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Iran wants peace, prosperity for neighbors



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Turkey seeking ways to boost trade with Iran: envoy

TEHRAN — Turkish Ambassador to Tehran Derya Ors said his country is looking for ways to improve its trade ties with Iran despite the U.S. sanctions, the portal of Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) reported.

The official made the remarks in a meeting with TCCIMA Head Masoud Khansari in Tehran on Monday.

In the meeting, the officials discussed the trade relations between the two coun-

tries and emphasized the need to continue and develop bilateral cooperation despite the pressure imposed by the U.S. sanctions.

The Turkish ambassador also announced that his country is seeking ways to continue purchasing oil from Iran.

Referring to the determination of the two countries' presidents for developing economic relations, Ors voiced the readiness of the Turkish private sector for co-operation with Iranian firms despite the American sanctions. **→4**

Iran to legally seek reparations caused by JCPOA violation

TEHRAN — Laya Joneidi, the presidential aide for legal affairs, has said that Iran will legally seek reparations caused by the U.S. violation of the JCPOA, the official name for the 2015 nuclear deal.

"The legal body of the government seeks for compensation of damages caused by violation of the JCPOA. We are making

efforts to document the damages and provide the situation for the violators to make up for damages," she told ICANA in an interview published on Monday.

She added, "We have asked the country's major economic sectors to assess the damages and pursue the issue precisely." **→2**

Zionist, Arab regimes agree to advance 'alliance'

TEHRAN — Persian Gulf Arab states and the Zionist regime have agreed to advance an alliance no matter what happens to the Zionist-Palestinian conflict, Tel Aviv-based Channel 12 television network reports.

The agreement was reached between the regime's 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. **→13**

Iraqi protests, spontaneous or conspiracy?

By Hossein Amiri

TEHRAN — Iraq witnessed protests in recent days about the inadequate public service situation, lack of job opportunities and corruption, but these protests have turned violent and have killed and injured dozens.

There are shreds of evidence indicates that what is happening in Iraq is a "goal-oriented-conspiracy". There are several reasons for this.

First, there are pictures on social networks from Iraqi protesters that are both fake and completely suspicious. Some images of the protesters have slogans against the Shia clerics and Ayatollahs. At the same time, there are mottos in which people demanding the overthrow of the Iraqi government. This is while the Iraqi people deeply believe in Shia's religious authority and its constructive role in the country, and the best example for

this the Iraqi people's welcoming to Ayatollah Sistani's 2014 fatwa to mobilize people to fight against ISIL terrorism. On the other hand, the government in Iraq has won the elections and its people have voted for Shia groups to form a government.

Second, the demonstrations in Iraq coincided with the Arba'een Trek. It seems that these demonstrations have targeted Arb'een's Trek. The goal is to prevent the Grand March being held in Iraq, on the one hand, and to prevent people from other countries, especially Iran, to go to Iraq to attend the indelible event. This is one of the reasons behind the anti-Iranian slogans in demonstrations in some Iraqi cities.

Third, the demonstrations in Iraq coincided with the Yemeni hegemony against Saudi Arabia as well as with the political stalemate in the

occupied territories to form a cabinet.

Iraq is one of those countries that has an independent foreign policy and opposes the Saudi war against Yemen and it is also against the normalization of the ties between some Arab countries with the Zionist regime.

On the other hand, the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) "al-Hashd ash-Sha'abi" has close relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Due to these ties, Iraq has been targeting by the Arab-Israeli-Western axis.

Secretary-general of Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq, Qais al-Khazali an Iraqi Shi'a paramilitary group, said last August that some political opponents in Iraq are preparing to hold demonstrations with the support of foreign powers because they are unhappy with Iraqi foreign policy. The problem is "Deal of the Century". **→13**

Iran's coup de grace

By M.D

SANA'A — In a Washington round table in May 2012 I was asked what I thought about Iran's role in our region. I said, when the U.S. and Iran reach a coexistence arrangement, we will all sleep peacefully.

Although an indigenous exclusive regional security arrangement must be our aim, the reality is that these arrangements can only be accomplished between nations that have ownership of their sovereign decisions. Unfortunately, on the Arab side, we have mortgaged our sovereign decisions to the U.S. for protection that is increasingly proving elusive and for expensive defensive weapons that have failed the test. Which brings us to the question, when Saudis offer to negotiate a political solution with Iran, what can they bring to the table that would entice Iran? Iran wants all sanctions lifted, return to the JCPOA

as is and ultimately departure of foreign forces from the oil rich Persian Gulf. Can the Saudi or any Arab regime offer any of these and make it stick?

Despite an 8 year destructive war, 4 decades of embargo and political, media and cyberwarfare launched against it, Iran has emerged as the regional superpower whose adversaries have been forced to reckon with. In that same period, and despite our wealth, vast real estate rich in resources, a population of more than 400 million and hundreds of billions spent on U.S., British and French weapons, we on the Arab side have failed to come anywhere close to Iran's military superiority or free our sovereign decisions from U.S. hegemony. While Iran has managed to create alliances within Arabia that go beyond sectarian and ethnic divides, Saudi Arabia, instead of matching Iran, has created sectarian animosity within the Sunni house it claims to

lead while continuing to brutally discriminate against its own Shia minority. Except for its oil wealth, Saudi Arabia, in every other endeavor, has failed to set itself as a world player deserving attention.

There is a reason that efforts to resolve the current crisis in our region are centered on bringing only the Iranian and U.S. presidents together without any mention of Saudis just across the waters.

Saudi Arabia is not able to fight Iran nor does it have the required sovereign independent decision that enables it to negotiate with Iran and deliver. Yemen is a case in hand where the coalition it summoned under its leadership has not only failed to achieve any of its stated goals but, despite its vast military resources, is now on the verge of one of the most humiliating defeats in the hands of a comparatively poorly armed military and economically impoverished nation. **→3**



Team Melli train for Cambodia match

TEHRAN — Iran national football team started training camp for Cambodia match at the 2022 FIFA World Cup Qatar and AFC Asian Cup China 2023 Asian Qualifiers.

Iran will host Cambodia in Group C on Thursday in Tehran's Azadi stadium.

Marc Wilmots's team started the campaign with a 2-0 victory over Hong Kong.

The Belgian coach has invited 23 players to Team Melli for two matches against Cambodia and Bahrain.

PERSPECTIVE
Hanif Ghaffari
 Head of the Tehran Times
 Politics Desk

Trump concerns Texas and Ohio polls

U.S. President Donald Trump is in a political deadlock. Recent state and state polls show that Trump has lost the chance to win again not only in states like Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Michigan, but also in states like Florida and Ohio. Many international affairs analysts believe that if the US presidential election were held today, Trump would certainly be defeated by Joe Biden, Elizabeth Warren or Bernie Sanders. This is the worst possible situation for Trump.

A review of recent polls in key, sensitive, and decisive Ohio states clearly shows that the US president is in the most dangerous situation possible.

As Newsweek reported, The survey, conducted by Emerson Polling from September 29 to October 2, found that former Vice President Joe Biden and Senator Bernie Sanders had the biggest leads (6 points) over Trump in the swing state. Fifty-three percent of voters said they would support Biden or Sanders over the president in a head-to-head matchup. Elizabeth Warren also beat Trump in a hypothetical matchup by 4 percentage points — above the survey's margin of error of 3.2 percent. Fifty-two percent of Ohio voters backed the Massachusetts lawmaker compared to the 48 percent who supported Trump.

A new Michigan poll shows top 2020 Democratic contenders beating President Trump in a key battleground state that the president flipped in 2016. The EPIC-MRA survey shows former Vice President Joe Biden beating Trump 51 percent to 41 percent in a hypothetical match-up. Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) would beat Trump 49 percent to 43 percent, while Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), who won Michigan in the 2016 Democratic primary, led the president 48 percent to 44 percent, according to the poll.

What do the two polls really mean for Trump and his companions? The fact is that the President of the United States of America has lost his political balance! He will do everything for his victory in next year's presidential elections.

Finally, Donald Trump today has become a symbol of failure, despair, and confusion in US domestic and foreign policy. Trump will no doubt be doomed to failure. What remains after Trump will be the destroyed community and government of the United States of America.

PERSPECTIVE
Fatemeh Salehi
 Mehr News Agency
 journalist

Tel Aviv's proposal for non-aggression pact with Arabs

In the shadow of current changes in the region, Netanyahu revealed a new Zionist regime's plan for striking an agreement with the Arabs against Iran, which sends important messages.

It seems that while all media outlets and public opinion are focused on recent protests in Iraq, Israeli officials are trying to contact Arab states of the Persian Gulf that are too reactionary. The Tel Aviv regime also is seeking to reinforce its hidden relations with the Arabs in the wake of regional developments.

Over the last few days, Iraq witnessed disturbances that initially started with civil and anti-corruption protests, but soon after turned into anti-Iran slogans. The protests are being led by social media and foreign elements.

By a review of the world news, we will notice that the protests have become their headline. Contradictory analyses and news regarding these events are spreading across Iraq.

In the meanwhile, on the anniversary of the October war (the 1973 Arab-Israeli war) Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz claimed that he has presented a plan to Persian Gulf Arab states to reach an agreement with Tel Aviv and put an end to existing tensions.

Katz, as Netanyahu's right-hand man, presented the plan during a meeting with some these countries' foreign ministers on the sidelines of the recent annual UN conference. The plan also has been presented to Jason Greenblatt, Trump's special envoy for the Middle East.

According to the reports, the plan has four articles: the first one is about developing friendship and cooperation between Israel and Persian Gulf Arab states based on the UN Convention and the principles of international law.

The second article states that "necessary and effective measures" will be taken to ensure that none of the parties engage in activities such as war, hostility, sabotage and incitement against one another.

According to the third article, neither party shall involve in coalition, organization or alliance with a third country with military or security nature. Neither party should cooperate with or promote these coalitions and organizations. **→13**

Leader: Enemies unable to drive wedge between Iranians, Iraqis

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei has said that the enemies tried hard to disunite Iranian and Iraqi nations but failed.



“The enemies tried to sow discord (among Iranian and Iraqi nations) but failed and their plot will be ineffective,” the Leader’s official Twitter account quoted Ayatollah Khamenei as saying late on Sunday.

“Iran and Iraq are two countries whose people’s hearts and souls are tied together via faith in Almighty God and love for Imam Hussein and the progeny of holy prophet of Islam (PBUH). Their bond will grow more firm day by day,” the Leader underscored.

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

In a stark contrast with claims that the demonstrations are popular and spontaneous, new analyses have recently revealed that 79% of hashtags provoking protests in Iraq on Twitter originate from Saudi Arabia and only 6% are from Iraq.

The timing of the start of the protests with the great march of Arbaeen arouse suspicions, as new findings show that Riyadh is resorting to the cyber space where it is stimulating the public on social media.

Amir Abdollahian: Leader told Assad in 2011 that Syrian people were Iran’s redline

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Hossein Amir Abdollahian, a senior foreign policy advisor to the Iranian parliament speaker, has said that Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei had told Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in 2011, when the riots first broke out in Syria, that the Syrian people are Iran’s redline.

Amir Abdollahian said the message was relayed to Assad through IRGC Quds Force chief Qassem Soleimani.

In the message the Leader told the Syrian president that if he showed leniency toward the killing of the Syrian people then he “could not count” Iran’s help, Farheekhtegan quoted Amir Abdollahian as saying, citing an interview published by the Office for the Preservation and Publication of Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei’s Works.

“When the Syrian crisis started in 2011, it was among the first advices of the Leader of the Revolution to Mr. Bashar Assad, which was conveyed by General Soleimani, that the ‘people are our redline. Do not count on us if you become indifferent towards killing of the people’,” explained Amir Abdollahian who served as Iran’s point man for Arab affairs at the time.

Amir Abdollahian added, “The Leader of the Revolution did not just focus on strategic and major levels of the region. In fact, he was concerned about the people of Syria.”

Official: U.S. toiling to drive wedge into Iran-Iraq ties

TEHRAN (FNA) — The U.S. is doing its best to ruin the strong and friendly ties between Iran and Iraq, said Deputy Head of the Political Studies at Iran’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs Salim Khatibzadeh.

The United States is striving to sow seeds of discord between Iran and Iraq, Khatibzadeh warned on Sunday, adding, “Social, political, religious and historical ties between Iran and Iraq are inseparable.”

He made the remarks in a local ceremony on “Role of Arbaeen March in Relations between Iran and Iraq”, and said, “Iran’s most natural relations are formed with Iraq.”

Over the past few decades, regional rivals and enemies of the two countries and also global arrogance have tried to tarnish amicable relations between the Islamic Republic and Iraq, he noted.

He said that Arbaeen is the manifestation of power of Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq.

“We have a duty to help Iraqi people and our amicable relations should be expanded with a long-term perspective,” he added.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Khatibzadeh termed reopening of Bukamal border crossing in Iraq which gives Iran access to the Mediterranean Sea via Iraq and Syria a “very strategic” measure.

His remarks come as millions of pilgrims from Iraq, Iran and around the world are preparing to travel to the holy Iraqi cities of Najaf and Karbala to attend Arbaeen, marking the 40th day after the martyrdom of the third Shia Imam, Hussein ibn Ali (Peace be upon him).

The gathering usually attracts more than 20 million participants every year.

Iraqis take pride in hosting pilgrims participating in Arbaeen, many of which are from Iran. The event has consequently turned into a symbol of unity between the people of the two countries who deeply venerate Imam Hussein.

The comments also come against the backdrop of several days of protests against mismanagement and corruption in Iraq, with certain demonstrations descending into violence and bloody clashes.

Iran to legally seek reparations caused by JCPOA violation

1 → U.S. President Donald Trump quit the JCPOA in May 2018 and returned the sanctions on Iran that had been lifted under the agreement. Trump also ordered new sanctions. In May, he introduced a total ban on Iran’s oil exports.

In October 2018, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ordered the U.S. to lift sanctions on Iran. The ruling was made in response to a plea from Tehran after the Washington withdrawal from the JCPOA.

Pressure and sanction against Iran have failed, Jahangiri says

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Thanks to people’s unity, pressure and sanction against Iran have failed, First Vice President Es’haq Jahangiri said on Monday.

“Imposition of pressure and cruel sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran by heads of hegemony have failed through the people’s unity and the efforts of officials,” he said during a ceremony in Birjand, South Khorasan.

He added, “Despite the United States’ economic war against our country, the country is moving fast on the path of development.”

The vice president also expressed hope that the people’s living standards would be improved and the country’s economic situation would become stable.

Jahangiri said on October 1 that Iran has succeeded to defeat the United States’ policy of “maximum pressure”.

“We have defeated the United States’ policy of maximum pressure and they are aware that this plan does not work against Iran,” he said at the time.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the vice president attached great importance to national unity and integrity.



“The Iranians will get out of the troubles caused by the United States and anti-Iran countries. It is just essential to protect unity and integrity inside the country,” he remarked. In an interview with NPR published on

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

“Abandon the illusion that Iran can be defeated by pressure,” he said.

Iraqi minister: Baghdad utilizing entire capabilities to host Arbaeen pilgrims in safest way possible

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iraqi Interior Minister Yaseen al-Yaseri has announced that his government has done its best to guarantee Iranian pilgrims’ security while participating in the Imam Hussein Arbaeen march and mourning ceremony.

Al-Yaseri made the remarks while he paid a visit to the Shalamcheh border crossing in the southwestern province of Khuzestan. He was accompanied by Iranian Consul-General in Basra Ahmad Siyahpoosh.

The Shalamcheh passageway, which is located 15km west of Khoramshahr city, is one of the most important borders for the Iranian pilgrims while crossing into Iraq for the Arbaeen march.

Al-Yaseri further voiced satisfaction over traffic of pilgrims from Shalamcheh into Iraq, adding that Baghdad has also prepared required facilities to hold the ceremony as glorious as possible.

As the ceremony is very important for both Iran and Iraq, Habibollah Sayyari, the deputy army chief for coordination affairs, said on Sunday that the army has employed military

drones at the Iraq borders to ensure the security of pilgrims visiting Iraq for the Arbaeen march.

“The army is closely watching all (Iran-Iraq) borders through different methods to ensure the borders’ security,” Admiral Sayyari said.

He added that the army had been providing other services to the pilgrims as well.

The Arbaeen march, which is the largest religious gathering in the world, comes 40 days after Ashura, the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (PBUH).

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

Iranian Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli predicted last week that more than three million Iranians would visit Karbala.

This year Arbaeen falls on October 19.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said on September 18 that “the Arbaeen march is an extraordinary phenomenon not only in our era but also



throughout history.”

He added, “We cannot find such a gathering and movement that takes place every year more enthusiastically than the previous years.”

Iran’s policy is expanding ties with neighbors: government

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iranian government spokesman Ali Rabiei said on Monday that the government’s “very important” policy is expanding ties with the neighboring countries.

“All of us and also littoral states to the Persian Gulf must be aware that there are ill-wishers who seek to harm any success in bridging differences,” he said during a press conference.

He added, “Today, our people are well aware that enjoying friendly relations with neighbors and deepening them are the most effective instrument to counter bullying and unilateralism of extra-regional powers.”

Pointing to President Hassan Rouhani’s participation in the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) summit in Armenia on October 1, Rabiei said the president’s visit was in line with expanding relations with neighbors.

“At the current juncture, this visit has been of great importance. It plays an important role in ties with neighbors,” he said.

During a speech at the summit, 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



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

Presidential chief of staff Mahmoud Vaezi has said that Iran will start economic interaction with the 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.

■ ‘Poisoned propaganda will not separate Iranians and Iraqis’

Rabiei also said that “fake” and “poisoned” propaganda will not separate the Iranian and Iraqi people.

Iran has always been ready to stand beside the Iraqi government and people, he added.

The remarks by the government spokesman come as certain Iraqi cities, including Shia-populated ones, were the scene of protests.

Most analysts and officials firmly believe the protests were provoked from outside Iraq to undermine the incoming great Arbaeen March in which hundreds of thousands of Iranians also take part.

Arbaeen march will foil plots: police chief

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Police Chief Brigadier General Hossein Ashtari said on Monday that participation of pilgrims in the Arbaeen march will foil enemies’ plots.

The remarks by police chief came after some cities in Iraq were the scene of violent protests, which many politicians and analysts believe were incited from outside the country. They say the protests were provoked to undermine Iran-Iraq relations on the eve of the great Arbaeen march in which three million Iranians are expected to participate.

During a meeting with Grand Ayatollah Hossein Nouri Hamedani in Qom, Ashtari also said, “Police forces will have an active participation in the Arbaeen march and more than 30 thousands of the police staffers will serve the pilgrims.”

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

Millions of pilgrims from Iraq, Iran, Pakistan and some other countries head to Karbala, where the shrine of Imam Hussein is located, by foot. It is considered the greatest march in the world.

This year, Arbaeen falls on October 19.

In an interview with ISNA published on Saturday, Heshmatollah Falahatpisheh, a member of the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, said that the Arbaeen march will defeat divisive policies in Iraq and the neighboring countries.

“The reality is that the Arbaeen march has defeated many divisive policies in Iraq and neighboring countries. Many countries have taken actions against the Arbaeen march, however, their plots will backfire. This year’s Arbaeen march will be the symbol of unity between the Iranian and Iraqi people,” he said.

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

He added, “We cannot find such a gathering and movement that takes place every year more enthusiastically than the previous years.”

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

“The people’s participation in the Arbaeen march prevents divisive policies by the enemies,” he added.



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Venezuelan envoy advises Iran against 'talks under pressure'

POLITICAL DESK **TEHRAN** — The Venezuelan Ambassador to Tehran, Carlos Antonio Alcalá Cordones, has advised the Islamic Republic against entering talks with the United States under the pressure of sanctions, saying Washington is after undermining independent countries.

The White House is pursuing plots to dominate the independent states and plunder their energy resources, Cordones said, the Tasnim news agency reported on Sunday.

He said the U.S. has imposed sanctions on both Iran and Venezuela and tries to undermine the nations that advocate progress.

Elsewhere in his remark, the Venezuelan envoy said his country would never approve of talks with the U.S. with preconditions, stressing that any dialogue needs to be held under the UN Charter and without conditions imposed by the White House.

He said the Americans do not recognize the national sovereignty of others and do not respect the results of elections in other countries.

"So it is illogical to hold talks with the United States under imposed conditions," the ambassador added.

Asked by Tasnim about Washington's



policy of carrot-and-stick and its push to force Iran and Venezuela to negotiate under the pressure of sanctions, Cordones said the U.S. administration's withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal last year revealed that the

White House does not honor any commitment or treaty.

"The Americans always seek to impose their own measures, to impose hegemony, and to seize the interests of other countries

to gain their own benefits."

U.S. President Donald Trump quit the nuclear deal in May 2018 and restored sanctions that had been lifted under the accord and added new harsh ones.

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).

Guardian Council to form expert group to supervise legislation policies

POLITICAL DESK **TEHRAN** — Spokesman for Iran's Guardian Council Abbas Ali Kadkhodayee announced on Monday that the legislative vetting body is duty bound to form an expert group for studying and directing general legislation policies in the council.

In a specialized meeting over necessities of materialization of general policies of legislation system held at the venue of Law and Political Science Faculty of the University of Tehran, Kadkhodayee said such an expert group is supposed to study and direct general legislation policies to pave the ground for more confidential execution of law nationwide.

"There are some ratified bills that do not enjoy any guarantee for their execution. Law must solve the country's problems but it must not exacerbate the situation," the spokesman went on to say.



"We must do our best to minimize the cases of parallel laws because such deficit will make difficult implementation of laws," Kadkhodayee pointed out.

"As an example, the Supreme Council of Cultural Rev-

olution has been issuing some ratifications on which the Guardian Council's supervision or monitoring are not specified," he pointed out.

Kadkhodayee added that the above-mentioned expert group is a subset of the Guardian Council and decision about its establishment was made in a meeting among representatives of the Parliament, the Expediency Council and the Guardian Council.

The Guardian Council is an appointed and constitutionally mandated 12-member council.

The Iranian constitution calls for the council to be composed of six Islamic faqihs (expert in Islamic Law), «conscious of the present needs and the issues of the day» to be selected by the Leader of Iran, and six jurists, «specializing in different areas of law, to be elected by the Parliament from among the Muslim jurists nominated by the Judiciary chief.

Zarif rejects rumors of biological assassination against Iran's envoy to UN



POLITICAL DESK **TEHRAN** — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has dismissed as fake news that biological assassination has taken place against Tehran's Ambassador to the United Nations Majid Takht Ravanchi, who is now under treatment in a hospital in New York.

Zarif said that Takht Ravanchi was not aware about his disease till he took office as the country's UN envoy, adding that his cancer was diagnosed in New York.

He further said that the ambassador has undergone surgery in New York and is now under chemotherapy treatment.

"If we had been aware about his cancer problem before his departure to New York, we would have certainly begun his treat-

ment in Iran," Zarif emphasized, adding that the medical team in New York called for Takht Ravanchi's immediate surgery.

In late September, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Seyed Abbas Araqchi, in a message on his Instagram page, lashed out at Washington for inhumanly preventing Zarif from paying a visit to Takht Ravanchi at the hospital.

Araqchi expressed regret that the U.S. administration is holding humanitarian issues hostage for political aims.

The reaction came after American authorities forbade Zarif from visiting Takht Ravanchi.

The U.S. State Department had said it would allow the hospital travel request only if Iran released one of the U.S. citizens claimed to be «wrongfully detained» in Iran.

MP: Ground must be paved for national dialogue ahead of upcoming elections



POLITICAL DESK **TEHRAN** — Mohammad Reza Tabesh, representative of Ardakan's people in the Parliament, said on Monday that it is necessary that people take part massively in the upcoming parliamentary elections, calling the election a kind of "national dialogue" which would lead the nation towards prosperity.

Tabesh, deputy head of the parliamentary Hope (Omid) faction, and a member of the Parliament Budget and Planning Committee, said, "Election can be regarded as the people's language while talking to each other and to ruling system, and it is also the language of ruling system while addressing people and political parties.

"So, we must pave the ground for all walks of the life and also elites to partici-

pate in the upcoming election as a national dialogue which in turn will reinvigorate capability of our nation and establishment in the world."

The next round of the parliamentary elections and the mid-term election of the Assembly of Experts will be held on February 21, 2020.

There are currently 290 seats in the Iranian parliament, known as Majlis, elected by direct vote of people in nationwide election for four years.

The Assembly of Experts is a high-ranking body that elects and oversees the activities of the leader of the Islamic Revolution.

Members of the assembly are directly elected to office by people for an eight-year term. It holds biannual meetings to appoint a new chairman.

Iran's coup de grace

1 → When Saudi Arabia threatened retaliation to what it claims to be Iranian attacks on Aramco, it depended on America to strike Iran. America, under Trump, will not fight Iran. Trump might strike a defenseless country like Syria which cannot strike America back. But not Iran which has demonstrated the ability to deliver regionally devastating retaliatory strikes if attacked. Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif warned that Iran's retaliation will be "all-out war". This warning is taken seriously by America and its regional allies. The advice given to Trump by his military commanders following the downing of America's most expensive and sophisticated spy drone acknowledges this reality. The fact that Iran downed the drone is proof that Iran has the means and the resolve.

The reality is that the U.S., as the party that walked out of the JCPOA, has all the keys needed to diffuse the crisis its action provoked. The direction this crises will take, war or negotiations, will be determined by America and Iran, not Saudi Arabia.

Therefore, to resolve these crises we need to look to solutions that address the fears of both, the U.S. president and Iranians. For the Iranians, to imagine they can hold out until either Trump is removed by impeachment or election will be as folly as Trump thinking he can sanction Iran to its knees. Iran has survived wars and sanctions for forty years and emerged powerful. Iran is the best evidence of the poison that doesn't kill you but makes you stronger. For Iran, Trump will probably prove to be a better deal for them than previous administrations. What Iran needs to bear in mind is that American foreign

policy has a shelf life of 4 to 8 years, although the damage can be longer, as in the case of Bush's Iraq war. Beyond the 8 years it is the legacy American presidents want to leave behind that determines America's policies. Therefore, it is what the American president needs and not what America needs that will determine America's relations with Iran. More so, considering that the U.S. Congress has abdicated oversight of foreign policy to whoever is in the White House, creating serious questions about America's long-term credibility. Within this timeframe, mindset and credibility issues lie both: the opportunity and the danger through which Iran must navigate. Trump is coming up for re-election. This is a president who campaigned on a "no more stupid war" platform, even claiming he opposed the war in Iraq. He promised to bring home American troops. He is also obsessed with undoing or outdoing Obama. His biggest campaign promise is taking back from foreigners, including even America's allies, what they "shortchanged" America and to keep foreigners out. He needs a success story against foreigners, a "very bad" foreigner at that. He has so far failed to get from North Korea anything beyond a photo op and a few remains of America's war dead. Moreover, Deal of the Century conference in Bahrain turned out to be a very bad circus forcing his son in law to go into hiding. These two and re-writing the JCPOA were the three foreign policy

For Trump, the Saudis have outlived their usefulness.

triumphs he hoped to take to the voters in 2020. Two have failed, so far. The JCPOA is his only remaining hope. Hence his desperation to meet the Iranian president, even for a photo op. Iran, portrayed as another "bad guy", can give Trump the real success he desperately craves. What Iran can take in return, apart from the immediate need to lift sanctions, is the beginning of a friendship that could ultimately lead to that grand prize, helping Trump get re-elected and starting with him a process that will disengage America from the region and keep his "no-war" promise, while taking his troops home. For Trump, the Saudis have outlived their usefulness. Their economy is in tatters. The Yemen debacle, though coming to an end, will still prove difficult if not impossible to recover from. Whether the Saudi regime will survive the destructive policies of Salman's reign and the internecine wars it unleashed within the ruling family, is anybody's guess. What is certain, these policies have given Iran opportunities only close allies or foolish adversaries, can give. For all the wars launched against Iran in the past forty years, Iran's patience and this crisis might prove to be the coup de grace against Iran's adversaries.

The writer is a Yemeni political activist, former President of TAWQ, a non-partisan democratic movement that includes members of various Yemeni political groups and was also a businessman. He is now retired and lives in exile. The opinions in this article are his own and do not reflect the opinions of any organisation that the writer has been or is currently affiliated with.

Khosravi border crossing reopens to pilgrims visiting Iraq

POLITICAL DESK **TEHRAN** — The Khosravi border crossing, which is the nearest border to the Iraqi capital of Baghdad and the holy city of Karbala, was reopened on Monday morning.

The border crossing had been closed at the request of Iraqi officials due to the curfew in Baghdad which came after protests in Iraq turned violent.

"We sought to find a new route that, if curfew continued in Baghdad, would allow pilgrims to pass and this has been done," Tasnim quoted Kermanshah Province's Governor Houshang Bazvand as saying on Monday.

Iran's Foreign Ministry on Thursday urged all pilgrims from the country to postpone their visit to Iraq until calm is restored.

"Stressing the importance of the great march of Arbaeen and the necessity of holding this magnificent congregation, the Foreign Ministry calls on the Iranian faithful ... to postpone their visit to Iraq until calm is restored to the country, and to pay close attention to the warnings of political and security officials," the Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

Iran is confident the Iraqi government and nation will work with all groups, parties and personalities, especially the top clerics and other religious authorities and political leaders to calm the current tense situation, it added.

Arbaeen, which is the largest religious gathering in the world, comes 40 days after Ashura, the martyrdom anniversary of the third Shia Imam.

Each year, a huge crowd of Shia Muslims flock to the Iraqi city of Karbala, where the holy shrine of Imam Hussein (AS) is located, to perform mourning rituals.

In August, Iran and Iraq signed an agreement in Tehran to reopen the Khosravi border crossing and remove visa requirements for Iranian pilgrims.

Iran and Iraq also agreed to raise the level of services and facilities for the pilgrims and enhance border security during the Arbaeen season, which will culminate in a large gathering in Karbala on October 19.

The four border crossings of Khosravi, Mehran, Chazzebah, and Shalamchah are open to Arbaeen pilgrims.

Army chief: Iran wants peace, prosperity for neighbors

POLITICAL DESK **TEHRAN** — Army Chief Abdolrahim Mousavi said on Monday that Iran wants peace and prosperity for neighboring countries, according to Mehr.

"We wish security and safety for all regional countries and Muslim nations, and we want everyone to live in peace, tranquility and prosperity," Major General Mousavi asserted.

He said the Islamic Republic does not intend to invade or attack any country, but will not tolerate bullying.

"We will never succumb to bullying and will continue to stand up for our rights," the army chief said. "We have no doubt that we will emerge victorious some day and that day is not far-off."

Mousavi pointed to the eight years of successful defense in the face of former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussain's war against Iran, saying, "Today, as well, we are standing up to any plot and threat."

He said Iran will defeat the enemy in the economic war. "This is God's promise."

U.S. President Donald Trump has adopted a maximum pressure policy against Iran since he walked away from the Iran nuclear deal, which is also called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The policy includes sanctions on Iran's economy, especially its oil exports, and bans on top Iranian figures and organizations. At the same time, the U.S. president has pushed for talks with Tehran.

The sanctions were imposed regardless of Iran's full compliance with its commitments under the (JCPOA), which was struck between Iran and six major powers, including the United States, in July 2015.

Iranian officials describe the sanctions as an "economic war" and "economic terrorism".

Last week, President Hassan Rouhani said the United States' use of dollar as a weapon will lead to economic terrorism.

"U.S. hostile moves and its use of dollar as a weapon will lead to economic terrorism and affects the ordinary lives of people," Rouhani said at the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) summit in Yerevan, Armenia, on October 1.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran expects signatories to the JCPOA to take actions in line with implementing it. Under the current sensitive situation, it is essential to support this achievement of multilateralism in order to improve international cooperation, security and stability," he added.

Iran to launch second phase of Arak reactor in one or two weeks

POLITICAL DESK **TEHRAN** — Ali Akbar Salehi announced on Monday that the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) will start launching the second part of the Arak heavy water nuclear reactor "within one or two weeks".

Salehi, the vice president and the AEOI chief, broke the story in a meeting with members of the Parliament Education and Research Committee, the IRIB reported.

The announcement by Salehi falls within Iran's strategy to partially remove limits on its nuclear activities in retaliation for the revocation of the multilateral nuclear deal by the Trump administration and a failure by the Europeans to honor their obligation to compensate Iran for the sanctions effects.

Salehi also said the stockpile of Iran's nuclear fuel enriched above 3.5 percent has gone up highly so that every day 5-6 kilograms are added to the stockpile.

"This means that we have reached to the pre-JCPOA era," stated Salehi, a nuclear physicist.

Under the 2015 nuclear accord, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Iran was allowed to just keep 300 kilograms of nuclear fuel enriched to 3.67 percent.

The nuclear chief also said by next month his organization will add 2,500 SWU (separative work unit) to its current 5,060 SWU and "this means that our enrichment capacity will increase by 40 percent."

STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	320909.7
IFX	4213.11

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	46,117 rials
GBP	51,775 rials
AED	11,437 rials

Source: cbi.ir

COMMODITIES

Brent	\$58.94/b
WTI	\$53.46/b
OPEC Basket	\$57.96/b
Gold	\$1,501.30/oz
Silver	\$817.55/oz
Platinum	\$883.60/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

MINEX 2019 hosting 130 Iranian, foreign companies

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — The 8th International Investment Opportunities in Iran's Mines and Mining Industries Exhibition and Conference (MINEX 2019) kicked off on Monday in Tehran, hosting 130 Iranian and foreign participants. As reported by IRNA, exhibitors and participants from 18 countries including Italy, Germany, Russia, South Africa, Turkey, China, South Korea, Japan, the Netherlands, Sweden, Belgium, Spain, the Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, Canada, Pakistan and India are showcasing their latest equipment and services in this three-day event.



The exhibition covers three areas of discovery, mining and processing in which exhibitors from a variety of areas such as mining equipment and machinery, mining industries, various investor companies, financial institutions, credit and consulting engineers are participating. Presenting the achievements of producers and introducing investment opportunities as well as discovery of new export markets are some of the objectives of the conference and exhibition. Along with the exhibition, the 8th International Conference on Materials Engineering and Metallurgy is also being held which covers seven major areas of engineering materials, physical metallurgy, extractive metallurgy, industrial metallurgy, casting and freezing, simulation, strategic management and environment. Some 30 scientific and specialized workshops are also planned to be held on the sidelines of the exhibition and conference.

Global ad spending dented by weaker British, German economies

Global advertising spending in 2019 is expected to grow lower than a previous estimate, hurt by recession fears in the United Kingdom and Germany, despite strong growth in digital ad budgets in the United States. As per euronews.com, industry forecaster Zenith cut its forecast to 4.4% growth from 4.6%, blaming a weaker trading globally and slowdowns in Europe and Asia. Global ad spending rose 6.7% in 2018. With major European economies teetering on a recession, owing to trade tensions and the uncertainty around Brexit, businesses have tightened their purse strings, in turn hurting advertising budgets. Zenith, owned by French advertising group Publicis <PUBP.PA>, forecast that global ad spending will reach \$640 billion this year, with a 4.3% rise in 2020 and 4.4% in 2021, down from previous forecasts of 4.4% growth in 2020 and 4.3% in 2021.

The forecaster said it would normally expect an increase in ad spending in 2020, benefiting from U.S. elections, the Summer Olympics and the UEFA Euro 2020 tournament. "But given current political and economic uncertainty, brands are being cautious about committing to extra spending at the moment," it added. Zenith forecast a 0.6% decline for ad spending in Germany this year, down from a prior expectation of fall of 0.4%. It also reduced its growth forecast for the UK to 3.3% from 3.9%, its slowest rate of growth since 2011. German industrial orders fell more than expected in August on weaker domestic demand, data showed on Monday, adding to signs that a manufacturing slump is pushing Europe's largest economy into recession. Expenditure on advertising in China, the world's second biggest spender after the United States, is also slowing. However, small- and medium-sized companies advertising for the first time on Facebook Inc <FB.O> and Google <GOOGL.O> are continuing to drive growth in the United States, where consumer spending chugs along at a steady pace. "Small businesses in the U.S. are spending heavily on social media and paid search, and are fuelling much of the global growth of these channels," Zenith researchers said. The firm said ad spending on social media is expected to grow 20% in 2019, overtaking print to become the third-largest advertising channel.

National Exports Day aims to promote Iran's exports: TPO head

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN— Iran's National Day of Exports (October 21), which has been celebrated over the past 22 years, is aimed at promoting the country's exports status, Hamid Zadboum, the new head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), said in a press conference on Monday. "Every year, this day is celebrated to honor the Iranian exemplary exporters in a bid to promote the culture of exports throughout the country", the official stressed.

Briefing the press on the procedures conducted by TPO for selecting the exemplary exporters, who will be honored during a ceremony in the National Exports Day, he said that 302 exporters had submitted their documents to the related committee, among them 265 participants were selected at the first stage, of them 106 ones could come to the next stage, and finally 40-50 exporters will be announced as exemplary. The exemplary exporters will receive their trophies from president or the first vice president, he added. Zadboum further announced that the committee for selecting the exemplary exporters consists of representatives from TPO, Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), Iran Chamber of Cooperatives, Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), Central Bank of Iran (CBI), Planning and



Budget Organization (PBO), and Standards Organization. The TPO head mentioned serious participation of ICCIMA, Exports Guarantee Fund of Iran, and Exports Development Bank of Iran for organizing the event as a distinctive feature of this year's ceremony. He further announced that concurrent with the National Exports Day ceremony, TPO will launch the organization's mobile app, and also two online systems on its website, one for commerce consultation, and the other one for survey and receiving the viewpoints

and suggestions of the exporters.

■ Non-oil imports fall 5.5 percent in first half

Elsewhere in his remarks, the TPO head released some data on the country's non-oil trade during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22) and said the neighboring countries are still the major export destinations of Iranian non-oil products, accounting for more than 50 percent of the exports. He put the value of exports at \$20.948 billion, with 22.5 percent rise in volume while

10.5 percent drop in value, and imports at \$21.221 billion with 5.5 percent fall in value and 0.5 percent increase in volume during the first six months of this year. The official also noted that TPO is improving the roadmap for expansion of the country's non-oil exports.

■ Supporting domestic production He further referred to the issue of supporting domestic production and said that in this year, which is the year of pickup in production, the major part of the Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry's plans and measures are toward this objective.

Different desks have been set up in the ministry in this due and noticeable measures are being taken to support domestic producers, he added.

"Given the integrated work being done for supporting domestic production, we can witness the targeted \$10-billion drop in our non-oil imports by the [Iranian calendar] year of 1400 (March 2020-March 2021)", Zadboum highlighted.

Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Reza Rahmani had said on Saturday that the ministry plans to reduce the country's imports by \$10 billion by the Iranian year of 1400.

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

Iran, Germany stress reinforcing trade ties

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** – Board of directors of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) and Germany-Iran Chamber of Commerce and Industry (AHK Iran) held talks on Sunday and emphasized the need to increase coordination in order to strengthen trade relations between the two countries.

As reported by the portal of ICCIMA, the event was attended by the officials from both sides including AHK Managing Director Dagmar von Bohnstein, ICCIMA Head Gholam-Hossein Shafeie and ICCIMA Deputy Head for International Affairs Mohammad-Reza Karbasi. Speaking in the meeting, Shafei considered the Germany-Iran Chamber of Commerce to be one of the most important joint chambers of commerce in the country and said "Since its establishment, this chamber has pursued very positive plans for development of trade between the two countries." "Germany has long been one of Iran's major trading partners, so if there is an issue in economic relations between the two countries, it must be dealt with as quickly as possible.

Iran-Germany trade relations are based on mutual interests and should be kept as such," he said.

Further in the event, ICCIMA Deputy Head Karbasi noted that the main purpose of the meeting was to coordinate the activities of the German-Iranian Chamber of Commerce and Industry with ICCIMA, adding that "One of the most important demands of the private sector is the establishment of an Iran-Germany joint chamber in accordance with domestic law. A subject that has been raised many times but hasn't been realized."

Von Bohnstein for her part expressed he government and the German-Iranian chamber's support for the two countries' traders, saying "since the start of the new round of U.S. sanctions on Iran, some German companies have stopped operating in Iran, but the government and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Iran and Germany have always been supportive of trade between the two countries."

She further urged Iranian officials to take necessary measures for supporting the two sides' private sectors,



saying "the level of economic cooperation between Iran and Germany is currently in balance but this balance is not stable. The members of the board of directors of ICCIMA should take necessary measures to maintain and strengthen this balance."

No decision made on rationing subsidized gasoline: Majlis speaker

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iranian parliament (Majlis) speaker Ali Larijani said the parliament has not still made any decision about rationing the subsidized gasoline, Tasnim news agency reported.

Addressing the press after a closed-door session of Majlis on Monday morning, the official said that there are different viewpoints in this regard and the government has its own suggestions that

will mention in the national budget bill.

"The parliament is not to make a rapid decision, because we have time for investigating the next year's budget bill, but it is important that everyone knows that Majlis is determined that no pressure will be put on the people, and if such decisions is to be made it should be completely in the interest of the low-income people", Larijani further emphasized.

Turkey seeking ways to boost trade with Iran: envoy

1 → He further pointed to the target of \$30 billion annual trade set by Iran and Turkey, saying that the level of bilateral trade exchange is expected to rise in light of mutual efforts.

Ors also mentioned the two countries banking relations, noting that despite the pressures and threats from the U.S., Turkey's Halk bank has continued to cooperate with the Iranian market so that currently about 85 percent of the financial transactions between the two countries is running

through this bank.

Khansari for his part pointed out that Iran and Turkey are not only trying to maintain the current level of economic relations despite the pressure of sanctions, the two sides are aiming to boost it to \$30 billion.

"Although the \$30 billion trade targeting of the two countries has not yet been achieved, the ways for developing economic ties are not closed and the two neighboring countries can expand their cooperation," he said.

Iran, Iraq capable of increasing bilateral trade to \$20b by 2021: industry min.

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** – Iranian Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade Reza Rahmani says Iran and Iraq have the potential to rezease the value of their bilateral trade to \$20 billion dollars by 2021.

Speaking to the press on Sunday, Rahmani put the value of trade between the two countries at \$12 billion in the past Iranian calendar year (March 2018-March 2019), adding that the figure will rise to \$20 billion by the year 2021.

The official said developing relations with neighboring countries is a priority for his ministry, adding that "Exchange of trade delegations, holding exhibitions in both countries, establishment of an Iranian permanent

exhibition in Iraq, and an increase in the exchange of visit the two countries' officials, are on the agenda of the Industry Ministry to increase the volume of trade between the two countries."

He further referred to the increase in the number of border crossings on the shared borders with Iraq, describing the launch of Shalamcheh-Basreh railway as a good opportunity to develop Iran-Iraq bilateral trade relations.

The industry minister further noted that there are good steps being taken in customs relations to promote the level of relations.

The economic and political relations between Iran and

Iraq has increased significantly in the past few years and the two neighbors are seeking ways to facilitate financial transactions and boost their trade ties.

Back in August, Iraqi Ambassador to Iran Sa'd Javad Qandil said his country and Iran are considering mechanisms to use local currencies in their bilateral trade to reduce reliance on the U.S. dollar.

Iran's exports to Iraq have increased by 37 percent in the last Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20) and the two country's officials have constantly stated that the two sides have it on agenda to boost their mutual trade to \$20 billion by 2021.

No real economic transformation for Africa despite growth

Africa has been experiencing impressively high rates of economic growth since 2001, but there has been no real economic transformation, acting head of Private Sector Development, Investment and Resource Mobilization in the African Union Commission, Islam Swaleh, said last week. As per southerntimesafrica.com, speaking to senior journalists from the continent at a media awareness workshop on Africa industrialization framework hosted by the AU Commission's Trade and Industry in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Swaleh said over the years the high growth rates were in both resource-rich and non-resource-rich countries and that this was due to improved governance, commodity prices, and debt relief.

The high growth rates were also due to elimination of the worst policy distortions, urbanization, population growth and the attendant demand for goods and services.

However, Swaleh said, there had to date, been little or no real economic transformation in Africa due to the fact that less than 10%

of African workers were employed in manufacturing.

Africa, he said, was as a result of the structural adjustment policies and programs of the 1980s and 1990s, less industrialized today than it was in 1980 and so had in fact undergone a process of "deindustrialization" which was antithetical to the normal process of economic development.

■ Modern tradable industries

He also said private investment and modern tradable industries were very low on the continent; and that there was relatively little intra-African trade, which was less than 15% on average, compared to over 60% in other regional blocs such as the European Union and North American Free Trade Area.

"Africa's very high rates of population growth are unprecedented in human history with most African countries projected to more than double their populations over the next 20-30 years," he said.

"In nearly every country on the continent,

rural workers are flocking into cities and towns. Unlike the Asian experience, there are in most cases no manufacturing industries to absorb this migration. Most African economies are dominated by services, retail trade and the informal economy.

"About 50% of Africa's population is under 25 years. with slow or little structural economic transformation, it is projected that only about 25% will find formal sector jobs - regular salaried jobs and the informal sector will continue to be the main source of employment for most Africans."

Swaleh said most African economies were dominated by services, retail trade and the informal economy. Non-tradable services such as construction, transport, hotels, restaurants and the public sector were particularly important

The informal sector was the dominant feature of most African economies and it was mostly made up of micro and small enterprises (MSMEs) and accounted for most employment.

"There are, however, relatively few modern tradable industries that can turn the African economic potential into reality. Tradable industries are what are needed to be engines of productivity growth and are needed for job creation and value chain linkages especially between manufacturing and agriculture," he said.

"There have been many reports in the media and from international development institutions about the increased flows of FDI to Africa in recent years. However, most of the FDI into Africa actually goes to only a few countries out of the 55 countries in Africa. According to statistics from UN Conference on Trade and Development (World Investment Report 2013) and the international consulting firm KPMG, fully 50% of all FDI into Africa went to only three countries - Nigeria, South Africa and Ghana. Much of the rest was taken up by, again, a few countries, notably Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Kenya.

‘Over 3800MW of new power plants to come on stream by next summer’

ENERGY **TEHRAN** – Some 3,864 megawatts (MW) capacity of new power plants are planned to be added to Iran's electricity network by the next summer's peak consumption period, IRNA reported, quoting the Managing Director of Thermal Power Plants Holding Company (TPPH) as saying.

Speaking in TPPH's general assembly on Sunday, Mohsen Tarzatabal noted that last year (March 2018-March 2019) over 1,200 MW capacity of new thermal power plants were inaugurated across the country.

"Thermal power plants have had a significant share of the country's energy production over the past few years, so that last year, more than 92 percent of the country's electricity needs was supplied by thermal units," he said.

According to the official, the country's thermal power plants are more and more leaning toward using cleaner fossil fuels like natural gas.

"The amount of natural gas used by power plants has also increased over the past few years, so that currently over 90 percent of the



country's thermal power plants are powered by natural gas," he said.

He further noted that following a

development initiative foreseen in the country's Sixth Five-Year National Development Plan (2016-2021) the average

efficiency of the country's power plants will increase 2.1 percent from the current 37.9 percent.

The nominal capacity of electricity generation at Iranian power plants currently stands at nearly 85,000 megawatts [84.795 gigawatts (GW)].

Iran's total power generation capacity stood at 80,000 MW in the past Iranian calendar year 1397 (March 2018-March 2019), up from the 78,484 MW of its preceding year.

According to a report by Tasnim news agency, the country's power generation capacity is set to reach 85,695 MW by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 2020).

Currently, a total of 478 thermal power plants are operating throughout Iran which include both gas power plants and combined cycle plants.

With a total generation capacity of 25,083 MW (nearly 31 percent) combined cycle power plants account for the biggest share in the country's total power generation capacity followed by gas power plants generating about 30 percent.

Iran to establish LNG park to develop energy sector: Zanganeh



ENERGY **TEHRAN** – Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said his ministry is planning to gather mini-LNG complexes with a total capacity of three million tons in an LNG park, Tasnim news agency reported on Monday.

Zanganeh noted that the ministry plans to develop the country's LNG sector in collaboration with the private sector and with the aid of domestic companies.

"At first, the plan is to engage only small-scale companies in the program," Zanganeh said.

Asked about the details of the mentioned LNG park, the minister noted that private companies will be the main in-

vestors in this project and the government will also support the construction process.

"We also had discussions with MAPNA Group, a knowledge-based company that could enter into the construction of LNG plants, and the company is going to conduct a review and report the results to the Oil Ministry," he added.

Iran holds the second largest natural gas reserves in the world. Despite this advantage, the country controls less than one percent of the world's natural gas market. Nevertheless, Iran is the third largest gas producer and, over the past few years, has focused on increasing its share of the global gas market.

Oil prices up as U.S.-China trade talks loom, supply issues mount

Oil prices were up on Monday, buoyed by hopes of progress in U.S.-China trade talks and supported by challenges to supply facing major exporters.

Brent crude rose 34 cents or 0.6% to \$58.71 a barrel by 0840 GMT, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude was at \$53.16, up 35 cents or 0.7%.

Both futures contracts ended last week with a more than 5% decline after dismal manufacturing data from the United States and China, with the trade row between the world's top economies undermining global economic prospects.

U.S. and Chinese officials meet in Washington on Oct. 10-11 in a fresh effort to work out a deal.

On the supply side, deadly anti-government unrest has gripped Iraq, the second-largest producer among the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries.

Iraq's oil exports of 3.43 million barrels per day (bpd) from Basra terminals could be disrupted if instability lasts for weeks, Ayham Kamel, Eurasia Group's practice head for Middle East and North Africa, said in a note.

"Any oil production disruption would occur at a time when Saudi Arabia has lost a significant part of its energy system redundancies (spare capacity)," he said.

The major Buzzard oil field in the British North Sea was also shut for pipe repair work, China's CNOOC said on Friday.

Libya's National Oil Corporation (NOC) said on Sunday it would close the Faregh oil field at Zueitina port for scheduled maintenance from Monday until Oct. 14.

But analysts said the resumption in Saudi Arabian production after the Sept. 14 attacks could undermine a price rally.

The "Saudi attacks have quickly been forgotten about and global growth is back to being the main driver of oil markets," said Craig Erlam, senior market analyst at OANDA.

"Such complacency could come back to bite oil traders as another aggressive spike will likely accompany any further escalation in the region."

Despite Monday's gains, Brent is still down more than



20% from the 2019 peak of \$75.60 a barrel recorded in April.

OPEC Secretary-General Mohammed Barkindo said it was still too early for the group to discuss deeper oil output cuts to support prices, Russian news agency TASS reported on Monday.

First Gen plans to lease floating storage regas unit for LNG by Q1

By Victor V. Saulon

First Gen Corp. targets to lease a floating storage regasification unit (FSRU) for liquefied natural gas (LNG) early next year when it has determined the volume that it needs to import fuel to existing power plants and potential capacity expansion, its top official said.

"Until we know what we need, that's when we can contract. So when we do that, is probably sometime first quarter of next year," said First Gen President and Chief Operating Officer Francis Giles B. Puno in an interview.

He said the standard storage size of an FSRU is about 120 metric tons (MT) to about 150-160 MT. But the volume should also factor in the number of times transport ships will be bringing in LNG from foreign sources, and the volume of gas used by the existing power plants.

"There are international service providers that can provide the floating storage regas unit itself. There are many vendors that do that," he said, adding that the company is in talks these vendors. "That discussion has been there for some time already as well."

Mr. Puno said the "base case" today for First Gen remains the construction of an onshore LNG import terminal.

The power generation

In December last year, the company signed a joint development agreement with Japan's Tokyo Gas Co., Ltd. to build the terminal within the Lopez-led company's power generation complex in Batangas City.

In September this year, First Gen named Japan's JGC Corp. as the engineering, procurement and construction contractor. The immediate focus of the partnership is to complete a detailed study to modify the existing jetty in Batangas to accommodate large- and small-scale LNG vessels, while continuing to receive liquid fuel.

First Gen, the country's leading gas power generation company, has around 2,000 megawatts (MW) in operating gas facilities comprising of four gas-fired power plants, namely: the 1,000-



MW Santa Rita power plant, the 500-MW San Lorenzo, the 414-MW San Gabriel, and the 97-MW Avion power plant.

Mr. Puno said site preparations for the onshore terminal had been completed.

"Then we'll build the jetty — the reconfiguration of the existing jetty. So now that's going through detailed studies," he said.

Feasibility studies will help configure the jetty to accommodate the FSRU, which is a big vessel that will be permanently docked.

"We're studying that to see if there's any fatal flaw, technical specification that needs to be done to essentially adjust the existing jetty that we have. So that will determine also the size of the ship that we can bring in," he said.

First Gen targets to start using the FSRU in 2021, although it has an existing contract with the consortium behind the country's Malampaya gas until 2024.

Mr. Puno said there are times when Malampaya gas capacity is "maxed out" thus the need to buy imported LNG towards the end of the concession when there might be uncertainty on the reliability of the home-sourced natural gas.

"They (Malampaya consortium) need to reinvest. So whereas before we were planning to construct and hopefully start operating the onshore terminal by 2024, the floating storage allows us to accelerate that sooner just in case,

for example, Malampaya is not enough," he said. "It also allows us to expand quicker, like build more capacity potentially."

The current market situation

He said the FSRU would allow the company to take advantage of the current market situation where the price of gas is "cost competitive."

"At some stage, we're hoping that we can even import gas at a price that is at least equal if not cheaper than the existing Malampaya. So that's also good for the consumers," he said.

The existing gas contract with Malampaya only has the Santa Rita and San Lorenzo plants under a "firm" deal. For the San Gabriel and Avion plants, the contract is "flexible."

Mr. Puno said plants under the flexible contract would "potentially" use the imported LNG. "Or maybe new capacity. That's one. And secondly, we also have Ilijan, 'yung sa San Miguel (Corp.), which will expire in 2022, I believe. So in two years' time, they will need more gas as well."

"Right now, we're also in discussion with them (San Miguel) on being able to sell gas to Ilijan," he said.

First Gen has identified "numerous" LNG suppliers, which are kept engaged in the discussions, Mr. Puno said. He said locking in a contract at this time would be premature.

Mr. Puno also said that the company's dollar commitment for imported gas is an even bigger number than the investment for the regasification infrastructure, but did not disclose figures.

"Once the demand is already firmed up then we can contract. And contracting really is not that difficult. The question really is do we have the infrastructure to bring in the gas and then utilize that," he said.

He said First Gen is looking to initially contract with gas suppliers for the FSRU, which is a smaller volume than that for the onshore facility.

"Anyway, the contract for Santa Rita and San Lorenzo will only expire in 2024. We don't need as much gas today than in 2024. In 2024, definitely we'll need the gas," he said.

(Source: bworldonline.com)

Second Announcement

Aria Banader Iranian Chabahar
Marine and Port Services Development Company
International Public Tender Notice



Tender Subject: Manufacturing, Shipment, Training and Delivery of Four Units of Ship to Shore Gantry Crane (STS) for Shahid Beheshti Port of Chabahar
No. PE/1014/98

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

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

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

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

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

By Saeed Sobhani

TEHRAN —The President of the United States continues to decline in opinion polls. However, according to public opinion polls in the United States, more and more people are in favor of Trump's impeachment in Congress. On the other hand, Joe Biden's famous Democratic nominee has lost his place in the latest opinion polls! More Democratic supporters now doubt that they will continue to support Biden. The same issue has raised the votes of Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders, two other Democratic candidates.

■ **Trump's target is Biden for now. Democrats fear others could face the same playbook**

As NBC reported, President Donald Trump currently faces an impeachment probe over his private and public calls, despite no existing evidence of any crime, for foreign investigations into former Vice President Joe Biden and his family. But Biden's Democratic rivals know that while it's the former VP who has Trump's attention today, there's no telling who it might be tomorrow: the president has such a long history of making unfounded charges about opponents that any of the other Democratic presidential candidates could be the next to be tarred with a conspiracy theory.

In the past week, Trump has called for the Democratic chairman of the House Intelligence Committee to be arrested "for treason" for paraphrasing a readout of his Ukraine call in a hearing instead of quoting it — treason being a capital charge with no relevance to their dispute. Last month, for no clear reason, he called for investigations into former President Barack Obama's post-White House deals with Netflix and his book publisher. Earlier this year, he made a baseless demand for an investigation into Rep. Elijah Cummings, D-Md. Previously, Trump claimed he personally funded investigations into Obama's birth certificate and publicly called on hackers to find his college records. He pushed a National Enquirer story falsely alleging Sen. Ted Cruz's father was involved in the John F. Kennedy assassination and demanded the press investigate further. Trump's long record of similar accusations — and his apparently heightened interest in pushing his administration to advance them — are one reason the impeachment inquiry has taken on such urgency for Democrats, some of whom fear that what Biden faces now could descend on any number of 2020 contenders should they get close to the nomination.

"Every single candidate in this race is going to have their time in the barrel, that is the way that Trump and his allies work," said Zac Petkanas, a Democratic strategist who ran the Hillary Clinton campaign's rapid response team. "His ability and willingness to manipulate the levers of power to his personal and political benefit is a huge concern going into the 2020 election."

Petkanas recommended Democrats develop a careful plan to debunk attacks in broad terms without repeating the details, a tactic Biden has employed at times by broadly citing outside sources who've found Trump's allegations against him baseless.

"The intent of misinformation is not to prove to people whether it's true or not, it's to create a debate around the issue," he said.

Republican allies of Trump, including Vice President Mike Pence, have argued Biden's established family entanglements with Ukraine — namely his son's work for a Ukrainian energy company — deserve to be scrutinized.

But the particulars of the Biden case, while not unimportant on their own, are largely irrelevant to the question of whether it's appropriate or legal to push for investigations, at home or abroad, into political rivals. The lack of any incriminating evidence behind the calls for an investigation into Biden and the timing in the election cycle also raise the specter that the president could seize on thin or false claims to target other candidates. There will be no shortage of fringe figures looking to push conspiracy theories into Trump's orbit that could provide grist for future calls for such probes.

This week, a far-right pro-Trump personality facing a felony indictment sought to spread a baseless claim about Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., after being caught spreading an easily debunked smear against South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg earlier in the race.

Warren laughed it off with a tweet that indirectly referred to the story, but there's a history of similar figures sending claims upwards from online message boards to the president himself. "Within 24 to 48 hours, something can push from 4chan or Reddit to individuals on Twitter, then they end up putting them on TV," Benjamin T. Decker, a researcher who specializes in disinformation and the founder of digital investigations firm Memetica, said. "In that regard, it's easy to hack Trump's attention, because it's very clear what his media consumption points are."

This dynamic has already played out in the current scandal. In the same call with a Ukrainian leader in which Trump pressed for an investigation into Biden, he called for a separate probe into what seem to be a confused web of false conspiracy theories that migrated from the online message board 4chan to Fox News hosts, intended to absolve Russia of the 2016 Democratic National Committee hack. Trump's former Homeland Security adviser, Tom Bossert, expressed concern this week that the president and his aides appeared fixated on these "completely debunked" series of claims. As an example of how this phenomenon might end up targeting a political rival, Decker pointed to last month, when a video falsely claiming to show Rep. Ilhan Omar, D-Minn., celebrating on the anniversary of 9/11 moved through pro-Trump users on Twitter and into the president's own feed.

As if to illustrate the point, Trump personally feted the supporter who had spread the false

The battle of two politicians continues

Trump and Biden fall multaneously!



Omar story and another conspiracy theory the president had retweeted about Bill Clinton at a White House event on Friday, inviting him to speak. Rick Tyler, an MSNBC analyst who worked on Cruz's presidential run, said that the campaign was caught off guard by Trump's infamous JFK smear in part because they assumed it would be treated as "ridiculous" by voters. This time, with Trump's words carrying the power of the presidency and a well-established pattern of behavior, Democratic campaigns are less likely to be surprised if they face tactics similar to what's befallen Biden. "It's like watching from the window while a crane swings a wrecking ball in the opposite direction of a building you're in," Tyler said. "We don't have to wonder whether the wrecking ball is going to hit the building. It's going to hit the building."

■ **Trump wins the chyron war with Biden**
But Politico reported that Donald Trump's shocking request Thursday on the White House lawn that not only Ukraine, but also China, should investigate the Bidens, may have shown his open defiance of impeachment threats, but it also gave major air time to the innuendo the president and his allies have been trying to spread about Hunter Biden's links to a company funded by a Chinese investor. While the substance of news reports focused on the brazenness of the president's publicly calling on foreign governments to investigate a rival, their headlines and chyrons often communicated a simpler message: "Trump: Ukraine & China Should Investigate Joe Biden and Son," as CNN put it.

While the media's interest was sparked by the possibility of wrongdoing by Trump, the casual reader watching TV with the sound off or scrolling the headlines on a news site might well have assumed the greater scandal was about Biden. The media's reaction to Trump's China comments is a particularly dramatic example of what some writers and media specialists have discerned as a key to the president's successful communications: He understands that readers no longer consume entire articles or watch lengthy news discussions. Rather, they pick up stray impressions from what they see or hear on the go, which then add up to concrete ideas that may not fully comport with facts or reality. Even if media organizations go to pains to describe Trump's allegations about Biden as "unsupported" or "unsubstantiated," it may not be enough to prevent those impressions from being made — as New York Times columnist Michelle Goldberg argued this week.

"It suggests more muddiness in the factual record than actually exists," she wrote. "Trump isn't making unproven charges against Biden.

He is blatantly lying about him. He and his defenders are spreading a conspiracy theory that is the precise opposite of the truth."

Muddying the waters is a strategy which worked for Trump in 2016 against Hillary Clinton and appears to be part of the playbook against Biden. Joshua Green, a Bloomberg Businessweek writer and author of a 2017 biography of Trump ally and former Breitbart chief Steve Bannon, wrote Wednesday how Bannon sought to get potentially damaging storylines about Clinton out of the conservative media echo chamber and into the mainstream press. And "as Bannon had intended," Green wrote, "the whiff of corruption attached itself to Hillary and became a major theme of the media's coverage, poisoning her image."

In 2015, Bannon promoted the findings of "Clinton Cash" by Peter Schweizer, a Breitbart editor and president of the Government Accountability Institute, a nonprofit that's received significant backing from the right-wing Mercer family. The New York Times struck an "exclusive agreement" with Schweizer, resulting in a front-page story highlighting potential conflicts of interest involving the Clinton Foundation.

Schweizer is now making his mark on the presidential election cycle with "Secret Empires," a 2018 book that examined how "the American political class hides corruption" and highlighted the business activities of Biden's son Hunter in Ukraine and China. "As with 'Clinton Cash,' Schweizer didn't allege in his book on the Bidens that any laws were broken," Green writes. "Instead, his reporting laid out a suggestive timeline that led readers to the inescapable conclusion that what had transpired reeked of influence-peddling and moral, if not legal, corruption — the sort of self-dealing voters despise."

It's fair to question Hunter Biden taking a high-paying directorship at Burisma Holdings in Ukraine, or conducting other international business, while his father was vice president, as journalists did several years ago. Former New York Times reporter James Risen wrote in 2015 how the son's business relationships could undermine his father's "anticorruption message" in Ukraine.

But Risen didn't accuse Joe Biden of impropriety, as is now being alleged. Risen last week wrote that Trump, his lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, and allies of having "twisted, perverted, and turned" his journalism into "lies and poisonous propaganda."

Trump and Giuliani have mentioned China in connection to the Bidens several times in recent weeks, though the story hasn't gotten significant traction beyond conservative media ecosystem, which includes Fox News opinion hosts. The Daily

Beast's Lachlan Markay and Asawin Suebsaeng wrote on Sept. 26 how Bannon, Schweizer and others were trying to "open a new front" around the China allegations, though "their efforts have come as almost all of the national political attention is focused" around Ukraine.

In "Secret Empires," Schweizer looked at Hunter Biden's role in investment fund BHR Partners, which struck a deal with the Chinese government-owned Bank of China shortly after Hunter Biden and his daughter accompanied Joe Biden on a 2013 trip to meet President Xi Jinping. In a July profile in The New Yorker, Hunter Biden acknowledged meeting with a BHR representative, though dismissed it as a social call. "How do I go to Beijing, halfway around the world, and not see them for a cup of coffee?" he said. The New Yorker also noted that Hunter Biden "became an unpaid member of BHR's board but did not take an equity stake in BHR Partners until after his father left the White House."

Such nuance was missing from Trump's unfounded claim that "what happened in China is just about as bad as what happened with Ukraine" — a line that immediately became part of the Fox News chyron: "Trump: China Should Investigate Bidens, What Happened There Just About As Bad As What Happened In Ukraine."

Nonetheless, that was only a little more amped up than what viewers saw on liberal MSNBC: "Trump Calls For Ukraine, China To Investigate." And while news organizations continued to work the story throughout the day, focusing mainly on Trump, Biden felt obliged to issue a stinging defense of his family, thereby shifting at least some of the spotlight to him, which is probably what Trump sought to provoke in the first place. Trump's strategy, concluded journalist and author Michael Weiss on Twitter Thursday, was to sell "debunked lies to the base" and force "the media to keep mentioning and re-litigating Biden/Burisma (and now China) while denouncing the media as enemy agents."

■ **Biden said he was prepared for Trump attacks, but now he's struggling to respond**
NBC reported that Joe Biden launched his presidential bid with a clear message to his party: no one was more equipped to take the fight directly to Donald Trump.

But the last two weeks have tested just how ready the Democratic frontrunner really was for the kind of all-out assault the president has launched against him, and his family.

Biden had always expected, and close allies had long warned, that Trump and his allies would try to make his family an issue. One of his final hurdles before joining the race was a

family meeting to make sure the tight-knit Biden clan was ready.

"They're not naive," Biden would say of his family members after that get-together. "From the time they were born," they have "been in the public eye." He said they understood that "the primary will be very difficult. And the general election running against President Trump, I don't think that he's likely to stop at anything in whomever he runs against."

Now, longtime confidants of the former vice president say that even he could not have anticipated that the president would escalate his attacks so dramatically, or so early. And his reluctance to discuss his family in the campaign is a major reason why he has chosen not to respond more forcefully to Trump's current assault until recent days. "It's way beyond anything I quite frankly thought he would do," Biden said during a candidate forum last week.

The current onslaught is threatening to overwhelm Biden's candidacy at an already difficult time, with his frontrunner status in the Democratic presidential field imperiled by tightening polls, slower fundraising and now a full-fledged assault by Trump and his allies. Biden's third White House bid had already endured a series of trials, beginning before he even launched his candidacy in April: accusations of inappropriate physical contact, heightened scrutiny on his Senate record, and at times halting debate performances. Through it all, his campaign has pointed out that his status as the frontrunner in a crowded primary field had proven remarkably enduring, especially on the question of which Democrat voters think could best take the president on in a general election.

Advisers say that growing support for impeachment in the polls shows that the public is focused on the developing White House scandal. "This campaign will continue to focus on the issues that impact people's lives while simultaneously hammering Donald Trump for his unprecedented abuse of power and correcting the record on the mountain of lies Trump and his allies continue to spread about Joe Biden," deputy campaign manager Kate Bedingfield said in a memo Saturday. Still, the scope of the challenge appears far greater now. As one longtime Biden associate put it: "If he survives this, he should be president."

The campaign has been buried in free advice from a vast network of allies — most of it encouraging a more aggressive response by the candidate himself to the president.

But while his headquarters has been working overdrive to push back on a false Ukraine narrative and almost daily escalations by the president, Biden himself has been reticent to respond in kind, given that his son, Hunter, is squarely in the middle of Trump's attacks.

His longstanding aversion to discussing family matters publicly — influenced greatly by the grief he's borne publicly since his earliest days in the Senate — has been an obstacle for advisers to overcome as they pushed for a stronger voice. "As a father myself, I think any of us in public life who have to face groundless accusations against our families it makes us defensive, it makes us angry, it makes us unhappy. But I know Joe is motivated by a calling to solve this problem and move us forward and help bring the country together," Sen. Chris Coons, D-Del., said in an interview with NBC News.

Still, it took until Thursday night in Reno, Nevada, for Biden to offer his most forceful response yet to Trump, telling an audience that he "will put the integrity of my whole career in public service to this nation up against his long record of lying and cheating and stealing any day of the week."

"Let me make something clear to Mr. Trump and his hatchet men and the special interests funding his attacks against me: I'm not going anywhere."

"We gotta get something straight. All this talk from the president about corruption comes from the most corrupt president we've had in modern history, he's the definition of corruption," he said.

And Saturday, the campaign turned his remarks in Reno into a television ad, part of a \$6 million buy up against a larger media blitz by the president's campaign.

The array of challenges Biden now faces threatens what had been his biggest asset: the appearance of strength, and his own contention that he was the Democrat with the best chance of defeating Trump.

His response to the adversity, especially the nearly daily assaults by the president and his allies, is shaping up as the ultimate stress test for his candidacy. Reflecting on his possible 2016 campaign in his recent memoir, "Promise Me, Dad," Biden said that had he run, it would not have been "a cautious, trim-around-the-edges campaign," but would instead "go big. Because frankly, at this point in my career and after all my family had been through, anything less just wasn't worth it."

The Biden 2020 campaign has, though, at times felt constrained by the frontrunner position he began with, in the most crowded Democratic field in a generation and with a Democratic electorate that has changed since he and Barack Obama won the White House in 2008. At times he's joked about the new reality, as when he was asked in August about a dynamic within the GOP. "I'm still trying to figure out my party!" he quipped. "He's in a new world," said Philippe Reines, a longtime adviser to Hillary Clinton. "He can litigate every day that the world should be like it was 10, 20, 50 years ago, but he's not going to win that fight."

"The environment he's in doesn't require him to be as nasty as Donald Trump," Reines said, "but it does require him to stand up for himself quickly and forcefully and out of his mouth. And if he does that, then he is proving his argument of the case, that he's the best to take him on." →7



One year after Khashoggi's brutal murder: Business as usual?

By Medea Benjamin

ANTIWAR — Heinous. Savage. Ghastly. It's hard to find the words to describe the act of luring journalist Jamal Khashoggi into a Saudi consulate in Istanbul, suffocating him, chopping him up and dissolving his bones. Yet a year later, governments and businesspeople around the world are eager to forgive and forget — or already have.

So far, not a single Saudi official has been found guilty or punished for this crime. The Saudi government has put 11 officials on trial but these trials, which began in January and drag on behind closed doors, are a mockery of justice. The government is prosecuting lower-level officials but not the top guns who are truly responsible. The defendants have not been named but it is known that Saud al-Qahtani, a former top aide to Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman (MbS) and the alleged mastermind of the murder, is not a defendant and the government refuses to say where he is.

And what about the crown prince himself? In a September 29 PBS interview, MbS accepted responsibility for the killing because it happened "under his watch" — but he denied having prior knowledge. The CIA, however, concluded in November that the prince, who maintains tight control in the kingdom, likely ordered the killing. A report by United Nations Special Rapporteur Agnes Callamard said there was "credible evidence" linking him to the murder and cover up of what she said was undoubtedly a "state killing." Still, the trials continue even though they do nothing to indict the person who gave the orders.

When Khashoggi was murdered, the outrage had a major effect on US congressional support for the Saudis, manifested by growing opposition to the US support for the catastrophic Saudi war in Yemen. Several key Republicans turned against MbS, not in response to the humanitarian crisis in Yemen but in response to the public outcry against Khashoggi's horrific murder. A broad-based coalition of peace, human rights and humanitarian groups was able to convince a majority in both the House and the Senate to cut off support for the Saudi war in Yemen, a necessary step to hold MbS accountable for his complete disregard for human life. Even some of the most hawkish Republicans stepped up in response. Lindsey Graham, for example, called MbS a "wrecking ball" and voted to end support for the war, explaining in a statement, "I changed my mind because I'm pissed. The way the administration had handled [Khashoggi's murder] is just not acceptable." The bills were vetoed by President Trump but Congress is still trying to force the President's hand by including an amendment in the must-pass military funding bill (NDAA).

On the heels of Khashoggi's death, businesses, embarrassed by their Saudi connections, started pulling out of deals. Dozens of companies and notables, from the New York Times to Uber CEO to the head of the World Bank, decided to skip the major annual Saudi Future Investment Initiative, also known as Davos in the Desert. Talent agent Endeavor returned a \$400 million investment from Saudi Arabia. Several think tanks, including the Brookings Institution and the Middle East Institute, announced that they would no longer accept Saudi funding. In the past year, five PR firms — Glover Park Group, BGR Group, Harbour Group, CGCN Group and Gibson, Dunn & Crutche — have severed ties with the kingdom. At the behest of groups including the Human Rights Foundation, singer Nicki Minaj canceled her performance in Saudi Arabia, citing concerns about the



treatment of women, the LGBTQ community and freedom of expression. Freedom Forward was successful in getting the New York Public Library to cancel its "Youth Forum" with MbS's charity, the Misk Foundation.

Still, the Saudis have been investing huge sums of money in companies and notables to "rebrand" the Kingdom, prompting CODEPINK to launch a full-blown Boycott Saudi campaign in January. The campaign includes urging entertainers not to perform, asking Vice Media to stop producing promotional/propaganda videos for the Saudis, encouraging Lush Cosmetics to close their Saudi stores, and pushing the G20 nations to reconsider their decision to hold their 2020 meeting in Saudi Arabia. The campaign's long list of targets shows just how much money Saudi invests in whitewashing its crimes and how overreaching its influence is.

While human rights groups work to hold the private sector accountable, the biggest obstacle to holding Saudi accountable is the Trump administration continued support. Trump has focused on Saudi Arabia's key role as a purchaser of US weapons and an ally against Iran. In the wake of the September 14 attacks on the kingdom's oil infrastructure, Trump announced the deployment of 200 troops and Patriot missiles to Saudi Arabia to bolster its defenses against Iran. It is also Trump who vetoed legislation to end military assistance for the Saudi war on Yemen on three different occasions and went so far as to declare a state of emergency to sell \$8 billion in weapons to the Saudis while bypassing Congressional disapproval.

Trump has not only stood by MbS but pushed for his rehabilitation on the world stage. With the "Davos in the Desert" Future Investment Initiative taking place against this year, on October 29-31, Jared Kushner is expected to

lead a robust US delegation. Big banks and investment firms, including Goldman Sachs, BlackRock, CitiGroup, are once again lining up to attend. It seems the money to be made in the anticipated initial public offering of the world's wealthiest company, the Saudi oil company Aramco — valued at between \$1.5 trillion and \$2 trillion — is just too enticing.

Khashoggi himself was critical of the international community's unwillingness to take substantive steps to hold the Saudi regime accountable. In a column about the need for freedom of speech in the Arab world, he remarked that the repression by Arab governments "no longer carry the consequence of a backlash from the international community. Instead, these actions may trigger condemnation quickly followed by silence." The sad irony is that in response to his own murder, governments and private interests are proving his point.

One year later, their silence has allowed MbS to tighten his grip on power and increase repression against political rivals and women activists. It has given the green light for governments around the world to sell weapons to the Saudis to destroy Yemen. It allows businesses to rake in billions in petrodollar investments and foreign entertainers to provide a veneer of normalcy and modernity to the kingdom. Far from being held accountable for Khashoggi's murder, MbS is thriving — thanks to his rehabilitation by an international community that cares more about money than it does human rights. In times like this, it's difficult not to ask oneself: Who is more evil — the maniacal Saudi crown prince responsible for Khashoggi's murder and the murder of tens of thousands of Yemenis, or the mendacious world leaders and businesspeople who continue to embrace what should be a pariah state?

Children are still dying in Afghanistan

TEHRAN (FNA) — The past four years were among the deadliest for children in Afghanistan since the US-led invasion of 2001, with nearly 13,000 youngsters killed and injured in that period.

According to a new report by UN Secretary-General António Guterres on children and armed conflict in Afghanistan, 12,599 youngsters were killed or injured by fighting between 2015-2018 - 82 percent more than between 2011-2014. The report serves as a potent reminder that while so-called peace talks between the US and the Taliban are claimed to have made some progress, life for ordinary Afghans remains blighted by violence and hardship. The global community should be disturbed by the scale, severity and recurrence of these grave violations endured by boys and girls in Afghanistan over recent years. The 17-page study, which bears Guterres' name but was compiled by his special envoy on children in wartime, Virginia Gamba, says that youngsters made up almost a third of all civilian casualties in Afghanistan.

This includes those who were killed in schools by US-led airstrikes and bombings. They were also killed or maimed by fighting on the ground, improvised explosive devices, suicide bomb blasts, and from unexploded weapons that detonated unexpectedly after they were deployed. Sadly, children in Afghanistan have known nothing but heart-breaking realities as a result of violence and US-led war and occupation. The number of child casualties is appalling, and the time

is now to call on the US-led coalition to immediately put an end to the suffering of children.

The growing civilian death toll has mostly come as a direct consequence of US-led aerial attacks since 2015. Since the beginning of that year, some 1,049 children were killed or injured in attacks from the skies. In one extreme case, US helicopters in April 2018 fired rockets and heavy machine guns at an open-air graduation ceremony at a madrasa in Dasht-e Archi district of Kunduz province, killing at least 30 children and injuring 51 others. While the protection and well-being of children can only be reached through long-term peace, the world community must seize all available opportunities to improve right now the protection of boys and girls in Afghanistan. The report comes after US and Taliban negotiators struck a draft peace deal last month aimed at leading to drawdowns of the 14,000 US troops and thousands of NATO troops in the landlocked, South Asian country. Still, the country is better off without US occupation and terror.

This is a reckless strategic failure that benefits no one - are no less applicable now than they were in 2001. Just as then, those against withdrawal show no sign of ever wanting this war to end. That stagnation is a telling indictment of what passes for foreign policy in Washington. Too many policymakers seem incapable, if not unwilling, of considering the big picture, of asking whether continuing this war is in



any sense good, useful, or even in conformity with the will of the people they ostensibly represent.

President Trump, like President Obama before him, campaigned on shuttering reckless wars of choice, lambasting mission creep and the ineffectual nation building it so often entails. Yet neither president has pushed past the inertia of what's been called the foreign policy "blob". While the rest of the country is past ready to move on, the locus of Washington's foreign policy conversation about Afghanistan is about the scale at which military intervention should continue forever, not whether it should continue at all.

There is no US-imposed, militarily

enforced solution to Afghanistan's woes, and indefinitely prolonging US occupation cannot and will not change that. The US government is trying to bomb and spend Afghanistan into a political order that can only be achieved by those who must live with the outcomes, both through promising diplomatic efforts led by the United Nations and through conversations among various factions of the Afghan people themselves. Whatever course and time frame those negotiations may take, the business at hand for Washington remains the same: US military intervention and occupation in Afghanistan must come to an end. It's the only way to save children from dying in the war-torn country.

Anti-Brexit campaigners, who believe Johnson will use a legal loophole or send a second letter, threatening to sabotage EU processes if they grant a Brexit delay, asked Scotland's Outer House of the Court of Session to issue an order compelling him to comply with the Bann Act.

But the judge said assurances given by the government's top legal officer in Scotland not to frustrate the Bann Act meant it was unnecessary to do so.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

Trump and Biden fall multaneously!

6 → The Biden campaign insists that Trump's clear focus on him is an asset in the campaign, and has helped rally Democrats to his side. They saw an influx in online donations in the final days of the fundraising quarter, pushing him over the \$15 million mark.

But that figure was still short of hauls from Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., as well as Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., and South Bend, Indiana Mayor Pete Buttigieg. Meanwhile, a national poll released by Monmouth University Wednesday was the latest to show Warren out front of the Democratic pack. Biden's lead over the Democratic field in the Real Clear Politics polling average — once as high as 26.8 points — is now down to 1.7.

And in a potentially ominous sign, the Monmouth poll released Wednesday also showed that 43 percent of respondents believed Trump's claim that Biden pressured Ukrainian officials not to investigate his son's business dealings, while 37 percent did not. One-in-five voters said they weren't sure.

But another longtime Biden confidant insisted that the former vice president would not be knocked off stride, and said his willingness to endure the crucible was a testament to how motivated he was to defeat Trump. "He has been hit with everything but the kitchen sink," the Biden ally said. "He knew this was going to be awful but he just couldn't live with himself if he didn't run and Trump went on to win."

Trump is dragging down Biden with him

Business insider reported that The Ukraine scandal and related whistleblower complaint pose an existential threat to Donald Trump's presidency. The revelation that Trump urged a foreign power, in this case Ukraine, to investigate former Vice President Joe Biden has sparked an impeachment inquiry in Congress. But the controversy also has the potential to sow doubts and suspicion around Biden, despite no evidence of wrongdoing on his part, and there are already signs that it's begun to. Trump seems to be looking to his 2016 playbook in this regard. Throughout the 2016 campaign season, Trump sought to malign former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, his top opponent, by constantly focusing on her use of a private email server. Biden is a top contender for the 2020 Democratic nomination and an unapologetic critic of Trump, and the president appears to be employing a similar tactic as he seeks to divert attention away from the impeachment inquiry and discredit the former vice president.

Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump (L) and Democratic presidential nominee former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton during the town hall debate at Washington University on October 9, 2016 in St Louis, Missouri. Getty

Though the FBI characterized Clinton's use of a private email server as "extremely careless," it concluded she did not commit any criminal wrongdoing. To this day, Trump has not let the issue go, and even alluded to it in the phone call with Ukraine at the heart of the whistleblower complaint. And he really hammered Clinton on it during the campaign, at one point suggesting he'd jail her if elected.

It's hard to know exactly how much of an influence the focus on Clinton's emails ultimately had in her 2016 loss to Trump, which was a product of a convoluted array of factors and occurred despite her winning the popular vote.

But when Clinton left her post as Secretary of State in 2013, she had a whopping 69% approval rating. Within just a few years she would go on to become the second-most unpopular major-party presidential nominee in modern US history, surpassed only by Trump in this regard. And polling during the 2016 campaign season showed that Clinton's handling of the email scandal was hurting her with voters — including Democrats.

Biden could potentially suffer similar consequences as Trump seeks to make the Ukraine scandal a story about the former vice president rather than his efforts to have a political opponent investigated. US President Donald Trump (L) shakes hands with former US President Barack Obama (C) and former vice-President Joe Biden after being sworn in as President on January 20, 2017 at the US Capitol in Washington, DC. MARK RALSTON/AFP/Getty Images

The whistleblower complaint centers around a July 25 phone call between Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. On the call, Trump urged Ukraine to investigate Biden regarding the former vice president's role in seeing a prosecutor fired at the same time that his son, Hunter Biden, served on the board of a powerful Ukrainian gas company, Burisma Holdings. Trump's primary allegation is that Biden squeezed Ukraine into firing its top prosecutor to the benefit of his son, but there's no evidence of this. It's true Biden pressured Ukraine to fire the prosecutor, Viktor Shokin, and as part of these efforts he at one point threatened to withhold \$1 billion in loan guarantees from Ukraine if Shokin wasn't pushed out.

But the former vice president was actually among a large number of US and European officials to push for the ouster of Shokin — and the European Union hailed his dismissal — as he was widely viewed as far too soft on rampant corruption in Ukraine. Moreover, by the time Shokin fired there were no active investigations into Burisma. Long story short, Trump's allegations against Biden are without and evidenced foundation.

Even still, more Americans seemingly believe Biden probably pressured Ukraine to fire Shokin to help his son than those who say he probably didn't, according to a recent Monmouth University poll, which suggests the narrative Trump is pushing is taking hold.

Monmouth found 42% of Americans say Biden "probably did exert this pressure" and 37% say this probably did not happen. Meanwhile, the new prosecutor general in Ukraine on Friday announced he is reviewing past investigations into the owner of Burisma. This raised the possibility of inquiries into the gas company tied to Biden's son being restarted. The Ukraine scandal is rapidly escalating, and a second whistleblower with first-hand knowledge of some of the allegations outlined in the complaint has also come forward.

Trump's presidency is in serious trouble. But as this controversy drags Trump down, he appears determined to take Biden with him via an endless stream of attacks on Twitter and in statements to the media. And there are growing signs that if Biden isn't able to mount a potent counteroffensive, Trump might succeed. "If someone says something enough, people will start to believe it"

Family members gather for a road naming ceremony with U.S. Vice President Joe Biden, centre, his son Hunter Biden, left, and his sister Valerie Biden Owens. AP

Before Biden even officially entered the 2020 race, he was at the top of the polls for months. After he officially announced in April, he continued to lead the pack for weeks and well into summer.

But in the past two weeks, his numbers have begun to dip and other candidates like Sen. Elizabeth Warren have pulled ahead of him in multiple state and national polls.

Whether or not this is linked to the Ukraine controversy is difficult to measure, but there is evidence that Trump's baseless allegations against Biden are beginning to shape voter perceptions about the whistleblower complaint and ensuing scandal. And some of his campaign advisers are getting worried. Democratic Rep. Cedric Richmond of Louisiana, who serves as a Biden 2020 campaign co-chairman, for example, recently told The New York Times, "If someone says something enough, people will start to believe it, and this president gets in his zone of telling a lie over and over again. You have to make sure people don't believe in it."

Scottish court rejects bid to force UK PM to seek Brexit delay

A Scottish court has rejected a bid by campaigners seeking an order to force British Prime Minister Boris Johnson to ask for a Brexit delay if he has not struck a deal with the European Union in less than two weeks' time.

The court on Monday concluded there was no need to take any pre-emptive action against Johnson because he had given legal assurances that he would abide by a law compelling him to ask the EU for an extension if no divorce deal had been agreed.

"The government accepts that in executing its political policy it must comply with the 2019 Act," the judge, Paul Cullen, said in his ruling.

"That being the government's clearly stated position before the court, there is no need for coercive orders against it or against the prime minister to be pronounced."

Last month, the United Kingdom's Parliament passed legislation, known as the "Benn Act", which requires Johnson to send a letter to the EU asking for a delay

if he fails to agree a deal by October 19 unless he has legislators' approval to leave without any agreement.

With the clock ticking down to Britain's departure on October 31, Johnson has consistently said he will not ask for a Brexit delay and that he would rather be "dead in a ditch" than seek any further extension.

But he has also said he will not break a law that forces him to request one if no withdrawal agreement deal has been agreed without explaining that apparent contradiction.

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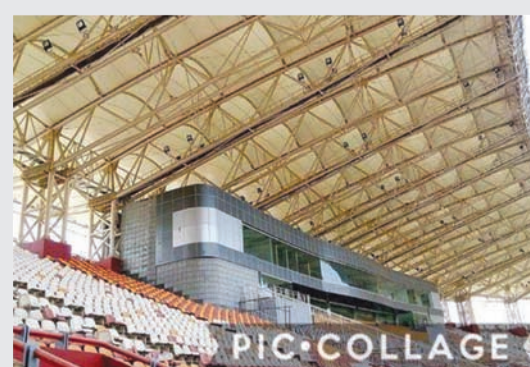
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The center of the Milky Way exploded when ancient human walked the Earth

The supermassive black hole at the center of the Milky Way triggered a “cataclysmic” explosion recently enough to occur as our earliest ancestors walked the Earth, scientists believe.

While astronomers have suspected such an event took place for years, new research dates the blast to just 3.5 million years ago – 63 million years after an asteroid wiped out the dinosaurs.

Two cone-shaped nuclear flares sliced through the Milky Way in opposite directions for at least 200,000 light years, bursting out into deep space and impacting the trail of gas partially circling the galaxy known as the Magellanic Stream.

Scientists allege such a powerful blast could only have been caused by nuclear activity associated with Sagittarius A, the black hole at the center of our galaxy, which is 4.2 million times larger than the sun.

“These results dramatically change our understanding of the Milky Way,” said the study’s co-author Dr. Magda Guglielmo, of the University of Sydney. “We always thought about our galaxy as an inactive galaxy, with a not so bright center.

“These new results instead open the possibility of a complete reinterpretation of its evolution and nature. The flare event ... was so powerful it had consequences on the surrounding of our galaxy. We are the witness to the awakening of the sleeping beauty.”

Sagittarius A tends to be a relatively stable “sleeping dragon”, researchers said.

But the study suggests the black hole woke up dramatically as our ancient ancestors, the



ape-like Australopithecines, were already afoot in Africa, releasing a burst known as a Seyfert flare.

Study leader Professor Joss Bland-Hawthorn, of the University of Sydney, said: “The flare must have been a bit like a lighthouse beam.

“Imagine darkness, and then someone switches on a lighthouse beacon for a brief period of time.”

His team at Australia’s ARC Centre of Excellence for All Sky Astrophysics in 3 Dimensions (ASTRO 3D) described it as a “titanic, expanding beam of energy”.

Professor Lisa Kewley, director of ASTRO 3D, said: “This is a dramatic event that happened a few million years ago in the Milky Way’s history.

“A massive blast of energy and radiation came right out of the galactic center and into the surrounding material.

“This shows that the center of the Milky

Way is a much more dynamic place than we had previously thought. It is lucky we’re not residing there.”

In 1996, astronomers became aware of a strange glow radiating from the Magellanic Stream. Scientists began to hunt for a cause and Sagittarius A became the prime suspect.

The team first described the evidence of this explosion in 2013, when they identified the black hole as the cause.

Their latest work, published in the Astrophysical Journal, builds upon and reinforces their previous findings.

Based on a recent analysis of the data gathered by the Hubble Space Telescope, the researchers calculated the massive explosion took place 3.5 million years ago and lasted around 300,000 years.

The question of how black holes evolve, influence and interact with galaxies “is an outstanding problem in astrophysics”, the researchers added.

Black holes are places where matter is compressed by gravity to a point where the normal laws of physics break down, bending and distorting space and time.

By definition, they cannot be seen in the conventional sense, making them hard to study. Their presence is inferred from radiation emitted as gas and debris swirl around them.

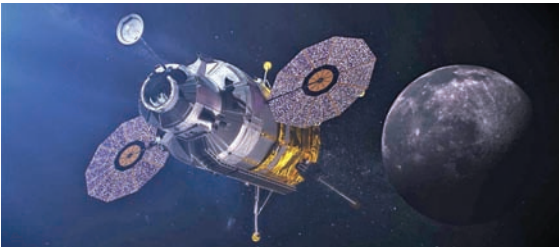
In another contrast to its “sleepy” persona, last month researchers discovered Sagittarius A was “growing hungrier”, eating far more interstellar gas and dust than it had ever been seen doing before.

(Source: The Independent)

NASA invites bids from firms to build lunar lander for 2024 mission

There can be no doubt that NASA is serious about trying to land astronauts on the moon by 2024.

Even though the Artemis program has yet to be fully funded, NASA has issued a call to US companies for a lunar landing spacecraft that will place the first woman and the next man on the moon’s surface. The call has been sent out in draft form twice already this year, allowing private companies to comment and help NASA shape the request. Now those companies have until 1 November to submit their finished proposals. From these, two companies will be contracted to provide the landers.



The first one to complete its spacecraft will be the one that makes the first landing in 2024. The runner-up will fly

on the second Artemis landing mission in 2025.

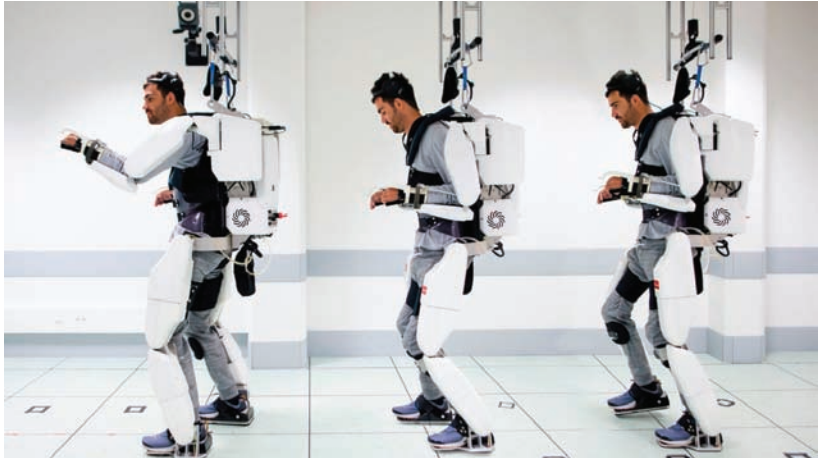
In order to reduce the cost and meet the tight deadline of a workable spacecraft by 2024, NASA has significantly decreased the number of interim reports that it will expect the contractors to file.

To maintain safety and quality, however, NASA’s engineering workforce will be made available to work alongside the companies, and each proposal must include a plan for how that collaboration will take place.

Artemis aims to establish a “sustained” human presence on the moon by 2028.

(Source: The Guardian)

Paralyzed man walks using mind-controlled exoskeleton



A French man paralyzed in a nightclub accident has walked again thanks to a brain-controlled exoskeleton, providing hope to tetraplegics seeking to regain movement.

The patient trained for months, harnessing his brain signals to control a computer-simulated avatar to perform basic movements before using the robot device to walk. Scientists described the trial results as a breakthrough.

Doctors who conducted the trial said though the device was years away from being publicly available, it had the potential to improve patients’ quality of life and autonomy.

The patient, identified only as Thibault, 28, from Lyon, said the technology had given him a new lease of life. Four years ago his life was permanently changed when he fell 40ft (12 meters) from a balcony, severing his spinal cord and leaving him paralyzed from the shoulders down.

“When you are in my position, when you can’t do anything with your body ... I wanted to do something with my brain,” Thibault said.

He trained using a video game avatar system to acquire the skills needed to operate the exoskeleton and had to relearn natural movements from scratch. “I can’t go home tomorrow in my exoskeleton but I’ve got to a point where I can walk. I walk when I want and I stop when I want,” Thibault said.

Cervical spinal cord injuries leave about 20% of patients paralyzed in all four limbs and is the most severe injury of its kind.

Alim Louis Benabid, professor emeritus at Grenoble and lead author of the study published in the Lancet Neurology journal, said: “The brain is still capable of generating commands that would normally move the arms and legs,

there’s just nothing to carry them out.”

A team of experts from Grenoble Alpes hospital, the biomedical company Cinatech and the CEA research centre began the procedure by implanting two recording devices either side of Thibault’s head, between the brain and the skin. These read his sensorimotor cortex, which controls motor function.

Each decoder transmits brain signals, which are translated by an algorithm into the movements the patient has thought about. It is this system that sends the physical commands the exoskeleton executes.

Thibault used the avatar and video game to think about performing physical tasks such as walking and reaching out to touch objects. Using the avatar, video game and exoskeleton combined, he was able to cover the length of one and a half football pitches over the course of many sessions.

Several studies have used implants to stimulate patients’ muscles but the Grenoble research is the first to use brain signals to control a robot exoskeleton.

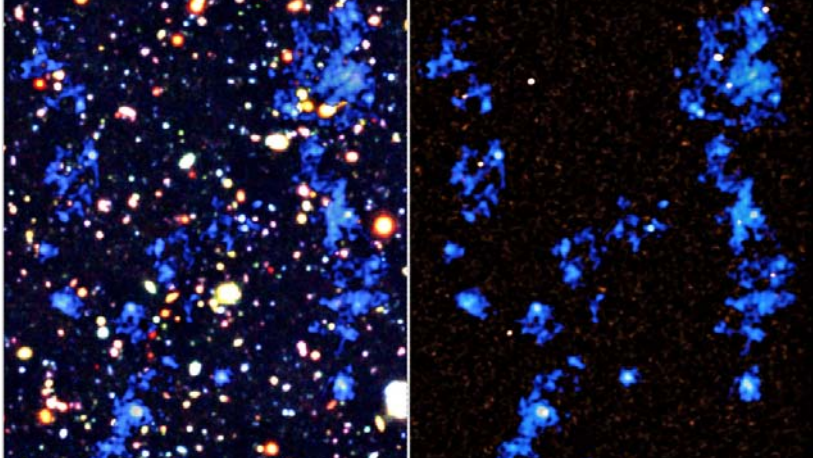
Experts involved in the study said it could potentially lead to brain-controlled wheelchairs for paralyzed patients. “This isn’t about turning man into machine but about responding to a medical problem,” said Benabid. “We’re talking about ‘repaired man’, not ‘augmented man’.”

In a comment piece on the study, Tom Shakespeare, professor of disability research at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, said the exoskeleton system was a long way from usable clinical possibility.

But Thibault said the trial offered a “message of hope to people like me ... This is possible, even with our handicap.”

(Source: The Guardian)

Massive filaments fuel the growth of galaxies and supermassive black holes



An international group of scientists led by the RIKEN Cluster for Pioneering Research have used observations from the Multi Unit Spectroscopic Explorer (MUSE) at the ESO Very Large Telescope (VLT) in Chile and the Suprime-Cam at the Subaru telescope to make detailed observations of the filaments of gas connecting galaxies in a large, distant proto-cluster in the early Universe. Based on direct observations they found that, in accordance with the predictions of the cold dark matter model of galaxy formation, the filaments are extensive, extending over more than 1 million parsecs -- a parsec being just over three light years -- and are providing the fuel for intense formation of stars and the growth of super massive black holes within the proto-cluster.

The observations, which constitute a very detailed map of the filaments, were made on SSA22, a massive proto-cluster of galaxies located about 12 billion light years away in the constellation of Aquarius, making it a structure of the very early universe.

The findings, published in Science, give new insights into galaxy formation. The dominant belief at one time was that galaxies formed and then organized into clusters, in a bottom-up way, but now it is generally believed that filaments in the universe fueled the formation of clusters of galaxies and galaxies at places where the filaments crossed, creating dense regions of matter. In accordance with this, the group found that the intersection between the enormous filaments they identified is home to active galactic nuclei -- supermassive black holes -- and “starbursting” galaxies that have very active star formation. They determine their location from observations made

with the Atacama Large.

Their observations are based on the detection of what is known Lyman alpha radiation -- ultraviolet light that is produced when neutral hydrogen gas is ionized and then returns to its ground state -- using the MUSE instrument. The radiation was found to be intense -- too high to be from the ultraviolet background radiation of the universe. Their calculations indicated that the high radiation was likely triggered by star-forming galaxies and forming black holes.

According to Hideki Umeahata of the RIKEN Cluster for Pioneering Research and the University of Tokyo, the first author of the paper, “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.”

“Previous observations,” he continues, “had shown that there emissions from blobs of gas extending beyond the galaxies, but 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. This adds credence to the idea that these filaments are actually powering the intense activity that we see within the galaxies inside the filaments.”

Co-author Michele Fumagalli from Durham University, UK, 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.”

(Source: Science Daily)

This is how a ‘fuzzy’ universe may have looked

Dark matter was likely the starting ingredient for brewing up the very first galaxies in the universe. Shortly after the Big Bang, particles of dark matter would have clumped together in gravitational “halos,” pulling surrounding gas into their cores, which over time cooled and condensed into the first galaxies.

Although dark matter is considered the backbone to the structure of the universe, scientists know very little about its nature, as the particles have so far evaded detection.

Now scientists at MIT, Princeton University, and Cambridge University have found that the early universe, and the very first galaxies, would have looked very different depending on the nature of dark matter. For the first time, the team has simulated what early galaxy formation would have looked like if dark matter were “fuzzy,” rather than cold or warm.

In the most widely accepted scenario, dark matter is cold, made up of slow-moving particles that, aside from gravitational effects, have no interaction with ordinary matter. Warm dark matter is thought to be a slightly lighter and faster version of cold dark matter. And fuzzy dark matter, a relatively new concept, is something entirely different, consisting of ultralight particles, each about 1 octillionth (10⁻²⁷) the mass of an electron (a cold dark matter particle is far heavier -- about 105 times more massive than an electron).

In their simulations, the researchers found that if dark matter is cold, then galaxies in the early universe would have formed in nearly spherical halos. But if the nature of dark matter is fuzzy or warm, the early universe would have looked very different, with galaxies forming first in extended, tail-like filaments. In a fuzzy universe, these filaments would have appeared striated, like star-lit strings on a harp.

As new telescopes come online, with the ability to see further back into the early universe, scientists may be able to deduce, from the pattern of galaxy formation, whether the nature of dark matter, which today makes up nearly 85 percent of the matter in the universe, is fuzzy as opposed to cold or warm.

“The first galaxies in the early universe may illuminate what type of dark matter we have today,” says Mark Vogelsberger, associate professor of physics in MIT’s Kavli Institute for Astrophysics and Space Research. “Either we see this filament pattern, and fuzzy dark matter is plausible, or we don’t, and we can rule that model out. We now have a blueprint for how to do this.”

Vogelsberger is a co-author of a paper appearing in Physical Review Letters, along with the paper’s lead author, Philip Mocz of Princeton University, and Anastasia Fialkov of Cambridge University and previously the University of Sussex.

While dark matter has yet to be directly detected, the hypothesis that describes dark matter as cold has proven successful at describing the large-scale structure of the observable universe. As a result, models of galaxy formation are based on the assumption that dark matter is cold.

“The problem is, there are some discrepancies between observations and predictions of cold dark matter,” Vogelsberger points out. “For example, if you look at very small galaxies, the inferred distribution of dark matter within these galaxies doesn’t perfectly agree with what theoretical models predict. So there is tension there.”

Enter, then, alternative theories for dark matter, including warm, and fuzzy, which researchers have proposed in recent years.

“The nature of dark matter is still a mystery,” Fialkov says. “Fuzzy dark matter is motivated by fundamental physics, for instance, string theory, and thus is an interesting dark matter candidate. Cosmic structures hold the key to validating or ruling out such dark matter modles.”

Fuzzy dark matter is made up of particles that are so light that they act in a quantum, wave-like fashion, rather than as individual particles. This quantum, fuzzy nature, Mocz says, could have produced early galaxies that look entirely different from what standard models predict for cold dark matter.

(Source: Science Daily)

We just got new information on the first-ever plant sprouted by china on the Moon

When China’s Chang’e-4 spacecraft landed on the lunar far side on 3 January 2019, it made history. It was the first spacecraft to visit that part of the Moon, and among its payload was a 2.6 kg (5.7 lb) mini-biosphere called the Lunar Micro Ecosystem (LME).

The sealed, cylindrical biosphere is only 18 cm (7.1 in) long and 16 cm (6.3 in) in diameter. The LME carried six lifeforms, kept in mostly Earth-like conditions except for micro-gravity and lunar radiation.

The LME carried cotton seeds, potato seeds, yeast, fruit fly eggs and Arabidopsis thaliana.

This ground-breaking work by China is the first biological growth experiment on the Moon. Only the cotton seeds produced positive results. This experiment took place back in January 2019 when the lander made it to the Moon. At that time, the team behind this experiment thought that there was only one leaf, but now data indicates there were two.

The image is a 3D reconstruction based on data analysis and image processing, and it clearly shows two leaves.

None of the other organisms produced any results.

The LME was unheated, so after the first lunar day -- about 14 Earth days -- the cotton sprout died when the temperatures plunged to minus 190 Celsius (-310 F.) But the experiment continued, to test the longevity of the LME itself.

The leader of the experiment is Xie Gengxin of the advanced Technology Research Institute at Chongqing University. While there will be no scientific papers published from the experiment, Xie hopes to build on this work.

During the planning stages there was talk of sending a small tortoise to the Moon, but mission constraints prevented it.

In an interview with IEEE Spectrum Xie said, “The weight of the Chang’e-4 probe demanded that the weight [of the experiment] can’t exceed three kilograms.”

It would have been a hard, brutish life for any tortoise that made the trip. Not only would it have died when the temperature plunged, but oxygen would’ve run out in about 20 days.

It wouldn’t have been the first tortoise in space. That honor goes to the two tortoises on the Soviet Union’s Zond 5 mission in 1968. Alongside the two turtles were fruit flies and plants. (The two turtles were deprived of food as part of the experiment, and they suffered from starvation when they returned to Earth, but they were alive.)

But while the Zond 5 mission was the first mission to carry any Earthlings beyond Earth’s orbit, the Chang’e-4 mission was the first to carry some to the Moon (other than astronauts, of course.) And it won’t be China’s last.

(Source: sciencealert.com)

Over 43,000 people tour UNESCO-tagged ensemble of Sasanian cities in H1

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Some 43,650 travelers toured the UNESCO-registered Sasanian-era (224–651) Archaeological Landscape of Fars Region in southern Iran during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (started March 21).



The ensemble comprises several ruined royal palaces, strongholds and fire temples in Bishapour, Firouzabad and Sarvestan, which are located in Fars province. It embodies political, historical, cultural and artistic developments of the mighty Sasanian Empire that at the time was one of the leading world powers alongside its arch-rival the Roman-Byzantine Empire.

Under the Sasanians, Iranian art experienced a general renaissance. Architecture often took grandiose proportions, such as the palaces at Ctesiphon, Firouzabad and Sarvestan.

History threatened as Turkey prepares to flood ancient city

Hasankeyf, Turkey - The rumble of heavy machinery is a background cacophony as the call to prayer rings out over this ancient town on the banks of the River Tigris in southeast Turkey.

The crash of rocks being shifted to prepare for the filling of a hydroelectric dam - that will see the town submerged - reminds residents that they face eviction in the coming days.

The preparation work, which coats the 12,000-year-old settlement in dust, has neared completion and locals now face the uncertainty of not knowing exactly when they will be forced from homes and businesses that have been in their families for generations.

“Everybody is traumatized by this,” said Bulent Basaran, 50, from his restaurant overlooking the river. “We feel like we’re in a coma. I don’t see any light, just negative things and problems.”

For years, the people of Hasankeyf have lived with the threat of their town being swallowed by waters behind the \$1.3bn Ilisu dam, which lies 75km (47 miles) downstream.

Although they were given until Tuesday, October 8 to leave, the town’s market and streets showed little sign of an impending evacuation over the past few days, despite a lack of customers at the stalls and shops selling local rugs and crafts.

“There’s no date to leave now,” Basaran said. “I guess it will be at the end of the tourist season next month. The district governor has threatened to cut off the electricity and water if we don’t leave in a month.”

Hasankeyf is one of the world’s oldest settlements and has been the center of numerous cultures and empires since the Bronze Age, including the Assyrians, Romans, the Ummayyad and Abbasid caliphates, and the Turkic Seljuks and their Ottoman successors.

(Source: Al Jazeera)



ROUND THE GLOBE

Old City of Luxembourg, its quarters and fortifications

The Old City of Luxembourg is located at the confluence of the Alzette and Petrusse Rivers, on a very steep rocky outcrop which is somewhat of a natural fortification that only needed to be completed on the west side.



Due to its exceptional strategic position, the City of Luxembourg was one of the largest fortresses of modern Europe which was constantly strengthened and reinforced as it passed successively into the hands of the great European powers.

Originally, the City of Luxembourg comprised only a small fort (the castle) built shortly after the middle of the 10th century on an almost inaccessible rock.

In the 12th century, the settlement that developed near the castle was protected by a stone fortification wall, which was extended in the 14th and 15th centuries. In 1443, the city was taken by the troops of Burgundy.

The city also retains the layout of its streets and many public buildings, important testimony of its origins and its development since the 10th century.

Inside and at the foot of the ramparts, quarters where people lived and engaged in trades or crafts developed. They also kept places of worship, such as the Church of St. Michel, now a veritable museum of sacred art, or the Church of St. Nicolas, subsequently transferred to the sanctuary of the Jesuits, the present cathedral.

(Source: UNESCO)

30,000 Iranians obtained visas for Spain in 2018, envoy says

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Some 30,000 Iranians got visas for Spain in 2018, Madrid’s ambassador to Tehran has said.

Eduardo Lopez Busquets told Mehr in an interview released on Sunday that some 15,000 Spanish travelers arrived in Iran in 2018 while some 30,000 Iranian nationals were granted visas for Spain in the same year.

Spaniards mostly visited the cities of Isfahan, Shiraz, Kashan and Yazd, the ambassador said, adding that Spanish people used to arrive in Iran generally for trade and business but nowadays they mostly visit the country for tourism purposes.

“I have visited various Iranian cities from [southern coasts of the] Caspian Sea to the Persian Gulf, cities such as Asaluyeh, Shiraz, Tabriz, Kish, Isfahan, Yazd, Mashhad, Kashan.”

The one scheme that can help the tourism industry in this country is [following] tourist routes [for instance the one that] connects Mashhad to Kerman and other tourist cities so that they arranged in the same path, Busquets explained.

Commenting on traveling in the country, the ambassador noted one of the major challenges Iran’s tourism is facing is the shortage of quality hotels.

Here the private sector plays an important role and the country cannot make progress in this regard until it wants to wait for foreign capital, the top diplomat added.

In a late September interview with ILNA, Busquets stated that Iran is an amazing and wonderful country for tourists.

Iran is an amazing and wonderful country for tourists and [some] ninety percent of Spanish cultural tourists are willing to visit the country at least for once, he said.

“Iran is home to the most genuinely hospitable people who greet foreign tourists with open arms.”

“Most of these tourists are attracted to monuments and culture of Iran. Although they may have been given a different picture of Iran in the media, tourists certainly



A Spanish couple poses for a photo during a visit to the UNESCO-registered Persepolis, which was once the ceremonial capital of the Persian Achaemenid Empire (c. 550–330 BC).

change their minds about the country after a visit to Iran,” the ambassador stated.

Presently, a loan exhibit from Spain’s Archeological Museum of Alicante (MARQ) in on show at the National Museum of Iran. The large-scale exhibition features around

300 objects, some of which dating for millennia.

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

Iran temporarily lifts visa requirement for Iraqi nationals

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Iran’s embassy in Baghdad has announced that Iraqi nationals can visit Iran without a visa from October 24 to December 27, 2019.

The embassy noted that this measure is an appreciation to Iraq which has scrapped visa requirements for Iranian pilgrims in the current lunar months of Muharram and Safar, Mehr reported on Monday.

The Iranian mission expressed hope that the measure would further cement ties between the two countries and also it would more fertile grounds for permanent removal of visas between the two neighbors.

Iraq has removed visa for Iranian pilgrims who visit the country during Muharram and Safar to attend mourning ceremonies of Imam Hussein (PBUH).

Iran and Iraq earlier in March agreed to waive visa fees in a mutual approach



Iranian pilgrims go on a long trek towards Karbala, where Imam Hussein (AS) is laid to rest, to pay tribute to the third Shia Imam who was the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

in the hope of increasing the number of tourists to help boost local economies and bring their peoples closer.

Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli said last week that the number of Iranian pilgrims visiting Iraq this year for Arbaeen was expected to reach three million.

Arbaeen pilgrimage, aka Arbaeen trek, is a characteristic spiritual exercise in which hundreds of thousands of Shia and Sunni Muslims, even Christians and Zoroastrians, etc. from various nationalities participate.

The long treks will be destined to Karbala, where Imam Hussein (AS), the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), is laid to rest.

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

IKIA schedules 676 extra flights for Arbaeen

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Imam Khomeini International Airport is scheduled to operate 676 extra flights in order to make the best use of air traffic during Arbaeen pilgrimage.

In close cooperation with Iran Civil Aviation Organization, the IKIA have received permits for 676 extra flights for Arbaeen, which will be operated from October 9 to November 2, connecting Tehran to Najaf and Baghdad, Ali Rostami, the managing director of Imam Khomeini Airport City said on Monday.

Rostami had earlier put the number of extra flights

at over 500, expecting more than 90,000 passengers to be transported to Iraq through the airport in order to attend the religious rituals.

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.

How to travel using an e-bike or scooter

By Lauren Sloss

If you follow the safety precautions, an electric bike, scooter or motorbike is an easy and cheap way to tour most urban centers.

Curious about those electric bikes, scooters and mopeds scattered across city centers these days? There’s been an explosion of electric vehicles-for-hire in cities worldwide, providing alternatives to public transport for getting around town.

These app-based options — most with one-word names like Lime and Bird — are largely designed to support locals in their day-to-day travels, but hopping on the e-transit wagon can be seamless for visitors, too.

The rapid adoption of these new vehicles hasn’t been without issue. Two years ago, three companies in San Francisco dumped 2,000 scooters on the city sidewalks with neither permits nor permission. Sidewalks were impassable, crosswalks blocked and wheelchairs couldn’t navigate ramps. The city quickly banned the operators and created regulations to better integrate e-scooters and bikes into the transportation infrastructure (Paris is dealing with similar issues after allowing 12 separate e-scooter companies to operate in the city simultaneously, and in New York City, the introduction of 1,000 Revel mopeds earlier this year in two boroughs has raised concerns over safety).

The companies’ universal promise — of an environmentally friendly transportation option — isn’t clear cut, either. A study published last month in the journal Environmental Research Letters found that the resources required to collect and charge scooters, and

to manufacture them, aren’t necessarily offset by the “green-ness” of the ride itself (many companies buy carbon offsets to balance charging emissions). Still, while not a perfect option, these vehicles are markedly more environmentally sound than driving, and have become wildly popular with locals and tourists alike.

Considering e-bikes and scooters into your next trip? Here’s how to get started.

Find a ride

Mobile-based apps make finding bikes, scooters and even motorbikes incredibly easy for riders 18 and older, without the hassle of finding a rental shop (and potentially negotiating rates in a foreign language). One of the major players in the space, perhaps unsurprisingly, is Uber, which runs Jump (bikes and scooters in 32 cities and 10 countries) and recently partnered with Lime (scooters in 100 cities and 25 countries). In the United States, the Uber competitor Lyft is also in the scooter game (20 cities) and operates city bike shares in eight cities.

Other common operators to look for include Bird (scooters in 100-plus cities), which recently acquired San Francisco-based company Scoot (scooters, bikes and motorbikes, in various combinations, in San Francisco, Barcelona and Santiago). Most of these companies have both a United States and international presence, and are growing fast — scope out availability through company websites before an upcoming trip, and download apps as needed. If you’re already an Uber or Lyft user, you’ll be able to access bikes and scooters through your existing account. App interfaces differ slightly, but gener-

ally will show you where to find a vehicle, how to unlock it, the range on a device and the rates for your ride. The vast majority of bikes and scooters are dockless, meaning you don’t have to drop them at a specific site or docking station, but instead, you must leave them in designated zones (leaving your device outside of that zone will result in a fee). Most apps only allow you to rent one vehicle per account, save Lyft’s bike share partnerships (Lime is also currently testing a new Group Ride feature in Europe and Latin America).

Safety first

The apps will use images to demonstrate how to safely use your bike or scooter; many also offer maps and information specific to the city in which you’re renting. Scoot requires that you watch an orientation video before riding one of their motorbikes (you can go to their San Francisco headquarters for an in-person orientation if you’d like).

All operators recommend that, when first trying a vehicle, you do so in a less congested area. Stick to protected bike lanes when available (other than motorbikes, which should be ridden in car lanes). Be very aware of traffic.

“This is new technology, and there’s definitely a learning curve,” says Andrew Savage, Lime’s vice president of sustainability. “We are sharing the streets with cars, and these vehicles haven’t dealt with scooters until recently.”

While many e-bike or scooter companies will give away helmets around a launch, devices don’t come equipped with helmets (save Scoot’s motorbikes and Revel’s mopeds). You can seek out bike shops and rental services

for helmets, but Morgan Lommele, director of state and local policy of the nonprofit PeopleForBikes, recommends traveling with your own — a growing number of collapsible options make this an increasingly more packable option.

Rules of the road

Rules and rider culture can differ by city and country, as does the availability of bike lanes and routes. Ms. Lommele highly encourages riders to do some research beforehand.

“Do a little homework the same way you’d find a great restaurant or hotel or concert,” she says. “Slow down. Really pay attention to what’s going on around you.”

In addition to researching optimal routes, understanding a city’s rules is key. Preliminary research helps, but Michael Keating, founder and president of Scoot, has another good rule of thumb when he’s riding in a new place: do what the locals do.

“If locals are riding in bike lanes, parking their bikes in a certain place, do that! And don’t do your first ride at rush hour.”

City rules differ, but generally, you should not be riding bikes or scooters on the sidewalk.

Enjoy the ride

One of benefits of getting around a new city on a bike, scooter or moto? It’s fun.

“When you’re on a scooter or a bike, you can see the sites, and you can actually stop and enjoy them easily,” says Rachel Holt, Uber’s head of new mobility.

Mr. Keating agrees.

“When you’re traveling, the journey is really the destination. You get this fun, rich way to see a place.”

(Source: The New York Times)

Sky News Arabia cuts away live UNGA coverage for anti-UAE speech, further tarnishing its reputation

By Mehrdad Ferdows

TEHRAN — Sky News Arabia cut live coverage of the 2019 UNGA after the foreign minister for the fugitive president Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi started censuring the UAE role in the Yemen conflict, further damaging the reputation of the UAE-based channel that has already been hurt due to the network siding with Saudi Arabia on Khashoggi's case.

The surprise cut came during a speech by Mohammed Abdullah al-Hadhrami before the United Nations General Assembly on Sept. 29.

After lambasting Iran that "wrought havoc in the Arabian Peninsula" by launching "this Iranian-Houthi coup d'etat in Yemen", Al-Hadhrami took aim at the UAE and censured the country for supporting a coup attempt by Yemen's southern separatists against the Hadi government in Aden in August.

But a few seconds after he started lashing out at UAE's support for the separatist Southern Transitional Council against the Saudi-supported Hadi, the channel cut coverage and an anchor repeated previous remarks by Al-Hadhrami blaming Iran for the instability in Yemen.

Emerging rifts in Yemen

Abu Dhabi, the most powerful of the seven constituents of the UAE, is united with Saudi Arabia in many fronts.

A Saudi-led military coalition involving the UAE invaded Yemen in 2015 to restore to power the fugitive president Hadi.

Since then, tens of thousands of people have been killed and millions driven to the brink of famine in what the UN describes the globe's worst humanitarian crisis.

As the anti-Saudi forces resist and international humanitarian criticisms aggravates, rifts between Saudi Arabia and the UAE are being highlighted, threatening to open a new front in the Yemen conflict.

Amid the fighting between separatists and Hadi forces in and around the port city of Aden in late August, the UAE staged air raids on Hadi's forces, killing dozens of people.

"Our army has unfortunately had to face myriad direct military attacks in violation of international law," al-Hadhrami said.

"These attacks were mounted by Emirati air assets. These attacks have undermined



Mohammed Abdullah al-Hadhrami, the foreign minister for the fugitive president Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi

the stability of our homeland and in this way the Emirati aggression has undermined the noble goals of the coalition."

In his speech, al-Hadhrami thanked Saudi Arabia for helping Hadi's government in its fight against Ansarullah, who control the capital and many of the country's urban centers. Abu Dhabi, Riyadh and their Yemeni allies have long accused Iran of backing Ansarullah and supplying them with weapons.

But both Ansarullah and Iran reject such claims. Tehran says its backing for the Houthis is limited to advisory support, and denies providing them with any military aid.

Pushing Saudi propaganda

This is while just last year, the channel was drawn into the propaganda battle in the Middle East over the murder of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi.

Sky News Arabia was strictly following the shifting line from Riyadh after Khashoggi disappeared on a visit to the Saudi consulate in Istanbul in October 2018

The channel was strictly following the shifting line from Riyadh since Khashoggi disappeared on a visit to the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on October 2.

The London-based Daily Telegraph noticed the biased coverage at the time, publishing an article lambasting Sky News Arabia.

"In a review of Sky News Arabia coverage of the killing of Mr Khashoggi, The Daily Telegraph was unable to find any reporting that questioned or challenged the various versions of events offered by Saudi Arabia," the newspaper wrote.

Following is an excerpt of the Daily Telegraph article:

The Saudi government initially claimed the Washington Post columnist left the consulate alive and well. Sky News Arabia reported that Riyadh was facing a "systematic attack" from

regional rival Qatar with false information that aimed to "harm the Kingdom and undermine its high status in the Arab, Islamic and international communities".

"Since the disappearance of the Saudi journalist in Istanbul earlier this month, Qatari and Doha-funded media outlets have published dozens of reports containing false and contradictory information about the case," Sky News Arabia reported mid-October.

The channel's presenters have also taken up the Saudi cause on screen. In a piece to camera last week, Saudi commentator Abdullah al-Bander said reports from Turkey that Khashoggi was killed and dismembered had "no proof and it is all from one source". He branded them "lies" and said that "all this information was broadcast by the media belonging to Qatar in recent days, but has no proof".

"This proves that the goal was only to attack [Saudi Arabia], and not to discuss the real issue," he said.

Al-Bander's views were not challenged on air and packaged as a tweet to Sky News Arabia's 4.2 million followers on Twitter.

As overwhelming evidence emerged that Khashoggi was killed in the consulate, Sky News Arabia's reporting focused on praise for the official response, with a report titled as "The welcome of Saudi Arabia's actions on the issue of Jamal Khashoggi continues."

Impartial journalism?

Sky News Arabia is a joint venture between Abu Dhabi Media Investment Corporation, owned by the Emirati royal Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, and the UK's Sky.

Mansour is the deputy prime minister of the UAE, owner of Manchester City and son of the former emir of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. At its 2012 launch, Sky News Arabia vowed to set itself apart in the region with "independent and impartial" journalism.

The Arabic-language channel broadcast mainly in the Middle East, designed as a rival to al-Jazeera, the rolling news network funded by the Qatari state.

But such editorial policies could bolster allegations that Sky News Arabia is only spewing state disinformation, destroying the channel's reputation as a trusted source of news and commentary.

Trump is about to become the right-wing smear machine's greatest unintended casualty

ALTERNET — It's commonly said that the "wheels of justice turn slowly," and that's usually true. But once in a while those wheels suddenly pop into reverse, jolting the car backwards and crushing whoever happens to be standing behind the truck.

In what is truly the richest of ironies, Donald Trump is now poised to become just another piece of right-wing roadkill, an unintended casualty of his own disinformation machine, the exact same machine that cemented his electoral victory over Hillary Clinton in 2016. By extorting foreign leaders to manufacture dirt involving Vice President Joe Biden's son, Trump stupidly fell into the trap of believing his own team's propaganda, a result that those who created the Biden/Ukraine fairy tale in the first place completely failed to foresee. And now he's looking at impeachment for believing their lies and taking them to their logical conclusion.

The warning signs for Team Trump were there from the start, but they went unheeded. It's well-documented that Trump the politician (as opposed to Trump the phony media creation) is at his core a deeply stupid, credulous man whose "agenda" and worldview are shaped entirely by what he sees on Fox News. Couple that with a tendency to surround himself with sycophantic "yes-men" who assure him that all his actions are examples of some titanic genius, and it should have been predictable that this president, watching dumbly as his Hannity-fed heroes droned on and on about supposedly nefarious dealings by the one political opponent he feared the most, would do something extraordinarily idiotic with that information at some point.

Jane Mayer of the New Yorker explains how the "Biden/Ukraine" hoax was invented and spread by the same people who invented the "Uranium One" fiction which Fox News and other Republican sludge generators spawned in order to smear Hillary Clinton in the 2016. The cast of characters for both smears is remarkably similar.

Anyone trying to track the Ukrainian conspiracy stories that were eventually embraced by President Trump is likely to get mired in the same echo chamber of right-wing news purveyors that misinformed voters in 2016. A pivotal source of the allegations against the Bidens, for instance, is the Government Accountability Institute, a Florida-based opposition-research operation that was founded by the former Trump political adviser Stephen Bannon—the same conservative nonprofit that ginned up questionable stories about the Clintons during the last Presidential campaign. In both instances, much of the coverage of the scandal was kicked off by Peter Schweizer, a longtime conservative political writer who is an editor-at-large at Breitbart News and the president of the Government Accountability Institute.

The "Government Accountability Institute" or GAI is funded by a "libertarian" (i.e., I've got mine so fuck you) billionaire named Robert Mercer, a major donor to Trump's campaign, whose interests apparently lie in shaping American society in tandem with his grotesque social whims. As Stephen Bannon himself acknowledged in an email to Mayer, the GAI acted as the primary source for the Biden/Ukraine "story." Mayer's article describes the purpose of the GAI as intended to generate baseless smears and worm them surreptitiously into the "mainstream" media where they can be repeated by more "credible" sources, even if those sources are simply busy debunking them.

Bannon designed the organization as a means of transmitting partisan dirt-digging to the mainstream media. He



realized that, though mainstream reporters were suspicious of partisan opinion, they were open to damning facts about public figures, regardless of the sourcing. He set out, with Schweizer, to produce material that would generate mainstream coverage, and right-wing outrage.

In 2016 Schweizer published the book "Clinton Cash" which made the baseless accusation that Hillary Clinton, as Secretary of State, had essentially traded away American national security by selling uranium mines to Russia in exchange for contributions to the Clinton foundation. By hawking this over and over through their mouthpieces on Fox News, Mercer, Bannon and Schweizer had no trouble convincing susceptible viewers eager to believe any right-wing drivel spoon-fed to them that the Clintons were wholly, unimaginably corrupt. The fact that these insinuations were totally false was beside the point. As it turned out, several government agencies having nothing to do with Hillary Clinton approved the deal, which ultimately involved a "negligible" amount of uranium.

Just as with the "Clinton Cash" fable constructed to inflame a drooling base of Fox News knuckledraggers, we now have practically the exact same cast of characters behind the latest baseless smear against Joe Biden—that he somehow intervened with Ukraine to protect his son's profits.

In March of 2018, Schweizer and the Government Accountability Institute once again produced a book that was perfectly timed for the Presidential campaign. "Secret Empires" devoted a chapter to the subject of "Bidens in Ukraine," which laid out the conflicts of interest posed by the wheeling and dealing of Biden's son Hunter.

Even though Schweizer conveniently omitted the fact that there was no prove to his insinuations about Ukraine and Joe Biden, that didn't stop the conservative media from jumping on the bandwagon like flies on the proverbial shit. And, just as before, again we had the same hawking on Fox News of a shabbily-sourced tome of lies that every credible media source has shot down. But this time an attention-whoring sleazebag named Rudy Giuliani became involved, traveling to Ukraine under the guise of being Donald Trump's "private attorney," and attempting to solicit Ukrainian acquiescence and participation in the scam. And as Mayer points out, a couple new characters were now recruited by the Trump campaign itself to stoke the phony story. In particular, John Solomon, formerly a respectable reporter for the Hill but now entrenched in the more lucrative occupation of churning out right-wing trash for profit, was tapped to spread the manure around.

As Giuliani conspired this past spring with questionable

Ukrainian sources, Solomon pumped out a string of eye-catching stories echoing those sources' claims about the Bidens. This appears to have been no coincidence. According to NBC, the Giuliani documents show that Solomon's columns were part of the Trump team's strategy. (The New Yorker was unable to reach John Solomon, and a question e-mailed to the editor of The Hill, about whether the publication stood by Solomon's stories, went unanswered.)

She explains how the story was churned by Solomon and Schweizer, with lots of mutual dick-sucking apparent on both sides:

In Solomon's April 1st column, he cited Schweizer's book. Two days later, Schweizer sent "kudos" to Solomon during an interview on Breitbart News, and added, "We're talking about potentially legal jeopardy involving the Vice-President's family." Schweizer opined that it was "all the sort of thing that needs to be investigated and looked into by a grand jury," and added, "it's pretty clear that you have a pattern that the for-sale sign was open with the Biden family... and that in itself demands investigation in the United States."

Republican state television (also known as Fox News) then proceeded to run twelve or more segments hyping this wholly in a single month, seeding it into the right-wing swamp. Of course, dumb Donald was watching like any other addled fool, slurping up every word. Sean Hannity mentioned it on seven separate shows, prompting Trump to respond personally to his hero with this Tweet, praising Solomon's reporting:

If Trump was capable of generating a hard-on, it must have happened during April of this year, as measured by the rapid, subsequent merging of the White House and Fox News, first by Giuliani, then of Trump himself, who called the network to declare that further action was needed, and in particular, that he wanted to involve his stooge William Barr in the investigation.

By this time, the stodgy New York Times had become involved in "covering" the "controversy," and even though the Times threw in a casual disclaimer—nineteen paragraphs into their own story—confirming that the entire farce was bullshit ("No evidence has surfaced that the former vice president intentionally tried to help his son by pressing for the prosecutor general's dismissal."), as far as Bannon, Schweizer and Mercer were concerned, they had already won the battle. Nevermind that several credible news sources spent the next few months confirming that it was all an invented hoax—the damage was done, and high-fives and clinking shot glasses were doubtlessly being exchanged all around.

Except no one stopped to consider what an irrational, power-mad sociopath like Trump would do with this information, swirling around busily in his brain. As it turns out, he went with his instincts, which, unlike the arc of history, do not bend towards justice but towards extortion. And his attempt to extort Ukraine by withholding Congressional aid until they manufactured some non-existent dirt about Joe Biden has ended up biting him squarely in the ass. He's going to be impeached, something he existentially has dreaded since he assumed office, because it will forever leave a stain on his presidency that people will use to compare his tenure to that of an untarnished, impeccable, Barack Obama.

Thanks to his slavish devotion to the right-wing propaganda machine, Donald Trump is about to become just another piece of collateral damage. And he has no one but himself to blame.

Saudi Arabia as the Arab media capital? What a joke

By Madawi al-Rasheed

MEI-The personality cult of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman needs soft power as much as it needs repression.

The latest initiative to consolidate state propaganda is the creation of the Saudi Media Forum, which aims to bolster the country's reputation. In conjunction with the Saudi Journalists Association (SJA), the international conference is set to be held this November, a year after the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi and the detention of several writers.

The conference will summon local and international journalists to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing the industry, and hand out awards. SJA chair Khalid al-Malik said it would become an annual event "to cement Riyadh's name as the Arab Media Capital" and to boost its political and economic reputation.

Social media trolls

The impulse behind this suspicious initiative is perhaps the utter failure of Saudi media to contain and counter the bad publicity that rightly followed Khashoggi's murder.

Saudi domestic media and pan-Arab satellite television utterly failed to shift public opinion in favour of the regime, as it was clear from the beginning that Riyadh had orchestrated Khashoggi's gruesome murder inside the consulate in Istanbul.

A deluge of lies, official statements and amateur legal defence fell short of convincing an educated global audience of the regime's innocence, even as social media trolls circulated these lies online, aiming to bewilder observers and create confusion over who might have been responsible.



A protestor wears a mask of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman next to people holding posters of slain Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi in Istanbul on 25 October, 2018.

While reporting on the Khashoggi case descended into trivial propaganda in favour of the regime, in an attempt to absolve the crown prince of any responsibility, the war in Yemen - now into its fifth year - remains a thorny adventure, garnering international criticism and condemnation.

Images of starving children, total devastation, and the targeting of civilians have overshadowed the glorious regime propaganda prioritising Saudi relief operations. Nobody expected Saudi media to show how missiles went astray and killed hundreds of civilians, or how air strikes targeted a Doctors Without Borders treatment centre catering to patients afflicted by cholera.

Overtures to Israel

Revamping Saudi media is an urgent matter, given the controversial drive to conclude the "deal of the century", a Saudi-backed US initiative to reach peace with Israel without involving those most affected by occupation, deportation and bombardment - namely, the Palestinians.

Riyadh's overtures to Israel have become an open secret, reported primarily in the Israeli, rather than Saudi, media. While news of trips to Israel by Saudis flood the internet, Saudi media often ignores or dismisses them. Official meetings and Saudi purchases of Israeli surveillance technology remain unreported and even dismissed as counter-propaganda to undermine the Saudi regime and its reputation in the eyes of its own people.

Respected foreign journalists should not be lured to accept an invitation by a regime that has shown zero tolerance for free speech

Finally, there is the media empire of Qatar, which Saudi Arabia has failed to match or undermine and is now determined to counter by positioning itself as the Arab Media Capital - a project destined to utterly fail and degenerate into lies, counter-lies and cheap political propaganda.

Saudi media is neither effective soft power nor a trusted source of news and analysis.

This applies to all government-sponsored Arab media, including Qatar's media empire and the UAE's Sky News Arabia. All governments who think that media can be deployed as an arm of foreign policy end up disappointed, as today, social media is the main source of information for Arab and global audiences. When governments try to control this new media format, they are exposed and their propaganda debunked.

There is yet a media war to be won among the warring factions in the Gulf and beyond. Arab media narratives are only good as windows, from which to observe the ramblings of repressive regimes and their futile attempts to mask this repression.

Controlling the media

Attempts to control the media and to award prizes to the most loyal Saudi, Arab and international journalists will prove to be a counterproductive endeavour. Even the most esteemed journalists in the West who initially succumbed to Saudi propaganda about reform and transformation have abandoned these illusions.

Thomas Friedman of the New York Times and David Ignatius of the Washington Post initially wrote rosy pieces on the alleged reforms of bin Salman, only to discover how such words were supporting a bloody regime that would later murder one of their own, namely Khashoggi.

For Saudi Arabia to truly become the media capital of the Arab world, it needs freedom of speech in a democratic and transparent political system. No conference will alter this important condition; the event in November will be an opportunity for invited foreign journalists to enjoy a short trip with lavish hospitality.

Respected foreign journalists should not be lured to accept an invitation by a regime that has shown zero tolerance for free speech, going so far as to murder one of its own outspoken journalists, while many others linger in prisons.

Despite an upcoming conference aimed at bolstering Riyadh's journalistic reputation, the Khashoggi affair shows just how far this notion is from reality

Fifth women’s park opens in Tehran

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — The fifth park exclusively for women was inaugurated in Tehran on Monday, ISNA news agency reported.

In order to bring about justice and equality for all the citizens, women-only parks have been built to provide them with safe recreational spots without the need to wear hijabs, Zahra Sadr-Azam Nouri stated.

Accordingly, five special parks have so far been created for women so that they could use the sunlight without coverings and thus increase their health, she added.

A study conducted by the Ministry of Health in 2001 showed an alarming growth in the number of women developing osteoporosis.

Stretched over 35 hectares, the newly inaugurated park is named after Marzieh Hadidchi to commemorate the first woman who commanded a military division during the Iran–Iraq war, she noted.

It is planned to expand the number of parks in other parts of the city, she highlighted. Behesht-e Madaran (literally meaning mothers’ paradise) was the first women-only park which opened in the capital in 2008. Three others were later built in the city.

Iranian mothers allowed to pass on citizenship to children

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — The Iranian parliament (Majlis) on Monday declared a law to the government allowing children of an Iranian mother and foreign father to get Iranian citizenship.

According to the law, children of Iranian women and non-Iranian men who were born before or after the law can be an Iranian citizen in case the Iranian mother requested if they have no security problem before the age of 18.

These children, after reaching the age of 18, can apply for Iranian citizenship if not requested by the mother, then will be granted Iranian citizenship in case of no security problem.

Populations of UK’s most important wildlife have plummeted since 1970

Populations of the UK’s most important wildlife have plummeted by an average of 60% since 1970, according to the most comprehensive analysis to date.

The State of Nature report also found that the area inhabited by officially designated “priority species” has shrunk by 27%. The species are those deemed most important and threatened, and include hedgehogs, hares and bats, many birds such as the willow tit and the turtle dove, and insects such as the high brown fritillary butterfly.

The report finds the losses to all animals, plants and marine life show no sign of letting up, despite some successes in protecting individual species. It found that 41% of species have decreased in abundance, while just 26% have increased.

A quarter of UK mammals and nearly half of the birds assessed are at risk of extinction, according to the report, which was produced by a coalition of more than 70 wildlife organisations and government conservation agencies. When plants, insects and fungi are added, one in seven of the 8,400 UK species assessed are at risk of being completely lost, with 133 already gone since 1500.

(Source: The Guardian)

WORDS IN THE NEWS

Cheap AIDS drugs for Nigeria

(December 12, 2001)

Nigeria today becomes the first African country to start using cheap imported non trademark drugs to treat AIDS and HIV infection. Ten-thousand patients will be treated in selected hospitals with drugs imported from India. This report from Elettra Neysmith:

The AIDS **pandemic** in Africa has been likened to a **runaway train ripping through** the continent. The figures are **staggering**. Out of an estimated forty-million people living with HIV or AIDS worldwide, twenty-eight-million are in sub-Saharan Africa. Around ten-million children have lost one or both parents; while in South Africa, fifteen-hundred people are infected each day.

The result is a **human landscape that has been permanently scarred**. Almost everyone has been affected in some way. The crisis has been **exacerbated by** the fact that AIDS hits at the very infrastructure needed to tackle its effects. Doctors, nurses, and teachers have all **fallen victim**, weakening the public health systems of some of the world’s poorest countries just when they are most needed.

While anti-retroviral drugs have revolutionized treatments in the west, the United Nations joint programme on AIDS estimates that only thirty-thousand people have benefited in Africa. Even **with the advent** of cheaper medicines -- access is still likely to be limited and expensive. But although the continent has been the worst affected by AIDS -- it also **boasts** some of the world’s most spectacular success stories. In Uganda, HIV infection rates have fallen by around two-thirds over the last ten years; while in Senegal, the rate is below two percent. The emphasis has been on prevention; and it’s taken tremendous **political will**, and huge education campaigns. There’s been no **magic formula** -- but their example at least offers some hope to those still **waking up to** the true cost of AIDS.

■ **Words pandemic:** a disease affecting people over a wide geographical area
■ **runaway train:** a train that no-one can stop
■ **ripping through:** to move very powerfully through a place or building, destroying it quickly
■ **staggering:** deeply shocking
■ **a human landscape that has been permanently scarred:** a population, and a way of life that has been damaged forever
■ **exacerbated by:** made worse by
■ **fallen victim:** in this case, infected with HIV/AIDS
■ **with the advent of:** with the development of
■ **boasts:** has achieved
■ **political will:** determination by politicians and decision-makers
■ **magic formula:** an easy, quick solution
■ **waking up to:** realizing

(Source: BBC)

National Children’s Week underway

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — The National Children’s Week is underway from October 5 to 11 under the theme of “We must build up the future”, Mehr news agency reported on Saturday.

Each day of the week is dedicated to a theme which is interwoven with different issues such as health and safety, environment, cultural heritage, peace, communication, media and family.

Accordingly, October 9 is dedicated to children who will make the country’s future and how to treat them in a way to form a bright future either for themselves or the country.

Various recreational and educational programs centering on the topic similar to the day’s theme are held on each day which have been coordinated by the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (an Iranian institution with a wide range of cultural and artistic activities in the field of mental and cultural development for children and young adults).

Different programs such as storytelling, role playing and book reading are held on Tuesday which is called “Child, Peace, Play and Joy” Day, with UNICEF representative in Iran in attendance.

Museums are free of charge for children on Tuesday.

Several workshops including photography, drawing, creative skill, and crafts will be held during one-week celebration along with unveiling movies and books.

This year’s motto is chosen the same as the

last year’s to keep “hope for a bright future” for Iranian children.

The poster designed for the children’s day is depicting a sense of hope, freshness and energy while putting emphasis on the importance of games and imagination in children’s lives and future.

■ **Children’s Day around the world**

Children’s Day is a day to engage in fun and frolic. But it is not just that. This day reminds everyone to renew their commitment towards the well-being and welfare of all children. It is an opportunity for all of us to reflect on our responsibility to ensure that our children are able

The day also offers each of us an inspirational entry-point to advocate, promote and celebrate children’s rights, translating into dialogues and actions that will build a better world for children to grow up in a safe, sustainable, and prosperous world.

So, in this regard, Children’s Day is recognized on various days in many places around the world, to honor children globally. It was first proclaimed by the World Conference for the Well-being of Children in 1925 and then established universally in 1954 to protect an “appropriate” day.

The World Conference for the Well-being of Children in Geneva, Switzerland, proclaimed June 1 to be International Children’s Day. After the conference, different governments around the world decided to declare a day as Children’s Day to draw attention to children’s issues, which many of them chose June 1.

Iran marks World Food Week 2019

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — Iran celebrates World Food Week on October 12 to 18 under a national theme of “Improving the nutrition pattern to maintain healthy and promote health”, IRNA reported on Monday.

World Food Day (WFD) is celebrated every year across the world on 16th October. It’s an annual celebration in the honor of the founding date of the Food and Agriculture Organization launched by the United Nations in the year 1945.

WFD was established by the member countries of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in November 1979. Since then, the WFD is been observed in more than 150 countries every year; raising consciousness and knowledge of the problems and reasons behind hunger and poverty.

Since 1981, World Food Day started adopting different celebration theme each year for highlighting common areas of concerns which needed attention and action. This year the theme is “Our Actions Are Our Future” which refers to healthy diets.

Hossein Azizi, an official with the Food and Drug Administration, said that specifically, on World Food Day different programs will be implemented focusing on improving nutrition patterns to promote health.

Over the one-week celebration different programs and events will be held centering on seven main themes, he added.

He further explained that the programs planned include salt and fat reduction in food and beverage, nutrition labels to promote consumer knowledge, food safety and health indicator, fighting with the smuggling of health products, product authenticity



sticker, special and useful food products, and promotion of consumer awareness in the field of food.

According to FAO, a combination of unhealthy diets and sedentary lifestyles has sent obesity rates soaring, not only in developed countries, but also low-income countries, where hunger and obesity often coexist. Now over 670 million adults and 120 million girls and boys (5-19 years) are obese, and over 40 million children under 5 are overweight, while over 820 million people suffer from hunger.

An unhealthy diet is the leading risk factor for deaths from non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and certain cancers. Linked with one fifth of deaths worldwide, unhealthy eating habits are also taking a toll on national health budgets costing up to USD 2 trillion per year.

Obesity and other forms of malnutrition affect nearly one in three people. Projections indicate that the number will be one in two by 2025. The good news is that affordable solutions exist to reduce all forms of malnutrition, but they require greater global commitment and action.



Moreover, United Nations has established Universal Children’s Day in 1954, which is celebrated annually on November 20th to promote international togetherness, awareness among children worldwide, and improving children’s welfare.

November 20th is an important date as it is the date in 1959 when the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child. It is also the date in 1989 when the UN General assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Baby turtle starved to death with over 100 bits of plastic in stomach

A dying baby turtle that washed up on a beach in Florida had 104 pieces of plastic in its stomach.

Experts say it was one of just dozens of young turtles that have starved to death in the area after eating microplastics in the sea this year.

The Gumbo Limbo Nature Centre posted a photograph on Facebook of the loggerhead sea turtle and the fragments of plastic found in its stomach after it died.

Emily Mirowski, a turtle rehabilitation assistant, told CNN that the turtle, which was small enough to fit in the palm of a hand, was weak and emaciated.

“It was really heartbreaking. But it’s something we’ve seen for several years and we’re just glad people are finally seeing this image, and hopefully it’s raising awareness.”

When babies hatch between March and October each year, they head towards floating seaweed called sargassum, where they live for their first few years.

“The issue is that with all the plastic in the oceans, that’s where the plastic sticks,” Ms Mirowski said. “All the microplastics stick to the seaweed, and it looks like food to the baby turtles.”

The plastic in their stomachs makes turtles feel full, so they don’t eat or receive the nutrition they need to survive.

This season, members of the public have dropped off at the centre dozens of washbacks – babies that have washed back ashore after just a few weeks – and



all had plastic in their stomachs, CNN reported.

Turtles suffering from malnutrition due to plastic consumption are so common that the nature centre, in Boca Raton, put a cool box outside its building for residents to safely drop them off for rehabilitation.

Some survive but many are too weak and emaciated.

“We give them a small amount of fluids every day to get them hydrated,” Ms Mirowski said. “Then we hope they’ll pass the plastic naturally. The important thing is getting them hydrated to get their appetite back.”

The problem won’t end until people stop buying plastics and disposing of them improperly, she said.

“We have to reduce plastic use as much as possible,” she said.

“Not just recycling, but eliminating plastic out of daily use. Every piece of plastic that’s ever been made is still out there. It never goes away, it just breaks down to smaller pieces.”

(Source: The Independent)

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → چ

FDA to penalize manufacturers producing unlabeled GM foods

Iran’s Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will penalize food manufacturers who have not labeled genetically modified (GM) food products, Vahid Mofid, the caretaker of the FDA department of food and beverages has announced.

All food products containing ingredients derived from GMOs must be labeled, including soybean and corn oil, rapeseed and cottonseed, he also noted.

He went on to say that eight laboratories in addition to the Energy & Power Industries Laboratories Company can test the products in terms of containing GM organism.

Labeling the products is merely done out of respect for the customer and providing the consumer with different choices and has nothing to do with the product’s safety and health, he concluded.

PREFIX/SUFFIX

“chloro-, chlor-”

■ **Meaning:** green or chlorine

■ **For example:** This is the fundamental process by which *chlorophyll* ‘captures’ the energy of sunlight.

PHRASAL VERB

Pan out

■ **Meaning:** to happen or develop in a particular way

■ **For example:** We’ll have to see how things pan out.

IDIOM

Crystal clear

■ **Explanation:** to understand or has an obvious meaning

■ **For example:** There was no need to repeat the instructions. They were crystal clear.

سازمان غذا و دارو با محصولات تراریخته فاقد برچسب برخورد می کند

مدیرکل فرآورده های غذایی و آشامیدنی سازمان غذا و دارو، وحید مفید در گفت و گو با خبرنگار ایرنا اعلام کرد: تمام محصولات تراریخته در سطح عرضه کنترل می شوند و در صورتی که تراریخته باشند اما برچسب نداشته باشند، حتما برخورد می کنیم.

وی اضافه کرد: برخی محصولات در کشور مانند ذرت، سویا و کلزا از نوع تراریخته وجود دارد و فرآورده های غذایی در صورت استفاده از این محصولات تراریخته باید آن را روی برچسب خود اعلام کنند.

مفیدافزود: هشت آزمایشگاه علاوه بر آزمایشگاه مرجع در کشور می توانند تراریختگی را تعیین کنند.

مدیرکل فرآورده های غذایی و آشامیدنی سازمان غذا و دارو گفت: درج تراریختگی در برچسب جلوی ترکیبات، صرفا احترام به مشتری و فراهم کردن قدرت انتخاب برای مصرف کننده است و هیچ ارتباطی با ایمنی و سلامت آن فرآورده ندارد.

U.S. gives green light to Turkey to launch military operation in north Syria

U.S. troops start pullout in Syria

TEHRAN — The United States has given the green light to Turkey to launch a military operation against Washington’s long-time Kurdish allies in northern Syria.

The decision came after a phone conversation between U.S. President Donald Trump and his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Sunday.

“Turkey will soon be moving forward with its long-planned operation into northern Syria,” the White House said in a statement.

On Monday, Erdogan spoke of imminent army perations against Kurdish militants in Syria.

“There is a phrase that we always say: we can come any night without warning. It is absolutely out of the question for us to further tolerate the threats from these terrorist groups,” Erdogan told reporters.

Ankara views US-backed YPG militants as terrorists affiliated with the homegrown Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) militant group.

Turkey said it was ready to carry out an air and ground operation to push back YPG militants from border areas after a deadline to jointly establish a so-called safe zone with the U.S. passed.

On the issue of Daesh prisoners in the region, Erdogan said he would work with European states to resolve the issue.

“There are (Daesh prisoners) from France, Germany, other countries. They say ‘We don’t want to have control over them. We can’t look after them. What can be done about this?’ They are going to work on that and I instructed our colleagues to work on that too,” he noted.

Washington has said that Ankara would be responsible for the Daesh militants captured in the area over the past two years.

The White House said U.S. troops would withdraw from the border between Turkey and Syria and wouldn’t be involved in the offensive.



Late last year, Washington stopped a Turkish offensive against Kurdish militants after Trump announced a plan to withdraw troops from Syria.

Trump told Erdogan in their December 14 phone conversation that the U.S. was “done” with Syria and that “it’s all yours.”

British daily The Guardian said on Monday moving U.S. forces out of the area “will in effect abandon Washington’s longtime allies, the Kurds.”

“Allowing Turkey to move into northern Syria is one of the most destabilizing moves we can do in the Middle East. The Kurds will never trust America again,” Ruben Gallego, an Iraq war veteran and Democratic congressman from Arizona, tweeted.

Kurds slam Washington

The so-called Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) of Kurdish militants said on Monday morning that their U.S. partners had already begun withdrawing troops from areas along

Turkey’s border.

Footage aired on Kurdish news agency Hawar purportedly showed U.S. armored vehicles leaving positions near the towns of Ras al-Ayn and Tal Abyad in the border region.

“The American forces did not fulfill their commitments and withdrew their forces from the border areas with Turkey, and Turkey is now preparing for an invasion operation of northern and eastern Syria,” the SDF, which holds much of the area, said in a statement.

SDF spokesman Mustafa Bali accused the U.S. of leaving the area to “turn into a war zone,” adding that the SDF would “defend northeast Syria at all costs.”

In August, the U.S. and Turkey agreed to set up the so-called safe zone to the east of the Euphrates River between the Turkish border and Syrian areas controlled by U.S.-backed militants.

Erdogan had given the U.S. until the end of

September to come up with concrete results on the development of the zone.

The two sides are reportedly at odds over the depth of the militant-free buffer zone and who should control it.

Turkey expects the creation of a 32-kilometer (20-mile) safe zone in northern Syria, and has stressed that it wants the U.S.-backed YPG cleared from the region.

Syria has reiterated its rejection of the so-called safe area, and dismissed all projects aimed at undermining the unity and territorial integrity of the country.

Turkey set to begin offensive

Commenting on the White House statement on the imminent offensive, Turkey’s Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said on Monday that his country was determined to clear its border with Syria of militants.

He claimed that Turkey’s plan does not violate Syria’s territorial integrity.

“Since the beginning of the crisis in Syria, we have supported the country’s territorial integrity, and we will continue to do so from now on,” Cavusoglu said in a tweet.

Ankara says it wants to settle up to two million Syrian refugees in the “safe zone.” State broadcaster TRT Haber said last month that Turkey planned to build towns within the zone at a cost of \$27 billion.

Ankara’s official Gazette reported on Friday that Turkey’s Gaziantep University would open three faculties in small towns in northern Syria.

UN voices concern

The United Nations has also said that it is “preparing for the worst” in northeast Syria, stressing that there are “a lot of unanswered questions” about the consequences of the operation.

“We don’t know what is going to happen... we are preparing for the worst,” the UN’s humanitarian coordinator for Syria, Panos Mourtzis, said in Geneva.

Germany warns EU of refugee wave bigger than 2015 if it fails to take action

TEHRAN — German Interior Minister Horst Seehofer warns that Europe may soon face a refugee crisis “even greater” than the one that hit the continent in 2015 if the European Union fails to develop the “strength” to contain the rising numbers of refugee arrivals.

“We must do more to help our European partners with controls on the EU external borders. We have left them alone for too long,” the minister told German Bild am Sonntag newspaper, referring to Greece, Turkey, Spain and Italy.

“If we don’t, we will once again see a refugee wave like in 2015 — maybe even greater than four years ago,” he added.

Seehofer also warned that in case Europe fails to find the “strength to solve this problem” it could see a “loss of control” in the face of such a crisis.

In a separate interview with the Welt am Sonntag newspaper, the minister drew attention to Turkey, saying Ankara needs more assistance in dealing with millions of refugees that have entered the country since the start of militancy in neighboring Syria in 2011.

“Turkey is doing a great deal in welcoming refugees,” Seehofer said. “It is also in our interests, but it is clear that we cannot manage the future with the resources of the past.”



He made the comments following visits last week to Greece and Turkey, where he discussed a deal on refugees and border controls.

In an unprecedented refugee influx, over one million refugees arrived in the European Union in 2015, most of them fleeing conflict zones in the Middle East and North Africa, Press TV reported.

A year later, Turkey became Europe’s gatekeeper after signing a deal with the EU aimed at controlling the inflow of refugees into the continent. The agreement ended the influx, bringing the number down to around 30,000 annually in the following years.

The refugee deal is, however, in trouble, with Ankara accusing Europe of failing to honor its economic pledges. Under the agreement, \$6.5 billion was pledged to help Turkey host 3.6 million Syrian refugees, but as of June, only \$2.4 billion had been paid to Ankara.

Iraq says all evidence points to ‘malicious hands’ in protests

TEHRAN— Iraqi officials say there are “malicious hands” behind the killing of both protesters and security forces during the recent spate of unrest in Baghdad and some other cities.

Interior Ministry spokesman Saad Maan confirmed for the first time on Sunday that 104 people had been killed, including eight security officers, and more than 6,000 wounded in the protests.

Maan said the ministry was working with other government institutions to find out who was behind the killings. According to medical sources, the majority of protesters killed were struck by bullets.

The protests began last Tuesday, with demonstrators calling for better living conditions. The rallies soon turned into riots as some protesters started vandalizing public properties and attempted to enter the Green Zone in the capital Baghdad -- which houses government offices and foreign diplomatic missions.

On Saturday night, armed elements and violent rioters attempted to take over local TV stations in Baghdad after the government removed a days-long curfew.

Maan said protesters burned 51 public buildings and eight political party headquarters but Iraqi security forces did not confront them. According to the spokesman, most of those killed on Friday had



been shot in the head or heart, a sign that skilled snipers had carried out the killings.

Officials say there are attempts at “sedition” from “unidentified snipers” who shot police and protesters indiscriminately.

“We can’t accept the continuation of the situation like this,” Prime Minister Adil Abdul-Mahdi told his Cabinet late Saturday. “We hear of snipers, firebombs, burning a policeman, a citizen.”

Parliament speaker Mohamed al-Halbousi echoed the premier’s remarks, saying that “infiltrators” were wreaking havoc. He said the parliament had formed a committee to investigate the matter.

Iraqi security officials have made it clear that their forces would not use lethal force against protesters unless their lives were in danger.

On Sunday night, at least 13 people were killed in clashes with security forces in a district of capital, where the military admitted some forces had violated the rules of engagement, Press TV reported.

Tunisian election gives few clues to shape of next government

TEHRAN — Tunisia faced political deadlock Monday after Sunday’s election delivered a fragmented parliament and no obvious path to forming a government that must urgently address chronic economic and fiscal problems.

Sunday’s exit polls showed the moderate Islamic Ennahda as the largest party, but its modest projected vote share means it would need to bring many other parties into any workable coalition. Official results are not expected until Tuesday.

“The task will be very difficult and complicated to reach an agreement to form a government,” said Yamina Zoglam, a senior Ennahda official.

Several of Ennahda’s rivals have already said they will not join a government it leads, and Tunisians are confronting the prospect of protracted negotiations and the possibility of another election if no coalition can be agreed.

The parliamentary vote comes amid a separate presidential election in which one of the two candidates who advanced to next Sunday’s runoff vote is being held in detention on corruption charges, entailing a possible challenge to that result.

Eight years after ending autocratic rule, many Tunisians are disillusioned by the failure of repeated coalition governments to address economic problems and their rejection of major parties threatens a new period of upheaval.

If official results confirm Ennahda’s first place, it has two months to form a coalition. After that the president can ask a politician of his choice to try. If that also fails after two months, Tunisians will go back to the ballot box.

Next week’s presidential runoff pits Kais Saied, an independent, against Nabil Karoui, a media mogul detained on corruption charges that he denies. If he loses, he might appeal to overturn the result citing his detention< Reuters reported.



Climate change protests snarl up central London, 135 arrested

TEHRAN — Climate change protesters blocked traffic across London’s government district of Westminster Monday as they launched two weeks of peaceful civil disobedience to call for urgent action to curb carbon emissions.

Police said they had arrested 135 activists from the Extinction Rebellion group by 11:30 GMT.

The group expects 10,000 people will

come to the capital from across Britain to join the two-week protest, which is part of a coordinated international movement. There were similar climate protests on Monday in Berlin, Vienna, Amsterdam, Madrid and other cities around the world.

Large crowds of protesters blocked some of Westminster’s largest and busiest roads, bridges and squares, carrying banners with slogans such as “Climate change denies our

children a future unless we act now.”

Banging drums and chanting, they took over the tourist hotspot of Trafalgar Square and marched down the Mall, the broad tree-lined avenue that leads to Buckingham Palace.

According to Reuters, some activists glued or chained themselves to cars parked in the middle of roads or to street lamps, making it hard for police officers to detain them.

“We’re here because the government is

not doing enough on the climate emergency,” said protester Lizzy Mansfield. “We only get one planet and so we’re here to try and defend it.”

Extinction Rebellion rose to prominence in April when it disrupted traffic in central London for 11 days. More than 1,000 activists were arrested, of whom 850 were prosecuted for various public disorder offences. So far, 250 have been convicted.

Zionist, Arab regimes agree to advance ‘alliance’

➤1 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.

The occupying regime 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 regime’s 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.

Last week, Zionist ambassador to the UN said the regime and various Arab countries have been working together at the UN and elsewhere against Iran.

In a phone interview with the Jerusalem Post, Danny Danon said Tel Aviv was planning a number of actions against Tehran at the UN, adding that although Arab states were not co-sponsors, there was “cooperation” between them.

Tel Aviv’s proposal for non-aggression pact with Arabs

➤1 As the fourth article states all disagreements between parties regarding the agreement shall be resolved by consultation.

The Israeli regime is pursuing several goals by presenting the plan. First, to stop Arabs from joining Iran’s peace initiative to secure the Persian Gulf with the participation of the regional countries, since it is considered as a danger for Israel.

Second, to not allow Arab countries to form a coalition against itself and hold these countries responsible for the actions of the resistance groups.

The third goal is speeding up the process of normalization of political and economic relations and formalize them.

Fourth, maybe the conditions would be better provided for the implementation of the American Deal of the Century project to completely eliminate Palestine.

Fifth, the Zionist regime will no longer be recognized as the number one enemy of the Arabs and Islam. This time, Iran will be regarded as an imaginary enemy for the region and the Arabs.

It seems that the regime is trying to form a coalition by taking advantage of political and natural disagreements between Iran and some Arab countries in the Persian Gulf. Israel knows that some reactionary states in the Persian Gulf are at odds with Iran, and is trying to secure itself by highlighting these disagreements.

Netanyahu claimed that the plan is a “historic measure” that would end the conflicts between the Zionist regime and Arabs. It should be noted that the main reason of the conflict between Israel and Arabs is not the question of Iran, rather it is the question of the Israeli occupation of Palestine.

However, we should wait and see which countries will agree with the Zionist regime’s plan that has targeted security and peaceful co-existence in the region. The public opinion in Arab countries will not easily get along with formal agreement between their governments and the Zionist regime. It is likely that just like what happened in the Deal of the Century project, the plan will not reach its desired goals.

Those Arab leaders who have assisted the Zionist regime to promote Anti-Iranian sentiment without paying attention to the Palestine issue, have not been popular in the history.

Iraqi protests, spontaneous or conspiracy?

➤1 They want to obey the Iraqi government ... so we will see demonstrations in Iraq again. The demonstrations are scheduled to begin in October.

Fourth, the demonstrations in Iraq also coincided with the government announcing an inquiry’s output into the bombing of PMF’s garrisons and Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi’s emphasis on the direct role of the Zionist regime in the incident.

Meanwhile, in the ongoing violence in Iraqi, Western and Arab media focused on inducing PMF as a force against the protesters. The behavior of the main media stream also shows that what is going on in Iraq is a “concerted conspiracy”, which is aimed at weakening the Iraqi security and military forces, especially the PMF.

Fifth, the protests in Iraq were backed by some elements of the Ba’athist regime. As the protests began, the daughter of Iraq’s ousted dictator Raghad Saddam, tweeted in support of the protests, calling them “the generation of Qadisiyah” and writing “The whole of Iraq is with you” and “God bless our martyrs.”

It is real that the economic problems and corruption exist in Iraq and that is undeniable, but the violence that occurred during the recent protests and the way the Western and Arab media reported and covered the protests suggests that Iraqis should be vigilant.

U.S. federal judge says Trump must produce tax returns

TEHRAN — A U.S. federal judge in New York Monday dismissed President Donald Trump’s efforts to block access to years of his personal and corporate tax returns, saying sitting presidents are not immune from criminal investigations.

In a 75-page ruling, Judge Victor Marrero rejected Trump’s argument, saying such vast immunity would “operate to frustrate the administration of justice” by putting the president’s personal and professional affairs off-limits.

“This court cannot endorse such a categorical and limitless assertion of presidential immunity from judicial process,” Marrero wrote.

Trump had filed suit against Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr, who had subpoenaed the accounting firm Mazars U.S.A., seeking access to the president’s tax returns dating back to 2011.

Vance is investigating payments made by Michael Cohen, Trump’s former personal attorney, to Stormy Daniels, who claimed to have had an affair with Trump before he ran for president, AFP reported.

Liverpool’s Salah escapes with twisted ankle

Mohamed Salah sustained a twisted ankle in Liverpool's late victory over Leicester according to reports on Monday, but the Egyptian could still return for the Premier League leaders' clash at Manchester United on October 20.

Salah hobbled off in added time during the 2-1 win over the Foxes on Saturday after being caught on the left ankle by a lunge from Hamza Choudhury.

The England under-21 international was booked, but Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp believed he should have seen red for a challenge he branded “dangerous as hell”.

Salah had already been excused from Egypt’s friendly against Botswana on October 14 with Pharaohs head coach Hossam El Badry saying his star player “must rest”.

The Liverpool Echo reported: “Salah suffered a twisted ankle in the challenge, and while there is no timescale set on his return, Liverpool are hopeful there is no long-term damage.”

After Salah had been withdrawn, Liverpool struck late through James Milner’s penalty to open up an eight-point lead at the top of the Premier League.

(Source: Goal)

Bayern boss Rummenigge angered by France call-up for injured Hernandez

Bayern Munich chief Karl-Heinz Rummenigge has spoken out against the world champions France after they called up the injured defender Lucas Hernandez for their Euro 2020 qualifiers with Iceland and Turkey.

Rummenigge had told the French football federation last week that Hernandez was unavailable because of the knee injury but the French have asked the defender to report for a medical examination.

“I want to point out that Lucas Hernandez did not play for us in the Champions League against Tottenham nor in the Bundesliga on Saturday,” Rummenigge said in a press release.

The former striker, now the chief power broker at Bayern, is said to be irritated by comments from the French national coach Didier Deschamps, suggesting the defender would be happy to play on one leg for the national cause.

“Didier Deschamps’ suggestion ... has stunned us,” he said.

The World Cup holders face Iceland in Reykjavik on Friday, October 11 before entertaining Turkey at the Stade de France on Monday, October 14.

Les Bleus are level with Turkey at the top of Group H on 15 points from six games, with Iceland three points back.

The top two qualify automatically for the final tournament.

(Source: AFP)

Osaka returns to top three after seeing off Barty in Beijing

Naomi Osaka’s win over world number one Ashleigh Barty in Beijing at the weekend lifted the Japanese player back into the top three in the new WTA rankings released on Monday.

It meant back-to-back WTA Tour titles for the 21-year-old, who won the Australian Open in January, but then failed to match those high standards at the next three Grand Slams.

French Open winner Barty retains top spot and even extends her lead following the failure of Karolina Pliskova to get past the first round in China.

Osaka’s rise to three means Elina Svitolina, quarter-finalist in Beijing, slips to four.

US Open champion Bianca Andreescu, who lost a thrilling quarter-final to Osaka last week, also climbs a place to number five pushing Simona Halep down to six.

(Source: AFP)

Lyon duo under pressure after derby loss

Coach Sylvinho and sports director Juninho are under tremendous pressure after Olympique Lyonnais were beaten 1-0 by bitter rivals St Etienne, stretching the club’s Ligue 1 winless streak to seven games.

The duo were named after Bruno Genesio’s contract was not renewed last season, and the return of club darling Juninho, a fan favourite during his 2001-08 stay, had raised hopes that OL would challenge Paris St Germain.

After scoring nine goals and conceding none in two opening victories, Lyon looked like a decent challenger for the title, but things unravelled quickly.

Since then, they have picked up three points from seven matches and look a far cry from the aggressive team they had been under Genesio and his predecessors.

Lyon now lie 14th in the standings on nine points, 12 points from champions PSG.

Last week’s 2-0 win at RB Leipzig in the Champions League bought the staff some time, but their loss in France’s fiercest derby has put Sylvinho and Juninho back in the crossfire.

(Source: Mirror)

Lloris out for the rest of the year, says Deschamps

Tottenham Hotspur goalkeeper Hugo Lloris will “almost certainly” be out of action for the rest of the year after his horror injury at the weekend, France coach Didier Deschamps said on Monday.

“It is difficult to say exactly how long he will not be available,” said Deschamps as France players gathered for their next Euro 2020 qualifying matches against Iceland on Friday and Turkey three days later.

“What matters to us right now is that he will not be with us for this round of games or for the next.”

France face Albania and Moldova in November.

Lloris suffered a dislocated elbow in conceding the opening goal of Spurs’ 3-0 defeat by Brighton on Saturday, dropping a cross before falling backwards and landing badly.

The Spurs goalkeeper was given oxygen and morphine as he was carried from the field before being taken to hospital.

“Almost certainly, he won’t be back on the pitch in 2019,” said Deschamps.

Steve Mandanda will take over in goal for France against Iceland while Paulo Gazzaniga, who replaced Lloris on Saturday, is likely to continue in the role for struggling Spurs.

(Source: Independent)

Breaking Bolt’s record, 10 months after giving birth

Becoming the most successful athlete in World Championships history - as she did in Doha - would once have been all-consuming for Allyson Felix. The past 12 months have changed her beyond measure.

Having a baby has also given birth to the activist hidden inside her. Felix is no longer a willing participant in the “culture of silence” around maternity rights in elite athletics. She has found her voice.

Felix the mother is running late. We meet on the 42nd floor of her hotel overlooking the Persian Gulf.

With the World Athletics Championships in town, these plush surroundings are perfect for a six-time Olympic sprint champion, but not for 10-month old daughter Camryn it seems. Her body clock has yet to adjust to the Middle East and as a result Felix, 33, has been up all night.

It is not a new experience for somebody who spent most of last December sleeping in a chair in a children’s intensive care unit.

Camryn was born on 28 November 2018, weighing just 3lbs 7oz. Felix had gone into hospital for a routine check-up at 32 weeks only to be told that both she and her baby were in mortal danger.

Felix was suffering from pre-eclampsia - a potentially life-threatening condition for both mother and baby. Her blood pressure was rising while Camryn’s heart-rate was decelerating.

And so, 10 hours after arriving at



hospital, Felix gave birth by emergency Caesarean to Camryn.

Ten months and one day later, Felix secured a record-breaking 12th World Championships gold medal in the 4x400m mixed relay in Doha, surpassing Usain Bolt. On Sunday’s closing day she added gold number 13 as USA won the women’s 4x400m relay.

“Last Christmas when I was in the hospital I could not have believed at all that I would be here in Doha winning medals,” she says. “This moment that was

supposed to be so happy was happy, but it was also really scary and uncertain.”

Out of that uncertainty Felix found purpose. Primarily through a commitment to her daughter in the here and now that saw her spend every waking moment in the intensive care unit. But in addition, she began a two-pronged campaign of activism.

May saw the normally shy Felix address a House Ways and Means Committee in the US Congress, highlighting the issue of maternal mortality among black women. In the USA, black women are nearly four

times as likely to die during childbirth and twice as likely to suffer complications.

Introducing herself as “Camryn’s Mom”, Felix began her speech with the words: “I would like to share the story of the two most terrifying days of my life.” Looking back now it is no less raw.

She says: “When I was in the hospital, it was such a scary situation. I feel like I am someone who is privileged and I was in that situation and was kind of aware but not fully educated. And if I am not fully educated then there are a lot of women who aren’t fully educated as well. Speaking to Congress had to happen in order to save lives. It is way bigger than sport.”

Then Felix took on sportswear superpower Nike over maternity rights for athletes. She was involved in contract negotiations with them while dealing with her life as new mum. Nike wanted to pay Felix “70% less than before”, which she said at the time she was willing to accept.

“What I’m not willing to accept is the enduring status quo around maternity,” she wrote in a powerful New York Times article published in May. “I asked Nike to contractually guarantee that I wouldn’t be punished if I didn’t perform at my best in the months surrounding childbirth. I wanted to set a new standard. If I, one of Nike’s most widely marketed athletes, couldn’t secure these protections, who could? Nike declined.”

(Source: BBC)

Manchester United board to blame for club’s on-field woes: Neville



Manchester United’s struggles are the result of poor planning by the club’s board and manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer needs time and money to get the team back on track, former defender Gary Neville has said.

United, once the dominant force in English football, have made their worst start to a Premier League campaign in 30 years and dropped to 12th in the table, two points above the relegation zone, after Sunday’s 1-0 defeat at Newcastle United.

Solskjaer is the fourth permanent manager to take charge since Alex Ferguson retired in 2013, with the 20-times English champions enduring mixed fortunes under David Moyes, Louis van Gaal and Jose Mourinho despite spending heavily on players.

“United are getting the pain they deserve for poor decisions at board level,” Neville told Sky Sports. “The board (is) responsible for this with poor recruitment, poor selection of managers, going with them and then pulling off them.

“If you change direction as a board every two years, investing 250 million

pounds (\$308 million) along the way in each manager, you’re going to have big problems.”

Solskjaer, who sanctioned the departures of Alexis Sanchez and Romelu Lukaku in the close season, is trying to rebuild the side with a greater emphasis on youth, and Neville said the board would have to be patient with his former team mate.

The club signed centre back Harry Maguire, right back Aaron Wan-Bissaka and winger Daniel James before the season started, but need to bring in another “five or six top players”, he added.

“Solskjaer needs... the opportunity to spend the money the others have had to spend. If United recruit well in the next three or four windows, they’ve got the bones of something. If they recruit badly, they’ll end up suffering,” Neville said.

“There’s no quick fix and it has to be done methodically. I hope, because of the poor results, they don’t come off the path they’re on which is to develop a young, progressive team but they do need some quality and experience in there.”

(Source: Reuters)

James Harden apologizes as controversy grows: ‘We love China’



Houston Rockets star James Harden has offered an apology as the controversy over general manager Daryl Morey’s tweet of support for Hong Kong protesters continues to grow at a crucial time for the NBA in China.

Harden spoke while standing with teammate Russell Westbrook at a practice in Tokyo on Monday, three days after Morey posted a now-deleted tweet that read: “Fight for Freedom. Stand with Hong Kong.”

“We apologize. You know, we love China. We love playing there,” Harden said. “For both of us individually, we go there once or twice a year. They show us the most important love.”

The incident has come at a particularly awkward moment for the league, whose players have often been outspoken about social issues in the United States.

China has teams playing preseason games in the U.S. this week, the Rockets are about to play two games in Japan and the Los Angeles Lakers -- with one of the biggest global sports stars, LeBron James -- are set to play the Brooklyn Nets on Thursday in Shanghai and Saturday in

Shenzhen, China.

“We appreciate them as a fan base,” Harden said. “We love everything there about them, and we appreciate the support that they give us individually and as [an] organization.”

The strong reactions to Morey’s tweet underscore Beijing’s sensitivity about foreign attitudes toward the ongoing Hong Kong protests that have lately grown into violence in the semiautonomous territory. China has accused foreign parties in the United States and elsewhere of encouraging the demonstrations.

Nets owner Joe Tsai, a co-founder of Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba, posted a 736-word open letter on his Facebook page late Sunday night saying that Morey stepped on what he described as “a third-rail issue” when it comes to China and Hong Kong.

“By now I hope you can begin to understand why the Daryl Morey tweet is so damaging to the relationship with our fans in China,” Tsai wrote. “I don’t know Daryl personally.”

(Source: ESPN)

Liverpool in pole position to end title drought as Man City falter

Liverpool have lived through enough near misses in 30 years not to take anything for granted in October, but an eight-point lead in the Premier League gives Jurgen Klopp’s men a golden opportunity to end that long wait.

The European champions came agonisingly close to fulfilling their title dreams in May, losing out to Manchester City by just one point, despite posting the third-highest points tally in top-flight English football history, with 97.

But they bounced back quickly to lift the Champions League in June and have shot out of the traps with eight straight league wins to take a commanding lead.

Liverpool have not always shone this season. Their past three league wins have come by a solitary goal, but they have shown the tenacity and hunger to get the job done at the same time as an injury-hit City, going for their third title in a row, have lost their edge.

High-flying Leicester’s visit to Anfield on Saturday offered City hope they could cut the five-point gap separating the sides heading into the weekend.

Deep into stoppage time, the Foxes seemed set to do the champions a favour with the sides locked at 1-1, until Sadio Mane tumbled in the box and James Milner coolly slotted away a 95th-minute penalty.

“They didn’t look for a second like a team who won so many games that they don’t have the desire anymore to win another one,” said Klopp.



“It looked like they had never won a game before and I love that fact.”

■ City feel Laporte loss

A day later, City failed to find the same kind of response as Wolves emerged from the Etihad 2-0 victors after soaking up the hosts’ pressure and hitting relentlessly on the counter-attack.

City’s defensive problems without the injured Aymeric Laporte were ruthlessly exposed as Wolves missed three glorious first-half chances before finally landing a blow with two Adama Traore goals in the final 10 minutes.

Slack defending also cost Pep Guardiola’s men in a 3-2 defeat at newly promoted Norwich last month and the fear for City is that the gap to Liverpool will only grow over the coming months.

Defender Laporte will not be back until after the New Year and City may have to act quickly in the transfer market in January after failing to fill the void left by former captain Vincent Kompany’s departure at the end of last season.

But two seasons of near-perfection have emboldened Guardiola to believe that anything is still possible.

“I know these guys, they can still do it,” said the Catalan coach on Sunday. “We are in October and there’s a long way to go.”

The sides still have to face each other twice, offering City the chance to eat into that gap.

Their clash at Anfield next month is increasingly looking like a must-win for the champions, but even Guardiola has failed to win in his previous four visits there as City boss and the blue side of Manchester have not won away to Liverpool since 2003.

Five times Liverpool have finished second since they last won a top-flight title in 1989/90.

Rarely in that time have they ever had a better chance to end the long wait to be crowned champions of England.

(Source: AFP)

Iran U23 football team announced

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Newly-appointed coach d e s k Hamid Estili has invited 35 players to Iran U23 football team on Monday.

Iran are preparing for the 2020 AFC U23 Championship, where the team have been drawn in Group C along with titleholders 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.

On Sunday, Estili replaced Farhad Majidi as new head coach of Iran U23 football team.

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, Shahrin Bushehr and Malavan.

Squad:
Goalkeepers: Mehdi Nourollahi (Saipa), Habib Farabbasi (Naft Masjed Soleyman), Meraj Esmaeili (Zob Ahan), Ali Keykhosravi (Sepahan)

Defenders: Mohammad Moslemipour (Machine Sazi), Taha Shariati (Saipa), Aref Gholami (Esteghlal), Sina Khadempour (Esteghlal), Ali Shojaei (Nassaji), Aref Aghasi (Foolad), Abolfazl Razaghpour (Paykan), Saadat Hardani (Foolad), Mohammad Aghajani (Shahr Khodro), Ramin Davoudi (Esteghlal Khuzestan), Omid Dorreh (Saipa), Abolfazl Jalali (Saipa)

Midfielders: Omid Noorafkan (Sepahan), Mohammad Khorramalhoseini (Machine Sazi), Reza Shekari (Tractor), Amirhossein Hosseinzadeh (Saipa), Mohammad Khodabandehloo (Paykan), Reza Jabireh (Sanat Naft), Sina



Zamehran (Shahr Khodro), Mohammad Sharifi (Saipa), Esmail Babaei (Fajr Sepasi)

Strikers: Amirhossein Bagherpour (Foolad), Mehdi Abdi (Persepolis), Mehdi Ghaedi (Esteghlal), Amir

Roostaei (Persepolis), Sajad Aghaei (Esteghlal), Rahman Jafari (Nassaji), Younes Delfi (Charlari), Mohammad Reza Azadi (Tractor), Jafar Salmani (Sanat Naft), Vahid Namdari (Foolad)

Dembele could be suspended from El Clasico

On Sunday, Barcelona star Ousmane Dembele was sent-off by the referee during their La Liga game against Sevilla, as he said "you're very bad", in response to teammate Ronald Araujo's red card.

The above-mentioned incident happened in the 87th minute of the match – a minute earlier, Araujo – who also marked his debut for Barcelona during the game – had been shown a red card for his foul on Sevilla star Javier Hernandez.

Samuel Marsden, an ESPN and Diario Sport reporter, later revealed that Lahoz confirmed in his report that he sent the former Borussia Dortmund star off for telling him he's "very bad" while gesticulating the same with his arms.

Meanwhile, Ernesto Valverde the manager of Barcelona, explained that it is difficult enough to get much out of Dembele in Spanish, while also admitting that he is astonished at how the entire incident turned out.



"It's a mystery. It's hard to get a phrase out of him in Spanish. It won't have been a long phrase, for sure," he said.

And now, Daily Mail reports that he is likely to miss out on the upcoming La Liga clash against Real Madrid, as his offence involves direct interaction with a match official.

Earlier last season, Atletico Madrid's Diego Costa received an eight-game ban for allegedly insulting the referee, and later, Deportivo La Coruna's Michael Krohn-Dehli was given a two-game suspension for saying the same thing as Dembele.

(Source: ESPN)

Barcelona confirm Victor Valdes departure from youth team role

Barcelona have sacked under-19 team coach Victor Valdes less than three months after bringing him back to the Camp Nou following several disagreements with club executives and club workers, sources have confirmed to ESPN FC.

Last Friday, ESPN FC reported that Valdes had already said goodbye to his players after Barca announced the former goalkeeper was not going to travel to the Saturday's game against Gimnastic in Tarragona.

Barca made the announcement on Monday morning and have immediately replaced him with Franc Artiga, who was the coach of the under-19 B team and part of the youth set up at La Masia since 2010.

Sources close to the club told ESPN FC Valdes was given a dressing down on Friday by Patrick Kluivert, who is the director of youth football.

There have been clashes over a range of issues, including the team's formation, the



management of star player Ilaix Moriba and Valdes' failure to turn up for important meetings with other coaches at the club.

Barca's U19s are unbeaten in the league but dropped points against Cornella and have lost both of their Youth League games, against Borussia Dortmund and Inter Milan.

Valdes completed his UEFA Pro license alongside former teammate and friend Xavi Hernandez, who is working in Qatar, and the two have been linked to Victor Font who is a candidate for the 2021 club presidential elections.

(Source: Daily Mail)

Father-daughter duo proves 'no' is not the final answer

Para alpine skier Ally Kunkel knows firsthand that not taking 'no' for an answer is easier said than done.

Taken off the United States national team after the PyeongChang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games, the teenager spent last season proving why she deserves to train alongside the nation's best.

After a slew of gritty races and a silver medal at the World Para Alpine Skiing World Cup, Kunkel has been welcomed back on the team and will be skiing in national colors once again in the upcoming season.

"It was slightly disappointing, I'm not going to lie, but I think it was what needed to happen and I'm really thankful I got the opportunity to step back a little bit and focus on fundamen-tals," Kunkel said.

Do it better

Kunkel was 16 when she qualified to her first Winter Paralympics. In PyeongChang, she finished seventh and eighth in the women's standing super-G and giant slalom, respectively.

Once she heard she was off the national team, Kunkel set to work on becoming a better skier. As a first step, she moved from Colorado to Park City, Utah to train with the National Ability Center.

There she skied up to five hours every day, in addition to strength work at the gym.

Exam day

All that training was put to the test at the World Cup in La Molina, Spain in March, where Kunkel competed as an independent athlete. The solo mission would have been impossible if not for the commitment of her father, who accompanied Kunkel on the trip.



"I'm trying to be everything - coach, dad, equipment tuner. It's just a balance of everything," said Larry Kunkel.

"It's not a cheap thing. We try to do it as inexpensively as possible, but it's a considerable cost. But she's dedicated to doing it and we're going to support her in any way we can," added Kunkel.

The investment to travel more than 8,000km to the Spanish ski resort paid off as Kunkel blazed to a silver finish in the competition's second giant slalom race.

She was the only athlete from USA to reach the podium in La Molina with the exception of Thomas Walsh, who took a bronze in the men's standing giant slalom.

"It didn't even hit me until I was taking my boots off in the van and I was like, 'Oh my gosh, I was on the podium! Wow!'," Kunkel said.

"I've collected a few medals over the years through my able-bodied racing and Para racing but this one is definitely going to be really special for me. It's my first World Cup podium ever."

Turning heads

Kunkel's milestone medal did not go unnoticed by Team USA's staff. Her former teammates cheered her on while the coaches offered encouraging words.

"It doesn't matter where you're sitting right now, if you're on the podium or you're not, it's all about if you're improving with each and every single run," Kunkel recalled their advice. "That's what I've just been trying to do and focus less on results."

While her medal inspired cheers in the USA camp, one person was noticeably composed - her father. As throughout all of competition, Larry Kunkel remained on the sidelines, never shouting or giving loud advice.

"I get a little embarrassed," Kunkel said with a laugh. "Every teenager is embarrassed of their parents a little bit so I make him stay a little bit more low key, but he's basically doing everything for me. He's my tech, my sports psych, my coach, everything."

Now that his daughter is back on the national team, Larry Kunkel is anticipating an even stronger performance in the 2019/20 season.

"I hope she can take away some confidence that she can perform at a high level even as an independent," he said.

"Hopefully with the support of the national team she can do even more because they're going to have more resources than we're going to have on our own."

Kunkel will join another seven skiers in the national team announced on Thursday, including PyeongChang 2018 gold medalist Andrew Kurka.

(Source: Paralympic)

Japan limited to one automatic 3x3 basketball place at Tokyo 2020

Only one 3x3 team from Japan will automatically secure a place at next year's Olympic Games in Tokyo after the International Basketball Federation (FIBA) confirmed the qualification criteria.

FIBA revealed Japan would be given a spot in the men's and women's 3x3 tournaments at Tokyo 2020 earlier this year, pending final approval from the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

But an automatic ticket will only be granted to the highest-ranked Japanese team under criteria published by FIBA.

The other Japanese squad will be provided with plenty of opportunities to qualify, however, as they will be entered into the Olympic qualification tournament.

If Japan fail to seal an Olympic berth at the event, the country will compete at the last-chance universality qualification competition.

Japan's men are currently in line to be awarded the sole automatic spot for the Olympic host nation as they are ranked ninth, two places above the women, who sit 11th on the FIBA standings.

The top four teams on the men's and women's rankings will qualify for Tokyo 2020 and will be announced by FIBA on November 1.

If Japan fails to get into the top four on either list, they will replace the fourth best team on the rankings.

It means they are likely to take the place



of Mongolia, currently fourth on the men's standings.

Serbia, Russia and China are set to join Japan in the men's event at Tokyo 2020,

while Russia, China, Romania and France are on course to claim the automatic berths in the women's tournament.

Three places in each of the men's and women's competitions will be on offer at the Olympic qualification tournaments, the exact dates and locations of which have not yet been revealed.

One spot per gender will be up for grabs at the Universality Olympic Qualifying Tournament.

The first Olympic Qualifying Tournament is due to be staged in March 2020 and will feature 40 teams, 20 for each gender.

3x3 basketball will make its debut on the Olympic program at Tokyo 2020.

(Source: Insidethegames)

Iran's women's 3x3 basketball move up to 7th

IRNA — Iran's women's 3x3 basketball team have moved up to 7th place in the FIBA ranking.

Russia are the first team in the ranking followed by China, Romani and France.

The top four teams on the men's and women's rankings will automatically qualify for Tokyo 2020 and will be announced by FIBA on November 1.

The 3x3 basketball will make its debut on the Olympic program at Tokyo 2020.

The first Olympic Qualifying Tournament is due to be staged in March 2020 and will feature 40 teams, 20 for each gender.

Persepolis can win Iran's title: Branko Ivankovic

PLDC — Former Persepolis coach Branko Ivankovic says Persepolis have the chance of winning Iran Professional League (IPL) title.

In an exclusive interview with Euronews, Ivankovic said that after only six weeks, it's too soon to predict who will win the title.



"They have failed to get good results and this needs more analysis. I cannot talk about that because I'm not in the team and have not seen their matches in the previous matches. So, I have no exact information about the team's situation," Ivankovic said.

Ex-Al Ahli coach says that Persepolis can return to the title race.

"First of all, I have to say Persepolis have good team and good players but they need more time to coordinate. Persepolis are now five points behind leaders Sepahan but there is 24 weeks left. So, there is too soon to predict who will win the title," the Croat added.

Asked him if there is any chance to return to Persepolis, Ivankovic said, "Not at all at the moment. I have to solve my problems here in Saudi Arabia. I had four outstanding years in Iran and had good relationship with Persepolis fans, the club and the players. It was the best career in my life. However, I cannot return to Persepolis now."

Under Gabriel Calderon, Persepolis have won three matches and lost three in six matches.

Iran handball team to hold camp in Qatar

TASNIM — Iran national handball team will travel to Doha on Tuesday to hold training camp, where the team will play friendly matches with Qatar.

Team Mellis are stepping up preparations ahead of the Asian qualifications for the Tokyo Olympic Games next year.

Iran will prepare for the 2019 AHF Men's Asian qualification event, which will be held in Doha from October 17 to 26.

Iran have been drawn in Group A, which also features Bahrain, Kuwait and South Korea.

Group B includes Saudi Arabia, Qatar, India and Hong Kong.

The top two teams will qualify for the semi-finals.

Junior wrestlers shine in Azerbaijan Grand Prix

IRNA — Iranian junior wrestlers received two gold, two silver and five bronze medals in 2019 Grand Prix held in Shamakhi, Azerbaijan.

The event was held in the attendance of 340 wrestlers from Russia, Iran, Ukraine, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan.

Iranian athletes Ali Gholizadegan in the weight category of 55 kg and Amir Ali Sabouteh in 80 kg category received gold medals.

Amir Hossein Khosronejad (65kg) and Abbas Khalaj (110 kg) snatched silver medals.

Saeed Parvaneh, Yusef Jaber, Behnam Ebadollahi, Omran Salegi and Omid Abbasi grabbed bronze medals.

Azerbaijan ranked first and Iran and Russian stood on the second and third places respectively.

Gary Hooper linked with Iran's Esteghlal

TASNIM — English forward Gary Hooper has been linked with a move to Iranian football club Esteghlal of Tehran.

The 31-year-old striker has most recently played for Sheffield Wednesday.

The Iranian media reports suggest that he has reached a final agreement with Esteghlal of Tehran.

Esteghlal signed Cheick Diabaté in the summer transfer window but the Malian striker has not met the expectations.

Hooper started his career at English club Grays Athletic and has also played at Southend United, Celtic and Norwich City.

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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

He who calls God but does not obey Him, is like an archer who wants to shoot with a bow without a bowstring.

Imam Ali (AS)

Chicago festival to screen “Just 6.5”, “The Role”

A R T **TEHRAN** — Iranian director Saeid Rustai’s acclaimed drama “Just 6.5” and his fellow filmmaker Farnush Samadi’s short movie “The Role” will compete in the 55th Chicago International Film Festival.



Babak Hamidian and Mina Sadati act in a scene from “The Role” directed by Farnush Samadi.

In “Just 6.5”, detective Samad takes on a powerful drug kingpin in a fierce battle to stem the rising tide of drug addiction in Iran. Opening with a high-octane roundup of suspects and addicts that culminates in a punishing finale, the film tracks Samad as he tries to bring in top dealer Nasser. But landing him in jail is just the beginning.

The movie will be screened in the New Directors Competition that features bold works from emerging talents.

“Just 6.5” received a special mention at the 15th Zurich Film Festival in Switzerland on Sunday. American filmmaker Oliver Stone presided over the festival’s jury composed of Italian screenwriter Laura Bispuri, Colombian director Ciro Guerra, German actor Sebastian Koch and Swiss producer Tiziana Soudani.

In “The Role”, a marriage is tested when a woman accompanies her husband to an audition and discovers her own talent for acting.

The film will compete in Women in Cinema, a program that elevates women creators and promotes films by and about women, making space for new kinds of stories and new voices.

The Chicago International Film Festival will open with a screening of American director Edward Norton’s “Motherless Brooklyn” and will come to an end with American filmmaker Jim Farrell’s documentary “The Torch”, about Buddy Guy, the Chicago legend who remains the standard-bearer for the blues at 83.

New president appointed to Fajr Intl. Film Festival

A R T **TEHRAN** — Cinema Organization of Iran (COI) director Hossein Entezami appointed filmmaker Mohammad-Mehdi Asgarpur the new director of the Fajr International Film Festival.



Mohammad-Mehdi Asgarpur in an undated photo (Mehr/Majid Haqdoost).

Asgarpur replaced Reza Mirkarimi who had held the position since 2016.

Asgarpur was the director of the 20th and 21st editions of the festival in 2002 and 2003.

Entezami also appointed Mirkarimi as a member of the Policymaking Council of the festival, which also includes Foreign Ministry Spokesman Abbas Musavi, cineastes Alireza Shojanuri and Nader Talebzadeh.

The 38th Fajr International Film Festival will be held in Tehran in April 2020.

Gholam-Ali Haddad-Adel publishes travelog of Arbaeen pilgrimage

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — Gholam-Ali Haddad-Adel, the director of the Academy of Persian Language and Literature, has published his travelogue of the Arbaeen pilgrimage in a book.

The book “I Went to the Desert and Found a Downpour of Love” has been published by the Islamic Culture Publishing House, and has been translated into English, Urdu and Arabic. The English version has been released by Shahriar Fasih.

The three books will be introduced during a ceremony at The Central Library of Tehran Park-e Shahr today.

In this book, Haddad-Adel recounts his personal memories and experience of the Arbaeen pilgrimage 2017.

He also gives a report of this spiritual journey, the feelings of the people attending the annual ritual and mawkib keepers and the organizers, who host and serve the people on the way to visit the shrine of Imam Hussein (AS) in Karbala during the Arbaeen gathering.

Imam Hussein (AS) and his companions were martyred in Karbala on Ashura, the 10th day of Muharram, standing against the injustices of the oppressive Umayyad dynasty in 680 CE.

Iranians and Shia Muslims from other countries embark on a journey to the Iraqi city of Karbala to observe the day of Arbaeen at the holy shrines of Imam Hussein (AS), the third Imam of the Shia, and his brother, Hazrat Abbas (AS).

Arbaeen, which will be commemorated on October 19 this year, marks the end of the 40-day mourning period following the martyrdom of the Imam and his loyal companions on Ashura.

“Gray Body” from Iran to compete in LA Femme festival



A scene from “Gray Body” by Iranian director Samaneh Shojaei.

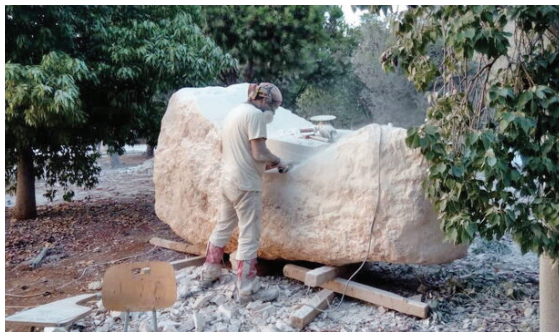
A R T **TEHRAN** — Iranian director Samaneh Shojaei’s short animation “Gray Body” will go on screen at the 15th edition of the LA Femme International Film Festival in Beverly Hills, California, the U.S.

The film is about a doctor who is visiting with one of his patients, while there is a room full of psychiatric patients, who are waiting for him and cannot be calm

anymore.

“Gray Body” has also been selected to go on screen at the 30th edition of the New Orleans Film Festival, which will be held in the U.S. city from October 16 to 23.

The LA Femme International Film Festival, which aims at empowering women working behind the camera as directors, producers and writers, will run from October 17 to 20.



An artist works on a statue during the 2nd International Sculpture Symposium in Beirut.

Iranian, Italian architects to display new designs in Tehran

A R T **TEHRAN** — A number of Iranian and Italian designers and architects will showcase their latest designs during the 3rd edition of the Objet exhibit in Tehran on Friday.

Objet is a design platform, which provides people with opportunities to discover the relationship between space, objects and the environment.

Designs of desks, tables, practical sculptures and many other objects will

be on view at the exhibition, which will be organized at the Niavaran Cultural Center.

Elnaz Tehrani is the curator of the exhibition, which has put its spotlight on designs made with the material of stone.



In this Jan. 28, 2010, file photo, copies of J.D. Salinger’s classic novel “The Catcher in the Rye” as well as his volume of short stories called “Nine Stories” are seen at the Orange Public Library in Orange, Ohio. A photo of Salinger is at left. (AP Photo/Amey Sancetta, File)

New York library exhibit to pay tribute to JD Salinger

NEW YORK (AP) — An upcoming exhibit at the New York Public Library will offer a look into the very private life of J.D. Salinger.

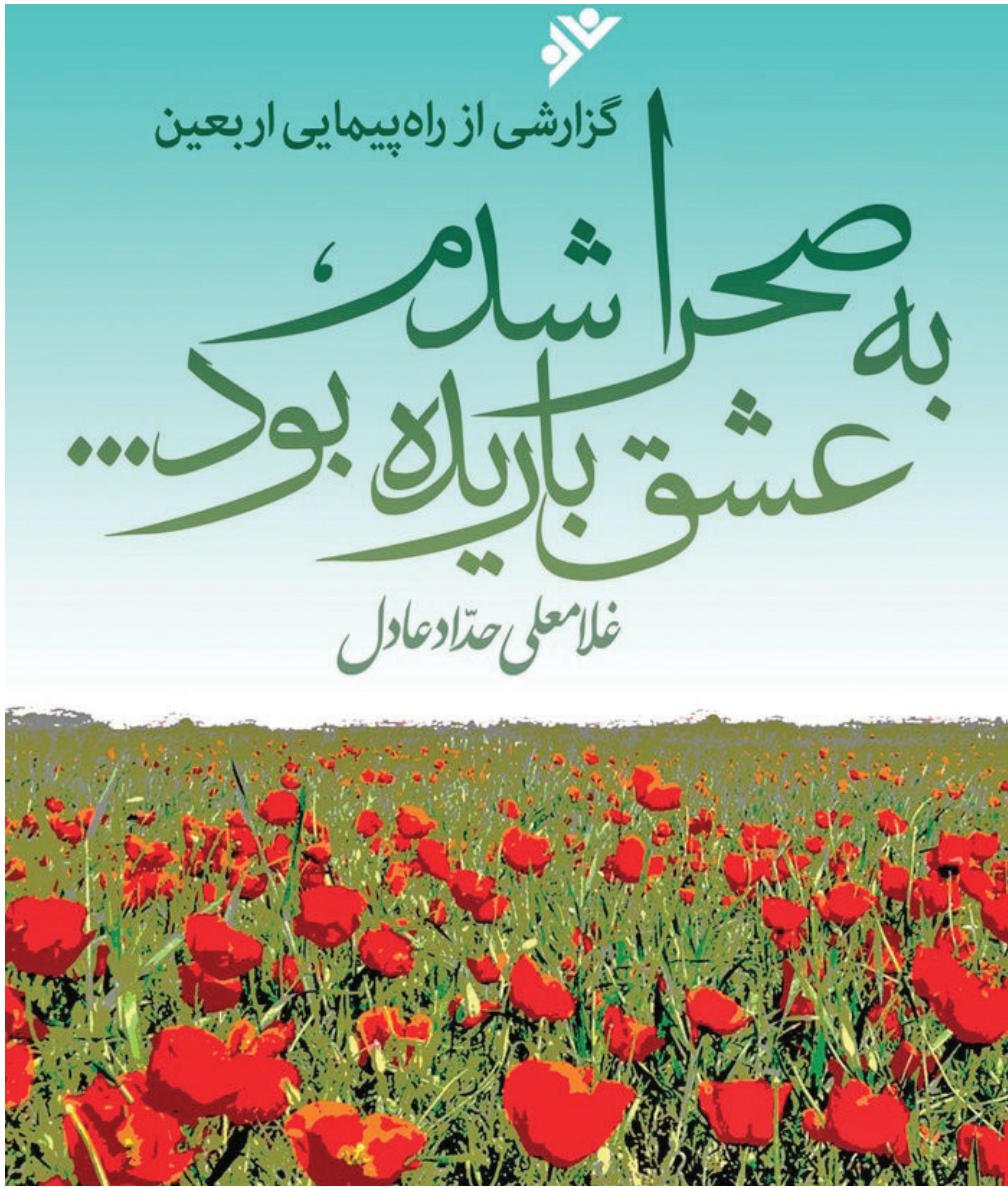
From Oct. 18 to Jan 20, 2020, the library will show materials ranging from family photographs to letters to the original typescript for his classic “The Catcher in the Rye.” The exhibit is called “J.D. Salinger” and was organized by the library in partnership with the author’s widow, Colleen Salinger, and son, Matt Salinger.

Matt Salinger said that while he plans to release his father’s unpublished writings at some point, the library will not be showing any unpublished material.

J.D. Salinger, who died in 2010, published no books after the 1960s but continued to write during the following decades. Fans have long obsessed over what he had been working on.

The exhibit will help mark the 100th anniversary of Salinger’s birth. In a statement Monday, Matt Salinger said that he hopes to lift “the veil a bit” on his famous father, whom he acknowledged avoided public scrutiny in his lifetime.

“But I’ve learned that while he may have only fathered two children there are a great, great many readers out there who have their own rather profound relationships with him, through his work, and who have long wanted to get to know him better,” Matt Salinger said.



Front cover of the Persian version of “I Went to the Desert and Found a Downpour of Love” by Gholam-Ali Haddad-Adel.

Iran-French co-production “Kömür” goes on screen in Tehran



A scene from “Kömür” by Iranian director Esmail Monsef.

A R T **TEHRAN** — “Kömür”, a co-production between Iran and France by Iranian director Esmail Monsef, hit silver screens on Monday at Iran’s Art and Experience Cinemas, which are dedicated to screening documentary and art films.

The Azerbaijani-language drama “Kömür”, which means charcoal in Azerbaijani, tells the story of a modest

charcoal producer, Gheirat, who lives in a village in northwestern Iran.

When his son is sentenced to jail, he does everything to set him free. Gheirat, who is known as an honest man, starts smuggling goods, which leads him to a tragic ending.

Monsef and Saeid Asadi from Iran and Etienne de Ricaud from France are the producers of the film, which premiered at the 37th Fajr International Film Festival in Tehran in April.

Iranian sculptors taking part in Beirut symposium

A R T **TEHRAN** — Iranian sculptors Mohammadreza Zabiholahzadeh, Shahriar Rezaei and Mehdi Salahshur are taking part in the 2nd International Sculpture Symposium now underway in Beirut, Lebanon.

The symposium is taking place on the campus of the University of Beirut and will be running until October 15, Iran’s Visual Arts Office has announced.

Also attending are three Italian sculptors Michele Sassi, Luca Prandini and Pierluigi Portale.

The completed sculptures will then be situated in the courtyard of the university.

The University of Beirut in Lebanon and the Lebanese artistic association Murex d’Orient are the organizers of the symposium.

The director of the Italian Cultural Institute in Lebanon, Monica Zecca, and the Iranian cultural attaché in Beirut, Abbas Khameyar, were among the participating guests at the opening ceremony of the symposium on October 1.



A view of the 2017 exhibition of “Objet” at the Niavaran Cultural Center in Tehran whose title was “Light On, Light Off”.