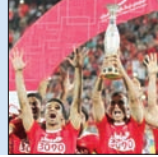




Leader renews call for oil-free economy **2**



Nation has overcome 'maximum pressure' **2**



CAS confirms Persepolis winners of Super Cup **15**



True Molavi is in Masnavi not in sama: Iranology Foundation CEO **16**

Next nuclear steps foreseen if Europe fails to honor commitments



See page 2

PMO launches shipping container production line

TEHRAN — Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) has launched a production line for manufacturing multi-purpose shipping containers in collaboration with the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development, the portal of PMO reported.

As reported, Transport and Urban Development Minister Mohammad Eslami and PMO Head Mohammad Rastad

attended the opening ceremony, which was held on Tuesday.

According to Mohammad Ali Hassan-Zadeh, the deputy head of PMO, with the establishment of this production unit, which is based in Alborz province in north-central Iran, the county will be self-sufficient in the manufacturing of shipping containers and will no longer face problems in this regard. **→ 4**

Iran warns against possible Turkish military operation in northern Syria

TEHRAN — The Iranian Foreign Ministry in a statement on Tuesday voiced Tehran's strong opposition to any possible Turkish military aggression against Syria, warning that such a move will certainly exacerbate the security situation in the region.

The statement by the Foreign Ministry came immediately after Turkish Defense Ministry announced early on Tuesday that preparations for a military operation in northern Syria are complete.

Turkish leaders view the YPG (the People's Protection Units) as an extension of the banned Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). The Syrian Kurdish forces played a key role in defeating ISIS.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry hoped for restoration of peace and stability to Syria and the entire region and added that Tehran is closely pursuing reports with "concern" over Turkish forces' possible deployment in Syria. **→ 2**

Faisal Meqdad advises Turkey not throw itself to death

TEHRAN — Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister Faisal Meqdad, criticizing Kurds' confidence in the U.S., has said Syrians will defend their territory over possible Turkish operations in Syria.

"Anyone who sells himself at a cheap price will put his history aside" Meqdad said.

Meanwhile, U.S. President Donald Trump has defended his decision to

let Turkey attack Kurdish militants in Syria by withdrawing American forces from the north of the war-ravaged country.

The president told reporters in the Roosevelt Room of the White House on Monday that "it's time to come back home," further voicing "great respect" for those Republicans that have been trying to change his mind. **→ 13**



ARTICLE
Ebrahim Fallahi
Tehran Times journalist

Israeli forces put occupied West Bank on lockdown for rituals

TEHRAN — Israeli military forces have put the occupied West Bank on complete lockdown in order to pave the way for Israeli settlers to perform religious rituals in Jerusalem al-Quds.

According to Palestinian media, Israeli army has announced that all crossings into the occupied West Bank and the besieged Gaza Strip will remain closed until Thursday morning.

The Israeli military also said that border crossings between the occupied territories and the neighboring countries would be closed until Wednesday night

on the occasion of the Jewish holiday of Atonement, also known as Yom Kippur.

Israeli forces have imposed traffic restrictions, with public transportation, government services and television broadcasters ceasing operations during the holiday. All flights from the Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv were also canceled.

According to Palestinian media, more than 200 settlers, who were being escorted by armed Israeli forces, provocatively toured the al-Aqsa Mosque compound in the occupied Old City of East Jerusalem al-Quds to attend the ritual ceremony.

U.S. allies in Asia paying the price for Iran sanctions

As one of the world's top oil producers, Iran for long has been among the major crude suppliers to Asia and due to its high quality reserves which are significantly low in sulfur, many Asian refineries are designed to solely process various grades of Iranian crude oil and gas condensate. **→ 5**

CEO of NICICO: Boom in Mineral Sector to Be Created by Introducing Investment Opportunities

Chief Executive of National Iranian Copper Industries Company (NICICO) Dr. Ardashir Sa'd-Mohammadi said that booming in mineral sector is created by introducing investment opportunities.

He pointed to organizing MINEX Iran 2019 (Iran Mines & Mining Industries Exhibition), he said, "in the current situation, we require identifying and creating investment opportunities in Iranian mines and mineral sector in order to boom this sector."

In this regard, organizing MINEX Iran 2019, which is one of the largest mineral events in the Middle East and is held in the presence of active domestic and foreign exhibitors, is a golden opportunity in introducing high potentials and capabilities of investment in mineral industrial sector."

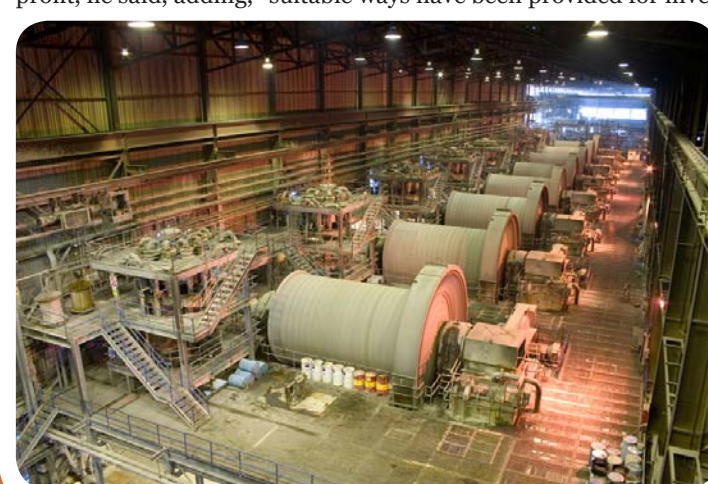
Among other mines, copper mine is the best opportunity for investment that has not any rival and alternative, he said, adding, "making investment in this sector can lead to the creation of high added value for the country."

The current strategy of the National Iranian Copper Industries Company (NICICO) is based on setting up new concentrate factories with the aim of accessing one million tons of concentrate, he said, adding, "to attain this objective, we require doubling mineral operations and achieving about 300 million tons of mineral operations."

Increasing the transport fleet of drilling equipment is needed for double extraction of minerals, he said, adding, "for doubling the extraction volume of minerals, we have to increase the transport fleet of the drilling equipment."

Entering the mineral transport fleet is one of the investment opportunities that investors can make investment in this field, he added.

Undoubtedly, making investment in the field of production of concentrate is profitable and has high margin of profit, he said, adding, "suitable ways have been provided for investors in order to make huge investment in the field of small-scale copper mines, the issue of which will help generate employment in the region."



He pointed to the high quality of Iranian copper and use of this product in high-tech industries and added, "Iranian copper sector is a good opportunity for entering downstream and high-tech industries."

In the end, Chief Executive of National Iranian Copper Industries Company (NICICO) Dr. Ardashir Sa'd-Mohammadi said that his company will welcome investors and entrepreneurs who want to make huge investment for the development projects of the company."



TENDER INVITATION NO.98/1006
IRAN ALUMINIUM COMPANY (IRALCO), would like to invite eligible suppliers for the supply of the following items on tender basis (lining material):

1. Corner carbon block, 200 Pieces
2. Side (redressal) carbon block, 1600 Pieces
3. End carbon block (1), 200 Pieces
4. End carbon block (2), 200 Pieces

Interested companies are allowed to send their competitive offer till **22. October. 2019** based on our required instruction to following address: **NO.49, Mollasadra Ave., Vanak Square, Postal code: 1991614581 Tehran, Iran. Attention: Ms. Emadi**
Tel: +98 21 88049046-7 Fax: +98 21 88049045

For obtaining tender's documents and more information, please check: www.iralco.ir
Public Relations Department of Iran Aluminum Company



TENDER INVITATION NO.98/1007
IRAN ALUMINIUM COMPANY (IRALCO), Would like to invite eligible suppliers for the supply of 24 MT. Aluminum - Nickel 75% on tender basis.

Interested companies are allowed to send their competitive offer till **22. October. 2019** based on our required instruction to following address: **NO.49, Mollasadra Ave., Vanak Square, Postal code: 1991614581 Tehran, Iran. Attention: Ms. Emadi**
Tel: +98 21 88049046-7 Fax: +98 21 88049045

For obtaining tender's documents and more information, please check: www.iralco.ir

Public Relations Department of Iran Aluminum Company



TENDER INVITATION NO.98/1008
IRAN ALUMINIUM COMPANY (IRALCO), would like to invite eligible suppliers for the supply of 70 MT. Al - MN 75% on tender basis.

Interested companies are allowed to send their competitive offer till **22. October. 2019** based on our required instruction to following address: **NO.49, Mollasadra Ave., Vanak Square, Postal code: 1991614581 Tehran, Iran. Attention: Ms. Emadi**
Tel: +98 21 88049046-7 Fax: +98 21 88049045

For obtaining tender's documents and more information, please check: www.iralco.ir

Public Relations Department of Iran Aluminum Company



Leader renews call for oil-free economy

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei on Tuesday insisted on his position that it is necessary that Iran cut dependence on oil incomes and its side effects.



Ayatollah Khamenei made the remarks while paying a visit to an exhibition of knowledge-based companies and superior technologies in Tehran. He was accompanied by Vice President for Science and Technology Sorena Sattari.

The Leader said young people visiting the fair were asking why certain goods that are being produced inside the country are being imported.

“One of the complaints of young visitors and producers in this exhibition was the issue of importing some products which are manufactured in the country too,” the Leader remarked.

He said such a situation is the consequence of an economy which is dependent on revenues from crude exports, adding this “wrong view” must be reformed.

The Leader told Sattari that “you must not allow such barriers to block the way on our active young human resources, do your best in this regard and I will do my best too.”

Nation has overcome ‘maximum pressure’, says Rouhani

POLITICAL TEHRAN — President Hassan Rouhani said on Tuesday that the Iranian nation has successfully passed the difficult test of countering the “maximum pressure” policy of the ill-wishers.

“The enemies of the Islamic establishment and the Iranian nation, while they may not confess, have accepted the fact that the maximum pressure strategy has failed and they should throw away such approach when facing the Iranian nation,” Rouhani said at a meeting with top officials of the Intelligence Ministry.

He praised all governmental bodies and the armed forces for their efforts in countering the enemies, saying such approach should continue until the enemies completely lose hope on the maximum pressure strategy.

U.S. President Donald Trump quit the 2015 nuclear deal in May 2018 and introduced the harshest ever sanctions on Iran as part of “maximum pressure” against the country.

Iranian officials insist that the maximum pressure policy has failed.

In similar remarks last month, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said that the United States’ failed policy of maximum pressure on Iran has turned into “maximum deceit”.

“Having failed at ‘maximum pressure’, Secretary Pompeo is turning to ‘maximum deceit’,” Zarif tweeted.

Zarif’s comments came as U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo blamed Iran for the Yemeni drone attacks on oil installations in Saudi Arabia on September 14.

Zarif said blaming Iran for the dangers ensuing the Saudi-led war on Yemen “won’t end the disaster”.

Elsewhere in his Tuesday remarks, Rouhani said the Intelligence Ministry’s approach should be aimed to create a secure society.

“Different social strata and tastes should [be able to] believe in the healthy approach and strength of the Intelligence Ministry and feel security and tranquility whenever they hear the ministry’s name,” he stressed.

UN committee postponed after Iranian diplomat opposes U.S. visa restriction

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Chairman of the 6th committee of UN General Assembly ordered cancellation of the meeting after Iran’s representative at the committee Ali Nasimfar voiced strong dissatisfaction about Washington’s restriction imposed on the Iranian delegation during the 74th session of the UN annual meeting in September.

Nasimfar voiced Tehran’s opposition to the U.S. for refusing to issue visa to all members of the Iranian delegation planned to visit New York and called on the chairman of the committee to counter such moves.

Nasimfar’s opposition which enjoyed expertise and legal basis forced the chairman of the committee to postpone the session to investigate about the Iranian diplomat’s opposition.

Nasimfar, who serves as Iran’s ranking lawyer at the UN, lashed out at the Washington officials’ lack of cooperation to issue visa for the Iranian delegation, imposing restrictions on Iranian diplomats and their family members residing in New York, calling on the UN secretariat to meddle in the issue.

Nasimfar said that the U.S. move as a host country is in contradiction to the UN charter and relevant conventions, because the move has prevented effective presence of the UN member states in required meetings.

In the meantime, Stephane Dujarric, the spokesman for the UN secretary general, said, “The secretariat is after contacting with the host country’s representative office to solve the problem.

The sixth committee is the primary forum for the consideration of legal questions in the General Assembly.

The U.S. limited the number of visas for the Iranian delegation to attend the UN meeting in September in New York.

It also imposed restrictions on the movement of the Iranian officials in the city.

Last month, American authorities forbade Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif from visiting a New York hospital to see his country’s Ambassador to United Nations Majid Takht Ravanchi, who is undergoing cancer treatment.

The U.S. State Department 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.

Trump enjoyed destroying nuclear deal as Obama’s major foreign policy success: professor

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Roy Licklider, adjunct senior research scholar at the Saltzman Institute for War and Peace Studies and adjunct professor of political science, says Donald Trump was happy to kill the 2015 nuclear deal which was President Barack Obama’s major foreign policy success.

“Trump enjoyed destroying President Obama’s major foreign policy success.”

Licklider told ILNA in an interview published on October 6.

Licklider said like other academics he was a strong supporter of the nuclear pact, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

“I strongly approved of the Joint Agreement, like most academics I know, and I saw it as President Obama’s major foreign policy achievement,” Licklider remarked.

■ **‘Trump enjoys overriding experts’**

The professor said Trump did not heed warnings by politicians and academics to avoid abandoning the JCPOA.

“The fact that many observers thought this was a mistake did not deter him; he enjoys overriding ‘experts’.”

He also applauded efforts by the Europeans and Iran to keep the deal alive, “but I doubt that they will succeed.”

According to the Associated Press, the Spaniard set to become the Euro-



pean Union’s point-man in Iran says the nuclear deal with Tehran must be preserved.

During a parliamentary confirmation hearing to become the next EU foreign policy chief, Josep Borrell said Monday that “we have to keep this agreement alive in order to defend our interests, our security and avoid something worse.”

Borrell, who is currently foreign minister in Spain’s caretaker government and set to take over in Brussels from

Federica Mogherini on Nov. 1, says “the political unity of the Europeans will be crucial” in keeping the agreement going.

■ **‘Trump notoriously willing to change positions but not on JCPOA’**

The academic also said Trump is infamous for changing position on issues but not the multilateral nuclear agreement.

“President Trump is notoriously willing to change positions on issues, but it seems unlikely that he will do so with this one.”

Iran warns against possible Turkish military operation in northern Syria

1 → The ministry further underlined that military aggression against Syria and deployment of Turkish forces in the northern part of the war-torn country will not ally Ankara’s security concerns.

Instead, the ministry warned, such a move will inflict broad human losses and material damage to Syria and its people and that is why the Islamic Republic is firmly opposed to any military operation in Syria.

“Iran is ready to mediate via holding urgent contacts with senior Turkish and Syrian officials to meet existing concerns through peaceful and diplomatic ways. Tehran believes that Syria’s integrity and national sovereignty should be respected and reiterates that the Adana Pact enjoys suitable basis for resumption of such mediating talks,” the ministry’s statement read.

In a tweet late on Monday, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif also said “Adana provides framework for

Turkey and Syria and Iran is ready to help” defuse the tension.

A senior Kurdish official warned in August that the U.S. had given a green light to Turkey to attack Eastern Euphrates, calling on the Kurds to reach an agreement with the Syrian government as soon as possible.

Head of the Syrian Kurds’ National Initiative Omar Ousi told the Arabic-language al-Watan newspaper that the agreement between Washington and Ankara came amid Turkey’s claim that negotiations to create a safe region on Syrian soil had failed, adding that the content of the negotiations between the

two sides differed from what had been stated by the Americans and Turks.

He noted that Turkey’s threats were very serious and dangerous this time, and said that Turkey’s plan in northern Syria would possibly start soon from the Manbij region and then would spread to Ein al-Arab, Ra’as al-Ein and adjacent areas.

Ousi referred to the U.S. attempts to pressure the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) to accept Turkey’s plan, and said the U.S. has started settlement of differences with Turkey.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry also called on the U.S. to immediately pull out its forces from Syria.



It stressed that the U.S. decision to exit its forces from Syria should be made as soon as possible.

In his Monday tweet, Zarif also said, “The U.S. is an irrelevant occupier in Syria.”

The chief diplomat said, “Achieving peace and fighting terror in Syria will only succeed through respect for its territorial integrity and its people.”

Iran says foreseeing next modification steps if Europe fails to honor nuclear commitments

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Seyed Abbas Mousavi has said that Tehran has even prepared plans for the next stages to scale down its nuclear deal commitments if the European side remains indifferent to the fourth step, the Mehr news agency reported on Tuesday.

So far, Iran has taken three steps to reduce its nuclear commitments.

Iran began to partially limit its nuclear commitments after the European Union failed to honor its obligations to shield Iran from the U.S. sanctions. The decision was taken on May 8, one year after the U.S. quit the nuclear deal and reimposed sanctions on Iran.

At the same date, Iran’s Supreme National Security Council gave Europeans a two-month time to honor their agreements otherwise Iran will take the next steps. However, so far Europe has failed to protect Iran from sanctions.

In the first stage Iran removed cap on its nuclear deal stockpile which was limited to 300 kilograms enriched to purity of 3.67 percent. In the second stage, which started in July 7, Iran started enriching nuclear fuel to more than 3.67 percent. And in the third stage, which naturally fell on September 6, Iran removed ban on nuclear research and development (R&D).

“The Europeans did not suitably fulfill their obligations under the 2015 nuclear deal and tied their measures and initiatives in an unwritten but objective manner to a positive view of the U.S. president,” Mousavi stated.

“However,” he added, “we have pursued our planning and have overseen necessary scenarios. If current trend continues (for one month) and the Europeans remain inactive, we will step up the fourth step (of reducing JCPOA obligations).”

He further said, “Required planning has been carried out for even the time beyond the fourth step.”

First Announcement



ONE STAGE RENEWAL TENDER INTERNATIONAL CALL

FOR PURCHASE OF 60,000 MT BAUXITE

TENDER No.: 98/344

DATE.: 31th August ,2019

1.Subject.: Iran Alumina Company (IAC) intends to purchase high quality bauxite in amount of 60,000 +/-10% MT for using in its Alumina Refinery Plant through one stage Tender according to following conditions as mentioned in the relevant Tender documents .:

Note: The basic level for Al₂O₃ should be 46% and for SiO₂ should be 6% .

2.:Bid Bond Guarantee.: 64,000€(sixty four thousands) Euro/or 8,000,000,000 Rials

3.:Tender proposal.: Since the tendering is to be done in one stage ,thus the eligible Bidders should follow and regard the Tender instructions and present and submit all of required justified documents and the mentioned Tender envelopes in one package together.

4.:Closing Date.: The eligible Bidders should submit their Bids/proposal to the central administration office as mentioned below and also in the Tender documents before 14:00 pm ,local time , on the day monday , 11th November ,2019 .

5.:Opening Date.: 12th November ,2019

6.: Contact information .: For more details and receiving the relevant Tender documents , the Bidders can refer to the following contact information.

Add.: Km 7 of Sankhast Road ,city of Jajarm , Northern Khorasan Province,IRAN,P.O.Box:1135-94415 ,Commercial department / legal and contractual Affairs .

Tel .: 0098-58-32605344 Fax.: 0098-58-32272487
website: www.iranalumina.ir E-mail.: info@iranalumina.ir

IRAN ALUMINA CO
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U.S. sanctions jeopardizing global trade system: envoy

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iran's deputy ambassador to the UN, Es'haq Al-e Habib, says Washington's illegal sanctions have endangered the international trade system, calling on the international community to break its silence over what he called an "unprecedented threat."

Addressing a meeting of the Second Committee of the UN General Assembly held in New York on Monday, Al-e Habib said it is undeniable that commitment to multilateral cooperation as a basis for global treaties and agreements is currently under unprecedented and growing pressure.

"Sanction-based policies have made multilateral financial and trade system very inefficient, and now it is upon the international community to guarantee that the financing of development is not taken hostage by certain countries through unilateral coercive measures," he added, Press TV reported.

"The illegal and illegitimate coercive and unilateral measures of the U.S., including its unprecedented and unjustifiable sanctions against certain developing countries, Iran in particular, amid the international community's silence have increased in an unprecedented way and threaten the foundations of multilateralism," Al-e Habib said.



Tensions between Tehran and Washington have risen since last year when President Donald Trump abruptly withdrew the United States from the 2015 nuclear deal and attempted to put "maximum pressure" on the Islamic Republic.

On May 8, exactly one year after the U.S. abandoned the deal, Tehran began

to partially reduce its commitments to the agreement at bi-monthly intervals.

In the first stage, Iran announced that it will not limit its stockpile of the nuclear fuel to 300 kilograms allowed under the deal. However, on that date (May 8) Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) said if the remaining parties to

the JCPOA, especially Europeans, devise a mechanism to protect it from the sanctions effect in the two-month deadline it will reverse its decision.

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

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

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

In his Monday speech, Al-e Habib also criticized the World Trade Organization (WTO) for blocking Iran's membership for two decades because of the political pressures of certain member states, saying that unilateral behaviors are currently targeting the WTO, jeopardizing the entire trade system of the world.

Iran, the largest economy not yet member of the WTO, has been requesting to join the organization since 1995, and was admitted to it as an observer in 2005, but sanctions began to hit Tehran afterwards and certain countries — especially the U.S. — opposed its membership.

Iran: Iraqi govt., nation strong enough to overcome internal problems

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Seyed Abbas Mousavi said on Tuesday that the Iraqi nation, government and elites are capable to settle recent unrest in their country.

Mousavi said that Iraq enjoys experienced and wise nation and officials who will unitedly counter the country's problems and will solve them in the best way possible.

"The Iraqi people, who have been facing so many incidents when their country was under the U.S. forces' occupation and also after the occupation time, have been successfully managing to overcome the crises via consensus of all parties, groups and elites," the spokesman pointed out.

Mousavi also warned all ill-wishers who have been waiting to use protests in favor of their own interests, saying, "Do not push yourself into trouble, because,

such incidents are internal affairs and will be settled soon by Iraqi political, religious and nation."

He further pointed to the Arbæen march and mourning ritual for Imam Hussein (AS), saying the recent unrest in Iraq will not inflict any sensible effect on the march and ceremony.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has said efforts to create division between the Iranian and Iraqi nations have ended in failure and the new one will also prove ineffective.

"The enemies tried to sow discord but failed and their (new) 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 since October 1.

According to Al Jazeera, clashes between protesters and security forces have killed over 100 people and wounded over 6,000 - most of them demonstrators struck by bullets.

Iraqi President Barham Salih has condemned violence against protesters. Salih also said that an inquiry will be launched into the deadly violence.

"The right to protest and freedom of expression are guaranteed by the Iraqi Constitution," he said.

Some analysts and politicians believe that the certain countries are using unemployment and corruption as excuses to stir protests in order to spoil Iran's ties with Iraq, epically as the great march for Arbæen is starting.

It is estimated that about 3 million Iranians visit Karbala to mark Arbæen.

Key Majlis committee passes four anti-U.S. motions



POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The spokesman of the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee says the committee has passed four anti-American motions to counter the United States' anti-human rights measures.

Hossein Naqavi Hosseini said on Tuesday the motions were passed during a session of the committee earlier in the day, Mehr reported.

According to Naqavi Hosseini, the motions necessitate replacing American products and services, establishing a museum on U.S. crimes, urging the government to file charges against the U.S. for its anti-human rights measures against Iranian nationals and urging the government to include the crimes committed by the U.S. in school and university books.

The top MP also said Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has briefed the committee on his recent trip to New York to attend the UN General Assembly's annual summit.

"According to the foreign minister's report, in spite of the tight restrictions that the U.S. imposed on the Iranian delegation, the foreign minister held 70 meetings and speeches and the president held 40 meetings and speeches," he explained.

President Hassan Rouhani visited New York last month to participate in the 71st annual session of the United Nations

General Assembly and hold talks with senior officials of some other countries attending the meeting.

Zarif accompanied Rouhani in order to pursue Iran's active diplomacy in face of U.S. pressure.

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

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

Tensions between Tehran and Washington have been high since U.S. President Donald Trump pulled out of the 2015 nuclear deal last year and re-imposed sanctions on all major industries in Iran, including oil and petrochemicals exports.

The U.S. has since been adopting a "maximum pressure" policy in order to force Tehran into entering a new round of negotiations.

Iran, however, has ruled out the possibility of talks as long as sanctions are in place, saying Washington's "maximum pressure" has produced "maximum resistance" from Tehran.

Tehran has also described the sanctions as an act of "economic war" and "economic terrorism" against the Iranian nation.

Intl. aid to Afghan refugees only 6% of total cost: Rahmani Fazli



TEHRAN (MNA) — Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli has said that the fund that other countries and international organizations are providing to Afghan refugees in Iran constitute only 6% of total costs.

He made the remarks on the sidelines of the 70th meeting of UNHCR's governing Executive Committee (ExCom) on Tuesday in Geneva, Switzerland.

Iran is one of the countries that provide the most services in the field of accommodation, facilities, and assistance to the Afghan refugees residing in Iran, Rahmani Fazli said.

He said that in today's meeting of ExCom, the role of international organizations and European countries and other countries in providing services and facilities to Afghan refugees was discussed, noting that unfortunately, other countries have a low level of co-operation in this regard.

The resources that other countries and international organizations are providing to Afghan refugees in Iran are only 6% of total costs, he noted.

Without security, peace, development, and employment in Afghanistan, there is no real chance that this issue will be resolved in a radical way, he said, adding that this is the duty of all active countries in the international arena.

Referring to his visit with Afghanistan's Minister of Refugees and Repatriation

Sayed Hussain Aleml Balkhi on Monday, he mentioned that it was agreed that the Afghan government would have more control over the issue of illegal entry of Afghans into Iran, and that Iran would create more favorable conditions for identifying refugees and giving legal permission for their temporary stay in the country.

Iran's measures for Afghan refugees have always been appreciated by all members of ExCom, Interior Minister said referring to a set of measures Iran has taken for Afghans over the 40 years, adding that appreciation is not enough, and they should also play their role and provide the necessary support in accordance with the ratifications and conventions.

Rahmani Fazli left Tehran for Geneva on Sunday to attend the 70th meeting of ExCom. He is scheduled to deliver a speech at the session.

He will also hold separate talks with his counterparts on the sidelines of the event.

The meeting is aimed at reviewing and approving the agency's programs and budget, as well as advising on international protection and discussing a range of other issues with UNHCR and intergovernmental and non-governmental partners.

ExCom's Standing Committee meets several times each year to carry on the body's work between plenary sessions.

Ambassador slams UK for delaying to pay Iran's debt

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iran's Ambassador to London Hamid Baedinejad has criticized Britain's Defense Ministry for its delays in paying Iran's debt for a series of defense deals signed between the two countries before the 1979 Islamic Revolution.



"The legal counsel of the UK Defense Ministry subsidiary company, resorts to all possible procedural tactics and lawyerism to delay the payment of Iran's debt," Baedinejad said in a tweet on Monday evening.

"Pursuant to such efforts, the court decided TODAY to convene its next substantive session after 6 months, in March 2020," he added.

In July, a top court in Britain dismissed a complaint lodged by Iran seeking at least £20 million in interest for a debt related to the defense deals, Tasnim reported.

Judge Stephen Phillips from the High Court in London ruled that the UK does not have to pay the sum that Iran believes has accrued on £387 million owed to Tehran over the failed delivery of more than 1,500 Chieftain tanks and armored vehicles based on contracts signed as of 1971.

The ruling dealt a fresh blow to efforts meant to reduce tensions between Iran and Britain as the two countries are locked in several disputes, including two recent ship seizure incidents and a high-profile legal case related to the imprisonment of dual nationals.

Britain has repeatedly refrained from paying the debt it acknowledges it owes to Iran, citing illegal sanctions imposed by the United States on Tehran.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson once briefed the journalists in February 2018 after a trip to Tehran as foreign minister that the money will be paid back.

Last month, former British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said his country would obey a court order to repay £400m to Iran, if the precise sum owed is agreed.

"Our policy as the British government had always been absolutely clear. We are a law-abiding government, so if there is a court order that says that this money has to be paid ... then we obey the law," Hunt said.

"The court process is still continuing, it is still deciding the exact amount that has to be paid," he added.

Iran's economy stabilizing: VP

TEHRAN (Tasnim) — Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri has said that despite the U.S. government's severe sanctions against Iran, the Islamic Republic's economy is moving toward a better and more stable situation.

"Despite the U.S.'s imposition of tough sanctions, the country's economic condition is moving toward stability and improvement," Jahangiri said in a speech in Tehran on Tuesday.



"This is while the Americans (have) waged an all-out economic war against Iran," the vice president added.

"(Iran's) macroeconomic indicators are promising and reports received from every single business confirm that," Jahangiri stated.

The enemies thought that by these moves (sanctions), they would lead the Iranian economy into collapse, he said, adding that, however, the Iranian people passed through this difficult era and are "moving toward job creation, production and prosperity".

The remarks come against the backdrop of increased tensions between Iran and the U.S. with Washington imposing new sanctions against the Islamic Republic.

The U.S. has ratcheted up pressure on Iran since last year after withdrawing from the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Since then, the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump is trying to reduce Iran's oil exports to "zero," and has sent an aircraft carrier strike group, a bomber squad, an amphibious assault ship, and a Patriot missile battery to the Middle East to try to stack up pressure on Tehran.

Iranian officials, however, have dismissed such moves as psychological warfare, saying the country has its own ways of circumventing the American bans and selling crude oil.

In comments on April 24, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei said the U.S.'s attempts to block the export of Iranian oil will get nowhere as Tehran will be exporting any amount of crude it needs and wants.

Describing a cut in Iran's reliance on the export of oil as an opportunity, the Leader said such an opportunity will be used for further reliance on internal capabilities.

"Although the sanctions pave the way for problems in certain cases, they will benefit the country if they are dealt with correctly and logically," Ayatollah Khamenei said at the time.

STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	314469.9
IFX	4122.85

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	46,096 rials
GBP	51,637 rials
AED	11,437 rials

Source: cbi.ir

COMMODITIES

Brent	\$57.58/b
WTI	\$51.95/b
OPEC Basket	\$58.59/b
Gold	\$1,504.70/oz
Silver	\$\$17.61/oz
Platinum	\$889.10/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

Iran's PMO launches shipping container production line

➔ “Container is one of the most important tools of world trade today,” Hassan-Zadeh said, adding that according to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), of the total volume of shipping trade in the world, nearly 40 percent is in the form of liquid bulk, 35 percent in the form of solid bulk, 16 percent is by containers and the rest are in the form of general cargoes.



Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Mohammad Eslami (3rd L) and PMO Head Mohammad Rastad (2nd L) attended the opening ceremony of a container manufacturing unit in Alborz Province on Tuesday.

PMO is seeking to create new container capacity in the country's ports to gain more share of container transportation in the region, according to Rastad.

Nearly 1.7 million TEUs of container cargos were loaded and unload at Iran's ports during the past Iranian calendar year (March 2018-March 2019).

Number of trading codes at stock market hits 13m

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — The number of trading codes at Iran's stock market has reached 13 million, according to the latest data released by the officials from Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO).

Also as announced by SEO Head Shapour Mohammadi, 300,000 persons are conducting trades at this market per week, of them 20,000-30,000 persons are present in the base market of Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) exchange market, known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB).



The official put the number of companies active at stock market at 600, and number of financial institutes active at this market at 650, saying that 6,000 directors are present at the country's capital market.

Norwegian interest rates seen flat for years, says CB chief

The Norwegian central bank's (CB) key policy interest rate will likely remain unchanged for the next few years, Governor Oeystein Olsen said on Tuesday, reiterating the message delivered by the bank's policy-setting board last month.

As per reuters.com, “in our September interest rate forecast, the policy rate remains close to today's level of 1.5 percent for the next couple of years,” Olsen said in a speech.

Norges Bank last month hiked rates for the fourth time in 12 months amid strong domestic growth but said further policy tightening had become less likely as the global economy was slowing down.

“On the one hand, growth in the Norwegian economy is still solid, inflation is close to the target and capacity utilization is somewhat above a normal level,” Olsen said in a speech at a business school in Oslo.

“On the other hand, there is considerable uncertainty about the global growth outlook. The policy rate path reflects a trade-off between these conditions,” the governor added.

Outlining the central bank's policy toolkit, Olsen said the country had space for manoeuvre both on monetary and fiscal policy in case of unforeseen events.

“In the event of a severe downturn, we would lower the policy rate,” he said, while reiterating a desire to avoid following other European central banks into negative territory or quantitative easing.

Reform plan gets underway in state banks: finance minister

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran's **d e s k** Finance and Economic

Affairs Minister Farhad Dejjpasand announced the start of a banking reform program in government-owned banks, Tasnim news agency reported on Tuesday.

Dejjpasand made the announcement on the sidelines of a council meeting for dialogue between the private sector and the government in Tehran on Monday.

The meeting was attended by senior officials and representatives from both the government and private sectors, including Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Reza Rahmani, Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Farhad Dejjpasand as well as Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Gholam-Hossein Shafeie.

Speaking to the press after the meeting, Dejjpasand said “Following the president's order and considering the fact that reforming the banking system has become a top priority for the government, we set up a working group and by analyzing the past experiences developed a plan which is more focused on practicality.”

According to the minister, the plan covers many areas including banks' privatization, private and public sector's deferred debts to



Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Reza Rahmani (1st L), Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Farhad Dejjpasand (3rd L) and ICCIMA Head Gholam-Hossein Shafeie (2nd L) attended a council meeting for dialogue between private sector and government in Tehran on Monday.

banks, increasing banks' capital and adequacy, corporate governance, easing banks' frozen assets, and reforming the banks' internal management.

“In preparing this plan, we have consulted with the representatives of the private sector, and several academics, economists and consulting parties,” he said.

Iran's active presence in Anuga 2019 to boost foodstuff exports

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — High participation of Iranian **d e s k** exhibitors in Germany's Anuga 2019

exhibition was an opportunity for increasing the exports of Iranian foodstuffs, Bahman Hosseinzadeh, the managing director of Iran International Exhibitions Company, stated.

Anuga, the world's largest trade fair for food and beverages, is being held at Germany's Cologne from October 5 to 9.

Evaluating presence of 26 Iranian companies in the biennial international exhibition as very positive, Hosseinzadeh said, “We had a very fruitful presence in the 100th edition of the event”, according to a report published on the website of Iran International Exhibitions Company.

Iranian companies participating in the exhibit were some strong exporters of pistachio, saffron and dried fruits, and were highly welcomed by the German companies, the official further underscored.

He also announced that his company is planning for presence of 100 Iranian exhibitors in the next edition of the event.

During a press conference on Monday, Hosseinzadeh had referred to the significance of boosting the country's exports of products and reiterated that holding exhibitions is a major approach in this due.

Iran's Five-Year National Development Plan (2016-2021) has envisaged an export growth of 21.7 percent and holding exhibition both inside and outside the country plays some significant role to this end, he noted.

Underlining the importance of benefitting from the 400-million population markets of the neighboring countries for expansion of exports, Hosseinzadeh said to materialize the objective of more non-oil export to the regional countries his company has defined an especial plan for holding different exhibitions.



“As most of our neighbors are some major importers of commodities we should benefit from this opportunity to boost our exports”, he added.

“We have also negotiations underway with other countries for example Eurasian countries and they are willing for cooperation”, the official said.

Focus back on U.S.-China trade -- Asian markets rise

Asian markets rose on Tuesday as investors resumed their focus on the next round of China-U.S. trade talks this week. But hopes for success are being tempered by mixed messages from both sides of the table. There has been a general feeling of positivity in recent weeks that a solution to the long-running tariffs saga can be found, providing some much-needed support to equities in the face of worsening economic data.

According to thethaiger.com, Beijing's top trade envoy Liu He will meet with U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin from Thursday this week.

But observers warn it is unlikely progress will be smooth, with reports this week saying China had cut back on the number of areas it is willing to discuss, suggesting leaders sense weakness in the White House as Donald Trump faces impeachment proceedings and a slowing economy.

Trump said late Monday he preferred to strike a big deal. “We’ve come this far. We’re doing well. I would much prefer a big deal and I think that’s what we’re shooting for.”

Stephen Innes, Asia-Pacific market strategist at AxiTrader says China is gaining confidence in the lead up to the negotiations.

“A large percentage of the market thinks China may roll the dice and take advantage of what they think is Trump's weakened political state, trying to push negotiations closer to next November's presidential election”.

“In this context ... Trump may



decide to hardball the upcoming talks, suggesting there could be a high level of disappointment even relative to the market's muted expectations.”

Still, regional markets were enjoying some much-needed buying support today as the Chinese delegation heads to Washington. Hong Kong climbed 0.7% as dealers returned from a long weekend break to mixed U.S. jobs data that eased concerns about a U.S. recession while also keeping expectations for an interest rate intact. Shanghai rose 0.6% following the week-long National Day celebrations, while Tokyo went into the break 1% higher.

Sydney and Singapore were each 0.5% higher, Seoul rose 0.9%, Manila jumped more than 1%, and Taipei and Jakarta both put on 0.6%. Wellington was slightly lower.

Also on the agenda for investors is the release this week of minutes from last month's U.S. Federal Reserve policy meeting, which will provide an idea about the bank's thinking leading up to its rate cut, while third-quarter earnings season also gets underway.

Surprise rise in German output is just ‘flash in the pan’

German industrial output rose unexpectedly in August but analysts said Europe's biggest economy remains at risk of recession after months of contraction in manufacturing.

According to reuters.com, industrial output rose 0.3% on the month after two successive monthly drops, Statistics Office figures showed on Tuesday, defying expectations of a 0.1% decline.

The rise was driven by production of intermediate and capital goods, the Economy Ministry said. Manufacturing rose 0.7% while construction fell by 1.5%, the data showed.

Germany's export-dependent manufacturing sector is already in recession. That has dragged on the economy as a whole, which shrank in the second quarter. Economists expect another slight economic contraction in the July-September period.

Uncertainties linked to Britain's planned departure from the European Union and global trade disputes are starting to hurt Germany's labor market, which has been the backbone of a consumption-driven growth cycle as exports weaken.

“Given that industrial output provides us with a deep look into the economic development in the third quarter, one could entertain the idea that the German economy will just about avoid a recession,” Thomas Gitzel of VP Bank wrote in a note.

“But unfortunately one must consider the industrial production data for August as a flash in the pan,” he added. “We expect production in September to be negative. This means that GDP will contract at least slightly in the third quarter.”

In another sign that the gloom in manufacturing will continue, the BGA trade association

on Tuesday slashed its 2019 trade forecasts. It expects exports to grow by a maximum of 0.5% this year from a previous prediction of 1.5%.

Industrial orders had fallen

July's output reading was revised up to a fall of 0.4% from a previously reported drop of 0.6%. On Monday, data showed that industrial orders had fallen more than expected in August on weaker domestic demand.

Chancellor Angela Merkel's right-left coalition government has resisted calls for a substantial spending package to offset the slowdown and put the economy back on a growth path.

Peter Vanden Houte of ING warned it was too early to talk about a trend reversal in German manufacturing despite August's rise in output, adding that the big picture remains negative.

The “omen remains bleak,” he wrote in a note. “As long as world trade stagnates, German industry and by extension the whole German economy is almost certainly bound to languish.”

Prolonged weakness in Germany, a bell-wether for the economic health of the eurozone, would be a headache for the European Central Bank, which in September pledged indefinite stimulus to revive the bloc's economy.

Economists and German business lobby groups have urged Merkel to ditch her policy of no new debt and borrow to fund a stimulus package for the economy.

Pressure on her to act will intensify if the economy continues to weaken.

“We believe that at the beginning of next year, additional budgetary stimulus might be put in place, paving the way for an economic upturn in the course of 2020,” said ING's Vanden Houte.

UK economy starts to show cracks under Brexit and global strains



Pessimism among businesses has reached the highest levels in years.

The gauges of future activity in the Lloyds Business

Barometer, CBI Growth Indicator and IHS Markit/CIPS surveys have all turned weakened recently.

The closely watched IHS Markit/CIPS survey last week showed Britain's dominant services sector contracted unexpectedly in September — and marked the worst reading in a major developed economy.

Household spending has supported Britain's economy since the Brexit vote, although there are signs that households have spent more on non-discretionary goods such as food, while spending in restaurants and hotels has weakened.

As of the second quarter, spending on the latter was about 1.5% lower than in mid-2016, but nearly 7% higher for food and non-alcoholic drinks, according to official data.

Figures from the British Retail Consortium and payment card company Barclaycard published on Monday showed shop chains had their worst September since records started in 1995, although spending on entertainment increased.

SP phase 14 to go on stream next Iranian year: Zanganeh

E N E R G Y
d e s k

TEHRAN — Phase 14 of South Pars gas field (in the Persian Gulf) is going to come on stream in the upcoming Iranian calendar year of 1399 (starts on March 20, 2020), Shana reported, quoting Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh as saying on Monday.

Speaking to the press after a meeting with the representatives of the parliament's planning, budget and accounting committee, the minister noted that the operations for completing the development project of the phase 11 will also begin soon.

Emphasizing the fact that the oil ministry's plans for the next Iranian calendar year are mostly focused on development of joint oil and gas field, Zanganeh said "Fortunately, the development plans for the country's oil and gas fields are well underway despite the U.S. sanctions, and this is particularly evident in South Pars."



The official further mentioned the development project of Farzad B gas

field, saying "We have formally sent a message to the Indian side noticing them

that the work should be started within the agreed frameworks, however, if the Indians do not wish to cooperate with Iranian companies, we will, of course, obtain funding for the Farzad B project. We have already outlined the goals and how to implement them."

■ **Total, CNPC left Iran in a friendly atmosphere**

Elsewhere in his remarks, Zanganeh noted that the France's Total and China's CNPC were forced by U.S. sanctions to leave the project for development of South Pars phase 11, and their departure took place in a completely friendly atmosphere.

"We wanted to do this project with Total which was able to bring the high pressure technology in the offshore section, however unfortunately both Total and China's CNPC were forced to leave because of the U.S. sanctions, they were friendly and we had no arguments", he said.

U.S. allies in Asia paying the price for Iran sanctions

➔ When in May 2018, the U.S. withdrew from Iran's nuclear pact, many of Iranian oil buyers, especially in Asia, cried objection and asked to be exempted from the sanctions. In response, the U.S. granted a 180-day waiver to eight countries, including China and India, South Korea, and Japan, allowing them to gradually reduce their shipments of Iranian oil and find replacement suppliers.

Although even after the waivers were expired in May 2019, many of Iranian buyers defied U.S. and continued their imports of crude oil from Iran, however, some, more conservative, countries like South Korea and Japan gave in to the U.S. pressures and despite their national interests, stopped buying Iranian oil. Maybe, at the time, the mentioned countries weren't aware of the long-term consequences of conforming to U.S. demands.

Now, more than six months after the expiration of the waivers, those Asian allies of U.S., which were in fact among the top importers of Iranian oil, are sadly the ones who are taking the blow from Washington's sanctions on Iran, the most.

■ **South Korea and Iranian condensate**

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, South Korea is among the

top five importers of crude oil in the world. Three of the 10 largest crude oil refineries in the world are located in South Korea, and since the Asian country doesn't have any oil reserves of its own, it is highly dependent on Middle East's oil supplies.

On the wake of the new sanctions on Iran, the biggest supplier of gas condensate to South Korea, the country has been forced to seek alternative sources of crude oil and especially condensate to keep its refineries and petrochemical industry running.

As I mentioned earlier, Asian refiners, especially in South Korea, have long favored Iran's crude oil and condensate for its rich yield of naphtha, a raw material that is a key feedstock for the petrochemical industry. Most of them are especially designed to process Iranian and Qatari condensate which has low levels of sulfur and leaves no residue. Moreover, they prefer Iranian condensate over Qatari condensate because it is relatively cheaper and comes with better deal conditions.

With the U.S. sanctions coming to effect, Seoul had to forget this cheap and high quality source of crude oil to keep its Western ally content.

In late 2018, the first signs of the price that South Korea was going to pay for U.S. actions

started to show; The Asian country bought and tested 23 different types of condensate from 15 countries as possible substitutes for Iranian condensate for which the country had to pay about \$9 billion.

■ **The sole beneficiaries**

Taking advantage of the situation, U.S. has been pushing its condensate on South Korea, for which Seoul has to reconfigure its refineries that are built to process Iranian grades.

Imports from the United States nearly tripled to 1.09 million tons in June, or 264,745 bpd, according to Reuters data.

Following its decision to comply with U.S. sanction, the Asian country is finding itself in a very difficult position. Interestingly, the U.S. crude suppliers exporting to Asia are the sole beneficiaries of the current situation.

As they are finding it out in a very hard way, the price of replacing Iran's crude oil is not going to be small.

The U.S. President Donald Trump has called, many times, for Asian countries to stop buying oil from Iran and has continuously claimed that the U.S. will protect the interests of its allies. However, the sky rocketing shipping costs from U.S. to Asia and the relatively expensive prices of American crude cargoes are telling a different story. It seems

that despite Trump claims, the 'service free of charge' under the name of U.S. alliance is rather an illusion.

■ **Surging oil tanker rates**

In addition to the supply aspect of the dilemma, the issue of shipping the cargoes is yet another problem for Asian crude consumers.

Last week, Reuters reported that freight rates to ship U.S. crude to Asia were continuing to surge, and costs to charter a supertanker hit a new record of \$12 million.

As reported, South Korea's top refiner, SK Energy, chartered a supertanker called Pacific M at a record price of \$12.35 million to ship U.S. crude to the country.

The surge in the prices came after the U.S. imposed sanctions on China's COSCO in late September, due to what they claimed was involvement in shipping Iranian crude oil.

The interesting thing is that U.S. crude exports have increased significantly since the country re-imposed sanctions on Iran. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration the exports surged to an average 2.9 million barrels per day (bpd) in H1 2019.

And guess where the top regional destination for U.S. crude has been! You were right, Asia.

Oil edges higher on supply worries, eyes on trade talks

Oil prices rose on Tuesday, buoyed by overnight gains in industrial commodities, while unrest in oil-producing countries Iraq and Ecuador raised concerns of supply disruption, adding to support.

As stated by reuters.com, Brent crude rose 38 cents, or 0.7%, to \$58.73 a barrel by 0344 GMT, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude was at \$53.08, up 33 cents, or 0.6%.

"Copper and aluminum traded very strongly in London and given the weakness we saw in manufacturing data last week that suggests that there's some correction going on in industrial commodities generally," said Michael McCarthy, chief market strategist at brokerage CMC Markets in Sydney.

"We're at the lower end of the trading range, some of those moves have taken some traders by surprise. That means the risks have flipped to the upside at least in the short term."

Investors are trading cautiously before U.S.-China trade discussions that will take place in Washington on Thursday, although expectations are low for a comprehensive deal that will end a trade war between the world's top economies.



"While it's virtually impossible to predict with any confidence how these trade talks will unfold, oil prices could be in for a sustained rally if the (U.S.) tariffs were to be put on hold indefinitely, which could see some of the braver at heart support dips," Stephen Innes, Asia Pacific market strategist at AxiTrader, wrote in a note.

Protests in Iraq and Ecuador over poor economic conditions

are threatening to disrupt output from the members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

The death toll has climbed after a week of unrest in Baghdad, capital of the second-largest OPEC producer.

In Ecuador, protests against austerity measures could reduce the Andean producer's crude output by 59,450 barrels per day, the country's energy ministry said late on Monday.

Ecuador, one of the smallest OPEC members, is pulling out of the bloc next year because of fiscal problems.

In the United States, crude inventories probably grew for a fourth straight week while distillates and gasoline stocks likely fell last week, a preliminary Reuters poll showed on Monday.

Separately, Russia, the world's second-largest oil producer, has joined the ranks of swing producers as it could increase production fairly quickly by 0.3-0.5 million barrels per day, or 0.3-0.5% of global supply, if Saudi Arabia's production problems were to last longer than expected, Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak told Reuters.

Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil exporter, has resumed production.

U.S. oil production will stall as investment dries up

By Phil Flynn

There are reports that the U.S.-China trade deal talks will be scaled down as the Chinese seem to not want to make any commitments as the Democrats continue to work towards impeachment. The Democrats know their only chance to get back power is to impeach the President as they do not have any candidates that can beat the President. The Chinese know that their best chance to continue to suck the lifeblood out of the American economy is to get a deal with a Democrat. Oil in the meantime is finding support on more surveys that show a big drop in OPEC oil production.

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

■ **The Faregh oil field**

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.

Bloomberg is also reporting that, "U.S. troops will stand aside when Turkish forces invade northern Syria in the coming days, the White House said. President Erdogan has said the incursion may be imminent. He and Trump spoke on Sunday by phone. The comments signal the U.S. will allow Turkey to advance against Kurdish forces".



The oil market is finding stability as it realizes that last week's deep slide was overdone. OPEC's slide in oil output along with faltering U.S. production and record U.S. oil exports will more than likely lead to a big draw in U.S. oil inventory. Last week the American Petroleum Institute reported a big draw but the Energy Information Administration did not. The EIA will have to correct that. In the meantime, according to Baker Hughes, the U.S. oil rig count fell yet again by 3 to 710 last week. The rig count has declined in 30 of the last 40 weeks so far this year. We believe that U.S. oil production will start to stagnate as investment dries up. U.S. oil production has stalled.

■ **The crude pipelines**

Bloomberg News reports that, "Newly commissioned Permian basin crude pipelines have yet to boost U.S. crude exports, as the ongoing U.S.-China trade war weighs on demand from Asia.

The U.S. Census Bureau said exports averaged 2.73 MMbpd in August, up just 40,000 bbl from a month before. That's despite the start of two widely anticipated crude pipelines from West Texas to the Gulf Coast.

Plains All American LP's began service on its Cactus II crude pipeline in August and loaded cargoes for export that month. EPIC Pipeline Co LP started operations on its oil pipe in August as well. But the lines, with a combined capacity of over 1 MMbpd, may not be in full use.

"A lot of capacity will eventually be online from those pipes, but it would take sometime before all of that becomes available. We shouldn't expect to see all of that show up in one month," said John Coleman, an analyst at consultant Wood Mackenzie.

Also, the U.S.-China trade war which has in part weakened global oil prices is affecting demand as well as production. Total U.S. crude production in July fell to the lowest levels since February, according to government data. Chinese buyers reduced their purchases in U.S. crude for August ahead of the start of a 5% tariff on American oil.

Retail gas prices are trickling down. AAA says that the national average for regular unleaded is at \$2.653.

(Source: futuresmag.com)

Prompt bearishness for LNG in China on PetroChina Rudong terminal shutdown

Uncertainty over Chinese winter LNG demand looms because state PetroChina shut its Rudong receiving terminal after a typhoon September 22, with a significant drop in prompt shipments and expectations of softer forward deliveries over the season.

The latest discharge into Rudong was from the Eduard Toll on September 28, laden with a Yamal cargo. This was 11 days after the prior Qatari offload on September 17 and six days after the terminal shutdown on September 22. The tanker left the port unladen on September 29, Platts cFlow data showed.

This was the only cargo delivery into Rudong in 15 days since

September 22, while there were no October deliveries registered as of Monday, according to cFlow.

Cargo delivery in September - the typical shoulder month for Chinese demand - was seen to be among the lowest levels in the year.

In September, the Rudong terminal only received four cargoes and five cargoes in 2018 and 2019, respectively.

However, it was anticipated, on the back of historical data, that volumes delivered starting in October would climb as winter heating demand picked up in the eastern regions.

The busier terminal saw 10 deliveries, or 716,000 mt, in October 2018, while in

November, cargo receipts further increased to a count of 13, or 841,000 mt in 2018.

■ **Testing bottleneck levels**

Correspondingly, terminal utilization rates climbed on the back of seasonal winter demand starting October, testing bottleneck levels in peak winter over January-February.

The Rudong terminal has a monthly average utilization rate of 132% in October 2018, Platts data showed.

PetroChina was reported to have halted operations of its Rudong terminal on September 22, after a piling barge hit the facility causing damages at the bridges and transmission pipelines, following the typhoon in the region, according to sources with knowledge of the matter.

Trucked LNG distribution was heard to have resumed swiftly on September 24 following the incident, according to local news agencies. Domestic trucked LNG prices in East China rose from Yuan 3,090/mt (\$6.56/MMBtu equiv) on September 23 to Yuan 3,195/mt (\$6.82/MMBtu) on September 30, right before the start of the Chinese national holiday October 1-7, SHPGX data showed.

However, details remained limited on the duration and status of the terminal pipeline shutdown.

PetroChina could not be reached for comment.

Market participants expected a significant

decline in LNG sendouts if trucked LNG is the only option for distribution, while pipelines remained shut. Each truck is understood to carry around 20 mt of LNG, with 3,000 trucks to be equivalent to a full-size LNG cargo of 60,000 mt.

As significant additions of elastic LNG supply and demand challenge traditional business models, and the trend towards LNG commoditization gathers pace, what lies ahead?

Market sources expected slow recovery on the terminal pipeline distribution networks amid the October 1-7 Chinese national holiday.

"Inspection work will be understandably slow during the holiday period, with proper maintenance likely to be carried out only post-holidays; testing and restart schedules could drag the entire process to up to a month," said an end-user.

A second end-user agreed, saying that there were expectations of the terminal to resume operations only until late-October. Further details could not be verified.

Winter deliveries were definitely affected, with the need for PCI to divert LNG cargoes to its two other terminals, the first end-user said.

PetroChina's Tangshan LNG terminal was heard to be already expecting two additional cargoes initially slated for October delivery into Rudong, a source close to the matter said.

First Announcement



NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO. : 08-21-9740011

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

Items	Material Description	Quantity
01	TUBING, API GRADE-80,SEAMLESS"VAM",N.VAM" SEC" OR APPROVED THREAD RANGE 3 (MAXLEN :40.5FT)AS PER API5CT/ISO11960.PSL:2 MARKING:COLD DIE STAMPED IN ACCORDANCE WITH API 5CT SIZE (OD)/WEIGHT (PPF)AS SPECIFIED NOTE:LEVEL OF INSPECTION :1(L.O.1:1)QCCP/MPDS DOCUMENTS ARE ESSENTIAL TO REVIEW & CONFIRM "ITP DOCUMENTS IS ESSENTIAL FOR TECHNICAL EVALUATION "4-1/2 IN" 13.5PPF DRIFT:3.795 IN.	20000 LE

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their "Intention to participate" letter via Fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 2, available at: WWW.nisoc.ir, not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded

The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 106,131 EURO or 13,478,752,000 RIAL, in favor of NISOC

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

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

FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT
Bldg. No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex
Kouy-e-Fadaeian Island (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran
Tel. No.: 061 341 23455 Fax No.: 061 3445 7437
Public Relations www.shana.ir www.nisoc.ir

تهران تایمز : نوبت اول ۹۸/۷/۱۷ نوبت دوم ۹۸/۷/۲۰

Seyed Hosseini: Sheikh Zakzaky's return blow to Nigerian Government

TEHRAN (FNA) — Seyed Abdollah Hosseini, Islamic scholar and university lecturer, says Nigerian Muslim Leader Sheikh Zakzaky foiled the Nigerian government's plan to defame him by pretending that they offered medical treatment abroad, while he was convinced that the government's main intention was to kill him.

In an exclusive interview with FNA, Seyed Hosseini said the message of Sheikh Zakzaky's return was that he preferred his own country's "jail" to the abroad "five-star hotel" as he noticed dishonesty in government's action.



Seyed Hosseini is a lecturer at the al-Mustafa University in Johannesburg, South Africa. He has had close relations with Sheikh Zakzaky for more than three decades.

Below is the full text of the interview:

■ Do you believe the Nigerian court and government were sincere in allowing Sheikh to receive medical treatment abroad?

A: The answer is simply No, as Sheikh himself was convinced that the actual intention of the Nigerian government was to kill him abroad; so he did not want that to be achieved by the Nigerian government. The behavior of the officers who accompanied him with animosity to India showed they had no intention of helping him to be cured. That made Sheikh believe that they were accompanying him to kill him, not to take him back. He is a smart leader, and he did not allow them to do so, and chose to go back to his country. If the Nigerian government has any intention of killing him, it now had to commit it in Nigeria; not in India. It was like Imam Khomeini's decision when he was in France and heard that the Shah regime had the intention to kill him; he decided to return to Iran so that if Shah had had any plans to kill him, it would have been in Iran.

■ Why did Sheikh Zakzaky choose to leave India without complete medical treatments?

A: The Nigerian government introduced Sheikh to Indian authorities as a terrorist who killed a lot of people and was now under prosecution; but, since he was sick, he needed to be treated, and then he would be taken back to the court. So, the picture the Indian government had was a terrorist, instead of the picture of a leader of a Muslim community. India therefore took the highest security measure for him at the hospital, as he was thought to be a terrorist.

The Nigerian government also issued a press release that Sheikh expected a five-star hotel, and Sheikh had to choose between a hotel and a hospital. But, Sheikh's return was a big blow to the Nigerian government, telling to them this is their five-star hotel, take it, and he is not interested and he is happy with the same jail that they were keeping him in before. He also sent this message to the Nigerian government that they did not need to send six people with him to India, to bring him back; as Nigeria is his country and his concern was that they wouldn't accept him back. So, it was his decision to come back to his own country. He also did not have trust in the Nigerian and Indian authorities to do the treatment.

India was chosen as two medical doctors from India visited Sheikh and put the proposal to treat him in India forward based on the large Shia community in India and their own hospitals. Medanta hospital was never the choice of Sheikh.

■ The case of Sheikh Zakzaky was neither covered by the mainstream media, nor by any prominent international human rights organizations. Why?

A: The mainstream media is controlled by Israel and Saudi Arabia. Some ninety percent of them is run by the Zionists. Since Sheikh's activities are against Zionism, they do not allow the news about Sheikh to go around, preventing him from becoming a hero by being known to the world. This is the reason they did not allow this to happen. If such a thing would happen to a European leader, the whole world would completely be aware of this. An American celebrity went to another country and did something wrong, and the news was everywhere, while the leader of some twenty million Africans has been in jail for four years, and no one has talked about him. Then when he was in India for treatment; again, no one talked about him. Remember Rwanda, the world started talking about it when already five hundred thousand people were killed, because they were blacks. If they had been white, with the killing of the first ten people the whole world would have known about it.

The Nigerian government introduced Sheikh to Indian authorities as a terrorist who killed a lot of people and was now under prosecution; but, since he was sick, he needed to be treated, and then he would be taken back to the court. So, the picture the Indian government had was a terrorist, instead of the picture of a leader of a Muslim community.

By Saeed Sobhani

TEHRAN— Former US President Donald Trump and former Vice President Joe Biden continue their fight. In the end, it looks like the loser has two losers: Biden and Trump!

Polls show that on one hand American public opinion has increased in opposition to the Trump administration, and on the other hand, Biden's popularity has declined. This is the best possible situation for people like Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders. Here's a look at the latest Biden and Trump polls and news:

Polls begin to signal rising impeachment threat to Trump

As CNBC reported, Modern polling usually tells us how public opinion hasn't moved. Despite last week's hailstorm of bad news, President Donald Trump's job approval rating stood virtually unchanged.

So did the president's backing from Republican elected officials in Washington. Except for Sen. Mitt Romney of Utah and a few others, GOP members of the House and Senate have either defended the president's actions concerning Ukraine and former Vice President Joe Biden or remained silent.

Yet surveys in recent days show public sentiment evolving more than Trump's steady topline would suggest. They also illuminate the potential for erosion among fellow Republicans, which could ultimately threaten the president's ability to survive a Senate trial on articles of impeachment approved by the House.

"If you're the president you have to take that seriously," says former Republican strategist Tom Davis, who once ran his party's House campaign arm. "What moves this ultimately is public opinion. These members like their jobs."

Last week's Monmouth University poll showed signs of movement within a broader portrait of stability. Buoyed by backing from 86% of Republicans, Trump's approval rating remained unchanged: 41% of Americans approved of his job performance, 53% disapproved. At the same time, the share of Republicans backing a House impeachment inquiry doubled to 16% from 8% in August.

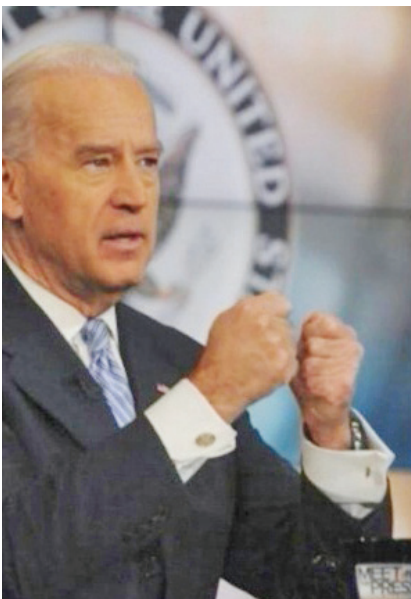
A CBS News poll found 23% of Republicans backing an impeachment probe. In a USA Today survey, 30% of Republicans called it "an abuse of power" for Trump to ask Ukraine to investigate Biden. Even if they haven't broken with their party's president, those Republicans pose a particular danger to Trump, who once bragged that he could shoot someone on Fifth Avenue in New York without losing support. "The willingness to hear this out is a sign that you're not a Fifth Avenue Republican," says GOP strategist Liam Donovan.

Others susceptible to change include the roughly 15% of voters who already disapprove of Trump but don't yet back impeachment. This group consists largely of political independents, with some Democrats and a smaller number of Republicans as well. College-educated whites — who disdain Trump but so far feel less strongly about impeaching him — represent a special vulnerability. If House Democratic investigators can persuade wavering Republicans that Trump withheld aid to Ukraine in return for a Biden investigation, observes GOP pollster Whit Ayres, "then it's a different ballgame."

Tribal loyalty in contemporary politics makes that a high hurdle. In the Monmouth Poll, for example, only 40% of Republicans said they believed Trump requested a Biden investigation even though the White House-released transcript of his call with Ukraine's president shows that he did. "There are a lot of people who will go to the ends of the Earth to give Donald Trump the benefit of the doubt," Ayres explains.

Still, support for Trump's impeachment, not merely an inquiry, reached 50% in last week's Economist/YouGov poll. A 51% majority — including one in eight Republicans — said the Senate should remove Trump from office if the House votes to impeach him. It will take more defections than that to shift the cost-benefit analyses of the GOP politicians whose voters will decide Trump's fate. Virtually all of them — including swing-state senators on the ballot in 2020 such as Martha McSally of Arizona, Cory Gardner of Colorado and Susan Collins of Maine — fear defections among Trump-loving Republicans at least as much as an anti-Trump wave. "We're a long way from any Republicans being ready to vote for impeachment, even if they don't like the guy or think he's a good president," cautions GOP pollster Glen Bolger. "That may never happen. Democrats can pass impeachment articles in the House all on their own, but would need the votes of at least 19 Republican senators to convict and remove Trump from office in a Senate trial."

Yet new evidence keeps tumbling out nearly as fast as House Democrats subpoena documents and testimony from admin-



istration officials. Today, Ohio Sen. Rob Portman broke with Republican colleagues who have excused Trump's conduct, calling it "not appropriate." Portman stopped short of supporting impeachment, saying Congress needs to be "very careful" about that step. But the fact that mainstream Republicans entertain the discussion while watching the polls underscores Trump's heightened peril.

"I certainly wouldn't vote to impeach on the basis of what I've seen so far," says veteran Rep. Tom Cole of Oklahoma, a former executive director of the Republican National Committee. "I'm not going to rule it in or out."

■ **Biden campaign rallies its donors for big Super Tuesday push as poll numbers and fundraising soften**

Also CNBC reported that Joe Biden's campaign — which is grappling with weakening poll numbers, a disappointing third-quarter fundraising haul and attacks from President Donald Trump over Ukraine ties — rallied its leading donors and fundraisers over the weekend in Philadelphia as it looks to reestablish momentum in the race for the Democratic presidential nomination.

That means increased emphasis on Super Tuesday primaries March 3, when 40% of delegates are up for grabs, and not necessarily on the earliest nominating states, Iowa and New Hampshire, where campaigns usually seek to grab an early toe-hold in presidential races. According to attendees who spoke on condition of anonymity due to the private nature of the talks, senior campaign officials told leading Biden fundraisers, or bundlers, that the campaign is looking to boost the number of its fundraising events and bolster its online donor program in a bid to dominate Super Tuesday. California, North Carolina and Texas all hold their primaries that day.

The weekend sessions, which were scheduled before the most recent developments in the polls and the Ukraine scandal, were held at the 201 Hotel. They were led by campaign manager Greg Schultz, deputy campaign manager Pete Kavanaugh and other leaders.

"They need to raise a substantial amount. Super Tuesday comes immediately after the first four states," said a business executive helping Biden raise cash and who participated in the strategy session. When asked how the aides described their upcoming efforts, this person said: "More events with him, surrogates, and ramping up online. They feel good about ramping up online."

Attendees described the senior campaign officials' remarks as a "rah rah speech" — and a call to beef up fundraising efforts in order to have the best chance at picking up delegates in earlier primary states such as Nevada and South Carolina. These primaries are scheduled for February, after the Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire primary. In the most recent surveys, Biden is ahead of the pack in Nevada and South Carolina but slightly behind in Iowa and New Hampshire.

"Goal for 4Q [fourth quarter] was, 'Let's ramp it up with traditional events, and let's beef up the online contributions,'" said another backer of Biden's who took part in the meeting. "I agree timing is an issue — we need enough to get through Iowa and New Hampshire. Staying in the hunt through those two and crushing them in S.C. will bring in the Super Tuesday money. So we need to do reasonably well in those two."

Former Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell, who attended the gathering and is helping Biden raise campaign cash, brushed off donor concerns about polls and fundraising.

"Donors are always worried. I've never had donors that are 100% confident," Rendell told CNBC on Monday. "If the polls show that they you are winning by 20, they ask why aren't you winning by 23."

These discussions came just days after the Biden campaign announced an un-

derwhelming third-quarter fundraising haul of slightly more than \$15 million. The former vice president's tally for the period was less than the takes for Sens. Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren and South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg. Biden's front-runner position has weakened substantially. He is virtually tied or slightly behind Warren in some surveys, and his once-massive lead over Warren in the Real Clear Politics polling average has collapsed to 0.3%. A Biden campaign spokesman declined to comment.

Biden recently spoke about his possible path to victory through the electoral college at a fundraiser in California. The former vice president mentioned the state of North Carolina as one he thinks they could win while noting Texas could be a long shot. "I think we can win Georgia. And I think we can win North Carolina," he said last week. He labeled the Lone Star state, along with later primaries in Georgia and Arizona, as "a stretch," while noting, "I don't want to jinx myself."

Georgia holds its primary March 17, and Arizona's is March 24.

Politico recently reported that Biden's campaign plans to increase its staffing in Super Tuesday states. Still, Biden's campaign privately stressed that in order to make inroads, it needs to efficiently raise the cash necessary to compete, and possibly win, the majority of the Super Tuesday delegates. Biden's campaign said the last week of the third quarter represented its best seven days of online fundraising since May. While the campaign gave the impression to donors that it may spend more online, Biden's political organization has seen a dip in Facebook ad spending over the past 30 days. The social media giant's ad library shows the campaign has spent over \$280,000 on Facebook ads since Sept. 5, which was less invested than other primary contenders over that same time period, such as Warren, Sanders, Buttigieg, Sen. Kamala Harris and billionaire Tom Steyer. Facebook is often used by campaigns to appeal to grassroots donors and help bring in small donations.

Biden himself spoke to more than 100 financiers at the weekend event — and signaled that he's going to ratchet up his attacks on Trump in the Ukraine scandal, donors said. The president has repeatedly linked Biden and his son Hunter to unproven claims of corruption in Ukraine.

Trump himself is embroiled in an impeachment inquiry by the House of Representatives after a whistleblower alleged the president asked Ukraine's president to investigate the Biden family. While Trump has denied wrongdoing, he recently said China should also look the younger Biden's business ties there while reiterating his call for Ukraine to investigate.

Biden wrote an op-ed for The Washington Post, which was published over the weekend, in which he forcefully pushed back on Trump's attacks. "And to Trump and those who facilitate his abuses of power, and all the special interests funding his attacks against me: Please know that I'm not going anywhere," Biden wrote. "You won't destroy me, and you won't destroy my family. And come November 2020, I intend to beat you like a drum."

Biden also recently put out a new attack ad against Trump titled "Unhinged" as part of a \$6 million media effort in the early states. CNN reports the ad will run in Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina and Nevada as a digital spot and will be broadcast on a few of those television markets.

■ **Fox News Poll: Biden bests Trump by nine points in Wisconsin**

Foxnews reported that Wisconsin voters are unhappy with how things are going in the country, oppose the border wall, think tariffs hurt the economy, and disapprove of the job President Trump is doing. That gives Democratic candidates the lead in each of the possible 2020 matchups tested in a Fox News Poll of

Wisconsin registered voters.

Joe Biden bests Trump by 9 points (48-39 percent) and has the only lead outside the poll's margin of error. Bernie Sanders is up by 5 over Trump (45-40) and Elizabeth Warren has a 4-point edge (45-41). In each case, the remaining 13-14 percent of undecided/third-party voters is enough to shift the race either way.

Trump receives 41 percent support or less in each of the matchups -- well below the 47 percent he won the Badger State with in 2016. At the same time, none of the Democrats hit 50 percent. The Democratic candidates mostly owe their advantage to women voters and those with a college degree. Trump does best among white men without a degree and white evangelical Christians.

"Wisconsin is a tough nut for Republicans and the president has an uphill climb," says Republican pollster Daron Shaw, who conducts the Fox News Poll with Democrat Chris Anderson. "He needs to reassure rural voters who are spooked by the tariffs while persuading suburban voters to buy into his low tax/pro-growth economic vision."

Trump won rural voters by 27 points in 2016. They now back him over Biden by only 2 points. By a 19-point margin Wisconsin voters think tariffs hurt rather than help the economy, and more oppose building a wall along the southern border by 10 points. Those favoring the wall prefer Trump by 73 points, while those opposed go for Biden by 76. Voters who say tariffs hurt the economy prefer Biden by a 61-point margin. Those who think tariffs help support Trump by 65. Trump beat Hillary Clinton in Wisconsin by less than one percentage point, making him the first Republican to win the state since 1984. Ninety-two percent of Clinton voters back Biden, while 83 percent of Trump voters stick with him.

Currently, 44 percent of Badger State voters approve of the job Trump is doing and 54 percent disapprove. Views are nearly identical on the direction of the country: 43 percent are satisfied with how things are going vs. 55 percent dissatisfied. Almost half (48 percent) rate the economy as excellent or good, while slightly more (51 percent) say it is in only fair or poor shape. Meanwhile, despite many finding Trump's dealings with the president of Ukraine troubling (33 percent extremely and 12 percent very), a 54 percent majority says there is zero chance something about the situation would cause them to change their mind about Trump.

Forty-two percent want Trump impeached and removed from office, 4 percent say impeached, but not removed, and 45 percent oppose impeachment. More Republicans (90 percent) oppose impeachment than Democrats favor it (82 percent). In the race for the Democratic nomination, Biden is the top choice with 28 percent support, followed by Warren at 22 percent, and Sanders at 17 percent. Pete Buttigieg comes in at 7 percent, Kamala Harris 5 percent, and Cory Booker, Amy Klobuchar, and Andrew Yang get 2 percent apiece. All others receive 1 percent or less.

The Sanders campaign announced Wednesday that he is off the trail indefinitely after undergoing a heart procedure. The poll was conducted Sunday through Wednesday evenings. More Sanders supporters strongly back him (75 percent), compared to Warren (61 percent) and Biden supporters (61 percent). Biden's strongest groups include moderates, white Catholics and voters without a college degree. Warren does best among college graduates and self-described liberals, and Sanders makes the top three largely because of voters under age 35. More Warren supporters (64 percent) are extremely interested in the election than Sanders (60 percent) or Biden supporters (51 percent). Democratic primary voters place far greater importance on beating Trump than voting for their preferred candidate (52-33 percent). They split, however, when it comes to supporting a candidate who will build on former President Obama's legacy vs. one who will take a new and different approach (43-47 percent). Biden is the top pick among those who want to build on Obama's legacy and those who prioritize beating Trump. Democratic primary voters favoring a new approach give roughly equal support to Biden, Warren and Sanders.

Conducted September 29-October 2, 2019 under the joint direction of Beacon Research (D) and Shaw & Company (R), this Fox News Poll includes interviews with 1,512 Wisconsin voters who spoke with live interviewers on both landlines and cellphones. Respondents were randomly selected from a statewide voter file, and 663 were screened to identify potential participants in the Democratic presidential primary. The poll has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points for all registered voters and 3.5 points for Democratic primary voters.

Robust domestic economy favors China in trade talks

GLOBALTIMES — US officials will find it unrealistic to pursue a broad trade deal with China in negotiations set to begin this Thursday if the deal is a challenge to China's core interests. Chinese people paid scant attention to the trade tensions with the US during the National Day holidays, celebrated from October 1 to 7.

Crowds flocked to tourist spots across China, such as the Great Wall in Beijing. According to Alibaba Group, the volume of hotel bookings through its app surged by more than 300 percent year-on-year in the period between October 1 and 3 in 10 popular "red tourism" destinations, which have significance in the country's revolutionary history. Although the number of people who crossed the border of China dropped 11 percent year-on-year during the first six days of the holiday, indicating a cooling market for outbound tourism, the holiday economy remains vigorous.

More Chinese appeared to opt for domestic sightseeing during this year's National Day holidays, making the festival a spending spree. Tourism income is likely to swell to a new record high.

Other leisure activities, including cinema box office revenues, will make a great contribution to the economy. The "golden week" has brought a tourism and consumer boom. China has for several years been trying to move away from its export-oriented and investment-led model toward one driven by consumption. Now the transition is taking place. A consumption boom in the golden week means greater economic endurance amid the China-US trade war. The Chinese economy will stay vigorous without a trade deal with the US. A new round of China-US trade negotiations is expected to begin later this week, but if the US insists on a broad trade deal that contains too many core-interest related issues and forces China to make concessions, Washington will see nothing in the end.

The US economy has a different ethos than the Chinese one does. It will take more time for China and the US to work out bilateral differences in terms of trade.

The Chinese side has sincerity to reach an agreement with the US but it will not cede its core interests in exchange for a broad trade deal. If some consensus can be reached between the two countries, an "incomplete" agreement is the best choice for the US side. We believe China and the US have common ground on which they can advance trade negotiations step by step with patience. But if Washington is too ambitious and unrealistic to solve complex economic problems once and for



all, the US can get nothing, not even an incomplete agreement with China. Trade talks with the US are likely to evolve into long-lasting negotiations and China is fully prepared. However, the faster China's consumption grows, the fewer bargaining chips are left in the US' hands. There is not much time left for the US side.

■ Africa has a lot that China can learn from

I often write on the flight. This habit makes me more productive, but it carries huge risks. For example, it is easy to forget the laptop on the cabin seat. Two weeks ago, when I was transferring flights in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa, the risks finally boiled over. It happened on my way back to Beijing from a visit to Zimbabwe. When a friend who works for a Chinese company in Harare heard that I was on the same plane as his parents, he asked me to help the aging couple to find their way around the Addis Ababa airport for a transfer to Shanghai. Once the plane landed, all I could think about was how to find the two elderly people on board, take the shuttle bus and find the transfer passage and other details. It was only during the security check at the transit gate when laptop must be taken out of the luggage to be scanned that I realized I had left my laptop on my cabin seat. For a scholar, the loss of a laptop equals a disaster of magnanimous proportions.

I chose to accompany the two old people to the

boarding gate, but it took me more than half an hour. As I made my way back, pulling the heavy check-in suitcase to the departure point of the shuttle bus, I was struck by the fact that the hope of finding the plane and retrieving the laptop in a short layover at Africa's largest airport was probably harder than climbing the Everest. I asked each shuttle bus driver anxiously whether they knew where the ET863 I was flying was. No one gave me a clear answer. Until a driver of a minibus told me that he was on his way to pick up the plane's crew and offered to help me find the laptop. This time, the fire of hope that had been extinguished was rekindled.

He drove to ET863 at a speed of 60 miles per hour. The flight attendants were waiting in the cabin. A flight attendant said to me: "I just called you on the radio, but no one responded. Now the laptop has been handed over to the airport security staff." The driver hurriedly asked the flight attendants to get on the bus and continued to chase the security car at a speed of 60 miles per hour. He was in a bigger hurry than I, and I had to apologize to the dozen or so flight attendants on the bus. The comfort and tolerance of the flight attendants made me feel the warmth of Africa yet again. The driver got off and asked around several security vehicles. He used a walkie-talkie to call all the tarmac security, and also dropped these crew members off at the destination. He then transferred another

new batch of crew to another aircraft. He kept comforting me, "Don't worry. I'll help you find it."

As the minutes ticked by, he helped me consult at least eight security points while he was transferring crews. In the dark, the minibus honked, flashed its warning lights as it zoomed on the runway of Addis Ababa airport and among hundreds of planes for half an hour, much like a thrilling scene in a Hollywood movie starring Tom Cruise. At the ninth security point, a security officer was waiting with my laptop, which was unharmed. I lost it and found it again. I embraced the driver, as if I were born again.

I will always remember this passionate, caring, intelligent, responsible and professional Addis Ababa airport driver, Tefer Mekonnen. I will always remember the thrilling but warm night at the airport. More importantly, I will always be grateful for this adventure in Africa, which made me rethink the method of looking at the underdeveloped continent from an economic perspective. In the eyes of some people, Africa means poverty and backwardness and Africans are synonymous with laziness and stupidity. This utilitarian logic exposes the racist prejudice of those people. Tefer's bravery, wit and professionalism are further evidence of their narrow-mindedness and short-sightedness that have lasted for hundreds of years.

I cannot imagine if it happened at an airport in China or any other country, could I meet a warm-hearted person like Tefer? He reflects a kind of simple cultural and social power and represents the powerful charm of the most ancient land of mankind. I argued in many of my articles, and now I believe more firmly, that the Chinese people need to completely change their view of Africa. They should show more appreciation to Africa for the help the continent has given to China in the past and the fact that it is still better than China in some aspects, so as to better tap the great potential for cooperation in the future.

■ Global brands better stay away from politics

Daryl Morey, general manager of the NBA team the Houston Rockets, has obviously gotten himself into trouble. He tweeted a photo saying "fight for freedom, stand with Hong Kong" on Saturday while accompanying his team in Tokyo. The tweet soon set the team's Chinese fans ablaze. It can be imagined how Morey's tweet made them disappointed and furious. Shortly afterward, CCTV sports channel and Tencent sports channel both announced they would suspend broadcasting Rockets' games. Some

of the team's Chinese sponsors and business partners also started to suspend cooperation with the Rockets. The public opinion over the incident in the US is just the opposite. Some American media professionals asked Morey and Rockets to stand firm. Andrew Yang, one of the Democratic presidential candidates, said "the Chinese government banning the Rockets is a terrible move."

The incident shows an expanding worldwide culture gap. Imagine if Morey publicly tweeted support for the Beijing and Hong Kong Special Administrative Region government, would rioters in Hong Kong smash up Rockets' logos in the city?

Commercial and cultural organizations which engage in transnational operations should manage their attitudes and statements over sensitive issues. Impulsive words can easily trigger a backlash. As the general manager of the Rockets, Morey shoulders the main responsibility for the marketing of his team, but he invited trouble on himself and offended the public on the Chinese mainland. His professional capability is simply too poor.

Some Americans try to link Morey's tweet with so-called "freedom of speech." That is ridiculous. Morey does have the freedom to praise Hong Kong protesters, just like the Chinese fans also have the freedom to abandon the Rockets. The problem is that Morey's freedom is at the expense of Rockets' huge commercial interests, which the team is unwilling to give up. It's a paradox with which Americans are grappling.

Respecting customers is a universal business rule. Morey has to choose between safeguarding his individual freedom of speech and protecting the Rockets' commercial interests by respecting the feelings of Chinese fans. When he opted for the former, the Rockets will have to make a second choice from the perspective of the team.

This incident has nothing to do with the Chinese government. Yang's accusations were a poor tactic of a politician aimed at soliciting attention. The issue first of all is about the market. All Chinese fans are watching how the Rockets and NBA handle this crisis. Whether the team apologizes, in what way, and how it deals with Morey will directly influence fans' enthusiasm for the Rockets and even the NBA.

It's believed the Rockets have felt the intricacy of the matter as the franchise is also facing great ideological pressure from the US side.

How much wisdom the Rockets have to overcome the crisis and minimize the adverse effects will become an interesting test case. The biggest

First Announcement



Announcement of the contractors' qualification for Khouzestan steel company pelletizing plant, Hood Exhaust Fan capacity increase together with an ESP de-duster by EPC, EPCF contract.

Khouszestan Steel Company (KSC), intends to increase the capacity of its pelletizing plant process exhaust gas by removing the existing axial fan and installing a new radial fan on ground level, equipped with an ESP (electro static precipitator) de-duster. All the required duct works is included.

The capacity of radial fan is about 15000 normal cubic meters per minute, and is equipped with VFD and IGV systems.

Companies interested in taking part the tender, having the following qualifications, can declare their readiness:

1. **Sufficient Technological Knowledge and experience in the implementation of pelletizing plants, process gas fans equipped and ESP de-dusters.**
2. **The ability of financing and implementing the project by EPCF approach is preferred.**
3. **The equipment must be supplied from European Companies in Europe or other country under their license with European Union Countries Standards.**

The interested companies shall send the following documents to KSC by the date: **06th November 2019**

1. **Company Profile and Catalogues**
2. **Company references of similar projects. (Name, Location, Scope, Capacity and Contract Price)**
3. **The list of projects with frame of financing (if any).**

After receiving the documents and evaluating the companies' competency, KSC will send the tender documents to the selected contractors.

Address: IRAN, Ahwaz, Khouszestan province, Khouszestan Steel Company, Post Box: 1378, Post Code: 61778-1311, Contracts department

Contact: Mr. Jamshid Sayyadi project manager
Tel: 0098 61 32908222
Email: j.sayyadi@ksc.ir

First Announcement



Announcement of the contractors' qualification for Khouszestan steel company High Pressure Grinding Rolls (HPGR) project by EPC, EPCF contract.

Khouszestan Steel Company (KSC), intends to increase the Blaine of incoming purchased iron ores from 400 – 900 cm²/gr to 1800 cm²/gr by execution of High Pressure Grinding Rolls (HPGR) project with the capacity of 800 tons per hour .

Companies interested in taking part the tender, having the following qualifications, can declare their readiness:

1. **Sufficient Technological Knowledge and experience in HPGR.**
2. **The ability of financing and implementing the project by EPCF approach is preferred.**
3. **The equipment must be supplied from European Companies in Europe or other country under their license with European Union Countries Standards.**

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Contact: Mr. Jamshid Sayyadi project manager
Tel: 0098 61 32908222
Email: j.sayyadi@ksc.ir

Pars Diplomatic Real Estate

Apartment

Apt in Zafaranih
200 sq.m, 3 Bdrs.
furn, equipped kitchen
spj, renovated, parking
\$2500

Ms.Sara: 09128103207

Apt in Fereshteh
1st floor, 180 sq.m, 4 Bdrs.
furn, great balcony, parking
\$2500

Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Apt in Mirdamad
180 sq.m, 3 Bdrs., fully furn
equipped kitchen, parking
\$1500

Ms.Sara: 09128103207

Apt in Niavaran
3rd floor, 240 sq.m 3 Bdrs. unfurn,
spj, balcony, roof garden, elevator,
lobby storage, parking
Price: negotiable

Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Apt in Jordan
14th floor, 230 sq.m, 3 Bdrs.
one separate suit, fully furn
equipped kitchen, spj, gym
gathering room, nice view
elevator, parking, **\$1500**

Ms.Sara: 09128103207

Apt in Shariari - Sadr
1st floor, 200 sq.m, 3 Bdrs.
furn, equipped kitchen, elevator
storage, parking
\$2000

Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Villa

Villa in Darband
duplex, 2000 sq.m land
400 sq.m built up, 4 Bdrs. unfurn,
outdoor swimming
3 balconies, green garden
4 parking spots
Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Duplex Villa in Pasdaran
550 sq.m land, 630 sq.m built up, 4
Bdrs., unfurn, outdoor swimming
pool, renovated parking, **\$4000**

Ms.Sara: 09128103207

Duplex Villa in Niavaran
650 sq.m land, 450 sq.m built up, 4
Bdrs., fully furn
outdoor swimming pool
yard, parking, **\$2600**

Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Villa in Elahieh
duplex, 3000 sq.m land
furn/unfurn, 500 sq.m built up
Beautiful garden, parking
Ms.Sara: 09128103207

Triplex Villa in Zafaranih
450 sq.m land, 800 sq.m built up
14 Bdrs., unfurn, balcony elevator,
renovated, storage parking, **\$5000**

Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Villa in Ajudaniye
2 floors, 315 sq.m & 300 sq.m
furn, equipped kitchen swimming
pool, sauna
parking, gym, **\$4000**

Mr.Shayan: 09128440156



Holder of

ISO 9001:2008

ISO 10004:2012

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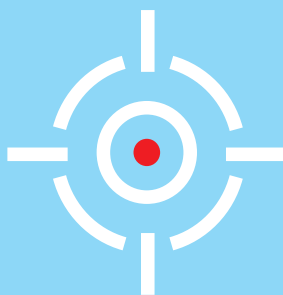
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Saturn overtakes Jupiter as host to most moons in solar system

Saturn has taken over from Jupiter as host to the most moons in the solar system after astronomers spotted 20 more lumps of rock orbiting the ringed planet.

It brings the number of Saturnian moons to 82, surpassing the 79 that are known to orbit Jupiter, its larger, inner neighbor.

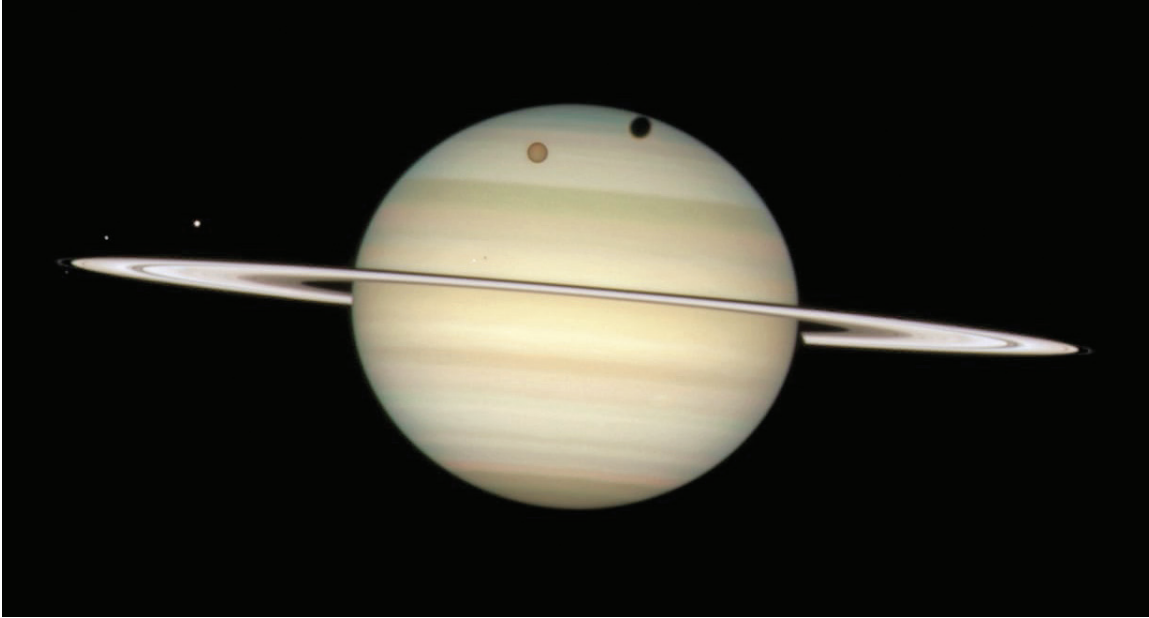
“It’s exciting to find them,” said Scott Sheppard, an astronomer who led the work at the Carnegie Institution for Science in Washington DC. “These moons are very far away from the planet.” Each is about three miles across.

The scientists discovered the moons when they set algorithms to work on decade-old images captured from the powerful Subaru telescope on Mauna Kea in Hawaii. By comparing images taken over hours and days, the algorithms distinguished between stationary stars and galaxies and moons that hurtled around the planet.

At the birth of the solar system, vast amounts of dust and gas circling the sun coalesced into the eight known planets. But Sheppard believes that shortly after Saturn formed, more than 4bn years ago, passing asteroids and comets were captured by the planet’s gravity and have circled it ever since.

Depending on the angle of approach, comets and asteroids straying too close to Saturn in the early solar system would have become locked into radically different orbits around the planet. Only three of the new moons have so-called prograde orbits, meaning they circle Saturn in the same direction that it rotates. The other 17 are in retrograde orbits, meaning they orbit the planet backwards. One is the most distant moon ever spotted from the planet.

The outer moons of Saturn fall into three broad



families according to how they orbit the gas giant. Two of the new prograde moons appear to belong to a group that swings around Saturn at an angle of about 46 degrees. The moons, named after Inuit mythology, may once have belonged to one far larger moon that broke apart in the distant past.

The new retrograde moons appear to belong to another group named after Norse mythology and are also thought to be fragments of a much bigger

parent moon that was smashed to pieces in the solar system’s violent past.

“This kind of grouping of outer moons is also seen around Jupiter, indicating violent collisions occurred between moons in the Saturnian system or with outside objects such as passing asteroids or comets,” Sheppard said.

The discovery was announced on Monday by the International Astronomical Union’s Minor Planet Center. (Source: The Guardian)

ISS astronauts are spacewalking to replace batteries



Astronauts on board the International Space Station (ISS) rarely get a break from their cramped quarters. Only on occasion do they get to don a spacesuit and actually venture outside. This month, various mission members will get to do so five times.

Over the weekend, NASA began a lengthy series of spacewalks to upgrade a set of batteries on the outside of the ISS. After seven hours outside the orbiting science lab, flight engineers Christina Koch and Andrew Morgan successfully completed the first mission, manually swapping out two nickel-hydrogen batteries for one brand new lithium-ion battery.

“Oh my goodness, it is gorgeous,” said Morgan as he exited the ISS in the early hours of the morning. “This is pretty awesome.”

Still, there wasn’t much time to marvel at the view. Spacewalks are always painstaking, not to mention dangerous. For hours on end, the pair of astronauts had to “inchworm” a bunch of huge fridge-sized batteries to and from a work site on the other side of the ISS.

The P6 electronics assembly, where the new batteries are destined, is too far away for the station’s robotic arm to reach, which means the crew must shuffle the batteries from a pallet on the arm all the way there and back.

“The choreography that the crew members have back and forth is very important because they’re going to be moving a (new battery) that’s about 428 pounds (195 kg) and taking it off of the pallet and moving it out to the integrated equipment assembly,” spacewalk flight controller Keith Johnson told CBS News.

“And then they’ll take off an old battery, which weighs about 365 pounds (165 kg) and bring that back again.”

In microgravity, weight isn’t so much an issue, but the mass of these batteries still factors in when it comes to inertia, and this can make the whole process slow and cumbersome.

“You have to use fine motor skills and go very very slowly,” explains the spacewalk flight director TJ Creamer. “Moving large objects and massive objects are very doable in space, you just have to be careful and go slowly.”

When the ISS was originally launched into orbit in 1998, it was

equipped with 48 nickel-hydrogen batteries, split between its four solar wings. When the station dipped into shadow, these batteries were responsible for keeping things going.

After nearly two decades of use, it’s about time they got replaced. In 2017, NASA began swapping out these old batteries with 24 smaller lithium-ion power packs, which provide greater storage and power efficiency.

That year and the next, two sets of six batteries were installed; now, in 2019, the ISS is at last getting its third set. The only difference is that now the work site is a lot farther from the station’s robotic arms, which helped perform the last two swap-outs.

In fact, the P6 work site is the farthest component from the Station’s core modules; it sits on the port side of the outpost.

Over the course of four more missions, astronauts on board the ISS will systematically remove all 12 nickel hydrogen batteries from the P6 and replace them with six lithium-ion batteries.

“We really have to protect how we handle the batteries and how we put the batteries in because there are connections that have to go into the Integrated Electronics Assembly, and they can’t be damaged or dented,” says Johnson.

“Crew members have to be very careful how they hand off the battery to each other to protect the back end of that box.”

Each of these paired spacewalks will include different combinations of four astronauts, none of whom have performed this maneuver before, not even on the ground in training. The necessary materials and procedures have been uploaded however, and they’ve had plenty of study time.

One of the duos taking on this challenge will include Koch and Jessica Meir, and it will be the first all-female spacewalk, finally taking place after a cancellation earlier this year.

“It has been a wonderful day,” said Koch after leading the first seven-hour spacewalk. “I also wanted to say a huge congratulations to the teams across the world that made this day just an awesome day .. For us, it’s an honor and a privilege to be a part of your team.”

(Source: sciencealert.com)

NASA, Boeing, SpaceX closing in on return to human spaceflight



By Paul Brinkmann

America’s public and private space endeavors may soon regain the nation’s role as the global leader in human space exploration, but they are years behind schedule.

At stake is not only United States dominance, but also scientific advances to be gained from space exploration. More than \$20 billion has been spent to develop new capsules -- NASA’s Orion, SpaceX’s Crew Dragon and Boeing’s Starliner.

Boeing and SpaceX are more than two years late in sending astronauts back to space from U.S. soil compared to their original contract schedules. They’ve dealt with delays caused by such problems as parachute failure and a capsule exploding during a test firing.

NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine publicly called out SpaceX for the delays in a statement Friday, a day before SpaceX founder Elon Musk showed off the company’s next-generation spaceship, Starship. Musk said Saturday Starship will carry people into orbit by 2020.

NASA’s own SLS rocket and Orion capsule also have been delayed for years, having started in design phase under the Constellation program that was defunded in the 2011 federal budget. NASA has accelerated plans for returning to the moon, but there are no guarantees of funding to do that within a five-year window set by Vice President Mike Pence in March.

The space agency and the two major space companies continue to make progress in their space travel programs, but have not set a date for launches with crews aboard.

“Certainly, it is harder than people realize,” NASA astronaut Randy Bresnik told UPI. “We need to make sure it’s safe to put people on [these capsules], and we can’t fly until it’s safe. There’s also a point when you say we gotta go fly, and we’ve minimized the risk as much as we can.”

NASA, SpaceX and Boeing are followed closely by Jeff Bezos’ Blue Origin and Richard Branson’s Virgin Galactic in space travel aspirations. Blue Origin is pursuing a 2024 moon landing goal, but hasn’t tested its launch vehicle, the New Glenn rocket. Virgin has had success in its space tourism venture, having sent three people into suborbital space in a February launch of its spaceplane.

Regardless of launching a moon mission by 2024, NASA’s urgent need is to stop relying on Russian Soyuz rockets for U.S. astronauts -- at a cost of over \$70 million

per seat. That’s the only way the United States has been able to send astronauts to the International Space Station since the space shuttle was mothballed in 2011.

NASA awarded two finalist contracts in 2014 to certify new spacecraft to carry people by 2017 -- Boeing got \$4.2 billion for its Starliner capsule and SpaceX got \$2.6 billion for Crew Dragon.

A sobering report from the U.S. Government Accountability Office in June noted that both programs were making progress, but also said continued delays create “continued uncertainty about when either contractor will be certified to begin conducting operational missions to the ISS.”

NASA acknowledged the uncertainty in February, when it announced plans to purchase two additional Soyuz seats from Russia.

Bresnik flew on the last shuttle to retrieve an astronaut from the space station in 2008. He later flew in Soyuz capsules for two missions to the station and served on an original design team for the Crew Dragon capsule.

The explosion of a Crew Dragon capsule on a launch pad during engine testing in April was a serious blow, he said.

“It was disappointing, to say the least,” Bresnik said. “I mean, we really did not need that right now. We were supposed to have those commercial crew programs flying by now. These things need to fly, but they have to fly when they’re ready.”

Crewed missions, except for Virgin Galactic, are expected to launch from Kennedy Space Center in Florida, though SpaceX’s Starship could eventually launch from both Florida and Texas.

New launch towers at the space center have been outfitted with astronaut access arms for Starliner, which is to ride atop a United Launch Alliance rocket, and Crew Dragon, designed for a Falcon 9 rocket.

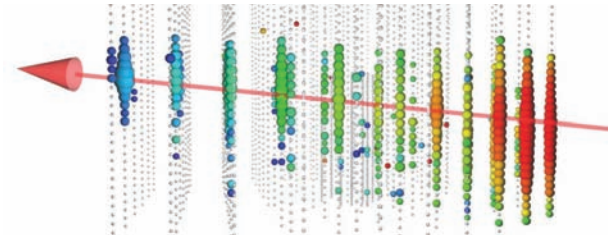
SpaceX completed an uncrewed test launch and landing of Dragon, but that capsule is the one that exploded on the pad later. Months after the explosion, SpaceX blamed a leaky titanium valve and said it would fix the problem with a new type of valve.

ULA awaits Boeing’s date for the first launch of Starliner. Boeing officials confirmed plans for an uncrewed test in 2019, possibly in October. But no further dates have been set for SpaceX or Boeing.

“The tower, the access arm, escape routes and even bathrooms for the astronauts at the top of the tower are ready,” said Dane Drefke, a lead engineer for ULA.

Astronomers have traced a single neutrino to a collision 3.8 billion light-years away

When a single neutrino was detected by a neutrino detector in Antarctica in September 2017, it was the start of something amazing. It was to become the first-ever high-energy neutrino that astronomers could trace back to an origin - a blazar galaxy called TXS 0506+056, 3.8 billion light-years away.



But, in the manner of many great discoveries that revelation opened up a whole new can of questions, including this: why, of all the galaxies with similar properties, has a neutrino only ever been traced to this one?

Now, astronomers have found a possible answer, pinpointing the source event that produced this neutrino. The relativistic jet blasting out of a supermassive black hole could have acted as a cosmic particle collider, producing a flurry of neutrinos that, due to the shape and wobble of the jet, ended up streaming through Earth.

And this could be a signpost indicating the presence of a binary supermassive black hole at the center of TXS 0506+056 - thought to be the end result of two galaxies merging.

Neutrinos are slippery little suckers. They are among the most abundant subatomic particles in the Universe, a bit similar to electrons, but they don’t carry a charge and are almost massless. And they rarely interact with... anything. Trillions are streaming through your body at any given moment.

Because they don’t interact with stuff much, we don’t detect them very often. When they do interact with the ice below the surface of Antarctica, neutrinos can produce a small shower of particles. In turn, these produce the luminal boom of Cherenkov radiation - this is detected by Cherenkov detectors stationed at the IceCube Neutrino Observatory.

But that’s just the detection part. Tracking a neutrino’s trajectory is another challenge altogether, and it took multi-messenger astronomy to accomplish this for the first time last year. That’s why we know this particular neutrino - titled IceCube-170922A - came from a blazar, a type of galaxy with an active supermassive black hole oriented so its jet is pointing directly at us.

It seems reasonable to conclude, therefore, that blazars are a source of neutrinos. But there’s just one problem. TXS 0506+056 is the only blazar to which neutrinos have been traced.

So, an international team of astronomers led by Silke Britzen from the Max Planck Institute for Radio Astronomy in Germany set out to investigate why.

“We wanted to unravel what makes TXS 0506+056 special, to understand the neutrino creation process and to localise the emission site and studied a series of high resolution radio images of the jet,” Britzen said.

The team reanalyzed a series of observations taken by the Very Long Baseline Array between 2009 and 2018, studying the jet kinematics and flux-density evolution of individual jet components closely. They paid special attention to 2014 and 2015, a period that saw higher neutrino activity; and also the period before and after the detection of IceCube-170922A.

They found that the dynamics of the jet were not smooth and undisturbed, as is expected. Instead, parts of the jet seemed to be colliding with other parts of the jet.

That could be produced in a number of ways. It could be the result of a new jet slamming into an old one; two jets from different sources; or the clash of two jets from the same source. Whatever it was, the team identified flux-density flaring in six parts of the jet near the likely collision site, which seems to support their hypothesis. It was this collision, the team believes, that produced IceCube-170922A. “This collision of jetted material is currently the only viable mechanism which can explain the neutrino detection from this source,” said astrophysicist Markus Böttcher of North-West University in South Africa.

“It also provides us with important insight into the jet material and solves a long-standing question whether jets are leptonic, consisting of electrons and positrons, or hadronic, consisting of electrons and protons, or a combination of both. At least part of the jet material has to be hadronic - otherwise, we would not have detected the neutrino.”

The team also found that the jet is likely curved; and that the black hole seems to be wobbling, resulting in a precession of the jet, like a wobbling spinning top. Whether it’s another black hole or something else creating that wobble is not clear. However, another supermassive black hole in a binary system could produce a second jet.

“The closer we look at the jet sources the more complicated the internal structure and jet dynamics appears,” said astronomer Christian Fendt of the Max Planck Institute for Astronomy.

“While binary black holes produce a more complex outflow structure, their existence is naturally expected from the cosmological models of galaxy formation by galaxy mergers.”

Well, one thing seems clear: TXS 0506+056 is not like all the other blazars. It may have a binary supermassive black hole at its core. And if the team is correct about the source of the neutrino, future events could reveal more about this bizarre galaxy.

(Source: sciencealert.com)

NASA Mars Curiosity rover finds an ‘ancient oasis’

NASA scientists believe Mars may have had an oasis environment around 3.5 billion years ago, they said Monday. Evidence of ponds scattered across a 100-mile-wide basin called the Gale Crater was found by the Curiosity rover, which discovered mineral salts mixed with sediment in rocks.

Curiosity is currently exploring each layer of the Gale Crater and Mount Sharp to uncover the history of Mars, which scientists think may have gone from an underwater landscape with deep lakes to an oasis-style series of shallow ponds.

“Streams might have laced the crater’s walls,” NASA said Monday, adding “climate fluctuations” changed the environment from wet to desert. Curiosity had previously found evidence of freshwater lakes on Mars, too.

“We went to Gale Crater because it preserves this unique record of a changing Mars,” said William Rapin of Caltech. “When and how long was Mars capable of supporting microbial life at the surface?”

(Source: msn)

Why are Chinese tourists losing interest in travelling to the U.S.?

In 2018, Chinese tourists made nearly 150 million trips around the world, spending a colossal \$277 billion. More than \$36 billion, or about 13% of that sum, was spent in the U.S., with Chinese visitors spending it up in Hawaii, Hollywood, and other big-ticket U.S. destinations.



The trade war and an economic slowdown in China resulted in the first drop in Chinese tourists arriving in the U.S. in 15 years last year [File: Bebeto Matthews/AP]

Since the start of the trade war, however, Chinese tourism to the U.S. is down by more than 8%. The number of Chinese visitors stateside is waning—due to geopolitical pressures, a strong dollar, and the seductive call of the rest of the world.

The resulting trend could be extremely damaging for the U.S. tourism sector. It's already under pressure from reduced domestic travel, as Americans save pennies to pay off their debt. (Talk of a looming recession hasn't helped.)

Though visits of all kinds to the U.S. from China are falling, it is pleasure trips that have taken the greatest hit.

Since Donald Trump imposed tariffs on Chinese goods in March 2018, the dollar has gone from strength to strength—making it harder for Chinese tourists to justify an already expensive trip.

Chinese officials have also done what they can to dissuade travel to the U.S., including issuing a travel advisory in June warning of "frequent mass shootings, robberies and thefts."

At a Chinese Foreign Ministry press conference, spokesperson Yan Shuang said it was a question of "mutual respect." He cited harassment of Chinese citizens seeking the right to travel to the U.S. by U.S. law-enforcement agencies as a particular concern.

It's questionable whether the advisory, which expires at the end of the year, had much of an impact compared to the wider economic and geopolitical picture. Online, Chinese people mocked the warning, noting that officials' families were continuing to travel to the U.S.

Then, there's the question of visas. To travel to the U.S., Chinese visitors must apply for a B visa. Last year, 17% of Chinese applicants were refused—but had to pay \$160 for their application nonetheless. Since 2013, the rate of refusal has steadily risen.

It the same time, other countries have taken dramatic steps to open their doors to Chinese tourists, and their spending potential. Thailand is the latest to float visa-free entry for Chinese travelers. It would be joining the likes of the United Arab Emirates, Fiji, and Morocco. After relaxing its requirements in 2016, the North African nation saw a 3,500% year-on-year increase in visa applications from China processed by Ctrip, a Shanghai-based travel agency.

But while they may not be going to the U.S., Chinese tourists are still packing their bags to other cheaper, more welcoming destinations. Outbound travel from China worldwide remained consistent, with 5.5% growth in 2018.

(Source: World Economic Forum)



ROUND THE GLOBE

Historic Monuments of Novgorod and Surroundings

Situated on the ancient trade route between Central Asia and northern Europe, Novgorod was Russia's first capital in the 9th century.

A UNESCO World Heritage, the Historic Monuments of Novgorod and its Surroundings have a direct relation to the process of establishment of the Old Russian state in 9th-10th centuries. It is surrounded by churches and monasteries, as a center for Orthodox spirituality as well as Russian architecture.



The most ancient Russian Old Church Slavonic manuscripts (11th century) were written at Novgorod, including an autonomous historiography (as early as the 12th century) and, in particular, the first complete translation into Slavonic of the Old and New Testaments (late 15th century). Novgorod was a birthplace of the national style of stone architecture, and one of the oldest national schools of painting.

The majority of historical monuments are associated with Novgorod Republic (12th-15th centuries) which itself was a unique phenomenon of Medieval Russia. It was only after the conquest of the two republics (1478, in the case of Novgorod) by the Muscovite rulers that the present Russian capital acquired cultural supremacy.

The outstanding archaeological and cultural layers of Novgorod of 10th-17th centuries occupy an area of about 347 ha, with a depth of 7-8 meters and are waterlogged and anaerobic, thus preserving organic materials.

Authenticity

The Historic Monuments of Novgorod and Surroundings meet the criteria of authenticity, as their foundation dates and authorship are documented and confirmed by field studies.

(Source: UNESCO)

National museum has new look at history of Tehran

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** — An exhibit d e s k at the National Museum of Iran offers its visitors Tehran's thousands of years of history by showcasing relics excavated from southern and northern neighborhoods of the city.

Titled "Ancient Tehran: From Plain to Mountain", the exhibit features relics that have been unearthed from Cheshmeh-Ali and Qeytariyeh neighborhoods of the Iranian capital, IRNA reported on Tuesday.

The exhibition that opened on Wednesday showcases 110 objects including potteries decorated with delicate red lines that were unearthed in Cheshmeh-Ali and date from 4800 BC to 5200 BC, said Jebrael Nokandeh who presides over the National Museum of Iran.

Qeytariyeh relics were excavated from a cemetery in the northern neighborhood in the years 1968-69. They include clay and metal objects that date from 1000 BC to 1200 BC, the official said.

Organized in close cooperation with Tehran Municipality, the Iranian National Committee for ICOM (the International Council of Museums), and the Ministry of Cultural Heritage,

Tourism and Handicrafts, the exhibit will be running through October 22.

Archaeologists said last year that the history of Tehran that may go down in time some 6,600 years more than previously thought.

Cheshmeh-Ali, literally meaning "Spring of Ali", a historical and recreational spot located in the south of Tehran and north of Rey as the history of settlement in the latter goes down to the 3rd millennium BC.

The history of Rey, according to the Encyclopedia Britannica is featured in the Avesta (the original document of Zoroastrianism, an Iranian religion) as a sacred place, and it is also mentioned in the book of Tobit, of the biblical Apocrypha, and by classical authors.

According to the encyclopedia, the enigmatic evidence of human presence on the Iranian plateau as early as Lower Paleolithic times comes from a surface found in the Bakhtaran valley.

The first well-documented evidence of human habitation is in deposits from several excavated cave and rock-shelter sites, located mainly in the Zagros Mountains of western Iran and dated to Middle Paleolithic or Mousterian times (c. 100,000 BC).



Iranian tourism, crafts under spotlight at Ankara exhibit

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Iranian travel destinations, d e s k handicrafts and arts are under spotlight at a cultural exhibit which was opened to the public in Ankara on Sunday.

The exhibition is organized under the auspices of the Iranian Embassy in Turkey with the aim of introducing Iran's culture and ancient civilization to other nations, Mehr reported.

Featuring cultural and artistic products such as engravings and miniatures, as well as pictures of historical and tourist attractions of the country, the event is held in cooperation with the municipality of Alt?ndag Ankara and will wrap up on October 13, the report added.

Addressing the exhibit, Mahmoud Sedqizadeh, Iranian cultural counselor in Ankara, emphasized the importance of holding such events to introduce Iran's culture and at-

tractions to Turkish people.

The official also voiced hope that such kind of activities would serve to strength Tehran-Ankara relations more than ever.

In February, Hormatollah Rafiei, head of the Association of Iranian Travel Agents, emphasized the need to attain a balance in tourist flow rates between the two neighbors, saying Iran intends to reach a balance with Turkey in the movement of tourist flow.

Iranian tourists vacationing in Turkey have increased hotel occupancy rates in many cities, particularly in the eastern province of Van, to 100%, while their shopping is a lifeline for tradesmen, Daily Sabah reported last month.

President of Iranian Scientific Ecotourism expected in October that some six million Iranian nationals to visit Turkey in 2020 while Turkish arrivals in Iran are far more less.



Pouya Mahmoudian in an undated photo

‘No plans to detach handicrafts department from tourism ministry’

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — There are d e s k no plans to detach the handicrafts department from the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, deputy minister for handicrafts Pouya Mahmoudian said on Tuesday.

She made the remarks in response to some recent rumors about joining the handicrafts department to the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade, IRNA reported.

Iranian lawmakers on July 31 approved transformation of the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization into a ministry.

"Once the new organizational structure is redefined for the handicrafts department, it could monitor and support the sector and keep that under its surveillance with more strength than before," Mahmoudian explained.

Handicrafts exports from the Islamic Republic reached \$289 million in the past Iranian calendar year 1397 (ended March 20), showing three percent growth year on year.

Traditional ceramics, pottery vessels, handwoven cloths as well as personal ornaments with precious and semi-precious gemstones are among Iranian exports to Iraq, Afghanistan and Germany, the U.S., the UK and other countries.

Forged by volcanoes, Kamchatka offers majestic, magnetic wilds

By Eva Sohlman and Neil MacFarquhar

"If you can find me a better place than Kamchatka on this earth, I will argue with you!" exclaimed Alexei Ozerov, the exuberant chief volcanologist on the entrancing peninsula hanging off Russia's Pacific Coast.

Leaping from behind his cluttered desk at the Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, he tore a tabletop globe from its stand and traced his finger around the "Ring of Fire," the chain of volcanoes encircling the Pacific Ocean.

Only the Kamchatka Peninsula stands directly over the grinding tectonic forces that forged its volcanoes, he said, with about 30 still active among more than 300. Four to seven erupt annually. That makes it a unique vantage point for volcanologists and everybody else, said Mr. Ozerov.

UNESCO seemed to agree. The international organization has designated the volcanoes of Kamchatka a world heritage site because of what it called their exceptional beauty, concentration and variety.

Indeed, say "Kamchatka" to a Russian, and many will respond with a dreamy look and a wistful "Oh!" The peninsula, farther east than Japan, represents a distant otherworld of majestic, magnetic wilderness.

That's not exactly wrong. Famous for its exceptional flora and fauna, the peninsula does not resemble anyplace else in Russia, or many other parts of the planet.

Kamchatka, roughly the length of California at just under 800 miles, is shaped like one of the peninsula's plentiful fish, with its head pointed down toward Japan and its tail attached to the rest of Russia.

In late summer, Kamchatka's abundant rivers run red with the crush of salmon racing upstream; it is the only place left where all six species of wild Pacific salmon return to spawn. An estimated 20,000 brown bears roam its enchanted forests of Russian rock birch and other trees, growing fat and mostly happy off salmon.

Giant Steller's eagles wheel overhead while offshore, orcas cavort and Kamchatka's king crabs grow bigger than footballs.

During the brief window between the last snows of May and the first in mid-September, a rich variety of plants bloom at turbo force, adapted to their short, spectacular lives. The

plants exude an unexpected tropical luxuriance.

Emerald forests and mauve tundra cover the foothills amid volcanoes in various hues of gray and dusty red, most dotted with glaciers and snow. Alpine meadows burst with blossoms and colors including yellow rhododendron, purple mountain heather, pink azaleas, fuchsia fireweeds, and the white stars of the eschscholtz starwort. Lower down, fields of wild grass can grow more than 11 feet tall.

Kamchatkans insist that this is where Russia begins, where the first of her 11 times zones wakes up. In previous centuries, it took a year to reach the peninsula from Moscow. To this day, no paved roads traverse the swampland separating it from mainland Russia.

Kamchatka's isolation has gradually ebbed, with tension emerging between preserving it and developing its natural resources. Visitors come for its unusual, pristine nature and the plethora of outdoor activities in a relatively compact area — trekking, fishing, rafting, surfing and mountain climbing. In winter, there's helicopter skiing and a monthlong dog race. Intrigued by Kamchatka's mythical allure, we decided to make our last trip of a five-year assignment in Moscow to the region that most Russians consider the obscure end of their country.

To a volcano's rim on massive tires

As our Aeroflot flight from Moscow traced an 8-hour arc above the Arctic Circle, we delighted as the red-orange disc of the sun seemed to roll along with us, never setting. Blissfully unaware of how Kamchatka's capricious, sub-Arctic weather plays havoc with travel plans, we had decided that six days was enough to hit the highlights.

Soon after we landed, the wispy fleece around the dazzling volcanoes circling the regional capital of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky thickened and they disappeared. "Neil, heli excursions canceled for tomorrow," read the WhatsApp message from our travel company.

Kamchatka has only about 370 miles of paved roads, mainly concentrated around the three southern cities, home to 80 percent of its shrinking population of just under 315,000. Pricey helicopters provide the only quick access to some of the more spectacular sights.

Grounded, we headed for Mutnovsky volcano, a famous peak of more than 7,600 feet. While less than 40 miles from

the capital, reaching the top required a bumpy, four-hour drive on dirt roads and across boulder-strewn lava fields.

Our camouflage-wearing volcano guide, Sergei Y. Lebedev, was an originator of the idea of building Mad Max vehicles mounted on massive tires to haul tourists up to the very lip of various volcanoes. He had added a double axle to the back of his current model, a silver Toyota minivan. Its six tires, each four-foot-tall and 27-inches-wide, meant we climbed a short ladder to get in.

Wherever we stopped, tourists ignored the nature and photographed our hulking vehicle. The other guides had given it the affectionate Russian nickname of "Malysh" or "Baby."

As the road ascended, 30-foot poles appeared at regular intervals along its edge. They measured the formidable height of the winter snow, Mr. Lebedev said.

After sliding across a couple of glaciers, we parked and began hiking into Mutnovsky's crater. The barren landscape — the soil is too sulfurous for plants — and the shifting mists lent the entire scene a Kurosawa-like foreboding. No signs cautioned about the risks, but a small white cross honoring a young scientist who died collecting data served as sufficient warning.

Mr. Lebedev described one previous visit, when the mountain rumbled fiercely and suddenly in the fog, giant boulders materialized in a field. "It is so strange and stunning that you can walk into an active volcano," he told us.

We threaded our way through a narrow valley covered with ice, volcanic rocks and small, ash-covered piles of snow. It took 90 minutes to approach the heart of the crater. The hissing and sulfurous smell arrived first, as if the Devil was nearby, breathing heavily.

From atop the last ridge, we saw white steam billowing skyward from open holes in the earth. These wheezing, roaring fumaroles dyed much of the landscape a bright yellow. As we stared into their murky depths, a sudden gust of steam stung the eyes and prickled the skin.

On a clear day you can hike to a lake, but thick fog prevented us from venturing further.

On the way down, the clouds finally cleared, revealing the snow-flecked splendor of Vilyuchinsky Volcano with its lopsided, 7,135-foot cone.

(Source: The New York Times)

Riyadh changing tack on Tehran: Mirage or Oasis?

By Mehrdad Ferdows

TEHRAN - Saudi Arabia has sent a series of recent signals interpreted as its willingness to de-escalate tensions between Tehran and Riyadh, which have dominated the political landscape in the West Asia for a couple of years. But could these signals be taken seriously?

Speculations are surfacing that remarks by the Saudi crown prince in a CBS interview and some mediation efforts by third parties could be an early practical step on the reconciliation path, indicating the kingdom is posing for a shift in policy toward its northern neighbor.

In recent months, the Saudi leadership has been quietly trying to scale back its downright hostility vis-à-vis Iran.

The Saudi authorities, who formerly took turns to speak out against Iran in harsh terms, have been largely silent.

But in the wake of the attack on the state oil giant Aramco, Saudi crown prince Mohammed bin Salman is ditching threats.

Changing tune

Speaking to CBS's 60 Minutes in an interview aired on September 29, the crown prince said for the first time that he prefers political approach towards Iran.

"The political and peaceful solution is much better than the military one," he said.

The remarks came two years after rejecting dialogue with Shia Iran and threatening to make war inside Iran.

"We know that the aim of the Iranian regime is to reach the focal point of Muslims," he said in May 2017, pointing to Mecca and Medina.

"We will not wait until the fight is inside Saudi Arabia and we will work so that the battle is on their side, inside Iran," he said.

A recent report by Lebanese daily Al-Akhbar suggests MBS' words were not just rhetoric, as a purported trove of leaked documents show he was starting a process of setting up a joint task force with Washington aimed at regime change in Tehran.

Celestial enlightenment?

Bin Salman's remarks in the CBS interview,



which were applauded in Iran, aren't the result of some celestial enlightenment that descended on Mohammad bin Salman.

In May 2017, Bin Salman was 31, fresh off a meeting with the newly elected US President Donald Trump, brokered through his son-in-law Jared Kushner.

But now, the prince feels alone. Following the September 14 attack into Aramco facilities proved Saudi Arabia's military vulnerability.

And Trump showed no real interest in accompanying Saudi Arabia and stressed America's energy independence in the age of shale. With a realization of his country's exposure, the crown prince is now expressing hope for a peaceful solution with Iran.

Olive branches

Meanwhile, Pakistani and Iraqi officials have talked about Saudi willingness for mediation with Iran.

Abbas al-Hasnawi, an official in the Iraqi prime minister's office, recently told Middle East Eye that the Saudis had given the green

light to Iraqi mediation with Iran, and that the Iraqi prime minister had already given each party the other's terms for talks.

Iranian officials have also shown green light to the talks, with Iran's parliamentary speaker Ali Larijani declaring that "direct dialogue between Iran and Saudi Arabia may solve many political and military problems in the region."

Bin Salman is also willing to de-escalate the war in Yemen.

The Houthis have offered several olive branches in recent weeks, announcing they will stop attacking Saudi territory.

Last week, they also announced the release of hundreds of prisoners of war, including three Saudi nationals.

Riyadh has also shown green light to the participation of the Yemeni government in fresh peace talks with the Houthis in Oman.

Will 2017 experience repeat?

The two sides have not exchanged ambassadors since January 2016, when Saudi

Arabia cut off ties with Iran.

The pretext for the Saudi severance of ties, which followed a long period of worsening tensions, was attacks on its diplomatic missions in Tehran and Mashhad by protesters angered over the execution of Shia cleric Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr on terrorism charges.

Despite the Iranian authorities condemned the attacks and sentenced the perpetrators, Riyadh opted to keep the door on dialogue with Tehran shut and let tensions between the two regional powers remain at an all-time high.

But there were speculations in 2017 that ties between the two sides could improve.

That year, Iran resumed sending hajj caravans to Saudi Arabia for the first time since the tragic Mina stampede in 2015 that left over 2,300 worshippers dead, including 464 Iranians.

Iran was absent in the 2016 hajj, due to what Iranian officials described as the Saudi failure to provide credible assurances about the security of Iranian pilgrims to allay concerns of a repeat of the stampede.

In August 2017, then-Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir even shook hands with his Iranian counterpart Mohammad Javad Zarif in a rare encounter on the sidelines of an OIC meeting in Istanbul, a surprise for many observers who used to see the top Saudi diplomat excoriating Tehran.

Moreover, Iraqi Interior Minister Qasim Al-Araji was reported as saying during a 2017 visit to Iran that Saudi leaders have asked Baghdad to mediate between Tehran and Riyadh.

However, in September 2017, al-Jubeir dented optimism over a rapprochement weeks later, denying any warming of relations with Iran.

"If Iran wants to have good relations with Saudi Arabia, it has to change its policies. It has to respect international law," Jubeir told a press conference in London in 2017.

But is Riyadh really having a true change of heart towards Iran this time? To form a judgment, let's take a look at evidence.

(To be continued)

The Collapse of Media and What You Can Do About It

By Nafeez Ahmed - Andrew Markell

COUNTERPUNCH — When a system enters into the final stage of its deterioration — whether that is an institutional system, a state, an empire, or the human body — all the important information flows that support coherent communication breakdown. In this final stage, if this situation is not corrected the system will collapse and die.

It has become obvious to nearly everyone that we have reached this stage on the planet and in our democratic institutions. We see how the absolute dysfunction of the global information architecture?—represented in the intersection of mainstream media outlets, social technology platforms and giant digital aggregators?—is generating widespread apathy, despair, insanity and madness at a scale that is terrifying.

And we are right to be terrified, because this situation is paralyzing us from taking the action required to solve global and local challenges. While liberals fight conservatives and conservatives fight liberals we lose precious time.

While progressives fight government, the corporations and the super-rich we drown in despair. While philanthropists, fueled by their own certainty and wealth, fight for justice or equality or for some poor hamlet in Africa we become apathetic and distracted from the real source of the problem. And while the president fights everyone and everyone fights the president, the collective goes mad.

In the background, however, the game of hoarding resources and not redistributing them accelerates; absorbing the sum total of our collective actions and commitments into a singular unacceptable future. There is only one way to avoid this fate; uncover the source of the disease and cure it by mobilizing solutions.

We are about to break down for you the source of this disease of information that is accelerating us to ecological and institutional collapse because once you see it, you will be free to act and build something else.

The Collapse of Democratic Institutions

Industrial civilization is in the throes of a great disruption, a systemic transition which could either lead to regression, crisis and collapse; or a new way of working and living, a new mode of prosperity, a new narrative of success.

The global media industrial complex is not equipped to address this great disruption to civilization-as-we-know-it. To the contrary, it is literally incapable of meaningfully processing information in such a way that it produces, for a significant percentage of the human population, real actionable knowledge? which can render humanity capable of transitioning successfully into the new era.

The global media industrial complex today compounds the problems we are facing.

It does this by providing, despite appearances, no knowledge at all. The prevailing model of media is to monopolize and manipulate information flows to produce beliefs and emotions that will allow giant aggregators to maximize 'clicks', to maximize advertising revenues, to maximize profits?—?for a few.

So rather than creating knowledge, the global media industrial complex is designed to generate competing, polarized narratives around which different audiences coalesce into irreconcilable segregated communities; it reinforces beliefs without teaching critical thinking; it blunts an attitude of openness while promoting a banal left-right dichotomy that fuels a global culture of mindless consumerism.

This prevailing media structure constrains the public's capacity to make intelligent decisions. And that allows global ecological, energy, economic, social and other challenges to accelerate, while we argue amongst ourselves about ideology.

The consequence is that information flows are inexorably linked to dominant processes of profit-maximization for a



tiny minority; so much so, that people's relationship to information is managed as a control mechanism over attention and ideological persuasion.

The Monopolization of Media & Journalism

At the heart of our collapsing democratic institutions sits the global media industrial complex. If you are brave enough to look closely you will see that both 'free press' and 'fake news' outlets operate as a structural extension of an extreme form of predatory capitalism, using information to capture wealth for the few at the expense of the many, by capturing our minds. They are two sides of one coin that make the same people obscene piles of cash.

We only have to peer under the hood to see this fact staring us in the face.

In the US, six huge transnational conglomerates own the entirety of the mass media, including newspapers, magazines, publishers, TV networks, cable channels, Hollywood studios, music labels and popular websites: Time Warner, Walt Disney, Viacom, News Corp., CBS Corporation and NBC Universal.

In the UK, 71% of UK national newspapers are owned by just three giant corporations, while 80% of local newspapers are owned by a mere five companies.

Today, the world's largest media owner is Google, closely followed by Walt Disney, Comcast, 21st Century Fox and Facebook. Together, Google and Facebook monopolize one-fifth of global ad revenue. And all these corporations control the bulk of what we read, watch and hear, including online. They define our understanding of the world and ourselves.

Yet they reflect a tiny number of people who have a very narrow outlook on the world.

That's because these power structures are part of what one study in the journal PLoS One describes as a "network of global corporate control." The study authors, a team of systems theorists at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, found that the world's most powerful 43,000 transnational corporations are dominated by a core 1,318 companies, further dominated by a "super-entity" of just 147 firms.

So most of what we read, watch and hear through the media is structurally conditioned by a network of special interests that are self-supported and self-sustained. This is why the distinction between fake news and real news is both illusory and dishonest. Due to this structure, virtually everything you encounter as 'news' functions a subtle or overt piece of propaganda that distracts you from the real activity that is driving the machinery. It matters little whether it comes from Mother Jones, the New York Times, Breitbart or Fox News — everything coming at you within this structure produces the debilitating effect of confusing your mind and stimulating your emotions into a complex mash-up of anger, resignation apathy and sloth.

Through the Google Glass

To understand the power of these special interests to monopolize information in service to their own vested ends, we

need look no further than the story of world's largest media owner of all.

In January 2015, INSURGE broke the exclusive story of how Google was founded and evolved under the wing of the US intelligence community.

The report revealed that during his development of the core code behind the Google search engine as a Stanford University postgraduate student, Sergey Brin received seed-funding from a CIA and NSA-run research program, the Massive Digital Data Systems (MDDS). The confirmation came from a former manager of the MDDS, Dr. Bhavani Thuraisingham, who is now the Louis A. Beecherl distinguished professor and executive director of the Cyber Security Research Institute at the University of Texas, Dallas.

This was not necessarily unusual?—?the intelligence community has long been involved in Silicon Valley for all sorts of obvious reasons. What's interesting is that you probably never knew about how this worked in relation to Google. And that says a great deal about the way the global media industrial complex operates. Her claims are corroborated by a reference to the MDDS programme in a paper co-authored by Brin and fellow Google co-founder Larry Page while at Stanford.

How the Media — All Media — Handles the Truth

This story was totally blacked out in the English-language media: except the US tech news site Gigaom, which recommended our investigation as follows:

"An interesting, if extremely dense, account of Google's longstanding interactions with US military and intelligence was published on Medium last week."

This has very important implications that deserve careful scrutiny: In short, the inside story of Google's seed-funding and founding by the CIA and NSA breaks into the open?—?but not a single English-language newspaper wants to cover or even acknowledge the story. Yet what could be bigger news, than one of the world's biggest 'news-facilitators' being so closely aligned with the US intelligence community at birth?

The lack of interest is not the result of a conspiracy. It's the predictable outcome of the fact that the global media industrial complex represents a highly centralized institutional structure that perpetuates a culture of slavish obedience to power.

The global media industrial complex largely obscures important knowledge about the very structure and nature of power. That's why this is probably the first time you've seen direct evidence that the most powerful media owner in the world, Google, was conceived with the support of the US intelligence community.

Power and Control Over Your Mind & Your Resources

This is not about whether Google is uniquely 'evil'. It's about a wider pattern of unacceptable ownership patterns and social networks across the media landscape.

Consider William Kennard. He served on the board of the New York Times, then became US Federal Communications Commission chairman. He then joined the Carlyle Group as Managing Director. Carlyle majority-owns Booz Allen Hamilton, the defense contractor managing NSA mass surveillance. After Kennard joined the Obama administration as US Ambassador to the EU, he pushed for the secretive, pro-corporate Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP).

Consider John Bryson, Obama's Secretary of Commerce until 2012. In the preceding decade he sat on the board of the Walt Disney Company, which owns the American Broadcasting Corporation (ABC). He was simultaneously on the board of US defense contractor Boeing. Despite resigning from those positions after joining government, he held lucrative stock, option assets, and deferred-compensation plans with both Disney and Boeing. →13

10 Ways the media manipulates our opinions

BRIGHTSIDE — Almost 30 years ago, Noam Chomsky, a famous intellectual, wrote about the manipulation strategies the media uses. It's been quite some time since then, and now we have things like the internet, Twitter, and Facebook, so the media has many more ways to influence us. Unfortunately, the influence is not always positive.

Bright Side will tell you about the methods newsmakers use to manipulate our consciousness.

Create a diversion.

Creating a diversion is the media's favorite strategy. Important information isn't noticed amongst a huge number of smaller stories. The internet didn't solve this problem: we constantly switch our attention to funny pictures and jokes. The only difference is that today we at least have a choice: you can easily filter the information you want to receive to avoid unimportant information.

Exaggerate a problem

Sometimes an imaginary or exaggerated problem causes very serious reactions from society. In 2016, NASA published an article saying that if astrology were scientific, the zodiac signs would change their positions. For example, Virgo would become Leo. Cosmopolitan presented this as a scientific discovery and claimed that 80% of people would have to change their zodiac sign. The article spread so fast that NASA had to publish a retraction.

Gradual strategy

In order to form a certain opinion, you can publish materials on the topic gradually. This strategy is used to form an image of a person, a product, or an event. For example, in the media of different countries, only certain food brands are mentioned. The brightest example of using the media for promotion was probably the popularization of smoking in the middle of the 20th century.



Postponing strategy

To convince people to make hard or unpopular decisions, the media can present them as "painful, but absolutely necessary." And then they tell people that these decisions need to be made tomorrow, not today. Future sacrifices are easier than ones you need to make today. Examples include independence referendums or dictatorships in developing countries, based on propaganda and authoritarianism.

Being very kind

Some advertisements use language, arguments, symbols, and intonations for children. Such communication makes people less critical. Brands use the imperative form, and they aim for the simplest feelings and impulses. The media has a patronizing tone of voice because it definitely knows more than we do.

More emotions, less thinking

News and emotions always go together, and there is nothing good about it. Emotions don't let you perceive facts critically and objectively. They block the rational part of your mind. This often leads to a distortion of reality. This is the reason why the term "information warfare" is not forgotten but is actually often used. Users from all over the world try to figure out how to steer clear of it.

Keeping people uninformed

The media and the government can manipulate a society if the society doesn't understand the techniques. And this happens due to a lack of education. Chomsky thought that access to information was very different for the elite and the ordinary people. However, times have changed, and the digital era gives us a chance to find any information we need. And education level can't be a factor here.

Encouraging people to like mediocre products

The media is totally content to tell people that it's cool to be stupid, vulgar, and rude. This is why we have so many TV shows, sitcoms, movies with sequels and prequels, tabloids, and so on. They are not just for recreational purposes but also for switching attention away from truly serious problems.

Making people feel guilty

The point of this strategy is to make people blame themselves for local and global problems. People blame themselves for wars that were started by governments, not them. In 2014, a photo of a boy who was lying between his parents' graves went viral. The photo was presented as a photo from a war zone. In fact, the photo was part of a project that was dedicated to love for relatives. The author of the picture was shocked by the way it was used in the media.

Knowing more about people than they know about themselves

The media often tries to know everything about everyone, but they often cross the line. In 2005, the British tabloid News of the World was caught wiretapping celebrities, politicians, and even members of the royal family. The information that was received in this disgusting way was used to write exclusive articles that gained a lot of readers. The lawsuits from celebrities and ordinary people ended with the closing of the tabloid, which had to pay huge amounts of compensation.

Chomsky thought that access to information was very different for the elite and the ordinary people. However, times have changed, and the digital era gives us a chance to find any information we need. And education level can't be a factor here.

Wildlife trafficking on the rise all across Latin America

The illegal wildlife trade is increasing all across Latin America, the first high-level conference on the issue in the Americas was told. After drugs, guns and human trafficking, wildlife trafficking is the world's most lucrative organised crime with an annual value of around \$20bn (£16bn) each year, according to a 2016 report by Interpol and the UN environment programme.



As the world's most biodiverse continent, home to roughly 40% of the world's plant and animal species, Latin America is a hub for the criminal trade. Wildlife trafficking is increasing in most countries in the region, including the conference's host, Peru, said the head of its forestry and wildlife service, Luis Alberto Gonzales-Zuñiga.

"It's not stalled, or declining, it's on the rise. It's a globalised business and it needs a globalised response," he told the Guardian. Whether it is the trade in live wildlife or dead animals and their parts, the countries from which they originate need to take the crime more seriously, said Salvador Ortega, Interpol's head of forest crime for Latin America. They need to understand that they are part of the supply chain for a transnational criminal organisation, he told the Guardian.

"Corruption is the most disruptive element for our investigations in this region," Ortega added. "[It] damages international police cooperation and transnational investigations which are fundamental to combat a crime whose origin may be this region, but whose destination is the regions which finance these crimes."

While collectors in the US, Europe and the Middle East largely drive the smuggling of live specimens, east Asia, particularly China, is a major destination for wildlife parts, Ortega noted.

The poaching of jaguars, the largest big cat in the Americas, for teeth, skin and bones has grown for the first time since the 1970s to feed rising demand for Chinese traditional medicine and exotic jewellery. It is linked to increased Chinese investment in the region, experts say.

The threatened carnivore was the image chosen as the emblem for the initiative launched in Lima on illegal wildlife trade last week. Revered by several pre-hispanic cultures, the animal continues to hold a mystical appeal for the continent's many peoples even as it faces new threats.

Lishu Li, programme manager for the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) in China, said that the government there was taking "serious actions to combat the illegal wildlife trade" with more prosecutions, longer jail terms and fines.

Sue Lieberman, vice president for international policy at the WCS, said there were strong incentives for the region to combat wildlife trafficking beyond fighting crime.

"Ecotourism for one is really important source of foreign exchange," she said. "But if you don't have wildlife to view people aren't going to come."

"If enforcement is increased and governments collaborate more with each other I believe we can stop this in time," she added.

Both the UK and the US governments have backed this summit, which is a follow-up to the illegal wildlife trade conference in London last year.

The UK environment minister, Zac Goldsmith, commended the conference. "We need to make sure this wildlife trade doesn't drive further biodiversity loss and damage fragile ecosystems," he said.

(Source: The Guardian)

WORDS IN THE NEWS

Search continues for Osama Bin Laden

(December 17, 2001)

United States and British Special Forces together with Afghan soldiers are continuing to search for Osama bin Laden and up to two-thousands of his men in the mountains of eastern Afghanistan. One of his fighters who has been captured has said that Osama bin Laden was in the area a week ago. This report from Damian Grammaticas:

A **vicious** fight goes on in Afghanistan's mountains with up to two-thousand al-Qaeda fighters **on the retreat**. American bombing raids from the air have slowed but on the ground, the al-Qaeda men are being **tracked** - US and British Special Forces determined to capture or kill them before they have a chance to **flee**. Despite **the gains on the ground**, few of al-Qaeda's senior leaders have been found. The Americans say they don't know where Osama bin Laden is; their task now is to capture him and al-Qaeda's leaders.

If bin Laden is in the White Mountains, they have men watching his **escape routes**. From the **handful of fighters** who have **surrendered** have come stories of just **how costly the battle has been**. Thirteen Arabs being held by the local Afghan fighters said they had been part of a group of sixty - half their number had been **wiped out** by a single American bomb over the weekend. The few still alive on the mountain are demanding guarantees of their safety before they surrender

Words

vicious: very cruel and violent

on the retreat: moving away from opposing armies to avoid fighting them

tracked: found by following footprints or other signs that show you where people have been

to flee: escape, run away quickly from something dangerous

the gains on the ground: the military advantages that have been won

escape routes: paths or ways through which you can escape

the handful of fighters: the small group of fighters

surrendered: if a soldier surrenders he stops fighting and agrees he has been beaten

how costly the battle has been: a costly battle is one in which many soldiers have been killed

wiped out: if a group of people are wiped out they are destroyed completely

(Source: BBC)

UNDP supports Isfahan to become age-friendly city

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — The United Nations Population Fund (UNDP) signed a memorandum of understanding with the Municipality of Isfahan on Tuesday to support Isfahan for becoming an age-friendly city to better meet the needs of its older residents.

On the sidelines of the signing ceremony, UNDP representative in Iran, Leila Jodan, said that Isfahan officials are keen to transform the city into an age-friendly one, and our negotiations and cooperation began years ago, IRNA news agency reported.

She went on to add that if Isfahan becomes a city compatible with elderly needs, it will be open to all elderly tourist in the world.

To do so, cooperation of related organizations is required, she highlighted.

Age-friendly cities are not just convenient for this group of the society but must be suitable for all age groups to live a healthy life, said Jodan.

"The United Nations Development Program is to create cities suitable for all age groups so that no one is excluded from a healthy living."

She pointed to the rapid growth of the world's aging population and added that this rate is higher in Asia and among wom-



en than in other regions. At present, senior citizens account for about 10 percent of the Isfahan population which will reach up to

30 percent by 2050.

Studies show that if children live alongside the elderly, they will achieve more in the

7,561 Iranians died in traffic accidents in 5 months



SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — Road crashes claimed lives of 7,561 people during the first five months of this year (started March 21), according to the latest data released by Iran's Forensics Organization.

Over the five-month period, 5,918 men and 1,643 women were victims of road accidents.

Provinces of Fars, Khorasan Razavi and Tehran had the highest road fatalities with 612, 543 and 542 deaths, respectively.

In the first five months of this year, the number of injured people who referred to forensic centers in the country declined by 0.3 percent, as 157,836 got injured, of whom 112,327 were men and 45,509 were women.

Moreover, the number of injured in traffic accidents fell by 0.3 percent compared to the same period last year.

In the aforementioned period, Tehran, Khorasan Razavi and Isfahan provinces ranked the first three provinces with the highest number of injuries.

Also, the highest number of people died in crashes on August 2008 and the lowest in April was in April.

Over the Iranian calendar month of Mordad (July 23- August 22), A total of 1,729 people died in traffic accidents, while the number of casualties increased

by 4.4 percent compared to the same period last year.

Road traffic injuries also dropped by 2.5 percent compared to the same period last year.

Mordad was also the deadliest month among the first five months of this year, while the first month of this year recorded the lowest casualties.

According to the World Health Organization, road traffic injuries caused an estimated 1.35 million deaths worldwide in the year 2016.

In other words, one person is killed every 25 seconds. Only 28 countries, representing 449 million people (seven percent of the world's population), have adequate laws that address all five risk factors (speed, drunk driving, helmets, seat-belts and child restraints).

Over a third of road traffic deaths in low- and middle-income countries are among pedestrians and cyclists. However, less than 35 percent of low- and middle-income countries have policies in place to protect these road users.

The average rate was 17.4 per 100,000 people. Low-income countries now have the highest annual road traffic fatality rates, at 24.1 per 100,000, while the rate in high-income countries is lowest, at 9.2 per 100,000.

Have Iran's rangelands been shrinking over past decades?



ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — Rangelands in Iran were estimated at over 90 million hectares some 50 years ago, while the figure is currently 84.8 million hectares, the deputy director for the Forests, Range, and Watershed Management Organization has said.

"However, the statistics reported decades ago regarding the area of rangelands may not be accurate due to lack of precise measuring instruments," Tarahom Behzad explained.

Rangelands are grasslands, shrub lands, woodlands, wetlands, and deserts that are grazed by domestic livestock or wild animals.

Rangelands are distinguished from pasture lands because they grow primarily native vegetation, rather than plants established by humans, which are also managed principally with practices such as managed livestock grazing and prescribed fire rather than more intensive agricultural practices of seeding, irrigation, and the use of fertilizers.

Pastures covered some 90 million hectares area of land 50 years ago, while 74 percent of which were in good condition, Behzad told ISNA on Monday.

It shrank to 84.8 million hectares constituting 52 percent of the country's land area, he added. He went on to say that over half of the country's rangelands are in poor condition and its canopy cover (vegetation height) is less than 25 percent.

Establishment of industries, mining, and overgrazing are among the factors contributed to the depletion of rangelands, he highlighted.

He further stated that 75 percent of the rangelands value is environmental such as preventing soil erosion, reducing runoff volume and flooding potential, increased groundwater recharge and preserving plant and animal species.

The annual economic value of rangelands per hectare is \$232, which is mostly related to medicinal, food and industrial products, he highlighted.

Criticizing a lack of law on protection of rangelands, he noted that the law on conservation and exploitation of forests and rangelands has a more forest-based approach and deals with rangelands on a case-by-case basis.

If an independent law on pastures legislates, rangeland depletion will be largely prevented, he suggested.

Behzad concluded that the restrictions on the transfer of rangelands that will soon be announced to the provinces.

Ali Moridi, an official with the Department of Environment, said in July 2018 that in recent years, soil erosion, climate change, drought spells, overexploitation as well as over-grazing have led to the degradation of many rangelands in Iran.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ج

Guardian Council ratifies bill on soil conservation

The Guardian Council ratified the bill on soil conservation which has been passed by the Majlis (Iranian Parliament) earlier in February, Masoumeh Hosseinpour, director general of department for parliamentary and legal affairs at the Department of Environment (DOE) has announced.

As per the law, any trade or export of soil is prohibited, and only the excretion of minerals or exportation of low amounts of soil for research purposes is excluded after meeting the legal process, she noted. She went on to add that under the law, the judiciary system seeks to establish specific centers in order to pursue the related issues or violations, mining activities are also subject to compliance with environmental regulations.

PREFIX/SUFFIX

“uni-”

■ **Meaning:** single

■ **For example:** *unicorn* is a mythical animal represented as a horse with a single straight horn.

PHRASAL VERB

Part with something

■ **Meaning:** to give something to someone else, although you do not want to

■ **For example:** I'm reluctant to part with any of the kittens, but we need the money.

IDIOM

Off the cuff

■ **Explanation:** to say something without any previous thought or preparation

■ **For example:** He handles off-the-cuff interviews very well.

لایحه حفاظت از خاک توسط شورای نگهبان تایید شد

مدیر کل دفتر حقوقی و امور مجلس سازمان حفاظت محیط زیست اظهار داشت: لایحه حفاظت از خاک بعد از تصویب مجلس شورای اسلامی، به تایید شورای نگهبان رسید. به گزارش گروه محیط زیست خبرگزاری فارس، معصومه حسین پور، گفت: در قانون حفاظت از خاک انتقال خاک به خارج از کشور ممنوع است و فقط خروج مواد معدنی و مقادیر کم خاک به منظور امور پژوهشی پس از رعایت فرایند قانونی مربوط مستثنی است. مدیر کل دفتر حقوقی و امور مجلس سازمان محیط زیست درباره نقش دیگر نهادها در این قانون گفت: بر اساس این قانون قوه قضائیه به منظور رسیدگی به جرائم موضوع نسبت به ایجاد شعب تخصصی اقدام و به جرائم مربوط خارج از نوبت رسیدگی می کند. بر اساس این قانون عملیات معدنی هم منوط به رعایت ضوابط زیست محیطی خواهد بود.

Iraq pres. condemns attacks on protesters, security forces

TEHRAN—Iraq’s President Barham Salih has condemned as “unacceptable” the recent acts of violence targeting protesters, journalists and security forces amid a spate of unrest gripping the Arab country, warning against foreign attempts to fish in troubled waters.

“The targeting of peaceful demonstrators and security forces with live bullets, and the targeting of media and media workers is unacceptable in Iraq, which we have pledged to be a democratic, in which rights and freedoms are respected, and where all abide by the Constitution,” Saleh said during a televised speech on Monday.

A wave of protests began in Baghdad and some other cities a week ago, with the participants calling for better living conditions and more government efforts to end the nation’s economic woes less than two years after the country declared victory over the Takfiri Daesh terror group.

The initially peaceful protests, however, turned ugly after armed elements and violent rioters entered the scene, starting to vandalize public property and attempting to enter the Green Zone in Baghdad — which houses government offices and foreign diplomatic missions.

The rioters also attempted to take over local TV stations in the capital Baghdad over the weekend after the government removed a days-long curfew.



On Sunday, the Interior Ministry said 104 people, including eight security officers, had been killed and more than 6,000 people wounded in the mayhem.

Iraqi officials say there are “malicious hands” and “infiltrators” behind the killing of both protesters and security forces during the unrest.

According to Press Tv, Salih went on to say that Iraqi people have the right to hold peaceful rallies, urging security forces to

preserve the rights of all Iraqis.

He asked the protesters “to join a constructive and genuine dialog within the national framework that guarantees informing the people about the steps of reform, and holding direct and daily meetings with our youth in all cities.”

The Iraqi leader further called for restraint and de-escalation in order to prevent non-Iraqis from interfering in the national

dialog, proposing a government reshuffle and a review of the electoral law that meets the Iraqi people’s “national ambitions.”

Salih expressed support for a “fundamental ministerial reshuffle,” while announcing a series of measures to combat corruption and provide better job opportunities and services — a key demand of the protesters.

The president urged the parliament to enact reforms, including electoral reform, to address the demands of demonstrators.

Salih also reiterated that an inquiry will be launched into the deadly violence “in order to prevent the use of excessive force and to follow the rules of engagement.”

The president assured the nation that “the right to protest and freedom of expression are guaranteed by the Iraqi Constitution.”

On Sunday, the Iraqi government announced a series of reforms after an “extraordinary” session overnight in response to the sweeping unrest.

Confronted by its biggest challenge since coming to power just under a year ago, Prime Minister Adil Abdul-Mahdi’s cabinet also issued a decree including 17 planned reforms, such as land distributions and increased welfare stipends for needy families.

Authorities have asked protesters to give them time to implement the reforms.

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

Azerbaijan PM resigns, president replaces him with loyalist

TEHRAN — Azerbaijan’s President Ilham Aliyev has appointed a technocrat and close ally as the Caucasus country’s new prime minister after his predecessor suddenly resigned, officials said.

“The president has appointed his economic adviser Ali Asadov as new prime minister,” parliament speaker Oktay Asadov told legislators on Tuesday. “Prime Minister Novruz Mammadov has tendered his resignation which has been accepted by the president,” he added.

Legislators approved the nomination in a 105 to 0 vote.

The reason for Mammadov’s resignation has not been given. Observers describe Asadov, a 63-year-old presidential aide on economic issues, as Aliyev’s long-time ally.

Energy-rich Azerbaijan has been hit hard by a global slump in oil prices and the new appointment may be motivated by Aliyev’s desire to kick-start the stagnant economy, analysts say.

Mammadov was appointed to the post in April last year after having served as Aliyev’s foreign policy adviser and deputy



head of presidential staff.

With most powers concentrated in the hands of the president under the constitution, the prime-ministerial post is seen as largely a nominal role traditionally held by Aliyev’s close lieutenants.

The president has ruled the Caspian state with an iron fist since he was first elected in 2003, after the death of his father, Azerbaijan’s Soviet-era Communist leader and former KGB general Heydar Aliyev.

Under the Aliyev dynasty, Baku has faced strong international criticism for silencing dissent and opposition media, Al Jazeera reported.

Dubai ruler and princess set for legal battle in London next month

TEHRAN — Jordanian Princess Haya bint al-Hussein, the estranged wife of Dubai’s ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum, appeared at the High Court in London Tuesday in the latest round of a battle over the welfare of their two children.

At a preliminary hearing in July, she had asked the court to protect one of her children from a forced marriage and to grant a non-molestation order, a type of injunction that protects against harassment or threats.

The two parties said in a statement at the time that the legal battle was related to the welfare of their children but did not concern divorce or finances.

A full hearing in the case between the sheikh and Haya, the daughter of the late King Hussein and half-sister to King Abdullah, will be heard on Nov. 11 and is expected to last five days.

While Haya attended the preliminary



hearing, the sheikh was not present in court. He was represented by David Pannick, one of Britain’s top lawyers.

The judge told reporters that they could say Tuesday’s hearing took place but not give any details of the legal arguments.

The 70-year-old sheikh, who is also vice-president of the UAE, married the princess, a former member of the International Olympic Committee, in 2004 in what was believed to be his sixth marriage. He has more than 20 children by different wives, Reuters reported.

U.S. ambassador to EU faces questions in Trump impeachment probe

TEHRAN — Congress’s impeachment investigation into U.S. President Donald Trump turns Tuesday to the U.S. ambassador to the European Union and the role he may have played in trying to get Ukraine to probe Trump’s political rival Joseph Biden.

Gordon Sondland, who donated \$1 million to the Republican president’s inauguration committee, will meet behind closed doors with staff of three Democratic-led House committees.

The impeachment probe is focusing on a whistleblower’s allegations that Trump leveraged nearly \$400 million in aid to secure a promise from Ukraine’s president to investigate former vice president Biden and his son Hunter, who sat on the board of a Ukrainian energy company.

The House of Representatives Foreign Affairs, Intelligence and Oversight Committees staff are expected to ask Sondland to explain why he became involved in dealings with Ukraine, which is not a member of the European Union.

Sondland was a Seattle-based hotelier until Trump nominated him to his position as ambassador in May. He

was confirmed by the U.S. Senate in June and presented his credentials at the European Commission in July.

According to text messages released by House committee leaders last week, Sondland was heavily involved in contacts with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy as he sought a meeting with Trump, and Ukrainian officials expressed concern at the administration’s decision to block nearly \$400 million in U.S. military assistance for Kiev.

In one of the texts, for example, Sondland emphasized that Trump “really wants the deliverable.”

Charges that Trump pressured Zelenskyy in a July 25 telephone call to investigate Biden, a leading rival in Trump’s 2020 re-election bid, while withholding the military aid, helped prompt House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi to announce a formal impeachment investigation last month.

Trump has denied wrongdoing.

Concerns about the call, and possible Trump threats to Ukraine, came to the attention of Congress in a report by a



whistleblower. On Sunday, lawyers said a second whistleblower had come forward to substantiate that complaint, Reuters reported.

Turkey says it strikes Syria-Iraq border ahead of offensive

TEHRAN — Turkey’s military struck the Syrian-Iraqi border to prevent Kurdish forces using the route to reinforce northeast Syria, as Ankara prepares to launch an offensive there after a surprise U.S. troop pullback, Turkish officials told Reuters on Tuesday.

Turkey says it is ready to advance into northeast Syria, after the United States began

pulling back troops from the Turkey-Syria frontier in an abrupt policy shift widely criticized in Washington as a betrayal of America’s allies.

The U.S. move will leave Kurdish-led forces long allied to Washington vulnerable to attack by the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK), which brands them terrorists because of their links to Kurdish

militants who have waged a long insurgency in Turkey.

Giving details of the overnight strike, a security official said one of the main goals was to cut off transit route between Iraq and Syria often used by Kurdish armed groups “before the operation in Syria.”

“In this way, the group’s transit to Syria and support lines, including ammunition,

are shut off,” the official said.

According to Reuters, it was not clear what damage was done or whether there were casualties. Details of the strike, a joint operation by Turkey’s intelligence service and the military, were hazy. One official described them as an air strike, while the other said the site was made “unusable through various means”.

Over 300 arrests as London climate-change activists vow more protests

TEHRAN — London police have made more than 300 arrests as climate-change protesters, labelled “uncooperative crusties” by Prime Minister Boris Johnson, continued two weeks of civil disobedience to push for more to be done to protect the environment.

On Monday, the Extinction Rebellion group took action in several countries including Britain, Germany, Austria, Australia, France and New Zealand as they lobby politicians to go further in cutting carbon emissions.

The protests are the latest stage in a global campaign for tougher and swifter steps against climate change coordinated

by the group, which rose to prominence in April when it snarled traffic in central London for 11 days.

London police said 319 arrests had been made by the end of Monday and Johnson criticised the activists.

Speaking at an event Monday evening he said: “I am afraid that the security people didn’t want me to come along tonight because they said the road was full of uncooperative crusties,” using a slang British term for eco-protesters.

“They said there was some risk that I would be egged,” he added.

On Tuesday, some protesters hit back at him.

“It’s not helpful,” Diana Jones, from the southern English county of Sussex, told Reuters.

“We’re just ordinary people trying to express our deep disappointment with how slow the process of getting climate change action to occur is taking place, with the government not really listening, not really taking it forward on the scale it needs to be taken.”

The group wants Britain to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2025 rather than the government’s 2050 target< Reuters reported.

Faisal Meqdad advises Turkey not throw itself to death

➔1 “We’ve been there for many, many, many years beyond what we were supposed to be. Not fighting. Just there. Just there. And it’s time to come back home,” Trump said in his first public remarks since he decided to pull out U.S. forces. “But I can understand the other side of it... But if you go by the other side, that means we should never, ever come home.”

The U.S. commander in chief also asserted that he did not go solo in making the decision.

“I consulted with everybody,” he said. “I always consult with everybody.”

This is while the decision has faced backlash from many inside the U.S. government, including Trump supporters.

“This is a terribly unwise decision by the president to abandon our Kurdish allies, who have been our major partner,” Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine) told Politico.

Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) also criticized the partial pullout on “Fox & Friends,” saying that the “impulsive decision by the president has undone all the gains we’ve made [and] thrown the region into further chaos

“I hope I’m making myself clear how shortsighted and irresponsible this decision is in my view,” he added.

The collapse of media and what you can do about it

➔11 Consider Aylwin Lewis, another Walt Disney Compaany director and simultaneous longtime director at Halliburton, one of the largest transnational oil services firms, formerly run by Dick Cheney. A Halliburton subsidiary, Houston-based KBR Inc., received \$39.5 billion in Iraq related contracts over the last decade?—many of which were no-bid deals.

Consider Douglas McCorkindale, a director of giant media conglomerate Gannett for decades, and head of various Gannett subsidiary spin-offs. Gannett is the largest US newspaper publisher measured by daily circulation, and owns major US TV stations, regional cable news networks, and radio stations. Yet for about a decade, McCorkindale also served as a director at the US defence giant, Lockheed Martin, resigning in April 2014.

Consider that these individuals, through their media and defense industry interests, profited directly from devastating wars enabled, effectively, by their own propaganda.

And notice that this is a bipartisan game, lavishly benefitting liberals and conservatives alike.

So the global crisis of information and the global Crisis of Civilization?—where we see an escalating convergence of political extremism, ecological destruction, and economic volatility, unravelling our societies and families, decapitating the hopes of our youth?—are clearly one and the same reality.

The commodification of information is part and parcel of the commodification of the planet. This is a game where your mind, your attention and future are reduced to a worthless asset, traded through the markets until there is nothing left. But there is no need to accept this fate. All that is required is that you see it for what it is.

Once seen, new information and ideas can flow into your mind, new emotions can flow into your body, and you will be empowered to take action. If you see you can act. It becomes obvious that the only solution is to redesign the journalistic format such that new ideas and information lead to constructive action. It becomes obvious that to enliven the public sphere and restore our democratic institutions, we should facilitate the flow of money in media back to where it belongs; into the hands of both journalists and reader-participants committed to the creation of a just and sane future.

Trump says U.S. has not ‘abandoned the Kurds’ in Syria

TEHRAN— Donald Trump Tuesday insisted that the United States has not “abandoned the Kurds” with his decision seemingly giving the green light for Turkey to attack Kurdish militias inside Syria.

“We may be in the process of leaving Syria, but in no way have we Abandoned the Kurds, who are special people and wonderful fighters,” Trump tweeted.

He stressed that Washington has an important relationship with NATO member and trading partner Turkey.

He also said that “any unforced or unnecessary fighting by Turkey” would prompt “devastating” consequences for the country’s economy, AFP reported.

EU tells British PM Johnson to stop playing ‘stupid’ Brexit blame game

TEHRAN — The European Union accused Britain of playing a “stupid blame game” over Brexit on Tuesday after a Downing Street source said a deal was essentially impossible because German Chancellor Angela Merkel had made unacceptable demands.

With just 23 days before the United Kingdom is due to leave the bloc, the future of Brexit remains deeply uncertain as both London and Brussels positioned themselves to avoid blame for a delay or a disorderly no-deal Brexit.

In a sign that Johnson’s last-ditch proposals to bridge the Brexit impasse have failed, a Downing Street source said Merkel and Johnson spoke on Tuesday morning and she made clear that a deal was “overwhelmingly unlikely”.

The Downing Street source said that if Merkel’s position on Northern Ireland remaining in the EU’s customs union was the bloc’s position, then a deal was impossible.

“If this represents a new established position then it means a deal is essentially impossible not just now but ever,” the Downing Street source said.

A spokesman for the German chancellor confirmed the call had taken place but declined to comment further, Reuters reported.

Murray to make Grand Slam singles return at Australian Open

Former world number one Andy Murray will play at next year's Australian Open in what will be his first Grand Slam singles appearance since undergoing hip surgery, organisers confirmed on Tuesday.

Murray, 32, who has finished runner-up at Melbourne Park five times, was knocked out in the first round at last year's Australian Open having said before it started that it could be his last tournament.

The Scot underwent a career-saving hip resurfacing procedure at the end of January and made his competitive return to tennis in the doubles at Queen's Club in June, where he won the title with partner Feliciano Lopez.

Murray, who is currently ranked 289th in the world, played in the doubles and mixed doubles at Wimbledon, partnering Serena Williams in the latter, and made his singles return in Cincinnati in August.

He reached the quarter-finals of the China Open in Beijing last week, losing to Dominic Thiem, and won his opening match at the ongoing Shanghai Masters on Monday.

(Source: Mirror)

Struggling Espanyol sack Gallego, appoint Machin

Espanyol have sacked coach David Gallego eight games into the season and replaced him with former Sevilla and Girona manager Pablo Machin, the Spanish side said in a statement on Monday.

Gallego leaves Espanyol second bottom in the standings on five points, with the club winning one La Liga game, drawing two and losing five.

The final straw for the club was the 2-0 defeat by fellow strugglers Real Mallorca on Sunday.

The coach did have some success in European football, however, leading them past three qualifying rounds to make it into the Europa League group stage, picking up four points from their opening two games.

Gallego's successor Machin had sustained success with fellow Catalan side Girona, leading them into Spain's top flight for the first time in 2017 and finishing 10th in La Liga the following season.

Machin's work with Girona earned him the role at Sevilla where he made a strong start as the team made an early tilt for the title before fading away, and he was relieved of his duties in March.

(Source: Goal)

Sources: Barca must make €124m from sales

Barcelona must bring in €124 million in player sales before the end of the season or the club risks damaging its financial stability, sources have told ESPN FC.

Philippe Coutinho, on loan at Bayern Munich, and out-of-favour midfielder Ivan Rakitic are two of the players Barca believe they will be able to sell.

They are already working hard on balancing the books before the 2019-20 financial year ends on June 30, 2020. The Spanish club used to classify income from player sales as "extraordinary" until Neymar's transfer to Paris Saint-Germain for €222m in 2017.

Since then, they have been forced to make the sale of players each year a priority for their financial model to work. The amount they must bring in this season has been fixed at €124m to ensure they don't end the year in the red. If that were to happen, club members could push for the board's removal.

Some members are already anxious about the club's economic health, with one member at Sunday's AGM having suggested the board rushed through the sale of Jasper Cillessen to Valencia in June to avoid a similar scenario earlier this summer.

However, Barca's confidence lies in the belief that they will be able to bring in good money for Coutinho and Rakitic.

Both players were used as bait in a move for Neymar last summer but neither wanted to move to PSG. Coutinho ended up joining Bayern on loan, while Rakitic drew interest from Italian duo Inter Milan and Juventus.

Bayern have an option to sign Coutinho for €120m and must let Barcelona know before June 30 if they plan to push ahead with a permanent move for the Brazil international.

"Bayern are happy with Coutinho but it is still too early to know what they will do next summer," a Barcelona source told ESPN FC. "So far, no one from the club has called us to talk about taking up the option [to buy]."

(Source: Soccernet)

Wenger wants Lyon job but Laurent Blanc favourite

Arsene Wenger is interested in becoming Lyon manager, sources have told ESPN FC.

Wenger is also considered as an attractive option by the French club although their priority is Laurent Blanc.

Sources have told ESPN FC that former France boss Blanc is the main candidate and will meet Lyon on Tuesday to discuss the role, which would be his first job since leaving Paris Saint-Germain in 2016.

Wenger, who turns 70 on Oct. 22, left Arsenal in May 2018 after 22 years in charge and has turned down a lot of offers, including from Premier League clubs, in that time.

Although he has agreed in principle to take on a technical role at FIFA, his priority is to make a return to club management as soon as possible.

Lyon sacked Sylvinho on Monday after a poor start to the domestic season.

Fourteenth in Ligue 1, Lyon are only a point clear of bottom team Metz and have not won any of their last seven league matches (four defeats and three draws) after two wins in the first two weeks of the season.

Sylvinho, who had never managed a club before, was new sporting director Juninho's choice last summer. Nevertheless, there was no way back from such a disastrous start of the campaign.

(Source: ESPN)

World Cup winner Schweinsteiger announces his retirement from football

Bastian Schweinsteiger has announced his retirement from professional football, with the former Bayern Munich, Manchester United and Chicago Fire star hanging up his boots at the age of 35.

The World Cup winner has spent the last three years turning out in MLS after taking in a brief spell with the Red Devils at Old Trafford prior to his move to Chicago.

He was considered to be quite a coup when United secured his signature, but a spell in England did not play out as planned.

Schweinsteiger is, however, assured of a standing as a club legend at Bayern Munich.

Having first linked up with the German giants as a teenager, he went on to take in 500 competitive appearances, winning eight Bundesliga titles and the Champions League along the way, while also collecting 121 caps for his country.

Schweinsteiger's finest hour with Germany came in 2014, when Joachim Low's side savored World Cup glory in Brazil.

There will now be plenty of time for a combative figure to look back on many happy memories, with the decision taken



to take walk away at the end of the current campaign in America.

In a post on social media, Schweinsteiger said: "Dear fans, the time has now

come, and I will be finishing my active career at the end of this season.

"I would like to thank both you, my teams FC Bayern, Manchester United,

China TV drops NBA exhibition games; league defends free speech



Chinese state television said on Tuesday it would not air NBA exhibition games played in the country this week, heaping pressure on the U.S. basketball league after a tweet by a Houston Rockets executive backing protests in Hong Kong.

Rockets general manager Daryl Morey apologized on Monday for any hurt caused by the tweet, which he quickly deleted over the weekend.

But China's government, fans and the team's partners were not mollified, resulting in loss of sponsors and broadcasts in the world's second-largest economy and an important National Basketball Association (NBA) market.

However, NBA Commissioner Adam Silver spoke up for freedom of speech saying it was not up to the NBA to regulate what players, employees and team owners said, nor to adjudicate differences between people around the world.

CCTV state television said it strongly opposed Silver's support of Morey.

Any comments that challenged a country's sovereignty and social stability were "not within the scope of freedom of speech", CCTV said, adding it was reviewing its relationship with the NBA.

Months of anti-government protests in Chinese-ruled Hong Kong have angered Beijing, which has accused Western governments of stirring up anti-China sentiment. China rejects outside intervention in Hong Kong as interference.

The NBA had earlier issued a statement saying it regretted Morey's remarks, drawing criticism from U.S. lawmakers.

But Silver, in Japan for an exhibition game, defended Morey's right to express his opinions.

"It is inevitable that people around the

world – including from America and China – will have different viewpoints over different issues," Silver said in a statement. "It is not the role of the NBA to adjudicate those differences."

Silver later told a news conference in Japan, where he is attending an exhibition game, that the NBA was not apologizing for Morey "expressing his freedom of expression".

"I regret, having communicated directly with many friends in China, that so many people are upset, including millions and millions of our fans," Silver said.

The league has worked for years to cultivate the Chinese market and regularly plays exhibition games there. Its top stars, including Rockets guard James Harden, frequently visit to meet fans and take part in promotions with sponsors.

"As a league we are not willing to compromise those values," Silver said, referring to freedom of expression.

"I'm sympathetic to our interests here and to our partners who are upset. I don't think it's inconsistent on one hand to be sympathetic to them and at the same time stand by our principles."

Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang referred to criticism of Morey's comment by the Chinese Basketball Association, which he said made China's position "very clear".

"I suggest they pay attention to the reaction of the ordinary Chinese people," Geng told a regular briefing.

Exchanges and cooperation would not work if people failed to understand public opinion and China would take "firm and powerful measures to resolutely safeguard national sovereignty and security", he said.

(Source: Reuters)

Angry Bale wants to leave Real Madrid



Real Madrid forward Gareth Bale is "angry" and "fed up" at the Spanish giants and wants to leave the club, according to BBC Radio 5 Live's Guillem Balague.

Bale had been set to join Chinese Super League side Jiangsu Suning on a three-year contract in the summer - earning a reported £1m a week - but Real cancelled the deal because they wanted a transfer fee.

In July, Real manager Zinedine Zidane said "we hope he leaves soon", a comment to which Bale's agent Jonathan Barnett replied: "Zidane is a disgrace - he shows no respect for a player that has done so much for Real Madrid."

Bale has won four Champions Leagues, one La Liga title, a Copa del Rey and three Uefa Super Cups and Club World Cups during his time at Real, scoring more than 100 goals.

After the collapse of his move to China, the 30-year-old Wales international pulled out of a pre-season game in Munich - understood to be because he was not in the right mental state to play.

He has returned to the Real team this season, scoring twice in seven matches as they have moved to the top of La Liga.

But he was left out of the squad for last week's Champions League game against Club Brugge, before returning to the starting line-up for the 4-2 win against Granada on Saturday.

"Gareth Bale is fed up," said Balague. "He can do this no longer. At a time when he began to stand out, knowing that as he plays matches his fitness would be sharpened, he suddenly had to watch the game against Brugge in the stands. Nobody knows why.

Chicago Fire and the German national team. You made this unbelievable time possible for me!

"And of course, I would like to thank my wife Ana Ivanovic and my family for their support.

"Saying goodbye as an active player makes me feel a little nostalgic, but I am also looking forward to the exciting challenges that await me soon. I will remain faithful to football.

"Many, many thanks for the time we spent together, I will always have a place for you in my heart!"

Unsurprisingly, Bayern have been among the first to wish Schweinsteiger well in his retirement, with the Bundesliga outfit saying "Thanks for everything, Basti!" while also billing him as a "legend".

Schweinsteiger will be remembered as one of the most memorable figures of his era, with his game all about winning the ball and giving no less than 100 per cent every time he took to the pitch.

Those qualities should serve him well in whatever the future holds, with the call made to open a new chapter away from the playing field.

(Source: Goal)

U.S. women's team fights back against governing body's pay claims

U.S. women's national soccer team players pushed back in a court filing on Monday against claims by the U.S. Soccer Federation that some members earn more than their male counterparts, as they argued for class action status in the latest chapter of their closely-watched legal fight.

All 28 member of the U.S. women's national soccer team sued the U.S. Soccer Federation for gender discrimination in March in a lawsuit that included complaints about wages and working conditions.

Mediation between the two parties broke down in August, weeks after U.S. Soccer's President Carlos Cordeiro said in an open letter that the organization has paid more to the women's team than the men's in recent years.

A week ago, the organization said it opposed the women's players bid for class action status in their suit.

"Over the class period, the (Women's National Team) has played far more games than the (Men's National Team) and amassed a far higher win percentage, including earning two World Cup championships," the suit's plaintiffs said in Monday's court filing. "This is the only reason why the four (Women's National Team) class representatives were



able to earn more total compensation than members of the (Men's National Team)."

Those four players - Megan Rapinoe, Carli Lloyd, Alex Morgan and Becky Sauerbrunn - would have earned far more under the men's team's pay rate policy, the plaintiffs argued in the filing.

A spokesman for U.S. Soccer said members of the men's national team have the chance to earn larger bonuses, but they do not receive guaranteed money in their "pay-for-play contract structure."

"Our men and women's national teams have different pay structures, not because of gender, but because each team chose to negotiate a different compensation package with U.S. Soccer," the spokesman said.

The U.S. women's team successfully defended its World Cup title in July in France, defeating the Netherlands in the final. The team has four women's World Cup titles, more than any other nation.

Players from the U.S. men's squad threw their support behind their female counterparts in July and accused U.S. Soccer of not paying a fair share of generated revenue to national team players.

The dispute has attracted international attention, with numerous celebrities, athletes and politicians backing the women's players amid renewed conversation over pay equity in the United States.

(Source: Eurosport)

Iran U23 team have chance of qualifying for Olympics: Hamid Estili

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Newly-appointed of Iran U23 football team head coach Hamid Estili says they have chance of booking a place at the 2020 Olympic Games, however it will be a difficult task.

With three months to go to the 2020 AFC U23 Championship kick-off, Estili took charge of Iran's Olympic football team.

He replaced Farhad Majidi, who stepped down as his role after he fell out with the team's technical committee.

Iran have been handed a tough group in the 2020 AFC U23 Championship, where they are drawn in Group C along with defending champions Uzbekistan, China and South Korea.

The competition 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.

"We have been drawn in a tough group but are hopeful that we book a place in Olympics. We only have 90 days left to the competition but will do our best to send a well-prepared team to Thailand. Iran U23 football team will play a friendly match with Shahr Khodro on Friday and then we will travel to Doha to play friendly match with Australia," Estili said.

"Our players are young and need to play more warm-up games. The friendlies can help them to improve more. This is a very hard situation, but we're trying, and the football federation must support us ahead of the important tournament," he added.

"We have invited 35 players to the team but will travel to Doha with 20 players. We have had some problems in the past but there is no time to talk about that. Our goal is to keep moving forward," Estili concluded.



CAS confirms Persepolis winners of Iran's Super Cup

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) has confirmed that Persepolis football team are the winners of Iran's Super Cup.

The Iranian Football League Organization had already awarded the title to Persepolis after Esteghlal withdrew from the game but the Blues had protested the decision.

The match was originally scheduled for July 20 but Esteghlal requested Iran Football League Organization to postpone the match.

The organization refused to reschedule the match since two teams had to play in quarter-final of AFC Champions League and Iran Professional League (IPL).

Esteghlal filed an appeal to Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) against the decision and the sport's supreme court announced that Persepolis are the winners.

The Iranian Super Cup is a trophy awarded to the winners of a match between the Iran Professional League's season champions and the winners of the Hazfi Cup.

Abramov confident of Uzbekistan revival

Vadim Abramov returns to the role of Uzbekistan head coach confident his players can raise their game after a disastrous start to their Asian Qualifiers campaign last month, with a 2-0 defeat at the hands of Palestine costing former coach Hector Cuper his job.

The Argentinian parted company with the Uzbekistan Football Association days after the surprise reversal in Al Ram, prompting the re-hiring of the man who steered the country to the semi-finals of the 2011 AFC Asian Cup in Qatar.

That remains the best-ever result for Uzbekistan's senior men's team in the Continental competition and Abramov believes his players' commitment to their cause will be enough to lift their spirits ahead of the upcoming meetings with Yemen and Singapore in Group D of qualifying for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 and AFC Asian Cup China 2023.

"All the players feel the responsibility in front of the nation and the government, which is focused on the development of football," Abramov told the AFC.com. "Our people love football and the players themselves realize everything."

"So there is no need to lift their morale, I think they themselves will figure out how to get out of the situation which they are in."

"Of course, everything changes, so I have changed as a coach and most of the players from (my previous period in charge) aren't in the national team



anymore. As far as I know only Odil Akhmedov is still playing in the national team from that squad.

"We hope that we will handle the situation and the upcoming two matches will show us to what extent our players and football in general have changed."

Abramov's previous stint ended seven years ago during Uzbekistan's attempt to qualify for the 2014 FIFA World Cup Finals in Brazil and since then he has coached Lokomotiv Tashkent, Neftchi Fergana and, most recent-

ly, Bunydokor, where he has worked extensively with many of the country's up-and-coming talents.

And while he admits that he still needs to fully assess the squad after his lengthy absence from the national team, he will try to find a balance between youth and experience as the country pushes for a place at their first-ever FIFA World Cup Finals.

"I should start to work in order to respond, because I was out of the team during the last seven years," he

said. "I have worked in Lokomotiv and Bunydokor during this period, I had a long pause in my career due to some particular reasons, so it is difficult for me to judge. When I start to work productively I will be able to say what we need to change."

"Currently, a group of U-23 players have been capped for the national team. Uzbekistan's U23 team players mostly come from two local teams: Bunyodkor - where I've been working - and Nasaf."

"We have really talented young players but we should understand that the level of the national team and U23 team isn't the same. Therefore they should get more experience to play in the national team and that is the aspect which we are working on mainly."

The opening loss means Uzbekistan trail group leaders Singapore by four points and are three behind the Palestinians, while group favourites Saudi Arabia have a solitary point after they were held to draw by Yemen. Those results have left Abramov determined to pick up wins in both of their upcoming matches to put their challenge for Qatar 2022 back on track.

"Clearly, it is very important to win because of the current standings in our group and in order to get our confidence back," he said. "We must win these matches to save the chance to fight for the qualification to the World Cup."

(Source: the-afc)

Matchday Three: Five matches to look out for

32 ties will be played in the next two Matchdays of the Asian Qualifiers for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 and AFC Asian Cup China 2023 as the Continent's 40 hopefuls look to take another step closer in advancing to the two showpieces.

Matchdays One and Two produced several surprises and the AFC-com picks out five matches to keep an eye on in Thursday's Matchday Three.

■ China PR vs Guam

On paper, this should be a win for China PR but it can never be as easy that, not when they are facing a side who have a history of beating higher ranked opponents.

Guam grabbed headlines in the previous Asian Qualifiers when they defeated the higher ranked Turkmenistan and India in Round Two and the Pacific Islanders are itching to score big again.

Back-to-back defeats against Maldives and Philippines mean Guam have no room for error, setting the stage for a potential classic against a side - at 68 - ranked 127 places higher.

● Group A

China PR vs Guam
Tianhe Stadium (Guangzhou)

■ Australia vs Nepal

The Socceroos' last home defeat in FIFA World Cup qualification was in 2008 - 1-0 to China PR - and this is a streak Nepal will have to overcome at the GIO Stadium Canberra.

The South Asians, however, will not be lacking in motivation - especially after having bounced back from a 7-0 defeat to Kuwait to beat Chinese Taipei 2-0.

● Group B

Australia vs Nepal
GIO Stadium Canberra

■ Uzbekistan vs Yemen

Uzbekistan's opening match defeat to Palestine cost Hector Cuper his job as head coach and the Central Asians couldn't have picked a worse time to play a Yemen side brimming with confidence.

The West Asians followed up a 2-2 draw with Singapore by holding Asian giants Saudi Arabia to a similar result and will be confident of getting a positive result against an Uzbekistan side that could still be reeling from their opening day defeat.

● Group D

Uzbekistan vs Yemen
Pakhtakor Markaziy Stadium (Tashkent)

■ Bangladesh vs Qatar

The reigning AFC Asian Cup champions and FIFA World Cup 2022 hosts Qatar travel to Dhaka still wondering how they settled for a 0-0 draw with India on Matchday Two.

That result ended a winning streak for Felix Sanchez's side against Asian opposition and Bangladesh will be relishing the chance to lock horns with the Continent's standout team.



● Group E

Bangladesh vs Qatar
Bangabandhu National Stadium (Dhaka)

■ Vietnam vs Malaysia

The last meeting between the two Southeast Asian rivals in Hanoi ended with Vietnam lifting the 2018 AFF Cup.

Much, however, has changed since then and Malaysia - after a 3-2 win over Indonesia and a heartbreaking 2-1 loss to United Arab Emirates - will believe they have a chance to take all three points against a Vietnam side who are the dominant team in ASEAN now.

● Group G

Vietnam vs Malaysia
My Dinh National Stadium (Hanoi)

(Source: the-afc)

Farhad Ghaemi misses rest of FIVB World Cup

TASNIM — Iran's outside spiker Farhad Ghaemi will miss the rest of the International Volleyball Federation (FIVB) Men's World Cup due to the foot injury.



An MRI scan revealed that Ghaemi is suffering from a torn calf muscle.

Ghaemi will be out of action between four to six weeks, Siamak Afrouzi, Iran's volleyball team doctor, said.

The 2019 edition of the FIVB Volleyball Men's World Cup features 12 national teams from the five continental confederations playing in Nagano, Fukuoka and Hiroshima from October 1 to 15.

Zlatko Kranjcar candidate to become Gol Gohar coach

Persian Football — Ex-Iran U-23 coach Zlatko Kranjcar has been nominated to become head coach of Iranian football club Gol Gohar.

Gol Gohar parted ways with Vinko Begovic following poor results in Iran Professional League (IPL) and Iran's Hazfi Cup.

Under guidance of Begovic, Gol Gohar lost three matches and earned three draws in six matches.

Branko Ivankovic, Ali Daei, Majid Jalali and Firooz Karimi are also shortlisted to replace Begovic.

Kranjcar was fired as head coach of Iran U-23 football team in May after one year in charge.

Iran beach soccer beat Oman in friendlies

TASNIM — Iran national beach soccer team defeated Oman in two friendly matches in Muscat.

Team Melli defeated Oman 2-1 and 6-3 as part of preparation for the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC) World Beach Games in Qatar.

Iran have been drawn in Group C along with Ukraine, Senegal and Paraguay.

Abbas Hashempour's team will face Ukraine on October 11 and play Senegal and Paraguay on October 13 and 14, respectively.

The international beach multi-sport event is being organized by the ANOC and hosted by the Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC).

More than 1,300 athletes from around 90 countries are expected to participate in the event.

Men's Beach Soccer

Group A: Brazil, Switzerland, UAE and Morocco
Group B: Italy, Spain, Mexico and Solomon Islands
Group C: Iran, Paraguay, Senegal and Ukraine
Group D: Russia, Japan, Uruguay and El Salvador

Bento: Taeguk Warriors' focus on Sri Lanka

Paulo Bento is not looking beyond Sri Lanka as the head coach plots to seal a 10th consecutive FIFA World Cup appearance for Korea Republic.



The Taeguk Warriors host Sri Lanka in Hwaseong on Thursday in their second Asian Qualifiers tie for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 and AFC Asian Cup China 2023.

That will be followed by a historic trip to Pyongyang for their Group H match against DPR Korea next Tuesday but Bento said his squad are not looking beyond Sri Lanka.

"My players and I will play Sri Lanka first and then we'll face DPR Korea. So we're focusing only on Sri Lanka. We'll prepare for DPR Korea after," said Bento.

Korea Republic opened their campaign with a 2-0 win over Turkmenistan in September and will be firm favourites for another three points against Sri Lanka.

The South Asians suffered defeats to Turkmenistan (2-0) and DPR Korea (1-0) on home soil in September and will be heading into the Korea Republic tie on the back of a 6-0 defeat to Malaysia in an international friendly last Saturday.

Bento, however, said it is his team's form which will determine whether Sri Lanka - who at 202 are ranked 165 places below Korea Republic - will be defeated.

"The important thing for us is to stay within the framework of our philosophy," said the Portuguese.

"When the opponents tighten things up defensively, we have to keep things simple and efficient. We have to be accurate with our passes and shots, and finish our chances in front of the net."

(Source: the-afc)

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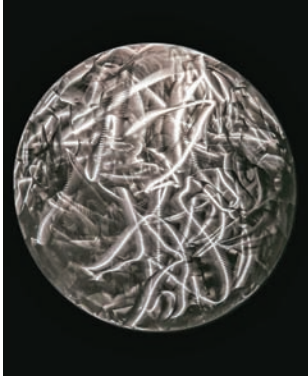
GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

People's true nature is revealed in their critical conditions.

Imam Ali (AS)

National Museum of Iran to display works by sculptor Bijan Basiri

A R T d e s k TEHRAN — A selection of works by the Italy-based Iranian sculptor Bijan Basiri will be displayed in an exhibition at the National Museum of Iran on Friday.



"Specchio Solare" ("Solar Mirror") by Bijan Basiri.

The Embassy of Italy in Tehran will organize the one-day exhibit entitled "Nottambulo" ("Night Owl") in collaboration with the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (TMCA) to mark Italy's Day of Contemporary Art, which falls on October 11, the TMCA announced on Tuesday.

Italian Ambassador Giuseppe Perrone, as well as the director of Iran's Museums and Historical Properties Office, Mohammadreza Kargar, and Iran's Visual Arts Office director Hadi Mozaffari are scheduled to attend the opening ceremony of the event.

"II Canto del Tempo del Pensiero Magmatico", a documentary by Ali Eskandari on Basiri, will also be screened at the ceremony.

The Embassy of Italy donated a sculpture from Basiri's series "Hermes" to the Music Museum of Iran in February 2019.

Iranian literati to attend Arbaeen gathering

A R T d e s k TEHRAN — A group of 80 Iranian writers and poets will be attending the annual Arbaeen pilgrimage in Iraq.



Arbaeen pilgrims, Karbala.

The literati on this journey, which will be sponsored by the Shahrestan Adab Cultural Institute, will visit the Iraqi cities of Karbala, Najaf, Samarra and Kadhimiya.

The group will organize poem recitations, storytelling sessions and several other cultural programs on their way to 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.

Cinéma V rit  receives about 6,000 submissions from over 100 countries

A R T d e s k TEHRAN — The 13th edition of Cin ma V rit , Iran's major international documentary film festival, has received about 6,000 submissions from over 100 countries, the Documentary and Experimental Film Center, the organizer of the festival, announced on Tuesday.

The submissions are mostly from Italy, Canada, the U.S., Austria, Egypt, Japan, Taiwan, France, Russia, Australia, Korea, Finland, Lebanon, India, Germany and Pakistan.

The official lineup of the festival will be announced in early November. The Cin ma V rit  festival will be held in Tehran from December 9 to 16.

True Molavi is in Masnavi not in sama: Iranology Foundation CEO

C U L T U R E d e s k TEHRAN — Iranology Foundation director Ayatollah Seyyed Mohammad Khamenei said on Monday that the Persian poet Molana Jala ad-Din Rumi is only perceivable through his masterpiece Masnavi-ye Manavi not by sama, a Sufi ecstatic dance.

Speaking during a ceremony organized at the foundation to commemorate Rumi, Khamenei said that it doesn't need to hold a dance ceremony to introduce a poet like Rumi and added, "The true Molavi is in Masnavi, not in sama."

"Due to their mysterious aspects, many of the teachings are not comprehensible to the public, and those people who can express these teachings in verse and prose are very important. Few people have this ability, but Molavi was one of those few people," he said.

"Nowadays, there are people in the world who intend to appropriate our luminaries, and unfortunately, we are only mere spectators. Today, there are nations, which have never had a rich cultural and historical background like Iran, that want to steal Iranian luminaries like Avicenna and Farabi to present them as Turkish personalities or to refer to Molavi as 'Rumi'," he stated.

"Actually, we should call Molavi 'Khorasani' rather than call him Rumi because of a few years of his residing in the Eastern Roman Empire," he noted.

However, he said that Molavi is an Iranian personality who does not belong to a specific society, but instead he belongs to all humanity.

Gholam-Ali Haddad-Adel, the director



Iranology Foundation director Ayatollah Seyyed Mohammad Khamenei.

of the Academy of Persian Language and Literature, also attended the ceremony.

In his brief speech, he lamented that political stories and gossip about singers

and dancers are the top five most viewed issues published by the Western media on Google, and said, "Molana's world is against what we see in the Western civilization."

"We see a world in the West that lacks any meaning, while what Molana wants to say is that man has great meaning, and the world is full of meaning," he noted.

Farda technology and industry festival announces winners



A scene from "Vars" by Javad Vatani.

A R T d e s k TEHRAN — The winners of the 5th Farda Technology and Industry Film and Photography Festival in various categories were honored during the closing ceremony at the Art Bureau in Tehran on Monday.

Javad Vatani was named best director for his documentary "Vars", while Narges Rostami received the award for best animator for her film, "The Scout".

"Vars" is about Veresk Bridge, an over 80-year-old bridge in northern Iran. It was constructed before World War II and is on the railway that connects between Tehran and the Caspian Sea region.

"The Scout" is a 4-minute animated film based on the true story of Azbar-Ali Hajavi, also known as Riz-Ali Khajavi, who

bravely saved the lives of passengers from a train crash in 1961.

In the animation section, the special jury award was presented to Bahram Azimi's "The Sixth String".

The film is about a musician, who wants to compose his new music inspired by his new car.

The story of the movie is based on the life of Darvish Khan, a Persian classical musician and tar player, who passed away 90 years ago in a car accident. He is considered as the first victim of a car accident in Iran.

In the industrial photography section, Mohammad Khayyati won first prize in the single photo category, while Mohammad Qorchi received first prize in the photo series category.

Works by Iranian artists on view at Lebanese exhibit

A R T d e s k TEHRAN — A selection of artworks created by Iranian artists on the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS) and his loyal companions is currently on view in an exhibit named "Beauties of Ashura" in the Lebanese city of Nabatieh.

The collection includes photos, paintings, graphic designs and teahouse paintings, the Persian service of IRNA reported on Tuesday. However, the report did not mention the venue of the exhibition.

Lebanese Hezbollah representative and MP Mohammed Raad, Iranian cultural attach  in Beirut Abbas Khameyar, as well as a number of artists and students, were among the participating guests at the opening ceremony of the exhibit on October 2.



Iranian cultural attach  Abbas Khameyar briefly explains about a teahouse painting on view at the exhibit "Beauties of Ashura" in Nabatieh, Lebanon on October 2, 2019.

"Two Popes" filmmakers hope Pope Francis is amused

LONDON (Reuters) — Director Fernando Meirelles is a fan of Pope Francis but says his new film, which tries to get into the head of the Argentine pontiff, also shows some of his weaknesses.

"The Two Popes" is based on the story of Pope Benedict's 2013 dramatic retirement from the papacy and the ascendancy of Pope Francis and imagines some of the conversations the two men might have had.

"I did the film because I'm a big fan of Pope Francis. I think he's a very important voice in the world today," Meirelles said at the London film festival on Monday.

"He sees the planet as one thing and he's trying to build bridges while everybody

wants to build walls. So I decided to make the film to know him better and even to support what he says," he added.

"It's very honest. We show the mistakes that he's done some 30 years ago in Argentina. But in the end, he comes across like somebody we should support," the Brazilian filmmaker said.

The film, starring Anthony Hopkins as the traditional Pope Benedict and Jonathan Pryce as his more liberal successor, is set mostly in a movie set replica of the ornately decorated Sistine Chapel in the Vatican.

"It was just such a great character to play, showing his flaws and his weaknesses

as well as his very positive strengths and what he can do as a kind of leader which we desperately need in political life these days; someone who can show us the way and show us how to live and go back to the old Christian values," Pryce said.

The Netflix movie launches in U.S. movie theaters in late November and on the streaming service in December. It is not known whether it will be screened at the Vatican.

"If he (Francis) sees it, I hope he is amused. I hope he isn't angry. And I hope he understands that what we've tried to portray is the essence of the man and what he is trying to do," said Pryce.



Pope Francis visits his predecessor, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, at the Mater Ecclesiae Monastery in Vatican, December 21, 2018. (Vatican Media/Handout via Reuters)