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Iran plans to reduce imports by \$10b in 2 years

TEHRAN — Iran's Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade plans to reduce the country's imports by \$10 billion by the Iranian calendar year 1400 (March 2021-March 2022), IRNA reported on Saturday, quoting

the industry minister as saying.

According to the official, of the mentioned total \$10 billion reduction in imports, \$1.2 billion will be in the textile and garment industry, \$500 million in cellulose products, \$2.7 billion in petrochemicals, \$2.4 billion in mining, \$600

 $million\,in\,steel\,industry,\,\$650\,million\,in$ home appliances, \$650 million in machinery, \$1.4 billion in the automotive industry, and \$250 million in electrical and electronic appliances.

Making the remarks in a specialized roundtable on promoting domestic production in the country's auto industry, Reza Rahmani said "Achieving this goal requires \$2 billion plus 200 trillion rials (about \$4.7 billion) worth of investment." \rightarrow 4

First session of legislationmaking provisions held

TEHRAN — First meeting of studying provisions of legislation-making process which was declared by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei was held on Saturday.

Majlis Speaker Ali Larijani, representatives from the Expediency Council, Guardian Council, government, Judiciary and also parliament attended the session. Larijani described the meeting as "constructive"

The three branches are duty bound to implement the provisions of legislation-making process based on the constitution, he told reporters after the meeting.

He said that the next session will be held in next month. →2

Ambassador meets Nechirvan Barzani and other KRG officials

TEHRAN — Iranian Ambassador to Baghdad Iraj Masjedi has met with President of Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) Nechirvan Barzani in Erbil, Mehr reported on Friday.

During the meeting, Masjedi and Barzani discussed Iran-KRG relations and ways to expand them, as well as the developments in Iraq and the region. It came after the Iranian envoy met Government Masrour Barzani during his visit to Erbil, which began on Wednesday. The two sides conferred on Iran-KRG relations as well as developments in Iraq

with Prime Minister of Kurdistan Regional

and the larger region. Masjedi also met with Secretary of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) Executive Committee Fazil Mirani to exchange

views on bilateral relations. \rightarrow 3



Oil offering at **IRENEX** facing challenges, but will definitely continue

he national budget law for the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21) obliges the Oil Ministry to offer at least two million barrels of light crude oil, two million barrels of heavy crude oil and two million barrels of gas condensate at the international ring of Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX) every month.

Offering crude oil and gas condensate at IRENEX is to materialize the objectives of "Resistance Economy" for diversifying methods of selling these products and benefitting from the capabilities of private sector for exporting them.

National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) offered light crude oil at IRENEX first on October 28, 2018, just few days before new U.S. sanctions on Iran's petroleum sector took effect (November 4).

Offering gas condensate at IREN-EX came after the successful offering of crude oil at this market. And then the turn came to heavy crude. Offering heavy crude at IRENEX came after NIOC offered light crude at this stock market in eight round.

Now, after nearly one year, the released reports show that sales of these products has not been so successful and welcomed, as according to the representative of NIOC at IRENEX, just about one million barrels of light crude and 70,000 barrels of heavy crude have been sold at IRENEX since the second Iranian calendar month of Ordibehesht (began on April 21), although the products have been regularly offered at IRENEX on a weekly basis.

IRENEX Managing Director Seyed Ali Hosseini believes that policymaking and execution are not integrated; and it is the reason behind the slow trend of the trades.

In an interview conducted by IRNA last week, the official said that in every activity, when these two are integrated,

the result will be successful. Replying to a question that why crude oil offering is not welcomed at IRENEX, Hosseini said, "The task should be precisely monitored and the existing barriers should be investigated, but we have some weakness in this due." → 4

Foreign embassies "stirring up" situation in Iraq: UK analyst

TEHRAN (Tasnim) - A political analyst fromLondon said the embassies of the US and UK in Baghdad are taking advantage of Iraq's poor economic conditions following the defeat of Daesh by "deliberately stirring up trouble" in the Arab country.

'If there are insufficient jobs, there must be some form of basic income. Yes, the foreign embassies -- US, UK and the Netherlands-- are deliberately stirring up trouble but that is always easy to do when people are economically insecure. Also all American, British and Israeli forces should be kicked out," Rodney Shakespeare told Tasnim when asked about the reason behind recent sporadic unrest in Iraq that has led to several casualties.

Iraqi Prime Minister Adil Abdul-Mahdi on

Thursday expressed regret that the ongoing protests have become violent, saying he is ready to meet with representatives of the protesters to discuss their demands.

Speaking on Thursday night, the Iraqi prime minister said certain elements have been able to derail the protests from their peaceful path.

The unrest comes as millions of pilgrims are preparing to travel to the Iraqi holy cities of Najaf and Karbala to attend Arbaeen, marking the fortieth day after the martyrdom of their third Imam, Hussein ibn Ali (AS).

Divide-and-conquer strategy

Kevin Barret, an author and analyst from Madison, also told Tasnim that "as Iraq grows more stable and confident, and gets its finances

and infrastructure rebuilt, it grows more and more potentially independent.

He added that an "independent Iraq will inevitably lean towards or join the Axis of Resistance to imperialism and Zionism, for two reasons: First, the Shiite-majority population of Iraq has obvious affinities with other members of the Axis of Resistance; and second and most importantly, if Iraq wants to return to the path of using its resources to benefit its population, it will ultimately need to help eject parasitical outsiders from the region. And the only group of countries that is working toward that end, rather than cooperating with the invaders, occupiers, and plunderers, is the Axis of Resistance." \rightarrow 13



Hoist by its own petard: How Saudi Arabia was pushed against the wall in Yemen

spate of fruitful Yemeni operations against Saudi Arabia has underscored transformation of anti-Saudi forces into an obstinate actor gaining in military sophistication, increasing pressure on Riyadh to acknowledge what described as a democracy-promotion campaign has only diminished its influence in Yemen and sullied its reputation globally.

Eyebrows raised when a swarm of drones struck facilities at the heart of Saudi Arabia's oil industry last

The attack was regarded highly sophisticated since it circumvented a patchwork of air defense systems inside the oil kingdom.

The attacks were claimed by a coalition of Yemeni fighters, mainly made up of Ansarullah and more than a half of the former Yemeni Army.

Saudi Arabia and its western backers the US, UK, France and Germany - have accused Iran of perpetrating the strike, but no compelling evidence proving the claim has yet been publicized.

Last week, the Yemeni forces unveiled a separate set of military operations against Saudi Arabia that proved even more surprising for the global audience.

The Yemeni forces broadcast footage they said was of an assault against Saudi Arabia in August that killed or wounded 500 soldiers with near 2,700 soldiers surrendering

The assault targeted the southern region of Najran, with videos aired showing armored vehicles hit by blasts, along with large piles of weapons and surrendering soldiers

Saudi Arabia has described Ansarullah's claims as part of a "misleading media campaign". However, it has not directly

disconfirmed the Yemeni assertions. ■ Turning point in conflict? The attacks showed the Yemeni fighters are capable of engaging in major cross-border offensives against Saudi Arabia, threatening the status-quo of the five-years-old war in Yemen. →11

Is Pompexit imminent?

For months, Foggy Bottom has been embroiled in a parlor game of sorts: Will the captain of the foreign policy ship, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, jump overboard and run for U.S. Senate in his native Kansas, as establishment Republicans in the upper chamber have asked him to do?

The idea seemed farcical, at first. Why would the nation's chief diplomat who has risen in the Trump era -- from Congressman to CIA chief to quite arguably the most powerful Cabinet official -- trade in those gains to become a junior senator? Pompeo is widely known to covet the presidency, perhaps as soon as 2024, the next open Republican nomination contest. Even if his boss, President Donald Trump, was to go down next fall or before then, the now-pedigreed Pompeo could simply raise money for two short years before the inevitable inception of the nom- Fund in Brussels give a taste of his values. He

But there are other factors at play. Unlike his predecessor, Rex W. Tillerson, Pompeo is a loval soldier-- as the New Yorker's Susan Glasser labeled him, "the Secretary of Trump." But at his core, Pompeo is a syncretic figure. Pompeo did not endorse Trump during the 2016 primary; he favored neocon candidate Marco Rubio. But unlike NeverTrump intellectuals horrified by the New York mogul's neo-Buchananite rise, Pompeo stayed in the conservative fold, serving as a surrogate for the Donald Trump general election campaign, and gleefully interviewing for a senior job after the shock victory of 2016.

Pompeo's address this year to the Claremont Institute, the de facto intellectual home of Trumpism, and remarks last year to the German Marshall

clearly does not believe, as other Republicans hope, that Trump's rise was all celebrity flash. The secretary views Trumpism as a more permanent political force, whatever becomes of its founder; Pompeo hopes to benefit from political primogeniture. At Claremont, as highlighted by estimable administration interlocutor Walter Russel Mead, Pompeo linked "America First" to the founding; he is, as Mead astutely noted, a "conservative internationalist" who believes "American engagement should be guided by a

narrower focus on specific U.S. interests.' At Brussels, Pompeo took a hatchet to a Trumpera bugbear, the "rules-based international order, saying "multilateralism has too often become viewed as an end unto itself," ... The more treaties we sign, the safer we supposedly are. \rightarrow 13



"Diplomacy of resistance" holds its fourth congress

The fourth congress on "diplomacy of resistance" was held at Tehran's Andisheh hall on Saturday to mark the memory former Iranian ambassador to Lebanon Ghazanfar Roknabadi who was martyred along with hundreds of other Iranian pilgrims in the Mina disaster near Mecca on September 24, 2015. Iran holds Saudi Arabia responsible for the tragedy.

Iran's strategy is to protect security in Persian Gulf: diplomat

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Mahmoud Heidari, the Iranian e s k ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina, has said that Iran's approach is to protect security in the Persian Gulf through regional cooperation.

"Iran's approach is to protect comprehensive security in the Persian Gulf through expanding regional cooperation and preventing illegitimate interference of foreign military forces,' ISNA quoted him as saying on Saturday during a meeting with Chairman of the House of Peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina Bakir Izetbegovic.

Heidari also explained about the latest developments in the

Izetbegovic, for his part, called for expansion of relations.

During a speech at the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) summit in Yerevan on October 1, President Hassan Rouhani reiterated that Iran's policy is to protect security in the Middle East region, especially in the Persian Gulf.

"Peace and security in the Persian Gulf, Sea of Oman and Strait of Hormuz must be provided by the regional countries. As I said at the United Nations General Assembly summit, I invited all the countries influenced by developments in the Persian Gulf and Strait of Hormuz to join the Hormuz Peace Endeavor," the

Rouhani first broke the story about the Hormuz Peace Endeavor (HOPE) on September 25 when he addressed the annual UN General Assembly in New York. 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

In a tweet on September 26, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif 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

Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said last week that Iran will soon announce details of the Hormuz Peace Endeavor.

"Details of the plan will be announced soon in written format, especially to the eight countries that we invited to join the coalition. This plan seeks to create peace and security in the region,' he said during a press conference.

Iran, Turkey to expand co-op in campaign against organized crimes

POLITICAL TEHRAN – Iran's ambassador to Ankara and d e s k Turkish deputy interior minister conferred on broadening mutual cooperation between the two friendly neighbors in the campaign against organized crimes.

In a meeting in Turkey's capital city of Ankara, Ambassador Mohammad Farazmand and Turkish Deputy Interior Minister Mohtaram Injeh held talks over reinvigoration of Tehran-Ankara mutual cooperation in the campaign against organized

The two officials further stressed their firm will to widen cooperation between their countries' relevant bodies in war on terrorism and counter-narcotic operations.

Separately, the Iranian envoy wrote in his personal tweeter account that "Iran and Turkey have broad and tight cooperation in campaign against organized crimes.

Iran is in the forefront of the fight against drug trafficking and thousands of Iranian police forces have been so far martyred to protect the world from the danger of drugs.

The Iranian anti-narcotic police have always staged periodic operations against drug traffickers and dealers.

Arabaeen March and rise of new Middle East

POLITICAL TEHRAN – Recent regional and global developments are promising a new Middle East which is different from the one the great hegemonic powers

If we consider that the western powers shaped the Middle East in the 1921 conference in Cairo, it will become a 100-year old phenomenon in 2021.

Eight years ago, in March 2011, a bloody civil war broke out in Syria, a war which was supposed to change the region's political-geographical scene another time. The war was launched within the framework of a plan dubbed the Balkanization of the Middle East. The aim behind launching such a plan was to change the geography of the region via targeting the three powerful nations of Iran, Iraq and Syria.

But, September 2013 was a turning point for failure of the mentioned plan when the great western powers could not implement a joint military operation against Syria similar to the operation they did against Libya in 2011.

Following the western powers' failure, a monster dubbed Daesh or ISIL was created that started storming Iraq and managed to occupy Mosul (the third largest city in Iraq) on June 10, 2014, but, the western powers' plot of creating Daesh was also foiled and Mosul was liberated in June 2017.

Heavy attacks on Saudi Arabia's oil installations on September 14, 2019 can be considered as the second turning point in creation of new Middle East. The incident gave upper hand to Yemeni combatants and testified a change in power balance in favor of Yemenis against Saudi-Emirati aggressors.

The above-mentioned huge and history-making developments have turned a very vast region, including Iran, Iraq and Syria with 2, 270,000 square kilometers of area of land and with a population of nearly 140 million, into a common wealth region.

Inside this large region, it takes 22-24 hours by bus or 2-3 hours on plane to travel from Tehran to Beirut, Lattakia or other Mediterranean Sea's ports utilizing a visa similar to Schengen visa in Europe. Iran and Iranians can easily attain eye-catching political, cultural, economic and trade achievements by pro-

moting their interactions among this large region. It should be mentioned that some anti-Iran minor moves appearing in recent unrests and riots inside Iraq are the latest attempts of ill-wishers who seek sabotaging the great path along

which the region has started stepping up.

Large march of pilgrims of Arbaeen on October 19 is a blessed herald for proving rise of new Middle East in spite of destructive and warmongering moves.

Yadollah Javani: Iran has turned from a deterrent power to a retaliatory one

POLITICAL TEHRAN—IRGC Depud e s k ty Commander for Political Affairs Yadollah Javani has said that Iran has achieved more than deterrence power and turned into a power to retaliate.

"Certain governments in the region were unaware of depth of Iran's capabilities, however, many facts were revealed to them when Iran shot down the United States' drone and also when our forces seized the British tanker," Javani told the Tasnim news agency in an interview published on Saturday.

"They became aware that first, the Islamic Republic of Iran has no doubt about defending its security and responds as soon as a drone of the United States violates its airspace and second, the fact that the other side is unable to respond," he added.

Using indigenously built Third Khordad surface-to-air missile system, Iran's air defense forces shot down a U.S. spy drone, a MQ4-C Triton, over Iran's territorial waters

Also, on July 19, the IRGC Navy impound-



ed the British tanker Stena Impero when it was passing through the Strait of Hormuz en route to Saudi Arabia "for failing to respect international maritime rules". The tanker was released in September.

■ 'Iran supports protecting security in Persian Gulf'

Javani also said that Iran supports protecting security in the Persian Gulfand is ready to help the regional countries in this respect.

"The Islamic Republic has announced for many times that its regional policy is protecting security and stability in the region. The Islamic Republic is ready to maintain security in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz and it has announced for several times that the United States, Israel and certain European countries are the main elements of

undermining security in the region," he said. As an initiative to protect security in the region, President Hassan Rouhani proposed the Hormuz Peace Endeavor (HOPE) on September 25 when he addressed the annual UN General Assembly in New York.

Arbaeen march will defeat divisive policies, MP says

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Heshmatollah Falahatpisheh, a member of the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, has said that the Arbaeen march will defeat divisive policies in Iraq and the

The reality is that the Arbaeen march has defeated many divisive policies in Iraq and neighboring countries. Many countries have taken actions against the Arbaeen march, however, their plots will backfire. This year's Arbaeen march will be the symbol of unity between the Iranian and Iraqi people," he told ISNA in an interview published

Arbaeen marks an end to a 40-day mourning period following the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (AS) and his loyal companions at the Battle of Karbala on Muharram 10 in the year 61 AH (680 CE)

This year, Arbaeen falls on Saturday, October 19. Millions of pilgrims from Iran, Iraq, Pakistan and some other countries head to Karbala by foot. It is considered

the greatest march in the world. Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said on September 18 that "the Arbaeen march is an extraordinary phenomenon not only in our era but also throughout history.'

He added, "We cannot find such a gathering and movement that takes place every year more enthusiastically

Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati, chief of Iran's Assembly of Experts, said on September 30 that the Arbaeen march is symbol of unity between the Iranian and Iraqi people and also shows power of Islam.

"The people's participation in the Arbaeen march prevents divisive policies by the enemies," he added.

Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli said on September 29 that it is predicted that more than three million Iranians to visit Karbala, which hosts the Shrine of Imam Hussein (AS.

Certain actors seek to undermine security

Falahatpisheh also said that there are certain actors who seek to undermine security in Iraq by abusing peaceful demonstrations by people.

"Those are the opponents who use any issue to cause insecurity in Iraq. Among them are certain actors who support elements that cause insecurity in Iraq. The ones who planted bombs after ouster of Saddam [Hussein] in 2003 and after that supported Daesh. They seek to disintegrate Iraq," the MP pointed out.

Protests erupted on Tuesday in Baghdad and quickly spread to other Iraqi cities, mainly in the south.

Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, the top Shia cleric of Iraq, has urged security forces and protesters to avoid violence.



"It is sorrowful there have been so many deaths, casualties and destruction" from clashes between anti-government protesters and security forces in recent days, Ayatollah Sistani said in a letter Friday, according to Press TV.

In the letter read out by his representative Ahmed al-Safi during a sermon in the holy city of Karbala, the top cleric urged all parties to avoid violence.

He also criticized officials and political sides for failing to answer the demands of the people to fight corruption, urging them to heed the demands of the protesters "before it's too late"

IRGC commander: Iran's border crossings with Iraq safe, secure

POLITICAL TEHRAN - The deputy commander of Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) at Imam Ali Central Security Base on Saturday underscored that Iran's entire border

crossings with Iraq are safe and secure. Brigadier General Gholamhossein Qeib Parvar reiterated that Iran's border crossings with Iraq are safe and durable security is restored to the entire border crossing as always. He added that people can travel without any worry or problem.

In his visit to border terminals in Shalamcheh and Chazabeh in the southastern province of Khuzestan that borders Iraq, the IRGC commander told the Mehr News Agency that the entire border crossings with Iraq enjoy high-level security and Araba'een pilgrims can safely cross the border crossings into Iraq.

Cooperation and coordination among the entire security, police and executive bodies in Khuzestan province put an end to some (who are) worried about traffic of pilgrims from the Chazabeh border crossing," he stated, adding that security at the



Shalamcheh border crossing is also at a

high level.

The Arba'een pilgrimage is the world's largest annual public gathering that is held 40-day mourning period following Ashura, the religious ritual for the commemoration of martyrdom of the grandson of Prophet Mohammad and the third Shiite Imam, Hossein bin Ali's in 680.

Anticipating Arba'een, or the fortieth day of the martyrdom, the pilgrims make their journey to Karbala on foot, where Imam Hossein and his companions were martyred and beheaded by the army of Yazid I in the Battle of Karbala.

Senior MP censures weak reaction of **Europeans to U.S. JCPOA violation**

POLITICAL TEHRAN - MP Mohammad Javad Jamali, who sits on the Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, has criticized the E3 (France, Germany and Britain) for their weak reaction to the violation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the official name for the nuclear deal.
According to the JCPOA, signed

between Iran and the E3 along with the U.S., Russia and China in July 2015, Iran agreed to put limits on its nuclear work in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions. However, Donald Trump quit the deal in May 2018 and restored sanctions that had been lifted under the accord and added new harsh By withdrawing from the JCPOA, the

United States violated the UN Security Council Resolution 2231 that endorsed the deal. Tehran has called the sanctions as economic terrorism.

On May 8, exactly one year after the U.S. abandoned the deal, Tehran began to partially reduce its commitments to the agreement at bi-monthly intervals.

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

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

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

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

Some military drills undisclosed to public, says Pourdastan

TEHRAN (MNA) – The Head of Iranian Army's Strategic Studies Center Brigadier General Pourdastan said that some military drills of Iranian armed forces are held in the dark while some others are done publicly to send caution to enemies.

"We have a series of wargames which are held secretly as the one held last month and was recently announced; a collection of tactics and techniques are practiced during these drills which helps us better understand different threats and better implement what has been learned in military schools," Pourdastan told Mehr News Agency on Saturday.

Sometimes the enemy should become aware of your capabilities, this is good," he said, adding that "Sometimes, we should send some alarms to enemies.

He went on to say that after the United States entered



the Middle East region following Sep. 11 attacks, different Iranian armed forces including IRGC, Army's Ground

Force and Navy held separate military drills in the country to "give alarms to Americans".

These warnings weakened the determination of Americans for any aggression against Iran, creating a great deterrence, he added.

"Targeting the U.S. drone was also a strong alarm" to American officials who purportedly had some plans on the table waiting to be carried out, Pourdastan said, adding that downing the drone in an altitude of 62,000 feet with a home-made missile made Americans think twice about Iran's defense capabilities.

"We call these alarms 'active resistance'," he added. "This active resistance is in place in many areas; both in domestic issues and in issues which relate to the Islamic Republic of Iran's strategic depth such as Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq," added the commander.

First session of legislation-making provisions held

Abbasali Kadkhodaei, the spokesman for the Guardian Council, said that legislation-making provisions are "strategic plan".

In a decree issued on September 28, Ayatollah 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

the constitution. The Leader's declaration is in line with

Article 110 of the Iranian constitution. The general policies of the legislation have been prepared after consultation

three bodies should be in conformity with 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.

Australia releases Iranian student Reza Dehbashi

e s k has released an Iranian research student detained on alleged charges of exporting American equipment with military application to Iran.

The 39-year-old Reza Dehbashi, a student of the University of Queensland (UQ), had long been fighting to avoid extradition to the U.S., which accused him of exporting military equipment for detecting stealth planes or missiles to Iran, Tasnim reported on Saturday,

citing Fars news agency.

Dehbashi was held in Australia for 13

According to ABC News, lawyers for the U.S. government had applied for the Iranian PhD student's extradition for allegedly conspiring to export "defense articles designated under the U.S. munitions list" for the Islamic Republic.

The Iranian student has never set foot in the United States, but had been accused of exporting American equipment for detecting stealth planes or missiles to Iran, Press TV reported.

Dehbashi had been working on a "skin cancer detection device" at the time of his arrest. He had dismissed the charges as "a



misunderstanding" and "unfair".

The IRIB news showed footage of what it said was Dehbashi arriving at Tehran's Imam Khomeini International Airport.

This is not the first time that Iranian

university students and professors have been detained abroad.

Massoud Soleimani, a 49-year-old Iranian scientist left Iran on sabbatical last year, but was arrested upon arrival in Chicago and transferred to prison in Atlanta, Georgia for unspecified reasons.

On May 22, Iran's science minister said the United States has set a trap for Iranian scientists, enabling their entry into the country before arresting them.

Mansour Gholami said the U.S. has identified a number of Iranian professors, who have conducted research in certain areas, published relevant scientific articles, and ordered and bought laboratory equipment.

They issue visas for Iranian professors and arrest them upon their arrival in the U.S.," he said. "This is a type of game they play to lure Iranian professors there.'

He also ruled out the possibility that those targeted in the scheme might have been in violation of Washington's sanctions.

The news of Dehbashi's release came shortly after Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne said on Saturday that an Australian couple who had been detained in Iran on spying charges were freed.

Payne said all charges against them had been dropped and that the couple were on their way home and in "good health and in good spirits."

Defense official: Iran resolved to indigenize metrology technology in ten years

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The Iranian Defense Ministry is determined to indigenize metrology technology within the framework of a ten-year plan, Deputy Defense Minister Qassem Taqizadeh announced on Saturday.

'We will soon place a metrological satellite dubbed Tolo within orbit by using domestically-made satellite-carrying rockets," Taqizadeh said while participating in the Second National Gathering of Securing Infrastructures and Protecting People.

The brigadier general reiterated that Iran's Armed Forces and defense industry have been capable of promoting their knowledge in industrial and scientific arenas so skillfully that the country is now equipped with ranking deterrence and defense technologies and can confront the enemies' high-tech weapons and technologies.

The general pointed to his time in National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), saying that a large number of NASA staff are originally Iranians, "so we can utilize such experts and capacities inside the country to reinvigorate our defense might with regard to domestic talents and reliance on our youth.'

crossing Mehran border'



'Based on guidelines of Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, we have defended the country via an asymmetric war against the enemies and also based on the same guidelines our experts manufactured domestically-made equipment and technologies," the deputy defense minister underscored.

In relevant achievements in military field earlier this year, the Army's Ground Force unveiled new arms and military equipment in a ceremony participated by high-ranking commanders in Tehran.

The achievements included smart multi-rotor bomber $drone\ with\ the\ capability\ of\ carrying\ 8kg\ of\ ammunition$ and flight durability of 30 minutes, a hunter quadcopter with the ability to throw net on the target, a Passive Detection of moving humans with Dynamic Speed (PADS), a plasma atomic spectrometer, laser alarm systems carried by person and vehicle, backpack jamming systems, two squadrons of hand-thrown drones and G3-mounted launchers to throw net.

 $Meantime, a \, 23\text{-}mm \, BTR\text{-}mounted \, BTR \, personnel \, carrier$ cannon and a self-propelled 155-mm cannon were unveiled.

Defense analysts and military observers say that Iran's ar games and its advancements in weapons production have proved as a deterrent factor.

In recent years, Iran has made great achievements in the defense sector and gained self-sufficiency in essential military hardware and defense systems.

The country has repeatedly made it clear that its military might is merely based on the doctrine of deterrence and that it poses no threat to other countries.

General warns of ramifications of war in Persian Gulf



'Nine-fold rise in number of pilgrims

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Ahmad the Arba'een march are trying to disrupt Karami, head of the Arba'een Headquarters in Ilam Province, has said there has been a nine-fold rise in the number of Iranian pilgrims who travel to Iraq through the Mehran border crossing.

Some 35,000 pilgrims left Iran to visit Iraq's holy sites or returned to the country via the Mehran border crossing in the western province of Ilam on Friday, Tasnim on Saturday quoted Karami as saying.

He also said the recent unrest in Iraq has had no impact on the arrival or departure of pilgrims in and from the border crossing.

The official pointed out that the passage of travelers is happening smoothly and in complete security.

The remarks come amid sporadic unrest in a number of Iraqi cities in recent days. The death toll from days of violent demonstrations across Iraq has soared to at least 70, security and medical sources said.

Iran has expressed sorrow over the violent protests.

An Iranian cleric said on Friday that arrogant countries who are unhappy with the annual event.

"Arba'een is an event that has gained the attention of the world but the arrogance (a term used by Iranian officials to refer to the U.S. and its allies) does not want this to happen," Ayatollah Emami Kashani said during Friday Prayers in Tehran.

Emami Kashani said the enemies try to disrupt the Arba'een march because it gathers millions of Muslims from across the world and "this they cannot tolerate."

Iraqi Prime Minister Adil Abdul-Mahdi has expressed regret that the ongoing protests have become violent, saying he is ready to meet with representatives of the protesters to discuss their demands.

Speaking on Thursday night, the Iraqi prime minister said certain elements have been able to derail the protests from their peaceful path.

He said there was no "magic solution" to issues such as graft, unemployment and corruption but he would begin passing a law for basic income to be meted out to poor families.



POLITICAL TEHRAN — Head equipment to Saudi Arabia following k of the Civil Defense Organization has warned of the $consequences\ of\ any\ war\ in\ the\ Persian$ Gulf, saying dire consequences await those who start a war.

"Iran has the upper hand against the enemies' threats, and officials are trying to utilize this advantage to serve the country's national interests," Brigadier General Gholam Reza Jalali said, Iran Press reported on Saturday.

"We possess a very good defensive deterrence in the military field ... The country's defense systems and military are perfectly robust, ready, and are playing their role bravely, and this has had many implications in the political

and military dimensions," Jalali added. In similar remarks last month, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said any country that starts a war against Iran "will not be the one who finishes it.'

He said the U.S. is "posturing" by sending troops and defense the September 14 attacks on a major Saudi Arabia oil facility.

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

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the attacks were an "act of war" while Trump announced he would "substantially increase" sanctions on Iran.

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

"I make a very serious statement about defending our country. I am making a very serious statement that we don't want to engage in a military confrontation," said Zarif.

He added that a military response based on "deception" about the attacks would cause "a lot of casualties".

Russia 'invites' Iran envoy to ministry over journalist arrest

(Press TV) - Russia's Foreign Ministry says it has "invited"Iran's ambassador to Moscow to clarify the circumstances surrounding the arrest of a Russian journalist in the Iranian capital Tehran on suspicion of espionage.

Mehdi Sanaei was "invited to the foreign ministry to quickly clarify the circumstances" and ensure the rights of journalist Yulia Yuzik are observed, ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said on Friday.

The Iranian ambassador told Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Morgulov that Yuzik had been detained to be questioned but "would soon be released," according to a statement by the ministry later Friday.

Yuzik, 38, who worked for several prominent Russian publications, was arrested in her hotel room on Wednesday. "She has been detained on suspicion of having ties to



 $Is raeli\ intelligence\ services, "said\ a\ spokes man\ for\ the\ Russian$ embassy in Tehran, citing her mother.

"The representative of Russia's consulate is now at the Iranian Foreign Ministry trying to resolve this issue," said journalist Boris Voitsekhovskiy, identified by Russian media as Yuzik's ex-husband.

Moscow and Tehran enjoy strong ties and have been working in a strategic partnership format on their issues of mutual interest. Russia has been critical of Washington's exit from a 2015 multilateral deal with Iran and re-imposition of harsh sanctions against the Islamic Republic.

The two countries have also been assisting Syria in its efforts to uproot terrorist groups that have been wreaking havoc on the Arab state since 2011 with the backing of Washington and its regional allies.

Senior advisor says foreign evil hands are behind Iraq unrest

d e s k TEHRAN — Hossein Amir Abdollahian, a senior foreign policy advisor to the Iranian parliament

speaker, has said foreign evil hands are seeking to destabilize Iraq. "Foreign evil hands which have been behind making #Iraq insecure for years, are now seeking to destabilize Iraq in other way," he tweeted on Friday.



"While considering civil demands, it is Zionists & Takfiri terrorists' supporters who are behind recent developments in Iraq. This plot will also be foiled," Amir Abdollahian added.

The remarks came while the ongoing protests in Iraq have

The unrest comes as millions of pilgrims are preparing to travel to the Iraqi holy cities of Najaf and Karbala to attend the Arba'een march, which marks the fortieth day after the martyrdom anniversary of their third Imam, Hussein ibn Ali (AS).

According to Press TV, demonstrations erupted on Tuesday over unemployment and poor public services, with some protesters arguing that they deserve a better life since they are living in a country with some of the world's largest energy resources.

Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, the top Shia cleric of Iraq, has urged security forces and protesters to avoid violence, expressing sorrow over some sporadic unrest that has led to several casualties.

"It is sorrowful there have been so many deaths, casualties and destruction" from clashes between anti-government protesters and security forces in recent days, Ayatollah Sistani said in a letter Friday.

Ambassador meets Nechirvan Barzani and other KRG officials

■ While in Erbil, the diplomat also held a meeting with Qubad Talabani, from the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), who serves as the KRG deputy prime minister.

Nechirvan Barzani assumed office as KRG president on June

The post had been vacant since November 2017, when the former president resigned after Kurdistan held a controversial independence referendum.



In September 2017, the Kurdistan Regional Government defied stern warnings from the central government in Baghdad and several other states, and held referendum on separation from mainland Iraq. Kurdish officials said a majority of people had voted "Yes" to secession.

In response, the central government called the vote inconstitutional" and adopte

Branches of power cooperating to offset sanctions on Iran: VP

TEHRAN (Tasnim) — Iran's Vice President for Parliamentary Affairs Hossein Ali Amiri highlighted the administration's determination to help resolve the people's economic problems, saying the three branches of the government are cooperating to offset the sanctions imposed by the U.S.

'Today, the government is addressing people's problems in various sectors and is planning and working hard to resolve them," Amiri told reporters in the northern city of Qazvin on Saturday.

'Unfortunately, the imposition of cruel sanctions has created difficult economic conditions for the people and the country but as we have proved to the world many times before, this time again we will proudly pass this great test...," he added.

"Good plans have been developed to ease the pressure of sanctions and to tackle the problems of the country today and their implementation is seriously being pursued with the help of the three branches of power in the country," the vice-president went on to say.

The remarks come against the backdrop of increased tensions between Iran and the U.S.

In May 2018, U.S. President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew his country from a multilateral nuclear deal with Iran, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and unleashed the "toughest ever" sanctions against the Islamic Republic.

Since quitting the landmark 2015 nuclear deal with Iran, Trump has been running a "maximum pressure" campaign to force Iran into negotiating a new deal that addresses its ballistic missile program and regional influence.

Iran, which until a few months ago had been fully complying with all of its commitments despite the U.S. withdrawal from the deal, has rejected the idea of talks with Washington.

Given the Europeans' failure to abide by their obligations under the deal, Tehran began scaling down its commitments in early July.

STOCK MARKET

IFX 4255.08	TEDPIX	327305.7
	IFX	4255.08

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	46,112 rials
GBP	51,806 rials
AED	11,437 rials

Source: cbi.ir

COMMODITIES

\$58.37/b
\$52.81/b
\$57.96/b
\$1,506.70/oz
\$\$17.63/oz
\$883.05/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

Over \$309m of state-run shares divested in H1

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iranian Privatization Organization (IPO) has offered just 13 billion rials (about \$309.5 million) of state-run shares to the private sector during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22), IRIB reported.

On September 19, Iranian Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Farhad Dejpasand said the government should amend its policies and methods of setting the prices and transferring the shares in the process of privatization.

Making the remarks during a ceremony for introducing the new head of Privatization Organization, Alireza Saleh, the minister said: "We investigated the cases of blame on the privatization processes; all transferring trends have been conducted based on the regulations and were complying the laws.'

In its planned budget for the current Iranian year (ends on March 19, 2020), the Iranian government expects to earn some 106 trillion rials (about \$2.5 billion) of income from divesting shares of sate-run companies to the private sector.

In Iran, implementation of privatization plan aimed at more productivity, investment making, job creation, promotion of trade palance, more competition in domestic economy, and reducing financial and management burden on the government has been under the spotlight over the past decade.

The law on implementation of the general policies of the Article 44 of Iran's Constitution on privatizing state-owned companies was declared in 2006 in a bid to downsize the government and promote the private sector's role in the national economy.

The government envisioned a large privatization program in the Fifth Five-Year National Development Plan (2010-2015), aiming to privatize about 20 percent of the state-owned firms each year. Under the present interpretation of the Article 44, some state-owned companies have been privatized to reduce their financial burden on the country's budget and also increase their productivity.

Downsizing the government is on the agenda, but a number of factors has been hindering privatization trend in the country, among them government's high interference in the management of the transferred companies is a challenging one.

Commodities worth \$710m traded at IME in a week

ECONOMY TEHRAN — During the weekdays ended on October 3, while 555,517 tons of commodities worth over \$710 million were traded at Iran Mercantile Exchange, the trading volume and value experienced a growth of 20 percent and 32 percent, respectively.

According to the report from IME International Affairs and Public Relations, last week, on the domestic and export metal and mineral trading floor of IME, 233,875 tons of various products worth close to \$315 million were traded.

On this trading floor, 227,723 tons of steel, 2,720 tons of copper, 3,300 tons of aluminum, 120 tons of molybdenum concentrates, 12 tons of precious metal concentrates as well as 15 kg of gold bullion were traded by customers.

The report declares that on domestic and export oil and petrochemical trading floors of IME, 320,946 tons of different commodities with the total value of \$395 million were traded.

On this trading floor, 145,750 tons of VB feed stock, 75,485 tons of bitumen, 71,924 tons of polymer products, 22,205 tons of chemical products, 827 tons of insulation, 1,656 tons of argon as well as 3,720 tons of sulfur were traded.

Furthermore, 696 tons of commodities were traded on the

The value of trades at IME during the past Iranian calendar month of Shahrivar (August 23-September 22) has increased 22 percent from its previous month, IME published on its website. Some 2.168 million tons of commodities worth 102 trillion rials

(about \$2.428 billion) were traded at IME during the past month, indicating 49 percent rise in terms of volume.

On June 24, during the meeting of IME shareholders, IME Managing Director Hamed Soltani-Nejad said that this exchange has prepared ten macro plans to improve its performance during the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 19, 2020).

He mentioned development of underlying assets through existing instruments, development of financial instruments for commodity-backed securities, expansion of market size and depth, increasing cooperation with other organizations, and strengthening IME brand as some of the mentioned macro plans.

Soltani-Nejad has previously announced that IME accounted for 39 percent of the value of the total trades in the Iranian capital market during the past Iranian calendar year.

He put the value of IME trades at 1.78 quadrillion rials (about

\$42.3 billion) in the past year.

The value of trades at IME rose 52 percent in the past calendar year from its previous year.

Iran plans to reduce imports by \$10b in 2 years

Deals worth \$286m signed with domestic auto parts manufac-

During the mentioned roundtable, deals worth 12.3 trillion rials (about \$286 million) were signed with domestic manufacturers of auto parts for producing 42 different car

As reported, producing the mentioned auto parts inside Iran is going to have saved the country over €91 million.

During the signing ceremony, Rahmani noted that the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) has pledged to provide the country's industry sector with one quadrillion rials (about \$23.8 billion) of liquidity in the second half of this Iranian calendar year (September 23, 2019-March 19, 2020).

According to the official, Iran's Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade has implemented several programs for promoting domestic production and increasing exports in the current Iranian calendar year.

Coming under seven major axes, the ministry's programs mainly focus on developing and supporting domestic production as well as expanding exports to the neighboring

Supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), supporting the country's exporters and creating specialized working groups in order to promote exports to the

neighboring countries, reviving the country's

idle production units and small and medium

sized mines, supporting domestic auto part

manufacturers, holding exhibitions for encouraging domestic production, signing cooperation agreements with knowledge-based companies and universities are among the major steps taken by the industry ministry in order to promote domestic production and boost exports.

Oil offering at IRENEX facing challenges, but will definitely continue

1 → Another reason for not successful offering of crude oil at stock market is lack of necessary infrastructure at this market.

There are such barriers, but the experts say that they should not stop the process of

Barriers exist, but offering should not be stopped

Ali Bakhtiar, a member of Iranian parliament's energy committee, has said, "It is true that selling crude oil at IRENEX has not been successful, but it is not a reason to stop this right measure.

"Offering crude oil at stock market is a necessity under the current condition, so that through it we can compensate for the fall in our oil sales at the global markets at the time of sanctions. We should resolve the problems as soon as possible in a way that in the near future we can enjoy a reliable planning for selling oil at IRENEX", the official commented.

Referring to some of the challenges in the way of offering oil at stock exchange as those related to the shipment, and also limitations for money transfer and insurance because of the sanctions, he said, "These challenges should be removed through cooperation among IRENEX, Oil Ministry, Central Bank of Iran (CBI), and Majlis [Iranian parliament], so that our stock market could be like that of the modern countries, a ground for the big deals of crude oil and oil products.'

Experiences to be used for offering oil products

Meanwhile, as the country has also started offering oil products such as gasoline at IRENEX, the experts believe that the results of offering crude oil at the stock market should be used as experiences for avoiding the weak-

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.
The latest data released about sales of oil

products at IRENEX indicate that National Iranian Oil Company has sold 450,000 tons of oil products worth \$160.656 million at the international ring of Iran Energy Exchange during the week ended on September 20.

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

Not the good time to start

Bakhtiar besides a number of other experts also say that offering crude oil at stock market should have been started some years ago, and because of the sanctions, last year was not a proper time to begin this initiative.

Mohammad-Ali Khatibi, a former representative of Iran in OPEC, said, "It was not a proper time; offering crude oil at stock market is a new measure being slowed down also by the sanctions condition.

But he is of the opinion that if different parts of the private sector set up a consortium in this field they will be stronger to tackle the As previously mentioned, despite all the

barriers and challenges, the country is determined to continue offering crude oil and oil products at the stock market.

In a press conference hosted by Mehr news agency at the place of the agency in early July, NIOC's representative in IRENEX said that the company will continue offering oil at IRENEX.

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.

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 IREN-EX in order to institutionalize the necessary procedures which are a prerequisite for improving IRENEX to the level of world class stock exchanges." he said.

Meanwhile, on May 21, Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said National Iranian Oil Company will continue the process of offering crude oil at Iran Energy Exchange.

Back in February, the minister had also said that it may take some time for selling crude oil at IRENEX to be common and regular, but the oil ministry will offer the product at this market every week.

Economy ministry offers banking reform plan to govt.

ECONOMY d e s k Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Farhad Dejpasand said a program for amending the country's banking system has been prepared by the ministry and handed over to President Rouhani in

late September.

Speaking in a meeting with the CEOs of government-owned banks, Dejpasand noted that the ministry will follow up on the provided solutions in the program through relevant authorities until it reaches a conclusion, Shada reported.

The official noted that government-owned banks (including the biggest lenders) are seriously following a program to relinquish their excess assets and subsidiaries and also reduce the number of branches in order to increase their cash

Back in February, the government announced launching a program for selling excess properties of state banks, as part of its plans to reform the limping banking

He further stressed that transparency, efficiency and sound management of banks' costs are all bound to the establishment of digital banking as well as the full and effective implementation of corporate

"The Economy Ministry's Deputy for Banking, Insurance and Government Corporate Affairs is going to rank banks in terms of corporate governance and digital banking deployment," Dejpasand added.

Dejpasand also urged state banks to continue providing the necessary support to various economic sectors, especially the production sector, as before.

Iran's banking industry is suffering, among other things, from issues such as poor balance sheets, capital inadequacy, inability to recover non-performing loans to the tune of billions of dollars, arcane rules, and dubious operations of illegal credit institutions that have been punishing the economy for years.

In late August, Governor of Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Abdolnasser Hemmati said the bank has been working hard to reform the banking system long grappling with mismanagement and financial

Industrial projects inaugurated in 3 provinces

TEHRAN – In a two-day visit to the provinces of Qazvin, Gilan and Alborz during Oc-

tober 2-3, Iranian Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade Reza Rahmani visited and inaugurated 13 industrial projects in these provinces.

According to a report published by the ministry, during the trip Rahmani visited several industrial units and also inaugurated numerous manufacturing units and knowledge-based companies in the mentioned provinces.

Visiting Abyek Cement Company in Alborz province and meeting with the province's entrepreneurs and businessmen, visiting Dastranj Reza Baft knowledge-based factory as well as inaugurating Tuneel Saz Machine knowledge-based company in Qazvin province, and also inaugurating a copper wire production unit in Gilan province were among the events in which the minister participated. Rahmani also held talks with Gilan's

businessmen, entrepreneurs and owners of industrial units and discussed avenues for enhancing the province's domestic pro-

duction sector.

'The most important goal which the U.S. sought in imposing sanctions was to close our industrial units, but fortunately with the measures and steps taken by the government as well as the support of the people, the economic embargo on our country in the manufacturing sector has virtually failed," he said.

According to the official, Iran's Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade is following several programs for promoting domestic production across the country.

Supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), supporting the country's exporters and creating specialized working groups in order to promote exports to the neighboring countries, reviving the country's idle production units and small and medium sized mines, supporting domestic auto part manufacturers, holding exhibitions for encouraging domestic production, signing cooperation agreements with knowledge-based companies and universities are among the major steps taken by the industry ministry in order to promote domestic production and boost exports.

U.S.-China trade war could slow global manufacturing activity into start of 2020, economists warn

By Kathleen Magramo

As manufacturing data from China, the United States and Europe weakened to record levels in September, economists argued that a downward trend could be expected to continue until at least the first quarter of 2020.

Manufacturing activities across China, the U.S. and Germany have been contracting continuously in the last few months amid uncertainty caused by the protracted trade war between Beijing and Washington, with data from September released this week further emphasizing the issues faced by the global economy.

China's manufacturing activity has now contracted for five consecutive months, while readings for both Germany and the U.S. dropped to their lowest levels in a decade.

"I think it's pretty clear that the global economy will continue to suffer in the last quarter of the year, and possibly into the first quarter of next year," said Neil Shearing, chief economist at Capital Economics.

The Institute for Supply Management's (ISM) purchasing managers' index (PMI) for U.S. manufacturing sank to 47.8 in September, the lowest since June 2009, marking the second straight month of contraction.

PMI is a gauge of sentiment among supply chain managers, with a reading below 50 indicating a sign of contraction. In the survey, manufacturers are asked to provide a view on business activities such as export orders, purchasing, production and logistics.

Contraction in new export orders

"Global trade remains the most significant issue, as demonstrated by the contraction in new export orders that began in



July 2019. Overall, sentiment this month remains cautious regarding near-term growth," said ISM chair, Timothy Fiore.

A similar survey conducted by IHS/Markit showed American manufacturing PMI rebounded from 50.3 in August to 51.1, showing a marginally optimistic expansion of the industry in September.

"Although (the ISM/IHS Markit readings) are sending opposite signals about activity, the downturn in each continues to confirm our view that trade-related uncertainty has been a major drag on the sector," said a research note from Bank of America economists Stephen Juneau and Michelle Myer. In China, September's PMI improved to 49.8 from 49.5

reau of Statistics, although it remained in negative territory. According to Shearing from Capital Economics, the slight uptick in September's PMI in China was an "outlier" while the rest of the world's figures dropped, with the most concerning

in August, according to official data from the National Bu-

weak readings within China's construction sector.

Europe is also feeling the effects of the U.S.-China trade war, with Germany's manufacturing sector recording its worst performance since the global financial crisis.

Germany's PMI sat at 41.7 in September, down from 43.5 in August, according to data released by IHS Markit/BME on Tuesday, with factory managers particularly showing an increased willingness to reduce workforce numbers.

Continuous global slowdown

A "continuous global slowdown can be anticipated as Brexit woes and trade tensions heighten in Europe, but none of this comes as a shock," said Max Zenglein, head of economic research at the Mercator Institute for China Studies in Berlin. "There is an exception this time around compared to 2008 and 2009, this global slowdown is going to be paired with a more pronounced slowdown in China.

"I'm expecting we are just in the beginning of a full on global downturn, manufacturing hasn't reached rock bottom yet.'

Aside from diminishing global manufacturing activity, the World Trade Organization (WTO) this week also slashed its global trade growth forecast for the end of the year to 1.2 percent, more than half of its projection of 2.6 percent earlier in April.

The "darkening outlook for trade is discouraging, but not unexpected," said WTO director general Roberto Azevedo

"Beyond their direct effects, trade conflicts heighten uncertainty, which is leading some businesses to delay the productivity-enhancing investments that are essential to raising living standards.'

(Source: scmp.com)

Azar oil field's 1st phase of development to be completed by Mar. 2020

ENERGYd e s k

TEHRAN — The first phase of the development project of Azar oil field, in western Iran, is

expected to be completed by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 19, 2020), managing director of Iran's Petroleum Engineering and Development Company (PEDEC) said.

According to Touraj Dehqani, with the first phase of the development project completed, the field's output capacity will reach 65,000 barrels per day, Shana reported.

Under the first phase plan, 18 wells have been drilled in the field, all of which are completed, the official said.

Azar, one of the joint fields with Iraq, spans

an overall area of 482 square kilometers in southeast of Mehran town in the western Iranian province of Ilam.

The field is estimated to hold 2.5 billion barrels of oil in place. The volume of possible oil reserves to be extracted from Azar field is estimate to be around 400 million barrels.

Back in July 2017, Russia's Gazprom signed a cooperation agreement with Iran's Oil Industries' Engineering and Construction (OIEC) over the development of the oil field. In December 2017, the two companies submitted their joint plan to the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) to develop the field.

According to PEDEC, the cumulative oil extraction from Azar oil field has reached 20



million barrels since it began operation in March 2017

As there is still no processing installation at the place of this filed, its output is going to be sent to the processing facilities of Dehloran oil field through a 120-km pipeline, Shana reported.

The field is developed jointly by OIEC and Oil Industry Pension Fund Investment Company (OPIC) in a period of 55 months.

Asian prices slip as China stays away, demand lackluster

this week, with many Chinese and other regional players absent from the market due to the Golden Week holiday and no respite seen from rising supplies.

The average LNG price for November delivery into northeast Asia was estimated at \$5.55 per million British thermal units (mmBtu), down from \$5.75 per mmBtu last week, Reuters reported.

There were few trades done in a quiet market due to the week-long vacation in China as well as a public holiday in South Korea, traders said.

On the Platts window, Shell sold a cargo to Vitol for delivery between Nov. 28 and Dec. 2 to Tianjin, China for \$6.25 per mmBtu.

Several November cargoes were offered this week - by Abu Dhabi National Oil Co (ADNOC) from its Das Island plant on a delivered-ex-ship basis and from the Ichthys LNG plant in Australia, sources said.

Angola also offered a cargo for end-October loading, one source said.

LNG prices have been at multi-year seasonal lows for much of the year despite increasing consumption as China's demand growth stabilizes and falls behind soaring production

On Friday, Kinder Morgan's Elba Island plant in the U.S. state of Georgia became the fourth to start up this year. U.S. exports so far this year have equaled the 2018 total of the



world's No. 3 exporter, Malaysia.

The natural gas in Europe

In Europe, natural gas prices at the Dutch hub rose with the switch of the front month to the November contract but the outlook, in the absence of any sharp drop in temperature

Dutch front-month prices, a European benchmark, traded at around 16 euros per megawatt hour, or \$5.15, compared to \$3.51 at the end of September. That was far below the \$9.38 they fetched at the same time a year ago.

97.4% full on average, data from Gas Infrastructure Europe showed on Friday.

While consumption has begun to increase with the onset of colder weather, the continent remains well supplied. Fields in Norway and Britain are not expected to ramp up supplies this month by as much as they normally do, analysts said.

Turkey's Botas bought four winter cargoes at a discount to the Dutch benchmark, said one source who interpreted the award of the tender at such a price as a sign the sellers did not want to add to the oversupply in Europe.

Egypt, meanwhile, lowered gas prices fixed for the cement, metals and ceramic industries by between \$1.50 and \$2.00 to \$5.50 to \$6.00 per mmBtu.

Despite the bearish outlook, European gas traders are keeping an eye on several issues that may curtail supplies or boost demand including concerns over some French nuclear reactors and a Russia-Ukraine transit agreement.

U.S. sanctions on Chinese oil tankers meanwhile spilled over into LNG with a number of ice-classed LNG tankers, serving the Yamal facility in northern Russia, blacklisted due to their partial ownership by a sanctioned

LNG shipping rates for the Pacific basin jumped to \$75,000 per day, from \$61,000-\$65,000 last week. Sources said this was due to seasonal demand for tankers coupled with additional demand stemming from new projects coming

European countries such as France, Austria and Poland reported gas storage 100% full with tanks across the continent

Is Nigeria finally ready to cut oil production?



Nigeria is ready to make the sacrifice and cut its oil production deeper if OPEC and allies decide in December that it is necessary to deepen the cuts, Nigerian Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, Timipre Sylva,

told Bloomberg in an interview on Friday. According to oilprice.com, Nigeria has been one of the largest overproducers and non-compliant OPEC members in the production cut deal this year.

Nigerian overproduction has offset some of the cuts of its fellow OPEC members at a time when the oil market continues to be oversupplied with rising U.S. production and faltering oil demand growth.

Asked if he thinks that the OPEC+ group would need to make deeper cuts to prevent a surplus next year, Sylva told Bloomberg that the oil market is unpredictable right now.

"But if we need to make deeper cuts in

December, we'll make cuts," he said, adding that "We cannot allow prices to just plum-

"If things are going southward, we'll have to do some more cuts, and we are ready to make that sacrifice," the Nigerian minister said. The biggest OPEC producer in Africa has

been pumping 1.8 million bpd of crude oil year to date, Sylva told Bloomberg. "We had some overproduction in August, but we committed to cutting now, and we cut

down in September, and we are going to fully comply from October," he said. Iraq and Nigeria — the two rogue members of OPEC that haven't been complying with their share of the production cuts in recent months - pledged last month to fall within their respective caps while the cartel and its allies are trying to rebalance the oil market. Nigeria has promised to reduce its oil production by 57,000 bpd.

In August, Nigeria pumped 1.866 million bpd, up by 86,000 bpd from July, according to OPEC's secondary sources that the cartel uses to calculate official production and compliance rates. Nigeria's cap as part of the deal is 1.685 million bpd.

Rogue members such as Iraq and Nigeria have been derailing the cartel's efforts to secure full compliance from all.

Brazil looks to new horizons with offshore wind energy

Brazil, with a firm commitment to onshore wind power (on land), also begins to look at new horizons.

As per evwind.es, Brazil, with a firm commitment to onshore wind energy (on land), also begins to look at new horizons with offshore power generation (offshore) in the northeast region of the country, whose extensive coastline and favorable weather conditions increase its potential.

The Brazil wind generation guidebook study, from the BTG Pactual bank, established that the states of "Maranhao, Piauí, Ceará and Río Grande do Norte generate constant winds of high average speeds, perfect conditions for additional offshore wind capacity.

Preliminary studies by the Federal University of Santa Catarina and the Energy Research Company (EPE), with data up to May 2019, consider that the potential for wind power generation in the high seas of Brazil is 11 thousand gigawatts, with 57 percent located only in the northeast region.

The state-owned National Electric Energy Agency (Aneel), regulator, told Efe that Brazil "has offshore wind power plant projects in different phases of implementation" and one of them, Asa Branca I, in Amontada, Ceará state, You have already received the so-called Grant Registry.

The generation capacity

The Asa Branca I plant, with an expected generation capacity of 720 megawatts, is in the process of receiving the environmental license from the state-run Brazilian Institute of Environment (Ibama).

In February, the company BI Energy, of the Italian group Community Power, announced investments for 800 million euros (about 881.4 million dollars) in the wind farm of the coast of Caucaia, in the metropolitan region of Fortaleza, capital of Ceará, and which with 576 megawatts intends to provide electricity to 800 thousand residences.

The Subsidy Registry for this project in Caucaia is in process within the Aneel, "which must be granted in the coming months when all the requirements are met", and will subsequently enter the process for environmental licensing, the regulatory body of the Energy sector in the country.

The coordinator of the Energy Nucleus of the Federation of Industries of Ceará (FIEC), Joaquim Rolim, cited that only on the coast of his state there is a "total potential of 117 gigawatts" viable for wind power generation, "being more in half at depths less than twenty meters."

In addition to Ceará, the Aneel said that twenty kilometers

off the coast of Guamaré, in Rio Grande do Norte, the state oil company Petrobras develops the so-called 'Off-shore Wind Generation Pilot Plant', which has a capacity equal to or less than 5.0 megawatts does not require the Aneel **Grant Registry**

The offshore wind power
In that case, explained the regulator, the Petrobras initiative, which is the pioneer in offshore wind power in the country, only requires Ibama's environmental licenses. Projects for offshore wind power plants add to those recently

announced in the continental part of the northeast region. Last month, Neoenergia, the second largest energy distributor in Brazil and controlled by Spain's Iberdrola, announced

an investment of 1.9 billion reais (about \$ 475 million) in the construction of ten new parks in the so-called Oitis Wind Complex, which join two others already in development.

The twelve wind farms, located in the state of Bahia and planned to operate in full as of mid-2022, will have an installed capacity to generate 566.6 megawatts of energy.

In Piauí, the Italian group Enel Green Power is building the Lagoa dos Ventos wind power plant, between the municipalities of Lagoa do Barro, Dom Inocencio and Queimanda Nova, which will be the largest in South America with a capacity of 716 megawatts, according to the secretary Regional Ministry of Mines and Energy, Howzembergson de Britto.

In that complex of Piauí a factory of components for wind energy of the German-Spanish conglomerate Nordex Acciona is already installed.

PacifiCorp releases plan to cut coal power and add renewables

On Thursday, PacifiCorp released a 20-year power plan that cuts back on coal and adds renewable wind and solar energy.

As stated by dailyastorian.com, the Portland-based utility serves 1.9 million customers across six western states, including Oregon and Washington, and right now more than half of its power comes from coal.

Environmental groups have been pressing PacifiCorp for years to close more of its coal plants sooner and speed up its transition to renewable energy. But leaders in states like Wyoming, where the utility's coal plants are stationed, say the company would be hurting local economies and betraying their trust by closing coal plants early.

The investor-owned utility is planning to shutter more than 75% of its coal fleet by 2038, cutting nearly 4,500 megawatts of coal-fired power at multiple plants in Wyoming, Montana, Colorado, Idaho and Utah.

Only a portion of the closures would come sooner under the new plan than they would have otherwise. The company is calling for the early retirement of seven coal units at five different plants, with some closures coming more than a decade ahead of schedule.

In a statement, Chad Teply, PacifiCorp's senior vice president for business policy and development, said the company is aware that the early retirements will cut jobs at its coal plants.

Impacting thermal oper-

We are mindful that these re-



source decisions impact our thermal operations employees, their families and communities," he said. "Our top priority is making certain our employees and communities remain informed about the changes ahead and that we work in concert with everyone involved to develop plans that help them transition through this time of change.

Company officials estimated the new plan will save \$300 million to \$500 million in operation costs and will offer the lowest power rate option for PacifiCorp customers.

Rick Link, PacifiCorp's vice president of resource planning and acquisitions, said cost calculations played a big role in the company's decision to reduce its generation of coal-fired power.

'Coal generation has been an important resource in our portfolio, allowing us to deliver reliable energy to our customers, and will continue to play an important role as units approach retirement dates," he said in a statement. "At the same time, this plan reflects the ongoing cost pressure on coal as wind generation, solar generation and storage have emerged as low-cost resource options for our customers. On a press call following

PacifiCorp's announcement, Link said the company's analysis shows closing too many coal plants too soon could create problems for the reliability of the grid and the capacity of the entire system to generate enough energy for all of

Alternative energy options At the request of the Oregon Public Utilities Commission, PacifiCorp analyzed the costs of continuing to run its coal plants compared with al-

ternative energy options. That study

found more than half of its existing

coal plants were more expensive to

In 2016, Oregon lawmakers passed a bill that requires the state to stop paying for coal-fired power by 2030 in an effort to cut ties with coal plants delivering power to Oregon from out of state through PacifiCorp and Portland General Electric.

Washington passed a similar law this year that will cut off payments for coal-fired power by 2025.

PacifiCorp said in an email its plan would nearly triple the company's use of wind power. Its long-term plan calls for adding 3,500 megawatts of wind power in Wyoming and Idaho, as well as 6,300 megawatts of solar power with 2,800 megawatts of battery storage to go along with it in Utah, Wyoming, Oregon and Washington. The company also plans to build a 400-mile transmission line between Wyoming and Utah to help connect new sources of renewable energy.

The utility's plan will need approvals from utility regulators in the six states it serves.

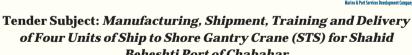
Christopher Thomas with the Sierra Club said the Oregon PUC should consider rejecting the company's plan and requiring more early coal plant retirements

"This draft plan shows what we've long suspected: Coal is now one of the most expensive ways to make electricity," he said. "While Pacific Power is moving to retire some of its uneconomic coal units, it still plans to send coal power to Oregon for the next decade even though its own analysis shows that cleaner options like wind, solar and energy storage are cheaper.

First Announcement

Aria Banader Iranian Chabahar Marine and Port Services Development Company





Beheshti Port of Chabahar No. PE/1014/98 It is hereby notified that Aria Banader Iranian Chabahar Marine and Port Services

Development Company as the company in charge of procuring equipment for phase 1 of Shahid Beheshti Port of Chabahar development plan is calling for tenders for the international public tender of Manufacturing, Shipment, Training and Delivery of the above mentioned equipment in a two-stage manner, after the quality assessment.

All manufacturers with the experience of manufacturing the above-mentioned equipment are invited to receive the CD containing the quality assessment forms and the tender documents by presenting a written introduction letter and the original bank receipt of 5,000,000 IR Rials deposited to the bank account no. 0203568843007 in the name of Aria Banader Iranian Chabahar Marine and Port Services Development Company with Bank Day at the below address.

The deadline for submitting the documents, evidences and the completed quality assessment forms is at the latest by Thursday, November 21, 2019; 10:00 A.M. (local time)

- Purchase and delivery address of the tender documents: No. 40, Kish St., Nelson Mandela Blvd., Tehran, IRAN, Postal Code: 1518814111, Phone: +982188190677-9, FAX: +982188190679 Email Address: m.niapak@abiports.com.

- To keep the date of the documents delivery, any question is allowed until 72 hours before the deadline of the documents delivery.
- All manufacturers are obliged to abide by the Maximum Utilization of Local Capabilities Law.
- The cost of the advertising is undertaken by the tender winner.
- After the quality assessment the qualified companies will be invited to provide the technical and commercial documents.

Making sense of hope: Can Iran's Hormuz peace endeavor succeed?

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Since President Hassan Rouhani's election in 2013, Iran has proposed the establishment of a regional dialogue forum at various international conferences, through articles in numerous platforms, and within official statements.

Iran has sought an inclusive regional dialogue forum since the 1990s similar to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The OSCE provides a particularly suitable framework for Iran and (Persian) Gulf Cooperation Council ([P]GCC) countries. An official summit could be organized in Baghdad, Muscat or Kuwait City to improve relations between countries surrounding the Persian Gulf, or in other words, the Hormuz Strait Community. This would be the first such meeting of the eight littoral nations of the Persian Gulf—with the possibility of including Yemen in later stages—to tackle mutual concerns and shared threats.

President Rouhani presented an updated version of Iran's proposal at the 2019 United Nations General Assembly, which he dubbed the Hormuz Peace Endeavor, or HOPE.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif briefly explained the contents of the proposal during a special session of the UN Security Council. HOPE, according to Zarif, is based on the fact that all regional states have the responsibility to ensure peace, stability and prosperity in the region and, together with the global community, have a common vital interest in maintaining freedom of navigation and energy security for all.

Iran presented HOPE as a plan of action which seeks to initiate preparatory arrangements for an HSC Summit to commence deliberations on a broad spectrum of security and cooperation issues, including energy security, arms control and confidence-building measures, military contacts, establishment of a possible Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone and the conclusion of an HSC non-aggression pact. Additionally, HOPE seeks to establish a joint taskforce, on various issues regarding practical measures to gradually expand cooperation including in early warning, prevention and resolution of conflicts, combatting drug and human trafficking, joint investments and ventures in energy, transit and transportation, and cooperation in cyber security.

Zarif acknowledged that these objectives can only be promoted through adherence to common principles of good neighborliness such as dialogue and mutual respect, respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, and invariability of international borders, peaceful settlement of all disputes, rejection of threats and use of force, non-aggression and non-intervention in the internal or external affairs of each other, and rejection and non-participation in coalitions and alliances against each other.

Importantly, Iran seeks the participation and support of the United Nations to furnish the necessary international umbrella and to ensure the legitimate interests of the international community, based on UNSC Resolution 598 which facilitated the ceasefire that ended the war between Iran and Iraq in 1988. Paragraph eight of this resolution requests the UN Secretary-General examine, in consultation with Iran and Iraq and other States of the region, measures to enhance the security and stability of the region. Aside from the security interests of the Islamic Republic, HOPE takes into consideration the concerns of the ([P]GCC) states. However, Iran makes no secret that its ultimate goal is the withdrawal of US troops from the region. In his UNGA address, Rouhani argued that the formation of any security coalition and initiative under any title in the region with the centrality and command of foreign forces is a clear example of interference in the affairs of the region, adding that the security of the region shall be provided when American troops pull out and that security shall not be supplied with American weapons and intervention. Additionally, Rouhani appealed to the (P)GCC states by stating: America is not your neighbor. This is the Islamic Republic of Iran which neighbors you and we have been long taught that: Neighbor comes first, then comes the house. In the event of an incident, you and

So far within the actual contents of the initiative, Iran has not demanded the immediate withdrawal of US forces. Instead, it calls for the rejection and non-participation in coalitions and alliances against each other, meaning as long as US forces are not meant to threaten Iran's security, coexistence might be possible. It would have been delusional for Iran to expect the removal of US troops under the current circumstances in which Saudi Arabia is expecting an even broader US engagement within its territory, Qatar relies heavily on US assurances provided through the Al Udeid Airbase, Bahrain hosts US Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT), and Kuwait, Oman and the UAE have their own military ties with the US.

As a standing counter-proposal, the United States has called for the establishment of an International Alliance for Safety and Protection of Maritime Navigation, which so far includes Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the UAE, Australia and the United Kingdom. Additionally, since the Trump Administration withdrew from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in May 2018, there has been an effort to establish an Arab NATO to counter and contain Iran. The first ministerial-level meeting of the so-called Middle East Strategic Alliance (MESA), took place on the sidelines of UNGA in 2018 where Secretary of State Mike Pompeo met with his counterparts from the six (P)GCC countries, plus Egypt and Jordan. A similar meeting was held this year—minus Egypt, which decided to withdraw—but included Iraq as an observer. It is relatively clear, however, that Oman, Qatar, and likely Kuwait, would be wary to join such an arrangement if it leads to a military confrontation with Iran. This wariness has been previously expressed by their opposition to forming a unified military force within the (P)GCC.

At the same time, it is difficult for any (P)GCC state to support an Iranian proposition on regional security given frictions within the Arab organization. This is despite the fact that Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, and the UAE have been calling for similar propositions with regards to regional dialogue. Saudi Arabia and the UAE have maintained a blockade of Qatar for more than two years. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain still lack diplomatic relations with Iran, after the incidents that occurred in Iran in response to Riyadh's execution of Shiite Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr. Saudi Arabia is feeling particularly aggrieved following the Aramco attacks on September 14. The United States, Britain, France and Germany have named Iran as the state that bears responsibility despite not providing concrete evidence.

At UNGA, Saudi Foreign Minister Ibrahim al-Assaf called on the international community to apply utmost pressure on Iran, arguing that the best way to control the Islamic Republic was by cutting off its financial resources. In tandem to such posturing, however, there have been reports that Pakistan and Iraq have been involved in mediating possible talks between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

History has shown that it is not possible to advance prosperity, security, and stability in the region in a non-inclusive manner that excludes Iran's participation. The fate of HOPE is contingent on Iran's ability to transform the proposal into concrete steps to generate confidence with its Arab neighbors, in addition to garnering the support of the international community, including the United States. Clearly, the majority of (P)GCC states are not prepared to forego their military partnerships with the United States absent a real local capacity to guarantee their security and political interests. While it is unlikely that all (P)GCC states will genuinely embrace the proposal under current circumstances, it is high time for all countries surrounding the Persian Gulf to seek a common path away from current tensions and hostilities.

Grand celebration shows peaceful intent, unity of Chinese society

GLOBALTIMES — A celebratory event, including a military parade, marking the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) was held on Tuesday morning at Tiananmen Square in Beijing. Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, also Chinese president and chairman of the Central Military Commission, delivered an important speech and inspected the troops of the People's Liberation Army in the parade.

The most eye-catching part of the celebration was the military parade, including the debut of military hardware such as 16 DF-41 ICBM, which has attracted world attention. The celebration of the 70th anniversary of the founding of the PRC has showcased the extraordinary image of China in the new era.

China is a united and cohesive country with outstanding organizational ability. Such a spectacle, including the parade, is a super project and tests the comprehensive capabilities of the country. Strong technical support and comprehensive coordination capability are required. The one held in Beijing is a microcosm of celebrations across China. This year is unusual. In view of the ongoing trade war that has lasted over a year and a half and continuous riots in Hong Kong, some external forces want to make China a subject of ridicule. However, Chinese society hasn't divided but has become more united. The unprecedented, grand celebrations have brought more joy to the Chinese people. It will further boost the confidence of the people

and pale the voices of some external forces.
China has become stronger, including the country's national defense capabilities. The debut of DF-41, 16 of which participating in the military parade, indicates it has been in full service. Western analysts generally believe that DF-41 is a multiple-warhead-capable, solid-fuel and road-mobile ICBM with a range long enough to hit any target on Earth. It's an advanced nuclear strike force. DF-41 and the JL-2 will raise China's nuclear deterrent capabilities to a new level.

China's national defense capabilities have been progressing in line with the country's technological and economic strength --something expected of a major power. If one country only focuses on economy and drags its feet on defense, it will inevitably fuel external hostilities and ambitions. China should ensure a balanced development. A strong military is conducive to deterring external forces.

China cherishes peace. Grand military parade is meant to enhance military transparency, not to flex muscles or coerce. Military hardware including DF-41 haven't been unveiled publicly until they are already in service. The restraint is rare in the world. It is worth mentioning that all the nuclear weapons displayed by China will not be used in pre-emptive strategic strikes, or to threaten non-nuclear nations. China is the only nuclear power that declares no-first-use nuclear policy. The firm policy will be applied to all of China's nuclear weapons.

China has firm strategic planning, which won't be disrupted by temporary factors. Western media outlets, in analyzing 70th founding anniversary celebrations of the PRC, tend to list temporary factors as if the scale and level of this year's military parade is designed for those factors. China traditionally celebrates founding anniversaries every 10 years. Displaying new weaponry is also a tradition.

 $China\,is\,marching\,forward\,steadily\,despite$



the ups and downs in 70 years. The military parade in the morning and grand gala in the evening will show China's new image, which we believe will bring positive energy and influence to a complicated world.

Collaborative governance key to Afghan peace

In the study of internal armed conflict management, collaborative governance among major powers is an important research topic. It can reduce conflicts and help promote peace. Donald Trump administration's fetish for unilateralism failed to bring peace in Afghanistan, which again reaffirms how important collaborative governance is.

After taking office, Trump started to fulfill his election promises to withdraw troops from Afghanistan. In August 2017, Trump publicly announced the new US strategy in Afghanistan and South Asia, which was a sign of the US reshaping the regional order. In July 2018, the Trump administration decided to hold direct talks with the Taliban. Zalmay Khalilzad, former US ambassador to Afghanistan, was appointed the special representative for Afghanistan reconciliation at the US State Department in September 2018. Khalilzad has been in charge of talks with the Taliban. After the talks, the US and the Taliban made some progress. On March 12, Khalilzad announced that the US and the Taliban reached a draft agreement, a major milestone for Afghan peace as the militant group had refused to talk with Afghan government.

However, Khalilzad's draft agreement was not widely recognized in the Trump administration. Then US national security adviser John Bolton argued that the Taliban cannot be trusted to fulfill their promises. The massive tractor bomb explosion in Kabul on September 2 proved the bellicose official right. On September 8, Trump tweeted that he had canceled the secret US meeting with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and senior Taliban leaders, saying "if they cannot agree to a ceasefire during these very important peace talks... they probably don't have the power to negotiate a meaningful agreement anyway."

During the Afghan peace process, the Taliban has been divided into two groups, the hard-liners and the moderates. The former want victory by force, while the latter seek peace through dialogue. After negotiations with the Trump administration came to naught, the Taliban delegation visited Russia and China to show that they have still not given up the desire for peace. Not long after consultations with Zamir Kabulov, Russia's special envoy to Afghanistan, the Taliban delegation visited

Beijing to meet Deng Xijun, China's special envoy for Afghanistan affairs and discussed the Afghanistan-US peace talks. Suhail Shaheen, a spokesman for the Afghan Taliban in Qatar, said that "the Chinese special representative said the US-Taliban deal is a good framework for the peaceful solution of the Afghan issue and they support it." In fact, by saying so, the Taliban was expressing goodwill to the Trump administration, hoping to restore negotiations with the US.

In the Afghan peace process, China prefers to promote peace through international cooperation. For example, China has cooperated with the US to train Afghan diplomats, pushed Pakistan to release a joint statement in July with China, Russia and the US on Afghan peace process, and supported the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in boosting cooperation with Afghanistan.

Afghanistan's peace is in line with China's national interests. But if the peace process reverses, China has the ability to control Afghan armed conflicts within a limit. For this purpose, China has strengthened its military and technological cooperation with Pakistan and Tajikistan to address regional defense weaknesses. China has also introduced artificial intelligence, facial recognition, unmanned aerial vehicles and other high technologies to border area management, improving the ability to respond to potential threats.

Generally, collaborative governance is of great importance to promote peace in Afghanistan. In particular, China and the US should make use of their own advantages to strengthen cooperation in the Afghan peace process. This not only benefits Afghanistan's peace, but also is in line with the interests of both China and the US.

China's success an alternative to Western development model

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, the Asian country has made brilliant achievements and drawn global attention. Within seven decades, China has completed the industrialization process which developed countries took hundreds of years to achieve and grown to become the second-largest economy from wallowing in poverty and bleakness.

The founding of the PRC has changed the global political landscape, encouraging people in colonies and semi-colonies, who were seeking liberation and independence as well. China has been playing a pivotal role in safeguarding global peace and multipolarization. In spite of twists and turns along the way, China's development is of great significance to the

world.Great changes have taken place in terms of economic development in China over the past 70 years. In 1952, China's GDP stood at 67.9 billion yuan (\$9.55 billion); while the figure exceeded 90 trillion yuan (\$12.66 trillion) in 2018, an increase of 1,325 times. China has been contributing more than 30 percent of the global economic growth for many years, outperforming any other economy. China has served as the global growth engine and stabilizer, which is a blessing for both Chinese people and human history.

China's progress has not only contributed to political and economic changes across the world, but also provided an alternative to the Western development model. It offers another option for countries which want to seek development while at the same time maintaining independence. China's unique path has not only absorbed Western development experiences, but is also based on its own conditions. It's fair to say it's a kind of integrated innovation. The reason why China can make such great achievements within only 70 years lies in its politics. China has rejected the old and rigid closed-door policy and any attempt to abandon socialism. It won't simply replicate and copy what the West has done. This shows the extraordinary political wisdom and willpower of the Communist Party of China.

Besides, political stability has guaranteed China's continuous development. Some countries are plagued by partisan struggle and policy uncertainties brought about by the change of government. But in China, the country's political system has ensured the continuity of long-term projects and helps concentrate resources on accomplishing major tasks.

The superiority of China's development path lies in that it emphasizes "common values," which are distinct from the exclusionary and coercive "universal values" of the West. The West's "universal values" mainly serve to promote the Western model to the rest of the world. The West trumpets any country can succeed as long as it applies Western values and development model. Yet it has been proved over decades that it is wrong as every country has a different domestic situation and what can work smoothly in the West may not suit countries in other regions. China has also made contribution to redefining democracy. Chinese democracy transcends the Western democratic concept, the key features of which are elections and competition among political parties. China believes those engaged in street politics and color revolution in the garb of democracy pose a challenge to Western democracy.

China has come up with some new development concepts. It emphasizes realizing comprehensive and coordinated development in economy, politics, society, culture and ecology by continuous reform. This can be learned by other countries, especially developing ones. China has called for building a community of shared future for mankind and achieving shared and winwin development with other countries. The global harmony can be achieved through coexistence, extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits. China's view for building a community of shared future for mankind is in sharp contrast to some great powers' moves, such as pursuing unilateralism, tearing up international treaties and withdrawing from international organizations. Clearly, China has now taken the moral high ground in the international community.

Ex-UN official lauds Iran's active resistance policy against U.S.

TEHRAN (Tasnim) — A former official at the United Nations and professor of international law praised Iran's policy of resistance against US pressures as "successful so far" and said the Islamic Republic has proven that it will not back down in the face of Washington's hostilities.

"I believe Iran has effectively made its point that it will not back down in the face of harsh sanctions and other hostile acts (by the US) that are contrary to international law," Professor Richard A. Falk said in an interview with Tasnim. Professor Richard Anderson Falk is the author or co-author of 20 books and the editor or co-editor of another 20 volumes. In 2008, the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) appointed him to a six-year term as a United Nations Special Rapporteur on "the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967".

The following is the full text of the Interview:
On Tuesday, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah
Seyed Ali Khamenei deplored the US' calls for talks with Iran
as a trick and said Tehran will not negotiate bilaterally or
multilaterally with Washington at any level. What do you
think about Ayatollah Khamenei's remarks?

A: With all due respect, I think that Ayatollah Khamenei's remarks are phrased in too unconditional language. I believe that it is desirable not to shut the door to what I call 'restorative diplomacy,' and thereby avoid any further devastation caused by the current reliance on 'coercive diplomacy' by the adversaries of Iran and 'active resistance' by Iran. Trump is unpredictable and impulsive, and should not be challenged so directly as he might act irrationally in ways that would be mutually harmful. At the same time, the Iranian religious leader is correct to express the view that Iran will not engage in normalization talks so long as the United States and Israel seek to impose unacceptable restraints on Iran as a sovereign nation.



■ Iran sees the United States' calls for negotiation as a trick and part of the so-called "maximum pressure" campaign which has failed to force the Islamic Republic to give in to US demands. How do you assess Iran's policy of "active resistance" against the US pressures?

A: I agree with the view that Iran should not be lured into a negotiation that gives the US a public relations victory by claiming the success of its 'maximum pressure' approach, but this should be done by Tehran in ways that also express Iran's search for an improved regional and global political atmosphere that is geared toward peace and co-existence rather than war and hostility. I believe Iran has effectively made its point that it will not back down in the face of harsh sanctions and other hostile acts that are contrary to international law. Now it can seize the initiative by proposing a constructive approach that shows that it seeks normalization on the basis of sovereign equality, and is not seeking confrontation for the sake of confrontation.

Iran has said the US' return to the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and the removal of sanctions against the Islamic Republic is the only way that Washington can hold talks with Tehran. How do you see the prospects of open diplomacy between Iran and the US as well as the other parties to the JCPOA?

A: Trump has wrongly, and for regressive political reasons, condemned the JCPOA, but would have incredible political difficulty if he now were to affirm it. The motivation for condemning JCPOA had to do with his efforts to repudiate Obama's diplomacy and to show total solidarity with Israel, and not really about the 2015 agreement, except incidentally. I think Iran should propose to reconvene the countries that negotiated in 2015, and produce a new agreement based on intervening developments, but making it clear that this would not be an acceptance of any preconditions put forward by Washington

Can we regard the Islamic Republic's strategy of "active resistance" against the US pressures as successful?

A: I think 'active resistance,' depending somewhat on how it is defined has been successful so far, but in some ways a dangerous and high risk policy if adhered too much longer. Iran, having made its point effectively, should move to higher ground by proposing constructive deescalating steps such as reconvening the P5 +1 group to come up with a new framework agreement covering Iran's nuclear program and the ending of US sanctions. The way forward should not be a continuation of the present, but an effort to occupy this high ground of law, morality, and peaceful conflict resolution. It may also be appropriate at this time to propose an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council, which likely would be rejected by Trump, but would put Iran in a favorable light internationally as creatively engaging in restorative diplomacy.

Is Biden happy? Is Biden upset?!

TEHREAN — Former U.S. Vice President Joe Biden is outraged and outraged by Donald Trump on the one hand, for his son's unusual dealings with Ukrainian companies. But on the other hand, Biden hopes the war will end for the Democrats. Biden hopes to improve his position in public and state polls. On the other hand, Joe Biden has no desire for recent revelations to weaken his position in the Democratic Party's internal polls.Here's a look at the latest analysis and news on public and state polls in the US, as well as analysis of

Four in Ten Republicans Believe Trump Mentioned Biden on the Ukraine Call

As National review reported, A $\,\mathrm{new}\,\mathrm{poll}\,\mathrm{shows}\,\mathrm{that}$ only four in ten Republicans believe that President Donald Trump mentioned investigating Joe Biden on his phone call to the Ukrainian president — even though Trump himself has admitted that he did. The Monmouth University Survey was conducted between September 23 and 29, and the results were published

Not only is this news itself a problem, but it's also a symptom of a larger one: For far too many people, partisanship supersedes facts.

It's true: The majority of people are either for Trump or against Trump, and the side that they're on is the only thing determining their view of any issue. Many people on Trump's side have (whether they're conscious of it or not) simply written off any negative information about him as "Fake News." With this kind of mindset, why would they ever even bother to click on a headline from, say, the New York Times reporting that Trump had mentioned Biden in the call? There, they might be able to see that Trump had in fact admitted it, but many would never get that far — because they have already decided that the Times is a "Fake News" source, and therefore not worth considering.

Also, for the same reason, they might not trust it even if they did get so far as to read it. In short: If it's favorable to Trump; they believe it. If it isn't; they don't.What's more, this isn't the first time that we have seen survey results like this. No - in 2017, a Public Policy Polling survey found that less than half of Trump supporters believed that Donald Trump Jr. had met with a Russian lawyer, despite the fact that the president's son himself had admitted that he did so. Of course, there are many people who would see these surveys and just chalk it up to Republicans being brainwashed idiots — but those people would be wrong. After all, the fervent left has also proven to be lost in its own partisanship-induced fog. For example: Remember when Trump dumped all of that fish food in that koi pond during a visit with Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe? Trump-haters saw it, and immediately took to Twitter to slam it as an example of more rude, unpresidential behavior from Trump. The truth? Abe had actually done it first, and Trump had just been following his lead as anyone who had actually bothered to watch the entire video, or read the entire pool report, would have known. But, of course, the hyperpartisan left had no need to bother with such things, because facts aren't what they're using to determine their views of issues. Their partisanship is.

After all, "Fishgate" is far from the only time the

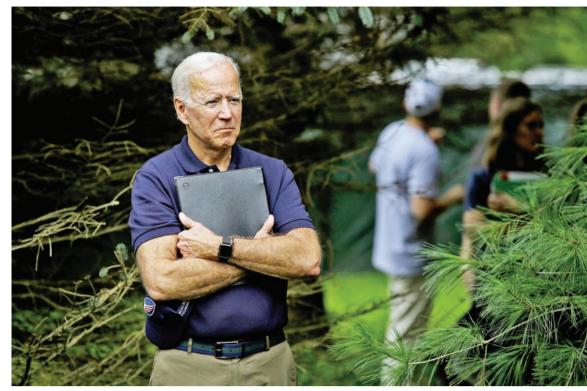
Left has done something like this. For example: How many times have you heard a leftist journalist confidently claim that the rhetoric Trump uses at rallies leads to more hate crimes? This past spring, Vox, the Washington Post, the San Francisco Chronicle, and CNN all ran stories on a single study that reported a 226 percent increase in hate-related incidents due to Trump rallies. Politicians including Senator Bernie Sanders and Representative Ilhan Omar seized on the study as concrete, absolute, indisputable proof that, as Omar put it, Trump's "rhetoric is directly and indirectly inciting hate."

Ves. Leftists confidently made these claims without bothering to look into the numbers or consider any other factors or explanations. Thankfully, Matthew Lilley and Brian Wheaton at Reason did just that. They used the same statistical methods as the original study's authors to analyze the impact that Hillary Clinton's rallies could be having on hate crimes, and do you know what they found? An even greater increase associated with her rallies than with Trump's. What's more, rather than iust saving "Aha! So Hillary is the hate-inspiring one!" the pair looked into other reasons for the numbers, ones that had nothing to do with politics — explaining that the inflated number of hate crimes could easily be due to factors such as politicians often choosing to hold rallies in larger cities, where "the raw number of crimes is generally mechanically higher.'

Something has to change. We live in a climate where one side hates the other, where it's impossible to work together, and so much of it is based on perceptions that have no basis in reality. Although it's fine to have a political affiliation, that should never replace your desire for objective truth and knowledge. After all, reality is going to exist whether you're aware of it or not — and it's always best to be able to make your decisions and determinations based on what's real, rather than on a politically motivated fantasy.

Joe Biden trails rivals as fundraising totals plummet from last quarter

Also NBC reported that Former Vice President Joe Biden announced raising \$15.2 million in the third quarter of the year, behind some rivals and short of what he raised in the previous quarter of the year. Biden, a leading 2020 contender, has suffered shrinking poll numbers in recent weeks and the fundraising numbers announced Thursday may further fuel questions about whether he can maintain the sense of inevitably his campaign has sought to create around his candidacy. The third quarter of the year, which spans from July to the end of September, is typically the slowest of the year, but Biden was outflanked by at least two opponents. Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., tapped his small-dollar fundraising army for an impressive \$25.3 million haul in the quarter, while Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Indiana, who has become a darling of the left-leaning



donor class, posted a \$19.1 million haul.

California Sen. Kamala Harris raised less than the former vice president at \$11.6 million. Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, who has been gaining on Biden in polls, has yet to announce her fundraising. Candidates have until Oct. 15 to file reports with the Federal Election Commission. Biden personally revealed the numbers during a fundraiser in Palo Alto, Calif, on Thursday, telling donors they were among the more than a half-million individuals who have given to his campaign.Biden aides had been mum all week about when it planned to release his third-quarter haul."Today's fundraising totals put the campaign in a strong osition as we enter the fall," said Biden campaign manager Greg Schultz in a statement. "The question any campaign faces at this point is whether or not you have the resources to compete in early states and sustain your efforts beyond. Our campaign unequivocally does and builds on our strength each week

The campaign announced \bar{a} \$6 million ad buy earlier Thursday, Schultz noted, and he said the campaign has "well over 200 staff and dozens of field offices" in key states. Buttigieg was also the money leader in the spring, but Biden was not far behind. He had entered the race late, giving him less time to raise money in the second quarter. In July, Biden's campaign announced it had raised \$21.5 million since its launch in late-April, while Buttigieg raised \$24.8 million. The drop-off of more than \$6 million from Biden's initial total to now comes even as he made time for more big-dollar fundraisers in the last three months. According to an NBC News tally, Biden attended 24 fundraisers in the second quarter and 43 in the third. Biden was attending a pair of fundraisers on Thursday in the Bay Area. It was not immediately clear whether the higher number of big-dollar events was an effort to compensate for a possible downturn in small-dollar, online giving. In July, the campaign said it had received 436,000 donations from 256,000 individuals, with an average donation of \$49.In the third quarter, the campaign said 56 percent of its donors were new and that the average donation was down to \$44.

The campaign also said the last week of the third uarter was its best week for online fundraising since early May, something not atypical for campaigns as they press online supporters to make last-minute donations before the end-of-quarter deadline. The influx also came as Biden became the center of a growing impeachment effort in Congress over President Donald Trump's apparent effort to pressure the government of Ukraine to investigate his potential Democratic foe.

Ohio poll shows Donald Trump behind Joe Biden Cleveland reported that A new poll from Emerson

College shows potentially troubling signs for Republican President Donald Trump in Ohio.

Trump, who won the state by 8 percentage points in 2016, has a net negative job approval rating. Three of the top Democratic candidates narrowly beat him in a theoretical head-to-head matchup, although the results are within the margin of error. And a plurality of respondents to the poll said they supported impeaching the president. The poll was conducted by Emerson College in Massachusetts using robocalls and an online panel from Sept. 29 through Oct. 2. The sample of 837 Phio registered voters has a margin of error of plusor-minus 3.3% and is weighted by various factors from the 2016 election, including gender, age, education and ethnicity.

Trump under water

Fifty-one percent of the surveyed voters said they disapproved of Trump's job performance. Only 42.6% said they approved. As in other surveys, Trump's poor job performance numbers were driven by women and minority voters, though white and male voters also held a net-negative approval rating of the president. The survey results also indicated the antipathy didn't spread to GOP Gov. Mike DeWine, who had a net 3.3% negative job approval rating – within the margin of error.

Impeachment

Ohioans were essentially split on whether to impeach Trump. The survey did not ask for a reason, but the recent controversy over Trump asking Ukraine to investigate former Vice President Joe Biden, a Democrat running for resident, has led to Democrats in Congress announcing they'll open an impeachment inquiry. Of those polled by Emerson, 42.7% said they supported impeaching the president while 39.3% said they opposed.

Of the subset of Democrats in the poll, there was a three-way race for the Democratic primary.Biden narrowly led the field with 29.2%, followed by Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont at 26.6% and Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts at 20.6%. Sen. Kamala Harris of California at 6.6%, South Bend, Indiana Mayor Pete

Buttigieg at 5% and businessman Andrew Yang at 3.3% rounded out the rest of the top of the field. Rep. Tim Ryan, a Youngstown-area Democrat running for president, polled at 0.4%. Ryan was not on the Democratic debate stage in September and won't be included in the October debate hosted in his home state.

While only a single poll, the Trump's head-to-head matchups against the Democrats produced some foreboding signs. Others have shown similar trends.Sanders topped Trump 53.1% to 46.9%. Biden bested Trump 52.6% to 47.4%. And Warren narrowly won 51.6% to 48.4%. Results from an Emerson College poll of Ohio voters showing Republican President Donald Trump narrowly trailing Democrats Joe Biden, Elizabeth War-

Now, this doesn't mean Trump is doomed in the state. All of the matchups were within the margin of error, making them statistically a tie. Voters were also only given the option to pick one of the two candidates in the head-to-head question, discounting the possibility of third-party candidates or those who wouldn't vote. But the fact the president's approval rating has tanked downward since he took office in 2017 and the possibility that Ohioans are even open to the idea of impeachment isn't a great sign for the president. Sanders and especially Warren are mocked among Republicans in the state as too liberal to possibly beat Trump. If the Emerson College results are indicative of the political climate in Ohio, the president should

It's a three-way race in California's presidential primary. Kamala Harris isn't included

As Sacbee reported, California's 2020 primary is up in the air for three contenders seeking the Democratic presidential nomination. Unfortunately for home state . Sen. Kamala Harris, she's not among tȟem, according to a poll released Wednesday night by the Public Policy Institute of California. The numbers show a drop in support among likely Democratic or Democratic-leaning voters since her first debate, down from first place at 19 percent in July to fourth place at 8 percent.

Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren saw the biggest surge in California since July, jumping from 15 percent to 23 percent. She is now in a statistical tie with former Vice President Joe Biden and Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, who recorded 22 percent and 21 percent, respectively.

"The race is very close now between three candidates in California, and there's no distance between those three," said Mark Baldassare, president of PPIC. "There's a second tier, and, yes, that's where our California senator is in right now."

Maya Humes, communications director for Harris's campaign in California, said the senator is expanding her operation within the state to appeal to more voters. On Sunday, the campaign opened its first California office, in Oakland. "As our operation expands, our plan is to work with our supporters to ensure that Californians up and down the state know Kamala's plans to tackle the issues that keep them up at night," Humes said. Californians said homelessness, jobs and the economy, housing costs, immigration and the environment are their most important issues. Baldassare said Harris's performance in the last two debates is the biggest factor contributing to her decline, given 84 percent of respondents told PPIC the debate performances are either very important or somewhat important to their choice of candidate.

With California's March 3, 2020 primary approaching, there is still time for Harris to make up her losses. The poll found that most likely California voters are still making up their mind. Fifty-three percent said they'd consider another candidate, while 44 percent said they

are definitely supporting the person they named.

A separate poll released last month by UC Berkeley found that 43 percent of Californians likely to participate in the state's 2020 primary were presently considering Harris, compared to 45 percent for Sanders, 46 percent for Biden and 68 percent for Warren.

Joining Harris $\bar{i}n$ the second tier of 2020 candidates is South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, who PPIC found polled at 6 percent — a mere 1 percent increase since the organization last surveyed voters in July.Rounding out the pack are entrepreneur Andrew Yang at 3 percent, New Jersey Sen. Cory Booker and former Housing and Urban Development Secretary Julián Castro at 2 percent and Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar, former Texas Congressman Beto O'Rourke and billionaire liberal activist Tom Stever at 1 percent. The margin of error among people asked about their voting preference for the Democratic nomination was 4.9 percentage points. It was 4.2 percentage points for the overall sample of 1,031 likely voters.

Trump and money are shielding Saudi Arabia from accountability for Khashoggi's killing

 $\bf ANTIWAR$ — One year after Khashoggi's killing, and 4 $1\!\!/\!_2$ years into the brutal Saudi-led intervention in Yemen, Congress and the president have yet to hold Saudi Arabia accountable. Following the brutal killing of Saudi dissident and Washington Post contributor Jamal Khashoggi at Saudi Arabia's consulate in Istanbul, Turkey, one year ago, the Saudi government became something of a toxic commodity in American politics. Several high-profile lobbying and public relations firms dropped the Saudis as a client. Think tanks, including the Brookings Institution, severed ties with the Saudi government. Businesses pulled out of a major conference in Riyadh shortly after Khashoggi's death.



As the U.S. intelligence community, and the United Nations, were determining that Saudi Arabia was culpable in the killing, members of Congress demanded accountability. Democrats led the charge on a series of bills that would have halted U.S. arms sales to the kingdom and ended U.S. support for the Saudi-led coalition's disastrous war in Yemen. Republicans were outraged too. Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), who claimed on "Fox & Friends" to have once been Saudi Arabia's "biggest defender on the floor of the United States Senate," announced shortly after Khashoggi's death that Saudi Arabia's de facto ruler, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, "has got to go." The crown prince denies a role in Khashoggi's death; the U.N. sees credible evidence warranting further investigation.

Despite the backlash directed at the kingdom, the Saudis haven't faced serious consequences for the slaying of Khashoggi or its slaughter of civilians in Yemen. That is thanks in large part to one man — President Trump. He has loudly and emphatically defended Saudi Arabia at every opportunity. According to a July House Oversight committee report, he recently considered giving Riyadh nuclear technology without appropriate safeguards to prevent nuclear proliferation, in part at the behest of the chair of his inaugural committee, Thomas J. Barrack Jr. He has also tweeted at least a fleeting willingness to go to war with Iran on Saudi Arabia's behalf following the attacks on Saudi oil fields, something the American public overwhelmingly doesn't support.

Trump's principal argument for siding with the Saudis has

to do with the alleged economic benefits of U.S. arms sales to the kingdom. It all began during his May 2017 trip to Saudi Arabia, when he touted a purported \$110-billion arms deal that would mean "jobs, jobs, jobs" for Americans. The deal itself, according to the Washington Post "Fact Checker," was considerably smaller than the administration claimed, with much of it composed of sales already approved under the Obama administration or speculative offers that would happen years from now, if ever. And a report from our organization, the Center for International Policy, found the president's claims of U.S. jobs tied to Saudi arms deals were greatly exaggerated—10 to 20 times the actual number.

The facts, however, have not prevented Trump from vetoing a series of congressional measures aimed at ending U.S. military support and arms sales to the region.

While Trump appears to be the commander-in-chief of Saudi Arabia's public relations efforts in the U.S., he's far from alone. Even with several firms abandoning the influence machine the Saudi's had assembled before Khashoggi's killing, the Saudi lobby is still represented in the U.S. by more than 20 "K Street" firms, according to the Department of Justice. This includes influential operators such as Squire Patton Boggs and Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck—whom the Saudis paid over \$1 million on Oct. 4, 2018, just two days after Khashoggi was killed at the Saudi consulate—and the McKeon Group, whose namesake, former Rep. Howard "Buck" McKeon (R-Santa Clarita), was once the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee.

Saudi Arabia has also dramatically increased funding to many of the lobbying and public relations firms that stayed with them post-Khashoggi. In fact, one firm—Qorvis Communications, the Saudis' longtime public relations gurus in America—received nearly \$18 million from the kingdom in just the first three months after Khashoggi's death, more than most countries spend on all of their lobbying activities for an entire year. Washington lobbyists acting as agents of Saudi Arabia have also continued to give lavishly to House and Senate campaigns, in some cases on the same day they met with members of Congress or their staffs to discuss the kingdom. All of this has served a critical function for the Saudi regime: maintaining enough support in Congress to ensure Trump's vetoes aren't overridden, which keeps the U.S. government from punishing the Saudis for Khashoggi's death.

President Trump's protection of Saudi Arabia is at best a temporary shield. Veterans, peace and human rights groups, and other interest groups have been pushing Congress to block U.S. military support for the kingdom by invoking provisions of the War Powers Resolution and making amendments to the National Defense Authorization Act. Human rights organizations also have pushed beneficiaries of Mohammed bin Salman's private charity — among them the New York Public Library and the United Nations-to abandon their connection to the foundation, which the crown prince uses as a propaganda platform.

Yet, one year after Khashoggi's killing, and 4 ½ years into the brutal Saudi-led intervention in Yemen, Congress and the president have yet to hold Saudi Arabia accountable. That cannot be allowed to stand. On the anniversary of Khashoggi's murder, we owe it to him to stand up to the Saudi lobby and the president, and once and for all punish the Saudi government for what it has done.

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Space station crew lands safely in Kazakhstan in return to Earth

By Brooks Hays

The Soyuz capsule safely shepherded NASA astronaut Nick Hague, Russian cosmonaut Alexey Ovchinin and visiting astronaut Hazzaa Ali Almansoori from the International Space Station back to Earth on Thursday morning. Almansoori is the first and only person

from United Arab Emirates to travel in space. Ovchinin served as commander of the vehicle, while landed safely at 6:59 a.m. EDT in Kazakhstan, according to a news

release from NASA.
While Almansoori spent just more than a week in space, the departure of Hague and Ovchinin from the space station marked

the end of a 203-day mission.

NASA astronaut Christina Koch traveled to the space station with Hague and Ovchinin in March, but she will stay aboard until

«Koch remains aboard the orbiting laboratory for an extended mission that will provide researchers the opportunity to observe effects of long-duration spaceflight on



a woman in preparation for human missions to the Moon and Mars,» according to NASA.

During their time inside the space station, Hague and Ovchinin conducted dozens of science experiments in the fields of biology, biotechnology, physical science and Earth science.

The duo tested free-flying robots, as well as devices designed to replicate the structure and function of human organs. Hague and Ovchinin also used an instrument to measure the distribution of CO2 in Earth's atmosphere.

With Hague and Ovchinin now gone, Expedition 61 has officially begun on the space station. Last week, NASA astronaut Jessica Meir and Oleg Skripochka of Roscosmos arrived to join NASA astronaut Andrew Morgan and European Space Agency astronaut Luca Parmita, as well as cosmonauts Alexander Skvortsov and Oleg Skripochka of Roscosmos.

The Expedition 61 will continue to carry out dozens of science experiments, as well as make repairs and upgrades to the space station.

Your video can ID you through walls with help of Wi-Fi

Researchers in the lab of UC Santa Barbara professor Yasamin Mostofi have enabled, for the first time, determining whether the person behind a wall is the same individual who appears in given video footage, using only a pair of Wi-Fi transceivers outside.

This novel video-Wi-Fi cross-modal gait-based person identification system, which they refer to as XModal-ID (pronounced Cross-Modal-ID), could have a variety of applications, from surveillance and security to smart homes. For instance, consider a scenario in which law enforcement has a video footage of a robbery. They suspect that the robber is hiding inside a house. Can a pair of Wi-Fi transceivers outside the house determine if the person inside the house is the same as the one in the robbery video? Questions such as this have motivated this new technology.

"Our proposed approach makes it possible to determine if the person behind the wall is the same as the one in video footage, using only a pair of off-the-shelf Wi-Fi transceivers outside," said Mostofi. "This approach utilizes only received power measurements of a Wi-Fi link. It does not need any prior Wi-Fi or video training data of the person to be identified. It also does not need any knowledge of the operation area."

The proposed methodology and experimental results will appear at the 25th International Conference on Mobile Computing and Networking (MobiCom) on October 22.

In the team's experiments, one Wi-Fi transmitter and one Wi-Fi receiver are behind walls, outside a room where a person is walking. The transmitter sends a wireless signal whose received power is measured by the receiver. Then, given video footage of a person from another area - and by using only such received wireless power measurements - the



receiver can determine whether the person behind the wall is the same person seen in the video footage.

This innovation builds on previous work in the Mostofi Lab, which has pioneered sensing with everyday radio frequency signals such as Wi-Fi since 2009.

"However, identifying a person through walls, from candidate video footage, is a considerably challenging problem," said Mostofi. Her lab's success in this endeavor is due to the new proposed methodology they developed.

"The way each one of us moves is unique. But how do we properly capture and compare the gait information content of the video and Wi-Fi signals to establish if they belong to the same person?"

The researchers have proposed a new way that, for the first time, can translate the video gait content to the wireless domain.

"Our approach is multi-disciplinary, drawing from areas of both wireless communications and vision," said Chitra

Karanam, one of three Ph.D. students on the project. Given some video footage, the team first utilized a human mesh recovery algorithm to extract the 3D mesh describing the outer surface of the human body as a function of time. They then used born electromagnetic wave approximation to simulate the RF signal that would have been generated if this person was walking in a Wi-Fi area.

Next they employed their time-frequency processing approach to extract key gait features from both the real Wi-Fi signal (that was measured behind the wall) and the video-based simulated signal. The two signals are then compared to determine if the person in the Wi-Fi area is the same person in the video.

The researchers' processing pipeline involves a series of mathematical functions, including Short-time Fourier transform and Hermite functions, in order to get the spectrogram of the received signal. "A spectrogram carries the frequency-time content of the signal, which implicitly carries the gait information of the person," explained Belal Korany, another Ph.D. student involved in the effort.

Several important gait features are then extracted from both spectrograms and properly compared to declare if the person in the video is behind the wall.

"We have tested this technology extensively on our campus," said Herbert Cai, the third Ph.D. student on the project. The lab has tested their new technology on 1,488 Wi-Fi-video pairs, drawn from a pool of eight people, and in three different behind-wall areas, and achieved an overall accuracy of 84% in correctly identifying the person behind the wall.

(Source: eurekalert.org)

Early warning signs preceded deadly collapse of Krakatau volcano



The 2018 collapse of the Anak Krakatau volcano, which triggered deadly tsunamis, was preceded by several early warning signs, according to a new study.

In December, the volcano's cone collapsed and slid into the Sunda Strait. The resulting tsunami affected nearly 200 miles of coastline on the Indonesian islands of Sumatra and Java, killing 437 people and injuring thousands more.

The latest survey of ground-based measurements, as well as data collected by drones and satellites, revealed increased temperatures and ground movement along the volcano's southwestern flank a few months before the catastrophe.

Scientists also found evidence of a pattern of low-frequency sound waves produced by a smaller earthquake two minutes prior to the deadly collapse. The seismic data helped scientists analyze the cone's collapse and descent into the ocean

cone's collapse and descent into the ocean.

Researchers hope their analysis, published this week in the journal Nature Communications, can help forecasters predict the next collapse.

"At Krakatau, we were able to observe for the first time how the erosion of such a volcanic flank took place and which signals announced it," Thomas Walter, a volcanologist at the German Research Centre for Geosciences GFZ in Potsdam, said in a news release.

An analysis of satellite data showed the slow formation, over several months, of a

The collapse, which lasted two minutes, was picked up by seismographs and infrasound networks before the tsunamis reached shore. Had a monitoring system picked up on the signals, early warnings to seek shelter along the Indonesian coast might have saved lives.

"We used an exceptionally broad range

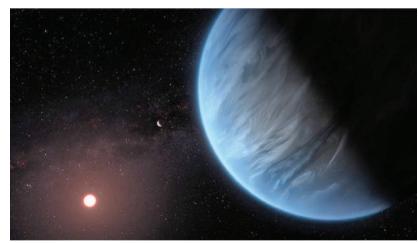
"We used an exceptionally broad range of methods: From satellite observation to ground-based seismic data, from infrasound to drone data, from temperature measurements to chemical analysis of eruption products," Walter said. "Today's almost unrestricted access to worldwide data was critical in this. In the days following the tsunami, it allowed us to analyze this event at different locations in different countries at the same time."

The research team suggests their analysis can be used to build tsunami warning systems anywhere a volcano or landslide is at risk of plunging into the ocean. Traditional monitoring systems would be unlikely to recognize the significance of a similar event. Unlike earthquakes, the seismic signature of the flank collapse produced very few high frequencies. Instead, the collapse generated sound waves in the range of low frequencies.

"This property was the reason why the event was not detected in any routine evaluation," said GFZ seismologist Frederik Tilmann.

(Source: UPI)

Why just being in the habitable zone doesn't make exoplanets livable



By Lisa Grossman

Few science questions have more universal appeal than "Are we alone in the universe?" The search for alien life has captured human imaginations for thousands of years. And almost 25 years after the first discovery of a planet orbiting a star that's not the sun, astronomers are closer than ever to finding out.

"Most people, if not everybody, at some point in their life wonders if there's life on other planets," says Harvard University astronomer David Charbonneau. "We could actually answer it ... we know what kind of telescope we'd have to go and build" to find out.

That endeavor may not be so straightforward, though, thanks to a long-simmering debate about how to identify the planets most likely to host life. The debate came to a boil on September 11, when astronomers announced the discovery of water vapor in the atmosphere of nearby exoplanet K2 18b.

The planet's appeal comes from its position in its star's "habitable zone" — often defined as the region where temperatures may be just right for liquid water, thought to be crucial for life. K2 18b may even have rain clouds, astronomers reported.

That doesn't mean you should pack your umbrella and go. "Just because a planet is in the habitable zone, doesn't mean it's habitable," says Jessie Christiansen,

an astrophysicist at Caltech and NASA Exoplanet Science Institute. "If you queried 100 astronomers, 99 of them would say this planet isn't habitable."

In fact, of the 192 or so exoplanets known to spend most of their orbits in their stars' habitable zones, all but 24 are probably inhospitable gas giants like Jupiter. And even if a rocky planet sits in the habitable zone, like Mars, that doesn't guarantee anything can live there. Scientists consider the Red Planet to have debatable chances of hosting life.

Of the 4,118 exoplanets discovered as of October 1, only 24 might meet the criteria for habitability: They have a mass and radius that suggest a rocky Earthlike surface, and orbit most of the time at a distance from their star that supports liquid water.

So how do you find a habitable planet while stuck on Earth? Start by rethinking the term's definition. Some astronomers argue that the term "habitable zone" is too clumsy, including planets with no chance of habitability while excluding others that might be viable. Scientists from various disciplines are looking to mineral physics, chemistry and insights from ecology to refine the concept of habitability.

And new space observatories designed to seek life could be approved by NASA next year. Maybe it isn't just the words used to define habitability that need upgrading, but the equipment used to find it, Charbonneau says. "We don't have the right telescopes."

Astronomers have a bold plan to film the black hole at the center of our galaxy

In April, an international team of scientists captured the first-ever photo of a black hole. In September, they won a US\$3 million Breakthrough Prize for that accomplishment. But they're far from finished.

Next, the team behind the Event Horizon Telescope (EHT) is planning a cinematic debut. The subject: the supermassive black hole at the center of our own galaxy.



The new project, called next-generation EHT (ngEHT), aims to capture real-time videos of the Milky Way's black hole to observe its behavior and see how it changes its environment.

"We can see the black hole evolve in real time," Shep Doeleman, an astronomer who leads the global EHT team, told Business Insider.

"Then we can understand how it launches these jets that come from its north and south poles. We can see how it evolves with the galaxy. We can even test Einstein's gravity in completely different ways, by looking at the orbits of matter — not light, but matter — around the black hole."

The black hole in the groundbreaking photo published in April is known as M87. In the image, the yellow-red ring is the accretion disk – a rotating mass of super-hot gas and dust from dead stars, planets, and other objects. In M87's case, that disk is larger than our entire solar system.

The darkness within the disk is the event horizon – the point beyond which the black hole's gravitational force is so strong that not even light can travel fast enough to escape. (That absence of light, of course, makes photographing or filming a black hole extremely difficult.)

"It tells us so much," Doeleman said of the photo.

"It tells us that there are near-light-speed motions of the gas around the black hole. It tells us how the black hole is oriented in space. It confirms Einstein's theories of gravity very close to the black hole boundary. Once you get a tool like this that gives you access to the inner workings of the cosmos, then you immediately just want to do more."

That's why the ngEHT team is turning their global network of telescopes back to M87, as well as to the black hole at the center of our own galaxy.

The Event Horizon Telescope is made up of observatories around the world. Working together, they can function as a single "virtual" telescope the size of Earth.

The group is working to add more telescopes to that network and leverage new computer technology to process 10 times more data from those telescopes. In doing so, they think they can capture video of the two black holes in about five years.

Doeleman hopes that eventually, the videos can reveal what a still image cannot: how those black holes devour matter.

Currently, scientists can tell when distant black holes have eaten something big (like a star) because the events emit intense light that eventually reaches telescopes on Earth. Doeleman thinks videos could capture such events as they happen in real time.

"Imagine you could see the black hole during one of those periods of activity. You'd see exactly where that emission was coming from," he said. "Understanding how these things happen – it tells us everything about the black hole dynamics and how they feed."

M87 – the black hole the EHT team photographed – has a mass equivalent to about 6.5 billion suns. The black hole at the center of our galaxy, Sagittarius A^* (pronounced "A-star") or Sgr A^* , is much less massive; it's roughly equivalent to 4 million suns.

4 million suns.

That means Sgr A* pulls in less matter, which gives it a much smaller accretion disk than M87's. Because of that, matter circles the black hole far more quickly, completing orbits in a few hours, as opposed to weeks in the case of M87.

"So the M87 black hole, you might look at it from one week to the next and not see too much difference," Doeleman said.

Because of that, the plan to film M87 involves time-lapse video captured over the course of several months. That should be enough time for matter to orbit several times around the black hole.

On the other hand, the EHT team hopes to get real-time footage of Sgr A^* , since it changes more quickly and visibly as things move around it.

"[Sgr A*] is very active, and during the course of one night of observing, you may see eight or nine orbits of material around that black hole," Doeleman said.

round that black hole," Doeleman said.

He hopes to eventually make hours of footage of our galaxy's ciling black hole available to the public.

roiling black hole available to the public. Eight telescopes around the world combined to create the

first photo of a black hole.

The ngEHT team plans to expand that network to include 11 telescopes in 2020, Doeleman said. Then in four years, they

plan to draft a proposal to build new dishes to incorporate as well. They don't need new dishes to film the black holes, but expanding the network would improve video quality. "It's very likely that we may be able to start making

rudimentary movies over the next five years or so. They might be jerky. They might be low-resolution, but they would be the first steps," Doeleman said.

He added: "When we have 20 dishes, that's going to be such a big leap. That will give us the high-fidelity movies that we want to make."

Space-based telescopes in the planet's orbit will eventually lend their vision, too, making the collective telescope even larger than Earth.

Doeleman compared this process to the evolution of

Hollywood movies. Even the most low-quality films seemed amazing at first, but movie technology keeps advancing.

"A number of early-career young scientists have now cut

"A number of early-career young scientists have now cut their teeth on this first image," he said. "We're developing a new field and it's going to grow and just get better over the years."

(Source: sciencealert.com)

Exhibit, meeting to put spotlight on Tehran exquisite carpets

HERITAGE TEHRAN — The Carpet Museum of Iran is scheduled to host an exhibit and a special meeting on exquisite rugs and carpets that have been handwoven in Tehran.



A select of Tehran carpets and rugs will go on show in the exhibit, which will open to the public on October 6.

The meeting, in which historians, museum curators, and experts of the Persian carpet are slated to change views, is set to take place on October 9, Mehr reported.

The events are parts of a vast programs to mark "Tehran Week", which comes to end on October 10.

Persian carpets are sought after internationally for their delicate designs and high quality. Official figures show handmade carpets have a significant share in Iran's non-oil export.

Tehran is home to a rich, matchless patchwork of the Iranian history and architecture such as Golestan Palace, Grand Bazaar, Treasury of National Jewels, National Museum of Iran, Glass & Ceramic Museum, Masoudieh Palace, Sarkis Cathedral, Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Carpet Museum of Iran, just to name a few.

Airbnb adds getaways in tune with the animal kingdom

Airbnb on Thursday began offering "Animal Experiences" promising harmony with nature, from lazing with alpacas to helping dogs struggling to survive in the aftermath of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster.

The startup expanded beyond home-sharing services about three years ago into offering ways for travelers to dive into local happenings.

Airbnb has built a line-up of "experiences," in which lodging comes with conduits to local cuisine, arts, music, outdoor adventures and even socially-minded activities.

Animal Experiences promises travelers getaways that could allow them to engage with many kinds of creatures and their "human advocates" -- and ways that might help, instead of harm, nature.

"With technology taking up so much of our lives, it's easy to feel disconnected from nature and animals," Airbnb co-founder and chief executive Brian Chesky said during a presentation in New York.

"Life is better with animals, but for many busy people, looking at them through a screen is the closest they can get.

The new nature-focused category of experiences is intended to provide customers with better understanding of animals while

 $maintaining \, a \, high \, standard \, for \, environmentally \, friendly \, tourism.$

Experiences offered included paddle-boarding with corgis, kayaking with conservationists, buzzing about with urban beekeepers, watching arctic foxes and rescuing puppies lost in the 30-kilometer (19-mile) Chernobyl exclusion zone.

ROUND THE GLOBE

Venice and its lagoon

Founded in the 5th century and spread over 118 small islands, Venice became a major maritime power in the 10th century. The whole city is an extraordinary architectural masterpiece in which even the smallest building contains works by some of the world's greatest artists such as Giorgione, Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese and others.



A UNESCO World Heritage, the property comprises the city of Venice and its lagoon situated in the Veneto Region of Northeast Italy. In this lagoon covering 50,000 km², nature and history have been closely linked since the 5th century when Venetian populations, to escape barbarian raids, found refuge on the sandy islands of Torcello, Jesolo and Malamocco

These temporary settlements gradually became permanent and the initial refuge of the land-dwelling peasants and fishermen became a maritime power. Over the centuries, during the entire period of the expansion of Venice, when it was obliged to defend its trading markets against the commercial undertakings of the Arabs, the Genoese and the Ottoman Turks, Venice never ceased to consolidate its position in the lagoon.

Human interventions show high technical and creative skills in the realization of the hydraulic and architectural works in the lagoon area. The unique cultural heritage accumulated in the lagoon over the centuries is attested by the discovery of important archaeological settlements in the Altino area and other sites on the mainland, which were important communication and trade hubs

(Source: UNESCO)

We revealed how Achaemenids ruled Persia: Oriental Institute expert

HERITAGE TEHRAN — Years of deciphering and studying Achaemenid cuneiform clay tablets, which have been on loan from Iran to the Oriental Institute, has yielded valuable information about the Persian Empire, how it organized and how it ruled, a professor emeritus at the Institute has said.

They helped further the understanding of "how (Achaemenid) society was organized, how basic institutions of control and support worked", Matthew Stolper told AFP

Stolper emphasized the scientific interest of the works, saying "We've learned the names of some of the important people in the ruling class.

"But more importantly, we learned how they ruled," he noted, addressing a press conference before the opening ceremony of an exhibit, which put on show some 300 of the clay tablets at the National Museum of Iran in downtown Tehran.

Unearthed from the ruins of Persepolis, capital of the Persian Achaemenid Empire (6th - 4th c. BC) in the south of Iran, they belong to a group of 1,783 clay tablets or tablet fragments recently returned to Iran from the United States

after a drawn-out legal saga.

In February 2018, and following years of ups and downs, the fate of those ancient Persian artifacts, was left in the hands of a U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled in favor of Iran.

"We fought very hard to keep them safe and spent millions of dollars so that we could return them" to Iran, said Christopher Woods, head of the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute, referring to the legal fees incurred by the institute

up until the U.S. Supreme Court decision.
"Hopefully we'll return the second batch much faster and it will be a much larger group," he added.

"The idea was always to return the tablets. They were on loan on us and we were entrusted with that cultural heritage. And we have a long history of borrowing objects and always returning them. So the Oriental Institute always returns objects that we were entrusted with as loans," Press TV quoted Woods as saying.

In the 1930s, the university received from Iran on loan



Oriental Institute director Christopher Woods (2nd L), director general of Iranian museums Mohammadreza Kargar (3rd L), and deputy tourism minister Mohammad-Hassan Talebian (4th L) address a press conference on Achaemenid clay tablets at the National Museum of Iran, Tehran, October 2, 2019.

some 30,000 tablets or pieces of tablets found in Persepolis. for research purposes.

A large portion of the tablets were returned to Iran three times between 1948 and 2004, before the restitution was blocked by legal action of U.S. survivors of a 1997 bombing in Israel blamed on the Palestinian resistance movement of Hamas, Press TV reported.

Reprimanding Tehran for supporting the group, the plaintiffs demanded the seizure of the tablets and their

sale in order to recover a sum of \$71.5 million that Iran was sentenced by a U.S. court to pay in this case, the

The proceedings only ended in February 2018 with a U.S. Supreme Court decision to ban the seizure of the tablets.

The Achaemenid [Persian] Empire was the largest and most durable empire of its time. The empire stretched from Ethiopia, through Egypt, to Greece, to Anatolia (modern Turkey), Central Asia and to India.

Iran's Sari, Ardebil named ECO cultural capitals

TOURISM TEHRAN — Iranian cities of Sari and Ardebil have been selected as the cultural capitals for the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in the years 2022 and 2023 respectively.

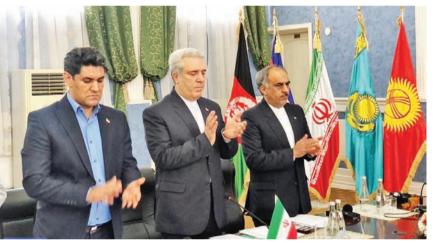
Iran's proposal for introducing ECO cultural capitals was submitted to the third meeting of ECO tourism ministers attended by tourism minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan and his counterparts in ECO region, CHTN

The Islamic Republic was also selected to host the meeting of ECO tourism ministers in 2021, the report added.

Iran, Tajikistan seek to deepen tourism ties

Upon arrival in Dushanbe, Mounesan was welcomed by Tajik Foreign Minister Sirodjidin Muhridin. The two officials explored avenues for promoting cooperation in the field of tourism.

They discussed a range of issues, with a focus on enhancing mutual collaboration in the fields of tourism and cultural heritage in a meeting attended by Tehran's



Iranian tourism minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan(C) and his colleagues clap during the third meeting of ECO tourism ministers, which was held in Tajikistan on October 3 and 4, 2019.

ambassador to Dushanbe Mohammad Taqi Saberi, IRNA reported.

Highlighting cultural and lingual commonalities between the Iranian and

Tajik nations, Muhridin called for using the capacities for increasing exchange of tourists and take advantage of Iran's experience in holding tourism exhibition and conferences for introducing the two countries' capacities in this field.

Mounesan, for his part, hailed lingual, religious, cultural and historic commonalities of Iran and Tajikistan, saying that President Rouhani's latest visit to Dushanbe was a major step in line with promoting bilateral relations.

The third meeting of ECO tourism ministers was held on October 3 and 4.

ECO is an inter-governmental regional organization encompassing countries from Europe, Caucuses and Central Asia, Middle East and South Asia with more than 460 million inhabitants and over 8 million square kilometers connecting Russia to Persian Gulf and China to Europe.

According to the organization, its overall objective is to materialize sustainable economic development of its member states and the region as a whole.

For travelers, sustainability is the word—but there are many definitions of it



Most people want to support sustainable tourism, even though the concept remains fuzzy.

The word "overtourism" is so new it does not yet appear in most dictionaries (although it was shortlisted as a Word of the Year in 2018). But the novelty of the term has not diminished the impact of its meaning: "An excessive number of tourist visits to a popular destination or attraction, resulting in damage to the local environment and historical sites and in poorer quality of life for residents," according to the Oxford Dictionary

As travelers wake up, sometimes abruptly, to the challenges of joining some 1.4 billion other tourists to the world's most enticing destinations, the threats-and consequences-of overtourism are becoming more visible each day. The UN World Tourism Organization, along with public and private sector partners, has declared September 27 as World Tourism Day and uses this platform to discuss tourism's social, political, economic, and

environmental impacts. This day highlights the importance of sustainable tourism-a framework for engaging travelers and the travel industry at large in supporting goals that include protecting the environment, addressing climate change, minimizing plastic consumption, and expanding economic development in communities affected by tourism.

Getting the facts

A new National Geographic survey of 3,500 adults in the U.S. reveals strong support for sustainability. That's the good news. The challenge will be helping travelers take meaningful actions. According to the survey, while 42 percent of U.S. travelers would be willing to prioritize sustainable travel in the future, only 15 percent of these travelers are sufficiently familiar with what sustainable travel actually means. (Avoid the crowds at these under-the-radar gems.)

"One of the reasons we embarked on this study was to have a better understanding of what consumers really want and what sorts of sustainability practices matter to them," says Gary Knell, chairman of National Geographic Partners. "Since three-fourths of Americans have taken a leisure trip in the past year, I would say it's high time to begin a conversation around sustainable travel. Not because sustainability is a buzzword today, but because it will drive the future. In our survey, the consumers most familiar with sustainable travel are young: 50 percent are 18 to 34. Among travelers who understand the sustainable travel concept, 56 percent of them realize travel has an impact on local communities and that it's important to protect natural sites and cultural places.

The survey will inform National Geographic's experiential travel and media businesses and spark conversations for creating solutions around sustainability. Our travel content [disclosure: I'm the editor of it] focuses on environmentally friendly practices, protecting cultural and natural heritage, providing social and economic benefit for local communities, and inspiring travelers to become conservation ambassadors. In short, we see every National Geographic traveler as a curious explorer who seeks to build an eth<u>ic</u> of conserving what is special about places.

Building better practices

National Geographic Expeditions offers a range of group travel experiences, including land expeditions, cruises, and active adventures, many of which take place around a collection of eco-lodges that are rigorously vetted for their sustainability practices. Unique Lodges of the World are selected for commitment to incorporating innovative sustainability practices into their everyday operations, including supporting natural

and cultural heritage, sourcing products locally, and giving back to the local community.

South Africa's Grootbos Lodge launched a foundation to support the Masakhane Community Farm and Training Centre, which teaches food production and entrepreneurship to the local community. Through this program, the lodge has given plots of land to local people who have completed the training, increasing their income and access to local, healthy foods; so far the program has benefitted more than 138 community

"From our perspective, the best properties in the world are built with a mission to help protect people and the environment," says O'Shannon Burns, National Geographic Expeditions' sustainability director. "When travelers have the opportunity to directly support these efforts during their stay, they come away wanting to help even more—to preserve and protect the places the<u>y</u> visit."

Supporting sustainable goals

A goal of the survey is to inform the travel and tourism industry about what sustainability issues are most important to travelers and how they are willing to support those initiatives. "The travel industry is more dependent than most industries on the health of local communities, environments, and cultures," says Knell. "We are looking at a population of 10 billion by 2050 and that is going to take a massive toll on our resources. To continue to provide authentic travel experiences, we need to invest in the resiliency of places affected by overtourism and climate change.'

Storytelling can help by highlighting problems brought on by tourism and surfacing practices and technologies to mitigate negative impacts. "As storytellers, we at National Geographic believe it's important to celebrate the beauty in the world—natural and cultural—so that people are keen to take the steps necessary to protect it," says Knell.

In the coming months, National Geographic Travel will dig deeper into the topic of sustainable fourism and provide resources, practical tips, and destination advice for travelers who seek to explore the world in all its beauty-while leaving behind a lighter footprint.

(Source: National Geographic)

Gen. Soleimani world's most

accomplished military figure in counter-terrorism: analyst

TASNIM - An American political analyst and author described

Iran's IRGC Quds Force Commander Major General Qassem

Soleimani as the "world's most accomplished military figure"

complished military figure in the field of counter-terrorism...

Gen. Soleimani's fight against Daesh is a wholehearted fight—

unlike America's ambivalent war on Daesh that has included

covert support for the same terrorists it fights," Kevin Barret

How do you see the role of commander of the IRGC Quds

Force Commander Major General Qassem Soleimani in fighting

terrorist groups, particularly Daesh, in Iraq and Syria in the

accomplished military figure in the field of counter-terrorism.

The word "terrorism" is defined as the intentional targeting of

civilians. Daesh is undoubtedly a terrorist organization since it

intentionally targets civilians based on their ethnicity or religion.

And it does so in such barbaric fashion that many have wondered

whether part of its real mission is to make Islam look bad in the

A: Major General Qassem Soleimani is the world's most

Following is the full text of the interview:

"Major General Qassem Soleimani is the world's most ac-

in the field of counter-terrorism.

from Madison told Tasnim.

eyes of global public opinion.

Hoist by its own petard: How Saudi Arabia was pushed against the wall in Yemen

1 → What was a small religious movement emerged in Yemen's north in the 1980s, is now an actor of regional importance.

Ansarullah fought six unsuccessful insurgencies against the Saudi-backed government of Yemen in 2000s.

Following the Arab uprisings in early 2010s, the movement drew support from a wide array of local groups, tribesmen and military officers who shared a resentment of feeling marginalized at the hands of a corrupt and paralyzed government.

The Saudi invasion and the economic blockade of the poorest Arab country has pushed many more to join the ranks of anti-Saudi forces

Currently, a hybrid range of forces make up the military element of Ansarullah, with some 60 percent of the Yemeni army previously loyal to former president Ali Abdullah Saleh having allied with the group.

Thanks to the alliance, the group has become equipped with Yemeni Army's weapons systems ranging from tanks and technical vehicles to anti-tank guided missiles and long-range ballistic missiles.

Massive transformation

They have come a long way since the early months of the war.

The Houthis have significantly increased their cross-border strikes since December 2017, launching many assaults on military and economic installations in Saudi Arabia.

Missiles have been time and again fired into Saudi cities, reaching as far as the cap-



A screengrab from footage via Yemen-based Al Masirah TV purportedly shows soldiers surrendering to anti-Saudi forces near the Saudi Arabia-Yemen border.

ital Riyadh, and since January 2018 they've attacked using drones.

During a presser late last month, Saudi military spokesman Turki al-Maliki claimed that Saudi Arabia had been targeted with 232 ballistic missiles and 258 drones in

The increase in the number of attacks is in a large part due to the Houthis' growing capabilities to manufacture drones and missiles.

During the years, their technology has become much more sophisticated and far

The ragtag Ansarullah has transformed from a small opposition movement to a battlehardened military force threatening the status-quo of the five-years-old war in Yemen.

Attacks bode well for Yemen

The attacks showed the ragtag Ansarullah has transformed from a small opposition movement into a battle-hardened military force capable of hitting Saudi Arabia where it hurts the most.

Saudi Arabia and its western allies have long accused Iran of directing, arming and funding the movement. But such claims fly in the face of realities.

Despite the imbalance of wealth and weapons, the Yemenis have stalemated the US-backed forces of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Saudi Arabia has invested billions of dollars in defense systems from the US, but those weapons have failed to shield the kingdom from incoming attacks.

The UAE seems to have realized that the war in Yemen is a hopeless case. That's why it announced recently it would pull out of the Yemen conflict, leaving the Saudis increasingly isolated.

The assaults on the Saudi oil facilities and the major ground offensive have spurred efforts to end a conflict long overdue for res-

The war has triggered the world's worst humanitarian disaster, with thousands of civilians dying from preventable causes, including malnutrition, disease and poor

Let's hope Saudi Arabia will come to its senses and stop shooting itself in the leg.

By Hana Saada

ALGIERS — Algeria's People's National Army's Chief of Staff, Deputy Minister of National Defense, Lieutenant General Ahmed Gaïd Salah responded to the statements by the president of the European Parliament's subcommittee on human rights, saying that what was happening in Algeria was a strictly internal affair.

The remarks made on Saturday, September 28, by Marie Arena, President of the European Parliament's subcommittee on human rights, announcing a hearing with "a number of actors" of the 22 February movement in Algeria and the rejection of the holding of the presidential election, slated for December, 12th, were considered by many Algerian politicians as "a blatant attempt at interference" aimed at disrupting the holding of the 12 December presidential election.

On Monday, September 30, in a speech delivered in Oran, western Algeria, during his working and inspection visit to the second military region, where he supervised the conduct of missile exercises against ground and surface targets, Lieutenant General Ahmed Gaïd Salah, Chief of staff of the National People's Army (ANP), responded to

statements by the European leader. "I have stressed time and time again that there are hostile foreign parties who are plotting against Algeria and trying to interfere in its internal affairs with blatant complicity of the gang, "said the ANP Chief of Staff, saying that" these are desperate attempts that are essentially intended to undermining the stability and security of Algeria and its people ".

In the same vein, General Gaïd Salah reiterated that what is happening in Algeria is an internal matter that concerns only Algerians, and that the people, aligned with their army, will know how to deal with these maneuvers which will be doomed to failure.

"Algerians are the owners of their country who are entitied to make decisions independently, and will follow no instructions from any other party," Gaid Salah said, adding "what is happening in Algeria is a pure internal affair that concerns Algerians alone, as the people who are backed up by their army would know how to thwart such maneuvers, which are doomed to failure.

"Algerian people will get out of the crisis soon, through organizing free, fair and transparent presidential elec-

In conclusion, the head of the ANP said he wanted to "tell these outrageous to worry about their affairs and the problems of their countries, Algeria will know how to triumph and get out of crisis thanks to its people and army. "This army will not leave Algeria, [...], plagued by the instigations and conspiracies of a small group of people, [...], who plan to disrupt the presidential election," he concluded.

EU member's statements

In a recording posted on social networks, Marie Arena



Lieutenant General Ahmed Gaïd Salah

said that the European Parliament on Saturday gave support to the popular protest movement in Algeria, announcing a hearing with "a number of actors" of Hirak, the protest movement that broke out on February 22nd.

This is the 32nd event organized in Algeria against the current Algerian regime. Today the protesters are men, women, young people, who are asking for democracy in Algeria. We support them here in the European Parliament by organizing a hearing with a number of actors of the current revolution in Algeria, "said the

She stated that the protesters in the country "indeed and of course demand that elections be held, but not under the current model, not under the current regime, not with the rules of the current regime. They demand that there be changes in the Constitution, that there is political pluralism, that there is freedom of expression and association, which is not the case today in Algeria".

These remarks did not go unnoticed by the Algerian political and popular class, which categorically rejected all forms of foreign interference in Algeria's internal affairs. The parliamentary bloc of the Union for Renaissance and Justice hailed Algerian people awareness and problems without foreign intervention.

"The free and proud Algerian people have chosen to call its revolution a peaceful civilized movement. We take public opinion to note that our people did not ask any party to provide him with lessons or advice on internal issues. Algerians have the will and experience to overcome all obstacles and will make their way towards a smooth solution and safe change to a system that some of its gang received support and green light from entities of States that are tampering with our country's interests and its people's faith.

The parliamentary group of the Algerian Popular Movement "MPA", shared the same position, deploring the statements of the EU's deputy.

"The interference in Algeria's internal affairs is a failed attempt to sow suspicions in order to prolong the life of

"We reject, inter alia, such interventions in the internal

affairs of Algeria, which we consider to be an infringement of national sovereignty", MPA party said.

In addition, MPs of the National Liberation Front Party pointed out that the European Union interference in Algeria's affairs is harmful to the relationship between the Algerian and European parliaments which is based on respect for privacy. He underlined that Algeria does not need external dictates using some platforms to pass

"The FLN bloc needs to go to the presidential elections on December 12, as this a right way out of the crisis for the interest of the people and the nation", the

"We firmly believe in the strength and consciousness of the free and proud Algerian people, and we have every confidence that it rejects all forms of foreign interference in its affairs. It is capable to overcome difficulties and has sole sovereignty in resolving its internal crises.

For his part, former Prime Minister and Presidential hopeful, Ali Benflis, also lambasted EU's blatant interference, underlining that the solution to the Algerian political deadlock rests only with Algerians.

Algerian people, on the other hand, reacted to the video ublished on social media by EU's member, launching ne hashtag "#do_not_speak_in_my_name" .

EU backtracks

Maja Kocijancic, spokesperson of the EU took the floor. clarifying, in a statement to the Algerian Press Service (APS), the position of the European Union (EU) on the crisis in Algeria, after the controversy triggered by the vords of Ms. Arena. She underlined that the body endorses the presidential elections, scheduled for Dec.12th, hoping that this election will express profound aspirations of the Algerian people.

"The EU is following developments in Algeria with great attention and has encouraged Algerians from the beginning to work towards a democratic and peaceful outcome in a spirit of dialogue and accountability. We are maintaining this line, "she said, noting that" we hope that the elections will contribute to meeting the deep aspirations of the Algerian people, with respect for fundamental rights and in a climate of appeasement ".

Moreover, Ms. Kocijancic stressed that it is "important that freedom of expression, association and assembly be guaranteed to citizens as provided for in the Constitution of the Republic of Algeria," asserting that these fundamental rights "are heart of relations between the EU and Algeria ".

In conclusion, stressing the importance of the partnership between the EU and Algeria, the official reaffirmed "the EU's commitment to continue deepening relations with Algeria," while respecting the sovereignty of the

Algerian Head of State Abdelkader Bensalah announced, two weeks ago, the holding of the presidential election

Gen. Soleimani's fight against Daesh is a wholehearted fightunlike America's ambivalent war on Daesh that has included covert support for the same terrorists it fights. Gen. Soleimani, unlike the Americans and Russians, has led forces that are indigenous to the region. His forces are genuinely committed to defeating Daesh. They are not just in it for a paycheck; whereas some of the anti-Daesh forces under US command, not to mention the Americans themselves, are mere mercenaries, of whom John Cale once said: "Mercenaries are useless, disunited, with nothing to keep them in the battle except a meager wage, which is just about enough to make them want to kill for you, but not enough to make them want to die for you." Gen. Soleimani and his troops, unlike the mercenaries (including Daesh mercenaries drawing Saudi paychecks), are willing to put their lives on the line. Like the Ansarullah in Yemen, Gen Soleimani's forces have fought bravely and skillfully against mercenaries hired by tyrants.

The 33-day war launched by Israel in 2006, also known as the July War, took place in Lebanon, northern parts of Occupied Palestine and the Golan Heights. How much do you think General Soleimani has been effective in strengthening the axis of resistance and confronting the US and Israeli plots in the region?

A: Gen. Soleimani recently gave a rare interview in which he discussed his role in the 33-day war. Western sources have long admitted that Gen. Soleimani's leadership was a crucial factor in Hezbollah's humiliation of the Zionists in 2006. But only now has the world learned that $\operatorname{Gen}\nolimits.$ Soleimani spent virtually the entire war in Lebanon, shoulder to shoulder with Hezbollah leader Syed Hassan Nasrallah and commander Imad Moughnieh, who was

Gen. Soleimani's remarkable achievements (and his courage in taking the fight to the Zionist enemy in its own backyard) highlight the wisdom of Iran's regional policy, which involves offering support to independent, principled groups committed to resisting Zionism and imperialism. This approach contrasts starkly with the American approach to building alliances, which seeks out ambitious, unprincipled egotists who are willing to sell out their countries for a fistful of American dollars. Those sell-outs become America's "friends and allies." But since they are basically selfish and corrupt, they are not very effective allies. They are not courageous in battle. Nor are they much loved by the people of their own countries.

Right now the Western world is wondering how Saudi Arabia, with its \$67 billion military budget, can be losing to the lowbudget Ansarullah forces. The answer is that the Saudi forces are corrupt from top to bottom. They are in bed with Zionism and imperialism, and they have no true leadership, no principles, and no real cause except their own pocketbooks.

Gen. Soleimani leads faithful Muslim forces committed to truth and justice. The Axis of Resistance is fighting for a just cause: to expel the forces of Zionism and imperialism from the Muslim East. This is a cause that the vast majority of the population of the region, in their heart of hearts, strongly supports. That is why the Axis of Resistance, with its relatively tiny military budget, can successfully wage a David vs. Goliath struggle and defeat the richest and most powerful entities on earth.

Mobilization of volunteer forces in Syria, Iraq, Pakistan, and Lebanon by the General has played a key role in defeating hegemonic powers and their schemes. What do you think?

A: General Soleimani is able to mobilize volunteer forces not only due to the great respect in which he is held (even by his enemies) but because he is known to be fighting for a just cause. Nobody will volunteer to fight for a tyrant! But many will volunteer to fight against tyranny and aggression, especially when called upon by such a skillful and charismatic leader as General Soleimani.

The American mainstream coverage of the fight against Daesh in Iraq and Syria admits the key role played by these volunteer forces in defeating Daesh, while at the same time casting these volunteer forces as a problem for the US. This is one of those rare instances in which the mainstream media is basically right.

Americans and Zionists used the September 11, 2001, false flag to try to remake the region in their interests. They are now facing defeat, thanks to the resistance of the people of the region in general, and the leadership of the Axis of Resistance, including Gen. Soleimani, in particular. As an American citizen, I believe my government should face the reality of the situation and radically change its policy, embracing or at least working with principled, independent forces, and giving up on Zionism and the tyrannical (Persian) Gulf monarchies. Such a policy shift would align with America's real interests. But it probably won't happen until Zionist domination of the US ends.

The Sinwar effect

By Damir Nazarov

WEST SIBERIA/ TYUMEN — Since the appointment of Yahya Sinwar as head of Hamas in the Gaza Strip, there has been an expected shift in the Palestinian organization towards the Axis of Resistance. Whereas with Iran and Hezbollah the main points of the contradictions over Syria were successfully overcome (it is worth pointing out that the military wing-al-Qassam Brigades never severed ties with Tehran), the problem of relations between Hamas and the Syrian government itself has yet to be resolved.

To clarify this further, I suggest we attempt an examination of a series of official statements delivered by Hamas representatives from year 2017 to 2019. Thus, it can be seen that the arrival of

Sinwar influenced the revision of the former position of the leading Palestinian party on the Syrian issue, which can be found in official statements and various media resources referring to Hamas representatives. Thus, these statements can be interpreted as positive signals from the new Hamas leadership towards official Damascus.

So quotes:

28.08.2017 - Yahya Sinwar stressed that a "breakthrough" had occurred in the Syrian crisis, and he said that it would offer an opportunity to improve relations between Hamas and the Assad government . "We are waiting for the right time to restore that relationship so that Hamas remains out of the power struggles in the region. We are adopting a 'zero-problems' policy with all parties, so as to serve the Palestinian

cause," Sinwar said.

11.06.2018 - Ismail Haniyeh talks about Hamas relationship with Syria.

22.03.2019 - Fawzi Barhoum: "Hamas vehemently condemns the Trump's announcement that the US administration recognizes the Israeli occupation's sovereignty over Golan Heights, occupied by the Israeli occupation in 1967.'

25.03.2019 - Ismail Haniyeh: "The Trump administration's weird decisions would not alter the history and geography of Syria. The Golan Heights are a Syrian territory and the US decree could not abolish he Syrians' rights to Golan."

3.04.2019 - Ali Baraka, told Al-Monitor that Hamas' condemnation of the US Golan decision is a matter of principle that applies to any Arab land subjected to aggression.

28.05.2019 - Hazem Qasem said "The

Israeli bombardment on Syrian and Lebanese territories is a continuation of the ongoing Israeli aggression on the Arab nations"

01.07.2019 - Hamas condemns the appalling Israeli occupation's attacks on Syria and its deliberate killing of Syrian in cold blood.

20.07.2019 - Ismail Haniyeh told Turkish journalists that he hopes relations with Damascus can be "repaired and rebuilt."

09.07.2019 - Mahmoud al-Zahar told the Beirut-based Al-Nahda news website - "I think we should not have abandoned Assad. We would have been better off not taking sides in the crisis from the very beginning".

26.07.2019 - Yahya Moussa told Al-Monitor "The return of Syria's role in the region will be a plus for all Arabs".

'Building more special schools for autistic children a must'

SOCIETY TEHRAN — Establishment of more special schools for children suffering from autism is a must, Saeedeh Saleh Ghaffari, the director of Autism Association, said, pointing out to the challenges of these children in regular schools and the lack of teachers who are trained to meet the needs of these children.

Teaching students with autism has complexities, and requires a great deal of effort and patience, as well as a creative mind and sharp eyes to find a way in order to develop and communicate with them, she highlighted.

Autism symptoms range from mild to severe that requires different levels of support based on their severity, she said, adding, some of these children are being integrated into public schools and educated alongside regular students, which helps them get ready to enter the community.

However, empowering ordinary school teachers in dealing with and educating these students is crucial, as inappropriate behavior can discourage them from attending school, she added.

Sometimes, however, parents of other classmates complain about the presence of autistic children in a regular school and ask the school principal to expel them, but it requires training of public and culture promotion, she lamented.

If a student is suffering from severe autism and cannot attend regular schools, they will be referred to exceptional schools," she noted, ISNA reported on Saturday.

"Our other concern is assessment of students prior to school attendance. Workforce conducting assessment should also be given the necessary training, as sometimes a child with autism has the sufficient ability, but at the time forgets what have learnt before due to stress; therefore, the evaluation of these students should be different from others.

Due to stress, some of them forget about their most basic needs like bladder control which cause them difficulties at schools, she said.

There are currently 49 autism training centers throughout the country, 30 of which are state-run centers, she stated, adding, 7 autistic boys' schools and one girls school are operating in Tehran, while a number of provinces are completely deprived

The important point, however, is that the educational spaces for children with autism is not proper, as classes on fourth-floor of some schools are dedicated to autistic students which does not have a lift, she lamented.

These schools also require special facilities; for example, occupational and speech therapists who provide them with training must be employed in addition to teachers, said Saleh Ghaffari.

Also, the classroom differs on the way educational topics are performed, as they are trained individually and in group work, and there are usually between two to seven students in each class, although this number may vary depending on the severity of disorder, she added.

Referring to educational content for these students, she noted that some of them are taught the books of normal students while others study the exceptional student's books; so one of the challenges is that student books for autistic children is not prepared and only a book have been written for such students.

"We have sought to remove these barriers since the establishment of the association; we even called for exceptional education department to come up with a memorandum of understanding to hold training courses for families," she explained, lamenting our suggestions are always verbally welcomed, but in practice there are limitations that hinder our cooperation.

According to the World Health Organization autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) refers to a range of conditions characterized by some degree of impaired social behavior, communication and language, and a narrow range of interests and activities that are both unique to the individual and carried out repetitively.

Individuals with autism often present other co-occurring conditions, including epilepsy, depression, anxiety and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). The level of intellectual functioning in individuals with ASDs is extremely variable, extending from profound impairment to superior levels.

WORDS IN THE NEWS

Swiss army referendum

(December 3, 2001)

Swiss citizens have rejected a proposal to abolish the country's national army, following a referendum on the issue. The proposal asked voters to question the purpose of an army in a country which had declared itself neutral since 1515. This report from Emma Jane Kirby.

With seventy-nine per cent of voters rejecting the proposal to scrap the Swiss Army and just over twenty-one per cent voting in favor of its abolition, it's clear that Switzerland's armed forces are not under serious threat. Although it's a country which has been **neutral** for the past four centuries, Switzerland has one of the world's largest armies per capita, with a force of over three hundred and sixty thousand men, costing around five and a half billion dollars a year - that's almost a fifth of the annual government budget.

Switzerland without an Army, the group which **put forward** the proposal, claimed that abolishing the Army would free up resources and people that Switzerland could invest instead in non-military initiatives both at home and abroad. The Government warned that would force Switzerland, which is not a member of the UN, the European Union or any **military** alliance, to rely on other countries, contradicting its tradition of neutrality.

Although there are government plans underway to scale back the army over the next few years, the result of the referendum means that for now at least, every Swiss man will still be obliged to undergo regular military training until he can finally hand back his rifle at the age of forty-two.

Words

abolition: the formal ending of a system: it is abolished neutral: a neutral country does not support any side in a war **per capita:** literally, 'by head': the cost of the army is high in relation to the size of the population

that's: this amount represents put forward: if you put forward a proposal you suggest it should be accepted

free up resources: make resources (money and people) available for another purpose

that: abolishing the army and using the money for other purposes

military alliance: armies from different countries working together

scale back: reduce

undergo regular military training: learn at set intervals the skills necessary to be a soldier

(Source: BBC)

'Veterinary services, crucial but less appreciated'

By Faranak Bakhtiari

TEHRAN - Iran marks the National Veterinary Day on October 6. Despite high contribution of veterinary services to the health of both animals and humans, measures done to appreciate the services are not sufficient and the sector needs more serious attention, Payam Mohebbi, head of Tehran Pet Hospital told the Tehran Times on Friday.

National Veterinary Day history October 6 was designated as the National Veterinary Day in 1990, which was supposed to be celebrated each year.

After trying to dedicate a day to the veterinary, Dr. Hassan Tajbakhsh proposed a day in Mid-October, which was a blessed day in ancient Iran.

In the past, 14th day of each month was called goosh rooz (derived from the name of an angel named Gaoosh; the guardian angel of cattle and useful animals)

Although, any national day observances contribute to the achievement of different purposes like promoting awareness and action on important issues, stimulate interest in activities and programs; about this day neither sufficient attention is paid to, nor effective efforts are done to overcome the challenges in this field, Mohebbi lamented.

What are the main role of veterinary and challenges facing it?

Mohebbi explained that "Veterinarians highly contribute to health infrastructure in the country. In other words, veterinary services play a crucial role in human health as well as livestock with controlling highly contagious diseases and infections which threaten the people's lives in case of lack of food safety.

Human have been living with animals and their world swirled together from long ago to an extent that human started using the animals to stay alive; so that there have been complications along with benefits, he said.

However, in many contexts veterinary services could contribute to the provision of essential public health interventions with providing food security as well as the livestock and animals safety.

This is while, veterinary, most of the time if not always, have been overlooked in our country either by the people or by the officials, mostly because of the poor management and lack of a single responsible body for the veterinary system."

Unfortunately, physicians have been the focus of attention, with veterinarians hiding behind it; despite their important role, he said, adding, "physiological needs should



first be satisfied which refers to food safety and is directly provided by veterinarians, while physicians come the next.

Year by year, new technology and modern approaches replaces the old ones; so health system is not an exception and managing it using the old policies is not possible any more.

Health in the world is an integrated system and benefits from an integrated management system which is controlled by a single body, unlike our country that health system has been torn apart and each body is tasked with a part of it.

Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, and Department of Environment in Iran are the responsible bodies for the health system, and lay the blame on each other when facing a problem, he lamented.

It even come up with educational problems, for instance, Ministry of Education accepts many students into the veterinary course regardless of the career capacity, he also noted.

To overcome these issues, the country's health system must be redefined and transformations need to be done, even if it comes at the cost of merging ministries, he added.

The related bodies are supposed to prepare the healthcare roadmap of next 10 years at the time, not to think of plans implemented years ago and its outcomes, these are the challenges that might be the main obsession of healthcare system if not tackled now, Mohebbi highlighted.

A recently launched campaign went viral among people highlighting the heavy environmental impacts of conventional meat production and the concerns people have about the welfare of animals under industrial farming, how much is it reliable?

"Many years ago, the population of humans was much less than that of today because the nature was managing it, whenever the population exceeded the natural resources capacity, diseases and microbes have shown up and balanced the population.

But human has always strived to survive, to do so, had interfered with the nature and wildlife, namely, mass production of livestock, destroying forests or wild habitats for farmland, producing emissions driving the climate crisis, polluting rivers and oceans.

Today, the shift towards flexitarian, vegetarian and vegan lifestyles is undeniable, with some people cutting down on their meat consumption as a result of becoming more conscious towards the environment and animal welfare.

Reducing meat consumption may contribute to a decline in some environmental issues such as methane gas as cows and other ruminant animals emit methane, a potent greenhouse gas, when they digest grasses and plants, he explained, noting, the world needs to reduce emissions from fossil fuels and agriculture to sufficiently rein in climate change

"However, it cannot be completely done in the world, we cannot persuade billions of people who have been feeding on meat for hundred years as well as those producing it to cut meat consumption and production.

It might be even effective in having a better world, but people and manufacturers uneasiness about less use of meat will be a barrier despite the problems that may appear as a result, including, a drop in milk consumption and consequently diseases.

Moreover, dismantling livestock industry will bring our country huge losses and many active in agricultural sector will also lose career," he lamented.

Can we take a chance at being managed by the nature once again?

"As I mentioned before, we increased our chance of survival among other creatures, changing the animals, lands and nature over time, which might not necessarily have been the right option, but stopping it today is impossible, so the best and only way is proper and sustainable management.

Poor environmental policies are definitely the main reason behind running off resources. such as water, forests, soil and so on; which is mostly facing the world; to overcome it, we must make a fair share of resources.

Because, if we stop using technologies or medicine or any modern ways of tackling issues, then nature even cannot control it; and the prevalence of many life-threatening diseases along with huge consequences of interference with nature will blow up the world," he also highlighted.

Animal cruelty cases are believed to be increased, is it right? How can it be stopped? Animal cruelty cases have not been recently increased in the society, this our attention that got more attracted to such happenings which mostly comes from the increased interaction between human and animals, Mohebbi said.

He went on to add that there have always been people who were mentally ill and aggressive to animals everywhere in the world; and this is a social phenomenon and requires social solutions as well.

"But what can really stop acts of cruelty to animals is only training and educating the people, otherwise no fining, jailing or threatening can efficiently prevent such behavior. Culture promotion and changing people's

behavior toward animals is of great importance while the role of the media is undeniable, he suggested.

How veterinarians can promote animal

Mohebbi noted that not any veterinarian is an animal supporter, but as long as they are involved in ensuring health of people and animals, they play a part role in animal protection.

Here are two debates of animal right and welfare, veterinarians are supposed to enforce the animal right with offering adequate care for injured or ill animals and not to abuse them, but when it comes to animal welfare all parts of the society are responsible, he explained.

On the other hand, concern for animals welfare is also deeply embedded in duties of veterinarians toward animals; but being an animal right advocate or supporter totally depends on the personality, he concluded.

Device removes waste from Great Pacific garbage patch for first time

A floating contraption designed to remove waste from the sea has successfully removed large quantities of plastic from an enormous island of rubbish about the size of France, in the Pacific Ocean for the first time.

The creator of the system, 25-year-old Dutch inventor and engineer, Boyan Slat, announced on Twitter the device had successfully captured large pieces of flotsam, including ghost nets, office chairs, plastic helmets and tyres from the Great Pacific garbage patch, and that it had also caught large quantities of micro plastics.

The technology, based on a large line of cork floats suspending a huge skirt hanging below it, requires no power and depends on the movement of the sea to push it through the rubbish.

Mr Slat first announced his plans to attempt to use passive technology to pick up litter from the ocean in 2012.

"We now have a self-contained system in the Great Pacific Garbage Patch that is using the natural forces of the ocean to passively catch and concentrate plastics, thereby confirming the most important principle behind the ocean cleanup system," he said in a video statement.

The news indicates Mr Slat's concept works and will pave the way towards further clean-up operations.

Writing on Twitter, he said: "Very proud of the Ocean Cleanup team for getting to this important milestone today. Onwards to the next step; a large scale, operational



In a statement he said there remains "much more work to do" to reach the next stage in the plans.

"After beginning this journey seven years ago, this first year of testing in the unforgivable environment of the high seas strongly indicates that our vision is attainable and that the beginning of our mission to rid the ocean of plastic garbage, which has accumulated for decades, is within our sights," he said in a statement.

"Our team has remained steadfast in its determination to solve immense technical challenges to arrive at this point. Though we still have much more work to do, I am eternally grateful for the team's commitment and dedication to the mission and look forward to continuing

to the next phase of development." Levels of plastic waste going into the sea are enormous.

According to estimates published by the UK government, every year more than 150 million tonnes of plastic waste pollute the world's oceans.

Around a million birds and more than 100,000 sea mammals die every year from eating and getting tangled

The growth in single-use consumer plastics has fuelled the surge in plastic pollution. It is estimated there are now 5.25 trillion pieces of ocean plastic debris, and a recent report estimates the quantity of plastic in the sea will treble by 2025.

Around 40 per cent of plastics are thought to enter the waste stream in the same year they're produced.

Earlier this year, environment and energy ministers from the G20 countries agreed to adopt a voluntary framework for reducing plastic litter, which includes strategies designed to assist developing countries.

Under the framework drawn up in Japan in June, G20 members will promote a "comprehensive life-cycle approach" to prevent and reduce plastic litter discharge to the oceans through various measures and international cooperation.

They will also have to report their progress in tackling the problem, and "share best practices, promote innovation and boost scientific monitoring and analytical methodologies". (Source: The Independent)

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Child adoption process to speed up

Child adoption process being piloted in Tehran will speed up, Darioush Bayatnejad, Tehran province welfare organization director

Currently, some 2,800 applicants are awaiting adoption process, most of whom are parents not having children or intending to foster a child, he added.

پروسه فرزندخواندگی تسریع میشود

مدیر کل بهزیستی استان تهران تاکید کرد: پروسه فرزندخواندگی تسریع می شود. به گزارش خبرگزاری مهر، داریوش بیات نشاد اظهار کرد: در حال حاصر بیس از ۲۸۰۰ متقاضی فرزندخواندگی پشت نوبتی پذیرش در بهزیستی استان تهران هستند و خانوادههایی که به دلایل پزشکی صاحب فرزند نشده و تمایل دارند که فرزندی را به فرزندخواندگی بپذیرند، عمده متقاضیان سازمان بهزیستی در این خصوص هستند.

PREFIX/SUFFIX

"alti-, alto-, alt-"

Meaning: high

For example: High altitude has its most pronounced effect on the rising time of bread.

PHRASAL VERB

Pal up

Meaning: to become someone's friend For example: She paled up with Neil while travelling

IDIOM

Crying need

Explanation: When there is a great lack of something

which is urgently needed, there is a crying need for it For example: Hospitals claim that there is a crying need for nurses.

Baghdad lifts curfew as normalcy returns after unrest

TEHRAN — Iraqi authorities have lifted a days-long curfew in Baghdad as normalcy returns to the streets of the country's capital.

Reuters reported on Saturday that traffic ran as usual in Baghdad, with streets and main squares being otherwise quite.

Iraqi Prime Minister Adil Ab-dul-Mahdi had announced the curfew on Thursday.

The country's National Security Council had issued a statement on Thursday saying that the measure was required to "protect citizens and public and private properties".

Affirming the demonstrators' "right to protest", the council condemned "acts of vandalism that accompanied the protests."

The curfew came after several days of Iraqi protests against mismanagement and corruption, with certain elements turning to acts of violence.

A number of protesters and security personnel have been killed as a result of the provocations.

On Friday, Iraqi police said in a statement that "unidentified snipers" killed two security forces and two civilians across the capital Baghdad earlier in the day.

Washington's plan

Arab media outlets and observes have published reports revealing that the U.S. seeks to drive recent anti-corruption protests in Iraq into chaos in a bid to install a pro-U.S. regime.

"Despite the legitimate demands of the Iraqi people in fighting corruption", recent



developments in Iraq have been a "manifestation of an American plot to abuse such grievances," the Lebanese Arabic-language

daily newspaper al-Akhbar reported.

The paper added that Iraqi security officials have uncovered a plan that seeks to provoke major clashes between Iraqi protesters and security forces.

The clashes, hyped with provocative media coverage, are meant to produce a major security vacuum that can set the stage for the emergence of a U.S.-affiliated Iraqi military commander who can take on the leadership role of a "savior government".

The plan will seek to ultimately strengthen

U.S. control over the country The report, however, added that the Iraqi overnment was well aware of the plan and had adopted several policies to counter it.

Security sources speaking to al-Akhbar earlier this year had said that 2019 would be

a tense year for the "people of Iraq".
Writing for the Arabic-language al-Ahd news website, Ali Matar, an analyst in Arab political affairs, said that Washington sought to create insecurity in the country so that Iraq would remain "hostage" to the U.S. in a bit to exploit its resources.

Matar added that Washington sought to revive ISIL Takfiri terror cells and sabotage

The Arab analyst said that Washington had always sought to undermine Iraq when it was close to attaining certain points of political and economic breakthrough.

Matar highlighted that the tensions came shortly after the Abdul-Mahdi government reopened the country's Al-Qa'im crossing with Syria and accused Israel of orchestrating a string of recent drone strikes on Iraqi popular mobilization forces.

Abdul-Mahdi had also entered talks with Beijing and Moscow in a bid to acquire air defenses against the attacks, he noted.

The U.S. seeks to "get revenge" from Abdul-Mahdi's government, he added.

Seyyed Reza Sadr-alhoseini, an Iranian Middle East analyst, also echoed Matar's

'The American's thought that Baghdad would be more cooperative with them. However, the policies of Abdul-Mahdi, the Iraqi parliament and its president did not allow Washington to achieve its goals," he said.

Hossien Sheikholeslam, another political analyst, highlighted that Iraq's current troubles are largely rooted in the "corrupt system set up by the Americans in the country following the overthrow of Saddam".

Sheikholeslam added that current tensions in the country were a product of American plans seeking to weaken "the Resistance", an alliance that has gradually formed in the region in a bid to counter foreign-backed intervention in the Middle East.

Foreign embassies "stirring up" situation in Iraq: UK analyst

The US-led, Zionist-instigated war on Iraq was designed to cripple and destabilize that country. The invaders pretend to fight terrorism. They pretend to be working to stabilize the situation. But even as one side of the US-led Occupation helped the Iraqi government fight takfiri terrorists, the other side was sponsoring the terrorism. Today, they seem to be shifting to a political rather than military divide-and-conquer strategy, by sponsoring color revolution style protests designed to keep Iraq unstable and unable to take its place as a genuinely independent country working towards full regional independence," Barret said.

Long history of interference

Dennis Etler, political analyst and a former professor of anthropology based in California, said the US and other Western intelligence services have a "long history of interfering in the domestic affairs of nations" they wish to control by fomenting antigory appropriate the protects. They trute dotted by the second course of the protects of the protect of the prot anti-government protests. They try to destabilize targeted countries in the hope of advancing their own agenda in regions where they wish to assert or maintain political influence'

He further told Tasnim that Iran has recently pledged to further support Iraq's reconstruction after the defeat of Daesh and the US and its allies want to disrupt these friendly relations and the recent riots can be seen as an attempt to sabotage Iraq's attempts at reconstruction.

"A failed Iraqi state serves the interests of US imperialism in its attempts to contain Iran's influence in the region," he said.

Is Pompexit imminent?

→1 "Pompeo mocked: "The more bureaucrats we have, the better the job gets done." His comments cleverly threaded the needle between Trumpian nationalists and most traditional, red tape-hating conservatives.

But there is another aspect to Pompeo's profile. A politician's pol, he has prudently stood betwixt dueling factions. But if forced to choose, it's clear: Pompeo is still a man of the pre-Trump establishment. The West Point valedictorian, Harvard Law graduate and military equipment entrepreneur is a conservative in the mold of the Wall Street Journal editorial board. Put otherwise, Pompeo is Trump-curious, but traditional. Pompeo has even hired as a senior aide a WSJ alumnus, ex-Trump critic Mary Kissel, as well as neocons such as Elliot Abrams. As Mead noted about Pompeo's Claremont address, "This is all very well, critics will say, but does Mr. Pompeo speak for his chief?'

That has long remained unclear, and may remain so. What's clear: Pompeo's continued flirtation with a Senate run, even in the face of other grandees in the race, such as the Peter Thiel-backed Kris W. Kobach, shows him to be a survivor with a keen eye for the escape hatch. Pompeo has always feared the unpredictable, risk-loving Trump could go down-- hence, the interest in the Senate seat. Also, if 2024 looks like poor terrain for Republican presidential candidates or his brand of "conservative internationalism," the relatively young Pompeo could pick his spot from

Curt Mills is the Foreign Affairs Columnist at the National Interest, where he covers the State Department, National Security Council and the Trump Presidency.

EU rejects UK's request for weekend talks as Johnson insists on no Brexit delay

TEHRAN — The European Union has rejected a British request to hold Brexit talks this weekend, British media reported, as Prime Minister Boris Johnson reiterated his commitment to leaving the bloc on Oct. 31 despite the possibility of a not reaching an exit deal.

The European Commission said that Johnson's new Brexit proposals do not provide any basis for finalising a separation agreement, according to Sky News.

Talks on Johnson's plan to replace the Irish backstop will not take place over the weekend, EU Commission spokeswoman Natasha Bertaud was quoted as saying by Sky. She added that the UK will be given "another opportunity to present its proposals

"If we held talks at the weekend it would look like these were proper negotiations," the Times newspaper had earlier cited an EU diplomat as saying. "We're still a long way from that".

Johnson has consistently said he will not ask for a Brexit

delay, reiterating the point on Friday. 'New deal or no deal - but no delay. #GetBrexitDone #LeaveOct31". Johnson said in a tweet.

However, his government also acknowledged for the first time on Friday that Johnson will send a letter to EU asking for a Brexit delay if no divorce deal has been reached by Oct. 19,

Iraqi forces bust terror cell plotting to assassinate **Ayatollah Sistani**

Reuters reported.

TEHRAN— Iraq's security forces have dismantled a terrorist group as it was planning to assassinate the most prominent Shia cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani in the wake of ongoing demonstrations against corruption, unemployment and poor public services, a report says.

Lebanon's Arabic-language al-Mayadeen television news network, citing Najaf Provincial Governor Luay al-Yassiry, said on Friday that members of the terror outfit actually wanted to kill the revered cleric in the holy city of Najaf, located about 160 kilometers (100 miles) south of the capital Baghdad, and had infiltrated the old part of the city for the purpose.

Meanwhile, the correspondent for the Iran-based Arabic-language al-Alam television news network, Navid Behrouz, reported that the captured terrorists had planned to incite protesters to storm Ayatollah Sistani's office.

Earlier in the day, Grand Ayatollah Sistani urged Iraqi security forces and protesters to avoid violence, expressing sorrow over some sporadic unrest that has led to several casualties, Press TV reported.

"It is sorrowful there have been so many deaths, casualties and destruction" from clashes between anti-government protesters and security forces in recent days, he said in a letter

U.S.-backed militants warn Erdogan of 'all-out war' in Syria



TEHRAN — U.S.-backed militants warn of an "all-out war" after President Tayyip Erdogan say Turkey will carry out an air and ground military operation in Syria as soon as Saturday or Sunday.

The so-called Syrian Democratic Forces said on Saturday it would "not hesitate to turn any unprovoked (Turkish) attack into an all-out war" in northeast Syria.

Erdogan said earlier his country will launch the air and ground operation east of the Euphrates in Syria after a deadline to jointly establish a so-called safe zone with the US passed.

"We gave all warnings to our interlocutors regarding the east of Euphrates and we have acted with sufficient patience,' Erdogan said at the opening of his AK Party's annual camp on Saturday.

"We've made our preparations, made our operation plans, given the necessary instructions," he added. According to Erdogan, the military operation will begin "as soon as today or tomorrow".

On Tuesday, he said Ankara's patience with the US over the creation of the "safe zone" had run out.

Turkey, he said, had no choice but to act alone to push back militants from the so-called Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) from border areas, given the lack of progress made with the U.S.

In August, the US and Turkey agreed to set up the militant-free buffer zone to the east of the Euphrates River between the Turkish border and Syrian areas controlled by US-backed militants. Ankara views YPG militants as terrorists affiliated with the homegrown Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) militant group.

Erdogan has given the US until the end of September to come up with concrete results on the development of a purported safe zone on Turkey's border with Syria.

The two sides are at odds over the depth of the zone and who should control it.

Turkey expects the creation of a 32-kimeter (20-mile) safe zone in northern Syria, and has stressed that it wants the US-backed YPG cleared from the region.

According to Press TV, Syria has reiterated its rejection of the so-called safe area, and dismissed all projects aimed at undermining the unity and territorial integrity of the country.

India signs \$5b deal for Russian air defense systems, despite threat of U.S. sanctions



TEHRAN — India signed a \$5 billion deal to buy five Russian S-400 air defense systems despite a looming threat of U.S. sanctions on countries that trade with Russia's defense and intelligence sectors.

The deal was signed in New Delhi during a visit by Russian President Vladimir Putin, who met Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss nuclear energy, space exploration

India has requested that the United States grant it a waiver for the deal from sanctions prescribed by the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act, a U.S. law passed in August 2017 that is intended to punish Russia for its annexation of Crimea and alleged interference in the 2016 U.S. elections.

The U.S. did not spare China from sanctions last month for purchasing its own Russian S-400 surface-to-air missile systems and fighter jets.

If the U.S. does impose sanctions on India, it is unclear how India could pay Russia for the military equipment, since the law bars dollar-denominated financial transactions.

Vladimir Sotnikov, a foreign affairs expert at an independent research institute in Moscow, believes India could make the payment in a mixture of rupees and dollars to try to circumvent the sanctions.

The deal is likely to bolster the close relationship between India and Russia that dates back to the cold war, when the U.S. tilted towards Pakistan, India's neighbor and arch-rival. But it is also likely to strain ties with Washington.

India is the world's largest importer of military hardware, according to Mumbai-based think tank Gateway House, and has depended on Russia for political support as well as billions of dollars in military hardware. Nearly 70 per cent of India's present-day defense equipment was procured from Russia, according to India's Defense Ministry, South China Morning Post

Saudi defense minister says views Houthi truce 'positively'

TEHRAN - Saudi Arabia says it views the truce announcedby Yemen's Houthis positively, claiming the proposal is something the kingdom has always been seeking.

'The truce announced in Yemen is perceived positively by the Kingdom, as this is what it has always sought, and hopes it will be implemented effectively," Saudi Arabia's Deputy Defense Minister Prince Khalid bin Salman wrote on Twitter.

Last month, the Houthi movement offered to halt its retaliatory attacks against Saudi Arabia if the kingdom ends its bombing campaign against Yemen.

The offer and the kingdom's belated welcome follow a recent major ground operation by Yemenis and a brazen drone attack on Saudi Arabia's heart of oil industry.

U.S. government-funded Voice of America (VOA) said on Friday Saudi Arabia is shell-shocked from the devastating attack on Aramco oil facilities last month.

In an analysis, the agency said the kingdom has realized that it is facing defeat in Yemen and is consequently seeking to terminate the war.

After four years of facing Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, the "once rag-tag" Houthis and their Yemeni allies have managed to hold off "the military might of Yemen's rich Persian Gulf neighbors," VOA said.

Launching its war on Yemen in March 2015, Riyadh had sought to install a pro-Saudi regime in power and crush the popular Ansarallah movement.

The article explained, however, that Ansarallah, which has proven to be one "of the most effective" fighting groups in the region, has forced Riyadh to realize the failure of its military campaign.

"From the Saudi point of view there is a recognition that after four-and-a-half years, they can't bomb the Houthi into submission, and that perhaps there has to be some kind of accommodation," said Persian Gulf analyst Neil Partrick speaking to the VOA.

Consequently, recent developments have not only faded the chance of victory in the eyes of Riyadh, but, according to observers, the kingdom is increasingly seeing the war in Yemen as a threat "greater than before," VOA said.

The September 14 Aramco attack plunged Saudis into "shock", said Partrick who was present in the Aramco oil facilities in the "immediate aftermath" of the operation.

He said Saudi media pleaded for the West's "strong action", even military intervention, but Riyadh's Western allies refrained from any direct action.

The U.S. administration, instead, is trying to coax Saudi Arabia into negotiations with Houthi leaders, The Wall Street Journal reported.

According to Press TV, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs David Schenker, who visited the region recently, said Washington is in talks with Houthis in a bid to end the war, the first such contact in more than

Shortly after the Aramco attack, Yemeni forces scored a major field victory against Saudi-led troops in the country's northern Najran region last week.

Pompeo sees a lot of work needed at North Korea, U.S. nuclear talks

TEHRAN — U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said much work remained to be done at U.S.-North Korean nuclear talks that began in Sweden on Saturday aimed at ending a stalemate, expressing hope that "a set of dialogues" would follow in coming weeks and months. The meeting at an isolated conference center on the Swedish capital's outskirts is the first formal working-level discussion since U.S.

President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un met in June and agreed to restart negotiations that stalled after a failed summit in Vietnam in February.

Police had closed off the approaches to the complex facing the Baltic Sea on the island of Lidingo, where the delegations led by U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Stephen Biegun and North Korea's Kim Myong Gil were expected to meet.

Two motorcades entered the secluded $center\,early\,on\,Saturday\,with\,a\,police\,officer$ confirming one carried the North Korean officials. The other included cars used by Biegun when he met Swedish Foreign Ministry officials on Friday.

The delegation from North Korea, also known as the Democratic People's Republic

of Korea (DPRK), which is under sanctions banning much of its trade due to its nuclear program, arrived in Sweden on Thursday after Pyongyang unexpectedly said talks would take place on Oct. 5.

Speaking in Athens on the last leg of a tour of southern Europe, Pompeo said he was hopeful of progress in the nuclear talks, Reuters reported.

Argentine club Banfield honours fans lost in Dirty War

Argentine football club Banfield has honoured 11 of its fans who disappeared during the country's "Dirty War" in an emotional ceremony it said was designed to honour "victims of state terrorism."

Banfield's president Lucia Barbuto read out the names of those honoured and gave their families official club membership cards like the ones they held when they disappeared between 1976 and 1983, the period when a brutal military dictatorship cracked down on left-wing opponents after a coup.

"In the name of the club I ask for forgiveness that this recognition took so long," Barbuto told the crowd gathered under the first division club's ageing concrete stand.

Family members were joined by fans and human rights activists, including some of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, the group whose quiet demonstrations in front of Argentina's presidential palace brought the military abuses to public attention.

Argentina's official truth commission said 8,960 people went missing during the military dictatorship but human rights groups estimate that about 30,000 were killed. Most were students, union leaders or dissidents who were murdered for their political beliefs.

"They will never make them disappear from our hearts or from the club they loved," Analia Gavio, niece of German Gavio, one of those honoured, told Thursday's gathering.

Players from Banfield's men's and women's teams read out the list of names in a video that showed the 11 in a playing formation against the background of a football pitch.

(Source: Reuters)

Lawrence apologizes for error of judgement in drink-driving charge

Derby midfielder Tom Lawrence has apologized for "a total error of judgment" after being charged with drink-driving last month.

The Welshman and Rams forward Mason Bennett were charged with drink-driving after a crash on September 24 following an alcohol-fuelled night out with teammates.

Derby club captain Richard Keogh also suffered a serious leg injury in the collision which will keep him out for at least the rest of the season.

Both Lawrence and Bennett were fined the equivalent of six weeks' wages -- the maximum contractual limit -- by Derby.

As well as the fine, Lawrence and Bennett have been told to serve an additional 80 hours of community and rehabilitation, which includes a drink aware course.

"I wish to offer my sincere apologies to the football club; our chairman, the manager, my team-mates and all our supporters for my indiscretions that night," said Lawrence.

"It was a total error of judgment on my part, out of character for me and I am deeply disappointed in my behavior and upset for my teammate and our captain Richard Keogh."

Bennett and Lawrence will appear in court to answer charges of drink-driving on October 15.

Despite the charge, Lawrence was still called up to the Wales squad by Ryan Giggs for upcoming Euro 2020 qualifiers against Slovakia and Croatia.

(Source: Mirror)

Valdés on the brink of sacking by Barcelona

According to Catalunya Radio, Valdes has told his players that he wasn't sure if he would be continuing in his role and said he had a very sobering chat with Patrick Kluivert, the new youth academy director.



Valdes, a man with a very strong character and someone they spoke of as a potential head coach, was at odds with the board when he wasn't allowed to use Estadi Johan Cruyff for Juvenil games as it was closed for the reserve team and the women's team.

"From the first day when I arrived on my motorbike, I thought it would be our home but I will keep fighting," he

They have lost to Borussia Dortmund and Inter Milan in the youth league and he was sent off after his first win with the team.

A report in the Catalan papers recently suggested he didn't go to a dinner with all of the youth team coaches and it caused Barcelona to reconsider his position. With the losses piling up and Valdes not backing down on some key issues including playing in a more pragmatic 4-4-2, it looks like it might cost him his job.

(Source: AS)

Olympic champion McNeal disqualified from hurdles

Olympic champion Brianna McNeal of the United States was disqualified from the heats of the 100m hurdles on Saturday. McNeal exited the track at the Khalifa Stadium tearfully after she was shown a red flag for a fractional false start.

McNeal, 28, protested the decision but was shown a replay

on a monitor at trackside which confirmed her disqualification. It was a disappointing exit for McNeal, who had been hoping to add a world crown to the 2016 Olympic crown she won in Rio de Janeiro.

(Source: AFP)

Lloris in hospital with 'big' arm injury as Tottenham lose at Brighton

Hugo Lloris suffered a potentially serious arm injury and was hospitalised as Tottenham lost 3-0 at Brighton on Saturday.

Lloris failed to hold on to Pascal Gross' third minute cross at the AMEX Stadium and landed awkwardly in the goalmouth as Neal Maupay nodded in Brighton's opener.

The France international, who won the World Cup with his country in 2018, required on field treatment as oxygen was administered before he was taken away on a stretcher. Lloris was then transferred to a nearby hospital.

Tottenham coach Mauricio Pochettino said after the match: "He is in the hospital now. The club is going to communicate the problem but we need to wait. The club will communicate because I think it is a big problem in his arm.

"It was a massive impact after three minutes. It had a massive impact on the game. To concede and lose your captain is a massive impact emotionally and for the team.

"After 30 minutes it was 2-0 and we tried to find a solution but it was impossible.



It's a very difficult moment but we need to keep going."

Lloris' injury capped a miserable afternoon for Tottenham following their

embarrassing 7-2 defeat against Bayern Munich in the Champions League on Tuesday. Maupay's goal and two from Aaron Connolly meant Tottenham are still without an away league win in nine months

Pochettino said ahead of the match he wanted to stay for five more years at Spurs but another defeat has cranked up the pressure on him.

"I feel very sorry for the fans. We are living in a tough moment. When we were on the top we were together and now this movement has arrived we need to stick together," he added.

"This feeling is not so good. It is new for everyone in the club. Now is a moment to be strong."

The injury to Lloris would have added to the insult of the goal for Tottenham boss Mauricio Pochettino.

Tottenham were thrashed 7-2 by Bayern Munich in the Champions League in midweek.

And Brighton doubled their lead before the break as the Seagulls piled the pressure on the boss.

The Seagulls finished off the job in the second half with Aaron Connolly's second strike securing a 3-0 win.

(Source: Soccernet)

Muhammad world record as Barshim soars for Qatar gold



Dalilah Muhammad of the United States stormed to a world record-breaking victory in the 400 metres hurdles as hosts Qatar celebrated a gold medal for high jumper Mutaz Essa Barshim at the World Championships on Friday.

On a night of high drama played out before a rare packed house at the Khalifa Stadium, Muhammad broke the world record for the second time this year as she powered home to win in 52.16 seconds.

The 29-year-old Olympic champion took gold ahead of compatriot Sydney McLaughlin, while Jamaica's Rushell Clayton took the bronze.

"I just wanted the world title so much but to break the world record again is fantastic," Muhammad said after her victory, which improved her record of 52.20sec set in July.

"I just decided to go for it from the start," Muhammad added. "It hasn't really sunk in yet but it feels good."

The biggest roar of Friday's action was reserved for Qatari high jumper Barshim.

The 28-year-old had the home fans on their feet after a roller coaster competition which saw him clinch victory with a jump of 2.37m

Barshim's win came after he had flirted with elimination at 2.33, before clearing the bar on his third and final attempt.

Two Russian athletes competing under the Authorised Neutral Athlete banner, Mikhail Akimenko and Ilya Ivanyuk won silver and bronze.

"For me, it was just a dream, amazing. I was not 100 percent ready but when I came and saw all those people cheering for me, even if I was dying, if they take me in a wheelchair or ambulance, I would do everything I can," said Barshim.

Barshim's victory earned him an audience with Qatar's ruler, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani.

"I can't' tell you what he said -- it's top secret," Barshim joked.

In the men's 400m, meanwhile, Steven Gardiner of the Bahamas surged to an emotional victory which he dedicated to his country as it attempts to recover from the devastation of Hurricane Dorian.

"I got a lot of messages from people back home. They told me to do my best," Gardiner said.

"I wanted to give them a bit more than my best. I wanted to be a world champion and here I am now."

Gardiner blasted to victory in a time of 43.48sec, winning ahead of Colombia's Anthony Jose Zambrano who took silver in 44.15sec.

Fred Kerley of the United States was forced to settle for bronze with 44.17sec, denying the Americans a gold medal which would have completed a 100m, 200m, 400m and 800m sweep.

The men's 3,000m steeplechase saw a

nail-biting finale, with Conselsius Kipruto of Kenya just pipping Ethiopian rival Lameche Girma at the line in 8min 01.35sec, the fastest time in the world this year. The 24-year-old Olympic champion had

it all to do coming to the final barrier but he summoned up a final burst of acceleration and hit the line abreast of Girma. The duo spent a nervy few seconds

awaiting the result before Kipruto was confirmed as the gold medallist.

The Kenyan celebrated by climbing onto a barrier -- putting his finger to his lips and then one hand in the shape of a telescope to his eye.

Girma set a new national record of 8:01.36. Morocco's Soufiane El Bakkali settled for the bronze timing 8:03.76.

In the women's discus, Yaime Perez's long wait for a major outdoor title ended with a gold.

(Source: Mirror)

Platini free to return to football but Qatar investigation goes on



Former UEFA president Michel Platini is finally free to return to football next week when his four-year ban for ethics violations ends, although he remains linked to a corruption investigation in his home country relating to the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

The former France captain and national coach went on to become one of the game's most prominent administrators when he was elected president of European football's governing body in 2007.

A triple Ballon d'Or winner, Platini was

A triple Ballon d'Or winner, Platini was expected to succeed Sepp Blatter as FIFA president in 2016 but fell spectacularly from grace a few months earlier.

He was banned from football for receiving a two-million Swiss franc (1.8 million euros, \$2 million) payment from the head of the world game, with Blatter banned for eight years, later reduced to six, for his part.

The payment, made in 2011 when Blatter was seeking re-election as president, was related to work carried out by Platini between 1999 and 2002.

The pair were found guilty of "abusive

execution" of their powers and a conflict of interests.

Platini, now 64, has been battling to clear

his name ever since, although his ban was reduced to four years from an initial six, leaving him free to work in football again when the suspension expires on Monday.

With the former Saint-Etienne and Juventus midfielder sidelined, he watched on as Gianni Infantino, once his right-hand man at UEFA, became FIFA president in February 2016. The Swiss-Italian was re-elected in June this year.

Approached by AFP on Friday, Infantino declined to comment on Platini, who made his determination, and bitterness towards FIFA, clear in an interview with Swiss television channel RTS last month.

"I will be back. I don't know where, I don't know how. I can't go out of the game on the back of a ban, even if it's a ban made by idiots," he said.

Speaking to French daily Le Monde

Speaking to French daily Le Monde about what the future holds, he added: "I have had lots of offers and requests to become a pundit, to do the Euros, the World Cup."

In an interview with French sports daily L'Equipe, he played down talk of a return to the top levels of football administration, although he has been linked with the role of president of the French Football Federation when that position opens up in 2021.

"My wife taught me never to go back, to not experience the same love affair twice. So yes, that closes doors for me, notably those at UEFA," he said.

"My suspension ends in October, while the last elections for the FIFA presidency took place in May and the next ones will be in four years," he added. "They arranged that well in Zurich."

One source close to UEFA said the organisation's current president, Aleksander Ceferin, "could support Platini" as a candidate for the FIFA presidency in 2023 as the Slovenian "cannot stand" Infantino. By then, the Qatar World Cup will have

come and gone, but Platini has been dogged by his connections to the controversial awarding of that tournament.

In June this year he was held and questioned by French anti-corruption police investigating the 2010 vote to award the tournament to the Gulf state.

According to France Football magazine, a "secret meeting" took place in November 2010 at the Elysee Palace in Paris between former French president Nicolas Sarkozy, Qatar's then-Prince (now Emir) Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, and Platini.

(Source: AFP)

Conor McGregor charged with assault for bar punch in Dublin

Conor McGregor has been charged with assault for punching a man in a Dublin, Ireland, bar in April.

McGregor, the former UFC two-division champion, was formally served with a summons and is due in a Dublin court Oct. 11 on the charge, McGregor spokesperson Karen Kessler confirmed with ESPN's Ariel Helwani. McGregor's team had no further comment.

Per the The Independent, the assault charge carries a maximum prison term of six months if convicted, a fine of \$1,646, or both.

The incident occurred April 6 at the Marble Arch pub. McGregor, 31, was captured on camera punching a man, who was sitting at the bar, in the face. The man is in his 50s. In an August interview with ESPN, McGregor expressed

remorse for his "unacceptable behavior" in the situation. "I was in the wrong," McGregor said. "That man deserved to enjoy his time in the pub without having it end the way it did. ... I tried to make amends, and I made amends back then. But it doesn't matter. I was in the wrong. I must come



here before you and take accountability and take responsibility. I owe it to the people that have been supporting me.

I owe it to my mother, my father, my family. I owe it to the people who trained me in martial arts. That's not who I am. That's not the reason why I got into martial arts or studying combat sports. The reason I got into it was to defend against that type of scenario."

McCroppe (21.4) has port fought since a loss to Whabib

McGregor (21-4) has not fought since a loss to Khabib Nurmagomedov at UFC 229 in October 2018. Since then, he has had a series of outside-the-cage issues. The Irishman was arrested in March in Miami for smashing a man's cell phone outside a club. Later that month, the New York Times reported that McGregor was under investigation in Ireland for alleged sexual assault. McGregor tweeted around the same time that he was retired from MMA, but has since backed off from that statement.

"I must get my head screwed on and just get back in the game and fight for redemption, retribution, respect -- the things that made me the man I am," McGregor told ESPN in August. "And that's what I will do."

(Source: ESPN)

Jahanbakhsh dropped from World Cup qualifiers

SPORTS TEHRAN — Marc Wilmots has named his 23-man team for two matches against Cambodia and Bahrain at the 2022 FIFA World Cup Qatar and AFC Asian Cup China 2023 Asian Qualifiers but Brighton winger Alireza Jahanbakhsh has been dropped from Team Melli following a poor run of form.

Iran, who started the campaign with a 2-0 win against Hong Kong in September, will host Cambodia in Tehran's Azadi Stadium on Oct. 10 and meet Bahrain in Manama five days later.

Team Melli have been drawn in Group C alongside Iraq, Bahrain, Cambodia and Hong Kong.

The eight group winners and four best runners-up will advance $\,$ to the AFC Asian Cup China 2023 Finals and the final round of qualifying for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022.

The next best 24 teams from the second round of the joint qualifiers will compete in a separate competition for the remaining 12 slots in the 24-team AFC Asian Cup China 2023.

Iran Squad

Goalkeepers: Alireza Beiranvand (Persepolis), Rashid Mazaheri (Tractor), Payam Niazmand (Sepahan)

Defenders: Ramin Rezaeian (Al-Shahania SC), Majid Hosseini (Trabzonspor), Milad Mohammadi (Gent), Siavash Yazdani (Esteghlal), Mohammadhossein Kananizadegan (Persepolis), Morteza Pouraliganji (Al-Arabi), Mohammad Naderi (Persepolis). Morteza Manouri (Sepahan)

Midfielders: Omid Ebrahimi (Al Ahli, Qatar), Masoud Shojaei (Tractor), Ahmad Nourollahi (Persepolis), Ashkan Dejagah (Tractor), Ali Karimi (Esteghlal), Vahid Amiri (Persepolis), Ehsan Haji Safi (Tractor), Mehrdad Mohammadi (Desportivo Aves)

Strikers: Mehdi Taremi (Rio Ave), Sardar Azmoun (Zenit), Karim Ansarifard (Al-Sailiya), Mohammad Mohebbi (Sepahan)



Iran blind football book place at 2020 Paralympic



R T S TEHRAN — Iran sealed their place at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics on Saturday by qualifying for the final of the IBSA Blind

Football Asian Championships Iran defeated hosts Thailand 3-2 thanks to goals from Sadegh Rahimi (two goals) and Hossein Rajabpour.

The Persians will face five-times Asian champions China in the final match on Monday

Brazil, Argentina, Spain, France, Japan and Iran have qualified for the 2020 Paralympic Games so far.

Iran, Rio 2016 silver-medalist, have already defeated Malaysia 4-0, Oman 10-0

and Japan 1-0 in the Asian Championships. The 2019 IBSA Blind Football Asian Championships is being held in Pattaya, Thailand, from Sept. 30th to Oct. 7th.

The top two teams at the competition will qualify for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games.

The IBSA Blind Football Asian Championships have been held every two

Iran beat Australia at FIVB **World Cup**



S P O R T S TEHRAN — Iran defeated Australia 3-1 (25-22, 18-25, 25-18, 27-25) at the **International Volleyball Federation** (FIVB) Men's World Cup at Nagano White Ring on Saturday

Lincoln Alexander Williams led Australia with a match-high 19 points and Amir Ghafour scored 18 points for Iran.

Team Melli will face Brazil on Sun-

day.
The 2019 FIVB Volleyball Men's World Cup is the 14th staging of the

FIVB Volleyball Men's World Cup, contested by the senior men's national teams of the members of the Fédération Internationale de Volleyball (FIVB), the sport's global governing body. The tournament is being held in Japan from

Japan played hosts for this event for the twelfth consecutive time since 1977.

This is the first time since 1989 that FIVB decided not to allocate any spots in the Olympics, due to Japan hosting the 2020 Summer Olympics.

Fabricio: Emotional goal nearly brought me to tears

Urawa Red Diamonds midfielder Fabricio admitted that his stunning opener in Wednesday's AFC Champions League semi-final first leg unleashed a torrent of pent-up emotions at Saitama Stadium.

The Brazilian had already given warning that he intended to test Guangzhou Evergrande 'keeper Zeng Cheng with an early, unsuccessful effort on goal but few in the stadium were ready for what happened on 19 minutes.

From fully 25-yards-out Fabricio received possession, took a touch, and let fly with a vicious, swerving effort that rocketed into the opposite far corner of the goal, leaving

The 29-year-old celebrated his stunning goal with real feeling and, he admitted, it was a significant moment to score his first AFC Champions League goal in such style.

"I was very happy to score such a beautiful goal," he said. "In fact, I've been training so hard to score exactly that kind of goal.

"So, when I finally achieved it for the first time in a long while, I was very emotional and almost began crying." Part of his delight in making such an impact came from



the desire to stand out on the field against many of his more well-known countrymen.

Much of the hype ahead of the tie had revolved around Guangzhou's Brazil-born stars Paulinho, Talisca and Elkeson, but it was Fabricio's name that took the headlines.

"They are high-level players with experience of many big tournaments, so it's an honor to play against these types of opponents," he said.

"It was an honor just to step out onto the pitch today. And s, it does give me extra motivation to win against them.

"It was this determination and huge desire to win that made the difference. So I'm very happy we got the victory

While the 2-0 scoreline does give Urawa a big advantage going into the return meeting in southern China in three weeks' time, Fabricio is well aware that the tie is

Guangzhou boast a 21-match unbeaten record at Tianhe Stadium in the AFC Champions League and they will not

give up their dreams of a third Continental final so easily. "When you play a great team such as Guangzhou, you

can't think about any first leg advantage," said Fabricio.
"We have to play hard against them. We have to channel

the same will and feeling we had from the first leg and do our best to get the result we need to go to the final.'

(Source: the-afc)

Tzu-Hui Lin suspended for anti-doping violation

The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) has suspended powerlifter Tzu-Hui Lin of Chinese Taipei for two years for committing an anti-doping violation.

The five-time Paralympian and Beijing 2008 Paralympic champion, who competes in the up to 79kg class, returned an adverse analytical finding for Methylephedrine in a urine sample provided on 28 April 2019 after competing at the Eger 2019 World Para Powerlifting World Cup in Hungary.

This substance is included on the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) 2019 Prohibited List under the category S6. Stimulants.

As a result of her violation, Lin will be ineligible for competition for two years from 28 April 2019 to 27 April 2021. All her results from 28 April 2019 and onwards will be disqualified including forfeiture of any medals, points, records and prizes. This includes the World Cup bronze medal she won in Eger.



The IPC would like to remind all athletes the principle of strict liability applies

to anti-doping matters and that any athletes who need to take a prohibited substance for

medical reasons should seek a Therapeutic Use Exemption.

Each athlete is strictly liable for the substances found in his or her sample, and that an anti-doping rule violation occurs whenever a prohibited substance (or its metabolites or markers) is found in his or her bodily specimen, whether or not the athlete intentionally or unintentionally used a prohibited substance or was negligent or otherwise at fault.

As a signatory of the World Anti-Doping Code (WADC), the IPC remains committed to a doping-free sporting environment at

The IPC, together with the International Federations and the National Paralympic Committees, established the IPC Anti-Doping Code to prevent doping in sport for Paralympic athletes, in the spirit of fair play. The IPC Anti-Doping Code is in conformity with the general principles of the WADC.

(Source: Paralympic)

Iran runners-up at 2019-2020 FIVB World Tour

Iran finished in second place at the 2019-2020 FIVB World Tour on Friday.

Iranian pair Alireza Aghajani and Javad Firouzpour lost to Thailand's Nuttanon Inkiew and Sedtawat Padsawud 2-1 (21-17, 17-21, 12-14) in the final match.



Another Iranian pair Bahman Salemi/Arash Vakili defeated Japan's Hitoshi Murakami/Takashi Tsuchiya 2-0 (21-17, 21-19) in the bronze medal match.

The Bandar Torkaman event marks the first tournament on the 2019-2020 World Tour calendar as the FIVB begins its 34th season of sanctioning international beach volleyball events.

The complete 2019-2020 FIVB World Tour schedule is still being finalized as the 2020 portion of the calendar will be highlighted by qualifying events for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games through mid-June.

The Summer Games are scheduled for July 25 through August 8 in Tokyo.

(Source: FIVB)

Vinko Begovic sacked as **Gol Gohar coach**

PLDC - Gol Gohar coach Vinko Begovic was sacked as his role following poor results in Iran Professional

Gol Gohar lost to Esteghlal 2-1 in Tehran's Azadi Stadium on Friday.

The Sirjan-based football team have earned three points from six matches in IPL so far under guidance of Vinko. The team were also eliminated from Iran's Hazfi Cup

last week after losing to Naft Masjed Soleyman. Begovic helped Gol Gohar win promotion to IPL for the first time in its history.

Ali Daei, Branko Ivankovic, Majid Jalali, Firooz Karimi and Mohammad Taghavi are candidates to take charge of the team.

Ex-PSG forward Ben Arfa linked with Tractor

TASNIM - Hatem Ben Arfa has been reportedly linkedwith a move to Iranian football club Tractor.

The free agent forward is on Tractor's radar as well as Italian clubs Fiorentina and Sampdoria, Tuttomer-

Tractor want to pay €1.8 million to land the 32-year-

The Iranian football club, headed by former Galatasaray coach Mustafa Denizli, seek to win the league title for

Ben Arfa is a former French youth international and has played at all levels for France. At the under-17 level, he was a part of the team that won the 2004 UEFA European Under-17 Championship.

Ben Arfa was called up to the senior team for the first time in October 2007 for a UEFA Euro 2008 qualifying appearances for France, scoring twice.

Iran to send four athletes to **WDF World Cup**

IRNA — Two boys and two girls will represent Iran at the World Darts Federation (WDF) World Cup in Romania. Mehrdad Seyfi and Amir Mehdi Zangiabadi are in Group 3 and will vie with boys' pairs from England, Azer-

baijan, Austria, south Africa and Switzerland athletes. Fatemeh Karimi and Fatemeh Safi have been also drawn in girls' Group 3 along with England, Azerbaijan,

Austria, South Africa and Switzerland athletes. The teams will be headed by Hamid Reza Momeni in the competition.

The prestigious competition will bring 488 players from 54 countries together in Cluj-Napoca in Romania from October 7 to 12.

Iranian referees to judge at FIFA World Cup qualification

IRNA — Iranian soccer referees will officiate the match between Malaysia and Vietnam (Group G) at the 2022 FIFA World Cup qualification in Asia.

Moud Bonyadifar, Saeed Alinejad, Ali Mirzabeigi, and Vahid Kazemi will be respectively the referee, assistant

referee, and fourth official of the match. The qualification match will be held between Malaysia

and Vietnam in Hanoi on October 10. Bonyadifar was the referee of Tehran's famous derby

between Persepolis and Esteghlal.

He will also officiate some games in the Asian U19 matches in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on November 10.

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When you begin to turn your back to the world, death is turning to you. Oh, how soon this meeting takes place.

Imam Ali (AS)

Movies from Iran competing in Rome Asiatica festival

R TEHRAN — The Iranian films "Castle of e s k Dreams" and "Sly" are competing in the 20th Asiatica Film Festival, which is currently underway in Rome, Italy.

"Castle of Dreams" by Reza Mirkarimi is about two young children whose mother has just died, and their father, Jalal, after long years of absence, returns to sort things out, but he does not want to take the children with him.

Director Kamal Tabrizi's comedy film "Sly" tells the story of Qodrat Samadi, who wants to become a member of parliament, but he has a reputation for recklessness and taking arbitrary action. Deciding his best course of action is negotiating with assorted parties and politicians, none take him seriously until he's connected to a single, notorious incident.

The festival, which opened on October 1 and will run until October 10, has also selected "Rona, Azim's Mother", a co-production between Afghanistan and Iran by Tehran-based Afghan brothers Jamshid and Navid Mahmudi, to screen in the official competition.

Starring Iranian actors Mohsen Tanabandeh and Mojtaba Pirzadeh, the film is about Azim, an Afghan refugee who works as a janitor in Tehran. While helping his mother and his brother's family plan to smuggle themselves into Germany, he feels betrayed by his brother when he abandons their mother.

Italy introduces furniture company in Tehran

R TEHRAN — An Italian seat and furniture manufacturer was introduced during a ceremony by the Embassy of Italy in Tehran on Friday.

The ceremony was held at the Italian ambassador's residence, where a number of the company's products were placed on display.



Italian Ambassador Giuseppe Perrone speaks during a cer emony held at his residence on October 4, 2019 in Tehran to introduce an Italian seat and furniture manufacturer.

Speaking at the ceremony, Ambassador Giuseppe Perrone gave some details about the history of the company, and said that the Italian company is quite familiar with the art and tastes of the Iranian nation.

He also said that he is well aware of the talents of Iranian designers in decorative art and that his country would be pleased to have more cooperation with Iranian industrial designers.

A number of Iranian decorative design companies were also attending the ceremony.

J. T. Rogers' play "Oslo" to go on stage in Tehran

R TEHRAN — Iranian director Yusef Bapiri plans to stage American playwright J. T. Rogers' play "Oslo" at the Samandarian Hall of the Iranshahr Theater

> Complex on October 10. Written in 2016, the play



recounts the efforts the Norwegian diplomats Mona Juul and Terje Rod-Larsen made to organize breakthrough negotiations between Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat in 1993.

The play premiered in the U.S. in 2016 and it has won several awards including the Lucille Lortel Award for Best Play, the Outer Critics A poster for "Oslo" by Ira- Circle Award for an Outstanding

nian director Yusef Bapiri. New Broadway Play and the 2017 Drama League Award for an Outstanding Production of a Play.

It also received the Tony Award for Best Play and Best Featured Actor in a Play Award at the 71st Tony Awards in 2017. Hutan Shakiba, Nima Imanzadeh, Negin Tahamtan, Mehrnush

Hajikhani, Puyan Fereiduni and Kimia Kavand are the members of the cast for the play, which will remain on stage until November 4.

Iranian Film Festival Australia to open with "Castle of Dreams"

TEHRAN — Reza e s k Mirkarimi's drama "Castle of Dreams" will open the 9th edition of the Iranian Film Festival Australia (IFFA) in Brisbane on October 24, the organizers have announced.

The film is about two young children whose mother has just died, and their father, Jalal, after long years of absence, returns to sort things out, but he does not want to take the children with him.

The film has been screened at several international events, including the 22nd Shanghai International Film Festival, where it won awards in three categories, including best film and best director.

The film's star, Hamed Behdad, also shared the award for best actor with Chinese actor Chang Feng at the event.

It also received the awards for best film and best director at the Batumi International Art-House Film Festival in Georgia in September.
The Iranian Film Festival Australia

will continue in Brisbane until October 30 and then will move to Sydney from October 31 to November 6. Canberra, Melbourne and Adelaide

which will come to an end in Perth on November 20. The festival's lineup will be announced in the near future.

will be the next cities to host the festival.



A scene from "Castle of Dreams" by Reza Mirkarimi.

Book on Persian poet Forugh Farrokhzad published in Turkish

CULTURE TEHRAN — "Verses of Sigh: Unspoken Words about Forugh Farrokhzad", a book by Iranian documentarian and critic Nasser Saffarian, has recently been published in Turkish in Istanbul.

Published by Yapi Kredi Publications, the book has been translated into Turkish by Derya Önder and Makbule Aras Eivazi.

The book is about the life and career of the influential Iranian poet and film director Forugh Farrokhzad (1935-1967), who is considered as one of the Iranian modernists and most famous female poets.

Her first book of poetry, "The Captive", was published in 1955. "The Wall", "The Rebellion" and "Another Birth" are her other works.

Farrokhzad died in a car accident when she was 32.

The book also contains the interviews Saffarian had done with Farrokhzad's family, close friends, poets and artists, including Simin Behbahani and Fereidun Moshiri, for his documentaries "The Mirror of the Soul" (2000), "The Green Cold" (2003) and "Summit of the



Front cover of the Turkish version of "Verses of Sigh: Unspoken Words about Forugh Farrokhzad" by Iranian writer Nasser Saffarian.

Wave" (2004) about the poet. "Verses of Sigh" was published by Now Publications in Tehran in 2002.

Tbilisi museum to showcase photos of **Niavaran Palace**

TEHRAN — The Tbilisi e s k History Museum in the Georgian capital will be playing host to an exhibition of photos of Tehran's Niavaran Cultural Historical Complex on Tuesday.

The exhibition entitled "Niavaran Palace Complex" displays photos from Iranian photographer Saeid Fallahfar's series "The Palace" that contains photos of the royal palaces in Tehran.

'In Persian culture, palaces reflect history. They are unique examples of art and architecture, and show the political and social aspects of each government," Fallahfar said in a statement for the exhibition, which was published on

The palaces built by the Achaemenids and the Qajar and Pahlavi kings all reflect the political, social and cultural tendencies of Iranians throughout history," he added.

"Persepolis in Fars, Sadabad and Golestan in Tehran, or even the modern Bastihills resort in Lavasan, a resort town about 40 kilometers northeast of Tehran, all introduce part of Iran's art and cultural heritage, indeed," he remarked.



A poster for Saeid Fallahfar's photo exhibit "Niavaran Palace Complex" at the Tbilisi History Museum.

The exhibit has been organized in collaboration with the Embassy of Iran in Georgia and will be running until October 11.

Iran's Art for Peace Festival honors three artists

TEHRAN — Maestro Loris Tjeknavorian, e s k filmmaker Amir Naderi and Persian literature scholar Mohammadreza Shafiei Kadkani have been honored with medals at Iran's Art for Peace Festival.

Iran's Art for Peace Festival annually honors several artists and literati who have made a significant contribution to peace with a medal.

Maestro Tjeknavorian received the award for his felong career in music. Naderi for his portray love in cinema and Shafiei Kadkani for his promotion of Persian culture and literature. $\label{large number of artists and literati, including Hossein} A large number of artists and literati, including Hossein$

Mahjubi, Kambiz Derambakhsh, Taha Behbahani, Mona Zandi and Amir Esfandiyari, attended the honoring ceremony, which took place in Tehran on Thursday at Baroque Gallery, the host of the festival.

"This is a memorable night and I am happy to have received this award. I hope I can serve Iran with my art to achieve peace," Tjeknavorian said in his acceptance speech.

Last week, the Peace and Friendship Ambassadors Group in Tehran proposed that the United Nations select Tjeknavorian as a peace ambassador.

The proposal was made by Tayyebeh Mohammad, the founder of the Peace and Friendship Ambassadors Group at the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) in Tehran.



Maestro Loris Tjeknavorian poses for a photo with his award at the closing ceremony of the Art for Peace Festival at Tehran's Baroque Gallery on October 3, 2019.

Naderi, who lives in New York, could not attend the ceremony, so photographer Nader Samavati received the award on his behalf.

"I will give the award to Naderi and I will tell him that everybody in Iran loves him," Samavati said.

Naderi is mostly famous in Iran for his hits "Harmonica" (1974) and "The Runner" (1984).

Shafiei Kadkani also could not attend the ceremony, so the director of the festival, Fereidun Farbud, received the award on his behalf.

Shafiei Kadkani, 80, is a professor at the Ferdowsi University of Mashhad and a member of the Academy of Persian Language and Literature.

He rose to fame with his collection "On the Avenues

He is also the author of "With Light and Mirror; In Quest of Roots of Iran's Contemporary Poetry Evolution", which reviews the impact of social and political factors

Iran's Art for Peace Festival opened at Baroque Gallery in Tehran on September 20 with the motto "The World

Artists from 20 countries displayed 200 works in the media of painting, photo, sculpture, motion graphics, installation, video art, cinema and theater during the seventh edition of the festival.

The artworks came from Italy, Germany, Australia, Spain, South Korea, Brazil and several other countries.

A lineup of 23 films was also screened during the festival at the Farhang Theater Hall in Tehran for four days. The Art for Peace Festival is a non-competitive event,

which was established in 2013 by the Iran Art for Peace Group, an independent ensemble led by graphic designer Farbud.

The festival is organized every year in Tehran to promote world peace as well as to attract attention to the environmental issues in the country.

Diahann Carroll, TV trailblazer for black women, dead at 84

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Diahann Carroll, a $versatile \, singer \, and \, stage \, actress \, who \, quietly \,$ blazed a trail for black women on American television in the late 1960s by playing a widowed nurse and single mother in "Julia", died on Friday at age 84, her manager said.

Carroll, whose career also was punctuated by a pioneering Tony Award and an Oscar nomination, had been suffering from cancer and died in her sleep at home in Los Angeles with her daughter by her side, her manager, Brian Panella, said by phone.

"She had been fighting it for quite some time, and did not want the world to know," said Panella, who had managed her career for 20 years.

With a handful of movie roles and an award-winning Broadway career already under her belt, Carroll landed the title role in the 1968 situation comedy "Julia." She played Julia Baker, a nurse struggling to raise a young son by herself after her husband was killed in the Vietnam War.

The show, which ran for three seasons on NBC and earned Carroll a Golden Globe Award and Emmy nomination, was a breakthrough for African-American women who were only beginning to make inroads on the small screen at the time.

Actress Nichelle Nichols first appeared two years earlier on "Star Trek" in the supporting role of communications officer Lieutenant Uhura. But "Julia" was the first prime-time network series to star a black woman playing a professional character, as opposed to a maid or domestic worker, as was the case in the 1950s sitcom "Beulah."

"She never wanted to praise herself for anything in that regard," Panella said. "It was more that she felt that she was a part of the expansion of the African-American community in the arts, not the sole creator

of that movement."

Carroll's close friend and fellow vocalist from that era, Dionne Warwick, reacted with grief, saying, "My personal world has taken a downward spiral. Losing my dear friend and mentor comes as a true hurt to my heart."

Carroll's success as "Julia" set her up for another title role in the 1974 movie, "Claudine," for which she received an Academy Award nomination as best actress. Playing opposite James Earl Jones, she reprised her single-mother persona, this time living in Harlem with six children and on public relief.

She went on to play numerous screen roles, mostly in television shows and made-for-TV movies, until just a few years ago. Besides 'Julia", she is perhaps best remembered by TV audiences for her role as Dominique Deveraux, a glamorous diva on the 1980s hit

prime-time soap opera "Dynasty.' Carol Diann Johnson was born in the Bronx borough of New York City on July 17. 1935, daughter of a subway conductor, and $began \, singing \, with \, her \, Harlem \, church \, choir$ at age 6, according to IMDB.com.

In 1954, she landed her first singing role on Broadway in the musical "House of Flowers," before going on to play Clara in the Otto Preminger's big-screen version of "Porgy and Bess in 1959. She also had auditioned for the lead in Preminger's 1954 film adaptation of "Carmen Jones" but ended up cast in the supporting role of Myrt instead.

Her performance as a fashion model in the 1962 Broadway musical interracial love story "No Strings" won her a Tony Award as best actress, a first for an African-American performer.

Carroll, who had been married four times, also sang in nightclubs and recorded several record albums from the late 1950s to the mid-1960s.