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## Government needs private sector for national development: VP

**TEHRAN** — Iran's First Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri said the government needs private sector for progress and development in the country.

He made his remarks in a meeting with the heads of the country's Chambers of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture in Tehran on Saturday, for discussing the private sector's contribution in the economy, the news portal of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) reported.

Jahangiri further noted that the government fully supports the private sector, saying "the government should place even more importance on the country's private sector which is the major driving force behind the economy."

"Meeting with the representatives of the private sector, who are the pioneers of the country's industry and trade, is a great opportunity for the government to get a better view of the economy and make better planning accordingly," he said. **→4**

## Iran taking legal action on U.S. cyber-attacks: general

**TEHRAN** — The Foreign Ministry has been taking legal actions against the United States over its cyber-attacks against Iran, says Head of the Civil Defense Organization Gholam Reza Jalali.

"The Americans have had many cyber threats and measures against our country," Brigadier General Jalali said, Tasnim reported on Sunday.

"Naturally, legal consequences awaits them, which the legal section of Iran's Foreign Ministry is pursuing seriously," he added. He said Iran is capable to counter such attacks.

"Our task is to boost the infrastructures of our cyber defense capabilities in the field of energy and other important fields," the top general stressed. **→3**

## Iraqi PM pledges reforms to calm protests

**TEHRAN** — The Iraqi government announced a series of reforms early Sunday in response to sweeping anti-government.

Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi's cabinet issued a decree including 17 planned reforms, such as land distributions and increased welfare stipends for needy families.

The decree ordered construction of 100,000 new housing units. In September,

ber, local authorities launched demolitions of houses in informal settlements, home to three million Iraqis across the country.

In response to staggering youth unemployment, which has reached around 25 percent according to the World Bank, the government said it would create large market complexes and boost benefits for those without work. **→13**



## REPORT

**Ramin Hossein Abadian**  
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## Protests in Iraq and why foreign parties are involved

The current protests in Iraq have entered a new phase in the shadow of foreign plots and a spiteful leadership.

For the last few days, Iraq has been the focus of media attention as anti-government protests are taking place in some Shiite cities. The author believes that the protests have been fueled outside Iraq. There could be many reasons for the protests, including Iraqi prime minister's trip to mediate between Iran and Saudi Arabia, and his earlier trip to China. This was an important issue for Americans because it would reduce the regional tension and a decrease in U.S. arms sales to regional countries. The Iraqi parliament's effort for passing a law to repeal Iraqi security contracts with the U.S., and to remove the U.S. forces from Iraq could be another reason.

It should be noted that the Iraqi prime minister has recently announced that the attacks on PMF positions were carried out by Israeli drones. This is his second stance against the Zionist regime. He had earlier taken his position against the Deal of the Century.

Along with all that was said, the presence of people linked to the Ba'ath party and the U.S. like Ahmed El Helw is considerable. Saddam's daughter Raghda Hussein is seeking to incite Ba'athists with her Tweets.

The role of Saudi Arabia was so intense that Saudi infamous channels such as Al Arabiya and Al Hadath are seeking sedition. The main critics of the government like the Sadrists have not called on the people to pour into the streets, and it reveals that the movement is being led by a foreign power. Lack of leadership in the protests and inciting teenagers through Facebook influencers related to the U.S. embassy, coupled with anti-Iranian slogans are obvious evidence that the protests are led by foreign elements.

Of course, not all participants in the protests are supporters of the U.S. or Ba'ath party, as one of those killed is the brother of a PMF martyr. Lots of people have come to the streets because of the government's inefficiency, with the hope to someone listen to them. **→13**

## Iranian-made Peugeot 301 platform to be used for a number of other domestic cars

**TEHRAN** — Chief Executive of Iran Khodro Industrial Group (IKCO) Farshad Moqimi said on Friday that 'Peugeot 301' sedan will hit the domestic car market during the first half of the next Iranian calendar year (to start on March 20, 2020), Mehr news agency reported.

More than 1,000 parts have been identified for manufacturing 'Peugeot 301' passenger car, he said, adding, "over 140 top Iranian auto parts manufacturers have participated for manufacturing the parts."

He said that 'Peugeot 301' is a new platform which is considered as an outset for manufacturing new products of IKCO and added, "this passenger car observes requirements of 85-point standards and is environment-friendly."

Starting production with at least four-star quality level and attaining objectives of industrialization and commercialization in the first six months of the next year have been cited as the macro objectives for this car, according to Moqimi.

CEO of IKCO noted that the car will be manufactured in two models, with manual or automatic transmission gearboxes, adding, "promoted domestically-manufactured gearbox (4BE) with less noise and hydraulic clutch are some features of this passenger car."

In mid-July, IKCO officially inaugurated a production line for Peugeot 301 more than three years after the French owner of the car pulled out of a partnership with the Iranian company citing the threat of American sanctions.

During the ceremony for the test production of

the sedan, Hashem Yekkeh Zareh, the CEO of the group at that time, said IKCO plans to begin the mass production of Peugeot 301 after the end of the current Iranian calendar year in March, adding that Iran's largest carmaker had put some €60 million worth of investment in the project, Press TV reported.

"Some 100,000 units of this car will be produced in phase one and (the annual production) will increase to 250,000 units in the next four years without any support from Peugeot," he said.

Yekkeh Zareh insisted that the car will keep the logo and name of France's Peugeot despite the fact that the company reneged on its promises and left the Iranian market in June 2016. **→4**

## Resistance only way to restore Palestinians' rights: Islamic Jihad leader

**TEHRAN** — The secretary general of Palestine's Islamic Jihad Movement says resistance forces will continue their fight against Israel's occupation of their land until full restoration of their rights.

Ziyad al-Nakhleh made the remarks during a speech in the occupied Gaza Strip on Saturday, addressing tens of thousands of Palestinians participating in a massive rally held in commemoration of the 32nd anniversary of the establishment of the movement.

The march, held in Gaza City, was attended by Islamic Jihad leaders, and hundreds of fighters from the al-Quds Brigades, the armed wing of the Islamic Jihad.

"Gaza, which has always been oppressed, is now a cornerstone and front to be reckoned

with in the equations of war," said Nakhleh, adding that the blockaded enclave represents "the vigor of its men and its resistance, and the steadfastness of its people."

He further hailed the Islamic Jihad's capability to deter any threat posed by enemies, stressing that today Gaza "is besieging the occupation despite its poverty, it is imposing new facts, breaking old theories, and will remain steadfast."

Nakhleh also denounced the Oslo Accords, which were signed during the early-mid 1990s between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in an attempt to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and to guarantee Palestinians' right of self-determination, but all to no avail.

"The worst thing we face today is the belief held by some that we can talk with the enemy in peace and that peace is possible between Palestinians and the Israeli regime," further said the head of the Islamic Jihad.

According to Press TV, Nakhleh also called for unity among all factions to defend the Palestinian cause and fight Zionist plots.

The Gaza Strip has been under Israeli siege since June 2007, which has caused a decline in living standards. Israel has also launched three major wars against the enclave since 2008, killing thousands of Gazans each time and shattering the impoverished territory's already poor infrastructure.

## Painting depicting Ashura tragedy unveiled at Tehran children's center

**TEHRAN** — An illustration portraying a story about Imam Hussein (AS) and his six-month-old baby boy, Ali Asghar (AS) who was the youngest person martyred on Ashura, was unveiled during a special ceremony in Tehran on Saturday.

The illustration entitled "Resurrection of Beauty" has been created by Mehdi Farrokhi to make children more familiar with the event of Ashura.

Ashura is the 10th day of Muharram, the day upon which Imam Hussein (AS) and his companions were martyred in Karbala, Iraq in 680 CE. **→16**



## ARTICLE

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## Strategies for combating international terrorism in Central Asia

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Central Asia has been cast as the site of a new "great game". Central Asia has been largely influenced by international developments and the emergence of persistent sources of instability and tension in other parts of the world, including the Middle East and North Africa. Some states in the region have succeeded in expanding their relationships with other actors. For example, Kazakhstan has tried to advance its goals by participating in important international issues and designing appropriate policies. Although Kazakhstan has succeeded in this path, most of the countries in the region face major challenges. At the moment, Central Asian states are facing serious menaces to their security from various challenges like drug trafficking, water disputes, religious fundamentalism and expansion of terrorist and takfiri groups such as ISIS.

Given the increased risk of terrorist groups infiltrating the region, the key question is: "What strategies exist to counter international terrorism in the Central Asian region?" This Study suggest that an integrated long-term strategy is an effective and comprehensive way to combat international terrorism.

### Central Asia and international terrorism

The war in Syria and Iraq has significantly altered modern terrorism, with radical Islamic militants from Central Asia being no exception. Most importantly, for the first time travelling outside of the region to fight in the ranks of militant and terrorist organisations became a mass phenomenon. In Syria, the radical Islamic militants from Central Asia have established terrorist organisations of their own. These terrorists have Salafi-Wahhabi inclinations and are among the backers of al-Qaeda, al-Nusra Front and Daesh Takfiri groups. They have turned into a potential threat for countries in the Central Asia as these international and organized terrorists may one day find their way to other regions and states after Syria. **→11**





## Commander: Iran’s defense industry heading towards producing smart weapons

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** – The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Aerospace Force commander said on Sunday that Iran’s defense industry has launched an eye-catching plan to produce smart weapons.



Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh said that the defense industry is to equip weapons with domestically-made smart instruments, adding, “This a turning point in manufacturing defense industry’s products.”

He further highlighted importance of light-manufacturing of military products and said, “Such capabilities have brought about remarkable growth in production of military equipment.”

In relevant remarks while addressing IRGC commanders in Tehran last week, Hajizadeh said, “Today, the balance of

power has changed and the shadow of war has become useless.”

He said if enemies dare enough to target Iranian drones, even if they make it to intercept the aircraft, they will be forced to fire air defense missiles worth \$5 million against Iran’s \$25,000 ultra-advanced drone.

“No matter it hits the drone or not, they will be beaten and they will be the losing side in this confrontation,” General Hajizadeh said.

“Today, in addition to the trans-regional states’ bases, we have made their warships in the sea useless for a distance of 2,000 kilometers,” he added.

## Iranian diplomat expresses optimism over relations with regional countries

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Mohammad Irani, the Iranian ambassador to Kuwait, has expressed optimism over Tehran’s relations with the countries in the region.

“Iran also calls for Kuwait’s mediatory role in the near future to create unity among the regional countries,” ISNA quoted him as saying on Sunday in an interview with Arabic Al Ra’i daily.

“Kuwait’s role in creating peace among the countries is known to all,” he added.

In an interview with Al Jazeera published on October 1, Majlis Speaker Ali Larijani said that Iran is open to starting a dialogue with Saudi Arabia and other countries in the region.

“An Iranian-Saudi dialogue could solve many of the region’s security and political problems,” he said.

Larijani also said that Saudi Arabia does not need to rely or depend on its main ally, the United States.

“Riyadh can submit its proposals to be discussed at the Iranian-Saudi dialogue table without pre-conditions from our side,” the senior MP said.

Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi said on September 30 that he believes Saudi Arabia is looking to de-escalate tensions with Iran.

In an exclusive interview with Al Jazeera, he said that it is in everybody’s interest to prevent further war in the region.

“Nobody possesses the weapons necessary to deal their adversary a fatal blow. Chaos and destruction will hit the region in its entirety,” Abdul Mahdi said.

His comments came as Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman said in an interview with CBS’s 60 Minutes program aired on September 29 that he preferred a peaceful resolution with Iran, describing it as “much better than the military” option.

In a possible sign of diplomacy, Abdul Mahdi has announced that he would visit Tehran soon, in an effort to reduce tension in the region, according to Iraqi media.

## Iranian interior minister to attend UNHCR summit in Geneva

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Iranian Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli left Tehran for Switzerland on Sunday to partake in an annual summit held by United Nations High Commissioner (UNHCR) for Refugees.

Rahmani Fazli, accompanied by his senior aides, is due to address the 70th annual summit of the UNHCR.



The minister will also hold meetings with high-ranking officials from Pakistan, Afghanistan and the UNHCR during his stay in Geneva.

The annual summit has been routinely held at the venue of United Nations in Geneva on 7th till 10th of October in which ranking representatives of member states have been participating.

Iran has been a generous host for more than 2 million Afghan refugees for two decades, with little help from the international community.

Tehran has called on the international community to strengthen support for Iran for hosting the Afghan refugees and provide repatriation support for the refugees.

Voluntary repatriation of Afghan refugees from Iran has slowed in recent years in the face of poor security and economic conditions in Afghanistan, which Tehran blames on the U.S.-led invasion of the country in 2001.

The office of the UNHCR was established by the UN General Assembly in 1950.

According to the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, the agency is mandated to lead and coordinate international action to protect refugees and resolve refugee problems worldwide. Its primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees.

UNHCR first opened an office in Iran in 1984 and expanded its presence with the massive influx of Iraqi refugees following the Persian Gulf War in 1991 and the start of Afghans’ mass return movement to Afghanistan in 1992.

Today UNHCR has its Central representative office in Tehran, plus three sub-offices in Mashhad, Kerman, and Ahwaz.

# Zarif says ties with neighbors are Iran’s first priority

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Sunday that ties with neighbors are the first priority of Iran’s foreign policy.

“We said at the start of the 12th government that ties with neighbors are super-priority of our foreign policy which we will pursue seriously along with facilitating economic affairs,” he said in a session of parliament.

He noted that Iran’s relationship with Pakistan, Afghanistan, Russia, Turkey, Iraq, and Qatar are in their best state over the past 40 years.

He also said that there is “confusion” in Iran-Pakistan relations.

“Our relations with Pakistan and our objectives are clear. The problems that exist come from the special situation in the region and presence and interference of foreign forces,” he said.

He added that there are “very good” and “comprehensive” relations between the two countries.

“Today, borders of Iran and Pakistan are the safest borders for Pakistan. We want them to do something that these borders be the safest for Iran too,” he said.



**■ ‘Iran supports peace in Afghanistan’**

Zarif also said that Iran supports peace in Afghanistan with the involvement of all Afghan parties.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran’s position is peace with the involvement of all the Afghan parties, not with foreign military power or involvement of just one Afghan party,” the chief diplomat explained.

## Iran to start economic interaction with Eurasian bloc from October 27

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Presidential chief of staff Mahmoud Vaezi has said that Iran will start economic interaction with the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) from October 27.

“Iran’s economic interaction with this union will be started on October 27. In the first phase, 502 items of our commodities will enter the union’s member states with preferential tariff near to zero,” he told ISNA in an interview published on Sunday.

He added, “It is obvious that we should search for new partners and different markets for our products when the country is under sanctions and economic terrorism and when our old economic partners are under pressure by the United States.”

“Being a member of the Eurasia Union is a very good opportunity for our businessmen,” he noted.

Vaezi also said that Iran’s participation in the Eurasia Union will prove to the U.S. that it has failed to “isolate

Iran economically”.

“They imagined that they could make us surrender through imposing maximum pressure and blocking international business to us. However, we have not had let them achieve their objectives in a diplomatic move we have taken in the past months,” he said.

The EEU summit was held in Yerevan, Armenia, on October 1. Iran also attended the conference.

EEU includes Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Russia.

During a speech at the summit, President Hassan Rouhani called for forming a special task force for joint investment.

“I welcome any kind of financial and banking cooperation with member states to Eurasian Union. So, I suggest the formation of a special task force for joint investment,” Rouhani told the delegates at the EEU summit.

He also noted that Iran supports cooperation within

## Kamalvandi: Nuclear energy for all, nuclear weapon for none

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Spokesman for the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Behrouz Kamalvandi on Sunday reiterated that Tehran is committed firmly to the Supreme Leader’s guideline of “nuclear energy for all, atomic weapon for none”.

Speaking at a ceremony inaugurating training courses on nuclear rights attended by law experts and officials at the venue of the AEOI, Kamalvandi said Tehran has always attached key importance to the Leader’s guideline on nuclear energy as its main motto.

He said Iran decided to scale down parts of its undertakings under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action after a “yearlong patience towards the U.S. withdrawal from the deal to create a balance between rights and obligations.”

However, he insisted on Iran’s position that “if the other side manages to do the same (creating a balance between rights and obligations) Iran is ready to halt reduction of commitments and if not Tehran will continue modification of obligations.”

In August 2012, Ayatollah Khamenei said, “The Islamic Republic of Iran considers the use of nuclear, chemical and similar weapons as a great and unforgivable sin. We proposed the idea of ‘Middle East free of nuclear weapons’ and we are committed to it. This does not mean forgoing our right to peaceful use of nuclear power and production of nuclear fuel. On the basis of international laws, peaceful use of nuclear energy is a right of every country. All should



be able to employ this wholesome source of energy for various vital uses for the benefit of their country and people, without having to depend on others for exercising this right. Some Western countries, themselves possessing nuclear weapons and guilty of this illegal action, want to monopolize the production of nuclear fuel. Surreptitious moves are under way to consolidate a permanent monopoly over production and sale of nuclear fuel in centers carrying an international label but in fact within the control of a few Western countries.

I stress that the Islamic Republic has never been after nuclear weapons and that it will never give up the right of its people to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Our motto is: ‘Nuclear energy for all and nuclear weapons for none.’ We will insist on each of these two precepts, and we know that breaking the monopoly of certain Western countries on production of nuclear energy in the framework of the Non-Proliferation Treaty is in the interest of all independent countries, including the members of the Non-Aligned Movement.”

## Iranian MP: U.S., Saudi Arabia behind recent unrest in Iraq

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** – A senior member of the Iranian Parliament National Security and Foreign Policy Committee said on Sunday that joint plots orchestrated by Washington and Riyadh were root causes of recent riots in Iraq.

Ala’eddin Boroujerdi said that Riyadh tried to push Iraq into anarchy on the threshold of the Arbabeen march and ritual to cover Saudi forces’ disgusting failures in Yemen.

“Recent developments in Iraq are definitely a result of provocations manufactured out of Iraq in which the U.S. played a pivotal role,” he underscored.

He went on to emphasize, “Iraq’s recent incidents are controllable and will fade soon without any influence on the largest world gathering of Arbabeen.”

Iraq has been rocked by a new wave of protests over economic hardships and joblessness since October 1.

In stark contrast to claims that demonstrations are popular and spontaneous, new analyses have revealed that 79% of



hashtags about protests in Iraq on Twitter originate from Saudi Arabia and only 6% are from inside Iraq.

However, the timing of the start of the protests with the great march of Arbabeen arouses suspicions, as new findings

**■ ‘Syrian Kurds’ rights must be upheld’**

Zarif also said that the rights of Syrian Kurds must be upheld.

“Iran announced to the Turkish side that the only way to protect Turkey’s security is deployment of military forces in border areas. Any action against Syria’s border security and sovereignty will bring no fruit for Turkey,” he stated.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan threatened on Saturday to launch a military operation into northeastern Syria to push back militants from the so-called Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG) from border areas.

Zarif also said, “Iran has announced readiness to cooperate with the Syrian and Turkish governments based on the international regulations. Iran will not let any country in the region use terrorists to gain its own benefits.”

**■ ‘Foreign Ministry duty-bound to facilitate economic affairs’**

Zarif also said that the Foreign Ministry is duty-bound to facilitate economic affairs and not just attract investors and sign agreements.

“This ministry finds investors and provide them with information and pave the grounds for their cooperation with economic sectors,” he explained.

the framework of economic and political blocs such as the EEU, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO).

Elsewhere, he said that the international community must counter the United States’ unilateralism.

“The international community must take a firm decision and also take effective actions to counter the United States’ unilateralism and hostile approach,” Rouhani suggested.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has said that important progress has been made at the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) summit and ground has been paved for expansion of regional trade.

“Important progress in Yerevan as Iran joins #EEU Summit, and together with the Member States, ratifies PTA.

With parallel work on North-South & South-West Transit Corridors, ground paved for expansion in regional trade & cementing of our role as a vital transit hub,” Zarif tweeted on October 1.

## Europeans legally not in a position ‘to quit nuclear deal

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has said that the Europeans are not legally in a position to quit the 2015 nuclear deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

“From the legal point of view, they have no right to do so,” he told ICANA in an interview published on Sunday.

He said that the JCPOA is an international agreement that was approved by the United Nations. The chief diplomat added that the United States’ withdrawal from it was against international law.

Zarif also criticized the Europeans for failing to fulfill their commitments under the deal.

He also said that Iran has taken actions within the framework of the nuclear deal and will continue it.

U.S. President Donald Trump quit the nuclear pact and imposed sanctions on the Islamic Republic that were lifted under the agreement.

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

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

decision.

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

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

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

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said on Wednesday that Iran will continue to reduce commitments under the nuclear deal.

“Reducing nuclear commitments, for which the Atomic Energy Organization is responsible, should continue seriously and precisely as it was announced by the government till it reaches favorable result and it will definitely reach the result,” Ayatollah Khamenei said during a meeting with the High Council of the Commanders of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

The Leader also said the United States’ policy of “maximum pressure” against Iran has ended in failure.

“They imagined Iran would be forced to show flexibility if they applied policy of maximum pressure. With the help of God, they understand that the maximum pressure has caused problems for themselves,” the Leader stated.

show that Riyadh is resorting to cyberspace to provoke the public.

A new analysis, released on Thursday, shows that, despite all the claims which try to present the unrest in Iraq as a popular movement with no political intention or affiliation, only 6% of the calls for street demonstrations originated from Iraq and the dominant majority belonged to Saudi Arabia where almost 80% of the social media content is devised and posted.

It is not a new revelation that Saudi Arabia uses dozens of Twitter bots that their job in massive scale is to call protesters to join violent street rallies.

Even the volume of hashtags sent from Kuwait is bigger than Iraq, and 7% of pro-protest Tweets are from the tiny Arab country.

The UAE, Egypt, the U.S., and Yemen are the other countries where Tweets originated, promoting anti-government protests.



# Salami: Enemy's media outlets complicated but fragile

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — The enemy's news media outlets have a complicated façade but they are very fragile also, Islamic Revolution Guards Corps chief Hossein Salami said on Sunday.

"The enemy's news network is similar to a spider's web: It has a complicated appearance but at the same time it's very fragile," Salami said while speaking at a conference.

Hailing Iran's journalists, he said it is not important that the enemy possesses lots of media outlets because "you discredit the enemy's media outlets with showing the truth."

The commander also said Iran's enemies tell lies and oppress people, adding, "Who conveys the voice of the innocent Palestinian and Yemeni children other than you?"

He added that the enemy is retreating and the followers of the Islamic Revolution are marching forward. "This is a sign of victory."

In remarks back in July, Salami said Iran has managed to destroy the United States' fictitious and artificial grandeur in the world.

The IRGC is tasked with calculating how to overcome the enemy in each and every



scenario, he said.

"Once, military action was the main focus of the enemy... but today, economic war is the main field in which the enemy encounters us," the general said, emphasizing that Iran is currently at an intersection of global economic pressure.

Salami described the tensions between Tehran and Washington as a "war of wills", saying that in the current situation it's the enemy that is concerned about the outbreak of a war.

"Such concern is evident in their physical and tactical behaviors," he remarked.

In similar remarks last week, Major General Qassem Soleimani said the IRGC has destroyed the grandeur of the world's biggest army, which is the U.S. Army, and showed its emptiness to the world.

"The way of overcoming the enemies has been paved, but we must keep acting with wisdom, the same way we crippled the enemy and forced it to [accept] defeat in the last 20 years," said Soleimani, commander of the IRGC Quds Force.

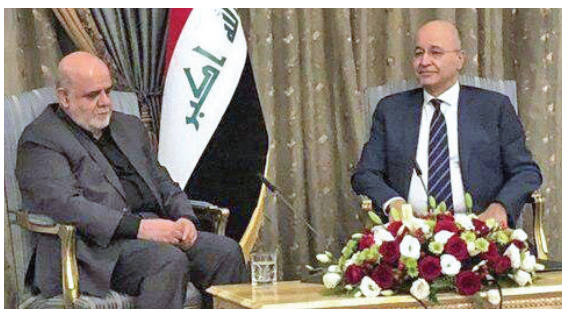
## Iran supports stability, security in Iraq: diplomat

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Iranian Ambassador to Baghdad Iraj Masjedi said on Sunday that Tehran supports stability, security and economic development in Iraq.

During a meeting with Iraqi President Barham Salih, Masjedi said that Iran will help Iraq to reconstruct war-torn areas.

During a meeting with officials of the Council of Balad in Iraq's Salaheddin Province in February, Masjedi also voiced Iran's readiness to reconstruct Iraq, saying cooperation in reconstruction of the Arab country was already happening.

"Iran is determined to reconstruct the Daesh-stricken



Iraqi towns and cities in a similar way that it supported the friendly and brotherly government and people of the country during the fight against Daesh," he pointed out.

At a meeting of representatives of Iran and Iraq's private companies active in the construction industry in July, Mohammad Amirzadeh, the deputy head of Iran's chamber of commerce, expressed the Iranian private sector's readiness for cooperation with Iraqi companies in reconstructing Iraq.

Iran is well positioned in the maritime industry, road construction, engineering services, power supply technology and other industries and could play a significant role in the reconstruction process of Iraq.

## 'Building next phases of Bushehr nuclear power plant on agenda'

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — The director of the Bushehr nuclear power plant announced that construction of the second and third phases of the plant is atop his agenda.

Reza Bannazadeh who was addressing Bushehr Province Passive Defense Meeting on Sunday announced that his

team is resolved to implement the second and third phases of the nuclear plant to overcome shortage of electric power in southern Iran.

"The Bushehr plant is currently generating 1000 MW of power which will remarkably be enhanced after implementing the two proposed units," he explained.

A large percentage of consumed power in the southern provinces of Fars and Bushehr are generated in the Bushehr plant which accounts for 28 percent of the said provinces, Bannazadeh stated.

Iran's first Russian-built nuclear power plant in Bushehr started operating in 2011 and reached full capacity

the following year.

The project for Bushehr-2 was presented by Russian nuclear experts in Tehran in September 2014.

In February 2017, Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Ali Akbar Saleh said two new nuclear reactors are scheduled to be built in Bushehr.

## Advisor underlines the youth's role in confronting Israel



**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Hossein Amir Abdollahian, a senior foreign policy advisor to the Iranian Parliament speaker, on Saturday called for more vigilance against the Zionist regime's plots and underscored the young people's prominent role in facing the occupying regime.

Amir Abdollahian, who is also secretary general of the International Conference on Supporting Palestine's Intifada, highlighted the necessity of wise involvement of the young people in the campaign against the occupying Zionist regime.

In his meeting with members of anti-occupying and pro-Palestinian international union, the advisor pointed to the plots of the Zionist regime and the global arrogance led by the U.S. and said, "They intend to disintegrate the Islamic world."

"So, continuation of resistance and wise presence of university students and young people at the scene of confronting the usurper Zionists is a necessity," Amir Abdollahian reiterated.

The senior advisor further said, "The

Islamic Republic of Iran has adhered to its revolutionary principals and the ideology of resistance to defend the Palestinians' rights to return them to their mother land and free the holy Qods."

In relevant developments in early September, Hamas politburo Chief Ismail Haniyeh in a letter praised Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei for his support and emphasis on arming and equipping the Palestinian resistance groups, stressing that Tehran's support boosts the fight against the Israeli regime.

Haniyeh in his letter thanked Ayatollah Khamenei for his support for the Palestinian resistance forces and equipping them against the Israeli enemy.

Haniyeh stressed that Iran's willingness to arm the resistance forces will significantly influence the fight against the Zionist regime.

He also declared that the Hamas resistance movement will stick to its unalterable approach to remaining in the Iran-led Resistance Front until final victory is achieved.

## Iran taking legal action on U.S. cyber-attacks: general



**1 →** Jalali also said more than 120 drills have been held over the past 6 months to exercise tactics to counter cyber-attacks against the energy sector, including oil refineries, petrochemical plants, and gas and petroleum transport installations.

In comments in May, Jalali said Iran has become the top power in the region in terms of cyber security.

In 2018, Iran's Civil Defense Organization made a series of arrangements to counter the U.S. hostile strategies and its potential move to block Iran's access to the Internet.

Iran launched the first phase of its national data network in 2016 after a gap of eleven years.

The national network offers a new internet system with higher security which officials say would be up to 60 times faster than the best speeds currently available. It is also designed to be more secure to potential cyber-attacks.

Tensions between Iran and the U.S. has escalated in recent months.

On Saturday, Jalali 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," he said.

"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," the general added.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad 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.

## Army using drones to secure Iran-Iraq borders for Arbreen: Sayyari

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Habibollah Sayyari, the deputy army chief for coordination affairs, says the army has employed military drones at the Iraq borders to ensure the security of Iranian pilgrims visiting Iraq for the Arbreen march. "The army is closely watching all [Iran-Iraq] borders through different methods to ensure the borders' security," Mehr on Sunday quoted Rear Admiral Sayyari as saying.



He added that the Army has been providing other services to the pilgrims as well.

The Arbreen march, which is the largest religious gathering in the world, comes 40 days after Ashura, the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (PBUH), the second Imam of Shia Muslims and the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Each year, millions of people travel on foot to Karbala, where the holy shrine of Imam Hossein is located, to perform mourning rituals.

Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli predicted last week that more than three million Iranians would visit Karbala, which hosts the Shrine of Imam Hussein, (AS), to mark Arbreen this year, which falls on October 19.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said on September 18 that "the Arbreen 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 than the previous years."

Meanwhile, Iraq has been the scene of ongoing protests in recent days.

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.

## Hashd al-Shaabi to ensure security of Khosravi border: Kermanshah governor

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Governor of Kermanshah Province Hooshang Bazvand said on Sunday that Iraq's Popular Mobilization Forces (Hashd al-Shaabi) will ensure the security of Arbreen pilgrims at Khosravi border.

"Khosravi is the only Iran-Iraq joint border which leads passengers directly to Baghdad," Bazvand said, according to Mehr.

"This is an advantage ... but due to the recent unrest in the Iraqi capital, a new road has been selected to replace the route to Baghdad from Khosravi border, security of which is to be provided by Hashd al-Shaabi," he explained.



"From Khosravi border, the selected road goes to Najaf and then to Karbala," he added.

Arbreen, which is one of the largest religious gatherings in the world, comes 40 days after Ashura, the martyrdom anniversary of the third Shia Imam, Imam Hussein (PBUH).

Each year, millions of Shias visit Karbala, where the holy shrine of Imam Hussein is located, to perform mourning rites.

Last year, two and half a million Iranian pilgrims participated in the Arbreen pilgrimage but the figure is expected to reach three and a half to four million this year, given the fact that visa requirements for Iranians have been lifted.

In recent days, several Iraqi cities have seen days of violent protests and deadly clashes with security forces.

The demonstrations, which began on Tuesday, were largely peaceful during the first hours but later turned chaotic and are now making headlines around the world.

Many demonstrators say they can no longer bear problems like chronic corruption, high youth unemployment, and poor public services. They are demanding the government take action immediately.

Iraqi Prime Minister Adil Abdul-Mahdi announced a curfew on Thursday.

Iraqi authorities lifted the curfew days later as normalcy returned 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 quiet.

Tehran says foreign 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 another way," Hossein Amir Abdollahian, a senior foreign policy advisor to the Iranian parliament speaker, tweeted on Friday.

## Head of IRIB world service: Islamic Revolution has never been limited to Iran's borders

**TEHRAN (Iran Press)** — Head of the IRIB World Service has said an advantage of the service over all of Iran's media rivals and competitors is that it can spread the global message of the Islamic Revolution of Iran.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Peyman Jebelli said from a technical and financial point of view, the IRIB cannot compete with the enormous budgets and state-of-the-art equipment available to Mainstream Western media, but "we do have this special advantage that we can spread the global message of the Islamic Revolution which is attractive to ordinary people all over the world."

Jebelli also praised the seven martyrs of the IRIB World Service, including Press TV correspondent Maya



Nasser, a reporter in Syria, who was martyred while reporting on the ground, after he was hit by a gunshot bullet in 2012.

He praised Serena Shim, a Press TV reporter in Turkey, who was killed in a suspicious car accident. She had a major role in covering the news and reporting from Turkey, Lebanon, and Syria.

Jebelli also lauded Habibollah Hosseinzadeh, a cameraman who was working for Press TV was martyred in a terror bomb attack in the Afghan capital of Kabul.

In concluding remarks, Jebelli thanked all IRIB World Service staff and personnel for their tireless efforts, reporting news and events to a worldwide audience.



STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	320211.3
IFX	4187.95

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

Brent	\$58.37/b
WTI	\$52.81/b
OPEC Basket	\$57.96/b
Gold	\$1,506.70/oz
Silver	\$817.63/oz
Platinum	\$883.05/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

Who can influence the ECB?

By Stefan Gerlach

Three months after they chose Christine Lagarde to succeed Mario Draghi as president of the European Central Bank, eurozone governments now have other major personnel decisions to make regarding the ECB's Executive Board. With German board member Sabine Lautenschläger having unexpectedly resigned last month, and her French colleague Benoît Cœuré's eight-year term ending in December, there are two open slots to be filled.

These positions matter. The six members of the Executive Board, together with the eurozone's 19 national central-bank governors, form the Governing Council that sets the ECB's monetary policy. Because the board members all work in Frankfurt, they are in close contact with one another and take the lead in proposing the direction and decisions the council should take.

Eurozone governments have an informal understanding that Germany, France, Italy, and Spain, which together constitute three-quarters of the eurozone economy, can always have a national of their choice on the board. That means the open slots are likely to be filled by a German and an Italian (because Lagarde, like Cœuré, is French, while the departing Draghi is Italian).

That seems like a sensible way to help ensure the ECB's continued political legitimacy. Unfortunately, there can be no guarantee that large countries always have the best candidates to propose. In fact, two of the most credible contenders to succeed Draghi, the Finns Erkki Liikanen and Olli Rehn, come from a small country. So did the ECB's first president, the Dutchman Wim Duisenberg.

■ Hard-money proponent

In considering appointments to the ECB, governments naturally think of candidates who will forcefully support the "national view," if indeed such a thing exists. The German government will thus probably prefer a hard-money proponent who believes that the central bank's policy is far too expansionary and that interest rates are too low for individual savers, pension funds, and insurance companies alike. Meanwhile, the Italian government may propose a candidate who thinks the ECB should pursue a full-blown asset-purchase program, cut its key deposit rate further, and not put too much pressure on banks to sort out their stocks of non-performing loans.

But such candidates are unlikely to be very influential in the ECB's Governing Council – as the example of Bundesbank President Jens Weidmann illustrates. Weidmann undoubtedly has all the necessary skills to be a successful ECB president: he has an impressive grasp of monetary theory, plenty of policy experience, and is a clear and engaging public speaker.

Subscribe today and get a free copy of our new magazine, Sustainability Comes of Age, along with unlimited access to OnPoint, the Big Picture, the entire PS archive of more than 14,000 commentaries, and our annual magazine, for less than \$2 a week.

Unfortunately, he appears to have pushed the German view (or, perhaps more accurately, that of many German commentators) too strongly. Although Weidmann's inflexible stance may have strengthened his profile in Germany as a firm supporter of monetary rectitude, it rubbed too many other council members and eurozone governments the wrong way. His candidacy to succeed Draghi thus failed to receive broad support.

■ The ECB policy

For the same reason, Weidmann has had little impact on ECB policy, which is effectively determined by where the council's center of gravity is on any particular issue. Council members who are too far away from that center, even if they are in tune with national sentiment, are disregarded and lose influence.

The experience of former U.S. Senator Barry Goldwater is perhaps instructive in this regard.

Goldwater held uncompromisingly conservative views on many issues and, in accepting the 1964 Republican presidential nomination, famously said that "extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice," and that "moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue."

Although this was a good sound bite, and although his candidacy arguably set the stage for the nomination of Ronald Reagan a generation later, Goldwater lost to President Lyndon Johnson in a landslide.

Thus, rather than proposing Executive Board candidates who will forcefully promote national views, the German and Italian governments should instead consider nominees who are likely to be able to influence ECB policy. That calls for candidates who do not have predictable and rigid opinions on the issues that the Governing Council will face in the near future, such as whether the ECB should prolong its asset purchases and/or cut interest rates further.

Members of the ECB's Executive Board should consider each policy issue on its merits with an open mind, and be willing and able to help forge broad agreements in the Governing Council in support of policy decisions. In many ways, these attributes are precisely what French President Emmanuel Macron had in mind when he proposed Lagarde to succeed Draghi.

(Source: project-syndicate.com)

Government needs private sector for national development: VP

➡ He stressed the need for the government and the private sector to reach a common understanding of the country's current economic condition, adding that finding solutions for the problems requires sharing similar views and perspectives on the country's economic situation.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Jahangiri emphasized that the government needs the country's private sector to advance its plans, stating: "currently, over two million job opportunities are created by the private companies, so a significant share of the country's employment is owned by the private sector."

Jahangiri said that the upward trend of the country's economy and the improvement in non-oil exports and employment indexes are in fact due to the positive performance of the private sector.

"The increase in non-oil exports is a positive move that is due to the efforts of the private sector", he said.

During the first quarter of this year (March



Iran's First Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri (L) and ICCIMA Head Gholam-Hossein Shafei attended a meeting with the heads of the country's chambers of commerce in Tehran on Saturday.

Iran Air posts annual profit despite U.S. sanctions

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — Iran's National Airline (Iran Air) has reported a surge in operating profits for the past Iranian calendar year (ended in March 2019) despite a surge in aviation costs resulted from the U.S. sanctions on the country.

According to Deputy Transportation Minister Shahram Adamnejad, the announcement was made by Iran Air during an annual shareholders' meeting on Saturday.

Adamnejad did not elaborate on the net figures and further details and there was no information available from the flag carrier.

Iran Air is also expected to announce increased revenues for the current calendar year ending March 2020 mainly because it accommodated a large number of flights carrying Iranian pilgrims to Saudi Arabia for the Hajj season in September.

The company announced during the busy travel season that it had scrambled technicians and engineers to keep planes airworthy despite

sanctions that ban using foreign companies for maintenance services.

Despite a U.S. ban on its purchase of 200 aircraft from Airbus, Boeing and ATR, Iran Air has pressed ahead with an ambitious fleet expansion program as it seeks buying planes whose sales are not affected by the sanctions.

It said last year any offer from companies based in Russia and in non-European countries to deliver new planes would be welcome.

Adamnejad said that an operating profit recorded for Homa (the Persian acronym for the carrier), at a time of "increased costs and oppressive sanctions" was a result of better performance in fields including ticket sale, cargo, engineering, ground services and cost control.

"It is expected that through implementing fleet expansion programs at Homa and increased sale revenues for the company, its profit-making run could accelerate by several times," he said.

Iranian-made Peugeot 301 platform to be used for a number of other domestic cars

➡ "Ultimately, these cars belong to Peugeot," he said, adding that the IKCO will launch similar production lines for Peugeot 208 and 2008, models that was supposed to be produced in Iran as part of a contract signed in January 2016.

Other officials in the IKCO said the company would soon become almost self-sufficient in production of the Peugeot 301.

Based on its deal with IKCO, the PSA Peugeot Citroën was supposed to invest up to €400 million over a five-year period to produce, launch and market three of its models, including the 301.

In late July, an IKCO director had announced that the company would put domestic engine EC5, an improved version of TU5 on Peugeot 301 cars.

TU5, which is presently installed on Peugeot 206 and some types of Peugeot Pars, is very popular in Iran, Beigloo told IRNA at that time.

EC5 engine has been developed by IKCO Engine Research Center, he said.

It is for the first time that more than 60% of a foreign vehicle is being indigenized, Beigloo said, adding that some 80% of the car will be domestically produced within the next few months.



Noting that the platform used for manufacturing Peugeot 301 cars is a new one, he said that the Iranian spare parts manufacturers could adjust themselves with the modern technology despite the sanctions imposed on the country.

In mid-May, Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Reza Rahmani issued a directive on "strengthening domestic manufacturing of imported auto parts".

Addressing two of his deputies, Farshad Moqimi, then deputy for industrial affairs, and Mohammad-Baqer Ali, the board chairman of Iran's Industrial Development and Renovation Organization (IDRO), the minister put empha-

Transport Ministry inks co-op MOU with Vice-Presidency for Science and Technology

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — Iran's Transport and Urban Development Ministry signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Vice-Presidency for Science and Technology for cooperation in the fields of road transportation and aviation.

As reported by the portal of the Transport Ministry, the MOU was signed in a ceremony attended by the Transport Minister Mohammad Eslami and the Vice President for Scientific Affairs Sorena Satari at the place of the ministry on Sunday.

The MOU covers a variety of areas for mutual cooperation, including development of the upstream sector and establishing a roadmap in this regard, cooperation in execution of joint projects, planning for the application of new technologies to improve services in the field, productivity and facilitation of the country's transportation, reducing damages

21-June 20), 6,000 new jobs were created by the private sector compared to the same period in the previous year, the official said.

He finally noted that the country's banking system has pledged to allocate 9 quadrillion rials (about \$214 billion) worth of facilities to the private sector by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 19, 2020).

During the meeting, the heads of the provincial chambers of commerce also brought up various issues including the need for using the capacity and experiences of the private sector in government's economic decision-making, the need for government's serious support for the private sector, reforming the country's banking system, amending the tax system, delegating authority to the provinces to resolve their regional problems and creation of a joint cross-border economic task force between the state-run sector and the private sector as well as creation or improvement of the necessary infrastructures for imports and exports.

sis on using the highest potential of human resources for strengthening domestic manufacturing of auto parts which are currently imported to the country.

Highlighting the orders of the Supreme Leader of Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei on supporting production in the current Iranian calendar year (began on March 21), which is named the year of "Pickup in Production" by the supreme leader, Rahmani stressed that cooperation among all car makers, auto part manufacturers, knowledge-based companies and enterprises is vital for strengthening domestic manufacturing of imported auto parts.

This movement should be all-out promoted to combat sanctions and also prevent from exit of foreign currency from the country, the minister noted.

He said the policy of domestic manufacturing of auto parts should be seriously followed up, and in this due the capable manufacturers should be seriously supported.

And in a ceremony attended by the industry minister on Saturday, deals worth 12.3 trillion rials (about \$286 million) were signed with domestic manufacturers of auto parts for producing 42 different car parts.

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

(Source: staff & agencies)

‘27 mining study proposals to become practical projects soon’

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN – Head of Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO)'s research center said 27 study proposals received by the organization will become practical research projects in near future, IRIB reported.

Gholamreza Mola-Taheri said IMIDRO's goal is not to merely add to the piles of existing theoretical research, "So by applying a new policy which we call a "demand-driven" approach, we have called on all production units in the industry to state their technological problems and technological needs, so that it would be met by our research projects."

According to the official, so far over 150 technological requirement proposals have been registered in under 27 study project frameworks in IMIDRO's system for submitting such requests and proposals (called SATE in Persian acronym) and soon deals will be signed to carry out these 27 research projects.

"These applications will be reviewed by a team of industry and research experts and will enter into a contract after approval," Mola-Taheri said.

IMIDRO has planned 600 practical

and theoretical courses for different provinces across the country, which cover a variety of specialized areas including open and underground mines, workplace safety, health and defensive driving.

The organization's plans put projects worth \$4.5 billion into operation by the end of current Iranian calendar year (March 19, 2020).

Boosting production, creating jobs, providing infrastructure and making joint venture with the private sector are the main pivots of IMIDRO's plans.

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

According to the IMIDRO Head Khodadad Gharibpour, based on the mining potentials and research and academic capabilities of the country's provinces, 10 mining regions have been defined in order to manage projects and also utilize the country's academic potentials in this industry.



# Iran to take all necessary measures to keep oil exports afloat: Zanganeh

ENERGY

**TEHRAN** – Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said on Sunday that Iran will use any possible way to export its oil, stressing that exporting crude was the country's legitimate right.

"We will use every possible way to export our oil and we will not succumb to America's pressure because exporting oil is Iran's legitimate right," Zanganeh said.

Iran's crude oil exports were cut deeply when the United States re-imposed sanctions after President Donald Trump exited last year from Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers.

Speaking to the press on the same day, the official emphasized that Iran wants positive ties with all the countries in the region, adding that China's national petroleum company

had pulled out of developing phase 11 of the country's giant South Pars gas field.

"We want to be friends with all regional countries. Our mutual enemy is outside the Middle East... I have no problem to meet with Saudi Arabia's oil minister", he stated.

■ **Petropars to develop SP phase 11**  
Zanganeh also said that China's CNPC had pulled out of a contract to develop South Pars Phase 11, adding Iranian Petropars Company would develop the project alone.

"China has pulled out of developing the phase 11 of South Pars field and Petropars will carry out the job," he said.

In 2015, National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) signed a contract with a consortium of Total, CNPC International and Petropars to develop the offshore project in the Persian Gulf waters.



Following the U.S.'s withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal back in May 2018 and imposition of new sanctions and restrictions for foreign companies working in Iran, Total pulled out of the contract.

"The fate of the South Pars Phase 11 has been determined and Petropars will continue

developing the project alone and by the end of this [Iranian calendar] year (March 19, 2020), the first jacket will be installed in the phase for a platform with 500 mcf/d of gas production capacity," Zanganeh said during a visit to MAPNA Group's turbine workshop near Tehran.

## IRENEX to hold 16th round of offering light crude oil on Tuesday



ENERGY

**TEHRAN**— National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) will offer two million barrels of light crude oil at the international ring of Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX) on Tuesday, Shana reported.

The base price for this round of offering, which is the 16th round since beginning of offering light oil at IRENEX, and the ninth round in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21, 2019), is \$61.01 per barrel.

Buyers can receive their cargo up to three months after the transaction, and the delivery of the cargo in other regions is subject to NIOC approval.

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

In this regard, the company has been offering various grades of crude oil almost every week since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year.

Light crude oil was offered at IRENEX first on October 28, 2018 just few days before new U.S. sanctions on Iran's petroleum sector took effect (November 4). In the first round, NIOC could sell some 280,000 barrels

of crude oil at \$74.85 per barrel. With the daily supply amount of one million barrels, the market wrapped up by selling eight 35,000-barrel cargos of oil on the day.

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

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

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

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

## Unlocking the potential of oil products in the MENA region

By Omar El-Huni

As the end of the UAE Vision 2021 approaches, governmental moves to diversify the energy sector in the MENA region have been bolstered by a need to unlock the potential of every oil and gas molecule.

To extract the full potential from crude oil, refinery takes place. The industrial process involves extracting the crude oil from beneath the Earth's surface and refining it into a variety of useful products, such as petroleum, kerosene, jet fuel, gasoline and other types of fuels.

Industry forecasts indicate that by 2040 the demand for natural gas will grow 40% and the demand for oil will increase by at least 10 million barrels per day.

The increase in demand for these resources is the primary reason for driving investment downstream across the MENA region and over the next 20 years, projects valued at \$283 billion are being implemented to help the region meet this ever-increasing demand for energy.

Following the decline in the price of oil in 2014, margins have fallen but the demand for refined products exceeds that of the refinery capacity. Therefore, it is important to consider

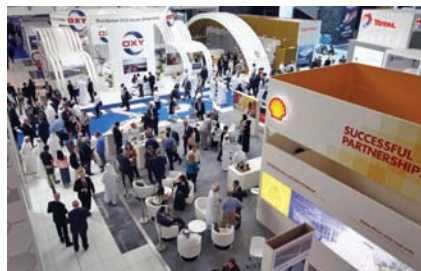
the need for upgrades to the technology used at these refineries.

■ **The refinery process**  
In the average refinery processes, less than half of a barrel of oil will contribute to its value; the remainder will be what is known as "negative crude oil" or "crack." Converting this negative product into a valuable resource is the main reason for an upgrade to the refinery process.

Should upgrades not be implemented, because of the pace of refinery engagement, they will lose their competitive edge and have no choice but to close operations.

Christopher Hudson, president of the Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition and Conference (ADIPEC), said that as MENA producers focus on maximizing value from the existing fields, developing resources have heightened interest onshore and offshore. This will have a knock-on effect in the investigating of diversifying and upgrading infrastructure and the revenue streams and new product lines.

The "headline speakers at ADIPEC are the same policymakers and business leaders whose decisions will shape the future of oil and gas. Their dialogue in Abu Dhabi will set the agenda for a thriving industry and



economic growth, underpinned by people, partnerships, technology and bold and innovative thinking," Hudson said.

Saudi Aramco, the largest spender in the region's oil and gas sector, has \$31 billion in investments under way, with \$42.2 billion of projects spread across the three largest oil and gas companies in Kuwait.

■ **Developing new sources**  
"While producers in the Middle East continue to maximize value from existing fields, there is heightened interest in developing new resources, both offshore and onshore, as well as investing in upgrading and diversifying both infrastructure and products downstream to create new products lines and revenue streams. ADIPEC 2019 will be a catalyst for future growth and prosperity in the oil and

gas industry," Hudson said.

Algeria's Sonatrach has disclosed plans to execute projects worth \$10.8 billion with a \$2.5 billion contract regarding the Hassi Messaoud refinery. Egypt's Ministry of Petroleum and the Kuwait Oil Company have project plans worth \$12.3 billion.

The largest pre-execution contract value lies with Iraq's Ministry of Oil, where the projects carry a value of \$19.5 billion, with \$13.7 billion in the bidding phase.

ADIPEC 2019, scheduled for November 11-14, will bring industry thought leaders together. Inaugurated in 1984, ADIPEC is recognized as a leading industry conference and exhibition for oil and gas.

Forty-two oil companies, 145,000 visitors and more than 980 technical and strategic speakers from around the world will gather for the event that brings together more than 2,200 international exhibiting companies.

This year's conference will demonstrate the evolution taking place in the energy sector, with "Oil & Gas 4.0" the main strategic conference of the event, hosting sessions exploring the development of technology and energy. Other sessions will examine partnerships for global energy conservation. (Source: thearabweekly.com)

## Small-scale power generation market challenges on upcoming trends 2017 – 2025

Presently, energy systems are undergoing significant and extensive changes. The world is moving away from centralized fossil fuel and nuclear-based large power systems toward a more distributed or decentralized system.

As per spacemarketnow.com, the drivers driving these changes are regulations to cut down on greenhouse gas emissions, to increase the share of renewable energy sources in energy mix, to enhance energy efficiency, and also the need of energy security.

These distributed systems majorly rely on renewables and combined heat and power (CHP) systems for power generation, which enable the consumers to become producers of their own power.

The conventional power systems have been primarily centralized with power generation at bigger and larger power plants and generated power flowing through voltage chain; however, this trend is expected to change with an increase in small scale power generation capacity at local level either due to local energy sources or due to increase in local energy demands.

The policies and incentives offered by various governments for renewables across the world is estimated to give a vital boost to the small-scale power generation market, and the same is anticipated to expand at a healthy rate during the forecast period due to increase in demand for standby power and better power quality by the end-user markets.

### ■ Renewable and non-renewable sources

In terms of source of energy, the small-scale power generation market can be segmented into renewable and non-renewable sources of energy. The renewable sources comprise small-scale solar power plants and wind turbines, small-scale hydro plants, biogas, and biomass.

The renewable sources segment is projected to increase at a substantial rate during the forecast period due to reduced carbon footprint from these sources of energy for small-scale power generation.

The non-renewable sources of energy include oil and



natural gas for small-scale power generation from reciprocating internal combustion engines, gas turbines, small steam turbines or micro turbines.

The efficiency of these systems can be improved by employing combined heat and power (CHP) system, which recovers wasted thermal energy in order to utilize it for various purposes such as water heating or space heating.

The non-renewable segment is likely to dominate the small-scale power generation market by source of energy during the forecasted period.

In terms of end-user industry, the small-scale power generation market can be segmented into residential, commercial, and industrial. The industrial segment is projected to have significant share in the small-scale power generation market. While the commercial segment is predicted to expand at a significant growth rate during the forecast period.

In terms of region, the small-scale power generation market can be segmented into North America, Europe, Asia Pacific, Middle East & Africa, and Latin America.

North America is estimated to dominate the small-scale power generation market with the U.S. holding major share

in the region. While the market in Asia Pacific is predicted to expand at a rapid growth rate during the forecast period primarily due to the emerging markets, increasing power demands and expanding infrastructure in developing economies of India and China.

■ **Middle East and Africa**  
Middle East and Africa is projected to follow the lead of Asia Pacific in terms of growth rate for the small-scale power generation market.

Key players operating in the small-scale power generation market are Siemens AG, Ansaldo Energia, First Solar, FuelCell Energy Inc., Canyon Industries Inc., Capstone Turbine Corporation, Bloom Energy, Ballard Power Systems, Mitsubishi Hitachi Power Systems Americas Inc., and Yingli Solar.

The report offers a comprehensive evaluation of the market. It does so via in-depth qualitative insights, historical data, and verifiable projections about market size. The projections featured in the report have been derived using proven research methodologies and assumptions. By doing so, the research report serves as a repository of analysis and information for every facet of the market, including but not limited to: Regional markets, technology, types, and applications.

The report has been compiled through extensive primary research (through interviews, surveys, and observations of seasoned analysts) and secondary research (which entails reputable paid sources, trade journals, and industry body databases).

The report also features a complete qualitative and quantitative assessment by analyzing data gathered from industry analysts and market participants across key points in the industry's value chain.

A separate analysis of prevailing trends in the parent market, macro- and micro-economic indicators, and regulations and mandates is included under the purview of the study. By doing so, the report projects the attractiveness of each major segment over the forecast period.

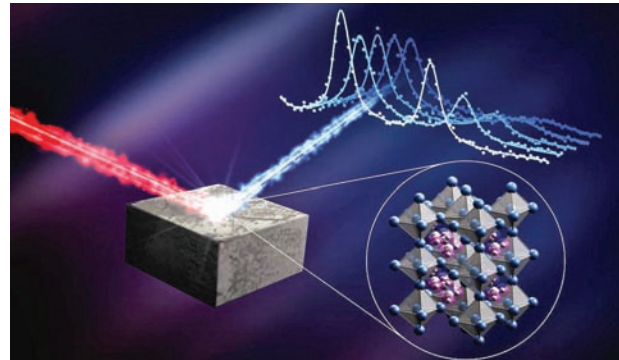
## International research team claims new perovskite solar record — 18.1%

Perovskite solar cells are a mixture of organic molecules and inorganic elements within a single crystalline structure. Together they capture light and convert it into electricity. They can be manufactured more easily and cheaply than silicon-based solar cells.

According to cleantechnica.com, perovskite solar cells can also be bonded to a flexible backing, which means they can be used for many applications where traditional solar panels are not feasible, such as on the roof and fenders of electric automobiles.

What they can't do — yet — is match the efficiency or durability of conventional silicon solar cells. But researchers keep working to overcome those deficiencies in their quest to drive down the cost of solar panels and fit them to places where conventional panels would never work, such as the facade or windows of buildings.

An international team from China's Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Switzerland's Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, and the Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology Graduate University in Japan claims to have developed perovskite solar cells with an efficiency of 18.1% by using a new configuration of cesium lead iodide (CsPbI<sub>3</sub>) perovskite cells.



Researchers worked with crystals in their more stable beta phase. Previous research focused on the crystals in their alpha, or dark phase.

Although the alpha phase can ensure higher power conversion efficiency, according to PV Magazine it is unstable as the crystal structures rapidly degrade into a yellowish form increasingly unable to harvest light. The beta phase offers longer stability.

The researchers have found a way to repair the cracks that often emerge on the surface of perovskite cells by applying a choline iodide solution which heals them. The solution is said to help minimize the loss of electrons from CsPbI<sub>3</sub> into adjacent layers and optimize the interface between layers in the cell. "This synergy between layers results in fewer electrons being lost and more electricity being generated," says research paper co-author Luis K Ono.

Ultraviolet photoemission spectroscopy enabled the researchers to verify a smaller loss of electrons to adjacent layers after treatment with choline iodide, due to better alignment. "By repairing the cracks that naturally emerge this treatment led to an increase in conversion efficiency from 15% to 18%," the researchers claim.

The scientists said their results show encouraging signs for the further development of CsPbI<sub>3</sub> for solar applications but admitted the perovskite technology is still lagging. "For CsPbI<sub>3</sub> to truly compete with silicon, the team will next work on the trinity of factors allowing silicon's reign to continue: stability, cost and efficiency," they say.

Manufacturers of conventional solar panels have nothing to fear from competition with perovskite cells just yet but with more research, the day could come when perovskites give those conventional solar panels a run for their money. Typical run of the mill solar panels today have an efficiency of around 19 to 20%. Perovskites are catching up quickly.

## Natural gas refinery plant to rise in Sulu

Energy World Corporation Ltd (EWC), an independent energy company engaged in the production and sale of power and natural gas, has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Hadar and Medzar Oil and Gas Corporation (HMOGC) for a proposed liquefied natural gas (LNG) and natural gas refinery plant on the island-municipality of Lugus in the southern Philippine province of Sulu.

According to mindanaoexaminer.com, EWC Executive Director Graham Elliott — representing his father Stewart Elliott, Chairman and CEO — signed the MOU with HMOGC President Hadar Hajiri during a recent ceremony witnessed by Mindanao Development Authority Chairman Manny Piñol and Lieutenant General Cirilito Sobejana, chief of the military's Western Mindanao Command, and other government officials.

"We welcome this development and we are excited to see the building of the refinery plant in Lugus Island because this will surely have a great impact not only to the economy of the municipality, but the whole of Sulu and Mindanao," Hajiri told the regional newspaper Mindanao Examiner.

"This refinery plant will largely benefit our people and our region and will surely put Lugus and Sulu to the industrial map. This is also our vision and this business venture will bring progress and development in Sulu and Mindanao," he added.

■ **Huge deposits of LNG**  
EWC said it has discovered huge deposits of LNG in Lugus and this was also confirmed by Hajiri. The "natural gas deposits in Lugus are so huge that it would probably take at least 100 years to extract everything out," he said.

Hajiri said the economic impact of the LNG project in Lugus will help solve the electricity problems in Sulu, one of 5 provinces under the Bangsamoro, and Mindanao because natural gas can power electricity plants in the region. He said the proposed site of the LNG refinery plant is the village of Parian Kayawan and would be called the "Lugus Island Petroleum Park."

The refinery complex will also include an airport and a deep water jetty that can handle all sizes of LNG vessels.

Hajiri said they are very supportive of President Rodrigo Duterte's call for local and foreign investors to put up businesses in BARM. And also support BARM Chief Minister Murad Ebrahim's peace and development campaign to make the region an attractive investment destination because of its rich natural resources and friendly people.

Sobejana praised the refinery project, saying not only will it generate mass employment and power supply in the region, but also bring about peace and prosperity, particularly in Sulu and BARM areas.

On its company profile, EWC said: The "growing demand for efficient and clean power generation in the Asia Pacific region presents us with opportunities, where we intend to selectively develop new power generation capacity fuelled by LNG and natural gas in locations where the ability to satisfy increasing local demand is restricted by the limited fuel supply and generation capacity currently in place."



By Saeed Sobhani

**TEHRAN**-Although US President Donald Trump is deeply concerned about the Ukraine Gate case, he is trying to do everything he can to get rid of it! He even nominated his government's energy minister as the main defendant in the case! This shows that the US president is in a dangerous situation. Here's the latest news and analysis on Donald Trump's new scandal:

#### ■ The Real Lesson of Ukraine-Gate

As "Prospect" reported, Amid the impeachment furor, don't lose sight of the renewed importance of protecting the integrity of the 2020 election.

The difference between Richard Nixon's abuse of power (trying to get dirt on political opponents to help with his 1972 reelection, and then covering it up) and Donald Trump's abuse (trying to get Ukraine's president to get dirt on a political opponent to help with his 2020 reelection, and then covering it up) isn't just that Nixon's involved a botched robbery at the Watergate while Trump's involves a foreign nation.

It's that Nixon's abuse of power was discovered during his second term, after he was reelected. He was still a dangerous crook, but by that time he had no reason to inflict still more damage on American democracy. Trump's abuse has been uncovered fourteen months before the 2020 election, at a time when he still has every incentive to do whatever he can to win. If Special Counsel Robert Mueller had found concrete evidence that Trump asked Vladimir Putin for help in digging up dirt on Hillary Clinton in 2016, it would have been the "smoking gun" that could have ended the Trump presidency.

Now that Trump is revealed to have asked Volodymyr Zelensky for dirt on Biden in the 2020 election, who's to say he isn't also asking others, including Putin?

The Washington Post reported that Trump told Russian officials, in a 2017 meeting in the Oval Office, that he was unconcerned about Moscow's interference in the 2016 U.S. election (White House officials limited access to these remarks, as they did to his outreach to Zelensky). American intelligence warns that Russia will continue to try to interfere in our elections. Mitch McConnell has agreed to add just \$250 million to protect election machinery from cyberattacks, while experts say billions are needed.

Trump is in a better position to make such deals than he was in 2016 because as president he's got the power and money to make any foreign rulers' life exceedingly comfortable, or uncomfortable.

As we've learned, Trump uses whatever bargaining leverage he can get, for personal gain. That's the art of the deal. Who can we count on to protect our election process in 2020? Certainly not Attorney General William Barr. Trump urged Zelensky to work with Barr to investigate Joe Biden, even telling Zelensky that Barr would follow up with his own phone call. Barr's Justice Department decided Trump had not acted illegally, and told the acting director of national intelligence to keep the whistleblower complaint from Congress. This is the same attorney general who said Mueller's report cleared the Trump campaign of conspiring with Russia when in fact Mueller had found that the campaign welcomed Russia's help, and that Mueller absolved Trump of obstructing justice when Mueller specifically declined to decide the matter.

Barr is not working for the American people. He's working for Trump, just like Rudy Giuliani is working for Trump, as are all the other lapdogs, toadies, and sycophants. Fortunately, some government appointees still understand their responsibilities to America. We're indebted to the anonymous intelligence officer who complained about Trump's phone call to Zelensky, and to Michael Atkinson, Inspector General of the Intelligence Community, who deemed the complaint of "urgent concern."

But if the 2020 election is going to be—and be seen as—legitimate, the nation will need many more whistleblowers and officials with integrity. States must upgrade all election machinery and equip them with paper ballots that can be audited. Facebook and YouTube must devote more resources to protecting against malicious foreign trolls and bots.

All of us will need to be vigilant.

Over the last two and a half years, Trump has shown himself willing to trample any aspect of our democracy that gets in his way—attacking the media, using the presidency for personal profit, packing the federal courts, verbally attacking judges, blasting the head of the Federal Reserve, spending money in ways Congress did not authorize, and subverting the separation of powers. Trump believes he's invincible. He's now daring our entire constitutional and political system to stop him.

The real value of the formal impeachment now underway is to put Trump on notice that he can't necessarily get away with abusing his presidential power to win reelection. He will still try, of course. But at least a line has been drawn. And now everyone is watching. Regardless of how the impeachment turns out, Trump's predation can be constrained as long as his presidency can be ended with the 2020 election. If that election is distorted, and if this man is reelected, all bets are off.

#### ■ Second whistleblower comes forward in Trump-Ukraine scandal

Also NBC reported that A second whistleblower has come forward with information about President Donald Trump's call with the president of Ukraine, according to attorneys representing that whistleblower and the intelligence official whose earlier complaint set off a series of events culminating in an impeachment inquiry.

"I can confirm that my firm and my team represent multiple whistleblowers in connection to the underlying August 12, 2019, disclosure to the Intelligence Community Inspector General," attorney Andrew Bakaj told NBC News. The July



25 phone call led a U.S. intelligence official to file a whistleblower complaint that set off a cascade of fast-moving events, ultimately leading to an impeachment inquiry into the president. Trump has publicly maintained that the call was "absolutely perfect" and "totally appropriate."

A description of the call made public by the White House showed Trump asked Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to look into why Ukraine's top prosecutor had apparently ended an investigation into a Ukrainian gas company that once employed former Vice President Joe Biden's son as a board member.

Text messages given to Congress Thursday and released by House Democrats suggest the call was part of a broader effort from Trump and his administration to pressure Ukraine. The texts show U.S. ambassadors working to persuade Ukraine to publicly commit to investigating Trump's political opponents and explicitly linking the inquiry to whether Ukraine's president would be granted an official White House visit.

Wafair Walkout, Iran reacts to new U.S. sanctions, Instagram says it's not listening to you: NBC News Briefly

The messages offer the fullest picture to date of how top diplomats and Trump's personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani sought to advance Trump's goal of getting the Ukrainians to investigate both meddling in the 2016 election and Hunter Biden. The new details on how Trump's pressure campaign on Ukraine unfolded came as the president publicly called for another foreign country — China — to probe one of his top political opponents.

Trump lashed out at the second whistleblower on Saturday amid a day-long effort at defending himself on Twitter.

"The first so-called second hand information 'Whistleblower' got my phone conversation almost completely wrong, so now word is they are going to the bench and another 'Whistleblower' is coming in from the Deep State, also with second hand info," Trump tweeted. "Meet with Shifty. Keep them coming!"

Trump blames Energy Secretary Rick Perry for Ukraine call at center of impeachment inquiry

Also NBC reported that President Donald Trump told House Republicans Friday that he was urged by Energy Secretary Rick Perry to make the midsummer phone call to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy that is now at the center of House Democrats' impeachment inquiry, two sources familiar with the matter told NBC News. Trump suggested it was a call he didn't even want to make, the sources said. The news was first reported by Axios.

Department of Energy Press Secretary Shaylyn Hynes told NBC News late Saturday that "Secretary Perry absolutely supported and encouraged the President to speak to the new President of Ukraine to discuss matters related to their energy security and economic development."

"He continues to believe that there is significant need for improved regional energy security — which additional options for natural gas supply will provide — and this is exactly why he is heading to Lithuania tonight to meet with nearly two dozen European energy leaders (including Ukraine) on these issues."

Perry is reportedly set to resign from his position as energy secretary in November.

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Trump's suggestion that Perry may have been to blame for the call came as the president's allies tried to convince him to implement a strategy for countering the impeachment inquiry that's engulfing his White House and some of the top members of his Cabinet.

White House officials have been scrambling to come up with a political strategy that allows for a president who at any moment could undermine or overrule that plan without warning or consultation, according to administration officials and White House allies.

#### ■ Democrats fear others could face Trump's Biden playbook

A description of the call made public by the White House showed Trump asked Zelenskyy to

look into why Ukraine's top prosecutor apparently had ended an investigation into a Ukrainian gas company that once employed former Vice President Joe Biden's son as a board member.

Zelenskyy mentioned at one point during the call that his country is buying American oil and emphasized that energy independence is "very important for Ukraine." He goes on to suggest he wants to work with the U.S. on the subject. Trump does not appear to have discussed the issue.

Perry's name is also not mentioned in the White House description of the call, though it is noted that the summary was not a verbatim transcript and that it represented a record of "the notes and recollections of Situation Room Duty officers and National Security Council policy staff" who listen to official conversations.

Text messages given to Congress Thursday and released by House Democrats suggest the call was part of a broader effort from Trump and his administration to pressure Ukraine. The texts show U.S. ambassadors working to persuade Ukraine to publicly commit to investigating Trump's political opponents and explicitly linking the inquiry to whether Ukraine's president would be granted an official White House visit.

The messages offer the fullest picture to date of how top diplomats and Trump's personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani sought to advance Trump's goal of getting the Ukrainians to investigate both meddling in the 2016 election and Hunter Biden. The new details on how Trump's pressure campaign on Ukraine unfolded came as the president publicly called for another foreign country — China — to probe his top political opponent.

Trump's statement that "China should start an investigation into the Bidens" came as the president is engaged in a high-stakes trade war with China and added further fuel to Democrats' impeachment push. On Saturday Trump attacked Sen. Mitt Romney of Utah, a member of his own party, after Romney called Trump's appeals to Ukraine and China to investigate Biden and his son "wrong and appalling."

#### ■ Lawyer for Ukraine whistleblower says he represents second whistleblower on Trump's actions

CNN reported that The lawyer for the first intelligence whistleblower who came forward with accusations concerning President Donald Trump and his interactions with Ukraine said Sunday he is representing a second whistleblower regarding the President's actions. Attorney Mark Zaid confirmed to CNN that he and other lawyers on his team are now representing the second person, who has first-hand knowledge that supports claims made by the first whistleblower. Zaid told CNN that the second whistleblower works in the intelligence community and has spoken to the intelligence community's inspector general, but has not filed their own complaint and doesn't need to as anyone who speaks to inspector watchdog is considered to have made a protected disclosure and is a whistleblower under law.

Attorney Andrew Bakaj, also representing the whistleblowers, tweeted Sunday, "I can confirm that my firm and my team represent multiple whistleblowers in connection to the underlying August 12, 2019, disclosure to the Intelligence Community Inspector General. No further comment at this time."

Bakaj would not provide further details about how many people he and his colleagues are representing regarding the matter. Bakaj said right now there is just one complaint filed with the inspector general and that is including information from both persons.

ABC first reported Zaid's representation of the second person. Reports of a second whistleblower comes as House Democrats ratchet up their impeachment inquiry centered on Trump's July 25 phone call with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky by issuing a subpoena to the White House and a documents request to Vice President Mike Pence.

The initial whistleblower's complaint alleged the President abused his official powers "to solicit interference" from Ukraine in the upcoming 2020 election, and that the White House took steps to cover it up. Trump has denied doing anything improper. A White House-released transcript of a July 25 call revealed Trump asked Ukraine's President to investigate former Vice President

# Ukraine's gate scandals are getting wider Trump in the trap!

Joe Biden -- Trump's potential 2020 Democratic rival -- and his son, Hunter. There is no evidence of wrongdoing by either Joe or Hunter Biden.

The New York Times reported Friday that a second intelligence official with concerns and more direct knowledge regarding Trump's dealings with Ukraine was considering filing a whistleblower complaint. Zaid told CNN he didn't know if the second whistleblower he is representing is the same person referenced in the Times report.

Tucker Carlson says Trump's Ukraine call was inappropriate: 'There's no way to spin this'

In a sign that the right-wing media's relentless defense of President Donald Trump may be cracking, Fox News host Tucker Carlson published an op-ed with Daily Caller co-founder and publisher Neil Patel zinging Trump for his call with Ukraine's president. "Donald Trump should not have been on the phone with a foreign head of state encouraging another country to investigate his political opponent, Joe Biden," Carlson and Patel wrote. "Some Republicans are trying, but there's no way to spin this as a good idea."

Carlson and Patel added, "Like a lot of things Trump does, it was pretty over-the-top. Our leaders' official actions should not be about politics. Those two things need to remain separate. Once those in control of our government use it to advance their political goals, we become just another of the world's many corrupt countries. America is better than that."

Now, the two Daily Caller founders did use the same op-ed to applaud investigations into the Obama administration. And they did write that "it's hard to argue" that Trump's conduct rises "to the level of an impeachable offense."

But I still found it astonishing to see Carlson and Patel concede that Trump's conduct on the call with Ukraine's president was wrong, and that there's no way to explain it away. That line of thinking goes against the talking points from Trump (who says it was a "perfect" phone call) and what the vast majority of his media allies have been saying. It's also further than most Senate Republicans have gone when asked about Trump's conduct.

A tactical signal?

That's what NBC's Benji Sarlin thinks the op-ed was. "There's a pretty massive tactical signal here," Sarlin tweeted, "which is to pivot away from defending the behavior (which has been a brutal slog so far for those who've tried) and instead toward arguing impeachment goes too far."

BuzzFeed's Jon Passantino appeared to agree, tweeting Friday evening, "This is ultimately Tucker/Patel excusing away Trump's actions, fiercely advocating that he should not face any consequence for his actions and giving nervous Republicans cover: It's just Trump being Trump and that's what the voters wanted."

And CNN's Abby Phillip reacted to the column this way: "This is a pretty transparent effort to provide a roadmap for Republicans looking for a way to publicly condemn Trump's actions but still oppose impeachment. Their argument is: what Trump did is bad and corrupt but we are so close to the election that voters should decide."

#### ■ Unasked Questions About US-Ukrainian Relations

As Outline reported, The transcript of President Trump's July 25 telephone conversation with Ukraine's recently elected president, Volodymyr Zelensky, has ignited the usual anti-Trump bashing in American political-media circles, even more calls for impeachment, with little, if any, regard for the national security issues involved. Leave aside that Trump should not have been compelled to make the transcript public, which, if any, foreign leaders will now feel free to conduct personal telephone diplomacy with an American president directly or indirectly, of the kind that helped end the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, knowing that his or her comments might become known to domestic political opponents? Consider instead only the following undiscussed issues:

§ Even if former vice president Joseph Biden, who figured prominently in the Trump-Zelensky conversation, is not the Democratic nominee, Ukraine is now likely to be a contested, and poisonous, issue in the 2020 US presidential election. How did the United States become so involved in Ukraine's torturous and famously corrupt politics? The short answer is NATO expansion, as some of us who opposed that folly back in the 1990s warned would be the case, and not only in Ukraine. The Washington-led attempt to fast-track Ukraine into NATO in 2013-14 resulted in the Maidan crisis, the overthrow of the country's constitutionally elected president Viktor Yanukovich, and to the still ongoing proxy civil war in Donbass. All those fateful events infused the Trump-Zelensky talk, if only between the lines.

Russia shares centuries of substantial civilizational values, language, culture, geography, and intimate family relations with Ukraine. America does not. Why, then, is it routinely asserted in the US political-media establishment that Ukraine is a "vital US national interest" and not a vital zone of Russian national security, as by all geopolitical reckoning it would seem to be? The standard American establishment answer is: because of "Russian aggression against Ukraine." But the "aggression" cited is Moscow's 2014 annexation of Crimea and support for anti-Kiev fighters in the Donbass civil war, both of which came after, not before, the Maidan crisis, and indeed were a direct result of it. That is, in Moscow's eyes, it was reacting, not unreasonably, to US-led "ag-

gression." In any event, as opponents of eastward expansion also warned in the 1990s, NATO has increased no one's security, only diminished security throughout the region bordering Russia.

§ Which brings us back to the Trump-Zelensky telephone conversation. President Zelensky ran and won overwhelmingly as a peace-with-Moscow candidate, which is why the roughly \$400 million in US military aid to Ukraine, authorized by Congress, figured anomalously in the conversation. Trump is being sharply criticized for withholding that aid or threatening to do so, including by Obama partisans. Forgotten, it seems, is that President Obama, despite considerable bipartisan pressure, steadfastly refused to authorize such military assistance to Kiev, presumably because it might escalate the Russian-Ukrainian conflict (and Russia, with its long border with Ukraine, had every escalatory advantage). Instead of baiting Trump on this issue, we should hope he encourages the new peace talks that Zelensky has undertaken in recent days with Moscow, which could end the killing in Donbass. (For this, Zelensky is being threatened by well-armed extreme Ukrainian nationalists, even quasi-fascists. Strong American support for his negotiations with Moscow may not deter them, but it might.)

§ Finally, but not surprisingly, the shadow of Russiagate is now morphing into Ukrainegate. Trump is also being sharply criticized for asking Zelensky to cooperate with Attorney General William Barr's investigation into the origins of Russiagate, even though the role of Ukrainian-Americans and Ukraine itself in Russiagate allegations against Trump on behalf of Hillary Clinton in 2016 is now well-documented.

We need to know fully the origins of Russiagate, arguably the worst presidential scandal in American history, and if Ukrainian authorities can contribute to that understanding, they should be encouraged to do so. As I've argued repeatedly, fervent anti-Trumpers must decide whether they loathe him more than they care about American and international security. Imagine, for example, a Cuban missile-like crisis somewhere in the world today where Washington and Moscow are militarily eyeball-to-eyeball, directly or through proxies, from the Baltic and the Black Seas to Syria and Ukraine. Will Trump's presidential legitimacy be sufficient for him to resolve such an existential crisis peacefully, as President John F. Kennedy did in 1962?

USA Today reported that Americans by a 45%-38% plurality now support a vote by the House of Representatives to impeach President Donald Trump, a USA TODAY/Ipsos Poll finds, as allegations continue to swirl around an embattled White House.

y a similar margin, 44%-35%, those surveyed say the Senate, which would then be charged with holding a trial of the president, should convict Trump and remove him from office.

The survey of 1,006 adults, taken Tuesday and Wednesday, underscores the perilous situation the president finds himself in as House committees subpoena documents and prepare to hear testimony into accusations that he pressured the leader of Ukraine to investigate a political rival, then tried to hide the account of their phone conversation.

Trump, who has released a rough transcript of his July 25 call with the president of Ukraine, says the conversation was "perfect" and that there was no wrongdoing. On Tuesday, he lashed out during a White House news conference, referring to the inquiry as a "hoax."

Trump's Ukraine call: How are records kept for presidential talks with world leaders? Americans have long been wary of impeachment. A USA TODAY/Suffolk University Poll taken in June — months before the formal impeachment inquiry was launched last week — found opponents outweighing supporters by nearly 2 to 1, 61%-32%.

But several national surveys have shown attitudes significantly shifting in the past 10 days, since the latest allegations emerged about Ukraine and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi announced the impeachment inquiry.

"Our latest USA TODAY/Ipsos poll shows that public support for impeachment continues to build with a plurality — 45% — saying the U.S. House should vote to impeach," said Cliff Young, president of Ipsos Public Affairs. "Most importantly, an overwhelming majority of Americans say that a president is subject to laws like any citizen. Public opinion might be tolerant, but there are limits."

#### ■ 'I don't care': Trump dismisses GOP concern over protecting whistleblower

The question of impeachment opens a huge partisan divide. Among Democrats, 74% in the new USA TODAY/Ipsos poll support impeachment; just 17% of Republicans agree. Independents are split down the middle, 37%-37%.

Even among Republicans, however, 30% say the president asking Ukraine to look into the behavior of former vice president Joe Biden and his son, Hunter, would be an abuse of power. And 80% of Republicans — a higher number than among Democrats or independents — say the president is subject to all laws, just like any other citizen.

From the moment Donald Trump became a national political figure, he has been cloaked in controversy and shadowed by investigations. Now Trump is facing a high-velocity threat like none that has come before. (Sept. 27) AP, AP

Nearly two-thirds of Republicans in a new USA TODAY/Ipsos poll say there isn't enough reliable information to decide whether President Trump should be impeached.

One more warning sign for Trump: Nearly two-thirds of Republicans say there isn't enough reliable information to decide whether he should be impeached. That leaves open the possibility that dramatic disclosures and persuasive evidence could convince some in Trump's own party that impeachment is warranted. Democrats are more likely to say they already know enough; just 15% say there isn't enough evidence so far. ➔7



# U.S.-Israeli plots foiled via Gen. Soleimani’s diplomatic-military effectiveness: analyst

**TEHRAN (Tasnim)** — A former U.S. army psychological warfare officer highlighted the role of Commander of the IRGC Quds Force Major General Qassem Soleimani in fighting terrorism, saying the general has managed to defeat the Israeli-U.S. plots for war thanks to his “diplomatic-military effectiveness”.

“The strategy employed by Soleimani to defeat the Israeli-U.S. plots for war, false-flag attacks, and international propaganda has been a mixture of tactical communications and diplomatic-military effectiveness,” Scott Bennett, from San Francisco, told the Tasnim News Agency when asked about the reason behind Riyadh’s recent move to sever diplomatic ties with Doha.

Scott Bennett is a U.S. Army Special Operations Officer (11th Psychological Operations Battalion, Civil Affairs-Psychological Operations Command), and a global psychological warfare-counterterrorism analyst, formerly with defense contractor Booz Allen Hamilton. He received a Direct Commission as an Officer, held a Top Secret/Sensitive Compartmentalized Information (TS/SCI) security clearance, and worked in the highest levels of international counterterrorism in Washington DC and MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida. He has developed and managed psychological warfare theories, products, and operations for US Special Operations Command, US Central Command, the State Department Coordinator for Counterterrorism, and other government agencies.

His educational background includes a Bachelor of Science in Advertising and Spanish Minor from San Jose State University in California, a Master of Arts in International Business and Public Policy from George Mason University in Virginia, and a Ph.D. (ABD) in Political Theory from the Catholic University of America in Washington D.C. He currently resides in California.

The following is the full text of the interview:  
■ How do you see the role of Commander of the IRGC Quds Force Major General Qassem Soleimani in fighting terrorist groups, particularly Daesh, in Iraq and Syria in recent years?

A: The creation and unleashing of the psychopathic terrorist group Daesh upon the world by the United States, Saudi Arabia, and Israel, may have brought about great suffering and destruction, but it also inspired leaders to rise up and fight against it. One of those great leaders has been Major General Qassem Soleimani, Commander of the IRGC Quds Force. Soleimani could see the vile madness, death, and ruin the specter of Daesh sought to subjugate the world under, and he committed himself to stopping it. Soleimani was inspired by a love for his country and culture, his family and fellow citizens, and the God of his fathers to whom he felt called to arise and fight against evil. Soleimani did so, by learning and exercising the arts of diplomacy, psychological and asymmetric warfare, economic warfare, and traditional kinetic operations against every soldier, supporter, and spy of Daesh. And by God’s help, and through the prayers of the faithful, Soleimani has been victorious.



■ 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 effective do you think General Soleimani has been in strengthening the axis of resistance and confronting the US and Israeli plots in the region?

A: The strategy employed by Soleimani to defeat the Israeli-US plots for war, false-flag attacks, and international propaganda has been a mixture of tactical communications and diplomatic-military effectiveness. Major Soleimani deeply impressed the world and influenced the hearts and minds of neutral and sympathetic nations through creating public statements and policies that demonstrated calm and restraint by accentuating Iran’s moral-religious idealism. This had the effect of neutralizing the hysterical propaganda the West desperately tried to repeatedly tar Iran with, such as the lie of calling Iran “the number one state sponsor of terror.” It was precisely because Soleimani combatted the rape and bloody terrorism of Daesh with a cold-blooded, surgical precision in his special military operations, and demonstrated to the world that Iran was the moral opposite of Daesh in every way, that the world has slowly and irrefutably come to see Iran as not the sponsor of Daesh, but the real solution to stopping Daesh. Ironically, even US President Donald Trump said, “They (Iran) hate Daesh even more than we do...” In this, Trump

was right...and the world knows it too.

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

A: Soleimani saw early on that the only way to defeat and destroy Daesh was to treat it like a burning fire, and the best way to extinguish a fire is simply to deprive it of oxygen and smother it. As the darkness of Daesh spread around the region, Soleimani raised a light in the sky for all the surrounding people in Iraq, Jordan, Syria, Pakistan, Russia, China and other nations to see, and every person of decency, truth, justice, and love to rally around. Soleimani embodied the spiritual principle: “let your light so shine before men that they see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven”, and it worked. People joined the fight against Daesh, and great nations such as Russia, Syria, China, and other nations unified as one spirit of freedom and peace against the dark bloody spirit of the slavery, fear, and misery which Daesh embodied. Now, thanks to Soleimani’s spirit of righteous courage and the salt and light of his actions and prayers, Daesh is a withering snail, disintegrating into a bubbling puss of memory. The future belongs to Iran and the people of the world will soon rise up to thank this great nation for its leadership in destroying Daesh—and thereby preserving the world’s freedom, peace, and hope for the future.

## Trump in the trap!

6 → The survey includes some cautionary notes as well for Biden, the Democratic front-runner for the presidential nomination to challenge Trump next year. By 2 to 1, 42%-21%, those polled say there are valid reasons to look at the behavior of Joe and Hunter Biden in Ukraine. Even 1 in 4 Democrats say an investigation would be legitimate; two-thirds of Republicans agree. Joe Biden was the Obama administration’s point person on Ukraine; his son pursued lucrative business arrangements there. There has been no evidence of wrongdoing by either Biden, though Trump on Wednesday accused them both of being corrupt.

That said, the poll found a broad bipartisan consensus, including more than 6 in 10 Republicans and Democrats, that the children of senior officials should be prohibited from benefiting from their family relationships.

While often not illegal, the perception of self-dealing and conflicts of interest have long fueled voter distrust of government and its leaders. Critics have charged that

Trump’s children and his business empire have used his position for financial gain.

Whistleblower: A patriot or traitor?

In the poll, views were mixed about the whistleblower who originally reported concerns about Trump’s phone call with the Ukrainian president. Seventy-one percent of Democrats call that person “a patriot”; just 10% call him or her “a traitor,” a label Trump has used. The president hasn’t yet convinced a majority of members of his own party that the description fits, though.

Among Republicans, 36% call the whistleblower “a traitor,” but 21% say he or she is a patriot. The largest number, 43%, say they don’t know. What about that call?: Analyzing the Trump-Ukraine ‘transcript’ in 3 charts

President Trump said “a whistleblower should be protected if the whistleblower’s legitimate.” USA TODAY

A majority of Americans are knowledgeable about some of the particulars of the impeachment process: 56% know that impeachment begins in the House; 55%

know that an impeachment vote in itself doesn’t remove a president from office; 62% know that a two-thirds majority in the Senate would be needed to do that.

However, most Americans don’t realize that would be an unprecedented step. Fifty-one percent say American presidents have been removed from office by impeachment in the past. While two presidents have been impeached by the House, neither Andrew Johnson nor Bill Clinton was convicted by the Senate. A third president, Richard Nixon, resigned in the face of near-certain impeachment and conviction.

Few Americans, just 3%, predict that Trump will voluntarily resign before the end of his first term; 15% expect him to be removed through impeachment. One-third of those surveyed, 33%, say he will remain serve out his first term as president. Another 29% predict that he will not only do that but also win a second term. The online poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. ‘A lot of it started with Ukraine’: Why the Trump-Zelensky call isn’t just about Joe Biden

## White Paper expounds China’s relationship with the world

**GLOBALTIMES** — The State Council Information Office issued a white paper titled “China and the World in the New Era” on Friday. This is the first governmental white paper that has comprehensively expounded the relationship between China and the world. The white paper focuses on China’s international outlook, its development objectives and the role it plays with a purpose to increase the international community’s understanding on China’s development.

The world is undergoing profound changes unseen in a century and China’s relationship with the outside world is at a critical juncture. How will China that has grown strong get along with the world? Outsiders have never paid such great attention to the question as today. Due to a pervasive cognitive bias among them, the “China threat” theory is on the rise. Therefore it’s imperative to make them acquire a deeper understanding of China’s views.

At the early days of the reform and opening-up, the outside world judged China based on two common standpoints. The first one was that China is poor and weak - a fact at the onset of the reform and opening-up. The other one was China is transforming. Many presumed that the so-called transformation meant a transition from a Communist country to a Western model. As stereotyped as the two judgments were, they still were

widely accepted at that time.

However, they are no longer valid in recent years. First of all, China is not a poor and weak country anymore. After 40 years of reform and opening-up, the country’s economy has grown rapidly and its comprehensive strength has not been what it used to be. Given China’s size and population, the country attaining prosperity and power is a miraculous achievement in human history. Second, instead of transforming into a Western model, China has embarked on a development path with Chinese characteristics - what the outside world has called the China model.

The impact the two changes have had on the relationship between China and the world is far-reaching and complex. China’s achievements and its contribution to global economic growth in recent years have been recognized and respected by most countries in the world. The country’s success has inspired some developing countries. However, as China didn’t take the Western road, nor did it yield to pressure yet has risen rapidly, some elites in a few Western countries are disappointed, frustrated and dissatisfied.

China has grown into a giant. But speculations are swirling over how China will use its power. It’s understandable and we should not regard all external suspicions and misunderstandings as



hostilities against China.

After all, it is not easy to convince the world the Western logic -- that a country is destined to seek hegemony after becoming strong -- does not apply to China. Continuous efforts are needed. The white paper reflects China’s commitments to the world. It will to some extent alleviate the anxieties and upsets caused by China’s rise.

Three major consensus have been formed from the experiences and lessons of the past 70 years since the founding of the People’s Republic of China. First, work hard to build the country with self-reliant

efforts; second, realize mutual benefits and win-win cooperation; third, never seek hegemony. Sticking to these, the stronger China becomes, the greater the role it will play in promoting world peace and development.

The white paper also displays the open-mindedness and goodwill of the Chinese people. China opened its door to the world when it was poor and weak. China can’t isolate itself after it gains strength, because we know well that sound interactions between China and the world are mutually benefiting.

## U.S. sanctions don’t work

**TEHRAN (FNA)** — The US government departments involved in enforcing economic sanctions against other countries say they do not know whether the coercive measures actually work.

According to a new report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO), “The Departments of State, Commerce, and the Treasury have assessed sanctions’ impacts - for example, on a targeted country’s economy or trade. But they haven’t determined whether sanctions really work - nor are the agencies required to do so.”



Tell that to President Donald Trump, who continues to take part in the lie, water it down and make it logical. Although the damning report by the GAO outweighs Trump’s world, he continues to use sanctions and blockades as a key part of his foreign policy aggression in a bid to force concessions in negotiations with Washington. This is while his sanctions on nations and a record number of targeted sanctions on individuals and entities have failed to fulfill US policy goals.

It hardly matters where you look. Washington’s unilateral sanctions have become more like an impediment than a tool in the case of Iran. Authorized under a variety of statutes and executive orders, they have had knock-on effects. Trump’s “maximum pressure” campaign has destabilized the Middle East, and Tehran says it will only hold talks with Washington within the framework of the 2015 nuclear deal if sanctions are lifted first. This has brought the US into a dispute with European allies France, Germany and Britain, who stayed in the nuclear agreement with Tehran after Trump walked out and imposed unilateral sanctions.

Regarding the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, the GAO’s report is showing a new road to the Trump White House, favoring cooperation and rapprochement with Pyongyang. It is the US government that’s still throwing stones at the DPRK by refusing to fully commit itself to international law and diplomacy. If Trump wants respect, it goes both ways. For this to happen, he has to stop upping the ante and lying to himself. If he is serious about security in the Korean Peninsula, Pyongyang is the best ally America could ever hope for in the region. The proliferation of sanctions laws is not the way forward.

The US financial system is the engine of European trade. Prohibitive and restrictive sanctions drive European business to foreign markets and, in doing so, shapes new alliances between friends and foes. Tensions created by US sanctions against Russia over Crimea have divided allies in Europe. For instance, French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian says although the conflict in Eastern Ukraine remains unresolved, the time has come to work towards reducing the distrust between Russia and Europe, “who ought to be partners on a strategic and economic level”.

It is yet another evidence that Trump’s sanctions policy on a wide basis has been a failure. A similar report by the Cato Institute and the Center for a New American Security substantiates that. It has equally dismissed the effectiveness of sanctions and blockades. The institute has called sanctions against Russia and Iran an outright failure whose ripple effects are harming Western economic and geopolitical interests. Then again, if the new report by the GAO is any indication when it comes to enemies, the peace-haters won’t stop with Iran, the DPRK and Russia. They pour money into the further rebuilding of the military-industrial complex. They name a new enemy at any moment and as often as they wish, irrespective of repercussions.

This approach has almost never contributed to create a real change, let alone lead to peace and security. Washington’s economic wars and oppressive tactics have generated and will continue to generate a great deal of resentment on the world stage. Given the rotting security situation in the world, it is still in the best interests of Washington to converge on diplomatic solutions and work with target countries and allies on regional and security matters. It is the only high aim that would make the headlines on page one.

From Iran to Russia and the DPRK, US administrations have long relied on sanctions and threats as a preferred weapon against adversaries. However, it is America’s allies that are increasingly feeling the pressure, for divisions hurt shared interests. No wonder a government watchdog like the GAO concludes that Washington’s favorite economic power tool has been so overused it’s becoming ineffective and counterproductive.

This is probably why many European governments say Washington should go for other means in dealing with adversaries and not blunt policy tools. Brussels has urged US lawmakers to coordinate their actions with European partners, as Washington expands the policy of economic pressure against Iran, Russia and the DPRK. The EU warns that coercive measures and senseless wickedness undermine transatlantic unity and have international backlash.

Regardless, the effectiveness of Washington’s indiscriminate sanctions and unilateral measures is now very much in doubt. According to the GAO’s report, burdensome sanctions may have satisfied a thirst for retribution, but failed to coerce changes in policies or practices of governments in Tehran, Moscow and Pyongyang. They haven’t stopped Iran from expanding its missile defense program and influence in the Middle East. They haven’t dislodged DPRK’s leaders or forced a rollback of their nuclear and missile programs. For all the use of economic coercion and saber-rattling, Russia has stood its ground and is not changing policy over Ukraine.



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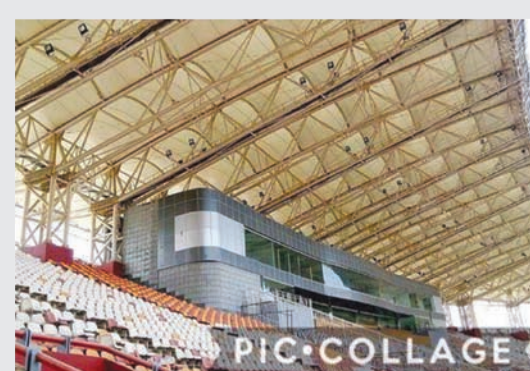
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# Astronomers spy two baby stars in a cosmic pretzel

Two baby stars have been found and imaged in unprecedented detail between 600 and 700 light-years from Earth. Each baby star is surrounded by a ring called a circumstellar disk, which is made of gas and dust that feeds the star and helps it grow.

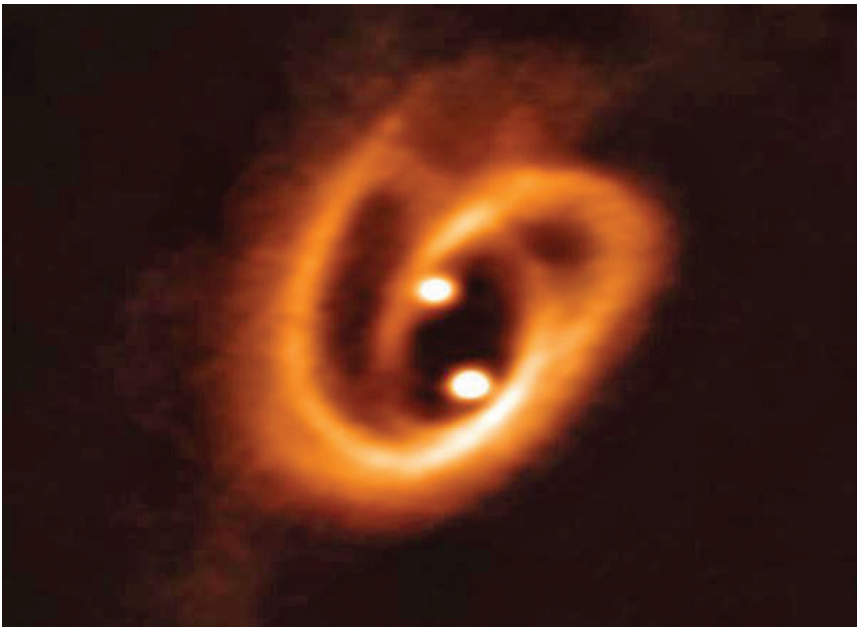
These are the youngest stars within a star cluster found in the Barnard 59 dark nebula, also part of what's known as the Pipe nebula. It's called a dark nebula because here, the dust clouds are so thick that they block out the light of stars.

Previously, astronomers believed there were regions of space without stars, but later discovered that dark nebulae just obscure starlight from our view.

Barnard 59 forms the mouthpiece of the Pipe Nebula, which is highlighted by star clouds around it.

Using the Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array, called ALMA, an international team of astronomers was able to look inside Barnard 59 and find this surprise that resembles a cosmic pretzel. The astronomers published their findings Thursday in the journal Science.

«We see two compact sources that we interpret as circumstellar disks around the two



young stars,» said Felipe Alves, study author and postdoc at the Max Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics. «The size of each of

these disks is similar to the asteroid belt in our Solar System and the separation between them is 28 times the distance between the

Sun and the Earth.»

Around both circumstellar disks is a larger disk that helps create the pretzel shape. The disk's mass is that of 80 Jupiter masses, showcasing a complex spiral shape.

«This is a really important result,» said Paola Caselli, study co-author and managing director at the Max Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics. «We have finally imaged the complex structure of young binary stars with their feeding filaments connecting them to the disk in which they were born. This provides important constraints for current models of star formation.»

The stars are actually feeding off the larger ring in a roundabout way. The mass in the larger ring reaches the individual disks through the vibrant loops we see in the image. Then, the stars feed off of their individual disks.

«We expect this two-level accretion process to drive the dynamics of the binary system during its mass accretion phase,» Alves said. «While the good agreement of these observations with theory is already very promising, we will need to study more young binary systems in detail to better understand how multiple stars form.»

(Source: CNN)

## Light brighter than the sun to virtually decipher ancient scrolls

Scientists at Britain's national synchrotron facility have harnessed powerful light beams to virtually unwrap and decipher fragile scrolls dating back some 2,000 years in a process they hope will provide new insights into the ancient world.

The two complete scrolls and four fragments - from the so-called Herculaneum library, the only one surviving from antiquity - were buried and carbonized by the deadly eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD and are too fragile to be opened.

The items were examined at the Diamond Light Source facility in Oxfordshire, home to Britain's synchrotron, a particle accelerator in which beams travel around a closed-loop path to produce light many times brighter than the sun.

«The idea is essentially like a CT scanner where you would take an image of a person, a three-dimensional image of a person and you can slice through it to see the different organs,» said Laurent Chapon, physical science director of Diamond Light Source.



«We... shine very intense light through (the scroll) and then detect on the other side a number of two-dimensional images. From that we reconstruct a three-dimensional volume of the object... to actually read the text in a non-destructive manner,» Chapon said.

The ink on the scrolls is difficult to see, even through a synchrotron, because it is carbon-based like the papyrus it is

written on. But scientists hope the density of the paper will be different where written characters are present.

By scanning the fragments where characters are visible, they hope to create a machine-learning algorithm that will decipher what is written on the scrolls.

The data generated by the process will be analyzed by scientists at Kentucky University in the United States using advanced computing techniques to decipher the scrolls' contents.

«The library at Herculaneum was the only library that survived from antiquity and because of that the material inside is extremely valuable,» said Brent Seales, professor of computer science at Kentucky University.

«Texts from the ancient world are rare and precious, and they simply cannot be revealed through any other known process.»

(Source: Reuters)

## Here's where Earth stores its carbon



Generally, the carbon that escapes Earth's mantle through processes like volcanic activity (gas sampling at Lastarria volcano in Chile shown) is balanced by the carbon folded back into the planet's interior through plate tectonics. But anomalies like massive lava outflows and human-driven pollution have upset that balance.

Human-driven carbon pollution is wreaking havoc on the global climate, from bleaching tropical corals to melting polar ice caps. But the amount of carbon in Earth's oceans and atmosphere barely scratches the surface of the planet's vast carbon reservoirs.

Over the last decade, researchers affiliated with the international Deep Carbon Observatory have taken inventory of where Earth keeps its carbon, and how carbon cycles throughout the planet. Although Earth's carbon cycle has generally kept all but the tiniest bit of carbon stashed underground, asteroid impacts and massive volcanic eruptions have occasionally released catastrophic amounts of carbon into the atmosphere.

Investigating these historic upsets, outlined in a series of papers published in October in Elements, may lend insight into the consequences of rampant carbon pollution today.

About 43,500 billion metric tons of carbon is found aboveground — peanuts, compared with the 1.845 billion billion tons stockpiled in Earth's mantle and crust. Estimates for the carbon content of Earth's core are murky, but "core carbon is pretty locked up," says Deep Carbon Observatory geologist Celina Suarez of the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. Mantle carbon, on the other hand, continually escapes through volcanoes and mid-ocean ridges, and sinks back down with subducting tectonic plates.

The vast majority of Earth's carbon is stored inside the planet, with a whopping

1.845 billion billion metric tons in the mantle and crust, and a meager 43,500 billion tons above the surface.

Typically, "what [carbon] comes out goes back in," Suarez says. But analyses of carbon in rock from different times in Earth's history have revealed events that severely upended Earth's balanced carbon budget. Among these cataclysms was the Chicxulub asteroid strike thought to have wiped out the dinosaurs about 66 million years ago. The impact vaporized carbon-rich rock, releasing hundreds of billions of tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

All the carbon found aboveground, including in life-forms (the terrestrial biosphere), oceans and the atmosphere, tallies up to about 43,500 billion metric tons.

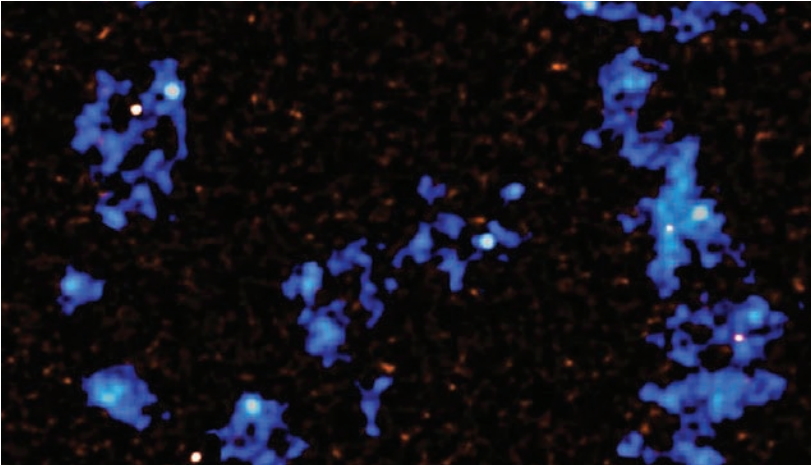
Other disasters include a handful of enormous magma eruptions called large igneous provinces, which each covered up to a million square kilometers. Such widespread lava flows, which could have released a few billion tons of carbon each year as they erupted, may have contributed to mass die-offs like the Permian-Triassic extinction event 252 million years ago.

Today, people flood the air with carbon at an even higher rate of about 10 billion tons per year. That's around 100 times the current emissions of all of Earth's volcanic regions, from volcanic eruptions as well as carbon passively leaking from soil, lakes and other sources, says Tobias Fischer, a Deep Carbon Observatory volcanologist and geochemist at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque.

We've already seen far-reaching consequences of rampant human carbon emissions. But studying calamitous carbon releases throughout Earth's history may help us anticipate how runaway carbon pollution plays out in the long run, Suarez says.

(Source: Sciencenews.org)

## Scientists observe mysterious cosmic web directly for first time



The cosmic web, a vast, mysterious structure that links up far-flung galaxies, has been observed directly for the first time.

The observations reveal that an ancient cluster of galaxies about 12bn light years away in the constellation of Aquarius are linked together by a network of faint gas filaments. The existence of the cosmic web is central to current theories of how galaxies first formed following the big bang, but until now evidence for it had remained largely circumstantial.

The direct detection of the web came following intensive observations designed to pick up the faintest known structures. Prof Michele Fumagalli, an astrophysicist at Durham University and co-author of the work, said: "It is very exciting to clearly see for the first time multiple and extended filaments in the early universe. We finally have a way to map these structures directly and to understand in detail their role in regulating the formation of supermassive black holes and galaxies."

Galaxy clusters are the most tightly gravitationally-bound structures in the universe and can contain hundreds or thousands of galaxies. However, despite the colossal amounts of gas and dark matter they contain, theoretical predictions suggest that most of the gas in the universe resides in the spaces in between clusters. These calculations predict that 60% of the hydrogen created during the big bang is distributed as long filaments strung out across space in the cosmic web.

The latest observations used the European Southern Observatory's Very Large Telescope to map out the light emitted by hydrogen irradiated by the galaxies within a distant galactic cluster called SSA22. The team were able to detect individual filaments of intergalactic gas spanning young galaxies in a newly forming cluster.

"These observations of the faintest,

largest structures in the universe are a key to understanding how our universe evolved through time, how galaxies grow and mature, and how the changing environments around galaxies created what we see around us," said Erika Hamden, an astrophysicist at the University of Arizona.

The observations of the cosmic web bolster the so-called cold dark matter theory of galaxy formation. This suggests that hydrogen gas created in the big bang collapses first into sheets and then into filaments strung out across space. In places where filaments cross or are clustered together, galaxies form and the filaments continue to fuel the growth of galaxies by feeding them a steady stream of gas.

In line with this theory, the latest observations reveal that the intersection between enormous filaments was home to active galactic centers, containing supermassive black holes and "starbursting" galaxies that have very active star formation.

"This suggests very strongly that gas falling along the filaments under the force of gravity triggers the formation of starbursting galaxies and supermassive black holes, giving the universe the structure that we see today," said Hideki Umehata, of the Riken Cluster for Pioneering Research and the University of Tokyo, and first author of the research.

Previous observations had shown short blobs of gas extending beyond galaxies, but the latest are the first to show extended filaments.

"Now we have been able to clearly show that these filaments are extremely long, going even beyond the edge of the field that we viewed," said Umehata. "This adds credence to the idea that these filaments are actually powering the intense activity that we see within the galaxies inside the filaments."

(Source: The Guardian)

## Brett McGuire searches space for the chemistry of life

By Lisa Grossman

In a different reality, space might smell like almonds. After all, scientists surveying the chemicals in the cosmos have found benzonitrile; just a bit of the compound would fill your nostrils with a bitter almond scent.

But our cosmos is too vast. "Space smells like nothing," says astrochemist Brett McGuire. "There's not enough to get an actual whiff."



McGuire, 32, of the National Radio Astronomy Observatory in Charlottesville, Va., confirmed the presence of benzonitrile in a dark cloud in the Milky Way. He also discovered some of the other most complex molecules in space to date. By figuring out which molecules are out there, he and others hope to learn how the organic chemistry that undergirds all life on Earth — and perhaps anywhere else in the universe — gets started in space.

McGuire got his start in space as an undergraduate chemistry major at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. During a talk, Ben McCall, now a sustainability expert at the University of Dayton in Ohio, explained what he does for a living.

Enough said. McGuire spent that summer working in McCall's lab, building a spectrometer to study how hydrogen gas, H<sub>2</sub>, reacts with H<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> — three hydrogen atoms with only two electrons. Some of McCall's research included zapping gases of simple molecules with electricity — "an actual miniature lightning bolt," McGuire says — to force atoms to recombine into new compounds that can't be bought in a bottle.

"Brett was a very precocious young scientist," McCall says. "This was the only time I've had a student who really started a new instrument from scratch as an undergrad."

The discovery of benzonitrile in a dust cloud in the Milky Way suggests that complex molecules can form from the buildup of smaller molecules in space.

Because space is so big and mostly empty, at least by Earth standards, it can take millions of years for two molecules flying around like billiard balls to get close enough to interact. "But it's not just neutral billiard balls out there," McGuire says. A charged molecule, like H<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup>, which has been discovered in interstellar space, can pull other molecules closer. "More or less all chemistry in space can trace itself back to H<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> at some point."

And all that chemistry includes some tantalizingly lifelike stuff. In 2016, McGuire and colleagues reported discovering propylene oxide in a gas cloud within the Milky Way. That was the first molecule seen in space that, like the amino acids that make up proteins and are essential to life on Earth, has two forms that are mirror images of each other. Large rings of carbon and hydrogen, called polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, or PAHs, have also been spotted around dead or dying stars — though it's been hard to tell how many carbons and hydrogens the PAHs contain.

PAHs are thought to be the seeds of dust, planets and organic chemistry in our galaxy and other galaxies, McGuire says. So how do they form? "How do you go from H<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> to things that literally click together to make the building blocks of life?" he asks.

The work of enumerating what's out there mostly takes place in a lab on Earth. McGuire injects a puff of gas of the molecule he's interested in into a large vacuum chamber, where the low temperature and pressure make the gas expand. Then he hits the gas with a pulse of intense microwave or radio radiation, sending the molecules tumbling. As they tumble, the molecules emit photons at a specific frequency. That light signature, called the molecule's rotational spectrum, is what McGuire looks for when he searches for those molecules in space.

Once McGuire knows the molecular fingerprint he's after, he turns to radio telescopes to find the same print in space. Many scientists focus on one branch of this process or the other, the laboratory spectroscopy or the interstellar astronomy; only a few have expertise in both. "Brett is one of those very few people," McCall says.

To sniff almonds in space, McGuire and colleagues focused the Robert C. Byrd Green Bank Telescope in West Virginia on TMC-1, a dark cloud about 450 light-years from Earth "where maybe there are stars that are considering starting to form," McGuire says. Forty hours of observing confirmed that benzonitrile, a benzene ring with a cyanide molecule stuck on the end, was there.

## Scientists find toxic fungus near Australia's Great Barrier Reef

A highly poisonous fungus, with toxins that can be absorbed through the skin, has been identified for the first time in the rain forest near the Great Barrier Reef, Australian scientists said on Thursday.

The Fire Coral fungus, which is better known in South Korea and Japan as being among the world's most poisonous mushrooms, was found near Cairns in the northern state of Queensland, scientists from James Cook University said.

"If found, the fungus should not be touched, and definitely not eaten," said Matt Barrett, an expert on fungi at the university's Australian Tropical Herbarium.

"Of the hundred or so toxic mushrooms that are known to researchers, this is the only one in which the toxins can be absorbed through the skin."

If eaten, the distinctive red fungus causes a horrifying array of symptoms: stomach pain, vomiting, diarrhea, fever and numbness are followed over hours or days by the skin peeling off the hands and feet, and the shrinking of the brain, he added.

It was most likely that the fungus occurred naturally in Cairns, although instances have also been reported from Indonesia and Papua New Guinea, Barrett said in a statement.

"The fact that we can find such a distinctive and medically important fungus like Poison Fire Coral right in our backyard shows we have much to learn about fungi in northern Australia," he added.

(Source: Reuters)



## IKIA plans to increase flight capacity for Arbaeen pilgrims

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** — Imam Khomeini International Airport will be putting on extra flights from Tehran to the Iraqi cities of Najaf and Baghdad catering for Arbaeen pilgrims.



The airport has authorized over 500 extra flights to Najaf and Baghdad which will be launched as of October 9, Ali Rostami, the managing director of Imam Khomeini Airport City told IRNA on Sunday.

He noted that flight permission has been granted to domestic and foreign airlines without any limitations.

It is expected that over 90,000 passengers will be transported to Iraq through the airport for the Arbaeen rituals, he added.

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

For the Arbaeen pilgrimage, aka Arbaeen trek, which is a characteristic spiritual exercise, hundreds of thousands of people from various nationalities head for Karbala, where the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), is laid to rest.

## Alaska Airlines will drop two Hawaii-California routes, bolster others

Alaska Airlines is consolidating its flying to Kona on the big island of Hawaii, ending routes to two California airports. The move comes Southwest Airlines continues to expand its presence in the market.

Alaska will discontinue flights between Kona (KOA) and both Sacramento (SMF) and San Francisco (SFO) in March, Alaska spokesman Ray Lane confirmed Thursday. The move was first reported by Airline Route.

However, Seattle-based Alaska will boost service between Kona and both San Diego (SAN) and San Jose (SJC) in California to daily, Lane said.

“With competition increasing for travel to Hawaii, this schedule positions us to be competitive when guests are booking vacations,” he said.

Alaska’s changes in Kona come as Southwest is rapidly ramping up its schedule to Hawaii. The Dallas-based discounter began flights to the islands in March, and will launch nonstop flights to Kona from both Oakland (OAK) and San Jose in January. It will also begin service between Sacramento and Honolulu (HNL) the same month.

“Hawaii has just been tremendously successful right out of the gate,” said Southwest chief financial officer Tammy Romo in early September.

Alaska competes with Southwest on nearly all of the latter’s new routes to Hawaii. By March, they will both serve Honolulu, Kahului/Maui (OGG), Kona and Lihue (LIH) from Oakland and San Jose (SJC), as well as Kahului from Sacramento, according to Diio by Cirium schedules.

Southwest has also said it will add flights between San Diego and Hawaii but has yet to announce specific routes or dates. Alaska serves Honolulu, Kahului, Kona and Lihue from the Southern California airport.

(Source: MSN)



## ROUND THE GLOBE

### Ancient Merv

Merv is the oldest and best-preserved of the oasis-cities along the Silk Route in Central Asia. The remains in this vast oasis span 4,000 years of human history. A number of monuments are still visible, particularly from the last two millennia.

A UNESCO World Heritage, the property is located in the territory of Mary velayat of Turkmenistan. It has supported a



series of urban centers since the 3rd millennium BC and played an important role in the history of the East connected with the unparalleled existence of cultural landscape and exceptional variety of cultures which existed within the Murgab river oasis being in continually interactions and successive development.

It reached its apogee during the Muslim epoch and became a capital of the Arabic Caliphate at the beginning of 9th century and as a capital of the Great Seljuks Empire at the 11th-12th centuries.

Today “Ancient Merv” is a large archaeological park which includes remains of Bronze Age centers (2500-1200 BC) such as Kelleli, Adji Kui, Taip, Gonur, and Togoluk; Iron Age centres (1200-300 BC) such as Yaz/Gobekli Depes and Takhirbaj Depe; the historic urban center and the post-medieval city, Abdullah Khan Kala. The inscribed property covers the area of 353 ha with a buffer zone of 883 ha.

The walls of the post medieval city are of exceptional interest, since they continue the remarkable continuous record of the evolution of military architecture from the 5th century BC to the 15th-16th centuries AD.

(Source: UNESCO)

# Visits to Golestan tourist attractions at 15.7m in H1

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** — More than 15.7 million visits to Golestan province’s tourist attractions were registered during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (started March 21), provincial tourism chief announced on Saturday.

A total of 15,724,383 visits by domestic travelers and 5,575 ones by foreign nationals were registered to natural and historical attractions of the province, Ebrahim Karimi said, CHTN reported.

Some 33,000 people opted to stay at eco-lodge units that are scattered across the province, he said.

The attractions were toured by over 20,800,000 domestic visitors and 6,235 international ones during the past Iranian year, the official said.

The official added that 3,230 jobs, which are directly related to tourism, were created in the province over the past 18 months.

In September, provincial tourism official Ahmad Tajari said that the idea of staying at an eco-lodge has been welcomed by thousands of travelers to Golestan province.

“[Many] travelers to Golestan province have welcomed staying at eco-lodges as some 33,000 people have been accommodated during the first half of the current [Iranian calendar] year,” he said.

“Such eco-lodges are a source of sustainable employment, yet they help to increase household income, especially in rural areas of the province.”

Iran’s tourism body said in 2018 that 2,000 eco-lodges will be constructed countrywide until 2021. Experts say each eco-lodge unit generates jobs for seven to eight people on the average so that the scheme could create 160,000 jobs. Golestan is reportedly embracing some 2,500 historical and



natural sites, with UNESCO-registered Gonbad-e Qabus – a one-millennium-old brick tower – amongst its most famous.

Narratives say the tower has influenced various subsequent designers of tomb towers and other cylindrical

commemorative structures both in the region and beyond. The UNESCO comments that tower bears testimony to the cultural exchange between Central Asian nomads and the ancient civilization of Iran.

## Tehran to host 4th Intl. Health Congress of Islamic Countries

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** — The 4th International Health Congress of Islamic Countries, which is aimed to bring together senior scholars, academia, and experts from the public and private sectors, will be held in Tehran’s Homa Hotel from October 9 to 11.

The congress will be held in cooperation with the ministries of health and tourism in order to boost relations among Islamic countries in the arena of health (medical) tourism, an official responsible for the event said IQNA on Saturday.

Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Turkey, India, South Africa, Russia, Serbia, Hungary and Kyrgyzstan are among the countries whose representatives are scheduled to take part in the congress, the official added.

Participants are intended to introduce their latest achievements and share experiences as well as discuss issues and ideas for improving economic and technological cooperation, according to the organizers. Guests are not restricted to Islamic coun-



A poster for the 4th International Health Congress of Islamic Countries

tries as the organizers say, “This event is not only for the Islamic countries, but it is also for all companies and organizations attempting

to work in this huge market. Paying special attention and supporting active startups in the field of health tourism is another objective

of this international event.”

Tourism minister said earlier in August that medical [and health] travelers constitute a significant share of arrivals in the country.

“[Nearly] 7.8 million foreign nationals visited Iran over the past [Iranian calendar] year [ended March 20] that a significant number of whom were medical tourists,” Ali-Asghar Mounesan noted.

The Islamic republic hosted a record high of nearly 600,000 medical travelers during the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-July 21), nearly equal to the figure for the whole past year, according to an Iranian association for the health tourism promotion.

Many domestic experts say that medical tourism in Iran produces win-win outcomes as the country yields considerable benefits to international health-care seekers, offering affordable yet quality treatment services.

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

## Cluster of French motorcyclists traversing Iran

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** — A 55-member group of French motorcyclists entered the country via the northwestern Bazargan border on Saturday on an itinerary that goes to the southern city of Shiraz.

The travelers are to make a ten-day journey in the country, director of Maku Free Trade Zone Organization for tourism development said, IRNA reported.

They are heading to Urmia, Saqqez, Hamedan, Arak, Isfahan, Yasuj and Shiraz after a one-day stay in Maku, Mehdi Abdollahzadeh noted.

The group is scheduled to leave the country via Bazargan border, the official added.

Iran’s deputy tourism minister Vali Teymouri said earlier in August that foreign travelers with motorcycle above 250cc are allowed to enter and ride in Iran.

Last year, Iran imposed the ban on trading heavy motorcycles (with engine capacity of more than 250cc) due to a law concerning customs and anti-smuggling issues. The law created restrictions and sometimes difficulties to a number of foreign tourists who wanted to enter the country, Vali Teymouri explained.

Many international travelers to the country say that traversing Iran equals an endless charm, as it embraces so many diverse cultures and landscapes.

## In Dijon, where mustard rules, you can also meet an ancient goddess

Say “Dijon,” and it is likely that the word mustard will spring to mind. You can enjoy free tastings and buy just about any flavor of mustard (from cassis to horseradish) in the pedestrian medieval center of this sleepy city.

But few know that most of the mustard seed now used in making Dijon mustard comes from Canada (the seed that grows here is mostly used to produce Moutarde de Bourgogne — mustard of Bourgarde).

What you will find in Dijon is a little-visited archaeological museum with rare treasures from the Celtic and Gallo-Roman world.

The Musee Archeologique is housed in the main wing of what was once the St.-Bénigne Benedictine abbey, set in a garden next door to the St.-Benigne Cathedral, the tallest building in the city. The museum is worth a visit just to see the grand stone hall with two rows of columns and high Gothic arches that once served as the abbey’s dormitory.

The museum itself, which I encountered as I explored the region for a book on the Seine, is a modest, low-budget affair — with no audio guides, no 3-D simulations, no museum catalog and very few trinkets and souvenirs to buy.

Its collections date from prehistory to the Middle Ages and include several hundred locally discovered Bronze-Age objects such as leggings decorated with etched geometric motifs; household items, jewelry and weapons from the ancient Celts; a Gallo-Roman frieze representing the mother-goddesses of Alesia; and Merovingian sarcophagi from the fifth

and sixth centuries.

But the star attraction is a 2,000-year-old bronze statue of the Gallo-Roman goddess Sequana with the remains of what was once a vast healing temple at the source of the Seine River less than an hour’s drive away.

Even before the Romans came to rule over Gaul, pilgrims came from as far as the Mediterranean and what is now the English Channel to pray to her for a cure, consult the pagan priests, stay for a short visit, give thanks. They threw “ex votos,” or votive offerings, in wood, stone and bronze into a sacred healing pool.

Over time, the Gauls and then the Romans expanded the temple complex, which is believed to have been destroyed in the fourth or 7th century. The museum has reconstructed in a color drawing what the temple looked like, including a processional walkway; the main shrine; a portico surrounding the main spring; an oval basin containing sacred water; terraces; gardens; and secondary buildings that could have been shops.

From the mid-19th century on, archaeologists began to comb through the site where the temple complex once stood. Their excavations yielded odd treasures, including the statue of Sequana, more than 800 third- and fourth-century Roman bronze coins, and 1,500 rare ex votos. Some of the ex votos date from at least 150 BC — before the Roman conquest. Many are on display at the museum.

The largest number of offerings were carved from soft limestone that was available in the area. Most of them



The Gallo-Roman goddess Sequana was once worshiped at a vast healing temple at the Seine River’s source. Credit/Credit/François Perrodin/Musée archéologique de Dijon

represented body parts thought to need healing: heads, eyes, arms, legs, and internal organs.

Another group consists of nearly life-size representations of pilgrims hewn from chunks of oak. They are part of the largest collection of wooden Gallic sculptures ever found, according to research by Simone-Antoinette Deyts, the archaeologist who studied the site for years.

The museum, working with archaeologists over the years, has struggled to interpret the meaning of the offerings. Statuettes of women with big bellies and of couples locked in embrace suggested a desire for a child.

Statuettes of children holding puppies or rabbits may have been offerings from parents giving thanks. A head without a mouth or ears could have signaled deafness, and a head wrapped in a towel, migraines.

Apparently, the temple employed artisans who mass-produced some of the offerings: small, thin bronze plaques of body parts crudely hammered on demand for the pilgrims.

There are also stone busts or full-figured sculptures up to three feet tall that represented pilgrims who were either worshipping or honoring Sequana.

More famous than the Musee Archeologique is the Musee des Beaux-Arts de Dijon. Founded in 1787, it has recently reopened after an extensive renovation and is considered one of France’s most beautiful museums. It includes objects from antiquity, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, as well as masterpieces by Titian, Veronese, de La Tour, Tiepolo, Delacroix, Monet, Manet, Sisley, Cross and Rouault.

(Source: The New York Times)



# FACT CHECK: All misleading claims by Saudi Arabia’s MBS in his 60 Minutes interview

By Alireza Hashemi

**TEHRAN** — Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman sat down with CBS’s Norah O’Donnell on September 24 to give his first interview since the slaughter of Jamal Khashoggi.

Bin Salman talked about Khashoggi, September attacks into Aramco facilities, the Saudi intervention in Yemen and the case of arrested female activists.

Over the course of the extensive interview aired late September, he made a number of misleading claims that aren’t backed up by the facts.

The Saudi prince, also known as Mr. Everything, who runs the absolute monarchy day-to-day on behalf of his father, seemed clueless about how the absolute monarchy is ruled.

In the interview, MBS presents himself as a young, progressive leader who might oppose some existing “laws” and is unaware of his government’s treatment of female activists and Khashoggi’s slaughter.

He also portrays himself as a peace-loving man who is hard pressed by an aggressive Iran through a wide array of methods.

Overall, the interview showed once again MBS is a man of contradictions.

Here’s a closer look at MBS’ claims:

**■ Denying responsibility for Khashoggi’s murder**

**The claims:** He said he takes “full responsibility as a leader” for the slaughter but is not directly responsible for it, since he cannot control all actions by “three million people working for the Saudi government”. He also said “there isn’t clear information or evidence that someone close to me did something to that effect”.

**The facts:** The MBS is flatly wrong on this notion. Those who murdered Khashoggi inside the Saudi consulate in Turkey by no means could have been ordinary employees. Saudi public prosecutors have charged



Mohammed bin Salman (R) and Norah O'Donnell

11 men in the case, including the deputy intelligence chief Major General Ahmed Asiri and a close aide who has accompanied MBS in several trips abroad, notably his U.S. trips. Saud al-Qahtani, once the prince’s right-hand man, has been implicated but not formally charged.

Even the CIA believes he is behind the murder of Khashoggi, a prominent critic of the crown prince.

**The claims:** The crown prince said he “must take all actions” to prevent a repeat of Khashoggi’s slaughter and that “our role is to work day and night to overcome this”. He says “investigations” on the case are still ongoing and all sentences will go into effect “with no exception”.

**The facts:** Almost a year has passed since Khashoggi was murdered by what Saudi officials currently describe as “rogue” elements. Why it takes so long for the Saudi judiciary to investigate the gruesome murder?

**■ Blaming Iran for Aramco attacks**

**The claims:** He said he agrees with

US State Secretary Mike Pompeo that the September attacks into Aramco facilities were “an act of war” by Iran.

The MBS said the attacks that targeted “the global energy industry” had no strategic goal and were a move out of mere “stupidity”. He also said that the world will see “further escalations” threatening “world interests” if it does not take a firm action to deter Iran.

**The facts:** No compelling evidence suggesting Iran’s role in the attack has yet been publicized. In the eyes of Yemenis, who have claimed responsibility for the attack, this was a legitimate strike to force Saudi Arabia to end its five-year intervention in Yemen.

**The claims:** MBS sought to portray himself as an anti-war figure, saying a “political and peaceful solution” to his Iran problem is much better than a “military response”.

**The facts:** Saudi officials have long been advocating attacks on Iran, with the former Saudi king Abdullah once urging the US to cut the snake’s head. MBS himself threatened in 2017 Saudi Arabia will bring war to Iran.

**■ Downplaying Saudi role behind Yemen crisis**

**The claims:** Asked about the solution to the Yemen war, the Saudi prince said the political resolution in Yemen would be much easier if “Iran stops its support of the Houthi militia”.

**The facts:** The “Houthi militia” are in fact a wide array of Yemeni forces including Ansarullah and more than half of the Yemeni Army.

Moreover, the claims that Iran provides major support for the anti-Saudi forces in Yemen are widely suspected.

**The claims:** He said Saudi Arabia is “open all initiatives for a political solution in Yemen”.

**The facts:** Saudi Arabia has rejected many initiatives by the UN and other countries to end the Yemen war during the past five years.

**■ Legitimizing the arrest of women rights activists**

**The claims:** Asked about the whereabouts of a dozen female activists that have been detained for more than a year, bin Salman touted Saudi Arabia as a country governed by “laws” and said the public prosecutor independently takes decisions on them.

**The facts:** The Saudi activists were literally kidnapped last year and they have not been charged yet. And what laws authorized the arrest of female activists in the first place? What laws authorized the detention of hundreds of Saudi princes in Ritz Carlton hotel in 2017?

**The claims:** Asked to comment on claims by Al-Hathloul’s family that she has been tortured in prison, bin Salman said it would be “heinous” if the claims are correct and that he will “personally follow up on this matter”.

**The facts:** Al-Hathloul is not some unknown prisoner. He is a well-known Saudi female activist and reports on torture allegations have gone viral on the internet. Can we believe the de factor leader of Saudi Arabia had never heard about torture allegations?

## In media newspeak, a ‘peace plan’ for Israel/Palestine is anything U.S. proposes

By Joshua Cho

**FAIR** — Prior to the elections in Israel/Palestine in September—marred by blatant racism posturing as the “democratic process,” with millions of Palestinians living under varying degrees of Israeli rule unable to vote due to their ethnicity—Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu generated headlines for repeatedly pledging to annex nearly a third of the illegally occupied West Bank, in violation of international law, to gain support for his and the Likud party’s reelection (New York Times, 9/10/19).

The Trump administration’s refusal to release details before the September election on presidential son-in-law Jared Kushner’s “Vision for Peace” plan, which would supposedly resolve the enduring conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, was only the latest demonstration of the farce the administration’s “peace plan” has always been for Palestinians.

However, corporate media coverage of “Vision for Peace” continued to transmit the perspective of US official sources, constantly referring unironically to the proposal as a “peace plan,” “peace initiative” or “peace process.” The more difficult and honest approach to reporting on the so-called “peace plan”—by analyzing the plan on its predictable outcomes, rather than its professed objectives—wasn’t taken, despite the media’s own reporting indicating how the plan could never lead to peace.

The Washington Post’s “Kushner Presents Vision of a Middle East at Peace but No Details How to Get There” (6/25/19) tellingly only referred to the Trump administration’s proposal as a “peace plan” in its photo captions, and instead described it as an “economic plan” or a “White House plan” in the text of the article, when it reported on the economic component of Kushner’s plan to raise “\$50 billion in regional investment projects over the next decade.” Perhaps this is due to it reporting that the plan has been met with “widespread skepticism” and has already been “rejected by the Palestinian leadership,” who claim that the US can’t be “an honest peace broker after taking several pro-Israel measures,” such as “recognizing the contested city of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital.”

Others have observed how Kushner’s “Peace to Prosperity” plan resembles a real estate developer’s brochure,

The New York Times

NEWS ANALYSIS

**Trump’s Middle East Peace Plan Faces a Crossroads After Coalition Talks in Israel Crumble**



Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu pointing to a map of Israel given to him by President Trump, who had drawn an arrow pointing to the Golan Heights and scrawled “Nice.” Axel Sahadi/EPA, via Shutterstock

The New York Times (6/1/19) referred oxymoronically to “a staunchly pro-Israel peace plan—one that snuffed out the goal of a two-state solution, for example.”

mentioning “human capital” and “property rights” without mentioning “human rights,” along with buzzwords like “unleashing economic potential” and “enhancing Palestinian governance.” Other pro-Israel measures omitted from the article that make it impossible to accept the US as an honest broker include the Trump administration’s support for Israel’s illegal annexation of the Syrian Golan Heights (FAIR.org, 4/4/19), the closure of the Palestinian diplomatic post in Washington, the transfer of the US embassy to Jerusalem and the slashing of aid to Palestinian refugees (Guardian, 6/25/19).

When the Wall Street Journal (8/1/19) reported on the Kushner team’s meetings in Israel and other Arab countries to promote his “peace plan,” it depicted Kushner as a good-faith negotiator and peacemaker trying to “breathe life into Middle East peace efforts.” This despite reporting that he and his team were snubbing Palestinian leaders and their demands, as Kushner’s team was evading a guarantee of full statehood for Palestinians in favor of a vacuous “autonomy.”

The Journal noted that Kushner didn’t bother meeting with “any Palestinian officials” on this trip, and reported how Palestinian officials have long demanded an independent state on the boundaries that existed before the 1967 war, along with East Jerusalem as its capital and the right of refugees to return to land currently in Israel, which is “generally echoed” by “Arab countries.” That Kushner has never seen the Palestinians as genuine negotiating partners has never been more obvious since he expressed his colonialist dismissal of Palestinians as incapable of self-governance (Axios, 6/2/19).

The Los Angeles Times (6/23/19) insisted on referring to the Trump administration’s “Vision for Peace” as a “peace plan,” “peace process” or “peace initiative” throughout its article, despite quoting statements that contradict such benign motives from sources “privy to Kushner’s work,” like former Israeli Defense minister and “hard-liner” Avigdor Lieberman:

Lieberman said the term “peace process” was irrelevant in the explosive region. “You will never see, at least in the next generation, any peace in the Middle East.”

The LA Times utilized this Newspeak even as it offered the assessment of Daniel Benjamin, the director of Dartmouth College’s John Sloan Dickey Center for International Understanding:

“The Trump administration’s policy for the region is to give the Israelis everything that Netanyahu wants and set up a scenario in which the Palestinians are forced to reject it,” thus providing the White House with “the excuse it needs to continue a basically punitive policy towards the Palestinians,” he said.

FAIR has documented how the New York Times has been one of the most credulous media outlets in covering the Israeli/Palestinian conflict (e.g., FAIR.org, 5/16/19, 4/26/19), and its coverage of the Kushner plan is no different. Although the Times’ “Trump to Open Middle East Peace Drive With Economic Incentives” (5/19/19) reported on Netanyahu’s plans to annex part of the West Bank (which would make a two-state solution impossible), and Kushner rejecting an independent Palestinian state, that wouldn’t stop its later reporting from dubbing the Trump administration’s proposal a “peace plan.”

The Times (6/1/19) continued to unironically refer to the US proposal as a “peace plan” or “peace initiative,” even as it observed that Trump planned to “throw his full weight behind Benjamin Netanyahu’s campaign to save his job as prime minister of Israel”—without mentioning that Netanyahu is facing multiple indictments for corruption. It also had no problem analyzing the “political calculus” behind the Trump administration’s plan:

Mr. Trump, eager not to alienate evangelical voters or

MIDDLE EAST

### Kushner Promotes Peace Plan During Middle East Trip

Trump administration officials have suggested the still-secret proposal won’t guarantee full statehood for Palestinians



Wall Street Journal (8/1/19) said Jared Kushner was promoting “how a peace plan could benefit the Palestinian economy”—on a trip that involved meeting with no Palestinians.

influential pro-Israel donors like the casino magnate Sheldon Adelson, is unlikely to present a plan that would put Israel or Mr. Netanyahu in an awkward position. For both leaders, therefore, the political calculus will argue for a plan that makes as few demands of Israel as possible.

Corporate media refused many other easy opportunities to discredit the Trump administration’s professed desire for peace. How could a genuine peace agreement be reached when the officials in charge of the plan, like Kushner, US ambassador to Israel David Friedman and former chief negotiator Jason Greenblatt, were all supportive of and bankrolling Israel’s illegal settlements, and have overseen some of the most punitive anti-Palestinian measures in US history (Jacobin, 7/9/19)? How could peace be achieved when the staunchly pro-Israel US plan involved approving Netanyahu’s plan to annex parts of the West Bank considered to be the “food basket” of Palestinians, and rendering a viable Palestinian state impossible by fragmenting it into isolated enclaves within Israel (Intercept, 9/11/19)?

Corporate media also gave scant coverage to the absurdity of a “peace plan” that tries to sell potential investments in Gaza and the West Bank as a “hot IPO,” and doesn’t mention Israel’s illegal occupation strangling the Palestinian economy (CounterPunch, 11/20/15). The UN has found that the Palestinian economy would be at least twice as large if it weren’t for the occupation (Al-Jazeera, 9/9/16), while companies doing business in the settlements contribute to and profit from land confiscations and violations of the rights of Palestinian workers (Al-Jazeera, 1/9/16).

Although there has been vigorous debate between those who support a two-state solution to the Israel/Palestine conflict (Guardian, 11/2/12; Nation, 7/2/14) and a single, multiethnic, democratic state, advocates for a one-state solution continue to be marginalized in the corporate media discussion (FAIR.org, 6/1/18), despite gaining ground among Palestinians and other people abroad. Rather than treating the denial of democratic rights to Palestinians as a human rights problem, the extension of those rights is portrayed as a threat to Jewish Israelis (FAIR.org, 2/1/19).

Seen from the perspective of those advocating a one-state solution, US and Israeli support for annexing parts of the West Bank is simply an acknowledgment of the reality that Israel/Palestine can only have one government, and a confirmation that democracy is the only path to peace. Whichever path one favors, it should be clear that in media Newspeak, “peace plan” is a propaganda term that only refers to whatever Washington is proposing at any given time.

## Strategies for combating international terrorism in Central Asia

**1 →** Activities of extremist networks which send their members and devotees to Syria have a determining role in the region. Many of the foreign rebels operating in Syria had links to these groups in their own countries. A portion of them are being encouraged by their relatives and friends in Syria to join the ranks of the Takfiri militants, especially older brothers motivate the younger ones to join the terrorists.

The terrorists’ method for recruiting forces is almost the same in most of the countries in the Central Asia. They usually do this through local sources and Islamist groups and organizations that have close ties with al-Qaeda, Salafists and Wahhabists. However, this is not done openly.

A number of terrorist groups are tasked with recruiting individuals to send them to fight in Syria. In fact, all terrorist groups, including al-Qaeda and the al-Tahrir Party are busy with the recruitment. The Takfiri groups of al-Nusra Front and the so-called Islamic Jihad Union are also employing nationals from the Central Asia. In some countries, the process of the employment is done through indigenous people. For instance, one third of all Kyrgyz people who have travelled to Saudi Arabia in pursuance of religious education have turned into extremist Salafi-Wahhabi preachers in Kyrgyzstan. That is why today the Kyrgyz are employing their people to prevent this.



**■ The Challenges of Combating Terrorism in Central Asia**

Fighting terrorist threats in Central Asia is a complex issue. To counter these threats, Kazakhstan and other Central Asian governments have been reevaluating their national counter-terrorism strategies. Counter-terrorism cooperation under the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization has its limits because not all the Central Asian governments are members of the organizations. Also these strategies have been mainly established to counter terrorism within the member states, not the ones stemming from other regions.

On the other hand, some external actors play a destructive role in improving the security situation in the region. Indeed none of the great powers are not serious fight against terrorism. At present, the security conditions of the region can be made more complicated for several reasons:

- First, the spread of terrorism and extremist groups;
- Second, U.S. competition to increase penetration;
- Third, ISIS’s willingness to be present in the region;
- Fourth, the presence of people from the countries of Central Asia, Afghanistan and Pakistan in the ranks of ISIS militants in Iraq and Syria;

**■ Iran and Fighting Terrorism in Central Asia**

The rising threats of extremism in Central Asia represent a strong menace for Iran interests. Due to the increasing presence of ISIS forces in Afghanistan, the security of Central Asia remains a top priority on the Iran security agenda. The Iran-Central Asia Strategy should include in its objectives the challenges of foreign fighters and radicalization, drug trafficking and organized crime, and conflicts that require cooperation between Central Asia and the Iran.

No one and no country can deny the constructive and positive role of Iran in fighting the scourge of terrorism in the region and the world. Iran’s efforts and assistance to regional countries have helped reign in the violence and bloodshed of ISIS terrorist group in various parts of the world by bringing the self-proclaimed statehood of ISIS to an end in Iraq and Syria. The Islamic Republic of Iran will continue to advocate dialogue, cooperation and trust among regional countries as the only viable way to end terrorism and devastating wars in the Middle East. In result no country would benefit from weakening Iran in the region.

In the past years Iran has acted as a buffer zone and has prevented the entry of terrorist groups from Middle East to Central Asia. Iran has always tried to fight with terrorist and takfiri groups. Among foreign actors in the region Iran and Russia have a good cooperation in the fight against terrorism. Iran and Russia are winning the Fight against Terrorism in Syria. Undoubtedly Iran and Russia can offer their experience in combating terrorism to Central Asian countries.

**■ Conclusion**

No doubt, security, peace and respect for the sovereignty of countries, as well non-interference in their internal affairs, and an effective fight against terrorism without double standards will be in the interest of all countries in the world.

Fight against Terrorism Requires a holistic and coordinated approach. For the implementation of the international Counter Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia need a Regional Joint Action Plan. Integrating counter-terrorism strategy to political, economic and social development policies is an important part of the comprehensive approach.

In order to combat terrorism in Central Asia, there are a few issues to consider:

1. All States in region to combat terrorism must take coordinated action.
2. Fighting terrorism in Central Asia will not succeed without creating peace and stability in Afghanistan.
3. Combating terrorism requires the formation of a regional and international coalition with States that really have a concern for countering terrorism, not the countries that have been sponsors of terrorist groups.
4. The fight against terrorism requires the use of past experiences in this regard. Iran and Russia have considerable experience in combating terrorism.



## International Olympiad medal-winning students honored

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — In a meeting held on Sunday, President Hassan Rouhani honored students winning medals at international Olympiads.

During the meeting, Rouhani emphasized the need for making the most of opportunities during life, saying that becoming elite is partly dependent upon intelligence and mental ability, but what makes it everlasting and significant is contingent on personal effort and endeavor.

Based on Islamic teachings, mental and psychological conditions as well as living standards, even before the birth of a child, is important and effective in the growth of his or her talents, the president explained.

He went on to say that a healthy and fair competition will contribute to more progress in all areas.

Employing elites in different fields will lower national administration expenses and will provide better conditions for development, he said, concluding that the government has adopted the policy for supporting knowledge-based companies in this regard.

## Food packages being distributed among pregnant women in deprived areas

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — Food packages are being distributed among pregnant women residing in deprived areas across the country to reduce births of babies weighing less than 2.5 kilograms, deputy director of Mostazafan Foundation has said.

The packages are consisting of rice, pasta, beans, cheese, soybeans, dates, oil, and poultry meat, which are being distributed every two months among financially struggling families who are expecting a baby, ISNA quoted Mousa Barzegari as saying on Sunday.



He went on to explain that the scheme was launched to improve pregnant women's nutrition, reduce pregnancy complications, and increase baby weight during pregnancy.

The scheme has been implemented since past 13 years by the Foundation in 360 cities across the country, he concluded.

■ **Poor diet during pregnancy impact on child's health**

According to WHO, maintaining good nutrition and a healthy diet during pregnancy is critical for the health of the mother and unborn child.

To promote a healthy diet, increasing the diversity and amount of foods consumed, sufficient and balanced protein and energy intake, continued use of micronutrient supplements, food supplements or fortified foods are essential.

Available evidence suggests that nutrition may support optimal gestational weight gain (i.e. neither insufficient nor excessive), reduce the risk of anaemia in late pregnancy, increase birth weight, and lower the risk of preterm delivery.

Counselling will be effective in undernourished populations when women are also provided with nutrition support such as food or micronutrient supplements where needed.

## WORDS IN THE NEWS

### North Korean state security

(December 10, 2001)  
It is one year since Britain and North Korea established ties. But while relations with Europe have warmed, North Korea's relations with the United States have deteriorated and attitudes hardened. This report from Caroline Gluck.  
It's a time for muted celebration in the North Korean capital, Pyongyang, as the first anniversary of **formalizing diplomatic ties** with Britain is being **marked**. The British embassy, which opened in Pyongyang in July, is holding a celebratory week with screenings of British films, and book and science exhibitions. Britain was one of the first European countries to normalize ties with the North last December as the **isolationist state** began an **unprecedented diplomatic drive**. It was a time of heightened expectations, soon after the historic summit between the two Korean leaders in which they **pledged to end hostility** and move towards a new era of **reconciliation**.

Pyeongyang has reacted angrily to recent calls from Washington to allow nuclear inspectors into the country as well as a State Department report which accused North Korea of repressing religious freedom.

The optimistic mood of a year ago has disappeared but, by opening ties with the North, Britain, like many other countries, has **opened a door** for dialogue and believes that **engagement** is the best way forward in helping to ease tension, not only on the Korean peninsula but further afield.

■ **Words**  
**formalizing:** making official  
**diplomatic ties:** relations between governments  
**marked:** celebrated, remembered  
**isolationist state:** a country that has cut itself off from other nations  
**unprecedented:** something which hasn't happened  
**drive:** effort  
**pledged to:** promised to  
**reconciliation:** understanding  
**opened a door:** encouraged, allowed discussion  
**engagement:** political discussions aimed at improving relation  
(Source: BBC)

# Tehran to get 550 kilometers of bike lanes in 5 years

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — Bikeways stretching to 550 kilometers will be built across the capital city of Tehran over the next five years, an official with Tehran Municipality has said.

Two years ago, a five-year plan was developed in collaboration with a Dutch group and international consultants aiming to develop cycling in Tehran, Mehdi Hassanzadeh, manager of the project for development of cycling in Tehran explained.

Tehran Municipality should coordinate with all relevant bodies, including the Cycling Federation, the Ministry of Sport and Youth, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, and the Traffic Police to develop cycling, he emphasized.

Pointing out that special cycling routes and parking stations will be established in the city within the next five years, he added that under the plan, a total of 550 kilometers of bike tracks - five kilometers per year in each area - will be built in Tehran.

At the same time, cultural, social, educational and informational activities should be undertaken to promote cycling among the citizens, he highlighted, ISNA reported on Sunday.

For example, the Ministry of Health has already spent funds on increasing the physical activity of citizens while reducing non-communicable diseases; on the other hand, the municipality of Tehran is seeking to develop cycling in the country to reduce air pollution and alleviate traffic congestion, he said.

He went on to add that co-ordination of these two bodies can also lead to the reduction of non-communicable diseases and increased physical mobility of citizens, in addition to the development of bicycles and the reduction of air pollution.

Lamenting that the municipality of Tehran sometimes do not follow the five-year



**Since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21), Tehran air quality has been unhealthy for sensitive groups for 27 days due to high rate of ozone emissions, while one day reported to be unhealthy for all the residents, according to the Tehran Air Quality Control Company.**

cycling development plan, he emphasized that "If we follow the plan precisely, better results will be achieved."

He further stated that a coalition for international funding was formed last year to develop cycling in cities, with the Dutch Embassy, international experts and municipalities in attendance, adding, the international cycling development fund was intended to be provided to the cities joined the coalition.

The coalition's efforts were efficient, but

unfortunately, with re-imposed sanctions, international funding faced barriers and we have been failed to attract funding, he regretted.

According to the latest agreements with the Traffic Police, the bike is to be recognized as a vehicle, and all the road laws and regulations will apply to bicyclists, he highlighted.

The plan has made good progress in past two years and the number of cyclists has grown, he said, adding, Tehran, on the other

## Charity foundation opens up 90,000 job opportunities in rural areas

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — Barekat Charity Foundation, affiliated to Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam, will create 90,000 jobs for the people residing in rural areas during the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21), an official with the foundation has said.

The foundation has developed 30,000 job plans which will result in creating 90,000 jobs in villages across the country, Hadi Johari stated, IRIB reported on Sunday.

Under the project, each manufacturing unit will be provided with low-interest loans amounting to 400 million rials (around \$10,000), he announced.

He went on to note that last year over 30,000 jobs have been generated by supporting 10,000 businesses in rural areas.

■ **\$95m earmarked for creating jobs in East Azarbaijan**

Ahad Hosseini, director general of labor and social welfare department of East Azarbaijan province, also said that a budget of 4 trillion rials (about \$95 million) was allocated to open up job opportunities in the province.

A part of the budget has been so far spent to pilot job development plans in Azarshahr and Maragheh cities, he noted, adding, each plan will support 700 business units to create over 2,000 jobs.

So far, some 110 job plans have been approved to receive the facilitation loans and start their business, he concluded.

Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam,

also known as Setad-e Ejraiye Farman-e Hazrat-e Emam, was founded in 1989. In the Iranian calendar year 1386 (March 2017-March 2018) Barekat Charity Foundation- the social arm of the organization- with the aim of promoting social justice was established.

Socio-economic empowerment of the communities by encouraging entrepreneurship prioritizing breadwinner women, developing infrastructure such as water supply schemes, power grid, and road building, constructing schools and increasing educational spaces, promoting health for all, granting non-repayable loans and insurance especially in less developed areas and regions most affected by 1980s war and natural disasters are of the priorities of the charity foundation.

## Teenage climate activist tipped to win Nobel Peace Prize

Swedish environment activist Greta Thunberg is being tipped to win the Nobel Peace Prize following a remarkable year in which the teenager's "school strike for climate" movement has grown to worldwide prominence.

Here is everything you need to know about the 16-year-old.

Who is Greta Thunberg?

Greta Thunberg began a lone protest outside Sweden's parliament in October 2018 when she was 15, saying would refuse to attend school on Fridays until the government tackled the growing climate and ecological crisis.

In the 12 months since, she has become one of the world's most talked-about people, having been invited to speak at the UN general assembly – where she invoked the wrath of Donald Trump – and inspiring global protests attracting hundreds of thousands of young campaigners.

"You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words," the teenager told world leaders during her emotional and confrontational speech at the UN last month.

"And yet I'm one of the lucky ones. Peo-

ple are suffering. People are dying. Entire ecosystems are collapsing. We are in the beginning of a mass extinction. And all you can talk about is money and fairytales of eternal economic growth. How dare you."

How have people responded to her?

Since being thrust into the global limelight, Greta's climate activism has attracted scorn as well as praise.

Some right-wing critics have, with little evidence, denounced her as a liar or a hypocrite.

Others have highlighted her Asperger's diagnosis and suggested she is being manipulated by her parents, actor Svante Thunberg and former Eurovision singer Malena Ernman.

Greta has repeatedly hit back at her critics, denying she is paid for her activism or is being "used" by anyone.

Earlier this year she wrote on Facebook to say "there is no one 'behind' me except for myself. My parents were as far from climate activists as possible before I made them aware of the situation".

Mr Trump, a notorious climate sceptic, took issue with her remarks at the UN, retweeting

the video of her speech and sarcastically writing: "She seems like a very happy young girl looking forward to a bright and wonderful future. So nice to see!"

Greta responded by changing her Twitter biography to read: "A very happy young girl looking forward to a bright and wonderful future."

Russian president Vladimir Putin, meanwhile, has accused her of failing to understand the realities of "complex" world. "When someone is using children and teenagers in personal interests, it only deserves to be condemned," he said.

"I'm sure that Greta is a kind and very sincere girl. But adults must do everything not to bring teenagers and children into some extreme situations."

Will Greta Thunberg win the Nobel Peace Prize?

If Greta is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize on October 11, she would be the youngest recipient of the prestigious award, which has previously been won by the likes of Nelson Mandela and Barack Obama.

She would also be the first person to win the prize for environmental work since Al Gore,



the former US vice president, who shared it with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 2007.

"It's hard to argue against the impact Thunberg's actions have had globally, and that's reflected in her odds as the favourite to win the Nobel Peace Prize," said Ladbrokes spokesperson Jessica O'Reilly.

Other candidates tipped to win the award include the Ethiopian prime minister Abiy Ahmed, Native Brazilian environmental leader Raoni Metuktire and New Zealand prime minister Jacinda Ardern.

(Source: The Independent)

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → €

## Euphrates softshell turtle threatened with extinction in Iran

Euphrates softshell turtle is endangered in the country mainly due to habitat loss and low precipitation, environmental expert Asghar Mobaraki told YJC on Friday.

## PREFIX/SUFFIX

### “-biotic”

■ **Meaning:** life

■ **For example:** The two groups of micro-organism which have been shown to be therapeutically beneficial as **probiotics** are the following.

## PHRASAL VERB

### Palm something off

■ **Meaning:** to persuade someone to accept or buy something that is not of good quality

■ **For example:** He tried to palm off his old books onto me.

## IDIOM

### Crying shame

■ **Explanation:** If something is a crying shame, it is very sad or unfortunate

■ **For example:** It's a crying shame that some families cannot afford lunch for their children.



# Washington accomplice in Saudi-led military aggression: Al-Houthi

**TEHRAN** — Yemeni Houthi Ansarullah movement says the United States is hindering peace efforts in Yemen, describing Washington as an accomplice in the Saudi-led military aggression against the country.

Mohammed Ali al-Houthi, the chairman of the Supreme Revolutionary Committee of Yemen, made the remarks in an interview with the Turkish daily Gazeteduvar on Saturday.

He said that aggression against Yemen will not end until the US, Israel, Britain, and France ends their support for the aggressors.

According to Press TV, Al-Houthi added that Yemeni forces are fighting in line with right to self defense, while stressing that the Houthi supreme political council welcomed any dialogue aimed at achieving peace.

He described as a “war crime” the Saudi-led blockade of his country which “has created the worst humanitarian crisis ever.”

He pointed to the Houthis’ offer of truce as a peaceful way out of the crisis, while warning that if the Saudis rejected the plan, they would suffer fatal losses.

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.

■ **Saudis can’t ‘change game’**  
Meanwhile, Mohammed al-Bukhaiti,

a member of Yemen’s Supreme Political Council, recommended the Saudis not to “think they can change the game.”

Ansarullah “will never accept a partial halt to the Saudi attacks on Yemen in return for a total halt on our part,” he said.

He also blasted the United Arab Emirates’ move to deploy 100 military vehicles in Taiz as “wrong”, calling militarization of al-Makha port in Yemen as violation of international laws.

“We will not remain silent in the face of the militaristic movements of the UAE, which are not in their favor. The Emirates must leave Yemen completely,” he added.

■ **Bomb blast kills Saudi mercenaries in Jawf**

In a separate development, an unspecified number of Saudi mercenaries were killed or wounded after a bomb exploded in Yemen’s northern province of al-Jawf, Yemen’s al-Masirah news website cited a military source as saying on Saturday.

Saudi Arabia and a number of its regional allies launched a devastating campaign against Yemen in March 2015, with the goal of bringing the government of Hadi back to power and crushing the Houthi Ansarullah movement.

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

## Tunisia elects lawmakers to tackle economy, disappointment after uprising



**TEHRAN** — Tunisians voted for a new parliament on Sunday but quiet polling stations gave an indication of the economic disillusionment that has emerged since the 2011 revolution and brought political newcomers to challenge established parties.

The failure of repeated coalition governments that grouped the old secular elite and the long-banned moderate Islamic Ennahda party to address a weak economy and declining public services has dismayed many Tunisians.

“After the revolution, we were all optimistic and our hopes were high. But hope has been greatly diminished now as a result of the disastrous performance of the rulers and the former parliament,” said Basma Zoghbi, a worker for Tunis municipality.

Unemployment, 15% nationally and 30% in some cities, is higher than it was under the former autocrat, Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali, who died last month in exile in Saudi Arabia.

Inflation hit a record 7.8% last year and is still high at 6.8%. Frequent public sector strikes disrupt services. Financial inequality meanwhile divides Tunisians

and the poverty of many areas has become an important political theme.

According to Reuters, any government that emerges from Sunday’s election will face the competing demands of improving services and the economy while further reining in Tunisia’s high public debt, a message pushed by international lenders.

While the president directly controls foreign and defense policy, the largest party in parliament nominates the prime minister, who forms a government that shapes most domestic policy.

For weeks, the names and faces of candidates have been posted on the walls of schools, which double as polling stations on election day, and leaflets have been stuffed through mailboxes or under car windshield wipers.

However, at four polling stations visited by Reuters on Sunday, there seemed to be few younger voters.

One of them, Imad Salhi, 28, a waiter, was concerned about the direction of Tunisian politics. “I am very afraid that the country will fall into the hands of populists in the next stage,” he said.

## EU divisions over Russia mount as France, Germany seek peace in Ukraine



**TEHRAN** — French and German attempts to end the conflict in east Ukraine risk increasing tensions that were already rising in the European Union over how to handle Russia and which could complicate peace efforts.

Progress at talks between Russian and Ukrainian envoys have raised hopes of convening the first international summit in three years on ending the fighting between pro-Russian separatists and Ukrainian government forces.

But some EU states, while welcoming a summit that would involve France, Germany, Ukraine and Russia, are worried by growing talk that the EU might partially lift sanctions imposed on Moscow since its seizure of Crimea from Ukraine in 2014.

EU divisions over how to deal with Moscow have been growing over overtures to the Kremlin in recent months, led by Paris.

Comments by French President Emmanuel Macron have especially upset governments in EU countries that were once Soviet satellite states or constituent republics. Alarmed by what they see as an increasingly aggressive Russian foreign

policy, they reject anything that might smack of appeasement.

“Are we to reward Russia because they have not done anything grotesque in the past few months?” one EU diplomat asked.

In EU meetings, letters and speeches, divisions about Russia that were once under control are resurfacing, diplomats say.

The tension could make it harder for the EU to agree new sanctions if Russia intensifies what are often depicted by Western leaders as efforts by President Vladimir Putin to undermine Western institutions such as the 28-nation bloc.

The tension could also further divide the bloc - with a group of French-led, relatively Russia-friendly allies such as Italy on one side, and the Baltic states, Poland and Romania on the other. This in turn could weaken the resolve of Western-backed governments to stand up for Ukraine, diplomats said.

According to Reuters, EU diplomats still expect leaders of the bloc to extend sanctions on Russia’s energy, financial and defense sectors for another six months at a regular summit in December.

## Turkey protests after U.S. Embassy likes tweet about ill nationalist party leader

**TEHRAN** — Turkey protested on Sunday after the U.S. Embassy’s Twitter account liked a tweet saying that Turkey should be ready for a political realm without Devlet Bahçeli, the leader of the nationalist party who has recently fallen in ill.

The dispute comes at a time when relations between the NATO allies are strained due to Turkey’s threatened incursion into northeastern Syria, after Ankara accused Washington of stalling efforts to establish a ‘safe zone’ there together.

Bahçeli is the leader of Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), which is an ally of President Tayyip Erdogan’s AK Party. The two parties entered the parliamentary and presidential elections in an alliance last year, which allowed them to attain a majority in parliament together.

On Saturday, the U.S. Embassy liked a tweet that said Turkey should be ready for politics without Bahçeli, who has had health issues in recent weeks.

The AK Party said on Twitter that the user who had posted the message was wanted for links to the network of Fethullah Gulen, which Ankara says orchestrated the abortive coup in July 2016.

Omer Celik, spokesman for the AK Party, said the U.S. State Department and Embassy needed to investigate the issue and an apology would not suffice.

“It shows that some people employed in the Embassy are making a special effort to damage the relations between the two countries,” Celik said on Twitter.

“The United States Embassy needs to try to understand Turkey not through people linked with terrorist organizations but through people who can conduct proper analysis,” he said.

The Embassy posted an apology on Twitter late on Saturday. “Earlier today our Embassy Twitter account ‘liked’ an unrelated post in error. We regret the mistake and apologize for any confusion,” it said. The like was also removed from the Embassy’s page.

Semih Yalcin, deputy head of the MHP, said on Twitter late on Saturday that Bahçeli has recovered from his illness and would return to work in the coming week.

The relations between the NATO allies have been under pressure in recent years over a range of issues, including Turkey’s purchase of Russian S-400 missile defense sys-



tems, differences in policy in Syria and the detention of local U.S. consulate employees and citizens in Turkey, Reuters reported.

## Protests in Iraq and why foreign parties are involved

➔ Indeed, if they did not chant anti-Iran slogans, we would have seen more people in these protests. Brutal and violent behaviors of some security groups also escalated the tension.

Another reason that reinforces the assumption about foreigners’ involvement is the lack of knowledge about the cultural situation in Iraq. If an Iraqi group were to lead the protests, they would definitely choose another time, since the majority of people are getting ready to attend the Arbæen ceremony, which will greatly affect the protests. Anyway, despite the commotions created, the protest is not as extensive as the last year’s. Some believe this movement has been formed to disrupt Arbæen pilgrimage and Iran-Iraq ties, but it will certainly fail. The Arbæen ceremony will be held more gloriously than ever.

It was the good work of all main Shiite and resistance groups that supported the Arbæen march and condemned acts of sabotage. On the other hand, they also demanded Abdul-Mahdi to listen to them, and gave him the opportunity to take practical measures for solving unemployment problem. Regarding the situation and the Arbæen march, it will be most likely that the protests end soon, but its consequences will remain. After Arbæen the protests will be probably resumed from another city like Basra.

## Iraqi PM pledges reforms to calm protests

➔ The public sector remains the largest employer in Iraq, a country of 40 million people, but it has struggled to absorb new university graduates in recent years.

The government has officially designated those killed as “martyrs,” granting their families a special set of benefits.

On Sunday morning, the situation was calm in Baghdad, though with lighter traffic than usual. The capital’s iconic Tahrir Square remained blocked off by security forces.

In another event, Parliament speaker Mohammed al-Halbusi pledged a range of reforms in a meeting with lawmakers on Saturday, but did not hold his planned legislative session as the body failed to reach quorum.

Born of calls on social media, the protest movement denounced corruption, unemployment and the decay of public services in a country chronically short of electricity and drinking water.

## Second whistleblower in Trump-Ukraine scandal comes forward

**TEHRAN**— A second whistleblower, with first-hand knowledge of President Donald Trump’s dealings with Ukraine, has spoken with the intelligence community’s internal watchdog, the lawyer representing the official said Sunday.

According to Reuters, Mark Zaid confirmed in an interview with ABC’s “This Week” that the second official, also from the U.S. intelligence community, has been interviewed by the inspector general. Zaid represents the first whistleblower who filed a complaint involving a July 25 phone call Trump held with Ukraine’s president in which he asked him to investigate a Democratic rival, former Vice President Joe Biden.

## Israel, Arab states agree to advance ‘alliance’

**TEHRAN** — Persian Gulf Arab states and Israel have agreed to advance a “historic” alliance no matter what happens to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Tel Aviv-based Channel 12 television network reports.



The agreement was reached between Israeli foreign minister Israel Katz and his Arab counterparts who met on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly two weeks ago, the report said.

As a follow-up to the meeting, teams would be formed to discuss the plan, which would forge relations between the sides “irrespective of what occurs with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,” the Jerusalem Post reported.

The newspaper said Katz’s spokesperson confirmed to the Jerusalem Post that the report was accurate. Katz also presented the plan to U.S. special envoy for the Middle East Jason Greenblatt.

The initiative calls for developing “friendly relations and cooperation,” preventing hostility or incitement to hostility against each other, and eschewing any military or security alliance with other parties against each other.

According to Press TV, Israel has full diplomatic ties with only two Arab states - Egypt and Jordan - but reports suggest Tel Aviv is working behind the scenes to establish formal contacts with such countries as Saudi Arabia and Bahrain.

Last month, Katz tweeted that he had held talks in New York with an unnamed counterpart from an Arab country with which Tel Aviv does not have formal relations.

They discussed “ways to deal with the Iranian threat” and a process for boosting “civilian cooperation,” he said.

In July, the Israeli top diplomat traveled to the UAE capital on his second public visit to a Persian Gulf country in eight months after visiting Oman in November 2018.

Later that month, he shared a photograph with Bahraini Foreign Minister Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifah during an event in Washington.

## U.S. ‘peace envoy’ meets Taliban counterparts for first time since failed deal

**TEHRAN** — U.S. so-called peace envoy Zalmay Khalilzad has met with Afghanistan-based Taliban negotiators for the first time since the American president called off a seemingly imminent truce deal with the notorious militants in its bid to end its 18-year war on the terror-ravaged country.

Announcing the development on Saturday, an unnamed Taliban official cited in an AP report did not elaborate further on the Friday encounter in Pakistan’s capital of Islamabad between Khalilzad and the

Taliban delegation led by Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, a co-founder of insurgent group that was ousted in 2001 by the U.S.-led military occupation of Afghanistan, purportedly aimed at rooting out terrorism in the country.

The Taliban official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media, the report noted, adding that while Washington has insisted that there is no resumption of peace talks, the meeting is still significant since the U.S. continues to

seek an exit from the longest war in its history, leaving hundreds of thousands killed, injured and displaced across Afghanistan.

According to the report, Khalilzad has been in Islamabad for much of the past week meeting with senior government officials in what the U.S. State Department referred to as follow-up meetings he held in New York during last month’s UN General Assembly session, where he met with Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan, who has been calling for a resump-

tion of peace talks.

This is while Taliban’s top negotiator Mullah Baradar arrived separately in the Pakistani capital for meetings with government officials aimed at discussing a wide range of political issues linked to the more than 1.5 million Afghans still living in Pakistan as refugees.

According to Press TV, In the past year, Khalilzad held nine rounds of negotiations with the Taliban in the Persian Gulf State of Qatar, where the insurgent group maintains a political office.



## Osaka beats world number one Barty to win China Open

Naomi Osaka won a second tournament on the spin as she fought back from a set down to defeat world number one Ashleigh Barty in the China Open final on Sunday.

The Japanese two-time Grand Slam champion emerged victorious after 110 minutes in chilly Beijing, 3-6, 6-3, 6-2.

On Saturday, after defeating holder Caroline Wozniacki in the semi-finals, the 21-year-old called her own serve “confusing”.

And so it was in the sixth game when Osaka conjured up a double fault, then an ace, then another double fault against Australia’s Barty.

The world number four, victorious in her home Pan Pacific Open last month, was broken when she planted a forehand into the net.

The former number one appeared mildly uncomfortable with her shoulder, touching it and rotating it between points.

Barty, 23, who had strapping down her left calf, wrapped up the first set in 34 minutes and frustration was creeping in for the Australian Open champion Osaka.

But much of the crowd in Beijing was pro-Osaka and they were cheering when she broke Barty to move 4-2 up on the way to winning the second set.

“Basically I was telling myself to keep fighting even though my attitude was really trash. This is a final, I’m really privileged to be here in the first place, so keep fighting.”

Osaka was in control now and broke Barty -- who five years ago took a rest from tennis and played cricket -- in the first game of the deciding set on the way to victory.

This was a third title of 2019 for Osaka and fifth in her short career.

(Source: AFP)

## Maradona gets first win at new club in Argentine league

Two late goals helped Gimnasia to get a long-awaited first victory under recently appointed coach Diego Maradona on Saturday.

Victor Ayala and Matias Garcia scored in the 83rd and 87th minutes, after opponents Godoy Cruz had had two men sent off.

The goals gave Gimnasia a vital 4-2 away win in their bid to stave off relegation from Argentina’s Superliga.

The win was a huge boost to Maradona, the famed World Cup winner who took over at the club last month.

After three successive defeats under Maradona, the win lifts Gimnasia off the bottom of the league and on to four points from nine games, one ahead of Saturday’s rivals.

(Source: Goal)

## Jailed goalkeeper makes return after years in prison

The former Flamengo goalkeeper who was sentenced to jail for his part in the murder of an ex-girlfriend made a return to the game on Saturday, with Bruno Fernandes given a warm welcome by fans at his new club Pocos de Caldas.

Fernandes, who is better known by his first name Bruno, was found guilty in 2013 of involvement in the murder of Eliza Samudio, a former partner and part-time model who was seeking paternity payments after giving birth to a son she said was his.

In a case that shocked both Brazil and the football world, Fernandes told the judge his friends strangled Samudio, cut her body up and fed bits of it to dogs.

He was given a 22-year sentence but having now served enough time to qualify for a part-release scheme he was allowed out to travel the 160 km from Varginha, where he served most of his sentence, to his new club in Pocos de Caldas.

The 34-year-old is allowed out during the day but must return to Varginha at night.

Fernandes appeared as a second-half substitute in Saturday’s friendly match against Independiente Juruia.

His side won 2-0 and although he had few saves to make he was well received by a crowd of around 200 people, Folha de S.Paulo reported.

Bruno, who kept goal for Flamengo when they won the Brazilian league title in 2009, told reporters earlier in the day he was looking forward to playing for the minor league club and proving he was a reformed man.

“When people here in Pocos de Caldas get to know the real Bruno, the human being that he is, then a lot of minds will be changed,” he said. “I have a great opportunity to show the new me.”

A previous attempt at a comeback with Varginha club Boa Esporte in 2017 was abandoned after legal appeals cut short his part-release scheme.

(Source: Mirror)

## Marathon gold for Ethiopia’s Desisa

Ethiopia has scored its first marathon title since 2001 with Lelisa Desisa placing first at the World Athletics Championships in Qatar. The race began just before midnight to avoid the brutal daytime heat.

Lelisa Desisa ran 2 hours, 10 minutes and 40 seconds and forced a sprint finish to win the marathon race in Doha, Qatar and claim the gold medal for Ethiopia on Saturday.

The 29-year-old Desisa placed ahead of his compatriot Mosinet Geremew and Kenya’s Amos Kipruto. Geremew was only four seconds slower than Desisa, with Kipruto 11 seconds behind Desisa’s time.

Desisa’s win brings the first world championship marathon gold for Ethiopia in 18 years.

“This is for 100 million of Ethiopians who were behind me,” said Desisa after the race. “I am the second man from my country to win this title and it is not just for me, it is for my country.”

Qatar organizers scheduled the race to start around midnight, to take advantage of cooler temperatures.

Desisa claimed silver at a 2013 championships in Russia. Separately, Desisa won the Boston Marathon in 2013 and 2015. After the city was hit by a terror attack on the day of his 2013 triumph, Desisa donated his medal to the city.

(Source: DW)

# Djokovic downs Millman to win his first Japan Open title

World number one Novak Djokovic won his first Japan Open title and the 76th of his career with a dominant 6-3 6-2 win over Australian John Millman in the final in Tokyo on Sunday.

It was a triumphant return to the tour for Djokovic, who had withdrawn from the U.S. Open in the fourth round due to a shoulder injury, and it was the 10th time he had won a title on his tournament debut.

The top seeded Serb needed only 69 minutes to dispatch Millman — who was playing in his maiden ATP 500 final — and the 32-year-old won the title without dropping a set in the tournament.

“It was a fantastic week in every sense,” Djokovic said. “I felt great on the court... (I) didn’t drop a set, played really well, served great. Just overall, a great experience.

“We had a tough battle in the first set. (In) the second set I stepped it up, started swinging through the ball even better than the first set.



Overall, it was a great tournament for him.”

Djokovic won a whopping 87% of his first service points and fired six aces, never giving Millman a whiff of a break point. He also broke the Australian ranked 79 places below him three times in the match.

Millman was simply no match for Djokovic, who fired 23 winners and also won eight of 12 points at the net.

“It sounds silly to say but I hope everyone all around the world realizes just how good you are,” Millman, 30, said at the trophy presentation. “You’re an absolute champion and you’re the type of person who’s going to be remembered forever.

“Your legacy is continuing to build and will just live on long after you’ve finished playing but I’m sure you’ve got a fair few more years left.”

Djokovic has already qualified for next month’s season-ending ATP Finals in London.

(Source: Reuters)

## Marc Marquez seals MotoGP title with Thailand win



Marc Marquez sealed his sixth MotoGP world title in Thailand on Sunday after storming to victory in a heart pounding final corner duel with Fabio Quartararo at the Chang International Circuit.

The win in Buriram gives him an insurmountable lead over closest rival Andrea Dovizioso with four races left in the season.

Spain’s Marquez finished in 39min 36.223sec just ahead of 20-year-old rookie Frenchman Quartararo with another Spaniard Maverick Vinales third.

Marquez jumped up and down with joy after the victory and was handed a large eight-ball to signify the eight overall championships across all classes he has won.

He was hoisted atop the hands of supporters in celebration.

Starting from third on the grid, Honda’s Marquez quickly slipped by Vinales and spent most of the race trying to overcome Quartararo (Petrone Yamaha) who led from pole position.

Quartararo held the lead for 25 of the 26 laps but Marquez made his move on the final circuit, flying past the leader as the crowd screamed in delight.

A jubilant Marquez told MotoGPTV it

had been an “amazing year”.

With six premier class titles the 26-year-old Honda superstar now pushes past Australian legend Mick Doohan.

He trails only Italian great Valentino Rossi, who won the last of his seven championships in 2009, and Giacomo Agostini, whose record eight came in 1975.

But rookie Quartararo is fast emerging as one of Marquez’s toughest rivals.

The stunning performance in Buriram, a rural town in northeastern Thailand that has banked its development on sports infrastructure, came after Marquez crashed hard in practice on Friday and had to go to hospital.

Hours later he was declared fit to race and rebounded to finish third in qualifying.

Marquez won the inaugural race in Buriram last year in another last-corner thriller against Dovizioso.

Clear skies prevailed after a downpour soaked the track on Saturday, delaying start times and creating slippery conditions for riders.

Italy’s Luca Marini won the Moto2 while Albert Arenas from Spain grabbed the Moto3 victory.

(Source: AFP)

## NBA’s Rockets try to calm storm after ‘stand with Hong Kong’ post



The Houston Rockets tried Sunday to distance the NBA club, who have a huge Chinese fan base, from general manager Daryl Morey’s tweet supporting the Hong Kong protests as it sparked a backlash in China.

Head coach Mike D’Antoni told reporters in Tokyo that he “doesn’t feel comfortable” commenting on Morey’s tweet, which featured an image with the message “Fight for Freedom. Stand with Hong Kong.”

The tweet was posted on Friday and later deleted.

“We’re here to concentrate on playing in Japan, playing great games and enjoying the culture of Japan,” he said as the club prepares for two exhibition games against the NBA champion Toronto Raptors in Saitama City.

The Chinese Basketball Association (CBA) reacted furiously to the comments, saying it would sever all ties with the Rockets, despite the club’s owner stating in a tweet of his own that Morey did not speak for the club.

“General manager of Houston Rockets club Daryl Morey made incorrect comments about Hong Kong,” the CBA said on its official social media page on Sunday.

“The Chinese Basketball Association is strongly opposed to this and will suspend communication and cooperation with the club.”

In a later interview with ESPN in Japan, Fertitta insisted that his relationship with Morey remained strong.

“I have the best general manager in the league,” Fertitta told ESPN.

“Everything is fine with Daryl and me. We got a huge backlash, and I wanted to make clear that (the organization) has no (political) position. We’re here (in Asia) to play basketball and not to offend anybody.” Semi-autonomous Hong Kong has been battered by four months of increasingly violent pro-democracy protests.

The rallies were ignited by a now-scraped plan to allow extraditions to mainland China, fuelling fears of an erosion of liberties in Hong Kong under the 50-year “one country, two systems” model China agreed before the 1997 handover from Britain.

The Rockets have enjoyed a huge following in China since the club drafted Chinese star Yao Ming in 2002.

(Source: Eurosport)

## Qatar faces rocky road to 2022 World Cup after athletics test

Despite triumphs on the track, Qatar has come under fire for its hosting of the World Athletics Championships with questions raised over Doha’s ability to deliver the football World Cup successfully in three years’ time.

Perhaps the most stinging off-track criticism of the 10-day event which concludes Sunday was sparked by the spectacle of a near-empty stadium during the opening days, raising fears for attendances in 2022.

“It’s a classic mega-event failing, believing that ‘if you build it, fans will come,’” said Simon Chadwick, professor of sports enterprise at Britain’s Salford University.

Crowds at the 1976 Montreal Olympics and the 2004 Games in Athens also failed to meet organisers’ expectations despite ambitious stadium construction, he noted.

International Association of Athletics Federations chief Sebastian Coe has come under fire for the dismal crowds that turned out in Doha to watch blue-riband events including the men’s and women’s 100 metres.

“The crowd is an easier subject to talk about rather than some of the more insightful stuff around the events,” said Coe, who attacked what he viewed as negative media coverage.

Spectator numbers improved as the week wore on after at least one large state-funded organisation offered staff free tickets for the Khalifa International Stadium.

“It totally felt different, there was a lot of energy,” said former 1,500m world champion Jenny Simpson on Thursday after the American won her heat.



### ■ ‘Reasons to be there’

Despite Western diplomats warning Qatar would be “judged harshly” for missteps during the athletics, Chadwick said Doha would be unfazed by criticism of meagre crowds.

The country instead sees the Championships and World Cup as a means of bolstering security, he said.

“Even if nobody turned up to watch the athletics, it doesn’t matter. Qatar has mitigated the threats it faces by making itself visible, relevant and important,” said Chadwick.

Qatar is embroiled in a bitter two-year dispute with Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates which accuse Doha of backing Iran and radical Islamists.

They have cut direct transport links, closed airspace to Qatari aircraft and restricted their citizens from visiting over the claims, which

Doha denies.

By hosting such events, Qatar “has a degree of protection against some of the threats,” Chadwick said, adding that the 2015 World Handball Championship and the 2016 cycling Road World Championships were also poorly attended.

FIFA would now seek clarity about Doha’s ticketing strategy following the sight of a near-empty stadium on some days at the athletics, he added.

“People want to know -- is there going to be somewhere nice to stay, can they buy a beer?” Chadwick said.

“What kind of event ecosystem are they constructing around that ticketing strategy? You’ve got to give people reasons to be there.”

Qatar World Cup organisers declined to comment on the ticketing challenges at the

athletics but sought to head off fears around the World Cup, including alcohol prices in the conservative Gulf monarchy.

Officials also sought to reassure LGBT fans their safety would be assured as they showed off rapidly evolving World Cup infrastructure to visiting media ahead of the athletics.

### ■ ‘Qatar no more’?

Another recurring issue was the heat in the road races, with some competitors berating organisers for the sweltering temperatures and humidity during the marathons and race walks that were held outside the air-conditioned stadium.

Canada’s Lyndsay Tessier, who placed ninth after 28 of her 68 rivals dropped out of the women’s marathon, told AFP it was “really scary and intimidating and daunting” seeing competitors collapse.

But World Cup organisers insisted to visiting media that 2022 will not be dogged by high temperatures as it will be staged in the winter months and played in air-conditioned stadiums.

Championships spectators faced grim traffic jams across Doha with many key roads and junctions undergoing construction, although competitors and VIPs received police escorts.

Congestion surged when the Al-Sadd football team hosted Saudi outfit Al-Hilal at home on Tuesday, just minutes away from the Khalifa Stadium. It also highlighted that soccer is more popular than athletics among Qataris, despite the fact that thousands of locals packed the stadium to see home hero Mutaz Essa Barshim retain his high jump title on Friday.

(Source: AFP)



# Hamid Estili named Iran U23 football coach

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — With three months to go to the 2020 AFC U23 Championship kick-off, Hamid Estili has been named as new head coach of Iran U23 football team.

Farhad Majidi stepped down as his role on Thursday. The ex-Esteghlal forward was resentful of anybody's attempts to interfere in his work and it put a major strain on their relationship.

"I step down from my role as head coach of Iran's U23 football team due to interference in my job. I spent too much time solving the problem and I'd rather stay away from the team in the shameful situation ahead of the important tournament like the AFC U23 Championship. The non-standard ways dictated by technical committee didn't reflect my values," Majidi posted on his Instagram account.

Iran have been handed a tough group in the AFC U23 Championship, where they are drawn in Group C along with defending champions Uzbekistan, China and South Korea.

The 2020 AFC U23 Championship will be held in Thailand from Jan. 8 to 26 and the top three teams of the tournament will qualify for the 2020 Summer Olympics men's football tournament in Japan as the AFC representatives.

Iran have not been in the Olympics since the 1976 games in Munich.

Hamid Estili, who is mostly remembered for his memorable goal and goal celebration against the U.S. at the 1998 FIFA World Cup, has already worked as head coach in Iranian football teams namely, Persepolis, Steel Azin, Shahin Bushehr and Malavan.



## Iran take three golds at Karate 1-Premier League



**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iranian athletes won three gold medals, one silver and one bronze at the Karate 1 - Premier League Moscow on Sunday.

Sara Bahmanyar defeated German karate competitor Shara Hubrich 1-0 in the final of the Female Kumite -50kg.

Rozita Alipour edged Haya Jumaa from Canada 1-0 in the Female Kumite -61kg final.

And Zabihollah Poorshab defeated Ryutaro Araga of Japan in the Male Ku-

mite -84kg final to win Iran's third gold in the competition.

Sajad Ganjzadeh also lost to Georgia's Gogita Arkania 7-3 in the final of Male Kumite +84 and claimed a silver medal.

Earlier on the day, Bahman Asgari Ghoncheh from Iran had claimed a bronze medal at the Male Kumite -75kg by beating his Spanish opponent Rodrigo Ibanez 3-1.

Karate 1 - Premier League Moscow brought 642 competitors together from 85 countries in Moscow, Russia.

## Iran runners-up at Blind Football Asian Championships



**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iran lost to five-times Asian champions China 1-0 at the Blind Football Asian Championships final match on Sunday.

Team Melli had sealed their place at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics on Saturday by qualifying for the final of the competition.

Brazil, Argentina, Spain, France, Japan, China 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 was held in Pattaya, Thailand, from Sept. 30th to Oct. 6th.

Iran defeated Malaysia 4-0, Oman 10-0, Japan 1-0 and Thailand 3-2 and lost to China 1-0 in the competition.

The IBSA Blind Football Asian Championships have been held every two years since 2005.

## Iran beaten by Brazil at FIVB World Cup

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iran suffered a 3-1 (25-27, 25-21, 27-25, 25-22) loss against Brazil at the International Volleyball Federation (FIVB) Men's World Cup on Sunday.

Iranian players' poor serves contributed to their loss at Nagano White Ring, while they were not good on defense as well.

Porya Yali led Iran with a match-high 25 and Yoandy Leal Hidalgo had 16 points for Brazil.

"We always enjoy volleyball when we play against Brazil because we have an opportunity to play against one of the best teams in the world. And for that reason, we have really good motivation all the time, (whether) we play with younger



players or experienced players," Igor Kolakovic said.

Iran will meet the U.S volleyball team on Wednesday.

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 Oct. 1 to 15.

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.

## Jordan, Singapore settle for draw

Jordan played to a goalless draw with Singapore in an international friendly match at Amman International Stadium on Saturday as both teams prepare for their respective Asian Qualifiers' campaigns.

Jordan had the better of the chances but failed to find a way past the Singapore defence.

Abdallah Al Attar and Ward Al Barri saw their efforts go wide in the opening minutes while Nooraldeen Al Rawabdeh

also failed to find the target when he broke through just before the half-time break.

The Jordanians continued to dominate in the second period and they nearly opened the scoring four minutes in through a header from Bahaa Faisal, who again came close in the 57th minute with his effort from the edge of the box.

Jordan, who opened their Asian Qualifiers Group B campaign for the 2022 FIFA World Cup Qatar and AFC Asian Cup China



2023 with a 2-1 win over Chinese Taipei on September 5, host Kuwait on Thursday and Nepal five days later.

Singapore had the best chance after two matches and will be aiming to maintain their run against Saudi Arabia at the King Abdullah Sports City Stadium in Buraydah before hosting Uzbekistan at the National Stadium five days later.

(Source: Jordan Football Association)

## Sardar Azmoun's European record is remarkable since Celtic were linked

Celtic reportedly wanted to bring Sadar Azmoun to the Scottish Premiership before he started scoring Champions League goals for Zenit St Petersburg.

Most Celtic fans would give an arm, or perhaps a finger or two, to reach the latter stages of the Europa League this season.

It's been far too long since The Hoops really competed on the continent and Neil Lennon has a huge challenge even plotting a way out of a Europa League group containing Lazio, Rennes and a Cluj side who triumphed 4-3 at Park-head just two months ago.

Fortunately, Celtic have one of the sharpest young strikers anywhere on the continent now. In his third season in green and white, Odsonne Edouard is showing the sort of form that will have defenders everywhere quaking in their boots.

But, for all his qualities, and that clinical header against Cluj on Thursday, Edouard still cannot hold a candle to

Sardar Azmoun when it comes to scoring goals in European competition.

According to The Mirror (22 April, page 48), Celtic wanted to sign the so-called 'Iranian Messi' back in the summer of 2018, shortly before he left Rubin Kazan for Zenit St Petersburg in a deal worth £10.5 million (L'Equipe).

Since Azmoun was linked with a move to the Scottish giants, he has taken his game to a whole new level, scoring five goals in just six games in both the Champions League and the Europa League. His most recent, a brilliantly taken solo effort against Benfica, sealed three points for Zenit on Wednesday night in the Champions League group stage.

In total, Azmoun averages a goal every 1.2 European games, compared to Edouard's 2.7. But the latter still has plenty of time to improve that record.

(Source: Hite)



## Sydney 2019: Iranian pistol queen Javanmardi among Ones to Watch

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iranian shooter Sareh Javanmardi is among Ones to Watch of the Sydney 2019 World Shooting Para Sport Championships set to begin 12 October in Sydney, Australia.

These 10 shooting Para sport athletes have the potential to make headlines at the sport's biggest competition outside the Paralympic Games.

Pistol queen is a three-time world and two-time Paralympic champion. Her most recent achievement was double gold at the 2018 Worlds, winning both her P2 (women's 10m air pistol SH1) and P4 (mixed 50m pistol SH1) titles in comeback fashion, Paralympic.org wrote.

The 33-year-old from Shiraz was the first Iranian female gold medalist in the Paralympic Games. At the Rio 2016 Paralympics, she took gold in the P2 - women's 10m air pistol SH1 and P4 - mixed 50m pistol SH1.



## Nadeshiko cruise past Canada

Tokyo 2020 hosts Japan officially got their Olympic preparations underway, overwhelming World Number Seven Canada to claim an impressive 4-0 win at IAI Stadium Nihondaira on Sunday.

Mana Iwabuchi, Yuka Momiki, Yui Hasegawa and Rikako Kobayashahi all got on the scoresheet for Asako Takakura's side, who ended a run of one win in their previous eight games in fine style.

In their first international outing since June's heartbreaking FIFA Women's World Cup exit against the Netherlands, Japan's superiority was evident from the opening minutes and they were quickly ahead through Iwabuchi.

The 2018 AFC Asian Cup MVP finished off a lovely passing move, arriving to sweep in Emi Nakajima's wide delivery across Canadian goalkeeper Stephanie Labbé to get the Nadeshiko up and running in the sixth minute.

Two goals behind Abby Wambach in the hunt for the all-time international scoring record, Canada's Christine Sinclair tried to give her side a lifeline, but Japan extended their lead in an impressive second half.

They went two ahead when substitute Momiki slammed home a loose ball after some excellent combination play led to Hasegawa's initial effort being saved by Labbé in the 65th minute, and the writing was on the wall for Canada seven minutes later, when Iwabuchi got in behind the defence to square the ball up for Hasegawa, who stroked a third goal into an unprotected net.

The visitors looked for a consolation goal but that only precipitated Japan's fourth, when an injury time counter-attack ended with Kobayashahi slamming a close-range effort into the roof of the Canadian net.

A collision with Labbé ended Hasegawa's afternoon early, but that knock - and an earlier one suffered by Narumi Miura - were the only negatives on a successful day for the Asian champions.

Japan will meet South Africa in another friendly in Kitakyushu next month, before taking on DPR Korea, China PR and Korea Republic in December's EAFF E-1 Football Championship in Busan.

(Source: AFC)

## Luiz header sees unspectacular Arsenal beyond Bournemouth test

Arsenal edged up to third in the Premier League as David Luiz's first goal for the club earned a 1-0 win over Bournemouth on Sunday.

Luiz has been a figure of fun for a host of defensive errors early in his Arsenal career after making the switch across London from Chelsea in August

However, the Brazilian is always a threat at the other end of the field and rose highest to head home Nicolas Pepe's corner on nine minutes.

Bournemouth had enough chances to at least earn a point with Callum Wilson missing the clearest opportunity, but Arsenal held out to record their first clean sheet in the Premier League since the opening day of the season.

Victory moves Unai Emery's men a point above Leicester, Chelsea and Crystal Palace in the early running for a top-four finish.

Pepe has struggled to match the expectations of his club-record £72 million (\$88 million) transfer fee since a summer move from Lille, but was told by Unai Emery to embrace the pressure of that price tag and the Ivorian was in the mood to impress.

Twice Arsenal had penalty appeals for fouls on Pepe by Diego Rico waived away.

However, it was Bournemouth who arguably had the best chance to add to the scoring before half-time when Dominic Solanke headed a Rico free-kick wide.

The visitors were certainly the more threatening side after the break and will rue heading back to the south coast with nothing to show for their efforts.

Wilson had the best chance when the England striker eased through the Arsenal defense and rounded Bernd Leno, but could not direct his shot on goal and Callum Chambers cleared.

Leno then had to be alert to turn Jack Stacey's driven shot behind.

Gabriel Martinelli was handed just his second Premier League appearance off the bench after the Brazilian scored twice in a stunning performance against Standard Liege in the Europa League on Thursday.

And he came close to a second Arsenal goal with a looping effort that drifted just over.

Emery's men then had to withstand a nervy five minutes of stoppage time as Matteo Guendouzi made a brilliant block to deny Josh King a certain equalizer and Steve Cook headed over from the resulting corner.

Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang was kept largely quiet, but hit the woodwork in stoppage time as Arsenal nearly sealed the points in style, but one goal was enough for a vital win.

(Source: AFP)



INTERNATIONAL DAILY  
www.tehrantimes.com

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Tel: 88911433  
» Webmaster: webmaster@tehrantimes.com  
» Printed at: Jame Jam Barta Borna - 44197737



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GUIDE TO  
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Although right may seem hard, its conclusion is easy and admirable, and though wrong may seem right, it will soon scatter pestilential poisons.

Imam Ali (AS)

## Painting depicting Ashura tragedy unveiled at Tehran children's center

**1 →** The ceremony took place at the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (IIDCYA) to mark Children's National Week, which began on Saturday.

Speaking at the ceremony, Farrokhi said that he wanted to make a painting that would communicate with the spirits of children.

The illustration, which has been drawn based on historical documents, depicts Imam Hussein (AS) and Ali Asghar (AS) in his arms. When the innocent baby was shot with an arrow piercing his throat on Ashura, the Imam sprinkled the blood upwards into the sky. The blood then turned into a peacock that flew into the sky.

"I believe illustrations, which play a significant role in gaining information, can help form the visual memory of children, and I hope this illustration can help introduce the culture of Ashura to children," he added.

Artist Saeid Gholami also attending the ceremony said that the artwork is a type of miniature painting with an abstract form.

"Children like and understand abstract painting. Also, this illustration bears Iranian and Islamic motifs which help children become better acquainted with their religious symbols," he explained.

## Cartoon exhibit to put spotlight on Yemenis resistance

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** — An exhibition of cartoons will be organized in Tehran to represent Yemenis resistant against the atrocities perpetrated by the Saudis in their war on the country.



A poster for the cartoon exhibition "Yemen Resistance".

A collection of 38 cartoons and caricatures by 13 Iranian artists will be showcased at the exhibit entitled "Yemen Resistance".

Organized by the Revayat Cultural Foundation, the exhibition will open at the Osveh Art and Cultural Center on Tuesday.

Cartoonist Masud Shojaei-Tabatabai is the director of the exhibition, which will be running until October 22 at the center located at No. 453, South Bahar St. off Enqelab Ave.

## Independent Iranian publishers to attend Frankfurt Book Fair

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Independent Iranian publishers Shabaviz, Sarir, Nazar and Behnegar plan to attend the Frankfurt Book Fair, the world's largest trade fair for books that will be held in the German city from October 16 to 20.

Shabaviz is a major children's book publisher, while Sarir publishes books on the Iran-Iraq 1980-1988 war.

Nazar Publications focuses on books on art and Behnegar is mostly active in publishing literary books.

A number of state-run publishing companies will also place their latest offerings in a pavilion dedicated to the Iran Cultural Fairs Institute (ICFI).

## Beatles' "Abbey Road" back at top of charts 50 years after release

**LONDON (Reuters)** — The Beatles' "Abbey Road" album has returned to the top of the British album charts 50 years after its first release.

"It's hard to believe that Abbey Road still holds up after all these years. But then again it's a bloody cool album," former Beatle Paul McCartney said in a press release.

Featuring such songs as "Something" and "Come Together", "Abbey Road" was the second-last album released by the Beatles before their acrimonious split, although most of their final release, "Let it Be", was recorded before the "Abbey Road" sessions.

Its initial 17-week run at number one ended on Jan. 31, 1970, and it returns to the top of the charts after a gap of 49 years and 252 days, a feat certified as a Guinness World Record.

The 50th anniversary of "Abbey Road" was marked last month by the release of special deluxe edition.

# Launching regional market, Iran's main cinema strategy: official

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** — The director of the Farabi Cinema Foundation, Iran's main center that outlines plans to deal with overseas organizations and other countries in the area of cinema, has said that launching a regional film market is the country's main cinema strategy.

He made the statement during a panel discussion organized on Saturday at the 4th Slemani International Film Festival in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq to uncover differing attitudes towards joint film productions, Farabi announced in a press release.

"We have taken major steps so far to establish such a local film market," Farabi Managing Director Alireza Tabesth said.

"We should utilize new technologies and observe global standards to increase our joint productions in the motion picture industry, and do our best to offer the productions in the local and global markets," he noted.

"With a 120-year history, Iran's cinema is the oldest film industry in the region and is well-known for its promotion of humane values in the world," he added.

Tabesth said Iran is ready to help restore cinema in Iraq's Sulaimaniyah. He also announced Farabi's readiness to collaborate in joint film projects.

Several movies by Iranian filmmakers, among them Reza Mirkarimi's drama "Castle of Dreams", are competing in various sections of the festival, which will run until October 7.

In addition, Iranian director Puran Derakhshandeh and her fellow documentarian Mehrdad Oskui are members of the juries for official and documentary competitions.



Farabi Managing Director Alireza Tabesth (R) and a number of film experts and cineastes attend a panel discussion during the 4th Slemani International Film Festival in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq on October 5, 2019. (FCF)

## Filmmaker Darvish asks entertainment channels to help globalize Iranian cinema

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Filmmaker Ahmadrza Darvish has asked Iran's international entertainment channels to help globalize the country's cinema.

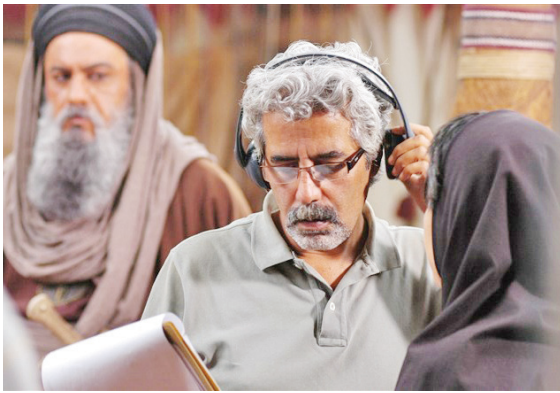
Darvish, the director of the controversial film "Hussein, Who Said No" in speaking on Saturday to iFilm Plus, a program aired by the Iranian entertainment network iFilm, which consists of three channels in English, Arabic and Persian, said that the idea that Iranian cinema is universal is nothing but an illusion.

"Unfortunately we are under the delusion of being universal in cinema, but I don't think this is true," he added.

"Even in the capitals of Islamic countries not many individuals seek after Iranian cinema. For example in the neighboring Afghan city of Mazar-i-Sharif, which enjoys the same language and culture, no Iranian films are seen in their film markets and buyers are mostly after Chinese and Thai movies," Darvish said.

"Under such a condition, the role of a channel like iFilm and other entertainment satellite channels is doubly felt," he added.

"The establishment of iFilm was a very clever decision and needs to be developed with new forms day by day," he said.



Ahmadrza Darvish in an undated photo.

He also talked about the topics of films that Iranian filmmakers need to choose for their international productions.

"A film on a situation which has no specific time and place will remain everlasting. Today, communications are not limited. Our films must represent the Islamic and national characters of their producers. However, they need to be

comprehensible for international audiences, and this is a principle for a universal film. The more the film concerns a global issue, the longer it will endure," he explained.

"Today, there are thousands of TV channels in the world and there is tight competition, therefore achieving a global status is getting harder," he said.

"We need to make better use of cultural affinities with other countries. Here, the role of channels like iFilm and Iran's international entertainment channels become more significant," he concluded.

Darvish's latest movie "Hussein, Who Said No" about the uprising of Imam Hussein (AS) against the Umayyad dynasty in 680 CE provoked controversy when several top clerics and certain people slammed the film over its depiction of some Shia saints.

The film was banned in Iran in 2015 hours after its premiere following protests by the clerics.

The film, which has been dubbed into several languages including Arabic and English, won the grand prize for the best full-length feature at the 7th Baghdad International Film Festival in 2015.

"Duel", "Kimia" and "Last Flight" are among Darvish's noteworthy credits.

## "Just 6.5" honored at Zurich film festival

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Iranian director Saeid Rustai's drama "Just 6.5" received a special mention in the international competition of the 15th Zurich Film Festival in Switzerland on Sunday.

Starring Payman Maadi, Navid Mohammadzadeh, Parinaz Izadyar and Farhad Aslani, "Just 6.5" is about a police squad under the leadership of Samad who has been assigned to arrest Nasser Khakzad, a major drug trafficker in Tehran.

American filmmaker Oliver Stone presided over the festival's jury composed of Italian screenwriter Laura Bispuri, Colombian director Ciro Guerra, German



Navid Mohammadzadeh acts in a scene from "Just 6.5" by Iranian director Saeid Rustai.

## Banksy's chimp-depicting 'Devolved Parliament' sells for over \$12 million

**LONDON (Reuters)** — A large Banksy painting depicting primates sitting in Britain's parliament sold for more than \$12 million on Thursday, a record price at auction for a work by the secretive British street artist, according to Sotheby's.

"Devolved Parliament", in which chimpanzees replace politicians in the House of Commons, more than comfortably surpassed its estimated price tag of 1.5 million to 2 million pounds, with the auctioneer declaring "history being made" at one point during the sale which was streamed live.

After bidding that lasted some 13 minutes, the 2009 artwork from a private collection sold to loud applause for a hammer price of 8.5 million pounds, to which fees are added giving a final price of 9,879,500 pounds (\$12.2 million).

"Record price for a Banksy painting set at auction tonight. Shame I didn't still own it," Banksy wrote on his Instagram feed beside a post quoting art critic Robert Hughes about the value of artworks.

"... The price of a work of art is now part of its function, its new job is to sit on the wall and get more expensive. Instead of being the common property of humankind the way a book is, art becomes the particular property of someone who can afford it," the Instagram post quoted Hughes as saying.



Sotheby's staff pose for a photograph with Banksy's 'Devolved Parliament' which has an estimated value of 1.5-2 million British pounds in a forthcoming sale in London, Britain September 27, 2019. (Reuters/Simon Dawson)

Before Thursday's sale, the auction record for a Banksy work was \$1,870,000 for "Keep it Spotless" which sold at Sotheby's in New York in 2008, according to the auction house.

"Devolved Parliament" measures 13 feet (4 m) long, making it Banksy's largest known canvas, according to Sotheby's.

Despite being painted in 2009, many commentators had drawn comparisons to current-day politics, namely the increasingly brutish exchanges in the House of Commons over Britain's pending departure from the European Union, or Brexit.

## Charmed lives and comebacks: Eddie Murphy returns in "Dolemite Is My Name"

**LOS ANGELES (Reuters)** — Sure, Eddie Murphy hasn't been around for a while, and his new movie "Dolemite Is My Name" is getting rave reviews. But don't call it a comeback.

"I've been making movies for almost 40 years, and every five years I'm in my comeback - they say I'm coming back," Murphy said.

"But ('Dolemite is My Name') is more a bookend than it is a comeback, because I'm never going to be making movies like I used to make movies," the comedian added.

"Dolemite Is My Name," out in U.S. movie theaters on Friday, sees Murphy playing the late real-life American celebrity, Rudy Ray Moore, a once struggling comedy and rap pioneer who found success in the 1970s through his obscene, kung-fu fighting alter ego Dolemite.

It's Murphy's first major film since the 2011 crime caper "Tower Heist."

"He (Moore) is just a great inspirational character. He believes in himself, that's what his biggest thing is," said Murphy.

"As crude as his movies were, he made them out of his pocket, and he had to do everything himself and come in from the back door," he said.

Critics are calling his performance a career best. "You might have to go all the way back to the '80s to find a Murphy performance driven by this much pleasurable funky verve," the Variety review said.



Eddie Murphy attends the premiere of "Dolemite Is My Name" in Los Angeles, California, U.S. September 28, 2019. (Reuters/Phil McCarten)

Murphy has more in store. He's working on two new movies - "Coming 2 America" and "Beverly Hills Cop 4" - sequels to two of his most successful films in the 1980s.

Aside from that, Murphy says he is going to focus on getting back to his first love, stand up, "unless, you know, Quentin Tarantino or Spielberg or Martin Scorsese or, you know, some genius dude or Spike (Lee) has something really incredible."

"I'm 58 now and I like nothing more than to just be at home on the couch within earshot of the children," he added.

Much as Murphy appears to be the perfect actor to embody Moore, who died in 2008, he says their careers couldn't be more different.