

"This issue is not pre-condition. I believe it is

he said. President Hassan Rouhani hold a phone conversation with French President Emmanuel Macron on Wednesday, during which he said that it makes no sense to hold talks with the U.S. when sanctions against Iran

non War. According to the Israeli military, four soldiers were killed in one of the most



ran has reduced 9,800 tons of ozone-destroying emissions over the past 26 Lyears as part of its commitment to the Montreal Protocol, phasing out the chemical substances responsible for ozone layer depletion while making efforts to cut another 2,000 tons.

Observed on September 16, the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer is celebrated every year across the globe since December 2000. This year was held with the theme of "32 years and healing"; showing over three decades of international cooperation.



Attack on Saudi oil facilities: consequences and solutions

s expected, oil markets started Monday trading with an unprecedented Aday trading with an unprecedence jump in prices following the attacks on Saudi Arabia's oil facilities which wiped nearly five percent of the global oil supply from the market.

Drone attacks claimed by Yemen's Houthi rebels on Saturday struck two of Saudi Aramco's major oil facilities in Khurais and Abqaiq - the world's largest oil processing facility and crude oil sta-

claims about Iran's role in the drone strikes on the Saudi Aramco oil installations were "hasty" and will be harmful to all countries in the region.

'We should see who benefit from such actions. This action is natural reflection of repeated suppression of a society," Rabiei said during a press conference.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo blamed Iran for the Yemeni drone attacks on oil installations in Saudi Arabia on Saturday

"Tehran is behind nearly 100 attacks on Saudi Arabia" and that "there is no evidence the attacks came from Yemen," Pompeo tweeted.

Pompeo added, "The United States will work with our partners and allies to ensure that energy

In response, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Sunday that the United States'

failed policy of maximum pressure on Iran has turned into "maximum deceit".

"Having failed at 'maximum pressure', Secretary Pompeo is turning to 'maximum deceit'," Zarif tweeted.

He said blaming Iran for the dangers ensuing the Saudi-led war on Yemen "won't end the disaster".

'No talks under sanctions'

Rabiei also said that Tehran will not hold talks with Washington under sanctions.

"If [U.S. President Donald] Trump takes the necessary actions and rebuild the trust, the talks

Geopolitical expert talks of U.S. plan to grab Saudi oil share from global market

He noted that removal of all sanctions is the prerequisite to start of "constructive diplomacy".

the most natural right of ours. In order to prove its determination and honesty, the United States should respect the Iranian people apart from lifting sanctions. Currently, we do not see the situation (is not ripe) to hold bilateral talks,"

are in place. <mark>→2</mark>



World Ozone Day: Iran well rid of ozone-depleting emissions

bilization plant.

Now, few days after the attacks, global oil markets are waiting to see how the disrupted oil is going to be compensated for.

Will Saudis be able to get their production back to its full capacity in a short period of time? If not, what are the options for replacing the lost barrels to keep the market in balance?

The market's reaction

A few hours after the strikes, Aramco released a statement confirming that production of 5.7 million barrels of crude (more than half of the kingdom's output) was affected by the attacks.

Aramco's statement sparked a wave of panic in the oil markets across the globe, causing for bets on oil prices to go as high as \$100.

As it was expected, in the first minutes of the Monday morning trades, Brent crude jumped \$12 to reach \$71 per barrel, posting its biggest ever surge in a day.

The market's significant reaction to the incident could also be translated as an indication of the skepticism about the promises of recovery by the Saudis or vows of taping into emergency oil reserves by the United States.

It is also a manifestation of yet another aspect of the world's energy cycle, that is the realization about the vulnerability of the global oil market and the magnitude of the impact of geopolitical factors on this market.

As Ed Morse from Citigroup Inc. wrote in a research note, "No matter whether it takes Saudi Arabia five days or a lot longer to get oil back into production, there is but one rational takeaway from this weekend's drone attacks on the Kingdom's infrastructure -- that infrastructure is highly vulnerable to attack, and the market has been persistently mispricing oil." \rightarrow 5

TEHRAN (MNA) — Anthony Cartalucci says it surely is no coincidence the US is targeting virtually every major energy producer from Iran, Venezuela, and Russia, but also including its own "allies" such as Saudi Arabia.

Following drone attacks on Saudi oil plants by Yemenis, the White House said on Saturday that the United States was committed to keeping oil markets well-supplied in the wake of an attack on Saudi Arabian oil plants by Yemen's Houthi group.

many believe since the US has become a major oil producer in the world it is trying to grab the share of the major oil producing countries in global energy market by different tools like sanctioning and creating tensions.

Sanctioning Iran, Russia and Venezuela in Venezuela, and Russia, but also including its recent years can be interpreted in this context. To this end even the US is trying to grab its regional ally's share, Saudi Arabia.

To touch upon the issue we reached out to Bangkok-based geopolitical researcher Anthony Cartalucci.

Referring to US real goal of creating tensions in the Persian Gulf and dragging Saudi Arabia to the quagmire of Yemen war, he said, "The US is positioning itself as an exporter of energy. However its gas and oil is more expensive to extract, process, and ship overseas. By disrupting existing major exporters and raising prices, the US is able to make its own exports more competitive. It surely is no coincidence the US is targeting virtually every major energy producer from Iran,

own "allies" such as Saudi Arabia.

He added, "The resulting conflict is also a huge boon for America's other major export weapons.

Cartalucci went on to say,"The US has used Saudi Arabia as a pawn for decades - encouraging the worst and most unsustainable kinds economic and foreign policies, keeping them dependent on US protection and placing them directly at the center of US-driven conflict in the Middle East.

In addition to the energy oriented implications of this recent incident - the attacks and how they are being exploited by the White House helps move forward Washington's plans to provoke wider conflict with Iran. \rightarrow 13



Reaping dates starts in Hormozgan province

As hot weather is gradually reaching its end, farmers with a help by women start to reap their date crops from palm trees in the village of Kenarou in Bandar Abbas, the coastal province of Hormozgan. Reaping dates will continue until the middle of Mehr (early October). It is estimated that production of date to reach 140,000 tons in the current Iranian year.

32 years ago, use of harmful man-made chemicals began eating away at the ozone, the hole over Antarctica was first discovered by the British Antarctic Survey in 1985.

Therefore, 197 countries signed "the Montreal Protocol on substances that deplete the ozone layer" to cut short of the substances that deplete the ozone layer; the United Nations (UN) enforced it in 1989, which is now considered the most successful international environmental treaty.

The ozone hole which was once the major environmental concern turned to the least important concern today; as the concentration of harmful emissions have considerably reduced by 14 percent since 2000.

The hole has been shrinking by 1-3 percent a decade.

However, the upper ozone layer above the Northern Hemisphere is said to be completely repaired in the 2030s, the gaping Antarctic ozone hole should disappear in the 2060s, according to a scientific assessment released in 2018 at a conference in Quito, Ecuador.

According to the UN, efforts to protect the ozone layer have also helped to tackle climate change by preventing the release of about 135 billion tons of carbon dioxide since 2010.

By the end of the century, eradicating Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) emissions not only can lead to the ozone layer repair but to reduce the temperature raise up to $0.4^{\circ}C. \rightarrow 12$



Iran reiterates reducing nuclear commitments is reversible

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Ali Akbar Salehi, director of the e s k Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, on Monday insisted on Iran's stated policy that Tehran's action in reducing its commitments under the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA, is reversible if the remaining parties to the agreement meet their obligations.



During a speech at the 63th **Regular Session of IAEA General** Conference in Vienna, he said it is the international community's responsibility to preserve the JCPOA.

"Although the deal has been praised as an outstanding achievement of years of diplomatic efforts, respective states have failed to go beyond expressing regret ... It should be noted that Iran's partial cessation of its commitments is reversible in case of full and effective implementation of the JCPOA by the remaining parties to the deal, Sputnik quoted him as saying.

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He added, "Against lifting of the nuclear-related sanctions, Iran has accepted some provisional limitations on its nuclear program and provided an unprecedented level of monitoring and access to the [International Atomic Energy Agency] IAEA in the context of new commitment under the additional protocol and the JCPOA itself. In

this regard, it is not worthy that with only 3 percent of the world- Salehi says if the wide nuclear facilities, Iran has provided almost 20 percent of all agency's accesses.

Elsewhere, Salehi said that if the nuclear deal is not preserved, multilateralism will lose its efficiency and problems will not be solved peacefully.

U.S. President Donald Trump quit the nuclear deal in May 2018 and imposed the harshest ever sanctions on Tehran. However.

Trump has been repeatedly calling for dialogue with Iran. On May 8, exactly one year after the U.S. abandoned the deal, Tehran began to partially reduce its commitments to the agreement at bi-monthly intervals.

In the first stage, Iran announced that it will not limit its stockpile of the nuclear fuel to 300 kilograms allowed under the deal. However, on that date (May 8) Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) said if the remaining parties to the JCPOA, especially Europeans, devise a mechanism to protect it from the sanctions effect in the two-month deadline it will reverse its decision.

But since European parties missed the deadline, on July 7 Iran announced that it has started enriching uranium to a higher purity than the 3.67%, thereby starting the second step.

As Europe missed the second 60-day deadline, Iran moved to take the third step, removing ban on nuclear research and development (R&D).

In a letter on September 5, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif notified European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini about Iran's third step.

No Rouhani-Trump meeting on agenda: Iran

 $1 \rightarrow$ Rouhani noted that there will be no change in Iran-U.S. relations without lifting of all sanctions and a change in the wrong path that Washington has taken.

In a phone conversation with French President Emmanuel Macron on Wednesday, Rouhani said it makes no sense to hold talks with the United States when sanctions against Iran are in place.

"From the viewpoint of the government, parliament and the people of Iran, negotiations with the United States make no sense when sanctions remain," Rouhani said.

"Trump's words do not last over 24 hours" Mousavi also said that no one can count on what Trump says, because his words "do not last for over 24 hours".

He also said Iran does not care about the firing of John Bolton,

Trilateral summit on Syria

Iranian, Turkish and Russian presidents hold talks on security situation in Syria

POLITICAL TEHRAN/ANKARA-President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the host of this round of trilateral summit between Turkey, Iran and Russia, hosted President Hassan Rouhani and Pres-

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ident Vladimir Putin in Ankara on Monday. It was the fifth summit since 2017. They were set to speak to reporters at a closing news conference and release a joint declaration.

The three presidents held one-on-one talks before the summit.

In the Syrian war, Tehran and Moscow have been backing the central government. However, Turkey has been a supporter of the rebel groups. Now, the three countries, despite differences, agree on power-sharing in Syria.

Iran and Russia were instrumental in cracking down on terrorists, especially ISIS, in Syria. ISIS misused the chaos resulting from the armed conflict between the government and the opposition groups to create killing fields in the country.

According to Al-Jazeera, the Turkish presidency had said the summit was to focus on ensuring required conditions for voluntary return of refugees.

Erdogan said the summit will bring new dimensions to the Astana process for Šyria. He said the Astana platform on Syria was a "unique attempt" to find effective solutions for Syria.

"We have to take more responsibility to ensure peace in Syria," he added.

Talking before the meeting of the three presidents, Rouhani also said cooperation among Iran, Russia, and Turkey, as the three guarantor states of the ceasefire regime in Syria, has promoted security in the war-ravaged country.

Efforts to 'normalize' situation in Idlib

Russia and Turkey agree on measures to "normalize" the situation in the terrorist-infested northwestern Syrian province of Idlib. Together with Turkey's president, we have outlined additional joint steps to neutralize



the terrorists' nests in Idlib and normalize the situation there and in the whole of Syria as a result," Putin told a joint briefing with Erdogan, Press TV reported.

Rouhani: Tehran-Ankara ties amicable, strong, developing In his separate meeting with Erdogan,

Rouhani called relations between Iran and Turkey amicable, strong and developing in

many fields, vowing to work to deepen ties. After the meeting, the two presidents attended the meeting of the high-ranking delegations of Iran and Turkey during which Rouhani said, "Fortunately, relations between Iran and Turkey have always been close and brotherly, and the two governments and nations have stood by each other in different conditions"

Appreciating the warm hospitality of the Turkish government and people, the Iranian president expressed hope that the visit would yield good results for both nations and the region, especially the people of Syria. He went on to acknowledge the Turkish government's clear stances against the United tates' unjust sanctions against Iran, saying, "Despite hardships, Iran and Turkey will continue their inclusive economic relations".

SEPTEMBER 17, 2019

He added, "Iran welcomes Turkish investors and private sector's presence and participation in implementing common projects.'

The president said, "The holding of the 27th Joint Commission of Iran and Turkey Cooperation in the coming days is a very important opportunity to further develop these relations and cooperation".

Rouhani also said Iran and Turkey share close views view in combatting terrorism. "Fortunately, good developments have been made in defense-related cooperation between the two countries. Therefore, Iran-Turkey cooperation n ensuring security in common borders and the region will improve further".

"The pattern of Iran-Turkey trilateral cooperation with Russia in ensuring the security of the region could contribute to the development and stability of the region and the two nations through trilateral and multilateral economic cooperation with neighbors".

"Guaranteeing the security of the Persian Gulf waterways, the Sea of Oman and the Strait of Hormuz has always been important for Iran as the largest littoral state," Rouhani said, adding that Iran considers itself responsible to ensure security of regional waterways.

In an indirect reference to the presence of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf, the president said, "The security of regional waterways has to be protected only by its littoral states, and that the presence American forces and inviting other countries to be present in the region will only increase the existing problems and tensions.'

Rouhani also said attacks on Yemen is the result of miscalculation and misinformation by the U.S., saying, "We must all work to bring stability back to Yemen with the participation of the United Nations."

Rouhani also pointed to cooperation between Iran and Turkey, as guarantors of the Astana process, which has made Syria more secure, saying, "We must help the Syrian government in fighting the remaining terrorists, especially in Idlib and east of Euphrates until the terrorists are eradicated from the region".

At the same meeting, the Turkish president referred to the friendly and brotherly relations between Iran and Turkey, saying, "We are determined to continue the great steps taken in relations between the two countries".

Erdogan added, "Trade cooperation between the two countries by using national currencies has grown significantly and this trend will continue".

He also said, "America's sanctions against Iran are unconstructive, and in view of the Turkish government, preserving the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action is an important symbol of the success of dialogue and diplomacy.

"We hope that as a result of today's summit and finalization of the previous summit's agreements in Sochi stability and security will prevail in the region, especially in Idlib," he concluded.

Tehran says to release UK-flagged tanker

POLITICAL TEHRAN – The Iranian e s k Foreign Ministry spokesman has said that the UK-flagged oil tanker Stena Impero, which was detained by Iran for violating international maritime rules, will soon be released.

Legal proceedings against UK-flagged Stena Impero are almost finished and there remains just "two or three formalities" to

take care of before releasing the ship, said Abbas Mousavi on Monday, according to Mehr news agency.

He added the release will happen in the coming days.

"This release is not being made be-

cause of any third party's mediation," he highlighted. The 30,000-tonne tanker was seized on "humanitarian grounds".

by Iranian naval forces on July 19, when it ignored distress call as it collided with a fishing boat on its route.

Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said the ship had also used a wrong path to enter the Strait of Hormuz.

In early September, Iran announced the release of the ship's seven crew members

Tehran had repeatedly said that the Judiciary branch should decide on the fate of Stena Impero

The seizure of the British tanker came amid a diplomatic row between Tehran and London, which had erupted earlier in July after British Royal Marines in Gibraltar illegally seized an Iranian oil tanker. That ship was later released.

Iran says U.S. hasty claims about strikes on Aramco harmful to all

 $1 \rightarrow$ In a speech aired live on state television in August, Rouhani said, "If someone just seeks to take photo with Hassan Rouhani, it is not possible unless they remove all the cruel sanctions and respect the Iranian people's rights." He said that there will be no change in Iran-U.S. relations without removal of all sanctions and change of the wrong path that Washington have taken.

He added, "Our path is clear. We will return if they return to their commitments. We seek to settle issues and solve problems through logical ways.'

"Change of our behavior towards those who have imposed sanctions on the Islamic Republic of Iran and launched

economic terrorism will start when they repent. They should return to their commitments and change the wrong path they have taken. They should serve the interests of the world and the international security. They must recognize the Iranians' rights and respect the revolution and the Islamic system," Rouhani pointed out.

Senior MP: war called off after Trump's assessment of Iran's power

TEHRAN (FNA) — Chairman of the Iranian parliament's National Security and Foreign

au the stand of

traced a military P8 aircraft violating the air-

Hajizadeh said, adding that his forces had also targeted near... Kouh-e Mobarak" region in the Central district of Jask in Hormuzgan province

Trump's national security advisor, as Tehran only attaches importance to actions.

Trump ousted Bolton on September 10.

Bolton was notoriously famous for his ultra-hawkish stance toward Iran

'It is regrettable that Europe needs permission to fulfil its commitments'

Mousavi also said it is "regrettable" that the European countries need permission from Washington to fulfil their commitments under the JCPOA

France has proposed offering Iran about \$15 billion in credit lines until year-end if Tehran comes fully back into compliance with the nuclear deal, a move that hinges on Washington not blocking it, according to Reuters.

Mousavi noted that the Europeans have not been able to guarantee Iran's benefits of the deal yet and Tehran may take the fourth step in reducing its commitments.

Trump abandoned the nuclear deal in May 2018 and imposed the harshest ever sanctions on Tehran. However, Trump has been repeatedly calling for dialogue with Iran.

Trump has announced that his administration is putting "maximum pressure" against Iran to bring Tehran to the negotiating table to rewrite the JCPOA.

On May 8, exactly one year after the U.S. pulled out of the JCPOA, Tehran began reducing its commitments to the agreement at bi-monthly intervals.

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.

In a letter to European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini on September 5, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif announced that as a third step Iran stops implementing all commitments related to nuclear research and development (R&D).

"The Iranian foreign minister sent a letter to Mogherini, announcing that the Islamic Republic of Iran stops all commitments in the area of research and development under the JCPOA because of consequences of the United States' withdrawal from the deal and the three European countries' failure to implement their commitments," Foreign Ministry spokesman Mousavi said.

"In this letter, it has been said that this action is in line with Iran's rights under the JCPOA and within the paragraph 36 of it and is in response to violation of the JCPOA during the past 16 months," Mousavi added.

Policy Commission Mojtaba Zonnour said that U.S. President Donald Trump revised his decision to respond to Iran's downing of an American spy drone in June after he was handed an assessment of Tehran's power to react.

"The Americans reached this assessment after destruction of their drone that in case of military reaction to the move (the shooting down of the drone), they will sustain 15,000 tolls and then a war of attrition would break out and Trump was, hence, forced to avoid any military action against Iran after the assessment of Iran behavior," Zonnour said on Sunday.

The influential lawmaker also warned of the dire consequences of any war in the region for the European states, and said in case of war, the flood of refugees will find their way to Europe.

In relevant remarks earlier this month, Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Hossein Bageri had also said that the U.S. army's assessment of Iran's retaliation power and not Trump's compassion prevented the U.S. president from starting a war after the IRGC downed the American spy drone in June.

"The day when the drone was downed, the U.S. president was on the brink of a decision (to attack Iran) and the biggest lie was that they did not do it to prevent the death of 100 people, while the decision was the result of intelligence assessment of the U.S. Army and after they briefed the U.S. president about the outcomes of their attack and about Iran's missile response, in islands, in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz and the regional states where Iran's arms are deployed," General Baqeri said, addressing a forum in Tehran.

They sat with him (Trump) in two 2 to 3-hour sessions and explained to him that he cannot attack Iran," he added.

Elsewhere, General Baqeri said that Iran is weakening the U.S. and Israel's influence in the region on a daily basis, adding that the



resistance front is advancing well.

He also dismissed allegations that Iran had sent military aid to Yemen to fight against the Saudi-led coalition, asking how a 9-meter-long missile can be sent to a country (Yemen) which is under the strongest siege that even prevents imports of medicine.

"These are illusions of some people," General Baqeri said, adding that the Islamic Revolution merely supports the Yemeni resistance forces spiritually

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Aerospace Force shot down an American spy drone over the territorial waters of Iran near the Strait of Hormuz at dawn on June 20.

After the incident, U.S. President Donald Trump said the US air force was "cocked and loaded" to attack three Iranian targets, but he called off the strike with 10 minutes to spare after being told that the airstrike might kill as many as 150 people.

Trump said in a series of tweets that he decided that the death toll was not a proportionate response to the Iranian shooting down of a U.S. spy drone off the Iranian coast.

After Trump's remarks, Commander of the IRGC Aerospace Force Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh said that his forces could have shot down a U.S. P8 aircraft with 35 on board which was violating Iran's airspace, but decided to shoot down the drone to only send a message to Washington.

"We intended to send a message to American terrorists in the region," Brigadier General space of Iran.

"Along with the American drone was an American P8 aircraft with 35 on board, and it was also violating our airspace and we could have downed it too," he said, adding, "But we did not do (shoot down) it. because our aim was to warn the terrorist forces of the U.S."

General Hajizadeh also stressed that Iran was not after war but was fully ready to defend itself, adding that the fate of the downed U.S. spy drone was waiting for any intruding flying object.

"Our response to anything trespassing Iranian territory is like this, and if such acts of aggression are repeated, our response will also be the same," General Hajizadeh said.

"We don't embrace war but we are ready to fully defend the country," he said.

"We possess a collection of U.S. drones which is a proof that U.S. has violated Iran's airspace and shows that they don't want to respect the international law," General Hajizadeh said.

"If such an aggression is repeated, we will add other U.S. (military) products to complete this collection," he noted.

"The U.S. measure was in violation of international law and we acted according to our legitimate responsibility," General Hajizadeh said, adding, "It is possible that a U.S. general or some operators were behind this American aggression, we don't know that. But that measure (intruding into Iranian airspace) is a violation of international aviation rules by a spy drone which then received our natural response."

Also, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said that his country had retrieved parts of the spy drone that was shot down from the country's territorial waters, rejecting Washington's claim that the aircraft was targeted in international waters.

"(The) U.S. drone took off from UAE in stealth mode and violated Iranian airspace," Zarif wrote on Twitter, adding that the drone "was after the aircraft violated Iran's airspace.

Zarif even provided the coordinates where the U.S. aircraft was intercepted, and added, "We've retrieved sections of the U.S. military drone in OUR territorial waters where it was shot down.

Meantime, IRGC Commander Major General Hossein Salami stressed that the move should alert Washington officials to stay away.

The incident sent "a clear message" to the U.S. and other enemies that Iran will show a firm and crushing response to any aggression, Salami stated.

"Borders are our red lines and any enemy which violates them will not go back home and will be annihilated. The only way for enemies is to respect Iran's territorial integrity and national interests," the major general noted.

Also, earlier this month, General Salami said Iran's military power and might had taken the military option off the table for the U.S., stating that the U.S. was fearful of war against Iran.

"We have completely blocked the road to the enemies in the military field and we have reversed the balance. Under the current situation, it is the enemies who are concerned about war and this concern is displayed in their physical and tactical behavior," General Salami said, addressing the commanders and personnel of Khatam al-Anbia base in Tehran.

He said the U.S. exercised a similar offensive strategy in the political field first, but "eventually, they announced that they didn't intend to go for a confrontation and called it a quit; in fact, this was a retreat to give them a chance to save themselves from a bottleneck they had created themselves.'

"Today, our global power is very well known and credited, and it includes an extraordinary deterrence capacity; we have managed to shatter the United States' awe in the world public opinion" on the scene of action, General Salami said.

Lawmaker cautions nuclear deal may turn into 'worthless piece of paper'

POLITICAL TEHRAN — A reform-d e s k ist parliamentarian has cautioned that if the Iranian rights under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) are not met, the international deal will turn into a "worthless piece of paper".

Mohammad Ali Vakili, a member of the Omid (Hope) bloc in the Majlis, said in an interview published on the Islamic **Consultative Assembly Research Center** website on Sunday that it is reasonable for Iran to gradually reduce its commitments under the JCPOA now that the accord has no benefit for Iran.

"As a matter of fact, if a further step is to be taken to reduce Iran's commitments to the nuclear agreement, the agreement will lose its essence and will be rendered useless," he opined.

Vakili also said that Iran is reducing its obligations as a reciprocal step because the other parties are failing to fulfill their commitments

In January 2016, the JCPOA was implemented between Iran and the P5+1 group (the U.S., Russia, China, UK, France and



Germany) in relation to Iran's nuclear program.

In May 2018, the U.S. announced its withdrawal from the deal and went on to

Iran's nuclear knowledge to astound West, says Rouhani's aide

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Hessameddin Ashena, an advisor to President Rouhani, says Iran's vast knowledge of nuclear technology would astonish Western countries.

"The limits of the science and technology in the nuclear field will not stop us anymore," Tasnim on Monday

quoted Ashena as saying. He made the remarks when asked to comment on Iran's steps to reduce its commitments to the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which include putting aside certain limitations on its nuclear program.

Ashena reiterated that there will be no limits on nuclear research and development and "we will move towards the cutting-edge of science."

He also said Iran's "third step" in reducing its JCPOA commitments has multiple layers.

Iran and the five permanent members of the United Na-

Raisi: Iran to have Canada's assets



in 2015, according to which Iran agreed to limit its nuclear program in exchange for termination of sanctions.

However, since U.S. President Donald Trump assumed office, he has done everything in his power to derail other countries' efforts to preserve the JCPOA and finally, on May 8, 2019, he withdrew the U.S. from the multilateral accord.

Much of the international community has voiced strong opposition to the U.S. move and warned of its ramifications for the region and the world.

A year after the U.S. pullout from the JCPOA, Iran started to take steps at 60-day intervals to reduce its commitments to the deal. So far, Tehran has taken three steps in that regard.

Tehran says its reciprocal measures will be reversible as soon as Europe finds practical ways to shield the Iranian economy from unilateral U.S. bans.

Rouhani said last week that Iran will take further steps to suspend its commitments in the future if necessary.

The president described the third step as the most important one compared to the previous two, adding, "If necessary, we will take further steps in the future.'

impose sanctions against Iran in November of the same year.

In order to preserve the agreements reached as part of the JCPOA, the European signatories of the deal stated in January 2019 that a financial mechanism for maintaining trade with Iran called INSTEX was underway, the benefits of it, however, yet remain to show up. On May 8, 2019, Iran announced that

it had ceased fulfilling its commitments regarding the sale of its surplus of 300 kilograms of uranium, as stated in the deal, basing its decision on the other signatories having not fulfilled their obligations.

On July 7, Iran announced that it would not be fulfilling another one of its commitments regarding limiting its enrichment of uranium to 3.67 percent.

On September 5, Iran announced that it was going to enrich uranium us-ing next-generation centrifuges as part of the third step of reducing commitments under the JCPOA, and announced that a further step will be taken in 2 months' time, should the other signatories not fulfill their commitments.

Iran says closely watching developments in Latin America

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Hossein Amir Abdollahian, a e s k senior foreign policy advisor to the Iranian parliament speaker, has said Iran closely watches developments in Latin America, especially the hostile moves adopted by the U.S. government against Cuba and Venezuela.

'We are following the developments in the Latin American region, including the U.S. government's hostile actions against Cuba and Venezuela, with sensitivity," Amir Abdollahian said, Mehr reported.

He made the remarks at a meeting with Cuban Foreign Ministry Director General for Middle East and North Africa Affairs Hector Igarza Cabrera in Tehran on Sunday.

During the meeting, Amir Abdollahian highlighted the im-portance of strengthening ties and cooperation between Iran and Cuba in different fields.

The friendly and lasting relations between the two countries is a firm basis for promoting the level of bilateral relations in political, parliamentary, economic and cultural fields," he said.

The Iranian advisor further hailed the 40-year-old relations between the two countries, saying "there has been good cooperation between the two countries over the past four decades."

'Latin America and the leading countries in the region, including Cuba, are at the center of Iran's foreign policy," he added.

The Cuban diplomat, for his part, pointed to the good relations between the two countries, saying "Havana welcomes the development of political, economic and cultural ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran."

The Iranian, Cuban parliaments can play an important role in accelerating economic and trade cooperation between Tehran and Havana, Cabrera remarked.

Concluding his remarks, Cabrera thanked the Islamic Republic for its support for Cuba against the U.S. imperialist policies.

Anti-Iran allegations sign of U.S.-Saudi military bankruptcy: Yemen

TEHRAN (Tasnim) - Mohammad al-Bakhiti, a member of Yemen's Supreme Political Council, said the U.S.-Saudi allegations that Iran has led recent drone strikes on Saudi oil installations are indicative of their "political and military bankruptcy".

Speaking to Tasnim, Bakhiti pointed to the Saturday drone attacks on Saudi company Aramco's oil processing facilities and said, "American and Saudi radars are unable to intercept Yemeni aircraft."



"If they had been able to intercept the aircraft, they would have shot them down," he added.

The Yemeni official further rejected U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo' claim that the drones come from Iran, saying there is no proof or evidence to substantiate the claim.

'Essentially, he (Pompeo) had to provide proof that the aircraft came from Iran but he didn't," he said, adding, "This is a military and political bankruptcy for Saudi Arabia and the United States.'

The Yemeni forces on Saturday launched drone attacks on two plants at the heart of Saudi Arabia's oil industry, including the world's biggest petroleum processing facility.

Pompeo put the blame for the operation on Iran, claiming, "Tehran is behind nearly 100 attacks on Saudi Arabia" and that



POLITICAL TEHRAN — Iran's k Judiciary Chief Ebra- which the courts have based their cases to

Iran has denied any role in the attacks



POLITICAL TEHRAN — Iran's

The three countries were the guark Defense Minister antors of the Astana peace talks, which

Hatami meets Turkish counterpart in Ankara

himi Raisi has warned Canada that if it does not reverse its decision on confiscating Iran's assets, the Iranian Judiciary and Foreign Ministry will cooperate to identify Canada's assets through international bodies and have them seized.

"No country will be allowed to violate the rights of the Iranian nation under any circumstances," Raisi asserted, Tasnim reported.

The comments came days after it was reported that Canada had seized and sold some \$30 million worth of Iranian assets, including two buildings in Ottawa and Toronto, to "victims of terror attacks" that took place in Lebanon and Israel.

appropriate the country's frozen assets.

"The Iranian nation has proved that it would not give in to force over any issue. and if Canada does not abandon this course of action and expropriates the Islamic Republic of Iran's assets, we will definitely launch a joint program in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Judiciary's international department, to detect Canada's properties," Raisi said.

"We will by no means remain silent on this issue," the top judge added.

Canada severed diplomatic relations with Iran in 2012. The country's pro-Israel lobby has been very influential in shaping Ottawa's anti-Iran policies.

Amir Hatami met on Monday with his Turkish counterpart Hulusi Akar in Turkey's capital, Ânkara.

According to the Anadolu Agency, Akar received Hatami with a military ceremony at the Turkish Defense Ministry, where national anthems of both countries were played.

Hatami greeted the escort of honor in Turkish language.

Following the ceremony, the ministers held a meeting in which regional security and defense issues were discussed.

Ankara was set to host a trilateral summit on Syria between the leaders of Turkey, Russia and Iran later on Monday.

were launched on Jan. 23-24, 2017 with the aim of putting an end to the Syrian conflict.

Kazakhstan has hosted multiple rounds of talks on Syria since January 2017, backed by the three power brokers, most of which involved delegations from the Syrian government and opposition.

The 13th round of talks was held in Nursultan, the new name of Kazakhstan's capital, on August 1-2.

In this round of talks international bodies such as the UN and the International Committee of the Red Cross were also present.

MP urges seizure of Canada-destined ships in retaliation

POLITICAL TEHRAN — A top Iranian lawmaker d e s k has denounced Canada's seizure of Iran's assets, saving Canadian shipments crossing the Strait of Hormuz should be confiscated by Iran in retaliation.

The ships and goods that set off from the Strait of Hormuz to the destination of Canada should be confiscated through an order, Heshmatollah Falahatpisheh said on Sunday, according to Fars.

He added that his proposal should be adopted as soon as possible.

Falahatpisheh, who is a member of the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, maintained that courts in Iran should be authorized to seize Canadian government properties in Iran.

He also said that responding in kind to the illegal act would not suffice as Canada has not enough assets in Iran that could be subject to a similar court verdict.

The comments came after a report by Global News said Canada had gifted some \$30 million worth of Iranian assets to the victims of terrorist attacks in which Iran says has not been involved, according to Press TV.

The report said the victims have received their share of



the money earned through the sale of two Iranian-owned buildings in Ottawa and Toronto, a document filed in the Ontario Superior Court of Justice in August reveals.

The valuable Ottawa property, sold for \$26.5 million, was used as the Iranian Cultural Center, and the Toronto building, sold for \$1.85 million, served as the Center for Iranian Studies, the Global News reported.

In addition to the \$28 million earned from the sale of

the two properties, the victims were also awarded a share of some \$2.6 million seized from Iran's bank accounts. Documents also list a Toyota Camry and Mazda MPV. In particular, they include the family of Marla Bennett, a U.S. citizen killed in a 2002 bombing that rocked the Hebrew University in Jerusalem al-Quds.

The attacks are mostly blamed on Palestinian and Lebanese resistance movements Hamas and Hezbollah. The families claimed that the Iranian government supported the two organizations and was therefore responsible for their actions.

Iran has denied any role in the attacks, saying the court ruling is an unlawful move that will have consequences or the Ottawa government if not revoked.

Abbasali Kadkhodaei, the spokesman for the Guardian council, has described the move by Canada as a blatant example of "state-run economic terrorism."

"Economic terrorism is a method in which Western governments seize or confiscate other nations' economic resources and interests through misusing legal tools without fair legal procedures," Kadkhodaei, a law expert, tweeted on Saturday evening.

"there is no evidence the attacks came from Yemen.

The attacks against the Saudi positions came in retaliation for the continued massacre of civilians and destruction of Yemen's infrastructure by the coalition led by the Riyadh regime.

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.

Since March 2015, Saudi Arabia and some of its Arab allies have been carrying out deadly airstrikes against the Houthi Ansarullah movement in an attempt to restore power to fugitive former president Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi, a close ally of Rivadh.

Official UN figures say that more than 15,000 people have been killed in Yemen since the Saudi-led bombing campaign began.

The Saudi war has impacted over seven million children in Yemen who now face a serious threat of famine, according to UNICEF figures. Over 6,000 children have either been killed or sustained serious injuries since 2015, UN children's agency said. The humanitarian situation in the country has also been exacerbated by outbreaks of cholera, polio, and measles.

Gharibabadi named vice chairman of IAEA General **Conference**

TEHRAN (MNA) - Iran's ambassador to the IAEA, Kazem Gharibabadi, has been appointed as the vice president of the General Conference of the international body.

Gharibabadi is to serve as the Middle East and South Asia (Mesa) group's VP of the conference.

The 63rd annual regular session of the General Conference of IAEA kicked off on Monday at the IAEA headquarters in Vienna.

Strengthening the IAEA's safeguard and implementing them has been cited as the main topic of the conference.

Increasing use of nuclear sciences and technologies for the progress and development of countries are other topics that will be discussed in the conference.

Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, Ali Akbar Salehi, is taking part at the session.

SEPTEMBER 17, 2019

STOCK MARKET

 TEDPIX
 305917.2

 IFX
 4011.39

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

<u>CURRENCIES</u>

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	46,505 rials
GBP	52,405 rials
AED	11,437 rials
a	

Source: cbi.ir

COMMODITIES

Brent	\$65.57/b
WTI	\$59.52/b
OPEC Basket	\$60.51/b
Gold	\$1,506.15/oz
Silver	\$17.93/oz
Platinium	\$961.25/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

Bank loans to economic sectors up over 30%

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iranian banking system's offered facilities to domestic economic sectors in the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-July 22), stood at 2.188 quadrillion rials (about \$52.1 billion), rising 30.9 percent from the previous year's same period, IRIB reported.

According to the data provided by the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), working capital loans paid to different economic sectors was above 1.3 quadrillion rials (about \$31.15 billion) accounting for 59.8 percent of the total provided facilities in the said period, registering a 27.7-percent increase from the previous year.

During the said period, the country's mining and industry sectors received 486.4 trillion rials (nearly \$11.6 billion) in the form of working capital loans, accounting for 37.2 percent of the total provided facilities.

Back in April, CBI reported that during the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20, 2019) the country's banking system offered 7.737 quadrillion rials (about \$184.2 billion) facilities to domestic economic sectors to register a 26 percent from its previous year.

Working capital loans paid to different economic sectors was above 4.319 quadrillion rials (about \$102.8 billion) accounting for 55.8 percent of the total provided facilities in the said period, registering a 14-percent increase from the previous year.

INSTEX chairman visiting Iran

 $1 \rightarrow$ STFI, called SATMA in Persian, was established to ease INSTEX implementation. If the financial instrument is decided to become operational, Iran says there will be no problem having it run in the country.



Iran's 5-month steel ingot output up 4% on year

ECONOMY d e s **TEHRAN** – Production of steel ingot by Iran's 10 major producers exceeded 8.539 million tons in the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-August 22), registering a four-percent rise from the same period last year, IRNA reported on Monday.

Production of other steel products also witnessed a nine-percent raise in the mentioned time span in comparison to the last year's same period.

As reported, over 5.834 million tons of such products were produced in the mentioned five months.

Iran's steel production capacity is projected to reach around 40 million tons this year (ends on March 19, 2020) with crude steel production reaching between 25 and 27 million tons.

According to the World Steel Organization (WSO), Iran became the world's tenth largest steel producer in 2018. The country is expected to become the world's seventh biggest steel producer by 2021, reaching 55 million tons of steel capacity.



According to the WSO's report, Iran produced 25 million tons of crude steel in 2018 which indicates 17.7 percent growth from 21.2 million tons in 2017. Also, a recent report by the WSO says that production of crude steel in Iran rose 7.1 percent during the first quarter of 2019 compared to the same period of time in 2018.

It is while crude steel production in the world increased 4.5 percent in the first quarter of this year.

The country's crude steel production capacity will increase by 25 million tons within the next four years, according to a deputy director in Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO).

Ardeshir Sa'd Mohammadi said that through such increase in crude steel output, the required feedstock for the plants will be properly supplied. The official further lamented that of the

The official further lamented that of the 35 million tons of crude steel produced in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20, 2019), 25 million tons were used in the production process.

Iran is one of the top 10 mineral-rich countries where 68 types of minerals have been identified so far, including the world's largest deposits of copper, zinc and iron ore, which are tempting international investors.

'Oman, a good place for re-export of Iranian products'

ECONOMY d e s k TEHRAN — Oman is a good place for re-export of Iranian products especially during the sanction time, portal of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) reported quoting the head of Iran-Oman Joint Chamber of Commerce as saying.

Mohsen Zarrabi said that as the Arab country is a member of World Trade Organization (WTO) and has free trade agreements with many countries with them Iran has no direct ties, it could be a proper hub for the re-export of Iranian commodities to different markets of world.

According to the data released by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the value of trade between Iran and Oman has increased to \$870 million during the first seven months of this year from \$557 million in the same period of time in the past year.

While the number of Iranian companies registered in Oman was just 263 in 2014

(when President Hassan Rouhani visited Muscat), the figure reached 1,163 by the end of 2018.

Iranian president's trip to Oman led to the all-out expansion of economic ties between the two countries.

Also, despite the U.S. reimposition of sanctions against the Islamic Republic, Oman is getting closer to Iran both politically and economically. There is also the same approach adopted by Iran, as Iranian companies now prefer to conduct trade with Oman rather than the United Arab Emirates (UAE), given that the UAE is highly complying with the sanctions.

Iran is somehow replacing some of its previous strategic trade partners such as UAE with Oman, considering the Sultanate as an economic-trade hub.

During the current year there have been many meetings and negotiations between trade and economic officials from the staterun and private sectors of the two sides with

the aim of strengthening and expanding bilateral trade ties.

In a trip to Muscat in mid-July, Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Reza Rahmani met a number of Omani senior officials including Minister of Transport and Communications Ahmed Mohammed Salem Al-Futaisi and Minister of Commerce and Industry Ali bin Masoud al Sunaid and emphasized the need for strengthening transport and infrastructure cooperation between the two countries in order to provide basis for expansion of trade ties.

During a meeting with Rahmani, Al-Futaisi welcomed economic cooperation with Iran in all areas, saying that Oman's policy is to develop relations with its neighbors, especially the Islamic Republic of Iran, and it welcomes any strategy to expand all-out relations.

Sunaiday, for his turn, expressed his country's eagerness for boosting trade with Iran, saying, "The Islamic Republic of Iran



has significant capabilities and capacities that the two sides can tap in line with the national interests of the two countries."

Developing sea transport between the two sides, facilitating visa issuance for Iranian and Omani traders, rising number of Iranian companies in Oman and also more competitive prices of Iranian products in the Omani market compared to the past are some of the major reasons behind expanded economic cooperation between the two countries.

China's economy is getting worse. That makes a trade deal more likely

By Laura He

China's economic slowdown keeps getting worse. That could give the country incentive to repair its trading relationship with the United States and take more steps to stimulate its economy.

The country released data Monday that showed industrial production — an important indicator for China's economy — increased by just 4.4% in August compared to a year earlier.

That's worse than the sector's performance in July, when it grew by 4.8%, its weakest growth in 17 years. Industrial production is important because it measures the output of key businesses in China's manufactur-



employment. It is fixed monthly. Cheung said Chinese policymakers could fix that rate lower when it is set later this week.

Weaker currency

China has also allowed the yuan to depreciate to its lowest levels in more than a decade in recent weeks. But a weaker currency isn't likely to completely offset problems with tariffs and sluggish global demand, said Martin Lynge Rasmussen, a China economist for Capital Economics. He said in a Monday research note that China will likely keep easing monetary policy in the coming months.

Tommy Wu, a senior economist for Oxford Economics, also said the country needs to take significant steps to stabilize growth. His firm forecasts the economy will

Chairman of INSTEX Michael Erhard Bock (R) met with Head of German-Iranian Chamber of Commerce Dagmar von Bohnstein in Tehran on Monday.

Former German diplomat Michael Bock was appointed as the new chairman of EU trade mechanism with Iran dubbed "INSTEX" on June 6, 2019.

INSTEX is a special-purpose vehicle established in January 2019 by France, Germany and the United Kingdom to facilitate non-dollar trade with Iran in a bid to bypass the U.S. sanctions.

So far, INSTEX has not become operational despite intense efforts on all sides.

Philippines' CA deficit to widen until 2021, Fitch shows

The country's current account (CA) deficit would continue to widen until 2021 due to strong import growth, according to Fitch Ratings.

According to philstar.com, the debt watcher said the subdued export performance and generally strong import growth in 2020 and 2021 would keep the CA in a deficit of between 2.4 percent and 2.6 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

For 2019, Fitch said the country's CA shortfall may hit 2.4 percent of GDP due to weak export performance in the first half.

Exports went down by 0.5 percent to \$34.22 billion from January to June compared to \$34.39 billion a year ago.

On the other hand, imports also declined by around one percent to \$53.12 billion from \$53.63 billion a year ago.

This translated to a 1.7 percent improvement in the trade deficit to \$18.9 billion from January to June compared to \$19.23 billion in the same period last year.

The CA position measures the net transfer of real resources between the domestic economy and the rest of the world. It consists of transactions in goods, services as well as primary and secondary income.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) expects a record CA deficit of \$10.1 billion this year, 27.8 percent wider than the \$7.9 billion shortfall recorded last year.

ing, mining and utilities sectors. The latest figure was also worse than the 5.2% growth that analysts polled by Reuters expected.

Other data released Monday by China's National Bureau of Statistics was also poor. Retail sales growth slowed to 7.5% in August, down from July's 7.6% yearon-year uptick.

The world's second-biggest economy has been struggling because of its trade war with the United States. It's also facing domestic challenges as it tries to rely less on debt to fuel growth.

New round of talks

The new data comes as China's tense trade relationship with the United States appears to be improving, at least a little bit. China announced last week that it would exempt American soybean and pork from tariffs. That was the latest in a series of steps taken by both countries to cool off ahead of a new round of trade talks. The soft August figures reflect an "increasing downside risk to the economy" as the trade war rages on, said Ken Cheung Kin Tai, chief foreign exchange strategist for Asia at Mizuho Bank in Hong Kong. "Against this backdrop, it makes sense that China softened its stance on trade talks" and introduced stimulus plans in recent weeks.

The weak data also fuels speculation about how China's central bank will continue responding to the slowdown, Cheung added.

The People's Bank of China has taken several steps in recent weeks to boost the country's economy. Earlier this month, it reduced the amount of cash banks have to keep in reserve by slashing the reserve requirement ratio for the first time in eight months.

And in August, the central bank launched a new Loan Prime Rate that will become the benchmark for banks to price loans, a reform meant to support growth and grow 6.1% this year and 5.7% in 2020.

The People's Bank of China could consider a cut to its medium-term lending facility rate, which is a key loan rate, said Ting Lu, chief China economist for Japanese investment firm Nomura. He also expects the government to loosen restrictions on the property sector later this year to help stimulate purchases.

Chinese officials have said they have enough tools available to bolster the economy.

The "Chinese economy is facing certain downward pressure from slowing global growth, protectionism and rising unilateralism," said Chinese Premier Li Keqiang in an interview with Russian media, according to a transcript published Monday by the Chinese government. "But the economy also has big resilience, potential and enough space to maneuver."

(Source: edition.cnn.com)

Germany to run world's largest current account surplus in 2019: Ifo

Germany will run the world's largest current account surplus in 2019 for the fourth consecutive year, the Ifo economic institute said on Friday, likely putting further pressure on Berlin to help reduce global imbalances and stimulate domestic demand.

As per hellenicshippingnews.com, this year's surplus in the current account — which measures the flow of goods, services and investments — is seen at \$276 billion (\pounds 221 billion), Ifo economist Christian Grimme told Reuters.

He added that Japan's surplus is projected to come in at \$188 billion, followed by China with \$182 billion. In contrast, the United States is expected to post a current account deficit of \$480 billion, the world's

largest, despite President Donald Trump's trade war with China and additional tariffs imposed on products imposed on Chinese products.

Germany's current account surplus can mainly be attributed to the fact that far more German products and services are sold overseas than imported to Europe's largest economy.



The trade imbalances have stirred the wrath of Trump, who has threatened to impose additional tariffs on German carmakers. The European Union's executive body and the International Monetary Fund have also criticized Germany's surplus.

The European Commission considers a current account

surplus of 6% as sustainable over the long-term when measured by the size of a country's economy.

Germany has come closer to that threshold. While the country reached a record high of 8.5% in 2015, Ifo is now projecting 7.1% this year.

Gita Gopinath, chief economist for the International Monetary Fund, said the global lender had long pressed Germany to boost spending and reduce its current account surplus, and there had been some movement of late.

"There has certainly been a shift towards doing more fiscal spending to raise potential output," Gopinath told an event at the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank in Washington. The "question is whether that's enough."

Gopinath said it made sense for Germany to act now and take advantage of low interest rates.

"If you are a country that needs to undertake spending investment in your infrastructure and today, you're able to borrow at very low rates, just from a pure cost-benefit analysis, it would make sense to do it now," she said. **SEPTEMBER 17, 2019**

chemical industry in the country's economy",

industry at 108,000, which is planned to reach

He also put the direct jobs created by this

The official said there are already 56

He put the annual petrochemical capacity

Mohammadi said 44 types of chemical

petrochemical complexes in the country of

which 54 are production complexes and 2

at 65.8 million tons which is planned to reach

products and 18 types of polymer products (300 different grades) are already produced

100 million tons in the second leap.

Mohammadi highlighted.

123,000 in the second leap.

are utility complexes

Over 600 companies to attend IRAN PLAST 2019

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN— Iran's 13th International Exhibition of Plastic, Rubber, Machinery and Equipment (IRAN PLAST) will host 570 Iranian and 35 foreign companies at the Tehran International Permanent Fairground from September 22 to 25, managing director of National Petrochemical Company (NPC) announced in a press conference on Monday.

Behzad Mohammadi also said that 12 delegations from 10 countries will attend the exhibition while 14 countries will participate through single pavilions. He said IRAN PLAST is a platform to make

connection between petrochemical industry and enterprises, while flourish downstream industries.

The NPC managing director mentioned more presence of knowledge-based compa-nies and startups in this edition of the event as one of its prominent features which has been achieved as the result of the high attention and support by the Oil Ministry to these companies during the past year.

The official said that 11 ministers of oil and energy from East Asia and neighboring countries have been invited to visit the exhibition and attend meetings with Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh for development of ties.

\$17b income, 108,000 direct jobs NPC managing director further put the annual income of petrochemical industry at \$17 billion which is planned to hit \$25 billion in the second leap [by the end of Iranian calendar year of 1400 (March 2022)] and will witness a significant rise in the third leap [by the end of Iranian calendar year of 1404



in this industry. "It indicates the significant role of petro-

Referring to the feedstock that petrochemical industry receives, he said that the industry receives 33 million tons of feedstock, of which 25 million tons is directly used for production of products and eight million tons s used as fuel

Indigenizing all groups of catalysts The official further mentioned indigenizing all groups of catalysts as a major objective that NPC is pursuing in the field of technology and research.

He said of the 40 groups of catalysts, 16 groups have been already indigenized, 9 groups will be indigenized in the second leap and the rest 15 groups are in the R&D stage to be indigenized.

27 projects to come on stream by **March 202**2

Elsewhere in his remarks, the NPC managing director said that by the next 2.5 years (that is the end of the second leap), 27 projects are going to come on stream in the petrochemical sector, among them Kaveh Methanol is a major one. The complex with the daily production capacity of 7,000 tons will be the largest methanol production unit in the world. It is scheduled to be inaugurated by the next six months (end of the current Iranian calendar year). He said that 16 high-capacity projects

are also planned to be inaugurated in the next Iranian calendar year of 1399 (March 2021-March 2022) and seven projects are scheduled for the Iranian year of 1400 (ends on March 2022).

In this way the number of petrochemical complexes will increase from the current 56 to 83 in 1400, he added.

The official also referred to the projects for the third leap (from 1400 to 1404), and said 26 projects have been defined which will boost the petrochemical capacity to 133 million tons, bringing annual income of \$37 billion.

Boosting exports, flourishing downstream sector

Mohammadi further mentioned NPC's policy to attain sustainable development, and said, "While pursuing quantity increase, we are paying special attention to rise quality to achieve two major objectives.

"The first objective is expansion of exports and having more presence in the global markets and the second one is flourishing downstream industries inside the country and increasing employment", he explained.



 $1 \rightarrow$ So, despite all the reassurance, oil markets around the world are once again overshadowed by the geopolitical risks and at least for some time the geopolitical risk premium will be seen in the oil prices.

Replacements for the lost oil

Many analysts and experts believe that Saudi Aramco won't be able to get all the lost capacity back over a short period of time and it would at least take a couple of weeks to get back to the full capacity.

Considering the worst case scenario, some analysts believe that the oil market should be looking for new sources of crude supply in case the damage to the Aramco facilities turn out to be more than what is seems and the Saudi's oil production takes more time than expected to get back to its full capacity.

One option, as previously mentioned, is the U.S. emergency reserves which Trump has promised to release to balance the market. However, analysts believe that such an action will likely not be taken in the short term.

"I don't think a release is imminent," Bob McNally, president of Rapidan Energy Group, told S&P Global Platts. "Everything depends on how much damage has been done and how long will it last.

There is also the matter of distance and time, as Sandy

Fielden, analyst at Morningstar puts it, "It takes 19-20 days to ship Ras Tanura (Saudi) to Singapore, but 54 days from Houston to Singapore. So U.S. 'relief' will take time.

It should also be mentioned that, although the U.S. strategic reserves are estimated at about 625 million barrels, but its offshore borders have restrictions on oil transportation. As the U.S. Department of Energy said in a report in 2016, the United States could release up to 2.1 million barrels a day from its strategic reserves.

Another option which is more likely in the short term Saudi Arabia's own reserves in countries like China and Japan, but with the kingdom's limited reserves, the loss could only be replaced for approximately 30-45 days, according to McNally.

'Saudi Arabia has about 188 million barrels of oil stockpiled, which can offset the 5-million-barrels of lost oil only for about 37 days," McNally said.

Even if Aramco manages to recover 2 million barrels of the disrupted capacity in short term (as they have claimed), the other 3.7 million barrels should be supplied from the reserves.

So if the oil which has been disrupted is not replaced before the company's stored supplies end, the market would go into an even more complicated situation.



Finally, some other believe that the easiest solution is to waiver the Iranian oil.

"The obvious short-term fix would be waivers on Iran sanctions, but politically that's a hard pill for the Trump administration to swallow. By all accounts the Iranians have tankers full of storage ready to go," Sandy Fielden said.

Jason Bordoff, founding director of the Center on Global Energy Policy at Columbia University also believes that Iran could be a reliable source of additional supply in case the disruptions prolong.

New modelling exposed grid problems that forced solar farms to cut output

By Giles Parkinson

New modelling and grid simulations conducted by the



however the situation remains dynamic, so constraints are required to protect the power system while we are collaboratively pursuing a range of solutions for current

Iran's PGPIC climbs in ICIS ranking despite sanctions

ENERGY TEHRAN — Iran's Persian Gulf Petrochemical ^s ^k Industries Company (PGPIC) has climbed three places to the 35th position in ICIS Top 100 Chemical Companies for 2019, Mehr news agency reported on Monday.

The latest data released by ICIS, which is the world's largest petrochemical market information provider, indicates that Iran's

leading petrochemical plant is improving despite the fact that PGPIC is targeted by the U.S. sanctions.

According to the National Petrochemical Company (NPC), the company was ranked 38th in the world in the 2018 ICIS listing. The improvement comes despite the re-imposition of U.S. unilateral sanctions on Iran.

In a statement, PGPIC CEO Jafar Rabiei congratulated his personnel on this remarkable achievement, emphasizing that the U.S. sanctions had no effect on the development of the sector.

The ICIS $\hat{T}op\,100$ Chemical Companies is a ranking of the world's largest chemical producers by sales. The listing includes both public and private companies, as well as additional metrics on operating profit, net income, capital expenditures, R&D spending, as well as total assets and the number of employees

PGPIC is the largest company listed in Tehran Stock Exchange and is the second largest petrochemical company in the Middle East.

Washington imposed new sanctions on Iran's largest petrochemical holding group in early June, aiming to dry up yet another source of Iran's revenues in order to boost pressure on the country's economy.

The U.S. Treasury said in a statement that it had sanctioned the PGPIC holding group's network of 39 subsidiary petrochemical companies and foreign-based sales agents.

Earlier in April, General Secretary of Iran's Association of Petrochemical Industry Corporation (APIC) had said U.S. sanctions are not going to have any significant impact on Iran's petrochemical exports.

"The mechanisms of petrochemical exports differ significantly from oil exports and therefore U.S. sanctions will have no impact on the production and export of petrochemicals." Ahmad Mahdavi Abhari said.

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

According to Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh, the country is currently producing nearly 65 million tons of petrochemical products annually.

Oil soars after attacks on Saudi, weak China data hits shares

Oil surged to four-month highs on Monday after weekend attacks on crude facilities in Saudi Arabia sparked supply fears, while shares in Asia extended losses as bleak economic data from China sapped investors' appetite for riskier assets.

As per reuters.com, European and U.S. stocks market looked set to follow, with Eurostoxx 50 futures slipping 0.7%, while futures for Germany's DAX were down 0.9% and those for France's CAC 40 eased 0.5%

By contrast, London's FTSE futures climbed 0.3%.

Wall Street was signalling a weak start, too, with E-Mini futures for the S&P 500 off 0.4%.

Brent crude futures surged nearly 20% at one point early in the day and U.S. futures jumped almost 16%, both hitting their highest level since May. But prices came off their peaks after U.S. President Donald Trump authorized the use of the country's emergency stockpile to ensure stable supply

By 0640 GMT, Brent futures were up 10% at \$66.31 per barrel, while U.S. light crude was up 9% at \$59.82.

The "bigger issue is what premium markets will build in to reflect the risk of further attacks," said Kerry Craig, Global Market Strategist, J.P. Morgan Asset Management.

"In the very near-term, we may also see a pick-up in safe-havens," he added.

"Central banks are likely to look through the inflationary impact of higher oil prices but the added geopolitical risk to an

Australian Energy Market Operator are apparently at the heart of the decision last week to dramatically curtail the output of five big solar farms in Victoria and New South Wales by 50 percent.

The decision to impose the constraints on the Karadoc, Wemen, Bannerton and Gannawarra solar farms in Victoria, and the Broken Hill solar farm in NSW, has taken the industry by surprise, and led to concern that other installations may also be affected. Or that these solar farms already affected may be further constrained.

The constraint has also blind-sided energy professionals because the solar farms affected have been operating for some time, and in the case of the 53MW Broken Hill solar farm located near the town of the same name in NSW, since 2015.

But that may exactly the reason why these farms have been targeted, as it is understood that all were approved before so-called "system strength" rules were implemented in 2017, and connection requirements further tightened earlier this year.

That means that the solar farms were not subject to system strength impact assessments which are now in place, and it is the lack of system strength, and potentially dangerous (to the system) level of voltage changes that is now causing concern in what is known as the "west Murray" section of the grid.

The potential weaknesses

The problems were identified as part of a series of ongoing "simulations" that the Australian Energy Market Operator is conducting across the grid, and particularly in areas where it is concerned about potential weaknesses.

In this case, the modelling suggested dramatic voltage changes after the potential trip of a 220v transmission line. As a result, AEMO imposed the constraint on the five solar farms while it sought to find a solution to the problem with the local network operators, the solar farm owners, and the equipment suppliers.

AEMO - as are the solar farm owners - are confident that a solution can be found soon. But exactly what that might be, and how much it would cost and what time would be needed to fix, is not yet finalized.

Possibilities include an upgrade or changes to the inverter technology or settings, or even the addition of a synchronous condenser, which are becoming a common and expensive addition to the grid as more wind and solar farms are built.

Many wind and solar farms in Queensland, NSW and Victoria have been required to add syn-cons, a decades-old technology that basically amounts to a spinning turbine with little or no fuel burned – at an estimated average cost of \$25 million to ensure their connection and commissioning goes smoothly.

South Australia is installing four such machines around its grid, but that is being done by the network operator because AEMO had formally identified an issue with system strength, and therefor won regulatory approval. The addition of the syncons in South Australia will mean less dependence on gas plants running in reserve, and lower costs.

The solar farms

There is a chance that AEMO may declare a similar system strength issue in west Murray, although because of the time taken for regulatory approvals of such installations, the solar farms will likely want an earlier, or interim solution to allow them to return to their full output.

Most of the solar farms have pre-agreed contracts, supplying customers such as the Victoria tram network and prporate customers such as Carlton & United Breweries.

And it should be pointed out that this is not about the variability of solar, or the need for storage. Gannawarra has a co-located Tesla big battery, and it is also constrained like others in the areas.

A spokesperson for AEMO said the issues in the West Murray area have not previously been experienced to this level.

"AEMO, the generators and the network businesses are working through a number of technical variables, and future network users," the spokesperson said.

"Ultimately, AEMO's aim is to generate outcomes that are acceptable from a system security perspective but, as far as possible, are reasonable and proportionate for existing users and those seeking to connect."

Second Announcement

(Source: reneweconomy.com.au)

already fragile backdrop will not go without notice."

MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan slipped 0.4% after data showed China's industrial production growth unexpectedly fell to its weakest pace in 17-1/2 years in August.

1398.3634



NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY AHVAZ-IRAN TENDER NO.: 40-32-90207-20-001

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

Items	Material Description	Quantity
14	U P C P/F "SULZER"GAS TURBINE .TYPE S 7	29

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

The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit .a bid bond of 2,868 EURO or 366, 165,000 RIAL, in favor of NISOC

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

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

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INTERNATIONAL DAILY **TEHRANTIME**

By Ted Snider

ANTIWAR — When Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev received his peace prize in 1990, the Nobel Prize committee declared that "the two mighty power blocs, have managed to abandon their life-threatening confrontation" and confidently expressed that "It is our hope that we are now celebrating the end of the Cold War." Recently, U.N. General Secretary António Guterres funereally closed the celebrations with the realization that "The Cold War is back."

In a very short span of history, the window that had finally opened for Russia and the United States to build a new international system in which they work cooperatively to address areas of common interest had slammed back closed. How was that historic opportunity wasted? Why was the road from the Nobel committee's hope to the UN's eulogy such a short one?

The doctrinal narrative that is told in the U.S. is the narrative of a very short road whose every turn was signposted by Russian lies, betrayal, deception and aggression. The American telling of history is a tale in which every blow to the new peace was a Russian blow. The fact checked version offers a demythologized history that is unrecognizably different. The demythologized version is also a history of lies, betrayal, deception and aggression, but the liar, the aggressor, is not primarily Russia, but America. It is the history of a promise so historically broken that it laid the foundation of a new cold war.

But it was not the first promise the United States broke: it was not even the first promise they broke in the new cold war.

The Hot War

Most histories of the cold war begin at the dawn of the post World War II period. But the history of U.S-U.S.S.R. animosity starts long before that: it starts as soon as possible, and it was hot long before it turned cold. The label "Red Scare" first appeared, not in the 1940s or 50s, but in 1919. Though it is a chapter seldom included in the history of American-Russian relations, America actively and aggressively intervened in the Russian civil war in an attempt to push the Communists back down. The United States cooperated with anti-Bolshevik forces: by mid 1918, President Woodrow Wilson had sent 13,000 American troops to Soviet soil. They would remain there for two years, killing and injuring thousands. Russian Premier Nikita Khrushchev would later remind America of "the time you sent your troops to quell the revolution." Churchill would record for history the admission that the West "shot Soviet Russians on sight." that they were "invaders on Russian soil," that "[t]hey armed the enemies of the Soviet government," that "[t] hey blockaded its ports, and sunk its battleships. They earnestly desired and schemed for its downfall.

When the cause was lost, and the Bolsheviks secured power, most western countries refused to recognize the communist government. However, realism prevailed, and within a few short years, by the mid 1920s, most countries had recognized the communist government and restored diplomatic relations. All but the US It was not until several years later that Franklin D. Roosevelt finally recognized the Soviet government in

Demythologizing the Roots of the New Cold War

his borders; Stalin would give Churchill Greece to protect his empire's borders. The deal was sealed on October 9, 1944.

Churchill says that in their secret meeting, he asked Stalin, "how would it do for you to have ninety percent predominance in Romania, for us to have ninety percent predominance in Greece?" He then went on to offer a fifty-fifty power split in in Yugoslavia and Hungary and to offer the Soviets seventy-five percent control of Bulgaria. The exact conversation may never have happened, according to the political record, but Churchill's account captures the spirit and certainly captures the secret agreement.Contrary to the official narrative, Stalin never betrayed the west and stole Eastern Europe: Poland, Romania and the rest were given to him in secret. Then Roosevelt lied to congress and to the world. That American lie raised the curtain on the cold war.

The New Cold War

Like the Cold War, the new cold war was triggered by an American lie. It was a lie so duplicitous, so all encompassing, that it would lead many Russians to see the agreement that ended the cold war as a devastating and humiliating deception that was really intended to clear the way for the US to surround and finally defeat the Soviet Union. It was a lie that tilled the soil for all future 'Russian aggression.'

At the close of the cold war, at a meeting held on February 9, 1990, George H.W. Bush's Secretary of State, James Baker, promised Gorbachev that if NATO got Germany and Russia pulled its troops out of East Germany, NATO would not expand east of Germany and engulf the former Soviet states. Gorbachev records in his memoirs that he agreed to Baker's terms "with the guarantee that NATO jurisdiction or troops would not extend east of the current line." In Super-power Illusions, Jack F. Matlock Jr., who was the American ambassador to Russia at the time and was present at the meeting, confirms Gorbachev's account, saying that it "coincides with my notes of the conversation except that mine indicate that Baker added "not one inch." Matlock adds that Gorbachev was assured that NATO would not move into Eastern Europe as the Warsaw Pact moved out, that "the understanding at Malta [was] that the United States would not 'take advantage' of a Soviet military withdrawal from Eastern Europe." At the February

one even remembers them."

Putin went on to remind his audience of the assurances by pointing out that the existence of the NATO promise is not just the perception of him and Gorbachev. It was also the view of the NATO General Secretary at the time: "But I will allow myself to remind this audience what was said. I would like to quote the speech of NATO General Secretary Mr. [Manfred] Woerner in Brussels on 17 May 1990. He said at the time that: 'The fact that we are ready not to place a NATO army outside of German territory gives the Soviet Union a firm security guarantee." Where are those guarantees?

Recent scholarship supports the Russian version of the story. Russian expert and Professor of Russian and European Politics at the University of Kent, Richard Sakwa says that "[r]ecent studies demonstrate that the commitment not to enlarge NATO covered the whole former Soviet bloc and not just East Germany." And Stephen Cohen, Professor Emeritus of Politics at Princeton University and of Russian Studies and History at New York University, adds that the National Security Archive has now published the actual documents detailing what Gorbachev was promised. Published on December 12, 2017, the documents finally, and authoritatively, reveal that "The truth, and the promises broken, are much more expansive than previously known: all of the Western powers involved – the US, the UK, France, Germany itself – made the same promise to Gorbachev on multiple occasions and in various emphatic ways.

That key promise made to Gorbachev was shattered, first by President Clinton and then subsequently supported by every American President: NATO engulfed Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic in 1999; Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia in 2004, Albania and Croatia in 2009 and, most recently, Montenegro. It was this shattered promise, this primal betrayal, this NATO expansion to Russia's borders that created the conditions and causes of future conflicts and aggressions. When, in 2008, NATO promised Georgia and Ukraine eventual membership, Russia saw the threat of NATO encroaching right to its borders. It is in Georgia and Ukraine that Russia felt it had to draw the line with NATO encroachment into its core sphere of influence. Sakwa says that the war in Georgia was "the first





in the public imagination and create the doctrinal history in which the US defeat of the Soviet Union ended the cold war. But the US did not defeat the Soviet Union. Gorbachev brought about what Sakwa calls a "self-willed disintegration of the Soviet bloc." The Soviet Union came to an end, not by external force or pressure, but out of Gorbachev's recognition of the Soviet Union's own self interest. Matlock flatly states that "pressure from governments outside the Soviet Union, whether from America or Europe or anywhere else, had nothing to do with [the Soviet collapse]." "Cohen demythologizes the history by reinstating the chronological order: Gorbachev negotiated the end of the cold war "well before the disintegration of the Soviet Union." The Cold War officially ended well before the end of the Soviet Union with Gorbachev's December 7, 1988 ad-

dress to the UN. Matlock says that "Gorbachev is right when he says that we all won the Cold War." He says that President Reagan would write in his notes, "Let there be no talk of winners and losers." When Gorbachev compelled the countries of the Warsaw Pact to adopt reforms like his perestroika in the Soviet Union and warmed them that the Soviet army would no longer be there to keep their communist regimes in power, Matlock points out in Superpower Illusions that "Bush assured Gorbachev that the United States would not claim victory if the Eastern Europeans were allowed to replace the Communist regimes that had been imposed on them." Both the reality and the promise were that there was no winner of the Cold War: it was a negotiated peace that was in the interest of both countries

When in 1992, during his losing re-election campaign, President Bush arrogantly boasted that "We won the Cold War!" he broke his own promise to Gorbachev and helped plant the roots of the new cold war. "In psychological and political terms," Matlock says, "President Bush planted a landmine under the future U.S.-Russian relationship" when he broke his promise and made that claim.Bush's broken promise had two significant effects. Psychologically, it created the appearance in the Russian psyche that Gorbachev had been tricked by America: it eroded trust in America and in the new peace. Politically, it created in the American psyche the false idea that Russia was a defeated country whose sphere of interest did not need to be considered. Both these perceptions contributed to the new cold war. Not only was the broken promise of NATO expansion not the first broken American promise, it was also not the last. In 1997, when President Clinton made the decision to expand NATO much more than an inch to the east, he at least signed the Russia-NATO Founding Act, which explicitly promised that as NATO expanded east, there would be no "permanent stationing of substantial combat forces." This obliterated American promise planted the third root of the new cold war. Since that third promise, NATO has, in the words of Stephen Cohen, built up its "permanent land, sea and air power near Russian territory, along with missile-defense installations." US and NATO weapons and troops have butted right up against Russia's borders, while anti-missile installations have surrounded it, leading to the feeling of betrayal in Russia and the fear of aggression. Among the earliest moves of the Trump administration were the moving of NATO troops into Lithuania, Romania, Bulgaria and nearby Norway.

rewarded with lies, broken promises and betrayal. That was the sowing of the first seeds of the new cold war. The second planting happened during the Yeltsin years that followed. During this stage, the Russian people were betrayed because their hopes for democracy and for an economic system compatible with the West were both destroyed by American intervention.

The goal, Matlock too gently explains, 'had to be a shift of the bulk of the economy to private ownership." What transpired was what Naomi Klein called in The Shock Doctrine "one of the greatest crimes committed against a democracy in modern history." The States allowed no gradual transition. Matlock says the Western experts advised a clean break with the past and a transition to private ownership without delay." But there was no legitimate private capital coming out of the communist system, so there was no private money with which to privatize. So, there was only one place for the money to come. As Matlock explains, the urgent transition allowed "privileged insiders[to] join the criminals who had been running a black market [and to] steal what they could, as fast as they could." The sudden, uncompromising transition imposed on Russia by the United States enabled, according to Cohen, "a small group of Kremlin-connected oligarchs to plunder Russia's richest assets and abet the plunging of some two-thirds of its people into poverty and misery."

The rape of Russia was funded, overseen and ordered by the United States and handed over by President George H.W. Bush to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Much of their advice, Matlock says generously, was not only useless, but sometimes actually damaging."

Sometimes damaging? In the first year, millions lost their entire life savings. Subsidy cuts meant that many Russians didn't get paid at all. Klein says that by 1992, Russians were consuming 40% less than they were the year before, and one third of them had suddenly sunk below the poverty line. The economic policies wrestled onto Russia by the US and the transition experts and international development experts it funded and sent over led to, what Cohen calls, "the near ruination of Russia." Russia's reward for ending the Cold War and joining the Western economic community was, in Cohen's words, "the worst economic depression in peacetime, the disintegration of the highly professionalized Soviet middle class, mass poverty, plunging life expec-tancy [for men, it had fallen below sixty], the fostering of an oligarchic financial elite, the plundering of Russia's wealth, and more." By the time Putin came to power in 2000, Cohen says, "some 75% of Russians were living in poverty." 75%! Millions and millions of Russian lives were destroyed by the American welcoming of Russia into the global economic community. But before Putin came to power, there was more Boris Yeltsin. Yeltsin was a necessity for Clinton and the United States because Yeltsin was the pliable puppet who would continue to enforce the cruel economic transition. But to continue the interference in. and betraval of. the Russian people economically, it would now be necessary to interfere in and betray the Russian democracy. In late 1991, after the fall of the Soviet Union, Boris Yeltsin won a year of special powers from the Russian Parliament: for one year, he was to be, in effect, the dictator of Russia to facilitate the midwifery of the birth of a democratic Russia. In March of 1992, under pressure from the, by now, impoverished, devastated and discontented population, parliament repealed the dictatorial powers it had granted him. Yeltsin responded by declaring a state of

emergency, re-bestowing upon himself the repealed dictatorial powers. Russia's Constitutional Court ruled that Yeltsin was acting outside the constitution. But the US sided - against the Russian people and against the Russian Constitutional Court – with Yeltsin.

Intoxicated with American support, Yeltsin dissolved the parliament that had rescinded his powers and abolished the constitution of which he was in violation. In a 636-2 vote, the Russian parliament impeached Yeltsin. But, President Clinton again sided with Yeltsin against the Russian people and the Russian law, backed him and gave him \$2.5 billion in aid. Clinton was blocking the Russian people's choice of leaders.

Yeltsin took the money and sent police officers and elite paratroopers to surround the parliament building. Clinton "praised the Russian President has (sic) having done 'quite well' in managing the standoff with the Russian Parliament,' as The New York Times reported at the time. Clinton added that he thought "the United States and the free world ought to hang in there" with their support of Yeltsin against his people, their constitution and their courts, and judged Yeltsin to be "on the right side of history."

On the right side of history and armed with machine guns and tanks, in October 1993, Yeltsin's troops opened fire on the crowd of protesters, killing about 100 people before setting the Russian parliament building on fire. By the time the day was over, Yeltsin's troops had killed approximately 500 people and wounded nearly 1,000. Still, Clinton stood with Yeltsin. He provided ludicrous cover for Yeltsin's massacre, claiming that "I don't see that he had any choice If such a thing happened in the United States, you would have expected me to take tough action against it." Clinton's Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, said that the US supported Yeltsin's suspension of parliament in these "extraordinary times."

In 1996, elections were looming, and America's hegemonic dreams still needed Yeltsin in power. But it wasn't going to happen without help. Yeltsin's popularity was nonexistent, and his approval rating was at about 6%. According to Cohen, Clinton's interference in Russian politics, his "crusade" to "reform Russia," had by now become official policy. And so, America boldly interfered directly in Russian elections. Three American political consultants, receiving "direct assistance from Bill Clinton's White House," secretly ran Yeltsin's reelection campaign. As Time magazine broke the story, "For four months, a group of American political consultants clandestinely participated in guiding Yeltsin's campaign.'

'Funded by the US government," Cohen reports, Americans "gave money to favored Russian politicians, instructed ministers, drafted legislation and presidential decrees, underwrote textbooks, and served at Yeltsin's reelection headquarters in 1996.'

More incriminating still is that Richard Dresner, one of the three American consultants, maintained a direct line to Clinton's Chief Strategist, Dick Morris. According to reporting by Sean Guillory, in his book, Behind the Oval Office, Morris says that, with Clinton's approval, he received weekly briefings from Dresner that he would give to Clinton. Based on those briefings, Clinton would then provide recommendations to Dresner through Morris. Then ambassador to Russia, Thomas Pickering, even pressured an opposing candidate to drop out of the election to improve Yeltsin's odds of winning. The US not only helped run Yeltsin's campaign, they helped pay for it. The US backed a \$10.2 billion International Monetary Fund (IMF) loan for Russia. the second-biggest loan the IMF had ever given. The New York Times reported that the loan was "expected to be helpful to President Boris N. Yeltsin in the presidential election in June." The Times explained that the loan was "a vote of confidence" for Yeltsin who "has been lagging well behind ... in opinion polls" and added that the US Treasury Secretary "welcomed the fund's decision." Yelts in won the election by 13%, and Time magazine's cover declared: "Yanks to the rescue: The secret story of how American advisers helped Yeltsin win". Cohen reports that the US ambassador to Russia boasted that "without our leadership ... we would see a considerably different Russia today." That's a confession of election interference. Asserting its right as the unipolar victor of a Cold War it never won, betraying the central promise of the negotiated end of the cold war by engulfing Russia's neighbors, arming those nations against its written and signed word and stealing all Russian hope in capitalism and democracy by kidnapping and torturing Russian capitalism and democracy, the roots of the new cold war were not planted by Russian lies and aggression, as the doctrinal Western version teaches, but by the American lies and aggression that the fact checked, demythologized version of history reveals.

1933

The Cold War

It would be a very short time before the diplomatic relations that followed the hot war would be followed by a cold war. It might even be possible to pin the beginning of the cold war down to a specific date. On April 22 and 23, President Truman told Soviet foreign minister Vyacheslav Molotov to "Carry out his agreement" and establish a new, free, independent government in Poland as promised at Yalta. Molotov was stunned. He was stunned because it was not he that was breaking the agreement because that was not what Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin had agreed to at Yalta. The final wording of the Yalta agreement never mentioned replacing Soviet control of Poland. The agreement that Roosevelt revealed to congress and shared with the world – the one that still dominates the textbook accounts and the media stories – is not the one he secretly shook on with Stalin. Roosevelt lied to congress and the American people. Then he lied to Stalin.

In exchange for Soviet support for the creation of the United Nations, Roosevelt secretly agreed to Soviet predominance in Poland and Eastern Europe. The cold war story that the Soviet Union marched into Eastern Europe and stole it for itself is a lie: Roosevelt handed it to them.

So did Churchill. If Roosevelt's motivation was getting the UN, Churchill's was getting Greece. Fearing that the Soviet Union would invade India and the oil fields of Iran, Churchill saw Greece as the geographical roadblock and determined to hold on to it at all cost. The cost. it turned out, was Romania. Churchill would give Stalin Romania to protect 9 meeting, Baker assured Gorbachev that "neither the President or I intend to extract any unilateral advantages from the processes that are taking place."

But the promise was not made just once, and it was not made just by the United States. The promise was made on two consecutive days: first by the Americans and then by West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl. According to West German foreign ministry documents, on February 10, 1990, the day after James Baker's promise, West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher told his Soviet counterpart Eduard Shevardnadze "'For us . . . one thing is certain: NATO will not expand to the east.' And because the conversation revolved mainly around East Germany. Genscher added explicitly: 'As far as the non-expansion of NATO is concerned. this also applies in general.

A few days earlier, on January 31, 1990, Genscher had said in a major speech that there would not be "an expansion of NATO territory to the east, in other words, closer to the borders of the Soviet Union."

Gorbachev says the promise was made not to expand NATO "as much as a thumb's width further to the east.' Putin also says mourns the broken promise, asking at a conference in Munich in February 2007, "What happened to the assurances our Western partners made after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact? Where are those declarations today? No

war to stop NATO enlargement; Ukraine was the second." What are often cited as acts of Russian aggression that helped maintain the new cold war are properly understood as acts of Russian defense against US aggression that made a lie out of the promise that ended the Cold War.

When Clinton decided to break Bush's promise and betray Russia, George Kennen, father of the containment policy, warned that NATO expansion would be "the most fateful error of American foreign policy in the entire post-cold-war "Such a decision," he prophesied, era. "may be expected to . . . restore the atmosphere of the cold war in East-West relations

The broken promise restored the cold war. Though it is the most significant root of the new cold war, it was not the first. There was a prior broken promise, and this time the man who betrayed Russia was President H.W. Bush.

The end of the Cold War resulted from negotiations and not from any sort of military victory. Stephen Cohen says that "Presidents Reagan and George H.W. Bush negotiated with the last Soviet Russian leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, what they said was the end of the Cold War on the shared, expressed premise that it was ending 'with no losers, only winners."

The end of the Cold War and the end of the Soviet Union occurred so closely chronologically that it permitted the American mythologizers to conflate them

Mikhail Gorbachev, who offered the West Russia and cooperation in place of the Soviet Union and Cold War, was

Boris Johnson at a dead end A third conservative victim is on the way

By Saeed Sobhani

TEHRAN — The British Prime Minister is in a difficult situation. Boris Johnson has lost the power to concentrate and manage on the issue of his country leaving the EU. Many parliamentarians, on the other hand, are looking at the controversial new British prime minister. Many experts believe the life span of the Johnson government will be shorter than expected. Here's a look at the latest analysis and news about Britain's exit from Europe:

Boris Johnson says he didn't lie to the Queen over suspension of Parliament

As CNN reported, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson has rejected accusations that he lied to the Queen over his controversial suspension of Parliament in the run-up to the Brexit deadline.Johnson was asked on Thursday if he had lied to the monarch, after a Scottish court ruled the day before that his government's advice to the Queen, which led to the five-week prorogation, was "unlawful."

"Absolutely not," Johnson replied. "The High Court in England plainly agrees with us but the Supreme Court will have to decide."

"We need a Queen's Speech, we need to get on and do all sorts of things at a national level," he added. Johnson has always insisted that his decision was a routine device that allowed the government to start a new parliamentary session with a fresh legislative agenda. Critics describe it as an audacious move to reduce the amount of time available to the opposition to block a no-deal Brexit.

The Scottish judges disagreed with the government, saying Wednesday that the suspension was motivated by the "improper purpose of stymying Parliament.

UK lawmakers are now not scheduled to return to Parliament until October 14, but Johnson said that MPs would have enough time to debate Brexit before and after the EU summit on October 17 and 18, where Johnson has said he hopes to secure a deal.

"I'm very hopeful that we will get a deal, as I say, at that crucial summit. We're working very hard -- I've been around the European capitals talking to our friends," he said."I think we can see the rough area of a landing space, of how you can do it -- it will be tough, it will be hard, but I think we can get there.'

The three Scottish judges did not order the UK government to reconvene Parliament, noting that the High Court in London had come to a different conclusion in another case last week and that the UK Supreme Court would need to resolve the issue next week.

That led to intense debate on Wednesday over whether MPs could go back to the House of Commons, with opposition lawmakers demanding Parliament be recalled and some MPs returning to the chamber to protest. Labour -- the main opposition party -- said it was "more important than ever" for Parliament to be recalled when, hours after the ruling, the government published its no-deal Brexit assessment. This warned of food and fuel shortages in a no-deal scenario.

The government will appeal at the UK Supreme Court against Wednesday's ruling and an emergency hearing on both the Scottish and English cases has been scheduled



workable." Johnson can't escape the clutches of May's zombie Brexit deal

As Guardian reported, in schlock horror movies there is a moment when the monster. assailed by every weapon and presumed dead, lurches back to life. And so Theresa May's Brexit withdrawal agreement comes crawling from behind the closed doors of parliament, where it was killed at least three times.

Boris Johnson says he wants a deal and there is neither time nor diplomatic goodwill sufficient to craft a new one. Erasure of the backstop – the Brexiteers' big demand – is not available. As a candidate for the Tory leadership, Johnson boasted that Brussels would yield once confronted with a UK government prepared to guit the bloc with no deal at all. Conversations in Paris and Berlin have disabused him of that notion. The EU position, restated by Leo Varadkar, the Irish taoiseach, in a press conference on Monday, is that the basic provisions of May's deal would survive even a no-deal scenario. They would return as conditions for the opening of talks that Britain would crave to normalise relations with the continent.

Johnson stood next to Varadkar in Dublin, shuffling like a chastened child. He said that inability to reach a deal by 31 October would be a "failure of statecraft". The phrase is revealing because the Tory leader has always fancied himself as a serious statesman, even if he doesn't look the part. That ambition has been superseded - but not extinguished - by admiration for the Donald Trump model of endless provocation. Last summer Johnson invited a private meeting of business leaders to imagine how Trump might handle Brexit: "There'd be all sorts of breakdowns, all sorts of chaos. Everyone would think he'd gone mad. But actually you might get somewhere."

Application of that theory has not gone to plan. Moderate Tories have proved less indulgent of unhinged leadership than their Republican counterparts, imposing a legal duty on the prime minister to reject a chaotic Brexit. Johnson could break the law, but that would carry a high risk of eviction from office – martyring himself for beliefs that he doesn't hold firmly enough to justify the cost in personal discomfort.

tension is expressed in domestic politics. There is affable Boris who thought he could charm his way to an elegant Brexit solution, unify his party and woo the country with a healing message. He was barged aside by bullying Boris who purges dissent from his party and stokes division in the country. One belongs to the old Tory party that venerated stability and reached out to liberal voters. The other leads a new revolutionary leaver party, recruiting admirers of Nigel Farage for a nationalist insurgency.

The Downing Street calculation appears to be that a majority is most easily won by stripping the Conservative party down and reassembling it as something unconservative. Johnson will run as a populist tribune, the man who would rather be "dead in a ditch" than surrender to tricky continentals and their Westminster collaborators. It might work. Current polling doesn't offer much of a guide when the vital choices have been punted to the end of October. That doesn't leave much time for the prime minister to tweak May's Brexit deal and, in defiance of all the odds, persuade a hostile parliament to vote for it. But that doesn't mean he has given up on the idea. Or, rather, it isn't certain that the battle between Johnson's conflicting instincts has been settled. He reads from the Trump playbook at home, but puts it hastily down when grownup EU leaders enter the room. He is too weak-willed to play the typical nationalist strongman. He saddled the populist tiger and rode it towards a no-deal Brexit, but look closely and you see a queasy expression, as if there is a part of him that wants to get off.

Brexit: Is Boris Johnson profiting from dividing?

As BBC reported, Not even a couple of months have passed, but it seems a lifetime since Boris Johnson said he wanted to bring the country together as he arrived in Downing Street as prime minister for the first time. Because so far his time in No 10 has suggested he believes he will profit instead from a divide.

That's the crack that his team identifies between leavers and former remainers - described by one cabinet minister, as "those who either want to get things done that matter to people, or MPs who want to stand up and repeat ad nauseam the things they have been saving about Brexit for the last three years". The "dividing line", is far from a new phenomenon in politics - it was beloved by Gordon Brown, then George Osborne too maybe politicians since time began - a way of creating an easily understandable political choice for the public, a way for politicians to say "pick us or them".But it's not just a line this time, it's like a toxic Second Announcement separation.Reading this you may believe, damn right, it's about time that all this political agony was brought to an end.And let's face it, as one MP pointed out tonight, the public don't exactly hold the political class in high esteem - politicians pushing the rules? More talking in Parliament is plainly not, on its own, going to find the magic solution to this grinding Brexit crisis. This is Downing Street's fundamental gamble, that in the end, most of the public are in the camp of the fed up and frustrated, who just want this to be over, and therefore they will tolerate a few prime ministerial bumps and scrapes along the way. And that's why, shocking though it may sound given No 10 has today been found to have misled the monarch and broken the law, in Downing Street, today's result is not entirely seen as bad thing, giving - as some of those close to the PM see it - yet more evidence of the "establishment" trying to stand in the way of allowing Brexit to happen. Nor is it surprising to many in the government that this mess has already ended up in the courts.Under Theresa May perhaps the resolution

of Brexit was a conflict delayed, rather than avoided.Indeed, for Boris Johnson's team, it's almost perhaps as if this is a script they wrote long ago. Throughout the Vote Leave campaign the approach was consistent - if the controversial things they claimed were challenged, their answer was not to demur, but to double down.

The parallels are already there. Listening to government minister Kwasi Kwarteng suggest tonight that independent judges doing their jobs are "interfering" tells us that - even though he used a classic political technique of saying he was only articulating what others were saying. When you listen to it remember that in this country, while it's not unusual for the courts to rule on cases relating to government business, we have an independent courts system traditionally and vitally free from political interference.

There's been a sense from day one this is a campaign to get Brexit done, rather than a traditional administration.But the problems stacking up cannot just be dismissed as campaign upsets to be blasted away with brass neck.Government is not a campaign where screaming headlines and binary arguments jostle with each other over a period of a couple of months. With no majority, the prime minister cannot simply dismiss MPs' concerns for more than a short period of time - a government that can't win votes is a government that can't last for long.With Scotland's senior judges ruling Downing Street's behaviour broke the law, the prime minister may also soon have to reverse his decision on suspending Parliament - that depends on what the legal brains at the UK Supreme Court will conclude on Tuesday. Even though these challenges might in the end play into No 10's political narrative of 'us and them", a tangle with the constitution is not a minor inconvenience that can just be dismissed.

Those who know Boris Johnson say often that he never really believed the rules applied to him.But as prime minister, his dreaded "establishment" will constrain him in some ways.

And some old allies, who are not in the No 10 inner circle, are frankly furious that he has chosen to take such a confrontational path.Ruthlessness in politics can be an attribute - any political leader who's ultimately succeeded has likely shown that.Perhaps Boris Johnson will perform a Houdini-like escape, get an EU deal and go on to govern successfully, stitching his angry and febrile party together - who knows, maybe then even winning an election?But ruthlessness can tip in to recklessness too that could damage not just Mr Johnson's interests, not just the Tories' wider interests, but much more widely, push the two sides in our national debate further apart.

The prime minister and some of his team might revel in pushing the rules.

They have made a clear decision about taking a controversial strategy, which could ultimately be successful, from which they won't be diverted.But there are powerful ministers in cabinet with concerns, as well as MPs in the Tory Party and the opposition. And ultimately of course, sooner or later, it's the public who will judge. Boris Johnson once joked about his own political style, suggesting he may sometimes take some plaster off the ceiling.But pushing the boundaries of convention in Parliament, with the palace and perhaps the judiciary, risks bringing the whole house down too.

UN and multilateral diplomacy

TEHRAN (FNA) — The United Nations will be hosting six high level plenary meetings - unprecedented even by its own standards - during the beginning of the 74th session of the General Assembly in late September.



The meetings are being viewed primarily as an attempt at reviving multilateral diplomacy at a time when a rash of hard-right nationalist leaders, including US President Donald Trump, are either rooting for authoritarianism, abandoning international treaties or undermining multilateralism - not necessarily in that order.

The United Nations is expecting over 180 world leaders, including foreign ministers and high-ranking government officials, to participate in the six-day mega event. The multilateral bodies - and international treaties - that have taken a beating include the UN Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Human Rights Council, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Trans Pacific Partnership agreement, the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and Paris Climate Change agreement.

As is, it is either a resurrection of multilateralism or a prelude to an obituary for international order. Scheduled to take place September 23-27, the meetings will cover a wide range of political and socio-economic issues on the UN agenda, including climate change, universal health care, sustainable development goals (SDGs), financing for development (FfD), elimination of nuclear weapons and the survival of small island developing states (SIDS) facing extinction from rising sea levels.

Speaking to reporters last month, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned that multilateralism is under attack from many different directions precisely "when we need it most.'

On the upcoming six summits, Guterres warned "the people of the world do not want half measures or empty promises. They are demanding transformative change that is fair and sustainable.'

But will the talk-fest produce concrete results or end up being another political exercise in futility? With the unrivalled super-power under the quixotic leadership of Donald Trump, even developing countries like the Philippines, Brazil and others have abandoned global norms. A rule based international order is collapsing before our eyes and Britain is on the brink of a messy Brexit while trade wars ruin Sino-US trade and drive the world towards a ruinous recession and the end of sustainable development.

But the important thing is that there's needed substance here. The US might well sit out the Climate Action Summit, and that's fine. The work of the UN and the member countries will go on without it. As for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), this is a signature UN initiative that needs more attention and focus.

Indeed, the world is not on track to reach many of these goals, and without greater commitment by member governments, they are not likely to be met by 2030. With the US disengaged from many of these discussions, the Secretary General is urgently needed to make a move to recommit leaders to these goals. This is a time of great international uncertainty and instability.

Above all, the UN, has lost its moral influence and not even the upcoming ritualistic General Assembly gathering of heads of state can salvage sensible limits on nuclear weapons, conventional weapons and a new generation of Lethal Autonomous Weapons or robotic weapons while negotiating an end to regional wars. Next year, in 2020, the UN will observe its 75th anniversary when a new chapter rededicating this unique global body to the ideals of the Charter opens. New stringent agreements must be negotiated at the planned gatherings. The UN has the creative minds to do this. One other thing that is important to underscore is that these upcoming meetings will disclose if Secretary General Guterres plays any leadership role. The world has proven with climate that it can move forward without the US. The question is how much this happens in other areas moving forward?

for September 17.Following the unanimous verdict, Conservative minister Kwasi Kwarteng was widely criticized for saying that "many people" think judges are biased over Brexit, but the Prime Minister backed away from his minister's comments.

Johnson said he would not "quarrel or criticize" the Scottish judges, adding that the British judiciary was "one of the great glories of our constitution."

"They are independent," Johnson said. "Believe me, around the world people look at our judges with awe and admiration, so I'm not going to quarrel or criticize the judges."-Clearly there are two different legal views -- the High Court in England had a very different opinion and the Supreme Court will have to adjudicate in the course of the next few days, and I think it's proper for politicians to let them get on and do that.

After a turbulent start to his tenure, Johnson received some rare good news on Thursday when a judge in Belfast dismissed a legal challenge to a no-deal Brexit, rejecting a claim that it undermined the Good Friday Agreement which brought peace to Northern Ireland.

Johnson's government has been legally obliged to request a Brexit extension from the EU if he doesn't get a deal. On Thursday the President of the European Parliament said he was open to extending the October 31 deadline if it were done to avoid a no deal exit, for a general election or to extend Article 50.

"We're not ruling anything out," said David Sassoli. "If solutions are proposed they will be debated -- all of them. Providing, of course, they respect the guiding principles of the European Union."But, up to now, I can say, and I would like to stress this point, the United Kingdom hasn't proposed any alternatives and anything that has been legally credible, if I can put it that way, and

Those who depict the Tory leader as a British Trump (including the US president himself) underestimate his capacity for cowardice. He also likes to be liked, which is why he promises contradictory things to different people. As mayor of London, he could be persuaded to support and oppose the same idea in consecutive meetings. I have heard from a number of sources how Johnson, as foreign secretary, asked officials to explain the problem with Brexit and the Good Friday agreement, and decided that the solution was to hide the border in the Irish sea. Northern Ireland could be an exclave of regulatory alignment with Brussels – the original "Northern Ireland-only" backstop model proposed by the EU. Only when the DUP freaked out - and hardline Tory backbenchers cried betraval - did Johnson recoil

from customs checks at the port of Larne. Reversion to this "NI-only backstop" is now the object of much speculation among seasoned Brexit-watchers. A notable side-effect of Johnson's decision to withdraw the whip from 21 Tory MPs is that their exile renders the 2017 confidence-and-supply deal with the DUP obsolete. Johnson is so far short of a majority that Arlene Foster's party can't get him over the line. That doesn't make it easier for the prime minister to ratify a Brexit deal, but it does remove a privileged power of veto from the unionist ultras.

One reason to suppose that Johnson is malleable on the detail is that on 29 March he voted for May's deal – the same one he denounces as an affront to democracy. The hypocrisy is not surprising, but it does illuminate that tension in Johnson's self-image, between the wannabe statesman and the Trump tribute act. One enjoys the hobnobbing with world leaders at global summits, the other is an accomplice in vandalising the architecture of a rules-based international order. The same



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SEPTEMBER 17, 2019

It's not aurora, it's STEVE

Aurora-watchers gazing at spectacular displays over the Labor Day weekend may have been seeing more than the northern lights. They may have been dazzled by STEVE as well.

STEVE is short for the Strong Thermal Emissions Velocity Enhancement, a celestial phenomenon auroral researchers, citizenscientists and photography enthusiasts first introduced to the world in 2016.

STEVE's narrow ribbon of light, to the naked eye, looks strikingly similar to aurora. However, there are distinct differences. First, its pinkish mauve color is not aurora-like. In addition, the phenomenon is often associated with 'picket fence" emissions, which look like green columns of light passing through the ribbons at lower altitudes. Lastly, STEVE appears in areas farther south than auroral lights typically do.

Scientists thought something didn't add up.

This summer, researchers confirmed that STEVE is not aurora, but is instead a unique phenomenon. Their findings were published in the journal Geophysical **Research Letters.**

"The big thing is, we can clearly say now it's not regular aurora," said University of Alaska Fairbanks researcher Don Hampton, a co-author on the paper. "It's a new phenomenon, that's pretty exciting.

The project, led by University of Calgary researcher D.M. Gillies, used a spectrograph to examine the light from the phenomenon and identify what kind of emissions it gives and in what patterns and wavelengths. Hampton and his colleagues designed and built the spectrograph at the UAF Geophysical



Institute. "We need to understand what the spectrum looks like and therefore understand the physics behind it," Hampton said. A spectrum acts as a definitive identification, like a DNA test or chemical formula for light.

When the scientists looked at STEVE's spectrum they saw something unique. Aurora has individual wavelengths and acts like a neon sign. In aurora, electrons from our magnetosphere fly down, bumping into atoms and molecules in our atmosphere, which excites them. Once the excited particles relax they emit photons, which can be seen as specific

wavelengths of light. Depending on which colors you see, you know certain lights came from a nitrogen molecule and others came from oxygen.

"When we looked at the spectrum of STEVE, it had none of those distinct wavelengths," Hampton said. "Instead, it's a very broad band of light. So all wavelengths are basically equally as strong.

This means that the light is not coming from atoms and molecules colliding in the atmosphere but from something very warm -- maybe thousands of degrees warm

"When you turn your electric stove on,

those coils get red hot, right? If you look at it with a spectrograph, you would see broadband emissions," Hampton said. "So this is like very, very warm atmosphere emissions of some sort."

The research also concluded that the picket fence emissions are similar to a typical aurora structure. These are caused by the same kinds of particle precipitation usually seen with aurora.

Like auroras, STEVE's appearances vary greatly, showing up anywhere from weeks to months apart.

Scientists have studied the hot particles associated with STEVE since the 1970s. However, they did not realize until recently that they produced a visible feature.

Confirming the existence of a celestial phenomenon is exciting, Hampton said. The next, and more difficult step, is finding out what causes it and how it affects us.

Any disturbance to our upper atmosphere, like aurora, can affect radio communications between Earth and spacecraft. STEVE is especially interesting because it is a large local energy input, but clearly not normal aurora.

"As a new phenomenon we want to understand not just why and how it is created, but also how does it affect our infrastructure," Hampton said. "We don't expect that if we understand how STEVE is created that we will cure cancer, or produce warp drive (though one never knows), but we do want to understand how one bit of the ionosphere works, and that may help overall knowledge as well as provide some practical understanding to reduce the impact on other aspects of our daily life.

(Source: Science Daily)

Thermoelectric device harnesses cold of space to power LED light at night



developed Engineers have а thermoelectric device that works in the dark of night, harnessing the cold of space and turning it into electricity to power an LED light. The affordable technology works without any heat inputs.

"Remarkably, the device is able to generate electricity at night, when solar cells don't work," Aaswath Raman, an assistant professor of materials science and engineering at the University of California, Los Angeles, said in a news release. "Bevond lighting, we believe this could be a broadly enabling approach to power generation suitable for remote locations, and anywhere

releases heat into space, it becomes cooler than the surrounding air -- radiative cooling. The prototype cost about \$30 to build. To protect the technology from the elements, scientists encapsulated the device in a

polystyrene case insulated by aluminized mylar. When scientists tested the device on the roof of a building at Stanford, the movement of heat through the plates from the air and out into space was harnessed by the generator, producing as much 25 milliwatts of energy per square meter over the course of six hours enough to passively power an LED light.

Though the technology described this



Fancy a game of hide and squeak? Rats

Rats can be taught to play hide and seek - and they squeal with joy when they win, scientists have found.

Both wild and domesticated animals have been known to play, but neuroscientists from Berlin's Humboldt University wanted to know more about the topic after hearing from pet owners and vets that rats seemed to be engaging in more complex forms of play.

"It has long been known that rats engage in simple forms of play - rough and tumble - but we wanted to know if they could do more complex games, like hide and seek," neurobiologist Michael Brecht, an author of the study, published in the journal Science,

But after being discovered, the rats would sometimes "re-hide," even if it meant a delay in receiving their reward - proof, the scientists believe, that the rats were playing for the sake of it.

Although quiet when hiding, researchers said the rats "squealed with joy" when they discovered the scientists - something researchers think shows an understanding of the game's rules.

"They look like they're having fun, they come running," Brecht told CNN. "They're very vocal, they call all the time because they are thrilled about it. But then they hide, they are pretty silent," he said.

Dinosaur extinction: Asteroid hit with force of 10 billion atomic bombs and deposited 'hundreds of feet' of material in hours, new research says

Sixty-six million years ago, life on our planet was going on just as it had on any other day – enormous reptiles dominated the landscape. Herbivorous behemoths up to 40 meters long co-mingled with bi-pedal carnivorous titans, seas teemed with fanged leviathans and the skies were navigated by leathery-winged creatures larger than any birds in history.

But in moments, after 180 million years of prosperity, this extraordinary abundance of life was all but obliterated.



The asteroid which wiped out the dinosaurs hit the Yucatan peninsula in Mexico with the power of 10 billion atomic bombs of the size used in the Second World War.

The impact set alight vast wildfires stretching thousands of miles, triggered towering tsunamis and blasted so much sulphur into the atmosphere it blocked the sun, causing the catastrophic global cooling that ultimately doomed the dinosaurs.

This cataclysmic scenario is what scientists have largely hypothesized ended the reign of the fearsome creatures.

Now, a new study led by the University of Texas at Austin has confirmed the theory by finding hard evidence in the hundreds of feet of rocks that filled the impact crater within the first 24 hours after impact. Core samples taken at the crater also contain charcoal

and jumbles of rock brought in by the tsunami's backflow. However, sulphur is conspicuously absent. They are all part of a rock record that offers the most detailed look yet into the aftermath of the catastrophe which wiped out 75 per cent of life on Earth.

Sean Gulick, a research professor at the University of Texas Institute for Geophysics (UTIG), who worked with an international team of more than two dozen scientists, said the research "tells us about impact processes from an eyewitness location".

"It's an expanded record of events that we were able to recover from within ground zero," he said, describing it as a short-lived inferno at the regional level, followed by a long period of global cooling. The asteroid "fried them, then [it] froze them. Not all

the dinosaurs died that day, but many dinosaurs did."

The research, published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, builds on earlier work by the Jackson School of Geosciences which described how the crater formed and how life quickly recovered at the impact site.

Most of the material that filled the crater within hours of impact was produced at the impact site or was swept in by seawater pouring back into the crater from the surrounding Gulf of Mexico.

In just one day about 425 feet of material was deposited - a rate that's among the highest ever encountered in the geologic record.

This breakneck rate of accumulation meant the rocks recorded what was happening in the environment within and around the crater in the minutes and hours after

where power generation at night is needed."

Batteries can be installed on solar cells to store energy harvested during the day for use at night, but the add-on is costly. Otherwise, solar cells are useless after the sun goes down. There is no equivalent technology for nighttime.

The technology developed by Raman and his colleagues at UCLA relies on what's called radiative cooling. The device features four rods supporting two aluminum disks painted black. Scientists integrated the cooling disks with a thermoelectric generator. As the sky-facing disk, or plate,

week in the journal Joule can only produce a small amount of electricity, scientists expect improved engineering will boost its potential output.

"Our work highlights the many remaining opportunities for energy by taking advantage of the cold of outer space as a renewable energy resource,' said Raman. "We think this forms the basis of a complementary technology to solar. While the power output will always be substantially lower, it can operate at hours when solar cells cannot.³

(Source: UPI)

told CNN

Holed up in a laboratory with the rats and a selection of remotely controlled boxes, a team of scientists played a version of the childhood game with the rodents, teaching them how to hide from and find the researchers.

Over a period of a few weeks, they found that the rats quickly learned how to hide and seek - and even started to develop tactics and strategies for the game.

Instead of being given food, the rats were tickled as their reward for both hiding and finding the researchers.

Brecht also said his team offered the animals "stupid" hiding places, such as transparent boxes - but the animals played strategically, instead opting for "smart hiding places" - opaque boxes, which provided better cover.

The team studied neural activity in the rats' prefrontal cortex as they played - and found that several cells in the brain region responded to certain aspects of the game.

The research could offer further insight into the link between play and cognitive abilities, Brecht believes.

(Source: CNN)

Scientists create a nanomaterial that is both twisted and untwisted at the same time

A new nanomaterial developed by scientists at the University of Bath could solve a conundrum faced by scientists probing some of the most promising types of future pharmaceuticals.

Scientists who study the nanoscale-with molecules and materials 10,000 smaller than a pinhead-need to be able to test the way that some molecules twist, known as their chirality, because mirror image molecules with the same structure can have very different properties. For instance one kind of molecule smells of lemons when it twists in one direction, and oranges when twisted the other way.

Detecting these twists is especially important in some high-value industries such as pharmaceuticals, perfumes, food additives and pesticides.

Recently, a new class of nanoscale materials have been developed to help distinguish the chirality of molecules. These so-called 'nanomaterials' usually consist of tiny twisted metal wires that are chiral themselves.

However, it has become very hard to distinguish the twist of the nanomaterials from the twist of the molecules they are supposed to help study.



To solve this problem the team from the University of Bath's Department of Physics created a nanomaterial that is both twisted and it is not. This nanomaterial has equal number of opposite twists-meaning they cancel each other out. Usually, upon interacting with light, such material appears without any twist; how

then could it be optimized to interact with molecules?

Using a mathematical analysis of the material's symmetry properties, the team discovered a few special cases, which can bring the 'hidden' twist to light and allow very sensitive detection of chirality in molecules.

Lead author Professor Ventsislav Valey, from the University of Bath Department of Physics, said: "This work removes an important roadblock for the entire research field and paves the way to ultra-sensitive detection of chirality in molecules, using nanomaterials.'

Ph.D. student Alex Murphy, who worked on the study, said: "Molecular chirality is an amazing property to study. You can smell chirality, since the same but oppositely twisted molecules smell of lemons and oranges. You can taste chirality, since one twist of Aspartame is sweet and the other is tasteless. You can feel chirality, since one twist of menthol gives a cool sensation to the skin while the other does not. You touch chirality expressed in the twist of seashells. And it is great to see chirality expressed in its interactions with the colors of laser light."

(Source: phys.org)

act and provide clues about the longer-lasting effects of the asteroid strike.

The research details how the blast from the impact ignited trees and plants stretching thousands of miles away and triggered a massive tsunami that reached as far inland as Illinois (over 500 miles)

Inside the crater, as well as charcoal, the research team found a chemical biomarker associated with soil fungi within or just above layers of sand that shows signs of being deposited by resurging waters. This suggests the charred landscape was deluged by the tsunami, then pulled into the crater as the floodwaters retreated.

Jay Melosh, a Purdue University professor and expert on impact cratering, said finding evidence for wildfire helps scientists know their understanding of the asteroid impact is on the right track.

It was a momentous day in the history of life, and this is a very clear documentation of what happened at ground zero," said Professor Melosh, who was not involved with this study.

One of the most important findings from the research is the lack of sulphur in the core samples. The area surrounding the impact crater is full of sulphur-rich rocks. But there was no sulphur in the core.

The discovery supports the theory the asteroid impact vaporized the sulphur-bearing minerals present at the impact site and released it into the atmosphere, where it wreaked havoc on the Earth's climate, reflecting sunlight away from the planet and causing global cooling.

Researchers estimate at least 325 billion metric tons of sulphur would have been released by the impact. That's about four orders of magnitude greater than that spewed out during the 1883 eruption of Krakatoa - an event which cooled the Earth's climate by an average of 1C for five years

Although the asteroid impact created mass destruction at the regional level, it was this global climate change that caused the mass extinction, killing off the dinosaurs along with most other life on the planet at the time.

"The real killer has got to be atmospheric," Professor Gulick said. "The only way you get a global mass extinction like this is an atmospheric effect.'

(Source: The Independent)



French hotel group returns to Syria hoping for visitor revival

A French hotel group is to manage two luxury hotels due to open next year in Damascus, becoming the first western company to return to Syria's tourist industry since civil war broke out in 2011.

Louvre Hotel Group, anticipating a wave of business visitors during the country's reconstruction, will operate the only internationally run upmarket hotels in Syria on behalf of the local Nazha Investments Group.

Although Damascus is stable, western companies are wary of returning to Syria. Reconstruction has been hampered as international sanctions deter foreign investment.

Holidaymakers were important business for Syria before 2011. The country's tourism minister said this month that 9m tourists had visited in 2010 and 259,000 jobs relating to tourism had been lost. Mounzer Nazha, chairman of NIG, said rehabilitating the two hotels had cost more than \$19m. They will be run under Louvre's Royal Tulip and Golden Tulip brands. Louvre is owned by China's biggest hotel group, state-owned Jin Jiang International Holdings, which bought it from Starwood of the US in 2015.

Of the roughly 1,500 properties Louvre manages, 67 are in the Middle East. Louvre signed contracts with NIG about three-and-a-half years ago. Amine Moukarzel, regional president, said the hotel company would provide services ranging from a "European general manager" to recruiting and training staff.

Louvre teams have already been visiting Damascus to give technical assistance. Because the properties will command a large share of Damascus's small selection of four or five-star hotels, Mr Moukarzel expects a "really high occupancy rate". "International visitors during hard times will need to be accommodated," said Mr Moukarzel, who pointed out that aid workers and diplomats stay in Damascus. "We are not into politics," he added about sanctions concerns, and said he anticipated tourists in future. (Ŝource: Financial Times)

Qasr-e Khorshid: A must-see tourist destination in northeast Iran

TOURISM TEHRAN — Qasr-e d e s k Khorshid (literally 'the Sun Palace'), is an 18th-century iconic monument which is currently used as a museum of anthropology in Kalat County, Khorasan Razavi province, northeast Iran.

The 20-meter-high monument is also well-known as Kalat-e Naderi, named after the famed Afsharid ruler Nader Shah

(r. 1736-1747). The structure embraces a scenic fluted-shaped circular exterior, a vast ground floor level, a cellar and a cylindrical tower which is supported by 66 columns.

With 12 rooms decorated with paintings and ornamental works such as plaster moldings, it was once a temporary home to king and his family. The surrounding garden contains 8 pools with connecting streams and fountains.

Narratives say the 'palace' is named

National parks

park in a different way.

restaurant or at a front desk

your stay to five weeks, at no cost?

environment and go back to places more than once."

up with a shorter option that feels more like a long vacation

than a seasonal job. Helping Hands participants are required

to work just 20 hours a week (at \$10.10 per hour) and have

the rest of their time to explore the surrounding natural

wonder. You'll be assigned a job in either housekeeping, a

dorm accommodations, or can arrange to bring their own

RV if they have one. Meals are served in a cafeteria, giving

participants more chance to bond with the international

group of employees. O'Rourke says the sense of community

she says. "I'm talking primarily among our employees but

also even with guests. There's a lot of interaction with our

"They make lifelong friends sharing these experiences,"

If you're a creative type, the National Parks Arts Foun-

of the program is one of its most appealing parts.

guests and they come from all over the world."

As for boarding, Helping Hands participants are given

after Khorshid who was one of Nader's wives. However, it was never completed due to an ambiguous state of affairs that poured in following Nader Shah's sudden death.

Some believe that foreign artisans were engaged in construction of the monument as its exterior panels bear pineapple and pear motifs, which is deemed to be unknown in the then Khorasan region.

Evidence suggests the building was used as a residential headquarters during the early Qajar era (I785 to 1925). Nader Shah is widely considered as

one of the most powerful rulers in history of the nation. He assumed power when a period of chaos overwhelmed Iran.

Nader managed to reunite the Persian realm while repelled invaders. He is sometimes referred to as the Napoleon of Persia or the Second Alexander.



People visit Qasr-e Khorshid, an 18th-century iconic monument in northeast Iran

How to get paid to travel

More Chinese opt for travel during family reunion festival By Natalie B. Compton

SHANGHAI (Xinhua) - More Chinese celebrated the Mid-Autumn Festival, a traditional holiday for family get-together, by traveling instead, as data from tourism authorities and travel agencies show.

According to Ctrip.com, China's major online travel agency, Chinese travelers have booked trips to tourist destinations in 88 countries and regions. The cities of Sanya, Beijing, Chengdu, Shanghai and Xi'an were favored domestic destinations, while Japan, Thailand, Malaysia, Russia and Indonesia were top outbound destinations.

One fourth of Ctrip's customers traveled with their beloved ones, 21 percent and 12 percent traveled with their children and parents respectively

Shanghai, one of the top destinations embraced a huge amount of tourists during the three-day holiday which started Friday.

The city's 160 main tourist sites received 2.78 million visitors, up 26.6 percent year on year, said the Shanghai Municipal Administration of Culture and Tourism on Sunday

Meanwhile, the city's 115 museums had 221,900 visitors during the holiday, up 10 percent year on year. Shanghai Science and Technology Museum welcomed 55,300 visitors, increasing 44.4 year on year.

Booking data from another online travel agency Lvmama.com also show that besides theme parks for parent-child tourists, historical and cultural sites reported larger amount of bookings across the country.

The Mid-Autumn Festival witnessed booming night-time consumption. Lvmama recorded 44 percent expanding of bookings for night-time tours than last year. Night cruises along rivers in Shanghai, Guangzhou and Chongqing were among the best sellers.

Celebrations were also held during the festival. Shanghai Tourism Festival welcomed 300,000 audiences for its grand opening parade held on Saturday.

(Source: Xinhua)

ROUND THE GLOBE

New Zealand Sub-Antarctic Islands



Pennsvlvania.

Both the Xanterra and AIR require selected participants to pay for their own airfare to the respective gigs. Europe

Small towns in Europe are having a tough time competing with the alluring appeal of bigger cities. Every few months, a headline pops up with another small town's efforts to lure in new residents by offering perks like \$1 homes, free plots of land to farm and more. It's happened in Antikythera, Greece, Albinen, Switzerland, and now the region of Molise, Italy. Regional councilor Antonio Tedeschi developed a plan to offer people more than \$27,000 to relocate to one of Molise's population-deficient villages in an attempt to revitalize the local economy. That payment will be made in 700 euro-per-month payments over the course of three years to chosen applicants who also agree to start a small

business in the region. Antarctica

(USAP) efforts there and to get the general public to better understand and appreciate those efforts. Photographers, sculptors, historians, painters, science writers and children's novelists have been among the chosen program participants given the opportunity to travel to Antarctica on the National cience Foundation's dime.

Anywhere

There are plenty of options around the globe for the taking, and for every travel style. You can search Workaway, an online community for sustainable travel and cultural exchange, to find opportunities to volunteer or work in 178 countries, like helping out at an alpaca farm in Estonia or working as an au pair in Andorra.

For travelers who enjoy farm life, there's World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms, (WWOOF). Originating in Britain in the '70s, WWOOF was once an acronym for Working Weekends On Organic Farms but has expanded to become an international community to connect farmers and temporary workers. WWOOF volunteers are expected to work about four to six hours a day in exchange for boarding, food and the chance to experience local life in their temporary home, whether that's somewhere familiar like California or maybe less-so like Koes, Namibia.

The New Zealand Sub-Antarctic Islands (NZSAI) encompasses five island groups that lie between latitudes 470 and 530 south: Snares Islands/Tini Heke. Bounty Islands, Antipodes Islands, Auckland Islands/Motu Maha and Campbell Island/ Motu Ihupuku and the islands surrounding it.



A World Heritage, the property lies between the Antarctic and Subtropical Convergences and the seas have a high level of productivity, biodiversity, wildlife population densities and endemism.

The World Heritage status also applies to the marine environment out to 12 nautical miles from each group. Including a total land area of 76,458ha, the marine area takes in 1,400,000 ha and constitutes one of New Zealand's remotest protected natural areas, including some of the world's least-modified islands.

Particularly notable is the abundance and diversity of pelagic seabirds and penguins that utilize the islands for breeding. The property supports the most diverse community of breeding seabirds in the Southern Ocean. There are 126 species of birds, including 40 seabirds, eight of which breed nowhere else in the world. The islands support major populations of 10 of the world's 22 species of albatross and almost 2 million sooty shearwaters nest on Snares Island alone.

Land birds also display a surprising diversity, considering the limited land area available, with a large number of threatened endemics including one of the world's rarest ducks. (Source: UNESCO)

has an Artist in R esidence (AIR) p up participants in a private accommodation for a month and pays participants a stipend or reimbursement for their time. Options include Dry Tortugas National Park in Florida, Chaco Culture National Historic Park in New Mexico, Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, Aztec Ruins National Monument in New Mexico and Gettysburg National Military Park in

Traveling to Antarctica is not an easy or affordable feat. Most travel opportunities fall into the luxury category. The loophole to getting down to the world's southernmost continent (for the creative set at least) is through the Antarctic Artists and Writers Program (AAW). The program was developed to get more eyes on the U.S. Antarctic Program

(Source: Washington Post)

How airlines are catering to their smallest customers: children

More and more airlines are turning their attention to their youngest travelers – both to appease their parents, and to keep other passengers happy on long flights.

Airlines are constantly trying to find new ways to win customers. In this never-ending competition, carriers – mostly international ones — are now turning their attention to their youngest passengers, wooing children (and beleaguered parents) with new amenities such as toys, child-friendly toiletry kits, meals and amped up seat back entertainment.

Paul Tumpowsky, a father of a toddler daughter and the co-founder and chief executive of the New York travel agency Skylark, said that these new amenities go a long way in keeping children occupied on long flights. "If children are happy, then parents are happy, and they associate the airline with a positive flying experience and are more likely to choose it for future trips," he said.

"Kids kits" keep children seated, happy, and quiet

Emirates recently introduced a kit that young passengers receive as soon as they board. It contains a travel-themed reusable bag or lunch box, a coloring book with markers and an arts and crafts project such as an origami kit. Older children get an animal backpack with a travel journal, and babies and toddlers get a stuffed animal such as an elephant or alligator.



In addition, the airline has an expanded menu of children's in-flight meals including chicken tenders and various kinds of pasta, served on a colorful tray. To keep them satiated between meals, children get a snack box with a cookie and sliced fruit.

Qatar Airways also has a new activity pack for children with crayons, coloring pages, stickers and a puzzle book. Infants get a stuffed toy, along with a plush book. The airline has also introduced new seat back entertainment aimed at children. It includes more than two dozen family-friendly movies that change monthly, and children's television such as The Disney Channel, Nickelodeon, the Cartoon Network and BabyTV.

Qantas also offers a kit with an activity book with puzzles and word games and even an Etch a Sketch toy. On select international flights, youngsters get colorful antiskid socks that they can wear onboard.

Turkish Airlines has several new onboard offerings for children. They receive a sack of three sustainably-made wooden figurines like pandas and soldiers, and a backpack amenity kit that includes a child-sized headset, a dental kit, socks and slippers. Parents with babies get a kit with a diaper changing mat, disposable bib, rash cream, baby lotion and shampoo, a packet of wipes and a breast pad.

Toys and videos keep children calm and entertained

On Singapore Airlines the cabin crew gives out toys to children based on their age. Babies, for example, receive plush blocks, while pre-school-age youngsters get mini puzzles, and older children get a Monopoly Deal card game. The airline plans to change the toys quarterly.

Young passengers also get to pick from a children's menu with more than a dozen items, like a burger with fries, fish sticks with diced vegetables and pancakes with sausage.

When it comes to domestic carriers, Jet-Blue recently debuted kid-focused videos from Headspace, a meditation service, as part of its in-flight entertainment. One of the videos, for example, is a five-minute cartoon that teaches children how to stay calm on a flight. The airline also has a new "Party Up" food box designed with youngsters in mind. Sold onboard for \$9, it includes M&M's, popcorn, Fig Newtons, Parmesan cheese crisps and salami slices.

(Source: The New York Times)

The future of war will be "liked"

It was, perhaps, the strangest demand in political history:

"The middle photo is taken from Hungarian porn. Stop using fake photos to 'trick' people into supporting your lost cause."

This Nov. 18, 2014, tweet from a now-defunct Twitter account run by the U.S. State Department offered an early glimpse into a new front in the future of war: trolling. The message was the outgrowth of an effort the department had launched in 2011 to track and counter terrorist propaganda, first against al Qaeda, then against the fast-growing Islamic State that had spun out of its Iraqi remains.

The campaign may have sounded sensible, but it soon backfired. Instead of cheering on the online battle against extremism, Twitter users piled on with more questions than the staid Foggy Bottom bureaucrats manning the account were prepared to answer. "How did the State Dept. know it was Hungarian porn?" @SpaSuzy asked. "dude ... it's really weird you know so much about hungarian porn,"

After an avalanche of criticism, the State Department decided it was inappropriate for the U.S. government to get stuck in the muck of social media—better to stick to airstrikes—and pulled the plug on the Twitter account.

Four years later, such scruples seem almost quaint. In an era in which President Donald Trump didn't just rise to power through his deft use of the same medium, but then even used it to fire his first secretary of state, the old notions that government should stay above the social media fray have evaporated. Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter have become crucial battlegrounds for politics, war, and even truth itself. Social media has emerged as an arena in which virality-how far and wide a message spreads-trumps veracity. In this domain, attention is power. Win enough of it and you can reshape the very fabric of reality.

A generation ago, the new notion of what was called "cyberwar"—the hacking of networks—began to take conflict into a new domain. Today, what we call "like wars"—the hacking of the people and ideas on those networks—mark the latest twist in the ever-evolving nature of warfare.

On the surface, many of these battles waged on social media can seem like mere propaganda and an often silly version at that-like teenaged trolling transposed onto the global stage. In August 2017, for example, the Ukrainian government's official Twitter account attacked Russia with a mocking South Park GIF; in June 2018, the Israeli Embassy in Washington, D.C., answered a fire-and-brimstone threat by Iran's supreme leader. Avatollah Ali Khamenei, with a Mean Girls meme; and in May 2018, the U.S. Air Force cracked jokes about airstrikes in Afghanistan while the Taliban returned the favor by poking fun at former U.S. commander David Petraeus's illicit love affair.

The goal for all such actors is not merely the lulz but to ridicule their foes and expand their influence, in a world where online sway can drive real-world power. Yet beneath it all, a more serious side of conflict also takes place, its ammunition the bevy of images taken from actual battles. Today, nearly all our moves are tracked, including those in anything from election



events, smartphone in hand. Others are captured in the background: be it images that lay in the distance or even information in the digital background, from the geolocation of CIA black sites revealed by guards' use of exercise apps to the metadata that accompanies every online post. The result is that the smallest of firefights is observed by a global audience, while terrorist attacks are even shared out live by the killers themselves. Open-source intelligence analysts then use these very same digital breadcrumbs to reveal new secrets, documenting war crimes that would go otherwise untracked or assessing the strength of enemy formations that would go otherwise unobserved. It works for both good and bad: Terrorists use this information to win new recruits; human rights activists use it to highlight the plight of civilians caught in harm's way and even steer rescues their way. During the 2016-2017 Battle of Mosul-the most livestreamed and hashtagged siege in history-thousands of virtual observers waited for each new snippet of content, spinning it to all of these ends at once.

These battles that play out in the digital shadows are not just about unveiling secrets but burying truths-and even shaping hearts, minds, and actions. Russian sockpuppets and botnets, for instance, did quite a bit more than simply meddle in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. They used a mix of old-school information operations and new digital marketing techniques to spark real-world protests, steer multiple U.S. news cycles, and influence voters in one of the closest elections in modern history. Using solely online means, they infiltrated U.S. political communities so completely that flesh-and-blood American voters soon began to repeat scripts written in St. Petersburg and still think them their own. Internationally, these Russian information offensives have stirred anti-NATO sentiments in Germany by inventing atrocities out of thin air; laid the pretext for potential invasions of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania by fueling the political antipathy of ethnic Russian minorities: and done the same for the very real invasion of Ukraine. And these are just the operations we know about.

Such online skirmishes may appear insignificant compared with real fights conducted with real weapons, but they have become just as important. As Gen. Stanley McChrystal, the highly decorated former commander of Joint Special Operations Command, stated at a military conference in 2017, for the foreseeable future what happens on social media will be crucial to the outcome of any debate, battle, or war. The reason, he explained, is that battles are now being waged over truth itself. In these fights, "the line between reality and perception will be blurred," he said. "Separating fact from fiction will be tough for governments but almost impossible for populations."

McChrystal's comments may seem to echo the ravings of the notorious conspiracy theorist Alex Jones, whose website Infowars uses the tagline, "There's a war on for your mind!" But that doesn't make them any less truthful. With our personal and political understanding of the world increasingly filtered through online sources, images and ideas distributed and created on social media may become more important than objective facts. As McChrystal put it, "Shaping the perception of which side is right or which side is winning will be more important than actually which side is right or winning."

Indeed, the messages coursing through social media today shape not just the perceived outcomes of conflicts but the very choices leaders make during both military campaigns. Russia, for instance, has crafted its information operations into a potent, nimble weapon that can target U.S. voters or pinpoint artillery strikes in Ukraine, using what happens in the online world to geolocate soldiers—and then message their looming death right before the cannons fire. Social media even shapes the overall flow. A 2016 study by the Âmerican University professor Thomas Zeitzoff of the Israel Defense Forces' 2012 air campaign against Hamas in the Gaza Strip found that the conflict followed the pace set on Twitter; the tempo of operations and targeting shifted depending on which side was dominating the online conversation at the time. The military officers and civilian leaders were watching their social media feed and reacting accordingly.

Sometimes, social media posts can even spark new fights, especially when they play to long-standing tensions or hatreds. The Sri Lankan government blamed viral Facebook rumors for stirring up the hatred that led to a brutal assault on the country's Muslim minority this March. In June, false reports circulated among India's 200 million WhatsApp users spurred a spate of lynchings. Meanwhile, racist messages and rumors shared on Facebook continue to fuel the ongoing ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya Muslim minority in Myanmar.

Mounting evidence suggests that these online tug of wars may not just start fights and mass killings but also make conflicts harder to end. Criminologists who study the spike of murders in cities such as Chicago note how an increasing share of gang violence is attributable to social media trash-talking. Sometimes, the spark is a disrespectful emoji; other times, it's a long-forgotten post, dug up in a moment of escalating tensions. Unlike the interaction in the street (or by diplomats in a traditional negotiation), it doesn't matter if the original insult was made a year ago or hundreds of miles away. All that matters is that the world is watching and the internet never forgets. It's easy to see how a similar dynamic will haunt future ceasefire negotiations, whether the end of an insurgency or the conclusion of a major interstate war. There's always some people intent on keeping the violence going. And online, they never lose their voice.

Daunting as all this may seem, however, social media has only just begun to shape the future of war. Only half the world is online, while the tools of "like wars" today are like the biplanes of air war. Indeed, new machine intelligence is making it ever harder for humans to discern truth from lies and is possibly reshaping our conception of reality itself. Over the last year, the techniques needed to create "deep fakes"-hyper-realistic digital forgeries generated by advanced artificial intelligence neural networks have become increasingly accessible. This technology, currently used mostly by cutting-edge computer scientists and inventive pornographers, will soon flood the internet with pitch-perfect voice imitations, photo-realistic video fabrications, and vast networks of chattering bots indistinguishable from their human counterparts. And like everything else, deep fakes are also likely to be weaponized, both in elections and even battles. We've already had a taste of it; in its run to seize Mosul, the Islamic State was able to use a mix of real and fake news to help spur retreat by Iraqi Army units. Even U.S. information war units now train at sowing false digital trails to misdirect their foes. We may one day even face the prospect of a digital Gulf of Tonkin, where the very case for a real war is built wholly on AI-constructed lies.

These changes reshape the speed, experience, and even the reach of conflict. In the social media age, every election, every conflict, and every battle is simultaneously global and local. Even as the physical experience of war grows more alien to the average Westerner with each generation, it has also become more personal than ever. Our choices of what to "like" and share (or not) shape not only the outcomes of elections and battles but also what our friends, family, and the wider world treat as real. You may not be interested in like wars, but the future of

How the NYT partook in the plunder of Iraq

By Sinan Antoon

Many of the precious objects displayed in the global north's major museums were plundered from their home in the global south. The dubious itinerary and the illegal and unethical practices that facilitated the plunder cannot be found in the laconic texts accompanying these exhibited objects.

The narratives that frame the objects and collections and erase the plunder are usually those of "saving" and "recovering". Oceans away from their homeland, these treasures are often represented as being more "at home" in their exile in these metropolitan centres of the global north. They are "safe and sound" here and housed in reputable institutions where scholars and experts, who appreciate and understand their value and history, tend to them and curate popular and very profitable exhibits for the benefit of metropolitan audiences. As if the natives, the rightful owners of these objects, do not deserve them.

Some governments in the global south have been lobbying for years to retrieve some of these cultural treasures, but the process is not so easy and the balance of power is skewed. The tragic irony is that these plundered treasures are at times "loaned" back to their rightful owners in countries of origin.

The practise of plunder extends beyond archeological treasures and pre-modern relics. Entire archives and collections of important documents are still plundered by foreign institutions (or individuals working with them) and states.

Iraq is the most salient example, particularly after the Anglo-American invasion of 2003. The United States plundered millions of documents and moved them out of Iraq during its occupation of the country. With the exception of the Iraqi Jewish Archive, which is set to be returned to Iraq in two years, there are no plans to return any of the other collections.



A US soldier hauls documents during a raid conducted at a community centre in Baghdad in June 2003 [AP/Jim Krane]

In fact, in the past two years, more documents have been removed from the country, continuing this decades-long plunder. In a recent piece, the New York Times bragged about taking to the US thousands of ISIL documents its journalists snatched from liberated areas in Iraq.

Perhaps one should not be surprised that the newspaper that participated in justifying the 2003 invasion of Iraq does not consider these actions unethical.

A history of plunder

I have written before about the Bath Party Archive (consisting of three million pages) which was plundered by Kanan Makiya, who supported the 2003 invasion, and his Iraq Memory Foundation, which, despite its name, is a Washington-based organisation with no actual presence in Iraq outside the heavily guarded and privileged Green Zone of Baghdad.

In 2005, the US army helped Makiya ship the documents to the US. Despite calls from Saad Eskander, the then Director General of Iraq's National Library and Archive, to return these documents to Iraq, the Iraq Memory Foundation decided otherwise. In January 2008, the

foundation signed an agreement

with the Hoover Institution to

Who gave permission to the New York Times to remove thousands of ISIL files from Iraq?

transfer the documents there. Three months later, the Society of American Archivist (SAA) and the Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA), the world's largest organisation of archivists , wrote in a statement of its "deep concern about [these] records and others obtained by the United States ... in actions [that] may be considered an act of pillage, which is specifically forbidden by the 1907 Hague Convention." The letter stressed that these records must be returned to Iraq "to be maintained as part of the official records in the National Library and Archives." But this plundered archive was not returned and sits at the Hoover Institution to this day. Iraqi citizens and Iraqi scholars have no access to this important collection.

campaigns to military ones. Some of it is intentional: selfies taken in the midst of battle, observers watching

In the social media age, what you share is deciding what happens on the battlefield.

war and politics is very much interested in you—and your clicks.

(Source: foreignpolicy.com)

White House officials attack Washington Post over 'media bias'

The White House is ramping up its attacks on The Washington Post for what it calls unfair coverage of President Trump.

Stephanie Grisham and Hogan Gidley, the White House press secretary and deputy press secretary, respectively, on Thursday penned an op-ed in the Washington Examiner criticizing the Post for a Sept. 1 article that described "what some Trump advisers and allies characterize as a lost summer defined by self-inflicted controversies and squandered opportunities."

Grisham and Gidley wrote that the Post refused to cite the majority of Trump's accomplishments from a list of 26 that was provided by the White House, and that writers Philip Rucker and Ashley Parker "pushed their own personal political narrative that President Trump had a 'lost summer' of squandered opportunities and few accomplishments."

The White House officials argued that the opposite is true.

The Post article notes that White House officials offered up a list of over two-dozen accomplishments from summer 2019, but goes on to report that many of Trump's advisers and allies privately described it as a "period of missed opportunity and self-sabotage."

Grisham and Gidley pointed to the president's historic trip to the DMZ between North Korea and South Korea, his agreement in principle with Japan



on trade, and the administration's move to terminate the Flores agreement that set the rules for the detention of migrant children as examples of accomplishments that were not explicitly referenced by the Post.

The Post story does mention Trump's June meeting with North Korean Leader Kim Jong Un as an accomplishment cited by the White House.

"The truth is, Trump racked up many well-documented victories that directly benefited the American people at home and abroad," Grisham and Gidley asserted. "Media bias comes in two forms. It plays a role in deciding what news is, and is not, covered, and also in deciding how that news is covered. In this instance, the Post's 'reporters' are guilty of both," they wrote. In a statement to The Hill, The Washington Post defended its reporting. "Our story prominently noted the White House's list of accomplishments and quoted a White House spokesman at length. It also reported the views of Republicans, both on the record and on background, some of whom are part of the administration and some who watch

its performance from a distance," said Shani George, the Post's director of communications.

"Readers can judge for themselves whether our account fairly represented a variety of perspectives on the President's summer," she added.

Trump often attacks the Post for what he views as unfair coverage, frequently calling it the "Amazon Washington Post" in reference to the paper's owner, Jeff Bezos, who is the founder and CEO of Amazon.

The White House opinion piece also attacked the Post over its own "embarrassing moments," pointing for instance to a freelance article that had to be corrected for 15 errors.

The White House op-ed — titled "The Washington Post's lost summer," to mimic the publication's original article describing Trump's summer — was published Thursday and promoted by the White House Friday morning.

Grisham and Gidley also called out The New York Times and cable news networks in the op-ed for what the administration officials described as biased news coverage. Trump regularly refers to reports by the Times, CNN and other outlets as "fake news."

The White House earlier this week mocked the Post's "lost summer" article on Twitter, sharing a video that branded the piece "fake news."

(Source: thehill.com)

'The ISIS files'

The most recent episode of plunder comes courtesy of the New York Times. On April 4, Rukmini Callimachi, a correspondent for the paper who has been covering the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as ISIS) and was embedded with Iraqi military units, published a piece called The ISIS files. The piece describes how Callimachi and her team took thousands of ISIL documents that were left behind after its forces were pushed out.

"On five trips to battle-scarred Iraq, journalists for The New York Times scoured old Islamic State offices, gathering thousands of files abandoned by the militants as their 'caliphate' crumbled," the article claims.

Callimachi writes that Iraqi security forces "led the way and gave permission to take the documents". However, there is no record, oral or written, of any official permission from the Iraqi army or defence ministry to give these documents away.

The documents are crucial for the country's history and its future and they belong to the Iraqis. Their removal from Iraq, irrespective of any justification, is a violation of the 1907 Hague Convention.

Iraqis across areas formerly held by ISIL are struggling to rebuild their destroyed cities and to reconstruct their shattered lives. Why have they been deprived of troves of documents containing evidence of crimes committed against them?

It is noteworthy and ironic that the NYT inserted the following into the "ISIS files" story under the heading "Sharing the records":

"The New York Times is working to make the trove of ISIS documents publicly available to researchers, scholars, Iraqi officials and anyone else looking to better understand the Islamic State." How generous of them!

(Source: aljzeera.net)



Tehran's traffic jam drops by 52%

ENVIRONMENT d e s k **TEHRAN** — Traffic congestion in the traffic zones of Tehran has declined by 52 percent over the Iranian calendar month of Mordad (July 23-August 22) compared to the same period last year, according to the data released by the Tehran Traffic Control Company.



A new traffic scheme went into effect on June 22 in the capital aiming to address persistent air pollution and traffic congestion. The scheme defined two areas in the capital including, traffic restricted areas and pollution control areas; the city center is the most polluted and heavily congested area.

The total length of traffic jam in traffic-congested areas, especially during the peak periods or during peak pollution events, has been reduced from 26.2 kilometers to 12.5 kilometers, demonstrating a 52 percent drop, ISNA news agency reported on Monday.

People mostly judge the increase or decrease of traffic based on their personal sense, which is not at all accurate because it has to be based on different locations in the city and different hours, Mohsen Pourseyed Aqaei, CEO of Transportation and Traffic Organization affiliated to the municipality said, adding, it is important that statistics and cameras measure and analyze the length of traffic.

Statistics show a 14-35 percent reduction in traffic congestion in traffic zones and its surroundings, over the last month.

Traffic scheme also contributed to a 55 percent decline in traffic jam in the pollution control areas which are surrounding the traffic zones.

Moreover, the areas that are totally out of the two restricted areas got rid of traffic jam by 40 percent.

Under the traffic scheme, all vehicles, regardless of their registration numbers, are allowed to enter the traffic zones 20 days during each season (80 days all year round) for free without paying any fees and those who are planning on entering the zone more should pay taxes to the municipality.

Pourseyed Aqaei also said in early August that the newly initiated traffic scheme has reduced the capital's traffic jam by 6 percent during the Iranian calendar month of Tir (June 22-July 22).

Since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21), Tehran air quality has been unhealthy for sensitive groups for 24 days due to high rate of ozone emissions, while 1 day reported to be unhealthy for all the residents, according to the Tehran Air Quality Control Company. Traffic congestion and cars can contribute to ozone raise, as

Traffic congestion and cars can contribute to ozone raise, as toxic emissions of oxides of nitrogen is released by diesel cars during fuel combustion in an engine.

WORDS IN THE NEWS Australia set for new

refugee laws

(September 26, 2001)

The Australian government is about to introduce new laws to limit significantly the opportunity for boat people and other illegal immigrants to seek political asylum. This report from Red Harrison:

The laws will **reinforce** Australia's authority to turn boats away from Australia and impose **mandatory** prison sentences on the crews of boats which do cross the border. Boat people coming through Indonesia will be **denied permanent residence**, even if they prove to be **genuine** refugees. Similar restrictions will apply to people coming through Christmas Island and other **popular landing places** off the north-west coast.

The laws will confirm Australia's right to send these people to another country, such as the pacific island of Nauru, to be dealt with by the United Nations, and **an overriding law** will deny all these people access to the courts **to challenge** government actions or decisions.

World Ozone Day: Iran well rid of ozone-depleting emissions

SEPTEMBER 17, 2019

1 → What caused the ozone layer to shrink and deplete?

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The ozone layer is a part of the atmosphere that has high concentrations of ozone (a gas made of three oxygen atoms O3), compared to oxygen molecules that exist in nature as a pair of oxygen atoms. It exists 10km to 40km above the surface of the earth in a region called the stratosphere and contains 90 percent of all the ozone in the atmosphere.

Some harmful gasses including HCFC and Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) can interfere with the formation of ozone; mostly causing gaps or holes in the layer, as well as passing UV radiation from the sun to the atmosphere.

CFCs are referred to compounds of carbon, hydrogen, chlorine, and fluorine, typically gases used in refrigerants and aerosol propellants. They are harmful to the ozone layer in the earth's atmosphere owing to the release of chlorine atoms on exposure to ultraviolet radiation.

HCFCs are also man-made compounds containing hydrogen, chlorine, fluorine and carbon and do not occur naturally anywhere. These compounds are used in refrigeration, aerosol propellants, foam manufacture and air conditioning.

air conditioning. HCFCs are less dangerous causing a smaller risk to the ozone layer; while being very powerful greenhouse gases, which are nearly 2,000 times more potent than carbon dioxide in adding to global warming.

How Iran confronted chemicals jeopardizing the ozone layer?

Iran also joined the international cooperation protecting the fragile layer of ozone in 1989, and contributed significantly to global efforts in order to address climate change while protecting human



The ozone hole which was once the major environmental concern turned to the least important concern today; as the concentration of harmful emissions have considerably reduced by 14 percent since 2000. health and ecosystems.

In 1992, the Department of Environment in collaboration with the United Nations Development Program, approved a plan to establish an ozone layer conservation office in the Montreal Protocol executive committee; and the office started working a year later.

Maryam Hasani, an official with the ozone layer conservation office, told IRNA that activities of the ozone conservation office are summarized in five fields of changing production process, controlling and monitoring, raising public awareness, regional and international cooperation.

"Through the first phase of the plan, we succeeded in omitting 9,800 tons of ozone-destroying gasses changing the manufacturing processes of 1,378 factories, and it is scheduled to eradicate some 2,000 tons through the second phase," she explained.

Holding various workshops, enforcing a set of laws and regulations, and strengthening supervision in the manufacturing units are also part of the project's second phase, which will be achieved by 2030s, she added. She went on to say that the process is

slow but effective.

According to the Montreal Protocol, advanced countries must assist developing countries such as Iran; developed countries are committed to begin their elimination activities 10 years earlier, on the other hand, she said.

Also, funding raised by different countries should be provided to developing countries as part of an ozone-compatible equipment donation, she highlighted, adding, UN will ask the countries to report on where the fund have been spent, ensuring the countries' compliance with the protocol.

Mahak founder receives Muslim World Rania Award 2019

SOCIETY TEHRAN – The Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) granted the Muslim World Rania Award to Saeedeh Ghods, the founder of Mahak, a charity society dedicated to treating pediatric cancer in Iran, the public relations department of Mahak reported.

The Muslim World Rania Award is designed to recognize and celebrate the success of selected women in impacting people's lives on personal, organizational, national and global platforms. The recipients exemplify excellence through outstanding behavior and business undertakings based on the highest standards of integrity and social responsibility. Fulfilling the social responsibility in the fields of employ-

Fulfilling the social responsibility in the fields of employment and entrepreneurship, good reputation, cooperation with other Muslim countries, poverty alleviation and economic development of the world's Muslims are among the



features that the jury of this international award consider for the selection of the top figures.

Honored by the business and investment magazine, OIC TODAY, the awards are presented during a special ceremony that takes place in conjunction with the annual international trade event, the Muslim World Biz.

The 9th Muslim World Biz was held with the presence of more than 40 Islamic countries by Trade Exhibition and Conference of the OIC on September 4-6, 2019 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Ghods has been recognized as one of the 12 leading women in this event for providing comprehensive support for children with cancer and their families during the past 28 years and Marzieh Afkham the ambassador of Iran to Malaysia received this award on her behalf.

Heathrow expansion would be disastrous for wildlife, campaigners say

The impact of thousands of newly routed flights over Richmond Park has been almost completely ignored in Heathrow airport's environmental impact report on its plans for a third runway, campaigners have said.

As the consultation on Heathrow's expansion approached closure on Friday, environmental campaigners said the effect of the expansion on the biodiversity, tranquility and environment on the park had yet to be properly addressed.

Richmond Park, established in the 17th century, is a site of special scientific interest and a national nature reserve stretching over 1,000 hectares (2,470 acres). The Friends of Richmond Park group is demanding the airport carries out a full environmental impact assessment of the expansion on the park. Documents prepared for the Heathrow airspace and future operations consultation, which follows MPs' approval of the third runway last year, indicate that 47 arrivals an hour and between 17 and 47 departures would fly directly over the park at below 900 meters. Heathrow's flights are currently capped at 480,000 a year and it wants to increase this by 25,000 in 2021 and further when the third runway is built.

Environmental campaigners say the noise and pollution would be disastrous for the sensitive wildlife and the tranquillity of an area visited by more than 5.5 million people a year. They say thousands of nocturnal animals in the park would be threatened, including 11 of the UK's 17 bat species, all of which are protected by law, as well as little and tawny owls. Richard Gray, of Friends of Richmond Park, said: "In spite of the importance of Richmond Park and the impact of the expansion on it, the park is almost completely absent from the preliminary environmental information report in the expansion consultation documents.

"Where Richmond Park is covered, some of results are just not credible. The noise increase from 47 arriving aircraft per hour and a big increase in departing aircraft is estimated to be only 1 to 3dB. For tranquility, the park is mentioned specifically as having 'relative tranquility' but the impact of the proposals is expected to be negligible/slight – a strange

flights over the quietest place in London.

"The charity demands that Heathrow include

a proper assessment of Richmond Park in the

full EIA/ES [environmental impact assessment/

environmental statement]. Without that, the inspector will not have all the relevant material available to make a fully informed decision and Heathrow may face a legal challenge."

Green campaigners have been granted the right to continue their legal action against the expansion in an appeal next month. The legal challenge has been brought by the mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace and local authorities.

Boris Johnson, who as a backbench MP threatened that he would lie down in front of the bulldozers to stop the expansion, has hinted that he will follow the court challenge

Australia's hard line against boat people has **strong popular support**, though some minor political parties are describing the new laws as repressive and **abominable**.

The new laws are being debated in the Senate, the upper house of parliament, though debate is probably too strong a word because the labor party opposition is supporting the government **at every step**.

Words

reinforce: if you reinforce something, you make it stronger, you provide support for it

mandatory: if a punishment is described as mandatory, it is fixed by law for all cases (in contrast to crimes for which the judge or magistrate has to decide the punishment for each particular case) **denied permanent residence:** refused the right to settle down and remain indefinitely

genuine: people and things are described as genuine, if they are exactly what they appear to be, and not fake or an imitation **popular landing places:** places where boat people come ashore most often

an overriding law: the most important law, the one that cancels other legal provisions

to challenge: here - to question and appeal against strong popular support: here the phrase 'strong popular support' suggests that a significant number of Australians support the country's hard line against refugees abominable: very bad and unpleasant at every step: in whatever they do or propose to do

(Source: BBC)



Without water, everything withers

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Wildfire risk increases in Zagros foothills

Following heavy rainfall doused the country during the past months, vegetation has covered vast areas of Zagros forest in southwestern part of the country, which easily ignites when temperature level gets higher and wildfire risk increases.

Torrential rains over the past few months, has positive consequences like saturating the wetlands and reservoirs, however, led to some natural incidents like flooding which caused losses to the country, Mohammad Mansourpour, an official with the Iranian Space Agency said. As the result of the rain, plants and vegetation has grown in vast areas of forests and rangelands which soon will be dried due to temperature rise and enhance the possibility of massive fires, he added.

احتمال افزایش آتشسوزی در دامنههای زاگرس

بارش باران طی ماه های خیر باعث رویش علفهای پرتراکم در قسمتهای مختلف کشور شد که پس از افزایش دما علفها خشک شده و احتمال آتش سوزی را در دامنه های زاگرس افزایش می دهند. مصطفی منصورپور مدیر کل سنجش از دور سازمان فضایی ایران گفتگو با ایرنا اظهار داشت: بارشهای بهاری امسال، علاوه بر فوایدی که داشت و باعث پر آب شدن تالاب ها و ذخایر آبی شد، متأسفانه مشکلاتی و خساراتی مانند سیل نیز به بار آورد.

او افزود: با توجه به این بارشها، برخی از مراتع کشور که بدون پوشش گیاهی هستند، با علفهای بهاری با تراکم بالا پوشیده شدند اما طول عمر این علفها معمولاً دو ماه است و پس از آن خشک میشوند. با توجه به ماهیت اشتعال، تراکم زیاد علفها و افزایش دما، بحران آتشسوزی قابل پیش بینی بود.

PREFIX/SUFFIX

"hepato-, hepat-"

Meaning: liver

For example: There is no specific treatment for this disease and complete recovery from any form of *hepatitis* may take four months or longer.

PHRASAL VERB

pencil somebody/something in

Meaning: to make an arrangement for a meeting or other event, knowing that it might have to be changed later
 For example: Pickford has been penciled in as Robson's replacement.

IDIOM

Cut both ways

Explanation: Something that has both a positive and a negative effect at the same time

For example: Banning cars in the town center can cut both ways: less traffic congestion but fewer customers in the shops.

conclusion when the proposals are for noisy with lively interest.

MPs approved the Heathrow expansion plans by a margin of 415 votes to 119 last June.

(Source: The Guardian)

Yemen's military warns foreigners to leave Saudi oil plants

TEHRAN — Yemen's military has warned foreigners in Saudi Arabia to leave Aramco's oil processing plants, saying they are still a target and can be attacked "at any moment."

The warning came after Houthis and their allies in the Yemeni army deployed as many as 10 drones to bomb Abqaiq and Khurais oil facilities run by the Saudi state-owned oil company before dawn Saturday.

Spokesman for the Yemeni armed forces, General Yahya Sare'a, said in a tweet Monday that the attacks in the kingdom's eastern region had been carried out by drones with normal and jet engines.

He said Saudi Arabia should stop its "aggression and blockade on Yemen," or see the Yemeni army hit the kingdom "anywhere and anytime" it chooses.

Other Yemeni officials dismissed claims that the country is incapable of carrying out on its own the kind of attacks that targeted two plants at the heart of Saudi Arabia's oil industry.

Mohammed al-Bukhaiti, a member of Yemen's Supreme Political Council, pledged that Yemeni forces will continue to pound the Saudi oil industry until the kingdom ends its deadly war.

The unprecedented attack knocked out more than half of Saudi crude output, or 5% of global supply, prompting Saudi and U.S. officials to claim without any evidence that it probably originated from Iraq or Iran.



Bukhaiti told Iran's Tasnim news agency that blaming the attacks on other countries shows "cowardice" in facing up to the reality of Yemen's military power.

"Saudi Arabia declared war against Yemen on the grounds that our missile inventory posed a threat to its security," he said. "Today, we are surprised to see that when we hit Saudi oil wells, they exonerate Yemen from conducting these strikes and accuse others of doing them." "This is viewed as an own criminal decree

of conviction. It also shows their cowardice," Bukhaiti added.

U.S. Secretary of State Michael Pompeo was quick to blame Iran for the brazen attacks, claiming there was no evidence the drones had originated from Yemen.

Bukhaiti mocked the proposition, saying Washington resorted to such rhetoric to hide the fact that their radars were simply incapable of tracking Yemeni drones.

"Âmerica and Saudi Arabia's radars cannot intercept Yemeni aircraft. If they could intercept them, they would have shot them down," he argued.

Bukhiati said the fact that Pompeo did not produce evidence to substantiate his claim showed they were "bankrupt" both politically and militarily.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi dismissed Pompeo's allegations as "blind and fruitless remarks" that were "meaningless" in a diplomatic context.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif also responded to Pompeo, saying the United States had failed in its campaign of "maximum pressure" and was now "turning to 'max deceit'."

According to Press TV, Bukhiati made it clear that the Houthis would only stop attacking Saudi Arabia once it abandons "serving U.S. interests" and starts respecting the interests of its own people.

"Ending the war now is no longer a shared interest of Yemen and Saudi Arabia. Rather, it benefits Saudis more than it does Yemen because Yemen doesn't have much to lose," he said. "Yet we are witnessing Saudi Arabia's stubbornness because it is the United States that decides for them."

"These attacks will automatically stop when Saudi Arabia ends its aggression and lifts its blockade against Yemen," he said. "These operations will only expand and target facilities that are more vital and more sensitive than oil facilities."

Geopolitical expert talks of US plan to grab Saudi oil share from global market

The US has recently placed troops in Saudi Arabia and as it continues to ratchet up tensions with Iran, is creating a potential conflict that will consume not the US, its territory, people, and resources, but Saudi Arabia's and other Persian Gulf nations aligned with the US."

Commenting on the ways to tackle the tensions in the region, he noted, "As US power wanes, the ability for nations traditionally aligned with the US and the wider West have an opportunity to build ties with emerging global powers like China and re-emerging global powers like Russia. For example, while the US was "pivoting" toward Southeast Asia - the region itself made its own pivot toward China and other Eurasian powers. Nations once thought of as close US allies are now deeply invested in moving into the future as close Chinese and Russian allies.

Another aspect of Southeast Asia's transformation out from under US primacy was the improvement of relations between nations pitted against one another by US interests.

Saudi Arabia and other nations in the region currently suffering because of their "allied" status with the US must perform a similar "pivot." Just like in Southeast Asia, the Persian Gulf will benefit greatly if relations were improved between nations like Saudi Arabia and Iran. But also just like in Southeast Asia where the US targeted each and every nation escaping out from under its regional primacy with political instability, economic extortion, and even terrorism, the Persian Gulf will have to prepare for some hard times before its situation improves. Of course, the alterative is allowing the US to fight its regional allies down to the last Saudi, Emarati, and Qatari, leaving nations entirely broken."

Hezbollah's new missile specialized in 'destroying all military battleships'

→1 In a documentary aired on Lebanon's al-Manar TV channel marking the war, Hezbollah broadcast reconnaissance footage of the ship from the Lebanese coastline, preparations for the launch of the missile, the operations room which directed the strike as well as nighttime footage which showed the impact of the missile.Last week, Hezbollah Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah said the movement observes "no red lines" any longer in responding to Israel after a drone incursion into Lebanon on August 25 was retaliated by the group.

"It is the right of the Lebanese to defend their country and sovereignty, and there will be no red lines," he said.

"Despite all the threats and intimidation, today we are affirming the balance of power and reinforcing the deterrent force that protects our country," Nasrallah said.

According to Al Jazeera, Hezbollah was established following the 1982 Israeli invasion and occupation of southern Lebanon. The movement drove out Israeli forces from Lebanon in May 2000.

Since then, the group has grown into a powerful military force, dealing repeated blows to the Israeli military, including during a 33-day war in July 2006.

Kim invited Trump to Pyongyang in letter

TEHRAN — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un invited U.S. President Donald Trump to visit Pyongyang in a letter sent in August amid stalled denuclearisation talks, a South Korean newspaper reported on Monday, citing diplomatic sources.

Kim, in the letter sent in the third week of August, spoke of his "willingness" for a third summit and extended an invitation for Trump to visit the North Korean capital of Pyongyang, the Joongang Ilbo newspaper reported, citing an unidentified source. Trump on Aug. 9 said he had received a "very beautiful let-

ter" from Kim. But U.S. officials have not said anything about a second letter in August.

Trump and Kim have met three times since June last year to discuss ways to resolve a crisis over North Korea's missile and

claim lead in first round

Tunisia presidential vote: Outsiders



2019 PRESIDENTIELLE 2019 الانتخابات الرئاسية 2019 RESIDENTIELLE 2019

TEHRAN — Two anti-establishment candidates claimed the lead in the first round of Tunisia's presidential election on Sunday, in a poll focused on high unemployment and a surge in the cost of living.

Twenty-four candidates were standing in the election, the second since longtime ruler Zine El Abidine Ben Ali was removed in the 2011 revolution.

But in a sign of voter apathy, especially among the young, the elections commission (ISIE) reported turnout was only 45 percent, down from 64 percent recorded in the first round in 2014.

Kais Said, a 61-year-old law professor and expert on constitutional affairs who There was also an upbeat atmosphere at the party headquarters of media mogul Nabil Karoui, who is behind bars being under investigation for money laundering, as hundreds of supporters celebrated after he also claimed to have reached the second round.

Candidates must secure 50 percent of the vote to win outright, but if none of the hopefuls obtains a majority the two with the most votes will advance to the decisive runoff. The date of the second and final round has not been announced, but it must happen by October 23 at the latest and may even take place on the same day as legislative polls, slated for October 6.

Tunisia's president has limited powers - in charge of foreign policy, defence and national security - and governs alongside a prime minister chosen by parliament who has authority over domestic affairs, Al Jazeera reported.

India arrests Kashmir leader Abdullah under controversial law



TEHRAN — A senior pro-India Kashmir politician was arrested under a controversial law that allows authorities to imprison someone for up to two years without charge or trial.

Farooq Abdullah, 82, a three-time chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir, was on Monday arrested under the Public Safety Act (PSA) in Srinagar, the capital of the disputed Himalayan region.

Abdullah has been under house arrest since August 5 when Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist government stripped Kashmir of its special status and imposed a security lockdown.

"We have arrested him, and a committee will decide how long the arrest will be," els after an armed rebellion erupted against Indian rule in the region in 1989.

Amnesty International has called the PSA a "lawless law," and rights groups say India has used the law to stifle dissent and circumvent the criminal justice system, undermining accountability, transparency, and respect for human rights.

On August 6, Home Minister Amit Shah denied to the lower house of parliament that Abdullah had been detained or arrested.

"If he (Abdullah) does not want to come out of his house, he cannot be brought out at gunpoint," Shah said, when other parliamentarians expressed concern over Abdullah's absence during the debate on

Kashmir's status.

ran a low-key campaign as an independent, claimed to be in the lead for the runoff.

He finished "first in the first round", he said, citing exit polls in advance of preliminary results, which are expected to be announced on Tuesday. Indian-administered Kashmir.

Rights activists say more than 20,000 Kashmiris have been detained under the PSA since it came into effect in 1978. It has been widely used against rebMeanwhile, the Supreme Court has sought a response from the central government and the Jammu and Kashmir administration on a plea seeking to produce Abdullah before the court, Al Jazeera reported.

Algeria to hold presidential election on December 12: Gov't

TEHRAN — Algerians will head to the polls on December 12, the country's interim president said, as weekly protests have continued in the north African country for more than six months.

Abdelkader Bensalah made the announcement during a televised speech on Sunday, calling on Algerians to make December 12 "an historic day to make the dreams of our people concrete".

Weekly mass demonstrations forced veteran President Abdelaziz Bouteflika to resign in April, leaving Algeria in constitutional limbo and facing a standoff between protesters and the army-backed government.

"Elections are the only democratic solution to the crisis," Bensalah said.

The authorities had cancelled an election previously planned for July 4, citing a lack of candidates, amid mass protests demanding the departure of the rest of the old guard including Bensalah and Prime Minister Noureddine Bedoui. But army chief Lieutenant General Ahmed Gaid Salah has repeatedly called for an election as soon as possible, despite the opposition and protesters rejecting a vote.

Earlier on Sunday, authorities named an independent election authority to organise the vote to replace the Ministry of Interior, which has been in charge of elections over the past years.

"This [election] body is a concrete response to demands from our people including those seeking a radical change of the system," Bensalah said, in an apparent reference to protesters who have been staging weekly demonstrators since February 22.

"These changes confirm that the state will go ahead to meet all demands," he said.

The authorities had sought to calm demonstrators by starting the prosecution of Bouteflika's allies for suspected involvement in corruption cases.

Two former prime ministers, two former intelligence

chiefs, eight ministers and several prominent businessmen have been taken into custody after being questioned by judges as part of anti-corruption investigations.

Meanwhile, police have increasingly cracked down on protesters. More than two dozen arrested during Friday's march were jailed, their lawyers told the TSA online media outlet.

Karim Tabou, 51, a well-known figure in the movement, was jailed on Friday on charges of undermining the military, causing concern among opposition politicians and protesters.

Numerous other citizens have been jailed since the February 22 start of the peaceful demonstrations aimed at ridding Algeria of the Bouteflika era, mired in corruption. Among those jailed are people waving regional flags and, shocking for many, a veteran of Algeria's independence war with France that ended in 1962.

Protesters now demand that "political prisoners" be set free and many chant for the army chief to leave.

Netanyahu's annexation plans show Israel trying to change identity of Palestine: OIC

TEHRAN — The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has censured Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's plan to annex areas of the occupied West Bank as an election promise that is part of Tel Aviv's broader plans to change the identity of Palestine.

Speaking at an extraordinary meeting of the OIC in Jeddah on Sunday, Yousef bin Ahmad al-Othaimeen, the secretary-general of the organization, condemned Netanyahu's recent decision, referring to the plan as part

of Israel's continued attempts to change the historical identity of Palestine.

He noted that the extraordinary meeting of OIC indicates the centrality of the Palestinian cause, describing Netanyahu's recent announcement as an "irresponsible" move that exposes Israel's systematic settlement policy.

Netanyahu on Tuesday promised to annex parts of occupied land in the West Bank, including the Jordan Valley and northern Dead Sea, if he wins the September 17 general elections. The plan drew sharp criticism from the Palestinians as well as countries in the Middle East, including Jordan, Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

The 69-year-old Chairman of the Likud-National Liberal Movement also reiterated his intention to annex Israeli settlements throughout the West Bank if re-elected, and in coordination with US President Donald Trump.

More than 600,000 İsraelis live in over

230 settlements built since the 1967 Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories of West Bank and East Jerusalem al-Quds. The UN Security Council has condemned Israel's settlement activities in the occupied territories in several resolutions.

The OIC chief stressed that the Israeli "aggressive" plan violates the UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions, adding: "We affirm our utter rejection of the Israeli government's aggression against the sovereignty of the Arab territories." nuclear programmes, but substantive progress has been scant.

Their first two meetings were formal summits, the second of which, in Vietnam in February, broke down after they failed to narrow a gap between U.S. demands for North Korean denuclearisation and a North Korean demand for relief from sanctions.

They met for a third time on June 30 in the Demilitarised Zone between the two Koreas and agreed to restart working-level talks but that has not happened.

According to Reuters, since the June meeting, North Korea has several times tested short-range projectiles.

The White House, the U.S. State Department and the North Korean mission to the United Nations did not immediately respond to requests for comment on the report.

Rohingya still in Myanmar face 'threat of genocide': United Nations

TEHRAN — Hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslims who remain inside Myanmar face systematic persecution and are living under the threat of genocide, a UN fact-finding mission said on Monday, repeating calls for top generals to face trial.

Myanmar security forces are accused of killings, gang rape and arson during a crackdown that drove more than 730,000 people to flee western Rakhine state for neighboring Bangladesh after attacks on police posts by Rohingya insurgents in August 2017.

Myanmar has rejected most of the accusations and dismissed a report last September by a U.N-appointed panel which said military officers carried out the campaign against the Rohingya with "genocidal intent" and should stand trial.

"The threat of genocide is continuing for the remaining Rohingya," Australian human rights lawyer and panel member Christopher Sidoti said in a statement accompanying a new report, adding that Myanmar was failing to prevent and punish genocide.

According to Reuters, Some 600,000 Rohingya are living in "deplorable" conditions in Myanmar's Rakhine state, subject to restrictions on movement that touch almost every aspect of their lives, the UN report said.

"These facts underscore the impossibility of return for the nearly one million Rohingya refugees, mostly in Bangladesh," it added.

WORLD SPORTS



Djokovic in Brisbane, Nadal in Perth as ATP Cup draw made

World number one Novak Djokovic will begin his 2020 season in Brisbane, Rafael Nadal in Perth and Roger Federer in Sydney after Monday's draw for the ATP Cup, the new world tennis team event.

The championship, which will take place from January 3-12 in the lead-up to the year's first Grand Slam, the Australian Open in Melbourne, will feature 24 nations split into six groups across Sydney, Brisbane and Perth.

Eight teams -- with up to five players each -- will emerge from the round-robin stage to compete in the knockout phase in Sydney until one is left standing

Most of the world's top 30 men will take part, with ties comprising two singles and one doubles match.

At the draw in Sydney, Djokovic's Serbia were pitted against France, South Africa, Germany, Greece, Canada and wildcard entry Australia in Brisbane.

Nadal's Spain will face Japan, Georgia, Russia, Italy and the United States in Perth while Federer's Switzerland take on Belgium, Austria, Croatia, Argentina and the Andy Murray-led Britain.

The final five nations in the ATP Cup standings, based on the ranking of their number one singles player, will be determined by the second entry deadline of November 13.

The new-look start to the year offers Aus\$22 million (\$15 million) in prize money and a maximum of 750 singles and 250 doubles ATP rankings points

It will be held on the back of a revamped Davis Cup, run by the International Tennis Federation, in November, bringing together 18 nations in one place for a week at the end of the 2019 season. (Source: AFP)

Maradona's club suffer 2-1 defeat on new coaching debut

The Diego Maradona era as coach of Argentine side Gimnasia y Esgrima began with a loss on Sunday as defensive errors contributed to the club's 2-1 league defeat at home to Racing. Maradona, who took over at the ailing club last week, was an ani-

mated presence on the home touchline in La Plata, near Buenos Aires.

However, a goalkeeping error allowed Racing to take the lead 36 minutes into the match and although Matias Garcia equalised for Gimnasia six minutes into the second half they went behind again two minutes later after hesitant defending let Federico Zaracho grab a winner.

"I thought the team played well, the lads were great, but we need to keep working," said Maradona, who is coaching in his homeland for the first time since he led the national team in 2010. "We're not finished vet.

The result was Gimnasia's fifth defeat in their first six league games and leaves the club rooted to the bottom of the 24-team table with one point.

(Source: Reuters)

Pep: City players helped me lose 'Fraudiola' tag

Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola has praised his players for helping him to lose the "Fraudiola" tag that was aimed at him during his first season in England.

Guardiola failed to win a trophy in his first campaign at the Etihad and his tactics and passing playing style were questioned.

He has since won back-to-back Premier League titles with City and steered the club to an unprecedented domestic Treble last season.

"They gave me all the prestige I have in England, when the first season when it was Fraud Guardiola, Fraudiola," he said at a news conference

"This kind of game here in England -- it's not possible to play because you need to have tackles and you have to play like that -- these players gave me the prestige that I have.

"And now all around the world people say how good a manager I am -- it's for them, not for me.'

City suffered a shock 3-2 defeat against Norwich City on Saturday with defenders John Stones and Nicolas Otamendi at fault for the winning goal.

Guardiola refused to criticise his players and took full responsibility for a loss that sees his side trail table-topping Liverpool by five points.

"We were not precise up front or we made individual mistakes but I am responsible for that, but that is part of the game," he added.

"Sometimes it happens and the players know it's not necessary

Spain World Cup win, US woes blow Olympic basketball wide open

The Tokyo 2020 Olympics basketball suddenly looks wide open after reigning champions the United States suffered their worst World Cup, Spain triumphed and Argentina surprised.

World Cup bronze medallists France, and Australia, who were edged out of the medals but pushed eventual winners Spain all the way in the semi-finals, will also be in contention.

And not forgetting Serbia, who along with Gregg Popovich's young Team USA were the favourites in China but were also surprise victims in the quarter-finals.

The Tokyo Games are just over 10 months away and after some downtime following their exertions at the World Cup, teams will begin training their sights on next summer.

"It's exactly what I knew it to be because I've been involved with it before and in this day and age basketball in other countries is not a secret," Popovich said after his team's disappointing seventh-placed finish. "So it's not like there's an epiphany or

revelation to be made. "There are wonderful teams and wonder-

ful coaches all over the world so there's no surprise in any of that." If the United States can convince the likes

of double gold medallist LeBron James to play in Tokyo, they will be favourites to make it four Olympic titles in a row. But it remains to be seen whether the



flak flying Team USA's way after the China debacle scares the A-listers away or stings them into action.

Spain not the most talented' Spain's World Cup triumph, sealed with a comprehensive 95-75 victory over surprise finalists Argentina on Sunday in Beijing, was built on defence and teamwork honed from

playing together down the years. They also had Ricky Rubio, the Phoenix Suns point guard who was named tournament MVP, and the experience and international

knowhow of Marc Gasol. Rubio described the Spain team as "a

family" In contrast, the US roster was one of the

youngest in China and was thrown together at the last minute. The players were still getting to know each other as the tournament began.

'We were not the tallest or most talented, or in the odds when the tournament started, but we worked hard," said Spain's coach Sergio Scariolo, an assistant at NBA champions the Toronto Raptors.

"They didn't lose faith in themselves, and basketball rewarded them."
Disappointment fires Australia

Australia brought the Americans' run of 78 consecutive wins in major competitions and exhibition games to an end just before the World Cup, a forewarning of what was to come

The Boomers led Spain for much of their thrilling semi-final, only to lose in double overtime. They similarly ran out of gas in their bronze-medal match against France.

It left Australia still searching for a medal in the worlds or Olympics -- a barren run that they hope they can finally snap next summer.

Mitch Creek, their forward, hopes that the Boomers will have all their players for Tokyo -- they were missing Philadelphia 76ers Jonah Bolden and Ben Simmons in China. This team is going to be a very powerful

team when it comes to the Olympic Games,' he warned.

(Source: Eurosport)

Cristiano Ronaldo 'embarrassed' over rape allegations



Ronaldo repeatedly denied the accusation and the Clark County District Attorney's Office announced in July that the Juventus striker would not face charges as they could not "be proven beyond a reasonable doubt".

According to Der Spiegel, Mayorga first made a complaint of sexual assault in 2009 and subsequently reached an out-of-court settlement with Ronaldo. It was claimed by the magazine she was paid \$375,000 as part of a privacy agreement, preventing her from going public with the allegations.

The Portuguese, speaking to Piers Morgan in an interview to be aired on ITV on Tuesday, has spoken for the first time about the impact the case has had on his family life. "They play with your dignity. It's hard,"

said Ronaldo. You have a girlfriend, you have a family you have kids. When they play with your honesty, it's bad, it's hard.

"I felt embarrassed, I just changed the channel for Cristiano Jr not to see that they speak badly about his father, about a very bad case. It makes me feel so bad, to be honest."

Also being reported in the interview is an emotional moment when Piers Morgan showed the Juve star some footage of his father, José Dinis Aveiro, who died at the age of 52 because of alcoholism, expressing his pride about his son's early achievements. At this point Cristiano was visibly overcome with emotion.

"I didn't expect to cry. I have never seen this video. It's amazing," he responded.

José Dinis Aveiro died in 2005 due to liver failure. The footage had been recorded before the 2004 European Championship in Portugal, when Cristiano was just 19 years old and was emerging in England, at Manchester United. Cristiano's father was not able to witness his son's incredible sporting achievements, with Manchester United, with Real Madrid, Juventus, and Portugal. Another disappointment for the player is that his father never got to know his grandchildren.

Italian TV station fires pundit for racist Lukaku comment



Inter Milan striker Romelu Lukaku has once again been the target of a racist episode in Italy -- but this time on television, with a TV commentator sacked after making shock-ingly abusive remarks about the Belgian international on air.

Luciano Passirani was speaking on Top Calcio 24 about the Inter Milan striker when he commented: "Lukaku is one of the strongest, I like him a lot because he has strength: he is the alter ego of [Duvan] Zapata at Atalanta.

"They have something more than the others, there's nothing else to do. They score the goals and drag your team forward," he added. "If you go one-on-one with him, he will

kill you. Either you give him 10 bananas to eat. or That prompted program director Fabio "could no longer avezzan

Lukaku, who was signed from Manchester United this summer, has already scored two goals in three games for Inter Milan.

But his successful start was marred by Cagliari fans singing monkey chants earlier in September. He wrote on Instagram after the game: "Many players in the last month have suffered from racial abuse ... I did yesterday to [sic]," Lukaku wrote on Instagram.

"Football is a game to be enjoyed by everyone and we shouldn't accept any form of discrimination that will put our game in shame. I hope the football federations all over [the] world react strongly on all cases of discrimination."

To make things worse, his own Inter Milan fans claimed monkey chants directed at him

to tell them or watch some clips.

"Right now in the locker room they know they have to improve on that or it will not be possible to compete [for the title]." (Source: Soccernet)

Arsenal too scared of Watford and no-one wanted the ball - Xhaka

Arsenal captain Granit Xhaka says the Gunners "were too scared" as they let slip a two-goal lead to draw 2-2 at Watford.

Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang scored twice in the first half for the visitors but the Hornets hit back after the break through Tom Cleverley and a late Roberto Pereyra penalty.

Watford finished with 31 shots on goal, 23 of those coming in the second half.

"No-one wanted the ball. In the end we are happy to take a point," Xhaka said.

"We didn't show our game in the second half, we were too scared." Watford's first goal came as a result of Gunners defender Sokratis Papastathopoulos giving away possession inside his own area, allowing Cleverley to score.

Since the start of last season, Arsenal's players have made a combined 14 errors leading to opposition goals in the Premier League - at least two more than any other club in this time.

The 31 shots Watford had against Unai Emery's side were the most Arsenal have ever faced in a Premier League fixture since Opta began collecting such data in 2003-04.

Xhaka added: "Every team in the Premier League is strong enough to score but you have to keep calm, to show good character, to be mentally strong. We weren't today.

After winning their first two Premier League games of the season against Newcastle and Burnley, Arsenal are now without win in three following defeat at Liverpool and draws against Tottenham and now Watford.

"We have a lot of young players," said Emery. They will really learn in the next matches.

"We will continue with our way of working. We need to improve, to take some information from this match. But also we'll learn about that."

(Source: Mirror)

"I remember one day I was at home in the living room with my girlfriend watching the television, to see the news and they talk about Cristiano Ronaldo and this and that. I listened to my kids coming down the stairs and I changed the channel because I was embarrassed.

participate in our broadcasts" despite him being "the first to apologize."

"One of our commentators, in trying to define Lukaku's strength through a series of compliments, unfortunately chose a very bad metaphor that turned out to be racist, said Ravezzani.

"We cannot tolerate that, even unintentionally, a person who speaks for hours makes

But an open letter from the fan group 'Curva Nord," posted on its Facebook page, claimed the Cagliari fans were showing Lukaku a form of "respect" and that Italy doesn't have a problem with racism.

"We are really sorry you thought that what happened in Cagliari was racist," the group said.

(Source: CNN)

Five things we learned in European football this weekend

(Source: AS)

Neymar returned with a bang for Paris Saint-Germain, while Ansu Fati made sure Barcelona did not miss Lionel Messi. or Neymar for that matter.

As RB Leipzig showed their mettle in the Bundesliga and Ajax warmed up for the start of the Champions League, here are five things we learned in Europe over the weekend.

Actions speak loudest for Neymar

The vitriol aimed at Neymar from certain sections of the Paris Saint-Germain support during their game against Strasbourg on Saturday was quite something, as the Brazilian played his first game for the club after his summer-long transfer saga.

The world's most expensive player was booed, whistled and insulted by his own fans, and it was impossible not to watch the game and think that he needed to say something to calm the mood among unhappy fans.

He did speak after the game, but first he gave PSG a 1-0 win with a stunning injury-time overhead kick. Not everyone was won over immediately, but more moments like that one and even the angriest fans of the French champions may be willing to forget how desperate Neymar was to return to Barcelona.

Fantastic Fati the real deal

Teenage starlet Ansu Fati continues to marvel for Barcelona, with the 16-year-old starting and scoring the opener in his team's 5-2 demolition of Valencia in La Liga.

That followed a goal from the bench at Osasuna two weeks earlier, and it is easy to see why some in Catalonia think the youngster from Guinea Bissau could be the most exciting



talent to emerge at the club since Lionel Messi 15 years ago.

Fati, who was raised in Seville, also set up a goal for Frenkie de Jong, while 21-year-old Carles Perez lined up on the opposite flank for Ernesto Valverde's side with Messi still sidelined.

"Coming to terms with being a Barcelona player is a job for anybody, all the more so for such a young boy," said Valverde.

"We want him to get to know the top level, see how difficult it is and come to terms with how much work he has to put in. He can still bring more to the team.

Leipzig are title contenders

Saturday was billed as an early litmus test in the Bun-

desliga title race as last year's top four met each other in two early season six-pointers.

Borussia Dortmund delivered a statement with a 4-0 thrashing of Bayer Leverkusen, but it was RB Leipzig who made the biggest impression as they held on to top spot with a 1-1 draw at home to Bayern Munich.

Utterly outclassed in the first half, a tactical change and a well-timed penalty saw Leipzig pick up a deserved draw to stay top of the table after four games.

The result saw Julian Nagelsmann's side hailed as genuine title contenders in the German press, though the coach himself warned the team not to get ahead of themselves.

"We are not the only team who want to attack Bayern," he said

Mkhitaryan off mark with Roma

On-loan Arsenal midfielder Henrikh Mkhitaryan scored on his debut for Roma as the capital side got their first win this season, 4-2 over Sassuolo.

The Armenia international scored the third goal after Brvan Cristante's header and a vollev from Edin Dzeko. with Justin Kluivert completing the scoring in a 21-minute first-half spell.

Mkhitaryan failed to meet expectations at both Arsenal and former club Manchester United and is hoping to revive his career at Roma, who are now eighth in Serie A.

'With (Jordan) Veretout and Mkhitaryan in the team, we're better at keeping the ball," said new Roma coach Paulo Fonseca.

No restriction on Iranian women to attend Cambodia match: Govt Spox

ORTS TEHRAN — Iranian d e s k government spokesman Ali Rabiei said on Monday that the Iranian women can buy tickets to watch the match between Iran and Cambodia.

Team Melli will host Cambodia in the 2022 World Cup qualifier in Group C on Oct. 10 in Tehran's Azadi Stadium.

The Iranian authorities have been accused of allowing a select group of women into Azadi stadium to watch the matches but Rabiei says there is no restriction on the females to attend the match.

"Tickets will go on sale for all females for the match against Čambodia. We cannot ignore the women-related issues. We need to show tolerance and should not create a situation in which a girl like Sahar Khodayari setting herself on fire," Rabiei said.

The FIFA officials will check the preparations made by the Iranian FA to provide access to that Oct. 10 match for women.

In a statement FIFA expressed its condolences and said it reiterated "our calls on the Iranian authorities to ensure the freedom and safety of any women engaged in this legitimate fight to end the stadium ban for women in Iran.

Soccer is Iran's most popular spectator sport, with wrestling and volleyball not far behind. Team Melli, which literally means "the nation's team," enjoys tremendous support. Club teams attract crowds that rival those in Europe.



Very nice to score four goals in my debut: Gucci



S P O R T S TEHRAN — PEC Zwolle forward Reza Ghoochannejhad says that he is very happy to score four goals in his debut.

Gucci made a historic return to the Eredivisie on Sunday. The striker came off the bench to score four goals as PEC Zwolle came from behind to defeat RKC Waalwijk 6-2.

Gucci made history since he is the first player in Eredivisie history with four goals after coming on as a substitute.

"We had to do something. As a team,

we played very well in the second half, this tastes like more. I am very happy because I had a very good debut," Ghoochannejhad said after the match.

Ghoochannejhad joined Dutch Eredivisie side PEC Zwolle from APOEL Nicosia in early September.

«I was well received here from day one. I came here because it was easy to acclimatize. I am feeling good being here,"

he added. Zwolle sit 12th in 18-team league with seven points from six matches

Iran crowned CAFA U15 Women's champions



S P O R T S TEHRAN — Iran lifted 2019 CAFA U15 Women's Championship trophy on Monday.

Iran defeated Uzbekistan 3-2 in their third match and topped the event with three wins.

Ghazal Morshedi, Diana Norouzi and Fatemeh Yousefi scored for Iran.

The Persians had already defeated Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan respectively.

Iran captain Mohaddesh Zolfi was named as the tournament's Most Valuable Player.

She has been key to Iran's success in Tashkent, scoring twice in her side's opening 4-0 win over Tajikistan on Friday, before scoring the winner in Saturday's 1-0 win over Kyrgyz Republic.

The round-robin competition featured Kyrgyz Republic, Iran and Tajikistan compete as well as host nation and 2017 winners Uzbekistan.

The competition was held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan from September 13 to 16.

The CAFA Youth Championship is an international football competition in Central Asia for the member nations of the Central Asian Football Association (CAFA).

Australia stun Iran at Asian **Volleyball C'ship**

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** — Australia defeated Iran 3-1 (25–22, 23–25, 21–25, 21–25) at the 2019 Asian Men's Volleyball Championship at the 12,000-seater Azadi Sports Complex here on Sunday. Iran sit second in Pool A behind Australia after two wins over

Sri Lanka and Qatar.

Iran advanced to Pool E along with Australia, China and India. Pool F consists of Japan, South Korea, Chinese Taipei and Pakistan.

The next round will be held on Tuesday.

The event is a biennial international volleyball tournament organized by the Asian volleyball governing body, the Asian Volleyball Federation (AVC). The tournament is being held from Sept. 13 to 21.

Top eight teams of this tournament will qualify for the 2020 Asian Olympic Qualification Tournament, which will be held in Jiangmen, China from 7 to 12 January 2020, where the winners will qualify to the 2020 men's Olympic volleyball tournament.

Iran's national men & women teams qualify for Asian Table Tennis **Championship**

IRNA — Iran's national men and women table tennis teams registered their second wins on the first day of the playoff to cruise to the Asian Table Tennis Championships in Indonesia.

The national women's team, comprised of Neda Shahsavari, Fatemeh Jamalifar and Mahshid Samet, quashed Makao 3-0 on Sunday and qualified for the knockout stage. They had defeated Nepal in their first match.

The men's team also beat Bangladesh and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to be eligible for the last round.



The 2019 ITTF-ATTU Asian Table Tennis Championships kicked off on Sunday September 15 at Yogyakarta's GOR Among Rogo Stadium, Indonesia.

This tournament also serve as Tokyo 2020 Olympic qualifier competition with quota places up for grabs in each category.

The tournament in Indonesia will have participants plying their trade in six different categories - men's team, women's team, men's doubles, women's doubles, men's singles and women's singles.

The team events were conducted first from Sunday (September 15), with nations contesting in eight groups for the women's team and nine groups for the men's team events. The finals for the women's team event will be played on September 17 while the men's team final will be held the next day

On September 18, the women's singles games are slated to begin with 64 participants taking to the court for the first round of the knockout games, alongside the men's doubles' first rounds.

The men's singles, on the other hand, are scheduled to be played the following day, coinciding with the women's doubles. The finals for these two categories will be played on September 22, while the women's singles and men's doubles finals will be played a day earlier.

IPL: Esteghlal held by Naft Masjed Soleyman

The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) has suspended Uzbekistani powerlifter Navruzbek Abdurasulov for four years for committing an anti-doping violation.

The athlete who competed in the men's up to 107kg class returned an adverse analytical finding for dehydrochloromethyl-testosterone metabolite 4a-chloro-17B-hydroxymethyl-17a-methyl-18-nor-5a-androst-13-en-3a-ol (DHCMT metabolite) in a urine sample provided on 15 April 2019 in an out of competition test in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

This substance is included on the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) 2019 Prohibited List under the category S1.1A Anabolic Androgenic Steroids (exogenous).

As a result of his violation, Abdurasulov will be ineligible for competition for four years from 15 April 2019 to 14 April 2023. All his results obtained from 15 April 2019 and onwards will be disqualified including forfeiture of any medals, points, records and prizes.

James Sclater, the IPC's Anti-Doping Director, said: "As part of our increased investment in anti-doping



activities, the IPC is conducting more targeted out of competition tests on athletes.

'Åbdurasulov was part of the IPC's Registered Testing Pool, a group of top-level athletes in specific Paralympic sports who take part in an out-of-competition testing programme.

The IPC would like to remind all athletes the principle of strict liability applies to anti-doping matters and that any athletes who need to take a prohibited substance for medical reasons should seek a Therapeutic Use Exemption.

Each athlete is strictly liable for the substances found in his or her sample, and that an anti-doping rule violation occurs whenever a prohibited substance (or its metabolites or markers) is found in his or her bodily specimen, whether or not the athlete intentionally or unintentionally used a prohibited substance or was negligent or otherwise at fault.

As a signatory of the World Anti-Doping Code (WADC), the IPC remains committed to a doping-free sporting environment at all levels. The IPC, together with the International Federations and the National Paralympic Committees, established the IPC Anti-Doping Code to prevent doping in sport for Paralympic athletes, in the spirit of fair play.

The IPC Anti-Doping Code is in conformity with the general principles of the WADC.

(Source: Paralymic)

Endurance athlete completes longest ocean swim

VIEUX FORT, St Lucia (Reuters)

- Endurance athlete Cameron Bellamy completed the longest recorded ocean channel swim on Sunday, covering the 151.7 km (94 miles) from Barbados to St Lucia in the Caribbean in 56 hours and 36 minutes, according to the official website tracking his progress.

The 37-year-old South African set out from St Peters Bay in Barbados at 8.20 on Saturday morning, swimming in flat seas with gentle swells but hot conditions, reaching St Lucia just before 5 p.m. local time on Sunday to be met by the country's prime minister Allen Chastanet.

"He did it!" read a banner message on the tracker website.

Local media reported that paramedics took Bellamy to a medical facility for mandatory tests, but he appeared in good spirits when he exited the water after being swept a little further by the current than planned.

The swim is the latest in a list of endurance achievements by Bellamy, who previously rowed across the Indian Ocean and has swum the English channel, raising money for charity.

His swim beats a 124.4 km swim by Chloe McCardel from the south of Eleuthera Island to Nassau in the Ba-



hamas five years ago, recognized by the Marathon Swimmers Federation as the longest ocean swim. The organization is yet to formally verify Bellamy's swim. Bellamy drank every 30 minutes and ate every hour, according to updates on his Facebook page, following a strict feeding schedule to ensure his body stayed nourished and covered his body with a zinc-based lotion to protect it from the sun and salt water.

To combat "salt water mouth", he applied petroleum jelly to his mouth, lips and tongue hourly and washed his mouth out with a dental solution.

Bellamy had originally sought to swim last month from Cuba to the Florida Keys, but said his plan had been scuppered by the refusal of American authorities to allow his support boat to make the journey.

TASNIM — Esteghlal football team were held to a 1-1 draw by Naft Masjed Soleyman in week three of the Iran Professional League (IPL) on Sunday.

Mehdi Ghaedi gave visiting Esteghlal the lead after 16 minutes but Hamed Noormohammadi equalized the match with a header in the 70th minute.

Esteghlal have yet to win with Andrea Stramaccioni in the new IPL season.

In Isfahan, Zob Ahan and Tractor played out a goalless draw. Saipa defeated Nassaji 4-3 and Shahin Bushehr drew 1-1 with Paykan

AFC President meets Uzbek Head of State to discuss football development

The Asian Football Confederation President, Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa, has arrived in Tashkent and has met HE Shavkat Mirziyoyev, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The high-level discussions centered on the role and impact of the government reforms in the rise of football in Uzbekistan.

On his arrival in the Uzbek capital, the AFC President was greeted by Dilmurod Nabiev, Sports Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Oybek Kasimov, the Deputy Minister and Ravshan Irmatov, Uzbekistan Football Association Senior Vice President.

The AFC President also met Abdusalom Azizov, the Uzbekistan FA President and other top officials at the FA headquarters to discuss the further development of football in the country and co-operation in organizing AFC events in Uzbekistan in the near future.

As part of the Central Asian tour, the AFC President will also visit the Kyrgyz Republic (September 17-19) and Tajikistan (September 19-21).

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you may regard as an evidence of goodness. Imam Ali (AS)

Film scores by Alfred Newman up for discussion at **Tehran center**

TEHRAN — Tehran's Niavaran Cultural s k Center will be hosting a session on Thursday to review film scores by prominent American composer Alfred Newman (1900–1970). Iranian musician and scholar Nasrollah Davudi is scheduled

to discuss a number of Newman's works during



the session. Newman was born in New Haven, Connecticut. He is known for his work on "All About Eve" (1950), "How the West Was Won" (1962) and Camelot" (1967).

In a career spanning more than four decades, Newman composed the scores for over 200 motion pictures. From his start as a music prodigy, he came to be regarded as a respected figure in the history of film music.

He won nine Academy

A poster for a review session for Alfred Newman's film Awards and was nominated scores at Tehran's Niavaran 43 times, contributing to the Cultural Center.

Newmans being the extended family with the most Academy Award nominations, totaling 92 nominations in various music categories.

"Wuthering Heights", "The Hunchback of Notre Dame", "The Mark of Zorro", "How Green Was My Valley", "The Song of Bernadette" and "Captain from Castile" are among his other noteworthy credits.

Newman and two of his fellow composers, Max Steiner and Dimitri Tiomkin, were considered the "three godfathers of film music".

Iran's "Zero to Platform" nominated for Discovery Award at Raindance **Film Festival**

Be tested for HIV to watch "Monkey" on Reza Abdoh

A R T TEHRAN — Vahid d e s k Rahjuy and Hossein Maleki, the directors and writers of "Monkey" have arranged for theatergoers to be tested for HIV and informed about AIDS voluntarily at no cost before and after watching the play that is about the Iranian-American theater director Reza Abdoh who died of the disease in 1995 at the age of 32.

"In collaboration with the Health Ministry, several medical teams are present in the courtyard of the Molavi Theater to test theatergoers for HIV and give them information about AIDS," Rahjuy told the Persian service of Honaronline on Saturday.

"One of the play's aims is to educate people about AIDS and raise their knowledge of the disease as well as to improve the treatment of those people who are suffering from AIDS," he noted.

The documentary play tells the story of a theater student who decides to write his thesis on the plays staged by Abdoh, but his research on the subject leads him to a new path in his life.

"This play is the outcome of several months of research about AIDS and dialogues with people with HIV from all walks of life," Rahjuy said, and added that the play gives the audience a real insight into the interactions among people, the disease and environment.

He also said, "This is the first time a play focuses on the life of one of the most important Iranian directors in the American avant-garde theater. He has been acknowledged in the West, but unfortunately, is unknown in Iran.

Abdoh, writer and director of acclaimed plays such as "The Hip-Hop Waltz of Eurydice", died in 1995.



Behnam Hassanpur acts in a scene from "Monkey". (Tiwall/Sara Saqafi)

"Relentlessly inventive, he pushed his Abdoh's aesthetic language borrowed from fairy tales, BDSM, talk shows, raves, video art, and the history of avant-garde theater,"

the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York wrote about him in June 2018 when it hosted an exhibition on Abdoh.

Yarava Ensemble to perform at German festival



German violinist Susanne Zapf accompanies the Tehran-based ensemble Yarava in a concert at the Da Theater House in May 2017.

TEHRAN — Yarava e s k Ensemble from Tehran will be giving a concert in October at Randfestspiele, a music festival taking place in Zepernick, a district in the German city of Berlin.

Mehdi Jalali is the leader of the nsemble, which is scheduled to perform

of the festival, which will be held from October 3 to 6. German opera singer and composer

actors and audiences to their limits amid

ambitious, unusual, disorienting stage sets.

Margarete Huber, her fellow cellist Ülrike Brand and double bass player Matthias Bauer will accompany Yarava in their first performance on October 3.

The ensemble will give their second

Khorshid film festival to review **German shorts**



A scene from "Sara the Dancer" by German director Tim Ellrich. **TEHRAN** — A lineup

e s k of 17 short movies by German filmmakers will be screened at the 7th edition of the Khorshid Independent and Experimental Film Festival, the organizers announced on Monday.

"A Year along the Geostationary Orbit" by Felix Dierich, "Three Casualties" by Effect of Cannonry on Thunderclouds", all co-directed by Juliane Jaschnow and Stefanie Schroeder.

"Cold Valley" and "Umbra", both co-directed by Johannes Krell and Florian

Fischer will also go on screen at the festival. The Khorshid Independent and

Experimental Film Festival, which aims at

TEHRAN — "Zero to Platform", a s k documentary by Sahar Mosayyebi, chronicling the life of three Iranian wushu athlete sisters, has been nominated for the Discovery Award at the 27th Raindance Film Festival in London, the organizers have announced.

The documentary recounts the concerted efforts of the Mansurian sisters, Elaheh, Shahrbanu and Soheila, who chose wushu martial art to achieve success in life despite all the hardship they have faced throughout their life.

The film registered as "Platform" in the festival's schedule will be competing with five other films, including "A Dobugawa Dream" from Japan, "Miguelito" from Australia and "Oray" from Germany.

As a large independent film event in the UK, the Raindance Film Festival will be running from September 18 to 29.

The festival is officially recognized by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the British Academy of Film and Television Arts and the British Independent Film Awards. Selected shorts will qualify for Oscars and BAFTA considerations.

Tom Stoppard's "A Separate Peace" to go on stage in Tehran

A R T TEHRAN — The Bistun Theater Group e s k led by Iranian actor and director Kurosĥ Soleimani plans to perform Czech-born British playwright Tom Stoppard's "A Separate Peace" at Tehran's Neauphlele-Chateau Theater during November.

Soleimani has renamed the play "The White Silence" to perform it in Iran.

The play is about John Brown, who goes to a country nursing home with a case of money expecting hotel-style service. He's a kind of a dropout who is bound to be a puzzle to a profession geared to treating the sick, since he is not physically ill and apparently is not mentally ill, either.

The White Silence" will remain on stage for one month.

a repertoire of works by contemporary Iranian musicians at the festival, the organizers have announced. "Water" is the theme of the 27th edition

performance on October 6. Golnaz Khalili, Pegah Taslimi, Shaqayeq Baqeri and Asal Karimi are members of the group.

Jens Pecho and "Sara the Dancer" by Tim Ellrich are among the films.

The lineup also includes "The Wolf Fearing the Wolf", "Darkness" and "The

supporting independent filmmakers and developing the production of experimental films, will be held at the Iranian Artists Forum in Tehran from September 30 to October 3.

Montreal cinematheque to screen Iranian shorts

TEHRAN — The Cinematheque Quebecoise in Montreal, Canada plans to review 13 Iranian short films during a program, which will be held from September 23 to 26.

The program aims at offering an opportunity for Canadian audiences to discover a new portrait of Iranians, which has never been shown in the Western media, the organizers have said.

'Bayern Munich" by Negin Aminzadeh, about a man who finds out his girlfriend is leaving him while watching a soccer match, "Black Eared" by Behzad Azadi, about a young babysitter who is accused of mistreatment, and "Gaze" by Farnush Samadi, about a woman who witnesses a robbery, are among the films.

"Elephant's Shadow" by Arman Khansarian, "Retouch" by Kaveh Mazaheri, "Lay My Bed in the Room" by Amir Tuderusta and "Highlight" by Shahrzad Dadgar will also go on screen during the program.

'Elephant's Shadow" tells the story of Leila whose father has only a few days left to live according to his



A scene from Iranian director Shahrzad Dadgar's short film "Highlight".

doctors. His only concern is for his daughter's welfare as he knows how difficult life can be for a divorcee in Tehran. Leila decides to plan a scenario for her dad so that he can die peacefully.

"Retouch" is about a young woman whose husband is trapped under a halter during a workout, but she declines to save him and, consequently, he dies.

"Lay My Bed in the Room" is about a family that has to leave together in a house for a while after the death of a loved one.

The lineup also includes "Like a Good Kid" by Arian Vazirdaftari about the tensions between a child and his babysitter, "Greed" by Mohammad Mojallal about a man who is accused of stealing a golden tooth of a deceased and "Vision" by Soheil Amir-Sharifi about a man who betrays his girlfriend's trust.

The program will also screen "Manicure" by Arman Fayyaz, "Marzieh" by Dornaz Hajiha and "Daad" by Moha Arzhang.

Each screening will be followed by a review session, which will be attended by critics and film experts, including Canadian filmmaker Simon Galiero.

Auction for Banksy artwork depicting MPs as chimpanzees

LONDON (The Guardian) - Banksy's withering view of the UK parliament, showing a Commons chamber packed full of chimpanzees, is to appear at auction for what could be a record amount of money.

The artist painted Devolved Parliament in 2009, when the word Brexit would have baffled people.

But timing is everything. The artwork will go on display in London for the first time later this month at Sotheby's auction house, less than a mile from the House of Commons.

Alex Branczik, Sotheby's European head of contemporary art, said Banksy was a modern-day Voltaire.

He said: "Regardless of where you sit in the Brexit debate, there's no doubt that this work is more pertinent now than it has ever been, capturing unprecedented levels of political chaos and confirming Banksy as the satirical polemicist of our time."

At nearly 4 meters (13ft), the work is the largest known canvas by Banksy. It is being sold with an auction estimate of £1.5m-£2m. That means it could exceed the record of \$1.9m (£1.52m) paid for Keep it Spotless, a Damien Hirst spot painting on to which Banksy stenciled a maid cleaning.

Banksy originally painted Devolved Parliament for his takeover of his hometown museum in Bristol in 2009, a show that attracted more than 300,000 visitors and became one of the top 10 most visited exhibitions anywhere in the world that year.

It was lent earlier this year, by its anonymous owner, to a display at Bristol Museum marking both the exhibition's 10th anniversary and Britain's original planned exit from the EU on March 29.

At the time, Banksy wrote on Instagram: "I made this 10 years ago. Bristol museum have just put it back on display to mark Brexit day. Laugh now, but one day no one will be in charge"