



Leader declares legislation-making provisions **2**



Muscat will consider supporting 'Hormuz Peace Endeavor' **2**



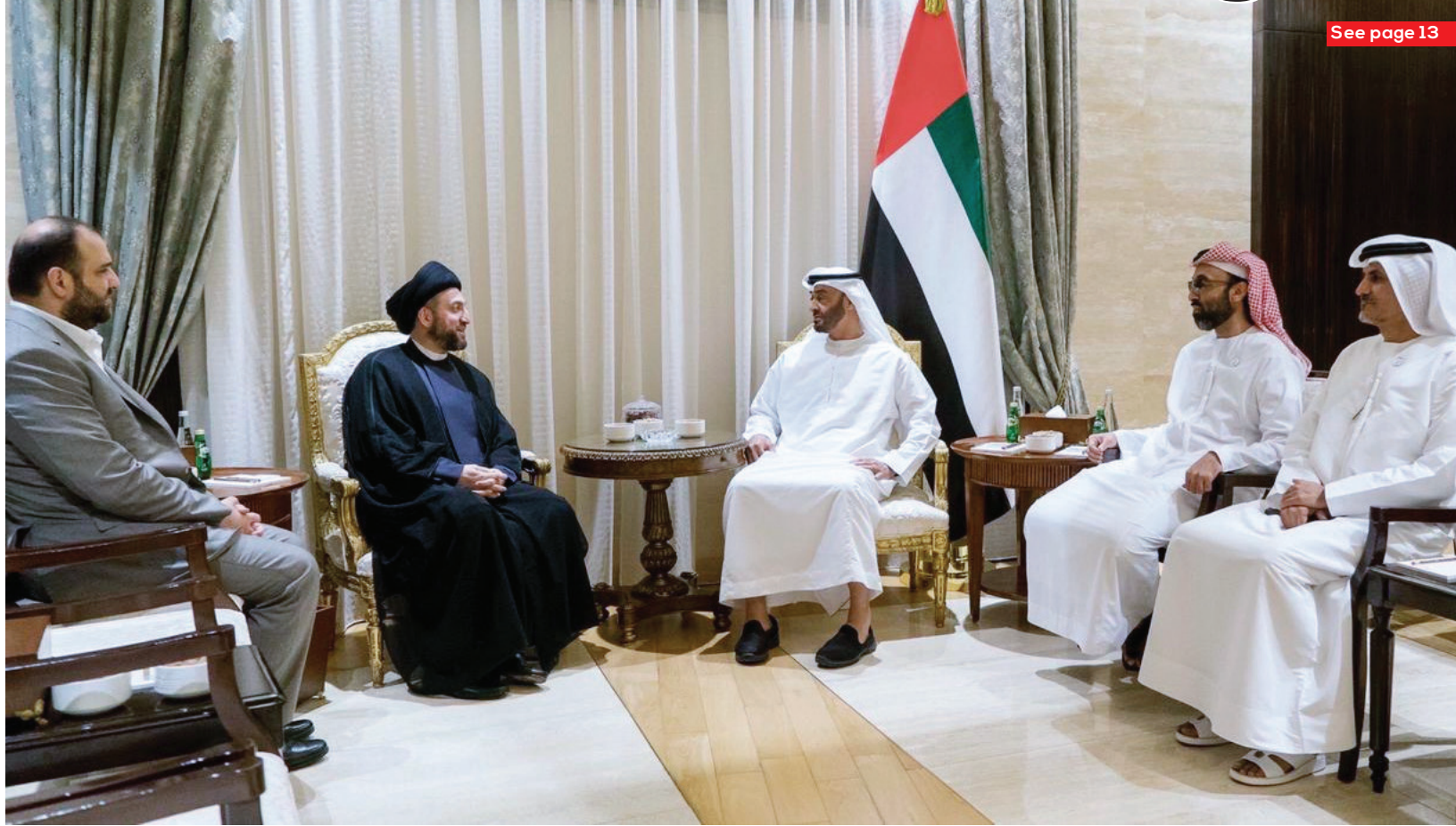
Iran heading to IBSA Blind Football Asian Championships **15**



Theater elites honored at Samandarian Awards **16**

Al-Hakim, Abu Dhabi prince discuss situation in the region

See page 13



Iran, Kazakhstan ink MOU on economic co-op

TEHRAN — Iran and Kazakhstan signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for expansion of economic cooperation, the news portal of Iran's Agriculture Ministry reported. The MOU was signed by Iranian Agriculture Minister Mahmoud Hojati and his Kazakh counterpart Saparkhan Omarov at the end of the two countries' 16th joint economic committee meeting in Kazakh-

stan's capital Nur-Sultan on Saturday. As reported, the MOU covers a variety of subjects including opening of Iranian banks branches in Kazakhstan, visa facilitation, investment in Kazakhstan's mining sector, increasing trade volume between the two countries, overseas cultivation, poultry and aquaculture, and medical as well as aviation cooperation. ➔ **4**

U.S. taking humanitarian issues hostage: Iran's top diplomat

TEHRAN — It is a disgrace that a government takes humanitarian issues hostage for its political goals, says Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi, in reference to the U.S. government's rejection of a request by Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif to visit Iran's UN ambassador in a New York hospital where he is being treated for cancer. The U.S. State Department said on Friday that Zarif's request to visit Am-

bassador Majid Takht-Ravanchi would be granted if Iran released one of several American citizens it had detained, according to Reuters. In a post on his Instagram account on Saturday, Araqchi said, "Inshallah Majid will recover soon and will go back to his post, but disgrace will be left for a government that takes humanitarian issues hostage for its political goals." ➔ **3**

Israel is the origin of modern terrorism: Mahathir Mohamad

TEHRAN — The creation of Israel by seizing Palestinian land and expelling its 90 per cent Arab population is the root cause of terrorism, Mahathir Mohamad said. "Since then, wars have been fought in many countries, many related to the creation of Israel. And now we have terrorism when there was none before, or at least none on the present scale. "Military action against acts of terrorism will not succeed. We need to identify the cause and remove it. But the great powers

refuse to deal with the root cause," he said in his statement at the General Debate of the 74th UN General Assembly here. The prime minister added that Malaysia accepted the state of Israel "as a fait accompli". "But Malaysia cannot accept the blatant seizure of Palestine land by Israel for their settlements as well as the occupation of Jerusalem by Israel. The Palestinians cannot even enter the settlements built on their land. ➔ **13**



REPORT

Fatemeh Salehi
Mehr News Agency
journalist

Trump's support for his "favorite dictator": The duality in Washington's look

The U.S. president's support for his favorite dictator, despite the unprecedented protests against Abdel Fattah el-Sisi in Egypt, indicates Washington's dual policies toward regional countries. Egypt has recently experienced major changes in its political arena, and people for the first time in years formed wide and general protests against Egyptian president Abdel Fattah el-Sisi.

The nationwide protest began last Friday, with thousands of citizens coming to streets and chanting "el-Sisi must go". It is kind of a reminder of the protests that led to the victory of revolution on January 25, 2011.

The protests and slogans against the Egyptian president were so intense that his pictures were taken down and ripped in various cities. It is the first time since the fall of Mohamed Mursi's administration through military coup in July, 2013 that Egypt witnesses such wide protests against the government.

Al-Tahrir Square is a symbol of revolution and protests, and also a place for Egyptian extensive protests. It should be noted that popular protests in Egypt has started following the request of the Egyptian artist and businessman Muhammad Ali.

The security forces tried to disperse protestors by tear gas and attacking. These forces have arrested about 700 people since the beginning the chaos in Egypt.

Mohamad Ali promised to take next steps after the protestors left, and asked Egyptian Minister of Defense Mohamed Ahmed Zaki to arrest el-Sisi because of killing Egyptians. He has recently threatened to release news about arresting some corrupt elements related to the Egyptian president's office. Mohamad Ali also criticized the sale of Tiran and Sanafir islands to Saudi Arabia, and said if el-Sisi do not step down by Friday, people would dismiss him and end his (political) life. ➔ **13**

Diplomat calls Saudi Arabia a fountain of extremism and terrorism

TEHRAN — Es'haq Al-e- Habib, the Iranian deputy ambassador to the UN, said on Friday that the Saudi regime is a "source of terrorism and extremism".

His comments came as response to Saudi Foreign Minister Ibrahim Abdulaziz al-Assaf's Friday remarks in the 74th session of the United Nations General Assembly in which he leveled terrorism charges against Iran and calling for further financial pressure on the country.

"It was Saudi Arabia and not Iran which provided billions of dollars worth of arms to the Daesh Takfiri terrorist group and affiliated terrorists in Syria," Press TV quoted Al-e- Habib as saying. He said that Saudi "despots" cannot go on



forever making accusations against Iran as a cover for failures stemming from their "primitive medieval dogmas".

The diplomat added that Saudi Arabia's

"destructive" policies should not be overlooked despite the regime's tendency to blame others for its mistakes.

Al-e Habib further pointed to the high number of Saudi nationals among the main operatives committing the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, adding that the Saudi regime has turned into a hotbed for "radicalism," with many terrorist leaders being known to have studied in Saudi-backed schools.

At least 15 of the 19 hijackers who flew passenger planes into the World Trade Center on that occasion came from Saudi Arabia. There are also numerous official reports that suggest the attackers were funded by some Saudi royals.

'Turkey might bring in Russia, China, Iran to team up in new regional energy corridors'

By Zahra Mirzafarjounan

TEHRAN (MNA) — Referring to EU and the US partial policy toward energy resources in Mediterranean Sea and the Middle East, Mehmet Ogutcu says Turkey might bring in Russia, China and Iran to team up in the new energy corridors in this region.

The Eastern Mediterranean region is rapidly changing. The turbulent political transition in Egypt after the Arab Spring, the war in Syria, the tensions between Israeli regime and Gaza and the never-ending dispute between Turkey and the Republic of Cyprus are -all together- reshuffling the regional geopolitical equilibrium. At the same time natural gas findings are flourishing in the offshore of Egypt, Israeli occupied lands, and Cyprus, reshaping the regional energy map and rapidly making the Eastern Mediterranean a world-class natural gas province. These geo-

political and energy pressures are rapidly converging, generating a number of new challenges and opportunities for each player in the region.

To know more about the issue, we reached out to Mehmet Ogutcu, Chairman of London Energy Club.

Following is the text of our interview with him:

■ What is the strategic and geo-economic importance of the Mediterranean Sea for Turkey?

A: We like it or not, Turkey is unquestionably the regional superpower in the East Mediterranean by virtue of its economy, military, human capital and cultural hinterland. It is also the region's largest energy economy, which can purchase the pipeline or LNG gas from the recent discoveries and can provide transit facilities from the region to high demand and high value European markets through its reliable gas infrastructure already in place. It is also the bridge for Russian, Caspian and

Black Sea crude oil, chemicals, coal and nuclear fuels to reach the international markets via the Bosphorus and Mediterranean.

Historically, Turkey has been the chief advocate and champion of free trade, freedom of movement and cultural exchanges in the Mediterranean and can still serve this purpose if a soft, but assertive power strategy can be re-engineered as in early 2000s without having to resort to what some analysts call "gunboat" diplomacy.

However, due to some miscalculations and self-imposed distancing itself from Egypt, Israel and Syria (as well as a new axis of Saudi Arabia and some other Persian Gulf nations formed against Turkey in the Middle East and North Africa, coupled with an alliance of Egypt, Greece, Israel and South Cyprus), there are strong efforts to exclude Turkey from the regional game over the past decade. ➔ **11**



ARTICLE

Martin Love
Political analyst from
North Carolina

The U.S. has evolved to "Inverted Totalitarianism"

Mike Pompeo continues to write and speak garbage about Iran. His obvious aim: turn the person in the U.S. street against Iran, or at least, spew enough propaganda over and over so that no one of weak mind, a majority, is going to object to the Trump gang doing whatever it wants in and to West Asia, and that in subservience to the Saudis and the Zionists.

Without the assistance of the mainstream U.S. corporate-controlled media, except in isolated instances where some columnist manages to get some truth published in a major U.S. newspaper like the New York Times or the Washington Post, there is still far too little direct objection to all the lies. But at the same time, clarity and some truth at least ARE making advances in a two step forward, one step backwards fashion.

This process is dangerously slow, but it is happening, as it appears that Trump has scant hope of reelection in 2020 if he ignites, or allows other to ignite, a military attack on Iran. The "public" seems to be simply tired of wars in the Middle East, and the deflection of tax dollars for foreign policies that have not served average Americans nor resulted in ANY "victories" for the U.S. — unless chaos has always been the chief aim, and almost no one in the government will admit to that.

It is a marvel to realize that the U.S., if it did have other objectives (aside from bolstering the apartheid regime in Israel and others which create chaos), that the U.S. has not won a single "war" (given alleged objectives) in decades, the Vietnam debacle being the primary example of a huge loss.

And there is virtually no corner of the globe where there is not a desire now, at least, to reduce the economic and military clout the U.S. has wielded to harm other countries. At the margin, this is increasingly a realization, but one can sort of understand why the process has been so excruciatingly slow. ➔ **13**



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"Farewell" narrates epic tragedy of Ashura

TEHRAN — Vocalist Hesameddin Seraj performed "Farewell", a concert narrating the epic tragedy of Ashura, in Tehran's Milad Tower on Friday.

The concert was led by conductor Mohammad Mirzamnai.

The poetry is composed by Aman Samani which puts highlight on bravery of Imam Hussein (AS) and his companions.

"No Date, No Signature" director Vahid Jalilvand also collaborated in reciting several pieces at the concert.

Ashura is the 10th day of Muharram, the day upon which Imam Hussein (AS) and his companions were martyred in Karbala, Iraq in 680 CE. The three-day concert will end today.

Leader declares legislation-making provisions

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — In a decree issued on Saturday, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei declared provisions of legislation-making process.

The decree was announced to the three branches of government, which includes the administration, Judiciary and parliament.

In the declaration, the Leader said that laws and regulations adopted by the three bodies should be in conformity with the constitution.

The Leader's declaration is in line with implementing Article 110 of the Iranian constitution.

The general policies of the legislation have been prepared after consultation with the Expediency Council.

In making legislation, the Leader stated, the principle of transparency should be observed and that the laws and regulations should be crafted based on expert knowledge and long-term plans.

Iraqi PM to convey verbal message from Saudi Crown Prince to Rouhani: sources

Iraqi sources have revealed that Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi is going to visit Iran in the few coming weeks in the context of reducing tension and soothing the crisis between Riyadh and Tehran.

The sources added that the Iraqi PM will convey a verbal message from the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman to the Iranian President Hassan Rouhani.

(Source: Al-Manar)

Finland says considers nuclear deal as basis for increasing ties

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Finnish Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto has said that Helsinki considers the 2015 nuclear deal, formally known as the JCPOA, as the cornerstone of expanding ties with Iran.

"We support the JCPOA. We are concerned about the United States' withdrawal from the deal and also Iran's steps towards quitting the JCPOA," he told IRNA in an interview published on Saturday.

Haavisto added, "We consider the JCPOA a good basis for bilateral cooperation. We believe that Europe can help Iran find a way out of the current crisis. Undoubtedly, we should continue dialogue and good relations."

In May 2018, President Donald Trump abandoned the nuclear deal and returned the previous sanctions and imposed new harsh ones. He even has introduced a total ban on Iran's oil exports.



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

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

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

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

The three European countries refers to France, Germany and Britain (E3) which are signatory to the deal.

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

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said in a press conference in New York on Thursday that the European countries have either been unable or shown no will to save the nuclear deal.

"We reduced our commitments in two phases. We also started the third phase. We hope that we would reach an agreement by the end of the two-month deadline. We will take the next steps if Europeans are not able to fulfill their duties," Rouhani pointed out.

"We were living up to our commitments fully and they kept decreasing their commitments. We wanted to create a balance, just as they were decreasing their commitments," CNN quoted him as saying.

Iran has repeatedly said if the remaining members of the JCPOA protect Tehran from sanctions effects it will immediately reverse its decisions. This statement was again echoed by Rouhani in New York on Thursday.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on September 22 that Iran will not succumb to economic pressure by Washington.

"Abandon the illusion that Iran can be defeated by pressure," he told NPR.

"We are resisting an unprovoked aggression by the United States. I can assure you that the United States will not be able to bring us to our knees through pressure," he said.

Former U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry has said that Washington's withdrawal from the nuclear deal is the cause of escalation of tension in the region, calling policy of "maximum pressure" on Tehran bankrupt.

"We have been pressuring them. Maximum pressure. And it was entirely foreseeable that that would result in further conflict. So we're seeing the unfolding of really a bankruptcy of approach," he told CBS News.

Chinese FM urges Persian Gulf states to form 'platform for dialogue'

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — China's chief diplomat, Wang Yi, suggested on Friday that countries bordering the Persian Gulf "should be urged to establish a platform for dialogue and consultation."

The remarks by Wang came two days after the Iranian president at the UN headquarters in New York invited the countries directly affected by the recent incidents in the Persian Gulf region to join the "Hormuz Peace Endeavor (HOPE)".

Wang also said the 2015 deal on Iran's nuclear program has an effect on global peace and security and asked all parties signatory to the deal to work jointly to keep it alive.

"The Iranian nuclear issue affects world peace and security. All parties need to work together to uphold the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and ensure that this historic outcome is not derailed," CNN quoted Wang as telling the UN General Assembly.

He added, "Given the growing tensions



China's Wang says it is necessary to "ensure that this historic outcome (JCPOA) is not derailed."

Omani FM says Muscat will consider supporting 'Hormuz Peace Endeavor'

By staff and agency

Omani Foreign Minister Yusuf bin Alawi bin Abdullah has said that Muscat will consider supporting Iranian President Hassan Rouhani's "Hormuz Peace Endeavor".

"We haven't seen it. If the theme... of that [plan] is based on stability, of course, we will support it," Al-Monitor quoted him as saying on Friday in an exclusive interview on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly.

During his speech at the 74th UN General Assembly on Wednesday, President Hassan Rouhani said, "Based upon the historical responsibility of my country in maintaining

security, peace, stability and progress in the Persian Gulf region and Strait of Hormuz, I would like to invite all the countries directly affected by the developments in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz to the 'Coalition for Hope', meaning Hormuz Peace Endeavor."

Rouhani said, "The goal of the Coalition for Hope is to promote peace, stability, progress and welfare for all the residents of the Strait of Hormuz region, and to enhance mutual understanding and peaceful and friendly relations amongst them."

"This initiative includes various venues

for cooperation, such as the collective supply of energy security, freedom of navigation and free transfer of oil and other resources to and from the Strait of Hormuz and beyond."

Rouhani added, "The Coalition for Hope is based on important principles such as compliance with the goals and principles of the United Nations, mutual respect, equal footing, dialog and understanding, respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, inviolability of international borders, the peaceful settlement of all disputes, and more importantly, the two fundamental principles of non-aggression and non-interference in

the domestic affairs of each other."

The president also said, "The presence of the United Nations is necessary for the creation of an international umbrella in support of the Coalition for Hope."

In a tweet on Thursday, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif also invited all regional states to join Iran's initiative for securing the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz.

Zarif said the initiative entails "dialogue, confidence-building, freedom of navigation, energy security, non-aggression, and non-intervention".

Zarif discusses Syrian developments with UN envoy

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif met with UN Special Envoy for Syria Geir Pedersen in New York on Friday discussing the latest developments in Syria and the Astana talks.

The meeting took place on the sidelines of the 74th UN General Assembly.

The Iranian foreign minister and Pedersen had met on September 3 in Tehran.

In the meeting in Tehran, Zarif said that Iran is determined to help settle the crisis in Syria politically.

Pointing to Iran's efforts to fight terrorism and extremism in Syria, he expressed Tehran's support for formation of a constitutional committee with cooperation of all parties to the Astana talks, also called the Astana format.

Pedersen informed Zarif about the latest efforts and consultations with other countries in line with settling the crisis in Syria.

In line with their security cooperation, Iran, Turkey and Russia - three powerbrokers in Syria - launched the Astana peace talks on the Syrian crisis.

The Astana peace talks were launched in January 2017 with the aim of putting an end to the Syrian conflict.

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

The 13th round of talks was held in Nursultan, the new



name of Kazakhstan's capital, on August 1-2.

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

Russian President Vladimir Putin said in August that Iran-Turkey-Russia talks have been "most effective" in tackling crisis in Syria. According to Sputnik, in a meeting with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan at Russia's MAK-2019 air show in August, Putin praised the results, achieved by the Astana format, calling it the "most effective mechanism" in resolving the Syrian crisis.

He added that the key task at hand for the format is to achieve stabilization of the situation "on the ground".

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, Putin and Erdogan

held their fifth summit on Syria in Ankara on September 16.

The return of refugees to Syria, non-interference of foreign countries in Syria's affairs, fighting terrorism, facilitating humanitarian aid to the Syrian people, and helping the formation of a constitution were among the points emphasized by Rouhani.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran, as in the past, believes that there is only a political solution to the Syrian crisis, and this can only be achieved through constructive interaction and participation by all Syrian people. The Syrian government and people -with all the diversity- are able to go through this crucial and, of course, dangerous path by themselves. The Islamic Republic of Iran has emphasized from the outset the inefficiency of a military solution to ending this crisis, and this fact is still true," Rouhani said in the meeting.

He added, "The common principles we emphasize are the continuation of the fight against terrorism to eradicate this disaster, dialogue and reconciliation, reducing tensions, reforming the constitution, return of refugees, exchange of detainees and rebuilding of Syria. A free and independent Syria, one that is not threatened by others or a base against others; a Syria away from foreign occupation and threat and free from terrorism; a united Syria, integrated with the preservation of the territorial integrity and national sovereignty, one in which each of its children have their inherent, natural and citizenship rights. And in this way, only the Syrian people will decide for their future and others should not be allowed to interfere in their internal affairs."

IRGC general: Israel surrounded by Iran

TEHRAN (Tasnim) — The Zionist regime of Israel has been surrounded by the Islamic Republic from all directions, a ranking commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said, warning Israel that it will be signing its own death warrant by taking any action against Iran.

In an interview with Tasnim, IRGC deputy commander for operations, Brigadier General Abbas Nilforooshan, said the Zionist regime is too weak to be considered a threat against a powerful establishment such as the Islamic Republic "which has surrounded it from the east, west, north and south."

The Zionist regime is making last-ditch efforts to survive, as the signs of its downfall have become obvious, the general added, warning the Zionist regime's leaders that the tiniest mistake would send "the wreackages of Tel Aviv into the Mediterranean Sea" in such a way that nothing would be left from Israel.

He said the Israeli regime is incapable of entering a full-blown war, adding that Israel lacks a "strategic depth" because its population has been hired from around the world.

Nilforooshan argued that the ethnic,

cultural and political divisions within the Zionist regime are so deep that a new rift over a war will push Israel to the brink of collapse.

The commander stressed that any wrong move to start a war would have the whole region entangled in a war and ignite a fire that would first burn away the aggressors.

"We do not intend to begin a war, but have prepared ourselves for any confrontation and war. If the aggressors start a war, we will enter this battlefield, because we believe the theater of such war will be so broad," the IRGC general warned.

In remarks in December 2016, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei expressed high optimism that the Israeli regime will perish within years.

"The Zionist regime - as we have already said - will cease to exist in the next 25 years if there is a collective and united struggle by the Palestinians and the Muslims against the Zionists," Ayatollah Khamenei said.

As for any move against the Islamic Republic, the Leader has frequently warned the adversaries that they would face a "harsh reaction" in case of any offense against Iran, stressing that the era of hit and run is over.

Iran nuclear deal likely to be fully destroyed in foreseeable future: Russia envoy

(PRESS TV) — A senior Russian diplomat says a 2015 nuclear agreement Iran clinched with major world powers could be completely destroyed in foreseeable future, stressing the importance of finding a solution to solve the existing situation.

"It is necessary to somehow find a way out of the situation since there is quite a real prospect of full destruction of the deal in foreseeable future," Russian Permanent Representative to International Organizations in Vienna Mikhail Ulyanov said at a Moscow-Vienna video conference on Friday on the results of the 63rd General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

He added that Iran is most likely to take the fourth step in scaling back its commitments under the nuclear accord, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action

(JCPOA), in November.

"It will proceed like this until the moment Iran gets what it wants, in other words, the restoration of the balance within the framework of the nuclear deal between nuclear and economic commitments. This balance is now totally upset as a result of obstructionist policies by the overseas partners," the Russian diplomat said.

He added that Moscow reacted to Iran's measures to reduce its commitments "without enthusiasm, but with understanding" and noted that Tehran continued to patiently and completely complied with everything for a whole year as verified by the IAEA following the United States' pullout from the nuclear deal.

Iran has so far rowed back on its nuclear commitments three times in compliance with articles 26 and 36 of the JCPOA.

As a third and final step in its reduction of commitments, Iran activated 20 IR-4 and 20 IR-6 centrifuges for research and development purposes after the Europeans failed to work within a 60-day deadline to meet Iran's demands and fulfill their commitments under the multilateral deal.

European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said on Wednesday that the remaining parties to the Iran nuclear deal have expressed their commitment to preserving the agreement, which U.S. President Donald Trump left in May 2018, stressing, however, that there are increasing difficulties ahead.

"It is in the interests of all to remain committed to the deal, but it is becoming increasingly difficult," Mogherini told reporters after a meeting of the parties at the United Nations.

In a meeting with the visiting acting head of the IAEA, Cornel Feruta, in Tehran earlier this

month, Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said the three steps taken by the Islamic Republic to reduce its commitments under the JCPOA are legitimate and allowed under the agreement.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei also said on Thursday Iran should no longer put its trust in the Europeans as they fulfilled none of their 11 commitments under the nuclear deal following Washington's withdrawal.

The Russian official on Friday criticized as "meaningless" the U.S. bans on top Iranian politicians, saying such restrictions are reducing the chances for settling the crisis around the nuclear deal.

Trump on Wednesday authorized the State Department to put a travel ban on top Iranian officials and their families over baseless "terrorism" charges.

Malaysian PM slams U.S. unilateral sanctions as 'privilege of the rich and powerful'

“The world is helpless,” Mahathir says

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Malaysia's Prime Minister Mahathir Bin Mohamad has criticized the United States for trying to force all countries to stop doing business with Iran.

“We do not know under what laws sanctions are applied. It appears to be the privilege of the rich and the powerful,” Mahathir said, addressing the 74th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on Friday.

According to the AFP, the outspoken 94-year-old leader urged greater international control of sanctions, saying, “If you want to have sanctions, let us have a law to govern them.”

“The fact is that when sanctions are applied to a country, other countries get sanctioned as well. Malaysia and many others lost a big market when sanctions were applied on Iran.”

U.S. President Donald Trump pulled out of the Iran nuclear deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), in May 2018. He has since imposed more



than 1,000 individual sanctions on Tehran, which culminated with an oil embargo this May. Zarif himself is also sanctioned.

Earlier this month, the U.S. Department of the Treasury slapped sanctions on the Central Bank of Iran and the country's sovereign wealth fund, a move Trump described as the “highest level of sanctions”.

Speaking to reporters after his address, Mahathir acknowledged that Malaysian firms had little choice but to comply for fear of being hit by U.S. sanctions.

“Generally, the world is helpless,” he said.

Mahathir also renewed his criticism of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, an 11-nation trade pact that includes Malaysia but from which Trump pulled the United States.

“Rich companies have given themselves the power to sue governments. The terms of the agreement were drawn up by them -- and they are not all like Bill Gates, who spends some money on charity,” he said.

“Most are bent on exploiting the power money gives them,” he said.

Iraq, Syria would have fallen without Ayatollah Khamenei: general



POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iraq and Syria would have fallen if Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the supreme leader of Iran, had not helped them, a top military advisor to the Leader said on Saturday.

“Ayatollah Khamenei, as a leader of the Islamic world, rushed to the aid of the Muslim nations of Iraq and Syria, and if it wasn't for him, Syria and Iraq would have fallen,” ISNA quoted Major General Yahya Rahim Safavi as saying.

Two years ago, the Iraqi and Syrian governments managed to defeat Daesh (ISIL) terrorist group with the help of popular forces and Iranian military advisors.

Major General Qassem Soleimani, the commander of Iran's Quds Force, declared the end of Daesh in a letter to Ayatollah Khamenei in November 2017.

In his letter, Soleimani, who had been at frontline positions in battles against Daesh in Iraq and Syria, thanked Ayatollah Khamenei's wise leadership, the sacrifices of Iraqi and Syrian people and governments as well as the defenders of the

shrine for their courageous fight against the terrorist group.

In his Saturday remarks, General Rahim Safavi also said those countries that claim to be the leaders of the Islamic world not only did not help Muslims, but they have been bombarding the Yemeni nation for five years.

He was pointing to Saudi Arabia and its allies, which have waged a war against Yemen in 2015, with the goal of bringing the government of Hadi back to power and crushing Ansarullah.

The U.S.-based Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED), a nonprofit conflict-research organization, estimates that the war has claimed more than 91,000 lives over the past four and a half years.

The war has also taken a heavy toll on the country's infrastructure, destroying hospitals, schools, and factories. The UN says over 24 million Yemenis are in dire need of humanitarian aid, including 10 million suffering from extreme levels of hunger.

Now, after becoming defense power, Iran will turn into economic power, says defense chief



POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Defense Minister Brigadier General Amir Hatami said on Friday that Iran will become an economic power after becoming a defense power.

“The enemies should know that in the next couple of years, with stopping its crude oil sales and a revolution in the economic field, Iran will become an economic power after it became a defense power, and their plots in this unwanted and cruel war will fail,” Hatami said, IRNA reported.

The defense minister also warned the enemies that the Iranian nation will not give up and will continue its resistance against sanctions.

After having failed in a hard war against Iran, the enemies are today waging an all-out economic war against the Islamic Republic, Hatami said.

Last month, Head of the Planning and Budget Organization (PBO) Mohammad-Baqer Nobakht said Iran is determined to draft its new budget bill with zero-dependence on oil revenues in a bid to disappoint the U.S. with its maximum pressure cam-

paign against Tehran.

Following the U.S. unilateral withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal in May 2018, U.S. President Donald Trump's administration went ahead with re-imposing sanctions on Iran, targeting the country's energy and banking sectors, and stepping up efforts to drive Iran's oil revenues to zero.

In April, the White House announced its decision not to renew waivers that allow eight countries, including China, Greece, India, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Turkey, to buy Iranian oil without facing U.S. sanctions.

Meanwhile, Iran says with or without waivers, the country's oil exports will not fall to zero under any circumstances. At the same time, the country is making efforts to reduce its reliance on oil revenues and instead turn its focus on non-oil production and exports.

Back in July, Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani underlined the U.S. failure to cut to zero Iran's oil exports, saying that Washington has been defeated by Iran's smart moves.

Lavrov: U.S. violated UN Resolution 2231 endorsing the Iran nuclear deal

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on Friday that assaults on international law have reached at disturbing levels as he focused on the U.S. exit from the landmark 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) accord, known as the Iran nuclear agreement, according to Anadolu Agency.

“The U.S. pulled back from the JCPOA, embraced by United Nations Resolution 2231, renounced its commitments and began requesting from others to play by American principles,” Lavrov said in a speech to the UN General Assembly.

In May 2018, U.S. President Donald Trump abandoned the JCPOA struck between Iran and world power according to which Iran was obligated to limit its nuclear activities in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions.

Lavrov said Washington has killed other UN resolutions on the Middle East.

“It suggested waiting for some sort of ‘Deal of the Century’, meanwhile it is taking unilateral decisions on Jerusalem and the Golan Heights,” he stated, alluding to Washington's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and also accepting the Golan Heights as part of Israel.

The two-state arrangement is “essential for satisfying legitimate aspiration of the Palestinian people and providing security for Israel and the region,” he stated, however he cautioned long-awaited arrangement is “in danger” with America's moves.

Turning to attack on Libya, the oil-rich nation that has remained plagued by strife since 2011, Lavrov said NATO individuals were bombarding the nation and “blatantly violating UN resolutions”.

NATO individuals “were also guided by the logic of their rules-based order; it resulted in the destruction of Libyan statehood,” he said, according to theindianwire.com.

Iran says still ready for prisoner swap with U.S.

TEHRAN (Press TV) — The Iranian Foreign Ministry says the Islamic Republic is still ready to negotiate a prisoner exchange with the United States.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran, as also announced by [Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad] Zarif, is ready to start talks about a prisoner swap,” Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said on Friday.

The Iranian spokesman made the comments at a presser on the release of an Iranian woman after spending over two years behind bars in Australia and the U.S.

A U.S. federal court on Tuesday sentenced Negar Ghodskani, who had been extradited to the U.S. from Australia, to 27 months of time served for alleged violation of U.S. sanctions.



Ghodskani was pregnant when Australian Federal Police arrested her on behalf of U.S. authorities in 2017 over what Washington claimed was flouting U.S. sanctions on Iran by purchasing U.S. electronics components and products.

The Iranian spokesperson told reporters that Ghodskani was arrested some three years ago in Australia “at U.S. officials' request based on unfounded accusations and was kept in extremely difficult and inhumane conditions.”

He added that during her detention, consular support for “this innocent Iranian citizen” had been on the agenda of Iran's embassy in Australia and the Foreign Ministry.

Mousavi added that Iran had protested Ghodskani's extradition to the U.S. which was carried out in violation of regulations and her rights.

He noted that Iran's Foreign Ministry attaches great importance to the restoration of rights of all Iranian citizens “cruelly prosecuted by the U.S. judicial system under the pretext of violating U.S. sanctions against Iran.”

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani on Thursday reiterated Tehran's preparedness for a prisoner swap with the United States, saying, “We have talked and negotiated several times with American officials in the past for the release of the two sides' prisoners and sometimes we have been successful.”

Speaking at a press conference in New York, which marked the end of his participation in the 74th annual session of the UN General Assembly, the president, however, emphasized that “the ball is in the U.S.'s court” now.

Rouhani referred to the release in June of Lebanese national Nizar Zakka, who has U.S. permanent residency and had been imprisoned for four years after being convicted of spying for the United States. Iran released Zakka following mediation efforts by President Michel Aoun of Lebanon.

However, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo declined on Thursday to discuss the possibility of a U.S.-Iranian prisoner swap, saying, “So, I never talk about sensitive issues as you described there,” Pompeo told reporters in New York.

Iran's foreign minister in April publicly expressed Tehran's preparedness for a prisoner swap with the U.S., saying he has been authorized to negotiate the deal with American officials.

He called on Washington to swap all Iranians jailed in the U.S. and on extradition requests from the U.S., mostly for alleged violations of U.S. export restrictions and sanctions violations, with those imprisoned in Iran.

U.S. taking humanitarian issues hostage: Iran's top diplomat

➔ “Our heart, soul and thoughts are with Majid and our prayers are with him. Inshallah he will leave the hospital soon, just as energetic, committed, motivated and endearing as ever.”

In July the United States imposed tight travel restrictions on Zarif before a visit that month to the United Nations, as well as on Iranian diplomats and their families living in New York, which Zarif described as “basically inhuman.”

“It is certainly not a friendly action. It puts the members of the mission and their families under basically inhuman

conditions. But for me it's fine because I don't have any work anywhere other than the three buildings,” the top diplomat said at the time.

Unless they receive prior approval from Washington, the Iranian diplomats are only allowed to travel within a small area of Manhattan, Queens and to and from John F. Kennedy airport.

Iran's UN mission spokesman Alireza Miryousefi said Takht-Ravanchi was being treated for cancer in a hospital

not far away in Manhattan's Upper East Side neighborhood. Zarif is in New York for the annual gathering of world leaders at the United Nations.

The spat comes amid heightened tension between Tehran and Washington following U.S. President Donald Trump's decision over a year ago to unilaterally withdraw from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal. Since then the U.S. has imposed harsh sanctions on Iran with the aim of forcing Tehran to renegotiate the nuclear deal.

General retracts ‘cloud theft remarks’

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Head of the Civil Defense Organization says he might have used inappropriate words when he said the enemies conduct cloud theft to prevent rain in Iran.

“Maybe [I] did not use the appropriate words with regard to cloud theft, but the issue is deliberate changes in climate,” Brigadier General Gholam Reza Jalali said in an interview, ISNA reported on Saturday.

Jalali said there are technologies in the world that can impact the atmosphere and create climate change in the world.

“My request was that scientific and research centers should study these changes,” he explained.

“I said at a scientific conference that I am suspicious of the climate changes in Iran's area,” General Jalali said. “I'm suspicious of whether they are natural or not.”

In remarks in July 2018, Jalali had said a decrease in annual precipitation in Iran seemed “suspicious”, noting that “foreign hands” might be behind the phenomenon.

“There are scientific centers in the country that conducted a study in this regard and the results confirm this point,” he remarked.

“Joint teams from Israel and one of the neighboring countries are deseeding



the clouds entering Iran,” he said, adding, “Also, we are faced with other phenomena such as cloud theft and snow theft.”

His remarks were criticized by some experts at the time.

Davood Parhizkar, director of Iran's Meteorological Organization (IMO), categorically denied the weather manipulation claims, saying such claims have no scientific basis and that mankind cannot manipulate the climate.

Recurrent drought spells in Iran are stemmed from climate change and temperature rise and not from other countries' interference, he added.

Parhizkar went on to say that extreme weather events such as floods, storms and drought are all resulting from climate change.

Larijani hails Armenia's supportive stances

TEHRAN (Tasnim) — Iranian Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani praised Armenia for supporting Iran in international organizations.

In a meeting with Armenia's ambassador to Tehran, Larijani said such backing results from the friendship between the two neighbors.

Highlighting the cordial ties between Tehran and Yerevan, Larijani also called for the promotion of cooperation in agricultural, pharmaceutical and medical sectors.

He also voiced the Iranian parliament's readiness to help develop parliamentary ties with Armenia.

For his part, the Armenian envoy stressed the need for the expansion of parliamentary interaction between the two neighbors.

Artashes Tumanyan also noted that Armenia's parliament speaker is going to pay a visit to Iran in the near future.

In February, Armenian Prime Minister Pashinian visited Iran and held a meeting with Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

In the meeting, Ayatollah Khamenei hailed Armenia as a good neighbor of Iran,



stressing that the two nations should maintain friendly ties despite the U.S. plots.

“Contrary to what the U.S. desires, the ties between Iran and Armenia should be strong, persistent and friendly,” the Leader underscored.

Ayatollah Khamenei also described increased cooperation and friendly relations as a duty to be conducted in favor of common interests of Iran and Armenia, saying, “Of course, the U.S. is completely unreliable and always tries to cause sedition, corruption, conflict and war; they are against the relations between Iran and Armenia and they oppose the interests of the nations. However, in response, we need to strengthen our relations and cooperation.”

Iran's renewable power generation capacity exceeds 840 MW

E N E R G Y **TEHRAN** — The capacity of Iran's renewable power plants has reached 841 megawatts (MW), Iranian Energy Ministry's news portal (known as PAVEN) reported on Saturday.

As reported, the country's renewable power plants have so far generated about 4.171 billion kilowatt hours (Kwh) of electricity, preventing the production of over 2.871 million tons of greenhouse gases.

Renewable power plants have also prevented the use of more than 1.185 billion cubic meters of fossil fuels and saved 918 million liters of water.

Based on the data provided by PAVEN, a total of 115 renewable power plants are active across Iran as of August 2019 and the construction is ongoing for another 37 plants to supply an extra 384 megawatts of renewables to the national power grid.

So far, 3,403 small-scale solar power plants have also been installed across the country, while another 2,500 units are under construction.

According to the report, currently renewable power plants have created 43,450



job opportunities across the country and the volume of private investment in this sector has exceeded 124 trillion rials (over \$2.95 billion).

The data provided indicated that 41 percent of the country's renewable power plants

are solar, 36 percent wind, 10 percent are small hydro power plants, two percent are thermal recycling and expansion turbines, and one percent are biomass.

Renewables, including hydropower, account for just six percent of the country's

total energy generation, versus natural gas' 90 percent share.

Overall, in the next five years, Iran is aiming for a 5,000 MW increase in renewable capacity to meet growing domestic demand and expand its presence in the regional electricity market.

According to Iran's Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (known as SATBA), the number of small scale solar power plants across the country which are used by households or small industries is being increased noticeably as Iranian households and small industries have embraced the new technology with open arms and investors also seem eager for more contribution in this area.

In early July, Seyed Mohammad Sadegzadeh, the head of SATBA, announced that Iran plans to add electricity generated from renewable sources to its export basket.

According to the official capacity of power generation from the renewable sources will exceed 1000MW by the end of the current Iranian year (March 19, 2020).

NIOC to offer 2m barrels of gas condensate at IRENEX on Tuesday

E N E R G Y **TEHRAN** — National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) will offer two million barrels of gas condensate at Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX) on Tuesday, IRIB reported.

As announced by NIOC, the base price will be \$58.58 per barrel in this round of offering gas condensate at IRENEX which is the eleventh round.

The least amount of purchase for land transportation is set to be 1000 barrels or 110 tons and buyers can receive their cargo up to three months after the transaction, and the delivery of the cargo in other regions is subject to NIOC approval.

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

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

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

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 IRENEX has said that the company will continue offering oil at this stock market.

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

Briefing the press about the procedures and processes of NIOC's oil and gas condensate offerings at IRENEX, the official noted that physical sales of oil at IRENEX is just the first step and the main goal is to activate other financial instruments, and offer Iranian crude in the regional stock markets.

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

NIOC has been offering various grades of crude oil and oil products almost every week, since the beginning of the



current Iranian calendar year (March 21).

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 (PGSR) at the international ring of IRENEX.

France, Greece and Bulgaria boost 2030 renewables targets

France, Greece and Bulgaria have pledged to increase renewable energy targets by 2030 as the European Union's National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs) were submitted by the 28 member states.

As per energy-reporters.com, to reach 2030 climate targets, the European Commission has estimated that approximately €180 billion per year of extra investment in energy efficiency and renewables will be needed.

"France has decided to raise its objective from 32 to 33 percent," said Fabrice Dubreuil, a permanent French representative to the EU at this week's meeting in Brussels.

Greece said it would raise its renewables target from 31 to 35 percent and Bulgaria from 25 percent to 27 percent.

Greece, which burns large quantities of filthy lignite, told the UN climate summit in New York that it planned to phase out

coal by 2028.

European ministers decided not to exclude nuclear projects from sustainable financing, despite the demands of three member states and MEPs.

A majority of member states did not want to exclude nuclear energy, as Germany, Austria and Luxembourg had demanded.

"We have strong concerns that the proposed framework would leave the door open to diverting financial resources away from environmentally sustainable activities and into technologies that cannot be considered either safe or sustainable," the three countries announced in a statement.

■ Nuclear power stations

"Nuclear energy is not safe and sustainable nor cost-effective," said German energy secretary, Andreas Feicht, in Brussels this week. "So we reject the idea of EU money to extend the life of nuclear power stations."

Populist-run member states were keen to secure extra EU funding.

Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary said there was a need to increase financing to meet the EU's 2030 energy and climate targets.

Coal currently makes up about 80 percent of Poland's energy generation and is only expected to fall to 50 percent by 2040.

According to the European statistics agency Eurostat, renewables made up 10.9 per cent of Poland's energy mix in 2017, which will need to increase to 15 percent by 2020 to comply with the EU's environmental targets.

Poland heavily opposes EU energy and climate targets.

"It's easy to lay down political objectives but more difficult to realize them," said Krzysztof Tchorezowski, Warsaw's energy minister.

Poland's targets "are already very ambitious", Tchorezowski told the Brussels event. The minister said any increase would bring "dangerous socio-economic costs" for Poland.

The former communist state's transition to renewables "should be covered by EU funds in the spirit of European solidarity", Tchorezowski said. Discussions are ongoing on the EU's 2021-27 budget.

Prague also said it would struggle to make EU targets.

"We are currently analyzing whether there are sufficient funds available" to boost the share of renewables, said the Czech delegation.

The Latvian representatives said it was "essential to find additional public financing for the implementation of targets" and more challenging targets would require increased funding.

IEA might revise down oil demand growth forecasts, again

By Tsvetana Paraskova

If the pace of global economy deteriorates further, the International Energy Agency (IEA) could revise down again its oil demand growth expectations for this year and next, the IEA's executive director Fatih Birol told Reuters on Friday.

"It will depend on the global economy. If the global economy weakens, for which there are already some signs we may lower oil demand expectations," Birol said on the sidelines of a forum in South Korea.

The IEA and many other organizations and analysts, including OPEC, have trimmed their oil demand growth estimates several times this year already, on the back of signs of slowing economic growth in the world, also due to the U.S.-China trade spat.

The IEA's latest downward revision to oil demand growth came in its August Oil Market Report, in which the Paris-based agency cut its forecast by 100,000 bpd to 1.1 million bpd for 2019, after seeing that between January and May demand growth was just 520,000 bpd, the lowest increase for the period since 2008. The IEA also revised down in August its oil



demand growth estimate for 2020, by 50,000 bpd to 1.3 million bpd.

In its latest Oil Market Report published in September, the IEA kept its August forecasts unchanged, expecting 1.1 million bpd demand growth this year and 1.3 million bpd oil demand growth for next year.

"For 2H19, we assume no further deterioration in the economic climate and in trade disputes. Oil demand growth will be significantly higher helped by a comparison versus a low base in 2H18, lower oil prices versus a year ago and additions to petrochemicals capacity," the

agency said in the report on September 12.

The IEA, however, warned that even if the oil market is tightening in the very short term, OPEC will be facing a "daunting" challenge in managing the market in 2020, when returning to a significant surplus would place pressure on oil prices.

Speaking to Reuters on Friday, the IEA's Birol said that the lowest pace in Chinese economic growth in decades could pressure oil demand growth downward, but on the other hand, the lower oil prices compared to last year put an upward pressure on demand.

(Source: oilprice.com)

First Announcement



N.I.S.O.C

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO. : 01-31-9780017

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

Items	Material Description	Quantity
06	PARTS FOR SOLAR GAS TURBINES MODEL MDG-1200 SERIAL NOS. 5426687, 5426688, 5430804, 5430805, SM77410, 5428394, 5428414 THRU 5428416 AND 428580 THRU 428582 REF. SOLAR DIVI. INTERNATIONAL	205 Nos

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

The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 14,192 EURO or 668,639,520 RIAL, in favor of NISOC

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

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

FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT
Bldg. No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex
Kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran
Tel. No.: 061 341 23455 Fax No.: 061 3445 7437

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تهران تایمز : نوبت اول ۹۸/۷/۷ نوبت دوم ۹۸/۷/۸

The CIA's base for mind control experiments

By Stephen Kinzer

In 1954, a prison doctor in Kentucky isolated seven black inmates and fed them “double, triple and quadruple” doses of LSD for 77 days straight. No one knows what became of the victims. They may have died without knowing they were part of the CIA's highly secretive program to develop ways to control minds—a program based out of a little-known Army base with a dark past, Fort Detrick.

Suburban sprawl has engulfed Fort Detrick, an Army base 50 miles from Washington in the Maryland town of Frederick. Seventy-six years ago, however, when the Army selected Detrick as the place to develop its super-secret plans to wage germ warfare, the area around the base looked much different. In fact, it was chosen for its isolation. That's because Detrick, still thriving today as the Army's principal base for biological research and now encompassing nearly 600 buildings on 13,000 acres, was for years the nerve center of the CIA's hidden chemical and mind control empire.



Detrick is today one of the world's cutting-edge laboratories for research into toxins and antitoxins, the place where defenses are developed against every plague, from crop fungus to Ebola. Its leading role in the field is widely recognized. For decades, though, much of what went on at the base was a closely held secret. Directors of the CIA mind control program MK-ULTRA, which used Detrick as a key base, destroyed most of their records in 1973. Some of its secrets have been revealed in declassified documents, through interviews and as a result of congressional investigations. Together, those sources reveal Detrick's central role in MK-ULTRA and in the manufacture of poisons intended to kill foreign leaders.

In 1942, alarmed by reports that Japanese forces were waging germ warfare in China, the Army decided to launch a secret program to develop biological weapons. It hired a University of Wisconsin biochemist, Ira Baldwin, to run the program and asked him to find a site for a new bio-research complex. Baldwin chose a mostly abandoned National Guard base below Catocin Mountain called Detrick Field. On March 9, 1943, the Army announced that it had renamed the field Camp Detrick, designated it as headquarters of the Army Biological Warfare Laboratories and purchased several adjacent farms to provide extra room and privacy.

After World War II, Detrick faded in importance. The reason was simple: The United States had nuclear weapons, so developing biological ones no longer seemed urgent. As the Cold War began, however, two seemingly unrelated developments on opposite sides of the world stunned the newly created Central Intelligence Agency and gave Detrick a new mission. The first was the show trial of the Roman Catholic Primate of Hungary Joseph Cardinal Mindszenty for treason in 1949. At the trial, the cardinal appeared disoriented, spoke in a monotone and confessed to crimes he had evidently not committed. Then, after the Korean War ended, it was revealed many American prisoners had signed statements criticizing the United States and, in some cases, confessing to war crimes. The CIA came up with the same explanation for both: brainwashing. Communists, the CIA concluded, must have developed a drug or technique that enabled them to control human minds. No evidence of this ever emerged, but the CIA fell hard for the fantasy.

In the spring of 1949 the Army created a small, super-secret team of chemists at Camp Detrick called the Special Operations Division. Its assignment was to find military uses for toxic bacteria. The coercive use of toxins was a new field, and chemists at the Special Operations Division had to decide how to begin their research.

At the same time, CIA had just established its own corps of chemical magicians. CIA officers in Europe and Asia were regularly capturing suspected enemy agents and wanted to develop new ways to draw prisoners in interrogation away from their identities, induce them to reveal secrets and perhaps even program them to commit acts against their will. Allen Dulles, who ran the CIA's covert-operations directorate and would soon be promoted to direct the agency, considered his mind control project—first named Bluebird, then Artichoke, then MK-ULTRA—to be of supreme importance, the difference between the survival and extinction of the United States.

In 1951, Dulles hired a chemist to design and oversee a systematic search for the key to mind control. The man he chose, Sidney Gottlieb, was not part of the silver-spoon aristocracy from which most officers of the early CIA were recruited, but a 33-year-old Jew from an immigrant family who limped and stuttered. He also meditated, lived in a remote cabin without running water and rose before dawn to milk his goats. Gottlieb wanted to use Detrick's assets to propel his mind control project to new heights. He asked Dulles to negotiate an accord that would formalize the connection between the military and the CIA in this pursuit. Under the arrangement's provisions, according to a later report, “CIA acquired the knowledge, skill, and facilities of the Army to develop biological weapons suited for CIA use.”

Taking advantage of this arrangement, Gottlieb created a hidden CIA enclave inside Camp Detrick. His handful of CIA chemists worked so closely with their comrades in the Special Operations Division that they became a single unit. Some scientists outside the tight-knit group suspected what was happening. “Do you know what a ‘self-contained, off-the-shelf operation’ means?” one of them asked years later. “The CIA was running one in my lab. They were testing psychochemicals and running experiments in my labs and weren't telling me.”

Gottlieb searched relentlessly for a way to blast away human minds so new ones could be implanted in their place. He tested an astonishing variety of drug combinations, often in conjunction with other torments like electroshock or sensory deprivation. In the United States, his victims were unwitting subjects at jails and hospitals, including a federal prison in Atlanta and an addiction research center in Lexington, Kentucky. ➔7

The Vietnam myth that gave us all those ‘Rambo’ movies

By Nathan Smith

The outline—For decades, conspiracy theorists have clung to the fiction that thousands of soldiers are being held captive in Asia.

At least six days out of every calendar year, an unassuming flag flies over American military bases, state capitals, post offices, and even Guantanamo Bay, right below the Stars and Stripes. The intimidating, pitch-black rectangle holds a white oval in the center containing the sullen silhouette of an unknown soldier, flanked by a distant watch-tower and a barbed wire fence. The letters “POW” and “MIA” sit above the figure, with a star in between; below it are the words “You are not forgotten.”

This flag, officially called the National League of Families POW/MIA Flag, is the only other flag to flap above the White House and hang in the Capitol rotunda. The “unknown” soldier at its center is based off Jim Heisley, the son of flag designer Newt Heisley, who was home sick from Marine Basic Training when his father was commissioned to design the flag. Newt thought his son, frail due to hepatitis, had the “gaunt look” of a prisoner of war, even though Jim was never imprisoned or missing in action. Today, decades after the last American troops left Vietnam, the outline of Jim Heisley's face can be seen on bumper stickers alongside slogans like “POWs never have a nice day.” You can buy it on baseball caps, bandanas, and Zippo lighters; at the official Veterans of Foreign Wars online store, you can purchase POW/MIA dog tag earrings, or a vaguely hypebeast-looking tee with “POW/MIA” and “VFW” on the sleeves.

There's another face that people associate with American prisoners of war in Vietnam: the beefy mug of Sylvester Stallone. This weekend sees the release of Rambo: Last Blood, the first Rambo movie in over a decade and, if the title is to be believed, presumably the last. This time, America's longest-running lone wolf is taking on Mexican sex traffickers to the tune of “Old Town Road.” Last Blood is pretty much a Taken movie in Rambo's clothing; it cares as much about the real victims of human trafficking as much as SESTA/FOSTA did. Like pretty much every Hollywood movie about America's southern border, it feels designed to have its plot points tweeted out as news by President Trump, as happened last year with the Sicario sequel that pretty much nobody saw. It wouldn't be the first time a sitting President has referenced Rambo; after seeing Rambo: First Blood Part II, Reagan remarked that he now knew what to do the “next time” a hostage crisis happened under his watch.

Thirty years ago, John Rambo was fighting a very different, if equally fictionalized and racialized menace, as the most public face of one of our country's greatest delusions: the belief that thousands of live American servicemen were held captive throughout Southeast Asia after the official end of the Vietnam War. Prior to the Nixon administration, the armed forces had used a different classification for soldiers who could not be accounted for: KIA/BNR, or “killed in action/body not recovered.” This classification led with the greatest likelihood — if a soldier's body could not be recovered, particularly in an unfamiliar environment like Vietnam, it was probably fair to assume they had been killed in combat — while still acknowledging those rarer cases in which an unrecovered body might not actually be a casualty. Though there had been a sporadic number of American servicemen held prisoner in Vietnam since the 1950s, the official position of previous administrations on the issue was to keep it “quiet.”

That all changed just a few months into Nixon's first term, in a desperate ploy to stir up support at home for an unpopular conflict abroad, as outlined in H. Bruce Franklin's M.I.A., or Mythmaking in America. As the many fictions necessary to sustain the war were exposed, Nixon and company needed a new approach — and a new lie. In a press conference on May 19, 1969, Defense Secretary Melvin Laird announced the existence of around 1,300 American soldiers now deemed “missing in action,” around half of whom were believed to be prisoners of war. The unaccounted for would now publicly be described as “POW/MIA,” implying that any servicemember missing in Vietnam could also be a prisoner of war. This transformed the war from a political issue into a humanitarian one, trading public support for sympathy. It didn't matter why we were there in the



first place: our boys were there, and by God were we going to do anything to get our boys home.

Suddenly, the public image of Vietnam looked very different. The very real footage of brutalized Vietnamese bodies, wailing children, and napalmed villages was traded for a fantasy — all of the violence that had been done in Uncle Sam's name was now being done to him. The POW issue soon became a cause celebre. In the early 1970s, millions of “POW bracelets” were sold by a student group called VIVA (Voices in Vital America), each branded with the name of a missing American serviceman. These shiny nickel bracelets were spotted on the wrists of celebrities like Sonny and Cher and Sammy Davis Jr, and allegedly Princess Grace Kelly put in an order for two bracelets. The silver bracelets could even be spotted on the fashion runway, where models with an interest in political activism took to wearing them. A New York Times profile from the day quotes a model named Astrida Woods, who says she was “dissatisfied” with her life as a model and felt the urge to give back. “I began to do some work with Ralph Nader, and now [wearing the bracelets]. It's a way to contribute something.”

As the war ended and hundreds of American soldiers held in captivity returned home, the belief in so-called “live prisoners” warped from public cause to conspiracy theory. Much of the existing literature on the POW/MIA issue, books with sensational titles like Kiss the Boys Goodbye and A Nation Betrayed, is written by true believers utterly convinced, against all odds and evidence, that there are live prisoners throughout Southeast Asia. When Franklin published M.I.A. in 1992, there were still 2,273 “unaccounted for” Americans from the Vietnam War; according to the Department of Defense's POW/MIA Accounting Agency, there are still 1,587 unaccounted for as of this year. Even the original total of missing Americans in the Vietnam War is considerably smaller compared to previous conflicts; as of September 13, 2019, the Department of Defense still lists 72,661 persons as “POW/MIA” from World War II. And as Franklin points out, at least half of the unaccounted for at the time of publication were known to have been killed in action — it's only because their bodies were not recovered or unidentifiable that they were classified as “missing.”

After the war, the POW/MIA issue became what writer Rick Perlstein described as “the right-wing variant of the Watergate-induced dread about whether anyone in Washington could be trusted.” It wasn't just that American prisoners were being held throughout Southeast Asia; the most ardent devotees of the conspiracy theory believed the federal government was actively suppressing information about their existence. For those who wanted to believe, information was aplenty; in Southeast Asia, an entire industry emerged to sell false information about POWs to gullible Americans.

Like the unknown soldier on the POW/MIA flag, Rambo has a real-life analog: former Green Beret and Special Forces operative James Gordon “Bo” Gritz, one of the POW/MIA issue's most passionate zealots (and also the inspiration for another action hero, Colonel John “Hannibal” Smith of TV's The A-Team). Because of his numerous missions into Southeast Asia in search of American POWs, Gritz was called before Congress in 1983 to provide evidence of their existence, to which he responded: “I have the same evidence, sir, that might be presented by a clergyman to convince you that God exists.” Gritz genuinely seemed to believe he had been called

by God to shepherd these poor soldiers, supposedly abandoned by their cruel government, back to the flock.

In 1982, armed with \$30,000 from Clint Eastwood and \$10,000 from William Shatner (in exchange for the rights to Gritz's life), Gritz assembled a team of mercenaries to cross over from Thailand into Laos in search of American POWs. Gritz allegedly asked Eastwood to seek the approval of his close personal friend Ronald Reagan; when Gritz and his team arrived in Thailand, they found a telegram from an associate, who claimed that Reagan promised to “start World War III to get the rest out” if the team found evidence of just one POW. It's unknown whether or not Reagan ever really said those words, but it was enough for Gritz, who forged ahead into Laos and, unsurprisingly, got his ass handed to him. H. Bruce Franklin writes:

“Almost as soon as they arrived in Laos they were ambushed, routed, and forced to flee as fast as they could back to Thailand. The ambushers, contrary to their initial assumptions, were not even treacherous Communists but a rival anti-Communist Laotian group whom Gritz's men had offended in Thailand and to whom Gritz, ironically enough, reportedly had to pay \$17,500 ransom to recover a captured American teammate. The raiders of course encountered no POWs.”

This mission, albeit a more successful version of it, is basically the plot of Rambo: First Blood Part II. Rambo is sent to a secret American military base in Thailand, where he is given the equipment he needs to wage a one-man re-invasion of Vietnam in search of POWs. Against all odds and the best efforts of a deep state suit who wants to cover the whole thing up, Rambo recovers an entire platoon of Unknown Soldiers and dispenses righteous fury upon his Communist enemies, but not before being erotically tortured and symbolically crucified by a Soviet officer.

Gritz, whose life is profiled most compellingly in the 2017 documentary Erase and Forget, would fade into the strange margins of American history following his Vietnam adventures. Over the next twenty years, he joined the Mormon church, starred in a truly god-awful soft-core direct-to-video Charlie's Angels knockoff called Rescue Force, ran for Vice President as running mate to David Duke, ran for President under the slogan “God, Guns, and Gritz,” was excommunicated from the Mormon church for refusing to pay his taxes, successfully negotiated the end of the standoff between the FBI and white supremacist Randy Weaver at Ruby Ridge, started a far-right survivalist compound called Almost Heaven, made friendly with all kinds of anti-semites and white nationalists, and attempted suicide via gunshot to the chest. (He survived.)

Stallone wasn't the only Hollywood action hero making the trip back to Vietnam; POW-sploitation was a veritable subgenre in the 1980s, from Chuck Norris' Missing in Action franchise, to the slightly more serious-minded Uncommon Valor with Gene Hackman, to complete exploitation trash like the David Carradine vehicle P.O.W.: The Escape. There were POW/MIA themed video games like Konami's Green Beret arcade cabinet series and P.O.W.: Prisoners of War for the NES. In American media, Vietnam was no longer an imperialist adventure with unclear causes — it became a highly moral rescue mission.

Though the POW/MIA theory may have less potency as a political force today, Vietnam hero worship is still an active part of life across the country. The documentary Erase and Forget follows

an elderly Gritz on a speaking tour of gun shows and Boy Scout jamborees. I never got my Eagle, but I made it all the way through Cub Scouts and up to Life Scout, the second-highest status in Scouting. Honor and respect toward veterans is one of the core values of Scouting, and the POW/MIA flag is not an uncommon sight at flag displays put on by the Scouts. I was a Boy Scout because I grew up Mormon, the one-time church of Gritz; until 2018, after the Scouts announced plans to become more gender-inclusive, the LDS church was one of the Boy Scout's biggest partners, and every church congregation had its own accompanying Cub Scout and Boy Scout troops.

I come from a family with a long history of service in the armed forces, but the military man with the greatest impact on my early life was outside the home. There was a man my family went to church with, a highly decorated Vietnam veteran that I'll refer to as The Colonel. He'd been paralyzed while jumping out of a helicopter in Vietnam and was a highly decorated soldier, with multiple Purple Hearts and various commendations for bravery. The Colonel also happened to manage an Arby's franchise, and every week I'd scarf down a half-pound of roast beef and a side of curly fries in his back office while he regaled me with war stories. The Colonel was my very own Bo Gritz — I'd make my dad give me crew cuts so I could wear my hair like his, and until at least second grade I had the deluded ambition that maybe someday I'd be Special Forces or a Green Beret. Military merchandise covered the walls of the Colonel's home, including POW/MIA-related flags and trinkets.

If I knew the Colonel later in my life, I imagine I would have tangled with him a little more. I remember he drove a car with a bumper sticker that said “Get U.S. out of the U.N.,” an isolationist and reactionary political position that I was not able to critically assess at eight years old. By then, another symbol of support for America's boys had become very popular: the yellow “Support the Troops” ribbon that became omnipresent as a bumper sticker during Iraq and Afghanistan. Like the POW/MIA flag, the ribbon turns a contentious issue into a relatively vague one. The ribbon asks us not to support the war, but to support the troops; the POW/MIA flag is a promise that we won't forget the American soldiers in Vietnam, but it says nothing about the broken reasons they were there in the first place.

I revered The Colonel because he was the kind of hero I'd been sold by Rambo movies, video games, and green plastic army men. He was a hero because he had fired automatic weapons into jungles and jumped out of helicopters, not because he fought for a cause that was especially heroic. These kinds of myths — the POW/MIA issue, the narrative I constructed around The Colonel's life — succeed because they reduce complicated issues and imperialist adventures into the stories of brave individuals. Focusing on the thousands of American servicemen who didn't make it back to their families is just another way of obfuscating the reasons for their absence.

The POW/MIA myth endures to this day, at Boy Scout events, Flag Day Parades, military surplus stores, and even Etsy shops, where you can buy vintage POW/MIA bracelets or have a new “remembrance cuff” made with the name of a relative on it. Every year since 1988, thousands of motorcyclists have descended upon Washington D.C. for the “Rolling Thunder Run,” a demonstration meant to “bring awareness and accountability for POWs and MIAs left behind.” The new Rambo movie isn't about American POWs in Vietnam, but it ends — without giving too much away — with a homecoming for Rambo, which feels a little like a figurative homecoming for all those fictional soldiers Stallone saved decades ago. The black POW/MIA flag still flies high, and Rambo endures as an icon; both are a testament to America's simultaneous desire to seek violent revenge while also playing the victim. I imagine that mentality — the idea that those pesky Communists took our boys prisoners and we never got them back — framed our approach in future wars, as both Gulf Wars and Afghanistan were sold as necessary, defensive measures to right unclear injustices, not as the offensive invasions they really were. But what do the facts matter? What does the passage of time matter? If you squint it all makes a vague sense, and besides, waiting to be proven right means never having to admit you were wrong. It's the American way.

Trump is an impeachment step

By Saeed Sobhani

TEHRAN — The President of the United States of America never imagined that his telephone conversation with the Ukrainian President would be so troublesome for him! A large number of US delegates are now trying to impeach the US president. Yet the Republican Party stands against this. Here's the latest analysis on this:

Trump's Ukraine call was incredibly stupid
As CNN reported, Trump's decision to push Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to investigate a political opponent one day after the country heard special counsel Robert Mueller testify before Congress suggests a man with a political death wish. Now, after a career built on demanding attention but evading meaningful scrutiny, Donald Trump is facing accountability for the first time in his life. Trump is struggling to respond to revelations that he pressured Ukraine to investigate former Vice President Joe Biden. And judging from his babbling public performance before reporters at the UN General Assembly in New York on Wednesday, he does not know how to cope. As usual, the President talked about a "witch hunt" and "fake news" and popularity polls as he spoke in the hoarse voice that seems to come over him in moments of stress. Then he damaged the case for his own defense, saying that if then-Vice President Joe Biden had sought a favor from Ukraine in 2015, it would have constituted an "impeachable event."

There's no proof that Biden sought favors from Ukraine. In fact the idea that he did is refuted in original reports on the matter. But a rough White House transcript of a phone call between Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky shows that the President did exactly what he'd suggested Biden had done.

"I would like you to do us a favor," Trump said to Zelensky, according to the White House transcript of the call. "There's a lot of talk about Biden's son. That Biden stopped the prosecutions and a lot of people want to find out about that, so whatever you can do with the attorney general would be great. Biden went around bragging that he stopped the prosecution so if you can look into it. ... It sounds horrible to me."

If there's "a lot of talk" about Biden's son, it has been generated mainly by the President, his supporters and his personal lawyer, former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani. Trump told Zelensky that both Attorney General William Barr and Giuliani would be calling the Ukrainian President.

As Biden has long occupied the front-runner position in the Democratic primary, Trump has cause to fear him -- and to try to undermine him. But urging Ukraine to investigate Biden's son constitutes an abuse of the public trust. Why would Trump use a phone call with a foreign leader to ask for a blatantly personal and political favor? I would suggest that Trump expects the government to function like his personal business -- and as a result he can't imagine that anything he might desire would be out of bounds for a president.

Throughout his life, Trump has operated under special conditions that allowed him to get away with almost anything. The classic example came when his extremely wealthy father bailed out his casino by purchasing \$3.5 million worth of chips at a blackjack table and then left the casino without gambling. This gambit broke state regulations, but the resulting fine -- \$30,000 -- was paltry, and the deposit provided much-needed cashflow.

Family wealth bailed Trump out of other difficulties and made it possible for him to take risks that others would have avoided. Bankruptcy followed bankruptcy, but because Trump's family money was protected by corporate structures, he maintained his high-profile lifestyle and kept on promoting himself as a super-successful businessman. He spread lies about the prominent women who had allegedly pursued him as a romantic partner, and he offered wildly varying claims about his personal wealth. Trump has even said that his net worth depends on how he feels at a given moment.

The truth about Trump remained elusive because so much of what he claimed could not be verified. His privately held businesses were not required to produce accurate public financial reports, and they never did. Meanwhile, how do you determine whether, as Trump claimed, he had once been one of the best young baseball players in New York?

As his biographer, I put time into checking Trump's claims and discovered that many, like the one about his baseball prowess, were false. These lies didn't threaten the whole country when he was just the clown prince of New York real estate and a reality TV show host boasting, falsely, about his ratings.

But now that Trump is President, all the bluster that may have seemed amusing and harmless to those who stayed outside Trump's orbit has plunged the nation into a constitutional crisis.

What we've seen in just this one Trump scandal -- and there are many more -- suggests that the President is incapable of fulfilling his duties and may even be driven by self-destructive impulses. As Trump acknowledged last week, a president's calls with foreign leaders are overheard by other US officials, who take notes. Given this knowledge, Trump's attempt to enlist Zelensky in his harebrained scheme was not just an abuse of public trust; it also demonstrates Trump's true beliefs about human nature. Who could be surprised that a national security official filed a whistleblower complaint about that phone call with Zelensky? Only a person who assumes that no one else ever acts out of a sense of ethical and moral duty.

What Trump seems to have ignored is that the American President operates in a system designed to check abuses -- and that the government he heads might be filled with people of conscience. As this scandal unfolds, the administration will come to learn the meaning of accountability. For Trump personally, it will be the first time.

Fact check: What Trump has been getting wrong on Biden and Ukraine

Donald Trump is facing intense criticism over a July phone call during which, according to a person familiar with the matter, he pressed Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to investigate the son of former Vice President Joe Biden, a leading candidate to face him in the 2020 presidential election.

Under fire, Trump has revived one of his favorite defensive tactics: trying to turn the spotlight onto his opponent.

Trump has made a series of allegations about Joe Biden and his son Hunter Biden over the last week. The essence of Trump's argument is that Joe Biden was improperly trying to help Hunter, who served on the board of a Ukrainian natural gas company, when Joe Biden pressured the Ukrainian government to fire the country's prosecutor general. But there are significant holes in Trump's story. Some of his allegations have been false. Others have been missing important context.

Trump's missing context: What happened with the Ukrainian prosecutor



In castigating Biden's effort to get the prosecutor general fired, Trump has declined to mention an important fact: a whole lot of other people were also trying to get him fired at the time. The Obama administration, American allies, the International Monetary Fund and Ukrainian anti-corruption activists, among others, had all made clear that they were displeased with the performance of Viktor Shokin, who became prosecutor general in 2015.

Shokin was widely faulted for declining to bring prosecutions of elites' corruption, and he was even accused of hindering corruption investigations. His deputy, Vitaliy Kasko, resigned in February 2016, alleging that Shokin's office was itself corrupt.

The International Monetary Fund warned Ukraine in February 2016 that it risked losing financial support if it did not clean up its act. The Financial Times explained in its article on the warning that then-President Petro Poroshenko was facing pressure to replace Shokin, whom the newspaper described as a "long-time loyalist" of the president; the article continued, "Mr. Shokin has been criticized for failing to bring to justice any of the snipers who killed dozens of protesters in central Kiev in the final days of the revolution, and for dragging his feet over investigating senior officials and businesspeople."

In a September 2015 speech, the US ambassador to Ukraine, Geoffrey Pyatt, used blunt language in criticizing Shokin, blasting "corrupt actors within the Prosecutor General's Office" who were "making things worse by openly and aggressively undermining reform." Then, during a visit to Ukraine, Biden, who had long handled Ukraine issues for the Obama administration, applied public and private pressure on the government.

In a speech to Ukraine's legislature, Biden said, "The Office of the General Prosecutor desperately needs reform."

The most detailed account of Biden's private words comes from Biden himself. At a Council on Foreign Relations event in 2018, he recounted that he had threatened to withhold a "billion-dollar loan guarantee" unless Poroshenko followed through on what Biden said was a "commitment" to "take action against the state prosecutor."

"I looked at them and said: 'I'm leaving in six hours. If the prosecutor is not fired, you're not getting the money.' Well, son of a bitch. He got fired. And they put in place someone who was solid at the time," Biden said.

The timeline here is fuzzy: Shokin was not actually terminated while Biden was in the country, as Biden's story made it sound. Ukraine's legislature voted to fire Shokin in March 2016; Biden's last visit to Ukraine before the firing was in December 2015. Biden did have a phone call with Poroshenko the week before the dismissal.

Biden spokesman Andrew Bates told CNN that Shokin's removal was a "focus" for Biden "during numerous trips and phone conversations," since the prosecutor was such a major impediment to anti-corruption efforts.

What Trump has been getting wrong

Trump is free to criticize Hunter Biden for taking a position with a Ukrainian company at the same time as his father was directly involved in Ukrainian issues. And Trump is free to criticize Joe Biden for declining to recuse himself from a matter that could conceivably have affected his son's interests.

But Trump has been inaccurate about some of the key facts of the situation.

Claim 1: Trump says Biden called for the firing of a prosecutor "investigating his son"

Trump has repeatedly claimed Shokin was investigating Hunter Biden. For example, Trump alleged Saturday that the media wants to avoid talking about the "Joe Biden demand that the Ukrainian Government fire a prosecutor who was investigating his son..."

But there is no public evidence that Hunter Biden was ever himself under investigation.

The investigation, as far as we know, was into the business activities of Mykola Zlochevsky, who owned a natural gas company, Burisma Holdings, for which Hunter Biden had sat on the board of directors since 2014. The United Kingdom had begun investigating Zlochevsky before Hunter Biden joined the board.

"Hunter Biden did not violate any Ukrainian laws -- at least as of now, we do not see any wrongdoing," Shokin's successor as prosecutor general, Yuriy Lutsenko, told Bloomberg. Of a 2013 business transaction that was part of the investigation, Lutsenko said, "(Hunter) Biden was definitely not involved. We do not have any grounds to think that there was any wrongdoing starting from 2014."

It is not clear how hard Shokin was investigating even Zlochevsky or Burisma at the time Joe Biden pushed for Shokin's firing. Kasko, the prosecutor who resigned from Shokin's office, told Bloomberg that the case was dormant at the time of Joe Biden's intervention: "There was no pressure from anyone from the US to close cases against Zlochevsky. It was shelved by Ukrainian prosecutors in 2014 and through 2015."

Shokin told The Hill for an April 2019 article that he had made "specific plans" before his firing that "included interrogations and other crime-investigation procedures into all members of the executive board, including Hunter Biden."

But his assertion that the investigation was active has been challenged.

"Shokin was not investigating. He didn't want to investigate Burisma," Daria Kaleniuk, executive director of Ukraine's Anti-Corruption Action Center, told the Washington Post for a July article. "And Shokin was fired not because he wanted to do that investigation, but quite to the contrary, because he failed that investigation."

Claim 2: Trump says Biden told Ukraine to take Shokin off the case

"Somebody ought to look into Joe Biden's statement, because it was disgraceful, where he talked about billions of dollars that he's not giving to a certain country unless a certain prosecutor is taken off the case," Trump said last week.

There is no evidence Biden ever called for Shokin to be "taken off the case." In fact, there is no evidence that Biden mentioned the case at all when discussing Shokin with Ukrainian officials. Rather, Biden generally pressured the Ukrainians to fire Shokin, according to reporting from multiple news outlets and Biden's own account of what happened. Trump's allies might argue that calling for the prosecutor's firing was even worse than calling for him to be taken off a particular case. But there is a key difference given the context. Had Biden called for Shokin to be taken off a particular matter in which his son had a stake, this would seem to suggest that his motivation was helping his son. But Biden calling for Shokin's firing, without mentioning that particular case, was consistent with the international concern about Shokin's performance.

Claim 3: Trump says Joe Biden previously said he spoke to Hunter Biden about Hunter's business dealings

Biden said Saturday, "I have never spoken to my son about his overseas business dealings." Trump responded Sunday, "He also said, long before, that he did speak to his son. So he lied, again."

Biden has not previously said that he did speak to his son about his overseas business dealings. Rather, it was Hunter Biden who said that there was a conversation on the subject, according to a New Yorker article in July.

That article said this: "As Hunter recalled, his father discussed Burisma with him just once: 'Dad said, 'I hope you know what you are doing,' and I said, 'I do.'"

Once is more than never, so Trump can fairly point out the contradiction -- though the New Yorker article did not offer evidence that the father-son exchange was detailed. Regardless, the elder Biden was not contradicting himself; he was contradicting his son.

Claim 4: The amount of money at issue

Trump has repeatedly alleged that Biden threatened to deny Ukraine "billions of dollars." According to Biden, it was a \$1 billion loan guarantee. (Less than three months after Shokin was fired, Obama agreed to approve a \$1 billion guarantee.)

We don't have independent confirmation of what was discussed, so it's possible that Biden had also raised the subject of additional funds.

One general caveat: it is possible that we'll generally learn more about Hunter Biden's work in Ukraine and about the firing of Shokin. But what we know right now shows significant factual problems with Trump's theories.

The CIA's base for mind control experiments

6 → In Europe and East Asia, Gottlieb's victims were prisoners in secret detention centers. One of those centers, built in the basement of a former villa in the German town of Kronberg, might have been the first secret CIA prison. While CIA scientists and their former Nazi comrades sat before a stone fireplace discussing the techniques of mind control, prisoners in basement cells were being prepared as subjects in brutal and sometimes fatal experiments.

These were the most gruesome experiments the U.S. government ever conducted on human beings. In one of the them, seven prisoners in Lexington, Kentucky, were given multiple doses of LSD for 77 days straight. In another, captured North Koreans were given depressant drugs, then dosed with potent stimulants and exposed to intense heat and electroshock while they were in the weakened state of transition. These experiments destroyed many minds and caused an unknown number of deaths. Many of the potions, pills and aerosols administered to victims were created at Detrick.

One of the most well-known victims of the MK-ULTRA experiments was Frank Olson. Olson was a CIA officer who had spent his entire career at Detrick and knew its deepest secrets. When he began musing about quitting the CIA, his comrades saw a security threat. Gottlieb summoned the team to a retreat and arranged for Olson to be drugged with LSD. A week later, Olson died in a plunge from a hotel window in New York. The CIA called it suicide. Olson's family believes he was thrown from the window to prevent him from revealing what was brewing inside Camp Detrick.

A decade of intense experiments taught Gottlieb that there are indeed ways to destroy a human mind. He never, however, found a way to implant a new mind in the resulting void. The grail he sought eluded him. MK-ULTRA ended in failure in the early 1960s. "The conclusion from all these activities," he admitted afterward, "was that it was very difficult to manipulate human behavior in this way."

Nonetheless Fort Detrick, as it was renamed in 1956, remained Gottlieb's chemical base. After the end of MK-ULTRA, he used it to develop and store the CIA's arsenal of poisons. In his freezers, he kept biological agents that could cause diseases including smallpox, tuberculosis and anthrax as well as a number of organic toxins, including snake venom and paralytic shellfish poison. He developed poisons intended to kill Cuban leader Fidel Castro and Congolese leader Patrice Lumumba. During this period, Fort Detrick's public profile rose uncomfortably. No one knew the CIA was making poisons there, but its role as the country's principal center for research into biological and anti-crop warfare became clear. From mid-1959 to mid-1960, protesters convened once a week at the gate. "No rationalization of 'defense' can justify the evil of mass destruction and disease," they wrote in a statement.

In 1970, President Richard Nixon ordered all government agencies to destroy their supplies of biological toxins. Army scientists complied. Gottlieb hesitated. He had spent years assembling this deadly pharmacopeia and did not want to destroy it. After meeting with CIA Director Richard Helms, he reluctantly agreed that he had no choice.

One batch, a supremely potent shellfish poison known as saxitoxin, escaped destruction, though. Two canisters containing nearly 11 grams of saxitoxin—enough to kill 55,000 people—were in Gottlieb's depot at Fort Detrick. Before Army technicians could remove them, two officers from the Special Operations Division packed them into the trunk of a car and drove them to the Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery in Washington, where the CIA maintained a small chemical warehouse. One of Gottlieb's aides later testified that he had ordered this operation without informing his boss. By the time the saxitoxin was discovered and destroyed in 1975, Gottlieb had retired.

Gottlieb was the most powerful unknown American of the 20th century—unless there was someone else who conducted brutal experiments across three continents and had a license to kill issued by the U.S. government. Detrick, his indispensable base, still contains untold stories of the cruelty that began there—just 50 miles from the center of the government that has kept them sealed for decades.

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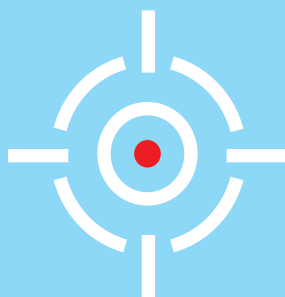
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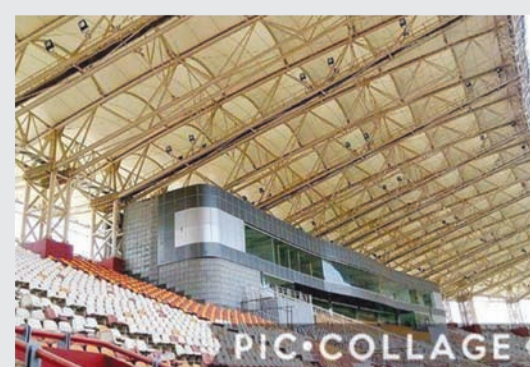
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Scientists puzzled by really big planet orbiting really little star

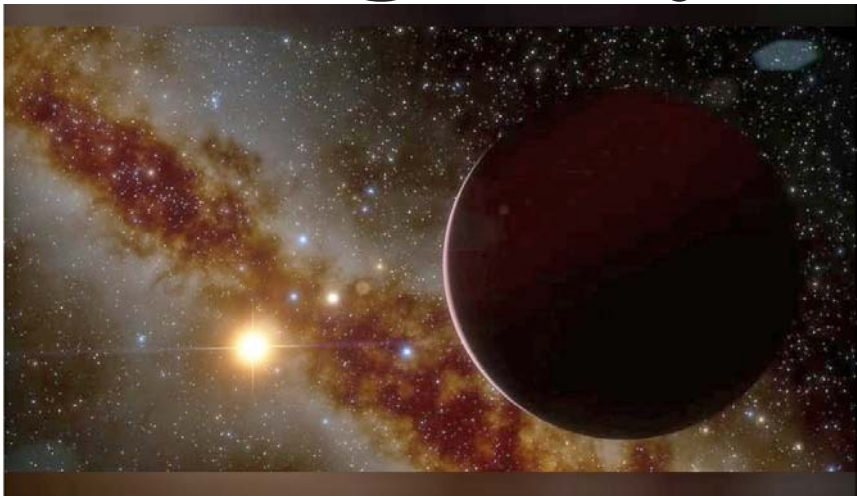
Scientists are expressing surprise after discovering a solar system 30 light-years away from Earth that defies current understanding about planet formation, with a large Jupiter-like planet orbiting a diminutive star known as a red dwarf.

Stars generally are much bigger than even the largest planets that orbit them. But in this case, the star and the planet are not much different in size, the researchers said on Thursday.

The star, called GJ 3512, is about 12% the size of our sun, while the planet that orbits it has a mass of at least about half of Jupiter, our solar system's largest planet.

"Yes, an absolute surprise," said astrophysicist Juan Carlos Morales of the Institute of Space Studies of Catalonia at the Institute of Space Sciences in Spain, who led the research published in the journal Science.

"The discovery was surprising because theoretical formation models suggest that low-mass stars typically host small planets, similar to Earth or small Neptunes. In this case, we have found a gas giant planet similar to Jupiter around a very small star," Morales added.



The planet, which like Jupiter is composed mainly of gas, was discovered using a telescope at the Calar Alto Observatory in Spain. It travels around its star in a very elliptical orbit lasting 204 days.

Red dwarfs are small, with relatively low surface temperatures. GJ 3512 is not only

much smaller than our sun, it is somewhat comparable in size to a very large planet, being only about 35% bigger than Jupiter.

"They emit less energy, so they are fainter than the sun, and their surface temperature is rather cool, below 3800 (degrees) Kelvin (6,380 degrees Fahrenheit/3,527 Celsius)

approximately. This is why they have a reddish color," Morales said.

There is evidence of a second planet currently orbiting the star, while a third planet might have been ejected from the star system in the past, explaining the elliptical orbit of the Jupiter-like planet, Morales said.

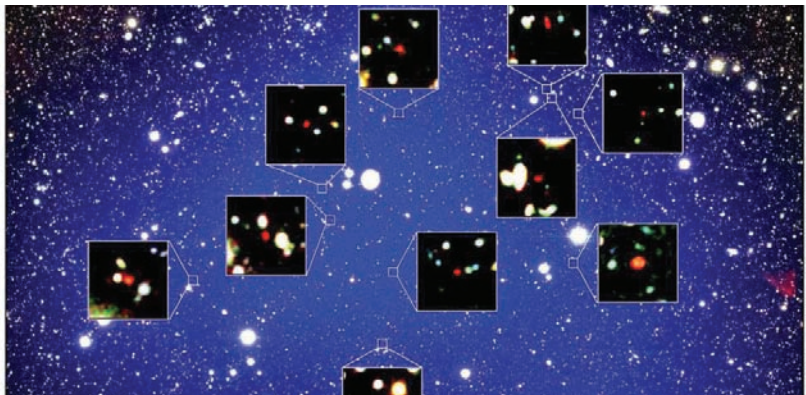
Planets are born from the same disk of interstellar gas and dust that produces the star around which they orbit. Under the leading model for planetary formation, called the "core accretion" model, an object initially forms from solid particles in the disk and the gravitational tug of this embryonic planet allows for an atmosphere to arise from the surrounding gas.

A competing model, called the gravitational instability model, may explain this unusual system.

"In this case, the protoplanetary disk around the young star may be slightly more massive than expected and cold," Morales said. "This makes the disk become unstable so some dense regions can appear. These clumps can grow until they collapse, forming a planet."

(Source: Reuters)

Astronomers spot oldest galactic protocluster, a giant of the early universe



With the help of several powerful telescopes, an international team of astronomers has identified the earliest known protocluster.

The protocluster, a constellation of 12 galaxies linked by gravity, formed some 13 billion years ago, when the universe was just 800 million years old.

Scientists have described their discovery in a new paper, set to be published in the Astrophysical Journal on September 30.

In the present universe, galactic clusters can grow to contain thousands of galaxies. Smaller galaxy clusters can organize to form superclusters, the largest structures in the cosmos. Models suggest there are 10 million superclusters in the observable universe.

The protocluster candidate, z66OD, contains a protogalaxy called Himiko, a giant gas cloud and one of the largest objects in the early universe.

Astronomers regularly probe deep space for signs of protoclusters. Studying these distant objects can help scientists understand how groups of galaxies form, evolve and grow.

Researchers spotted z66OD using the Subaru, Keck, and Gemini telescopes.

"A protocluster is a rare and special system with an extremely high density, and not easy to find," lead researcher Yuichi Harikane, a JSPS fellow at the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan, said in

a news release. "To overcome this problem, we used the wide field of view of the Subaru Telescope to map a large area of the sky and look for protoclusters."

Just a decade ago, scientists used Subaru to spot Himiko.

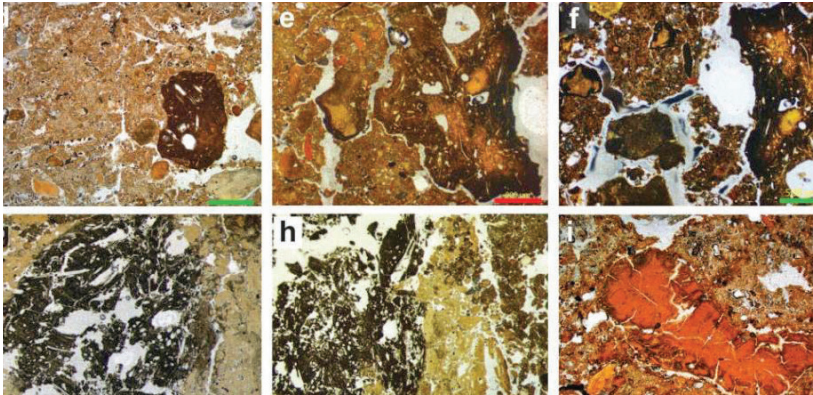
"It is reasonable to find a protocluster near a massive object, such as Himiko," said Masami Ouchi, researcher at the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan and the University of Tokyo. "However, we're surprised to see that Himiko was located not in the center of the protocluster, but on the edge 500 million light-years away from the center."

The latest observations suggest the 12 members of the protocluster are in the act of expansion. Scientists measured high rates of star formation within each galactic member. The accelerated star formation in each galaxy is being fueled by dense supplies of gas. Surprisingly, the protocluster does not appear to host a massive dusty galaxy, thought to be a feature of all early galaxy clusters.

"Although we haven't found such a galaxy in z66OD yet, future observations, for example with the Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array, ALMA, in Chile, should reveal more of the structure of z66OD," Seiji Fujimoto, an astronomer at Waseda University, Japan, said in a statement.

(Source: UPI)

Ancient litter on cave floor offers insight into lives of early humans



Scientists are gaining new insights into the day-to-day existence of early human groups, including Neanderthals and Denisovans, thanks to analysis of dirt and dust on the floor of a cave complex in Siberia.

Researchers from Russia and Australia deployed modern geoarchaeological techniques to study tiny fragments of bones and fossilized animal droppings, as well as bits of charcoal from ancient fires.

The data -- detailed this week in the journal Scientific Reports -- showed the Denisova Cave complex in Siberia's Altai Mountains was frequented, over the course of thousands of years, by hyena, wolves and even bears, as well as Denisovans, Neanderthals and early Homo sapiens.

"These hominin groups and large carnivores such as hyenas and wolves left a wealth of microscopic traces that illuminate the use of the cave over the last three glacial-interglacial cycles," Mike Morley, the study's lead author and a researcher at Flinders University in Australia, said in a news release. "Our results complement previous work by some of our colleagues at the site that has identified ancient DNA in the same dirt, belonging to Neanderthals and a previously unknown human group, the Denisovans, as well as a wide range of other animals."

Most studies of prehistoric life rely on ancient DNA and visible artifacts, such as

stone tools or animal and plant remains. But the latest findings offer proof that new insights can be gleaned from sifting through sediment.

"Using microscopic analyses, our latest study shows sporadic hominin visits, illustrated by traces of the use of fire such as minuscule fragments, but with continuous use of the site by cave-dwelling carnivores such as hyenas and wolves," said Richard Roberts, a professor at University of Wollongong in Australia.

The abundance of animal droppings suggests the region's large carnivores, species that have since gone extinct, dominated the cave. It's unlikely nomadic hominin groups would have shared the cave with animals. The findings suggest Neanderthals, Denisovans and early humans only visited periodically and stayed for brief periods of time.

The Denisova Cave complex is famous for yielding fossil evidence of a mysterious group of early hominins known as Denisovans.

The group interbred with Neanderthals and early humans, and genomic analysis suggests they are responsible for between three and five percent of the DNA of Melanesians and Aboriginal Australians. The people of Papua New Guinea derive as much as six percent of their DNA from Denisovans.

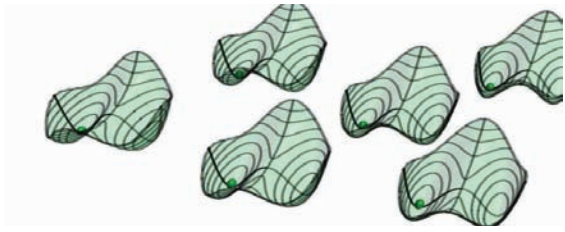
(Source: UPI)

Appreciating the classical elegance of time crystals

Structures known as 'time crystals' -- which repeat in time as conventional crystals repeat in space -- have recently captured the interest and imagination of researchers across disciplines. The concept has emerged from the context of quantum many-body systems, but physicists have now developed a versatile framework that clarifies connections to classical works dating back nearly two centuries, thus providing a unifying platform to explore seemingly dissimilar phenomena.

In a crystal, atoms are highly ordered, occupying well-defined locations that form spatial patterns. Seven years ago, the 2004 Physics Nobel laureate Frank Wilczek pondered the possibility of a 'time analogue of crystalline spatial order' -- systems that display sustained periodic temporal modulations in their lowest-energy state. The concept of such structures with an oscillating ground state is highly intriguing. Alas, not long after the idea has been published, it was proven that such time crystals are not possible without breaking fundamental laws of physics. Not all was lost, though. Subsequent theory work suggested that when quantum many-body systems are periodically driven, then new persistent time correlations emerge that are evocative of Wilczek's time crystals. These driven systems were dubbed 'discrete time crystals', and in 2017 the first experimental realizations of such states were reported in ensembles of coupled particles (ions, electrons and nuclei) that display quantum-mechanical properties.

Before long, astute observers spotted distinct similarities between discrete time crystals in quantum systems and so-called parametric resonators, a concept in classical physics reaching back to work by Michael Faraday in 1831. The connection between these two bodies of work remained, however, opaque. Now, a new framework goes a long way towards lifting the ambiguities surrounding the similarities between periodically driven classical and quantum systems. Writing in an article published today in the journal Physical Review Letters, Toni Heuguel, a PhD student in the Department



of Physics at ETH Zurich, and Matthias Oscity, a Master student there, working with Dr. Ramasubramanian Chitra and Prof. Oded Zilberberg form the Institute for Theoretical Physics and with Dr. Alexander Eichler from the Laboratory for Solid State Physics, report theoretical and experimental work that establishes how discrete time crystals can be generated that, on the one hand, require no quantum mechanical effects and, on the other hand, display genuine many-body effects, which is a characteristic of discrete time crystals reported in quantum systems.

There is one obvious similarity between classical parametric resonators and experimentally realized discrete time crystals in quantum many-body systems: Both display emergent dynamics at frequencies that are fractions of the drive frequency. In the context of discrete time crystals, the emergence of oscillations at such subharmonic frequencies breaks the temporal periodicity of the driven system, providing a form of 'time analogue' to crystalline spatial order, where the symmetry of space is broken. In classical parametrically driven systems, subharmonic frequencies appear in more familiar ways: A child on a swing, for instance, modifies the center of gravity at twice the frequency of the resulting oscillation; or the ponytail of a runner oscillates at half the frequency of the vertical head movement.

But do these dissimilar phenomena have anything to do with one another? Yes, say the ETH physicists. In particular,

they pinpoint where many-body aspects appear in classical systems. To do so, they considered classical nonlinear oscillators with tunable coupling between them.

It is well known that for certain driving frequencies and strengths, parametric oscillators become unstable and then undergo a so-called period-doubling bifurcation, beyond which they oscillate at half their driving frequency. Heuguel, Oscity and their colleagues explore what happens as several such oscillators are coupled together. In calculations as well as in experiments -- using two strings with variable coupling between them -- they find two distinct regimes. When the coupling is strong, the two-string system moves collectively, recreating in essence the movements of the child on a swing or the ponytail of a runner. However, in the case of weak coupling between the strings, the dynamics of each string is close to that displayed by the uncoupled system. As a consequence, the coupled oscillators do not bifurcate collectively but bifurcate individually at slightly different parameters of the drive, leading to richer overall dynamics, which gets ever more complex as the systems get larger.

The ETH researchers argue that such weakly-coupled modes are similar to the ones that emerge in quantum many-body systems, implying that their framework might explain the behaviors seen experimentally in these systems. Moreover, the new work prescribes general conditions for generating classical many-body time crystals. These could ultimately be used to both interpret and explore features of their quantum counterparts.

Taken together, these findings therefore provide a powerful unifying framework for periodically driven classical and quantum systems displaying dynamics at emergent subharmonic frequencies -- systems that have been so far described in very different contexts, but might be not that dissimilar after all.

(Source: Science Daily)

India's lunar mission shows space exploration is not just about immediate success

It was meant to be a day of pride for India on September 7, when the country was set to join an elite club of nations to have successfully landed a mission on the Moon.

But that morning as Vikram, the Chandrayaan-2 mission's lander, slowly made its way down to the lunar surface it lost communication with India's space agency.

On Thursday, NASA said that Vikram had a "hard landing" and its location is still unknown.

While this part of the Chandrayaan-2 mission has failed, this is just one step in India's space ambitions, and this experience may have laid important building blocks for future launches.



This mission was particularly complex for India, Rajeswari Pillai Rajagopalan, head of the nuclear and space policy initiative at the Observer Research Foundation, told CNN, as it was the country's first landing on a "non-terrestrial surface."

"Lunar landing or any landing is always a tricky issue ... the chances of things going wrong at the very last minute are always there," Rajagopalan said.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who championed the lunar mission, later consoled the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) team in a televised address.

"We will look back at the journey and effort with great satisfaction," Modi said. "The learnings from today will make us stronger and better. There will be a new dawn and a brighter tomorrow very soon."

Modi's optimism shows that when it comes to the space race, perhaps not everything has to be an immediate success.

"Landing on the Moon is no easy mission to accomplish. It shows India has progressed very far as a space nation. Despite the failed landing on the surface, the orbiter is still active and functional in the lunar orbit," freelance space journalist Jonathan O'Callaghan told CNN.

Chandrayaan-2, which means 'moon vehicle' in Sanskrit, took off on July 22 and over a period of 47 days gradually moved from orbit to orbit and was then sent in a slingshot towards the Moon.

The main shuttle, comprising of an orbiter, rover and lander, entered lunar orbit on August 20. Its primary mission was that, after successfully landing on the Moon, its rover would collect samples for 14 days. Following that it was scheduled to power down and stop transmitting.

While communication with Vikram has now been lost, the mission's orbiter has settled into its work, transmitting data to India as it circles the Moon in a now extended seven-year mission.

"Before this century, India's space program was quite different to the rest of the world. There weren't these high goals of landing on the Moon or going to Mars, but since the turn of the century, India has changed its focus to these grander missions," O'Callaghan told CNN.

And ISRO's latest attempt at landing on the Moon could help countries and private firms to understand better the nuances involved in space exploration, leading to better and more successful missions in the future.

Conversations are being had between different countries on what happened and what the lessons are for everyone as they embark on future missions, Rajagopalan said.

"That will contribute to the larger understanding of how missions are so complex and what are the things that need to be taken into account," she added.

For the past decade, India's foray into space exploration has been marked with successful missions. India has quickened the pace among Asian countries, such as China and Japan, as it competes to outmaneuver the others in space.

The Chandrayaan-2 reportedly cost around \$141 million, which is less than half the amount spent on the recent Hollywood blockbuster "Avengers: Endgame," which cost \$356 million to make.

"What's notable is that they're done with a low budget and they're very ambitious. This was India's second moon mission, but it was already an attempt to land on the surface, which is commendable," said O'Callaghan.

"Normally you're looking at hundreds of millions of dollars, but India doing this at a low cost is important because there has been some criticism over why India has been doing these missions to space when there are other areas to focus on."

"But I think it's important for the country to do these missions on a relatively low budget to provide inspirations and aspiration for the general public," he added.

In January, China made history by becoming the first nation to land a rover on the far side of the Moon and a planned mission next year is due to land on the Moon, collect samples and return to Earth.

Even if India did not become the second country after China to explore the far side of the Moon, its ambitions to become a major player in space continue.

By 2022, India aims to launch a manned mission into space. The Chandrayaan missions just laid foundations for that plan.

While Chandrayaan may not have achieved what it set out to, it was able to accomplish one thing. Hopes for the homegrown mission managed to unite the country, which like others across the globe grapples with an increasingly polarized political climate.

Many took to social media to share their thoughts. "ISRO has managed to achieve the impossible - unite the right wing and the left wing," read one tweet.

Another compared it to India's national obsession, cricket, tweeting even "the World Cup didn't unite Indians like this."

Others simply thanked ISRO, writing, "For a few hours tonight, you united the country in excitement, solidarity and genuine patriotic pride. That's not something we've had in a while. So, thank you."

(Source: CNN)

Monastery of Saint Thaddeus being restored meeting UNESCO standards

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** — The Monastery of Saint Thaddeus is being restored according to UNESCO standards and benefiting from technical experts, director of Iran's Armenian monastic ensembles has said.



A view of the UNESCO-registered Monastery of Saint Thaddeus in northwest Iran.

"We take no action arbitrarily and without taking the advice of experts," Sherli Avadian said on Tuesday, CHTN reported. "The [replacement] stones that have been used are similar in quality and color to the original. Some 80 percent of the monastery's stones are white."

A comprehensive plan for restoring the Monastery of Saint Thaddeus was ratified in the [Iranian calendar] year 1395 (March 2016-17) following some meetings with UNESCO representatives and their consecutive inspections, the official explained.

The plan entails five phases, of which three have been so far completed, she added.

Also known as the Qareh Klise ("the Black Church"), the monastery is one of the oldest surviving Christian monuments in the country. It is situated in West Azarbaijan province, some 20 kilometers from Maku, adjacent to the borders of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Turkey.

Together with St. Stepanos Monastery and the Chapel of Dzordzor, Qareh Klise was placed on the UNESCO World Heritage list in 2008 under the name "Armenian Monastic Ensembles of Iran".

All the three sites are located in West Azarbaijan and are of high significance from historical and cultural perspectives. They bear credible testimony to interchanges with the ancient regional societies in particular the Byzantine, Orthodox and Persian. UNESCO says that they bear examples of outstanding universal value of the Armenian architectural and decorative traditions.

Ancient Roman bath discovered in western Turkey

Archaeologists have unearthed the remains of a bathhouse in the ancient city of Aizanoi in the western province of Kutahya.

Speaking to the state-run Anadolu Agency, Zerrin Erdinc, deputy head of the excavation team, said that the bathhouse appeared to have been from fourth century BC. It consisted of three parts that provided cold, warm and hot baths.

"The structure and other details reveal that social classes were using them as public baths in ancient times," said Erdinc, who is also an academic at Dumlupınar University in Kutahya.

Romans could spend a whole day in the baths, as they were also seats for communal gatherings. Men and women used the baths at separate hours.

"There is also striking similarities between the ancient and modern-day baths," she added.

The remains of the bathhouse show that it had various sections meant for different purposes, like undressing, bathing, sweating, resting and eating.

"These required separate rooms with specific facilities, which the Romans built painstakingly to accommodate different purposes," said the archeologist.

Archaeologists said the area, added to the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List in 2012, has revealed settlements dating back to 3000 BC.

(Source: Hurriyet Daily News)

ROUND THE GLOBE

Al Zubarah archaeological site

The walled coastal town of Al Zubarah in the Persian Gulf flourished as a pearly and trading center in the late 18th century and early 19th centuries, before it was destroyed in 1811 and abandoned in the early 1900s.



Founded by merchants from Kuwait, Al Zubarah had trading links across the Indian Ocean, Arabia and Western Asia. A layer of sand blown from the desert has protected the remains of the site's palaces, mosques, streets, courtyard houses, and fishermen's huts; its harbor and double defensive walls, a canal, walls, and cemeteries.

Excavation has only taken place over a small part of the site, which offers an outstanding testimony to an urban trading and pearl-diving tradition which sustained the region's major coastal towns and led to the development of small independent states that flourished outside the control of the Ottoman, European, and Persian empires and eventually led to the emergence of modern-day Persian Gulf States.

The layout of Al Zubarah has been preserved under the desert sands. The entire town, still within its desert hinterland, are a vivid reflection of the development of an eighteenth- and nineteenth-century trading society in the Persian Gulf region and its interaction with the surrounding desert landscape.

(Source: UNESCO)

Iran marks World Tourism Day amid plans to boost arrivals

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Iran celebrated the World Tourism Day in a ceremony which was held in Zahedan, the capital of southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan province, on Saturday, with plans underway aimed to increase the number of foreign visitors to the country.

The celebration was attended by Tourism Minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan, hoteliers, tourism experts, tour operators, craftspeople, tour guides, private investors and tens of local officials.

"Each year, September 27th marks the beginning of a new approach towards the world's immense tourism industry," Mounesan said in a message on the occasion of World Tourism Day.

Commenting about the motto of "Tourism and Jobs: A Better Future for All", which the UNTWO has adopted this year, the minister said. "The selection of a motto for the year by the World Tourism Organization is not just a symbolic naming; it is an outcome of the most important features of the present time and future needs of the industry, yet it is a clear and executable strategy for all international tourism activities in the year ahead."

"The motto of 'Tourism and Jobs: A Better Future for All' is like a beacon for all our plans for the year ahead. This short and illustrative motto not only explains the mission of those who are active in the field of tourism, but also illuminates the tasks and approaches of all the executives, decision-makers, legislators, planners, and researchers of futures studies for the third largest industry of the world."

Each year, the tourism industry, due to its numerous and growing benefits, attracts the attention of societies and statesmen more than ever, the minister added.

He also noted that the tourism industry could ensure a better world in terms of peace,



Iran's tourism minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan addresses guests during a national celebration to mark the World Tourism Day in Zahedan, the capital of southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan province, September 28, 2019.

The motto of 'Tourism and Jobs: A Better Future for All' not only explains the mission of those who are active in the field of tourism, but also illuminates the tasks and approaches of all the executives, decision-makers, legislators, planners, and researchers of futures studies for the third largest industry of the world.

happiness, and job generation, "The tourism industry promises sustainable development of communities, pledges [more] employment and elimination of unemployment and poverty, and it also supports the equality of opportunities [for all] to bring peace and

happiness to the world."

Tourism, according to UNWTO, has experienced continued expansion and diversification over the past six decades, and it has become one of the fastest growing and most important economic sectors

Saudi Arabia opens kingdom to foreign tourists

Saudi Arabia is opening the ultraconservative kingdom to tourists for the first time, easing restrictions for foreign visitors as part of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's initiative to diversify the oil-dependent economy.

Visas had been restricted to Muslim pilgrims and business and diplomatic visitors, but on Friday the kingdom said its new online visa portal would be open to visitors from 49 countries, including the U.S. and major European and Asian countries.

"Opening Saudi Arabia to international tourists is a historic moment for our country," said Ahmad al-Khateeb, chairman of the Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage.

The change to visa rules comes two weeks after debilitating attacks on Saudi oil facilities, for which Riyadh and U.S. officials blamed rival Iran, raising fears of a broader conflict in the region. Tehran denied involvement. The drone and missile strikes took out half of Saudi Arabia's crude production and raised questions about security in the kingdom, a top military spender.

It also comes days ahead of the first anniversary of journalist Jamal Khashoggi's murder by Saudi government agents, an incident that sparked widespread international criticism of the kingdom. Mr. Khashoggi, a critic of the Saudi leadership, was brutally killed inside the Saudi consulate in Istanbul. A Central Intelligence Agency assessment concluded last year that Prince Mohammed ordered the killing. Riyadh



A Saudi man standing at the entrance of a tomb at Madain Saleh, a UNESCO World Heritage site, near Saudi Arabia's northwestern town of al-Ula. (Image by Fayez Nureldine/AFP/Getty Images)

has denied the crown prince's involvement.

The murder, which shattered the crown prince's global image, slowed foreign investment in the kingdom and complicated Prince Mohammed's plans to overhaul the Saudi economy to make it less dependent on oil.

The introduction of tourism visas comes at a moment of economic fragility for Saudi Arabia, as it struggles to jump-

start non-oil industries.

Saudi officials said the aim is for tourism to contribute up to 10% toward the country's gross domestic product by 2030, compared with 3% now. The kingdom hopes to attract significant foreign and domestic investment, helping create a million jobs, improve infrastructure and develop heritage, cultural and entertainment sites.

Until now, Saudi Arabia has hosted millions of Muslim pilgrims journeying to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, an important source of income for the Saudi government. But it has no broad system for nonreligious tourists other than citizens of its Persian Gulf neighbors.

Under the new program, tourists would be charged around \$120 for a visa that would be valid for one year and include multiple entries, with a maximum 90-day visit each stay.

The effort is meant to make visiting Saudi Arabia as easy as traveling to neighboring Arab tourist hot spots such as Dubai, The Wall Street Journal reported in March.

But the kingdom's plan faces challenges: More international visitors would be a test for a kingdom that doesn't allow alcohol and customarily requires even foreign women to wear a body-length, robe-like dress called an abaya.

"Women should cover shoulders and knees in public," a Saudi spokeswoman said, in what appears to be a relaxing of the abaya requirement.

(Source: The Wall Street Journal)

Scientists identify ancient baby bottles - and some are cute

Ceramic vessels, sometimes fashioned in whimsical animal forms, were used thousands of years ago as baby bottles to feed infants animal milk, according to scientists, offering an intriguing look at how and what infants were fed in prehistoric times.

Archaeologists said on Wednesday they confirmed the function of these ceramic objects by finding chemical traces of milk belonging to animals such as cows, sheep and goats in three such items found buried in child graves in Germany.

The oldest of the three vessels described in the study was made between 2,800 and 3,200 years ago during the Bronze Age. Other similar objects dating back as far as about 7,000 years ago during Neolithic times have been found in various other locations, the researchers said.

"I think this has provided us the first direct evidence of what foods baby were eating or being weaned on to in prehistory," said biomolecular archaeologist Julie Dunne of the University of Bristol in Britain, lead author of the study published in the journal Nature. "I think this shows us the love and care these



prehistoric people had for their babies."

These objects, little enough to fit into a baby's hands, served as vessels for milk, with a narrow spout for the baby to suckle liquid. While the three objects examined for the study were somewhat plain, oth-

ers boasted lively shapes including animal heads with long ears or horns and human-looking feet.

"I find them incredibly cute. And prehistoric people may have thought so, too - they would certainly have a dual function of

entertaining the children just like modern stuffed animals," said archaeologist Katharina Rebay-Salisbury of the Institute for Oriental and European Archaeology of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, a study co-author.

"They testify to the creativity and playfulness we often forget to attribute to our ancestors," Rebay-Salisbury added.

Life at the time was not easy, Rebay-Salisbury added, with many people living in unhygienic conditions, experiencing famine and disease and facing low life expectancy. During the Bronze Age and subsequent Iron Age in Europe, perhaps about a third of all newborns died before their first birthday and only about half of children reached adulthood, Rebay-Salisbury said.

These feeding vessels may have made life easier for mothers, as animal milk could substitute for breastfeeding, the researchers said. "Duties of mothering - amongst which feeding is an important one - can also be undertaken by other members of the community when children are fed with feeding vessels," Rebay-Salisbury said.

(Source: Reuters)

Samoa sees an increase in European tourism in 2018/2019

Samoa, The Treasured Islands of the South Pacific, has experienced a rapid increase of visitors from European countries in the past year. The Polynesian islands have seen the number of tourists from Europe rise by 18% between July 2018 and June 2019.

Composed of a collection of islands, the most popular destinations of Samoa include the island of Upolu, Savaii, and Apia, the capital. Known for its golden beaches, colourful culture and flourishing nature, the paradise is a popular destination for explorers and romantic holiday seekers alike.

The biggest jump of holiday goers from the region came from the United Kingdom, closely followed by the rest of

continental Europe.

A number of reasons have contributed to this accomplishment, including the recent introduction of Samoa Airways. The new Air career allows travelers to reach the Polynesian islands in an easier way, offering flight opportunities from Australia and New Zealand.

There has also been a boost in support from destination management companies Island Hopper Vacations (a part of the Turama Group) and Samoa Scenic.

Alison Cryer, Managing Director of Samoa Tourism Authority, indicates future plans focusing on the European market- "We at the Samoa Tourism Authority are de-

lighted by the 18% increase in Europe visitors. This news results from the strong work of the dedicated designation management companies and the positive introduction of Samoa Airways. The European Market has proven to be a successful breakthrough for Samoa, and we are ensuring the region will continue to be a large focus for us in the future."

Early indications show positive predictions regarding further increase of European tourists in the 2019/2020 travel season. Plans are in the pipeline for Samoa Airways to codeshare with outside airlines, making the destination even more accessible to the European region.

(Source: Travel Daily News)

Bright horizons for deep-rooted Iranian-Algerian relations with both sides considering no limit for cooperation

By Hana Saada

ALGIERS — The newly-appointed Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Democratic People's Republic of Algeria Hossein Mashalchizadeh held a series of meetings with Algeria's high-ranked officials with a view to explore avenues for bolstering and reinvigorating all-out bilateral cooperation.

The Iranian Diplomat held a meeting with the Algerian Commerce Minister Said Djelab, during which both sides put forward the deep and solid friendship between the two brotherly countries, expressing the will of their countries to further work for their consolidation and strengthening, especially in the economic field in the best interests of both peoples.

Welcoming the level of bilateral cooperation in the various spheres, both officials noted that this cooperation has initiated a new era given the deep links binding both countries, wishing its promotion at a higher level, through the conclusion of joint projects as well as the exchange of expertises and experiences as well as the participation of both countries' delegations at exhibitions promoting local products.

In the same vein, the Iranian Envoy met with the Minister of Communication, Government's Spokesman and Acting Minister of Culture, Hassan Rebahi.

After highlighting the fraternal relations between Algeria and Iran, both sides called for the intensification of efforts to further promote cooperation at the highest level, in accordance with the will of the leaders of the two countries and on the basis of their converging positions on numbers of causes.

With respect to communication aspect, they welcomed the level of the cooperation binding both countries, highlighting the need to further expand media cooperation and the exchange of press technology and expertise between both countries given the great role assigned to news agencies in terms of helping to realize a better knowledge of others in order to overcome the great deficiency in Muslim world, especially nowadays when our world is facing biased media of the World Arrogance and need to make more efforts to introduce and prove righteousness of its positions.

Highlighting the potentials and energies of these countries, they called to speed up the pace of exchange of delegations of journalists, adding that the exchange of information in both countries can provide fertile ground for the development of cultural and diplomatic ties as well as scientific, economic, commercial and cultural cooperation, which is supported by the existence of common will among the leaders of the two countries. The spotlight was placed also on the need to ink MoUs between both countries' news agencies.

It is worth mentioning that National news agency Algeria Press Service (APS) and Iran's Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) signed, in 2018, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on news exchange.

The Memorandum of Understanding was signed by "APS" Director General, Abdelhamid Kacha, and IRNA Agency Director General, Seyed Zia Hachemi.

During the signing ceremony, both parties agreed to exchange information services (information, photos, videos and computer graphics) as well as to carry out joint projects, affirming that grounds for expansion of professional cooperation between the two news agencies are well prepared.

Before the signing ceremony, IRNA agency Director General paid a visit to the various departments of the APS, where he received explanations on the activities of the Agency and the processing of information, meanwhile, MR. Hashemi expressed his admiration for the "organization" of these services.

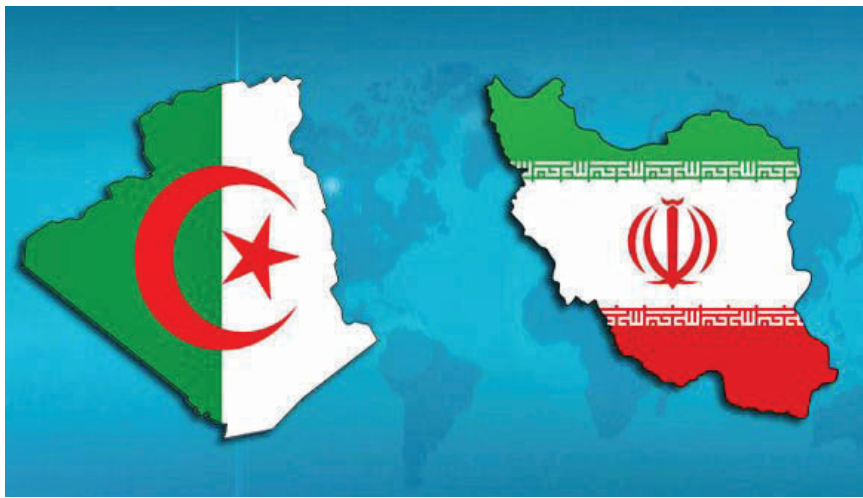
On the other hand, Algerian delegations frequently pay visits to Iran with a view to usher in good cooperation between the two media for strengthening and expanding Iran-Algeria relations.

The opening of IRNA bureau in Algeria was, repeatedly, arisen by Algerian visiting delegations. Director General of the Algerian news agency APS Abdelhamid Kacha, Managing Director of 'Al-Khabar' newspaper Kamal Jouzi and Managing Director of 'Al-Khabar' TV network Ali Jari, stressed, in different visits, that the opening of IRNA news bureau in Algiers and the exchange of reporters and media persons will help broaden cultural affinities between the two sides.

As long as culture is concerned, the Iranian Diplomat and the Algerian Acting Culture Minister hailed the cultural cooperation exiting between both countries, calling for its broadening into other fields such as; theater, music and literature.

A movie on Ahmed Bey (c. 1784-1850), the last Ottoman ruler of Algiers is co-produced by Algeria and Iran. Iranian filmmaker Jamal Shurjeh is the film's director and the costumes and film sets have been designed by Iranian experts. The Iranian cineaste Danesh Egbashavi, is, also, collaborating on the film, directing the war scenes for "Ahmed Bey". An Iranian team will give consultation on the stunt, make-up, shooting and sound-on-film.

The film, depicting Ahmed Bey's life from 1826 to 1848 when he ruled the Regency of Algiers, laid grounds for more cooperation between Tehran and Algiers in various fields related to cinema and arts.



This experience is highly appreciated by the Algerian side, as expressed by the former Culture Minister Azzedine Mihoubi, who considered this joint project of film-making with Iran as an opportunity for getting familiar with the Iranian cinema style as well as exchanging cultural knowledge between the two countries.

Algeria, for its part, is eager to introduce Algerian culture and art to Iranian people, participating in different exhibitions, lastly few months ago, an Algerian Cultural Exhibition was held at Melal Cultural Center, with a view to make people of the two countries more familiar with each other's cultures, customs and traditions. Works of visual and traditional arts (Watercolor, oil paint, acrylic painting, miniature, painting on sand, ceramic panels, etc.) and handicraft were displayed, illustrating to Iranians the historical aspects and life of the people of Algeria.

On the other hand, different Iranian cultural exhibitions took place in Algeria to get the Algerians familiar with Iran's culture and art.

Several major cultural and art fairs are frequently organized by Iran's embassy in Algeria, such as: the one held last year in Blida province, located about 45 km south-west of Algiers, and 10th Intl. Festival of Calligraphy, Miniatures Exhibition with prominent Iranian artists in attendance, where they were warmly honored.

Screening Iranian films and documentaries, holding calligraphy workshops, performing Iranian music, introducing Iranian food and confectionery, introducing Iranian science, tourism and historical attractions and displaying films are always on the agendas of the exhibitions' programs, international book fairs and cultural weeks which help the two nations get more acquainted with the cultural identity and tradition of one another.

Last May, Algerians discovered for a week the Iranian movies following a government initiative to diversify cinematographic products. An Iranian Film Week was held in Algeria in order to present Persian culture and cinema to the African country's public.

Prominent Iranian film directors, namely; Seyyed Reza Mirkarimi and Kamal Tabrizi attended the event where a number of Iranian films were screened; such as: A Cube of Sugar by Reza Mirkarimi, About Eli by Asghar Farhadi, A Piece of Bread by Kamal Tabrizi and Mainline by Rakhshan Bani-Etemad. Different cultural panels about Iranian cinema were also held on the sidelines of the event with Algerian directors and producers.

The Iranian Ambassador was received, also, by the Minister of Relations with Parliament Fathi Khoûl. During their meeting, both sides emphasized the need to boost parliamentary cooperation through the exchange of delegations and the activation of Algeria-Iran parliamentary friendship group, reiterating that parliamentary diplomacy can help reinforcing peace and stability and fostering talks to remove tensions and settle the regional crises.

On January 10, 2019, Algeria-Iran parliamentary friendship group was set up at the headquarters of Algeria's People's National Assembly (Parliament's Lower House) in Algiers with a view to consolidate and strengthen parliamentary relations in accordance with the provisions of a framework for joint activities, especially in the parliamentary arena.

For his part, Algerian Religious Affairs and Endowment Minister Youssef Belmahdi granted the Iranian Diplomat a meeting, during which both sides hailed the brotherly relations between the two Muslim countries, underlining the necessity of strengthening them in various fields.

The religious cooperation and exchange between both countries is experiencing a glare with meetings between religious scholars from Algeria and Iran taking place frequently. Earlier, an agreement was inked, in Algiers, between the President of High Islamic Council, Bouabdellah Ghlamallah, and Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Reza Salehi Amiri, which aimed at finding means of preventing and fighting Takfiri and extremist groups, as well as rescuing the Islamic world from the crisis being experienced.

In addition, Algeria expresses admiration for Tehran's International Holy Quran Exhibition held each year, describing it as a big, major religious display in the global arena that has contributed to Muslims solidarity.

The Zionist regime's plots against the Muslim world have caused division among the Muslim countries; however, the Islamic Republic of Iran has played a role in making the Muslim nations united by holding an international exhibition of Holy Quran, Algerian Ambassador to Iran Abdel Moun'aam Ahriz told the Islamic Republic

News Agency (IRNA).

Besides, hand-woven Persian carpets covering an area of 12,000 square meters are decorating the Grand Mosque of Algiers (world's third largest mosque, also known Djamaa El Djazair mosque, to be completed in Algeria).

Earlier, Algeria's the then Minister of Religious Affairs and Endowments Mohamed Aissa said that his ministry received the first batch of the carpets, made up of 539 pieces at the end of 2014, in a contractual framework with the Waqfs or Endowments Foundation.

According to IRNA news agency, the carpets were purchased by an Algerian businessman with a price tag of €6 million from Iranian cities of Naeen and Kashan with a view to add a unique touch to this tremendous cultural and architectural project.

Earlier and following the handing of his credentials, His Excellency Hossein Mashalchizadeh held a meeting with the Algerian Head of State Abdelkader Bensalah, during which, he described relations binding Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Algeria as friendly, emphasizing the determination of the Islamic Republic for strengthening and expanding relations in various fields with Algiers.

For his part, Bensalah conveyed his warmest greetings to his Iranian counterpart Hassan Rouhan, wishing evermore success for the ambassador in his new post in line with strengthening bilateral ties.

The Iranian Ambassador held another meeting with the foreign Minister Sabri Boukadoud, during which bilateral relations and means to further boost them in the best interests of the two brotherly countries and peoples have been reviewed. In addition, the latest developments in the region have been discussed.

Mashalchizadeh replaced Reza Ameri, former Iranian Ambassador to Algeria.

Iran and Algeria enjoy constructive relations with bilateral cooperation increasing since the resumption of diplomatic relations between the two countries in September 2000. Former Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad expressed, in 2007, Iran's determination to remove all obstacles to developing economic ties between Iran and Algeria.

Over 2008, bilateral trade between Algeria and Iran doubled from \$25 million in 2007 to \$50 million. In addition to bilateral trade in commercial good, Iran and Algeria have inked up to 70 agreements and MoUs in different fields, to wit, inter alia, energy, industry, banking, agricultural industries, mining, energy, justice, education, tourism, and art... etc.

Iran and Algeria, respectively the world's second and seventh largest natural gas reserve holders also want to share expertise in various areas of gas including production, marketing and the liquefied natural gas (LNG) business.

Talks were launched to buy Algeria's phosphate, a move welcomed by the Algerian side as the then Algerian Energy Minister Yousfi responded favorably, proposing that companies in both countries get together to discuss the details in order to reach agreements to facilitate the exporting of Algerian phosphate to Iran.

In July 2008, Iran and Algeria announced plans to build a joint cement plant in Algeria worth nearly \$300 million, thus greatly increasing their industrial cooperation.

With respect to automotive industry, many agreements between the Algerian group Tahkout and Iranian car manufacturer Saipa for the establishment of a great complex, with an implementation cost amounts USD 300 to million, made up of fifteen factories in Tiaret, west of Algiers, were inked.

The Iranian party is contributing with its technological expertise in the manufacturing of cars running on CGN.

Another automotive industry agreement has been signed between private group Rahmouni and Khodro manufacturer for the assembling of cars in Algeria.

Besides, Iran's major tire producer Yazd Tire concluded an export deal with Renault's Algerian operations to export 50,000 tires produced by the company in central Iran to Algeria.

Furthermore and covering different fields, a draft agreement between Algeria's Geological Survey Agency and its Iranian counterpart was inked to establish a cooperation framework in the mining research.

In this regard, the Algerian standardization institute (IANOR) signed a draft agreement with its Iranian counterpart to ease trade exchange between Algeria and Iran while bringing closer both countries' standards.

The Algerian Company of Fairs and Exhibi-

tions (Safex) and the Iranian Agency for Foreign Trade signed an agreement to facilitate Algeria's participation in Iranian exhibitions and shows, and vice-versa.

A MoU on the production of drugs and medical equipment was signed by the then Director of Pharmacy and Medical Equipment at the ministry of Health, Population and the Hospital Reform Hamou Hafedh and Iran's Deputy-Minister and President of the Organization of Food and Drugs Rasoul Dinar Kand. It relates to the manufacturing of vaccines and serums in Algeria.

Another MoU was inked from the Algerian side by the then Director General of Frater-Razes Labs Abdelhamid Cherfaoui and from the Iranian side by Director of Baboush lab Darou Khir Abadi on the manufacturing of biotech drugs.

In 2017, eight cooperation deals, covering different fields, were inked during the Second Joint Iran-Algeria Economic Cooperation Commission presided by First Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri and Algerian Prime Minister Abdelmalek Salal with a number of the two countries' cabinets in attendance.

The first deal signed by the two sides pertains to education. Other documents included cooperation agreement between the two countries' youth and sports ministries during 2015-2017, technical collaboration deal between their labor ministries as well as cultural cooperation deal between the culture ministries.

The two countries' higher education and justice ministries also signed relevant deals.

Relations between central banks of the two countries picked up in the recent years coinciding with the exchange between high-ranking banking officials from Iran and Algeria. At present, central banks of the two countries are interrelated and obstacles related to issuing purchase and sale contracts have been removed through serious follow-ups.

As regards tourism; some Iranian travel agencies are in touch with their Algerian counterparts with a view to boost tourism cooperation for the acquaintance of the two nations with each other's history and civilization.

Politically, Iran and Algeria hold regular talks on bilateral, regional and international issues. Regular meetings between the two foreign ministries' officials, high-ranked delegations within the framework of relations and regular consultations are taking place. Their brotherly relations are deeply rooted and go back to the 1960s. Soon after Algeria's independence from France in 1962, Iran was among the first countries to recognize it as an independent nation, opening the Iranian embassy in autumn of 1964, in Algiers.

For its part, Algeria, as a mediator, led the initiative to address the border dispute between Iran and Iraq in 1975. It hosted a meeting with the Iranian and Iraqi officials in attendance that led to the signing of a deal known as "the Algiers Agreement".

Following the victory of 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran, bilateral ties between the two nations developed and the two countries intensified meetings and exchanges culminating in the adoption of similar stances on an array of international issues, particularly the problems faced by the World of Islam like the ones in Palestine and Syria. Algeria is one of countries which have independent positions close to those of Iran on many issues, including in terms of its political literature.

Another accord was inked between Iran and the USA due to the mediation of Algeria during the US embassy takeover in Tehran. Algiers Accord became another cause for better ties between Iran and Algeria. However, both countries' relations experienced some ups and downs. Yet, in the wake of the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000, Tehran and Algiers resumed diplomatic relations and since then these relations keep flourishing, maintaining common approaches to regional and international issues. Algeria opposed the Arab League members on giving the Syrian seat in the League to the Syrian opposition, and Algiers resisted taking any kind of military action in Syria, and as for Hezbollah and Hamas, Algeria objected putting their names on the terrorist group list in the Arab League.

Since the very beginning of the nuclear talks and even before the conclusion of the JCPOA, Algeria was positive about Iran's peaceful nuclear activities and constantly and explicitly defended Iran's right in international bodies. Following the implementation of the nuclear deal finalized by Iran and six world powers in July 2015, known as the JCPOA, Algeria considered the deal as an important stage in the process of the settlement of the tension and crisis situations, in a view to preserving international peace and security, and development in the benefit of all the peoples.

Algiers had, in 2015, received the first vice president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Eshaq Jahangiri, just after expressing refusal to join the Saudi coalition. The beginning of a deeper cooperation between the two countries is, therefore, also a clear message sent to Riyadh: Algiers wants to diversify its cooperation with Iran, avoiding getting into a diplomatic game that would be dictated by the Americans. Iran's Hassan Rouhani said the two countries have always backed each other in difficult times and today, whereas the Algerian side stressed that Tehran-Algiers relations would witness further expansion in all domains during the new Algerian administration's tenure.

'Turkey might bring in Russia, China, Iran to team up in new regional energy corridors'

1 → I do not believe that, without Turkey - the most important power and source of certain disagreements in the region - it is not possible to bring lasting peace and prosperity to the East Mediterranean and the newly created 7-country East Mediterranean Natural Gas Forum will not function. It is, in a nutshell, a must to engage Turkey constructively in the Mediterranean and seek "win-win" solutions rather than even talking about isolating it.

For Ankara, having free maritime access to the Mediterranean all the way from the Bosphorus down the Aegean Sea to Gibraltar and Suez are of critical strategic importance. In my view, freedom of navigation is more vital for Turkey than the current natural gas related disputes. It is for this reason that Turkey is not shying away from escalating the situation in Libya even though it is already under pressure on multiple fronts.

■ Could you please explain why Ankara argues that Turkish Cypriots have the right to exploit gas in the region? (According to Turkey's own interpretation of international maritime law)

A: Although the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) is recognized only by Turkey, it is an entity that represents slightly less than half of the island's 1.2 million population and Turkish Cypriots were recognized an equal founder of the Republic of Cyprus in the 1960s till 1974 when Turkey was forced to militarily intervene to protect the Turkish Cypriots against an Athens engineered coup attempt.

International legal considerations aside, there is a reality on the ground, which must be taken into consideration when it comes to natural gas discoveries, exploitation, sharing of revenues. They have not been consulted or brought into decision-making processes from the outset. There were only vague statements from Nicosia that when value will be generated they will be given their fair share. This is not the way to go, offering handouts arbitrarily. Ankara as a guarantor to the TRNC is advocating its right to the resources endowment in the island. This is separate from Ankara's own assertion about violations of its own continental shelf and exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in the East Mediterranean.

■ What do EU sanctions to Turkey mean? Do they have power to stop Turkey from drilling around the Cyprus coast? Or are they rather symbolic considering the EU-Turkey migration deal and cooperation in security policy and energy transport?

A: EU sanctions have been adopted under pressure from South Cyprus and Greece, two EU member countries, which sought assurance from other fellow members for protecting what they call "the EU territory" no matter how disputed and controversial borders and EEZs could be.

Sanctions are important only in symbolic terms - they are not the ones that are unlikely to seriously hurt the already worsening Turco-EU ties. They will not stop Turkey seeking its protection of interests in the region at all - to the contrary, they have caused anger and frustration, arguing that the EU can no longer be a "honest broker" for resolving the disputes in the region. There are some deep-rooted fundamental interests of the EU that drive the relations with Turkey, which cannot be sacrificed under any circumstances for the sake of Greek and Greek Cypriot pushing against Ankara.

Migration deal, energy security and security collaboration are only a few areas where both sides work together. It is much bigger than that picture involving Turkey's place in the new world order and how the EU and Turkey can work together in our region, irrespective of the accession process Turkey has been in for longer than half a century.

■ How could Turkey's actions in the Eastern Mediterranean alter its relation with NATO?

A: For NATO, Turkey is a vital ally in a region where NATO borders are surrounded by instabilities and security risks such as Russia, Syria, Iraq, Caspian and Southeast Europe. Despite difficulties with the US particularly in Syria, the East Mediterranean and Black Sea, NATO values Turkey's strong engagement with the Alliance and wants to avoid the risk of a disentangled Turkey shifting towards greater military co-operation with Russia, China and Iran.

True, the so-called "gunboat" diplomacy practiced by Turkey in the East Mediterranean might cause tensions with some NATO countries but overall NATO will strive to keep Turkey engaged as a constructive force in the region that should not be upset. Turkey will not allow South Cyprus to join the Alliance and will remain a stumbling block to greater collaboration with Israel in the region given their not so friendly attitude towards Turkey on a score of issues in the East Mediterranean.

■ It is said that one of the reasons that pulled Turkey into crisis in Syria is the matter of energy transit. I mean Iran could transit its oil and gas to Europe via Iraq and Syria and also it is said that Turkey has territorial dispute. What do you think of this?

A: It is no secret that Turkey wants to become a regional energy hub for the crude oil, gas and electricity flows from Russia, Iran, the Caspian, Iraq and East Mediterranean. Despite there is a long way to go for the early materialization of this Turkish ambition, still any efforts to undercut or bypass Turkey will not be welcomed in Ankara.

It is accepted by everyone that the wars and conflicts in the Middle East, the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean are caused in large measure by an energy war, either over resources and shipping/pipeline routes to high value and secure markets. The insecurity of the Strait of Hormuz, as experienced recently, and the influence of Iran on the Persian Gulf and other Middle Eastern disputes, have led to the proposals to create a new Energy Corridor in the Middle East to the Mediterranean. This corridor is perhaps the most important conflict area of the next century. All the major players of the world are now fighting to have their share in this corridor linking Iran-Iraq-Syria to the Mediterranean or connecting the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean in order to bypass the Strait of Hormuz. Turkey is particularly sensitive to the Kurdish energy corridor and has been a fiercest opponent to that design.

■ What is the US stance toward disputes over the energy sources in Mediterranean Sea?

A: Neither the EU nor the US follow a neutral position in the East Med energy and geopolitical disputes - definitely far from Turkey's position regarding natural gas exploration in disputes areas and exclusive economic zone assertions. ExxonMobil is active in Cyprus for natural gas exploration. The US supports Israeli, Egyptian and Cypriot stances, and warns Turkey to respect sovereignty of these countries particularly as regards their acreages distributed to international oil and gas companies. The US has also joined the latest meeting of the East Mediterranean Natural Gas Forum as an observer. It is unlikely that Ankara will change its position no matter what pressures might come from Washington DC or Brussels. If cornered, Turkey might bring in Russia, China and Iran to team up in the new energy corridors in this region.

72 schools inaugurated in quake-stricken Kermanshah

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — During a ceremony on Saturday, Education Minister Mohsen Haji Mirzaei inaugurated 72 schools in quake-hit underprivileged areas of Kermanshah province through video conferencing, IRIB news agency reported.

The schools, measuring 46,000 square meters in area, consist of 390 classrooms, Haji Mirzaei said, adding 1.14 trillion rials (nearly \$27 million) has been invested in the project.



“In Kermanshah province quake devastated many schools, however, we constructed schools twice those destroyed,” he highlighted.

With construction of new schools, educational space has increased by one square meter per student, he added.

Some 78 schools with 418 classrooms were damaged by the earthquake, but with the participation of charities, banks and institutions, more than 190 projects started to make up for the educational spaces, he explained.

Last year, some 73 small schools were built in villages, Haji Mirzaei concluded.

On November 12, 2017, a destructive earthquake measuring 7.3 on the Richter scale hit Sarpol-e Zahab in Kermanshah. Some 90,000 houses were partly or completely damaged by the tremor. Sadly, the quake took over 660 lives and left more than 10,000 injured.

■ Charity foundation opens 12 schools

During the ceremony, Mohammad Mahjouri, deputy director of Barekat Charity Foundation, announced that the foundation constructed 12 out of the 72 schools across the province.

Twelve schools consisting of 160 classrooms have been opened in 6 cities of Javanroud, Salas-e Babajani, Sarpol-e Zahab, Qasr-e Shirin, Dalahu, and Gilan-e Gharb, he stated.

Among which, a technical and vocational center has also been inaugurated, said Mahjouri, Mehr news agency reported. A total of 250 billion rials (around \$6 million) have been spent to construct these educational centers, he further noted, adding, the technical and vocational center also costed over 10 billion rials (about \$240,000).

All of which have hosted students since the beginning of the current school year (September 23), he also said.

He went on to add that the foundation has targeted the construction of 2,000 schools by the next two years, 62 percent of which have been completed, he highlighted.

Also, a memorandum of understanding for building 82 percent of the schools has been signed and will soon be implemented, he concluded.

Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam was founded in 1989. In the Iranian calendar year 1386 (March 2017-March 2018), Barekat Charity Foundation- the social arm of the organization- was established with the aim of promoting social justice.

Socio-economic empowerment of communities by encouraging entrepreneurship prioritizing breadwinner women, developing infrastructures such as water supply and power grids, building roads, constructing schools and increasing educational spaces, promoting health for all, granting non-repayable loans and insurance especially in less developed areas and regions are of the priorities of the charity foundation.

WORDS IN THE NEWS

Computer image of Hurricane Michelle

(November 5, 2001)

The eye of Hurricane Michelle, the strongest storm to hit Cuba for more than fifty years, has passed over the island and is now heading towards the Bahamas. It has left severe damage caused by winds of two-hundred kilometers per hour and flooding. This report from Daniel Schweimler.

The eye of Hurricane Michelle has passed over Cuba but the island is still being **battered** by strong winds and heavy rain. Much of the country, including the capital Havana, is without gas and electricity. Telephone lines are down and the population is **being urged to** remain in their houses. Reports say that large areas of agricultural land, especially in the west and center of the country, have been **devastated** and homes have been damaged. There is also severe flooding, mostly in coastal areas.

But there are few reports of **casualties**. This is probably thanks to the huge civil defense operation launched by the Cuban authorities over the past few days. More than six-hundred-thousand people were **evacuated** from **vulnerable** areas and remain in safe shelters while the damage is assessed and the cleaning-up operation **gets under way**. There are still no flights, public transport has been suspended and the country remains virtually **at a standstill**. But, as Hurricane Michelle heads out to sea, Cuba is **breathing a tentative sigh of relief**. The storm has passed, leaving a trail of destruction, but it does not appear to have been as bad as it could have been.

■ Words

the eye of Hurricane Michelle: the center of the storm, where winds are low, is called the eye
battered: hit with great power
being urged to: being told or encouraged to do something
devastated: very badly damaged
casualties: people who are killed or injured
evacuated: if you are evacuated, you are sent from one place to another for your own safety
vulnerable: not very safe, easily damaged
gets under way: is started, begins
at a standstill: without any activity, nothing is happening
breathing a tentative sigh of relief: an uncertain feeling that the worst is over

(Source: BBC)

‘Iran to have oldest population in region by 2050’

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — Iran will be home to the largest aging population in the region by the next three decades due to the large proportion of citizens aged over 35 years who are expected to be over 65 years old by 2050, the deputy health minister said.

Alireza Raeisi made the remarks on the occasion of October 1st, International Day of Older Persons, IRNA reported on Saturday.

The International Day of Older Persons highlights the important contributions that older people make to society and raise awareness of the opportunities and challenges of ageing in today's world.

Between 2017 and 2030, the number of persons aged 60 years or over is projected to grow by 46 percent (from 962 million to 1.4 billion) globally outnumbering youth, as well as children under the age of 10.

Moreover, this increase will be the greatest and most rapid in the developing world. Population ageing is poised to become one of the most significant social transformations of the 21st century.

Iran will have the highest rate of elderly citizens by the next thirty years, therefore, the Ministry of Health is committed to raise awareness, promote culture, and implement more care programs in this regard, Raeisi explained.

“We have controlled mortality under age five, and life expectancy increased by 20 years, however, delay in marriage and childbearing, and the gap between the first child and the second one are issues that need to be addressed.”

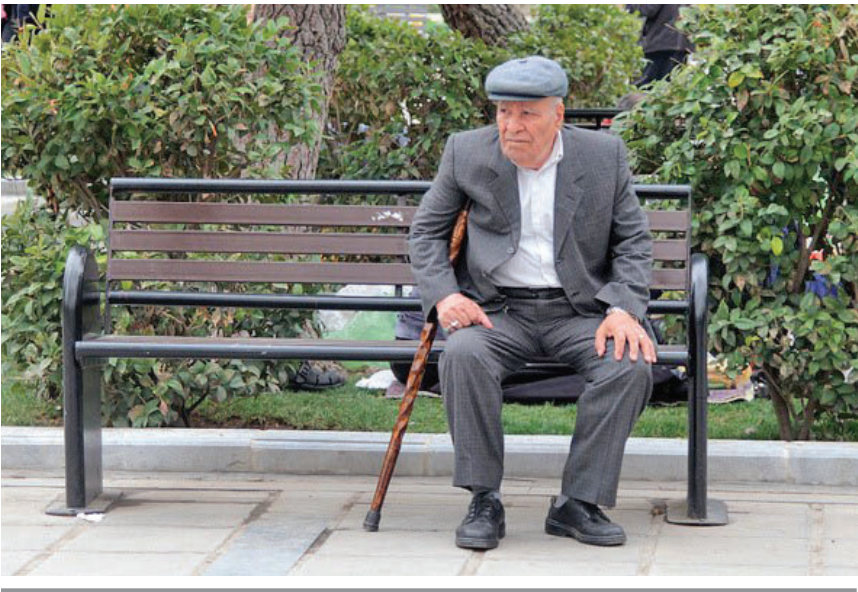
Raeisi also said that many disabilities occur in old ages roots back to one's childhood and adulthood; so providing health services to youth can help improve the health of the elderly.

“Over the past four decades, life expectancy has increased from 50 years to more than 70 years, 21.4 years for men and 23.4 years for women.”

According to the statistics, elderly constitute 9.26 percent of the country's population which will reach up to 30 percent over the next three decades, he added.

“At the present time, northern Gilan province has the highest rate of elderly citizens while Sistan-Baluchestan province hosts the lowest population of old citizens in the country. Meanwhile, aging population is steadily rising in Alborz and Mazandaran provinces,” he stated.

Elderly women outnumber elderly men by a ratio of 100 to 97.6, he said, adding, while the economic participation rate of the



By 2050, 2 billion people, over 20 percent of the world's population, will be 60 or older, with Asia as the region with the largest number of older persons, and Africa facing the largest proportionate growth, according to the UN.

elderly is about 12.2 percent.

In Iran, older men are far more likely to be married than their female counterparts, as some 89 percent of the elderly men and 44.7 percent of elderly women are married and live with their spouses, he noted.

He went on to say that 26.5 percent of senior-led households live alone and more than half of female-headed households are elderly.

According to Raeisi, “94 percent of Iranian seniors are covered by social insurance and 31 percent are under supplemental insurance coverage. The need for hospitalization for the elderly is 2 times that of ordinary people. Elderly spend most of their time on self-care, rest, housework and religious activities, with 12 percent of whom having a job. Cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, kidney failure and cancers are the leading cause of death among the old population, respectively. The prevalence of hypertension in those over the age of 60 is about 35 percent.”

He went on to say that “11 percent of the elderly are affected by diabetes, with less than 40 percent receiving appropriate services in this regard.

While hyperlipidemia infected 33 percent of the senior citizens; 60 percent of whom are receiving medical care.

About 36 percent of them are overweight, 22 percent obese, and 4 percent lean.

Also, 56 percent are physically inactive and 21 percent of have a history of smoking.”

Raeisi also explained that “60 percent of the people aged over 60 years have dental and oral problems, while 36 percent of them are suffering from Alzheimer's, 14 percent of whom referred to physicians. Also, 82 percent of the seniors are satisfied with their lives.”

■ Reason behind decreasing working-age population

According to the data released by the National Organization for Civil Registration, comparing past three years, some 1,366,509 infants were born in the country, whose births were registered last year, while 1,487,913 births occurred a year before it, and 1,528,053 births have been recorded in the Iranian calendar year 1395 (March 2016-March 2017), a difference of roughly 100,000 per year.

A major contributing factor to this trend has been diminishing fertility rates

in recent decades, further compounded by longer lifespans.

Moreover, socioeconomic factors led to fertility rate decrease and reproductive behavior in the country, including urbanization, education, financial issues, first marriage age, as well as increased access to family planning services along with increased time gap between the first born and marriage.

Between the Iranian calendar years of 1376 (March 1996-March 1997) to 1395 (March 2016-March 2017), the average age at first marriage for females increased from 19.8 to 23.0 and for males increased from 23.6 to 27.4.

■ National document on older persons prepared

Elsewhere in his remarks, Raeisi said that the national document on older persons, the roadmap showing the way for better planning for the elderly, will be unveiled by October 1st during a conference to be held in this regard.

The document enhances the coordination and collaboration of related bodies and assign them activities, he added.

Non-medical service delivery, designing health care centers based on the elderly needs, updating service packages, active participation in osteoporosis control, monitoring mental health and nutrition of the elderly, designing tool to screen bone density and fractures, providing them treatment services at home, and elderly-friendly pharmacy were among the Ministry's programs for this part of the society.

■ International Day of Older Persons

By 2050, 2 billion people, over 20 percent of the world's population, will be 60 or older, with Asia as the region with the largest number of older persons, and Africa facing the largest proportionate growth.

With this in mind, enhanced attention to the particular needs and challenges faced by many older people is clearly required.

On December 14, 1990, the United Nations General Assembly (by resolution 45/106) designated October 1 the International Day of Older Persons.

The 2019 theme is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 10 (SDG 10) and focuses on pathways of coping with existing and preventing future old age inequalities. SDG 10 sets to reduce inequality within and among countries, and aims to “ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome,” including through measures to eliminate discrimination, and to “empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.”

Huge moth that went ‘extinct’ 50 years ago is back in Britain

A striking blue moth that was thought to have gone extinct in Britain 50 years ago has now recolonised and is breeding, conservationists have revealed.

The Clifden nonpareil – whose name means “beyond compare” – is one of the largest and most spectacular moths native to the UK.

It has a wingspan that can reach almost 12cm and a bright blue stripe across its black hindwings, which gives rise to an alternative name of the blue underwing.

These moths have always been rare in the UK.

Historically they were established in Orlestone forest in Kent during the 1930s before declining significantly after 1956. There was also a colony established in Norfolk but there is little information on it.

Mark Tunmore, editor of Atropos journal told The Independent: “We're not completely clear as why it declined after 1956. It may have been climatic or it may have been due to woodland management. Those are probably the main factors, but at the time there wasn't the same knowledge and scientific research.

“After it disappeared in the 60s it went back to being a

very rare migrant and certainly it was not spotted every year. Since 2000 it's been turning up in increasing numbers,” said Mr Tunmore who says it might be getting less picky about its habitat choice.

It has long been regarded as a holy grail among moth enthusiasts and there have been numerous sightings across the south of England and Wales this year. That suggests they are now colonising Britain, as opposed to just being a migrant.

Mr Tunmore said: “Climate change is a very likely reason why it's coming in but it's hard to know what aspect of climate change might be helping it.”

Richard Fox, from the charity Butterfly Conservation, said: “There's never been a better chance of a thrilling encounter with this impressive insect. This year, the Clifden nonpareil is turning up all over southern Britain, in the Midlands, East Anglia and Wales, in Ceredigion and Monmouthshire, as well as in south coast counties.

“The Clifden nonpareil is a fantastic addition to our wild-life and it is great to know that it is resident again in the UK, after an absence of 40 years or so.

“Its caterpillars feed unnoticed up in the canopies of aspen

and poplar trees, so the adult moths are the best indication of how widely established this species now is.”

The moth's forewings are camouflaged so it can blend in with tree bark or a stone wall. However, if it is spotted it snaps open its forewings and displays the bright blue colour which confuses the birds, giving the moth a few seconds to get away.

People are being asked to record sightings of the Clifden nonpareil and other moths on the Moth Night website, which was founded by Mr Tunmore.

He said: “September is a special time for studying moths in the British Isles, with a colourful range of resident species mixing with more exotic species from Europe or even North Africa as warm air currents sweep them northwards.

“Already this year, we have received reports to our migrant insect news service, Flight Arrivals, of Clifden nonpareil sightings from Cornwall, Devon, Sussex, Warwickshire, Suffolk, Dorset, Kent, Norfolk, Somerset and Northamptonshire.

“Some of these are likely to be immigrants and some part of the recently established resident populations.

(Source: The Independent)

First Announcement

N.I.S.O.C

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO. : 08-38-9240056

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

Items	Material Description	Quantity
01	ROCK BITS. JET TYPE , LESS NOZZLES WITH API REGULAR TOOLJOINT PIN CONNECTION 8-3/8IN.X4-1/2 IN 8-3/8 IN I.A.D.C.S.1.7	40

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

The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit .a bid bond of 13,088 EURO or 617,500,000 RIAL, in favor of NISOC

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

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

FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT
Bldg. No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex
Kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran
Tel. No.: 061 341 23523 Fax No.: 061 3445 7437
Public Relations www.shana.ir www.nisoc.ir
تهران تایمز : نوبت اول ۹۸/۷/۷ نوبت دوم ۹۸/۷/۱۰

Blasts as insurgents try to disrupt Afghan presidential election

TEHRAN — Insurgents worked to disrupt Afghanistan's presidential election Saturday, with a series of blasts reported across the country as voters headed to the polls and troops flooded the streets of the capital.

The vote marks the culmination of a bloody election campaign that is seen as a two-horse race between President Ashraf Ghani and his bitter rival Abdullah Abdullah, the country's chief executive.

The Taliban, who unleashed a string of bombings during the two-month campaign, in recent days issued repeated warnings they intend to attack polling centers.

At least 15 people were wounded in the southern city of Kandahar when a bomb went off at a polling station about two hours after voting began, a hospital director told AFP, and officials across the country reported several small explosions at other election sites.

"Peace is the first desire of our people," Ghani said after casting his vote at a high school in Kabul.



"Our roadmap (for peace) is ready; I want the people to give us permission and legitimacy so that we pursue peace." Wary authorities placed an uneasy

Kabul under partial lockdown, flooding streets with troops and banning trucks from entering the city in an effort to stop would-be suicide bombers attacking the electoral process.

One voter at a polling station in a Kabul high school said it was important to cast a ballot.

"I know there are security threats but bombs and attacks have become part of our everyday lives," 55-year-old Mohiuddin, who only gave one name, told AFP.

"I am not afraid, we have to vote if we want to bring changes to our lives."

The capital's traffic, often gridlocked, dropped to a trickle as schools and offices closed for the day and as many people chose to stay off the roads.

Some 9.6 million Afghans are registered to vote, but many have lost any hope that after 18 years of war any leader can unify the fractious country and improve basic living conditions, boost the stagnating economy or bolster security AFP reported.

Johnson referred to police watchdog over businesswoman links

TEHRAN— The government of London said it had referred Prime Minister Boris Johnson to Britain's police watchdog for potential investigation over allegations of misconduct involving a U.S. businesswoman while he was mayor of London.

The Greater London Authority (GLA) said Friday it had referred to a "conduct matter" concerning Johnson to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC), which investigates complaints connected to the police.

The referral follows allegations, first reported by The Sunday Times, that when Johnson was mayor, he failed to declare close personal links to tech entrepreneur Jennifer Arcuri who received thousands of pounds in public business funding and places on official trade trips.

Asked about the referral, Johnson's spokesperson told Reuters: "The prime minister as mayor of London did a huge amount of work when selling our capital city around the world, beating the drum for London and the UK.

"Everything was done with propriety and in the normal way," he added.

Arcuri did not immediately respond to an emailed request for comment.

The matter has been referred to the police watchdog because Johnson was head of the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime, a role equivalent to a police commissioner, during his 2008-2016 term as mayor.

Under the referral, the authority will try to determine whether there are grounds for a full investigation that could lead to criminal charges of misconduct in public office, Reuters reported.

The GLA said in a statement: "The Monitoring Officer of the GLA has today recorded a 'conduct matter' against Boris Johnson and referred him to the Independent Office for Police Conduct so it can assess whether or not it is necessary to investigate the former Mayor of London for the criminal offence of misconduct in public office."

Iraqi PM approves reopening al-Qa'im border crossing with Syria

TEHRAN — Iraqi Prime Minister Adil Abdul-Mahdi has authorized the reopening of the al-Qa'im border crossing with Syria as both countries manage to restore security to the region.

The Iraqi state news agency INA quoted the Arab country's border agency chief as saying on Friday that the crossing will be opened for travelers and trade on Monday.

The crossing, which connects the town of al-Qa'im in Iraq's Anbar Province to the Syrian city of Bukamal in Syria's Dayr al-Zawr Province, was closed in 2013 to support Iraqi forces in their fight against al-Qaeda militants and later Daesh terrorists.

Al-Qa'im and Bukamal lie on a strategic supply route and the crossing between them had only been open to government or military traffic.

The planned opening of the border crossing comes at a time that both Syrian and Iraqi governments have mostly purged their countries of Takfiri terrorist outfits.

In October 2018, the Nassib crossing border crossing between Jordan and Syria opened to people and goods after being closed for three years.

In recent weeks, however, Israel has launched attacks on the pro-government Iraqi military force Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), or Hashd al-Sha'abi, which has been protecting the Arab country's border from infiltration attempts by foreign-backed Syria Takfiri terrorists.

On Friday, sources in Iraq reported that an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) struck targets within a base belonging to the Hashd al-Sha'abi on the Syrian border.

Similar attacks have been reported in Bukamal, where members of the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah are allegedly helping the Syrian army to secure the crossing and its surrounding areas, Press TV reported.

The Israeli attacks are considered an attempt by the regime to prop up Takfiri terrorist outfits that have been suffering heavy defeats in the region.

Israel is the origin of modern terrorism: Mahathir Mohamad

➔➤ "Because of the creation of Israel, there is now enmity towards the Muslims and Islam. Muslims are accused of terrorism even if they did nothing.

"Muslim countries have been destabilized through the campaign for democracy and regime change. Muslims everywhere have been oppressed, expelled from their countries and refused asylum.

"Thousands have died at sea and in the severe winters. One cannot deny that in the past there were no massive migration. Now the wars and instability due to regime change have forced them to run away from their countries," he added.

Mahathir also said that the application of the rule of law has been selective.

"Friends may break any law and get away scot-free. Thus, Israel can break all the international laws and norms of the world and it will continue to be supported and defended. The unfriendly countries can do nothing right. There is no justice in the world," he added.

According to MalayMail Dr. Mahathir also again highlighted the fate of the Rohingyas in Myanmar.

"Many colonies of the West, upon independence, expelled non-natives in their countries. But nowhere have they been as brutal as Myanmar.

"Even natives massacred, brutally killed and raped in full view of the world backgrounded by the burning houses and villages of the victims.

"They were forced to migrate and now they dare not return to Myanmar even when offered. They cannot trust the Myanmar military unless some form of non-Myanmar protection is given.

"The helplessness of the world in stopping atrocities inflicted on the Rohingyas in Myanmar has reduced the regard for the resolution of the UN. Now, despite UN resolution on Jammu and Kashmir, the country has been invaded and occupied.

"There may be reasons for this action but it is still wrong.



The problem must be solved by peaceful means. "India should work with Pakistan to resolve this problem. Ignoring the UN would lead to other forms of disregard for the UN and the Rule of Law," he said.

Ammar al-Hakim, crown prince of Abu Dhabi discuss the situation in the region

TEHRAN— Chairman of the National Wisdom Movement Ammar al-Hakim discussed with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan the situation in Iraq and the region, Iraq's Nina News reported.

During the meeting, they discussed developments in the Iraqi arena and exchanged views on a number of issues of common concern, particularly the challenges facing the Arab region and ways to deal with them and contain their

repercussions.

Abu Dhabi Crown Prince stressed the UAE's keenness to strengthen its relations with Iraq to serve the interests of the two brotherly countries and peoples.

The meeting was attended by Sheikh Tahnoon bin Zayed Al Nahyan, National Security Advisor and Ali bin Hammad Al Shamsi, Deputy Secretary General of the Supreme Council for National Security.

Pompeo subpoenaed as Democrats press Trump impeachment

TEHRAN — Democrats charged aggressively into an impeachment investigation of President Donald Trump, ordering Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to turn over Ukraine-related documents and scheduling testimony for witnesses to alleged abuse of power by the US leader.

Three House committees gave Pompeo one week to produce the documents, saying multiple State Department officials have direct knowledge of Trump's efforts to enlist the Ukraine government's help in his US campaign for re-election.

"The Committees are investigating the extent to

which President Trump jeopardized national security by pressing Ukraine to interfere with our 2020 election and by withholding security assistance provided by Congress to help Ukraine counter Russian aggression," they said.

Public support is growing for impeachment after the release of an anonymous whistleblower's complaint on Thursday, reportedly made by a CIA analyst who had worked in the White House.

It accused Trump of pressuring Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky in a July 25 phone call to supply dirt on former vice president Joe Biden, the favorite to represent

Democrats against Trump in the 2020 presidential election.

The complaint also revealed that White House aides, alarmed at Trump's implicit offer to release aid in exchange for Zelensky's help, sought to hide the record of the call in a highly secure computer system normally used only for the country's most top-secret intelligence.

Congressional investigators announced Friday interviews starting next week with five State Department officials, including former ambassador to Ukraine Marie Yovanovitch, whom Trump reportedly forced out earlier this year for resisting his efforts to pressure Kiev to probe Biden, AFP reported. m

Trump's support for his "favorite dictator": The duality in Washington's look

➔➤ But in the meanwhile, Trump's position toward widespread protests in Egypt should be considered. He supported el-Sisi, saying there might be protests in every country and against everyone. Egypt has a great leader, he is very respectable. There was chaos before el-Sisi's administration, but there is no chaos anymore since he came to power.

Trump stated that he is not worried about the protests in Egypt because they are carried out in every countries. There were protest even during Barack Obama's presidency.

Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, who has travelled New York to attend UN General Assembly meetings, has made considerable remarks about his American counterpart. He claimed that "political Islam" is the cause of the chaos in the region. El-Sisi said that public opinion will not accept the rule of political Islam groups, and as long as these groups are trying to seek power, the region will remain unstable.

This is not the first time that Trump explicitly backed el-Sisi, regardless of his actions and policies in the country, and violating freedom of speech. Last month, Trump stated one of his most controversial remarks about el-Sisi. "Where is my favorite dictator?" Trump said as he was about to meet el-Sisi outside a hotel in Biarritz, France. After Trump's words the audience became silent.

Trump's interpretation indicates that he believes in el-Sisi's dictatorship nature but does not willing to lose an ally such Egypt in the region. El-Sisi has interfered in many important regional cases since taking the power. Following Saudi Arabia's hostile policies against Qatar is an example of these actions. Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the UAE and Bahrain cut their diplomatic ties with Qatar on June 5, 2017 by claiming Doha's support for terrorism.

Egypt also participated in Saudi-led coalition against Yemen, and dispatch military forces to attack the country. In fact, it can be said that el-Sisi follows Riyadh's policies and obeys the orders of its leaders on regional issues.

Since the beginning of el-Sisi's administration, human rights organizations has repeatedly warned about deteriorating human rights and freedom of speech in the country, with many claiming Egypt has become more like a large prison.

El-Sisi's move in overthrowing Mohamad Mursi and opposing with the establishment of a religious rule are among the approaches that are very pleasant to Trump. Of course it should be noted that Egypt's arms contracts with the U.S., like other Arab countries in the Middle East, have great benefits for Washington. Egypt is important to the U.S. in terms of providing easy access to Suez Canal, which is why the U.S. Department of State, despite affirming the violation of human rights in Egypt, has agreed with giving \$ 1.3 bn military aid to the country.

It can be said that U.S. support for dictatorship around the world, especially in the Middle East, is not something new and strange. This time the issue is completely highlighted in case of Abdel Fattah el-Sisi and Egypt. The country is of great importance for the U.S. and implementing Washington's policies in the Middle East in the shadow of Cairo's strict adherence to the policies of U.S. actor, Saudi Arabia. Trump has backed el-Sisi several times by ignoring extensive and unprecedented protests. Meanwhile, a smaller-scale protest in every countries that are opposite the U.S. leads to Washington's support for the protesters, and the U.S. will do its best to internationalize the protests.

The U.S. has evolved to "Inverted Totalitarianism"

➔➤ Perhaps in more than in any other country, and especially one with a government boasting hegemonic pretensions, the "average" American has little time or motivation to figure out what's happening overseas in the absence of some direct attack on the so-called "homeland". Many are beset with economic troubles, for one thing; it has been estimated that over 50 percent of Americans could not come up with \$400 in an emergency.

What wealth that exists lies almost exclusively at the very top of the food chain – among oligarchs and billionaires and those fortunate enough, like many of Wall Street, to enjoy high salaries. The skew mimics the skew seen in 1929, just before the Great Depression of the 1930s. Plus there is the fact of U.S. geographic isolation from other cultures and polities.

Americans are not "bad" people, although it may seem so to Iranians and many others in Asia. They are mostly just ignorant and have allowed successive administrations over recent decades to chip away at the separation of powers, at the Constitution, at the rule of law and much more, such that the U.S. no longer is a constitutional republic, but something the great but now deceased Princeton University thinker, Dr. Sheldon Wolin, called a state of "inverted totalitarianism".

Writer Chris Hedges, who was for years a Mideast correspondent for the New York Times, but who was forced out of the newspaper for his opposition to the war on Iraq in 2003, explains this kind of totalitarianism best: "It does not find its expression in a demagogue or a charismatic leader but in the faceless anonymity of the corporate state.

It pays outward fealty to the façade of electoral politics, the Constitution, civil liberties, freedom of the press, a fair judiciary, (etc)...but it has effectively seized all the mechanisms of power to render the citizen impotent." (Except that now, Donald Trump literally considers himself a leader, and charismatic, and acts like a demagogue...and could be impeached, but don't count on it. Trump is still likely to win reelection, provided he does not do something even more stupid than he has already done, like his withdrawal from the JCPOA.)

Meanwhile, it appears Netanyahu will be the one trying to form a new government in Israel. Many are disappointed about this, but Netanyahu is likely to accelerate Israel's decline in world opinion since unlike Benny Gantz he won't have any kind of grace period as the reelected PM.

And the Saudis are in steep decline post the attack on Kurais and Abqaiq. The war on Yemen has been a disaster for the Saudis, especially now. Interestingly, many in the Pentagon knew it would be disastrous well before it all began in March 2015, but the Saudis gave the U.S. no advance notice of their attack that Spring. The Houthis were actually considered a bulwark against al-Qaeda in Arabia and some senior officers in the Pentagon reportedly considered supporting them in some fashion until the Saudis began the war.

TEHRAN — State broadcaster TRT Haber says Turkey plans to build towns within the so-called safe zone in northeast Syria, raising fears that Ankara might be carving out a patch of land in the Arab country for itself.

The network revealed details of the scheme in territories outside the control of the Syrian government, which Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan proposed at the 74th session of the UN General Assembly earlier this week.

Last month, Turkey and the U.S. agreed to set up the "safe zone" stretching from the

Euphrates River to the Iraqi border.

Syria slammed the deal as a "blatant aggression" against the country's territorial integrity and a "flagrant violation" of the international law and the UN Charter.

At the United Nations, Erdogan held up a map to show the zone which Turkey wants to set up with the United States, and where it says one million Syrian refugees would be housed.

Turkey has pushed for the 20-mile (32 km) deep "safe zone" to be established along more than 400 km of its border with northeast Syria.

It initially said the aim of the zone was to drive back Syrian Kurdish YPG forces - which Ankara views as a security threat - from the border. It now says the region will also be used to settle 1 million of the 3.6 million Syrian refugees hosted by Turkey.

Under Turkey's plan, which would cost around 151 billion lira (\$27 billion), 140 villages and 10 towns would be established inside the "safe zone".

The project will feature a total of 200,000 residences. Each village would have 1,000 houses, enough for housing

5,000 people, while each town would provide 6,000 homes for a total projected population of 30,000.

Every household residing in villages would have its own farmland while each town would have hospitals, football pitches, mosques, schools and other facilities, the report said.

According to press TV, TRT Haber reported that foreign funds would be established to build the residences, which are expected to settle 1 million of the 3.6 million Syrian refugees hosted by Turkey. It also published mock-up photos of the housing project.

Brescia get suspended stand closure for fans Pjanic ‘gypsy’ gibe

Serie A club Brescia have received a one-match suspended stand closure after Juventus’s Bosnian midfielder Miralem Pjanic was subjected to abuse from the crowd during an Italian league match this week.

Chants of ‘zingaro’ which translates as ‘gypsy’ could be heard from the Brescia supporters when the midfielder touched the ball. But the Bosnian silenced his abusers by scoring the winning goal with Juventus coming back from 1-0 down to win 2-1.

The Italian Football Federation’s disciplinary body reported the insults came from “90%” of the occupants of the tribune, which was full that day and can accommodate up to 4,700 spectators. The sanction is suspended for one year.

Inter Milan’s Romelu Lukaku was subjected to monkey chants from Cagliari supporters early in the season, with AC Milan’s Franck Kessie and Brazilian Dalbert of Fiorentina also targeted by racist abuse, without any sanctions being issued.

(Source: Goal)

Liverpool face investigation over ineligible player in MK Dons win

The Football League (EFL) is investigating Liverpool to find out if the Premier League club potentially fielded an ineligible player in its third-round League Cup victory over MK Dons on Wednesday.

Possible sanctions could include a fine or Liverpool being removed from the competition. The identity of the player in question was not disclosed.

“We are currently considering the matter,” an EFL spokesman said.

Liverpool beat League One (third-tier) side MK Dons 2-0 to set up a fourth round clash with Arsenal. Manager Jurgen Klopp fielded four teenagers in the starting line-up for the third-round clash.

“The club are aware of a potential administrative issue pertaining to one of our players,” a Liverpool spokesman said.

“We are working with the relevant authorities in order to establish the facts of the matter and will be making no further comment until this process is complete.”

(Source: Reuters)

Potential Mexican investor in Dutch club gets marching order from angry fans

A potential Mexican investor in Dutch club Roda JC Kerkrade was chased out from their stadium on Friday by angry supporters in an incident local police say they are investigating.

Mauricio Garcia de la Vega was heckled from the start of the Dutch second division game against De Graafschap and then confronted by supporters at half-time, who marched him out of the stadium, social media videos showed.

“Police on Friday provided safety to a potential investor in Roda JC,” said a statement from regional police.

“The man had a discussion with supporters who then took him out of the stadium in Kerkrade where he got stuck and was brought to safety. Police are investigating.”

Supporters groups had planned to remove de la Vega, described as sports agent and concert promoter, from the stadium before the match in protest of his proposed takeover of the struggling club.

Roda has been mired in financial difficulties over last five years and has previous history of failed foreign investment.

The protests follow Dutch media expose of de la Vega’s alleged legal woes in his home country, including a suspension by the Mexican football federation.

The Dutch football association KNVB are still to ratify the proposed takeover amid an investigation into his suitability.

Roda are former Dutch cup winners but were relegated in 2014 amid financial problems after 41 years in the top flight of Dutch football.

They bounced back after one season but went down again last year.

A planned takeover of Roda JC by Russian investor Aleksei Korotaev ended when he was jailed in Dubai two years ago.

Roda coach Jean-Paul de Jong said after Friday’s match it was “very sad” what had happened.

“It was also a hard blow to the squad and we distance ourselves from this action,” he told reporters.

(Source: Mirror)

Nicaraguan FA apologizes for FIFA Awards controversy

The Nicaraguan Football Federation (Fenifut) has apologized for questioning the authenticity of the FIFA Best awards and admitted they made a mistake when sending their votes to the world governing body for this year’s vote.

Shortly after the awards ceremony on Monday, Nicaragua captain Juan Barrera said that in spite of FIFA documents saying he voted for winner Lionel Messi, he did not take part in the poll.

But Fenifut, after backing Barrera’s claims, are now acknowledging they erroneously put Barrera’s name on the form, when the player who voted was left back Manuel Rosas.

“Fenifut would like to make it clear this was a misunderstanding,” the Central American federation said in a statement. “Fenifut would like to apologize.”

The claims – along with a mistake by the Egyptian FA which meant that votes for Mohamed Salah were not counted - cast a pall over the results announced in Milan on Monday.

Barcelona’s Argentina striker Messi picked up the FIFA player of the year award for a record sixth time, beating off competition from Liverpool defender Virgil van Dijk and five-time winner Cristiano Ronaldo.

Liverpool manager Klopp took the top coach gong for the first time, ahead of Premier League counterparts Pep Guardiola (Manchester City) and Mauricio Pochettino (Tottenham Hotspur).

The captain and coach of every national soccer federation affiliated to FIFA get to vote on the player of the year, along with one media representative from each country.

In FIFA’s published list, Barrera’s top three selections in the best male player category were shown as Messi, Sadio Mane and Cristiano Ronaldo.

Fenifut said those were actually Rosas’ picks.

(Source: AP)

Debilitating humidity stifles Doha women’s marathon



Women’s marathon runners were rushed for medical attention, faces contorted in pain while other competitors hobbled off the track in the inaugural road race of Doha’s World Athletics Championships.

Humidity of more than 73 percent and temperatures of almost 33 degrees Celsius (91 degrees Fahrenheit) dogged the race, specially started at midnight to avoid peak heat, as it meandered along a course on Doha’s Corniche coast road.

“You see somebody down on the course and it’s just, extremely grounding and scary,” said Canada’s Lyndsay Tessier, 41, who was one of those to finish, coming in ninth. “That could be you in the next kilometre, the next 500 meters.”

“It was just really scary and intimidating and daunting. So that was enough to hold me back.”

Around two dozen runners in the 68-strong marathon field fell by the wayside as the sweltering conditions took their toll, in a sport which rarely sees drop outs at this level.

Kenya’s Ruth Chepngetich won gold when she took the tape after 2 hours 32 minutes and 43 seconds, crediting “training in a hot area” of her home country for helping her to tame the elements.

Tessier’s fellow competitors filed behind her as she spoke to the media, some held up by their coaches and others

too exhausted to stop and speak.

“I’m just really grateful to have finished standing up,” added Tessier.

The Championships’ organisers told race participants that the event’s timing could be changed if conditions proved prohibitive but ultimately pressed ahead with the original plan.

Almost all of the runners were saturated with sweat by the halfway point and most ran with bottles as some video cameras

being used to film the race malfunctioned because of the conditions.

A mild breeze that lapped the corniche during the opening ceremony and fireworks display had dwindled by the end of the race leaving the runners to bear the brunt of the surging humidity.

■ ‘Guinea pigs’

Marathon runners and walkers do not have the luxury of competing in the championships’ principal venue, the air-

conditioned Khalifa Stadium where the climate is maintained at 23-25 degrees.

France’s defending 50 km walk world champion Yohann Diniz strongly criticised the IAAF for being made to compete in Doha’s humid conditions.

“I am extremely upset. If we were in the stadium we would have normal conditions, between 24-25 degrees, but outside they have placed us in a furnace, which is just not possible,” he said on Friday.

“They are making us guinea pigs.”

Tessier said that seeing so many competitors drop out of one race was “alarming and you feel for them because you do know the training that’s gone into this”.

“You know how badly everyone wants it and wants to be here. You don’t wanna finish it or end it that way,” she said as sweat dripped off her face and a team member followed behind her with water.

Throughout the race, medical golf carts ferried runners who dropped out to a busy medical tent as a team of doctors, which included an expert on heat in sports, assessed their condition.

Namibia’s Helalia Johannes, who secured bronze, said hydration also played a key role in her strong showing.

“I cannot say I enjoyed the event -- there was a song that says ‘I must finish’,” she said.

(Source: AFP)

IAAF placing athletes in jeopardy, claims decathlon champion Mayer



Decathlon star Kevin Mayer slammed the decision to stage the World Athletics Championships in Doha on Saturday, accusing organisers of putting athletes “in jeopardy.”

The 27-year-old -- Olympic silver medalist in 2016 -- said staging the championships in the heat and humidity was a “catastrophe”.

Mayer was speaking after 28 of the 68 runners in the women’s marathon failed to finish after wilting in weather conditions of 32 degrees Celsius (90 degrees Fahrenheit) and humidity of over 70%.

His stinging comments follow those of 50 kilometres walk defending champion Yohann Diniz, who accused the IAAF of treating athletes as ‘idiots’ for making them compete in such conditions.

Diniz -- who added the walkers were being used as “guinea pigs” -- defends his title later on Saturday, both the men and women’s races get underway (2030GMT).

“Clearly by organising the championship here, they didn’t put the athletes first, they’ve mostly put them in jeopardy,” said Mayer at a press conference

on Saturday.

“Now, it’s up to us to not act like princesses and to get on with it anyway but for sure, we’re not at all in the right conditions to perform.”

Mayer, whose own defence of the title he won in London gets started on Wednesday, made no bones about what he thought about the championships.

He accused the organisers of not adapting the heat inside the Khalifa Stadium, although it has been through state-of-the-art cooling system.

“Even if people aren’t saying it out loud, it’s obvious it’s a catastrophe,” he said.

“There is no one in the stadium, the heat is not at all adapted, yesterday we saw about 30 people drop out of the marathon, it’s sad.

“Afterwards, I think at times like this you have to replace reason and focus on passion, otherwise I would have boycotted this championship.

“But clearly I am here and I’m only focused on the decathlon and not everything else. “

(Source: AFP)

Harden, Westbrook want to play for USA at Tokyo Olympics



Two-time reigning NBA scoring champion James Harden and fellow Houston Rockets guard Russell Westbrook said Friday they want to play for the United States at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

Speaking to reporters a day before the NBA club opens training camp for the 2019-20 campaign, seven-time NBA All-Star Harden made it clear he wants a chance at a third consecutive gold medal after helping US title runs in 2012 and 2016.

“Of course that’s one of my goals, to represent the USA and this beautiful country at the Games,” Harden said.

Westbrook said he also wants to be a part of the American squad of NBA stars that will attempt to capture a fourth consecutive gold medal and a seventh in eight tries since NBA talent first competed in the Olympics in 1992 at Barcelona with the Michael Jordan-led “Dream Team.”

After settling for bronze at the 2004 Athens Olympics, the Americans created a national team program and returned to Olympic supremacy.

But with many high-profile players skipping this month’s Basketball World Cup in China, the US team of NBA players settled for seventh, barely booking an Olympic berth and raising questions about how well even an elite US NBA squad would fare in Japan next year.

That prompted Tokyo Olympics commitments by Golden State guards Stephen Curry and Klay Thompson and four-time NBA All-Star guard Damian Lillard of Portland even before the Rockets’ starting backcourt joined them.

Harden, the 2018 NBA Most Valuable Player, averaged a career-high 31.6 points a game last season as well as a career-best 6.9 rebounds and 6.6 assists.

Eight-time NBA All-Star Westbrook, the 2017 NBA MVP who played for Oklahoma City last season, had 22.9 points and career highs of 11.1 rebounds and 10.7 assists a game.

Two-time NBA scoring champion Westbrook has led the NBA in assists the past two seasons and averaged triple-doubles in each of the past three seasons.

(Source: Eurosport)

Goalkeeping howler hands Liverpool win at Sheffield United



Liverpool extended their record of consecutive Premier League wins to 16 after beating Sheffield United 1-0 at Bramall Lane on Saturday.

Georginio Wijnaldum scored the only goal of the game but it came from a terrible mistake by goalkeeper Dean Henderson, who is on loan from Manchester United.

Liverpool recorded their first ever Premier League victory at Bramall Lane in four attempts and extended their perfect start to the new campaign.

Wijnaldum admitted afterwards that Jurgen Klopp’s side did not play well during the game.

“We didn’t start the game well,” said Wijnaldum. “In the first half we slowed the game down too much and that’s why they could stop us.

“It was not the best game we had but we won. A few years ago we would not have been able to win these games.”

The hosts started the game very brightly with Oliver McBurnie forcing Adrian into a save inside the opening five minutes.

Liverpool started to find their way back into the game and after 34 minutes, Virgil van Dijk produced a long ball which Sadio Mane controlled but sliced his shot high and wide.

The Senegal international missed another golden chance just before the break after he hit the post from

close range after being put through by Roberto Firmino.

Liverpool dominated possession in the second half but failed to create any clear cut chances.

John Fleck had a glorious chance for the hosts to score but Andrew Robertson produced a great block to keep the scores level.

Liverpool took the lead three minutes later in fortuitous fashion when Wijnaldum struck a volley on the edge

of the box that went straight through Henderson’s legs. Salah had a fantastic chance to score a second but Henderson made a save with his foot.

Substitute Leon Clarke had a wonderful opportunity to score an equaliser late on but blazed his shot wide from a cross.

■ Talking point

Relentless Reds march on. They had to work for it, but Liverpool ground out another victory and their impressive start to the season continues. It’s seven wins from seven in the league. While it’s still early days, the advantage they have over City feels significant because of how few points these teams dropped last season. There are more tests to come - Liverpool’s next three opponents in the league are Leicester, Tottenham and Manchester United - but they have cleared every hurdle they’ve come across recently and showed impressive character here, as well as that famous ability to win even when playing poorly.

■ Man of the match

Virgil van Dijk (Liverpool). One of a number of impressive centre-halves on show, he read the game brilliantly and was commanding in the air. He was probably the only of Liverpool’s big guns who lived up to their reputation today. Who needs an award from FIFA?

(Source: ESPN)

Iran heading to IBSA Blind Football Asian Championships

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran football 5-a-side left Tehran Saturday morning to participate at the IBSA Blind Football Asian Championships in Pattaya, Thailand.

Reigning Asian champions and world number three China are in Group A along with hosts Thailand, South Korea and newcomers India.

In group B, 2017 Asian silver medalists and world number team Iran will face Japan, Malaysia and debutants Oman.

The 2019 IBSA Blind Football Asian Championships will be held in Pattaya, Thailand, from Sept. 30th to Oct. 7th.

Bringing together eight national teams, these will be the largest ever Asian Championships and will see two teams - India and Oman - make their debut at official IBSA championships.

The top two teams at the competition will qualify for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games.

The 2019 Asian Championships are the 8th edition of the event, which took place for the first time in 2005 in Vietnam.

"We know that Iran have a difficult task in the competition because teams like Thailand and Malaysia as well as China, Japan and South Korea compete in the games with the aim of winning a spot at the Paralympics," Iran coach Javad Felfeli said.

"We've had good training camps in the previous months but failed to arrange friendly matches. We wanted to play Spain and Turkey but the matches were canceled because they announced a change to their schedule," he added.

Five-a-side football is a variation of association football, in which each team fields five players (four outfield players and a goalkeeper). Other differences from football include a smaller pitch, smaller goals, a reduced game duration. Matches are played indoors, or outdoors on AstroTurf or artificial grass pitches that may be enclosed within a barrier or «cage» to prevent the ball from leaving the playing area and keep the game constantly flowing.



Ramin Tabatabaei elected as FIBA Medical Commission member



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Head of Iran Basketball Federation Ramin Tabatabaei has been appointed as a member of the International Basketball Federation's (FIBA) Medical Commission.

"This appointment reflects your enduring basketball skills, experience and commitment. With this appointment, we hope to

work closely with basketball development and promotion around the world," FIBA wrote in a letter sent to Tabatabaei.

FIBA Medical Commission, which was formed in 1977 and comprises membership from the five FIBA Zones. It has the responsibility of advising FIBA on medical and anti-doping matters.

Iran water polo beat China at Asian Age Group



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran water polo team defeated China 8-6 on Saturday at the 10th Asian Age Group Swimming Championship.

Iran started the competition with a 22-4 defeat to Japan and then lost to Kazakhstan 9-6.

Iran beat India 17-7 and humiliated Sri Lanka 37-0 in the next match.

Iran will play Uzbekistan on Sunday.

The 10th Asian Age Group Swimming Championships got underway in Bengaluru, India.

The competitions kicked off on Sept. 24 and will run until Oct. 2.

Japan edge DPR Korea for title



opponents, Japan showed they were made of sterner stuff, immediately launching attacks of their own, and finding their reward in the 19th minute.

Japan's equaliser was beautiful in its simplicity, with Yuko Inose spotting the off-the-ball movement of teammate Amano and doing just enough to direct the ball into her path, before Amano finished unerringly from inside the box to become the first player in the tournament to beat DPR Korea goalkeeper Pak Ju-mi.

Japan's second goal came just four minutes later, this time through a sensational 25-yard strike from defender Hayashi, who pounced when an Aemu Oyama set-piece delivery from wide spilled loose off the boot of Inose, unleashing a strike every bit as good as her stunning opener against Bangladesh on Matchday Two.

Rarely tested in nearly 400 prior minutes of football, DPR Korea had conceded twice in the space of just four,

but they were still well and truly in the game and would have gone to half-time on level terms had it not been for the desperately unlucky Kim Hye-yong, who saw one strike on goal hit both uprights before trickling harmlessly away as Japan maintained a 2-1 advantage at the interval.

After a first-half played at a blistering pace, the early stages of the second period produced fewer scoring chances but saw significant tactical switches with Japanese top scorer Maika Hamano and four-goal DPR Korea forward Kim Hye-yong both replaced.

Hanon Nishio, Hamano's impressive replacement, nearly announced her arrival in stunning style when she beat three defenders before firing a shot narrowly wide just after the hour mark, while DPR Korea had the ball in the net in the 64th minute, but only well after a foul had been called on Japanese goalkeeper Nina Noda.

DPR Korea threw all of their considerable attacking power behind finding an equalizer, but only went close with a Myong Yu-jong header, which was kept out by Noda, as Japan claimed a highly impressive and well-deserved victory.

Japan's title is their first AFC U-16 Women's Championship crown since 2013, with that group of players going on to become world champions the following year – an achievement that Kano's players will have the chance to repeat in India.

(Source: AFC)

Japan emerged victorious at the AFC U-16 Women's Championship Thailand 2019, outlasting defending champions DPR Korea 2-1 in a gripping final at Chonburi Stadium on Saturday.

Two goals in four first-half minutes from Suzu Amano and Manaka Hayashi helped Japan overturn an early Hong Song-ok penalty and end DPR Korea's four-match winning run in the tournament.

The win makes Japan the first nation to win the competition four times, as head coach Michihisa Kano's charges followed on from previous successes at the U-17 level in 2005, and U-16 triumphs in 2011 and 2013.

While Japan claimed the title, both nations will represent Asia at the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup India 2020.

With a combined record of 39 goals scored and none conceded coming into the decider, Japan and DPR Korea showed why they are two of the world's most successful women's youth football nations, producing an opening 45 minutes of quality and intensity.

Chasing a third successive title, DPR Korea were the first to strike, going ahead through a ninth-minute penalty after Ririka Tanno brought down a surging Kim Chung-mi, with Hong stepping up to convincingly to convert the spot-kick for the simplest but most important of her four goals in Chonburi.

But while early goals from DPR Korea had paved the way for one-sided affairs against all four of their previous

Sportsmanship on full display as runner carries exhausted rival over finish line at IAAF Worlds

The International Association of Athletics Federations, the governing body of global athletics, or track and field, pushed back the start of its biennial world championships by several weeks after awarding the 2019 competition to Doha, Qatar.

It's incredibly hot in Qatar, so the hope was that by pushing the championships back that athletes would have somewhat cooler temperatures for competition. But on Friday night as men toed the line for the first heat of the 5,000 meter preliminaries, it was still 90 degrees.

With just a few hundred meters left, Aruban athlete Jonathan Busby slowed to a walk and was nearly doubled over, likely from cramping.

Fellow runner Braima Suncar Dabó, from the small West African nation of Guinea-Bissau, came up to Busby and grabbed his arm, and the two began shuffling together around the final turn. After several steps Dabó lifted Busby's left arm and put it around his shoulder, holding him up.

The crowd inside the stadium roared as it watched the beautiful display of sportsmanship.

Dabó and Busby crossed the finish line and Busby collapsed to the track — but not before turning off the stopwatch on his wrist. Each man was the only athlete from his respective country competing at Worlds this year; the IAAF allows every country to enter one athlete in the meet regardless of

whether he or she has met the qualifying standard in an event.

Busby was disqualified for receiving assistance, but he can say he crossed the finish line.

Dabó, amazingly, ran a personal best time despite nearly carrying Busby over the final 150 meters or so.

"I just wanted to help the guy finish the race," Dabó told media. "I wanted to help him cross the line. I think anyone in that situation would have done the same thing."

The moment was reminiscent of the 1992 Olympics, when British 400 meter runner Derek Redmond suffered a hamstring injury while running and his father came out of the stands to help his son finish the race.

(Source: Yahoo)



FIFA Women's Ranking: Iran move one spot down

IRNA— Iran's women's football team moved one place down to 71st in the latest FIFA Women's Ranking.

Australia is the best Asian football team, followed by Korea DPR and Japan.

The US women's national team continues to be the No.1 side in the world ahead of second-placed Germany and Netherlands at third.

The next FIFA Women's World Ranking will be published on 13 December 2019.

Naft Abadan fails to reach FIBA Asia Champions Cup final

TASNIM — Palayesh Naft Abadan of Iran lost to Alvark Tokyo of Japan in the 2019 FIBA Asia Champions Cup semifinals on Saturday.

Naft Abadan, who had already defeated Bahrain's Al-Muharrar, Fubon Braves of Chinese Taipei and Thailand's Hi-Tech Bangkok City, lost to the Japanese team 80-73.

Naft Abadan will meet the loser of Al-Muharrar in the third-place match on Sunday.

The 2019 FIBA Asia Champions Cup is the 28th staging of the FIBA Asia Champions Cup, the international basketball club tournament of FIBA Asia.

The competition is being held in Thailand from September 24 to 29.

Esteghlal at risk of being banned from ACL

PLDC — Esteghlal football team from Iran are at risk of being banned from the upcoming AFC Champions League since the team has failed to settle its tax debt.

All clubs must settle their debts according to Asian Football Confederation's regulations.

Asian Football Confederation had issued a statement saying that clubs with outstanding debts would not be allowed to compete in next year's Asian Champions League unless the arrears were paid.

According to the local media, Esteghlal have paid their debts but the Iranian club have yet to settle their tax debt.

The clubs had to settle their debts and send proof to the League Organization before August 15. They must meet the required professional standards to participate at the AFC Champions League.

Iran beach soccer to hold camp in Oman

TASNIM — Iran beach soccer team will hold a training camp in Oman as part of preparation for the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC) World Beach Games in Qatar.



Team Melli will play several friendly matches with Oman before participating at ANOC.

Iran have been drawn in Group C along with Ukraine, Senegal and Paraguay.

Team Melli will face Ukraine on October 11 and play Senegal and Paraguay on October 13 and 14, respectively.

The international beach multi-sport event is being organized by the ANOC and hosted by the Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC). More than 1,300 athletes from around 90 countries are expected to participate in the event.

Men's Beach Soccer

Group A: Brazil, Switzerland, UAE and Morocco

Group B: Italy, Spain, Mexico and Solomon Islands

Group C: Iran, Paraguay, Senegal and Ukraine

Group D: Russia, Japan, Uruguay and El Salvador

Digital Scoresheet successfully implemented in two major Asia events

Advancements to improve basketball in Asia moves forward with the continued implementation of the Digital Scoresheet system in competitions.

It is being used for the first time in Asian events at both the FIBA Women's Asia Cup in India and FIBA Asia Champions Cup 2019 in Thailand. The technology will continue to be used from this point forward.

"We have successfully implemented the Digital Scoresheet system at the FIBA Women's Asia Cup 2019 and FIBA Asia Champions Cup. From now on, the Digital scoresheet will be present in all the Asian competitions," said Hagop Khajirian, FIBA Executive Director - Asia.

The Digital Scoresheet system provides convenience by being editable, resulting in a smaller margin of error for the scorer's table operators. Since it is digital-based, the system is also environmental friendly.

Following the effective use of the system at Asia Champions Cup and the Women's Asia Cup, the Digital Scoresheet system will now be available for all National Federations.

"This tool is already provided to quite a number of National federations and we have already started organizing workshops with local TO-s since mid-summer. As of January 2020, using digital scoresheets will be a must in all basketball events Asia-wide," Khajirian added.

(Source: FIBA)

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 **GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING** 

It is not fair to judge on mere suspicion.
Imam Ali (AS)

New plays coming to Tehran theaters

A R T TEHRAN — Tehran theaters will be hosting three new plays “The Clock”, “Chamber Music” and “Beautiful”.

French author Emmanuel Robles’ play “The Clock” will be directed by Hamidreza Hedayati at Hafez Hall tonight.

The play is about Vanina, a young girl who stands against Alfieri, who reigns over the city by terror and corruption.



This combination photo shows the posters for plays “The Clock” (L), “Chamber Music” (C) and “Beautiful”.

Roya Mirelmi, Susan Parvar, Nasser Ashuri, Piruz Mirzai and Ruzbeh Jafari are the main members of the cast for the play, which will remain on stage until October 22.

American absurdist playwright Arthur Kopit’s “Chamber Music” will be staged by Iranian directors Mehdi Alinejad and Taha Mohammadi at the Mehregan Theater Hall on Wednesday.

The one-act play is set in 1938 and concerns eight famous women from different historical periods who all are interned in the same insane asylum.

The women believe they are author Gertrude Stein, martyr Joan of Arc, activist Susan B. Anthony, politician Queen Isabella I of Spain, pilot Amelia Earhart, silent-film actress Pearl White, explorer Osa Johnson and Constanze Mozart, the wife of the famous composer.

They have come together to represent the women of the asylum in planning for an attack they believe is soon to come from the men’s ward.

Sogand Sediqi, Sepideh Saedi, Elnaz Nabati, Hanieh Asghari and Shiva Javanmard are the members of the cast for the play, which will be on stage until October 19.

“Beautiful” by Norwegian author Jon Fosse will be directed by Khashayar Khalilkhani at the Iranian Artists Forum on Wednesday.

The play tells the story of a father who takes his family to his childhood’s village. Visiting people from the past reveals some secrets for the family.

Khalilkhani’s troupe for the play features Pantea Qadirian, Arya Tahvildar, Masud Entezari, Mohammadreza Hashemi and Armita Foruzandeh.

The play will remain on stage until October 25.

“The Death of Haman” performed at Greek Analogio Festival

A R T TEHRAN — The Parchamdar Theater Group from Iran performed “The Death of Haman” at the International Analogio Festival, which took place in Athens from September 21 to 26.

Abbas Abdolazadeh directed the troupe in two performances organized at the Athens University Museum on September 24 and 25.



The Parchamdar Theater Group performs “The Death of Haman” written and directed by Abbas Abdolazadeh.

The story of the play comes from Iran’s ancient history. Crafty Mordecai seeks power and wants to glorify his tribe in the Achaemenid Empire, so he approaches the king of Persia, Xerxes. With the help of his niece, Mordecai tries to persuade the king to fight all the tribes of his kingdom and he raises conspiracies around him. In the end, he achieves his goal, however, he is soon killed and his niece Esther becomes the queen of Persia.

Bahareh Qasempur, Shahabeddin Bahrami, Bahareh Arjmand, Kamyar Mohebbi, Puriya Saqafi, Zohreh Mardani, Ahmadreza Paydar, Fatemeh Gusheh, Shadi Amiri and Shaqayeq Lotfalkhan Mohajer were the members of the cast.

Iran, Brazil, Switzerland and Indonesia were the guests of honor during this edition of the International Analogio Festival.

Theater elites honored at Samandarian Awards

A R T TEHRAN — Three members of the Iranian stage elites, actor and director Akbar Zanjapur, playwright and director Hossein Kiani, and director Mahmudreza Rahimi, were honored at the 7th annual Samandarian Awards on Friday.

The awards were established by the Samandarian Theater Academy in 2013 one year after the death of the veteran theater teacher and director Hamid Samandarian. The academy was founded by his son, Kaveh, and his widow, Homa Rusta who also died in 2015.

A member of theater elites including Ehteram Borumand, Fahimeh Rahiminia, Mohammad-Ali Najafi, Sirus Ebrahimzadeh, Ali Puyan and Atabak Naderi attended the ceremony.

The names and memories of Samandarian and his wife were remembered at the ceremony through a video screened for the participants.

The awards were later handed to the honorees by graphic designer Ebrahim Haqiqi, as well as stage directors Hamid Amjad and Hamid Labkhandeh.

Samandarian’s son Kaveh and his wife cut the cake of the ceremony at the end.



This combination photo shows Akbar Zanjapur (L), Mahmudreza Rahimi and Hossein Kiani.

Warsaw Film Festival picks “A Hairy Tale” and “Just 6.5” from Iran

A R T TEHRAN — Homayun Ghanizadeh’s directorial debut “A Hairy Tale” and Saeid Rustai’s drama “Just 6.5” from Iran will go on screen at the Warsaw Film Festival, running in the Polish capital from October 11 to 20, the organizers have announced.

“A Hairy Tale” has been selected to compete in the official section with fourteen more films from different countries.

The black comedy is about three hairdressers with different tastes, each of them crazy about their own interests.

The film also known as “The Clown” brought Ali Nasirian the award for best supporting actor at the 37th Fajr Film Festival in Tehran during February.

Films in the official competition will be judged by a jury composed of Polish actress Malgorzata Bela-Pawlikowska, Romanian producer and director Oana Giurgiu, Slovenian director Hanna Slak, Albanian director Bujar Alimani and Polish director Michal Leszczylowski.

“Just 6.5” is an entry to Discoveries, a non-competitive section screening fiction and documentary films from all over the world, dealing with contemporary subjects.

Starring Payman Maadi, Navid Mohammadzadeh, Parinaz Izadyar and Farhad Aslani, “Just 6.5” is about a police squad under the leadership of Samad who has been assigned to arrest Nasser Khakzad, a major drug trafficker in Tehran.



Actress Hedyeh Tehrani acts in a scene from Homayun Ghanizadeh’s “A Hairy Tale”.

The film was a big winner at the 19th edition of the Hafez Awards where it was honored in several categories including best film and best director.

Maadi won the wards for best actor for his portrayal of Samad, while the film brought Hooman Behmanesh the award for best cinematographer.



A scene from “Orange Days” by Iranian director Arash Lahuti.

“Orange Days” named best at Pyongyang film festival

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian director Arash Lahuti’s movie “Orange Days” was named best movie at the 17th edition of the Pyongyang International Film Festival, the Embassy of Iran in the North Korean capital announced on Friday.

The film tells the story of Aban, the only female contractor in the cutthroat and male-dominated orange harvesting industry, who enters a competition to win a large contract.

“Orange Days” has received awards in several international festivals.

“Am I a Wolf?” wins Light of Asia Grand Prize at Korea Indie-AniFest

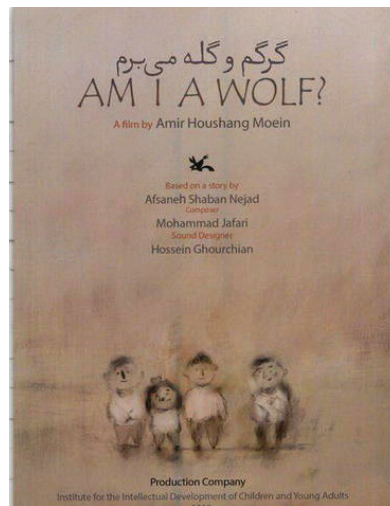
A R T TEHRAN — The award-winning Iranian short film “Am I a Wolf?” has won the Light of Asia Grand Prize at the 15th Indie-AniFest Korea Independent Animation Film Festival in Seoul, South Korea.

Directed by Amir-Hushang Moein, the movie is about a group of children who perform the familiar story of the wolf and the yearlings in school as a puppet show. The nanny goat grieving for its yearlings and the angry wolf in its solitude face each other.

In a statement published by the organizers on the closing ceremony of the festival on September 24, the jury wrote, “This film is presented with a very high degree of animation performance, successfully invoking life through its movements and reaching beyond the more easily achieved illustration of actions.

“The narrative of the story is beautifully woven between the parallel of outer and inner realities. As the children are performing a stage play about the perils of 7 domestic goats and a wild wolf, the viewer is invited to experience and be transported in-and-out between the dramas of performing children and blending into the fictional story of the play.

“The choice of art direction and graphic styling is very whimsical, invoking dream-like qualities while maintaining a more serious undertone and very fitting to the



A poster for Iranian director Amir-Hushang Moein’s animated movie “Am I a Wolf?”.

nature of the story.”

Earlier last week, the animated movie, which was produced at the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, also won the Grand Prix at the 12th Paris International Animation Film Festival (PIAFF).

The Star of Indie Grand Prize, Indie-AniFest’s top honor, went to “Movements” by South Korean director Jeong Dahee.

It won three honors including the Grand Newcomer Award and FIPRESCI Award at the 67th Mannheim-Heidelberg International Film Festival in Germany last November.

The star of the film, Hedyeh Tehrani, won the award for best actress at the 4th CineIran Festival, which was held in the Canadian city of Toronto last November, and Lahuti received the award for best screenwriter.

The Pyongyang International Film Festival was held from September 19 to 25.

Disney unveils “Star Wars” merchandise at Britain’s Pinewood Studios

LONDON (Reuters) — Actors from the “Star Wars” franchise headlined a global livestreamed event at Britain’s famed Pinewood Studios on Thursday to unveil new Walt Disney Co merchandise tied to the latest movie instalment and series spin-offs.

The new toys, clothes and gadgets will officially go on sale on Friday Oct. 4, a date marketed by Disney as “Triple Force Friday”, as it seeks to build buzz ahead of the premiere of “Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker” in December.

Disney also launched merchandise for “The Mandalorian”, the first Star Wars live-action spin-off series that will debut on streaming service Disney+ in November, and “Star Wars Jedi: Fallen Order”, a forthcoming video game.

The event at Pinewood, the studios just outside London where “The Rise of Skywalker” was shot, was hosted Warwick Davis, who started his career playing an ewok in 1983 release “Star Wars: Return of the Jedi”.

“As an actor in Star Wars, the first time you see yourself immortalized as a Star Wars toy is a very exciting moment, however old you are,” Davis said in an interview.

“The first time it happened to me was when I was 11 years old in Return of the Jedi,



Merchandise from “Star Wars: The Mandalorian”, television series sit on display at the announcement of new Star Wars products at Pinewood Studios, Iver Heath Britain September 26, 2019. (Reuters/Simon Dawson)

and as a young boy to actually have a toy of yourself is a mind-blowing experience.”

Naomi Ackie, a newcomer to the franchise who plays the role of ‘Jannah’ in the latest movie, said it was “super surreal” to see a bobble-head doll version of her character for the first time.

“All you can hope is that you do a great job, that people are excited about your character and they want to include it in their repertoire of knowledge,” Ackie, 26, said of the huge fan base for the franchise.

New merchandise included products from Hasbro Inc, Funko Inc and The Lego Group.

Long-lost Italian painting could fetch \$6 million at French auction

PARIS (Reuters) — A long-lost painting by a 13th century Italian master discovered in the kitchen of an elderly French woman has been valued at up to six million euros and will be sold at auction next month.

The “Christ Mocked” painting by early Renaissance artist Cimabue was valued at 4 to 6 million euros (\$6.6 million) by Paris old masters specialist Eric Turquin and will be sold by auction house Acteon in Senlis, north of Paris, on Oct. 27.

For years, the painting had hung close to a cooking plate in the kitchen of an elderly lady in Compiègne, north of Paris. It was found to be a Cimabue when an auction house specialist came to value her possessions.

Turquin said there was no doubt about the authenticity of the painting, as it was in the style of the Italian master and tunnels made by woodworms in the poplar wood panel match those of two similar Cimabues, a “Madonna Enthroned” in London’s National Gallery and “The Flagellation of Christ” in the Frick Collection in New York.

“This is an important work in art history. Cimabue pushed the envelope, he broke with the Greek style of painting with no perspective and he introduced humanity.



In 1280, that was totally new, he was a revolutionary,” Turquin told Reuters.

The painting, executed in egg tempera, shows the figure of Christ surrounded by an angry crowd who have come to arrest him.

Turquin said the tiny painting - measuring just 20 by 26 cm (10 inches) - is believed to be part of a diptych consisting of eight small panels. It may have been cut apart by an art dealer in the 19th century to get a better price.

“Works by Cimabue are very rare. When I was an art student, I would never have dared to think that one day I would have the chance to hold a painting like this,” he said.

The sale will be the first instance of a Cimabue painting coming to market and will be the first chance to value the artist’s work, the auction house said.