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Iran's currency value stable despite new U.S. sanctions

TEHRAN — Iran's national currency rial has been holding firm over the past few days despite the new U.S. sanctions which have targeted the country's central bank and National Development Fund. Press TV reported. Rial was traded at year-long highs of about 114,000 per U.S. dollar on Sunday, according to currency rate websites and reports from Tehran's unofficial exchange market. → 4

Larijani says Iran is friend of regional states

TEHRAN — The armed forces of the Islamic Republic will not let the Persian Gulf to become a playground to create insecurity in the region. Majlis Speaker Ali Larijani said on Sunday. He was making a reference to the U.S. plan to create a so-called security coalition in the Persian Gulf. "This is a new plot to plunder the region," Larijani said, according to Tasnim. → 2

UN urges Saudi to seize opportunity as Yemen offers ceasefire

TEHRAN — The United Nations has welcomed a proposal by Yemen's Houthi Ansarullah movement to halt strikes on Saudi Arabia in return for an end to the Saudi-led coalition attacks on Yemen. → 13

ARTICLE
Mahnaz Abdi
Head of the TehranTimes Economy Desk

Chabahar-Zahedan railway project requires private sector's contribution

Connecting the ports to the railway network is an issue seriously emphasized and followed up by Iran over the recent years, as the country is strongly pursuing the objective of boosting exports and transit via its ports. Chabahar Port in southeast Iran is the most prioritized one for railway connection as the port's exemption from the new round of the U.S. sanctions on the country is an opportunity for development of export, transit, and also transshipment. Lying on the coast of the Gulf of Oman in Iran's southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan Province, Chabahar is the country's only oceanic port and given its strategic location in the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) development of the port is of high significance for Iran. The project for building a railroad connecting Chabahar to Zahedan (capital city of Sistan-Baluchestan Province) is planned to be completed by the end of the Iranian calendar year of 1400 (March 2022).

Last week, Iranian First Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri announced that Supreme Leader Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei has agreed with withdrawing \$300 million from the National Development Fund (NDF) for Chabahar-Zahedan railway project.

The official said that the government attaches high importance to the development of Makran (a semi-desert coastal strip along the coast of the Gulf of Oman).

He stressed that the government is making every effort to implement and complete the projects in Makran and in this due Transport Ministry is working hard on Chabahar-Zahedan railway project.

Completing Chabahar-Zahedan railway projects has become more necessary since inauguration of the first development phase of Shahid Beheshti Port (an extension to Chabahar Port) in December 2017, which tripled the port's annual shipment capacity to 8.5 million tons. → 4

13 million Venezuelans ink petition against U.S. imperialism

TEHRAN — The government of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro has launched a worldwide campaign in denunciation of U.S. economic sanctions against the Latin American country and garnered more than 13 million signatures as part of an official petition set to be delivered to the United Nations.

Maduro initiated the campaign last month after U.S. President Donald Trump issued an executive order that officially seized Venezuelan state assets in the U.S. and imposed a complete economic and diplomatic blockade on the country.

The government in Caracas wrapped up the "No more Trump" campaign with a total of 13,287,742 signatures on Sunday as thousands gathered in the capital as well as other major cities

across Venezuela to sign the petition calling on the United States to lift the unilateral blockade.

"In every corner of the planet, we have seen the #NoMoreTrump campaign because it is a feeling that has expanded to the peoples of the world. This campaign symbolizes anti-imperialism," said Venezuela's Vice President Delcy Rodriguez, who signed the petition herself during one of the closing acts in Caracas.

"The petition is the expression of the will of a people who want peace, progress, tranquility and above all want to guarantee a free and sovereign homeland," Rodriguez added.

In his executive order on August 5, Trump said "all property and interests in property of the government of Venezuela that are in the United States... are blocked and may not be transferred,

paid, exported, withdrawn, or otherwise dealt in." The order was also designed to prevent third-party countries doing business with Maduro's government.

"The petition is the expression of the will of a people who want peace, progress, tranquility and above all want to guarantee a free and sovereign homeland," Rodriguez added.

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Will General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi return to Egypt?

By Mokhtae Haddadi

TEHRAN — For the first time since Abdel Fattah el-Sisi came to power in Egypt, there have been wide protests against him in Cairo and other cities. The protesters have called for his dismissal due to growing corruption.

There were wide protests against el-Sisi in Alexandria, Suez, Damietta, Dakahlia and Gharbia. Images have been spread on social media showing that protesters have taken down and ripped large pictures of Abdel Fattah el-Sisi.

Dozens of people were arrested in Tahrir Square, where the Egyptian revolution flared against Hosni Mubarak in 2011. Police used tear gas extensively, and security forces rush in the streets to react to smallest movement.

The protests were formed at the request of a campaign on social media launched by Muhammad Ali, exiled businessman. Muhammad Ali who is exiled in Barcelona, Spain asked to overthrow el-Sisi. The Egyptian contractor, who exposed el-Sisi's corruption cases, urged Egyptians to come to the streets and launch a revolution against him. The people's anger was aroused when Muhammad Ali posted files about the corruption of the President and the Egyptian army on social media. These files revealed that they wasted public treasury on the projects that have no benefits for Egyptian people, such as building Egyptian presidential palaces.

From the analysts' view, the Egyptian army is accused of entering in all economic projects,

and making certain companies to carry out the projects. Senior officers have also been paid by these projects, in addition to their salaries.

The supervisors believe that base on the Constitution, the Egyptian army goes beyond the observation of the parliament. It makes the army a closed and non-transparent organization that is not audited. No one knows how much funding and foreign financial assistance does it receive, how much domestic investment projects does it have, or how much it costs. The question is that, after the protests by the Egyptians against Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, will he keep his promise and step down? He has stated repeatedly that if Egyptian people want him to leave, he would not hesitate for a moment. → 13

REPORT
Faranak Bakhtiari
Tehran Times journalist

World Car-Free Day: costly cars, cheap fuel to blame for air pollution

Air pollution incurs financial loss of about 140 million rials (nearly \$3,300) for each family in Iran annually, however both high-priced vehicles and low-cost fuel are to blame for the air pollution severely haunting big cities of the country, said Behzad Ashjaei, secretary of the technical inspection committee of the Department of Environment.

According to the World Health Organization, seven million people die from air pollution every year, making it the greatest environmental threat to health today. Urban air pollution in particular is increasing by 8 percent every five years, and 95 percent of cities worldwide do not meet World Health Organization's guidelines.

An international movement to curb air pollution

World Car-Free Day is an international event celebrated every September 22 in which people are encouraged to use public or non-motorized transport to get around.

It has come a long way since its beginnings in 1956, when Dutch and Belgians abandoned their cars every Sunday to curb the effects of the Suez Crisis.

This Sunday, skyrocketing oil prices aren't the reason why 2,500 cities worldwide are participating in the "car-free day" initiative — it's the alarmingly high levels of NO2 and CO2 in the atmosphere.

Vehicles are a significant source of pollution, and transport is the fastest-growing source of fossil-fuel CO2 emissions, the largest contributor to climate change.

The results of going car free for one day are clear: the first "journée sans voiture" (day without a car), which took place in Paris in 2015, reduced exhaust emissions by 40 percent.

Last year in London, diverting traffic away from the marathon route caused local air pollution levels to drop by as much as 89 percent.

In this regard, UN Environment Program's "Share the Road" program supports governments and other stakeholders in developing countries to invest in infrastructure for pedestrians and bicycles. → 12



Naval parades in the Persian Gulf

Iranian military held naval parades (exercises) in the Persian Gulf near the port city of Bandar Abbas on Sunday. The parades marked an invasion of Iran by Saddam Hussein's army on September 22, 1980. Surprisingly enough, in recent months the United States and a few of its client states in the region are also showing teeth to Iran.

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Washington's policy of maximum pressure has not worked: Zarif

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has said that Washington's policy of sanction and pressure against Iran has not worked.

"The United States is running out of options. It is desperate. The policy of maximum pressure has not worked," he told CGTN in an interview aired on Sunday.

Pointing to recent sanctions on Central Bank of Iran (CBI), he said that the difference between these sanctions and previous sanctions on the CBI are twofold.

"First, central bank based on the sanctions cannot even be involved in transactions on food and medicine. It means that the central bank which is primary source of money for companies that buy food and medicine for Iran cannot finance them anymore. That means targeting the daily lives of ordinary people. Second, the difference between this designation and the previous designation is that it makes it more difficult for the next administration to remove these sanctions," he stated.

He added, "So, they want to make negotiations impossible. They want to make a change impossible. So, you need to re-examine the position of President Trump that he wants to negotiate with Iran. He just imposes a type of sanctions on Iran, on the central bank of Iran that would be very difficult for him and for his successor to remove."

Trump said on Friday that he has ordered sanctions on Iran's central bank at "the highest level." Trump, who had initially imposed the sanctions applied to Iran's central bank, said the new penalties on Iran mark the "highest sanctions ever imposed on a country."

Zarif said on Saturday that the U.S. sanctions on the central bank shows "desperation" and failure of "maximum pressure".

In a tweet, Zarif said that the sanctions displays "the preventing of CBI from financing import of food and medicine for our people".

He added that the sanctions also display "B Team's fear of U.S. return to negotiation and 'B Team's efforts to drag into war'".

Abdunnaser Hemmati, governor of Iran's central bank, also said late on Friday that the new sanctions prove Washington's inability to impose more pressures on the Islamic Republic.

"The U.S. administration's imposition of sanctions on the Central Bank of Iran again shows how empty their hands are in finding leverage against Iran," Hemmati stated.

"If such measures had been effective in pushing the cruel demands of that administration, the economic situation in the country (Iran) would be very different from the current one," he added, according to Tasnim. "The repeated failures of the U.S. administration over the past year and a half show that these sanctions have become more ineffective than ever," the central banker said, adding that the Iranian economy has proven its resilience to sanctions.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi also said on Saturday that Washington must admit failure of its sanction policy against Iran.

He described the U.S. foreign policy as "confused" and "frustrated" which is just based on "unilateralism, bullying and economic terrorism" and lacks "wise and dynamic initiatives" to settle issues peacefully.

"I hope the United States' officials will understand that they are not the only economic superpower anymore and that there are many countries which are interested in enjoying Iran's market and economic opportunities.

Mousavi urged the international community to devise a new economic and business system to reduce effects of the U.S. hostile actions.

Larijani says Iran is friend of regional states

U.S. Persian Gulf coalition aims to plunder the region, Larijani notes

➔ He made the remarks at a military ceremony held in the southern port city of Bandar Abbas to mark the Sacred Defense Week, which is the anniversary of the beginning of Iraq's war against Iran 39 years ago.

Larijani also said Iran is a friend of regional nations while Israel is the main enemy of Muslim states.

"The Iranian nation and its self-sacrificing armed forces view all Muslim nations as their brother and consider those countries' might the might of Islam, and regard the usurping Zionist regime (Israel) as a cancerous tumor in the region," the top parliamentarian said, according to Press TV.

He added, "The main reason behind insecurity in the region and the main enemy of Muslims is this very regime (Israel)."

The parliament speaker also lauded the Iranian armed forces as a national and regional asset, saying the armed forces have succeeded in establishing security in Iran and the region.

"The regional countries themselves are capable of establishing security in the region," he said.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Thursday reiterated Washington's plan to build a maritime coalition in the Persian Gulf to deter what he called Iranian threats.

He was speaking after talks with Saudi and Emirati leaders over the Sept. 14 attack on Saudi Arabian oil facilities that Washington and Riyadh have blamed on Tehran. Iran denies any involvement in the attack.

The Yemeni forces on September 14 launched drone attacks on two plants at the heart of Saudi Arabia's oil industry, including the world's biggest petroleum processing facility.

The attacks came in retaliation for the Saudi-led coalition's continued aggression on the Arabian Peninsula country.

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 Riyadh.

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

Iran displays Bavar-373 system in military parade

POLITICAL TEHRAN — In a military parade in south of Tehran on Sunday, the Iranian military displayed the Bavar-373 air defense missile system.

The parade marked the 39th anniversary of Saddam Hussein's war against Iran.

Bavar-373 is a mobile missile defense system designed to intercept and destroy incoming hostile targets. The system employs missiles that have a maximum range of 300 kilometers. The system is capable of simultaneously detecting up to 300 targets, tracking 60 targets at once and engaging six targets at a time.

The system is a competitor to Russia's S-300 missile system and brings quite a few substantial upgrades over its Russian equivalent.

According to the Fars news agency, the armed forces also displayed the home-made state-of-the-art missile defense system named 'Khordad 15' which is equipped with passive phased array radar system for detecting fighter jets, stealth targets and cruise missiles.

The system can trace targets, including fighter jets and enemy drones, 150km away



and intercept them at a range of 120km.

It can also trace stealth targets in areas 85km in distance, and destroy them at a distance of 45km.

Eighteen home-made ballistic missiles, in-

cluding Qadr, Emad, Sejil, Khorramshahr and Qiam were also displayed during the parade.

In addition to the powerful missiles, the military also unveiled a newly-developed home-made mine-resistant ambush pro-

tected (MRAP) vehicle for the first time in the nationwide parades.

Also, a new artillery system named Ha'el (Barrier) was for the first unveiled during the Sunday parades which is equipped with a passive radar system and can intercept the targets in a stealth mode.

The artillery system is mobile and has been designed to confront low-altitude targets, including cruise missiles, aggressor drones or little flying objects.

Iranian military might is being showcased at a time of tensions initiated by the United States and Saudi Arabia with Iran. The U.S. has been attempting to put together a maritime coalition to sail in the Persian Gulf following accusations that Iran has sabotaged oil shipping in the waterway.

Concurrent with the show of armaments, military forces across Iran held parades, including in the Persian Gulf. The military parades on September 22 mark the beginning of the Sacred Defense Week. Iran calls resistance against the invading Saddam Army in the 1980s "Sacred Defense".

Military holds parades

Iran ready to forgive neighbors' past mistakes and extend hand of friendship to them, says Rouhani

POLITICAL TEHRAN — At the start of the Sacred Defense Week, which marks the anniversary of Saddam Hussein's invasion of Iran on September 22, 1980, Armed Forces held military parades across the country.

Military parades were held in Tehran and 30 other provincial capitals, as well as the Persian Gulf waters.

The military parade in Tehran involved Army, the IRGC, police, border guards, and Basij.

Flanked by top military officers, Rouhani addressed the ceremony in south of Tehran. Rouhani said the Iranian military would neither allow any violation of its borders nor would it violate those of other countries.

Also, in an indirect reference to Saudi Arabia, Rouhani said Iran is ready to forgive the past mistakes of its neighbors and extend the hand of friendship toward them because the enemies were seeking to take advantage of the rifts among regional states.

He also said Iran will present at the United Nations this year an initiative for regional cooperation to ensure peace in the Strait of Hormuz, IRNA reported.

Rouhani made the remarks in Tehran during a military parade commemorating the 39th anniversary of Iraq's war against Iran.

■ **Iran to present 'Hormuz peace initiative' at UN**

Iran and regional countries can establish security in the Sea of Oman and Strait of Hormuz, he said.

"This year at the United Nations, we will present to the world the Hormuz peace initiative — the gist of which is love and hope — with the slogan 'The coalition of hope,'" Rouhani stated.

Rouhani is scheduled to travel to New York to attend the annual UN General Assembly meeting on Monday.

Rouhani added the presence of foreign forces for the region is dangerous for the security of shipping and oil flow.

"Our path is a path of creating unity and coordination with regional countries," the president stated, adding that those who want to attribute regional incidents to Iran are lying as they always do.

If they are truly after establishing security in the region, they must stop delivering dangerous weapons, fighters and bombs to the region, said Rouhani, referring to the United States.

"If they are truly after [establishing] security in the region, they [must] distance themselves from this region," he added.

Tensions between the U.S. and Iran have soared in recent days, especially after an attack by Yemeni Armed Forces against Saudi Arabia's



oil facilities, for which Washington and Riyadh have blamed Iran.

Iran has denied involvement in the attack, and a fierce war of words has been playing out between the two sides, with U.S. President Donald Trump threatening that his forces were "locked and loaded".

Last Monday, Iran officially warned U.S. officials against their claims that Iran had a role in the attacks. The warning was submitted to the Swiss ambassador to Tehran whose country represents the U.S. interests in Iran. Iran insisted in the letter that if "any moves"

takes place against the Islamic Republic, the aggressors will be faced with an immediate response and that the domain of the Iranian armed forces' response will not be limited to the "source of threat".

Top Iranian commanders have also firmly warned that Iran will hit back against any act of aggression.

In his Sunday remarks, President Rouhani slammed Washington's warmongering in the Middle East, saying, "You have always been a curse and a disaster for the region," and that the farther away the U.S. is from the region the more secure the region will become.

On the contrary, he continued, Iranian Armed Forces have brought security to the countries that they have helped.

"When they stood by the side of the people of Iraq, Syria, Palestine, and Lebanon, they brought security to those lands and managed to root out savage terrorists in the region," the president said.

The current Tehran-Washington tensions were caused by the U.S. withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), in May 2018, which was followed by a series of increasingly hostile moves against Iran, including re-imposition of harsh sanctions and allegations of misconduct in the region.

IRGC deputy chief: Iran acting patiently toward U.S. hostile moves for sake of Islam

POLITICAL TEHRAN — The deputy chief of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said on Sunday that Iran is acting patiently towards the United States' hostile moves for the sake of Islam and Muslims.

Rear Admiral Ali Fadavi made the remarks on the sidelines of a military parade marking 39 years after Saddam Hussein's army invaded Iran.

"I hope countries in the region will understand that Iran acts patiently toward U.S. hostile deeds for the sake of Islam and Muslims," Fars quoted Fadavi as saying.

The commander also played down military threats against Iran by certain

regional Arab countries lying on the southern shores of the Persian Gulf.

"When the U.S. has admitted weakness against the capabilities of the Islamic Republic, we pay no mind to the threats made by some regional countries," he remarked.

The IRGC-second-in command added that the Islamic Republic is seeking unity among Muslim countries.

The senior commander also warned that Iranian armed forces will shoot down any drone that encroaches Iranian territories, reminding the downing of the U.S. spy drone over the Persian Gulf on June 20 as it invaded the Iranian airspace.

U.S. sanctions Iran's central bank to please Saudis, ex-diplomat says

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Abdolreza Faraji-Rad, Iran's former ambassador to Saudi Arabia, has said that the United States imposed sanctions on the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) to please the Saudi rulers.

"The United States seeks to persuade Saudis that it takes actions like that in return for receiving money from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates," Faraji-Rad told ISNA in an interview published on Sunday.

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Friday that he has ordered sanctions on Iran's central bank at "the highest level." Trump, who had initially imposed the sanctions applied to Iran's central bank, said the new penalties on Iran mark the "highest sanctions ever

imposed on a country."

Trump's move came after Yemenis made drone attacks on the Aramco oil facilities in Saudi Arabia on September 14.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Thursday that the U.S. values oil more than the lives of the Arab people, criticizing Washington's hypocrisy regarding the war on Yemen.

"Arab blood vs. Arab oil / A primer on U.S. policy: 4 years of indiscriminate bombardment of Yemen, 100,000 dead Yemenis, 20M malnourished Yemenis, 2.3M cholera cases, carte (blanche) for culprits," Zarif tweeted.

Washington has claimed that Iran was involved in the attacks, an accusation Iran has called "maximum deceit".

Australia not to be drawn into military conflict with Iran: Scott Morrison

By staff and agency

Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison has said that his country will not be drawn into any military conflict with Iran.

Australia was engaged in the Strait of Hormuz and "that's where our involvement is", the Guardian quoted him as saying on Sunday.

"There was no discussion about anything else. There was an appreciation of our involvement in that particular operation, which I remind everyone is about freedom of navigation in the Straits of Hormuz," he said.

He added, "That's what that is about. The other matters that are being pursued by the United States are matters that they're pursuing, and I made it very clear when we announced our involvement in [the Strait of Hormuz] that it was very much about that freedom of navigation issue and that's what it is about and that's appreciated."

Morrison announced on August 21 that Canberra will take part in the U.S.-led coalition in the Persian Gulf.

"The government has decided that it is in Australia's national interest to work with our international partners to contribute. Our contribution will be limited in scope and it will be time-bound," Aljazeera quoted



Morrison as saying at the time.

Australian Ambassador to Russia Graeme Meehan has said that Canberra's participation in the U.S.-led coalition in the Persian Gulf does not mean that the country agrees with Washington's stand on Iran.

"We are quite careful to say that our participation in the maritime action to protect shipping in the Strait of Hormuz doesn't mean that we agree with all the actions that United States are taking in relation to the nuclear deal. Of course, the two things are connected, but there are also differences, and I think that is the same for some of the

European countries that are considering participating in the maritime act. The European countries don't generally agree with the United States' action of pulling out of the nuclear deal," Sputnik quoted him as saying on September 2.

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

The friction is rooted in U.S. President Donald Trump's decision in May 2018 to unilaterally withdraw from a landmark nuclear deal signed in 2015 between world powers and Iran.

Since then, the U.S. has reinstated sweeping sanctions against Tehran as part of a "maximum pressure" campaign and has also beefed up its military presence in the region.

The tensions escalated in May, when the U.S. accused Iran of sabotaging tankers in the shipping route, allegations vehemently denied by Iran.

Following Yemeni drone attacks on Saudi Arabia's oil installations on September 14, Trump flagged the prospect of a military strike against Iran.

Washington claimed Iran was behind

the attacks which has been rejected by Iran.

During a meeting with Morrison in the Oval Office on Friday, Trump said his preference was for restraint. However, he has ordered additional deployment of troops and enhanced air and missile defense systems to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Friday that "even the Saudis themselves don't believe the fiction of Iranian involvement" in the attacks on the Aramco oil facilities.

He said on Thursday that a military strike against Iran by the U.S. or Saudi Arabia would result in "an all-out war".

"I make a very serious statement about defending our country. I am making a very serious statement that we don't want to engage in a military confrontation. But we won't blink to defend our territory," he told CNN.

Zarif said that Iran hoped to avoid conflict, adding that the country was willing to talk to Saudi Arabia and the UAE. But the possibility of a return to negotiations with the U.S., however, would not happen unless Washington provided full sanctions relief as promised under the 2015 nuclear deal, Tehran's top diplomat said.

Zarif: Whoever starts war will not be the one who finishes it

U.S. 'posturing' by sending troops to Saudi Arabia, Iranian FM says

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has said any country that starts a war against Iran "will not be the one who finishes it" as he said the U.S. is «posturing» by sending troops and defense equipment to Saudi Arabia following the September 14 attacks on a major Saudi Arabia oil facility.

«I think it's posturing. I think it's all going the wrong direction in addressing this issue.» Zarif said in response to a question on how Iran sees the development in an interview that was set to air Sunday on CBS' «Face the Nation.»

The Trump administration has blamed Iran for the attack by the Yemenis on Saudi Arabia's Abqaiq plant and its Khurais oil field that adversely affected up to half of the supplies from the world's biggest oil exporter.

President Donald Trump on Friday approved the deployment of U.S. troops and missile defense equipment to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Thursday said the attacks were an «act of war» while Trump announced he would «substantially increase» sanctions on Iran.

Zarif denied that Iran had anything to do with the attacks and said if the United Nations launches an impartial investigation into the attack "the outcome will be that it was not launched from Iran»

«We are confident that if the United Nations carries out an impartial investigation the outcome will be that it was not launched from Iran,» Zarif remarked.

The chief diplomat has already said linking Iran to the attack on the Saudi oil facilities is a "maximum deceit" in line with Washington's "maximum pressure" on Tehran. On Friday, Zarif also said "even the Saudis themselves don't believe the fiction of Iranian involvement" in the attacks on the Aramco oil facilities, citing Saudi Arabia's retaliation attack on Hodaideh in Yemen as a reason.

Asked by CBS if he was confident Iran could avoid a war, Zarif said, «I'm confident that we will not start one but I'm confident that whoever starts one will not be the one who finishes it.»

«That means that there won't be a limited war,» Zarif said, echoing his previous comments that a military strike on Iran by the United States or Saudi Arabia would result



Zarif says Iran is "confident that if the United Nations carries out an impartial investigation into" the attack on the Saudi oil facilities, "the outcome will be that" the drones were "not launched from Iran».

in an "all-out war.»

Major General Hossein Salami, the chief of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), also threatened on Saturday that any country that attacks Iran will see its territory become the "main battlefield." He added, "Whoever wants their land to become the main battlefield, go ahead." The general also said Iran will claim responsibility for anything it does.

Zarif says U.S. made it clear he was not welcome at UN

Zarif also said that the U.S. made it clear he was not welcome at the United Nations General Assembly in New York City next week that he planned to attend, despite being approved for a visa waiver.

«Well not necessarily, because the United States is under obligation, being the host of the UN headquarters to issue visas to member states. So they made it very clear in a letter that they attached to my visa that I'm not

eligible to get a visa, but they're doing it on a waiver basis. So they want me to know that I'm not supposed to be here,» Zarif stated.

The United States under President Trump has put an extreme pressure on Iran. He abandoned the 2015 nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), in May 2018 that was struck under his predecessor Barack Obama.

He has introduced a total ban on Iran's oil export, Iran's main source of income. Since abandoning the JCPPA, the Trump administration has been trying to strangle the Iranian economy. Iran has called the U.S. sanctions pressure "economic terrorism".

Trump on Friday said he has ordered sanctions on Iran's central bank at "the highest level."

Trump, who had initially imposed the sanctions applied to Iran's "national bank," said the new penalties on Iran mark the "high-

est sanctions ever imposed on a country."

The president's remarks at the White House came two days after he announced via Twitter that he had instructed Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin "to substantially increase Sanctions on the country of Iran!"

Many analysts believe that the regime of Benjamin Netanyahu is behind Trump's illegal approach toward Iran. Netanyahu was one of the chief opponents of the nuclear deal and has been repeatedly claiming that Iran is bent on building nuclear weapons.

Zarif has referred to recent remarks by former U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson about how Israelis have played Trump, saying Tillerson's remarks confirms that the B-Team took Trump for an "easy mark".

"Even President Trump's former Secretary of State now confirms what we have long pointed out: #B_Team took @realDonaldTrump for an easy mark who could be lied to and pushed to war—and the US military as their personal mercenary," Zarif said in a tweet on Saturday.

"Some still do, despite his firing of one member," he added.

Tillerson said on Wednesday that Israeli officials "played" Trump in their conversations with him, warning that a "healthy amount of skepticism" is needed in dealings with Netanyahu.

The comments came during a panel discussion at Harvard University in which Tillerson, who was fired by Trump last year, touched on a variety of themes from his tenure, including Iran, his hiring freeze at the State Department and the unpredictable nature of Israel's longest-serving prime minister, Netanyahu.

"They did that with the president on a couple of occasions, to persuade him that 'We're the good guys, they're the bad guys,'" Tillerson said, according to the Harvard Gazette. "We later exposed it to the president so he understood, 'You've been played.'"

The "B-team" is a term thrown into popular usage by Zarif. It refers to a group of politicians who share an inclination toward potential war against Iran, and the letter "b" in their names. They include Benjamin Netanyahu, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, and former U.S. national security advisor John Bolton.

Bolton was fired on September 10.

Navy chief warns of consequences of attack against Iran

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Iranian Navy Chief Rear Admiral Hossein Khanzadi has warned the enemies of the consequences of any aggression against Iran.

In case of any aggression by the enemy, the Iranian armed forces will give the most crushing response in the shortest time possible, Khanzadi said on the sidelines of military parades in Bandar Abbas, Mehr reported.



"Today, the defense power of the Islamic Republic of Iran is at its peak" and Iran's naval forces are ready to defend the country's marine borders, he remarked.

"This naval parade aims to show the readiness of armed forces and Iran's deterrence power, and also to send a message of peace and friendship to neighboring countries," Khanzadi added.

Tensions between the U.S. and Iran have soared in recent days, after an attack led by Yemeni armed forces against Saudi Arabia's oil facilities, for which Washington and Riyadh have blamed Iran.

Iran has repeatedly rejected the claim.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has raised the specter of "all-out war" in the event of the U.S. or Saudi military strikes and that Saudi Arabia would have to fight "to the last American soldier."

Iran wants to make 9/22 a day of peace, Zarif says

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif says Iran wants to make September 22 a day of peace – not war.

"9/22/1980 is a dark day for Iranians as it marks Saddam's invasion - with support of global powers," Zarif said in a tweet on Sunday. "Our region has been in turmoil ever since."

He added, "We want to make 9/22 a day of peace- not war. Today @HassanRouhani launched Coalition for HOPE: Hormuz Peace Endeavour. Details at UNGA."

'Victims of terrorism are peace messengers'

POLITICAL Son of a martyr of the Haft Tīr terrorist attack recited a statement that "Victims of Terrorism Are Peace Messengers" in front of the Peace Palace in the Netherlands in the 21st September, International Peace Day.

Media section of the Association for Defending Victims of Terrorism reports that a body of the association that is in the Netherlands to discuss human rights issues related to victims of terrorism, recited the statement entitled "Victims of Terrorism Are Peace Messengers" in front of the Peace Palace in the Netherlands.

In part of the statement we read: "The idea of the peace has been a concern for many scholars and politicians from the very long ago which led to creation of a global structure by the name of United Nations in the contemporary world for problem solving and conflict resolution with dialogue and based on international law."

The statement goes: "Nowadays, centuries after that thought and nuances in the ideal of peace, humanity

has the same concerns from the beginning and is confused and the human rights are under perpetual and brutal attacks from the global evil from Africa to Europe and Asia and especially in Yemen, Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic, Palestine, Afghanistan and Pakistan. In this situation, the word of peace seems to be an arbitrary thing not a real or accessible thing in human society."

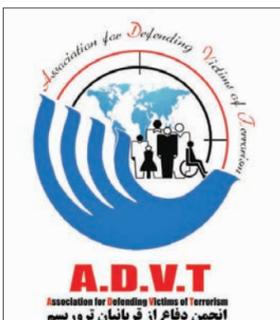
In the other part we read: "Terrorism is the big threat and challenge to the global peace today and this devastating phenomenon is a tool for imperialists and put the peace of human society in danger of perpetual brutality and makes real peace inaccessible. The international essays in confronting this global challenge have been futile and it seems that we are not capable of peace building."

The statement continues: "Victims of terrorism are the most genuine voice and the highest price in tribute of human morality and dignity, and they have tributeed (sic) the human values by sacrificing their souls, security and health and by accepting the very harsh things. The message of the victims is the invitation to abstaining from violence and creating the sustainable peace. This invitation tries to weaken the bases of violence and extremism in the human society by enhancing public awareness about the consequences of the organization of terrorism."

At the end the Association for Defending Victims of Terrorism appreciates these efforts in conflict resolution and creating a world without evils, and warns that sustainable peace is not accessible without paying attention to the reality of the organization of terrorism and its destructive function and without it we will be reciting peace in our international sessions and statements and programs."

In the final part, the Association for Defending Victims of Terrorism called on "all the peace and human rights activists, scholars and politicians to pay attention to the protection of victims of terrorism in their programs and try to do so in every situation."

Besides, the body of Association wrote the "World without Terrorism" on the "Peace Tree" in front of the palace.



Rouhani leaving for New York to attend UN summit

POLITICAL TEHRAN — President Hassan Rouhani is set to travel to New York on Monday to attend the annual United Nations General Assembly meeting, according to the president's office.

"In addition to his speech at the General Assembly, President Rouhani will meet top media directors and experts of New York and a number of America's foreign policy elites," Parviz Esmaili, the president's media officer, said on Sunday.

Esmaili said the president will be interviewed by some media outlets and will hold a press conference at the end of his stay in New York, IRNA reported.

Rouhani will also meet some heads of state, the secretary general of the United Nations and some heads of international organizations, he added.

The report followed after Iran's UN mission announced that the U.S. has issued visas allowing President Rouhani and Foreign Minister Zarif to travel to New York for the UN meeting.

Zarif had said earlier that U.S. Secretary of State Mike



Pompeo was trying to delay issuing visas for the Iranian delegation.

Meanwhile, amid U.S. requests for a Trump-Rouhani meeting at the gathering of the world leaders, Tehran last

Monday dismissed the possibility of such meeting, saying "neither is such a plan on our agenda nor will such a thing happen."

However, Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said, if the United States "stops economic terrorism and returns to the nuclear deal, then they may sit at a corner and be present within the framework of the nuclear deal member states," the New York Times reported, citing Fars news agency.

Earlier, the White House had said that it was not ruling out the possibility of a meeting between Trump and Rouhani on the sidelines of the UN summit.

Trump himself has, on numerous occasions, voiced willingness to meet Rouhani, while at the same time putting enormous economic and political pressure on Iran.

The relationship between the two nations has deteriorated since last year, when Trump unbelievably withdrew the United States from the 2015 deal and reimposed punishing economic sanctions on Tehran.

'Inattention to rights of the families of Haft Tīr bombing is impunity to terrorism'

TEHRAN (Association for Defending Victims of Terrorism) — Son of one of the martyrs of the Haft Tīr disaster said in an interview with the international section of ADVT in the Almere graveyard that inattention to the rights of the families of Haft Tīr bombing is impunity to terrorism.

Mr. Mohammad Ali Paknejad, who is negotiating about the rights of the victims of terrorism in the Netherlands as the representative of the families of the victims and the injured, visited the tomb of Mohammad Reza Kolahi in Almere graveyard. He pointed out the terms "martyr" and "Ali Motamed" on the tombstone and said "this is the tomb of Mohammad Reza Kolahi, the offender of

the Haft Tīr crime in 1981 in Tehran. He was also responsible for the sound systems and arrangements of Jomhourī Party in Tehran. He installed a strong bomb in the meeting room at the night of the incident and killed several Iranian figures. Then he escaped the country and lived secretly for many years. However, he is buried with a pseudonym today."

The son of the victim of the Haft Tīr terrorist attack continued: "surprisingly, lawyer of the culprits was in our side, that we don't know why the past record of the organizational affiliation of this terrorist was condoned. If the secrets behind the murder and the Haft Tīr terrorist attack are illuminated... we are

not convinced why there is a huge fear about informing families of the victims of the Haft Tīr terrorist attack about information of the Ali Motamed murder case."

Mr. Paknejad expressed hope that "Dutch officials would accept demand of the families of victims and give a space to them to be heard in the court of Ali Motamed's murder."

At the end, son of the Martyr Seyed Reza Paknejad said: "our message is that this grave is a sample of 35 years of escaping and living in secrecy with fabricated identity for a terrorist and it can be an example for any culprit especially friends of Ali Motamed, that this is their end and they should wake up and end their crimes and come back to society."



Somali pirates release ill Iranian hostage captured in 2015

(Press TV) — Somali pirates have released a sick Iranian hostage they captured more than four years ago due to his urgent need to medical care, a humanitarian group says.

The Iranian man, identified as Mohammad Sharif Panahandeh, was flown to Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa, from the city of Garowe on Saturday, the Hostage Support Partnership (HSP), the charity that negotiated his release, said in a statement.

"He's severely malnourished. He lost a huge amount of weight. It reminded me of someone who's just been released from Belsen (a Nazi) concentration camp," John

Steed of the HSP said.

He added that Panahandeh's health had deteriorated significantly in recent weeks and he was suffering from "severe stomach problems and internal bleeding."

His release meant that just three other hostages now remain in the custody of Somali pirates, Steed further said, adding that their Iranian fishing vessel had been captured in March 2015.

According to the organization, Panahandeh will return to Iran in the coming days after medical tests, adding that the remaining hostages are being held in "appalling conditions."

The HSP said Somali community leaders had been crucial in the negotiations.

Piracy used to be a major problem in the Gulf of Aden as Somali pirates frequently attacked ships, seized their cargoes and kidnapped crew members, later demanding ransom for their release. Over the past years, the threat has largely subsided after international warships were deployed to the area to protect vessels.

The Iranian Navy has been conducting anti-piracy patrols in the Gulf of Aden since November 2008 to safeguard maritime traffic, especially for the country's ships and oil tankers.

STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	302103.5
IFX	4017.04

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	46,254 rials
GBP	52,424 rials
AED	11,437 rials

Source: cbi.ir

COMMODITIES

Brent	\$63.20/b
WTI	\$58.09/b
OPEC Basket	\$64.39/b
Gold	\$1,518.50/oz
Silver	\$18.04/oz
Platinum	\$949.95/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

G-7 loses prestige amid growing nationalism

By Bae Hyun-jung

The liberal world order, or at least the belief that it could be sustained, has lasted for much of the 20th century, but is likely to fade away amid the rise of nationalism and protectionism across the world.

This regression to state-centered policies naturally drove advanced economies to drift apart from conventional world organizations such as the United Nations and the World Trade Organization, and turn to smaller interest groups.

The Group of Seven is an informal bloc of the so-called Western advanced democracies -- Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK and the U.S. Russia had was part of the forum from 1998 to 2014 -- as part of the Group of Eight -- but was suspended for its disputed annexation of Crimea.

The G-7 was for some years considered a rising power group, representing a significant portion of the world's economy and key decision makers. Its homogenous membership was also seen as a positive factor that facilitates consensus and action.

But in light of the changing world order, this organization apparently finds itself wedged between the top-tier power group -- the U.S. and China -- and the rest of the world.

Amid the rise of new economic powers, the G-7 countries have seen their influence shrink over the past decades. Their aggregate gross domestic product stood at around 46 percent in nominal values, down considerably from nearly 70 percent three decades earlier. In terms of purchasing power parity, they accounted for 32 percent of the world's GDP.

Observers point out that G-7's leverage will continue to diminish, not only due to the lack of emerging powers but also U.S. President Donald Trump who has been deepening divisions from the inside, raising questions about the bloc's cooperation.

This year's summit, hosted in France's Biarritz in August, was noted for failing to produce a communique -- the official joint statement -- for the first time since the group met back in 1975.

■ The anti-climax of the event

Instead, French President Emmanuel Macron stood in a joint press conference with his U.S. counterpart Trump and announced a short one-page statement that touches on limited issues such as trade, Iran, Ukraine, Libya and Hong Kong. Despite their self-claimed praise of the "successful" summit and the "unity" it displayed, the anticlimax of the event stirred up skepticism about the role of G-7.

Rising as a potential substitute to the fading presence of the G-7 was the Group of 20, which includes several of the emerging economies and represents about 80 percent of the global GDP, as well as two-thirds of the world population.

But for some member states, the G-7 continues to stand as an irreplaceable multilateral platform that offers exclusive membership.

Japan, the only Asian country among the seven, has been taking advantage of the gathering to state its case over disputed agendas in the East Asian region -- without the presence of China and South Korea.

The Korean court's ruling last year that Japanese firms compensate surviving Korean victims of forced labor sparked old historic feuds and expanded into the currently ongoing trade disputes between the two neighboring countries.

■ The G-7 gathering

Especially this year, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe took advantage of the timely G-7 gathering to show his disapproval on Seoul's withdrawal from an intelligence-sharing deal with Tokyo -- an action which came amid aggravating bilateral ties.

While Abe claimed that Seoul's decision "damages mutual trust," Defense Minister Takeshi Iwaya bluntly blamed Seoul for "making a big mistake," citing North Korea's repeated missile tests.

Though it did not make a direct mention of China, Japan also offered a favorable trade deal, saying that Japanese companies will import some 2.7 million tons of corn from the U.S., independent of the bilateral trade deal. The \$7 billion suggestion came amid the escalating U.S.-China trade dispute, which led Beijing to suspend its corn imports from Washington.

In related talks with Trump on the sidelines of G-7, Abe claimed that the imports would also benefit Japan, which has recently seen crop damages by moth caterpillars. The decision, however, triggered a backlash from local farming industries and experts.

"It is questionable whether that additional amount of corn is needed in Japan," local paper Mainichi said, adding that the crop damages are not as serious as Abe has claimed.

Nobuhiro Suzuki, professor of agriculture and life science at the University of Tokyo, accused the Abe administration of employing an expedient to take the U.S. side amid the U.S.-China trade war.

Despite all the efforts made at the G-7 forum, however, Japan is also increasingly recognizing the fading clout of the once-powerful economic platform.

Local paper Nikkei claimed that the G-7 is now facing a dramatic turn after over 40 years, reporting that the aggravating trade war between Washington and Beijing is a flashback of "the 1930s when trade protectionism was rampant amid the aftermath of the (World) War and the Great Depression."

(Source: theinvestor.co.kr)

Iran's currency value stable despite new U.S. sanctions

That came despite an announcement by the U.S. government on Friday which toughened sanctions on the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), while imposing sanctions on the country's National Development Fund (NDF) and a company advancing payments for the government agencies.

The sanctions came after attacks on Saudi Arabia's oil installation on September 14 which cut the kingdom's production in half and sent shockwaves across the global markets. Washington has blamed Iran for the attacks, accusations roundly rejected by Iranian authorities.

The rial's strength comes as the currency suffered massively last summer when the U.S. began to impose its sanctions on Iran.

It traded at historic lows of 190,000 against the dollar in September 2018 before it regained some of its value and rose against foreign currencies a month later.



A series of measures adopted by the Iranian government this year helped control the prices in the unofficial market, allowing the rial to trade at a year-long high of 109,000 against the dollar in July.

In late August, the governor of Central Bank of Iran said Iranian rial has been strengthened by over 40 percent against U.S. dollar over an eight-month period.

In an interview with NBC News' Lester Holt, Abdolnasser Hemmati noted that the country's foreign currency market was stabilizing and under control.

Experts cite the relative stability of the price of rial as a sign of the failure of the American sanctions. They believe Iran has managed to weather the impacts of the sanctions for the time being, allowing the country to further boost economic indicators regardless of growing American economic pressure.

Chabahar-Zahedan railway project requires private sector's contribution

In an interview conducted by Hamshahri Newspaper last week, Mansour Bijar, the deputy governor general of Sistan-Baluchestan for development affairs, stressed the need for expediting implementation of the railway project considering development of Shahid Beheshti Port and more cargo loading and unloading in this port.

The project for building the 610-kilometer railroad was launched nine years ago but due to lack of financial resources it was stopped for three years. Then the contractor of the project was replaced and the operation was started, but after passing four years of implementation it has only 40 percent progress, again due to lack of budget.

Now, the government being authorize to withdraw \$300 million from the National Development Fund for this project is a promising step to expedite its implementation, but the officials say that the project requires 40 trillion rials (about \$952.3 million) to be complete and given

all other factors into consideration more contribution seems necessary.

In an interview conducted by the news portal of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) and published on the website of ICCIMA on Sunday, Bahram Amir-Ahmadian, a professor of political geography at University of Tehran, said completing Chabahar-Zahedan railway project by the year of 1400 seems somehow optimistic considering the current condition.

The political expert believes that the government should attract the private sector's investment and contribution to the project.

Chabahar-Zahedan railway is a project to bring profit in long-term, so the government should inform the private sector about its significance and create the ground for this sector's presence in the project, he noted.

"It is not a project for which we wait for the foreign



investment, while we should refer to the domestic resources", the expert concluded.

Rice production surpasses 2.6m tons

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iranian desk farmers have managed to produce 2.6 million tons of rice during the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21), the Secretary of Iran Rice Association Jamil Alizadeh Shayeq announced.

As the official told IRNA, the country's rice production stood between 2.2 and 2.3 million tons in the past Iranian calendar year (March 2018-March 2019) and the increase in the production could consequently decrease the imports of the commodity.

Iran's annual rice consumption stands at about three million tons. That means nearly 400,000 tons of the product is required to be imported into the country, according to Shayeq.

However, customs data show that nearly 700,000 tons of rice was imported into the country in the first quarter of this year (March 21-June 21), and considering the previous year's statistics, it can be concluded that there is no shortage of rice in the country for the current year.



The official noted that the rice production was estimated to reach 2.5 million tons this year and the production has exceeded the expectations.

According to Shayeq, more than 90 percent of the country's rice is produced in the provinces of Gilan and Mazandaran in northern Iran, and less than 10 percent of the commodity is produced in the provinces of Isfahan, Ilam, Kurdistan, Khuzestan and so on.

Based on official statistics, over 620,000 hectares of the country's agricultural lands are under rice cultivation, of which 520,000 hectares are in Mazandaran, Gilan and Golestan provinces.

CBI forms Open Market Operations executive committee

ECONOMY TEHRAN — The desk governor of Central Bank of Iran (CBI) has officially announced the formation of an executive committee on Open Market Operations (OMO), introducing the committee members.

Abdolnasser Hemmati in a decree on Sunday appointed Mohammad Nadali, Mahmoud Naderi Kazaj, Ahmad Goudarzi, Reza Bostani and Houman Karami Khorramabadi as members of OMO Executive Committee, IRIB reported.

Mohammad Nadali was also appointed as the head of the committee.

Monetary policy formulation and monitoring, supervising and monitoring monetary transfers, formulation and monitoring of position announcements, planning and monitoring of the interbank market, planning, monitoring and implementation of open market operations, and proposing monetary policy regulations and monitoring

models are reported to be some of the most important tasks that the committee should follow.

In mid-April, CBI Money and Credit Council approved a plan to allow the bank to engage in open market operations for the first time.

The policy was approved as part of the CBI plan to implement new instruments in its monetary policy, regulate interest rates, curb inflation, and develop a regulated framework for controlling banks' borrowings from the CBI.

OMO is a financial instrument through which central banks buy and sell securities in the open market to expand or reduce money supply.

Within the OMO, the CBI buys government bonds to increase the money base (cash reserves), thereby reducing inter-banking lending rates. Selling government bonds decreases the base money and raises interbank rates.

Industry ministry to eliminate nearly \$10b of imports by 2023

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iranian industry minister desk said by the Iranian calendar year of 1402 (starts in March 2023) nearly \$10 billion worth of imports in the country's industrial sector will be prevented by replacing them with domestically-made products.

Reza Rahmani made the remarks during the Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO)'s annual general assembly on Sunday, IRIB reported.

The official noted that the industry ministry is following seven major programs in the current calendar year, one of which is pertain to the mining sector and it includes activating small mines, completing production chains, exploration and etc.

According to the IMIDRO's annual report which was presented in the gathering, the organization is planned to inaugurate over \$4 billion worth of projects by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 19, 2020).

With the mentioned projects going on stream, more than 4,000 job opportunities will be created across the



Iranian Industry Minister Reza Rahmani (M) attended the annual general assembly of Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) along with IMIDRO Head Khodadad Gharibpour (R) and other board members.

country, according to the report.

The report also put the value of inaugurated projects in

the past Iranian calendar year at about \$2 billion, which had also created jobs for 3,800 people.

According to the report, IMIDRO's subsidiaries exported more than \$9 billion worth of different commodities in the past Iranian calendar year of 1397 (March 2018-March 2019), accounting for 20 percent of the country's total non-oil exports.

Boosting production, creating jobs, providing infrastructure and making joint venture with the private sector have been underlined as the main pivots of IMIDRO's policy making.

Given the policies of IMIDRO, planning for stable development of the chain of products, taking the most benefits of the private sector's capabilities, cooperation with the guilds and associations, reducing the risk of investment making, and indigenization of technology will be taken into account once implementing the mentioned projects.

Meanwhile, IMIDRO Head Khodadad Gharibpour has recently stressed that his organization has accomplishing semi-finished projects as its top priority.

China needs to change way it finances economy, think tank says

China needs to develop a better system for financing small businesses that drive innovation in the economy but currently struggle to access the funds they need for growth, a leading Chinese think tank said in a report published Sunday.

According to Reuters.com, China's economic development over the past 40 years has taken place through a financial system that has high government intervention and is "absolutely dominated by banks", the China Finance 40 Forum said in an annual report.

Such a model, however, tends to distort financial resources in favor of large

companies, the report said. That comes at the expense of smaller firms, which are the main drivers of innovation in the economy but usually lack the necessary assets for collateral or government guarantees to secure finance for growth.

Financial regulators have also failed to prevent certain financial risks, the report said.

The current financial system "is clearly not well suited to the core task of current high-quality economic development. Therefore, an important task of financial reform should be to adjust the financial structure," the report said.

China Finance 40 Forum is a think tank that focuses on economics and finance policy research and comprises members from regulators, universities and financial institutions.

China's reliance on technological innovation for future economic growth has made changing the structure of the financial system an urgent matter, said Huang Yiping, the report's leading author and a professor of economics at the National School of Development of Peking University.

Policymakers need to develop a multi-layered financing structure and reduce control over capital markets to open funding

channels for innovative firms, Huang said.

Only about 10% of total financing for Chinese companies comes directly from the financial markets, well below 43% for the United States and 23% for Britain, Huang said.

Banks should be encouraged to link small and medium enterprises (SMEs) with the country's capital markets, said Yang Kaisheng, a consultant for the think tank and former president of China's largest lender Industrial and Commercial Bank of China. Yang said there was also a need to set up a policy bank focused on SMEs involved in technology and innovation.

Iran Plast 2019 kicks off in Tehran

ENERGY TEHRAN — Iran's 13th International Exhibition of Plastic, Rubber, Machinery and Equipment (IRAN PLAST 2019) kicked off at the Tehran International Permanent Fairground on Sunday, Shana reported.

The inauguration ceremony was participated by Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh, National Petrochemical Company (NPC) Managing Director Behzad Mohammadi, Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Reza Rahmani, and a number of senior officials and directors of the related industries.

The four-day event is hosting 570 Iranian and 35 foreign companies.

As reported, 12 delegations from 10 countries including Iraq, Afghanistan, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Pakistan, Vietnam, Armenia, Kenya, India and Tunisia are attending the exhibition, while 14 countries are participating through single pavilions.



Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh (L) and Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Reza Rahmani cutting the ribbon on of IRAN PLAST 2019 on Sunday

IRAN PLAST is a platform to make connection between petrochemical industry and enterprises, while flourish downstream industries, according to the NPC managing director.

More presence of knowledge-based companies and startups in this edition of the event is 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.

Some conferences and workshops are being held on the sidelines of the exhibit and some contracts are anticipated to be signed between the petrochemical companies during the international event.

Meanwhile, 11 ministers of oil and energy from East Asia and neighboring countries have been invited to visit the exhibition and attend meetings with the Iranian oil minister for development of ties.

Iran exports over \$160m worth of oil products via IRENEX in a week

ENERGY TEHRAN — National Iranian Oil Company sold 450,000 tons of oil products worth \$160.656 million at the international ring of Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX) during the week ended on September 20, IRIB reported.

In the mentioned week, 168,000 tons of gasoline worth \$64.297 million as well as 162,500 tons of gasoil worth \$73.964 million along with 20,000 tons of kerosene and 50,000 tons of liquefied petroleum gas were sold to foreign buyers at IRENEX.

Since the U.S. withdrew from Iran's nuclear pact in May 2018, vowing to drive Iran's oil exports down to zero, the Islamic Republic has been taking various measures to counter U.S. actions and to lessen its economy's reliance on oil.

The country also sought new strategies to help its oil exports afloat, one of which is diversifying the mechanism of oil sales, like offering oil and oil products at the country's stock market.

National Iranian Oil Company offered light crude oil at IRENEX first on October 28, 2018 just few days before new U.S. sanctions on Iran's petroleum sector took

effect (November 4). In the first round, NIOC could sell some 280,000 barrels of crude oil at \$74.85 per barrel. With the daily supply amount of one million barrels, the market wrapped up by selling eight 35,000-barrel cargos of oil on the day.

NIOC's representative in Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX) has said that the company will continue offering oil at IRENEX.

Furthermore, in the past few years, Iranian think-tanks and energy experts have been repeatedly stating that the country should increase its refining capacity in order to lessen the economy's reliance on crude sales. In this regard, one of the main strategies of the National Iranian Oil Company in recent years has been focusing on the country's refineries.

In early August, National Iranian Oil Products Distribution Company (NIOPDC) offered 18,000 tons of 95 octane gasoline produced in Iran's Persian Gulf Star Refinery (PGSR) at IRENEX, of which 5,000 tons were sold to be exported to Afghanistan, Armenia, and Iraqi Kurdistan.

Later that month, NIOPDC also offered 10,000 tons



of gasoline produced in Iran's Persian Gulf Star Refinery at the international ring of IRENEX.

As reported, 500 tons of the offered cargo worth nearly 32 billion rials (about \$762,000) was sold to domestic buyers.

Global LNG Bunkering Market to grow at CAGR of roughly 65.2% over 2019-2024

In the new research report, titled "Global LNG Bunkering Market" the report highlights the important trends and dynamics affecting the growth of the market, including the limitations, drivers, and opportunities. The report gives data on the technological progressions that are bound to happen in the upcoming years or are happening as of now.

As per independenttelegaph.com, additionally, the opportunities and challenges faced by the main player's leading the Global LNG Bunkering Market have been recommended. The report studies the global market with the primary focus on Europe, North America, Asia-Pacific, Middle East & Africa, and Latin America.

The Global LNG Bunkering Market was valued at USD LNG Bunkering Million and is expected to reach D LNG Bunkering Million, expanding at a The worldwide market for LNG Bunkering is expected to grow at a CAGR of roughly 65.2% over the next five years, will reach 24400 million \$ in 2024, from 1200 million \$ in 2019,



according to a new GIR (Global Info Research) study.

This report focuses on the LNG bunkering in global market, especially in North America, Europe and Asia-Pacific, South America, Middle East and Africa. This report categorizes the market based on manufacturers, regions, type and application.

LNG bunkering market research report includes a detailed segmentation of the LNG bunkering market in Global by component, organization size, application, and industry.

Skargas, Shell (Gasnor), Statoil, Barents Naturgass, Engie, Bomin and Linde, Eni Norge, Harvey Gulf, Polskie LNG, Korea Gas Corp, Gaz Metro are the leaders operating in the LNG Bunkering market.

Liquefied natural gas (LNG) is natural gas (predominantly methane, CH₄) that has been converted to liquid form for ease of storage or transport.

LNG is an attractive fuel choice for many vessels because it exceeds the air quality standards set forth. It takes up about 1/600th the volume of natural gas in the gaseous state. It is odorless, colorless, non-toxic and non-corrosive. Hazards include flammability after vaporization into a gaseous state, freezing and asphyxia.

■ The liquefaction process
The liquefaction process involves removal of certain components, such as dust, acid gases, helium, water, and heavy hydrocarbons, which could cause difficulty downstream.

The natural gas is then condensed into a liquid at close to atmospheric pressure

by cooling it to approximately 162 °C (260 °F); maximum transport pressure is set at around 25 KPa (4 psi).

LNG bunkering is a particular type of operation where LNG fuel is transferred from a given distribution source to a LNG fuelled ship. It involves the participation of different stakeholders, from the ship-side, LNG supplier, ports, safety personnel, administrations and policy makers. In this report, LNG bunkering only refers to LNG bunkering fuel.

The worldwide market for LNG Bunkering is expected to grow at a CAGR of roughly 65.2% over the next five years, will reach 24400 million \$ in 2024, from 1200 million \$ in 2019, according to a new GIR (Global Info Research) study.

This report focuses on the LNG Bunkering in global market, especially in North America, Europe and Asia-Pacific, South America, Middle East and Africa. This report categorizes the market based on manufacturers, regions, type and application.

Wind power and solar energy already compete without subsidies

For years, wind turbines and solar power were derided as boondoggles. They were too expensive, the argument went, to build without government handouts.

As stated by ewind.es, today, renewable energy is so cheap that the handouts they once needed are disappearing.

On sun-drenched fields across Spain and Italy, developers are building solar farms without subsidies or tax-breaks, betting they can profit without them. In China, the government plans to stop financially supporting new wind farms. And in the U.S., developers are signing shorter sales contracts, opting to depend on competitive markets for revenue once the agreements expire.

The developments have profound implications for the push to phase out fossil fuels and slow the onset of climate change. Electricity generation and heating account for 25% of global greenhouse gases.

As wind and solar demonstrate they can compete on their own against coal- and natural gas-fired plants, the economic and political arguments in favor of carbon-free power become harder and harder to refute.

The "training wheels are off," said Joe Osha, an equity analyst at JMP Securities. "Prices have declined enough for both solar and wind that there's a path toward continued deployment in a post-subsidy world."

■ After decades of quotas

The reason, in short, is the subsidies worked. After decades of quotas, tax breaks and feed-in-tariffs, wind and solar have been deployed widely enough for manufacturers and developers to become increasingly efficient and drive down costs.

The cost of wind power has fallen about 50% since 2010. Solar has dropped 85%. That makes them cheaper than new coal and gas plants in two-thirds of the world, according to BloombergNEF.



"Solar got cheap," said Jenny Chase, an analyst at BNEF. "It's really that simple."

Yet for all its promise, clean energy still has a long way to go before fully usurping coal and gas. Wind and solar still only accounted for about 7% of electricity generation worldwide last year, according to BNEF. And most wind and solar projects still depend on subsidies. In the US, in fact, the solar industry is pushing to extend federal tax credits that are scheduled to decline over the next few years.

And then there's the issue of round-the-clock power. Solar doesn't work at night. Wind farms go idle when breezes slack. So until battery systems are cheap enough for generators to stockpile electricity for hours at a time, renewables can't constantly provide power like coal and gas.

Perhaps nowhere is the push toward subsidy-free clean energy clearer than on arid expanses of Southern Europe. About 750 megawatts of subsidy-free clean-energy projects are expected to connect to the grid in

2019 alone, across Spain, Italy, Portugal and elsewhere — enough to power about 333,000 households, according to Pietro Radoia, an analyst at BNEF.

■ The way of producing electricity

The "cheapest way of producing electricity in Spain is the sun," Jose Dominguez Abascal, the nation's secretary of state for energy, said last year.

The road to subsidy-free renewables wasn't easy for Spain. A decade ago, it offered developers a lavish feed-in tariff, prompting an uncontrolled boom that strained the national treasury. Spain slashed incentives and now has a hands-off energy policy.

China, the world's largest renewable energy market, also propped up wind and solar for years. Now it's shifting toward a more market-driven approach. Earlier this year, officials announced a plan to develop 20.8 gigawatts of renewable projects that can only profit from selling electricity into grids at prices equal to or less than coal. Plus, most wind farms built on land — as opposed to in the ocean — won't be eligible for subsidies after 2021.

The picture is less clear in the U.S. Nearly every American wind and solar project remains eligible for subsidies through federal tax breaks, which are scheduled to decrease or phase out altogether over the next few years. Plus, dozens of states have renewable-energy quotas, forcing utilities to buy a certain amount of wind and solar.

Still, they're starting to compete on their own. The proof is in the sales agreements. For years, clean-energy developers needed 20- or 25-year power-purchase contracts to ensure a return on investment. Now they're building wind and solar farms with agreements for 15 years or less — with the expectation that projects will compete against gas- and coal-fired plants in wholesale markets after the deals conclude.

Aramco to push ahead with IPO

Saudi Aramco has added banks including Barclays Plc, BNP Paribas SA, Deutsche Bank AG and UBS Group AG as bookrunners on its planned initial public offering as it pushes ahead with plans for the blockbuster deal, people with knowledge of the matter said.

According to gulfnews.com, the energy giant also picked Credit Agricole SA, Gulf International Bank BSC and Societe Generale SA, the people said, asking not to be identified because the information is private.

Aramco is planning to select about 15 bookrunners in total, including two Chinese firms, one of the people said.

Aramco is moving fast to add banks in junior roles on the deal after choosing the top underwriters last week. Bankers from the newly-appointed underwriters are flying to the Middle East for meetings with Aramco starting today, according to the people.

The oil producer, officially known as Saudi Arabian Oil Co., is still planning to add more local firms in junior roles on the offering, the people said.

Representatives for BNP, Deutsche Bank, Societe Generale and UBS declined to comment. Aramco, Barclays, Credit Agricole and GIB didn't immediately respond to requests for comment.

Aramco held kickoff meetings with the top banks in Dubai last week. Bank of America Corp., Citigroup Inc., Credit Suisse Group AG, Goldman Sachs Group Inc., JPMorgan Chase & Co. and Morgan Stanley were chosen earlier for senior roles on the deal, Bloomberg News has reported.

Aramco aims to stick to its schedule for planned analyst presentations and hasn't told banks of any plans to delay the IPO, even after devastating attacks on its biggest facilities slashed oil output, Bloomberg News reported this week.

The company was considering holding analyst presentations the week of Sept. 22 and listing on the Saudi bourse as soon as November, people with knowledge of the matter have said.

Deep geothermal: Is this NZ's clean energy future?

By Jamie Morton

The key to driving New Zealand's emissions to net zero by 2050 may lie not above us but kilometers beneath our feet, a top geothermal geologist says.

A new project will explore how tapping deep and hot geothermal resources could yield an unlimited source of clean energy for the country, at a time it's searching for bold ways to decarbonize.

What's called deep geothermal — "supercritical" fluids trapped far below the Earth's crust — packed the potential to deliver 10 times more energy than conventional geothermal energy, GNS Science's Dr. Isabelle Chambeffort said.

To put that into context, New Zealand last year generated 43,041 gigawatt hours (GWh) of electricity, or enough to power five million homes.

Just 17.6 percent of that came from geothermal energy — and around the same proportion came from non-renewable sources.

"New Zealand is using non-renewables at the same rate as geothermal, when our geothermal resources are so extensive, because, given current trends, conventional geothermal, hydro, solar and wind cannot replace non-renewables at a sufficient rate."

■ The electricity from renewables

At the same time, the government has been pushing toward a target of generating 100 percent of our electricity from renewables by 2035 — and a slashing carbon emissions to net zero by mid-century.

"Given energy demand continues to grow, to achieve these targets, New Zealand must fundamentally transform its energy sector," she said.

"Geothermal energy is New Zealand's energy future." Chambeffort explained that New Zealand's unique tectonic setting, with its active rifting, produced voluminous magma, and from it, an outstanding amount of heat flow.

"It delivers exceptional opportunities for geothermal development and has placed New Zealand among the leaders in geothermal energy technology for the past 60 years," she said.

"Knowing that only geothermal can increase our renewable energy portion to the required levels, exploration over the next 20 years will inevitably move towards hotter and deeper supercritical resources."

So-called supercritical fluids existed at temperatures and pressures above the critical point where distinct liquids and gas phases didn't exist — for pure water, this was above 374C.

"They exhibit higher heat-content and lower density and so have the potential to generate around 10 times more energy than conventional geothermal for the same amount of extracted fluid."

Yet, she added, our scientific understanding of deep geothermal wasn't good enough to offer the solutions the energy industry needed.

That's been a challenge elsewhere in the world, although supercritical systems, hotter than 400C, had now been investigated in places like Italy, Iceland and the United States.

These probes had suggested the best supercritical resources lay closer to magmatic heat sources than conventional systems.

Scientists suspected New Zealand's own deep magmatic conditions, plunging to more than 6km below ground, didn't offer reservoirs that were permeable — allowing water and gas to pass through it — or drillable.

■ Providing drillable targets

"However, we hypothesize that the presence of buried shear zones, or shallow intrusions favoring heat transfer from the deep magma reservoir to shallower conditions, provides drillable targets."

Her new project, supported through the Government's Endeavour Fund, first aimed to locate these reservoirs and study their distinct chemical characteristics.

That would lead the way to developing modelling for drilling, along with a new regulatory system.

Chambeffort said she and her colleagues would also explore the potential for re-injecting any carbon dioxide from it, to enable emissions-free "deep heat" energy.

"Development of New Zealand's existing geothermal resources has depended in large part on laboratory research to determine the chemical behavior of geothermal fluids, the effects of fluid-rock interaction, and predicted changes in rock properties during fluid extraction and injection," she said.

"We will leverage on this laboratory expertise combining it with international skills to acquire the foundational knowledge required."

Chambeffort said she'd moved from Europe to New Zealand so she could understand how its world-renowned geothermal systems worked.

"They are a gift to New Zealand — and by respecting and understanding them, we may have a way to get a step closer to seeing a 100 percent renewable country."

"I want to see that day and I believe we can."

(Source: nzherald.co.nz)

The road to sustainable peace in Asia

By Ding Gang

GLOBALTIMES — It was around 10 pm when I found myself on a bus leaving Gimhae International Airport for downtown Busan in South Korea. The roads of the city that became famous in Asia for hosting the 2002 Asian Games, were brightly lit up. A bridge spanning the Nakdong River was festooned with colorful lights. Coming across such a site, not many would be able to dredge up the fierce war that took place there about 70 years ago.

Frankly, the night scene in Busan is no different than that in many big Chinese cities. Lights along the Huangpu River in East China's Shanghai and Pearl River in South China's Guangzhou are even brighter. But people could feel a glint of excitement when realization dawns that they are at the southernmost point of the Korean Peninsula. The city was almost destroyed in the Korean War (1950-53), but now it is the world's fifth-largest port and is as well-known as big cities like Shanghai and Osaka. For many tourists from China, Busan is also known for the Shinsegae Centum City Department Store - the largest shopping complex in the world. The city is an epitome of unprecedented prosperity in East Asia. China, Japan and South Korea have become powerful engines for the world economy, accounting for 23.5 percent of world GDP in 2018 - almost equivalent to the share of the US. And the production capacity of the three countries is far ahead of any other region in the world.

However, after visiting some attractions in Busan, I began to have doubts about the extent of change that has taken place in East Asia. Whether I was in Busan Jungang Park, or in the United Nations Memorial Cemetery, or in the Busan Museum, or in front of a statue honoring Yi Sun-shin (1545-98) at the base of Busan Tower - who defeated Japanese aggressions various times in history - I didn't feel that history had moved away.

The sediments of history at the bottom of national consciousness are always looking for opportunities to come out to reveal themselves to the world - like in the trade dispute between South Korea and Japan. This seems to show the world that although the three East Asian countries have the ability to create development miracles, they are yet to find a key to get out of the historical trap.

Over the decades, East Asia has been developing in sync with a pattern derived from the Cold War. Even after the Cold War, security in the region is not free of US dominance. Historical disputes, which were once obscured by the Cold War, have not been completely resolved. The Military Demarcation Line (MDL), widely known as the 38th Parallel, is a proof that the Cold War has not really ended. The three East Asian countries have transformed into major economic powers. A new era in which the US can no longer play a dominant role has begun.

Yet how can the regional political and security architecture, which until now was dominated by the US, morph into a new framework led by cooperation among the three countries? That prospect remains uncertain. Quite a few aspects, which have a fondness for the status quo or embody an inertia to change, are acting as an impediment.

Some Western scholars attribute the uncertainty in East Asia to China's emergence. But anyone who has visited big cities in the region such as Shanghai, Beijing, Seoul, Tokyo and Busan, would find out that East Asia has been rising as a whole. The rise of countries here is closely intertwined. This is the trend. China's emergence has brought the possibility of the birth of a new pattern in East Asia.

Singaporean academic and former diplomat Kishore Mahbubani is one of the first scholars to predict the rise of Asia. But he is more focused on reminding the West that it must change its ways to observe and recognize Asia. The largest continent itself is the key to spawning more certainties for development. How to walk out of history in a peaceful and Asian way and establish a system given to sustainable peace and development, which could gradually replace the US-led Asian pattern, will be the real test for countries in the continent, especially for China, Japan and South Korea.

Farce hearing shows U.S. hypocrisy

GLOBALTIMES — Radical Hong Kong oppositionists Joshua Wong Chi-fung and Denise Ho Wan-see on Tuesday were invited to testify at a US congressional hearing about the Hong Kong issues. Wong and Ho described Hong Kong as a city which has lost freedom under the suppression of the Communist Party of China. The hearing was full of biased information and lies.

The hearing itself humiliated US congressional hearing system. The US Congress invited only Hong Kong's radical opposition figures but ignored the opinion of Hongkongers who support both the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) government's lawful measures and the Hong Kong police's efforts to counter riots in accordance with laws. The US Congress didn't even pretend to make the hearing look more credible. US senators who proposed the so-called Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act of 2019 have never thought about getting comprehensive, objective and real information about Hong Kong. The hearing they held didn't aim at verifying the situation in Hong Kong, but intended to use biased information to back their bill that hurts Hongkongers' interests.

The SAR government has officially withdrawn the extradition bill, but the opposition has extended their demands to so-called real universal suffrage. A few rioters continued to wreck havoc in Hong Kong. In such a context, the US Congress not only sided with the opposition in Hong Kong but also offered support to the extreme rioters. Although Hong Kong society is split in public opinion, only a minority of Hongkongers would support the passing of the act. The act requires an annual assessment of the special status of Hong Kong as a separate customs territory, which will severely threaten the stability of the city's financial environment, and thus hurt the interests of the majority of Hongkongers. This has nothing to do with the political appeals of Hong Kong citizens. Neither Wong nor Ho can represent the majority of Hong Kong people. Oppositionists like them collude with a handful of US senators and forge a fake public opinion of Hongkongers. Such a fraud in the US political system will only stain the US Congress rather than bring it glory.

The farce of the congressional hearing showed that the Hong Kong act proposed by the US Congress cannot reflect the reality of the Chinese city. It is a perfect match between the US current strategy against China and the interests of the extreme opposition of Hong Kong. It aims at offering a new tool to contain China. Some Hong Kong extremists are determined to take sides with the US and will not hesitate to betray their own city's interests.

The Hong Kong act could pass as some US political elites are promoting it, and some extreme Hong Kong opposition are collaborating from within. But the situation will not necessarily develop as the two forces wish. The future of Hong Kong is not in the hands of Washington, but in the hands of all the Chinese people, including Hongkongers.

Hong Kong's separate customs territory status is guaranteed by the Basic Law. The US move cannot represent the entire world. The impetus of the city's constant prosperity comes from within and from its close ties with the motherland. The US economic crackdown has not shaken China, nor will it determine the future of Hong Kong. Anyone who misunderstands this misunderstands the era and the world.

Another Zionist loon will replace Bolton: Mark Dankof

TEHRAN (Tasnim) — Mark Dankof, a former US Senate candidate, said President Donald Trump would replace John Bolton "with another radical Neo-Conservative/Zionist loon".

"The firing of Bolton is a laughable attempt by the President to cover for his War Party/Sheldon Adelson handlers. Trump's betrayal of his America-First constituency is becoming increasingly obvious to everyone but the brain-dead. Unfortunately, the latter category comprises most Americans who watch Mainstream Media in this country, both Republicans and Democrats. It is noteworthy that Mr. Trump will and has now replace(d) Mr. Bolton, at least temporarily, with another radical Neo-Conservative/Zionist loon in an attempt to continue the charade with his own voters that he will extricate them in 2020 and beyond from the quagmire in the Middle East dived into in earnest by George W. Bush, Dick Cheney, and Company. It simply will not work," Mark Dankof, who is also a broadcaster and pastor in San Antonio, Texas, told Tasnim.

Mark Dankof is a broadcaster for The Ugly Truth Podcast. Born in Wiesbaden, Germany, the son of a United States Air Force Colonel, he graduated from Valparaiso University in 1977 and from Chicago's Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in 1983. In recent years, he has pursued post-graduate work in systematic theology and theological German at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. Formerly the 36th District Chairman of the Republican Party in King County/Seattle and later an elected delegate to Texas State Republican Conventions in 1994 and 1996, he entered the United States Senate race in Delaware in 2000 as the nominated candidate of the Constitution Party against Democratic candidate Thomas Carper and Republican incumbent William Roth.

Following is the full text of the interview. **■ US President Donald Trump** on Tuesday announced the firing of national security adviser John Bolton. What is the main reason behind this? The dozen-plus names being floated to replace John Bolton run the gamut — from ambassadors to military officers to business leaders. Who would replace him?

A: The firing of Bolton is a laughable attempt by the President to cover for his War Party/Sheldon Adelson handlers. Trump's betrayal of his America-First constituency is becoming increasingly obvious to everyone but the brain-dead. Unfortunately, the latter category comprises most Americans who watch Mainstream Media in this country, both Republicans and Democrats. It is noteworthy that Mr. Trump will and has now replace(d) Mr. Bolton, at least temporarily, with another



radical Neo-Conservative/Zionist loon in an attempt to continue the charade with his own voters that he will extricate them in 2020 and beyond from the quagmire in the Middle East dived into in earnest by George W. Bush, Dick Cheney, and Company. It simply will not work. I told National Bugle Radio on the Republic Broadcasting Network today that real American Nationalists cannot continue to support this man or his policies unless there is an immediate, radical change in direction. There is no earthly reason to believe there will be. After all, Mr. Trump illegitimately and unilaterally pulled the United States out of the JCPOA/P5+1 deal with Iran. He moved the American Embassy in Israel illegitimately and illegally to Jerusalem. He continues to aid and abet Mr. Netanyahu's land thievery of the Occupied Territories and East Jerusalem, the Gaza Genocide, and the Saudi-Israeli Genocide taking place in Yemen. His Zionist rhetoric on Iran is matched by illegal and illegitimate economic sanctions on Iran even though Iran abided by the terms of the multilateral nuclear deal that Trump negated. When one adds to all of this the continued encirclement of Putin's Russia by NATO and American military assets, the illegal attempts to overthrow the Venezuelan government, and the Neo-Conservative/Zionist charade Mr. Trump continued to maintain on international TV regarding 9-11 on the 18th Anniversary, how it happened and who was behind it, I have concluded the situation is hopeless. I said so on Twitter and for a film documentary on 9-11 which airs in your country this Sunday. And make no mistake about it: The Democrats will have a Zionist tool as their 2020 nominee, despite their political posturing about desiring a foreign

policy of "Peace." Bolton is gone, at least for now, but the Zionist stranglehold on United States foreign policy and American domestic politics and institutions continues unabated. Both Trump and his "Opposition" know this, but are simply playing games. The Whitney Webb articles for Mint Press News on the Epstein-Maxwell-Pedophile Network and her essay on Christian Zionism both go a long way toward explaining how sick the American political process is, regardless of which major party wins a Presidential election. The Israeli-Zionist PAC money game in Federal elections published by the Washington Report on Middle East Affairs on an annual basis is another key to understanding the 5th Stage Cancer of the American Empire.

■ Bolton denied being fired and insisted that he had resigned. Democratic Senator Jack Reed said that "Bolton was wrong for this job," but added that removing him "isn't going to fix the failures plaguing this administration's dysfunctional foreign policy." He further described the White House as being "in constant turmoil." It seems that the Trump administration is in chaos. What do you think?

A: I will give you the best possible answer. Dr. Philip Giraldi, former CIA Station Chief and head of the Council for the National Interest underscores that the Trump administration is in total disarray and chaos. I agree with him. Dr. Giraldi's essay at the Unz Review, entitled "Trump Foreign Policy as Theater of the Absurd" sums it up beautifully. As far as Senator Reed's observation that firing Bolton "isn't going to fix the failures plaguing this Administration's dysfunctional foreign policy," I agree, but hasten to add that the real problem is much deeper than Donald Trump. It is the

absolute control the Zionist entity possesses over American institutions and policies that has been the case since the assassination of John F. Kennedy. This is not an accident, by the way. Your readers need to be acquainted with Laurent Guyenot's Did Israel Kill the Kennedys? and the complete text of Michael Collins Piper's Final Judgment, to see how much power and control I am speaking of. My own discussion with Kourosh Ziabari on 9-11 and Israel underscores how systematic this malignancy really is, and how comatose the American public is as well. I did not call the latter "brain-dead" earlier in this interview as a flippancy. I chose this description very carefully. I will add something that perhaps Senator Reed would not, as a warning to the people of Iran. Beware not only of Zionist military aggression and economic sanctions, but infiltration through Cultural Marxism which has hijacked the United States and the West. My own post for Charles Busman's Russia Insider on the LGBTQ movement and its tactics of infiltration and societal subversion was penned with both Russia and Iran in mind. I have sent this to top officials of your government as a warning, as I did in the case of my warnings to the Iranian nation in 2013 on the way in which the Pearl Harbor attack would serve as a primer for American/Zionist machinations involving your country.

■ US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin underlined that Trump and top aides remain "completely-aligned" on Washington's sanctions against Iran. However, Rob Malley, president of the International Crisis Group consultancy, said Bolton's departure could realign White House policy on Afghanistan, Iran, North Korea and Venezuela. What are your thoughts on this?

A: I believe all the available evidence I have already cited forces me to conclude that the Zionist American Treasury Secretary is correct on this subject. As for the Old American Right, the American Nationalist Right, we understand that the American Warfare-Welfare-Surveillance-Perversion State is a threat to the survival of every single innocent life on this planet. It is a Zionist Machine from start to finish. It needs to be eradicated. I stated such on Martin Luther King Day in 2018 to the African-American Community in San Antonio. This fight is not simply a fight conducted by Americans who want their Constitution and the Bill of Rights back, but the fight we share with Iranians, Russians, Palestinians, Syrians, Venezuelans, Iraqis, Libyans, and all the people of the world threatened by this Beast at the darkest and most dangerous period of time in all of human history.

U.S. human rights, double standards, hypocrisy

TEHRAN (FNA) — On September 12, the 42nd session of the UN Human Rights Council held a workshop to discuss the unilateral coercive measures related to human rights.

Many participating countries and NGOs condemned the US unilateral coercive sanctions and considered it as a violation of the Charter of the United Nations and in the meantime damaged international equality and justice. These illegal sanctions have become a kind of collective punishment towards the people of sanctioned countries like Iran.

There is no doubt this discussion is very important. But except for the unilateral coercive measures, we should also pay attention to the new development in the human rights sanction field. This refers to the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act which came into force in December 2016 in the United States. It began to directly sanction individuals on different issues. This shows the US human rights sanction has changed greatly in terms of targets and methods. It has made great impacts on international society and facilitated the birth of its "European version" and "Canada version", thus forming a multilateral-participating sanction system in the world. This new Act allows the US evade moral consequences which have been blamed before, such as the "collective punishment" towards the people of sanctioned countries.

This kind of new development should not come as a surprise to the world though. The United States always acts in its own way in dealing with human rights issues. When the UN Human Rights Council was established in 2006, the



Bush administration refused to join as a member state. It was only until 2009 the US joined the council, but the Trump administration declared to exit the Human Rights Council in 2018, because of the so-called council's prejudice against Israel and failure to effectively protecting human rights. To some extent, this action has marked the US exiting from the current global human rights governance framework. The US regards itself as the defender of human rights all the time and sees itself standing on the commanding heights of international morality, assuming the responsibility to supervise and criticize the human rights situation of other countries.

The United States publishes a human rights report evaluating the situation in other countries annually. An

important characteristic of American human rights policy and practice is its double standard. The US believes that it owns the highest human rights standard and best human rights protection practice, so it should be the example for other countries. But in fact, America has very serious human rights problems.

There are many human rights problems in the United States, such as civil rights violations, income inequality and racial and gender discrimination, but the US has turned a deaf ear to all of them while focusing on the human rights problems of other countries. Besides, the United States often uses double standards to treat other countries differently based on strategic considerations. The strategic importance of a country often influences American human rights policy towards the country. This means the US treats traditional allies and other countries differently. A case in point could be Saudi Arabia committing war crimes in Yemen using American weaponry to kill innocent civilians.

In fact, the reason why the US refused to join the Human Rights Council in 2006 is also "the council's hostility to Israel," itself one of the biggest violators of human rights in the world. But for those countries which the United States regards as potential competitors, the US usually uses the magnifying lens to find their human rights problems and derogate their international image in order to contain their rise. Iran is a case in point. It is important for the US to face up to its own human rights issues first.

Netanyahu in big trouble

IFP — With over 95 percent of the vote counted, the right-wing and ultra-Orthodox parties of Israel have failed to win enough seats for a parliamentary majority in the Knesset, marking a heavy defeat for Benjamin Netanyahu. Netanyahu imposed a new election on Israelis in the hope that the right-wing and the religious parties will win the parliamentary majority, but has now failed to meet his objective, as his entire bloc has won no more than 56 seats out of a total of 120.

As a result, he will have no choice but to form a coalition government with "Yisrael Beiteinu" led by Avigdor Lieberman, or with the center-left alliance, including the "Blue and White", the "Labor", and the "Democratic Union". But Lieberman is vigorously pushing for a national unity

government comprised of the Likud and the Blue and White parties. However, the Blue and White, the Labor, and the Democratic Union will approve of a national unity government provided that Netanyahu would step down as leader of Likud and be taken to court for his financial corruption case.

Therefore, Netanyahu has been put in a new impasse, the way out of which may be dissolution of the new parliament and a pledge to hold new elections. A third election in this year, nevertheless, will be unpalatable to the public opinion. Moreover, Israel's ceremonial president Reuven Rivlin would not easily approve of another election and the Knesset would not ratify it this time, either.

After all, Netanyahu cares about his own position more than anything else, and would not easily back off from the

efforts to hold the post of prime minister. He is a cunning person, familiar with the complicated political games. Netanyahu might even plan to encourage the Labor party to join his coalition. Led by Amir Peretz, the Labor has formed an alliance with a branch of Yisrael Beiteinu party.

On the one hand, the formation of such coalition would require the Labor party to vote for Netanyahu's immunity from prosecution during his political tenure, which would be naturally a big scandal for the Labor; on the other hand, Netanyahu will have to agree with the Labor party's more moderate policies on the issue of Palestine, which will certainly enrage and irritate Ayelet Shaked's far-right "Yamina" party, an ally of the Likud and a fervent proponent of expansion of West Bank

settlements.

In fact, as long as Netanyahu is leader of the Likud party, it would be impossible for him or for his main rival — leader of Blue and White Benny Gantz — to form a new government. As a result, in order for the government to be formed, Netanyahu will have to step down from the post of prime minister voluntarily, or the Likud party should remove him from the post. The Likud may even break apart amid the debates over Netanyahu's fate, and the broken party might form the national unity government with Gantz, Lieberman, and the left-wing parties. In any case, Netanyahu will be no more regarded as a solution to Israel's problems. Indeed, he himself has turned into the biggest problem of the Israeli political society.

Trump and key states

By Saeed Sobhani

TEHRAN — The decline in Trump's popularity in key states has been the subject of much concern by American analysts. However, the President of the United States of America is trying to regain his position in these states. This is a bit unlikely given the sharp decline in Trump's popularity!

Here's a look at some of Trump's latest polls and news in recent polls:

Fox News Poll: High interest in election, Democrats top Trump in matchups

As Foxnews reported, Fifty-nine percent of voters are extremely interested in the 2020 presidential election. That's a number typically only seen right before an election. It's 27 points higher than around this same time in the last presidential cycle -- and only one point off the record 60 percent extremely interested the week before Election Day in 2008. In addition, more Democrats (65 percent) than Republicans (60 percent) are extremely interested in the election and more Democrats (69 percent) than Republicans (63 percent) are extremely motivated about voting in 2020. That helps Democratic candidates top President Donald Trump in potential head-to-head matchups.

Joe Biden continues to perform best of the Democratic candidates tested, according to a new Fox News Poll. He has the biggest lead over Trump (+14 points), is the only one to receive 50 percent support, and the only one to keep Trump under 40 percent (52-38 percent). Last month, it was Biden over Trump by 50-38 percent. The poll, released Wednesday, shows Bernie Sanders topping Trump by 8 points (48-40). Elizabeth Warren is up by 6 points (46-40), which is right at the poll's margin of error, and Kamala Harris has a 2-point edge (42-40 percent), within the poll's error margin.

Between 10-18 percent are undecided or supporting third-party candidates. Biden's lead over Trump comes from large advantages among women (+22 points), suburban women (+30), and blacks (+74). In counties where the 2016 vote was close (Hillary Clinton and Trump within 10 points), Biden is ahead by 21 points. Among the 6 in 10 voters who feel extremely motivated about voting in 2020, Biden is up over Trump by 16 points. Trump is preferred over Biden among whites (+2 points), whites without a college degree (+11 points), and white evangelical Christians (+41). In 2016, Trump won whites by 20 points, whites without a college degree by 37 points, and white evangelical Christians by 64 points. "Democrats are sure to be pleased their candidates have an edge over President Trump in these early trial ballots," says Republican pollster Daron Shaw, who conducts the Fox News Poll with Chris Anderson, his Democratic counterpart. "But we've got nine more months of Democratic debates and primaries, and the data show a sense among many voters that by next November, Trump will be the last one standing."

By a 6-point margin, voters predict Trump will be re-elected. That's a reversal from December 2018, when by 13 points voters were more likely to say he would lose.

Even some voters who are backing a Dem-



ocratic candidate think Trump will win. For instance, 16 percent of those supporting Biden in the hypothetical matchup think the president will be re-elected. And it's about the same for those backing Sanders (15 percent), Warren (15 percent), and Harris (14 percent).

Three candidates are running against President Trump for the GOP nomination. It's no contest. Trump captures 86 percent support among Republican primary voters. Former South Carolina Gov. Mark Sanford, former Illinois Rep. Joe Walsh, and former Massachusetts Gov. Bill Weld each receive 2 percent. Another 4 percent say none of the above/other and 5 percent are unsure.

Even so, more than one in four GOP primary voters (27 percent) is hoping someone new who they haven't heard about yet will enter the race -- that includes one in five Republican primary voters who are backing Trump (21 percent). For comparison, 38 percent of Democratic primary voters want someone new to jump into the race, including 36 percent backing Biden.

Conducted September 15-17, 2019 under the joint direction of Beacon Research (D) and Shaw & Company (R), this Fox News Poll includes interviews with 1,008 randomly chosen registered voters nationwide who spoke with live interviewers on both landlines and cellphones. The poll has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus three percentage points for all registered voters and 5 points for Republican primary voters (341).

The ground is shifting: Arizona emerges as a 2020 trouble spot for Trump

As Politico reported, Arizona has long been touted as a potential swing state in the presidential election. Its time may have finally come. Demographic shifts, progressive organizing efforts and President Donald Trump's potential weakness in the state appear to be providing Democrats in 2020 with their best shot at capturing the state since Bill Clinton won it more than two decades ago. A new poll, commissioned by a state labor union and released today, shows Trump running neck-and-neck with Elizabeth Warren and Joe Biden in theoretical match-ups.

That poll follows several other recent surveys with more bad news for Republicans. A late July survey -- conducted by Trump's own pollster -- showed the president losing to Biden, and another in August reported a tie. In Arizona's closely-watched 2020 U.S. Senate race, two of those polls show GOP Sen.

Martha McSally in a tie and a third shows her trailing Democrat Mark Kelly.

"Republicans are very concerned," said Chuck Coughlin, once a top aide to Republican Govs. Fife Symington and Jan Brewer. "The ground is shifting."

The change has been gradually building for years as more Latinos, who tend to vote Democratic, have registered and voted in larger numbers.

During Trump's first midterm election in 2018, Democrats for the first time in recent memory won four statewide elected offices. Kyrsten Sinema's victory marked the first time Democrats have won an Arizona Senate seat since 1988. The party also picked up a handful of state legislative seats. Two years earlier, Trump became the first GOP presidential nominee in 20 years to receive less than 50 percent of the vote. The polling suggests the days of writing off Arizona as comfortably Republican could be ending. Republicans point out that registered Republicans vastly outnumber Democrats in the state, Trump fires up the base like no other and the state continues to be a mecca for retirees, who tend to vote Republican.

But Trump's approval rating is underwater, with 45 percent of Arizona voters holding a favorable impression of him and 53 percent having an unfavorable view -- the overwhelming majority of whom hold a "very unfavorable view," according to a survey of 520 Arizona registered voters by Bendixen & Amandi International. The firm, which typically surveys for Democrats and was paid to conduct this poll by SMART Local 359, the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers, conducted the poll from September 9-12.

Trump is tied dead even with Warren at 42 percent in a general election match-up and is essentially tied with Biden 43-42 percent, a lead well within the poll's margin of error of plus/minus 4.3 points.

McSally is tied at 42 percent with Kelly, a former astronaut and husband of former Arizona Congresswoman and mass-shooting survivor Gabby Giffords.

"Contrary to the conventional wisdom that the presidential race is down to only four swing states -- Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin and Florida -- this poll makes it clear that Arizona is wide open," said pollster Fernand Amandi. "Arizona is emerging as the new battleground."

Amandi's numbers are in line with a poll from OH Predictive Insights, a non-partisan Arizona consulting company that conducted a survey last month showing Biden at 45 percent and Trump at 43 percent. Warren, too, was basically tied with Trump, who had 44 percent to her 43 percent. Both Amandi's poll and OH Predictive's found that Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders and other candidates fared more poorly against Trump. OH Predictive, showed Kelly leading McSally by 46 percent to 41 percent in the Senate race.

In late July, Trump pollster Tony Fabrizio surveyed Arizona on behalf of the AARP and found Biden leading Trump, 50 percent to 45 percent. That poll had an error margin of 4 percent and found a statistical tie in the Senate contest. One quirk in the Senate race weighing on McSally: She's fresh off a bitter 2018 Senate race loss to Sinema, who has higher favorability ratings. McSally was later appointed to fill the seat held by Sen. John McCain following his death and the resignation of his successor, Jon Kyl, in 2019.

In the Democratic presidential primary, Amandi's poll shows Biden with a slight lead over Warren, with the former vice president at 29 percent and the Massachusetts senator at 24 percent. Sanders trails with 18 percent, followed by a host of other Democrats who are polling in the single digits. "What this poll of Arizona and what other polling across the country is suggesting is the Democratic primary is becoming a two-person race," Amandi said. As in other swing states and battlegrounds, however, political insiders wonder if Warren's politics are too progressive to ultimately carry Arizona and its 11 Electoral College votes. And regardless of who the Democratic nominee is, Republicans expect their base will come home to Trump as he unloads his substantial war chest on whomsoever he faces in the general election. "Trump's numbers with independents are terrible right now. But we know what Trump is going to do to the Democratic nominee. Trump knows his universe of voters," Coughlin said.

Sean Noble, who advised Republican Gov. Doug Ducey's successful campaign, said he believes that the recent polls could be off because people are lying to pollsters and the surveys won't be able to easily estimate the composition of the electorate because turnout will likely be at record highs.

Noble said tens of thousands of Republicans and conservatives didn't vote in 2016 for Trump, but he has brought them home in Arizona thanks to his conservative record of cutting regulations and appointing conservative judges. He said that should benefit McSally as well. "Trump will carry McSally," Noble predicted.

Chris Baker, a Republican political consultant from Arizona, said he believes the "polling is more a reflection of Trump's flavor of the day -- it will change. My guess is things will stabilize in the presidential race."

As for the Senate race, Baker said, he sees an even tighter race in this political environment. "With independent voters, their eyes are wandering," Baker said. "With Democratic voters, there's a lot of intensity. But there's a lot of intensity on the right as well."

The strange case of the burning Saudi refineries

IFP — The September 2019 attack that cut Saudi Arabia's oil production by up to 60% and has thrown the world into chaos was not a surprise. The claim by US Secretary of State that "Iran did it" is no surprise as well.

That Yemen did it, destroyed the world's largest oil refinery that has the world's best air defenses, almost, is a surprise. It is also quite possible that some other "player" is responsible. Let's postulate about that a bit, perhaps even delving into the kind of conspiracy theories that, of late, have turned out to be correct over and over.

First of all, Saudi Arabia had recently asked Russia for the S400 air defense system. Saudi Arabia has spent endless billions on air defenses and, periodically, drones and missiles from Yemen get through. The same thing happens to Israel as well, which has led that nation to make "under the table" deals with Hamas over and over while the Likudists play out their "goosestepping" militarist roles for Israel's misled population, one subject to military censorship over everything they read and see. You see, the S400 is for defense against lots of things, but for Saudi Arabia with highly robust defenses already, the S400 would be used to stave off attacks from stealth aircraft, its specialty. Of regional players, only Israel has such aircraft.

But then, aren't Saudi Arabia and Israel good friends, after all, each secretly aided ISIS and al Qaeda for years. But are they really friends or was this a "marriage of convenience"? For those who read MSM, even those questions will be unfamiliar as the terror pact between those nations has been censored widely.

What might drive things to get to the point where Israel might bomb Saudi Arabia? Well, Israel is facing an election and a key part of that election is the meltdown Israel is having over its "first couple," the Netanyahu's.

Money dictates politics there as everywhere else and the Adelson family, richest Israelis, have been picking up the political bills for the Netanyahu's for years. That's over. The Adelsons now say the Netanyahu's are crazy and Miriam Adelson is a psychologist. This is no small problem as the Adelsons are the biggest political contributors in the US as well. To get past this, Netanyahu promised to declare most if not all the West Bank as part of Israel, a deal-breaker for nations that had, temporarily at least, begun looking at rebuilding relations with Israel, that being Turkey, Saudi Arabia and maybe even Iraq. That's all done now. Then the

issue of random and continual bombing of Syria by Israel, bombing attacks supposedly on Iranian troops but too often killing civilians or clearly intended to aid operations of terror groups. Let us add, by terror groups, we mean groups officially banned in Russia as terror groups, a list you don't casually get on as in the US. Russia really hunts down terrorists. According to reports from the Jerusalem Post, Russia has expressed extreme "concern" of not only Israel's attacks on Syria but their move to seize the ad hoc Palestinian State on the West Bank and "ethnically cleanse" its Palestinian population, causing an unprecedented humanitarian disaster.

Netanyahu returned from his September 2019 visit to Moscow with his tail between his legs, all reports indicating that he was deeply chastised by Putin. Then there's the loss of John Bolton, former presidential advisor who, for the past few decades, has been on the payroll of one Israeli run special interest group or the other, a man many if not most Americans consider the worst presidential advisor ever, one that keeps coming back to life like a zombie. The answer was simple. Israel is at the end of the road with Saudi Arabia. ISIS is defeated and their cooperation in backing ISIS against Syria and Iraq is now an embarrassment. Saudi Arabia is now seeking peace with Yemen, a disaster for Israel's regional policy of "keep all wars going."

Worst still, the UAE and Iran are now openly cooperating in Persian Gulf security. Thus, when a huge Saudi oil complex was hit over and over in a 9/11 style attack, figuring out who might well have done this is relatively easy. It doesn't benefit Iran. This would be a direct attack on Saudi Arabia and Iran has been winning the political war, not just with the UAE but Russia and the EU as well along with continued support from China. Iran had no reason to attack.

Yemen is at war with Saudi Arabia and has some capabilities but not these capabilities, not to obliterate the biggest cash producer Saudi Arabia has. Only one nation in the region has the F35, a plane designed to take out oil facilities. You see, along with stealth, the F35 has limitations. If it operates without other aircraft along, like the F15E bomber, the limited bomb load of the F35 is only useful against targets that are vulnerable to smaller weapons, targets like oil refineries.

This proves capability. I think we have more than proven Israel's motivation and timing. We can still claim Yemen did it and Yemen would be happy to take credit except for no military expert remotely accepts that Yemen did this.

We do know that, for Iran, there would have been no reason. Iran was already winning. We could also look for recent analogs. Why did Syria turn to poison gas whenever they were in the last stages of crushing areas controlled by terrorists closely tied to Israel?

What are we saying or perhaps not saying here?

Thus, when Russia took 40 members of the White Helmets organization to The Hague to testify to their complicity in staging fake gas attacks on behalf of unnamed Western powers and Israel, when dozens of witnesses, parents of children kidnapped by the White Helmets or doctors threatened by them testified, the press blacked it out. In the long run, the now two-decade war that involves fake terror events, staged color revolutions and endless political misdeeds, at the center of it all we find Israel and their political allies who hold power in the US, Britain and France due to financial support from sectors tied to Israel, not just lobbyists but criminal groups as well. Keeping the lid on this is the army of fake think tanks, bribed and blackmailed politicians, press operatives, wholly-owned media groups, and politicized social media monoliths.

Still, in the end, Israel seems to be circling the drain, more hated than ever, more isolated and, oddly enough, less and less of a "Jewish state" and more of a "criminal state."

Proving this point, we need only refer to the statements by Donald Trump of the betrayal of Israel by American Jews, people who put ethics above politics, who put America before a brutal Israeli regime. Trump calls American Jews "traitors." Some simply call them Americans like others. At one time, Israel was defended by its ability to draw on the Holocaust and smears of anti-Semitism when their brutality against their own people was exposed. Time is now closing in. Did Israel bomb Saudi Arabia? Will Israel's remaining "man in Washington," Mike Pompeo get the war Israel is asking for, a war where Israel will be destroyed as well?

Wait, who would want Israel destroyed to save himself? Are the Netanyahu's as "crazy" as Shelly and Miriam Adelson claim? Would they "burn Israel to the ground" to save themselves from prison for corruption charges? Who benefits if even Israel is destroyed in a war seemingly begun to advance Israel's interests? Do understand this, it is necessary to think of the world as being in a "post-nation-state" phase. When one does that, conspiracies are easier to understand and accept

Bolton firing shows Trump's foreign policy not consistent: U.S. Analyst

TEHRAN (Tasnim) — An American political commentator highlighted US President Donald Trump's inconsistent approach toward foreign affairs, saying the president fired John Bolton to probably develop a "less aggressive stance" than the former US national security adviser.

"Certainly, there is a lack of consistency in the Trump administration when it comes to a variety of matters, including foreign policy," Keith Preston, the chief editor and director of attackthesystem.com, told Tasnim in an interview.

He added, "Trump likely fired Bolton because the President is inclined toward a less aggressive stance than what Bolton's supporters would prefer."

Keith Preston was born in Lynchburg, Virginia, United States. He received degrees in Religious Studies, History, and Sociology from Virginia Commonwealth University. He is the founder and director of American Revolutionary Vanguard and the chief editor of AttacktheSystem.Com. He has also been a contributor to LewRockwell.Com, Antiwar.Com, Anti-State.Com, Taki's Magazine, Radix Journal, and AlternativeRight.Com. He is the author of six books, and was awarded the 2008 Chris R. Tame Memorial Prize by the United Kingdom's Libertarian Alliance. Keith has been a featured speaker at conferences of the National Policy Institute, H. L. Mencken Club, and Anarchapulco. He has been interviewed on numerous radio programs and internet broadcasts, and appeared as a guest analyst on Russia Today, Press TV and the BBC.

The following is the full text of the interview.

■ US President Donald Trump on Tuesday announced the firing of national security adviser John Bolton. What was the main reason behind this?

A: John Bolton has long been associated with a coterie of super-hawks that dominate the Republican Party's foreign policy establishment. Bolton represents the objectives of two main groups. One of these is the neoconservatives, who are radical Zionists that are aligned with Israel's Likud Party, and want American foreign policy in the Middle East to align with Likud objectives. The other group is the aggressive imperialists that have been influential in right-wing American politics since the 1960s, and who are primarily concerned about empire-building, securing control over various material resources in different countries for US business corporations, and ensuring that the profit margins of the various military-related industries in the US remain high. Both of these groups take a very aggressive position when it comes to virtually all matters involving international relations, regardless of what other nations are involved. Bolton was essentially the spokesman for these interests in the Trump administration. Trump likely fired Bolton because the President is inclined toward a less aggressive stance than what Bolton's supporters would prefer. Trump has expressed a greater reticence about military intervention in other nations, and a greater willingness to utilize diplomacy and other means of advancing foreign policy objectives. President Trump was elected on a campaign platform that promised a more restrained foreign policy, and he is likely concerned about his reelection bid next year. He is also aware of how the legacies of Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama have been tarnished by their failures in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Syria, and the President does not want his own legacy to be damaged in the same way.

■ Bolton denied being fired and insisted that he had resigned. Democratic Senator Jack Reed said that "Bolton was wrong for this job," but added that removing him "isn't going to fix the failures plaguing this administration's dysfunctional foreign policy." He further described the White House as being "in constant turmoil." It seems that the Trump administration is in chaos. What do you think?

A: Certainly, there is a lack of consistency in the Trump administration when it comes to a variety of matters, including foreign policy. However, it is also possible to identify certain patterns. On one hand, the President has been very magnanimous toward foreign policy interests that he feels are consistent with his own interests. For example, he has been the most pro-Israel President that the US has ever had, even more so than President George W. Bush, and Trump has signed off on everything that Prime Minister Netanyahu has done that does not conflict with Trump's personal political interests, such as annexing the Golan Heights or moving the capital to Jerusalem. Trump has arguably been the most pro-Saudi President the US has ever had as well, in spite of the Saudi regime's horrible human rights record, support for Takfiri terrorism, and genocidal war in Yemen. Trump has also provided the Pentagon with record-high budgets. But Trump seems to draw the line at starting new wars, probably because as a businessman he understands cost-benefit analyses in a way that career bureaucrats like Bolton do not.

■ US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin underlined that Trump and top aides remain "completely-aligned" on Washington's sanctions against Iran. However, Rob Malley, president of the International Crisis Group consultancy, said Bolton's departure could realign White House policy on Afghanistan, Iran, North Korea and Venezuela. What are your thoughts on this?

A: The evidence indicates that Trump would like to extricate the United States from Afghanistan. Doing so would be to his advantage when it comes to his reelection chances in 2020. However, there also seems to be concern in the Trump administration about being perceived as having been "defeated" by the Taliban if a Taliban return were to occur following US departure. The present government in Afghanistan is essentially a US puppet, and the administration likely does not want to be viewed as the administration that abandoned a supposed ally, and allowed them to be defeated by the enemy, which is how US policymakers were viewed in right-wing sectors in the US following the Vietnam War. Trump is likely concerned about the perception of his legacy in this area as well. Additionally, there is concern about maintaining access to Afghanistan's rich mineral and other sources, and curbing Russian and Chinese influence in Central Asia.

Trump's positions on Iran largely reflect the pro-Israel sentiments of those around him, including members of his family. Trump likely regards the sanctions as a means of exercising pressure on Iran without actually going to war, which Trump wants to avoid because of the political consequences involved. The sanctions are likely to continue even with Bolton's departure. Regarding North Korea, Trump seems to represent factions of the US business class that want an opening with North Korea and the lifting of the sanctions against the DPRK so that North Korea can essentially become "China-lite," or a source of cheap labor and an export market for US companies. If Trump is reelected in 2020, his administration will likely continue to seek some kind of peace agreement with North Korea. As for Venezuela, the US petroleum industry wants control over the Venezuelan oil trade. The circle around Trump, including figures such as Bolton and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, were clearly trying to organize a regime change operation in Venezuela. They even had a hand-picked successor to President Maduro in the person of Juan Guaido. However, the Maduro government was able to retain enough military, political, and popular support in Venezuela that the US regime change plans failed. Trump is clearly not willing to actually commit the US to war in Venezuela, and he seems to have lost interest in Venezuela at this point even as Maduro retains power and Guaido has become a fugitive.

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Crucial role of recycling in the evolution of life in our universe

New research by astrophysicists at the University of Kent reveals vital clues about the role recycling plays in the formation of life in our universe.

By investigating the different stages in the life journey of stars and gaining new knowledge about their evolutionary cycle, scientists at the Centre for Astrophysics and Planetary Science have discovered more about a crucial stage in the emergence of life in our Universe. Their research reveals for the first time how matter discarded as stars die is recycled to form new stars and planets.

Scientists have long known that the materials that make up human life were not present during the beginnings of the universe. Elements such as carbon and oxygen form deep inside stars and are released when the stars explode. What has not been clear is what happens to these materials in the vast majority of stars which do not explode and how they are then extracted to contribute to the development of new planets and biospheres.

In their paper 'Numerical simulations of wind-driven protoplanetary nebulae -- I. near-infrared emission', which was published by the Royal Astronomical Society on September 12, Professor Michael Smith and PhD student Igor Novikov have discovered



this vital missing link. By carrying out 2-D modelling on their Forge supercomputer, which mapped the pattern of light emitted from stars under different environmental conditions, the research team were able to understand how the material ejected is

transferred and mixed with interstellar gas to form new astronomical objects.

For the first time, the physicists simulated the detailed formation of Protoplanetary nebula. These are astronomical objects that develop during a star's late evolution.

They modelled the formation of the shell of materials that is released as the star ages. These shells form planetary nebulae, or ring-shaped clouds of gas and dust, which are visible in the night sky.

The study revealed how the gas and energy expelled by stars are returned to the universe, and in what forms. It found that the elements produced by dying stars are transferred through a process of fragmentation and recycled into new stars and planets.

Professor Smith said: 'Initially, we were perplexed by the results of our simulations. We needed to understand what happens to the expelled shells from dying red giants. We proposed that the shells must be temporary, as if they stayed intact life could not exist in our universe and our planets would be unoccupied.'

'The shells are not uniform. Most are likely to be cold and molecular. They disintegrate into protruding fingers and so lose their integrity. In contrast, warm atomic shells remain intact. This provides vital clues about how carbon and other materials are transferred and reused within our universe. Our civilization happens to exist when the generation of recycled material is at its highest. That is probably no coincidence.'

(Source: Science Daily)

No benefit in growth mindset theory, study says



A motivational approach to learning used widely in schools to encourage academic success does not benefit pupils, Edinburgh research suggests.

So-called growth mindset theory—which assumes intellectual ability is not fixed but can be greatly changed—has little, or even a negative, effect on attainment, researchers say.

Psychologists who gauged the theory's impact in the classroom concluded that improved textbooks and systematic study practices are more effective ways of boosting learning.

The team tested more than 600 children and found that whether or not children believed basic intellectual ability can be changed had no effect on overcoming difficult challenges.

"We didn't see the remarkable results promised in earlier studies and would caution against using this approach in class. Beliefs about basic ability appear unrelated to resilience or progress in school," says Dr. Timothy Bates of the School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences.

*Hard work
Instead, they found that hard work and perseverance were vital if pupils were to make headway. Progress would be made faster if growth mindset interventions were discarded, the University of Edinburgh team says.

Growth mindset research began in the 1980s and, in common with several other ideas in psychology, has been rigorously re-examined in recent years.

The Edinburgh study, published in the Journal of Experimental Psychology: General, replicated two of the most influential papers on the topic and revisited the methodology used.

Psychologists tested mindset theory in three studies involving pupils in China and, now, in the UK, all aged nine to 13. They found that growth mindset manipulation had no effect on pupils' resilience and no relationship to motivation.

*Controlled studies
The sole exception in the controlled studies was one significant effect but in the reverse direction. Children with a growth mindset show worse, not better performance on more difficult material.

The researchers also studied children's grades across a semester in school. Again, the only association found was one that showed a negative impact.

In follow-up studies, the researchers found that similar failures were replicated in university students, with growth mindset showing zero association with performance, even in the challenging transition from school to university.

(Source: Medical Express)

Scientists reconstruct skeleton of elusive, pre-historic human



Researchers say they have reconstructed the skeleton of a pre-historic human from a long-extinct and elusive species using DNA found in the pinky bone of a 13-year-old girl who died 70,000 years ago.

Little is known about the Denisovans, who were ancient relatives of the more familiar Neanderthals and our own species. Their existence was only recently discovered and has fascinated scientists worldwide.

Evidence was first uncovered in 2008 in a cave in Siberia, and today it includes only three teeth, a pinky bone and a lower jaw, said Hebrew University genetics professor Liran Carmel.

It sounds like science fiction, but Carmel said that was enough to create a depiction of a full Denisovan skeleton.

"This is the first time that we provide a detailed anatomical reconstruction showing us what these humans looked like," he said. It turns out, Carmel said, "we are all very similar."

His team developed a technology to decipher the ancient DNA and, more importantly, its gene activity. Gene activity, for example, differentiates between a frog and tadpole, even though their DNA is identical, Carmel said.

DNA could indicate the Denisovan's dark skin, eyes and hair, Carmel said, but by mapping gene activity patterns, they could infer how the species stood out

anatomically from modern humans or Neanderthals. They identified 56 traits, most in the skull, that differed.

This helped them produce a rendering - claiming 85% accuracy - of a Denisovan skeleton that at first glance looks like it could be from a modern human, though differences are obvious on closer inspection.

There were similarities to Neanderthals - a sloping forehead, long face and large pelvis - but the Denisovans were also unique in their very wide skull and large dental arch.

The skeletal reconstruction, along with an artist's rendering of the 13-year-old girl's head and face, were published in the journal Cell.

The team repeated the process as a test with Neanderthals and chimpanzees, whose anatomies are known, and found the reconstruction to be 85% accurate. The discovery of more Denisovan DNA would further improve the rendering.

Some far-flung modern Asian populations possess small but significant amounts of DNA derived from Denisovans, suggesting they had a broad geographical presence.

Research suggests that Denisovan DNA may have contributed to modern Tibetans' ability to live in high altitudes and the Inuits' ability to withstand freezing temperatures.

(Source: Reuters)

Plasma flow near sun's surface explains sunspots, other solar phenomena

For 400 years people have tracked sunspots, the dark patches that appear for weeks at a time on the sun's surface. They have observed but been unable to explain why the number of spots peaks every 11 years.

A University of Washington study published this month in the journal Physics of Plasmas proposes a model of plasma motion that would explain the 11-year sunspot cycle and several other previously mysterious properties of the sun.

"Our model is completely different from a normal picture of the sun," said first author Thomas Jarboe, a UW professor of aeronautics and astronautics. "I really think we're the first people that are telling you the nature and source of solar magnetic phenomena -- how the sun works."

The authors created a model based on their previous work with fusion energy research. The model shows that a thin layer beneath the sun's surface is key to many of the features we see from Earth, like sunspots, magnetic reversals and solar flow, and is backed up by comparisons with observations of the sun.

"The observational data are key to confirming our picture of how the sun functions," Jarboe said.

In the new model, a thin layer of magnetic flux and plasma, or free-floating electrons, moves at different speeds on different parts of the sun. The difference in speed between the flows creates twists of magnetism, known as magnetic helicity, that are similar to what happens in some fusion reactor concepts.

"Every 11 years, the sun grows this layer until it's too big to be stable, and then it sloughs off," Jarboe said. Its departure exposes the lower layer of plasma moving in the



opposite direction with a flipped magnetic field.

When the circuits in both hemispheres are moving at the same speed, more sunspots appear. When the circuits are different speeds, there is less sunspot activity. That mismatch, Jarboe says, may have happened during the decades of little sunspot activity known as the "Maunder Minimum."

"If the two hemispheres rotate at different speeds, then the sunspots near the equator won't match up, and the whole thing will die," Jarboe said.

"Scientists had thought that a sunspot was generated down at 30 percent of the depth of the sun, and then came up in a twisted rope of plasma that pops out," Jarboe said. Instead, his model shows that the sunspots are in the "supergranules" that form within the thin, subsurface layer of plasma that the study calculates to be roughly 100 to 300 miles (150 to 450 kilometers) thick, or a fraction of the sun's 430,000-mile radius. "The sunspot is an amazing thing. There's nothing there,

and then all of a sudden, you see it in a flash," Jarboe said.

The group's previous research has focused on fusion power reactors, which use very high temperatures similar to those inside the sun to separate hydrogen nuclei from their electrons. In both the sun and in fusion reactors the nuclei of two hydrogen atoms fuse together, releasing huge amounts of energy.

The type of reactor Jarboe has focused on, a spheromak, contains the electron plasma within a sphere that causes it to self-organize into certain patterns. When Jarboe began to consider the sun, he saw similarities, and created a model for what might be happening in the celestial body.

"For 100 years people have been researching this," Jarboe said. "Many of the features we're seeing are below the resolution of the models, so we can only find them in calculations."

Other properties explained by the theory, he said, include flow inside the sun, the twisting action that leads to sunspots and the total magnetic structure of the sun. The paper is likely to provoke intense discussion, Jarboe said.

"My hope is that scientists will look at their data in a new light, and the researchers who worked their whole lives to gather that data will have a new tool to understand what it all means," he said.

The research was funded by the U.S. Department of Energy. Co-authors are UW graduate students Thomas Benedetti, Christopher Everson, Christopher Hansen, Derek Sutherland, James Penna, UW postdoctoral researchers Aaron Hossack and John Benjamin O'Bryan, UW affiliate faculty member Brian Nelson, and Kyle Morgan, a former UW graduate student now at CTFusion in Seattle.

(Source: Science Daily)

Six galaxies undergoing sudden, dramatic transitions

Galaxies come in a wide variety of shapes, sizes and brightnesses, ranging from humdrum ordinary galaxies to luminous active galaxies. While an ordinary galaxy is visible mainly because of the light from its stars, an active galaxy shines brightest at its center, or nucleus, where a supermassive black hole emits a steady blast of bright light as it voraciously consumes nearby gas and dust.

Sitting somewhere on the spectrum between ordinary and active galaxies is another class, known as low-ionization nuclear emission-line region (LINER) galaxies. While LINERs are relatively common, accounting for roughly one-third of all nearby galaxies, astronomers have fiercely debated the main source of light emission from LINERs. Some argue that weakly active galactic nuclei are responsible, while others maintain that star-forming regions outside the galactic nucleus produce the most light.

A team of astronomers observed six mild-mannered LINER galaxies suddenly and surprisingly transforming into ravenous quasars -- home to the brightest of all active galactic nuclei. The team reported their observations, which could help demystify the nature of both LINERs and quasars while answering some burning questions about galactic evolution, in the Astrophysical Journal on September 18, 2019. Based on their analysis, the researchers suggest they have discovered an entirely new type of black hole activity at the centers of these six LINER galaxies.

"For one of the six objects, we first thought we had observed a tidal disruption event, which happens when a star passes too close to a supermassive black hole and gets shredded," said Sara Frederick, a graduate student in the University of Maryland Department of Astronomy and the lead author of the research paper. "But we later found it was a previously dormant black hole undergoing a transition that astronomers call a 'changing look,' resulting in a bright quasar. Observing six of these transitions, all in relatively quiet LINER galaxies, suggests that we've identified a totally new class of active galactic nucleus."

All six of the surprising transitions were observed during the first nine months of the Zwicky Transient Facility (ZTF), an automated sky survey project based at Caltech's Palomar Observatory near San Diego, California, which began observations in March 2018. UMD is a partner in the ZTF effort, facilitated by the Joint Space-Science Institute (JSI), a partnership between UMD and NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center.

Changing look transitions have been documented in other galaxies -- most commonly in a class of active galaxies known as Seyfert galaxies. By definition, Seyfert galaxies all have a bright, active galactic nucleus, but Type 1 and Type 2 Seyfert galaxies differ in the amount of light they emit at specific wavelengths. According to Frederick, many astronomers suspect that the difference results from the angle at which astronomers view the galaxies.

Type 1 Seyfert galaxies are thought to face Earth head-on, giving an unobstructed view of their nuclei, while Type 2 Seyfert galaxies are tilted at an oblique angle, such that their nuclei are partially obscured by a donut-shaped ring of dense, dusty gas clouds. Thus, changing look transitions between these two classes present a puzzle for astronomers, since a galaxy's orientation towards Earth is not expected to change.

Frederick and her colleagues' new observations may call these assumptions into question.

"We started out trying to understand changing look transformations in Seyfert galaxies. But instead, we found a whole new class of active galactic nucleus capable of transforming a wimpy galaxy to a luminous quasar," said Suvi Gezari, an associate professor of astronomy at UMD, a co-director of JSI and a co-author of the research paper. "Theory suggests that a quasar should take thousands of years to turn on, but these observations suggest that it can happen very quickly. It tells us that the theory is all wrong. We thought that Seyfert transformation was the major puzzle. But now we have a bigger issue to solve."

"Our findings confirm that LINERs can, in fact, host active supermassive black holes at their centers," Frederick said. "But these six transitions were so sudden and dramatic, it tells us that there is something altogether different going on in these galaxies. We want to know how such massive amounts of gas and dust can suddenly start falling into a black hole. Because we caught these transitions in the act, it opens up a lot of opportunities to compare what the nuclei looked like before and after the transformation."

Unlike most quasars, which light up the surrounding clouds of gas and dust far beyond the galactic nucleus, the researchers found that only the gas and dust closest to the nucleus had been turned on. Frederick, Gezari and their collaborators suspect that this activity gradually spreads from the galactic nucleus -- and may provide the opportunity to map the development of a newborn quasar.

"It's surprising that any galaxy can change its look on human time scales. These changes are taking place much more quickly than we can explain with current quasar theory," Frederick said. "It will take some work to understand what can disrupt a galaxy's accretion structure and cause these changes on such short order. The forces at play must be very extreme and very dramatic."

(Source: Science Daily)

Australia to help Trump reach the Moon, and beyond

Australia will invest \$150 million (\$101 million) in its companies and technology to help U.S. President Donald Trump's bid for a moon landing by 2024 and subsequent U.S. missions to Mars, Prime Minister Scott Morrison said over the weekend.

Morrison, visiting NASA headquarters in Washington, said the five-year investment plan would help businesses support U.S. automation systems, build equipment for space craft and play a role in mineral exploration.

"We're backing Australian businesses to the Moon, and even Mars, and back," Morrison said.

The announcement came after Morrison made a state visit to the White House on Friday, with the red carpet rolled out, signaling Australia's strong ties with the United States after a period of tense relations with China.

The investment is part of a broader Australian plan to beef up its space sector, with Morrison saying the government wants to triple the size of the sector to \$12 billion and create some 20,000 extra jobs by 2030.

Trump, when asked at a joint news conference with Morrison about the U.S. space program, said the focus was on Mars.

"We're stopping at the Moon," he said, according to a transcript. "The Moon is actually a launching pad. That's why we're stopping at the Moon. I said, 'hey, we've already done the Moon. That's not so exciting'. They said, 'no, sir, it's a launching pad for Mars'. So we'll be doing the Moon but we'll really be doing Mars."

(Source: Reuters)

AFZ has potential for launching air taxi service: tourism expert

By Afshin Majlesi

TEHRAN — There is a potential for launching air taxi service in Arvand Free Zone, southwest Iran, as the region enjoys the presence of businessmen, travelers, investors as well as foreign nationals, local tourism expert Mahmoud Navaser told the Tehran Times.

Covering 37,400 ha, Arvand Free Zone is situated northwest of the Persian Gulf at the confluence of the two major rivers of Karun and Arvand and it shares border with Iraq and Kuwait as well, Navaser explained.



The free zone also encompasses the cities of Minushahr, Khorramshahr and Abadan, he added.

"Abadan and Khorramshahr have long been considered as centers of trade and commerce in Khuzestan province, and now the two cities annually welcome many businessmen from across the globe... Tax exemptions have significantly incentivized investors to be active in the free zone."

Vast tourist capacities of Abadan, Khorramshahr and Minushahr, as well as hospitality and warmth of the people in these cities, is the reason behind arrivals in the region, which attaches great importance to the development of transportation, Navaser added.

"There is no doubt that the growth of the tourism industry is dependent to the development of the transportation system. Today, a criterion for measuring the level of development of any country is its transportation infrastructure, and it is impossible to expand tourism without paying attention to the infrastructure required by the industry."

Arvand Free Trade Zone in the southwestern province of Khuzestan is one of the seven major free trade zones of Iran. It has long been one of the border and oil rich zones of the country due to the existence of freshwater rivers of Karun and Arvand and also transportation facilities including road, rail, sea and air. Lands of this Zone have been allocated to industrial activities, and other sectors, such as trade, tourism and office, to ports, warehousing and transit, and investors can invest in any of the economic activities.

Establishment of free trade zones in Iran dates back to Iranian calendar year 1368 (March 1989– March 1990) following the fall in the country's oil income in the preceding year which prompted the government to promote the non-oil exports.

The first two free trade zones of Iran were established in the south of country. The first one was Kish Free Trade Zone established in 1368 on Kish Island in the Persian Gulf and the second one was Qeshm Free Trade Zone established the year after on Qeshm Island in the Strait of Hormuz.

Some five other free trade zones have been also established in the country since then, including Chabahar in southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan Province, Arvand in southwestern Khuzestan Province, Anzali in northern Gilan Province, Aras in East-Azərbaycan Province and Maku in West-Azərbaycan Province, both in the northwest of the country.



ROUND THE GLOBE

Pre-Hispanic City and National Park of Palenque

The archaeological site of Palenque in the state of Chiapas is one of the most outstanding Classic period sites of the Maya area, known for its exceptional and well conserved architectural and sculptural remains.

The elegance and craftsmanship of the construction, as well as the lightness of the sculpted reliefs illustrating Mayan mythology, attest to the creative genius of this civilization.



The city was founded during the Late Preclassic, which corresponds to the beginning of the Christian era. Its first inhabitants probably migrated from other sites in the nearby region.

They always shared the cultural features which define the Maya culture, as well as a level of development that allowed them to adapt to the natural environment. After several centuries, ca. 500 CE, the city rose to be a powerful capital within a regional political unit. Without a buffer zone the total area of the archaeological site is 1780 hectares, 09 areas and 49 square meters and 1,400 buildings have been recorded, of which only about 10% have been explored.

Palenque has been the object of interest of numerous travelers, explorers and researchers since the 18th century. It illustrates one of the most significant achievements of mankind in the American continent. The ancient city has a planned urban layout, with monumental edifices and some of the largest clearings found in all the Maya area.

The architecture of the site is integrated in the landscape, creating a city of unique beauty.

(Source: UNESCO)

Iran and its enormous potential for religious tourism

TOURISM TEHRAN — Iran is **d e s k** growing into a major destination for religious tourism despite U.S. sanctions on its economy, some experts say.

"We have achieved a considerable growth of tourism in Iran," said the former CEO of Iran's Tourism Development Corporation Gholamhossein Hosseini in an interview with Press TV.

"World's average growth in tourism stands at around three to four percent. This is while we have experienced about 10 percent growth in 2015 which I believe is a remarkable success."

"When it comes to religious tourism, Iran is among the top five countries in the world," he added, noting that the Islamic Republic is well on its way to achieve its 20-year vision plan for tourism industry, which is to attract more than 20 million tourists.

Among the top destinations for international tourists to Iran are religious cities of Mashhad, Qom, Shiraz and capital Tehran. These cities are respectively home to the holy shrines of Imam Reza, the eighth Imam of Shia Muslims; his sister Hazrat Masumeh (SA); his brothers Ahmad and Mohammad; as well as the late founder of the Islamic Revolution Imam Rouhollah Khomeini, Press TV reported.

In terms of religious tourism, Hosseini further emphasized, "Iran enjoys an enormous potential. It has 8,000 sacred sites and pilgrimage places, around 4,400 of them have been registered."

"People from different religious backgrounds have a reason to visit Iran. Different



International travelers pose for a photo while visiting the holy shrine of Hazrat Masumeh (SA), the sister of Imam Reza (AS), in Qom, central Iran. Women are clad in chadors, shapeless gowns that cover their entire bodies, to respect a dress code required for female pilgrims.

religions in Iran have their own religious ceremonies and all that can attract tourists," he said.

Mashhad and Qom, however, "have always been the top five destinations for religious tourists," he noted.

Today 1.8 million tourists just from Iraq visit Iran annually, said the head of Iran's tour operators associations, Ebrahim Pourfaraj.

"We've had a rising tourism in Iran from countries like Oman, Kuwait, Pakistan and Afghanistan."

"Many religious tourists from across the world have seized the opportunity of depreciation of the value of the Iranian rial [due to U.S. sanctions] to visit Iran for longer time periods," he added.

Moreover, the deputy tourism minister

Vali Teimouri points out that according to the 2018 report released by the world tourism organization for our region, "each tourist brings [on average] \$1,490 to the country, and if you multiply that by the nearly 8 million international tourists that visit Iran annually, you'd be amazed by the foreign currency injected to the country's economy through the tourism industry."

He further underlined that tourism also contributes greatly to employment across the country, noting that tourism creates jobs more than any other industry and that tourists tend to spend money on tour guides, restaurants, various Iranian market places to purchase handicrafts and other goods.

A unique time for visiting Iran is during the first ten days of the lunar month of Muharram, which fell from Sept. 1 to 10 this year. That's because Iranians, who are mostly Shia Muslims, hold special ceremonies during this time. For Shia Muslims, Muharram is a turning point in the history of Islam.

Over the past couple of years, Yazd, Meybod, Isfahan and Kashan were among the cities which hosted the highest numbers of foreign tourists on the ninth and the tenth days of Muharram (Tasua and Ashura) when the mourning ceremonies reach its climax.

Last November, the U.S. reinstated sanctions on Iran, mainly the ones that had been lifted under the landmark 2015 nuclear deal, in order to batter Iran's economy, however, according to official data, they have so far failed to lessen foreign arrivals to the Islamic Republic.

Spanish cultural heritage show opens in Tehran

HERITAGE TEHRAN — Spain's Archeological Museum of Alicante (MARQ) on Sunday opened a show in Tehran. The large-scale exhibition, being hosted by the National Museum of Iran, puts on show around 300 objects, some of which dating for millennia.

The exhibit is in return for a landmark Iranian exhibit titled "Iran, Cradle of Civilization" that the Spanish museum had hosted from March 14 to September 1, pulling in 101,108 visitors Spain and other nationalities.

"Iran, Cradle of Civilization" was previously on show at Drents Museum, Assen, the Netherlands, where it was well received by museumgoers from June to November 2018.



Addressing the opening ceremony, Jebrael Nokandeh, the director of the National Museum of Iran, said that holding joint exhibits in the Netherlands and Spain is a unique work and a symbol of Iran's friendship with the two countries.

"Iran, Cradle of Civilization" turned the spotlight on the earliest developments of agriculture and livestock farming from the very beginning to cuneiform clay tablets, gold beakers and ornaments, bronze weapons and beautifully painted ceramics associated with successive Iranian kingdoms as it featured nearly two hundred pieces of a large span of Iranian history, starting from pre-historical era to the Islamic period.

Sapienza University to document historical sites in western Iran

HERITAGE TEHRAN — A team of **d e s k** experts from Sapienza University of Rome is slated to document some historical sites that are scattered across Kermanshah province, western Iran.

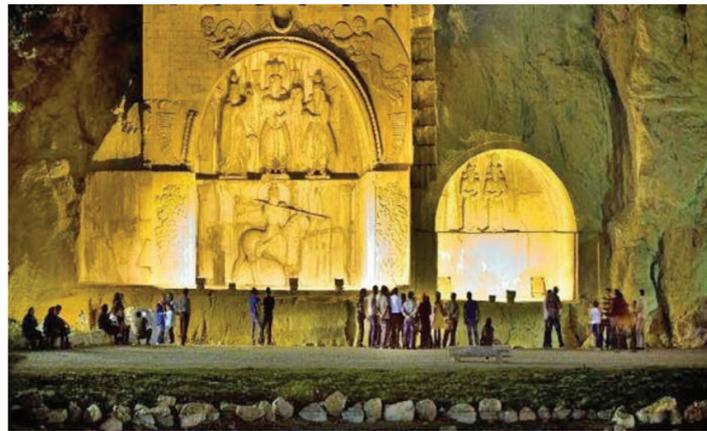
The project will be carried out under a memorandum of understanding which was inked on Saturday between the Italian university and provincial cultural heritage department, CHTN reported.

Sapienza University of Rome has long been active in studies related to the Iranian history and civilization, said Omid Qaderi, the provincial tourism chief.

"It can bring its valuable experiences to Kermanshah," the official said.

Temple of Anahita in Kangavar, the Palace of Ardashir in Firuzabad, and the Anubanini petroglyph are among historical sites that are to be documented, he added.

Over 300,000 travelers visited major



historical sites across Kermanshah during the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (started March 21), Qaderi said earlier in July.

The province embraces awe-inspiring historical sites including Bisotun and Taq-e Bostan, both on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Inscribed into the base of a towering cliff, Taq-e Bostan comprises extraordinary Sassanian bas-reliefs of ancient victorious kings divide opinions.

UNESCO has it that Bisotun bears an outstanding testimony to the important interchange of human values on the development of monumental art and writing, reflecting ancient traditions in monumental bas-reliefs. Measuring about 15 meters high and 25 meters wide, the inscription was created on the order of King Darius I in 521 BC. It bears three different cuneiform script languages: Old Persian, Elamite, and Babylonian.

Ancient humans may have made patterns and sculptures on South Africa's beaches

One of the first things many kids – or even adults – may do when they are on a beach or dune is to make patterns in the sand, or sculptures in the form of sandcastles.

Many generations of humans have enjoyed these activities. But until now there has been no reported evidence to suggest how far back in human history this may have occurred. Now my colleagues and I believe we may have found such evidence at sites along South Africa's Cape south coast.

Southern Africa boasts an extensive record of palaeo-art, and South Africa's Cape south coast, stretching eastward along the coast from Cape Town, contains one of the richest Middle Stone Age archaeological records in the world. This includes an engraved piece of ochre and the oldest reported example of rock painting. Evidence suggests that the area may have been critical to the survival of the human species.

This coastal region now contains extensive aeolianites (cemented dune deposits) and cemented foreshore deposits. These rocks are the cemented remains of the dune and beach surfaces that existed when our distant ancestors and many other vertebrates were making tracks in the region in the Middle-Late Pleistocene, approximately 158,000 to 70,000 years ago. We know the ages of the rocks from the results of previous dating studies.

It may seem that tracks and patterns made in the sand are ephemeral, destined to be covered by the effects of the next wind storm or tide. However, perhaps surprisingly, many of these records are preserved, ready to be identified when they are re-exposed through cliff collapse or through forces of erosion. Our team has identified more than 140 vertebrate tracksites along this coastline. For example, as many as 40 footprints made by hominins travelling down a dune surface, and estimated as being 90,000 years old, were identified at one site by members of our research team in 2016.

So, given that we know humans moved across these landscapes, we wondered whether there might also be evidence

of other forms of human activity on these surfaces of sand, such as patterns, symbols, sculptures, or foraging. If so, could such ancient canvases have left evidence of human activity that can be discerned and interpreted today? Indeed, could such evidence form a previously undocumented form of Middle Stone Age hominin expression and activity? Our findings suggest the answer to these questions may be "yes".

■ A plethora of patterns

At one site we found a large almost perfectly circular groove, along with a depression in the center of the circle. Beside this feature was a pair of oval shapes that may represent knee impressions. If this circle was generated by a human, then a possible mechanism could have involved the use of a forked stick, in the same way that a compass is used by kids in maths classes.

Other patterns included groove features beside possible human footprints, and a "hashtag" pattern that resembles known palaeo-art in the region. We also identified two possible animal images, one of which may conceivably have taken the form of a sculpture of a sting-ray. We have proposed a new term to describe patterns made in sand by humans, which become lithified over time through a natural cementation process: ammoglyph ("ammos" being Greek for "sand", and "glyph" being Greek for a carving, image or symbol).

If our interpretations are accurate, these findings represent two important things. Firstly, evidence of a human presence on these ancient dunes and beaches is more substantial than has been thought. Secondly, this evidence would buttress that of other avenues of research that attest to the cognitive abilities of early humans in this region.

■ Varying interpretations

There is a multitude of lines, grooves, patterns and shapes on these rock surfaces.

One of our challenges therefore lay in identifying whether a hominin "signature" could reasonably be inferred among this plethora of forms. We outlined other possible agents

that may have caused such patterns (such as wind, water, fossil roots and branches, and traces made by invertebrates, reptiles, birds and other mammals). We also considered how to distinguish between ancient patterns made in sand and more recent patterns etched in rock – that is, graffiti.

In some of the cases we described we simply pointed out features that appeared puzzling, that may possibly have been created by humans, but where other causes could not be reasonably excluded. One site contained patterns that we had never encountered before, and that do not appear anywhere in the ichnological (trace fossil) literature. After due consideration we interpreted this as possibly representing a seal tracksite, and will be reporting on this elsewhere.

In other cases, such as the circular feature with the central depression, the presence of grooves beside possible human footprints, and the "hashtag" pattern, the evidence for a human origin appeared more compelling. However, we took a cautious approach, acknowledging that absolute certainty is elusive.

■ Next steps

Samples have been taken for dating, adjacent to a number of the sites we described. We eagerly await these results. Non-invasive imaging studies may aid in the investigation of the rocks with patterns that suggest foraging behavior.

We hope that other scientists will critically examine the findings and interpretations that we have presented. Recognizing that ancient sand surfaces were not all "perishable", but that some of them have preserved an extraordinary record of what transpired on them, suggests a previously under-appreciated means of interpreting ancient human expression.

The resulting search for ammoglyphs on the Cape south coast has the potential to become a new field of study, at a meeting point of archaeology, art, ichnology, palaeoanthropology, pattern recognition and sedimentology.

(Source: The Conversation)

Reuters frustrated U.S. not striking Iran for Aramco attacks despite no evidence of Tehran's involvement

By Alireza Hashemi

TEHRAN — Some in the mainstream western media are lamenting why U.S. President Donald Trump is dragging its feet to march off to another open-ended military conflict in the Middle East, after days of reckless efforts to implicate Iran in the September 14 Yemeni attacks into Saudi oil installations.

The MSM outlets are repeating that Iran was behind the attack, despite the fact Iranian complacency with the Yemeni strike has not yet been publicly demonstrated.

They are following in the footsteps of U.S. Secretary of State Michael Pompeo, who has put American credibility on the line by accusing Iran of perpetrating an "act of war".

The attack, the latest in a series of strikes into key Saudi Arabian targets this year, was launched from south-western Iran using drones and cruise missiles, according to the American narrative.

This is while the Yemeni Houthi movement has claimed responsibility for the attacks, explaining in detail how the assaults were carried out.

The strike fits a pattern of Yemeni strikes against Saudi economic infrastructure, and it follows Yemeni threats made last month.

There is no plausible reasons to believe Iran was behind the attacks, and it's even unclear if Iran has indirectly played a role in the attacks.

Although the U.S. government and establishment media often call the Houthis a proxy of Iran, the fact is this is an independent force grown out of decades-long conflicts in Yemen.

The extent to which Iran offers support to the Yemeni forces has never been established.

Anyway, even if factual evidence does emerge that Iran has provided weapons used in the attack, there would be much less actual guilt on the part of Tehran than what the western outlets say. Why would this justify a U.S. military response?

Assemblage of junk

Surprisingly, neither the U.S. nor Saudi Arabia have so far presented a shred of credible evidence proving Iran launched the attack on Aramco.

In a press conference Wednesday night, Riyadh put on display a wreckage of what it said were remnants of weapons used in the attacks.

In the show, the Saudi Defense Ministry Spokesman Turki al-Maliki claimed the wreckage showed the attacks were "unquestionably sponsored" by Tehran.

But many believe the assemblage of junk were not that much-anticipated "concrete evidence" Saudi officials had vowed to provide. Al-Maliki did not say what area the strikes were fired from, just asserting they "could not have originated in Yemen".

Separately, Saudi Arabia's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Adel al-Jubeir on Saturday showed he is clueless about the perpetrator of the attacks.

Al-Jubeir said Riyadh would take the appropriate steps if its investigation confirmed that the attacks were launched from Iranian soil.

"The kingdom will take the appropriate measures based on the results of the investigation, to ensure its security and stability," al-Jubeir told a news conference.

Reuters eggs on war

However, it seems Reuters and other western outlets are bent on nudging the idea of war forward, picking up the anti-Iran narrative and running with it.

The corporate media is having the false accusations repeated until the need for Iran attack becomes consensus reality in the west. Of dozens of Reuters articles on the Aramco



Remains of the weapons which Saudi government says were used to attack an Aramco oil facility, are displayed during a news conference in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia September 18, 2019.

attack, almost all take Iran's involvement in the attack for granted.

The articles generally repeat the same demonology pro-war voices offered for years to try to justify an attack on Iran.

A Friday piece, titled "United States sending troops to bolster Saudi defenses after attack", says the US officials have told Reuters southwest Iran was the staging ground for the attack that might have been "authorized by Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei".

The article says this is "an assessment based at least in part on still-classified imagery showing Iran appearing to prepare an aerial strike".

But the agency doesn't explain why the evidence that reportedly justify an attack to a sovereign country are still classified.

The article also says the Pentagon's late Friday announcement that it will send some troops to Saudi Arabia to bolster defense systems "appeared to close the door to any imminent decision to wage retaliatory strikes against Iran following the attack".

Ouch! Isn't it too bad that the doors to "retaliatory strikes" are closed? The title of a Saturday column says, "Saudi oil attack shows how Iran sees new Mideast game".

This column clearly suggests Iran was behind the attack. A paragraph says, "Iran has been testing drones and supplying them to regional allies such as Hezbollah for years. This attack, however, showed significant recent progress. That the missiles were reportedly able to evade Saudi air defenses by flying behind them demonstrates striking sophistication".

A Thursday article reads, "Saudi Arabia shows attack site damage as Iran pledges tough defense".

This article relates a Saudi-organized tour



WORLD NEWS
SEPTEMBER 18, 2019 / 4:02 AM / 4 DAYS AGO

Wary of conflict with Iran, Trump takes go-slow approach to attack on Saudi oil

Screenshot of a Reuters article published on September 18, 2019.

The corporate media is having the false accusations repeated until the need for Iran attack becomes consensus reality in the west.

of the damaged facilities for western reporters to Friday remarks by an Iranian official that Iran would give firm response to any U.S. military plot in the region.

This is also the case with two other articles, titled "Iran says it will destroy any aggressor" and "Iran navy commander says Iran ready to defend its marine borders".

Both articles link pledges by Iranian commanders to defend Iranian territory, made in speeches on the occasion of the 39th anniversary of the beginning of the Iraqi invasion of Iran, to the Aramco attacks.

Striking example

Perhaps no article demonstrates the Reuters pro-war stance than a major piece released early on Wednesday.

In the article, published hours before Saudi Arabia held its news conference, Reuters lamented why Trump was not taking action immediately.

The title is provocative enough: "Wary of conflict with Iran, Trump takes go-slow approach to attack on Saudi oil".

Reuters reports Trump has adopted an "uncharacteristically go-slow approach" over whether to "hold Iran responsible" for attacks on Saudi oil facilities, apparently because he "seeks re-election next year" and he is "famously skeptical of his intelligence community".

But one can hardly conclude Trump's approach towards the Sept. 14 attacks was "uncharacteristically go-slow", taking into account Trump's approach to the explosions off the coast of the UAE's Fujairah in May, the attacks on two oil tankers in the Gulf of Oman mid-June and the shootdown of a U.S. spy drone inside Iranian territory late June.

Probably in all cases there was "no doubt" that Iran was the culprit - although even staunch allies of the U.S. wanted clear evidence - but

Trump reportedly decided to back down.

The Reuters piece itself mentions Trump's behavior towards Venezuela, reporting Trump has resisted suggestions for a "stronger focus on military planning" while a U.S.-led campaign of economic and diplomatic pressure has failed to "rescue" its people by toppling the Venezuelan government.

Reuters continues, "Trump's stance today is in stark contrast to 2017, less than three months into his presidency, when he waited only two days before launching air strikes to punish Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's forces for a chemical weapons attack."

Wait a minute. Was Trump entitled to bombard Syria as a punishment for a "chemical weapons attack"? Which global authority did sanction such attacks?

And there are no convincing proof to believe the Syrian government has ever committed chemical attacks.

CNN anchor echoes Reuters

Interestingly, a famous CNN anchor also egged on war with Iran, tweeting why Trump "balks" at military retaliation.

Trying to portray Trump's picking of sanctions instead of airstrikes as a sign of weakness, CNN anchor Jim Sciutto replied with a carefully worded question: "does this mean the president is again balking at military retaliation?"

According to Sputnik, the purpose of Sciutto's question is to frame Trump's choice as between showing strength by ordering an airstrike - which seems to be the obvious decision for any red-blooded American - or weakness by "balking" at that option.

A love for war

Seemingly, the mainstream media loves it when the U.S. bombs things.

The Trump-ordered missile strike on Syria's Shayrat Air Base in April 2017 was widely admired by the MSM.

A day after the attack, CNN's Fareed Zakaria said he thinks Trump had just "became President of the United States", Washington Post columnist David Ignatius asserted "put more umph" back into "the credibility of American power," and Fox News' Jeanine Pirro claimed "We finally have a man who knows the difference between right and wrong and good and evil, and it makes us proud."

Global Research and other respected alternative outlets have clearly demonstrated how big U.S. outlets, including the New York Times, CBS, and CNN, sold the Iraq war to the American people.

"Such was the barrage of propaganda directed at the American public that 69% believed Saddam Hussein was personally involved in the September 11 attacks. That is a significant achievement in manipulation. The poll results must have been news to the Iraqi dictator himself, a forgotten one-time American ally," Global Research reports.

The pattern continues into other illegitimate interventions, as the liberal Guardian newspaper championed the demolition of Libya in 2011, with editorials imploring, "The quicker Muammar Gaddafi falls, the better."

Now one can better grasp why William Arkin, one of NBC's political commentators, quit in January. In his resignation letter, Arkin denounced the network as a "cheerleader for open and subtle threat mongering," full of people who "accept that a state of perpetual war" is a necessity.

Trump decided to impose yet another round of sanctions to punish the people of Iran for what there is no public proof of, but MSM outlets are furious that Trump has backed away from an all-out war.

Trump can be almost certain that the day he orders air strikes, the MSM will cheer the decision as "presidential".

Jeffrey Epstein pitched his own narrative and mainstream media published it

By Emma Fiala

As independent media journalists and outlets reporting on all things Jeffrey Epstein continue to find themselves under the microscope, some important revelations about mainstream media's reporting of the convicted pedophile have come to light, thanks to the New York Times.

The double standard by which social media platforms, fact checkers, and news consumers alike judge independent versus mainstream media is, in short, incredibly unfair. Every time information about the ills of mainstream media surface, it is important to take note and adjust the lens through which one consumes mainstream media accordingly.

This latest revelation regarding the less-than-transparent side of mainstream media involves outlets like Forbes, National Review and HuffPost and Epstein's attempt to improve his public image after his stint in the Palm County Jail back in 2009 after he plead guilty to two prostitution charges for

13,882 views | Oct 2, 2013, 06:20pm

Science Funder Jeffrey Epstein Launches Radical Emotional Software For The Gaming Industry

Drew Hendricks Former Contributor
Entrepreneurs
Former Contributor



Screenshot of the 2013 Forbes article

soliciting a minor in Florida in 2008 in an attempt to avoid federal charges related to sexually abusing underage girls.

His efforts resulted in the publishing of multiple puff pieces casting the deceased financier as an intelligent and selfless businessman with a passion for science. And while Epstein was indeed a philanthropist, these articles failed to mention his criminal past or current controversies.

While all three articles referenced have been deleted since the report, the New York Times included quotes from each: "The Forbes.com article, posted in 2013, praised him as "one of the largest backers of cutting-edge science around the world" while making no mention of his criminal past. The National Review piece, from the same year, called him "a smart businessman" with a "passion for cutting-edge science." The HuffPost article, from 2017, credited Mr. Epstein for "taking action to help a number of scientists thrive during the 'Trump Era,'" a time of 'anti-science policies and budget cuts'."

The New York Times notes the little known method employed by corporate online publishers in which a contributor not typically associated with the outlet writes for little or no pay with little to no input from the outlet's editors.

Another less-transparent occurrence is precisely what happened at Forbes back in 2013. As seen in the screen shot above, the article titled "Science Funder Jeffrey Epstein Launches Radical Emotional Software For The Gaming Industry" appears to have been written by Drew Hendricks, contributor to Forbes. In early July, the Times revealed that Hendricks was in fact not the author of the article.

Hendricks admitted to having been paid \$600 to attach his byline to the text and publish it on the Forbes website after having been contacted by a public relations firm.

Hendricks claims to have not known about Epstein's history:

All I knew was, this is a guy doing a science thing. If I had known otherwise, I wouldn't have done it.

As it turns out, until recently HuffPost engaged in a process of allowing outside writers to contribute to the website without editorial review—a process that allowed for the publishing of yet another Epstein puff piece written by Rachel Wolfson, a "digital marketer," in 2017.

The National Review's Epstein article was written by Christina Galbraith, a supposed "science writer" who had published articles previously at both Forbes and HuffPost. And Galbraith just so happens to be listed as a contact in news releases from 2012, 2013, and 2014 promotion Epstein's foundations and other work.

In addition to the positive press campaign engaged in over the years, in 2010, after having completing his stint in jail, Epstein's social life kicked into high gear. According to the Times' July article, Epstein was suddenly rubbing shoulders with well-known people like Katie Couric, George Stephanopoulos, Jeff Bezos and Elon Musk. Harvard University published a website praising the convicted pedophile's accomplishments and highlighting that he donated millions of dollars to charity. And Epstein published his own website showcasing his own science event to which Stephen Hawking was a guest.

Leon Botstein, the president of Bard College, said Epstein was "like an ex-con who had done well on Wall Street" who donated \$50,000 to Bard in 2011 and \$75,000 in 2012. "If you looked up Jeffrey Epstein online in 2012, you would see what we all saw," Botstein said, speaking to the success of Epstein's efforts to craft his preferred public image.

(Source: Activistpost.com)

Trust in mainstream media on the decline

By Brian Flood

Trump blasts paper for corrected story; 'MediaBuzz' host Howard Kurtz explains.

In the wake of the latest controversial New York Times story, many are saying the mainstream media is in big trouble.

"The View" co-host Meghan McCain on Tuesday confronted a pair of New York Times reporters who blamed Gray Lady editors for botching a now-revised story accusing Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh of sexual misconduct.

"You guys left out a key detail," McCain said, referring to the paper leaving out the tidbit that the alleged victim doesn't remember the incident. "I think this is sort of Ground Zero for why so many people mistrust the media."

While McCain and other conservative pundits often use hyperbole to rip the mainstream media, she appears to be correct when it comes to people not trusting it.

A recent Gallup poll surveyed the confidence adults had in newspapers and television news -- and the results were staggering.

According to the poll, 48 percent of people have either "very little" or no confidence in television news, compared to only 18 percent in 1993. Confidence in newspapers has also

dipped, as 39 percent said they had "very little" or no confidence in newspapers in 2019 compared to only 17 percent as recently as 2003.

DePaul University professor Jeffrey McCall told Fox News that "decline in trust of the media is troubling" because a functioning republic requires citizens who are informed and have sufficient, accurate news on which to base self-governance decisions.

"Today, the media has lost sight of its obligation and instead too often fills the news hole with sensational, poorly sourced and/or agenda-driven content," McCall said.

"News consumers have enough sense to recognize these flaws and are responding as you would expect, by tuning out the news or, at least, being skeptical of the content they do read."

"Some leaders in the news industry tend to blame Trump's media-bashing as the reason for this decline in media trust, but the trend has been ongoing for 15-20 years, well before Trump came down the escalator to begin

his presidential campaign," McCall added. "Nobody expects the media to be perfect or 100 percent accurate, but obvious and high-profile lapses in professional judgment, as we saw in the New York Times this week, remind the public that the news industry is in chaos."

Fox News contributor Deroy Murdock feels the "Old Guard media have lost the trust of the American people because so many outlets have gone from reporting to Resistance."

"They would rather grind President Trump's face in the dirt than simply tell people what he did or didn't do on any given day. If so much as a hair on his head is out of place, we hear about it nonstop," Murdock told Fox News on Tuesday.

The Media Research Center tracks evening newscasts on ABC, CBS, and NBC and noticed a variety of pro-Trump and positive stories about conservatives that have been skipped. The Times' Kavanaugh debacle was largely ignored once it was revised and Murdock thinks the issue is part of an on-going trend.

"Such professional irresponsibility confirms that the media have become largely an offshoot of the Democrat National Committee. Sad, but true."

(Source: Foxnews.com)



First graders celebrate new school year with "blossoms festival"

SOCIETY TEHRAN — Iranian students celebrated their first year of attending school joining "Jashn-e Shokufeha", literally meaning "blossoms festival" held on Sunday in elementary schools nationwide.

Yesterday, the schools hosted numerous little students glowing in colorful uniforms walking hand in hand with their parents down the streets to join classrooms for the first time, some of whom grinning cheerfully imagining themselves in white doctor uniforms in the future and some others with teary eyes and a bit of anxiety being parted from their parents.

Annually on the last day of summer, first graders take part in "blossoms festival" with their parents to mark the start of the school year.

Mohsen Haji Mirzaei, Education Minister, symbolically attended the festival in an exemplary school.

"This year, some 1.4 million first graders and nearly 485,881 preschoolers will begin their first year of education at 65,388 elementary schools throughout the country," ISNA quoted Rezaan Hakimzadeh, an official with the Ministry of Education, as saying. She went on to say that 8.1 million students attend elementary schools this year, with a two-percent increase compared to the last year; first graders also increased by 1.07 percent this year.

England's national parks 'must do more to protect nature'

National parks and areas of outstanding natural beauty have not done enough to protect nature or welcome diverse visitors, and extra government funding must help drive radical change, according to a review.

The independent review, commissioned by the former environment secretary Michael Gove, praises the work of England's 44 "national landscapes", including the Lake District and Dartmoor, but calls for a new focus to stop declines in nature and welcome working-class and black and minority ethnic visitors.

The review, led by the writer Julian Glover, calls for parks, which cover nearly a quarter of England, to have a clear national mission to reverse environmental decline, assisted by 1,000 new rangers. It says every schoolchild should be given the chance to visit the parks and spend a night under the stars.

"National parks and AONBs have done their best to protect nature but it's not been good enough," said Glover. "Nature is in crisis in our protected landscapes just as it's in crisis outside them. We're not blaming national parks and AONBs but we want to give them the tools to do more, and recover declining nature."

Glover said the national parks were created after the second world war to serve the whole country and have proved "immensely popular", managing natural beauty well, particularly when receiving just £48m annual government funding between them. National parks generate more than £20bn for the rural economy, and support 75,000 jobs.

He added: "But our country has changed and we need to change the way we run our landscapes to keep pace with that. One thing is to make sure everyone feels welcome in those landscapes and the other is to make sure the way they are run reflects the country as a whole."

The review calls for the boards of national parks to better represent modern Britain – more than 99% of board members are white – and for a new programme to increase ethnic minority visits and ensure that minority groups see the parks as places for them.

Although more than 66% of people live within half an hour of a national park or AONB and they receive 94 million visitors each year, Glover said too many people don't know what they are for.

The review calls for a new national park in the Chilterns and a new "national forest" covering areas such as Sherwood Forest, to help increase woodland to fight the climate crisis.

It wants long-term programmes to increase black and minority ethnic visitors, better information to guide visitors, affordable homes within the parks, and consideration of expanding open access rights – the right to roam – in the landscapes.

Other ideas in the review include improved transport to help widen access, bike racks for buses as occurs in Switzerland, and electric bikes and charging points for electric vehicles. There are currently almost no electric vehicle charging points in some vast national parks.

(Source: The Guardian)

WORDS IN THE NEWS

Japan apologizes to Korea

(October 15, 2001)

Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi has offered an apology to the Korean people for the suffering they experienced during Japan's thirty-five-year occupation of the country.

Mr Koizumi's visit is aimed at trying to **repair damaged ties** with South Korea, and it was during a tour of a former prison where Korean independence fighters were held and tortured during Japan's thirty-five-year occupation of the country that Mr Koizumi offered an apology to the Korean people.

He expressed his **heart-felt remorse** for the pain and suffering that Koreans **endured** under Japanese colonial rule. Mr Koizumi said it was important that the two countries co-operate to make sure that the painful past was never repeated.

But noisy protests have accompanied Mr Koizumi and a planned visit to the National Assembly was cancelled because opposition politicians had threatened demonstrations. Anti-Japanese **sentiment is running high, fueled by** recent controversies over Japan's war time past. They include the approval of school history books that Seoul says **whitewashes** Japanese **wartime atrocities** and Mr Koizumi's recent visit to a **shrine** honoring Japan's war dead including convicted war criminals.

Words

repair: mend

ties: relations

heart-felt remorse: genuine, deeply felt sorrow

endured: put up with

sentiment: feeling

running high: at a very high level

fueled by: made more intense by

whitewashes: fails to take account of

wartime atrocities: very serious crimes committed in a war

a shrine: a holy place

(Source: BBC)

World Car-Free Day: costly cars, cheap fuel to blame for air pollution

1 → What really caused Tehraners to breathe foul air?

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 one 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 toxic emissions of oxides of nitrogen is released by diesel cars during fuel combustion in an engine.

To reduce pollution in the cities, cleaner transport fleets and less private cars can have immediate and long-term benefits, Behzad Ashjaei told ISNA on Sunday.

Although pollution standards in the world have become stricter compared to that of 20 years ago, people are still encouraged to stop using private cars, he said, adding, the reason is also clear, fewer cars, less air pollution, so the culture of using private cars should be promoted.

One concept should fit into the community that "owning a car does not mean using it every day", which is not formed by itself but the policy makers should think about it, he added.

Pointing out that everywhere in the world cars are cheap while using them are costly, Ashjaei said factors such as fuel prices, tolls, taxes, etc. have made people avoid using their cars as much as possible.

However, in Iran it is exactly the opposite; the car is very expensive but very inexpensive to use and as a result the car owner would like to use a car bought at a high cost every day, he noted.

"That is why traffic congestion and air pollution haunted our cities today; some say that Tehran does not have the capacity for so many cars, but it is more accurate to say that Tehran does not have the capacity to use so many cars daily."

"Iran ranked 71st in the world in terms of per capita vehicle," he said, highlighting, in Tehran alone there are four cars per person. "Vehicles per person in the world me-



Based on a report by the World Bank published in April 2018, air pollution in Tehran incurs annual loss of \$2.6 million and over 4,000 premature deaths from exposure to fine particles ambient concentrations.

tropolises such as Tokyo, Los Angeles and Vienna are even twice Tehran, but is air pollution haunting them? Definitely not," Ashjaei stressed.

Of course, urban structure is also effective in the cities' air quality, but more important is the culture of using private cars, which has so far not been seriously reformed in Iran, he added.

According to Ashjaei, based on a report by the World Bank published in April 2018, air pollution in Tehran incurs annual loss of \$2.6 million and over 4,000 premature deaths from exposure to fine particles ambient concentrations.

"In other words, each Iranian family bur-

dens an annual loss of 140 million rials (nearly \$3,300) caused by air pollution. If they take public fleet to work and take care of their car catalysts, they will pay less; so it is much better to play our part in reducing air pollution."

"Most cities in the country, especially Tehran, are experiencing a shortage of public fleets, so we should not neglect infrastructure alongside acculturation to reduce the use of personal cars," he emphasized.

The current capacity of public transport fleet is not responsive to the current customers, let alone private car owners, so it requires serious attention and investment, he explained.

Implying that emissions do not just de-

pend on automotive technology and many factors are involved, he stated that fuel quality, local conditions, altitude, driving pattern, topographical condition of the city all affect the amount of emission a car is producing.

"The DOE is responsible for controlling vehicles producing one out of 85 emissions, and we tried our best to monitor the emitting vehicles and reduce air pollution; but the main factor which can fully eradicate it is car manufacturers," he highlighted.

Efforts to reduce use of personal cars

'Car-free Tuesdays' campaign kicked off in 2016 by NGOs aiming to decrease the number of private cars in cities, hence mitigate air pollution, but lost momentum after almost a year probably because of the inefficient infrastructure in the country.

Such movements towards cleaner transport options entail appropriate infrastructure such as bike lanes to ensure safety improvements and higher ridership numbers, as well as efficient, low emission public transport.

However, the campaign has resumed by the Tehran mayor over the past 10 months.

How to save the cities?

Although raising awareness about vehicles emissions can make the citizens to use transportation services in a year; there must be effective solutions to a clean, efficient mobility ecosystem such as reducing traffic congestion, producing green vehicles, getting electric cars on the roads.

However, cities also must improve infrastructure to be suitable for bicycle riders and pedestrians, while holding electric charging stations or other facilities for the use of electric vehicles.

Public transport systems should run cheaper and safer to become a viable alternative to the car in urban areas; cities must be analyzed to offer different transportation as well as reducing waiting times for the passengers.

Roads are the other factor can improve traffic jam, as long as it offers alternative routes for drivers.

Increasing parking spaces all over the cities can also reduce the traffic.

The influence of manifestations of civilization on bedtime of Iranians and some other oriental countries

By Seyed Hossein Hosseini Seddiq

TEHRAN — For the first time, I left Iran in November 2004 to attend an international conference at UCL London. Although it was a three-day conference, the trip took two weeks to see the historic attractions of the two capitals of England and Scotland, London and Edinburgh and to gain useful experiences. One of the wonders of the land that caught my attention in those days was the closure of most shops and shopping centers at 7pm, and London was plunged into silence and darkness with all its glory.

Later in other cities in Europe and America, I witnessed this Western culture and tradition throughout the seasons. At first I thought, because Europe is cold, people are not used to sleeping in the afternoons, but with the 40 degree heat in California this mindset has also been corrected because chain stores from 7 and other malls sometimes open from 9am to 11pm Monday through Saturday. There are, of course, exceptions, such as restaurants, sports and leisure centers - which are open early in the week until 22:00 and are open late into the night. However, later in the life-span of many years, I came to realize that most people are elderly or ill who sleep in the afternoons, and it is very common for children to go to bed at 7 pm and adults at 10 pm.

Some of the merits of this culture may include:

1. Maintains physical and mental health and, in turn, brings freshness and vitality to the day, most importantly to the benefit of work and education.
2. Family members, especially parents, spend more time with their children and can focus on their education and play with them.
3. The community seems to be facing a decrease in traffic accidents and crime.
4. Other benefits include saving on electricity and other costs. For example, city buses run after 19:00 for longer hours to 1:00 am for some office staffs and factory workers and may skip to parties or weekends.
5. Parents who have children under the age of 18 or so in school are required by the Education Authority to enforce their children's sleep order.
6. It is customary for the parties to finally end by 9pm and get ready for sleep.

Now, what has happened that some eastern nations, and in particular the Iranians, after the arrival of the civilization manifestations, this Iranian and Islamic culture, left the ancestors in oblivion; while the Westerners themselves have maintained this culture from the distant past.

It was apparently just a hundred years ago that the Iranian Bazaars - usually roofed - had three main elements, a mosque, a seminary, and a public bath; they were beginning their activity:

At first, businessmen and merchants attended the Morning Prayer, followed by a mosque cleric preaching and addressing the Book of Makaseb (a book on business in Islam), familiarizing the audiences to the principles of commerce and to lawful and forbidden matters. Then the businessmen by the name of God open the shops and clean it and then eat breakfast. People gradually came to the Bazaar to buy their necessities, and the sellers were busy with business until the noon prayer.

Business people usually brought lunch from their home or dine at the Bazaar restaurant. They, too, continued their business constantly until the Maghrib or sunset prayer. After attending congregational prayer, they joined the family and had dinner and sometimes afterwards were going party or poetry sessions or recited the Quran and prayer. They finally fell asleep around 9 pm.

It is hoped that we will return to our ancestors' culture and tradition in this matter through rigorous, national planning and policy making.

"Sign Language Rights for All"; International Day of Sign Languages 2019

International Day of Sign Languages recognizes the importance of sign languages for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and fulfilling its core promise of leaving no one behind.

It also offers an opportunity to support

and protect the linguistic identity and cultural diversity of all sign language users." UN Secretary-General António Guterres said.

According to the World Federation of the Deaf, there are approximately 72 million deaf people worldwide. More than 80% of

them live in developing countries. Collectively, they use more than 300 different sign languages.

Structurally distinct from the spoken languages. There is also an international sign language, which is used by deaf people in

international meetings and informally when travelling and socializing. It is considered a pidgin form of sign language that is not as complex as natural sign languages and has a limited lexicon.

(Source: The UN)

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Recent rainfalls not to fully address prolonged droughts: expert

Despite above normal rainfalls the country has received, it cannot be claimed that the long-term droughts are set right, director for flood control and aquifer at Forests, Range and Watershed Management Organization has said.

That's why water management policies must be still drawn up with regard to water scarcity, ISNA news agency quoted Abolqasem Hosseinpour as saying on Saturday.

"However, with only a year of high rainfall averages we cannot say that drought is no longer hitting the country," Hosseinpour said.

Climate change has resulted in a drop in water resources, on the other hand, due to excessive use of subsurface water resources, the country is facing serious shortages which are not compensated by a year of normal rainfalls, he lamented.

PREFIX/SUFFIX

"dextro-, dextero-, dextr-"

■ **Meaning:** right

■ **For example:** A good handyman is skillful, **dexterous** and proficient in whatever it is he is doing.

PHRASAL VERB

Nod off

■ **Meaning:** to begin to sleep, usually when you do not intend to and are sitting somewhere

■ **For example:** I missed the movie because I kept nodding off.

IDIOM

Crest of a wave

■ **Explanation:** If you are on the crest of a wave, you are very successful in what you are doing

■ **For example:** Our company is going from success to success. We're on the crest of a wave right now.

بارش‌های اخیر خشکسالی کشور را جبران نمی‌کند

مدیرکل دفتر کنترل سیلاب و آبخوان‌داری سازمان جنگل‌ها، مراتع و آبخیزداری گفت: پس از بارش‌های اخیر در کشور، نمی‌توان ادعا کرد که خشکسالی‌های بلند مدت ما جبران شده است.

ابوالقاسم حسین‌پور در گفت‌وگو با ایسنا، اظهار کرد: سیاست‌های آبی ما همچنان باید منطبق بر کمبود منابع آبی باشد.

ما نمی‌توانیم با یک سال بارش نرمال و ترسالی ادعا کنیم که دوره خشکسالی کشور پایان یافته است.

وی ادامه داد: تغییرات اقلیمی سبب محدود شدن منابع آبی شده است و از سوی دیگر در کشور ما به دلیل اضافه برداشت از منابع آبی به ویژه آبخوان‌های زیرزمینی، کمبود جدی منابع آبی داریم که با بارش نرمال و حتی بیش از نرمال یکسال جبران نمی‌شود.

Yemen's Houthi leader vows more crushing response to Saudi attacks

TEHRAN— Leader of Yemen's ruling Houthi Ansarullah movement says future attacks against those committing acts of aggression against his country, namely Saudi Arabia and allies, would be more painful than a series of recent strikes targeting oil installations east of the northern kingdom.

Abdul-Malik al-Houthi said on Saturday that if Saudis want to go ahead with their relentless bombardment of Yemen and its civilians, Ansarullah would target them and their allies deep in their territories.

"Now after suffering defeat, they better stop attacks and aggression against Yemen," said Abdul-Malik making a reference to September 14 attacks by the Houthis on Saudi Arabia's oil installations which cut the kingdom's production in half and sent shockwaves across the global markets.

"In case aggression and blockade against Yemen continues, Yemenis' attacks into the depth of territory of the aggressors would become more crushing and more painful," he said in a statement carried by Houthis' al-Massirah TV network.

The statement comes against the backdrop of renewed tensions in the Middle East, where the United States has sought to use the attacks on Saudi oil installations as a pretext to mount pressure on Iran.

■ Saudi regime owes U.S. \$181mn for refueling support in bombarding Yemen



Saudi Arabia still owes the U.S. military \$181 million for aerial refueling assistance it received for its brutal bombardment of Yemen's mostly civilian targets amid Pentagon plans to send more troops to the despot kingdom to purportedly bolster its air defenses against retaliatory drone attacks by Yemeni forces.

Despite Washington's emphasis on U.S.-Saudi alliance following Yemen's destructive drone attack on the Kingdom's huge

Aramco oil facilities, Riyadh has failed to repay the Pentagon for providing midair refueling assistance for Saudi Arabia's bombing runs over Yemen nine months after American military announced plans to seek reimbursement of its expenses, US-based Defense News reported Friday citing congressional sources.

■ Thousands rally in Sana'a to mark anniv. of revolution
Meanwhile, Large crowds from across

Yemen have gathered in capital Sana'a to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the September 21st revolution. The mass rally dubbed "Freedom and Independence" was held to confirm that the Yemeni people are moving forward in their battle for independence.

On the eve of 5th anniversary the, the president of the Supreme Political Council, Mehdi al-Mashat, declared an initiative to achieve peace. He called on all Yemeni parties to engage in serious and genuine negotiations leading to a comprehensive national reconciliation that does not exclude any party, for the sake of building ties of fraternity and safeguarding the primacy of the higher national interests. The initiative was welcomed by demonstrators. They say it's Riyadh's last chance in case it's serious about peace endeavors.

In September 2014, the Ansarullah forces took state matters in their hands in Sana'a amid the absence of an efficient government there.

Before gaining control of the capital, the Houthis had set a deadline for the political parties to put aside differences and fill the power vacuum. However, the deadline was missed without any change in the country's political scene.

September 21st represents the starting point for Yemenis either to stay subject to contemporary slavery or to achieve freedom and independence through resistance against tyrants.

Iraq concludes fifth phase of 'Will of Victory' operation

TEHRAN — Iraqi pro-government Popular Mobilization Units (PMU) have announced the conclusion of a military campaign against the sleeper cells of the Daesh Takfiri terrorist group in the central parts of the country as well as a sector of the vast western desert leading to the border with Saudi Arabia.

The media bureau of the volunteer forces, better known by the Arabic name Hashd al-Sha'abi, announced in a statement that the fifth phase of the Will of Victory operation, which had started on September 16, was wrapped up on Friday as different units and forces of Iraqi military forces cleared the remote territory between the provinces of Karbala, Najaf and Anbar.

The operation was jointly carried out by various Iraqi forces, including al-Jazira Operation Command, federal police, the army, the PMU, counter-terrorism units and the air force.

Iraqi forces cleared plains in a 4,800-kilometer square area in Anbar province during the operation's fifth phase. The forces detained 21 Daesh suspects, who were handed over to authorities.

The forces further secured the desert area between the holy city of Karbala, Anbar province and Wadi al-Ghaf region. They also defused a number of improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

On August 27, the Iraqi military announced the conclusion of the fourth phase of the Will of Victory operation in western Iraq.

A statement by the media office of the Joint Operations Command said on August 5 that the Iraqi army, police and Hashd al-Sha'abi units, backed by the Iraqi Air Force fighter jets, had launched the third phase of the major offensive in the eastern Diyala province and Nineveh province in the north.

The statement said the troops had begun search operations in rural areas near the towns of Miqdadiyah, Jalawla and Khanaqin in Diyala province.

According to Press TV, also in Nineveh province, the troops launched an operation to clear the rugged areas of al-Atshanah and the mountain ranges of Badush and Sheikh Ibrahim in west and northwest of the provincial capital city of Mosul.

The second-in-command of the Joint Operations Command (JOC), Lieutenant General Abdul Amir Rashed Yarallah, said in a statement on July 20 that Iraqi military forces had launched the second phase of the Will of Victory operation to hunt down Daesh remnants north of Baghdad and areas nearby.

Biden urges investigation into Trump Ukraine call

TEHRAN — Former U.S. Vice President Joe Biden, a frontrunner for the 2020 Democratic presidential nomination, on Saturday called for an investigation into reports that President Donald Trump pressed his Ukrainian counterpart to investigate Biden and his son.

"This appears to be an overwhelming abuse of power. To get on the phone with a foreign leader who is looking for help from the United States and ask about me and imply things... this is outrageous," a visibly angry Biden said while campaigning in Iowa.

"Trump is using this because he knows I'll beat him like a drum and is using the abuse of power and every element of the presidency to try to do something to smear me," Biden said.

Trump's July 25 telephone call with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is at the center of an escalating battle over a whistleblower's complaint reportedly concerning the U.S. leader's dealings with Ukraine that the administration has refused to give Congress.

The Wall Street Journal and other news outlets on Friday said Trump repeatedly asked Zelenskyy to investigate unsubstantiated charges that Biden, while vice president, threatened to withhold U.S. aid unless a prosecutor who was looking into a

gas company in which Biden's son was involved was fired.

Trump, reports said, urged Zelenskyy, a comedian who had just won election, to speak with Trump's personal lawyer, Rudolph Giuliani. Giuliani, the former New York City mayor, has promoted the allegations against Biden and his son, Hunter, and acknowledged that he pressed for a Ukrainian investigation.

Biden has admitted threatening to withhold aid unless the prosecutor was dismissed, a demand also made by the wider U.S. government, the European Union and other international institutions for his alleged failure to pursue major corruption cases.

The news reports about the Zelenskyy phone call have intensified demands by Democratic lawmakers for the House of Representatives to launch impeachment proceedings against Trump, and have elevated the controversy to a major campaign issue.

Trump denied doing anything improper. He wrote in a series of tweets on Saturday that his conversation with Zelenskyy was "perfectly fine and routine." He accused the "Fake News Media and their partner, the Democrat Party" of staying "as far away as possible" from the Biden allegations, Reuters reported.

Will General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi return to Egypt?

➔ Anyway, we should wait and see how el-Sisi will deal with these protests. Will he respond them with iron fist, and call their actions a planned intrigue for destabilizing Egypt? He recently had collective and individual meetings with military and security commanders to make sure that whether there will be a harsh confrontation with opponents, or he should consider another process. He left Egypt for New York last Friday night to attend the UN General Assembly meeting.

Nobel Prize winner Tawakkol Karman referred to Abdel Fattah el-Sisi's trip as a non-return trip, and posted on Twitter, "ousted el-Sisi will not return to Egypt and that is for sure."

UN urges Saudi Arabia to seize opportunity as Yemen offers ceasefire

➔ In a statement issued on Saturday, UN Special Envoy for Yemen Martin Griffiths stressed "the importance of taking advantage of this opportunity and moving forward with all necessary steps to reduce violence, military escalation and unhelpful rhetoric."

On Friday, Mahdi al-Mashat, the head of the Houthi supreme political council, said the group would end all attacks on Saudi Arabia provided that the kingdom and its allies ended their attacks on Yemen.

He hoped that "the gesture would be answered by a stronger gesture" from the Saudis.

According to Press TV, Griffiths emphasized that the implementation of the proposal by the Houthis "in good faith could send a powerful message of the will to end the war."

He called on all parties to the Yemen conflict to "respect international humanitarian law, exercise restraint, and to spare Yemen from being drawn further into regional tensions."

Saudi Arabia has so far refused to accept the offer.

"We judge other parties by their deeds, actions and not by their words, so we will see," said Saudi Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Adel al-Jubeir.

The Houthi proposal came a week after Yemeni strikes on Saudi Arabia's oil installations, which knocked out half of the kingdom's production.

The Yemeni Houthi Ansarullah movement took credit for the attacks, although the US blamed Iran without providing any evidence. Tehran has denied involvement.

Saudi Arabia and its allies launched the war on Yemen in March 2015 in an unsuccessful attempt to reinstall a former regime. Four years later, the coalition has been bogged down in the war, which it had wished to end in a matter of "months."

Pelosi: Trump turning 'blind eye' to Saudi violence in Yemen

TEHRAN — U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi says President Donald Trump is "turning a blind eye to Saudi Arabia's continued violence" against innocent Yemenis.



Pelosi made the remarks in a statement she released on Twitter a day after Trump approved a plan to deploy troops to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

She described Trump's decision as an "outrageous attempt" to circumvent the will of the Congress.

Pointing to Saudi Arabia's "continued assault on countless men, women and children," Pelosi slammed the president for "turning a blind eye" to the "continued violence against innocent Yemenis, as well as its horrific murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi and its gross abuses of human rights, which represent a moral and humanitarian crisis."

"The United States cannot enable more brutality and bloodshed," she added.

She went on to say that Americans are tired of war and not interested in "entering another Middle East conflict, particularly on behalf of Saudi Arabia."

The Pentagon announced Friday it would send reinforcements to the region to bolster Riyadh's air defenses following a recent drone attack on two major oil facilities owned by Saudi state oil giant Aramco, Press TV reported.

The decision was made at the request of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, according to the U.S. Defense Department.

The Pentagon said the deployment would involve a moderate number of troops for what it called primarily "defensive in nature."

Elizabeth Warren overtakes Joe Biden in new Iowa poll

TEHRAN — Elizabeth Warren leads Joe Biden in Iowa for the first time, according to a new poll in the early voting state.

The survey carried out by the Des Moines Register, Mediacom and CNN puts the Massachusetts senator at 22% with likely caucus-goers, to the former vice-president's 20%.

They are well clear of the sprawling Democratic field. Vermont senator Bernie Sanders placed third, with 11%, ahead of South Bend, Indiana, mayor Pete Buttigieg on 9% and California senator Kamala Harris on 6%.

New Jersey senator Cory Booker, who said on Saturday he would drop out of the race if a fundraising target is not met, was next with 3%, tied with the Minnesota senator Amy Klobuchar.

Harris said this week that she will go all-in on Iowa, aiming for a top-three finish.

Biden still leads the realclearpolitics.com national polling average, on 30% to Warren on 19% and Sanders on 16%. Buttigieg and Harris, on 6%, are the only other candidates with more than 3% support.

Most of the Democratic field is in Iowa this weekend, on Saturday for the Polk county steak fry and a people's



forum. On Friday night, many of the candidates addressed an LGBTQ presidential forum.

The shadow of Donald Trump was never far away. At the steak fry, Warren called for the impeachment of the president and told the crowd: "I know what's broken, I know

how to fix it, and we're building a grassroots movement to make it happen."

Biden called for Americans to "pick our heads up, remember who we are, we are the United States of America."

He also addressed Trump's calls for an investigation into his family over business ties to Ukraine, amid swirling scandal over the president's behaviour and visits by his lawyer Rudy Giuliani to the eastern European country.

"The fact of the matter is that that fellow in the White House knows that if we get the nomination we're gonna beat him like a drum," Biden said. "So be prepared for every lousy thing that's coming from him."

The poll also asked likely voters for their second choices, an important selection in the caucus system. It concluded that at least 71% of likely caucus-goers are at least considering Warren, ahead of Biden on 60%.

According to the poll, 32% of those who said they caucused for Sanders in 2016 now support Warren, indicating the strength of her surge among progressive Democrats, Guardian reported.

Tanzania not sharing data on suspected Ebola cases: WHO

TEHRAN — The World Health Organization (WHO) says Tanzania has refused to provide detailed information on suspected Ebola cases.

In a statement on Saturday, the UN health agency said despite several requests "to date, clinical data, results of the investigations, possible contacts and potential laboratory tests performed... have not been communicated to WHO".

"The limited available official information from Tanzanian authorities represents a challenge," the statement said.

There was no immediate reaction by Tanzanian authorities.

In a statement on September 18, WHO

said it was formally informed by the East African country on September 14 that it had no cases of Ebola

"This followed earlier rumours of the death of one person and illness in a few others," WHO said in that statement. "Tanzanian authorities did not indicate what the cause of the illnesses might have been.

Concern has focused on a woman who died on September 8 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania's commercial capital, after exhibiting symptoms common to several diseases, including Ebola.

The patient travelled widely across the country, according to the UN agency, and individuals who came into contact with her

have been quarantined.

Two other suspected cases were also unofficially reported.

"At this stage, WHO is not aware of signs of a widespread transmission of any illness related to these cases, however investigations, including with the support of WHO Collaborating Centres, should continue to reach a diagnosis and further inform the risk assessment," the agency's statement said.

Also on September 14, Tanzania's Health Minister Umyy Mwalimu said the government had investigated two recent cases of unknown illnesses, but they were not Ebola.

"The two patients did not have Ebola," Mwalimu told reporters. "There is no Ebola outbreak in Tanzania as we speak, people should not panic."

She did not say if the two cases investigated included the death of the woman.

There is increased vigilance across the region after a 13-month outbreak of Ebola in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has killed more than 2,000 people.

According to al Jazeera, the outbreak, which was officially declared in August 2018, is the second deadliest on record behind the 2013-2016 epidemic in West Africa that killed more than 11,300 people.

Somalia's al Shabaab raid military base, loot weapons

TEHRAN — Fighters belonging to Somali extremist militant group al Shabaab stormed an army base near the capital Mogadishu on Sunday, looted it for weapons and then withdrew, a military source, residents and the group told Reuters.

The assault began when a suicide bomber rammed his explosive-laden car into the base in El Salini, 60 kilometers (37 miles) southwest of Mogadishu, at around 5:30 am local time, al Shabaab said.

A local elder, Ahmed Cali, told Reuters he had been woken by the sound of a huge blast followed by gunfire. He said that later al Shabaab fighters were seen leaving the base, some in trucks loaded with ammunition.

A major in the Somali military who didn't want to be named said the military has sustained some casualties, without giving details. He said the army had received reinforcements and was back in control of the base.

Nadal pulls out of Laver Cup with hand injury

Rafa Nadal has pulled out of his Laver Cup matches on Sunday due to inflammation in his hand, denying fans the opportunity to see him partner Roger Federer in the doubles on the final day of the tournament in Geneva.

Team Europe's Nadal was also scheduled to take on Team World's Nick Kyrgios in his singles clash and partner Swiss Federer against American duo John Isner and Jack Sock.

Federer instead played with Greek Stefanos Tsitsipas and they were beaten by the Americans 5-7 6-4 10-8 to give the World team the lead overall.

"I've had an amazing time playing at the Laver Cup and I'm so disappointed I'm not able to play again today, but I have some inflammation in my hand and I need to rest," Nadal said in a statement.

"The atmosphere has been amazing in Geneva and of course I'm going to be there courtside today for all my team mates and do everything I can to support them and help Team Europe win the Laver Cup."

Austrian Dominic Thiem stood in to replace Nadal but the day's schedule was further complicated when Kyrgios also withdrew, captain John McEnroe saying it was a shoulder injury.

"Nick's shoulder has been bugging him. He was talking about it last night," McEnroe said.

"I don't know what to tell you other than we wanted him to come out 100% and he didn't feel like he could. So that means we've got to put somebody else in."

American Taylor Fritz was Kyrgios's replacement.

(Source: Mirror)

FIFA study hails best-ever women's World Cup in France

FIFA's Technical Study Group (TSG) hailed this year's women's World Cup in France as the best-ever in the competition's history, with the tournament showcasing the tactical, technical and physical improvements in the women's game.

Soccer's world governing body released its analysis of the tournament in a 105-page report which their coaching and player development department head Branimir Ujevic said had confirmed the game's holistic development.

"From a technical, tactical, physical and mental point of view, France 2019 was the best women's World Cup seen to date," Ujevic said in a statement.

The United States won a record-extending fourth World Cup with a 2-0 victory over the Netherlands in the final in July, confirming their status as the leading power in the women's game.

The report said headers accounted for 27 goals including 15 from open play, up from 23 at Canada 2015, and highlighted the players' ability to better use the width of the pitch to deliver crosses.

Goalkeepers had an overall save rate of 70%, five percentage points up from 2015. Only 9% of passes were played long in the 2019 tournament while 61% of all ball-regains occurred within seven seconds.

"This was the most fluid women's World Cup of all time as players showed a great ability to read the game and perform the right movements with and without the ball," TSG head April Heinrichs said.

Heinrichs added that better coaching analysis and the use of technology had helped coaches give immediate and detailed feedback to players, thereby improving their performance.

(Source: Reuters)

Rashford injured as Man United lose at West Ham

Manchester United's away day misery continued after they suffered a disappointing 2-0 loss against West Ham United at the London Stadium on Sunday.

Andriy Yarmolenko and Aaron Cresswell scored in each half as Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's side still await their first victory on the road in all competitions since March.

United's poor day was compounded when Marcus Rashford sustained an injury and had to be substituted in the second half.

It is a huge blow for Solskjaer with Paul Pogba, Anthony Martial and Mason Greenwood all on the sidelines.

United named an unchanged side from the one that beat Leicester last weekend but they were underwhelming throughout the match.

The game lacked quality from both sides in the first half with long range efforts from Nemanja Matic and Mark Noble comfortably saved.

On the stroke of half time, the hosts went ahead after Felipe Anderson found Yarmolenko in space inside the box and the forward took a touch and produced a fine left-footed finish past David de Gea.

The visitors were livelier after the break and Juan Mata missed a glorious chance from close range after a good cross from Andreas Pereira.

Jesse Lingard replaced the injured Rashford and United pushed for an equaliser with Scott McTominay hitting the post and Harry Maguire's close range shot saved by Lukasz Fabianski.

With less than 10 minutes to go, Cresswell sealed the victory for West Ham with a wonderful free kick.

(Source: ESPN)

Dzeko last-gasp Dall'Ara winner

Edin Dzeko's header deep into stoppages gave 10-man Roma a dramatic victory, ending Bologna's run of eight straight home wins.

The Giallorossi were finding their feet under new Coach Paulo Fonseca with back-to-back victories over Sassuolo and Istanbul Basaksehir, even with Chris Smalling, Cengiz Under, Davide Zappacosta and Diego Perotti injured. Sinisa Mihajlovic gave the team talk via videolink from his hospital bed, where he is undergoing a second course of chemotherapy for leukaemia. Danilo was still out of action, so Mattia Bani remained in defence, as Bologna sought a club record ninth consecutive home win.

Alessandro Florenzi combined with a Lorenzo Pellegrini back-heel flick for a strike charged down by Bani, then Aleksandar Kolarov's angled drive flashed inches past the far post.

Mitchell Dikj's picked up an injury while fouling Pellegrini and was replaced at half-time by Ladislav Krejci. Stefano Denswil's defensive error almost allowed Justin Kluivert to score from close range, but it almost hit him and bounced into the arms of the goalkeeper.

Roma did take the lead with a classic set play, as Aleksandar Kolarov curled a trademark free kick into the top corner from the edge of the box, giving Lukasz Skorupski no chance.

Bologna have made a habit of comebacks and proved it again when almost immediately getting back on level terms. Kolarov was involved again, this time mistiming the tackle on Roberto Soriano for a penalty, which Nicola Sansone coolly converted.

(Source: Football Italia)

Vettel ends long wait for victory with Singapore triumph

Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel ended his year-long drought without a win at the Singapore Grand Prix on Sunday, mastering a hazy circuit to claim a record fifth triumph in the city-state.

The German was chased home by teammate Charles Leclerc, who started on pole but lost the lead to the four-time world champion after making his pit stop, and Red Bull's Max Verstappen, who finished third.

"It was a very late call on the pit stop and I just gave it everything on the out lap. I was surprised to come out ahead and it was difficult to manage the tyres but we controlled it to the end," Vettel told reporters.

Championship leader Lewis Hamilton finished fourth but extended his advantage over fellow Mercedes driver Valtteri Bottas to 65 points, with six races remaining, after the Finn finished in fifth.

The race got off to a clean start with the top six retaining their grid positions despite Vettel putting immense pressure on second-placed Hamilton in the opening lap.

While a few drivers were shifting position further down the field, the frontrunners were maintaining a one-second gap between each other as Leclerc set a slow



pace to make his soft tyres last as long as possible.

Ferrari and Red Bull were the first of the big teams to bring their cars in for pit stops as Vettel and Verstappen were fitted with the more durable hard tyres on lap 20,

with Leclerc following suit on the next lap. Leclerc, however, was dismayed to leave the pits behind Vettel.

Hamilton stayed out on track in the lead to set about forging a big enough gap to retain the lead when it was his turn to

come in.

But Vettel, Leclerc and Verstappen were lapping much quicker than Hamilton and when the Briton finally stopped seven laps after his rivals, he emerged in a distant fourth place.

Hamilton's only hope of victory was to capitalise on his rivals' degraded tyres late in the race.

But three safety car periods -- when both George Russell and Sergio Perez stopped on the track, and when Daniil Kvyat collided with Kimi Raikkonen -- allowed the front three plenty of time to cool their rubber.

Ferrari will be delighted to have recorded a one-two finish at a circuit they were not expected to muster a podium finish.

But Leclerc was unhappy with the pit strategy that dashed his hopes of a hat-trick after wins in Belgium and Italy.

"I won't do anything stupid. I want us to finish one-two," Leclerc told Ferrari over the radio when he was behind the second safety car. "I just don't think it's fair."

Smog from forest fires in neighbouring Indonesia has shrouded Singapore over the past week, and on Sunday air quality dipped to unhealthy levels ahead of the race.

(Source: AFP)

Marquez wins on 200th start, sixth title beckons



Honda's Marc Marquez celebrated his 200th start and moved within reach of a sixth MotoGP title on Sunday with a commanding win from pole position in front of his home Spanish fans at the Aragon Grand Prix.

Reigning champion Marquez now has 300 points and a lead of 98 over nearest rival Andrea Dovizioso, who finished second for Ducati at the anti-clockwise MotorLand circuit near Alcaniz.

Australian Jack Miller was third for non-works Pramac Ducati.

The points tally means Marquez will wrap up his fourth successive championship with four races to spare if he wins the next race in Thailand on Oct. 6.

"I was convinced about my strategy and it's what I did, push at the beginning and take this gap of four or five seconds and don't push more," said Marquez, who took the chequered flag 4.836 seconds clear of his Italian rival.

"The difference was stable and I'm happy for this victory -- it looks easy but in the end we are working very hard. We crashed on Friday, so we are pushing and Dovizioso never gives up," he added.

The victory was his eighth of the season. Dovizioso could claim the ride of the day, with the experienced Ducati rider qualifying 10th on the grid but making the most of his bike's power to carve his way back through the field.

"We knew we can fight for the podium and at the start I was really determined," said the Italian, who had struggled in practice.

Miller also used his bike's speed to good effect, passing Yamaha's Maverick Vinales for the final podium place on the last lap to end the European part of the season on a high before heading home to Australia for a few days' off.

"I... just tried to save the rear tyre," he said after his third podium of the season. "I didn't want to get sucked into trying to chase Marc down too much and destroy the tyre and just be a sitting duck at the end there."

"I just rode my pace. Mav came past but he was, I think, trying to chase down Marc and towards the end there he just started struggling off the long corners... so I just kept my cool and was able to bring it home on the podium."

Vinales had started on the front row, alongside French Petronas Yamaha rider Fabio Quartararo, who dropped back to fifth at the finish.

Italian great Valentino Rossi was eighth for Yamaha, with Britain's Cal Crutchlow sixth for LCR Honda and Spaniard Aleix Espargaro seventh for Aprilia.

Suzuki's Alex Rins and Petronas Yamaha's Franco Morbidelli collided on the opening lap, with the latter crashing out.

(Source: Reuters)

Inter maintain perfect start with derby win over Milan



Serie A leaders Inter Milan defeated city rivals AC Milan 2-0 at the San Siro stadium on Saturday to maintain their 100% start to the campaign.

Second-half goals from Marcelo Brozovic and Romelu Lukaku secured the win for Inter who deserved their victory and could have made the result even worse for Marco Giampaolo's side in the final stages.

After the disappointment of a 1-1 draw at home to Slavia Prague in the Champions League on Tuesday, Inter delivered a performance that will raise hopes of a serious bid for a first 'scudetto' in 10 years.

For coach Antonio Conte, in his first season at the club, the derby victory was a sign that his approach is beginning to work.

"It's a derby and those are always special games, never easy to predict, especially when both teams are so prestigious as Inter and Milan," Conte said.

"The lads played a good game in every aspect. We were coming off a performance in the Champions League that left a bitter taste in the mouth and perhaps that fired us up even more to go into the derby in the right way."

"It's a deserved victory, I am happy for our fans, because the derby is always the derby."

Inter, who are now unbeaten in the last seven league clashes with Milan, grabbed the lead thanks to a deflected strike from Brozovic in the 49th minute.

A quick free kick from Stefano Sensi

found Brozovic on the edge of the box and his low drive took a huge deflection off Rafael Leao and beat the wrong-footed Milan keeper Gianluigi Donnarumma.

The assistant flagged Lautaro Martinez offside but a VAR review ruled that he was not interfering with play.

It was the third time that VAR had been used in the game -- a 23rd-minute effort from Milan's Hakan Calhanoglu was ruled out for handball by Franck Kessie and then Inter's Lautaro Martinez had his tap-in disallowed for offside after Danilo D'Ambrosio's bicycle kicked had been parried out.

Lukaku made sure of the win with a 78th-minute glancing header from a Nicolo Barella cross from the left for his third goal since his move from Manchester United.

Inter, who went close to a third when Matteo Politano clipped the bar and then Andrea Candreva hit the post, have 12 points from four games, two more than defending champions Juventus, who earlier beat Verona 2-1.

Giampaolo said Milan, who have two wins from their opening four games, had shown their inexperience.

"We were too hesitant at the start, then as the game progressed Inter showed their greater experience," he said.

"The goal broke the deadlock and I was not happy to see that we reacted in an emotional way."

(Source: Eurosport)

Van Dijk threatens to eclipse Ronaldo-Messi in world's best

Virgil Van Dijk threatens to eclipse fellow European stars Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi to lift FIFA's The Best Player award on Monday, to set himself up as favorite for this year's Ballon d'Or.

Van Dijk, Ronaldo and Messi are the three men's finalists for The Best Player award, with the winner to be announced on Monday in a star-studded ceremony in Milan's famous opera house La Scala.

The towering Dutch defender helped Liverpool to the Champions League trophy last season and is well-positioned having already won the UEFA player of the year award.

Since The Best award was created in 2016, the winner has gone on to also lift the coveted Ballon d'Or, which will be unveiled on December 2.

Real Madrid and Croatia midfielder Luka Modric won both awards last year to end Ronaldo and Messi's ten-year domination.

In the past three years the podiums for both awards have been almost identical apart from Egyptian Mohamed Salah's third place in The Best in 2018, a spot occupied by France's Antoine Griezmann in the Ballon d'Or.

Based on Liverpool's success last season it could be Van Dijk's turn to become the first defender since Italy's former World Cup winner Fabio Cannavaro in 2006.



The 28-year-old proved himself among the best defenders in the world for Liverpool and the Dutch national side who reached the Nations League final.

Liverpool also missed out on the Premier League title by just one point behind Manchester City.

Both Messi and Ronaldo have won FIFA's award in different guises five times each.

Former Real Madrid star Ronaldo's six-year reign as the Champions League top scorer ended last season.

The 34-year-old scored six goals in Juventus' European campaign, including an incredible treble against Atletico

Madrid, before they were eliminated in the quarter-finals. Ronaldo also won the Nations League with Portugal and his first Serie A title with Juventus.

Messi was top scorer in the Champions League last season with 12 goals before Barcelona were eliminated by Liverpool in the semi-finals.

The Argentine was also the top European scorer with 36 goals and won La Liga title with Barcelona.

The 32-year-old helped Argentina to bronze at 2019 Copa America.

Messi however could pay for his three-month suspension by South American football body CONMEBOL after alleging corruption at the Copa America.

Among the women, American World Cup winners Megan Rapinoe and Alex Morgan, are in the running along with England's Lucy Bronze.

Rapinoe, 34, left France with a Golden Boot and Golden Ball award.

The three contenders for the men's coaching award are Liverpool's Champions League winning coach Jurgen Klopp, along with Tottenham's Mauricio Pochettino, who reached the European final, and Manchester City's Pep Guardiola.

(Source: AFP)

Persepolis emerge victorious over Esteghlal

S P O R T S TEHRAN — Persepolis defeated Esteghlal 1-0 thanks to an own goal in the second half in Iran Professional League (IPL) on Sunday.

Mehdi Abdi, who came off the bench in the 80th minute, received a superb pass from Bashar Resan inside the Esteghlal's area one minute later and found the back of the net courtesy of a deflection.

Esteghlal midfielder Ali Karimi missed a penalty in the 28th minute and was shown a second yellow card with a minute remaining.

Two teams showed a lackluster performance in a match which is one of the most exciting derbies in Asia.

"First, I have to congratulate my players because they played very well. Alireza Beiranvand saved a penalty in the first half and I believe that he is the best goalkeeper in Asia. I think we won an important match in Iran football and deserved the win," Persepolis coach Gabriel Calderon said in the post-match press conference.

Persepolis moved to second place with nine points in the table behind leaders Pajdideh on goal difference.

Esteghlal are 15th with two points from four matches.

Esteghlal lead the head to head results in competitive matches with 26 wins to Persepolis's 24, while 41 matches ended in a draw.

Tehran derby is a football match between the two prominent Tehran clubs Esteghlal (Blues) and Persepolis (Reds).



Iran's Yazdani wins gold at World Wrestling C'ships

S P O R T S TEHRAN — Hassan Yazdani from Iran claimed a gold medal in the 2019 World Wrestling Championships on Sunday after his Indian rival Deepak Punia withdrew from the final because of injuries from previous rounds.

The Iranian freestyle wrestler, who won a gold medal at the 2016 Olympic Games, was scheduled to meet Punia in the 86kg final.

"My leg is swollen up and it is hurting. The eye is swollen too, but it happens in wrestling. I picked up

both injuries during the first round. I am not fighting in the final (because of leg injury)," Deepak told Sportstar from Nur-Sultan on Sunday.

Iran's freestyle team wrapped up the 2019 World Championships with one bronze, one silver and one gold medal.

Alireza Karimi had won a silver in 92kg category and Younes Emami seized a bronze medal at the 70kg class.

The 2019 World Wrestling Championships were held in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan.

Statement on the visit of a FIFA delegation to Iran

On 19 September, a delegation of FIFA experts visited Tehran to discuss measures designed to allow women in Iran to freely attend football matches.

The delegation, which was also joined by a representative of the Asian Football Confederation, met with the country's Deputy Minister of Sport and Youth, and representatives of the Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) focusing on international relations, security and ticketing matters. The delegation also inspected the Azadi stadium in Tehran, where on 10 October 2019 the national teams of Iran and Cambodia will play a qualification game for the FIFA World Cup 2022 in Qatar.

In these productive discussions, FIFA reiterated its firm and clear position that women need to be allowed to enter football matches freely and that the number of women who attend the stadiums be determined by the demand, resulting in ticket sales. The inspections on site showed that there



are no noteworthy operational obstacles to these measures being implemented at the Azadi stadium, starting with the

game on 10 October 2019. In that respect, the delegation also discussed the detailed ticketing procedures as well as operational procedures required and in line with relevant FIFA regulations.

Furthermore, the delegation discussed the need to open stadiums for women to attend national matches. In that respect, FIFA announced that it will, based on the operational plans and results of the 10 October 2019 game, collaborate with the FFIRI in developing an operational protocol and related requirements for matches in the Iranian football league to be opened for women as well.

FIFA will continue to engage closely with the FFIRI and relevant government entities to implement these important changes in accordance with FIFA regulations.

FIFA's position is firm and clear: women have to be allowed into football stadiums in Iran. For all football matches. (Source: FIFA)

Setback for Alireza Jahanbakhsh but he will keep working

It has been one of those seasons for Alireza Jahanbakhsh so far.

Out of favor at the start of the campaign as far as the starting XI goes.

Left off the bench as Graham Potter looked to cover all bases with his six outfield options.

And now hit by a minor but annoying injury, just when opportunity might have knocked to be among the subs at least.

The Iran international missed the match against Newcastle.

It is the venue where he played his first full 90 minutes in the Premier League almost a year ago as Albion won 1-0. Things have not moved on as expected since then.

Until add-on clauses are met by summer signings this year, The Argus understands Jahanbakhsh remains Albion's record signing at £17 million.

But he has yet to justify that fee and, unlike most of his colleagues, remains in a sort of limbo even after the change of management.

Some have survived the cut and adapted

to different roles.

Others have been sent out on loan with varying degrees of (un)likelihood as to whether they will return.

But the situation for Jahanbakhsh remains the same.

He is here but not really here in first team terms.

That might – repeat, might – have changed had he been fit when Martin Montoya went down with tonsillitis ahead of the Burnley game.

But only had he returned from action with Iran in tip-top shape.

Potter told The Argus: "Alireza felt uncomfortable in his thigh."

"He reported it in the international break and came back with a bit of uncomfortable feeling."

"He shouldn't be too far away but he obviously misses the game."

Jahanbakhsh's frustrations have not dampened the enthusiasm of his hordes of



fans in Iran.

If anything, they are keener than ever to know what is happening with their idol and to give their own opinions.

Perhaps tellingly, no one thought to ask about Jahanbakhsh's absence when Potter spoke to the media soon after the Burnley game.

At his press conference on Thursday afternoon, the Albion head coach was asked about the player's current state of morale.

He replied: "I saw him today. He is good, he is working hard to get back fit."

"These things happen sometimes."

"He has been good around the group, he trains hard when he does."

"He wants to play, wants to help the team."

"It's disappointing for him that he has picked this up now because he would probably have had an opportunity to be in amongst it."

"That is how it is. He just has to keep working."

"We will be patient and, when he is fit, he will be involved."

That will be a relief to Jahanbakhsh himself.

There is clearly talent there as well as a pleasant general demeanor that makes it easy to really want him to succeed.

He will tell you himself that his first season with AZ Alkmaar was a learning process, leading to better things in subsequent campaigns. (Source: The Argus)

Ellili issues Al Jazeera rallying cry

Al Jazeera coach Chiheb Ellili believes his side has a major responsibility to the people of Jordan as they prepare to host Lebanon's Al Ahed FC in the first leg of the 2019 AFC Cup West Zonal Final.

Al Jazeera reached the same stage of the competition in 2018 before losing out to Iraq's Air Force Club – defeat which dashed Jordanian hopes of the nation claiming a first AFC Cup title since Shabab Al Ordon's triumph in 2007.

However, having successfully guided his side past former champions Kuwait SC and Al Ittihad in the group stage and then Syria's Al Jaish in the Zonal Semi-finals, Ellili is adamant that Al Jazeera are more motivated than ever to claim this year's Continental crown.

"Winning the title is very important for Al Jazeera," said the Tunisian coach ahead of Tuesday's encounter.

"We have a big responsibility as we are representing Jordan and the fact that we can make history. In the last training before the second leg against Al Jaish, we played the national anthem of Jordan, something which shows that we are playing this competition in the name of Jordan."

Al Jazeera qualified for the 2019 AFC West Asia Zonal final in stunning fashion as they saw off the challenge of Al Jaish.

Down 3-0 after the first leg of the semi-finals, Ellili's team produced a magnificent comeback to win the return tie 4-0 in front of their adoring fans at the Amman International Stadium.

"A negative for us, though, is that the Jordanian League has not started yet and [as a result] we have not had any competitive matches or official training."

"Nevertheless, we scheduled our preparations accordingly and had a plan which included a training camp. That has helped us to prepare the team for the match against Al Ahed," Ellili said.

The 55-year-old tactician was, however, also quick to warn his charges of the need to dig deep if they are to defeat their Lebanese opponents and keep alive Al Jazeera's dream of winning the AFC Cup title.

"Our opponents are a good team and they have good capabilities because they reached this stage of the competition," Ellili warned.

"We have studied them closely as they have made



some changes to their squad. I hope we can gain a good advantage in the first leg, one which we can then take into the second match which will be very important.

"The most important thing is to maintain our concentration throughout the two matches."

(Source: the-afc)

Iran has 'assured' women can attend qualifier: Infantino

FIFA officials have been in Iran this week discussing preparations for the Oct. 10 World Cup qualifier against Cambodia, their first home game of the 2022 qualifying competition.

"We need to have women attending – we need to push for that with respect but in a strong and forceful way and we cannot wait anymore," Infantino told a FIFA conference on women's football.

"We have been assured, that as of the next international game of Iran, women will be allowed to enter football stadiums," he said.

"This is something very important, with a couple of exceptions, but it is important to move to the next level and to the next stage," he added.

FIFA said on Saturday it would be working with the Iranian football federation to develop plans for women to attend domestic matches in the Iranian league as well.

(Source: Reuters)

Murray hoping to regain lost speed during Asian swing

Andy Murray is looking to improve his speed around the court as he steps up his return to singles action at the Zhuhai Championships in China following career-saving hip surgery.

Former world number one Murray, 32, is regaining his fitness after a hip resurfacing procedure at the start of the year and recorded the first two wins of his singles comeback at the Rafa Nadal Open Challenger tournament in Mallorca last month.



"I'm still kind of going through the recovery process from the operation. My muscles are still recovering, the ones that were cut during the procedure... sometimes I feel a little bit slow on the court," Murray told reporters on Sunday.

"I'm hoping that with playing more at this level, more time to recover, I'll start to get a little bit faster."

"The conditions here are difficult, very humid, which is always tough... I have no pain in my hip any more, so that's a positive thing."

Murray, who has dropped to 413 in the world rankings, will also compete in Beijing and Shanghai in the Asian swing of the ATP tour but the three-times major winner said his performance in Mallorca showed he still needed time to return to his best.

"I think physically I still have a lot of improving to do if I want to get back to competing on the tour at the highest level because it showed there that I wasn't quite ready to play many matches in a row," Murray, who lost in the third round, said.

"The last three weeks since that tournament, I've spent time working on my physical conditioning."

Unseeded Murray will begin his Zhuhai campaign against American Tenny Sandgren, his conqueror in the Winston-Salem Open first round last month.

He also confirmed he would play in next year's inaugural ATP Cup – a nation-based event ahead of the Australian Open. (Source: Reuters)

Barca stars lose confidence in Valverde

A number of Barcelona players have begun to lose confidence in coach Ernesto Valverde following the club's disappointing start to the season, various sources have told ESPN.

Saturday's surprise 2-0 loss to Granada signaled Barca's worst start to a top-flight season in Spain in 25 years. They have lost two of their opening five matches and have just seven points on the board.

The squad flew back to Barcelona straight after the game and will return to training on Sunday. The post-mortem into what happened at Granada and why they were so comfortably beaten will begin then.

Valverde took responsibility for the defeat in his postmatch news conference, with sources telling ESPN that part of the squad has been left disappointed with the side's performances away from Camp Nou this season – especially the display at the Estadio Nuevo Los Cármenes this weekend.

Barca opened the campaign with a 1-0 defeat at Athletic Bilbao and were then held to a 2-2 draw by Osasuna. They also drew 0-0 at Borussia Dortmund midweek in the Champions League and, stretching back to last season, are without a win in seven away games, which includes the painful 4-0 reverse at Anfield against Liverpool in the Champions League semifinal that knocked them out.

Despite that loss on Merseyside, until now at least, Valverde has maintained the players' support. The board backed him in the summer, pointing to the fact that he was excellent in terms of managing the dressing room, despite shortcomings in Europe during his two years in charge.

The loss against Roma in his first year was labelled an anomaly, with La Liga and the Copa del Rey sewn up after that loss in Italy. However, the loss to Liverpool in his second season in the dugout led to the first real doubts about the former Athletic coach.

"Something strange is happening," one source close to the dressing room told ESPN after the Granada defeat. "The team is playing without intensity and they're not creating anything."

Sources close to Barca president Josep Maria Bartomeu have told ESPN that he is not someone who loses his nerve or who makes impulsive decisions. Valverde has a contract until 2021 and it would take a prolongation of the club's current form to lead to the drastic measure of sacking him.

Valverde has been without a number of his best players so far this season due to injury. Luis Suarez only returned to fitness last week against Valencia, while Lionel Messi is yet to start a game. The Argentine's appeared as a substitute in each of Barca's last two outings after recovering from a calf injury. (Source: ESPN)

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Managing Director: Ali Asgari
Editor-in-Chief: Mohammad Ghaderi

Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 — 88808895
editor@tehrantimes.com
Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000
Advertisements Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051450
Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807
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GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

He who exposes himself to accusation must not blame the person who suspects him.
Imam Ali (AS)

Actress Mahtab Keramati to preside over Madrid Imagineindia festival

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian actress Mahtab Keramati, the star of acclaimed movie “Mazar-i-Sharif”, has been selected as the president of the 19th Imagineindia International Film Festival, which will be held in the Spanish capital of Madrid from May 17 to 31, 2020.

She won the award best actress at the 2015 Imagineindia for her performance in “Ghosts” by acclaimed Iranian filmmaker Dariush Mehrjui.

Keramati also was named best actress at the International Film Festival of Tamilnadu in Chennai, India in 2016 for her role in director Hassan Barzideh’s drama “Mazar-i-Sharif” about Taliban terrorism in Afghanistan.

Her fellow Iranian filmmaker Mehdi Rahmani will be in company with her on the jury, which also is composed of Indian film expert Modhura Palit, Polish filmmaker Hanna Polak and Afghan actress Leena Alam.

The Jury also includes Australian producer Bridget Ikin, Indian professor Anjali Monteiro, Kazakh filmmaker Olga Korotko, British-Indian writer and director Sandhya Suri, Kazakh producer Olga Khlashaeva and German producer Daniela Creutz.

Iranian director Reza Mirkarimi’s drama “Castle of Dreams” will be competing in the official section of the festival, which also features the Indian movies “Bulbul Can Sing” by Rima Das, “Aamis” by Bhaskar Hazarika and “Aadhar” by Sumon Ghosh.

“Aga’s House” by Lendita Zeqiraj from Kosovo “Summer Survivors” by Marija Kavtaradze from Lithuania and “Brotherhood” by Pavel Lungin from Russia will be screened in the official competition.

In addition, “Driving Lessons” by Iranian filmmaker Marzieh Riahi will be screened in the short films competition.

Tehran center to review Italian translation of Al-Sadr’s book on religions

CULTURE TEHRAN — “Le religioni al servizio dell’umanità”, an Italian translation of Lebanese-Iranian philosopher and Shia religious leader Musa al-Sadr’s book “Religions at the Service of Humanity” will be reviewed in a session, which will be organized at Tehran’s Book City Institute on September 28.

Carlo Cereti, former Italian cultural attaché in Tehran, Raffaele Mauriello, an assistant professor at the Faculty of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages at Allameh Tabataba’i University in Tehran, and a number of Iranian literati will attend the session.

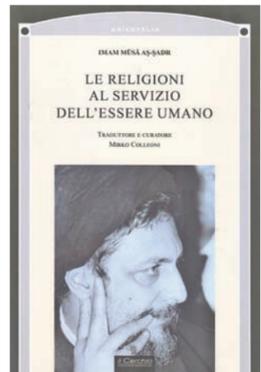
Translated into Italian by Mirko Colleoni, the book has been published in 2019 by Il Cerchio, a Rimini-based publishing house specializing in the publication of texts from the spiritual traditions, fantasy essays and medieval culture.

Musa al-Sadr, also known as Imam Musa Sadr, disappeared with two aides in August 1978 on his way to attend ceremonies commemorating Libya’s Muammar Gaddafi’s ascent to power.

When he was not seen in Tripoli, it was said he had left for Italy. While his fate is not known, it was widely suspected that he was kidnapped at the behest of Gaddafi, who may have viewed him as a religious rival.



Mahtab Keramati poses during a photocall after accepting the award for best actress for her role in “Ghosts” during the closing ceremony of the Imagineindia International Film Festival in 2015.



Front cover of the Italian version of Musa al-Sadr’s book “Religions at the Service of Humanity”.

Parsa Piruzfar to play Rumi in “Drunk on Love”

A R T TEHRAN — The 34-year-old Iranian stage and screen actor Parsa Piruzfar is due to star as Persian poet and mystic Molana Jalal ad-Din Rumi in the Iran-Turkey joint film project “Drunk on Love”, a public relations team for the movie announced on Sunday.

The film, which will be directed by Hassan Fat’hi, director of the popular Iranian TV series “The Tenth Night”, “Zero Degree Orbit” and “Shahrzad”, will focus on the lives of Rumi and Shams-i Tabrizi, the wandering sage who later became the mentor of Rumi in the 13th century CE.

Earlier in last week, the public relations team of the project announced that Palme d’Or-winning actor Shahab Hosseini also from Iran will play the role of Shams. The entire film will shot in Konya,

a Turkish town that is home to the mausoleum of Rumi.

Fat’hi and Farhad Tohidi are co-writing the screenplay. The ENG Yapim Medya Organization from Istanbul is collaborating in this project.

Rumi (1207-1273) undertook one or two journeys to Syria, during one of which he met the dervish, Shams.

However, he was deeply influenced by Shams during their second visit in Konya on November 30, 1244.

For months, the two men constantly interacted, and as a result, Rumi neglected his disciples and family, who could not tolerate the close relationship.

One night in 1247, Shams disappeared forever. This experience turned Rumi into a poet. The Divan of Shams is a true translation of his experiences into poetry.



Actor Parsa Piruzfar in an undated photo. (Arsha Aqiqi)

Krzysztof Kieslowski’s films up for discussion in Tehran sessions

A R T TEHRAN — The 8½ Film Club in Iran will organize sessions to review films by Polish film director and screenwriter Krzysztof Kieslowski (1941-1996) in a program named “Polish Grief”.

A selection of seven films will be discussed by a number of Iranian film critics and experts at the sessions to be held at the Haftrokh Institute in Tehran every Wednesday for about two months.

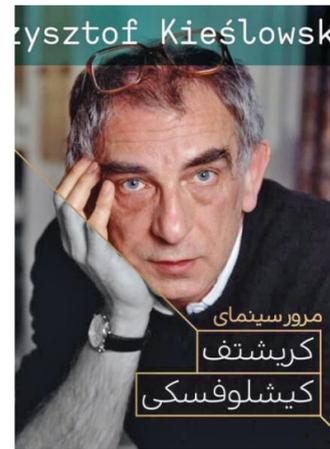
Parviz Jahed will review the “Three Colors” trilogy, while “The Double Life of Veronique” (1991) will be discussed by Shadmehr Rastin at the first session, which will be held on September 25.

“A Short Film about Love” (1988) and “A Short Film about Killing” (1988) will be reviewed by Amir Purya.

“Amator” (“Camera Buff”, 1979) will be discussed by Kamyar Mohsenin.

Kieslowski is known internationally for the trilogy “Dekalog” (1989), “The Double Life of Veronique” and “Three Colors” (1993-1994).

The Polish filmmaker received numerous awards during his career, including the Cannes Film Festival jury prize in 1988, the Venice Film Festival FIPRESCI Prize in 1989, Golden Lion in



A poster for “Polish Grief”, a program for reviewing films by Polish film director and screenwriter Krzysztof Kieslowski in Tehran.

1993 and the Berlin International Film Festival’s Silver Bear in 1994.

In 1995, he received Oscar nominations for best director and best writing.

“Katyusha” picked as best at Love Intl. Film Festival

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian director and producer Ali Atshani’s comedy “Katyusha” has been named best film at the Love International Film Festival in Santa Monica, California in the U.S. on Saturday.

The film also brought Mahmud Atshani the award for best cinematographer, the Bit Film Company that is the distributor of the film announced.

“Katyusha” is about a middle-aged religious man, Khalil, who is supposed to take care of a spoiled son of a wealthy man as his bodyguard for a number of days. The gap between their social levels and worldviews creates some problems.

Atshani has made the comedy “1st Born” starring Val Kilmer, William Baldwin and “Prison Break” actor Robert Knepper.

As the first co-production between Iran and America, the film tells the story of a newlywed couple, Iranian-born Ben and his American wife Kate, who are living in California. When the couple’s first pregnancy faces complications, both sides of their family must come together — a rather complicated notion as Ben’s father Hamid is an



Iranian director and producer Ali Atshani poses after accepting the best film award for his comedy “Katyusha” during the Love International Film Festival Santa Monica, CA in the U.S. on September 21, 2019.

anti-American Iranian politician, while Kate’s father Biden (Kilmer) is an American politician who takes a hardline stance against Iran.

Netflix chief says “The Crown” will look a bargain after streaming explosion

CAMBRIDGE, England (Reuters) — Netflix Chief Executive Reed Hastings said on Friday the entrance of Apple, Disney and NBC to the global streaming market will push content costs to levels that make its epic drama about the British Royal family “look like a bargain”.

Hastings’ comments at the RTS television industry conference in Cambridge jolted investors already worried about growing competition and sent the streaming heavyweight’s stock down 6%, adding to a recent sell-off.

Disney and others will vie for subscribers and likely drive up production costs.

Costing a reported 100 million pounds (\$125 million) to make, “The Crown” won critical acclaim and has helped Netflix build its subscriber base, which has risen to 152 million and given it a head start over rival pay-TV and technology firms.

“It’s a whole new world starting in November,” Hastings said.

He cited the planned launch of services by Apple and Disney, as well as a ramping up of Amazon’s offerings and the forthcoming Peacock platform from NBCUniversal.

The new video-on-demand subscription services are good news for producers, with rival platforms competing to poach the best content and talent, Hastings said.

“Someday ‘The Crown’ will look like a bargain,” he said. The show is intended to span 60 episodes over six seasons.



Reed Hastings, co-founder and CEO of Netflix, gestures during an event of the Fundacion Telmex Mexico Siglo XXI (Telmex Foundation Mexico XXI Century) in Mexico City, Mexico, September 6, 2019. (Reuters/Edgard Garrido)

Claire Foy starred in the first two seasons, which traced the life of Queen Elizabeth from her coronation at the age of 25 to the birth of her children, all while taking in the political dramas of the day.

Oscar winner Olivia Colman will star in the role when the third series launches in November.

Netflix’s stock has tumbled 26% since its quarterly report on July 17, when it said it lost U.S. streaming customers for the first time in eight years and missed targets for new subscribers overseas.

Apple’s streaming service debuts on Nov. 1, starting in the United States and some other countries, followed by Disney’s on Nov. 12.

“People are increasingly understanding that competition is here, and it’s going to increase,” said Morningstar analyst Neil Macker. “Companies like Disney are willing to bleed cash for years to compete in this space.”

Following on the success of “The Crown”, Hastings said Netflix would make a “big increase” in its investment in British television production next year, taking advantage of the country’s strong storytelling expertise.

“The possibilities the internet brings for growing entertainment is phenomenal, and over the next several years, with all of the expansion, I think we are going to see a very large increase in how much content is produced here in the UK,” he said at the conference.

“This year we spent a little over 400 million pounds in the UK and that’s continuing to grow, following our subscriber base.”

Asked if Netflix would spend twice as much next year, he said: “Probably not double, but a big increase.”

Dinosaurs, droids and holy hand-grenade up for grabs at film auction

LONDON (Reuters) — Jurassic Park dinosaur skulls, a Star Wars stormtrooper helmet and Monty Python’s holy hand grenade are among movie memorabilia going under the hammer in London this month at an auction organizers expect to exceed 6 million pounds (\$7.5 million).

Also on sale will be Jack Nicholson’s axe from “The Shining” and his purple “Batman” Joker costume.

One of the key pieces is a stormtrooper

helmet from the original 1977 “Star Wars” film, expected to fetch up to 180,000 pounds by specialist movie memorabilia retailer Prop Store.

Despite the thin padding and dodgy visor of the original costume, actor Syd Wragg looked delighted to be reunited with it on Wednesday for the first time since he wore it on set. His name, still visible, is marked in pen on its interior.

Although there was no bang when the pin from the “Holy Hand Grenade of Antioch”

was removed, sellers hope for an explosion of interest in the “Monty Python and the Holy Grail” piece as the British comedy celebrates its 50th anniversary this year.

“In true Monty Python style, this is actually built from a ballcock from a toilet system,” said Stephen Lane, of the Prop Store, which is organizing the auction.

Prop Store have put around 250 of the 900 lots on display at the BFI Imax building in Waterloo, south London, where the auction

will be held.

Fans of the latest outing of Joker might be in for a surprise with the more jovial multi-colored costume on display from Jack Nicholson’s turn as the character in “Batman”. The particular shade of purple was chosen by Nicholson himself to match that of the L.A. Lakers basketball team, Lane said.

The two-day auction is set for Sept. 30 to Oct. 1, with the public free to view the lots until then.

Viacom buys exclusive cable rights to “Seinfeld” from Sony

NEW YORK (Reuters) — Viacom Inc said on Saturday it has bought the exclusive cable rights to classic television sitcom “Seinfeld” from Sony Pictures Television, days after Netflix Inc landed the global streaming rights for the show.

“Beginning in October 2021, the full library of Seinfeld episodes will air amongst Viacom’s entertainment brands, including Comedy Central, Paramount Network and TV Land,” Viacom said in a statement.

“Seinfeld”, a show starring comedian Jerry Seinfeld playing

a version of himself and often humorously described as a show about nothing, followed four self-absorbed friends in New York City. It was a hit on the NBC broadcast network in the 1990s.

Sony Corp’s Sony Pictures Television, which owns the distribution rights to “Seinfeld”, reached the deal with Viacom. The terms of the deal were not disclosed.

Netflix and other streaming giants are poised to nab streaming rights for popular TV shows as the battle for streaming viewers intensifies.



A view shows the exterior of Hulu’s “Seinfeld: The Apartment”, a temporary exhibit on West 14th street in the Manhattan borough of New York City, June 24, 2015. (Reuters/Mike Segar/File Photo)