



Dictatorship stick on democracy



© File photo

Iran, Syria determined to expand trade ties

TEHRAN — Iran and Syria's first joint trade committee meeting was held in Damascus on Wednesday, during which the two sides stressed their willingness for further expansion of economic ties.

According to the portal of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), the event was attended by senior officials from both sides including Iranian Transport Minister Mohammad

Eslami, The Chairman of Iran-Syria Joint Economic Committee Keyvan Kashefi, and Hassan Danaeifar, the advisor to Iran's first vice president and also the chairman of the Iranian committee on development of economic relations with Syria and Iraq.

As reported, Eslami visited Syria on top of a high-ranking delegation to attend the event and also to discuss expansion of ties with Syrian officials. ➔4

Iran has full control over its borders: IRGC chief

TEHRAN — Chief of the IRGC Major General Salami said on Friday that Iran has full control over its borders.

During a visit to the Northwestern borders of the country in East Azerbaijan province, he said the IRGC has complete intelligence dominance over border areas and will give proper response to any act of aggression against the country.

"Ensuring [border] security is among

the major missions of the IRGC," he noted.

Elsewhere, Salami said that the Iranians will resist pressure.

"Economic resistance is possible through boosting production.

He added, "We have decided to resist, and this resistance is possible and simple because the will of the Iranian nation, Leader and all sections of the system support it."

Israeli forces getting into Iraq on forged U.S. passports: Akram al-Kaabi

TEHRAN — Senior Israeli forces are getting into Iraq on fake U.S. passports, Iraq's pro-government Harakat al-Nujaba Secretary-General Akram al-Kaabi says.

"Israelis are entering Iraq using fake American passports," al-Kaabi told Dehleh news network on Thursday night.

Recently, a female Israeli general entered Iraq, he said, adding she currently runs an Israeli military camp located in

the Iraqi Kurdistan's capital, Erbil.

"We are well aware that Israeli [troops] are also present at the U.S. embassy as well as the Ein al-Assad military base," the popular resistance force chief said.

Certain efforts by a "foreign power" are underway to revive the Daesh terrorist group in the Arab country, al-Kaabi said. ➔13



EDITORIAL
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The costs of European integration to the White House

In one of his most recent statements, French President Emmanuel Macron has announced the end of U.S. and Western hegemony in the international system. The remarks come as the EU and Eurozone are also facing a severe crisis of leadership.

Macron has warned Western nations against the "strategic mistake" of alienating Russia – but in doing so, he seeks a bigger role for himself in international politics.

"We are living the end of Western hegemony," Macron told diplomats, after hosting the G7 meeting in the city of Biarritz on France's Atlantic coast over the weekend. He named the rise of Beijing and Moscow as signs of a shift on the world scene.

The reality is that the European Union and the Eurozone, on the one hand, acknowledge the end of Western hegemony, and in particular the United States, and on the other hand, continue to be dominated by Washington. The EU's inactivity towards Europe has led to anger and frustration among citizens.

The EU and the Eurozone have a very uncertain future. In other words, America and Europe can no longer speak of international domination.

In such a situation, people like the French President and German Chancellor are worried about the future of the Eurozone and the European Union. This concern increases over time. The occurrence of a variety of security, political, economic and social crises has created many challenges in the European Union and the Eurozone.

The emergence of these challenges has led to a sharp decline in the popularity of traditional parties in Europe. In such a way, nationalist parties have been able to increase their popularity with the public. Which side are the European Union and the Eurozone really heading to? Will the future of Europe finally be clear these are the questions that concern the mentally ill, such as Merkel and Macron?

Ultimately, the more Europe delays in moving away from the United States, the more it will pay. It is as if European officials have not yet understood it. There is a long gap between the recent remarks of the French President and the EU's practical approach.

Prospect for INSTEX is not good: Paul Pillar

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
By Javad Heirannia

TEHRAN — Professor Paul Pillar, who was CIA intelligence analyst for 28 years, tells that the Europeans still want to save the JCPOA.

Pillar says "Doing so will require the Europeans to facilitate enough commerce with Iran for Iranian leaders to conclude that their country is receiving enough economic benefit to make continued observance of the nuclear limits justifiable."

He also adds that "The prospects for this happening are not good."

Following is the text of the interview:

■ Iran has announced that it will implement a third step to reduce its obligations under the JCPOA. Will Europe takes effective and convincing

action to prevent this?

A: The challenge for Europe has not changed since the Trump administration reneged on U.S. obligations under the JCPOA and, a year later, Iran began exceeding some of the limits of the agreement. The Europeans still want to save the JCPOA. Doing so will require the Europeans to facilitate enough commerce with Iran for Iranian leaders to conclude that their country is receiving enough economic benefit to make continued observance of the nuclear limits justifiable. The prospects for this happening are not good. The European governments mostly have the will but not the ability to make it happen. The governments do not control the private sector, and most European businesses that are big enough to matter fear being shut out of the U.S. market if they do business with Iran.

■ What would be the possible reaction of Russia and China to reducing Iran's commitments under JCPOA?

A: Russia and China also want to preserve the JCPOA. If Iran continues to exceed more of the nuclear limits, Russia and China will not impose additional sanctions of their own. They regard the Trump administration's imposition of new U.S. sanctions as the obvious cause of the agreement breaking down. Russia and China will seek to exploit the absence of Iranian dealings with the United States and any new conflict in Iranian-European relations by developing their own relations with Iran, which they see in their own economic interests. Russian President Putin also has a strategic interest in maintaining reasonably good relations with all countries in the Middle East, including Iran. ➔13

Bargaining with Iran not like closing real estate deal: Dennis Ross

TEHRAN — Bargaining with Iran is not the same as a closing a real estate deal, according to a Washington Post article.

An article by Dennis Ross and Dana Stroul published on Thursday argued that the Trump administration's maximum-pressure campaign on Iran is not working.

"The administration has consistently made the argument that economic sanctions would deprive the Iranian regime of money and that less money would mean less bad behavior and more concessions at the negotiating table," the article read.

"The inescapable conclusion, after surveying the region's conflicts, is that a U.S. strategy based exclusively on starving Tehran of money

cannot by itself compel changes in Iran's regional behavior," it added.

The article also pointed out that Brian Hook, the U.S. special representative for Iran, testified to Congress in June to argue that U.S. sanctions have led to cuts in Iran's military budget in 2018 and again in 2019.

Such purported budget reductions did not translate into reduced threats in the Strait of Hormuz earlier this year, the article said, pointing to Iran's shooting down of an intruding U.S. drone and other incidents.

In conclusion, the article said, "History tells us that Iran will not be sanctioned into changing its behavior. A successful policy of leverage

comes from collective international pressure, the prospect that negotiations can offer credible economic gains and the threat of meaningful consequences for malign actions."

Tensions started to build up between the U.S. and Iran after U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew Washington from the 2015 deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), in May 2018, and imposed sanctions against Tehran in a bid to put maximum pressure on the Islamic Republic. The Trump administration has also made empty calls for talks, but the Islamic Republic maintains that as long as the sanctions are in place and the U.S. refuses to return to the JCPOA, negotiations will be meaningless.



ARTICLE
Hamed Khani
Lawyer and member of the International Bar Association

Rights of migrant workers from perspective of Intl Orgs

In the present age the expansion of international interactions is preventing it to ignore the presence of aliens in a country. Aliens have rights in every country including the right to employment or work. Although this right has been addressed in various transnational documents, nowadays it is of interest to various scientists including lawyers. So, the subject that is briefly analyzed below; the rights of migrant workers from the perspective of international organizations or in other words from the perspective of international documents adopted by international organizations, especially the United Nations and the International Labor Organization.

Definition of the migrant worker and its types

To analyze the above-mentioned issue; It is necessary to provide a brief definition of the migrant worker; immigrant worker is a person who immigrated to his or her own country or abroad to work in jobs such as seasonal work. What is certain, Immigrant workers usually do not work permanently in one region or country? Immigrant workers who work outside their borders, May be employed as a foreign worker or a migrant worker, especially when they received an invitation from the host country before leaving the country. Of course by definition Article 11 of Protocol No. 97 and 143 (Which have been studied in future discussions) from of immigrant worker; There are people who intend to hire for a specific job And not employed as a Self-employed They go from country to country And are legally accepted And include frontier workers with short-term entry and stay. Free business owners And the artist And the sailors, people for the purpose of education and staff of organizations And factories don't. Obviously these groups, they are out of the immigrant working class.

In any case, migrant workers legally (ie; having legal documents and permits in the country of residence) or illegally (that is, enter the country of destination without observing the legal arrangements and secretly without a visa). Divided. ➔7



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Jashn-e Atefeh aims to support underprivileged students

A charity event, known as Jashn-e Atefeh (literally meaning the festival of kindnesses), kicked off on Thursday nationwide to support underprivileged students prior to the upcoming school year (starting September 23).

The event, which solicits contributions in kind or in cash, has been held for 23 years by Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation.

It spreads the culture of altruism and promotes the tradition for helping others, through which many financially-struggling students are provided with the opportunity to continue education.

‘EU to continue working to preserve nuclear deal’

By staff and agency

European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said on Friday that the European Union will continue working to preserve the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

“My role...is to preserve the full implementation of the existing agreements,” she told reporters during a meeting of EU foreign ministers in Helsinki, according to Vancouver Sun.



Mogherini, British Foreign Minister Dominic Raab, French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian and German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas met in Helsinki on Friday to discuss the JCPOA. U.S. President Donald Trump last year unilaterally pulled out of the deal and re-imposed sanctions on Iran.

Europeans have repeatedly said they are committed to saving the deal, however, efforts to shield Iran's economy from the reimposition of U.S. sanctions have so far yield no result.

Iran, Malaysia agree to form supreme council of ties: Zarif

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TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Thursday that Iran and Malaysia have agreed to form a supreme council of ties at foreign ministerial level.

According to ISNA, Zarif said his meeting with Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir bin Mohamad was “very good and friendly”.

“We talked about issues of the world of Islam, sanctions, the United States’ illegal actions and also actions that the two countries [Iran and Malaysia] should take,” he said.

Zarif started his Asian tour on Monday.

He first visited China and held two rounds of talks with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi.

He was in Japan on Tuesday and met with Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Kono.

He met with Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzo on Wednesday. Zarif also delivered a speech at the Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA) on Wednesday and met with top officials of the International Friendship Exchange Council (FEC) of Japan.

On the final leg of his tour, he arrived in Malaysia on Wednesday. He met with Malaysian Foreign Minister Saifuddin Abdullah and also the Malaysian prime minister.

He left Kuala Lumpur for Tehran on Friday. The Iranian foreign minister has traveled to several countries in recent weeks.

Before the tour of Asia, Zarif visited Kuwait, three Scandinavian capitals, and France.

‘Security in Persian Gulf can only be protected by regional countries’

POLITICAL
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TEHRAN – Brigadier General Alireza Sabahifard, commander of Iran's Air Defense Force, said on Friday that security in the Persian Gulf region can only be protected by the countries in the region and not by the foreign forces.

Extra-regional countries’ presence and coalitions just destabilize the region, he said during a speech at the Friday prayer.

“So, the West Asian countries’ leaders are strongly advised to revise their policies and avoid joining coalitions of the enemies of the world of Islam and seek intra-regional security policies,” he said.

Elsewhere, he noted that Iran has never sought any war, however, security of the country and the region is a redline for the Islamic Republic.

The United States has called on its European and Asian allies to form a maritime force to supposedly monitor safe shipping in the Strait of Hormuz and Persian Gulf.

So far, only Britain, Israel, Australia and Bahrain have agreed to join the coalition.

President Hassan Rouhani said on August 14 there is no need to foreign forces to maintain security in the Persian Gulf region.

“Major powers, especially America, seek nothing except causing division and emptying treasury of the Islamic countries. The Persian Gulf littoral states can maintain security and stability in the region,” Rouhani said during a cabinet meeting.

“The regional countries can maintain security through unity, solidarity and dialogue. Undoubtedly, the United States’ claims and actions will bring them [regional countries] no benefits. The regional countries have always been and will be ‘brothers’ and division only serves the enemies’ interests,” Rouhani remarked.

In an interview Al-Jazeera on August 12, Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif said, “We believe that the best the U.S. can do for the protection of maritime navigation is to just leave people alone; don’t interfere.”

Zarif added, “What we have called for, and repeat, is that our neighbors - all of us - belong to this region, we cannot leave this region. Others will leave this region; others will not secure us; others will not provide us with the security umbrella that we need. We can provide each other with that security umbrella. We extend our hand, and our hand remains extended, to all our neighbors.”

Zarif said on August 9 that the Persian Gulf is a “national security priority for Iran” and that Tehran will not “hesitate to safeguard its security” in this strategic waterway, which he described as a “vital lifeline” for the Islamic Republic.

The chief diplomat warned that military presence of extra-regional forces is absolutely a “source of insecurity”.

“Mindful of this reality, any extra-regional presence is by definition source of insecurity - despite propaganda,” Zarif wrote on his Twitter account.

Zarif says Trump quits nuclear deal for personal reasons

By staff and agency

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has said that U.S. President Donald Trump quit the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA, for personal reasons and not for some substantial reasons.

“He (Trump) doesn’t like (former President Barack) Obama’s legacy, he just wants to withdraw from the deal because of personal reasons, not because of some substantial reasons,” he told Bernama news channel published on Friday.

He also said that Iran will not renegotiate its part in the JCPOA, but is open to talks with all parties concerned to find ways forward in fulfilling the obligations.

He noted that the deal had been carefully negotiated and that it is impossible to renegotiate it.

He urged other European members of the deal to remain committed to the agreement.

“Iran will remain faithful to this deal, to the same extent other members are faithful to this deal,” he noted.

“We are ready to talk and consult with others on how to best implement this deal. We are talking about Europe coming to comply with its own obligations under the deal. If they need to



engage with the United States themselves in order to be able to comply with the obligation, then that’s something they would do and Iran would not have any role in it,” he said. Elsewhere, he said, “We (have) already talked

to the U.S. extensively for over two years and we’ve reached a conclusion ... that was 159-page long... it is a serious agreement, (including) almost all aspects of the nuclear issues as well as the aspect of the U.S. sanctions against Iran.”

Abe says he wants to do everything possible to ease Middle East tension

By staff and agencies

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said on Friday that he plans to do everything he can to ease tension in the Middle East region and wants to talk with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session that starts in September.

“Peace and stability in the Middle East directly links to Japan’s national interest,” Reuters quoted him as saying in a news conference at the end of a three-day international conference on African development.

“I would like to work tenaciously, and play the best possible role to ease tensions in the Middle East,” he said.

The Japan Times reported on Wednesday that Abe and Rouhani are planning to meet in late September at the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and Abe met in Yokohama, near Tokyo, on Wednesday.

According to Reuters, Zarif said that Iran is not seeking to increase tension but every country should be able to enjoy its rights under international law.

“As our president has said, we are not at all seeking heightened tensions,” Zarif said, speaking through a translator.

He said, “We believe every country should be able to

enjoy its rights under international law.”

According to The Mainichi, Zarif said, “Iran welcomes the Japanese government’s role (in trying) to ease tensions in the Middle East.”

Abe said, “Japan will persistently continue our diplomatic efforts to deal with rising tensions in the Middle East and stabilize the current situation.”

Pointing to his meeting with Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, Abe said that Ayatollah Khamenei noted that Iran does not seek nuclear weapons, according to ISNA.

Abe was in Iran on a two-day visit on June 12.

During a meeting with Abe on June 13, Ayatollah Khamenei dismissed U.S. President Donald Trump as a person not worthy of exchanging messages.

The Leader said Iran has “no trust” in the U.S. and will not at all “repeat the bitter experience” it gained from the negotiations that led to the conclusion of a 2015 nuclear deal, which Washington later ditched.

During a joint press conference with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani on June 12, Abe said he will use his country’s “utmost effort” to deescalate tension in the Persian Gulf and the wider Middle East region.



“Japan will use its utmost effort to reduce tension in the region,” he said.

Abe said, “Increase in tensions in the region must be contained at any price, and Japan can play a quite constructive role in this regard.”

“Peace and stability of the Middle East region is essential not only for the prosperity of this region, but also for the prosperity of the entire world,” Abe noted.

Mogherini calls for preserving nuclear deal

By staff and agency

European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini has called for preserving the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, more dialogue between the parties.

According to Middle East Monitor, she said in statements, on Thursday, that “holding dialogue on the basis of clarity and respect is the best way to reach an understanding”, pointing out that the European countries have focused during the past years on maintaining the agreement and respecting all its requirements, and that there is more work to be done.

Mogherini indicated that the joint plan



of action (the nuclear deal) was an extension to the UN Security Council resolution, clarifying that it was “not an international or bilateral agreement, but rather a part of a series of resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council.”

U.S. President Donald Trump abandoned the nuclear deal in May 2018 and returned the previous sanctions and imposed new ones.

So far, Iran has taken two steps in reducing its nuclear commitments: increasing its stockpile of enriched uranium beyond the 300 kilograms allowed under the JCPOA and enriching nuclear fuel to the purity level of 4.5 percent as the Europeans missed a 60-day deadline to devise a concrete mech-

anism to protect the country from the U.S. sanctions.

Under the agreement, Iran was allowed to enrich uranium to 3.67 percent.

President Hassan Rouhani said on August 14 that Tehran will start the next step of reducing nuclear obligations after the second 60-day deadline.

The third step can include installation of more centrifuges, especially advanced ones.

In an interview with the Sueddeutsche Zeitung newspaper published on Tuesday, Iran’s Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said the country will begin suspending more of its commitments under the nuclear deal between on September 6.

Putin, Merkel discuss nuclear deal

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TEHRAN – Russian President Vladimir Putin and German Chancellor Angela Merkel discussed the 2015 nuclear deal in a phone conversation on Thursday.

“They discussed the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on Iran’s nuclear program. Angela Merkel updated Vladimir Putin on the G7 discussions on this matter in Biarritz. It was noted that the efforts of all the concerned parties must be consolidated to preserve the JCPOA,” said a statement published by Kremlin.

U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew Washington in May 2018 from the JCPOA, which was reached between Iran and six world powers in 2015.

Afterwards, Washington re-imposed sanctions on Iran that had been lifted under the deal and ordered new ones.

On May 8, exactly one year after the U.S. withdrew from the multi-nation nuclear agreement, Iran announced a partial withdrawal from some aspects of the pact, saying that the country would no longer adhere to some of the limits on its nuclear activities.

It also threatened to step up uranium enrichment if an agreement is not made within 60 days to protect it from the sanctions’ effects.

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

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Paragraph 36 of the JCPOA provided a mechanism



to resolve disputes and allows one side, under certain circumstances, to stop complying with the deal if the other side is out of compliance.

In an interview with France 24 aired on August 23, Zarif said that the nuclear deal was prepared based on mutual mistrust and there are mechanisms in it when one party violates the deal.

“The JCPOA is a comprehensive deal on the nuclear issue which was negotiated with open eyes. We knew that we could not trust each other. It was basically actually based on mutual mistrust.

So, what we did was we put in place mechanisms that we could use if they violate. If we use those mechanisms, we do not need to leave the agreement we have shown strategic patience. That strategic patience may have been

required in order to give Europeans time to implement their part of the deal after the U.S. withdrawal.

Unfortunately, Europe was not able over the past 15 months to do that so we took certain measures and those measures as I said are reversible.

If Europe begins taking the steps that it is required to take,” he maintained.

Mikhail Ulyanov, Russia’s permanent representative to international organizations in Vienna, said in July that Moscow understands the reason behind Iran’s steps in reducing commitments under the nuclear deal.

“We understand the steps taken [by Iran], the reasons that pushed the Iranians to take them. We call on Iran to refrain from further actions that could complicate the situation with the nuclear deal even more,” he told Sputnik.

It's insane to negotiate with Washington, says cleric

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — It is insane to negotiate with those who break their promises, said Tehran Friday prayer leader Ayatollah Ahmad Khatami, referring to the idea of talks between Tehran and Washington after the former ditched the 2015 nuclear pact.

"As our president has said, we are not insane to negotiate with the Americans," Khatami told worshippers in Tehran on Friday. "As the supreme leader has said, there will be no negotiations with the U.S., and both the authorities and the people agree on this."

"Negotiation under pressure is surrender and the Iranian nation will never tolerate such disgrace," he added.

Khatami noted that the U.S. and its president, Donald Trump, are in need of bringing Iran to the negotiating table "but given the approach adopted by the U.S. and Trump, they're going to have to take this dream to their grave."

The U.S., under Trump, has occasionally shown its willingness to hold talks with Tehran, while abandoning the 2015 nuclear agreement with Iran and reimposing sanctions that the agreement had rescinded in order to put



enormous new pressure on Iran's economy. The idea of talks with Trump's America

has been firmly rejected by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei,

who has the final say in critical issues.

Also on Tuesday, President Hassan Rouhani ruled out the possibility of talks with Washington, saying the United States must lift all its cruel sanctions against Iran and begin respecting the nation's rights as a "first step" towards dialogue.

He stressed that the Islamic Republic will not engage in any negotiations for the mere sake of photo ops.

"We seek to resolve issues and problems in a rational way but we are not after photo ops. For anyone wanting to take a picture with Hassan Rouhani, this is not possible" unless that party chooses to set aside all the oppressive sanctions and respect the Iranian nation's rights, the president said.

During his Friday sermon, Ayatollah Khatami also pointed out that Trump had said during his 2016 campaign trail that Hillary Clinton and the Obama administration created Daesh (ISIL).

"They created Taliban as well and all terrorist groups are somehow linked to them," Khatami said.

"Interestingly, they speak of fighting terrorism," he added.

Zarif: Talks impossible unless U.S. ends economic terrorism

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The United States must return to the 2015 nuclear deal and end its economic terrorism against Iran before seeking negotiations with the Islamic Republic.

"The United States is engaged in an economic war against the Iranian people and it won't be possible for us to engage with the United States unless they stop imposing a war and engaging in economic terrorism against the Iranian people," Zarif said in Kuala Lumpur on Thursday, according to Press TV.

"So if they want to come back into the room there is a ticket that they need to purchase and that ticket is to observe the agreement," he stated, adding that Iran is not willing to meet for the sake of meeting and "we need to meet if there is result."

Zarif's remarks come days after French President Emmanuel Macron voiced hopes for a meeting between President Hassan Rouhani and his American counterpart Donald Trump in the next few weeks.

Macron said that G7 leaders had agreed to a joint action on Iran with the aim of defusing tensions and opening a new round of negotiations with Tehran.

"We agreed on what we wanted to say jointly on Iran," Reuters quoted Macron as saying last week. "There is a message from the G7 on our objectives and the fact that

we share them is important, which avoids divisions that in the end weaken everybody."

"Everyone wants to avoid a conflict, Donald Trump was extremely clear on that point."

Earlier, a French official said the French president had shared details of the plan to ease tensions with Iran during his working lunch with President Donald Trump at the G7 summit.

The official, who was speaking anonymously in accordance with the French presidency's customary practices, said France has been working for several weeks on the plan.

The diplomat said France and the United States share the same interests, which he claimed to be preventing "a nuclear-armed Iran."

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif met with last week with Macron in Paris to discuss the implementation of the nuclear deal, which is also known as the JCPOA.

"France presented some suggestions to Iran on how to implement the JCPOA and the steps that both sides need to take. We also presented some suggestions on how to fully implement the JCPOA," Zarif stated.

Trump has adopted a maximum pressure policy against Iran since he walked away from the JCPOA. The policy includes sanctions on Iran's economy, especially its oil



exports, and bans on top Iranian figures and organizations. At the same time, the U.S. president has pushed for talks with Tehran.

Iranian leaders have openly rejected the notion of talks with the U.S. as long as its illegal sanctions against Tehran are in place.

'Specter of war shattered after IRGC downing of U.S. drone'

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Amir Ali Hajizadeh, commander of the aerospace unit of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), said on Thursday that the shooting down of the intruding U.S. drone two months ago shattered the specter of war against the Islamic Republic.

The enemies had launched an extensive propaganda campaign to threaten Iran with a war, in such a way that even the intelligence services of the friendly countries were warning Tehran about a looming military action, Tasnim quoted Hajizadeh as saying.

However, the Islamic Republic was mindful that it was a trick to force Tehran to the negotiating table, he said.

"We were confident that if they (enemies) had made the first mistake, we would have attacked their bases around us," the commander added.

On June 20, the IRGC Aerospace downed an American RQ-4 Global Hawk drone over the Strait of Hormuz after it violated Iranian airspace.

Despite the U.S. claims that the drone had been flying over international waters, Iran said it had retrieved sections of the drone in its own territorial waters where



it was shot down.

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

In comments made a few hours after the incident, IRGC Chief Major General Hossein Salami said the incident had a

straightforward message that any foreign intrusion into Iranian territories would draw a crushing response.

U.S. President Donald Trump later said the U.S. had been "cocked and loaded" to retaliate against Iran after he learned an Iranian missile system shot down a U.S.

military drone.

However, the U.S. president claimed he decided to call off the mission after he learned 150 Iranians would die as a result of the strike.

In remarks on Wednesday, Iranian Armed Forces Chief of Staff Mohammad Hossein Baqeri said Iran's military power deterred the United States from taking any action after the Islamic Republic shot down the drone.

"Following the downing of the RQ-4 Global Hawk drone, if the U.S. decided to attack us but eventually called off the attack on the pretext of avoiding casualties, it is because of Iran's deterrence power," Major General Baqeri said.

Tensions started to build up between the U.S. and Iran after Trump withdrew Washington from the 2015 deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), in May 2018, and imposed sanctions against Tehran in a bid to put maximum pressure on the Islamic Republic.

Tehran has slammed the sanctions, which have affected the lives of thousands of Iranians, as "economic terrorism".

Voice of Arak, Haftapeh workers should be heard: Raisi

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Judiciary Chief Ebrahim Raisi has criticized the current type of privatization in Iran, saying the voice of the workers of Arak city and Haftapeh should be heard.

"In my trip to Arak, I listened to the words of Araki workers before any meeting," Raisi said on Thursday, Ensaf News reported.

He said privatization is one of the needs of the country and the government should support the private sector, but criticized policies that lead to decreased production.

"Such privatization in the country is wasting public property and is different from that privatization that existed in the law," he said, adding that the Judiciary will follow up on such issues.



Earlier this week, Iranian lawmakers released a statement to thank the Judiciary Chief Ebrahimi Raisi for taking measures to root out corruption.

MP Abolfazl Aboutorabi said on Monday that the statement, which has been so far signed by more than 100 lawmakers, voiced support for the measures adopted by the Judiciary in order to fight corruption.

"Officials of the Judiciary will not allow corruption to nest in any location within the system, and on the agenda must be finding the best way to recognize these [corrupt] individuals," Raisi said weeks ago.

"Anywhere within the administrative, judicial, economic, cultural or political system that becomes infected with corruption, we will confront it," he stated.

FDD promotes economic terrorism against Iranian nation: Tehran

TEHRAN (Press TV) — Iran's Foreign Ministry has repeated its assertion that a so-called U.S.-based think tank, which has been blacklisted by Tehran for its malign activities targeting the Iranian people, acts to promote "economic terrorism" against the Islamic Republic.

"In our view, the American Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD) is not considered to be a think tank at all, but is an organization that engages in designing and promoting 'economic terrorism' and is behind the U.S. administration's virulent measures against the people of Iran on a daily basis," Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said on Thursday.

The Iranian diplomat described the FDD as a designing and operational arm of the U.S. administration, saying that Washington bases most of its adversarial efforts against the Iranian nation on plots devised by this foundation.

On Saturday, the Iranian Foreign Ministry said it had added the foundation and its Chief Executive Mark Dubowitz to its list of sanctions for their role in spreading "economic war and terrorism against the Iranian people."

It added that the American institution, acting under its deceitful name, and in particular its chief executive, have "deliberately and knowingly" been endeavoring, in a proactive and serious manner, to damage the security and vital interests of the Iranian people.



Iranian officials use the term "economic warfare and terrorism" to identify the United States' nuclear-related sanctions against Iran, which Washington restored after leaving a nuclear deal between Tehran and major world powers last year.

Both the U.S. departure from the 2015 agreement, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and its restoration of the sanctions came while the JCPOA has been ratified by the United Nations Security Council in the form of a resolution.

Tehran observes that the unilateral and unlawful economic bans have endangered the lives, health, and freedom of the Iranian people.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Mousavi said the names of the first batch of people who cooperate with the FDD would be soon made available to various responsible institutions in the Islamic Republic, including the Judiciary, so they would fall under the sphere of Iran's punitive countermeasures.

"The first list of those sanctioned [by Iran for cooperation with the FDD] comprises people of various nationalities who play an effective role in the foundation's activities against the Iranian nation," Mousavi concluded.

Last Sunday, Mousavi said the Islamic Republic will resort to any legal and legitimate means to defend the "fundamental" rights of its citizens in line with the norms of international law.

He made the remarks when asked by reporters about the reaction of the U.S. administration to recent sanctions imposed by Iran on the FDD and its CEO.

The Iranian spokesperson further said, "Propaganda spread by the U.S. Department of State and Dubowitz's foundation is nothing new. They are experts in spreading lies and misleading."

Mousavi added that in addition to fulfilling its legal obligation, the Iranian government's move conveys this message to the world that it is determined to protect its citizens against enemies of the country.

EU to step up diplomatic dialogue with Iran to save JCPOA

TEHRAN (Tasnim) — The European Union considers a diplomatic dialogue with Iran to avoid any further escalation in the region as well as implementing the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), known as the Iran nuclear deal.

According to Belgian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Didier Reynders, the EU will do it as a priority step in securing freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz to avoid any further escalation in the region and to implement the Iran nuclear deal, Sputnik reported.

"We are very concerned about issues of maritime security and freedom of navigation, which should be ensured, but, as you know, we are trying to support the implementation of the JCPOA, so we are trying to avoid any escalation in the region. We will continue to look at how to guarantee freedom of navigation in the region, but also continue to work with Iran for the correct implementation of the nuclear deal," the minister told reporters on the sidelines of the informal meeting of EU foreign ministers, known as Gymnich, in Helsinki.

While answering a question about the possibility of establishing the EU observation mission in the region, Reynders noted that the "diplomatic discussion with Iran is currently the most important element."

Germany's foreign minister also said Friday after talks with Britain and France that European countries will step

up diplomatic efforts to save Iran nuclear deal.

The foreign ministers of Britain, France and Germany -- the three European parties to the deal -- were joined by EU diplomatic chief Federica Mogherini for talks on the sidelines of an EU meeting in Helsinki.

Germany's Heiko Maas said the trio wanted to build on momentum from last weekend's G7 summit, where Trump indicated willingness to talk to Iran.

"Our priority is to open the dialogue window between the U.S. and Iran," Maas told reporters.

"Especially after the G7 summit in Biarritz we are all of the opinion that the momentum that perhaps exists, the readiness for dialogue on both sides... must now be used." Mogherini said Thursday the EU would support such a move -- provided the current deal was preserved.

Mogherini also said that the EU will continue working to preserve world powers' 2015 nuclear deal with Iran but would welcome any progress beyond it.

"My role... is to preserve the full implementation of the existing agreements.

Again if something else can be built on it, this would be welcomed and accompanied by the European Union," Mogherini told reporters during a meeting of EU foreign ministers in Helsinki.

The Europeans have repeatedly said they are committed to saving the deal, but efforts to shield Iran's economy from the reimposition of U.S. sanctions have so far borne



little fruit.

The Iran nuclear deal has been jeopardized by U.S. President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw from it last May. The United States also reimposed sanctions on Iran.

In response to the U.S. pulling out of the deal and reimposing sanctions, Tehran has reduced certain amount of its commitments under the deal, but the EU says it has so far not taken any irreversible steps.

STOCK MARKET	
TEDPIX	278674.9
IFX	3710.22

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES	
USD	42,000 rials
EUR	46,553 rials
GBP	51,250 rials
AED	11,437 rials

Source: cbi.ir

COMMODITIES	
Brent	\$60.06/b
WTI	\$55.89/b
OPEC Basket	\$60.16/b
Gold	\$1,526.60/oz
Silver	\$18.41/oz
Platinum	\$926.80/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

Liquidity at \$475b in a month

ECONOMY **TEHRAN**— Iran’s liquidity stood at 19.979 quadrillion rials (about \$475.69 billion) during the third month of the current Iranian calendar year, Khordad (May 22-June 21), according to a report released by the Central Bank of Iran (CBI).

The CBI announced that the liquidity figure shows 25.1 percent growth in comparison with the same period in the preceding year, IRIB reported.

In mid-July, CBI’s Governor Abdolnasser Hemmati said this bank has some plans for channeling the liquidity into production in a target-oriented way.

Making the remarks during visiting a production unit in Isfahan Province, the official said, “I think that some production units are in need of liquidity and the banking system is responsible for providing liquidity for these units in the way of boosting domestic production and reducing reliance on foreign products.”

India’s prolonged consumption slowdown and a deteriorating global environment are delaying a recovery in Asia’s third-largest economy, nudging its government into action to supplement the central bank’s monetary stimulus.

As stated by livemint.com, in a spate of announcements within the space of a week, the government eased foreign investment rules, gave concessions on vehicle purchases and encouraged banks to make loans cheaper to spur growth from a five-year low. It also secured more fiscal space to stimulate the economy with a windfall from the central bank in excess of \$24 billion.

Data due Friday is expected to show gross domestic product growth slowed for a fifth straight quarter to 5.7% in the three months ended June. That’s slower than the 5.8% expansion in the previous quarter.

While the slowdown last quarter reflects, for the most part, a slump in investment before the election, high-frequency indicators since then suggest the economy’s lack of momentum has persisted.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is still considering whether to use the windfall from the central bank to cut borrowings or boost spending. The other measures announced so far, like the easing of foreign investment rules, will also do little to boost consumer demand in the near term.

“Since the major contributors to the economy’s investment pie are households and private corporations, their spending hold the key for reviving broad-based investment activity in the economy,” said Sunil Kumar Sinha, principal economist at India Ratings and Research, the local arm of Fitch Ratings, in New Delhi.

■ The worst slowdown

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who returned to power in May with a bigger margin than in 2014, is witnessing the worst slowdown so far under his watch. Unemployment is at a 45-year high, car sales have slumped the most in almost two decades in July and infrastructure output grew at the slowest pace in more than four years. “We recognize that consumption will have to be given a boost,” Sitharaman said in the eastern Indian city of Guwahati Thursday, adding that the government will unveil more measures that address demands from businesses. The Reserve Bank of India has already cut interest rates by 110 basis points this year to the lowest in nine years to boost loans and revive investment, while signaling it’s ready to do more. It has been pumping in liquidity to tide over a cash crunch in the banking sector.

“India’s slowdown is taking longer than anticipated to turn around, with the slump likely extending into the April-June quarter. The reasons — a slow roll-out of a fiscal support package for farmers, and weak transmission of the Reserve Bank’s rate cuts.”

The government added to that with a decision to immediately inject 700 billion rupees (\$9.8 billion) to recapitalize state-run banks and encourage them to lend.

The moves were initially cheered by the market, but those gains faded by Thursday as concerns on the slowing local economy and trade talks between the U.S. and China dominated investor sentiment.

The “government has done only some tweaks to existing policies, but nothing that’s really big-bang,” said N.R. Bhanumurthy, an economist at New Delhi-based National Institute of Public Finance and Policy. “Markets seem to be awaiting more measures. The government shouldn’t keep them in waiting.”

In the absence of any substantial fiscal stimulus, some economists feel the RBI may have to do more heavy lifting to support growth. Prakash Sakpal, an economist at ING Groep NV in Singapore, expects the central bank to cut the key rate by another 50 basis points before the end of this year.

“Despite all easing this year, there are no improvements in the monetary indicators,” he said. “RBI is under pressure from the government for more interest rate and liquidity support for the economy and it will continue cutting policy rates.”

Trade deal between Iran, EAEU to take effect in late October: sources

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — A trade agreement between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) will officially come into force on October 27, Press TV reported citing Russian media and remarks by Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian.

As reported, Iran’s Ambassador to Russia Mehdi Sanaei had attended a meeting with a senior EAEU official to finalize an agreement on formation of a free trade zone between Iran and the regional union.

A press release from the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) showed that Sanaei and EEC Chief Tigran Sarkisyan had exchanged the documents needed to complete formalities for the deal to come into force in late October.

“The negotiations were challenging, but they are over. The agreement has been signed and ratified. The progress is evident,” said Sanaei.

Iran’s Minister of Energy Ardakanian also appeared in a late-night TV interview



on Wednesday saying that Iran’ official accession to the EAEU will begin some 60 days after the exchange of documents in Moscow.

Ardakanian said the accession would be a major breakthrough for Iran’s trade as it would allow exports on zero tariffs for 70 products while 503 other items would enjoy lowered duties.

“We can supply our goods and products to their markets through the land borders of the Republic of Armenia as well as sea borders of the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan,” said Ardakanian, making a reference to the countries members to the EAEU which also includes Belarus and Kyrgyzstan.

He said Iranian President Hassan Rouhani would attend an EAEU summit in Yerevan in early October before his country officially joins the economic bloc.

Earlier this month, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan invited the Iranian president to participate in the meeting which will be on October 1.

Iran, Syria determined to expand trade ties

1 → In his speech in the meeting, the minister called for Iranian private sector’s active participation in reconstruction of the war-stricken Syria, saying that “of course the presence of the Iranian delegation in this meeting is in itself an indication of Iranian private sector’s determination for strong contribution to reconstruction of Syria.”

Referring to the presence of more than 60 Iranian companies in Syria’s international exhibitions, he expressed hope that businessmen and business owners would get to know each other better in these exhibitions and that they would be able to exchange information.

Eslami further expressed optimism that the business owners of the two countries would be able to sign trade and economic agreements with each other in order to

accelerate Syria’s reconstruction and trade exchanges.

“The governments of Iran and Syria are committed to removing barriers [in the way of trade] and facilitating the two countries’ economic cooperation program, and we have taken good steps in this regard,” he said.

Later on Thursday, the Iranian delegation met with Prime Minister of Syria Imad Khamis, during which the two sides discussed various issues including expansion of economic cooperation and removing obstacles in the way of implementing agreements signed between the two countries, the role of chambers of commerce in boosting the trade relations and the participation of Iranian companies in the reconstruction of Syria.

Back in May, Iranian and Syrian officials, entrepre-

neurs and businessmen held their sixth business forum in the past six months.

A Syrian trade delegation headed by the Chairman of Chamber of Industry of Damascus and its Countryside Samer al-Debes, Keyvan Kashefi, Hassan Danaiefar, and the Syrian Ambassador to Tehran Adnan Mahmoud as well as representatives of Iranian private companies attended the event which was hosted by Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) in Tehran.

During the gathering, several senior officials delivered speeches and afterwards the two sides’ companies held B2B meetings to get to know each other and acquire information on their potentials and capacities.

Tax income up 35% in 5 months on year

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran’s tax revenues increased 35 percent in the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-August 22) from the same period of time in the previous year, IRIB reported quoting Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Farhad Dejpasand as saying.

Iran managed to collect 1.09 quadrillion rials (about \$25.952 billion) of tax revenues during the past Iranian calendar year of 1397 (ended on March 20, 2019), showing that the country’s annual tax income plan has come true by 97 percent.

The country had planned to earn 1.13 quadrillion rials (about \$26.904 billion) of tax incomes in the past year.

Direct taxes collected in the past year stood at 640 trillion rials (about \$15.238 billion), showing that the planned figure has come true by 101 percent and also showing 15 percent growth year on year.

The revenues earned from taxes on the goods and services were 450 trillion rials (about \$10.714 billion), indicating that the planned figure has been materialized by 91 percent and also showing 11 percent rise year on year.



To minimize the effects of the U.S. renewed sanctions on the country’s economy, Iran is adopting some new economic approaches and the main important one is to reduce reliance on the oil revenues.

To materialize this objective, the country has put strengthening domestic production, boosting non-oil exports specially to the neighbor countries, and collecting taxes more systematically on top of its economic policies.

In early July, finance minister said that reducing the current year’s budget dependency

on oil exports is the most important economic objective in the country; and his ministry is seriously following up defined tax policies to this end.

The proposed 17.03 quadrillion rials (\$405 billion) budget bill for this Iranian year (started on March 21) has envisaged 1.53 quadrillion rials (about \$36.5 billion) of tax income.

Dejpasand has also stressed that an efficient tax system should be a priority in the government’s policy making.

A non-oil budget requires other stable

income sources.

In a message on the occasion of the National Day of Tax (July 7), finance minister stressed the necessity of planning for using stable non-oil income.

He wrote the sanctions should be considered an opportunity to reform the budget structure and to take the advantage of tax potential.

Also, in a separate message on the same occasion, Omid-Ali Parsa, the head of Iran’s National Tax Administration (INTA), wrote: “Establishment of an efficient tax system and reducing the budget reliance on oil income requires renewing the country’s tax system in all aspects.”

The official further underlined that lunching smart tax collection projects based on the comprehensive tax plan is a promising measure that INTA is taking to fulfill the pivot role of tax in the national economy during this year. All such measures, while promoting the role of tax as an instrument for stability, transparency and economic justice, will lead to reduce the effects and pressures of sanctions on the country, the official underlined.

Iran appoints new commercial attaché in Iraq’s Basra

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — The new acting head of Iran’s Trade Promotion Organization said Iran has dispatched a second commercial attaché to Iraq’s city of Basra, Tasnim news agency reported on Friday.

Mentioning the country’s plan for increasing the number of commercial attaches in the region, Hamid Zaboum noted that considering the importance of Iran’s economic relations with the neighboring Arab country, a third attaché will also be sent to Sulaymaniyah in Iraqi Kurdistan soon.

Back in July, Iran’s new Deputy Industry Minister in trade affairs, Hossein Modares Khiabani, said following the government’s policies for increasing the country’s trade with the neighbors, 10 new commercial attachés are going to be sent to neighboring countries.

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

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

In early March, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani headed a high-ranking political and trade delegation in a visit to Iraq, during which the two sides inked several agreements and emphasized expansion of trade ties.

Less than a month after President Rouhani’s visit to Iraq, an Iraqi delegation visited Tehran to attend an Iran-Iraq business forum which was hosted by Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) on April 7.



China will likely wait out the trade war as it bets on its own economy



China’s best option in the trade war is to wait it out, experts say, as it’s huge domestic economy is increasingly being driven by the power of its consumers — not trade.

As per cnbc.com, playing the long game is “probably the best and only option” that China has, said Chung Man Wing, investment director at Value Partners.

As trade tensions with the U.S. draw out, the world’s second largest economy will likely seek to beef up its domestic economy, which contributes more to growth than its exports, according to analysts.

The “(Chinese) government is trying to buy time in terms of using the window to restructure the domestic economy ... the domestic corporate sector,” Chung told CNBC on Thursday.

External trade make up only a “very small portion” of China’s economy — and form only about 20% of its gross domestic product, he said. “And majority of that is actually not to the U.S., so China can afford to play the long game, and play it well.”

China’s growth is domestically driven; consumption and infrastructure investment deserve more attention than exports.

In fact, Deutsche Bank said in a Wednesday report that as much as 80% of China’s exports went to countries other than the U.S.

“We describe China’s current strategy as ‘endurance’: the main goal is to preserve China’s economic resilience, while taking the higher U.S. tariffs as a given fact,” Deutsche economist Yi Xiong wrote in the report. Visitors to Tianzifang, a popular shopping and cafe enclave in the French Concession area of Shanghai.

■ The protracted trade war

The protracted trade war with the U.S. has gone on for more than a year, and shows

no signs of abating. China said last Friday it would impose new tariffs on \$75 billion worth of American goods. In retaliation, U.S. President Donald Trump said he would hike tariff rates on \$550 billion of imports from China.

But ANZ economists pointed to how China’s headline gross domestic product number was “barely affected” even after its exports started to drop in 2018 — when the trade war began.

The “(trade) impact on growth was over-rated,” ANZ said in a Wednesday report, pointing out that China’s first-half GDP growth this year was still 6.3% — even with tariffs already affecting its exports.

The trade war uncertainty led the Chinese government to lower its growth target of between 6% and 6.5% for 2019 — compared to last year’s roughly 6.5%.

But, “China’s growth is domestically driven; consumption and infrastructure investment deserve more attention than exports,” the ANZ economists wrote.

While China’s economy has slowed, the direct contribution of the trade war “does not seem to be very large,” Deutsche Bank’s Xiong wrote. Instead, he said the slowing growth

could largely be attributed to a decline in government investment, higher household debt, and deleveraging efforts — the process of reducing debt.

Meanwhile, Beijing appears to be also betting on its own economy.

On Tuesday, it unveiled measures to boost consumption, including the possible removal of restrictions on auto purchases.

China’s State Council added it would encourage commercially struggling malls, stadiums and old factory zones to be transformed into commercial complexes, gym and entertainment centers.

It said Beijing will be extending retail hours to promote the “night economy,” with convenience stores and restaurants staying open longer.

Meanwhile, China will also try to diversify its supply chains and accelerate its opening up to other countries — reducing its reliance on the U.S. in the longer term, said the Deutsche Bank report.

“This will both help the Chinese economy and increase the cost for the U.S. in a trade war,” Xiong wrote.

Iran's petchem output to exceed 100mt by 2021: Zanganeh

E N E R G Y **TEHRAN** – Iran's annual petrochemical output is expected to reach more than 100 million tons by 2021, despite U.S. sanctions, Press TV reported on Thursday, quoting Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh as saying.

"Iran eyes to produce over 100 million tons of petrochemicals by 2021 to meet an annual income target of \$36 billion," Zanganeh told the state TV.

He said hitting the target would mean that Iran had almost doubled its output of refined products in eight years.

Elaborating on the details, Zanganeh said a major progress had been recorded in the production of gasoline, a fuel which was once imported into Iran in high quantities.

He said Iran was now the top producer of gasoline among the countries member to the OPEC, the world's largest oil exporting alliance, adding that output had reached around 115 million tons a day with an 11-million-ton surplus which could be dedicated to exports.

The minister said a bulk of the gasoline produced inside Iran, around 75 million



tons, was very low in sulfur and met strict European standards on environment protection.

Faced with American sanctions that

have restricted its sale of crude, Iran has sought to earn more from a developing downstream industry in its oil sector.

Exports of refined products have surged since the U.S. imposed its sanctions on Iran in November, allowing the government to partly offset the lost revenue from direct oil sale.

Zanganeh said Iran's next target in expansion of downstream sector of the oil industry would be to reach a target of 150 million tons of output in refined products in a few years time.

Petrochemical industry is one of the most important pillars of Iran's economy and one of the main suppliers of foreign currency especially euro for the country.

According to Zanganeh, the country is currently producing 63 million tons of petrochemical products annually and with the new projects going on stream the number is expected to jump to 66 million tons in near future, further cementing the Islamic country's stance as a major petrochemical supplier to the world markets.

Renewable power plants' output tops 3.5b Kwh: energy minister

E N E R G Y **TEHRAN** – Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian said on Wednesday that the country's renewable power plants have so far produced over 3.5 billion kilowatt hours (Kwh) of electricity, preventing the production of over 2.461 million tons of greenhouse gases.

As reported by IRNA, the official put the country's current capacity of renewable power generation at 761 megawatts (MW), saying that currently another 380 MW of new power plants are under construction across the country.

According to the Energy Ministry's news portal (known as PAVEN), the country's renewable power plants have also prevented the use of more than 1 billion cubic meters of fossil fuels and saved 785 million liters of water.

Currently 115 renewable power plants are operating across the country and 32 are also under construction, according to Ardakanian.

The country's renewable sector has created 42,300 job opportunities and the private sector's investment in this area has exceeded 124 trillion (about \$2.95 billion).

Based on the latest data released by the energy ministry, 45 percent of the country's renewable power plants are solar, 40 percent are wind farm, 12 percent small hydroelectric power plants, and finally 3 percent are thermal recycling and biomass power plants.

Last week, Head of Iran's Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (known as SATBA) said 14 new renewable power plants started operation in nine different provinces during the Government Week.

According to Seyed Mohammad Sadeqzadeh, with a total capacity of 160 megawatts, the mentioned projects include a wind farm and 13 solar farms.

The official noted that over 4.45 trillion rials (nearly \$106 million) plus €107 million has been funded for completing the mentioned projects.

"These 14 power plants went operational in East Azarbaijan, Tehran, Hamedan, Zanjan, Yazd, Kerman and Fars provinces," Paven quoted Sadeqzadeh as saying.

Renewables, including hydropower, account for just six percent of the country's total energy generation, versus natural gas' 90 percent share. Overall, in the next five years, Iran is aiming for a 5,000 MW increase in renewable capacity to meet growing domestic demand and expand its presence in the regional electricity market.

Iran, Armenia discuss electricity swap

E N E R G Y **TEHRAN** – Iran's Ambassador to Armenia Kazem Sajjadi held talks with Minister of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure of the Republic of Armenia Suren Papikyan on Thursday to discuss electricity swap between Tehran and Yerevan.

During the meeting, Kazem Sajjadi discussed mutual cooperation, North-South Freeway and transfer of electricity by implementing the third line of the network for electricity transfer to Armenia with the Armenian minister.

Papikyan, for his part, expressed satisfaction over his visit to Iran to attend the Conference on Tehran Urban Water Management, hoping that he will hold talks with the Iranian colleagues to examine avenues to promote economic cooperation.

Armenia is a country in the South Caucasus region of Eurasia.

Located in Western Asia on the Armenian Highlands, it is bordered by Turkey to the west, Georgia to the north, the de facto independent Republic of Artsakh and Azerbaijan to the east, and Iran and Azerbaijan's exclave of Nakhchivan to the south.

Oil and Gas Resources of Caspian Sea, a Strategic Reserve for Futures



On the occasion of government Week, Managing Director of Khazar Exploration and Production Company (KEPCO) Dr. Ali Osouli pointed to the activities and performance of his company and added, "as the largest lake in the world, Caspian Sea accounts for about 40 percent of total lake area of the world in terms of rich oil and gas reserves."

After Persian Gulf region and Siberia, Caspian Sea is considered as third energy source in the world.

According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), total proven reserves of crude oil and natural gas in the Caspian Sea exceeds 100 billion barrels of oil and also 12 trillion cubic meters of gas.

In addition to its outstanding geopolitical situation, Caspian Sea is of paramount importance for Caspian Sea littoral states in terms of rich oil and gas reserves.

Since any rosy and bright perspective cannot be predicted for the existence of hydrocarbon resources in the Caspian Sea in the past years, after the

victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979, expert engineers of the country believed that Caspian Sea is home to rich oil and gas reserves which is not confined to some neighboring states. Proving the existence of reliable and considerable oil and gas in southern part of the Caspian Sea was realized at the unsparing and unflinching efforts of expert engineers of Khazar Exploration and Production Company as forerunner and flagbearer of this giant movement.

Expert engineers of Khazar Exploration and Production Company conducted vast feasibility studies in terms of geophysics, geology and oil engineering and grasped out to the existence of rich hydrocarbon resources in southern part of the Caspian Sea.

According to the studies made, 46 small and large oil structures have been recognized in depth between 500 to 80 meters, with the reserves exceeding 48 billion barrels of oil and gas.

According to the same scientific efforts and valuable studies made in

geology, dire need for manufacturing a Amir kabir Semi-submersible drilling Rig was felt for the drilling and exploration operation in the Caspian Sea, the issue of which was put atop agenda of the priorities of the National Iranian Oil company (NIOC).

Construction operation of Semi-submersible drilling Rig named "Amir kabir" was completed with the drilling capability up to 6,000 meters undersea in cooperation with the co-operation of able Iranian companies.

Finally, construction of this giant and unique structure, as weigh as about 15,000 tons, was one of the most challenge and breathtaking and complicated project of the company. Today, Amir kabir Semi-submersible drilling Rig boasts as a golden page in the list of honors of oil industry of the country, representing the sovereignty of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the international level.

By launching this giant project, undoubtedly, it can be said that the risk of drilling operation for the development and production activities has decreased as compared to the past due to the expertise and valuable ex-

periences of Khazar Exploration and Production Company.

The issue of repair and maintenance has been cited as one of the important challenges of the company, he said, adding, "given the complicated and advanced technologies of semi-floating platforms, the company was heavily dependent on foreign countries in the past but today, expert engineers of the company have equipped with the world's latest knowledge and technology in a way that all repair and maintenance operation of the platform are conducted by engineers of the company fully.

Setting up Relaxation Pool and allocation of a vast area for logistics affairs, repair and maintenance base for vessels, storage tanks and oil and gas transfer pipelines are considered as one of the strategies of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) in northern part of the country and coasts of Neka and Behshahr cities, the managing director added.

Of the other important measures taken by Khazar Exploration and Production Company, it can be referred to the construction of three multi-

purpose logistics vessels (Caspian 1, 2 and 3), construction of logistics base, construction of jetty, relaxation pond for construction operation of exploration and drilling, fulfilling 4,800-m drilling operation in depth waters of Caspian, winning scientific experiences and accessing valuable exploratory data of deep waters of the Caspian Sea, increasing regional cooperation with the Caspian Sea littoral states in the safety and protection field and oil participations, signing and sealing various Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with domestic and international companies, fulfilling environmental projects according to the depth water standards, organizing maneuvers of preparation with the possible emission of oil pollutants, fulfilling research activities and publishing several books in the field of geophysics and geology, receiving ISO 9001, ISO/TS 29001, ISO 14001, ISO45001 and HSE – MS manual, signing and sealing a cooperation document between Islamic Republic of Iran and Republic of Azerbaijan in the field of joint operation of capacities and capabilities of Khazar,

signing and sealing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between National Iranian Oil Company and Norwegian ORG Company for conducting feasibility studies of Sardar Jangal Square and exploratory block numbers 24, 26 and 29.

Today, we announce with proud that expert and competent engineers of Khazar Exploration and Production Company managed to materialize most objectives of oil and gas development projects in a way that Islamic Republic of Iran entered the club of oil and gas activities in the depth waters of the world for the first time in the Middle east region.

Benefited from latest knowledge and technology, neighboring countries have expressed their readiness to cooperate and collaborate with this prestigious company in relevant field.

It should be acknowledged that efforts, studies, measures and discoveries conducted by Khazar Exploration and Production Company in the Caspian Sea can play an outstanding role in promoting Iran's status in terms of hydrocarbon reserves in the international communities.



Oil prices fall but set for big weekly gain on trade dispute hopes

Oil gave back some of its recent gains on Friday, but was still headed for the biggest weekly increase since early July, boosted by a decline in U.S. stocks, a looming hurricane in Florida and an easing of Sino-U.S. trade rhetoric.

As per reuters.com, Brent crude LCOc1 was down by 23 cents, or 0.4%, at \$60.85 a barrel, by 0711 GMT, but was heading for a gain of more than 2% for the week.

U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures CLc1 fell 40 cents, or 0.7%, to \$56.31 a barrel. The contract is still set for a gain of nearly 4% this week.

"Oil prices remain elevated and we are in the middle of trading range here for both Brent and West Texas," said Michael McCarthy, chief market strategist at CMC Markets in Sydney.

Worries about a slowdown in economic growth and the impact on oil demand due to the trade war between the world's two biggest oil consumers kept a lid on price gains this week, even as falling inventories indicate a balancing market.



On Thursday, the United States and China gave signs that they will resume trade talks, discussing the next round of in-person negotiations in September ahead of a looming deadline for additional U.S. tariffs.

"It is very difficult to predict the sudden twist and turns in the Sino-U.S. trade backdrop," said Samuel Siew, investment analyst at Phillip Futures in Singapore.

The approach of Hurricane Dorian toward Florida earlier raised fears that offshore U.S. crude producers may shutter output if the storm passes into the Gulf of Mexico over the weekend.

Dorian is heading toward landfall on the Atlantic coast of Florida over the weekend and may enter into the eastern Gulf of Mexico next week. It is forecast to strengthen and become a highly dangerous Category 4 hurricane on Sunday, the National Hurricane Center said.

Chevron Corp's (CVX.N) 356,440 barrel-per-day Pascagoula, Mississippi, oil refinery is closely monitoring the progress of Hurricane Dorian, a company spokesman said on Thursday.

Last month, Hurricane Barry prompted offshore oil companies to shut as much as 74% of production, lifting U.S. crude prices, before it weakened to a tropical storm.

Government data on Wednesday showed U.S. crude stocks dropped last week by 10 million barrels to their lowest since October as imports slowed, while gasoline and distillate stocks each fell by over 2 million barrels.



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Generic medicine trade can tie China, India closer

By Hu Weijia

GLOBALTIMES – China has revised its drug laws to reduce penalties for the sale and import of unapproved drugs, sending a signal that the country may take an open mind toward cheaper generic drugs, especially those from India, to give poor and critically ill patients greater opportunities to extend their lives.

India is a leader in the world’s generic drug market. Generics made in India are often as effective as, but much cheaper than, brand-name drugs made in the West. India’s pharmaceutical exports reached \$17.3 billion during the period from April 2017 to March 2018, according to media reports.

If India can gain access to the market in China, which has about 1.4 billion people, India’s pharmaceutical exports are likely to get a big boost.

The Chinese black comedy Dying to Survive, which hit Chinese theaters in July 2018, made many Chinese people aware that there is a large demand for India’s generic drugs in China. It seems that the Chinese authorities have noticed this and are trying to find a way to solve this problem. The latest revision in drug laws is an important step for opening up the Chinese market to India’s generic drugs. We believe that China will continue its reforms in pharmaceutical registration and give better access to Indian medicines.

Big demand for India’s generic drugs has promoted the development of underground generics trade in China. After the new law comes into effect, the underground trade is likely to be exposed to sunlight, and continue its development and growth.

In the future, generics can become a bright spot in India’s exports to China and help narrow the South Asian country’s trade deficit with China.

India’s trade deficit with China was \$26.9 billion in the first half of 2019, according to Chinese customs data. If India’s generic drugs win market access in China, the trade deficit will be greatly reduced.

Challenges persist, however, and making India’s generic drugs fully available in China won’t be easy. However, as long as reforms are beneficial to Chinese and Indian people, we believe the governments in both countries will roll out domestic reforms and spur pharmaceutical trade between the two countries.

Trade disputes prompt record-high S.Korea budget

ByLee Shin-Hyung

ASIATIMES – The South Korean Ministry of Finance proposed a record-breaking budget of 513.5 trillion won (US\$423.7 billion) for next year, hoping thereby to cope with an economic downturn stemming from the prolonged US-China trade dispute and to deal with Japan’s tightened export controls on key parts and materials.

Following a 9.7% hike this year, the budget proposal represents a 9.3% increase from this year’s budget of 469.6 trillion won, excluding an extra budget made later in the year.

Eye-catching is 24.1 trillion won earmarked for research and development thanks to the highest increase in a decade.

“An increase in R&D spending is intended to boost economic growth potential and to localize the production of critical parts and materials subject to strengthened Japanese export control,” a Korean finance ministry official told Asia Times Thursday.

The Japanese government dropped South Korea from a “white list” of countries favored in trade following strengthened regulations on exports of semiconductor materials. About 1100 items that Korea imports from Japan appear to be subject to the tighter export control.

South Korea plans to spend 2.1 trillion won to localize the key imported goods while earmarking 4.7 trillion won to nurture prospective growth engines such as future vehicles, artificial intelligence, logic chips, 5G network and bio health. Proposed spending on social overhead capital projects for roads, schools, hospitals and public parks and libraries increased by 12.9% to 22.3 trillion won to boost domestic demand.

The government also earmarked 23.9 trillion to accelerate exports and investment, including creating startups and nurturing unicorn companies, and 25.8 trillion won for job creation. This spending is also for economic growth. But, the largest part of the budget is the spending on welfare at 181.6 trillion won, a 9.3% hike from this year.

Military spending will rise 7.4% to 50.2 trillion won

The Korean finance ministry expects total government revenue, including tax, to increase only 1.2% to 482 trillion won next year, leaving quite a big gap with spending.

The government proposes to sell a record-breaking 60.2 trillion won worth of deficit-covering treasury bonds, which almost doubles this year’s 33.8 trillion won.

South Korea’s fiscal deficit is estimated to increase to 72.1 trillion won from 42.3 trillion this year. The national debt is estimated to account for 39.8% of GDP, up from 37.1% this year. Rising government debts bring some worries.

“Issuing deficit covering bond worth as much as 60 trillion won makes no sense,” Song Eon-seok, a lawmaker of the opposition Liberty Korea Party, told Asia Times. “Fast-growing government debt is a serious problem.

The government needs to take efforts to maintain a sound fiscal condition.”

But, the government said the new level would not be alarming.

“National debt is estimated to increase next year due to weaker tax revenue (and rising spending), but it is not a worrying level compared with that of advanced countries,” finance minister Hong Nam-ki said in a press briefing.

“The national debt-GDP ratio of 39.8% is lower than Japan’s 220% and the average of OECD countries, which is slightly higher than 100%. Our fiscal condition is sound beyond compare.”

The government plans to increase the national debt-GDP ratio to the mid 40s in 2023.

While saying South Korea has the capacity to spend still more, however, Hong cautioned that the country “needs to spare fiscal room for reunification.” Credit rating companies “are sensitive” to any sudden rise in the fiscal deficit – but a ratio in the mid-40s “is acceptable.”

Lee Sang-jae, an economist at Eugene Investment & Securities, told Asia Times: “With the expansionary budget, economic growth led by government spending is expected to continue next year amid sluggish exports and private demand.”

He welcomed a sharp rise in social overhead capital spending, which is effective in boosting economic growth.

Regarding fiscal soundness, he said, “Although the fiscal deficit is growing, the nation’s debt ratio is still low, not at a warning level. Now is the time for an expansionary fiscal policy.”

Cost of import of pharmaceutical in Iran has increased and reduced availability of medicine: Finaud

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

By Javad Heirannia

TEHRAN – Marc Finaud, the former French Foreign Ministry spokesman, says that the Trump administration maintains exemptions from sanctions on humanitarian goods, but because of its banking sanctions against Iran also applicable to third countries, the cost of import of pharmaceutical in Iran has increased and reduced availability of medicine.

Former Senior Resident Fellow at the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) adds “China seems to be determined to ensure the full implementation of the JCPOA, especially the provisions on reconversion of the Arak reactor for which it has special responsibilities.”

A senior member of Geneva Centre for Security Policy also says that “It will certainly go ahead with its transactions in the expectation that the 90-day limit will be extended.”

Following is the full text of the interview:

■ We have recently witnessed the resignation of German Designated head of Europe-Iran trade entity (INSTEX). In this regard, the long overdue implementation mechanism will be postponed again.

Don’t you think that the resignation happened so that the Europeans can buy enough time?

A: The German diplomat slated to head INSTEX resigned officially for “personal reasons” but in fact because of the controversy caused by his interview on YouTube critical of Israel and favourable to Iran. The E3 countries are eager to make INSTEX fully operational in order to protect EU companies from American sanctions and contribute to salvaging the JCPOA.

The mechanism is now technically operational and several companies have registered, but the establishment of a special fund to buy debts back on the international markets still require financial authorizations.

■ Is it possible that the special purpose



vehicle for trade with Iran goes behind commercial export of pharmaceutical, medical devices and agri-food goods and covers oil trade?

A: As you know Al-Monitor cited three anonymous sources as saying French President Emmanuel Macron had raised the establishment of a \$15 billion credit line. At this stage, INSTEX is only designed to facilitate transactions in humanitarian goods needed by the Iranian population and not directly prohibited by American unilateral sanctions.

Russia has offered to join INSTEX if the mechanism was extended to the oil trade. Extending INSTEX beyond its initial purpose would be difficult to achieve and would delay further its operations. Meanwhile, despite lack of official confirmation, it seems likely that President

Macron offered President Rouhani a credit line that could bypass US sanctions and would facilitate the oil trade.

There are indeed a number of opportunities on the international oil market for Iran to export its production, in particular to big importers such as India and China.

■ How do you evaluate the future of INSTEX as the US has threatened to put sanctions on foreign companies if it goes behind food and medical supplies?

A: Officially, the Trump administration maintains exemptions from sanctions on humanitarian goods, but because of its banking sanctions against Iran also applicable to third countries, the cost of import of pharmaceutical in Iran has increased and reduced availability of medicine.

Moreover, multinational pharmaceutical companies, despite exemptions, are

From the perspective of China, Iran is a major partner: Adib-Moghaddam

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

By Javad Heirannia

TEHRAN – Professor Arshin Adib-Moghaddam, Chair of the Centre for Iranian Studies at the London Middle East Institute believes that “From the perspective of China, Iran is a major partner, not only in terms of hydrocarbon imports, but also because of a comparable strategic vision of a multipolar world order and a new Eurasian century which is behind the One Belt initiative.”

Professor in Global Thought and Comparative Philosophies and Chair of the Centre for Iranian Studies at the London Middle East Institute, also adds that “Hence, China will try to facilitate any type of trade with Iran, whenever possible.”

Here is the full text of the interview:

■ We have recently witnessed the resignation of German Designated head of Europe-Iran trade entity (INSTEX). In this regard, the long overdue implementation mechanism will be postponed again. Don’t you think that the resignation happened so that the Europeans can buy enough time?

A: I think the European Union has a genuine interest in keeping the JCPOA alive and INSTEX has been an important mechanism to that end, despite its flaws in terms of the financial incentives for Iran.

Indeed, what we are witnessing is a firm EU-centred stance on the Iran file, which is what we have advocated for a long time.

The EU needs to work in accordance with its own interests, rather than following what every US administration says. This seems to be happening now, and Iran is a major object of that new orientation in international politics.

Of course, Iran needs to keep its side of the bargain to make that diplomacy work.

■ Is it possible that the special purpose vehicle for trade with Iran goes behind commercial export of pharmaceutical, medical devices and agri-food goods and covers oil trade? As you know Al-Monitor cited three anonymous sources as saying French President Emmanuel Macron had raised the establishment of a \$15 billion credit line.

A: The details can only be worked out, once INSTEX is operative. President Macron has pursued important diplomatic initiatives, and as he has an interest in safeguarding the JCPOA, as indicated, he will try everything possible to that end.

■ How do you evaluate the future of INSTEX as the US has threatened to put sanctions on foreign companies if it goes behind food and medical supplies?

A: The ability of the United States to enforce these sanctions is questionable. In general, Iran should not overestimate US power which is waning pretty much all over the world, not least because of the misguided policies of the Trump administration. This is a fact and easily discernable for scholars of global history and world politics.

■ US extended Iran nuclear sanction waivers for 90 days. What are the reasons behind this decision?

A: The inability to enforce sanctions as indicated. Current US policies towards Iran must be interpreted as a marketing ploy.

Once one looks through the advertisement, the mediocrity of the displayed product becomes visible.

■ Iran’s Arak reactor renovation is China’s responsibility. But if China wants to import the redesigning equipments (from Europe), they do need more time. It seems that 90 day waivers will reduce China’s power of risk taking and



prevent it from doing the commitments. Do you think that Beijing will take the risk?

A: Again, I would analyse the specific policies within the wider framework of strategy.

From the perspective of China, Iran is a major partner, not only in terms of hydrocarbon imports, but also because of a comparable strategic vision of a multipolar world order and a new Eurasian century which is behind the One Belt initiative.

Hence, China will try to facilitate any type of trade with Iran, whenever possible. I think the commitment to the Arak reactor is a part of that approach.

U.S. missiles plan could spark arms race

By Li Daguang

GLOBALTIMES – The US tested a conventionally configured ground-launched cruise missile on August 19 shortly after it formally withdrew from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, making it quite clear that these are all long-planned moves.

The world is facing unprecedented changes, and many practices of the unilateralism, protectionism and bullying of the US have violated international law.

Under such circumstances, US plans to develop the once restricted, conventionally configured ground-launched medium-range missiles will undoubtedly open a Pandora’s Box.

First, the demise of the INF Treaty will result in a new arms race. US preposterous withdrawal from the INF Treaty destroyed an important basic arms control agreement and further complicated the international situation, which will inevitably weaken the global security architecture.

In response to the US withdrawal from the INF Treaty and test-firing of missiles, Russia has declared it will take retaliatory steps.

With the US test-firing medium-range missiles, the risk of a new global arms race has greatly increased.

Once the US deploys medium-range missiles in other countries and regions, it will inevitably lead other countries to produce and deploy medium-range missiles, thus triggering a new round of world arms race.

Second, the termination of the INF Treaty poses a direct threat to China’s national security.

New US Defense Secretary Mark Esper told reporters on his way to Australia in early August that he was in favor of deploying ground-based missiles to Asia and would like to see the deployment within “months,” according to the New York Times.

Later in Sydney, Esper accused China of destabilizing the Indo-Pacific.

The US has not yet announced the final site, but Guam is supposed to be the ideal place for the US deployment of medium-range ballistic missiles.

As an overseas territory of the US in the Pacific Ocean, Guam is situated about 3000 kilometers from the edge of East Asia, Japan, South Korea and the Russian Far East, which goes with the requirement of the range of a medium-range missile.

Obviously the US is shifting its strategic deployment focus to the Asia-Pacific.

Once the US deploys medium-range ballistic missiles in the Asia-Pacific, China will face the threats of being surrounded by medium-range missiles and the strate-



gic balance in this region will be broken.

This is the direct consequence of the termination of the INF Treaty.

To this end, China must maintain vigilance and take necessary countermeasures.

China should lay bare the US ill intention before the international community of terminating the INF Treaty. Using Russia

afraid of being sentenced by US courts and in that senses US sanctions act as a deterrent. So even if INSTEX is meant to facilitate trade, there is no guarantee that companies will choose to benefit from it if they perceive a risk of being submitted to US sanctions when their commercial or financial interests are greater on the US market than on the Iranian one.

■ US extended Iran nuclear sanction waivers for 90 days. What are the reasons behind this decision?

A: The Trump administration did extend the sanction waivers, thus allowing Russia, China, and European countries to continue cooperating with Iran to implement some provisions of the JCPOA regarding activities designed to prevent any risk of proliferation (at Bushehr, Fordow, and Arak). At this stage, the US Department of Treasury seems reluctant to envisage secondary sanctions that might be considerable against the remaining partners of Iran in the JCPOA.

Another reason is that, whereas the US withdrew from the JCPOA allegedly because the accord was not stringent enough, it would be difficult for Washington to explain that it prevented the implementation of some of the key provisions of the deal aiming at preventing Iran from manufacturing nuclear weapons.

■ Iran’s Arak reactor renovation is China’s responsibility. But if the Chinese want to import the redesigning equipments (from Europe), they do need more time. It seems that 90 day waivers will reduce China’s power of risk taking and prevent it from doing the commitments. Do you think that Beijing will take the risk?

A: China seems to be determined to ensure the full implementation of the JCPOA, especially the provisions on reconversion of the Arak reactor for which it has special responsibilities.

It will certainly go ahead with its transactions in the expectation that the 90-day limit will be extended.

Rights of migrant workers from perspective of Intl Orgs

➡ It should be noted that Concept Illegal immigrant worker it is different from refugee. In fact, the refugee cannot live in peace and security in his country for various religious, political, social and other reasons and fearing for his life, he is forced to migrate and live in the country of destination as a refugee.

■ **All kinds of countries According to the concept of immigrant**

Countries can be countries of origin (a country where the migrant worker is a national of the country and may be an opportunity or immigrant in the category of immigrant countries) and the destination country (a country where migrant workers have chosen to get a job) Divided.

■ **Types of support**

Concerning the types of support provided by international law and the collection of transnational documents migrating from the worker, the following can be mentioned:

A. Human rights protection: When it comes to human rights protection, it is the sum of the rights and freedoms that all human beings enjoy simply because of being human. These rights, which do not depend on any religion, geography, culture, economic and social system, etc., also include migrant workers.

B. The rights of immigrant workers in international law:

1- **United Nations Charter adopted in 1945; In Article 1** thereof; it addresses the purposes and purposes of the United Nations in four sections and in promoting and promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in paragraph 3, It has dealt with gender, language and religion for all without discrimination.

2- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948; The Universal declaration mentioned above, As the most important international human rights document, they contain the most fundamental and fundamental foundations of human rights and that other international instruments are based on the legal principles set forth in that Statute and Have been approved. The document sets out a set of fundamental human rights that includes immigrant workers.

3- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1966; Listed in Article 2, that governments are required to act in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations to promote universal and effective respect for human rights and freedoms. and in this regard, human rights must be guaranteed without any discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, opinion, etc. finally, it encourages governments to pursue these goals.

4- International Covenant on Civil Political Rights adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1966; in document also stipulated under paragraph 1 of Article 2; governments have pledged themselves to this covenant to respect and guarantee the rights recognized in the Covenant in respect of all persons residing in their territory and under the sovereignty of all persons without distinction in any respect.

5- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial discrimination adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1965; this document defines racial discrimination (Article 1), which obviously exposes the migrant worker to multiple discrimination and the provisions of this Convention can provide grounds for their protection.

6- Convention against Torture, Cruel and inhuman treatment approved by the 1984 General Assembly of the United Nations; It also refers to the inhumane inhuman treatment of every person obviously one of the persons supported by the above document is migrant workers.

7- Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted at the 1989 United Nations General Assembly; In addition to the emphasis on the prohibition of child trafficking, pornography and prostitution of, it also deals with illegal child laborers. In fact, this document can greatly help the immigrant worker through the illegality of child laborer (illegal immigrant).

8- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women adopted by the 1979 General



Assembly of the United Nations; the main task of this Convention is to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. It is clear that about half of all migrant workers are women, and this can be an effective step by eliminating or reducing discrimination against them.

Tip: "It should be noted that there is no explicit and collective rule among the above-mentioned sources regarding immigrant labor. However, some of the rules and regulations applicable to immigrant labor rights can also be found in the generality of these rules. The following is a reference to documents that explicitly set out certain rules regarding migrant workers."

■ **Other International Documents: Protocols and Recommendations:**

- Protocol No. 97 of 1949 to the International Labor Organization on Migration for Employment; Approved to facilitate the movement of surplus labor from the European continent to other parts of the world. The Convention also defines migrant workers, Seeks employment in Article 11 (1) and its provisions specifically deal with legal immigrant workers. Meanwhile, Iran has signed it but has not yet ratified it.

- Protocol No.143 as additional Rules for Migrant Workers Adopted by the General Conference of the International Labor Organization in June 1975; (This document protects legal immigrant workers, but in Articles 1-9 it also protects at least the rights of illegal immigrant workers to receive prior employment benefits.)

- Recommendation No. 86 of the International Labor Organization in June 1949; as a supplement to Protocol No. 97 cited above that the practical solution to the employment of a migrant worker expresses the subject of Convention No. 97.

- Recommendation No. 100, Which also supports immigrant labor in underdeveloped countries, approved by the International Labor Organization in 1955.

- can also refer to Recommendation No. 151 on the interests of workers in foreign countries. This Recommendation was actually adopted by the International Labor Organization in 1975 for the implementation of the 143 above mentioned Convention.

■ **Responsibilities of Origin and Destination Governments**

A) The responsibility of the originating countries towards migrant workers; Which include the following:

- Ensuring the right of adequate progress for the migrant worker,
- providing information to the migrant worker during the immigration process,
- monitoring regulations employment agencies and business providers,
- Workplace Safety,
- providing consular services to migrant workers,

- Harmonization of national laws the main astadndarhay the ILO,

- Adopt appropriate and systematic regulations for the possibility of returning migrants to the country of origin.

B) Obligations of destination governments:

B. Obligations of destination governments:

- Ensure access to adequate employment and wages;
- The establishment of international standard employment contracts for migrant workers;
- Creating labor organizations for group talks with migrant workers; the aim is to guarantee the fundamental rights of the worker,
- The right to have a passport, work and personal documents,
- Prohibition Seizure of documents,
- Freedom of movement in the country of destination,
- Possibility to get a driver's license
- Accommodation facilities;
- Prohibition of deportation and to protection against unemployment,
- Management and support of family humanitarian and human rights (spouse and children) immigrant worker,
- applying various policies to eliminate discrimination against migrant workers,
- Dealing with health and safety,
- Migrant workers access to legal and penal systems and related administrative tasks,
- observing non-discriminatory law in the process of investigating crimes and their violations,
- Respect for religious and religious activities,
- The right to own movable and immovable property

Demise of U.S. hegemony hastened by Trump: Ex-CIA officer

TEHRAN (Tasnim) — A former military intelligence officer with the CIA said US President Donald Trump has "unwittingly hastened the demise" of America's hegemony.

"Trump has unwittingly hastened the demise of the US as the world hegemon. China will soon have a bigger economy and the tendency of Trump to ignore or circumvent international agreements has meant that no one respects Washington any more..." Philip Giraldi told Tasnim.

Philip Giraldi is a former counter-terrorism specialist and military intelligence officer of the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and a columnist and television commentator who is the Executive Director of the Council for the National Interest, a group that advocates for more even-handed policies by the US government in the Middle East.

Following is the full text of the interview.

■ US President Donald Trump on Friday said he does not believe North Korean leader Kim Jong Un violated any pact with him by launching another round of projectiles. "He likes testing missiles," Trump told reporters as he departed the White House for the Group of Seven economic summit in France. North Korea continues to test missiles and Trump says we already have good ties with them. What is behind this soft tone?

A: Trump is desperate for a diplomatic victory and is misrepresenting what has been happening. Kim Jong Un rightly does not trust him and is playing him in hopes that the situation becomes so complicated that it will be difficult to move forward. In reality, China is the only country that can bring about change in North Korea and it can do so by making food shipments dependent on political changes, to include a renunciation of nuclear weapons. The US is a bystander in all of this.

■ The US has decided to set up an international patrol mission to secure the Strait of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf, calling on its allies to join it. A number of countries, including Germany, France, and Japan, have turned down Washington's request. It seems that the divide between the US and its close allies is growing. What do you think?

A: Yes. The United States only has two real allies in putting more pressure on Iran and they are Israel and Saudi Arabia. No one else sees any benefit coming out of armed international patrols which could potentially lead to an incident that will start a war.

■ According to a recent article published by the Washington Post, "Long-term trends show that China is catching up to the United States on just about every conceivable capability metric. Short-term trends show the European Union is a more potent regulatory power and the United States has become more isolated on questions of, say, aviation regulation". At the same time, serious international relations scholars have argued that US hegemonic power is nearing its end. What are your thoughts on this?

A: Trump has unwittingly hastened the demise of the US as the world hegemon. China will soon have a bigger economy and the tendency of Trump to ignore or circumvent international agreements has meant that no one respects Washington anymore. That is a good development as the United States has been an ignorant giant ever since 2001 that is much more inclined to do harm than good in the world.

Constitutional crisis in UK

TEHRAN (FNA) — UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson confirmed on August 28 that Parliament will be suspended in roughly two weeks' time until October 14. During this crucial run-up to the Brexit deadline on October 31, Members of Parliament would not be able to take any action to avert a no-deal Brexit, as they would not be sitting.

This so-called "prorogation" of Parliament is very common; it acts to break up sessions of Parliament, the new session being started by the holding of a "Queen's Speech" in which the government puts forward its priorities for the new session. It is particularly common for this to happen when a new Prime Minister is installed without an election, as has happened recently in the UK.

Then why is this move of such importance? Although Johnson is explicitly denying it, it seems very clear that the point of this prorogation is to deny MPs the opportunity to attempt to block a no-deal Brexit, particularly through legislating for an extension to the Article 50 process – or, at least, to make this much more difficult.

In this sense, the move is profoundly undemocratic because it is seeking to deny a say to the democratically elected representatives of the British people, regarding a decision of profound importance to the future of the UK.

This is reinforced yet further when we consider that, while Brexit was voted for by a majority of Brits, a no-deal Brexit specifically has no democratic mandate. On the contrary, during the 2016 referendum campaign, in virtually all documented cases, those arguing for leaving

the European Union claimed this would occur with a deal.

MPs from all parties, including the governing Conservative Party, have been quick to criticise Johnson's move. The Speaker of the House of Commons, John Bercow – who holds a great deal of power over parliamentary process – also released a statement calling the prorogation a constitutional outrage. Those dramatic words illustrate the strength of feeling there.

The controversy and disagreement surrounding this decision could well be on course to precipitate a full-blown constitutional crisis. The UK's constitution is infamously "uncodified" – that is to say, it is contained in a variety of different areas of legislation, case law, precedent and convention, rather than being clearly written in a single document.

This lack of codification, and particularly the reliance on conventions and precedent, can result in major difficulties. For example, it is the Queen who had to give permission for Parliament to be prorogued on August 28. By law, the monarch has every right to deny this permission, but by convention it is expected that the Queen will agree to do what she is told by her government.

Nevertheless, in the last couple of days, leaders of opposition parties have written to the Queen to demand a meeting to discuss the decision. This puts the royal household in a difficult position because, by convention, the Queen does not engage in politics and is completely neutral. Dragging her into this mess and, at some point, forcing an actual decision from her or her representatives on a point

of dispute would be deeply problematic for the UK's constitution.

Further constitutional crises may also come within Parliament itself. Speaker Bercow might, for example, follow through with his criticism of the prorogation and refuse to act on the Queen's (in reality, her government's) wishes. This would also cause massive ruptures to the UK's constitutional system without an obvious solution.

Legal action is also underway in an attempt to block Johnson's decision. While the actions of the Queen herself are not challengeable in court, the advice provided to her by her ministers, including the Prime Minister, is. Opponents will, therefore, likely seek a judicial review of this advice.

In taking this action, Johnson is likely seeking to force the hands of MPs who hope to avert a no-deal Brexit. If he limits the time available, they are less likely to pursue the legislative approach to blocking a no-deal, and more likely to attempt to dislodge his government with a confidence vote. That, however, carries the major risk of triggering a general election which would end any hopes to stop no-deal.

The UK is entering one of the greatest political messes in its history. This is a major gamble by Boris Johnson – one which might end his premiership even faster than pessimists predicted, and one which might trigger huge damage to the UK's constitution in the process. When the UK eventually will emerge from this mess is anyone's guess – but it may be a very different country by that stage in more ways than one.

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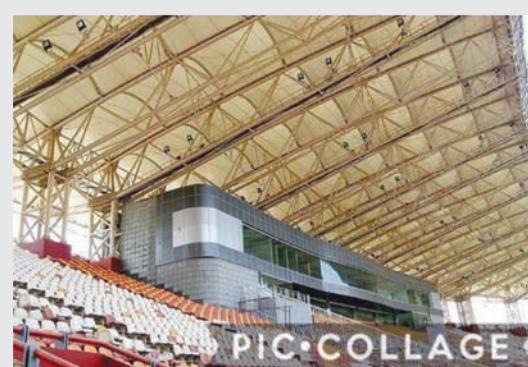
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Engineers attach Mars Helicopter to Mars 2020 rover

NASA engineers have installed the miniature helicopter on the space agency's Mars 2020 rover. The Mars Helicopter, nicknamed Scout, will be the first aircraft to fly on another planet.

Earlier this year, NASA Administrator Bridenstine detailed the agency's plans for exploring Mars through the air.

"For the first time, we are going to fly a helicopter on another world with the Mars Helicopter," Bridenstine said in March.

This week, engineers took another step in realizing that promise, integrating the twin-rotor helicopter and its Mars Helicopter Delivery System into the belly of the rover. Engineers also installed protective elements to shield the solar-powered helicopter from dust and debris that will be kicked up as the rocket boosters fire to slow the rover's descent.

The helicopter is primarily a proof-of-concept experiment. If it fails to take to the air, the scientific goals of the Mars 2020 mission will not be inhibited. If it succeeds, scientists and engineers will be able to integrate second-generation copters into future scientific missions.

"Our job is to prove that autonomous, controlled flight can be executed in the extremely thin Martian atmosphere," MiMi Aung, engineer at NASA's Jet Propulsion



Laboratory and the Mars Helicopter project manager, said in a news release. "Since our helicopter is designed as a flight test of experimental technology, it carries no science instruments. But if we prove powered flight on Mars can work, we look forward to the day when Mars helicopters can play an important role in future explorations of

the Red Planet."

Even without scientific instruments, the helicopter could still aid the forthcoming Mars mission. If it survives the landing and is successfully deployed, the copter could provide reconnaissance services.

"The helicopter would fly ahead of the rover almost every day, checking out various

possible points of interest and helping engineers back on Earth plan the best driving route," NASA announced earlier this year.

NASA plans to land the Mars 2020 rover in Jezero Crater. Like its technological predecessor, the Curiosity rover, which has been exploring Gale Crater since 2012, Mars 2020 will be capable of traveling across rough terrain. But even the hardest ground-base vehicles can't get up close and personal with some of the Red Planet's extreme features. In the future, helicopters could be used to explore Mars' cliffs, caves and ravines.

Mars 2020 and its Mars Helicopter are scheduled to be carried into space by a United Launch Alliance Atlas V rocket next July. The mid-2020 launch will put the two spacecraft on the Red Planet's surface by February 2021.

"With this joining of two great spacecraft, I can say definitively that all the pieces are in place for a historic mission of exploration," said Thomas Zurbuchen, associate administrator of the Science Mission Directorate at NASA's headquarters in Washington, D.C. "Together, Mars 2020 and the Mars Helicopter will help define the future of science and exploration of the Red Planet for decades to come."

(Source: UPI)

Scientists reveal the face of our oldest direct ancestor who roamed Ethiopia millions of years ago

The face of our oldest direct ancestor has been revealed for the first time, with scientists calling the 3.8-million-year-old ape-like hominin an "icon of human evolution".

The adult male – known as MRD – was from a species known as Australopithecus anamensis who roamed Ethiopia's highlands millions of years ago. He is an ancestor of "Lucy", one of the world's most famous fossils who lived in the same area 3.2 million years ago.

The two early human species co-existed for 100,000 years, which rewrites previous research suggesting the older species gave way to the younger one. The earlier group – which MRD comes from – is the oldest known species that is unambiguously part of the human evolutionary tree.

"This is a game-changer in our understanding of human evolution during the Pliocene," said lead researcher Yohannes Haile-Selassie from Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

The species was previously only known through teeth and jaw fragments, which all dated to between 2.4 and 3.9 million years ago, discovered in Kenya and Ethiopia. However, until now what these ancient humans looked like was a mystery.

The breakthrough came in 2016 when the upper jaw of the specimen was found by a local worker in the Afar region in Ethiopia, 55km away from the Lucy fossil. Later the rest of the skull was found.

"I couldn't believe my eyes when I spotted the rest of

the cranium. It was a eureka moment and a dream come true," said Dr. Haile-Selassie.

With this first skull, scientists can now identify never-before-seen facial features. Some characteristics were shared with Lucy but others were significantly different, resembling more primitive groups such as Ardipithecus and Sahelanthropus.

"MRD has a mix of primitive and derived facial and cranial features that I didn't expect to see on a single individual," said Dr. Haile-Selassie.

"An anamensis was already a species that we knew quite a bit about, but this is the first cranium of the species ever discovered. It is good to finally be able to put a face to the name."

The skull was discovered in the Woranso-Mille area of Ethiopia where many hominin bones have been unearthed. Two-hundred and thirty hominin specimens have been found here, most are between 3.8 and 3 million years old.

"Until now, we had a big gap between the earliest-known human ancestors, which are about six million years old, and species like 'Lucy', which are two to three million years old," said Stephanie Melillo from the Max Planck Institute. "One of the most exciting aspects of this discovery is how it bridges the morphological space between these two groups."

The remains were dated using minerals in layers of volcanic rock nearby.

Scientists concluded that MRD would have lived near a delta where a river entered a lake. It would have been an actively rifted landscape with steep hillsides and volcanic eruptions, blanketed in ash and lava. The river probably flowed from the highlands in the Ethiopian plateau.

"MRD lived near a large lake in a region that was dry," said Naomi Levin, a co-author on the study from the University of Michigan. "We're eager to conduct more work in these deposits to understand the environment of the MRD specimen, the relationship to climate change and how it affected human evolution, if at all."

Both ancient male species would have grown to around 5ft and weighed around 100lbs. The females were around 3ft5 and weighed 62lbs.

Scientists now want to find out how these species interacted and if they competed for food or space.

Professor Fred Spoor, from London's Natural History Museum and who was not part of the study, said the skull is "a great addition to the fossil record".

"This cranium looks set to become another celebrated icon of human evolution," he said.

Researchers have published two papers on their findings – the first on the structure of the cranium and the second on the age and context in which MRD lived. Both papers are published in the journal Nature.

(Source: The Independent)

As Dorian looms, Florida's Space Coast braces for possible unprecedented impact



As Hurricane Dorian advances on a course likely to slam the Florida peninsula within days, U.S. space agencies and aerospace companies are sheltering millions of dollars in hardware and assets along the Space Coast.

Dorian, expected to strengthen in the Atlantic to a Category 4 storm with winds topping 130 miles per hour (209 kilometers per hour), could churn across dozens of launchpads owned by NASA, the U.S. Air Force and companies such as Elon Musk's SpaceX and Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin starting around Monday.

Governor Ron DeSantis has declared a state of emergency for the whole of Florida. here The Miami-based National Hurricane Center describes Category 4 storms as capable of causing «catastrophic damage» including severe damage to well-built homes.

NASA's Kennedy Space Center said on Thursday it will move its 400 foot (122 meters) tall, \$650 million mobile launcher structure used to assemble the agency's rocket for future moon missions from a launchpad and into the Vehicle Assembly Building, a 526 foot (160 meters) tall complex built to withstand winds of up to 125 miles per hour (201 kph). "Is it bulletproof to a category 4? We don't know because it hasn't been hit with anything that hard," Derrol Nail, a spokesman for the NASA center, said of the building, which is made of over 8,000

tons of steel. "We've seen it perform in storms between 100 and 110 miles per hour with minimal damage."

"This thing is an incredibly strong steel cage."

The Cape Canaveral space center said it would close on Sunday with a skeleton team of roughly 100 staff staying behind in the launch control room to monitor the storm and the site's aerospace assets.

"Everybody's got their procedures so that you know what to do and how to respond and adapt," Dale Ketcham, vice president of government relations at Space Florida, the state's space-based economic development body, told Reuters. "Because with your people and your capital investment, it's foolish to be cavalier regarding the preparation of a hurricane."

A spokeswoman for Boeing-Lockheed joint venture United Launch Alliance, whose rockets are used to launch national security satellites, said staff began securing rocket hardware this week and its facilities can face over 130 mile per hour winds.

A spokesman for SpaceX, which owns two launchpads on the coast, said it is taking steps to protect employees and facilities.

The U.S. Air Force base in Cape Canaveral, Florida said it has cut off power for non-essential facilities and urged base residents to prepare for possible hurricane-force winds.

(Source: Reuters)

Scientists produce world's first gene-edited reptiles



For the first time, researchers have used the gene-editing technology CRISPR-Cas9 to produce mutant reptiles, four tiny albino lizards.

Scientists have previously manipulated the genes of mammals, birds, fish and amphibians, but never reptiles. The team of University of Georgia researchers described their breakthrough in a paper published this week in the Journal Cell Reports.

"Reptiles are very understudied in terms of their reproductive biology and embryonic development," Douglas Menke, study co-author and an associate professor in the department of genetics at Georgia, said in a news release. "There are no good methods to manipulate embryos like we can easily do with mammals, fish or amphibians. To our knowledge, no other lab in the world has produced a genetically altered reptile."

To produce mutant offspring, scientists inject a gene-editing solution into a newly fertilized egg or single-cell embryo. The early intervention allows the gene-edit to be reproduced in all subsequent cells as the stem cells divide, multiply and differentiate.

Because female reptiles can store sperm in their oviducts for long periods of time, predicting when they will fertilize their eggs is difficult. The unpredictability of reptile egg fertilization made it difficult to properly deploy CRISPR-Cas9.

Menke and his colleagues were able to sidestep the hurdle by micro-injecting CRISPR proteins into multiple immature

eggs inside the lizard's ovaries. Scientists injected a solution targeting the tyrosinase gene into 146 oocytes inside 21 female brown anoles, a common lizard species in the Caribbean.

Researchers waited for the eggs to be fertilized, laid and hatched to see if the effort was a success. Four weeks later, out came four lizards with albinism.

"When I saw our first albino hatchling, it was truly awe inspiring," said Ashley Rasys, a doctoral student and the study's first author. "I'm most excited about the possibility of expanding this approach into many other reptilian model systems, effectively opening the doorway for future functional studies."

One of the reasons scientists chose to study albinism in brown anoles is that the condition is linked with vision problems in humans. The tyrosinase gene is known to control some aspects of eye development in humans and lizards, but not in more common animal models like mice. In followup studies, scientists plan to study the effects of tyrosinase gene manipulation on the development of the retina.

"This work could have far-reaching impact not only for the study of reptile genetics but also for the advancement of genomic medicine and application in humans," said David Lee, vice president for research at Georgia. "I applaud Dr. Menke and his colleagues on this very significant achievement."

(Source: UPI)

Millions of high-speed black holes could be zooming around the Milky Way

How are black holes born? Astrophysicists have theories, but we don't actually know for certain. It could be massive stars quietly imploding with a floopf, or perhaps black holes are born in the explosions of colossal supernovas. New observations now indicate it might indeed be the latter.

In fact, the research suggests that those explosions are so powerful, they can kick the black holes across the galaxy at speeds greater than 70 kilometers per second (43 miles per second).

"This work basically talks about the first observational evidence that you can actually see black holes moving with high velocities in the galaxy and associate it to the kick the black hole system received at birth," astronomer Pikky Atri of Curtin University and the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research (ICRAR) told ScienceAlert.

And it means there are potentially millions stellar-mass black holes zooming around the galaxy at high speed. The paper, currently available in pre-print, has been accepted into the Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society.

The study was based on 16 black holes in binary systems. Unless they're actively feeding, we can't actually find black holes, since no detectable electromagnetic radiation can escape their insane gravity. But if they're in a binary pair and actively feeding on the other star, the matter swirling around the black hole gives off powerful X-rays and radio waves.

Once we can see these black hole beacons, we can see how the black hole is behaving. The international team of researchers used this behavior to try and reconstruct the black hole's history.

"We tracked how these systems were moving in our galaxy - so, figured out their velocities today, moved back in time, and tried to understand what the velocity was of the system when it was born, individually for each of these 16 systems," Atri explained.

"Based on the velocities, you can actually find out if they were born with a supernova explosion, or if the stars just directly collapsed onto themselves without a supernova explosion."

We know that neutron stars can be violently punted out across space at high speeds by their own supernova explosions - this is called a Blaauw kick, or natal kick, and it happens when the supernova explosion is lopsided, resulting in a recoil.

It was unknown if black holes could be kicked in the same way. Hypothetically, they might - and indeed seven black hole x-ray binaries have been previously associated with natal kicks.

The new research has analyzed these, as well as nine others, in greater detail, combining measured proper motions, systemic radial velocities, and distances to these systems for the most detailed analysis yet.

The motion of one of these black holes as calculated by the team can be seen in the video below.

The researchers found that 12 of these 16 black hole X-ray binaries did indeed have high velocities and trajectories that indicated a natal kick. That's 75 percent of the sample. If this scales up to the estimated 10 million black holes in the Milky Way, that might mean around 7.5 million high-speed black holes careening out there. And 10 million is a low estimate.

In line with previous theories, these speeding black holes are slower than kicked neutron stars by a factor of about three or four, due to their higher mass. Interestingly, there seemed to be no correlation between black hole mass and velocity, which means we don't yet know if there's a correlation between progenitor star mass and the likelihood of a supernova.

This is a relatively small sample size of black holes, of course. But, according to Atri, it's a step towards building up a larger sample that can help us to understand how stars evolve and die, and give rise to black holes.

"Eventually, all of this will feed into how many black holes we expect in our galaxy, how many black holes that will actually merge to give those gravitational wave detections that LIGO finds," she added.

To continue to build on the research, the team will keep watching the sky. These binary systems aren't always bright - they come and go, transient. So the researchers are hoping to find more of these binary systems to continue building a census of Milky Way black holes, whether speeding or not.

(Source: sciencealert.com)

Astronomers spot evidence of volcanically active exomoon

Scientists may have found a volcanically active moon outside our solar system.

Hints of the moon's presence were discovered hiding in the WASP-49 solar system. Astronomers likened the moon to Io, the most volcanically active body in our solar system.

They also likened the moon to a satellite from Star Wars, the planet Mustafar, where Darth Vader's castle is located.

"It would be a dangerous volcanic world with a molten surface of lava, a lunar version of close-in Super Earths like 55 Cancri-e, a place where Jedis go to die, perilously familiar to Anakin Skywalker," Apurva Oza, postdoctoral fellow at the Physics Institute of the University of Bern in Switzerland, said in a news release.

Though researchers aren't conjuring the so-called exo-Io from thin air, it's possible the moon, like Mustafar, is science fiction. Or, it could be real, like 55 Cancri-e, also known as Planet Janssen, which orbits the star Copernicus about 41 light years from Earth.

Astronomers haven't directly observed it, only detected a spike in sodium gas surrounding the exoplanet WASP 49-b at an unusually high elevation.

"The neutral sodium gas is so far away from the planet that it is unlikely to be emitted solely by a planetary wind," Oza said.

Scientists analyzed Jupiter and Io and conducted a series of mass loss calculations to predict where a sodium-emitting moon would be positioned around a faraway planet such as WASP 49-b. The research will soon be published in The Astrophysical Journal.

"The sodium is right where it should be," said Oza.

Researchers at the University of Virginia previously determined that a trio of a star, close-in giant planet and moon could remain stable for billions of years. Oza participated in the early research while a doctoral student at Virginia.

In such a system, strong tidal forces -- the back-and-forth gravitational tug-of-war -- would help stabilize the moon's orbit, as well as heat its inside, triggering volcanic activity. A rocky, volcanic moon, scientists determined, would be more likely to produce sodium and potassium than a giant gas planet.

"Sodium and potassium lines are quantum treasures to us astronomers because they are extremely bright," said Oza. "The vintage street lamps that light up our streets with yellow haze, is akin to the gas we are now detecting in the spectra of a dozen exoplanets."

(Source: UPI)

New Zealand measles outbreak prompts travel warning

WELLINGTON (Reuters) — New Zealand is asking travelers to make sure they are immunized for measles before traveling to its biggest city, Auckland, as the country faces its worst outbreak in over 22 years.

“If you’re thinking of traveling into or out of Auckland, you should make sure you’re vaccinated at least two-weeks before you go,” Associate Minister for Health Julie Anne Genter said in a statement this week.



“This includes children from 12 months old,” she added.

Measles cases are rising globally, including in wealthy nations such as the United States and Germany, where some parents shun the vaccines mostly for philosophical or religious reasons, or concerns, debunked by medical science, that the vaccines against measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) could cause autism.

In the U.S. more than 1,200 cases have been recorded across 30 states in the worst outbreak since 1992, while other countries like the UK and Germany also recorded higher number of cases this year.

In New Zealand, 849 cases of measles have been reported so far this year, making it New Zealand’s worst measles epidemic since 1997.

Of these, 731 cases are in Auckland, and almost a third of those came in the last two weeks as the outbreak accelerated, state broadcaster Radio New Zealand reported. The spread of the disease outside Auckland has been limited.

Earlier this week about 300 Manurewa High School students were sent home after 13 students contracted measles. The school has told anyone not immunized to stay home until Monday.

“New Zealand’s measles outbreaks are reflective of what’s happening internationally. There are significant outbreaks occurring worldwide and cases from these countries are coming into Aotearoa,” said Genter, using the official Maori name for New Zealand.

A teenage girl from New Zealand sick with measles visited Disneyland and other popular tourist stops across Southern California earlier this month, possibly infecting others, local government health officials there warned.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern urged anyone who had not been immunized against measles to get vaccinated.

“I’m worried about those who choose not to be vaccinated, it is the most important thing that we can do to prevent the spread of an outbreak like this so again we just encourage everyone to make sure that they are vaccinated,” Ardern was quoted saying by Radio New Zealand.



ROUND THE GLOBE

Centennial Hall in Wroctaw

The Centennial Hall in Poland’s Wroctaw, Poland, a milestone in the history of reinforced concrete architecture, was designed by the architect Max Berg and built in 1911-1913.

The hall has a symmetrical quatrefoil ground plan with a huge circular central space covered by a ribbed dome topped with a lantern. It can accommodate up to 10,000 people.



The Centennial Hall is an outstanding example of early Modernism and the innovative use of reinforced concrete structures in the building industry. At the time of its construction, it was the largest ever reinforced concrete dome in the world.

It played a significant role in the creation of a new technological solution of high aesthetic value, which became an important point of reference in the design of public spaces and in the further evolution of this technology.

Drawing on historical forms, the building was a pioneering design responding to emerging social needs, including an assembly hall, an auditorium for theatre performances, an exhibition space and a sports venue. The building is a significant watershed in the history of Modern architecture.

The Exhibition Grounds, whose main feature the Centennial Hall, stands at the intersection of its principal axes, constitutes an integral spatial whole. The design of the Exhibition Grounds combined new elements with the southern part of the 19th-century Szcztytnicki Park, which was used as the setting for thematic garden exhibitions, such as the Japanese Garden, as well as for the temporary Exhibition of Cemetery Art, an extant reminder of which is an 18th-century wooden church relocated from Upper Silesia in 1912.

Authenticity

The Centennial Hall and Exhibition Grounds within the boundaries of the inscription have retained their unique cohesive spatial layout and permanent compositional features. The Centennial Hall is a fully authentic building in terms of architectural form, specific construction technology and materials. The building is in good condition following the completion of renovation work addressing its conservation as well as functional and technical modernization.

The structural condition of other features within the exhibition complex is varied, as is the state of preservation of their historic fabric. The property is used in accordance with its original intended functions.

(Source: UNESCO)

Meet the man whose brain makes him experiencing new forms of arts

By Afshin Majlesi

TEHRAN — Shahram Amiri is a versatile Iranian craftsman who has always wished to experience new forms of arts from his childhood to the moment in his early sixties.

In an interview with the Tehran Times, Amiri said, “I have always wished to experience new forms of arts in order to make fusions, innovations, and collages by the means of using various materials simultaneously. I have always intended to make novel things, not copies, in a way that they could reflect my feelings. Just being beautiful was not enough for me.”

He noted that in addition to marquetry, which he is most interested in, he is a practiced wood-turner, woodcarver, sculptor, designer and painter.

“I am able to weave rugs and Kilim carpets. I know various Persian-carpet schools and can differentiate one from another. But I have lived with the wood. I have been accustomed to smell aroma of the wood, which has always spurred my sense of inspiration.”

His professional expertise has been internationally applauded in several countries including the Philippines and Belarus. Amiri’s selects of works have also been showcased in dozens of national and international exhibits.

“Born in 1347 (1968) in Tehran, I started my professional career some 35 years ago... At the age of eight or nine I realized that I am interested in creating things out of mud or pieces of wood when I attended workshops at the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults in Tehran.”

“With the start of the Iran-Iraq War [in 1980], I came across some painters who were creating portraits or murals of martyrs or war veterans. At that time, I started developing my painting talent. Then I started to create sculptures. I remember that I made head of an eagle from wood, at the age of 12, by the means of modest tools.”

Talking about creation of his earliest yet finest woodcarving piece, the artist said, “At the age of twenty, after I completed my military service, I launched a



small workshop in our house. That was the time I started to create my best-ever work, an intricate wood-carved panel which was clearly inspired by a work from Mahmud Farshchian, who is master of Persian miniature. The panel named “Human Being” took me some three years to be completed. It won several prizes at several domestic exhibitions.”

Amiri believes that each handicraft skill can be paid attention from two points of view; creating an artistic masterpiece and making typical/routine products.

“So, in the marquetry realm, there are both ordinary and copied works as well as original or artistic ones,” he said.

Amiri said that “Ocean”, “Autumn”,

“Blades and Feathers” and “Prayer” are amongst his early fusion works that he considers them as “original”, however, they have been copied by others during the time.”

“Nowadays, I see young artists in the field of marquetry and woodcarving, whose skills are unique and exceptional. However, the Internet and social media are a considerable help for present-day artisans that didn’t exist when I started.”

In response to a question about specification of good marquetry, he answered: “That’s somehow a tough question because various experts have various ideas in this regard. “In my opinion, a good work of marquetry should firstly depict

a pleasant plot that should be both impressive and original.”

“Secondly, a good marquetry should represent skills in cutting woods into fragments, choosing proper natural colors, considering the wave of wood, as well as appropriate use of the light and shadow.”

Referring to the word “original”, Amiri explained, “In addition to paintings and drawings that are widely considered as sources for creating a marquetry, you can also use photographs. This way, you can get original shoots to have original pieces of marquetry.”

He added that “Marquetry is in fact a painting by the usage of wood not oil-paint brushes and canvas.”



A peek into 28th Iran Handmade Carpet Exhibition

HERITAGE TEHRAN — Photos show visitors and exhibitors bargaining over handwoven goods at the 28th Iran Handmade Carpet Exhibition.

Some 850 manufacturing companies and export businesses are participating in the event, which is running from August 25 to 31 at the Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds.

The event is considered as the world’s largest handmade carpet exhibition with regard to production standards both in terms of quantity and quality.

Organized by the Ministry of Industry, Mining, and Trade, the expo is customarily visited by trade and commercial delegations from various countries in order to make businesses.

Persian carpets are sought after internationally for their delicate designs and good quality. Various-sized carpets, rugs, and tableau rugs, whether newly-woven or rare ones, are brought together from every corner of Iran at the exhibit.

The fairground is concurrently playing host to the 32nd National Crafts Exhibition in a bid to draw more visitors. The crafts exhibit ends on August 31 as well. It features arrays of personal ornamentation, woodwork, illuminated manuscript, miniature, textile printing, enamel, leatherwork, handwoven textile, calligraphy, traditional musical instrument, metalwork, and marquetry to name a few.



Relaunched Uganda Airlines hopes to win slice of East African travel

Uganda on Tuesday relaunched its national carrier, Uganda Airlines, hoping to take a slice of the East African aviation business that is dominated by Ethiopian Airlines ETHA.UL

The country is banking on its emerging oil industry and the traditional tourism sector to generate international traffic to sustain the airline.

Though air traffic in Africa is forecast to grow 6% a year, twice as quickly as mature markets, over the next two decades, most state-owned flag carriers on the continent are losing money. The notable exception is Ethiopian Airlines, which analysts say has avoided the mistakes of other regional carriers and not fallen prey to political interference.

“We undertake to be a world class airline that will exceed customer expectations through high quality service,” Ugandan Airlines CEO Ephraim Bagenda said at a ceremony at Entebbe, the country’s sole international airport, south of the capital Kampala.

The airline will initially fly to seven regional destinations in Kenya, Tanzania, Somalia, South Sudan, and Burundi, the CEO said ahead of the inaugural flight to Kenya’s capital Nairobi.

In November, the airline would launch flights to destinations in south and central



Africa, he said.

But Uganda Airlines will face stiff competition not only from Ethiopian Airlines, but also from Rwanda and Tanzania which have also poured cash into their flag carriers in the past few years, though with far less success than Ethiopia. Another rival regional carrier Kenya Airways (KQNA.NR) has also faced challenges in its efforts to expand. It became loss-making in 2014 after buying a number of aircraft which coincided with a

slump in tourist and business travel to Kenya blamed on a spate of attacks by Somalia-based Islamist militants.

The airline has not recovered and was renationalized in July in what analysts said was a last-ditch effort to save it.

Uganda Airlines, founded by the country’s former dictator Idi Amin in 1976, was liquidated in 2001 during a push to privatize state firms.

Its revival will “reduce the cost of air

transport and ease connectivity to and from Uganda,” Prime Minister Ruhakana Rugunda said at the ceremony.

Ugandans spend about \$450 million annually on foreign travel and the state-owned airline would help keep some of this cash within the national economy, Rugunda said.

Citizens would also benefit from direct flights from their capital over expensive, indirect routes on rival airlines, the prime minister said.

The airline received its first two CRJ900 planes from Canadian aircraft manufacturer Bombardier (BBD.TO) in April. Two more of those planes are expected next month, according to the airline.

It expects to receive an Airbus (AIR.PA) A330 Neo in late 2020, then a second in early 2021, the CEO told Reuters in July, adding that the two wide-body planes will enable the airline to expand to destinations in the Gulf and China.

Each Bombardier cost around \$27 million while the carrier will pay about \$110 million for each of the Airbus aircrafts.

The airline is wholly publicly funded and forecasts that it will be self-financing after two years, the CEO told Reuters in July.

(Source: Reuters)

Bladder disorders campaign to be initiated at elementary schools

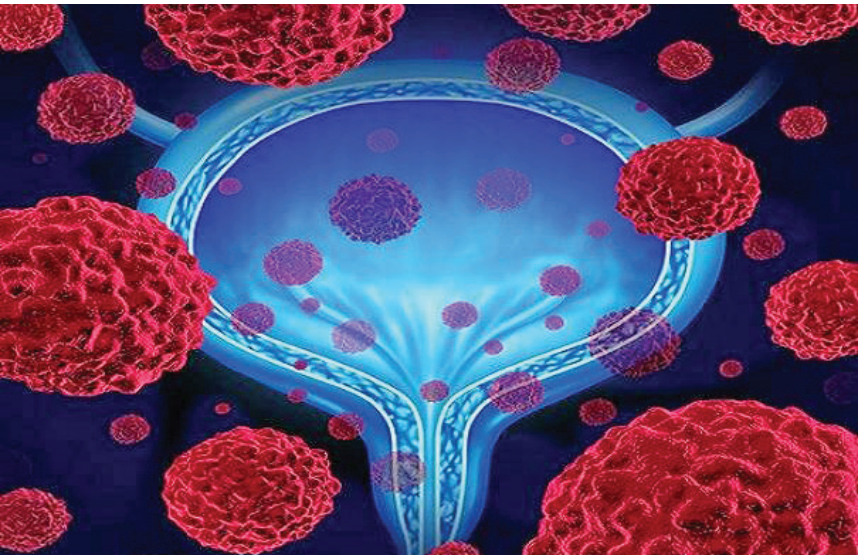
HEALTH **TEHRAN** – With the beginning of the new school year on September 23, a campaign on bladder disorders will be initiated at elementary schools nationwide.

The head of the neurourology association of Iran, Mehri Mehrad, said that the campaign will be initiated jointly by the association and the education ministry, Mehr reported on Monday.

Educational brochures will be distributed and sessions will be held in order to diagnose neurogenic bladder disorder and to inform parents, she said.

Some children suffer from neurogenic bladder disorder congenitally and if it is not diagnosed before the age of four, they should be treated using dialysis, she added.

■ What is neurogenic bladder?
According to urologyhealth.org, neurogenic bladder is the name given to a number of urinary conditions in people



who lack bladder control due to a brain, spinal cord or nerve problem. This nerve damage can be the result of diseases such as multiple sclerosis (MS), Parkinson's disease or diabetes.

Nerves in the body control how the bladder stores or empties urine, and problems with these nerves cause overactive bladder (OAB), incontinence, and underactive bladder (UAB) or obstructive bladder, in which the flow of urine is blocked.

In people with neurogenic bladder, the nerves and muscles don't work together very well.

As a result, the bladder may not fill or empty correctly.

Bladder muscles may be overactive and squeeze more often than normal and before the bladder is full with urine. Sometimes the muscles are too loose and let urine pass before you're ready to go to the bathroom (incontinence).

Blocking key protein could treat chronic pain

New research in mice suggests that targeting a particular protein in the spinal cord could form the basis of a new pain relief medication that could relieve chronic pain for thousands of people.

Approximately 20% of adults in the U.S. are currently living with chronic pain.

About one-fifth of adults in the United States are living with chronic pain, which is a pain that lasts for longer than 3 months. However, one specific type of chronic pain is of particular concern — neuropathic pain.

Neuropathic pain results from nerve injury and around 10% of the U.S. population may be living with it. Due to rising life expectancy and contributory lifestyle factors, estimates suggest that this figure will increase.

Neuropathic pain has a range of causes, including physical injury to the nerves that send information between the spinal cord and brain, viral infections, conditions such as diabetes and multiple sclerosis, medication side effects, and excessive alcohol consumption.

The cause does not alter the fact that doctors find this type of pain challenging to treat. It can also significantly impact a person's life, with symptoms ranging from burning and tingling to stabbing and stinging.

Traditional pain relief medications are often ineffective against neuropathic pain. As assistant professor Mette Richner from Aarhus University, Denmark, puts it, people with neuropathic pain can try a shopping basket of medications "without ever really getting any good results."

But Richner and a team from the university have identified a protein that could be an effective target for pain relieving

drugs. A decade's worth of research spurred the new study, published in the journal Science Advances.

■ How pain develops
Previous studies revealed that mice unable to produce sortilin, which is a protein that occurs on the surface of nerve cells, seemed to feel no pain after suffering nerve damage.

The researchers saw the same effect in regular mice with nerve damage, but only when they blocked sortilin's path.

The team wanted to find out why. They already knew that chronic pain occurred as a result of malfunctioning nerve cells. So they used molecular techniques, including tissue and protein analyses, to discover the link between sortilin and pain.

"And it's here, at the molecular level, that we've now added a crucial piece to a larger puzzle," explains Richner. That piece, in summary, is the role of sortilin in the pain development process.

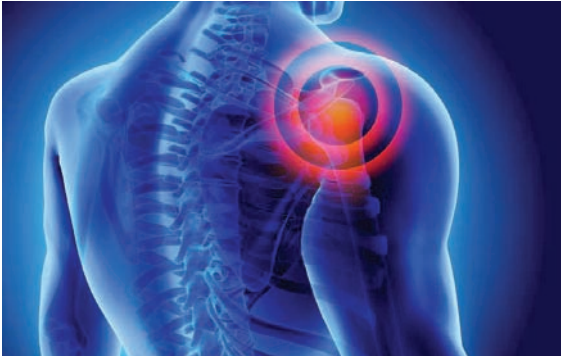
"Once nerve damage has occurred, and the nerve cells go into overdrive, molecules are released, which start a domino effect that ultimately triggers pain," she continues.

"The domino effect can be inhibited by a particular molecule in the spinal cord called neurotensin, and our studies show that the neurotensin is 'captured' by sortilin so that the brake is itself inhibited."

■ From mice to humans

A drug that could stop sortilin in its tracks could go some way to diminishing or stopping neuropathic pain altogether in the human body.

The team note two limitations to the research. One is that any further research into blocking sortilin will require



the help of the pharmaceutical industry. Secondly, the research took place in mice, and the researchers cannot yet say whether they can apply the findings to humans.

However, associate professor Christian B. Vaegter is confident that blocking sortilin could have the same effect on humans.

"Our research is carried out in mice, but as some of the fundamental mechanisms are quite similar in humans and mice, it still gives an indication of what is happening in people [living with] chronic pain."

Finding a treatment, however, depends on finding a way to halt sortilin in the spinal cord locally, and that will require a lot more research. For now, remedying neuropathic pain remains a challenge.

(source: medicalnewstoday.com)

Designing a blood test that can predict lifespan

The ability to predict how long someone is likely to live would help doctors tailor treatment plans.

A new study looking at biomarkers in the blood concludes that more accurately estimating mortality might soon be possible.

Researchers analyze blood in the search for markers of mortality risk.

As it stands, doctors can predict mortality within the final year of life with some degree of accuracy.

However, predicting it over longer periods — such as 5–10 years — is not yet possible.

A group of scientists who recently published a paper in the journal Nature Communications hope that they are now on the path toward developing a reliable predictive tool.

They believe that a blood test might one day be able to predict whether someone is likely to live 5 or 10 more years. The authors explain that this would help doctors make important treatment decisions.

For instance, they would be able to ascertain if an older adult is healthy enough to have surgery, or help identify those in most need of medical intervention.

A test like this might also benefit clinical trials: Scientists could monitor how an intervention impacts mortality risk without having to run trials until enough people die.

■ Predicting longevity
Currently, blood pressure and cholesterol

levels can give doctors an impression of a person's likely lifespan. However, in older adults, these measures become less useful.

Counterintuitively, for people aged 85 or over, higher blood pressure and higher cholesterol levels are linked with lower mortality risk.

Scientists from Brunel University London in the United Kingdom and Leiden University Medical Center in the Netherlands set out to identify any biomarkers in the blood that might help tackle this issue.

A recent study has concluded that personality traits in adolescence might predict longevity.

Their study is the largest of its kind, taking data from 44,168 people ages 18–109. During the study's follow-up period, 5,512 of these people died.

The team initially identified metabolic markers associated with mortality. From this information, they created a scoring system to predict when a person might die.

Next, the researchers compared the reliability of the scoring system with that of a model based on standard risk factors. To do this, they studied data from a further 7,603 individuals, 1,213 of whom died during follow-up.

■ Mortality metabolites

After whittling down a long list of metabolites, the researchers settled on 14 biomarkers independently associated with mortality.



Having higher concentrations of some of the 14 biomarkers — including histidine, leucine, and valine — is associated with decreased mortality.

Conversely, having lower concentrations of others — such as glucose, lactate, and phenylalanine — is associated with increased mortality.

The scientists demonstrated that the combination of biomarkers could predict mortality equally well in both males and females. They also tested their findings across several age groups, concluding that "[a]ll 14 biomarkers [...] showed consistent associations with mortality across all strata."

The biomarkers they identified are involved in a wide range of processes in the body, including fluid balance and inflammation. Also, scientists have already linked most of them to mortality risk in previous studies.

However, this was the first time that re-

searchers have demonstrated their predictive power when combined into one model.

This study is just the next step along a path that might lead to a usable blood test. However, the study authors feel encouraged: "A score based on these 14 biomarkers and sex leads to improved risk prediction as compared [with] a score based on conventional risk factors."

■ A long path ahead

The authors do note certain limitations of their study. For example, they were only able to analyze hundreds of the thousands of metabolites present in human serum.

Including more metabolites in future analyses would, the authors predict, "result in [the] identification of many more mortality associated biomarkers and, hence, improved risk prediction."

"There's a hope that in the near future we can understand the biomarkers that can be modified, perhaps by helping people improve their lifestyle or through medication, to lower the risk of death before a significant deterioration of health."

Although this exact test would not be suitable for use by the general public, it could eventually evolve and move into the public sphere in the same way that genetic testing has.

Perhaps, in the future, the question might not be, "How long will I live?" but rather, "Do I want to know?"

(Source: medicalnewstoday.com)

‘Gardening helps our mental health. They should do more of it in jail’

Alan Grant steps back from the flowerbed he has been carefully weeding and reflects on his morning's work. "It takes you away from prison a bit," he says, "it's therapeutic, it's enjoyable. My time here would have gone slower if it wasn't for the garden."

Since his transfer to Parc prison near Bridgend in south Wales almost three years ago, Grant has worked in the jail's gardens. His family and friends have noticed the impact it has had on him.

"The job does help people, especially if they struggle," he says. "Gardening helps with mental health and I think they should do more of it in jail. It gives a sense of purpose; it takes our minds off things. It keeps me going. I'm happy and I enjoy it."

Every available space at Parc is used — what was a builder's yard during renovation work is now allotments growing fruit and vegetables that will be used in the staff canteen; a former area of wasteland is now a calming Japanese-style garden, an area of quiet contemplation used by the officers. There are also beehives, bug hotels, bird boxes and a pond.

Particular thought has been put into making the prison more attractive and welcoming for visitors. The walkway from the entrance gate to the visiting area is decorated by a string of brightly planted hanging baskets.

Every available space at Parc is used — what was a build-

er's yard during renovation work is now allotments; there are also beehives, bug hotels, bird boxes and a pond. Photograph: HMP Parc

"Prisons are very austere, there's hardly any greenery, shrubs, gardens, or anything," says Mike Thomas, a manager who oversees Parc's horticulture staff. "The garden goes through the centre of the prison and you see straight away it has a calming effect on people."

"The men who work in the garden feel differently about themselves; they have been given trust. In the eight years I've been in my job, not one prisoner [working in the gardens] has been placed on governor's report for disobeying rules."

Parc is a private training prison and young offender institution run by G4S with a capacity of almost 1,700, including 60 young people. The 15 men who work in the garden earn £28 a week for 40 hours' work. Alongside their work, they study for qualifications in horticulture. Men who have worked in the gardens have taken jobs in horticulture after their release.

The project is in line with the prison education and employment strategy launched last year by the then prisons minister, David Gauke, which focused on the benefits of work and training in reducing reoffending. But Boris Johnson's recent announcements on crime and justice — including pledging £2.5bn to create an extra 10,000 prison places

and £100m to improve prison security — suggest the government's emphasis is shifting more towards punishment than rehabilitation.

Parc's work has been recognised by the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), which last week named the jail as winner of the Windlesham Trophy, an annual award for prison gardens. The competition was launched in 1984 by the then chairman of the parole board, Lord Windlesham, to acknowledge the positive impact of gardening on prisoners. Twenty prisons entered this year's competition. There is some sort of horticulture work going on in 30 prisons around the country. "The men who work in the garden feel differently about themselves; they have been given trust."

Plants at Parc are as good as can be seen at the Chelsea flower show, says Jon Wheatley, an RHS council member and Windlesham Trophy judge. But, he adds, "it is not just about pretty hanging baskets," and judges were impressed by Parc's focus on wildlife, sustainability and the climate.

Research by the University of Central Lancashire this spring found prison horticulture programmes had a "marked effect on mental health and wellbeing."

Having the gardens and work to occupy him has been important for Howard Ellis, who in a shed in the Parc grounds converts wooden pallets into planters for the horticulture team.

(Source: The Guardian)

How to be healthy: 9 easy tips for a healthier lifestyle

We all want to know how to be healthy, but it seems like such a lofty goal. Setting out to make healthy lifestyle changes can feel simultaneously inspiring and intimidating.

I mean, where do you even start? Do you need to overhaul your entire life in one fell swoop? The answer, Abby Langer, may be happy to know, is: no. When it comes to adopting new healthy habits and making them stick, there are lots of little things you can do that will make a big difference in the long run (and not make you crazy in the process).

Instead of trying to upgrade your health with a huge makeover, try these nine small, practically painless moves instead for long-lasting results.

■ Plate your meals backward.

People often pile on the carbs, then mosey on over to the protein, then top it all off with a meager scoop of vegetables in whatever space is left. Instead, go in reverse order, Abby Langer, R.D., owner of Abby Langer Nutrition in Toronto, tells SELF: Fill half your plate with vegetables, then divide the remaining quarters between protein and a starch, ideally something made up of complex carbohydrates instead of refined ones, like brown rice.

Serving yourself this way helps ensure you're getting your recommended daily servings of vegetables (at least 2 ½ cups, says the USDA), plus it increases your fiber intake and hydration levels thanks to vegetables' water content.

■ Put your food away when you're done serving yourself.

"Anyone will eat more if the food is staring at them," Langer says. Always feel free to grab more if you're truly hungry, but this way, you'll know it's because of a physical need for more food instead of pure convenience or temptation.

■ Drink a glass of water before each meal.

Drinking the amount of water you need each day is necessary for all of your body's systems to function smoothly, but it will also keep you from overeating due to hunger, making it easier to take a more mindful approach to your meals, Langer says.

■ Chew each bite thoroughly before swallowing.

The "reasons you need to slow your roll when eating" list is about as long as your arm, Langer explains. Wolfing down food can lead to bloating because of the extra air you're swallowing, that way-too-full feeling because you don't give your body a chance to process satiety before you clean your plate, and completely missing out on how delicious the food actually is.

You can choose a number of chews to abide by per bite, like 20, or you can go for a less regimented approach, like making sure you're swallowing naturally, not gulping hard to get down barely chewed mouthfuls.

■ Call food "healthy" and "less healthy" instead of "good" and "bad."

"When people label food as 'good' and 'bad,' it carries over into a judgment of themselves—if you eat 'good' food, you're a good person, if you eat 'bad' food, you've been badly behaved," Langer says.

That couldn't be further from the truth, so stop putting yourself in emotional timeout just because of what you eat.

"Truly, no foods are really bad and no foods are really good—some are healthier than others," Langer says. Reframing your thinking like this will likely help you learn the art of indulging in moderation instead of bingeing on "bad" foods, plus it's just a better way to treat yourself.

■ For every hour you spend sitting, get up and walk briskly for five minutes.

Sitting all day isn't good for your butt or your heart. Physical activity is extremely important for your longevity, and it all adds up, women's health expert Jennifer Wider, M.D., tells SELF.

Sometimes it can feel impossible to fit in a ton of exercise when you're not used to it, but peppering movement throughout your day is much more doable.

For example, if you follow this rule while sitting for eight hours a day, you'll wind up walking for 40 minutes, putting a commendable dent in the minimum recommendation of 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity per week.

■ And if some types of exercise feel dreadful to you, do something else.

Yes, dancing to Beyoncé at home counts as exercise. Will it burn as many calories as an intense boot camp class? No. But it's about picking exercise you'll actually enjoy enough to continue doing, not the type that makes your soul want to die but has the maximum immediate caloric payoff, Michelle Segar, Ph.D., director of the Sport, Health, and Activity Research and Policy Center at the University of Michigan and author of No Sweat! How The Simple Science of Motivation Can Bring You A Lifetime of Fitness, tells SELF.

Here's Segar's recommendation: "Come at it from a curiosity angle and say, 'What types of positive things would I feel motivated to do?'" This kind of approach helps you get honest with yourself about where your motivation comes from (you can also take Segar's quiz about workout motivation). Getting to the bottom of this is key when trying to cement any sort of habit, especially physical ones like exercising and eating well. It's much harder to stick with hellish activities than pleasant ones.

This also makes it easier to see "failures" on your journey to health as the learning experiences they really are: Bowing out of kickboxing class for two weeks in a row doesn't mean you don't truly want to get fit or you're lazy, just that it may not offer the right kind of motivation you need. "Approach everything as a learning opportunity to see what feels good and what works and what doesn't," Segar says.

■ Ease yourself into getting more sleep with five-minute increments.

Completely abandoning your to-do list, whether it's business or personal, to go to sleep three hours earlier just isn't feasible. But if you do it bit by bit, you'll acclimate yourself to your new, well-rested reality in a manageable way, Christine Carter, Ph.D., senior fellow at UC Berkeley's Greater Good Science Center and author of The Sweet Spot: How To Find Your Groove At Home And Work, tells SELF.

Try going to bed five minutes earlier each night (or every few nights, if this is really tough for you) until you hit the seven to nine hours the National Sleep Foundation recommends for adults.

■ Every time you make a new goal, break it up into bite-sized chunks.

"I'm a big fan of small, easy tweaks," Carter says. So is Segar: "Small is smart. Small is strategic. You can't take people who don't know how to play piano and have them play Mozart. When something's complex, it takes time to learn."

Because that's what a habit really is: Learning how to live your life in a different way.

This can apply to anything and everything health-wise. Let's say you've been having a huge sandwich for lunch every day but want to cut back on refined carbs. Don't swear you'll never let another piece of white bread pass your lips—tuck into a salad first, then let yourself have the sandwich until you're satisfied.

(Source: heart.com)

School tells pupils to take rubbish home to encourage zero waste

A school in Melbourne is removing bins from the classrooms and telling children to take their rubbish home to encourage them to move towards zero waste.

Melbourne Girls' College (MGC) hopes families will be persuaded to think more sustainably when packing their child's school lunch and will buy items with less packaging as a result of the decision.



Head teacher Karen Money, who is introducing the changes next week, said the plan has come from a group of students who are part of the school's sustainability team.

Students will conduct daily non-compulsory food inspections in which pupils who use reusable packaging will receive a token that will go into a draw to win prizes.

"It is a big issue across the world and really it has come from student agency," Ms Money told ABC Radio Melbourne.

"We are trying to build agile thinkers that are dealing with some of the larger issues in the world.

"Looking at some of the surveys about what young people are worried about, climate change and the environment that they are going into is a major issue."

She added: "If we all did nothing then we are just going to be in an even worse crisis."

Classroom bins will be removed and replaced with recycling stations and compost options, but sanitary waste bins will remain in the bathrooms.

In a newsletter to parents, Ms Money said: "The plan is being adopted with the ambition of becoming a zero waste to landfill school by the end of 2020, massively reducing our environmental impact.

"We hope that this will encourage everyone – students and staff alike – to reduce their waste by bringing less waste to school and, in doing so, create less waste at home.

"Numerous primary schools across the country have zero waste bins, however if successful, we believe we would be the first high school in Australia to make the change."

The school spent nearly \$13,000 (£7,200) to remove 1,000 cubic meters of rubbish last year, which was on top of paper recycling and other waste programs, according to the Herald Sun.

Ms Money added: "Not everyone is convinced yet but we at least need to give it ago.

"It is about education and communication. It is about making sure that we are all doing out bit."

The action comes as tens of thousands of children and young people have taken part in nationwide protests urging the government to introduce measures to address climate change.

Students from across the UK have missed school as part of the Youth Strike 4 Climate movement.

Last year, Brighton College, a private school in East Sussex, announced plans to ban pupils and teachers from taking plastic water bottles, plastic straws or non-biodegradable cups onto the premises.

Richard Cairns, headmaster at Brighton College, said that pupils caught flouting the ban of single-use plastics on the school site could face punishments – including supervised beach-cleaning.

The Independent has approached Melbourne Girls' College for a comment.

(Source: The Independent)

WORDS IN THE NEWS

Moscow Russia: 10 years on from the coup

(August 10, 2001)

Ten years ago an attempted coup in Moscow led to the fall of the USSR. Since then, life has changed in different ways for two sets of Russian citizens. This report from Caroline Wyatt:

House-hunting with the new Russian **elite** is a **disconcerting** experience. Most Moscow flats are tiny and **crammed full** of aunts, grandmothers and children as families seek to save money. But the flat that Konstantin Yermakov and his wife, Olga, are looking at in central Moscow costs more than a million dollars, with gold and marble everywhere.

The Yermakovs are new Russians - entrepreneurs **reaping the glittering rewards** of capitalism. Konstantin says that even the existence of **such a flat** would have been **unthinkable** in Soviet times when he was a civil servant and "profit" was **a dirty word**. Now he is a successful businessman.

Yet, over the past ten years, while some may have **achieved fabulous wealth**, Russia's switch to **casino-style capitalism** has also left many losers. In the village of Olgovo, just fifty kilometers north of Moscow, there is no longer any running water, the pipes are broken and no-one has the money to fix them. For many Russians this anniversary is **little cause for celebration** and just another day in the struggle to survive.

Words

house-hunting: looking for somewhere to live, such as a house or flat
elite: a select group that is superior in terms of ability or qualities to the rest of a group or society
disconcerting: something that makes you feel worried, embarrassed or uncomfortable
crammed full: if you cram something full, you fill it as much as possible

reaping the rewards of: benefit from, get something useful from
glittering: impressively successful or elaborate
such a flat: a flat like this

unthinkable: so strange that you cannot imagine it
a dirty word: a word or concept not to mention, a taboo subject

achieved fabulous wealth: become extremely rich
casino-style capitalism: a form of capitalism where some people win a lot while others lose a lot, as in a casino

little cause for celebration: not much reason to celebrate

(Source: BBC)

Americans' love of hiking has driven elk to the brink, scientists say

Biologists used to count over 1,000 head of elk from the air near Vail, Colorado. The majestic brown animals, a symbol of the American west, dotted hundreds of square miles of slopes and valleys.

But when researchers flew the same area in February for an annual elk count, they saw only 53.

"Very few elk, not even many tracks," their notes read. "Lots of backcountry skiing tracks."

The surprising culprit isn't expanding fossil-fuel development, herd mismanagement by state agencies or predators, wildlife managers say. It's increasing numbers of outdoor recreationists – everything from hikers, mountain bikers and backcountry skiers to Jeep, all-terrain vehicle and motorcycle riders. Researchers are now starting to understand why.

US national parks and wilderness areas have boomed in popularity in the last decade, with places like Yosemite national park hitting as many as 5 million visits a year. The influx is due to a mixture of visitation campaigns, particularly during traditional "off seasons", and an explosion of social media exposure that has made hidden gems into national and even international viral sensations.

The impact on wildlife is only recently apparent, and the Vail elk herd may be one of the more egregious examples.

Outdoor recreation has long been popular in Colorado, but trail use near Vail has more than doubled since 2009. Some trails host as many as 170,000 people in a year.

Recreation continues nearly 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, said Bill Andree, who retired as Colorado Parks and Wildlife's Vail district wildlife manager in 2018. Night trail use in some areas has also gone up 30% in the past decade. People are traveling even deeper into woods and higher up peaks in part because of improved technology, and in



part to escape crowds.

The elk in unit 45, as it's called, live between 7,000 and 11,000 feet on the pine, spruce and aspen-covered hillsides and peaks of the Colorado Rockies, about 100 miles from Denver. Their numbers have been dropping precipitously since the early 2010s.

Blaming hiking, biking and skiing is controversial in a state where outdoor recreation is expected to pump \$62.5bn into the state's economy in 2019, an 81% increase from 2014.

But for Bill Alldredge, a now-retired wildlife professor at Colorado State University, there is no other explanation. He started studying unit 45 in the 1980s in response to expanding ski resorts and

trails systems.

calving areas until radio-collared elk showed signs of disturbance, such as standing up or walking away. The consequences were startling. About 30% of the elk calves died when their mothers were disturbed an average of seven times during calving. Models showed that if each cow elk was bothered 10 times during calving, all their calves would die.

When disturbances stopped, the number of calves bounced back.

Why, exactly, elk calves die after human activity as mellow as hiking is not entirely clear. Some likely perish because the mothers, startled by passing humans and their canine companions, run too far away for the calves to catch up, weak-

Near-total ban imposed on sending wild African elephants to zoos

The regulator of global wildlife trade has decided to impose a near-total ban on sending African elephants captured from the wild to zoos.

After a heated debate at a meeting of parties to the convention on international trade in endangered species (Cites) in Geneva on Tuesday, the member countries approved a proposed text after a revision by the European Union included some exceptions to the ban.

The decision met with strong opposition from Zimbabwe in particular, which along with Botswana is the main provider of wild African elephants to zoos outside the continent and tried in vain to block the vote.

But with 87 in favour, 29 against and 25 abstaining, the vote for the amended text secured the two-thirds majority needed to pass.

"This is a momentous Cites decision for Africa's elephants," said Audrey Delsink, the wildlife director of Humane Society International's (HSI) Africa division.

The vote in plenary altered slightly a decision taken at the start of the 12-day conference prohibiting the transfer of all African elephants caught in the wild to so-called captive facilities.

The decision only affects African elephants. Asian elephants already enjoy more protection against international trade.

The initial Cites vote was to limit trade in live wild



African elephants to conservation in their natural habitats, basically ending the practice of capturing elephants and sending them to zoos and entertainment venues around the world.

The EU, which for technical reasons had been unable to cast its 28 votes during the first committee vote on 18 August, had hinted it might join the US and others in flatly opposing the text.

This prompted outcry, with a number of public

figures including Jane Goodall, Pamela Anderson and Brigitte Bardot sending a letter to the EU commission chief, Jean-Claude Juncker, asking that the EU back the ban.

In the end, the EU drafted an amended text, adding a loophole saying the elephants should remain in their "natural and historical range in Africa, except in exceptional circumstances where ... it is considered that a transfer to ex-situ locations will provide demonstrable in-situ conservation benefits for African elephants".

In such cases decisions should only be made in consultation with the Cites animals committee, and the International Union for Conservation of Nature elephant specialist group.

The EU amendment also made clear that African elephants caught in the wild and already in zoos could be transferred to other facilities outside Africa.

While elephants in western, central and eastern Africa have long been listed among the species in need of most protection under Cites, and thus banned from all trade, some trade has been permitted in southern Africa, where elephant populations are healthier.

Zimbabwe, for instance, has captured and exported more than 100 baby elephants to Chinese zoos since 2012, according to the HSI.

(Source: The Guardian)

ENGLISH IN USE

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A ← → ج

Persian literature Olympiad to be held internationally next calendar year

Persian literature Olympiad will be held internationally in Iran in the next Iranian calendar year (starting on March 21), deputy director at National Organization for Development of Exceptional Talents affiliated to Education Ministry has said.

In a collaborative attempt between National Library of Iran, ECO Cultural Institute, Allameh Tabatabaei University, Sa'di Foundation and Academy of Persian Language and Literature, the Olympiad will be held in Iran, Fars news agency quoted Enayat Salarian as saying on Wednesday.

Moreover, he added, the first international student Olympiad on stem cells and regenerative medicine in the name of Iran will be held in 2020.

PREFIX/SUFFIX

“-ectomy”

■ **Meaning:** removal

■ **For example:** Remember, no two people undergoing an **appendectomy** are alike.

PHRASAL VERB

Tell somebody off

■ **Meaning:** if someone in authority tells you off, they speak to you angrily about something wrong that you have done

■ **For example:** Shelley was one of those kids who was always getting told off at school.

IDIOM

Packed (in) like sardines

■ **Explanation:** very tightly or snugly packed together, especially in a small space

■ **For example:** We didn't want to take more than one car, so we had to drive for about four hours packed like sardines in Jeff's little sedan.

المپياد ادبي از سال ۹۸ به صورت جهاني برگزار مي شود

معاون مرکز ملی پرورش استعدادهای درخشان گفت: المپياد ادبی از سال ۱۳۹۸ به صورت جهاني برگزار می‌شود.

عنایت سالاریان در گفت‌وگو با خبرگزاری فارس در تشریح المپیادهای علمی امسال اظهار کرد: المپیاد ادبی از سال ۱۳۹۸ با کمک تعدادی از سازمان‌های فرهنگی مثل کتابخانه ملی، موسسه فرهنگی اکو، دانشگاه علامه طباطبایی، بنیاد سعدی و فرهنگستان ادب فارسی به صورت جهانی برگزار می‌شود.

سالاریان ادامه داد: همچنین در سال ۲۰۲۰ اولین المپیاد جهانی سلول‌های بنیادی به میزبانی و با ابداع ایران برگزار می‌شود.

Syrian army retake more towns in Idlib

TEHRAN — The Syrian army and its allied forces have made major gains in the north-western Idlib province, pushing deeper into the last stronghold of Takfiri terrorists and foreign-backed militants.

Syrian government troops have managed to liberate the towns of Khwain, Zarzoor and al-Tamanah in southern Idlib, opposition sources and residents said on Friday.

Opposition activists claim they have seen probably Russian jet fighters flying at high altitudes, dropping bombs on the outskirts of Idlib, assisting the ground forces in retaking the strategic city.

They also claim the Syrian army has recently been reinforced by hundreds of troops from the elite Syrian Republican Guards, led by President Bashar al-Assad's brother, and fighters from the Lebanese resistance movement, Hezbollah.

The new lineup of Syrian troops facing a coalition of the Takfiri terrorists and mainstream Turkey-backed militants has been credited with the "rapid progress" achieved in the last few weeks, an army defector and two senior opposition sources conceded.



The fresh gains came one week after the army seized control of a pocket of territory in the northwestern province of Hama from militants who had held it since the early

years of the war.

Since last Friday, the Syrian troops have pushed deep into a cluster of towns and their environs in the Hama countryside, encircling

the militants and a Turkish military post there, shortly establishing control over the strategic town of Khan Shaykhun in Idlib.

■ Syrian army to cease fire in Idlib de-escalation zone on Aug. 31

Meanwhile, Syrian government forces will unilaterally cease fire in the de-escalation zone in Syria's Idlib region Saturday morning, Russia's defense ministry was quoted by TASS news agency as saying on Friday.

The ministry also urged armed militant groups in the region to join the ceasefire, according to Interfax news agency. Russia has been the Syrian government's most powerful supporter in its eight-year-long war with rebels and militants. Syria and its ally Russia have stepped up an offensive against the last big stronghold of Syrian rebels, mounting more air raids and deploying ground reinforcements including Iranian-backed militias, army defectors and residents said Friday.

Moving deeper into territory along the Turkish border, the advance took the town of Tamanah after earlier capturing Khwain, Zarzoor and Tamanah farms, the defectors and residents said.

Yemeni drones target Saudi's Najran airport in fresh attack

TEHRAN — Saudi Arabia's Najran airport has once again come under attack by the Yemeni army and fighters of Popular Committees, who have been conducting regular missile and drone attacks against Saudi Arabia in retaliation for a years-long deadly war by the kingdom and its allies.

During the attack on Thursday, Yemeni forces, led by the Houthis Ansarullah movement, flew domestically-developed Qasef-2 (Striker-2) drones to take out aircraft hangars and other strategic positions inside the Saudi airport.

The airport in the southwestern Najran province near the border with Yemen has become a favorite target for the Yemeni resistance forces, who have over the past months inflicted major damage on the Saudi coalition using a formidable arsenal of homegrown missiles and drones.

Yemeni forces have also carried out similar attacks against an airport in the neighboring Abha province, bringing air traffic to a halt on

multiple occasions.

The Yemeni missiles and drones have gone even deeper inside the kingdom, causing considerable damage at various Saudi oil facilities as well as the King Khalid airport in the capital Riyadh.

The retaliatory attacks pale in comparison to the kingdom's brutal aerial, maritime and ground operations that have directly targeted Yemeni civilians several times a day since the beginning of the war in March 2015.

According to Press TV, Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who was the kingdom's defense minister at the time before rising to power as Crown Prince in 2017, pledged a coalition of allies, including the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, that the war would be over in a matter of weeks.

Four years later, however, the coalition is far away from reinstating Yemen's fugitive former president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi or destroying the Houthis, the two declared objectives of the war.

Ebola death toll in east Congo outbreak climbs above 2,000

TEHRAN — The death toll from Democratic Republic of Congo's year-long Ebola outbreak has climbed above 2,000, government data showed on Friday, as responders battle to overcome community mistrust and widespread security problems.

The death in neighboring Uganda of a 9-year-old girl who had tested positive for the virus after entering the country from Congo underscored the challenge medical teams face containing the disease in border territory with a highly mobile population.

The government team overseeing the response said the number of confirmed and probable cases had also hit a milestone of more than 3,000 in what has become the second-worst epidemic of the virus on record.

Despite the development of an effective vaccine and treatments, health workers have struggled to stop the virus spreading in remote and conflict-hit areas of eastern Congo, where many locals are wary of the response effort.

Nevertheless, the World Health Organization said the latest Uganda case highlighted the border authorities' skill at detecting and isolating potential sources of transmission.

"This case was picked up at the border," WHO spokeswoman Fadela Chaib said at a briefing in Geneva. "The people who are at the borders have the expertise."

This is Congo's 10th Ebola outbreak, but it is the first in the densely forested hillside provinces of North Kivu and Ituri, where militia-led violence and ethnic killing have undermined security in certain areas for decades.

The WHO declared the epidemic an international health emergency in July - only the fifth outbreak to warrant this status since the system was introduced in 2005.

The authorities have since come up against new fronts in their fight to contain the virus, testing the reach and flexibility of responders, Reuters reported.

Hadi pulls forces out of Yemen's Aden amid UAE attack

TEHRAN — Ex-Yemeni president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi says his forces have withdrawn from the port city of Aden as a rift in the Saudi-led coalition waging a war on the impoverished Arab country continues to widen.

His forces withdrew "to the vicinity of Aden governorate in order to spare Aden" and prevent its "destruction", Al Jazeera cited him as saying on Thursday.

This comes after Emirati warplanes earlier in the day pounded the positions of pro-Hadi forces in support of southern separatists.

According to reports, more than 300 pro-Hadi troops were killed and wounded by the UAE airstrikes on Aden and nearby Abyan province.

"They (UAE-backed separatists) have committed themselves to injustice, aggression and using armed forces against the Yemeni people in the southern governorates, using the UAE's military arsenal in order to divide our country," Hadi said.

He further called on Riyadh "to intervene and stop this blatant UAE interference".

However, the UAE's foreign ministry said the air raids



had targeted "armed groups led by members of terrorist organizations".

The situation in south Yemen is constantly shifting under frequent territorial exchanges between the two warring sides.

On Wednesday, the former government said in a statement that its forces had wrested control of Aden back from militia from the separatist Southern Transitional Council (STC) group which seized it on August 10 after four days of fierce clashes.

But on Thursday, the STC said its forces had retaken the city, after bringing in reinforcements and bolstering their positions.

Both the UAE-sponsored separatists and the Saudi-backed pro-Hadi militants serve the Riyadh-led coalition and have been engaged, since 2015, in a bloody war on Yemen aimed at reinstating Hadi and crushing the popular Ansarullah movement.

The former president resigned in 2014 and later fled to the Saudi capital.

According to Press TV, ties between the two sides have soured over a number of issues, including what the Yemenis view as Abu Dhabi's intention to occupy Yemen's strategic Socotra Island and gain dominance over the major waterways in the region.

Trump: Taliban deal close, U.S. troops to drop to 8,600

TEHRAN — Donald Trump said that the U.S. plans to reduce the number of American troops in Afghanistan from 14,000 to 8,600 and then will determine further drawdowns.

Trump's comment comes as a U.S. envoy is continuing talks with the Taliban to find a resolution to the nearly 18-year-old war. The president said the U.S. was "getting close" to making a deal, but that the outcome is uncertain.

"Who knows if it's going to happen," Trump told Fox News Radio's "The Brian Kilmeade Show."

Trump did not offer a timeline for withdrawing troops. The Pentagon has been developing plans to withdraw as many as

half of the 14,000 U.S. troops still there, but the Taliban want all U.S. and NATO forces withdrawn.

"We're going down to 8,600 and then we'll make a determination from there," Trump said, adding that the U.S. is going to have a "high intelligence" presence in Afghanistan going forward.

Trump has called Afghanistan — where the Taliban harbored members of the al-Qaida network responsible for 9/11 — the "Harvard University of terror."

If terror groups ever attacked America from Afghanistan again, "we will come back with a force like they've never seen before," Trump said. But he added: "I don't see that

happening."

The top U.S. military officer said Wednesday it's too early to talk about a full American troop withdrawal from Afghanistan. Gen. Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told Pentagon reporters that any U.S. deal with the Taliban will be based on security conditions on the ground and that Afghan forces aren't yet able to secure the country without help from allied forces.

"I'm not using the withdraw word right now," Dunford said. "It's our judgment that the Afghans need support to deal with the level of violence" in the country today.

Afghanistan's government expects that U.S. envoy Zalmay Khalilzad will soon update

officials in Kabul on the progress of talks with the Taliban.

A Taliban spokesman also has said that they're close to a final agreement. But even as the talks go on, there are persistent attacks by the Taliban across Afghanistan, and an affiliate of the ISIL terrorist group has taken hold in the country and has been expanding its base.

According to AP, even if Khalilzad is able to close a deal, it will remain for the Afghan government to negotiate its own peace agreement with the Taliban. Part of those talks will be determining a role for the Taliban in governing a country that it ruled before U.S. forces invaded in October 2001.

evolve and so must we," said Trump.

"Our adversaries are weaponizing earth's orbits with new technology targeting American satellites that are critical to both battlefield operations and our way of life at home," he said.

"Our freedom to operate in space is also essential to detecting and destroying any missile launched against the United States," he added.

cluding missile warning, satellite operations, space control and space support.

According to Press TV, Trump has long expressed concerns about the growing military capabilities of Russia and China beyond Earth. He has insisted such a move is necessary to tackle vulnerabilities in space and assert U.S. dominance in orbit.

"The dangers to our country constantly

Prospect for INSTEX is not good: Paul Pillar

➔1 China possibly could be deterred from making major new commercial deals with Iran by not wanting to complicate its trade negotiations with the United States. But right now those negotiations do not seem to be going anywhere, and so Beijing probably believes it has nothing to lose by doing business with Iran.

■ In your opinion, will the third phase of reducing Iran's commitments in the JCPOA be dangerous? Will Iran's case go to the United Nations Security Council after third step of reducing its commitments?

A: There is nothing distinctive about the third step that is different from the first couple of steps. Iran still is limiting itself to steps that are easily reversible, and keep it a long way from any capability to build a nuclear weapon. The JCPOA specifies procedures for any referral to the UN Security Council. The Trump administration would favor such a referral, but it no longer is a participant in the JCPOA and thus does not have the standing to initiate such action. A relevant question is whether the new British government of Boris Johnson, weakened by the Brexit mess and more dependent than ever on the United States, will start adopting the Trump administration's policy line on Iran.

■ Can the United States impose new sanctions on Iran after the third step in reducing Iran's commitments under JCPOA?

A: The Trump administration already has imposed nearly every sanction it has the power to impose on Iran. It can always find something else that it can describe as a further step in its "maximum pressure" campaign, but the practical difference from what exists right now will be minimal.

Dictatorship stick on democracy

TEHRAN— Following a request from British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, Queen Elizabeth II has prorogued the U.K.'s Parliament—temporarily shutting down the United Kingdom's deliberative body just weeks before the deadline for a no-deal Brexit hits.

The move has caused fury, with Speaker of the House John Bercow calling it a "constitutional outrage" and Ruth Davidson, the extremely popular leader of the Scottish Conservative Party, resigning in protest.

■ Labor to use Parliament to try to thwart no-deal Brexit

Britain's opposition Labor Party said it would trigger an emergency debate in Parliament next week to try to stop Prime Minister Boris Johnson taking Britain out of the European Union without a withdrawal deal.

More than three years after the country voted in a referendum to leave the bloc, the United Kingdom is heading toward its gravest constitutional crisis in decades and a showdown with the EU over Brexit, which is due to take place in just over two months' time.

Johnson enraged opponents of a no-deal Brexit Wednesday by using a parliamentary mechanism to order the suspension of Parliament for almost a month. The speaker of the lower house of Parliament, John Bercow, called this a constitutional outrage as it limited the time the Parliament has to debate and shape the course of British history.

Labor Party leader Jeremy Corbyn said that as soon as Parliament returned from its summer break Tuesday, his party would initiate a process to legislate against a no-deal Brexit that he said would be damaging for the jobs and the economy.

"What we are going to do is try to politically stop him [Johnson] on Tuesday with a parliamentary process in order to legislate to prevent a no-deal Brexit and also to try and prevent him shutting down Parliament in this utterly crucial period," Corbyn told reporters.

"This country is in danger of crashing out on the 31st of October with no deal," he said. "We have got to stop that and that is exactly what we will be doing next Tuesday."

Five other opposition parties, including the Liberal Democrats and the Scottish National Party, later issued a joint statement with Labor calling on Johnson to let legislators vote on whether Parliament should be suspended.

Economists have widely predicted that a no-deal Brexit would deliver a damaging blow to Britain's economy.

Three-month sterling implied volatility soared, indicating traders are bracing for more big price swings between now and the expected Oct. 31 Brexit date. JPMorgan raised the probability of a no-deal Brexit to 35 percent from 25 percent. Johnson's plan to suspend Parliament used the date of the Queen's Speech - to be held on Oct. 14 and preceded by a suspension of the House of Commons - to ensure Parliament will not sit between mid-September and mid-October.

In effect, the squeezed timetable forces opponents of a no-deal Brexit in Parliament to show their hand and act in as few as four days sitting next month. Parliament returns from its summer holiday on Sept. 3.

An election is likely, lawmakers said. Jacob Rees-Mogg, a Brexit supporter who is in charge of managing government business in Parliament, said opponents were confecting "the candy-floss of outrage" and dared them to do their worst. There is a small majority against a no-deal Brexit in the 650-seat House of Commons, but it is unclear if opponents of Johnson within the Conservative Party would collapse his government in a vote of no confidence. "It does look like next week is essentially the only opportunity that Parliament will have to maintain some control over this process and ensure that it has a say before we leave without a deal," Conservative MP David Gauke said.

Israeli forces getting into Iraq on forged U.S. passports: Akram al-Kaabi

➔1 His remarks came in the wake of recent airstrikes in Iraq against the positions of pro-government Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), also known as Hashd al-Sha'abi.

Following the strikes, the spokesman of Kata'ib Hezbollah, another prominent Iraqi resistance group, said the attacks on the positions of Hashd al-Sha'abi were an attempt by the U.S. and Israel to revive Daesh. Mohammed Muhayyee added that the next stage, which has been planned by the U.S., is to return thousands of foreign-backed Daesh terrorists to the Iraqi-Syrian border.

The attacks "were not accidental," but rather planned in advance after continued monitoring operations by Israeli and American drones, Muhayyee pointed out.

On Tuesday, Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul-Mahdi said his country's armed forces were fully prepared to respond firmly to any act of aggression launched either from outside or inside Iraq. "The prime minister pointed to the high readiness of our armed forces to defend Iraq, its citizens and state institutions in addition to diplomatic missions operating in Iraq," his media office said in a statement released following a cabinet session.

"He also stressed the Iraqi forces' readiness to respond firmly and by all means available to any aggression launched either from outside or inside Iraq." Daesh unleashed a campaign of death and destruction in Iraq in 2014, overrunning vast swathes of territory in lightning attacks. Iraqi government forces and allied fighters then launched operations to eliminate the terror outfit and retake lost territory.

Trump launches new Pentagon command for space warfare

TEHRAN — U.S. President Donald Trump has established a new Pentagon command dedicated to warfare in space as Washington considers China and Russia its rivals in the new military frontier.

"This is a landmark day, one that recognizes the centrality of space to America's security and defense," Trump said in a White House ceremony on Thursday.

"SpaceCom will ensure that America's dominance in space is never threatened," he said.

The Space Command will be responsible for planning and carrying out space operations. It is a new organizational structure within the Pentagon that will have overall control of military space operations. It will have 87 units at its launch with abilities in-

Barcelona and Atletico Madrid handed tough tasks

Both Atletico Madrid and Barcelona were handed tough tasks in their respective Champions League groups after Thursday's draw, with Valenciaalso being dropped into a difficult group while Real Madrid arguably got the most generous of the lot.

Los Blancos will meet Paris Saint-Germain though, in what should be a playoff for top spot. That fixture will have a number of sub plots too, with Keylor Navasset to join the French side and Neymar still an aim for Real Madrid.

Madrid are in Group A alongside the Parisiens, Club Brugge and Galatasaray, which shouldn't prove too problematic. Interestingly, they will visit the city wherein the final will be played - Istanbul.

Atletico have a difficult group though. They'll be reunited with their eliminators from last season in Juventus, and their biggest foe in the Champions League, Cristiano Ronaldo. On top of the Old Lady, they'll have to overcome Bayer Leverkusen and Lokomotiv Moscow.

Barcelona's is a group of death. Both Inter and Borussia Dortmund will be extremely trying for the Catalans. Slavia Prague will be the team everyone looks to take six points from.

Valencia, meanwhile, have it pretty hard but it's not impossible for them to progress. Chelsea and Ajax are both in transition this year, while Lille could catch a few teams off guard and play good football.

Manchester City were more fortunate that the Spaniards. Pep Guardiola's side will take on Shakhtar Donetsk, Dinamo Zagreb and Atalanta.

Champions Liverpool take on Napoli, again, as well as RB Salzburg and Genk.

Bayern Munich will face Tottenham, Olympiacos and Red Star.

Zenit Saint Petersburg have to overcome Benfica, Lyon and RB Leipzig.

(Source: Marca)

Brazilian MMA champ issues plea over Amazon fires

Brazilian MMA champion Jessica Andrade urged swift action to douse the fires burning out of control in the Amazon rainforest on Friday as she prepared for her UFC strawweight title defense.

Andrade, 27, who will face China's Zhang Weili in Shenzhen on Saturday, will enter the cage in a traditional tribal headdress to highlight the plight of Brazil's indigenous regions.

Tens of thousands of fires have been set this year in the world's largest rainforest, setting off a global outcry over conservation and environmental concerns.

"Not enough is being done. We need to preserve our natural environment," Andrade said in southern China.

"We have so many natural riches and it seems as though we are letting them be destroyed. This has to stop. The lands and the indigenous people seem to have no protection and we must listen to their voices."

Andrade said she hoped to draw attention to the problems facing Brazil's tribal population, including the loss of traditional lands and native species.

"I do this now as it is a way of bringing my people with me, and my culture," she said. "It makes me feel very proud and of course this is part of my character."

"My goal now is to give exposure to the native people of Brazil and the issues they are being forced to face. They need to have a voice."

Andrade traces her family's heritage back into the forests of Brazil through her fraternal great grandmother, who was captured as a native bride.

(Source: AFP)

Barcelona close to giving up on Neymar over PSG demands

PSG and Barcelona's merry dance over Neymar continues. Reports from several Barcelona-based media report that Barcelona negotiators have rejected PSG's counter-offer for the Brazilian. They believe the French club's demands are too high and the economics of the deal just do not add up.

After a week of back-and-forth negotiations played out in the press, Barcelona brought several players into the mix to offset the price of the 27-year-old. As they searched desperately for the formula that would see Neymar return to the Camp Nou after two years in Paris, PSG continued to demand too much for his sale.

They discussed the deal with those responsible for their finances and it seems they have come to the conclusion that a deal is simply not possible.

Radio Catalunya reported on Friday afternoon that the deal involved €130 million, a loan deal for Dembélé and the transfer of Ivan Rakitic and Jean-Clair Todibo. Barcelona flatly rejected. Barcelona had previously offered the exact same offer minus the Dembélé loan as the French attacker does not want to play in Paris.

(Source: AS)

UEFA Europa League 2019-20 groups confirmed

Manchester United face a 6,000-mile round trip to play Astana in Kazakhstan in the Europa League.

The 2017 winners will also take on Partizan Belgrade and AJ Alkmaar, while Wolves - playing in Europe for the first time since 1980 - face Besiktas, Braga and Slovan Bratislava

Arsenal, who lost to Chelsea in last season's final, have drawn Eintracht Frankfurt, Standard Liege and Vitoria.

Celtic will face Lazio, while Rangers are in a tough group with Porto.

■ **Group stage draw in full:**

Group A: Sevilla, Apoel Nicosia, Qarabag, F91 Dudelange
Group B: Dynamo Kiev, FC Copenhagen, Malmo, Lugano
Group C: Basel, Krasnodar, Getafe, Trabzonspor
Group D: Sporting Lisbon, PSV Eindhoven, Rosenborg, Lask
Group E: Lazio, Celtic, Rennes, Cluj
Group F: Arsenal, Eintracht Frankfurt, Standard Liege, Vitoria
Group G: Porto, Young Boys, Feyenoord, Rangers
Group H: CSKA, Moscow, Ludogorets, Espanyol, Ferencvaros
Group I: Wolfsburg, Gent, Saint-Etienne, Olexandriya
Group J: Roma, Borussia Monchengladbach, Istanbul Basaksehir, Wolfsburg AC
Group K: Besiktas, Braga, Slovan Bratislava, Wolves
Group L: Manchester United, FC Astana, Partizan Belgrade, AJ Alkmaar

(Source: BBC)

Football world rallies around grieving Luis Enrique after tragic death of daughter Xana, 9, from cancer

Former Barcelona and Spain manager Luis Enrique has paid tribute to his nine-year-old daughter after she passed away from osteosarcoma -- a form of bone cancer.

The 49-year-old released a statement on Twitter Thursday evening confirming Xana's death and thanking hospital staff for their care over an "intense five months."

"We will miss you lots but we will remember you every day of our lives, with the hope that in the future we'll meet each other again," read the statement.

"You'll be the star that guides our family."

The Spaniard, who stepped down from his role as Spain's national boss in June to spend time with his family, thanked those who sent good wishes but asked for "discretion and understanding."

■ **'Speechless'**

The Spanish Football Federation (RFEF) led the tributes online, saying it "mourned the sad loss of little Xana."

"We want to show our condolences to family and friends, joining us all today to their pain," it tweeted.

A host of Enrique's former players also paid their respects to young Xana, among them Barcelona superstar Lionel Messi.

"We are with you, all the strength of the world," the Argentine wrote on Twitter.

Meanwhile, Spain and Manchester United goalkeeper David de Gea said he was "speechless," while Enrique's former club Barcelona offered "condolences and all our sympathy."

Tennis legend Rafael Nadal also sent his condolence to the family. Nadal's uncle Miguel Ángel Nadal is a former Barcelona and national teammate of Enrique.

"I am very sad and I cannot imagine the pain of the family. A huge hug to Luis Enrique and the whole family from a distance. A lot of strength and courage in these hard times," he tweeted.

A host of clubs, including Manchester United, also paid



their respects.

Enrique enjoyed a successful playing career, representing Spain on 62 occasions. He also won three Spanish La Liga titles, once with Real Madrid and twice with rivals Barcelona.

He continued such success as a coach, winning the Champions League during his time at the Nou Camp, in addition

to two domestic titles and three Copa del Rey trophies.

Barcelona president Josep Maria Bartomeu expressed his sympathy, writing: "All of our support and compassion goes to Luis Enrique, his wife and all of his family at this particularly painful time."

(Source: CNN)

Rivals sense chance to end US reign at Basketball World Cup



Basketball's World Cup launches on Saturday in China with two-time defending champions the United States missing their biggest stars and looking uncharacteristically vulnerable after surrendering their long winning streak.

The chief threat to the LeBron James-deprived Americans looks likely to come from Serbia, but Spain, France, Australia and Greece -- led by NBA MVP Giannis Antetokounmpo -- are all snapping at Team USA's heels.

A total of 32 countries will begin in eight groups of four spread across cities in China, from Shenzhen in the south to the capital Beijing, where the final will be held on September 15.

Just a few days ago the United States under their respected coach Gregg Popovich were odds-on favourites to make the final and win it for the third time in a row, no matter the opponent.

But last weekend they were stunned 98-94 by Australia in Melbourne, the hosts ending the USA's run of 78 consecutive wins in major competitions and exhibition games.

Then followed another setback with Los Angeles Lakers forward Kyle Kuzma ruled out of the World Cup with an ankle injury.

San Antonio Spurs mastermind Pop-

ovich has been forced to name a young squad after numerous high-profile NBA stars opted out including James, Kawhi Leonard, Stephen Curry, James Harden, Anthony Davis, Russell Westbrook and Paul George.

Kevin Durant, Kyle Lowry and Klay Thompson are injured.

The Americans bounced back in Australia to beat Canada 84-68 in their last warm-up match before jetting over to China, but their aura of invincibility has dimmed and the players have admitted that they are still getting to know each other.

Myles Turner, a centre with the Indiana Pacers, said that his team-mates needed to adapt fast to the international game.

"A lot of times in the NBA you sort of wait until the fourth quarter to turn it on," said Turner.

"And these teams, everybody wants to beat the USA. We're the top dog and everybody's gunning for us night in and night out."

The US begin their title defence in Shanghai on Sunday when they play the Czech Republic in Group E, which also contains Japan and Turkey, runners-up to the Americans in 2010.

(Source: Eurosport)

Oliver Kahn to replace Rummenigge as Bayern chairman



Ex-Germany goalkeeper Oliver Kahn will join Bayern Munich's board in January to be groomed to replace club chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge, the Bundesliga giants announced Friday amid a back-room upheaval.

The appointment of Kahn, who played for Bayern from 1994 until 2008, was approved by Bayern's board late Thursday, just hours after club president Uli Hoeness, 67, officially informed the club that he is stepping down in November.

Current chairman Rummenigge, 63, will eventually hand the reins to Kahn on December 31, 2021, after showing his successor the ropes, while former Adidas boss Herbert Hainer is poised to replace Hoeness as club president in the November elections.

Kahn, a former captain of both Germany and Bayern who made more than 600 appearances for the club, will sign a five-year contract and will join the club's board from January 1, 2020, serving a two-year apprenticeship before taking over from Rummenigge.

"It won't be so formal, it will be part of a fluid process," explained Hoeness in Friday's press conference.

Hoeness sees Kahn as the "perfect

solution" to replace Rummenigge as the 50-year-old has served as "an important player in the history of the club" after he won the Bundesliga title eight times and was part of the team which won the Champions League in 2001.

Kahn "carries the DNA of the club in him", added Hoeness, who stressed how important it is to have a former Bayern player directing the club at boardroom level.

"It would be very difficult to establish someone in the position who has not played football at a high level," said Hoeness, who added that Kahn made "an excellent" impression on the board during Thursday's meeting.

"When you're talking to big-name players, like Robert Lewandowski or Joshua Kimmich... it's important that they take it for granted you know how to stop a ball."

Kahnn said it was a "great honor" to be accepted onto the board and feels "deeply connected with the club, it has strongly shaped my life".

After retiring 11 years ago, Kahn has earned an MBA in general management and built up his own business while serving as a TV expert for broadcaster ZDF.

(Source: Mirror)

'Dods' or alive: defying gravity in Norway's 'death diving'

They throw themselves into the air, twisting their bodies and seemingly making time standstill, before landing with a splash: originally a pastime to impress girls, Norway's sport of "death diving" now attracts dozens of daredevils.

Around 40 divers converged in the capital, Oslo, in mid-August for the annual world championship of the sport, officially known by its Norwegian name of "dods", meaning death.

Some svelte and muscular, others paunchy and tattooed, nearly all the competitors are Norwegian, apart from a few from Sweden, Spain, Denmark and Finland.

At first glance, it might look like just another belly flop competition.

But death diving requires an element of skill.

Jumping off a 10-metre (33-foot) tower, competitors perform a stunt, holding the pose for as long as they can until it looks like they're about to do a massive belly flop, before tucking their body into a tight curl at the last second as they are about to hit the water.

At Oslo's Frognerbadet municipal pool, the divers vying for the world title warm up with stretches, push-ups and headstands to prepare their bodies for the grueling challenge to come.

"You do have a few nerves," admits Morten Falteng, the oldest competitor at almost 60, who, with four friends, started the sport back in 1972.

"We didn't think too much about it back then, we just wanted to have fun. We dived, we jumped, we wanted to do something new," he recalls, clad in an old-fashioned, red-and-white striped swimsuit.

"And there were these five girls that always came to watch



us," he says, his voice trailing off at the memory.

■ **'Fear locks out'**

It was another group of Norwegian friends, who in 2008 set up the world championships.

Organizers say it was meant as a somewhat tongue-in-cheek title at the time as the only "international" diver that year was a Norwegian adopted from Guatemala.

To blaring music, competitors flex their muscles, dab, twerk and otherwise entertain the spectators below from the top of the diving tower.

"When I'm up there and it's a competition, all the fear just locks out. I can do anything when I'm up there," says Miriam Hamberg, a 22-year-old from Sweden.

For the past two years, the competition has been open to women, who compete in their own category.

Hamberg has won the title both times.

"My brothers have always done this and I've always done the same things as they do. I never want to be worse," she says.

■ **'No gravity for just a second'**

The world championship comprises of two events: classic and freestyle.

In the classic event, divers jump, their arms straight out to form a cross.

Then, just before impact, they tuck their body into a tight ball or pike position called "the shrimp", before reopening their body immediately after impact to make the biggest splash possible.

For the freestyle contest, spectacular flips, twisting acrobatics and other "slow motion" moves that create a sense of suspending time -- all, often improvised -- are de rigueur. Poolside, a jury scores the competitors on their style, timing, originality -- and, the size of their splash.

"It's difficult to describe," says Joan "Fly" Fuster, a 29-year-old Spaniard, who travelled from Menorca for the competition.

"I really love the feeling of flying and being free. Like there's no gravity for just a second."

Hitting the water at 70 kilometres (45 miles) an hour leaves little room for error.

While dods dives are far from the spectacular, death-defying swan dives performed off the cliffs of Mexico and elsewhere, they can still involve bruises and knees-in-the-nose when things don't go as planned.

Divers occasionally emerge from the water limping or in need of consolation, but mostly there's a lot of camaraderie among competitors, with cheering, hugging and high fives.

"It's not a very demanding sport," says French-Norwegian Paul Rigault, an official from the Norwegian death diving federation.

(Source: AFP)

Saman Ghoddos suspended four months by FIFA

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iranian international attacking midfielder Saman Ghoddos has been suspended from all games for four months by FIFA.

Ghoddos's former club Östersund are also prohibited from recruiting players in two transfer windows.

Ghoddos joined Amiens in French Ligue 1 at the end of last summer, but before that it was rumored that he had agreed to join Spanish side Huesca.

According to Huesca, the clubs should have agreed on an agreement and Ghoddos should have flown down to sign, but Östersund then withdrew.

According to the Football Channel, there will be consequences for both Östersund and Ghoddos.

«The player has been sentenced to pay compensation to SD Huesca and sporting penalties have been imposed on the player and Östersunds FK with reference to Article 17, sections 3 and 4,» FIFA writes in an email to the site.

His former Swedish club and he were sentenced to pay € 4 million to the Spanish club.

Ghoddos has been banned from all football activities until January.

He misses Iran's four matches at the 2022 FIFA World Cup and AFC Asian Cup China 2023.

Team Melli will start the campaign with a match against Hong Kong, slated for Sept. 10.

Iran will meet Cambodia and Bahrain on Oct. 10 and 15 respectively and face Iraq on Nov. 14.

The verdict can be taken on appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in Lausanne.



KAS Eupen GM Henkel welcomes new signing Saeid Ezatolahi



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Christoph Henkel, general manager of KAS Eupen, is satisfied with their new signing Saeid Ezatolahi.

The 22-year-old Iranian midfielder joined the Belgian football team on a one-year loan spell from Russian Premier League side Rostov with an option to buy.

«Saeid Ezatolahi proved his talent and abilities in Russian league. He also represented Iran national football team in the 2018 World Cup and played in group matches against Spain and Portugal. Al-

though he is only 22, he has played 28 times for the Iran national team,» Henkel told lavenir.net.

«I am confident that Ezatolahi will be a real reinforcement for our team and will help us in the current season. We welcome Saeid to KAS Eupen and wish him every success in our club,» he added.

Ezatolahi is the fifth Iranian player in Belgian First Division League.

Ali Gholizadeh, Kaveh Rezaei, Milad Mohammadi and Younes Delfi are also playing in Belgian teams.

Iran basketball capable of beating Puerto Rico, coach says



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran basketball coach Mehran Shahintab says that they can start the 2019 FIBA World Cup with a win over Puerto Rico.

Team Melli will play the Caribbean team on Saturday at the Guangzhou Gymnasium in Guangzhou, China.

Iran will also play Tunisia and Spain on Sept. 2 and 4 respectively in Group C.

«Puerto Rico match is very important for us. We know that they are an experienced team but our squad is made up of

a mix of young and experienced players. We are optimistic we can defeat them,» Shahintab said.

«All 32 teams participating in the FIBA World Cup are the best teams in the world. We've analyzed our opponents in Group C. We have to do our best in the match against Puerto Rico because it's a must-win game for us,» Iran coach added.

Spain is expected to finish undefeated on the top, and there will be a dogfight for the second spot.

Young talents give Arnold confidence

Australia head coach Graham Arnold is confident the Socceroos will make a positive start to their Asian Qualifiers campaign for the 2022 FIFA World Cup Qatar and AFC Asian Cup China 2023 after a thorough selection process.

Arnold named the 23-strong squad on Friday, with Australia to play Kuwait away in their opening Group B match on September 10.

Arnold's first Asian Qualifiers selection features a blend of international experience, and will offer further opportunities to numerous players at relatively early stages of their respective senior international careers.

«I have spent the past month in Europe with one of my assistants, Rene Meulensteen, watching and speaking with our players and their coaches and we have been delighted with what we have seen and heard,» Arnold said.

«The players that have been selected in this squad are fit and ready to go, while many, such as Brandon Borrello at Freiburg, Ajdin Hrustic at Groningen, Milos Degenek at Red Star Belgrade, Adam Taggart at Suwon



Bluewings, Jackson Irvine at Hull City, and Harry Souttar at Fleetwood Town, have made very positive contributions with their clubs.»

«Our June camp and friendly in Busan was a really important time for us. While many of the senior players that had participated in three major tournaments since 2017 were left out to give them a chance to refresh

mentally and physically, many young and emerging players were given the chance to enter or re-enter the set-up, which has helped us to develop our depth,» Arnold added.

Arnold's squad for features 12 players with 10 or fewer caps, highlighting the rejuvenation that is continuing within the Socceroos' set-up.

«I find it exciting for the Socceroos and the nation that there were so many more players in contention for this squad, and am expecting healthy competition for places in the starting side for Kuwait and our upcoming qualification matches as we target a winning start,» Arnold concluded.

Australia will spend a week acclimatizing in the United Arab Emirates ahead of the Kuwait tie. Also in the group are Jordan, Chinese Taipei and Nepal.

Following Australia's qualification opener against Kuwait, the Caltex Socceroos will play Nepal in Canberra on October 10, Chinese Taipei in Kaohsiung on October 15, and Jordan in Jordan on November 14.

(Source: the-afc)

Niang vows to “fully dedicate” himself to FIBA after election as President

Hamane Niang has promised to «fully dedicate» himself to the International Basketball Federation (FIBA) following his election as President of the worldwide governing body at its Congress in Beijing.

Niang, a former Mali Sports Minister who served as a FIBA vice-president, was elected unopposed during the meeting at the Sheraton Grand Beijing Dongcheng Hotel.

The former FIBA Africa head succeeds Argentina's Horacio Muratore and will serve a single four-year term through to 2023.

«I sincerely thank all the National Federations for the trust they have placed in me today,» said Niang.

«It is with humility that I accept this responsibility placed upon me.

«I promise to dedicate myself fully to FIBA during my tenure and to serve the

interests of our beloved sport across all corners of the world.

«We are the governing body of basketball and we must continue to play the leading role in developing our sport.

«Together, we can become the most popular sports community in the world.»

Niang will be tasked with building on the work done by Muratore, whose five-year stint at the helm concluded at the Congress, although the Presidential role at FIBA does not have the same significance as other global sports organisations.

Muratore oversaw FIBA during a challenging period, which included the sudden death of secretary general and International Olympic Committee member Patrick Baumann in October.

He was also at the helm during FIBA's



protracted row with EuroLeague, but has helped install widespread governance reforms to bring the organisation in line with modern standards.

Germany's Ingo Weiss was re-elected to serve a second four-year term as FIBA treasurer.

A total of 13 officials were elected

to the FIBA Central Board during the Congress, including Indonesian businessman and International Olympic Committee member Erick Thohir.

Papua New Guinea's Karo Lelai, chairperson of the Association of National Olympic Committees Athletes' Commission, and Japanese Basketball Federation President Yuko Mitsuya were among the others to secure a place on the Central Board.

They are joined by: Australia's David Reid, Celestine Adjahoun of Benin, Madagascar's Jean-Michel Ramaroson, Canada's Michele O'Keefe, Marcelo Luis Bedoya Murto from Paraguay, Usie Richards of the Virgin Islands, Romania's Carmen Tocala, Jean-Pierre Siutat of France, Antti Zitting of Finland and Greece's Asterios Zois.

(Source: Insidethegames)

Iran 5th at FIVB U19 World Championship

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran defeated Japan 3-1 (28-26, 23-25, 25-16, 25-23) at the 2019 FIVB Volleyball Boys' U19 World Championship fifth place.



Bardia Saadat led Iran with 37 points and Daiki Yamada had 28 points for Japan.

The defending champions lost to Russia 3-1 and failed to qualify for the semifinals.

Italy and Russia will meet together in the final match while Egypt and Argentina lock horn for the bronze medal.

The 2019 edition of the FIVB Volleyball Boys' U19 World Championship features 20 teams playing across four pools from August 21 to 30.

The competition is being held in Tunis, Tunisia.

Tractor defeat Persepolis: IPL

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Tractor football team defeated Persepolis 1-0 in week 2 of Iran Professional League (IPL) on Friday.

Ehsan Haji Safi scored the only goal of the match before the interval.

In the second half, Persepolis put the hosts under pressure but their strikers lacked of cutting edge.

Holders Persepolis started the new IPL season with a 1-0 win over Pars Jonoubi while Tractor played out a goalless draw against Naft Masjed Soleyman.

On Thursday, Esteghlal suffered a late 1-1 draw against Foolad, Sepahan defeated Machine Sazi 1-0, Padideh beat Shahin 2-1 and Sanat Naft drew 1-1 with Naft Masjed Soleyman.

Iranian thrower claims gold at Indian event

MNA — Iranian discus thrower Benham Shiri snatched a gold on Thursday at the 59th National Inter State Seniors Championships 2019 in Lucknow, India.

On the third day of the event in India, Shiri earned the title of men's discus throw competition with a throw of 57.83m.

Earlier on Wednesday, Iranian hurdler Mehdi Pirjahan had won a gold medal in 400m hurdle with a time of 49.33.

The competition, organized by Athletics Federation of India (AFI) kicked off on August 27 and will wrap up today. The four-day championships feature over 600 athletes from India besides other entries from countries like Sri Lanka, Maldives, Iran, Kazakhstan and Bhutan.

Iran's Sadeghian earns quota place for Tokyo 2020

TASNIM — Iranian shooter Armina Sadeghian secured quota place for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games on Thursday.

She earned her quota at the women's 10 meters air rifle final in the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) Rifle and Pistol World Cup in Rio de Janeiro.

Sadeghian registered 628.3 points and qualified for the final.

In April, Iranian shooter Najmeh Khedmati earned a quota place for the Tokyo 2020.

She came fifth at the women's 10 meters air rifle in the 2019 ISSF World Cup Rifle and Pistol in Beijing, China.

Ex-Iran defender Beikzadeh hangs up his boots

TASNIM — Former Iran and Esteghlal left back Hashem Beikzadeh announced his retirement from professional football at the age of 35 on Thursday.

Beikzadeh is a product of Fajr Sepasi youth academy.



He moved to Esteghlal in 2008 and won the league in his first season. Beikzadeh has also played at Sepahan, Saba, Zob Ahan and Tractor.

Beikzadeh made his debut for Iran national football team in August 2006 in a friendly match against the UAE.

He was again called up to Team Melli for the West Asian Football Federation Championship 2007 held in Amman, Jordan. He scored his first goal for Iran on June 24, 2007 in a 2-1 final match win versus Iraq.

He was called up to the national team for the 2014 FIFA World Cup by Carlos Queiroz but remained an unused substitute in the tournament, losing his spot to Mehrdad Pooladi because of injury.

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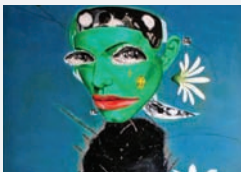
GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The tongue is a wild beast which, left to itself,
will wound and shed blood.

Imam Ali (AS)

WHAT'S IN ART GALLERIES

Painting



■ Homa Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Vahid Jafarnejad. The exhibit entitled “An Hour with Dancing Insects” will run until September 6 at the gallery located at No. 8, Forth Alley, Sanai St., Karim Khan Ave.



■ An exhibition of paintings by Puri Nahai is underway at Golestan Gallery. The exhibition will be running until September 4 at the gallery located at 42 Kamasai St. in the Darus neighborhood.



■ Paintings by Ali Naderi are currently on view in an exhibition at Dena Gallery. The exhibit titled “Color and Water” will run until September 4 at the gallery located at 4 Sussan Alley off Qarani St.



■ Ali Beigiparast and Mona Khoshroshahi are displaying their latest paintings in an exhibition at Negar Gallery. The exhibit named “The Dance of Pain” runs until September 4 at the gallery, which can be found at 33 Delaram Alley, Roshanai St. in the Qeitarieh neighborhood.



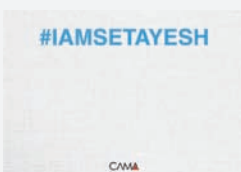
■ A collection of paintings by Samad Tavani is on display in an exhibition at Ace Gallery. Entitled “Cauterize and Garden”, the exhibit will be running until September 11 at the gallery located at 1831 Shariati Ave. near the Qeitarieh neighborhood.



■ Paintings by Mohammadreza Atashzad are on display in an exhibition at Atashzad Gallery. The exhibition will be running until September 6 at the gallery located at 3 North Abbaspur (Tavanir) St. near Vanak Sq.



■ An exhibition of paintings by Martin Rafieifar is currently underway at Theme Gallery. The exhibit named “The First Glance” runs until September 5 at the gallery located at 10 Zebardar Alley, North Villa St., off Karim Khan Ave.



■ Tehran's CAMA – Contemporary and Modern Art Gallery is hosting an exhibition of paintings by Setayesh Nasserabadi. The exhibit titled “#IAMSETAYESH” will run until September 4 at the gallery located at No. 44, 10th Golestan, Pasdaran St.

Drawing



■ Drawings by Mehrdad Iravanian are on display in an exhibition at Saye Gallery. The exhibit named “Presumptive Landscape” will run until September 11 at the gallery that can be found at No. 21, 13th Alley, Sanai St. off Karim Khan Ave.

Multimedia



■ Shalman Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings, sculptures and photos by Negar Azad, Zahra Hojatzadeh, Fatemeh Sheikh-Mohammadi and Kimia Nuri. The exhibition titled “Profile” will run until September 4 at the gallery located at 27 Kavusi Alley, West Rudbar St., off Mirdamad Blvd.

Photo



■ Mahsa Purbosheini, Fattaneh Rahimi, Ensieh Amirifar, Mohammad-Sadeq Saremi and three more artists are showcasing their latest photos in an exhibition at AG Gallery. The exhibition runs until September 5 at the gallery located at 43 Azodi St., Karim Khan Ave.

Screenwriters select Iran's top scripts of the year

A R T **TEHRAN** — Iran's top scripts of the year were awarded during the 8th edition of the Iranian Screenwriters Association Celebration at the Farabi Cinema Foundation in Tehran on Wednesday.

“The Underwater Cypress” co-written by Mohammad-Ali Bashe-Ahangar and Hamed Bashe-Ahangar received the award for the war film category. It is about soldiers from Iranian religious minorities who are still listed as missing in action, while the award in the action film category was presented to Mohammad-Hossein Mahdavian and Ebrahim Amini for “Lottery”, about trafficking Iranian women to Arab countries.

In the crime film category, “Sheeple”, written and directed by Hooman Seyyedi, was honored. The film also won the audience award for best screenplay.

“Sheeple” tells the story of a family of three brothers and a sister living in the slums of Tehran. The elder brother owns a drug-producing laboratory and presides over the group, like a shepherd for sheep.

Kazem Mollai, director and writer of the acclaimed drama “Kupal”, was honored in the experimental film category and the award for best comedy screenplay went to “Confiscation” written by Ali Forqani.

“Kupal” is about a hunter and a taxidermist called “Dr. Ahmad Kupal”. On the last day of the year, just moments before the arrival of the New Year, he faces an unexpected challenge.

Set in the 1970s, “Confiscation” is about a man who works for the SAVAK intelligence services and is forced to flee the country after the Islamic revolution in 1979.

“Lovely Trash” written and directed by Mohsen Amirusefi, about the Iranian presidential election in 2009, won the award for best fantasy screenplay. “Auntie Frog” about a frog who is worried about her 98 children by Fereshteh Taerpur and



Co-writers Mohammad-Hossein Mahdavian (L) and Ebrahim Amini pose after receiving the award for best action screenplay for “Lottery” at the 8th Iranian Screenwriters Association Celebration at the Farabi Cinema Foundation in Tehran on August 28, 2019.

Afshin Hashemi received the award for best musical.

In the drama section, Peyman Maadi received the award for his work “Bomb, a Love Story”.

The story of the film is set in 1988 when Tehran is being bombed relentlessly at the height of the Iran-Iraq war. The days that pass by are full of foreboding, and yet,

love, affection, hope and life itself manage to sweep away the fear of death from those surrounded by it.

In this section, “Astigmatism” by Majidreza Mostafavi and Payam Karami received the special jury award.

The organizers also paid tribute to screenwriter Khashayar Alvand, who passed away in February at 51.

Accepting the award, his brother Sirus, who is a veteran Iranian filmmaker, expressed his hope that officials pay more attention to the screenwriters.

“When artists are honored posthumously it means they are still alive,” he said.

In addition, veteran screenwriter Siamak Taqipour was honored for his lifetime achievements.

Nasirian, Nasirpur, Ahmadi receive Davud Rashidi Awards

A R T **TEHRAN** — Actors d e s k Ali Nasirian and Mahtab Nasirpur and writer Ahmadreza Ahmadi have each received one of the Davud Rashidi Awards, which are granted by late actor Davud Rashidi's family to honor cultural figures with outstanding achievements.

The awards ceremony began with tributes to Hossein Tabatabai, the first manager of Tehran's City Theater Complex, and recently-deceased actor Dariush Asadzadeh at the Abbas Kiarostami Hall of the Farabi Cinema Foundation on Thursday evening.

Actors Sirus Ebrahimzadeh and Fatemeh Motamed-Arya delivered speeches in praise of Rashidi who died in 2016, and the organizers also screened a video depicting the New York-based Iranian director, Amir Naderi.

“Davud Rashidi didn't reach the position he deserved,” he said in the video. “He had to play in films he didn't like, but he always read at nights and was always helpful.”

“I didn't have the chance to work with him. Many people didn't know him, but I had the chance to know him,” he noted.

The 79-year-old Persian poet, playwright and children's book writer, Ahmadreza Ahmadi, was the first person called to the stage to receive his award.

In his short speech, Ahmadi expressed his thanks to his wife and doctor for the efforts they made to help him recover from a severe heart condition.

“As a result, I could write several books and I have recently begun to do paintings,” he said.

Nasirian received his award from Taraneh Alidoosti, the star of Asghar Farhadi's Oscar-winning movie “The Salesman” who co-starred with him in director Hassan Fat'hi's



Actor Ali Nasirian (R) receives a Davud Rashidi Award from actress Taraneh Alidoosti at the Abbas Kiarostami Hall of the Farabi Cinema Foundation on August 29, 2019. (Meh/Behnam Tofiqi)

popular series, “Sharzad”.

“Davud Rashidi made a major impact on Iran's theater and his directorial career was very different from the regular programs others pursued. I learned a lot from him and I'm very proud of meeting him and being his colleague,” Alidoosti said. “I co-starred with Mr. Nasirian [in “Sharzad”], but I never had the courage to ask him if I could take a photo with him. Tonight, I want to do this.”

Nasirpur received the award from her husband, Mohammad Rahmani, the director of the acclaimed movie “Bench Cinema” and play “The Horses”.

“I have worked with Mahtab Nasirpur for three decades and we have lived together for over two decades. She has been the motivation behind my works,” Rahmani said before giving the award to Nasirpur.

Nasirpur thanked the organizers and said, “I also thank Mohammad Rahmani for giving me a beautiful life.”

Calligrapher Keikhosro Khorush honored with lifetime achievement award

A R T **TEHRAN** — Veteran calligrapher Keikhosro Khorush, who is mostly known for calligraphy works on Persian classical literature, was honored with a lifetime achievement award during a ceremony held at the Calligraphy Museum of Iran in Tehran on Thursday.

The ceremony attended by veteran painters Habibollah Sadeqi and Enayatollah Nuri, Tehran City Council member Ahmad Masjed-Jamei and a large number of calligraphers and literati was organized in collaboration with the Iran Calligraphers Association.

Speaking at the ceremony, director of the museum, Hooman Yusefdehi, said that the calligraphers and painters have beautifully recorded the feelings and desires of Iranians and added, “These artists possess a special status in Iranian society and we must always honor and appreciate them.”

Nuri next talked about Khorush and said, “Master Khorush has had great masters in life but good nature has been his best master. He has been able to throw away hatred and pessimism with the help of love and that is why his words are all filled with love and his art is respected. Master Khorush is a chapter of Iran's history of art and will be remembered forever.”

Masjed-Jamei called Khorush the symbol of Iranian's sophistication and said, “Master Khorush has represented calligraphy at its highest level.”

“He has mastery over both calligraphy and painting but has not mingled them together, and has followed their rules separately; this is



Calligrapher Keikhosro Khorush in an undated photo. (Meh/Shahab Qayyumi)

actually protecting Iranian traditional art,” he concluded.

Khorush painted a portrait of the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Imam Khomeini, in the early years of the 1979 Islamic revolution that has been republished many times.

A copy of the Divan of Hafez inscribed by Khorush has been one of the top-selling books over the years.

The Calligraphy Museum of Iran is home to a rare collection of Persian calligraphy.

The building was a historical house in Tehran formerly owned by Gholamreza Fuladvand, a senator during the reign of Iran's last monarch, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

The house was converted into a museum under the auspices of Tehran Municipality's Beautification Organization in 2017 and is located on Hoquqi Alley off Somayyeh Street in downtown Tehran.

Iran's submission to 2020 Oscars “Finding Farideh” named best in Herat festival

A R T **TEHRAN** — Iran's submission to the 2020 Oscars “Finding Farideh” was named best documentary at the 5th Herat International Women's Film Festival, a public relations team announced on Friday.

Co-directed by Azadeh Musavi and Kurosh Atai, the film is about a Netherlands-based Iranian woman who was adopted by a Dutch couple forty years ago, and returns to Iran to search for her family.

“Finding Farideh” was selected as Iran's submission to the 92nd Academy Awards in the best foreign-language film category.

The documentary has been acclaimed in several Iranian events. It was selected as best documentary at the 20th Iran Cinema Celebration in Tehran in September 2018.

Musavi also attended a screening of the documentary at Kabul University.

Iranian director Rakhshan Bani-Etemad was the president of the jury of the Herat

International Women's Film Festival. Bani-Etemad received an award for her lifetime achievements during the previous edition of the festival.

Mehraveh Sharifinia, the actress in Bani-Etemad's acclaimed social drama “Tales”, was also a special guest of the festival, which opened at the Intercontinental Hotel in Kabul on August 26 and ran until August 29 in Herat, Bamyan and Nangarhar.

A lineup of 47 films from different countries, including Afghanistan, India, Myanmar, Turkey, France, Egypt, Italy, Belgium, Iran, Russia, United States, Lebanon, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Kazakhstan and Germany, competed in the festival this year.

The first edition of the festival was held in Herat and the next two editions were also held at the ancient fortress of Ekhtiyar Al-din (Arg) in the same province. The fourth and fifth editions took place in Kabul.

London Film Festival picks three films from Iran

A R T **TEHRAN** — The d e s k Iranian films “The Warden”, “Coup 53” and “Fault Line” will go on screen at the 63rd BFI London Film Festival, the organizers have announced.

“The Warden” by Nima Javidi will be screened in the Thrill section. The film is about an Iranian prison warden who is assigned to transfer prisoners to a new building during the 1960s.

The documentary “Coup 53” by Taqi Amirani is a decade-long investigation into the U.S.-designed 1953 coup against the government of Mohammad Mosaddeq in Iran.

“Fault Line” (Gosal) is a short by Soheil Amirsharifi, which tells the story of a schoolgirl who tries to hide a mistake she made in the morning that has caused problems for her friends and herself.

The festival presents a lineup 229 feature films from some of the world's greatest directors and emerging filmmakers.

For 12 days from October 2 to 13, the festival will celebrate the diverse landscape of international cinema.

It will open with Armando Iannucci's “The Personal History of David Copperfield”, and close with Martin Scorsese's latest epic “The Irishman” in its international premiere.

Also included are Taika Waititi's “Jojo Rabbit”, Mister Rogers' movie “A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood”, Timothée Chalamet's historical drama “The King”, Noah Baumbach's “Marriage Story”, James Mangold's racing drama “Le Mans 66”, and Robert Eggers' black-and-white folk tale “The Lighthouse”.