



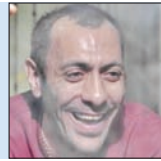
**Iran is forerunner of justice and freedom** **2**



**Attack on detention center marks newest Saudi war crime in Yemen** **3**



**Hezbollah determined to respond to Israeli drone incursion** **13**



**Iran's "Child Eater" wins grand prix at Danish festival** **16**

# Yemeni ambassador submits credentials to Zarif



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## Iran's external debt drops 7%

**TEHRAN** — Iran's debts to foreign lenders in the end of the third Iranian month of Khordad (June 21, 2019) stood at \$8.678 billion, showing seven percent decrease compared to the announced figure at the end of the past Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2019), IRIB reported on Sunday.

According to the latest data released by Central Bank of Iran (CBI), of the total

\$8.678 billion, \$6.969 billion was mid-term and long-term debts and \$1.708 billion was short-term debts.

As reported, Iran's foreign debts were \$9.339 billion at the end of the past Iranian calendar year.

The country's external debts stood at \$8.816 billion at the end of the second Iranian calendar month of Ordibehesht (May, 21), the CBI data showed. ➔ **4**

## Iran unveils drone capable of hitting targets 'far beyond its borders'

**TEHRAN** — Iran has unveiled a new domestically-built drone that can hit targets "far beyond its borders", Mehr reported.

The drone, dubbed Kian, was unveiled on Sunday morning, in a ceremony attended by Brigadier General Alireza Sabahifard, commander of Iran's Air Defense Force.

Speaking at the ceremony, Sabahifard said Kian had been designed in two types,

one of which enjoys high-speed capabilities for tracking and identifying targets while the other one is capable of long-haul flights to conduct precision-strike operations.

He said the advanced drone was designed, produced, tested and operationalized in one year by the young experts of the Drone Unit of Iran's Air Defense Force. ➔ **3**

## Hezbollah destroys Israeli military vehicle near border

**TEHRAN** — Hezbollah has destroyed an Israeli military vehicle in the Israeli border village of Avifim, a statement from Hezbollah said Sunday.

"At 4:15 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 1, 2019, the unit of martyrs Hasan Zabeeb and Yasser Daher destroyed an Israeli military vehicle on the road at the Avifim base, killing and wounding those inside," the statement read.

The Israeli military responded by returning fire towards Lebanon, with witnesses saying shells were falling around the villages of Maroun al-Ras and Aitaroun.

Avichay Adraee, the Israeli army's Arabic-language spokesperson, said on Twitter that residents living within 4 kilometers of the Lebanese border were being instructed to stay inside and open shelters. ➔ **13**

## Kurdish forces deployed again at Turkish borders in new uniforms

**TEHRAN (FNA)** — Kurdish militias have been deployed at the Turkish borders again after the recent withdrawal and the US military aid, amid Ankara's warning to Washington to establish a safe zone in Northeastern Syria, the Syrian Document Center said.

The Arabic-language Syrian Document Center news website quoted a field source as saying that the Kurdish militants have continued to resume their presence in bordering areas in new uniforms a few days after they declared withdrawal from the bordering areas in Hasaka and Raqqa under an agreement to establish a safe zone in Northeastern Syria.

It added that tens of Kurdish militias have returned to the towns of Tal Abyadh and Salouk in Northern Raqqa in different uniforms and as forces of the local military

councils. Meantime, the Syrian Observatory for Human rights reported that over 150 trucks carrying military and logistic aid as well as weapons and military equipment have been sent by the US to the regions occupied by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) via Simalka corridor.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan had on Saturday criticized Washington for lagging in establishment of safe zone in Northern Syria, warning that Ankara will implement its own plans in the next three weeks if the Turkish forces are not allowed to control the region.

In a relevant development late last month, the US army troops started building a military base in Hasaka border region to prevent the Turkish Army from launching an attack on Kurdish militias in Eastern Euphrates as

Washington continued its dual-approach diplomacy towards the two sides, media reports said.

The al-Khabour news website reported that the US Army troops had set up a military base containing a heliport in the town of al-Ghanamieh just five kilometers from Turkey's borders with Syria.

It noted that the US military base would also have a number of arms and ammunition cache as well as a special military training base, and said that the objective for building the military base was to prevent any possible attack by the Turkish Army against Kurdish militias. The Kurdish militias had earlier claimed that the operations have started to implement the US-Turkey agreement on creating a safe zone in Northeastern Syria in the city of Ra'as al-Ain to the North of Hasaka.

## U.S. and China begin imposing new tariffs as trade war escalates

**TEHRAN** — China and the United States have begun imposing additional tariffs on each other's goods in the latest escalation of their bruising trade war that has sent shockwaves through the global economy.

A new round of tariffs took effect from 0401 GMT on Sunday, with Beijing's levy of 5% on U.S. crude oil marking the first time the fuel has been targeted since the world's two largest economies started their trade war more than a year ago.

The Trump administration will begin collecting 15% tariffs on more than \$125bn in Chinese imports, including smart speakers, Bluetooth

headphones and many types of footwear.

In retaliation, China started to impose additional tariffs on some of the U.S. goods on a \$75bn target list. Beijing did not specify the value of the goods that face higher tariffs from Sunday.

The extra tariffs of 5% and 10% were levied on 1,717 items of a total of 5,078 products originating from the United States. Beijing will start collecting additional tariffs on the rest from 15 December.

The new round of tariffs promises more volatility when stock markets resume trading on Monday, although Wall Street is closed for the

Labor day holiday.

Independent Australian market strategist, Greg McKenna, said that market concerns had been repeatedly soothed by conciliatory words from Beijing and Washington.

But he said reality could begin to bite with Sunday's new round of tariffs.

"All the while the tariffs are actually being imposed and the global growth, earnings, and interest rate cycles are pointing down again," he said. "On top of that, the inverted U.S. yield curve suggests to many that at best the U.S. economy is slowing materially and at worst that the recession count down has begun." ➔ **13**



### PERSPECTIVE

**Hanif Ghaffari**

Head of the Tehran Times Politics Desk

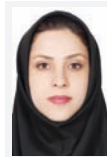
## Will Bolton be fired before 2020?

John Bolton, U.S. national security adviser, is more isolated than ever at the White House. He has now become a major symbol of Washington's defeat in the international system. In recent days, some media have been reporting the possibility of the removal of US National Security Adviser John Bolton. Accordingly, Donald Trump is likely to oust Bolton by year 2020. The popularity of Trump's foreign policy with American citizens has also fallen sharply. Some Trump supporters are deeply concerned about the US government's foreign policy becoming a weakness for the president in next year's presidential election.

Sources aware of Bolton's possible resignation before the start of 2020. Trump is well aware that if he wants to use the issue of Bolton's dismissal for his own electoral purposes and to attract independent voters, he must do so before the end of 2019, otherwise Trump's action would be ineffective.

John Bolton, US National Security Advisor, continues to promote war and terror and violence in his foreign policy. Bolton's title is basically tied to crime, war, and terror. Many American analysts say the National Security Adviser to the Trump government has become the symbol of the White House's failure in the international system. In George W. Bush's presidency, people like Dick Cheney and John Bolton have become the messengers of the White House's defeat in the world. This time Bolton has also become a messenger for defeating Trump and the US in the world.

U.S. media has recently pointed to Bolton's extreme isolation in the United States. Senior US officials have told the Washington Post that Bolton's opposition to the diplomatic effort in Afghanistan has sparked outrage from US President Donald Trump. Bolton's current position at the White House is largely similar to that of General McMaster (former Trump national security adviser) in recent weeks. McMaster was also at that time virtually excluded from Trump's major foreign policy decisions. - Bolton will soon become the main victim of the deal behind the Republican and Trump leaders. This is the worst fate that can await the US National Security Adviser.



### ARTICLE

**Mahnaz Abdi**

Head of the TehranTimes Economy Desk

## Investment funds laying ground to attract more investors

Investment funds have gained high popularity among the investors over the past two decades.

Due to different reasons, such as lack of time or information, many people prefer to benefit from these funds when they want to make some investment in different capital markets.

Making investment through investment funds offers the investors a number of advantages including professional management of the assets, lower risk in investment making, supervision and transparency, high market liquidity and economizing on the costs.

As defined by Investopedia, "An investment fund is a supply of capital belonging to numerous investors used to collectively purchase securities while each investor retains ownership and control of his own shares. An investment fund provides a broader selection of investment opportunities, greater management expertise and lower investment fees than investors might be able to obtain on their own. Types of investment funds include mutual funds, exchange-traded funds, money market funds and hedge funds."

Given that liquidity has recently reached its highest level in Iran, while the society is experiencing an increasing trend of inflation, many people are concerned about their money losing the value.

According to the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), 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). The figure shows 25.1 percent growth in comparison with the same period in the preceding year.

And the Statistical Center of Iran has announced that the inflation rate in the twelve-month period ended on August 22, which marks the end of the fifth Iranian calendar month of Mordad, stood at 42.2 percent, indicating a 1.8-percent rise from the figure of the twelve-month period ended on the last day of the previous month and a 41.6-percent rise compared to the same month of the past year. ➔ **4**



© ISNA / Erfan Khoshkhoo

## Sports journalist Shadmani laid to rest

**TEHRAN** — Iranian sports journalist Mehdi Shadmani was laid to rest in Tehran's Behesht-e Zahra Cemetery on Sunday.

Shadmani died early Saturday at the age of 37 after years of fighting cancer.

He died from Ewing's sarcoma, a rare form of cancer in Tehran's Baqiyatallah Hospital.

Mohammad Javad Azari Jahromi, minister of Information and Technology Communications, Reza Salehi Amiri, President of National Olympic Committee (NOC), former mayor of Tehran Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, Ali Daei, ex-Iran striker and Hadi Tabatabaei, former Team Melli goalkeeper, attended the funeral service in Tehran's Shahid Shiroodi Stadium. ➔ **15**



## Iran is forerunner of justice and freedom: Ismail Haniyeh

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Ismail Haniyeh, head of the political bureau of the Palestinian Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) has said that Iran is "forerunner of justice and freedom".

In a letter to Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei published on Sunday, Haniyeh said that Hamas will continue to remain in the resistance front until final victory is achieved.



Pointing to a Hamas delegation's visit to Tehran in July and meeting with Ayatollah Khamenei, Haniyeh said the Leader's remarks have shown new prospect to Hamas.

## Iran may revert its decision to reduce nuclear commitments: Zarif

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Sunday that Iran may revert its decision to take the next step in reducing commitments under the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA.

Talking to reporters on the sidelines of a meeting with MPs sitting on the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, Zarif said if the Europeans take action in implementing their obligations based on the JCPOA, Iran may revert its decision to take the "third step".

However, he warned, if the Europeans do not take the necessary actions by Thursday, Iran will announce taking the third step in reducing its commitments.

"The government's suggestions for the third step are clear and I will announce it officially as soon as the final decision is taken," the chief diplomat said.

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

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, Zarif said the country will begin suspending more of its commitments under the nuclear deal on September 6.

# Araghchi to visit Paris Monday to discuss proposal to save JCPOA

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi along with a delegation will visit Paris on Monday to discuss a "proposal being discussed between Iran and France".

The information was provided by President Hassan Rouhani's chief of staff Mahmoud Vaezi during an interview with the TV.

The proposal is intended to save the 2015 nuclear agreement, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

"An economic delegation comprised of various departments will take part in [Araghchi's] meeting to clarify the dimensions of the proposal," Vaezi said.

Since Washington's withdrawal from the JCPOA, Tehran has been asking Europe to ignore U.S. sanctions and continue trade. Recently, French President Emmanuel Macron has offered Iran economic incentives in order to reduce tensions between Tehran and Washington.

"France shared a proposal with us two weeks ago and we have revised a substantial part of it," Vaezi said, adding that the proposal is the result of five hours of phone discussions between Macron and Rouhani.



On August 31, Iran disclosed that in their latest phone call Rouhani warned Macron if Europe does not honor its obligations under the nuclear accord, Iran will take another step to reduce its commitments.

Tehran announced in May it will gradually

reduce its obligations and enrich more uranium if Europe does not respond to its demands.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif went to France two times last week upon his French counterpart's invitation

to discuss the situation around the JCPOA and regional tensions.

Zarif on August 25 paid a surprise visit to Biarritz, France, where the G7 leaders were meeting.

The visit came only hours after sources said Macron had been given mission by his G7 counterparts to engage in talks with Iran.

"We agreed on what we wanted to say jointly on Iran," Reuters quoted Macron as saying. "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."

Later, Zarif said in a tweet that he had met with the French president as "Iran's active diplomacy in pursuit of constructive engagement continues."

Iran and the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council — the United States, France, Britain, Russia and China — plus Germany signed the nuclear agreement on July 14, 2015 and started implementing it on January 16, 2016.

Under the accord Iran undertook to put limits on its nuclear program in exchange for the removal of economic and financial sanctions.

## Rouhani to Macron: Terms of nuclear deal unchangeable

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — In a telephone conversation with French President Emmanuel Macron late on Saturday, President Hassan Rouhani said that terms of the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, are unchangeable.

"Terms of the JCPOA are unchangeable and all parties must be committed to its provisions," Rouhani said.

He noted that Iran's main approach is preserving the nuclear deal.

"Full implementation of the commitments by all sides and security of shipping in all waterways, especially the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz, are Iran's two main objectives in current talks," he said.

He also said that the United States withdrew from the JCPOA to cause problems for Iran's interaction with other countries.

"Unfortunately, the European countries have not taken practical actions in line with implementing their obligations after the United States' unilateral action," Rouhani lamented.

Rouhani noted that removal of all sanctions lays the grounds for future talks.

Elsewhere, he said that Iran will take the next step in reducing its commitments under the JCPOA if Europe fails to implement its obligations.

However, he said that Iran's action is reversible.

Rouhani said that France is expected to make efforts in line with implementing resolutions of the UN Security Council and the UN Charter.

Macron pointed to Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif's visit to France on August 25, saying the trip showed Iran's efforts to meet its interests.

He noted that talks should be continued till a favorable result is reached.

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.

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 on September 6.

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.

## Yemeni ambassador submits credentials to Zarif

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — The new ambassador of Yemen to Tehran on Sunday handed over a copy of his credentials to Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif.

Yemen's National Salvation Government appointed Mohamed al-Dailami as the new ambassador of Sanaa to Tehran on August 17. Al-Dailami was named ambassador according to Republic Order 75. It was declared that the naming is within the framework of the Supreme Political Council and National Salvation Government.

Al Masirah, a Yemeni TV channel, said the ambassador was sworn in through a video conference by Mahdi Al-Mashat, president of the Supreme Political Council.

After the swearing in, al-Mashat asked al-Dailami to send his greetings to Iranian President Hassan Rouhani.

Al-Mashat expressed hope that the resumption of the Yemeni embassy's activities in Tehran would mark a beginning for the opening of foreign embassies in Sanaa.



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**Iran Alumina**

**ONE STAGE TENDER INTERNATIONAL CALL**  
FOR **PURCHASE OF 60,000 MT BAUXITE**  
**TENDER No: 98/344** **DATE.: 31<sup>th</sup> August ,2019**

**1.Subject.: Iran Alumina Company (IAC)** intends to purchase high quality bauxite in amount of 60,000 +/-10% MT for using in its Alumina Refinery Plant through one stage Tender according to following conditions as mentioned in the relevant Tender documents .:

Note: The basic level for Al2O3 should be 46% and for SiO2 should be 6% .

**2.:Bid Bond Guarantee.:** 64,000€(sixty four thousands) Euro/or 8,000,000,000 Rials

**3.:Tender proposal.:** Since the tendering is to be done in one stage ,thus the eligible Bidders should follow and regard the Tender instructions and present and submit all of required justified documents and the mentioned Tender envelopes in one package together.

**4.:Closing Date.:** The eligible Bidders should submit their Bids/proposal to the central administration office as mentioned below and also in the Tender documents before 14:00 pm ,local time , on the day monday , **30<sup>th</sup> September ,2019** .

**5.:Opening Date.:** **2<sup>th</sup> October , 2019**

**6.:** The relevant cost of this publishing Tender call will be paid by the winner as the first ranking Bidder.

**7.: Contact information .:** For more details and receiving the relevant Tender documents , the Bidders can refer to the following contact information.

**Add.:** Km 7 of Sankhast Road ,city of Jajarm , Northern Khorasan Province,IRAN,P.O. Box:1135-94415 ,Commercial department / legal and contractual Affairs .

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# Principlists to unify for upcoming election: top figure

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** – The head of the Front of the Followers of the Line of Imam and Leadership, which is a conservative political group, has said that the principlists have begun efforts to form a coalition for the upcoming parliamentary elections.

Mohammad Reza Bahananar also called on all factions within the principlist camp to set aside their differences and unify for the elections, saying, “The experience of the last two elections shows that we reach unity.”

He made the remarks during a press conference in Tehran on Sunday, according to Mehr.

Bahananar also said his camp has 300 potential candidates for the Tehran constituency.

“So far... 300 names have been presented to the council of coalition and we are studying them,” he explained.

Parliamentary elections will be held in late winter 2020.

**■ ‘EC members see no need to pass FATF-related bills’**

Elsewhere in his remarks, Bahananar, who is also a member of the Expediency Council (EC), said no need is felt among members of the council to pass FATF-related bills, including the Palermo and CFT bills.

Members of the Expediency Council have arrived at this conclusion that the council should first determine the results



of Iran’s prior commitments to FATF and see if Tehran has benefited from them or not, he said.

“Currently, the Expediency Council sees no necessity to ratify Palermo and CFT bills. It also should be noted that we do not care about the four-month deadline of the FATF,” he stressed.

“We are also waiting to see whether Europeans, as they claim, are showing any determination in implementing their JCPOA commitments or not,” Bahananar added.

On June 21, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) announced its decision to continue the suspension of counter-measures against Iran, noting the country’s

progress of legislative, anti-money laundering efforts.

The financial watchdog went on to note, however, that “if by October 2019, Iran does not enact the Palermo and Terrorist Financing Conventions in line with the FATF Standards, then the FATF will require introducing enhanced relevant reporting mechanisms or systematic reporting of financial transactions; and increased external audit requirements for financial groups with respect to any of their branches and subsidiaries located in Iran.”

In October 2018, the Paris-based watchdog had given Iran until February to complete an action plan of reforms that would bring it in line with global norms, or face consequences.

Then the FATF announced on February 22 that Iran has until June to fix its anti-money laundering and terrorism financing rules or face increased international scrutiny of its banks.

On October 7, 2018, the Majlis (parliament) voted in favor of the CFT. However, the oversight Guardian Council rejected the bill by finding 22 faults with it.

To become a law, the Guardian Council should vet the bill for compliance with the Constitution. In cases when the parliament and the Guardian Council disagree on a bill, the issue is referred to the Expediency Council for final arbitration.

## Details of Rouhani-Macron conversation cannot be released: Vaezi

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Presidential chief of staff Mahmoud Vaezi has said he cannot reveal the details of the phone conversation between President Hassan Rouhani and his French counterpart, Emmanuel Macron, which took place on Saturday night and lasted for two hours.

In a televised interview on Saturday night, a few hours after the Rouhani-Macron phone talk, Vaezi said the conversation focused on banking, economic and political issues and the two sides are waiting for results, Mehr reported.

According to reports, Rouhani and Macron discussed the prospects of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the official name for the 2015 nuclear agreement between Iran and six world powers which the U.S. scrapped last year.

“Fulfilling the commitments by all parties [to the JCPOA] and guaranteeing the security of free shipping in all waterways, including the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz, are two of Iran’s major goals in the ongoing negotiations,” Rouhani told his French counterpart.

Macron warned that the failure of the JCPOA will

embolden many hardliners on the world stage, adding that “we must look for a solution to secure our mutual interests, and in this regard, France will pursue solving political and economic problems on the way of dealing with Iran and resolve tensions.”

Over the last few weeks, the French government has launched an initiative and held talks with both Iran and the U.S. to reduce the tensions.

Following the recent G7 summit in Paris, 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. “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.”

Meanwhile, Tehran has ruled out the possibility of meeting for meeting’s sake, or as President Rouhani put it, for “photo ops”.

“We seek to resolve issues and problems in a rational way but we are not after photo ops. For anyone want-



ing 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, Rouhani said last week.

## Iran unveils drone capable of hitting targets ‘far beyond its borders’

**1 →** Iran has made major breakthroughs in its defense sector and attained self-sufficiency in producing military equipment and hardware despite facing sanctions imposed by the United States.

The Islamic Republic says its military power is solely for defensive purposes and does not pose any threat to other countries.

In remarks on Friday, Sabahifard hailed the recent progress of his forces, saying Iran’s air defense achievements are way ahead of expectations. The general also pointed the domestically-built missile defense system dubbed “Bavar-373,” saying few countries have the capabilities to produce similar missile defense systems.

On Thursday, Iran unveiled a long-range surface-to-air missile system, dubbed “Bavar-373,” saying the system is more advanced than the U.S. Patriot system and its Russian counterpart S-300.



Bavar-373 is a mobile missile defense system designed to intercept and destroy incoming hostile targets.

The system employs missiles that have a maximum range of 300 kilometers. The system is capable of simultaneously detecting up to 300 targets, tracking 60 targets at once and engaging six targets at a time.

The developments came amid escalating tensions between Iran and the United States. 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.

Sabahifard said only regional countries can maintain security in the Persian Gulf region. Extra-regional countries’ presence and coalitions only destabilize the region, he said during a speech at the Friday prayers.

## Iran, EU will try to preserve nuclear deal: professor

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** – A professor of political science at University of North Texas says that the European Union and Iran will try to preserve the 2015 nuclear deal between Tehran and world powers.

In an interview with the Iran Labor News Agency published on Sunday, Michael Greig said the deal was a good step toward stability in the region.

Greig said: “My guess is that Iran and Europe will try to sustain the agreement until the next U.S. presidential election, in the hopes that if Trump loses the election, the next U.S. president will re-join the agreement.”

“Key to that possibility is that Iran remains compliant with the terms of the agreement.”

The nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), was endorsed by the UN Security Council Resolution 2231.

Regarding Trump’s decision to leave the pact, Greig said, “I’m not sure that there is much positive to say about the decision by Trump. As for negative outcomes, it created divisions between the U.S. and Europe, and empowered the positions of hardliners in both the U.S. and Iran, and it also provided a bad example for North Korea in its negotiations with the U.S.”

The U.S.-based analyst further said “American politics is hard to predict this far away from a presidential election. Trump’s current public opinion polls are quite negative, which suggest that his reelection is far from certain.”

He added, “Iran has complained about the delay in

announcing the European Union’s financial mechanism, and within it, some believe that this mechanism is not enough to meet all the obligations of Europeans in the end.”

Washington withdrew from the internationally-endorsed 2015 nuclear deal with Iran in May 2018, re-imposed the toughest-ever sanctions against the country and started a plan to zero down Tehran’s oil sales.

Under the nuclear agreement reached between Iran and six world powers in July 2015, Tehran undertook to put limits on its nuclear program in exchange for the removal of economic and financial sanctions.

Yet, Iran continued compliance with the deal, stressing that the remaining signatories to the agreement, especially the Europeans, had to work to offset the negative impacts of the U.S. pullout from the agreement if they want Tehran to remain in compliance.

The Iranian officials had earlier warned that the European Union’s failure in providing the needed ground for Tehran to enjoy the economic benefits of the nuclear deal would exhaust the country’s patience.

Almost a year later, however, the EU failed to provide Tehran with its promised merits.

Then, the U.S. State Department announced that it had not extended two waivers, one that allowed Iran to store excess heavy water produced in the uranium enrichment process in Oman, and one that allowed Iran to swap enriched uranium for raw yellowcake



with Russia.

Then Iran gave Europe 60 days to either normalize economic ties with Iran or accept the modification of Tehran’s obligations under the agreement and implement its proposed INSTEX to facilitate trade with Iran.

Iran also set up and registered a counterpart to INSTEX called Special Trade and Financing Instrument between Iran and Europe (STFI) to pave the way for bilateral trade.

## ‘Stop nagging’, Zarif tells Pompeo

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif called on U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to “stop nagging” about the Iranian oil tanker Adrian Darya, saying that Iran “will sell oil to any and all buyers”.

Zarif brought examples that whenever and wherever the U.S. has tried to block Iran’s access to what it needs, his country has succeeded to make a breakthrough.

“US denied us means of defense: We built missiles & US complains.

US denied us nuclear fuel: We made it & US complains.



## Zarif says ‘we will sell oil to any and all buyers’

Now US engages in piracy & threats to prevent Iran from selling oil to traditional customers.

Stop nagging @SecPompeo: We will sell oil to any & all buyers,” Zarif tweeted on Saturday.

The tweet by Zarif came one day after the United States blacklisted Adrian Darya following repeated warnings over its valuable oil cargo.

“We have reliable information that the tanker is underway and headed to Tartus, Syria,” Pompeo claimed in a tweet on Friday.

On July 4, British Royal Marines in Gibraltar stormed the supertanker, then named “Grace 1” off the coast of Gibraltar, seizing the 300,000-ton vessel based on the accusation that it was carrying oil to Syria in possible violation of the European Union’s sanctions on the Arab country.

Spain revealed that the tanker was captured upon order by the United States. White House national security advisor John Bolton, an ultra-hawk, praised the ship’s seizure. The Gibraltar government, a semi-autonomous territory ruled by London, released on August 15 the supertanker despite the U.S. attempts to block it.

The U.S. Department of Treasury on Friday said the vessel is “blocked property”, and “anyone providing support to the Adrian Darya 1 risks being sanctioned”. The ship’s captain, Akhilesh Kumar, was also blacklisted under the order, which generally prohibits dealings with blocked property by U.S. persons.

Since its release from Gibraltar, the Adrian Darya has been bouncing around the Mediterranean, its every move followed. The vessel was in waters north of Cyprus as of early Saturday, according to the MarineTraffic website.

## 1.4 tons of drugs seized in Semnan, Alborz and Tehran provinces

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** – A provincial police commander has announced that 1,440 kg of drugs were seized in a joint police operation in the provinces of Semnan, Alborz and Tehran, IRNA reported.

Semnan Police Chief Colonel Abdollah Hassani said on Saturday that after months of intelligence activities by Special Operations Officers of Semnan Anti-Narcotics Police, clues to the activities of members of a drug smuggling gang from the east to the central parts of the country were obtained.

Hassani said subsequent observations by Semnan police officers showed that a part of a large cargo was being stored around Tehran by members of a gang and another was being transported.

Pointing to the cooperation among the police forces of the three provinces in the operation, the commander said the police seized a Peugeot automobile belonging to a gang member in Fardis of Karaj and 68.5 kilogram of morphine and 123.5 kilogram of opium were discovered.

Hassani said the operation led to the identification of the hideout and the arrest of a key gang member in Islamshahr.

Hinting at the discovery of two cars and the arrest of three drug smuggling gangs in the operation, he said police seized 1,248 kg of opium in the operation.

## Attack on detention center marks newest Saudi war crime in Yemen

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Saudi-led air strikes on a detention center in southwest Yemen on Sunday, which killed and wounded dozens of people, drew a strong rebuke from Tehran.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Seyed Abbas Mousavi said the detention center in Dhamar bombarded by the coalition had been identified by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and that its representatives had visited the site several times.

“The bombardment of the detention center was the latest war crime committed by the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen and (adds) another page to (the list of) crimes of the aggressors,” the spokesman said.

“These crimes are committed with weapons of the U.S. and some (other) Western countries... and the Yemeni people certainly hold these countries responsible for these crimes,” he added.

Residents in Dhamar told news outlets that there had been six air strikes and that a complex in the city being used as a detention center had been hit.

According to media reports, Yemen’s Health Ministry spokesman said 60 bodies had been pulled from the rubble at the prison and that the number could rise. There was no immediate independent confirmation of the number of casualties.

“The explosions were strong and shook the city,” one resident said. “Afterwards ambulance sirens could be heard until dawn.”

Yemen’s defenseless people have been under massive attacks by the coalition for more than four years but Riyadh has reached none of its objectives in Yemen so far.



STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	286114.7
IFX	3776.

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	46,226 rials
GBP	51,067 rials
AED	11,437 rials

Source: cbi.ir

COMMODITIES

Brent	\$59.25/b
WTI	\$55.10/b
OPEC Basket	\$60.24/b
Gold	\$1,522.25/oz
Silver	\$18.43/oz
Platinum	\$936.50/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

Iran’s external debt drops 7%

**1 →** Back in July, CBI published a report saying that Iran’s foreign debt at the end of the last Iranian calendar year decreased nearly 17 percent compared to the figure for the preceding year. The report indicated that of the country’s total external debt in the mentioned date, \$7.187 billion was long and medium-term debt while short-term debt accounted for \$2.151 billion.

External debt is the portion of a country’s debt that was borrowed from foreign lenders including commercial banks, governments or international financial institutions. These loans, including interest, must usually be paid in the currency in which the loan was made.

Foreign debt as percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the ratio between the debt a country owes to non-resident creditors and its nominal GDP.

French economy expands faster than expected in second quarter

France’s economy expanded faster than expected in the second quarter, proving - for now - to be impervious to the slowdown taking hold of the broader eurozone, official data showed.

According to gulfoday.ae, higher inflation ate into consumers’ purchasing power, as households disposable income fell 0.2% after surging 0.8% in the first quarter, boosted by the package of tax breaks and bonus scheme.

The eurozone’s second-biggest economy grew 0.3% in the quarter, unchanged from the previous three months, the INSEE statistics agency said, revising the figure up from a provisional estimate of 0.2%.

The revision means that France outpaced the broader eurozone where the economic output of the overall bloc slowed to 0.2% from 0.3% three months earlier.The relative resilience of the French economy contrasts sharply with the export-dependent German economy, which is teetering on the brink of recession.



Germany, the euro zone’s biggest economy, contracted 0.1% in the second quarter as global trade tensions and uncertainty over Britain’s exit from the European Union took their toll.

■ The economic stimulus

While the German slowdown is fuelling debate there about the need for a jolt of economic stimulus, France is already receiving an exceptional injection of public money into the economy this year.

President Emmanuel Macron brought forward planned tax breaks and incentives for companies to give workers bonuses together worth more than 10 billion euros (\$11.14 billion).

Macron rushed to pump the extra cash into the economy at the end of last year after facing violent anti-government “yellow vest” protests triggered in part by frustration over dwindling household purchasing power.

However, so far the extra cash has not translated into higher consumer spending, although it is helping to keep household confidence at elevated levels despite the deteriorating economic outlook abroad.

INSEE said consumer spending growth - traditionally the motor of the broader economy - eased to 0.2% from 0.3% in the first quarter.

The slower consumer spending was partially offset by a pick-up in business investment, which grew 0.9% after 0.6% in the first quarter as corporate profit margins increased to 33.1% - the highest since mid-2008 - from 32.6%.Meanwhile, the economy has started the third quarter on a firm footing with INSEE reporting that consumer spending grew 0.4% in July from June, against economists’ expectations for an increase of 0.3%.Data earlier this week showed consumer and business confidence held steady in August, defying the gloom setting in much of the euro zone.

Meanwhile, France will need to export 20.1 million tons of soft wheat this season after harvesting its second-largest crop in history, French consultancy Agritel said.

France, the European Union’s largest wheat producer and exporter, has only reached that level of exports three times before.

Mining projects worth over \$660m ready to come on stream: IMIDRO

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Seven projects worth more than \$660 million are ready to be inaugurated in Iran’s mining sector across the country, IRIB reported on Sunday, quoting head of Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) as saying.

According to Khodadad Gharibpour, the mentioned projects are based in four different provinces namely Isfahan, Zanjan, South Khorasan, and Kerman.

Gharibpour noted that three projects worth \$37 million will be inaugurated in Zanjan, South Khrasan and Isfahan provinces which create 213 jobs directly and offer 950 indirect job opportunities.

The other four projects worth over \$630 million are going to go operational in Kerman province.

The projects include a sponge iron production unit with a capacity of 4,000 tons of sponge iron per year and development of



Gol-e Gohar Iron and Steel Development Company, as well as a combined cycle power plant with a capacity of 160 megawatts.

“Inauguration of these projects in Kerman province will lead to direct employment of 1,600 people and creating 1,700 indirect opportunities,” Gharibpour said.

Back in April, Gharibpour had said that projects worth \$3 billion are planned to be inaugurated in the country’s mining sector in the current Iranian calendar year (began on March 21, 2019).

The official said that 20 projects implemented by IMIDRO in the previous year created 4,440 direct jobs and 25,300 indirect jobs.

The inaugurated projects were related to the chains of steel, copper and aluminum products as well as some infrastructure projects, the official mentioned.

The deputy industry and mining minister also said that the projects were implemented in collaboration with the country’s private sector.

Investment funds laying ground to attract more investors

**1 →** According to the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), 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).

The figure shows 25.1 percent growth in comparison with the same period in the preceding year.

And the Statistical Center of Iran has announced that the inflation rate in the twelve-month period ended on August 22, which marks the end of the fifth Iranian calendar month of Mordad, stood at 42.2 percent, indicating a 1.8-percent rise from the figure of the twelve-month period ended on the last day of the previous month and a 41.6-percent rise compared to the same month of the past year.

Under such condition, investment funds with the advantage of low investment risk and high market liquidity lay a proper ground for investment making.

It’s a decade that investment funds have started activity in the Iranian capital market under the supervision of Iran’s Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO).

According to the data released by Financial Information Processing of Iran (FIPIran), a subsidiary of Tehran Securities Exchange Technology Management Company (TSETMC), some 200 investment funds

have been active in the country during the past decade and the value of investment made by the real and legal entities through these funds has reached 1.6 quadrillion rials (about \$38.095 billion) something that equals 10 percent of liquidity in the country.

While the advantages offered by the investment funds incentivize the investors, capital market is also laying the ground for more activity of these funds in its different markets.

During a press conference held at the place of Iran’s over-the-counter (OTC) exchange market, known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB), on Saturday on the recent amendments made in the regulations of the IFB base market, Amir Hamooni, the managing director of IFB, said these amendments will make it possible for two more types of investment funds to enter the base market.

To attract more investors to these funds, SEO is also investigating their limitations to remove them.

One limitation is that each investment fund has its own mechanism; so the investors should study separate instructions and regulations for making investment through different funds.

Mohammadreza Motamed, the SEO director for



supervising financial institutions, last week announced that mechanisms of the investment funds are to become similar.

He said, “We are investigating the regulations to define an integrated instruction for the activity of these funds in a way that the investors will be required to refer to just a single instruction once making investment through different funds”.

Stock market issues 47,000 trading codes in a month

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Some 47,000 new trading codes were issued in Iran’s stock market during the fifth month of current Iranian calendar year, Mordad (July 23-August 22), IRNA quoted Fariba Akhavan, the deputy managing director of Central Securities Depository of Iran (CSDI), as saying on Saturday.

With the new codes issued, the total number of trading codes in the country’s



capital market reached 11.042 million, Akhavan announced.

She also said that 92 codes have been issued for the foreign shareholders since the beginning of current Iranian calendar year (March 21) and the total number of foreign shareholders’ codes is 1,366 at the moment.

The first trading code was issued for a foreign shareholder in Iranian calendar year of 1373 (1994-95) to let it commence its activity

in Iranian capital market.

Presence of new shareholders in Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE) rose 40 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1396 compared to its preceding year.

CSDI is the sole registrar, central custodian and clearing house for the Iranian financial market of four exchanges including TSE, Iran’s over-the-counter (OTC) market known also as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB), Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME), and Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX).

Recession-risk insights on tap as trade war flares: Economy Week

Terms of Trade is a daily newsletter that untangles a world embroiled in trade wars.

According to finance.yahoo.com, whether a recession is brewing in the U.S. and world economies may become clearer this week as a wave of vital data is released globally.

It’s already been a busy weekend. The U.S. carried through its threat to slap tariffs on roughly \$110 billion in Chinese imports. There were also fresh signs of the trade war hurting demand with China’s manufacturing purchasing managers’ index falling again and a slump in South Korean exports extending to a ninth month.

Thursday sees the release of PMIs from around the world, which may provide insight into how deep the manufacturing slump is and whether it’s infecting the services sector. Then on Friday the U.S. will publish its payrolls report for August with Bloomberg Economics predicting an increase of 195,000.

Such data will help inform the likes of Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell and European Central Bank President Mario Draghi as they enter September planning for policy meetings at which they’re expected to deliver fresh monetary stimulus.

■ The heightened uncertainty

“U.S. GDP data show defensive posturing among businesses in the first half of the year, so the risk is that heightened uncertainty will lead to an even more aggressive pullback,” said Carl Riccadonna, chief U.S. economist at Bloomberg Economics.

“This leaves consumers as the predominant engine of growth -- and so the focus in the near term turns to income generation in the monthly jobs report. If the household income trend is intact, then consumers will be well positioned

to shoulder the load in the back half of the year.”

Powell speaks in Switzerland on Friday just before Fed officials are set to go quiet. So this provides the last moment to inform investors about what the central bank is thinking.

On Wednesday, regional Fed presidents John Williams, James Bullard, Charles Evans and Neel Kashkari will all speak and the central bank releases its Beige Book snapshot of the economy. Friday’s payrolls report wraps up the week.

In Canada, the Bank of Canada holds a rate decision on Wednesday that’s expected to lay the groundwork for a cut after the federal election in October. An employment report comes Friday.

The trade war will continue to reverberate and shape markets and the region’s economic outlook.

■ Maintaining key rate

Australia’s Central Bank is set to decide on interest rates on Tuesday although economists expect it to maintain its key rate at 1% while leaving the door open to further easing. The next day, second-quarter GDP numbers are due with Bloomberg Economics penciling in a slight weakening to 1.5%.

On Friday, Japan posts household spending with economists anticipating its growth slowed in July.

Sweden’s Riksbank may scrap plans to raise interest rates when its officials gather on Thursday. Meantime, the mood music for the ECB’s own upcoming policy decision due on Sept. 12 will steadily increase in volume after hawkish members of its Governing Council last week signaled opposition to aggressive stimulus.

A speech by ECB Chief Economist Philip Lane on Wednesday may guide investors before officials begin a pre-meeting blackout period.

German factory orders and industrial production data



on Thursday and Friday respectively will reveal whether the weakness of the second quarter persisted into July.

In the UK, the PMIs will give a health check on the economy with a potential no-deal Brexit now just weeks away. The new government will detail its spending plans for the upcoming year on Wednesday.

Data on Monday will probably show Turkey’s economy contracted in the second quarter after the nation briefly exited its first recession in a decade in the first three months of the year. South Africa and Nigeria will report second-quarter GDP on Tuesday.

The two largest economies in Africa, which account for about half the continent’s total output, continue to be a drag on the region’s expansion.

Ukraine’s Central Bank may reduce rates on Thursday. The Bank of Russia will determine rates on Friday after two successive cuts; the median forecast is for another reduction of 25 basis points.

China rises to top engine of global economic growth in 70 years



China has ranked first in terms of contribution to global economic growth since 2006, becoming the leading engine of world economic growth, an official report said Thursday.

As per timesofoman.com, in the past 70 years, China’s proportion of major economic and social aggregate indicators in the world has further increased, its international status has been further enhanced, and its global influence has continued to grow, said a report released by the National Bureau of Statistics.

The report shows that from 1961 to 1978, China’s average annual contribution to global economic growth was 1.1 percent, but from 1979 to 2012, the average annual contribution rate was 15.9 percent, ranking second in the world.

From 2013 to 2018, the average annual figure climbed to 28.1 percent, ranking first place globally, the report said.

In 2018, the ratio of China’s contribution to global economic growth was 27.5 percent,

24.4 percentage points higher than in 1978, the report said.Over the past 70 years, China’s economic strength has grown remarkably.

In 1952, China’s GDP was 30 billion dollars, while in 2018, its GDP reached 13.61 trillion dollars, an increase of 452.6 times.

In 1978, China’s GDP ranked 11th in the world, while in 2010, it overtook Japan to become the second largest economy in the world, and has remained the second largest economy since then.



# Regulations on implementation of oil projects approved

**E N E R G Y** **TEHRAN** – The issue of implementing Iran's oil projects by domestic contractors was discussed in the 38th session of the country's Supreme Council of Economic Coordination on Saturday and rules and regulations pertain to the subject were approved by the council.

As reported by Shana, President Hassan Rouhani, Majlis speaker Ali Larijani and Judiciary Chief Hojjatoleslam Ebrahim Raiesi as well as Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh attended the council in which various issues were brought up and discussed.

Issues related to reforming the hidden energy subsidy system, reforming and integrating the country's tax and social security systems, and managing government assets were followed up in this session of the council.

First Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri, Presidential chief of staff Mahmoud Vaezi, Vice President for Economic Affairs Mohammad Nahavandian, Governor of Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Abdolnasser



Hemmati, Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs Farhad Dehpasand, Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli, Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian, Head of Iran Planning and Budget Organization (PBO) Mohammad Baqer Nobakht, Mohammad Jafar Montazeri, Iran's prosecutor general, and a number of MPs attended the session.

Since the reimposition of U.S. sanctions, Iranian oil ministry has been encouraging domestic companies' presence in its oil and gas projects, both in exploration and in development sectors.

As there are many blocks waiting for exploration and development, National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) is seriously following up the plans to lay the ground for the private sector's contribution.

In late August, NIOC announced that it has introduced 10 major oil and gas exploration projects in the company's Exploration Directorate.

The previous session of the Supreme Council of Economic Coordination was held on August 10.

## IRENEX to hold 8th round of heavy crude oil offering

**E N E R G Y** **TEHRAN** – National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) will offer two million barrels of heavy crude oil at Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX) on Tuesday, Shana reported.

The base price for this round of offering, which is the seventh round, is \$50.54 per barrel.

According to Iran's current year budget law, NIOC is obliged to offer two million barrels of heavy crude oil, two million barrels of light crude and two million barrels of gas condensate every month.

NIOC, however has been offering various grades of crude oil almost every week, since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year.

The 7th round of heavy crude oil offering was held on Tuesday August 27, in which two million barrels of heavy crude was offered at a base price of \$50.37 per barrel.

As decided by NIOC in collaboration with IRENEX, buyers can receive their cargo up to three months after the transaction, and the delivery of the cargo in other regions is subject to NIOC approval.

Since the U.S.'s withdrawal from Iran's nuclear pact in May 2018, vowing to drive Iran's oil exports down to zero, the Islamic Republic has been taking various measures to counter the U.S. actions and to keep its oil exports levels as high as possible.

One of the main strategies that Iran chose to execute to help its oil exports afloat has been trying new ways to diversify the mechanism of oil sales, one of which is offering oil at the country's stock market.

NIOC offered light crude oil at IRENEX first on October 28, 2018 just few days before new U.S. sanctions on Iran's petroleum sector took effect (November 4). In the first round, NIOC could sell some 280,000 barrels of crude oil at \$74.85 per barrel. With the daily supply amount of one million barrels, the market wrapped up by selling eight 35,000-barrel cargos of oil on the day.

Offering gas condensate at IRENEX came after the successful offering of crude oil at this market. The first offering was done on February 13, which failed to attract customers.

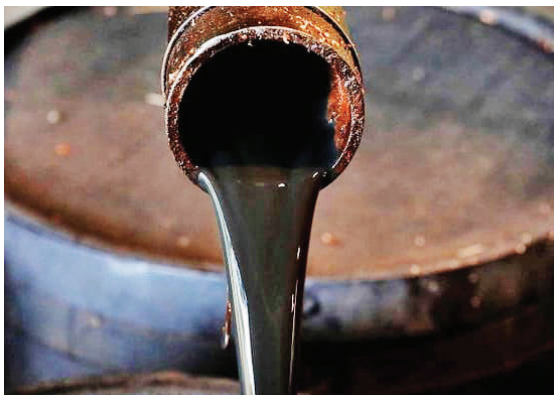
And then the turn came to heavy crude. Offering heavy crude at IRENEX came after NIOC offered light crude at this stock market in eight round.

National Iranian Oil Company sold 70,000 barrels of heavy crude oil at IRENEX for the first time on April 30. In the first round one million barrels of heavy crude was offered at a base price of \$60.68.

NIOC's representative in IRENEX has said that the company will continue offering oil at IRENEX, Mehr news agency reported.

"Offering oil and gas condensate in the international ring of IRENEX has become a legal obligation, and it will definitely be a lasting move," Amir Hossein Tebyanian said in a press conference hosted by Mehr news agency at the place of the agency in early July.

Briefing the press about the procedures and processes of NIOC's oil and gas condensate offerings at IRENEX, the official noted that physical sales of oil at IRENEX is just the first step and the main goal is to activate other financial



instruments, and offer Iranian crude in the regional stock markets.

"We will continue offering oil at the IRENEX in order to institutionalize the necessary procedures which are a prerequisite for improving IRENEX to the level of world class stock exchanges," he said.

According to the official, IRENEX was initially founded in an attempt to permit the Iranian private sector export crude oil since Washington aims to cut Iran's oil sales.

However now, foreign buyers have also expressed willingness to engage in IRENEX oil offerings and welcoming the idea, NIOC is preparing necessary bases for them to be able to do so.

## Moscow fuels Artic LNG race with billions of dollars

Novatek, Russia's largest private natural gas company, will receive a tax deduction of about \$600 million (40 billion rubles) from the regional budget of Yamal-Nenets and \$1.5 billion (100 billion rubles) from the federal budget to build an LNG export terminal in the autonomous region in north-western Siberia, Russian daily RBC reported this week.

As per oilprice.com, the information, which was confirmed by Novatek, is the latest indication that Moscow is doubling down on liquefied natural gas at a time of growing demand for the commodity that will inevitably displace a portion of demand for one of Russia's top export commodities, oil.

Novatek, which last year overtook Gazprom in market capitalization, operates the Yamal LNG plant, which has a nameplate capacity of 17.4 million tons annually, and is building the Arctic LNG plant, which will add another 19.8 million tons when completed.

Eventually, Novatek plans to operate total annual liquefaction capacity of 60 million tons.

The Russia company is not going it alone. Its partners in Arctic LNG 2 include Total, CNPC, Japan Arctic LNG, and CNOOC.

There were many reports that Saudi Aramco would buy into the project, but with 60 percent for Novatek and 10 percent for each of the minority partners, all the stakes have been divided -- and Novatek has said it would not reduce its 60-percent holding in the project.

Novatek is widely seen as the spearhead of Russia's international LNG expansion.

Gazprom also produces LNG but on a smaller scale than the private company, for the time being. Earlier this year,



in an interview with Bloomberg, Novatek's chief financial officer Mark Gyetvay said Russia could emerge as one of the top four global LNG producers over the next few years.

### ■ The LNG capacity

Bloomberg estimates that from April this year, the U.S. and Qatar could both have installed capacity of 100 million tons annually by 2030, sharing the top spot, with Australia following with 95 million tons annually and Russia coming fourth with 75 million tons of LNG capacity.

Estimates are an uncertain thing, however.

Low gas prices, especially in the key Asian markets, have stalled a lot of private LNG projects, notably in the United States.

This is where government support for Novatek becomes

essential.

With it, the company could stick to its plans and schedules and add production capacity before competitors who struggle with project delays and cost overruns. And there is another factor working for Novatek: climate change.

As the weather warms, parts of the Arctic are melting, opening up the Northern Sea Route for longer periods than before.

The route, which incidentally plays an important part in China's Belt and Silk Road initiative, cuts shipping times from Western Europe to China by as much as 15 days. This naturally has important implications for pricing and, consequently, competitiveness.

It is no coincidence Chinese companies hold stakes in both of Novatek's LNG facilities. In the Yamal LNG plant, these include CNPC with a 20-percent interest, and the state Silk Road Fund, with another 9.9 percent, bringing the total Chinese participation to almost 40 percent.

China will emerge as the world's largest LNG importer in the coming years and it is making sure to secure supply early on, led by purely economic considerations.

This means other suppliers would need to find ways to make their LNG more competitive, at least while the gas glut lasts, pressuring prices and turning the market into a buyers' market.

## China sends in the inspectors in to clamp down on wasted renewable energy



Chinese officials have dispatched inspectors across the country as part of a renewed effort to prevent wind and solar power from being wasted.

According to forbes.com, the inspectors will also be monitoring the roll-out of the country's new solar policies, which are a stepping stone to truly subsidy-free renewables in the country.

A combination of factors, from mismatched supply and demand to insufficient grid capacity, can result in what the

industry refers to as curtailment. Essentially, it amounts to shunting generating renewable energy plants offline until such time as that power is needed again or there is somewhere for it to go.

Last May, Beijing scrapped subsidy support for solar power, eventually holding the first round of a new replacement scheme earlier this year.

Many companies including manufacturers of solar panels and other equipment, supplement their revenue by develop-

ing projects. But with curtailment rates commonly in the double digits, those and the pure-play developers are seeing their profits curtailed too.

That may have been sustainable in the days of generous subsidy but the new support mechanism requires projects to operate on a cost per unit of electricity close to the price of coal. Would-be developers took part in a reverse auction bidding for a premium over and above the regional benchmark price for electricity. The margins are now slimmer.

The new support is also contingent on projects being able to demonstrate that the provinces where they are built have sufficient grid capacity to absorb their power. In July a total of 23GW of solar capacity was awarded to the winners.

Among the ten biggest winners were the world's largest panel manufacturer Jinko Solar and the second-largest inverter manufacturer Sungrow.

The inspectors will likely find themselves spending a lot of their time in Chi-

na's northern deserts where curtailment has previously been a challenge.

At the start of 2017, the country's National Energy Administration reported curtailments rates of 39% in Xinjiang province and 19% in Gansu Province.

The latest figure for Xinjiang, released last week, is 10.6%, a sign that the policy of halting new capacity and reinforcing the grid is making an impact.

At the start of 2019 the State Grid Corporation announced plans for five new pumped hydro energy storage facilities as part of an effort to tackle the curtailment challenge.

The inspectors will also be tasked with ensuring local governments are playing their part in promoting the purchase of renewable energy.

A renewable energy certificate scheme, similar to those in the U.S. and Europe, is also being established as an additional method of incentivizing investment in wind and solar power without a direct subsidy.

## POGC installs flare jacket of South Pars platform 13A

**E N E R G Y** **TEHRAN** – Pars Oil and Gas Company (POGC) finished installing the flare jacket of platform 13A of South Pars gas field on its spot in the Persian Gulf waters on Friday, POGC Public Relations Department announced.

Pars Oil and Gas Company is in charge of implementing development phases of the giant South Pars gas field (Iran shares with Qatar in the Persian Gulf).

According to the operator of South Pars phase 13 of development, Payam Motamed, the 405-ton structure, which is the last flare jacket of phase 13, was installed during ten days.

Once starting operation, platform 13A will add 14.2 million cubic meters (mcm) of gas to the country's total output, Motamed said.

Phase 13 development plan is aiming for a daily production of 56 million cubic meters of gas and 75,000 barrels of gas condensate, while 400 tons of sulfur, one million tons of ethane, one million tons of propane and butane, and 100,000 tons of LNG are to be the annual output of this phase.

South Pars gas field is estimated to contain a significant amount of natural gas, accounting for about eight percent of the world's reserves, and approximately 18 billion barrels of condensate. The field is divided into 24 standard phases.

In early June, Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh, in separate decrees, outlined the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2019-March 19, 2020) priorities of the ministry's four major subsidiaries.

In the decree addressed to Masoud Karbasian, the head of National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), completion and inauguration of the phases 13, 14, 22 and 24 of South Pars gas field was one of the main priorities for NIOC.

## SA looks to gas for power

As South Africa scrambles to stabilize and diversify its energy resources while continuing to be heavily reliant on an ailing Eskom and its coal, which is causing devastating pollution, the country is now strongly looking at liquefied natural gas (LNG) and oil as alternatives.

Industry experts say heavy coal consumption and unreliable power generation make natural gas an attractive solution to diversify its power generation base.



Next month, South Africa will host a three-day Africa Oil and Power Exhibition conference in Cape Town. Representatives from many African countries and about 1 000 global leaders in the petroleum and power industry will attend. Themed #MakeEnergyWork, the conference will discuss the future of natural gas on the continent.

The conference embraces the entire African value chain, from upstream oil and gas operators, service providers, finance, and energy infrastructure to power generation, transmission and distribution.

South Africa is one of the focus countries as it readily presents petroleum and power opportunities, and has been identified as an influential market. Various countries will present their projects with the hope of getting funding deals signed and sealed.

Next year, Transnet is putting out a tender for the development of an LNG import terminal in Richards Bay, and the World Bank, through its International Finance Corporation, has already committed \$2 million (R30.6 million) to fund the project.

Delivering his budget speech in July, Mineral Resources Minister Gwede Mantashe announced that the Coega special economic zone will be the preferred LNG importation hub.

(Source: city-press.news24.com)

First Announcement



**Iranian Offshore Oil Company (P.J.S)**  
**INVITATION TO PUBLIC TENDER (Pre-Qualification)**  
**CHARTERING OF ONE FIREFIGHTING TUG BOAT**  
**TENDER No. 97/072/OT/TI**

**1398-3387**

Iranian Offshore Oil Company (IOOC) intends to open Pre-Qualification for above tender with the following conditions:

### Scope of work:

Chartering Of One Firefighting Tug Boat

### Location:

IOOC Oil Fields in Persian Gulf

### Performance Period:

2 Years

### Other item shall be considered:

- 1: Ability of submission Bid Bond as in the amount of **Iranian Rial 10,635,774,720 for Iranian bidders and EURO 85,992.00 for foreign bidders.**
- 2: Ability of submission 10% of total Contract Price value as performance guarantee in case of winning according to Company's procedure.
- 3: Proposals should be submitted with no condition, incomplete, ambiguous or adverse of Package specification in deadline.
- 4: Company shall reserve the right to accept or reject any or all of proposals or part(s) thereof according to Tender Law.
- 5: The validity of the submitted financial proposals shall be 3 months from the Financial Bids opening Date and extendable for one further period.
- 6: for invitation to above tender, it is necessary to achieve the determinate minimum score in the Pre-qualification.

Bidders who have ability and are willing to participate in the Pre-qualification are requested to submit a written request to Contract Department, within One Week from Second Announcement by representative and collect the Pre-Qualification Forms.

Closing Date for submission of the Pre-Qualification documents shall be up to 14 days after the deadline of collecting Pre-Qualification documents. Place and time of submission and opening of proposals will be stated in Tender Documents.

Address for willing to participate and submission Pre-qualification Documents: **5<sup>th</sup> Floor, #12, Touraj St., Khakzad st., Vali-e-Asr Ave., after Balal Mosque, before Modarres Crossroad, Tehran, Iran. Tel: +9821-23942510**

**Note: Additional information is available at IOOC website address: [www.iooc.co.ir](http://www.iooc.co.ir) on the day of Second Announcement.**

**Iranian Offshore Oil Company Public Relations**



## U.S. wants to use HK turmoil to weaken China

**GLOBALTIMES** – Hong Kong has been reeling with chaos for over two months. Illegal rallies during which some rioters attacked police with Molotov cocktails and bricks were organized on Saturday, and the boycott of classes by students, which will pose a severe challenge to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) government and Hong Kong police, is imminent.

Ignited by opposition to an extradition bill, the chaos in Hong Kong has developed into unrest in which opposition forces, together with external forces, fuel anti-government sentiment and launch political movements in order to seize control of Hong Kong SAR.

These forces intend to cooperate with US attempt to comprehensively contain China.

Hong Kong is an open city, where various Western institutions and organizations, which have incited and promoted color revolution in other countries and regions, have had an impact on some media outlets, student unions, political parties and labor unions by funding, training, advising them or organizing social movements.

Western media outlets have been constantly whipping up public sentiment in favor of anti-government forces, piling pressure on the Chinese central government, the Hong Kong SAR government and the Hong Kong police in the international community.



Some US and Western politicians support opposition forces in Hong Kong and threatened Beijing with "profound consequences" including sanctions if the Chinese central government mobilizes the Hong Kong Garrison of the Chinese People's Liberation Army or the People's Armed Police to intervene directly.

In the backdrop of China-US rivalry, Washington intends to contain Beijing's rise. Realizing Hong Kong cannot play the role of promoting China's "peaceful evolution," the US hopes to mess up Hong Kong, creating trouble for Beijing and eroding the country's national power.

What some US politicians have recently said shows the US intends to link the Hong Kong affair with the trade talks between the two giants. US Vice President Mike Pence said on August 19 that "it would be much harder for us to make a [trade] deal if something violent happens in Hong Kong." Mike Pompeo, US Secretary of State, said on August 20 that Beijing and Washington may not reach a deal if the Chinese central government violently cracks down on the mass protests in Hong Kong.

However, China-US trade negotiations will have to take diverse interests into account, ranging from finance to technology. Amid the current China-US strategic competition, the Hong Kong problem is a US bargaining chip to negotiate with China, but not a decisive one.

Although the Chinese central government hopes the chaos in Hong Kong can end as soon as possible, it will not make concessions in trade talks with the US with regard to the Hong Kong affair.

Many are concerned whether or when the Chinese central government will step in to resolve the turmoil in Hong Kong.

The Chinese central government has made it clear that it firmly supports the Hong Kong SAR government in governing the city according to law, the Hong Kong police in strictly enforcing the law and the Hong Kong SAR judiciary in punishing violent criminals.

It has constantly warned the US and other Western countries not to meddle with the Hong Kong affairs. The patriotic forces in Hong Kong, standing with the SAR government, are fighting against Hong Kong anti-government forces and their Western supporters.

Though the chaos may not end very soon, the probability of violence waning is high, but for the odd flare-up at critical moments.

The escalation of violence over the past few months has upset many ordinary Hongkongers and the public will voice louder opposition to violence.

At the same time, police would step up measures to curb violence. So far, a number of rioters have been arrested.

Therefore, it's likely that violence would gradually reduce. But protests may continue for a while because protesters have not obtained what they want - such as the right to universal suffrage.

## Sudan's al-Bashir admits receiving \$25m from Saudi crown prince

Omar al-Bashir, Sudan's former president, has told a court that he received \$25m from Saudi Arabia's powerful crown prince.

The 75-year-old, who was toppled in April in the wake of mass protests against his three-decade rule, made the statement on Saturday after a judge formally charged him with illicit possession of foreign currency and corruption.

The offences could put al-Bashir behind bars for more than a decade. Questioned in court for the first time, al-Bashir said he used the money for donations and not for his own benefit.

Sitting in a metal cage in the court in Sudan's capital, Khartoum, al-Bashir said: "My office manager ... received a call from the office of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman saying he has a 'message' that will be sent on a private jet. 'We were told that the crown prince did not want his name to appear [linked to the transaction] ... and if the funds were deposited with Sudan's bank or the finance ministry, the source would have to be identified,' he said.

### ■ 'As you see fit'

Al Jazeera's Hiba Morgan, reporting from Khartoum, said al-Bashir told the court he gave five million dollars to the Rapid Support Forces, a paramilitary group that helped remove him from power, four million dollars to a university in Sudan and two million dollars to a military hospital. But he told the court he had no record of how the money was spent. "He said he did not want to turn down the money because he did not want to upset a country that had special relations with Sudan. But he also said that he wasn't sure of why it was given in the first place," said Morgan. Prince Mohammed told al-Bashir to "use the money as you see fit", she added.

An investigator had previously told the court that al-Bashir received \$90m in cash from Saudi royals.

The Saudi government communications office did not immediately comment on al-Bashir's statement.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

# Vancouver housing crisis with Chinese characteristics

By Ng Weng Hoong

Student Rose Wu has written a poignant commentary about how the decade-long challenges with housing affordability in Vancouver has turned into a racial discourse. Her 678-word piece in online publication The Tyee should be compulsory reading for the handful of influential politicians, academics and journalists whose campaign against the city's high home prices has cast a pall on "Asian-looking people" while playing down the role of other major factors.

So, how did the Canadian housing story become linked to race? Specifically, what has led to the framing of this narrative as the "Vancouver housing crisis with Chinese characteristics"?

Wu doesn't need to look far for an explanation.

In separate commentaries preceding her July 4 piece, three media professionals and an academic laid out some of the themes of the "Blame the Chinese" storyline.

Part 1 of this series looks at the comments put forth by Vancouver journalists Mitchell Anderson and Lynda Steele, while Part 2 will examine the "unimpeachable" arguments offered by Josh Gordon, an assistant professor at the Simon Fraser University (SFU), and Ian Young, the Vancouver correspondent for the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post (SCMP).

Front page of Vancouver newspaper The Province. Photo: The Greater Fool

The view from the ground

In a July 3 commentary in The Tyee, freelance writer Mitchell Anderson summarized the popular opinions that collectively blame China, Chinese immigrants and their money for Vancouver's housing problems.

His summary is noteworthy for not mentioning the domestic factors that have contributed to the region's housing boom or crisis.

This would include a decade of low interest rates, the surge in bank lending for home buying, the rise of alternative mortgage lenders, the region's strong economy and jobs market, restrictive anti-supply policies and practices by the various levels of governments, the shortage of rental-only developments, the inter-generational transfer of wealth, population growth, and record tourism arrivals.

According to Anderson's one-dimensional explanation, China's wealthy together with its criminal elements and corrupt officials have spirited a huge amount of money out of their country into Canada's housing market.

He cites a Bloomberg story about US\$800 billion leaving China since 2014 without asking if a large part of that is foreign-direct-investment projects undertaken by the country's many large companies in various parts of the world.

His suggestion that the bulk of that US\$800 billion has gone into buying Metro Vancouver's C\$50 billion-per-year (US\$38 billion) housing market is absurd: imagine a garter snake trying to swallow a horse.

Anderson also repeats a widely circulated story that wealthy Chinese migrants evade paying taxes after arriving in planeloads through Canada's Business



Immigration Program that ran from 1980 to 2014.

The "satellite family" phenomenon is often portrayed as widespread among Chinese immigrants, where the man returns to China to work and pays no taxes to Canada while his wife and children live off welfare in their new homeland.

The Canadian media's obsession with Chinese satellite families pales in comparison with their surprising lack of interest in the far bigger tax-evasion problems posed by the country's corporations and powerful elite.

Anderson, a frequent contributor to The Tyee, completes his negative stereotype of today's Chinese immigrant with the inevitable reference to money-laundering.

These days, "money-laundering" and "Chinese" have become mutually associated words. Credit goes largely to British Columbia's attorney general, David Eby, who has alleged – and is yet to substantiate – that Asian immigrant gangs are laundering billions of dollars through Vancouver's housing market, casinos, luxury-goods business, and expensive-cars trade.

The impression that Chinese gangs have swamped Vancouver with "mind-blowing" amounts of money has been largely sold to the public through regular sensational news reporting in the Canadian media, often with helpful government leaks and secret police studies.

The high point of this campaign is Eby's recent series of studies on money-laundering undertaken by supposed experts that is looking more like political theater built on dubious data and speculative assumptions.

Just as troubling is that Eby and his chief investigator Peter German seem overly focused on targeting Chinese money, immigrants and criminals as the main villains.

As noted in The Georgia Straight, the Eby-commissioned studies fail to address established money-laundering activities in other major sectors of the economy where the Chinese factor is far less pronounced.

Plight of the DINK couple

When you and your partner are a high-powered Double-Income-No-Kid

(DINK) couple who cannot afford one of those C\$20 million waterfront mansions, whom do you blame for your "housing crisis"?

Unlike Anderson's attempt at "macro analysis," Global News Radio CKNW host Lynda Steele offers a more personal perspective into how the Vancouver housing discussion has become so twisted.

"I should be living in a mansion in Shaughnessy, right? Champagne dreams and caviar wishes?"

Steele asks half-mockingly. Instead of the high life befitting her celebrity status, she and her partner have to settle for a condo.

She blames wealthy Chinese migrants and money-launderers working with greedy developers and incompetent politicians for having priced them out of the mansion.

The most telling but unstated point in her comment is that the "Vancouver housing crisis" story means different things to different people.

The homeless and the poor now have to share that narrative with those who feel they should be owning multimillion-dollar single-family houses in the city.

To support her argument, Steele cites SFU urban planner Andy Yan's 2015 "study" of 172 expensive homes in an affluent section of Vancouver's west side. Yan was given a set of selected data by Eby, the New Democratic Party's housing critic when it was in opposition.

Suspiciously, 66% of those homes were bought by people with "non-Anglicized Chinese names."

The study's apparently predetermined conclusion had the desired effect of igniting national outrage for the "evidence" it provided that new Chinese immigrants and their capital had taken over Vancouver's housing market.

Over time, reporters were citing that 66% figure with no reference to the tiny sample size of 172 houses.

When Vancouver's mayor at the time, Gregor Robertson, criticized the study's focus on race, he was rebuffed by influential journalists Douglas Todd of the Vancouver Sun and Ian Young of the SCMP.

Todd cited experts who said it was not racist to discuss the impact of global

capital, regardless of their origin, on local housing cost.

But he and the experts neglected to mention that the study's flawed methodology, data selection, and small sample size had predetermined the conclusion of home ownership by race.

If they had wanted to prove the impact of global capital on Vancouver's housing prices, the Eby-Yan study was not the smoking-gun document.

In a bizarre twist, it was Young who underscored the study's racial tone while trying to defend it from racism charges.

In an interview with Maclean's magazine, he said the study accomplished two things:

"It proves that those buyers are ethnically Chinese.

I don't think that's disputable. If someone's got a purely Chinese name, they're ethnically Chinese.

"Secondly, I think to an almost irrefutable degree, it proves they have some form of Chinese as a language mother tongue."

Yan won over the popular opinion, and his study remains as influential as ever.

In a mushy piece for Maclean's that included the usual allegations of Chinese complicity and stereotypes, author Terry Glavin hailed Yan as "the analyst who exposed Vancouver's real-estate disaster."

City planning expert Sandy James recently praised the Eby-Yan study for proving that the arrival of "a significant group of people" had led to the "commodification of housing as a holding, not a place to live in."

Judging from Glavin's coverage and James' comment, it still has not occurred to Canada's talking heads that a survey sample of 172 houses taken from more than 42,000 Greater Vancouver homes sold in 2015 is statistically meaningless. The survey should never have seen the light of day, much less become an authoritative study of reference.

Few have noted that Eby had focused his data-collection effort on a small section of Vancouver's west side noted for its high representation of ethnic Chinese residents. This methodology could also be applied to, say, parts of Surrey and Oak Street to show that people with "non-Anglicized Indian" and "non-Anglicized Jewish" names dominate certain neighborhoods. What does it prove? Nothing, except that the methodology was likely racially motivated and its "finding" of a high rate of Chinese home ownership was rigged from the start.

With the mainstream media and academia failing to ask critical questions, it was left to a former politician living in eastern Canada to warn about the "Yellow Peril" racist nature of the inquiry.

"Eby's guy (Andy Yan) looked at the names of the 172 buyers, screening them for 'non-anglicized' Chinese names, which is ... racist," Garth Turner said in a November 2, 2015, blog piece.

"Of course just looking at names does not reveal if the buyers are Canadian citizens, landed immigrants, permanent residents or the children and spouses of people working abroad but investing here."

If Rose Wu wants to know why, how or when the housing discussion turned racial, the Eby-Yan study of the 172 houses would be a key moment. This is the first article of a two-part series.

## America's Press freedom is an empty slogan

**TEHRAN (FNA)** – The United States continues to boast itself as a bastion of freedom and democracy. But with an increasing number of journalists targeted, humiliated and even attacked for publishing materials detrimental to US President Donald Trump, "press freedom" turned out to be an empty slogan in the world's most "democratic" country.

In its recent article, The New York Times elaborated the Trump administration's long-running efforts in diminishing the credibility of news organizations deemed hostile to the White House. The pro-Trump team, in retaliation for reports harmful for the president's re-election campaign, conducted laborious research into the public records of the journalists for embarrassing statements and publicized them in a misleading way.

Worse still, the pro-Trump network targets not only journalists challenging the administration, but also "anyone who works for any news organization that members of the network see as hostile to Trump, no matter how tangential that job may be to the coverage of his presidency," the NYT reported. A handful of journalists have been humiliated, abused and some of them even lost their jobs thanks to Trump's campaign against the free press.

As the fourth estate, the media is supposed to expose the wrongdoings of those in power. Journalists have the obligation to check the country's legislative, executive and judicial bodies. It is a shame that the United States, on the one hand, shouts to the world that it is the most "democratic" country, but, on the other, silences journalists from criticizing the government.

"Problematic" is how Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF) labelled US press freedom status this year. In 2019 alone,

10 journalists have been physically attacked in the country so far, according to the US Press Freedom Tracker. "The president's relentless attacks against the press have created an environment where verbal, physical and online threats and assaults against journalists are being normalized," RSF Interim Executive Director Sabine Dolan said.

Even more ironically, the US, for decades, has been using "freedom" and "democracy" as an excuse to intervene into other countries' internal affairs. The White House's involvement in the Hong Kong's political tensions, the Ukrainian crisis, the Arab Spring and in some past protests in Iran is an open secret. Holding high the banner of "freedom," the United States has tried to drag all these regions into an abyss of misery, misusing "freedom" to cover up its interventionist goals.

It is worth noting that in the case of Hong Kong protests, posts backing local police were intentionally deleted on Facebook, Twitter and other Western social media platforms, while rumours about police bullying protesters went viral. Some of the accounts have even been blocked for publicly supporting the Hong Kong police.

It is laid bare that "freedom of speech" is non-existent in the United States. It is merely a convenient tool by American politicians in pursuit of political aims. Zipping journalists' mouth, the White House asserts that "freedom" and "democracy" are its ultimate goals in intervening in other countries' affairs. This is a bold lie. Toppling regimes that it does not like under the guise of freedom is what American politicians are pursuing.

America's double-standard is nothing new. In Washington's logic, anything that conforms to its political interests



will be safeguarded under the principle of freedom; anything that does not will be ruthlessly silenced and even attacked. The US has used the same old tactic in the Middle East, Ukraine, and Hong Kong. This time, it is deployed again on domestic journalists hostile to the Trump administration.

Instead of targeting other countries, the United States should reflect more on itself before pointing a finger at other countries. Credibility, not silencing criticizing voices, is the trump card to win support. This is what the Trump administration should bear in mind in the re-election campaign.



# Joe Biden still not sure of victory!

By Saeed Sobhani

**TEJRAN** — Some polls appear to have worried former US Vice President Joe Biden. He is still ahead of his rivals like Bernie Sanders, Kamala Harris and Elizabeth Warren in most polls. Biden knows very well that he will lose power if defeated in the crucial state of Iowa.

Here's a look at the latest news and analysis on the Democrats' intra-party elections:

Fall Campaign Season Begins With Biden Teetering Atop Democratic Field

As The Time reported, Joe Biden sincerely did not understand the hullabaloo about a Washington Post story detailing how the former Vice President had mangled facts about U.S. soldiers and his own role in honoring them. For the life of him, he told his staffers on Thursday between campaign stops in South Carolina, he could not process why journalists, let alone the public, saw this as a problem. He had meant well enough, Biden told aides. The campaign wouldn't dignify it with a proper statement.

When it came time to do two previously scheduled interviews on the road, Biden stood defiant against any suggestion that he did, in fact, have his facts wrong. He told The Post and Courier of Charleston, S.C., that he had the "essence of the story" right. And he told a Washington Post podcast that he saw nothing wrong with his retelling, despite having misstated his role at the time, the military branch of the hero, the year it took place and what actually happened.

"I don't know what the problem is. I mean, what is it that I said wrong?" he asked the Post's Jonathan Capehart. (Biden, for his part, had also said he would not read the story.) After all, President Donald Trump has flubbed the facts more than 12,000 times, according to the Post's ongoing tally. Surely, Biden deserved some slack.

Thus is the state of the frontrunner for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination as the unofficial start of the fall campaign arrives this Labor Day weekend. The 76-year-old Biden, whose 1988 bid for the same nomination ended in a plagiarism scandal, is still having trouble mastering basic facts in stories that ostensibly star him.

He has already weathered one round of plagiarism charges in this campaign, brushed past complaints about his non-sexual physicality with friend and stranger alike and delivered two uneven debate performances. The ability to defeat Donald Trump — the centerpiece of his campaign rationale — has become less sturdy as polls indicate other candidates, too, could beat the incumbent in a hypothetical match up. Biden remains the polling leader, although nowhere near as comfortably as when he entered the race in April and then rebooted in May. The once-perceived inevitable nominee has been proven as fragile as his critics warned.

Which explains why, 22 weeks before Iowa hosts the lead-off caucuses, most of Biden's rivals are not forlorn. Elizabeth Warren is positioning herself — through an impressive political machine with few peers — to possibly win both Iowa and New Hampshire. Bernie Sanders knows the history, too; he and Warren both hail from states that border New Hampshire, and voters there have never passed on a chance to back a New Englander. In South Carolina, where six-in-10 Democratic primary voters are expected to be black, contenders like Kamala Harris, Cory Booker and Julián Castro see potential. And then there's Pete Buttigieg, whose fundraising shows little sign of limitations; 300 people on payroll, including 70 in Iowa and 50 in New Hampshire.

In other words, the Labor Day campaign launch of the frenzied fall push comes at a moment of tremendous peril for Biden, potential for his rivals and promise for Democrats who, above all else, want to beat Trump. First, though, they have to settle among themselves who will get the chance to do so. And, at the moment, it is possible to see paths for most of the mainstream hopefuls.

Biden remains the most plausible candidate, having built up chits over decades in politics dating back to his first election in 1970. But the last week has left some aides more worried than ever. First, during the same New Hampshire day when he bungled war stories, he also told the familiar story about how he entered politics: explaining that the turmoil of 1968, which saw the assassinations of Bobby Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr., sparked his civic interest. He then asked his audience at Dartmouth College to imagine the raw emotion had it been Barack Obama who was assassinated.

Biden's critics and even some allies cringed. It's never a good look to summon a theory about the assassination of the nation's first black President, especially if Biden was the constitutional successor.

Biden aides sprang to action, in a way not before seen during this campaign, to call out anyone who was being critical or snarky — and to shame journalists who had tweeted the quote without context. It was the first real show of a coordinated rapid response from Biden's Philadelphia



headquarters, and it quieted some jitters among Biden allies.

Then came a poll that showed Biden's numbers tanking. Monmouth University's survey — since described by its pollster as an outlier — showed Sanders and Warren each at 20% and Biden at 19%. Biden aides nervously dismissed it as a statistical aberration, which apparently it was. Still, though, it caused some nervous ticks among Biden donors and activists.

The top ranks of the Biden campaign, though, insist the campaign will move ahead as planned. Biden plans stops on Labor Day at Iowa union picnics and two days later will return to Stephen Colbert's The Late Show stage, where he gave a remarkably frank interview two years ago about his emotional status.

Meanwhile, Biden rivals are churning through events and cash. They may lack that national name ID and fundraising Rolodex, but they have optimism in bounds. They're not without reason. At this point in 2007, Hillary Clinton was at 37% in Real Clear Politics' average polls, while Barack Obama was at 21%. Obama, of course, prevailed. Still, it was a much smaller field.

All of this speaks to Biden's advantages. Unless — or until — his rivals coalesce in an anti-Biden bloc, he may be impossible to stop. Only candidates who win 15% support are eligible to win delegates to the nominating convention in Milwaukee. A brokered convention is entirely possible, which is why Buttigieg delegate chief George Hornedo has been aggressively working the phone with super delegates, who, in a twist of irony, may end having more power than in 2016 to actually decide the nomination. The rules changes passed after 2016 strip super delegates, the party insiders who can back anyone at the convention, of their votes on the first ballot. But if a brokered solution cannot be found, they may end up being called upon to sway the results. The fallout may be nothing short of chaos.

This is why Biden's backers are trying to win the nomination outright, on that first ballot. Still, the last week shows just how fragile Biden's advantages are at this moment. The fall campaign will certainly test those advantages further still.

Only a President Biden would rid us of the Trump era

As The Hill reported, Looking ahead to 2020, one question is uppermost in the minds of Democrats: Who can beat Donald Trump? A recent Gallup poll found that 58 percent of Democrats prioritize vanquishing Trump when making their primary decisions; only 39 percent say issues matter most. Former Vice President Joe Biden calls the forthcoming contest a "battle for the soul of this nation."

This dynamic has powered Biden's candidacy. Polls show him to be the most competitive Democrat versus Trump. As Biden's wife, Jill, recently told primary voters: "I know that not all of you are committed to my husband. . . but I want you to think about your candidate, his or her electability, and who's going to win this race." Forty-nine percent of Democrats say Biden has the best chance to defeat Trump; just 12 percent and 6 percent respectively give the nod to Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren

Although Democrats prioritize winning, it may matter more to Republicans who beats Trump and what that would mean. The Democratic race is quickly becoming a three-person contest among Biden, Warren, and Sanders. Others may emerge, but the passage of time makes this extremely

unlikely. The three contenders have different strengths. Biden stresses electability; Warren and Sanders say the next president should pursue major structural changes.

These messages resonate with different audiences. Warren and Sanders have significant leads among young voters and those who label themselves either very liberal or liberal. Biden has large advantages among voters aged sixty-five and older and among African-Americans. Donald Trump's profound political weakness makes the 2020 Democratic nomination especially valuable. Today, only 29 percent say they will definitely vote to reelect Trump; 41 percent definitely will not do so.

Who becomes president matters. As Alexander Hamilton once said, "Every vital question of state will be merged into the question, 'Who will be the next President?'"

For Republicans, Hamilton's query has particular relevance. If it's a President Warren or a President Sanders, GOP opposition will quickly coalesce. Trump has been quick to brand both as socialists, saying: "Here in the United States, we are alarmed by the new calls to adopt socialism in our country."

Moreover, he has trademarked Representatives Alexander Ocasio-Cortez (D-Mass.) , Ayanna Pressley (D-N.Y.) Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.) and Rashida Tlaib (D-Mich.) as symbols of today's leftward-leaning Democratic Party, tweeting: "The Democrats were trying to distance themselves from the four 'progressives,' but now they are forced to embrace them. That means they are endorsing Socialism, hate of Israel, and the USA! Not good for Democrats!"

National surveys show a relatively close race. Biden beats Trump by 7 points; Sanders, 5; and Warren and Trump are tied. But an inside look at the polling shows Sanders and Warren doing less well than Biden among independents, Midwesterners and non-college educated voters. Sanders beats Trump by 8 points among independents; Midwesterners, +2 points; and noncollege educated, +1 point. Warren does worse: independents, +1 point; Midwesterners, -3 points; noncollege educated, -8 points. Biden fares far better: independents, +8 points; Midwesterners, +5 points; and noncollege educated, + 3-points.

Each of these constituencies was crucial to Trump's 2016 win. He beat Hillary Clinton by 5 points among noncollege educated voters; 4 points among independents; and won the crucial Midwestern states of Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, Ohio and Iowa.

The smaller Warren and Sanders margins among these crucial voters point to a razor close finish. Such a result would cause Republicans to see it as a rejection of Trump, not the party's conservative policies. Unlike 2012, there would be no intraparty reflection. Instead, Republicans would denounce either Sanders or Warren as modern-day socialists.

But a Biden win — thanks to those crucial independents, Midwesterners and noncollege voters — is unlikely to produce immediate Republican opposition. Biden has never been tagged as a socialist, and his moderation is in line with another popular Democrat: Barack Obama. Under a Biden presidency, Republicans would be more likely to undergo a period of self-examination. Moderate Republicans could find their hitherto silent voices, and Donald Trump would fade even more quickly into oblivion.

## U.S. hegemony has ended, Washington looking other way: German analyst

**TEHRAN (Tasnim)** — A German political analyst said the world is becoming more and more multipolar day by day, adding that the state of American hegemony has "definitely ended" but no one in the White House seems interested to accept this.



"The state of American hegemony has definitely ended already, but not everyone in Washington seems to have noticed or accepted that. In Europe only the most lunatic pro-Westerners are demanding for more American acting and presence on the continent. Countries like Poland or the Baltic states are the last lapdogs of Washington. The world is changing every day and becoming more and more multipolar and diverse in its different concepts. That is a good development. Not for Washington of course," Manuel Ochsenreiter, Editor in Chief of German monthly news-magazine ZUERST, told Tasnim.

Following is the full text of the magazine. ■ 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: Washington experiences since the collapse of the communist block the painful process of the creation of real global multipolarity. For the neoon strategists in the US administration, this development is a real nightmare. In the past, they felt so almighty and powerful, that they described US foreign politics as "world inner policy". In the early 1990s, Washington was convinced that the world would be more and more a unipolar, Americanized planet, with "Western values" even in the very last corner of the very last little island in the Pacific. Countless Western analysts embarrassed themselves with future scenarios with a mild but also severe US hegemon.

The state of American hegemony has definitely ended already, but not everyone in Washington seems to have noticed or accepted that. In Europe only the most lunatic pro-Westerners are demanding for more American acting and presence on the continent. Countries like Poland or the Baltic states are the last lapdogs of Washington. The world is changing every day and becoming more and more multipolar and diverse in its different concepts. That is a good development. Not for Washington of course. But why should we care about Washington?

■ North Korean First Vice Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui on Saturday berated US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo over his comments describing North Korean behavior as "rogue" and warned that Pyongyang's hopes for talks with Washington are fading. North Korea continues to test missiles and US President Donald Trump insists the two nations have good ties. Despite all differences, Trump says the tests are nothing to worry about. Why?

A: President Trump seems always to be good for a surprise. He changed diplomacy completely, that annoys especially his Western and European allies. We shouldn't forget that not so long time ago Trump called Kim the "rocketman on a suicide mission". Hysterical Western journalists and so-called "experts" were forecasting even nuclear war scenarios between North Korea and the US. In the end, Trump and Kim were shaking hands. This style of politics is extremely nerve-racking for the Europeans — who honestly simply are disgusted by the US since Trump was elected president. If you like Trump or hate Trump — one doesn't get around some truth facts: Despite his often very aggressive rhetoric, he is the first American president making a deal with North Korea and even meeting the North Korean leader in person. No Obama and no Clinton would have had the guts to do so, George W. Bush would have rather bombed as well.

■ The US has decided to create an international patrol coalition to secure the Strait of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf, urging its allies to join it. A number of countries, including Germany, France, and Japan, have turned down Washington's request. European defense ministers have thrown their support behind a UN-led naval force, not a US-led one to protect key shipping lanes, though the idea is not meant to secure Hormuz. It seems that the divide between the US and its close allies is growing. What do you think?

A: The "split" between the US and her European allies is more a "technical debate" — but not a general misunderstanding. Also, the European powers are in favor of an international patrol mission — just not under the leadership of the US. The behavior of Washington's ambassador in Berlin, Richard Grenell, makes it very easy to refuse the US offers. Grenell is trying to push and to blackmail the German leadership to join the US mission. The Europeans want instead of a European mission in the Street of Hormuz — what is still a very problematic operation since it won't lead to any peaceful understanding but to a direct provocation and confrontation with the Islamic Republic of Iran. In all these debates we shouldn't forget one important point: This will be an anti-Iranian patrol mission, right in front of the Iranian coast.

## End nuclear testing

**TEHRAN (FNA)** — Everybody knows that the United States used nuclear weapons in the Second World War and with terrible consequences for the people of Japan. Often overlooked, however, is the large-scale, postwar use of nuclear weapons by the US and other nuclear weapon states.

According to the United Nations, at least eight countries have conducted 2,056 nuclear test explosions, most of which were far larger than the bombs that levelled Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The United States alone has detonated more than 1,030 nuclear explosions in the atmosphere, underwater, and underground.

Hundreds of thousands of people have died and millions more have suffered from radiation-related illnesses directly caused by the fallout from nuclear testing. The global scale of suffering took too long to come to light.

Authorities understand that the tests expose the local population to harmful radioactive fallout, but they push ahead in the name of national security. Only acknowledging the damage after information leaks in the late-1980s revealed that far more people were exposed to radiation, with more harmful

effects, than the nuclear weapon states had previously admitted.

Today, these governments estimate that testing has harmed millions of people worldwide. In some hot spots, people have been exposed to even higher levels. By comparison, the average American is exposed to the same level of radiation each year. The rate of cancer for people living in testing areas is 25 to 30 percent higher than elsewhere in the world.

On Oct. 5, 1991, however, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev announced a one-year nuclear test moratorium, which led a bipartisan US congressional coalition to introduce legislation to match the Soviet test halt. In 1992 the bill became law over the protestations of President George H.W. Bush. The following year, under pressure from civil society leaders and the UN, President Bill Clinton decided to extend the moratorium and launch talks on the global, verifiable Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which were concluded in 1996.

The CTBT has established a powerful taboo against nuclear testing. Global support for the treaty, which now has 184 state signatories, is strong, and the treaty's



International Monitoring System is fully operational and more capable than originally envisioned. Today, for the first time since 1945, no nuclear-armed state has an active nuclear testing program.

Yet, the door to further nuclear testing remains ajar. Although the treaty has been signed by 184 states, its entry into force is being held up by eight states, most notably the United States, China, and North Korea, which have refused to ratify the pact. Israel is also known to have over 200 nuclear warheads. Making matters worse, the Trump admin-

istration has accused Russia of cheating on the CTBT without providing evidence, has falsely asserted there is a lack of clarity about what the CTBT prohibits, and has refused to express support for bringing the CTBT into force.

In the Marshall Islands, where the United States detonated massive aboveground nuclear tests in the 1940s and 1950s, several atolls are still heavily contaminated, indigenous populations have been displaced, and some buried radioactive waste could soon leak into the ocean.

The UN should act to include the downwinders affected by the first US test in 1945 in the health monitoring program established through the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act of 1990. For the safety and security of future generations and out of respect for the people harmed by nuclear testing, the world body must act.

It is time to close and lock the door on nuclear testing by pushing the CTBT hold-out states to ratify the treaty and address more comprehensively the devastating human and environmental damage of the nuclear weapons era.



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# The greatest threat to life on Earth may come from space

By Stuart Clark

Next year, NASA will launch what all involved hope will be the most impactful space mission to date. The Double Asteroid Redirection Test (Dart) is designed to smash headlong into its target. It's an attempt to deflect an asteroid as a test of what to do if we spot a similar space rock on a collision course with our planet.

It's hardly news we want to hear at a time of so many domestic problems, but the threat from near-Earth asteroids is just one of a string of dangers that the planet and its technology are facing from space. Explosions on the sun create "space weather" that can play havoc with our satellites and other electrical systems, while the growing amount of space debris imperils the satellites that we all invisibly rely on.

The truth is our way of life utterly relies on space. The UK government now classes space as one of the nation's 13 critical infrastructure sectors. And it needs protecting.

This November, science ministers from the various countries that belong to the European Space Agency (Esa) will gather in Seville, Spain, to decide the agency's funding and priorities for the next three years. Attending the meeting is not something that depends on Brexit. Esa is an independent organization from the EU, and the UK has every intention of staying a member no matter what happens on 31 October. Included in that will be the creation of a comprehensive €200m a year program of planetary defense.

If approved, it would begin with a mission called Hera. This would investigate the aftermath of NASA's Dart impact, collecting enough data to turn the impact test into a workable asteroid defense program. And that's not all.

Called Space Safety, the program also proposes missions to warn us against space weather and begin the removal of space debris. "All threats are viewed as equally important," says Holger Krag, head of the program.

But that might not be the view of the various member countries, where funding is likely to be limited. If the full €200m is not forthcoming, ministers will have to decide which threats to tackle and which ones to simply cross our fingers over.

The choices are:

## ■ Near-Earth asteroids

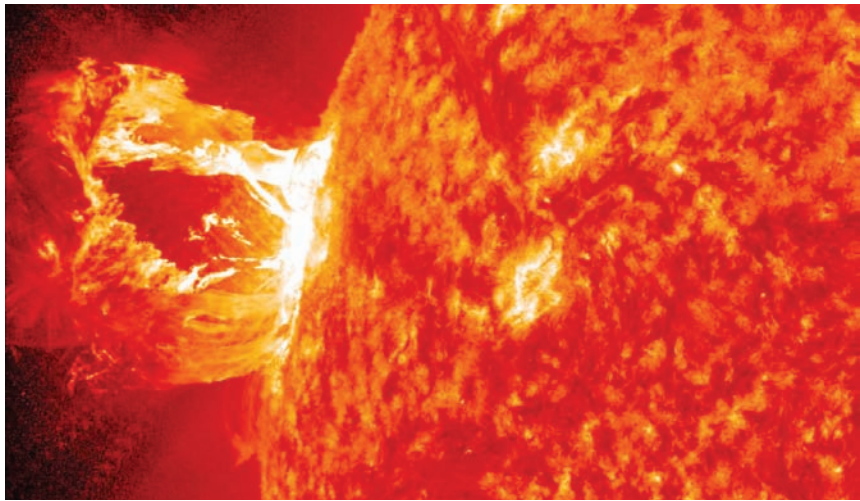
On Thursday 25 July, an asteroid 57-130 meters across missed our planet by just one-fifth of the distance to the moon. In astronomical terms, that's a hair's breadth. Had it hit us, the devastation would have been staggering.

Astronomers call asteroids of this size "city killers". It's not hard to see why. In February 2013, one roughly 20 meters across appeared in the sky above the Russian city of Chelyabinsk. It exploded at an altitude of around 30 kilometers, creating a shockwave that shattered windows and injured around 1,500 people.

What makes the asteroid of 25 July so disturbing is that if it had appeared over Chelyabinsk, instead of breaking windows, it would have toppled whole buildings. But there's hope.

"We are the first generation of life on the Earth that can actually do something about this risk," says Krag.

In the early 2000s, Esa convened a panel of experts to assess how best to deal with an incoming asteroid. The ideas they looked at ranged from the bizarre – painting an asteroid so that the way it reflected light would gradually shift its orbit – to the



frightening – repurposing nuclear weapons to melt part of the asteroid so that the heat it released would push the rock into a different orbit.

The team came to the conclusion that the most viable option was the so-called kinetic impactor. In other words, you drive headfirst into the asteroid and knock it out of the way.

Prof Alan Fitzsimmons of Queen's University Belfast was part of that original team. "The best thing we can do at the moment to protect the Earth is search for these objects and find them, study their physical properties so that we know what's likely to hit us and see if we can move one," he says.

This is how Dart and Hera came about. One spacecraft hits the asteroid, the other measures what happens. NASA and Esa collaborated in order to split the cost. Together, the two spacecraft make up the Asteroid Impact and Deflection Assessment (Aida) mission. They were supposed to launch together but while NASA went ahead and is now preparing for liftoff, a previous incarnation of Hera was narrowly rejected by Europe's science ministers at the last funding conference in 2016.

This set the European effort back three years but all is not lost. "Right now, we can just about do it if we get approval this year," says Fitzsimmons.

If the ministers say no again, the mission is dead. NASA will continue with Dart and use telescopes on Earth to measure the change in its target's orbit. But according to Fitzsimmons, that seriously diminishes the value of the mission.

Hera's observations will reveal the composition and physical structure of the target asteroid. This is vital data for planning how best to deflect another asteroid when one is actually found to be on a collision course. Without Hera, any future deflection attempt would be more "hit it and hope" than precise science.

"This is about protecting the planet and it's about time all the nations of Earth, including Europe and the UK, stepped up to the plate and helped out," says Fitzsimmons.

## ■ Space weather

Had you been alive 160 years ago today, you would have been about to witness something truly astonishing. As night fell on 1 September 1859, Earth's atmosphere lit up with one of the biggest displays of the northern and southern lights. Simultaneously, the technology of the day failed spectacularly. Compasses spun uselessly and phantom electricity surged through the telegraph lines stunning operators unconscious and setting fire to

equipment and offices.

The only clue to what had happened came from the English amateur astronomer Richard Carrington, who observed a giant disturbance on the sun from his observatory in Redhill, Surrey.

This was the discovery of solar flares, space weather and the danger they pose to electronic technology. Space weather is produced by magnetic activity on the sun, which drives a turbulent wind of subatomic particles out into space.

These particles carry electrical energy that can burn out sensitive electronics – and our vulnerability to them has only increased. Satellites and power grids are particularly susceptible to damage and destruction by space weather.

In 1989, a solar storm caused over \$10m of damage to equipment in the Hydro-Québec power grid, leaving six million people without power for nine hours. As bad as that seems, it's the events of the 19th century that have researchers worried.

"The Carrington event is a reasonable worst-case scenario," says Mike Willis of the UK Space Agency.

In 2017, the policy and economics consultancy London Economics reviewed the impact to the UK of a disruption to global navigation satellite services such as Galileo or GPS. They concluded that a five-day disruption would cost the country £5.2bn. Space weather appears on the National Risk Register, a Cabinet Office publication that lists what it regards as significant potential threats to the nation.

At present, the world relies on an ageing population of science satellites to warn us of incoming space weather. But it's hardly an early warning system and the spacecraft are all showing signs of wear and tear.

"We're living on borrowed time. If we lose the science missions, we will be effectively blind. And we don't want to be in that situation," says Willis.

To avert this danger, the UK invested €22m at Esa's 2016 ministerial conference to take a prominent role in studying a mission that would act as a space weather watchdog. Known as the L5 mission, it would be stationed tens of millions of kilometers away so that it can look into the space between the sun and Earth.

L5 will show us the incoming space weather. This will allow us to give early warnings so that payloads and other critical systems can be placed into safe modes, then reactivated once the danger has passed. The mission is now part of Esa's Space Safety program and so will be placed before all European ministers in November for approval. "Bringing other Esa member

countries on board is something we have to do," says Willis.

## ■ Space debris

This particular problem is all of our own making. When the space race began, the US and Russia blasted rockets into orbit willy-nilly. As other nations started building their own satellites, they too launched at random. No one cared about what happened to the spacecraft after the mission ended because, as Douglas Adams wrote: "Space is big."

It turns out that while Adams is right about the universe as a whole, the orbits around the Earth are not inexhaustible. There are now well over an estimated million pieces of space debris larger than 1 centimeter in orbit around Earth. Each one has the potential to collide with and destroy another satellite, creating hundreds of thousands more pieces of space debris.

Around half the debris in space today comes from just two incidents. The 2007 anti-satellite test in which China blew up a satellite of its own with a missile and an accidental collision in 2009 between a defunct Russian satellite and a working US one.

Space engineers talk about the Kessler syndrome, a nightmare scenario which envisages so much space debris being generated that we simply cannot put more satellites into orbit. Any we did launch would be destroyed by random collisions, creating more space debris and making the situation worse. Averting the Kessler syndrome is something Esa has been thinking about for a long time.

"We were one of the first agencies together with NASA to highlight this problem," says Holger Krag.

But progress has been slow, partly because the law is extremely lax about littering space. Now, however, as part of the proposed Space Safety program, Esa thinks it has found a way to get the ball rolling. The idea is simple.

First, it demonstrates that removing space debris is possible. Then it lobbies for international space law to be changed to say that a satellite's owner must de-orbit the craft at the end of its mission. If the owner fails to do this, they have to pay an industrial contractor to go and remove the satellite for them.

"That would automatically generate a market. And that's what we want to prepare for," says Krag.

So the mission Esa envisages for this strand of the Space Safety program is different from the other two. Instead of specifying the details of how the mission should complete its task, it wants industry to come up with those ideas. Esa will then lend its expertise to help develop the necessary technology but industry will own the missions.

"We hope to break the cycle between legislators waiting for de-orbit technology to be available and the law that is not yet tight enough to enable this market to begin," says Krag.

As well as the debris that is already up there, the proposed mega-constellation of hundreds or thousands of small satellites only makes the problem more urgent. Elon Musk's SpaceX plan is to launch 12,000 tiny satellites into very low orbits to supply low-latency telecommunications; other companies are planning similar fleets. All of them carry the potential to vastly increase the amount of space debris, making the Kessler syndrome more likely than ever.

Again, Europe's science ministers will decide in November whether this is a problem they want to tackle.

## This is what it looks like when an explosion creates gold in space

The first observation of a collision between neutron stars, detected in August 2017, created gravitational waves, light and heavy elements like gold and platinum. But astronomers have realized they also witnessed a kilonova, the kind of explosion that creates gold and platinum, the year before as well.

The 2017 observation offered evidence for the theory that such massive explosions in space are responsible for creating large amounts of heavy elements. All of the gold and platinum found on Earth was likely created by ancient kilonovae that resulted from neutron star collisions.

Because astronomers were able to make a direct observation in 2017, it changed what they expected a kilonova to look like. So they took their observations and looked back at other events initially thought to be something else.

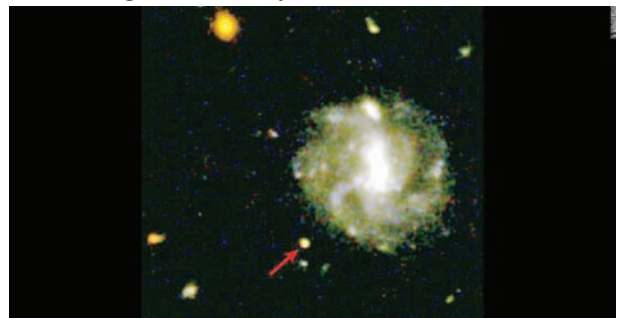
Specifically, they looked at an August 2016 gamma-ray burst. The event, named GRB160821B, was tracked minutes after detection by NASA's Neil Gehrels Swift Observatory.

The 2017 event wasn't tracked in its initial hours, adding intrigue to the 2016 event.

The new analysis of the 2016 event was published Tuesday in the journal Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society.

"The 2016 event was very exciting at first. It was nearby and visible with every major telescope, including NASA's Hubble Space Telescope. But it didn't match our predictions--we expected to see the infrared emission become brighter and brighter over several weeks," said Eleonora Troja, study author and associate research scientist in the University of Maryland's Department of Astronomy.

But the signal faded ten days after the event.



When the team went back and compared what the 2017 event looked like to the 2016 event, "it was a nearly perfect match," Troja said.

The team had observed a kilonova in 2016 without realizing it. The researchers now believe it was also the result of a neutron star collision, even though they can also result from a black hole and a neutron star merger.

The 2016 event detection doesn't have as much detail as the 2017 event, but their record from the first few hours revealed new insights about the kilonova's first stages. The astronomers were actually able to see the object that formed after the collision, which isn't available in the 2017 event.

"The remnant could be a highly magnetized, hypermassive neutron star known as a magnetar, which survived the collision and then collapsed into a black hole," said Geoffrey Ryan, study co-author and a Joint Space-Science Institute Prize Postdoctoral Fellow in the University of Maryland Department of Astronomy.

"This is interesting, because theory suggests that a magnetar should slow or even stop the production of heavy metals, which is the ultimate source of a kilonova's infrared light signature. Our analysis suggests that heavy metals are somehow able to escape the quenching influence of the remnant object."

Now, the researchers want to apply the insight they gained from this study to other previous events. This will also improve their observations of future events.

"The very bright infrared signal from this event arguably makes it the clearest kilonova we have observed in the distant universe," Troja said. "I'm very much interested in how kilonova properties change with different progenitors and final remnants. As we observe more of these events, we may learn that there are many different types of kilonovae all in the same family, as is the case with the many different types of supernovae. It's so exciting to be shaping our knowledge in real time." (Source: CNN)

## Mysterious 'alien' shapes on Venus are doing strange things to its climate, scientists say

Unexplained shapes seen on Venus, which some scientists have suggested could be signs of alien life, are even more mysterious than we thought.

Researchers studying the Venusian surface have found that the strange dark spots are affecting the planet's climate, after a new breakthrough study.

Scientists have known about the dark "splotches" on the surface for more than a century, and they change over time. But they have never been explained, with some researchers suggesting they could be evidence of life.

"The particles that make up the dark splotches, have been suggested to be ferric chloride, allotropes of sulfur, disulfur dioxide and so on, but none of these, so far, are able to satisfactorily explain their formation and absorption properties," said Yeon Joo Lee, the senior author of the new report, in a statement.

Observations show that the particles in those dark spots seem to be the same size, and behave similarly to, the microorganisms that can be found in the Earth's atmosphere. Along with other evidence, that has led to some of the world's most famous scientists including Carl Sagan speculating that the shadowy patches could be life.

Now researchers have learnt more about how those clouds affect the climate on the planet.

The researchers looked for changes in the planet's "albedo", or how much it absorbs of the light that hits it. They found that it seemed to vary hugely: between 2006 and 2017, the amount of light being reflected back into space halved and then started rising again.

Those changes had a similarly large effect on the amount of solar energy that the clouds absorbed, and therefore how much circulation there was in the planet's atmosphere. Vigorous activity could be seen in the planet's atmosphere, with clouds that whirled at more than 200 miles per hour, and could be explained by those changes in the clouds.

But, adding to the mystery, scientists still don't know why those dramatic changes are happening.

"That is a striking result," Limaye adds. "It suggests that something is changing. We can see the change in brightness. If the albedo is changing, something is driving those changes. The question is, what is the cause?"

Those dark patches that have been the subject of so much speculation have been referred to as "unknown absorbers", and could play some role in those changes.

(Source: The Independent)

## Scientists detected 2 black hole mergers just 21 minutes apart

Last Wednesday, a gravitational wave detection gave astronomers quite the surprise. As researchers were going about their work at the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO), a pair of gravitational waves rolled in just minutes apart.

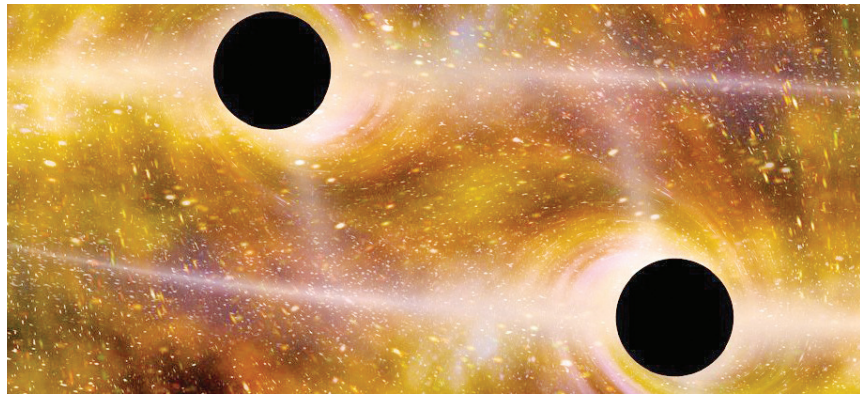
The first, labelled S190828j, was picked up by all three of LIGO's gravitational wave detectors at 06:34 am, coordinated universal time. The second, S190828l, was measured at 06:55 – a mere 21 minutes later.

Both seemed to be the run-of-the-mill dying screams of black holes as they squish together. But here's why it's so surprising: astronomers wouldn't expect to see a pair of signals in such quick succession.

In fact, this is only the second time two detections have rolled in on the same day. What's more, at first glance they also seemed to echo from more or less the same patch of sky.

"This is a genuine "Uh, wait, what?; We've never seen that before..." moment in gravitational wave astronomy," astrophysicist Robert Routledge from McGill University later tweeted, after openly speculating that it mightn't be a mere coincidence.

Nobody can blame Routledge for getting excited. Unexpected events like this are



what discoveries are made of, after all. As he said, this is science in real time.

One possibility briefly kicked around was that S190828j and S190828l were actually the same wave, divided by some sort of distortion in space before being roughly thrown together again. This would have been huge.

Gravitational lensing – the warping effect an intervening mass has on space, as described by general relativity – can divide and duplicate the rays of light from far-off objects. It has become a useful tool for astronomers in the measurement of

distances.

If this had indeed been a two-for-one deal, it would be the first time a gravitational wave had been observed through a gravitational lens.

Alas, it's now looking pretty unlikely. As the hours passed, new details emerged indicating the two signals don't overlap enough to be originating from the same source.

So close, and yet so far. Right now, this twin event is looking more like a coincidence.

To look on the bright side, we now live in an age where the detection of the crash-

boom of galactic giants isn't a rare event, but rather an endless peen of thunder we can record and measure with an insane level of accuracy. It's hard to believe the first collision was detected only a few years ago.

Scientists face a problem in the wake of freaky events like this one. On the one hand, wild speculations have a habit of taking on a life of their own when discussed so frankly in a public space, transforming into an established fact while barely half baked.

But time can be of the essence when we're scanning a near-infinite amount of sky for clues, too. By throwing ideas out broadly, different groups of researchers can turn their attention to a phenomenon and collect data while it's still hot.

This is what scientists do best – stumble across odd events, throw out ideas, and debate which ones deserve to be inspected and which should be abandoned.

If there's more to S190828j and S190828l than meets the eye, we'll let you know. For now, we can be disappointed that there was no Earth-shaking discovery, while still being amazed that we have the technology to discover it at all.

We really ought to celebrate the 'disappointments' a little more often.

(Source: sciencealert.com)



## Tourism festival to turn spotlight on Iran’s coastal provinces

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** — Chabahar will be hosting a major tourism festival in November. The ten-day event is intended to turn the spotlight on coastal provinces of Iran. The event will be attended by exhibitors and natives from the provinces of Mazandaran, Khuzestan, Bushehr, Hormozgan, Sistan-Baluchestan, and Golestan, Mehr reported on Sunday.



Vacationers enjoy a sea view during their visits to Chabahar, southeastern Iran.

The port city of Chabahar, which is located in the southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan province, welcomed 3,200 foreign nationals during the first nine months of the past Iranian calendar year (ended in March 2019).

“In addition, as we want to have exhibitors from other parts of the country, we also invited exhibitors from the provinces of Yazd, Kerman and South Khorasan, which have close proximity to Sistan-Baluchestan,” Sistan-Baluchestan provincial tourism chief Alireza Jalalzai said.

“Each night, [there will be special programs in which] one of the said provinces will promote its capacities, including customs, culture, traditions, travel destinations, handicrafts and cultural heritage,” the official explained.

For decades, Sistan-Baluchestan used to be shunned by potential foreign travelers though it is home to several distinctive archaeological sites and natural attractions, including two UNESCO World Heritage sites of Shahr-e-Soukhteh (Burnt City) and Lut Desert, shared with Kerman Province.

For mainstream Iranians, the name of Sistan-Baluchestan conjures up stories of drought, desiccated wetlands and dust storms. In the international scale foreigners may consider it a reminiscent of the big red blot on the Iran safety map.

## Hurricane Dorian dampens Labor Day travel

Vacationers along the southeast coast for the Labor Day holiday and the unofficial close of summer are in for a nerve-racking weekend.

After heading toward the Atlantic Coast of Florida for several days, Hurricane Dorian has veered toward Georgia and the Carolinas.

While Florida may not receive a direct hit, dangerous storm conditions are still anticipated in the state in the coming days. Meanwhile, Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina are now on high alert as the storm approaches those coasts.

Hurricane Dorian’s shifting path means the holiday weekend forecast looks better than anticipated in some places, but there will still be dangers for beach goers.

“High surf and very dangerous rip currents are expected all along the East Coast from Florida up through the Carolinas through the weekend,” said CNN Senior Meteorologist Dave Hennen.

Cumberland Island National Seashore, located on the largest barrier island off the coast of Georgia, is closing to the public on Saturday. The last ferry from the island leaves at 2:45 p.m.

Fort Frederica National Monument, located on nearby St. Simons Island, is also closing on Saturday, according to a National Park Service press release.

(Source: CNN)



## ROUND THE GLOBE

### Stari Ras and Sopocani

Registered on the UNESCO World Heritage list, Stari Ras and Sopocani is a serial property consisting of four separate components located in the Raska region of southern Serbia: Sopocani Monastery, Djurdjevi Stupovi Monastery, Holy Apostles St Peter and St Paul Church (St Peter’s Church), and the archaeological site of the Medieval Town of Ras.



The impressive collection of three ecclesiastical monuments dating from the 10th to the 13th centuries eminently illustrates the birth of artistic activity in medieval Serbia, which attained the highest standards in the art and culture of the Byzantine Empire and the regions of Central and Southeastern Europe.

The unique architectural complex formed by numerous structures in Stari Ras (Old Ras), situated at a crossroads of eastern and western influences, testifies to the period from 12th to the early 14th centuries when the ancient town was the first capital of the Serbian state.

The frescoes in the Sopocani Monastery church, dating from about 1270-1276, are among the finest in Byzantine and Serbian medieval art. These exceptional paintings represent the work of the best artists of that period who were unable to work in the territory of the Byzantine Empire and found refuge at the court of the Serbian king.

At Sopocani these artists introduced a refined spirit of antiquity to the prevailing medieval conventions. St George’s Church in the Djurdjevi Stupovi Monastery, founded in 1170-1171, is the earliest example of a distinctive new regional architecture that blended Romanesque and Byzantine styles.

(Source: UNESCO)

# World Tourism Day to focus on job generation, better future

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** — World Tourism Day is annually commemorated on September 27 with worldwide celebrations under the auspices of the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

The event is intended to raise awareness among the global community about various tourism-related arenas of social, cultural, political and financial dimensions as well as the contribution the sector can make to reach the sustainable development goals.

This year, the UNWTO has adopted the motto of “Tourism and Jobs: A Better Future for All” as the organization has set goals on development of skills, education and jobs, wishing to realize a better future.

The UNWTO, in a note posted on its website, expresses the need for formulating new policies in order to achieve the goals.

“New policies are needed to maximize tourism’s potential to create more and better jobs, especially for women and youth. New policies are also needed to reflect and incorporate ongoing advances in technology.”

It also accentuates on a missing link between tourism-related expertise and what travel businesses need.

“Policies and actions should be geared towards addressing the current mismatch between tourism skills that are taught and those that tourism employers need. This requires a holistic approach to the future of work in tourism, with heightened cooperation between all actors, including the public and private sectors.”

Regarding the future of tourism-associated jobs, the UNWTO says that creating and ensuring equitable employment is essential to increasing social inclusion, peace and security, adding that the potential of every economic sector to provide decent jobs should be utilized to its fullest.

“The emergence of new technologies has led to the development of new forms of work that are rapidly changing production processes worldwide. This both provides opportunities for, and puts pressure, on existing employment, welfare and education agendas.”

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), global unemployment remains high. All sectors and countries, therefore, need to create the conditions for more and better jobs. Embracing new technology can play a key role in achieving this goal.

The organization has also highlighted the impact of cutting-edge technologies on job skills saying, “Making the new wave of technological breakthroughs as inclusive as possible will require considerable investment in training and skills for life and work. Everyone should have a chance to develop their full potential so as to benefit from the new technological era.”

“To do this we need to examine the impact of technological change on socioeconomic growth, jobs and inequality. We also need to provide tools and skills to those who are



Foreign travelers visit the UNESCO-registered Imam Square, formerly named Naqsh-e Jahan Square, in Isfahan, central Iran. It almost always feels full of life thanks to being a prime destination for both domestic and foreign travelers. The square was laid out in the very early 17th century under the reign of the Safavid ruler, Shah Abbas the Great, to signal the importance of Isfahan as a capital of a powerful empire.

## New policies are needed to maximize tourism’s potential to create more and better jobs, especially for women and youth.

looking for a job and as well as to those whose jobs are at risk of automation.”

On the occasion of its centenary in 2019, the ILO released “Work for a Brighter Future: Report of the Global Commission on the future of Work”. This landmark report takes note of the forces transforming the world – technology, climate change, demography, globalization – to call for a human-centered agenda for the future of work.

The ILO estimates that ‘accommodation and restaurants’, together with ‘private sector services’, will create jobs at the fastest rate among all sectors in the economy over the next five years.

### Iran and its booming tourism

According to a World Travel and Tourism Council’s annual report, Iran’s tourism sector grew by 1.9% to contribute 1,158 trillion rials (\$8.83 billion) or 6.5% to the country’s gross domestic product (GDP) and 1,334 jobs (5.4% of total employment) in 2018.

The report, which digs into the economic impact and social importance of the sector, indicated that internation-

al visitors spent 168,954 billion rials (\$1.28 billion) in the Islamic Republic during 2018.

Nearly 7.8 million foreign nationals visited Iran over the past Iranian calendar year 1397 (ended March 20), showing a 52.5 percent increase year on year. The country hosted 5.1 million travelers in 1396 (March 2017-18).

Medical travelers constitute a considerable share on arrivals in the country. Many domestic experts say that medical tourism produces win-win outcomes in Iran as it can offer considerable benefits to international health-care seekers; affordable yet quality treatment services.

Medical tourism fetched Iran some \$1.2 billion in 1397, as its hospitals admitted some 70,000 foreign patients, according to data compiled by the Ministry of Health.

The Islamic Republic has set its goals to exceed its yearly medical travelers to around 2 million in [calendar year] 1404 (March 2025-March 2026).

Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, it aims to increase the number of tourist arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million in 2025.

## Protesters rally at Hong Kong airport to disrupt travel

**HONGKONG (Reuters)** — Hundreds of protesters gathered outside Hong Kong’s international airport on Sunday, disrupting travel in a bid to focus global attention on their fight for greater democracy in a city facing its biggest political crisis in decades.

Trains to the airport were suspended and traffic was congested after protesters urged the public to overwhelm road and rail links to one of the world’s busiest airports.

But passengers continued to enter and leave the terminal freely, and planes were still taking off. Rain fell as a tropical

depression approached Hong Kong from the southeast.

Authorities raised the number three typhoon signal, warning of a possible heavy storm on its way.

Police warned the airport gathering was illegal and said they would soon conduct a “dispersal operation”.

“The police warn all protesters to stop their illegal acts and leave immediately,” they said in a statement.

Sunday’s demonstration comes after police and protesters clashed overnight in some of the most intense violence since

unrest erupted more than three months ago over concerns Beijing was planning to erode the autonomy granted to the city when it was handed back to China from Britain in 1997.

China denies the charge of meddling in Hong Kong, which it says is an internal affair. It has denounced the protests and warned of the damage to the economy.

Protesters outside the airport, many wearing hard hats and gas masks, chanted “Fight for freedom! Stand with Hong Kong!” as riot police watched from inside the terminal building.

## How to travel using an e-bike or scooter



### If you follow the safety precautions, an electric bike, scooter or motorbike is an easy and cheap way to tour most urban centers.

happens unsurprisingly, is Uber, which runs Jump (bikes and scooters in 32 cities and 10 countries) and recently partnered with Lime (scooters in 100 cities and 25 countries). In the United States, the Uber competitor Lyft is also in the scooter game (20 cities) and operates city bike shares in eight cities.

Other common operators to look for include Bird (scooters in 100-plus cities), which recently acquired San Francisco-based company Scoot (scooters, bikes and motorbikes, in various combinations, in San Francisco, Barcelona and Santiago). Most of these companies have both a United States and international presence, and are growing fast — scope out availability through company websites before an upcoming trip, and download apps as needed. If you’re already an Uber or Lyft user, you’ll be able to access bikes and scooters through your existing account.

App interfaces differ slightly, but generally will show you where to find a vehicle, how to unlock it, the range on a device and

the rates for your ride. The vast majority of bikes and scooters are dockless, meaning you don’t have to drop them at a specific site or docking station, but instead, you must leave them in designated zones (leaving your device outside of that zone will result in a fee). Most apps only allow you to rent one vehicle per account, save Lyft’s bike share partnerships (Lime is also currently testing a new Group Ride feature in Europe and Latin America).

### Safety first

The apps will use images to demonstrate how to safely use your bike or scooter; many also offer maps and information specific to the city in which you’re renting. Scoot requires that you watch an orientation video before riding one of their motorbikes (you can go to their San Francisco headquarters for an in-person orientation if you’d like).

All operators recommend that, when first trying a vehicle, you do so in a less congested area. Stick to protected bike lanes when available (other than motorbikes,

which should be ridden in car lanes). Be very aware of traffic.

“This is new technology, and there’s definitely a learning curve,” says Andrew Savage, Lime’s vice president of sustainability. “We are sharing the streets with cars, and these vehicles haven’t dealt with scooters until recently.”

While many e-bike or scooter companies will give away helmets around a launch, devices don’t come equipped with helmets (save Scoot’s motorbikes and Revel’s mopeds). You can seek out bike shops and rental services for helmets, but Morgan Lommele, director of state and local policy of the nonprofit PeopleForBikes, recommends traveling with your own — a growing number of collapsible options make this an increasingly more packable option.

### Rules of the road

Rules and rider culture can differ by city and country, as does the availability of bike lanes and routes. Ms. Lommele highly encourages riders to do some research beforehand.

“Do a little homework the same way you’d find a great restaurant or hotel or concert,” she says. “Slow down. Really pay attention to what’s going on around you.”

In addition to researching optimal routes, understanding a city’s rules is key. Preliminary research helps, but Michael Keating, founder and president of Scoot, has another good rule of thumb when he’s riding in a new place: do what the locals do.

“If locals are riding in bike lanes, parking their bikes in a certain place, do that! And don’t do your first ride at rush hour.”

City rules differ, but generally, you should not be riding bikes or scooters on the sidewalk.

### Enjoy the ride

One of benefits of getting around a new city on a bike, scooter or moto? It’s fun.

“When you’re on a scooter or a bike, you can see the sites, and you can actually stop and enjoy them easily,” says Rachel Holt, Uber’s head of new mobility.

“When you’re traveling, the journey is really the destination. You get this fun, rich way to see a place.”

(Source: The New York Times)



# The health benefits of doing more vigorous exercise

We're always being told to do more exercise and for many of us, the news we don't have to work too hard — and get all hot, sweaty, and breathless while doing it — has been a significant selling point.

After all, exercising at a moderate intensity, where there's just a slight but noticeable increase in your breathing and heart rate, meets minimum recommended exercise targets.

Something as doable as brisk walking fits the bill, and if you can clock up 30 minutes on most days of the week, you can cut your risk of heart disease significantly — perhaps even halve it.

But is pushing yourself harder going to bring extra benefits?

"Absolutely," says Jeff Coombes from the School of Human Movement and Nutrition Studies at the University of Queensland.

While higher-intensity exercise isn't essential, Professor Coombes says it will definitely improve your level of fitness — the efficiency with which your heart and lungs work to get oxygen delivered to and used by your muscles.

The research is clear: the fitter you are, the less likely it is you will die of pretty much any health condition you can name, he says.

"With some limitations, there's good evidence the more [intense exercise] you do, the better off you'll be," Professor Coombes says.

## More bang for your exercise buck

The reason moderate-intensity exercise is emphasised by public health experts is because half of us do little or no exercise at all.

If you're one of these people, switching from being inactive to exercising moder-



ately is great bang for your buck, Professor Coombes says.

You'll significantly cut your risk of heart disease, Australia's biggest killer, for a relatively small increase in effort.

You also take a significant step towards warding off diabetes, stroke and probably a host of other conditions, too.

While you can further reduce your risk of heart disease, stroke, and diabetes by working harder while exercising, the reward for your

extra effort is comparatively smaller.

It's feared the advice to go hard may actually scare those who are inactive off exercising all together.

## Using exercise to reverse disease

Exactly how much healthier you'll be for your extra effort might depend on the disease you're trying to prevent, Professor Coombes says.

For instance, if you have diabetes and want to improve or reverse your symptoms, then exercising at a higher threshold of intensity might

be critical.

"We know moderate-intensity exercise is very good for preventing the onset of diabetes but for people who already have it, it seems moderate intensity might not be enough to reverse it or improve the symptoms," he says.

## Risk vs benefit

All exercise has safety risks and these increase when you push yourself harder.

However, the odds of a potentially fatal event like a heart attack or stroke are still very low, even when you exercise hard, Professor Coombes says.

"We're talking about one [adverse event] in tens of thousands of hours of exercising," he says.

"The risk is very minimal compared to the benefits."

Professor Coombes stresses the importance of being assessed for factors that increase the odds of heart attacks or strokes from exercise prior to starting an exercise program.

Treating those risk factors usually means exercise is still possible, but it may have to be tailored to your needs.

However, some people's health conditions may mean they should stick to lower-intensity exercise.

The greatest area of increased risk from exercising harder is probably muscle or joint problems, Professor Coombes says.

"You need to be careful. Listen to your body, don't do too much too soon," he says.

"If you have any musculoskeletal issues, see a doctor or physio to get advice."

(Source: abc.net.au)

## 5 health benefits of yoga for seniors

Yoga is all the rave these days. There seems to be a flow for almost everything like anxiety, tight joints, stressful days, and prenatal for expecting mothers.

Yoga has so many health benefits for everyone, including seniors. That's right! It's challenging yet gentle enough for people 60 and over, and there are classes for all levels.

Here are five incredible benefits of yoga for seniors.

1. Strengthens your bones and tones your muscle. As you age, your bone density and muscle mass decreases, which can lead to osteoporosis and osteopenia. But different yoga poses like Vrikshasana (Tree Pose) and Setu Bandhasana (Bridge Pose), can increase balance and coordination and reduce the chances of falls and fractures.

2. Helps with weight maintenance. Aging can bring on a few extra pounds that you may not want. Maybe you don't care to hit the gym five days a week, or perhaps you physically can't handle extreme workouts. According to Harvard Health, practicing yoga for 30 minutes a day may not burn as many calories as a half-hour on the bike, but 30 minutes or more a week can help shrink body mass index (BMI).

3. Improves your mental state. Yoga is all about the mind and body. It's about control and feeling good at that moment. An essential aspect of yoga is controlling your breath. Breathing exercises (pranayama) can help quiet the mind, according to the Mayo Clinic. Some practices also incorporate meditation, which allows you to have more control over your thoughts



and decrease judgment.

4. Boosts your mood. Experts say that regular exercise releases endorphins, a natural mood enhancer that brings about feelings of optimism and positivity, according to Livestrong. The best part is that you don't have to do vigorous exercises to achieve this. Slow breathing, meditation, or small movements like walking can improve your mood. Yoga increases GABA, a chemical in the brain known to help calm nerves.

5. Helps to build social interactions. If you attend a weekly yoga class, you'll create bonds with your instructor and others. According to Verywellfit, these social relationships are great for improving one's mood, which plays a significant role in healthy aging.

Before beginning yoga, speak with your doctor, especially if you are a first-timer or suffer from chronic conditions. Be sure to attend a professional class and to alert your instructor about any issues you may have. Yoga is all about listening to your body, so if you are a first-timer, don't push yourself too hard or try uncomfortable poses.

(Source: foxreno.com)

## Alternate-day fasting has health benefits for healthy people

A new study shows that strict alternate-day fasting may be a valid alternative to counting calories and may have similar results, while also benefitting various biological processes.

People often alter their diets — in order to lose weight, improve their cardiovascular health, and become healthier overall. There are many different ways to do so.

A recent study looked into alternate-day fasting (ADF) to see whether it is a viable alternative to other methods, such as intermittent fasting or caloric restriction.

The researchers found that a number of health benefits accompanied weight loss in participants who practiced ADF.

The results of their investigation appear in the journal Cell Metabolism.

## ADF as an option

Researchers — many from the Medical University of Graz, in Austria — conducted a randomized controlled trial. They enrolled 60 participants in a 4-week trial and randomly assigned them to either an ADF group or a control group.

The control group participants could eat whatever they wanted whenever they wanted, and the ADF group alternated between a 36-hour, no-calorie fast and 12 hours of unlimited eating.

The researchers followed the ADF group with continuous glucose monitoring to ensure that they did not consume any calories during their fasting periods. The participants also kept diaries during their fasting days.

The team also worked with 30 people who had been on a strict ADF diet for the last 6 months or more, in order to assess



the long term safety of the practice.

All of the participants had a healthy weight and good overall health.

## Unexpected biological benefits

While those in the ADF group often compensated for some of their lost calories when they were allowed to eat, they did not compensate for them all. Overall, they experienced a mean caloric restriction of around 35% and lost an average of 7.7 pounds during the 4-week trial.

There were health benefits, as well. The participants in the ADF group had reduced levels of soluble intercellular adhesion molecule-1, a marker linked to inflammation and age-related disease.

They also had lower levels of the thyroid hormone triiodothyronine, without experiencing any problems with thyroid function. Previous research has associated lowered levels of this hormone with longevity.

Additionally, the ADF group had lower levels of cholesterol and reduced trunk, or belly, fat. They also had some restriction in amino acids, which research in rodents suggests may extend the lifespan.

(Source: medicalnewstoday.com)

## Four of the best foods for healthy aging

It's no secret that progress in the gym starts in the kitchen, but what about simply aging? Can eating the right foods really help you look younger and feel better?

You bet. Added sugars and trans fats (hydrogenated oils) are sure to bring about signs of old age quicker, and an excess of saturated fats and sodium don't help, either. A lot of people know this, and yet they still have trouble acting on it. Why? Because staying away from bad foods is difficult. It's more expensive, takes more work to prepare, and doesn't taste nearly as good. But just because you have trouble not eating the wrong things doesn't mean you can't make a conscious effort to eat more of the right things.

There are plenty of foods out there that can help fight the symptoms of aging. Adding these four foods to your weekly diet can potentially change the way you look, feel, and even act as you start to struggle with the side-effects of aging:

## No new price hike for wheat bran: Deputy Industry Min.

Deputy Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade Abbas Tabesh said that bran rate has not had any new price increase in the current year (started March 21, 2019).

Price of bran used for macaroni, raw milk and flour will not experience any price hike, he said, adding, "if the Ministry of Agriculture insists on reducing the rate, price of milk should also be decreased."

Turning to the latest decision taken on the price of bran, he said, "the latest decision with regard to the price of bran dates back to the change in price of raw milk and macaroni, based on which, price of bran

in the final cost of raw milk and macaroni was set 12,500 rials on June 12, 2019) and after that, any other price hike has not been considered in this regard."

The head of Organization to Support Consumers and Producers added, "since tracking price of bran is difficult at the consumer market, the organization is ready to decrease price of flour and raw milk if the Ministry of Agriculture insists on reducing price of bran up to 8,400 rials in order to modify the final cost of bran at 12,500 rials."

He reiterated, "the Ministry of Agriculture proposes that price of bran should decrease

from current 12,500 rials to 8,400 rials at large."

He stated, "presently, there is not any problem in the field of provision of brand needed by flour making, dairy and macaroni production industries and the Ministry of Agriculture persists in decreasing the rate due to the high consumption of this product in livestock affairs."

"We are ready to receive the price documents of livestock from the Ministry of Agriculture in order to make necessary studies on the price."

That is to say that any price which is set



for brand in the livestock, the same price will be considered in the price of macaroni and raw milk in line with reducing prices, the deputy ministry of industry, mine and trade reiterated.

## 10 travel health tips that'll ensure you have a relaxing holiday

Travelling to foreign places doesn't only provide you with wonderful memories to last a lifetime; it can actually leave you in much better health — both mentally and physically.

Instead of thinking of travel as a luxury, the vast benefits suggest we should make it a much bigger priority for our wellbeing. Make sure you get the most out of your holiday with these travel health tips.

## Make sure you're covered with travel insurance

Anytime you travel, you want to stay healthy and return home in one piece. Well before your trip begins, make sure you are covered with travel insurance so you can embark on your big adventure worry-free.



## Don't forget medications and first aid

Don't forget to pack any prescription medications or products you need, such as asthma inhalers, EpiPens or insulin.

Depending on your itinerary, consider putting together a small first aid kit of things like plasters, painkillers and insect repellent. For motion sickness or concerns about traveller's diarrhoea, a quick visit to the pharmacy will supply everything you need.

## Make sure you're up-to-date with vaccinations

No one wants their holiday ruined by illness, so consult your GP or travel doctor in advance to find out what the recommended vaccinations are for every leg of your journey, as some require a series of shots over several days or weeks.

It's also a good idea to check if proof of vaccination is required upon arrival.

## Don't rely on the facilities

Travelling may strengthen your immune system, but there's no point taking unnecessary risks.

Along with vaccinations, keep a hand sanitizer on you that you can use before eating, after using the bathroom, or if your hands get grubby. Sometimes, there just aren't adequate facilities when you need them most!

## Forget the diet

Trying a foreign cuisine is a once in a lifetime opportunity and one of the things we look forward to the most about a holiday.

Unless you have allergies or are vegan, don't get too hung up about ingredients or calories, just do your best to eat some fruit and veges each day — you'll feel much better for it.

If you are in a country where the water isn't safe to drink, steer clear of fresh fruit and salads which might have been washed with contaminated water and just stick to ordering cooked vegetable dishes instead.

## Take extra care to stay hydrated

It can be easy to get dehydrated, especially if you're doing a lot of walking on your trip, and the last thing you want is a headache, dizziness or stomach ache from constipation.

Make water your drink of choice, always ensure you are drinking clean water, and consider packing some electrolyte sachets.

## Be prepared for lots of physical activity

During the day, walk or bike as much as you can to keep your body moving, and make sure you have the required level of fitness if you have any physically demanding activities planned.

Travelling can involve some big days on your feet, so doing regular walks prior to your trip is good preparation.

## Make sure you pack appropriate clothing

Know what climate you are heading into, with the correct clothes and footwear packed to protect yourself from the elements.

Even if you don't need hiking boots, bring comfortable shoes that you can walk in all day without blisters.

## Stick to the dress code

Before you pack your suitcase, double check if there are any dress codes or cultural customs you need to be aware of in the country and at any specific tourist spots you plan on visiting.

Dressing appropriately will ensure you don't cause any offence to locals, but will also increase your level of safety by helping you to blend in.

## Keep your valuables with you

Keep all important travel documents and money with you — not in your suitcase — and consider buying a hidden money belt.

Lock away valuables and consider leaving items that are irreplaceable or sentimental at home, in case they get lost or stolen.

(Source: nowtolove.co.nz)

## Fast food can be healthy without sauce and soda: study

Dieting is easy — all you have to do is remove every trace of the flavor, satisfaction and general happiness from the fast-food indulgences you love.

A new study out of Harvard breaks the news that drive-through fare is pretty unhealthy. But, its lead researcher points out, the food can be made healthier, just as long as you strip the sauce and toppings, leaving yourself with a pathetic patty on a bun with a glass of water — to wash the dry mass down.

The study, published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine, found that at the 34 fast-food chains they analyzed, the average combo meal contains 1,193 calories, and that the quantities of sodium, saturated fat and sugar are through the roof. But all a person has to do is hold the dipping sauce; remove toppings, such as cheese; and opt for water over soda — and you'll be good as gravy, says lead author Kelsey Vercammen of Harvard's T.H. Chan School of Public Health in an interview with Reuters Health.

"We were surprised at just how much realistic customer modifications can change the nutrient profile of a meal," Vercammen told the outlet.

Vercammen's stance is very optimistic, but it stands to benefit both humans and crows alike. (Our feathered friends were recently found to have higher-than-usual cholesterol thanks to the deep-fried detritus they scavenge!) Fast food has been blamed for everything from obesity to an early death.

Just don't try to tell that to the hordes of people chasing that infamous fried chicken sandwich.

(Source: foxnews.com)



## Birders claim first sighting of brown booby in UK

Hundreds of birders have flocked to Cornwall to seek what could be the first ever UK sighting of a brown booby.

The large, yellow-footed seabird is usually found fishing in tropical waters on the far side of the Atlantic, around the Caribbean and Venezuela.

A local birder reported seeing a suspected brown booby while he was relaxing with his family on the beach at St Ives on Monday. The bird was photographed on Tuesday by Keith Jennings, a birdwatcher and electrician who travelled from Gloucestershire to find it.



The brown booby surprised birders by loitering around the beaches of north Cornwall for five days, fishing close to the surf at Hayle on Thursday.

Mark Grantham, the chair of the Cornwall Bird Watching and Preservation Society, said: “These really rare seabirds do turn up but they are quite tantalising – so often they drift by and are seen for a couple of minutes and then they are gone. The fact that this bird has hung around is going to draw a lot of people.”

Hundreds of birders gathered around St Ives Bay to catch a glimpse of – and photograph – the bird, which has been attracted to bait fish found in the bay at this time of year.

But the brown booby was proving elusive on Friday, leaving many newly arrived birders disconsolate.

James Lowen, a nature writer and wildlife guide, drove 425 miles overnight with two friends to try to catch a glimpse of the bird, gathering on the dunes before dawn to train their telescopes on the sea.

“It’s never been seen in Britain before and rarity is always exciting,” he said. “I’ve seen it in the Caribbean 20 years ago but seeing it over this side of the Atlantic would be a real red-letter day. We’re having a lovely time sunbathing in the Cornish sunshine and there is that lure of pasties, but some birders are rather disconsolately packing up and leaving. Perhaps we’ll be lucky at some point.”

While rare North American warblers blown to Britain are likely to die without ever returning home, the brown booby stands a fair chance of finding its way back across the Atlantic, according to Grantham.

He said: “It is lost but it is completely in its element – it’s a sea-bird and it’s at sea. Seabirds can fish as they travel and east-west journeys are easier to manage than north-south. It is still in the right ocean and the right hemisphere so it could potentially make it back.”

A brown booby was spotted in Brittany, France later on Friday, with the birders in Cornwall believing it to be the same bird. “Time to pack up,” said Lowen on the Cornish coast.

The Cornish brown booby’s status as potentially the first ever sighting in the UK may be disputed, however, because since the sighting other birdwatchers have revealed what they suspect may have been another brown booby, flying off the coast of Kent earlier in August.

(Source: The Guardian)

## WORDS IN THE NEWS

### Notting Hill Carnival

(August 27, 2001)

Europe’s biggest street party is taking place in West London. The carnival attracts big crowds, but at what cost? This report from Jenny Waters:

The Notting Hill Carnival **first hit the streets of London** in 1964. It was **a very modest affair**, a gathering of Caribbean musicians in an area of London, where many West Indian **immigrants** had **settled** in the 1950s and 60s.

About a hundred people took part in that first Carnival. This year, two million are expected to **turn up**. They come to see groups of **revelers** dressed in **lavish costumes**, and to hear the steel bands and all the other styles of music on offer, ranging all the way from hip-hop to jazz.

But it’s not just great music that comes to people’s minds when they think of the Carnival. It’s also become associated with **disorder** and violence. In the long hot summer of 1976, when Britain experienced the highest temperatures it had known for years, the Carnival **descended into a riot**. Every year there’s a debate in the UK about how the event should be **policed**.

Last year there were two **murders** at the festival and the policing bill for this year’s Carnival will be the biggest ever for a single event in Britain.

■ **Words**  
**first hit the streets of London:** first arrived in London, was first held in London  
**a modest affair:** a small event  
**immigrants:** people who have come to live in a country from abroad  
**settled in:** to become familiar with somewhere new, such as a new house, job, or school  
**turn up:** attend  
**revelers:** people who are enjoying themselves or having a party  
**lavish:** extravagant, with an appearance of wealth  
**costume:** a set of clothes in a style typical of a particular country or historical period  
**disorder:** public disobedience, violent behavior  
**descended into a riot:** became violent, uncontrollable  
**policed:** if an event is policed, it is controlled or supervised by the police  
**murder:** the unlawful premeditated killing of one human being by another

(Source: BBC)



# Over 102,000 Iranians so far registered to attend Arbaeen trek

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — More than 102,000 Iranians have so far registered to participate in the Arbaeen pilgrimage, Amir Moradi, an official with the Arbaeen headquarters has stated.

Arbaeen pilgrimage also known as Arbaeen trek, a distinctively Shia spiritual exercise, is an epic journey gathering Shias as well as Sunnis, even Christians and Zoroastrians, etc. from various nationalities altogether making their ways to the holy Iraqi cities of Najaf and Karbala, walking towards the holy shrine of Imam Hussein (AS) commemorating the 40th day of his martyrdom in the battle of Karbala, in 680 AD.

Pilgrims should register in Samah website prior to the trek and then apply for the visa online.

A total of 102,023 people have applied

for visas, of whom 74,301 have been granted the permits, he noted, Khabaronline news agency reported on Sunday.

Three provinces of Tehran, Khuzestan and Fars have the highest number of pilgrims, he highlighted.

He went on to say that 15,597 people from Tehran province, 6,824 people from Khuzestan province, 6,526 people from Fars province, 5,000 people from Khorasan Razavi province, 4,987 people from Isfahan province and 2,986 people from Bushehr province have registered so far in the system.

Last year about 1.8 million Iranians took part in the ceremony. This is while in 2011 only 50,000 took the trek to Karbala which shows a great surge in the number of pilgrims taking the long walk to pay tribute to the third Shia Imam.



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## Illegal killings of Scottish birds of prey doubles in a year

Illegal killings of birds of prey in Scotland has more than doubled in a year and all of the incidents happened on or near land used for driven grouse shooting, according to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB).

The charity’s Birdcrime report found there were at least 12 incidents in 201, up from five the previous year.

A peregrine poisoned in the Pentland Hills; a buzzard found to have been shot twice in South Lanarkshire; a buzzard caught in an illegal trap in Inverness-shire, and a hen harrier caught in a spring trap in Perthshire, were among the recorded incidents.

There was a total of 87 in the UK in 2018. The charity is now calling on the Scottish Government to introduce licensing on the issue. Duncan Orr-Ewing, head of species and land management at RSPB Scotland, said: “Birds of prey are an integral part of Scotland’s heritage, woven into our landscapes and our history.

“We have international obligations to protect these birds. There is widespread revulsion amongst the Scottish public that these birds continue to suffer greatly at the hands of wildlife criminals. Our published data from Birdcrime 2018 shows that this damage is both current and significant, and reinforces why robust regulation of driven grouse shooting is urgently needed.”

Grouse moor estates are increasingly drawing criticism for their effect on native wildlife and climate change, with many calling for shoots to be banned.

This latest report comes just weeks after a Channel 4 report suggested hundreds of animals, including weasels, badgers, goshawks and buzzards were being killed on grouse moors.

“The Scottish Government has led the way in the UK by commissioning an independent review into the impacts of driven grouse shooting,” said Mr Orr-Ewing. “This is a seminal moment and a chance for Scottish Government to tackle raptor crime by bringing grouse moor management under regulation, and giving greater recognition to the public interest in the way such sporting estates are managed.

“Sanctions to remove licences to shoot should be available to act as a strong de-



terrent to those who currently break wildlife protection laws, and engage in other damaging land management practices.”

In England, there were 67 recorded incidents – with just five in Wales and three in Northern Ireland.

Of the 87 in 2018’s report, only one has resulted in a prosecution – with only one prosecution from 68 recorded incidents in 2017.

The figures do not include incidents where no bodies were recovered, however, with RSPB Scotland referencing a number of cases of satellite-tagged birds going missing in suspicious circumstances.

A Scottish Gamekeepers Association spokesman said the group would “await the official independent statistics from Scottish Government”, lamenting how the RSPB’s “unofficial report each year gets overtaken by the official figures approved by the relevant agencies.

He added: “We have been pleased to see the official statistics showing an establish pattern of year on year decline in raptor poisoning in Scotland, including the lowest figures ever recorded, in last year’s Government statement. The SGA has a proven stance against wildlife crime, removing eight members in seven years for wildlife crime convictions. We do not condone raptor crime.

“We disagree with RSPB regarding Muirburn (Code) and their views on mountain hares, which stem from a study which has since been scientifically proven to have utilised the least reliable count method available. Until independent agencies monitor satellite tags, which the SGA is petitioning Parliament for currently, we regard RSPB’s claims regarding satellite tags as speculative and lacking in verifiable evidence.”

(Source: The Independent)

## Rising sea levels and catastrophic storm surges could displace 280m people, UN warns

The damage caused by catastrophic “superstorms” combined with rising sea levels could increase by a hundred-fold or more, displacing hundreds of millions of people from coastlines around the world unless more is done to limit greenhouse gas emissions, according to a draft report by the United Nations.

According to French news agency AFP, which said it had obtained a copy of the report, the document outlines a grim scenario in which the warming oceans are “poised to unleash misery on a global scale”, with declining fish stocks, the melting of sea ice and glaciers, and increasing levels of human displacement.

Unless there are serious cuts to man-made greenhouse gas emissions, at least 30 per cent of the northern hemisphere’s surface permafrost could melt within just 80 years, the report warns.

This melt would unleash billions of tons of carbon stored in what are currently permafrost areas, which will accelerate rates of warming even more.

The upshot would be warming seas and rising coastlines, which could immediately threaten 280 million people, the document says.

The findings come from the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and is a “special report” on oceans and the Earth’s frozen zones, known as the cryosphere.

It is the fourth report in the last year to be published by the organization examining the impacts of the unfolding climate crisis, with the other three examining issues including declines in biodiversity, forest management and food, and how the effects of a 1.5C increase in average global temperatures since pre-industrialization will be felt.

All of the reports warn major change is required to avert disaster.

The warning comes as MPs and scientists have warned the UK is already on track to miss its environmental goals, including a government pledge to reach net zero emissions by 2050.

Last week a report from the Science and Technology Select Committee said efforts to reduce emissions have been undermined



by “unacceptable” cutbacks and delays, meaning we face “dire consequences”.

And on Thursday, the government’s chief environment scientist said the UK cannot hit its net zero emissions goal while ministers are fixed on economic growth as measured by GDP.

Globally, many countries are also dragging their heels on putting policy in place to tackle emissions.

The US – the second biggest contributor of CO2 – is exiting the Paris agreement on climate change, under Donald Trump’s leadership.

China – the world’s biggest polluter – is making strong progress in renewable technologies, but has relaxed air pollution controls and coal use is creeping upwards.

In India, an enormous drive to open coal power plants is underway, though the country is also increasingly relying on solar-generated electricity.

And in the EU, progress towards a mid-century net zero goal is slow due to some member states’ reluctance to vote for policies legally requiring them to reduce emissions.

The Paris agreement called on all countries to work to ensure average global temperature rises remain “well below” 2C warmer than the world was before the industrial revolution.

Michael Mann, director of the Earth System Science Centre at Pennsylvania State University told AFP one of the key problems was the idea humanity can overcome any problems resulting from sea-level rises.

“There is a pervasive thread in the US right now, promoted by techno-optimists who think we can engineer our way out of this problem,” he said.

(Source: The Independent)

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ع

## SDSs mitigation plan to take effect next year

Sand and dust storm (SDS) mitigation plan will be implemented in the southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchestan as of the next Iranian calendar year (beginning March 21), Department of Environment (DOE) chief has announced.

A total fund of \$150 million from the National Development Fund has been proposed to counter dust storms in Sistan-Baluchestan province, IRNA quoted Issa Kalantari as saying on Tuesday.

### PREFIX/SUFFIX

#### “-bound”

- **Meaning:** a word ending shows that something is restricted by or confined to
- **For example:** **Deskbound** executives can’t grasp production problems.

### PHRASAL VERB

#### Hammer away

- **Meaning:** to keep saying something because you want people to understand or accept it
- **For example:** I keep hammering away at this point because it’s important.

### IDIOM

#### Bring someone to heel

- **Explanation:** if you force someone to behave in a disciplined manner, you bring them to heel
- **For example:** The boy had always behaved badly, but the new headmaster managed to bring him to heel.

## طرح مهار گرد و غبارهای سیستان از اول سال آینده اجرایی می شود

رئیس سازمان حفاظت محیط زیست گفت: طرح مهار گرد و غبارهای منطقه سیستان و بلوچستان از ابتدای سال آینده اجرایی می شود. عیسی کلانتری روز سه شنبه در گفت و گو با خبرنگار ایرنا اظهار داشت: برای مبارزه با گرد و غبار این منطقه رئیس جمهوری تقاضای ۱۵۰ میلیون دلار اعتبار از صندوق توسعه ملی کرده است.



# Hezbollah determined to respond to Israeli drone incursion: Nasrallah

**TEHRAN** — Leader of the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah says the group is decided to give a response to Israel over its recent drone incursion into Lebanon.

Sayed Hassan Nasrallah said on Saturday that Israel "must pay a price" for its last week attacks into a southern suburb of the Lebanese capital Beirut where Hezbollah enjoys massive support.

He said giving a proper response to Israel over the drone incursions was about "establishing the rules of engagement and ... the logic of protection" for Lebanon.

"Israel should know that the Lebanese air space is not open to her," said Nasrallah in a televised speech, adding that the Israel attack open the door to assassinations if left unanswered.

The remarks came less than a week after Israel orchestrated a failed bombing mission through drones on Beirut's Dahieh region.



The attack, which took place early on Sunday, came to a swift end after a first drone

fell on a building housing Hezbollah's media office and a second one crashed in an empty

plot nearby after being detonated in the air.

Senior Lebanese officials condemned the attack as a violation of Lebanon's territorial integrity.

Nasrallah said in his Saturday speech that the response to Israeli attack could come from anywhere in Lebanon and not only from the Sha'baa farms south of the contrary where Hezbollah normally stations most of its military equipment.

"The response will come from Lebanon. We will choose the place and time," he said.

The Hezbollah leader further rejected claims by Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu that the resistance group had harbored facilities to build precision-guided missiles for attacks against Israel, Press TV reported.

"We don't have a precision missile factory. Netanyahu is lying," said Nasrallah, adding, however, that there were enough such missiles in Lebanon for any confrontation with Israel.

## 60 killed, 100 injured in fresh Saudi strikes on Yemen's Dhamar

**TEHRAN** — Saudi Arabia has carried out new air raids on Yemen's western Dhamar Province, killing at least 60 people and wounding 100 others.

The al-Masirah TV channel reported on Sunday that warplanes belonging to the Saudi-led coalition had pounded a jail where prisoners of war were being kept.

Head of Yemen's National Committee for Prisoners Affairs Abdul Qader al-Mortada said that the targeted prison housed over 170 prisoners of war, most of whom were supposed to be part of a local exchange deal.

The Saudi-led coalition claimed in a statement on Sunday that its aerial assaults

on Dhamar had targeted a military site belonging to the Houthi Ansarullah movement.

It alleged that Houthi fighters had stored drones and air defense systems at the site, and claimed the strikes were "in accordance with international humanitarian law."

According to Press TV, Saudi Arabia and a number of its regional allies launched a deadly war on Yemen in March 2015 in an attempt to reinstall a former regime and eliminate the Houthis, who have been defending the country along with armed forces.

The Western-backed military aggression, coupled with a naval blockade, has destroyed the country's infrastructure, and led to a massive humanitarian crisis.

## Russia slams U.S. for 'indiscriminate' attack in Syria's Idlib

**TEHRAN** — The United States has carried out a number of airstrikes in Syria's north-western province of Idlib, where Russia monitors de-escalation efforts, prompting a note of protest from Moscow.

On Saturday, the U.S. Central Command said American forces had hit what it claimed were an "al-Qaeda facility" north of Idlib, Reuters reported.

The Russian Defense Ministry subsequently said Washington had not notified Moscow in advance of the attacks, which caused casualties and endangered a standing ceasefire there, Russia's TASS news agency said.

Russia has been helping out the Syrian military against militants and terrorists

at Damascus' request since 2015.

The U.S. began leading an unlawful coalition of its allies in a purported effort against the Takfiri terrorist group of Daesh in the Arab country. That presence has lasted even though Damascus and its allies uprooted the group two years ago.

The Russian Defense Ministry said the U.S. airstrikes had violated previous agreements. Washington and Moscow have in the past made arrangements aimed at, among other things, avoiding air collision in Syrian airspace.

The U.S. attacks came on the day when the Syrian military had planned to withdraw from the Moscow-monitored de-escalation zone in Idlib to help the deconfliction drive.

## UK MPs to introduce legislation to stop 'no-deal' Brexit

**TEHRAN** — British parliamentarians opposed to a "no-deal" Brexit will try to pass legislation this week to prevent the United Kingdom from crashing out of the European Union without a deal next month, the opposition Labor Party's Brexit spokesman has said.

The legislation, to be published on Tuesday, would have one "very simple" aim - to prevent Prime Minister Boris Johnson from allowing the UK to leave the EU without an agreement on October 31, Keir Starmer told the BBC on Sunday.

"Obviously, if we are at the 31st of October, that will require an extension," he said.

"But I think this should be a very short, simple exercise designed to ensure we don't crash out without a deal."

According to the current timetable, Britain is scheduled to leave the EU on October 31 unless it formally requests for an extension to Article 50 and each of the European bloc's 27 member states agrees.

### ■ Parliament suspension

Britain's Parliament has limited time to craft and pass



a new law aimed at preventing a "no-deal" Brexit.

Johnson has announced plans to suspend Parliament for part of the time before the Brexit deadline.

Thousands of people across the UK took part in pro-

tests against Johnson's plans on Saturday.

Cabinet Minister Michael Gove, who is in charge of "no-deal" planning, refused to commit the government to follow Parliament's lead. He said he believed a majority of MPs would back the prime minister and defeat the legislation.

"We know the prime minister is making progress with our European friends and allies in attempting to secure a deal, and I don't believe that people will want to erect a roadblock in his way," he told the BBC.

Johnson and his top advisers are planning to meet the legislators from his Conservative Party to try to keep them from supporting the opposition's efforts to prevent "no deal".

Conservative MP David Gauke, a former British justice secretary and a Johnson critic, said he would meet the prime minister on Monday to hear his plan to deliver a Brexit deal he could support.

But he said he was prepared to disobey Conservative Party discipline and lose the whip if he was not persuaded.

## U.S., Taliban close to deal amid intensifying fighting

**TEHRAN** — Negotiators from the U.S. and the Taliban are "at the threshold of an agreement" which would reduce fighting and allow the continuation of full peace talks among Afghans, says a top U.S. official.

Senior U.S. diplomat and native Afghan Zalmay Khalilzad made the remarks on Twitter Saturday hours after the Taliban launched a massive offensive against Afghanistan's strategic city of Kunduz.

He also said the two sides had concluded their latest round of talks in Doha, Qatar.

Witnesses said on Saturday gunfire could be heard across Kunduz, the capital

of Kunduz province.

Heavy fighting has been going on in Kunduz city since Taliban fighters mounted attacks from several directions on Friday night.

The Taliban claimed they had captured several important buildings, while Afghan security officials insisted they had enough manpower on the ground to repel the attack.

Afghanistan's Interior Ministry said at least 34 Taliban terrorists had been killed during ground and air operations in three areas of the city and that purging operations were still underway.

Reports said electricity and most tele-

phone services were cut and residents were sheltering in their houses.

Meanwhile, Taliban fighters also attacked Pul-e Khumri, in the northern province of Baghlan, with interior ministry spokesman Nasrat Rahimi saying, fighters had taken up positions in two areas of Pul-e Khumri.

Rahimi also said that Afghan security forces were still fighting Taliban fighters there.

"The whole city is closed," said Safdar Muhsini, head of the Baghlan provincial council. "If the central government does not take quick action, the situation could get worse."

President Donald Trump declared on Friday that although Washington had held good negotiations with the Taliban, it had not yet reached a deal on U.S. troop withdrawal from Afghanistan.

According to press TV, Taliban sources have said Trump's remarks about maintaining a contingent of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, even after the signing of a deal would be unacceptable, demanding a complete pullout of foreign troops.

Nearly 20,000 foreign troops, most of them Americans, are currently deployed in Afghanistan as part of a mission to purportedly train, assist and advise Afghan security forces.

## Texas mass shooting kills 5, injures 21 as Alabama school shooting wounds 10 teens

**TEHRAN** — Another mass shooting in the U.S. state of Texas has reportedly left at least five people killed and more than 21 others injured while an earlier shooting incident at a high school football game in the southeastern state of Alabama left 10 teenagers wounded.

The Texas shooting began in the western city of Midland Saturday afternoon, where up to three suspects were seen shooting randomly at bystanders at a Home Depot department store before moving on to a movie theater in neighboring city of Odessa, where one of the shooters was reported shot and killed by police.

"It has been confirmed that the active shooter was shot and killed at the Cinergy in Odessa," the Midland Police Department declared in a Facebook post, adding: "There is no active shooter at this time. All agencies are investigating reports of possible suspects."

"We believe there are two shooters in two separate vehicles. One suspect is believed to be at the Cinergy [theater] in Midland and the other is believed to be driving on Loop 250 in Midland. The two vehicles in question are: gold/white small Toyota truck and a U..SPS Postal

Van. Please stay away from these areas and stay indoors," the police statement further said.

Moreover, Midland's Mayor Jerry Morales was also cited in local press reports as saying that two suspects and a possible third shooter were firing randomly at passersby, initially adding: "We have two fatalities and up to 20 injuries."

According to Press TV, Morales further stated that one of the suspected shooters was shot and wounded by police, saying: "One suspect is in custody. I'm not sure if he is alive." However, later reports said the suspect was killed by police, identifying him as 30-year-old white man.

It is not yet clear what motivated the mass carnage and whether the incident was racially motivated as was the case in a massacre a month earlier the Texas city of El Paso, where a white young male targeted mostly native Mexican residents, killing 22 and wounding nearly 30 more.

### ■ Alabama high school shooting injures 10 teenagers

In the Alabama shooting, a 17-year-old was appre-

hended by police officers after 10 teenagers -- ranging in age from 15 to 18 -- were shot following a high school football game in the city of Mobile.

The shooting victims were taken to a local hospital Saturday morning as Mobile Police Department spokesman Laderrick Dubose identified the teenage shooter as Deangelo Parnell, further declaring that there were no fatalities as the result of the incident.

Meanwhile, Mobile Police Chief Lawrence Battiste admonished young people for "bringing their beefs that they have with each other in their neighborhoods" into public settings and "putting people in harm's way."

"Why are young people bringing this type of violence to public events?" Battiste said at a news conference. "We're gonna have to be more aggressive on our end as a city as to how we hold these individuals accountable."

The incident "may have been a directed threat at one or two individuals and other people just happened to fall prey to their carelessness," he further added.

In yet another recent U.S. mass shooting in early August nine people were killed and 17 others were left wounded in Dayton, Ohio.

## U.S. and China begin imposing new tariffs as trade war escalates

➔ The trade tariffs on China have contributed a slowing of the Chinese economy, as well as other countries' economies in the region.

A snapshot of the country's giant manufacturing sector released on Saturday showed that activity contracted for the fourth month in succession in August.

The Chinese yuan has also come under pressure and fell to an 11-year low against the U.. dollar last week. South Korea said on Sunday that its exports had fallen for the ninth month in a row.

But Chinese state media struck a defiant note on Sunday.

"The United States should learn how to behave like a responsible global power and stop acting as a 'school bully'," the official Xinhua news agency said.

"As the world's only superpower, it needs to shoulder its due responsibility, and join other countries in making this world a better and more prosperous place. Only then can America become great again."

Tariffs could not impede China's development, said the official People's Daily of the ruling Communist Party.

"China's booming economy has made China a fertile ground for investment that foreign companies cannot ignore," it said, in a commentary under the name Zhong Sheng, or "Voice of China", which is often used to state its view on foreign policy issues.

Last month, Donald Trump said he was imposing tariffs on \$300bn worth of Chinese imports previously spared in the trade dispute.

Some of the tariffs were later delayed until December in a concession to U.S. retailers. Tariffs of 15% on cellphones, laptop computers, toys and clothing are to take effect on December 15, Guardian reported.

## Hezbollah destroyed Israeli military vehicle near border

➔ Meanwhile, a senior Hezbollah official says the Lebanese resistance movement will hit targets deep inside the Israeli-occupied territories in case the Tel Aviv regime launches a new war of aggression against Lebanon.

"The stance of Hezbollah Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah has pushed the Zionist enemy to live in a state of extreme terror, panic and caution to an extent that it has started hiding behind dummies in its military vehicles," Mohammad Yaghi said on Friday.

Nasrallah's executive assistant further noted that Hezbollah's response to any Israeli military campaign will not be limited to the border but rather deep inside the occupied territories.

"Our decision is to strike this enemy, which has launched a direct attack on us, on a normal house in (Syria's) Aqraba and in Beirut's southern suburbs (through a drone). This is not an idle threat, but a real action after which the enemy will learn not to commit new follies," Yaghi said.

"We have mobilized equipment, weapons and personnel to confront the enemy, and the resistance is now much stronger than the time prior to the 2006 aggression. We will let the enemy taste the bitterness, and it will regret its deed and aggression very much. They struck deep inside and we will respond deep inside. We will have another response for their drone strike as well," he pointed out.

Hezbollah said on August 26 that Israel had sent two drones into Lebanon on a bombing mission last weekend.

According to the resistance movement, the first drone had fallen on a building housing Hezbollah's media office in Dahieh suburb. The second drone, which appeared to have been sent by Israel to search for the first one, had crashed in an empty plot nearby after being detonated in the air, it added.

Following the drone raids, Nasrallah vowed in a televised speech that fighters of the movement would counter any further violation of the Lebanese airspace by Israeli drones.

Speaking in a televised speech broadcast live from the southern Lebanese town of Bint Jbeil on August 16, Nasrallah warned Israeli officials against launching a new military aggression against his country, stressing that all Israeli battalions will be destroyed under the eyes of mainstream media.

"Israeli military experts acknowledge that the Israeli army is incapable of waging a fresh war on Lebanon," he said.

## Taliban attacks second Afghan city as talks with U.S. wrap up

**TEHRAN** — The Taliban has launched an attack on the capital of northern Afghanistan's Baghlan province and gun battles with government forces are ongoing, according to an official, overshadowing increasing expectations over a peace deal between the group and the United States aimed at ending 18 years of war.

There was no immediate word on any casualties but Jawed Basharat, spokesman for the provincial police chief, said on Sunday that fighting continued on the outskirts of Puli Khumri.

The early-morning attack came a day after hundreds of Taliban fighters overran parts of Kunduz, one of Afghanistan's largest cities, in a major show of strength as the group wrapped up another round of peace talks with the U.S. in Qatar.

The assault on Kunduz set off a day of gun battles, with the Afghan military deploying reinforcements and using air power to repel the fighters. On Sunday, the interior ministry said the Taliban had been cleared from Kunduz but some fighters had fled to Baghlan.

"We hear the sound of blasts. The people [Puli Khumri] are so worried," Safdar Mohsini, chief of the Baghlan provincial council, told The Associated Press news agency.

"The Taliban are in residential areas fighting with Afghan security forces. We need reinforcements to arrive as soon as possible, otherwise the situation will go from bad to worse."

If the Taliban enter the city they will be very difficult to repel, Mohsini added, saying security forces at some checkpoints had run away without resistance. The city, which is home to more than 200,000 people, is located 230km north of the capital, Kabul, Al Jazeera reported.



## Nadal breezes into U.S. Open fourth round

Rafael Nadal cruised into the U.S. Open fourth round with a business-like 6-3 6-4 6-2 win over Chung Hyeon on Saturday.

The three-times champion took control of the match when he broke the South Korean's serve in the first set to grab a 4-2 lead and never looked back on a sunsoaked Arthur Ashe Stadium court.

Next up for Nadal is a last 16-clash with 2014 champion Marin Cilic, who came out on top in his slugfest with John Isner on the Grandstand court.

Nadal had been on court for just over two hours prior to his third round match after defeating John Millman in straight sets on Tuesday before getting a walkover into the third round when Thanasi Kokkinakis withdrew.

The second seeded Spaniard, who has been hampered by trouble-some knees throughout his career, did not wear his usual tape on his legs during the match.

"Tape is not working anymore," he said with a smile during his on-court interview.

"I am happy to be playing on hardcourts and I am trying to play a little more aggressive.

Nadal will have his work cut out when he meets big-serving Cilic on Monday, who defeated Isner 7-5 3-6 7-6(6) 6-4.

Nadal said the key was to toppling an opponent like Cilic was holding serve and making the most of his opportunities when receiving.

"Chances are not a lot, so you need to be ready to expect a very tough one," he told reporters.

"I need to be focused with my serve, as always. I need to be ready to accept the challenge that brings the competition in days like these ones.

"And I hope to be ready to play my highest level, because that's what I am going to need."

(Source: Reuters)

## Blanca Fernandez Ochoa: Winter Olympic medallist reported missing

Blanca Fernandez Ochoa, the first Spanish woman to win a medal at the Winter Olympics, has been reported missing, police say.

The former alpine skier, 56, disappeared more than a week ago, Spain's national police said.

Ms Ochoa was last seen driving a black Mercedes A-Class on 23 August in the Aravaca district of Madrid, Spain's capital.

In a tweet, Spanish police asked for information on Ms Ochoa's whereabouts.

The public appeal was issued at the request of Ms Ochoa's family, according to Spanish newspaper El Pais.

The former skier's daughter, Olivia Fresneda, who reported her mother's disappearance on 23 August, is "very worried", the paper reports.

Ms Ochoa left home without her phone and has not used her credit cards since she vanished, police sources told El Pais.

Detectives, who have reportedly been looking for Ms Ochoa for seven days, are yet to find any trace of her.

Born in Madrid in 1963, Ms Ochoa took part in four Winter Olympics between 1980 and 1992.

She was Spain's first female Winter Olympic medallist, winning the bronze in the slalom in the 1992 games at Albertville, France.

In an interview in 2014, Ms Ochoa said skiing had become an "obsession" but admitted she preferred playing golf since retiring.

Ms Ochoa was one of five siblings who competed at the Winter Olympics for the Spanish skiing team.

Her brother, Francisco Fernandez Ochoa, was the first Spaniard to win a gold medal at the 1972 Winter Olympics in Japan.

(Source: BBC)

## Formula 2 driver Anthoine Hubert killed in crash at Belgian Grand Prix

Formula 2 driver Anthoine Hubert has died after a crash at the Belgian Grand Prix, the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) has confirmed.

The Frenchman's car was hit at high speed by Juan-Manuel Correa's at Spa-Francorchamps. They were treated by emergency medical crews before being taken to a medical center.

Hubert, 22, died at 6:45 p.m. local time, the FIA said, while American Correa remains in a stable condition and is being treated at the Centre Hospitalier Universitaire (CHU) de Liege hospital.

The third driver involved, France's Giuliano Alesi, was declared fit at the medical center. The race was canceled soon after the crash occurred on lap two.

Formula 2 is a feeder series for Formula One and is seen as the final step before progressing to F1.

Hubert, who won two races this season and the Formula 3 championship last year, drove for BWT Arden and was an affiliated driver for the Renault Formula One team.

Teams and drivers from across the motorsport community paid tribute to Hubert, with former F1 world champion Jenson Button calling the youngster "super talented."

Mercedes' F1 team, which will be competing in tomorrow's Grand Prix on the same track, said: "The entire Mercedes family sends its deepest condolences to the family and friends of Anthoine Hubert, and his Arden and Renault teams on this tragic day."

(Source: CNN)

## LeBron files to trademark term 'Taco Tuesday'

LeBron James wants a little lettuce on his Taco Tuesday.

The Los Angeles Lakers superstar is looking to monetize his popular videos by filing to trademark the term "Taco Tuesday."

One of James' companies, LBJ Trademarks, submitted the necessary paperwork with the United States Patent and Trademark Office in August. The application states that the goods and services involved with the trademark involve "advertising and marketing services provided by means of indirect methods of marketing communications, namely, social media, search engine marketing, inquiry marketing, internet marketing, mobile marketing, blogging and other forms of passive, sharable or viral communications channels."

The company also lists "podcasting services" and "online entertainment services, namely, providing a website featuring non-downloadable videos, and social media posts in the field of sports, entertainment, current events and popular culture."

A source told ESPN's Brian Windhorst that James' team has no firm plans for the term but wants to keep all business opportunities open.

James isn't alone in requesting to trademark the term "Taco Tuesday." A search of the USPTO website yields 29 results, many of them no longer active. Other services listed by companies requesting the term are for electrical appliances, clothing and -- of course -- food.

(Source: ESPN)

# Sources: Barca, PSG end Neymar negotiations

Barcelona have given up their pursuit of Paris Saint-Germain forward Neymar but will make a renewed effort to sign the Brazilian superstar next summer, sources have told ESPN FC.

Sources close to the Ligue 1 champions also confirmed on Saturday that the deal is off and that Neymar will be staying in Paris.

Following weeks of negotiations with Paris Saint-Germain, Barca have been unable to strike a deal to bring Neymar back to Camp Nou.

However, sources at Barca have told ESPN FC that they don't view this as the end of the saga. The club have not ruled out returning with another offer next summer for a player they consider to be a "strategic" signing -- someone who brings the club as much on the pitch as he does off it.

The hierarchy at the club has appreciated the part played by Neymar during the negotiations with PSG, according to sources, with Barcelona saying he had expressed a desire to come back and exerted pressure on the French club to let him go.

Speaking on Friday, PSG's sporting director Leonardo said the club were still open to selling the Brazilian if Barca made an acceptable offer, but that none had arrived.



Now with 48 hours to go until the window shuts, that is looking improbable.

Despite PSG's apparent openness to sell, sources at Barca claim that a deal this summer became impossible when faced with the Ligue 1 side's reluctance to reduce their asking price for the forward, who they signed for €222 million from the Catalans in 2017.

Barca have been working on the viability of doing a deal for two months but they

cannot put the club's financial health at risk. Matching PSG's demands would signify a huge initial outlay in addition to another huge salary on the books.

ESPN FC first revealed on June 17 that Barca believed it would be possible to sign both Antoine Griezmann and Neymar. Therefore, once they bought the French forward from Atletico Madrid for €120m in July, they began to work on a deal for

Neymar.

"It's difficult but complicated," a club source told ESPN FC at the time, but the Spanish champions have been unable to get PSG to budge.

Barca made three offers in the end, with all of them rejected. The first bid included Philippe Coutinho, Ivan Rakitic and cash between the value of €80m and €100m. PSG were keen on Coutinho being included, so his loan move to Bayern Munich set the talks back.

Barca later returned with an offer to take Neymar on loan this season with an option to sign him next summer which was also declined.

The third and final offer was based on a figure of €170m, with Rakitic and Jean Clair Todibo plus the loan of Ousmane Dembele included to bring the money part of the transfer down to around €130m.

However, none of the three players were keen on being included in the deal.

Real Madrid and Juventus have also been linked with Neymar throughout the summer, but Leonardo said on Friday that Barcelona were the only side who PSG had held talks with.

(Source: ESPN)

## Mata urges United to find killer instinct



Manchester United midfielder Juan Mata admits his team must find their cutting edge after a frustrating start to the Premier League season.

United's season-opening 4-0 demolition of Chelsea is already a distant memory after Saturday's 1-1 draw against Southampton showed the flaws in Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's side.

Daniel James' brilliant opener was cancelled out by Jannik Vestergaard at St Mary's.

Even Kevin Danso's second-half dismissal for Southampton could not inspire United, who have just five points from their opening four matches.

United also blew the chance to win at Wolves when Paul Pogba missed a penalty in a 1-1 draw which was followed by a shock 2-1 home loss to Crystal Palace.

"Two points dropped. I think we have to come to these kind of games and win and come back to Manchester with three points or the feeling is frustration and two points dropped again," Mata said of the Southampton game.

"When you score the first goal and you have the ball and you seem that you are having the tempo of the game, you need to kill (it off) and score the second goal and then the game is more or less done."

Those comments echoed Solskjaer's complaints about United's lack of killer instinct and Mata knows the team need to up their game.

"We started the season really well against Chelsea at home, winning 4-0, great second half. I would say and after that, at Wolves we felt we dropped two points," the Spaniard said.

"We lost against Crystal Palace at home which we shouldn't accept and it shouldn't happen again, and today another two points dropped.

"We need to find this consistency and try to win and add three points after three points and that's our main objective.

"I think we are deserving more in almost every game but deserving is not enough: you have to get it."

(Source: France 24)

## Klopp plays down Mane's anger at Salah



Jurgen Klopp confirmed Sadio Mane was "upset with a situation in a game" following the forward's angry reaction during Liverpool's 3-0 victory at Burnley, but that "everything is fine."

The Senegal international was atypically furious while making his way to the bench after being substituted on 85 minutes, seemingly at Mohamed Salah's decision moments earlier not to slide a simple pass to him in the box to increase his side's advantage.

James Milner, Joe Gomez, Jordan Henderson and Roberto Firmino all tried to calm the speedster down as he remonstrated with Andreas Kornmayer, Liverpool's head of fitness and conditioning.

Klopp admitted Mane, who had scored Liverpool's second of the evening at Turf Moor and is typically the most timid player in the squad, "looked different to how he looks usually."

The manager revealed he spoke to the player in the dressing room to ascertain

and sort out the issue.

"He was upset, that was obvious," Klopp said. "Sadio cannot hide his emotions and I like that. It's all sorted.

"We spoke about it and everything is fine. We are individuals, we are emotional. It was a situation in the game he wasn't happy about -- that's completely fine.

"Would he do it in exactly the same manner again? Probably not, but it happens. Nothing happened, he didn't say any wrong words.

"Of course, I can understand that it's a little story. Thank God we are now away for a week, so if you write something about it, we will not read it anyway. And after a week, nobody can remember anymore, so it's a really cool moment to do it. But it is all good really, all fine."

The win was a record 13th in a row for Liverpool in the Premier League and saw them stay at the top of the table with four wins from four to start the campaign.

(Source: Soccernet)

## 'Everybody was crying' – Osaka warms hearts by consoling beaten Gauff

The defending champion consoled 15-year-old American Coco Gauff after beating her 6-3 6-0 in the third round of the US Open.

"She was crying, she won. I was crying. Everybody was crying!" said Gauff. "I didn't know why she was crying. I was like, 'you won the match!'"

It was not the first time Osaka has shown compassion in victory and after a heart-warming embrace at the net, she invited a tearful Gauff to speak to the crowd in a post-match interview.

"I was wanting to leave the court because I'm not the type of person who wants to cry in front of everyone. I didn't want to take that moment away from her, as well," said Gauff, competing in only her second Grand Slam singles main draw.

"She told me it's better than crying in the shower. She convinced me multiple times to stay. I kept saying no. Finally I said, OK, I'll do it. Because I didn't know what to do.

"I'm happy that she kind of convinced me to do it because, I mean, I'm not used to crying in front of everyone."

Osaka, 21, was holding back tears herself when she then spoke directly to Gauff's box, before apologising for playing so well.

"You guys raised an amazing player," said the Japanese world number one. "I used to see you guys training in the same



place as us. The both of us made it and are working as hard as we can. I think this is the most focused I have been since Australia.

Turning back to Gauff, she added: "I am sorry for playing you in this mentality. It was super fun!"

Osaka later told a news conference: "It was kind of instinctive because when I shook her hand, I saw that she was kind of tearing up a little. Then it reminded me how young she was.

"I was just thinking it would be nice for her to address the people that came and watched her play. They were cheering for her."

Gauff said she had not expected that reaction from Osaka.

"I'm glad that I was able to experience that moment," she said. "I'm glad the crowd was kind of helping me and her.

"For me a definition of an athlete is someone who treats you as their worst enemy on the court but after they treat

you like you're their best friend. That's what she did."

Japanese top seed Osaka announced herself to the world when she won the US Open last year after an angry Serena Williams accused the umpire of being a "thief" in some of the most dramatic scenes at a Grand Slam final.

Williams was given a game penalty for her outburst, which followed racquet smashing and another code violation as Osaka won 6-2 6-4.

"I'm sorry it had to end like this," a crying Osaka said during the trophy presentation.

Fast-forward 12 months and Osaka was once again up against the home favourite on Arthur Ashe. But this time the tears were different.

Osaka, though still only 21, was the senior - showing grace and maturity as she offered advice and comfort to Gauff - but could not hide her emotions when speaking to the teenager's family.

And remaining humble, Osaka laughed when it was suggested she was a "mentor" before hugging Gauff as the American left the court.

It was a moment which American 11th seed Sloane Stephens said is "what tennis should be about".

(Source: BBC)



# Hong Kong's Paatelainen relishing Group C challenge

Head coach Mixu Paatelainen is hoping he can turn the negative of a difficult draw into a positive for the future of Hong Kong's football when Round 2 of the Asian Qualifiers for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 and AFC Asian Cup China 2023 begins on Thursday.

Hong Kong will commence their campaign against Cambodia in Phnom Penh before hosting Group C top seeds Islamic Republic of Iran five days later at Hong Kong Stadium in what represents a difficult start to their challenge.

Iraq and Bahrain are also in the group, with the pair meeting in Riffa on Thursday.

Paatelainen, though, refuses to be overawed by the prospect of taking on a nation that has qualified for each of the last two FIFA World Cup Finals and who remain a serious threat following Marc Wilmots' arrival as head coach.

"We know if Iran have a match on September 5 or not they're going to be a very good team to play against," said the Finn. "That's a huge challenge. They're tall, they're powerful, they're quick, they're technical, they're tactically very good. They've got everything."

"I'm not surprised they're the highest ranked Asian team in the FIFA rankings, but it's a different kind of challenge. I'm a very positive person and I also want to turn that around."

"We've got two different matches coming up and I think that's good because we can refresh the players' mind."

"It's a totally different set up and a totally different mindset and opponent and I think that's good for the players' heads, to reboot the system and concentrate on the next challenge. Iran's a huge challenge but one we'll gain plenty of excellent experience from facing."

(Source: AFC)



## Iran crowned World Challenge Cup champions



**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iran national wheelchair basketball team won the 2019 World Challenge Cup in Tokyo, Japan.

Team Melli defeated Australia 84-58 in the final match.

Iran had already defeated Australia 75-62 in the tournament.

The Persians also beat South Korea 76-59 and hosts Japan 63-57 in the event.

The World Challenge Cup took place for the third year in Tokyo, Japan.

Organized by the Japanese Wheelchair Basketball Federation, the tournament is aimed not only to assist in strengthening the men's national team but held for the

purpose to prepare the teams for Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games.

An expansion of the movement of wheelchair basketball, such as increasing the level of international referees, table officials and managing scores and time, training of competition volunteers.

It is an international convention that is also positioned as an opportunity for the local residents including children to participate in the Paralympics interests, to activate local communities and legacy, including overseas teams participating in the competition and experiencing during pre-camping in neighboring municipalities.

## Omid Ebrahimi joins Belgium's KAS Eupen



**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iran international midfielder Omid Ebrahimi joined Belgian team KAS Eupen on Sunday.

The 31-year-old player has joined KAS Eupen on a one-year loan spell from Qatari club Al Ahli for an undisclosed fee.

Ebrahimi started his playing career at Shahr-dari Bandar Abbas in 2009 and joined Sepahan after One year.

He was a member of Esteghlal football team from 2014 to 2018.

Ebrahimi was one of Iran's iconic players in the 2018 World Cup in Russia.

He also represented Iran in 2015 and 2019 AFC Asian Cups.

Ebrahimi is the sixth Iranian player in Belgian First Division League.

He has joined his countryman Saeid Ezatollahi who joined Eupen on Thursday.

Ali Gholizadeh, Kaveh Rezaei, Milad Mohammadi, Younes Delfi and Saeid Ezatollahi are playing in Belgian teams.

Konigliche Allgemeine Sportvereinigung Eupen (often simply known as Eupen) is a Belgian association football club based in the city of Eupen in the German-speaking Community of Belgium, in the province of Liege.

It currently competes in the Belgian First Division A, and plays its home matches at the Kehrwegstadion.

## Iran confident of sealing a third consecutive FIFA World Cup appearance

Islamic Republic of Iran headline Group C of the Asian Qualifiers for the 2022 FIFA World Cup Qatar and AFC Asian Cup China 2023 with Iraq, Bahrain, Hong Kong and Cambodia equally determined to shine.

The eight group winners and four best runners-up will advance to the AFC Asian Cup China 2023 Finals and the final round of qualifying for the 2022 FIFA World Cup Qatar.

However, should Qatar - who have already qualified as hosts - win their group, the seven other group winners and five best second-placed sides will advance to the final round of qualifying for the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

The same applies should Qatar finish as one of the four best second-placed teams, with the fifth best group runners-up advancing to the third round of the Asian Qualifiers.

The next best 24 teams from the second round of the Asian Qualifiers will compete in a separate competition for the remaining 12 slots in the 24-team AFC Asian Cup China 2023.

**■ IRAN**  
FIFA Ranking: 23  
AFC Asian Cup Finals Record: Champions (1968, 1972, 1976)

FIFA World Cup Finals Record: Five group stage appearances

Head Coach: Marc Wilmots (BEL)

Despite good performances in the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia and AFC Asian Cup UAE 2019, there was only disappointment at the end for Iran as their Russia 2018 campaign ended in the group stage while they fell in the semi-finals at UAE 2019.

Team Melli, however, remain Asia's top ranked side and having hired Marc Wilmots as Carlos Queiroz's replacement as head coach, Iran will be confident of sealing a third consecutive FIFA World Cup appearance.

**■ IRAQ**  
FIFA Ranking: 77  
AFC Asian Cup Finals Record: Champions (2007)  
FIFA World Cup Finals Record: 1986 Group Stage  
Head Coach: Srecko Katanec (Slovenia)

Iraq's recent form suggests they will be confident of advancing to the third stage of qualification for the 2022 FIFA World Cup Qatar Finals - having played at the global showpiece in 1986 - which will seal them a place in the AFC Asian Cup China 2023 Finals.

**■ BAHRAIN**  
FIFA Ranking: 109



AFC Asian Cup Finals Record: Fourth place (2004)  
FIFA World Cup Finals Record: No previous appearances  
Head Coach: Helio Sousa (POR)

Bahrain have placed their trust in Helio Sousa to steer them in the Asian Qualifiers and have already enjoyed success under the Portuguese head coach by winning the 2019 West Asian Football Federation Championship title in July.

They will be a threat to the likes of Iran and Iraq.

**■ HONG KONG**  
FIFA Ranking: 139

AFC Asian Cup Finals Record: Third place (1956)  
FIFA World Cup Finals Record: No previous appearances  
Head Coach: Mixu Paatelainen (Finland)

Hong Kong missed out on the AFC Asian Cup UAE 2019 but their recent form - which saw them qualify for the 2019 EAFF E-1 Football Championship - will give them confidence in a tough group.

Head coach Mixu Paatelainen, however, believes the tough tests that Hong Kong face can only make them stronger.

**■ CAMBODIA**  
FIFA Ranking: 170

AFC Asian Cup Finals Record: Fourth place (1972)  
FIFA World Cup Finals Record: No previous appearances  
Head Coach: Félix Dalmás (ARG)

Cambodia will definitely be a handful for their Group C challengers, having progressed from Round 1 of the Asian

Qualifiers after defeating Pakistan 2-1 on aggregate.

The Southeast Asians are always a tough opposition when playing in Phnom Penh and they will be counting on this to boost their chances in the Asian Qualifiers.

**■ FIXTURES**

Matchday 1 - September 5: Cambodia vs Hong Kong; Bahrain vs Iraq

Matchday 2 - September 10: Cambodia vs Bahrain; Hong Kong vs Islamic Republic of Iran

Matchday 3 - October 10: Islamic Republic of Iran vs Cambodia; Iraq vs Hong Kong

Matchday 4 - October 15: Cambodia vs Iraq; Bahrain vs Islamic Republic of Iran

Matchday 5 - November 14: Hong Kong vs Bahrain; Iraq vs Islamic Republic of Iran

Matchday 6 - November 19: Iraq vs Bahrain; Hong Kong vs Cambodia

Matchday 7 - March 26: Islamic Republic of Iran vs Hong Kong; Bahrain vs Cambodia

Matchday 8 - March 31: Cambodia vs Islamic Republic of Iran; Hong Kong vs Iraq

Matchday 9 - June 4: Iraq vs Cambodia; Islamic Republic of Iran vs Bahrain

Matchday 10 - June 9: Bahrain vs Hong Kong; Islamic Republic of Iran vs Iraq

(Source: the-afc)

## Sports journalist Shadmani laid to rest

**1 →** A couple hundred journalists were in attendance.

Shadmani is survived by his wife and two children.

"I am most thankful and full of praises to Almighty God for granting me this rare opportunity. I wanted to help people [through my job, journalism]."

"How can I say it? I enjoy my life, because God has taken notice of me. God takes care for me and fixes broken things in life. God has granted me this nice woman," Shadmani said a month ago.

Tehran Times staff wish to express deepest sympathy and condolences to his bereaved family.

## Iran among world's top 20 chess teams

**IRNA** — Based on the latest ranking of the International Chess Federation, Iranian national team has mounted three steps for the first time to 20th position in the world.

According to the FIDE ranking list, Iran with an average of 2,566 is in the same position with Argentina, ranking the 20th in the world and third in Asia.

China and India are now in the first and second positions.

Iranian squad with average of 2,479 had earlier been in 51st position in the world and 6th in Asia.

In men's standard category, Iran's Alireza Firouzja and Parham Maghsoudlou ranked 37th and 78th in the world

Meanwhile, Sara Khademolsharie with a 2491 rating is standing on the 14th position of women category.

## UAE in fine form ahead of Malaysia tie

United Arab Emirates will carry winning form into the Asian Qualifiers for the 2022 FIFA World Cup Qatar and AFC Asian Cup China 2023 after registering back-to-back victories over Dominican Republic and Sri Lanka in friendlies matches played on Friday and Saturday.

Further good news for head coach Bert van Marwijk, who will be leading the UAE into competitive action for the first time, was the return of UAE talisman Omar Abdulrahman after a long injury lay-off.

Dutchman van Marwijk, who replaced Alberto Zaccheroni after the AFC Asian Cup UAE 2019, saw his tenure getting off to a winning start as his side defeated Dominican Republic 4-0 at the Bahrain National Stadium on Friday.

Al Wahda defender Abdullah Jasim put the UAE ahead in the fourth minute and Khalil Al Hammadi doubled their advantage in the 18 minute, and then scored his second of the night at the half-hour mark. Al Ain midfielder Bandar Al Ahbabi completed the scoring five minutes from time.

It was another pleasing night for van Marwijk on Saturday as the UAE ran out 5-1 winners over Sri Lanka with Ali Mabkhout scoring a hat-trick. Ahmed Berman and Ali Saleh added one each.

The match against Sri Lanka, who are also bound for the Asian Qualifiers, gave van Marwijk a chance to assess Abdulrahman with the midfielder coming on as a second half substitute.

Abdulrahman tore his Anterior Cruciate Ligament while appearing for Saudi Pro League side Al Hilal last October, which forced him to miss the AFC Asian Cup on home soil, with the UAE's campaign ending in the semi-finals.

He was included in the national squad despite not having played competitively for new club Al Jazira, who he has just signed for, as van Marwijk wanted to assess him before UAE begin their Asian Qualifiers Group G campaign against Malaysia on September 10 in Kuala Lumpur.

Also in the group are Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam with the UAE needing to finish in the top two to advance to the third round of qualifying, which will seal them a place in the AFC Asian Cup China 2023 and take them a step closer to the 2022 FIFA World Cup Qatar.

The UAE, who will return home from their training camp in Bahrain on Sunday, have qualified for the FIFA World Cup Finals once - in 1990. They will travel to Kuala Lumpur on September 4.

(Source: the-afc)

## Taremi wins three penalties as Sporting Lisbon delivered shock defeat

Sporting Lisbon's good run, which meant they were leaders, ended on Saturday after they lost 2-3 against Rio Ave. All of Rio Ave's three goals came from the penalty spot and were all committed by the Uruguayan Sebastian Coates, who was sent off for committing the third one.

The first of them was in the 4th minute after bringing down Taremi and Coates picked up a yellow.

Filipe Augusto scored the first for the visitors which led Sporting to up the pressure and Bruno Fernandes levelled the score after 21 minutes.

After the interval, the game was played at a slower tempo and the home side went in front thanks to a goal by the Brazilian Luiz Phellype.

But things started to go pear shaped for the hosts in the 84th minute when Sporting were thinking about victory after Coates fouled Taremi once again. Rio Ave got another pen and Ronan converted it.

After the equalizer, it became more even, but Coates was penalised once again for a foul on Taremi and the away side were awarded their third penalty. Coates was given his second yellow and his marching orders.

Rio Ave did not pass up the opportunity and Filipe Augusto made it 2-3 in the 91st minute to give Rio Ave a shock win.

(Source: BeSoccer.com)





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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

When God abases a creature, He deprives him of art and knowledge.

Imam Ali (AS)

## Iran’s “Child Eater” wins grand prix at Danish festival

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** — “Child Eater” by Iranian director Mohammad Kart has won the HCA award, the grand prix of the OFF – Odense International Film Festival in Denmark, the organizers have announced. “Child Eater”, also known as “Pedovore”, is about a teenage boy laborer who falls in love with a teenage girl.

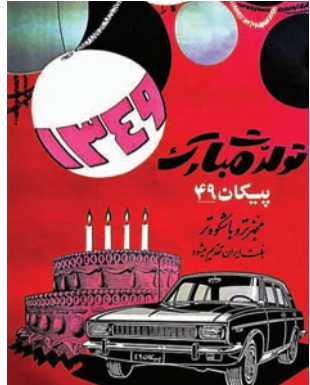


A scene from “Child Eater” by Mohammad Kart.

It was picked as best short film at the Iran Cinema Celebration last year. “Fun Factory”, a co-production between Norwegian-German co-directed by Lisa Brooke Hansen and Even Hafnor won the OFF Storyteller Award. The OFF Artist Award went to “Nursery Rhymes” by Tom Noakes from Australia. The OFF – Odense International Film Festival OFF, which is an Oscar-qualifying short film event, took place in Odense from August 26 to September 1.

## History of advertising in Iran under spotlight at Tehran exhibit

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** — An exhibition of posters recounting the history of advertising and graphic designs for promotional materials in Iran from the 1950s to 1970s will open at Dena Gallery in Tehran on September 13.



A poster for the exhibition of Iranian posters in the 1950s to 1970s.

Parsikia remarked. “These posters each have their own stories and characteristics, therefore, from the historical, sociological and aesthetical viewpoints, this exhibition is important,” he added. Mohammad Mokhberi and Shima Taheri are the curators of the exhibit, which will be running until September 18 at the gallery located at 4 Sussan Alley off Qarani St.

## Taylor Swift’s “Lover” album breaks new record in China

**NEW YORK (Reuters)** — U.S. singer-songwriter Taylor Swift’s album “Lover” broke a new record for an international artist in China on Friday as it surpassed one million combined total streams, downloads and sales within a week of its release. The combined total makes it China’s most-consumed full-length international album ever in such a short space of time. “Lover” was released on August 23 and is expected to reach 825,000-850,000 equivalent album sales in its first week in the United States, according to Billboard magazine. The record includes songs “ME!” featuring Brendon Urie of Panic! at the Disco, and “You Need to Calm Down”, which has a music video starring a plethora of celebrities including Katy Perry, Laverne Cox, Ellen Degeneres and Adam Rippon.

# Tehran theater experiences “Episode on an Autumn Evening”

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Divare Chaharom Theater, a private hall in downtown Tehran, is currently playing host to a small troupe performing Swiss author Friedrich Durrenmatt’s 1969 crime play “Episode on an Autumn Evening”. The play is about a bookkeeper who makes a crash entry on a novelist. He’s noticed that the 21 murder mysteries the novelist is famed for just happen to coincide with 21 unsolved actual murders — and the novelist just happened to be in the vicinity at the time of each murder.

The novelist ridicules any connection but admits it would be a quick way of supplying background and details. He points out that he has written not 21 but 22 mysteries. The bookkeeper disposes of that briskly — he did not count the 22nd murder as it was technically a suicide. A new note crept into the talk when the novelist warns that one does not press a murderer.

The play was translated into Persian by the prominent Iranian stage director and playwright Hamid Samandarian who died of liver cancer at the age of 81 in summer 2012. “I’ve made no alteration to the text and I’ve actually been loyal to the book translated by Hamid Samandarian,” director Akbar Hassani told the Persian service of Honaronline on Saturday.

Hassani is staging the play to offset the higher cost of his illnesses. He is suffering from multiple sclerosis (MS) and was diagnosed with blood cancer about two years ago. “Due to the sanctions on Iran and also the higher cost of medicines, I could not receive the necessary medical treatment... therefore I really am under pressure,” he lamented.



A poster for “Episode on an Autumn Evening”, which is currently on stage at Divare Chaharom Theater in Tehran.

“As I was fighting the diseases I applied to stage my play at several rent-free state-run theaters to offset the cost of my medical treatment, but all my efforts were in vain,”

Hassani said.

Finally, Divare Chaharom Theater, which is managed by actor Payam Azizi, agreed to host Hassani’s performances without any

payment in advance.

A cast composed of Azizi, Alireza Madani and Elahieh Purrehsan will stage the play until September 22.

## Director Rasul Sadr-Ameli on Singapore film festival jury



Iranian director Rasul Sadr-Ameli in an undated photo.

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Rasul Sadr-Ameli, the Iranian director of acclaimed movies “The Girl in Sneakers” and “I’m Taraneh, 15”, is a member of the jury of the Singapore South Asian International Film Festival, which opened on Friday.

Roger Garcia, a film critic and the former director of the Hong Kong International Film Festival, actors Yashoda Wimaladharmasiri from Sri Lanka and Suhasini Maniratnam from India, and filmmakers Sabiha Sumar from Pakistan and Rajiv Menon from India are the other members of the jury.

Sadr-Ameli’s latest drama “My Second Year in College” is scheduled to screen in a section dedicated to screening films

from the jury members.

The film is about two close friends who go on an excursion to Isfahan. When one of them falls into a coma, the other one finds that any confrontation turns out to be a new challenge.

The organizers also plan to screen Iranian director Kamal Tabrizi’s 2003 comedy “The Lizard” in a special program.

“The Lizard” tells the story of Reza, a professional thief who has his own style of robbery. In his last robbery attempt, he is deceived by several dilettante thieves, being trapped in an armed robbery. He manages to escape from prison clad in a cleric’s robe.

The Singapore South Asian International Film Festival will run until September 7.

## “Driving Lessons” named best non-Irish short at Dublin festival



A scene from Iranian filmmaker Marzieh Riahi’s movie “Driving Lessons”.

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Iranian director Marzieh Riahi’s “Driving Lessons” has won the best non-Irish short award at the Dublin Feminist Film Festival in Ireland, the organizers have announced.

The film tells the story of Bahareh, a young girl who, according to Iranian law, must have a man from her relatives accompany her on driving lessons so she and her male instructor won’t be alone.

The best Irish short award went to “Early Days” by Nessa Wrafter.

The film is about Kate who knows she’s lucky to have become a mother, and her instincts toward her newborn baby are fiercely protective. Postnatal trauma and hallucinations make the world increasingly

hard to bear.

The Dublin Feminist Film Festival was held in the Irish capital from August 22 to 24.

The festival promotes and celebrates female filmmakers, hoping to inspire and empower others to get involved in filmmaking.

This involves considering women on-screen, but also behind the camera, through celebrating and showcasing fantastic female filmmaking, as well as demonstrating that women make compelling and complex characters and subjects.

“Driving Lessons” also won the Golden Apricot for best short film at the 16th Golden Apricot International Film Festival in Yerevan, Armenia, in July.

## Plays from Western literature come to Iranian bookstores

**CULTURE d e s k** **TEHRAN** — A collection of five plays from Western literature have recently been published in Persian in Iran, publisher Nimaj has announced. “Hernani” by prominent French author Victor Hugo is a highlight of the books.

Translated by Ramtin Shahbazi, the play is about a tragic love story between a former noble, who became a bandit after being banished, and a young woman named Donna Sol de Silva, who has two other suitors, her uncle Don Ruy Gomez and Don Carlos, king of Spain.

French writer Jean Genet’s 1947 play “Deathwatch” rendered into Persian by Media Kashigar is another book in the collection.

The play is about four prisoners who are locked up in the same cell. Green-Eyes has killed a woman and is to be guillotined. Maurice and Lefranc have been sentenced for more minor crimes.

Maurice has a deep attachment to Green-Eyes, as does Lefranc, but secretly. He also hates Maurice, while feigning



Front covers of the Persian versions of the plays published by Nimaj Publications in Tehran.

## Darth Dorian? Hurricane nixes some ‘Star Wars’ fans’ Disney dream trips

**NEW YORK (Reuters)** — Some “Star Wars” fans who have waited decades to see the Millennium Falcon, blue milk and other artifacts of the long ago, far, far away, universe up close will have to wait just a little longer, thanks to Hurricane Dorian.

The storm is bearing down on Florida just as Orlando’s Walt Disney World resort is opening its “Star Wars: Galaxy’s Edge” attraction for the Labor Day holiday weekend, prompting some travelers to cancel their trips. “This was going to be a big deal vacation.

Seeing Galaxy’s Edge for the first time was making it different from any other trip,” said Jill Benedict. The 34-year-old owner of a Lake Orion, Michigan, travel agency, who bought tickets for herself, her husband, her sister and her sister’s friend the morning they went on sale, decided not to risk traveling into a potentially massive storm.

“My sister and I got in a very bad argument about it on Wednesday evening,” Benedict said by telephone on Friday. “It was pretty epic.” Thousands of tourists have packed into the

attraction since it opened on Thursday, even as Florida Governor Ron DeSantis declared a state of emergency ahead of the impending storm, warning coastal residents to stock up on water, food and medicine.

Disney officials did not respond to queries about whether the park would remain open through the storm, though it has closed for prior hurricanes, including 2017’s Hurricane Irma.

Some travelers with experience of storms opted not to risk it.

“The thought of paying \$4,500 to go sit in a hotel for a week, possibly without power, was not appealing at all,” said Ashley Touart, a 31-year-old chemical process engineer from Mobile, Alabama, who had planned to visit with her husband and mother.

“We’re from the Gulf Coast. So we know that if a Cat 3 or 4 comes on shore, you’re without power and it’s absolutely miserable,” Touart said, referring to the categories on the five-step Saffir-Simpson measure of hurricane strength.