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2,451 tourism projects worth \$47b underway in Iran

TEHRAN — A total of 2,451 tourism-related projects worth 2,000 trillion rials (about \$47 billion) are being implemented across the country, tourism chief said on Thursday. “The country has potential to attract whatever investment is made in this [tourism] sector and now the tourism share of the country’s GDP is about 2.9%, while a share of 4.5% is sought to be achieved. To attain such figure we need 21 billion

dollars of investments in tourism arena,” Ali-Asghar Mounesan said.

He made the remarks on the sidelines of a conference, in which representatives from six eastern Iranian provinces discussed ways to expand tourism.

If [U.S.] sanctions are lifted and regional tensions are reduced, tourism capacity of the country will be much higher [than what we witness today], he said. **→10**

MP warns Europe to fulfil JCPOA duties or face Iran’s next step

TEHRAN — Chairman of the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee Mojtaba Zonnour has warned that Iran would take the fourth step in reducing its commitments to the 2015 nuclear agreement of the JCPOA should the other side continue to fail to fulfil its obligations under the accord.

“If Europe fulfils its obligations during the 60-day deadline, the Islamic Republic will return to its obligations under the

framework of Barjam (JCPOA),” Mehr on Friday quoted Zonnour as saying.

“Otherwise, the fourth step in reducing Iran’s commitments to Barjam will be taken more forcefully and decisively,” he added.

Washington withdrew from the internationally-endorsed nuclear deal with Iran on May 8, 2018, reimposed the toughest-ever sanctions against the country and started a plan to zero down Tehran’s oil sales. **→3**

Heavy fighting rages as Syrians flee Turkish attacks

TEHRAN — Turkish warplanes and artillery hit northeast Syria on the third day of an incursion that has forced tens of thousands to flee.

Heavy fighting was reported on Friday amid reports that Syrian Kurds had regained control of two of the 11 villages lost earlier.

“There is heavy fighting between the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and

the Turks on different fronts, mostly from Tal Abyad to Ras al-Ain,” the so-called Syria Observatory for Human Rights said.

The Observatory said SDF Kurdish militants were using “tunnels, trenches and berms” in their defense operations while Turkish forces relied on airstrikes, heavy artillery and rocket fire. **→13**

“Hiring infiltrator”, the British old-fashioned scenario for creating sedition in Iraq

By Marzieh Salehi

TEHRAN — After recent attacks on PMF positions by Israeli fighter jets and Iraqi prime minister’s emphasis on taking revenge, this time the country has been subjected to suspicious disturbance on the eve of the Arba’een.

Although the Western media is trying to link the disturbance to the spontaneous protests due to economic problems and corruption in Iraq. But the last few months developments and coincidence of the disturbance with some political, security and economic events and with the Arba’een march reveal that the economic and social problems were merely the cause of these events. Provocative and driving elements of the protests should be sought outside the borders of Iraq.

In the meanwhile, the Zionist regime plays a remarkable role in the protests to hit Iraq as one

of main countries of the axis of resistance. Using infiltrating elements is one of the old methods of Mossad to meddle in target countries’ affairs.

Investigations indicate that one of the main Twitter influencer of the recent disturbance is “Ghaith Al-Tamimi”, a man who has undergone major changes in his life. Al-Tamimi educated in “martyr Sadr” seminary as a theologian. After Saddam’s fall, he joined to Al-Sadr movement and was appointed as one of commanders of Mahdi Army, then he spent one and half year in U.S. custody.

When he released from prison, he got resident in Britain and gradually became an opponent of Shiite’s seminaries and religious authority.

As one of his anti-Shiite activities, he suggested to destroy holy shrines to stop Iranians from traveling to Iraq.

He also recently participated as a religious

expert in a new documentary on the BBC Arabic channel about “temporary marriage in Iraq” with the aim of assailing Iraqi Shiites.

There is undeniable evidence about Al-Tamimi’s cooperation with Israel, including numerous images of him next to Zionist Jews.

During the recent unrest, Al-Tamimi has escalated tensions. In a post on Facebook, He unveiled his fundamental role in organizing and leading the protests, offering some instructions to change the tactics of the protests. In another statement he attacked religious authority of Iraq, claiming Ayatollah Sistani is no longer a safety valve for Iraqi people, but for parties.

Al-Tamimi also unsuccessfully launched a hashtag on social media, which state the religious authority does not represent me, against most trusted and favorite principle for religious Iraqis. **→13**

Enemies are at ‘groveling’ phase: IRGC deputy chief

TEHRAN — The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) second-in-command says the enemies have reached the phase of “groveling” in order to save themselves from the quagmire of Yemen and other countries.

In remarks on Thursday, Rear Admiral Ali Fadavi said the enemies have not been successful in their conspiracies against Iran, Mehr reported.

He said the enemies admit that Iran is a powerful country and are seeking to boost their deterrence power against the Islamic Republic.

“America’s animosity and fight against Iran is the enmity of evil against good and this fact has always put the Islamic Republic of Iran in the

position of power,” Fadavi noted.

In similar remarks in June, Fadavi said the conflict between Iran and the United States is a conflict between good and evil which has lasted for forty years.

No one in the world would dare to act against the United States, but the Islamic Republic has openly and successfully confronted the United States for forty years, the admiral stated.

Tensions have soared between Iran and the U.S. in recent months, especially after the U.S. drone downing incident and the drone attacks on Saudi Arabia’s Aramco facilities.

On June 20, the IRGC’s aerospace unit downed

an American RQ-4 Global Hawk drone over the Strait of Hormuz after it violated Iranian airspace. Despite the U.S. claims that the drone had been flying over international waters, Iran put on show the retrieved parts of the drone in its own territorial waters where it was shot down.

The drone was shot by homegrown air defense missile system “Khordad-3rd”.

Following the incident, Chief of the IRGC Major General Salami said the downing of the drone sent a “clear message” to Washington.

“The message is that while Tehran is not seeking war it is completely ready to fight if necessary,” Salami said.

PERSPECTIVE
Mostafa Mousavi Sabet
Head of the Tehran Times
Art & Culture Desk

Filmmaker emerges to bring dramas to bring Iranian political history to life

“I was born during the war, which had lasted for so long that I thought that it would be forever and would never end. When I heard people taking about the frontline I imagined it was a geographical location like a sea or a forest near the borderlines of each country where the war took place. We were in our childhood, experiencing a certain way of life. We chanted slogans in the schools and talked about certain issues and heard about subjects from the media that deeply influenced our hearts and minds. Today, the experiences of those years caused me to be interested in returning to those years with new feelings and perceptions, which come from awareness, and I want to recollect the memories of those years again.”

Mohammad-Hossein Mahdavian made the remarks during the Fajr Film Festival in Tehran in February after the premiere of his latest political thriller, “Trace of Blood”, which is currently on screen at Iranian theaters.

Perhaps nobody imagined that a filmmaker of political thrillers was being born in the new wave of Iranian cinema in 1916 when Mahdavian made his debut feature “Standing in the Dust” at 34.

The film recounted the life story of Ahmad Motevasselian, an IRGC commander who was kidnapped by the Zionist regime in 1982 in Lebanon.

The choice of subject matter was viewed by critics as an easy and clever way for the newcomer to obtain approval for the film from Iranian cultural officials.

At the time, the film was produced at the Owj Arts and Media Organization, a Tehran-based institution that produces revolutionary works in art and cinema. Nowadays, the projects that the organization supports no longer face burdensome bureaucratic hurdles imposed by the state.

“‘Standing in the Dust’ was the most customized movie I have ever made, and was my most popular film and also received critics acclaim,” Mahdavian told the Persian daily Sharq after the premiere of “Trace of Blood”. **→16**



© ISNA/ Alireza Parviz

Over 3m Iranians so far registered to attend Arbaeen march

TEHRAN — More than 3 million people have so far registered to participate in the Arbaeen march, IRNA reported on Thursday.

Over 72,000 foreign nationals have also registered up until the moment, the report added.

This year, visa requirement was removed for the pilgrims as a “positive step” toward paving the way for Iranian pilgrims visiting the neighboring country. **→12**

PERSPECTIVE
Ramin Hossein Abadian
Mehr News Agency
journalist

Erdogan’s dreams in northern Syria won’t be realized

Although Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s goals in northern Syria are beyond the issue of Kurds, but this dream will not be interpreted.

Erdogan’s political mindset and desire are toward the establishment of neo-Ottomanism in the region. Fighting terrorism and the threats of PKK (Kurdistan Workers’ Party) and its elements on the Syrian-Iraqi borders, is just an excuse to enter northern Syria.

Dreams such as expanding territory, changing demographic structure on the border with Syria, and increasing influence and power in the region, prompted Erdogan to declare war on Syrian Kurds. It was expected that with the efforts of Syrian people, army, and Kurds, and the assistance of Bashar al- Assad’s regional allies, the Syrians would get rid of ISIL.

For many years, the U.S. has suffered repeated defeats on both cold and hot wars in the Middle East, and lost billions of dollars. According to the U.S. president, who is currently dealing with impeachment, the White House no longer wants to be involved in this war and should have not entered the Middle East in the first place. These words by Trump are to challenge Democrats and Obama. It must be said that the only true word of Trump during his presidency is that the U.S. should leave the region.

Since the beginning of the Syrian war, U.S. intelligence agencies have brought ISIL to Syria through Turkey and Iraq and equipped it to hit the axis of resistance and also to create a safe zone for the Zionist regime. But the ISIL was defeated and 12000 of its forces were captured by Kurds. It is likely that most of them have important information about U.S. support and Israel’s role. The U.S. has allied with Turkey to eliminate the information.

Trump is withdrawing U.S. troops from Syria, with the excuse of cutting security and defense costs, and put Erdogan, his only ally in the Syrian case, in charge to keep American public opinion satisfied. **→13**

Pakistan PM to visit Iran Saturday

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan plans to start on a trip for mediation between Iran and Saudi Arabia, visiting Iran on Saturday.

According to Indo-Asian News Service, Khan will first travel to Iran on a one-day visit. He is scheduled to meet with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani on Sunday.



Khan will leave Iran for Saudi Arabia on Sunday.

Speaking at the weekly media briefing on Thursday, Pakistani Foreign Office spokesman Mohammad Faisal confirmed Khan's trip.

"The visits of the prime minister to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran are on the cards," he said without giving dates for the trip.

"I will update you as and when things unfold," he added.

The Pakistani prime minister is visiting Iran as the

tension in the region is getting more complicated. On Friday morning, an Iranian oil tanker was struck by two missiles in the Red Sea, 60 miles away from Saudi coastlines.

Riyadh and the United States had blamed Iran for the September 14 drone attacks on the Saudi oil facilities without presenting a substantial evidence. Yemen, which is under attack by the Saud-led coalition, had taken responsibility for the attack.

Khan had said that he was making an effort to mediate between Tehran and Riyadh. He held talks with Saudi Arabia's leaders in Riyadh, as well as Rouhani at the United Nations in September.

Rouhani warned world leaders on September 25 at the UN General Assembly that "the Persian Gulf region is on the edge of collapse, as a single blunder can fuel a big fire."

Russian Ambassador to Lebanon Alexander Zasyepkin has said that the Middle East needs dialogue between Iran and Saudi Arabia without a pre-condition.

In an interview with Al Akhbar daily, Zasyepkin criticized the United States' policies in the region and said that Washington does not respect international law and the countries' sovereignty, ISNA reported on Wednesday.

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

"An Iranian-Saudi dialogue could solve many of the region's security and political problems," Larijani predicted.

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

In an exclusive interview with Al Jazeera, he said, "Everybody is open to dialogue."

"Iran says [it is] willing to negotiate if sanctions are lifted; the U.S. [also] asks for dialogue ... neither does Saudi Arabia close the door for dialogue," Abdul Mahdi said.

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

Iran says ready to cooperate with intl. bodies to decrease climate change consequences

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Seyed Abbas Araqchi on Friday affirmed that Iran is firm to cooperate with international-regional organizations to narrow down the side-effects of climate change.



Addressing members of presiding board of the 6th session of international-regional climate change conference, Araqchi said, "Taking action against consequences of climate change is not possible without cooperation of regional countries."

He further stressed that managing negative impacts of dust haze and trans-boundary waters is not possible without cooperation of regional states and international organizations.

The senior diplomat added that the Foreign Ministry is resolved to do its best to pave

the ground for materialization of such cooperation between the regional nations.

Russia: So soon for comment on causes of explosions on Iranian oil tanker

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The director of the Asian Bureau of the Russian Foreign Ministry said on Friday that necessary investigations about causes of explosions in an Iranian oil tanker in the Red Sea are underway, suggesting it is necessary to refrain from immediate comments.

"Investigations are underway and there is still no evidence for talking about involvement of any side (in the incident)," Zamir Kabulov said, according to the Persian-language page of Sputnik.

He further called for patience till the results of investigations come out.

The vessel, operated by the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) and owned by the National Iranian Tanker Company (NITC), caught fire 100 km (about 60 miles) away from the Saudi port city of Jeddah in the Red Sea after two missiles hit its hull on Friday morning.

According to media reports, the explosion inflicted heavy damages on the vessel and oil spilt into the Red Sea.

The crew of the tanker, called SABITI, are safe, the media reported.

"None of the crew members were injured at the explosion... the situation is under control", Iran's Nour News cited an unnamed source as saying.

Cleric condemns Turkish invasion of Syria

Ayatollah Khatami warns Turkey not to repeat the Saudi Yemen mistake

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Tehran's provisional Friday prayers leader Ayatollah Seyed Ahmad Khatami said that Turkish troops' operation in northern Syria is nothing but aggression against an independent country and condemned the move.

Addressing a large number of worshippers in Tehran, Ayatollah Khatami termed the Turkish army's heavy attack on the northern part of the war-hit Syria as a blatant aggression against an independent country, calling on Ankara no to repeat a mistake done by Riyadh which is now in a Washington-made trap in Yemen.

"Iran's stance is an advising position which in meant immediate halt (of the Operation Peace Spring) and withdrawal of forces from the Syrian soil."

"I have an advice to the Turkish government. Saudi Arabia as a servant of the U.S. accepted Washington's order and now it has fallen in a swamp made by Washington. The Saudis wanted to put an end to the Yemen issue in one week, but now (nearly) after five years, these are Yemeni combatants that have gained upper hand, therefore, Turkey should be very careful in order not to fall in a similar trap made by the



U.S." the Friday prayers leader remarked.

Turkey launched an offensive on the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) on Wednesday. This happened despite warnings by Iran, Russia, Egypt and the European Union. The Syrian Kurdish fighters commonly referred to as SDF,

were instrumental in defeating Daesh.

On Tuesday, the Iranian Foreign Ministry in a statement had voiced Tehran's strong opposition to Turkish military invasion of Syria, warning that such a move would certainly exacerbate the security situation in the region.

Dangerous adventure against Iranian tanker

Missiles hit Iranian oil tanker in the Red Sea near the Saudi coast

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — In what Tehran calls a "dangerous adventure", two separate explosions, possibly caused by missile attacks, hit an Iranian oil tanker operated by the National Iranian Tanker Company (NITC) near the Saudi port city of Jeddah.

According to a statement by the NITC, the explosions took place some 60 miles from Jeddah early Friday.

The explosions hit the vessel's hull, causing heavy damages to the ship's two main tanks, which resulted in an oil spill in the Red Sea.

The spill is currently stopped, according to officials.

According to IRNA, the missiles hit the right side of the tanker's hull, creating holes measuring 50-to-150 centimeters.

The NITC said the tanker is heading toward the Persian Gulf with a low speed.

Technical experts are currently investigating the cause of the explosion. They believe it was a "terrorist attack", unnamed sourced told the Iranian Students News Agency (ISNA).

The statement by the NITC said the tanker, named Sabiti, was hit by two separate explosions at 5:00 and 5:20 am Friday, probably after being struck by missiles.

The NITC said the crew members were currently safe and none of them has been harmed in the explosions.

The tanker is currently in a stable condition, the statement added.

The NITC later dismissed the reports that the vessel had caught fire, according to SHANA, a new agency run

by the Oil Ministry.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi described the attack as "a dangerous adventure", warning that all the responsibilities fall on those behind it.

"The investigations conducted by the National Iranian Tanker Company indicate the Iranian tanker has sustained damages after being targeted twice, at half-hourly intervals, from a place near its shipping route in the east of the Red Sea," Press TV quoted Mousavi as saying.

Expressing concern about the maritime pollution caused by the massive oil spill in the region after damages inflicted on the vessel, he said, "All the responsibilities for the act, including the extensive environmental pollution in the region, fall on those behind the dangerous adventure."

He also noted that a probe is being conducted on the details of the attack and those behind it, and the results will be announced once it's done.

The NITC dismissed media reports that the oil tanker was hit by missiles fired from Saudi Arabia, IRNA reported.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said Beijing hoped the relevant parties would work together to uphold peace and stability in region, Reuters reported.

The director of the Asian Bureau of the Russian Foreign Ministry also said the necessary investigations about causes of the explosions are underway, suggesting it is necessary to refrain from immediate conclusions.

"Investigations are underway and there is still no evidence for talking about involvement of any side (in the incident),"

Zamir Kabulov said, according to the Persian-language page of Sputnik.

Earlier in the day, the U.S. Navy's Bahrain-based Fifth Fleet announced it is aware of media reports about the blast but had no further information.

"We are aware of the reports but we don't have any further information," a spokesman said.

The blasts caused oil prices to jump by over 2 percent, media reports said.

The explosions came a few months after Iranian oil tanker Happiness-1 faced "engine failure" and lost its control with 26 on board off the Red Sea port of Jeddah, and was later transferred to the port city for maintenance.

According to Iranian officials, the incident had occurred on April 30 while Happiness 1 was on its way to the Suez Canal, and that water had leaked into the tanker's engine room.

The Saudis refused to let the vessel leave and demanded that Iran pay \$200,000 a day for maintaining the vessel in the port, some \$10 million in total. It was finally released on July 20 and returned home.

Also in June, two large tankers were hit by explosions in the Sea of Oman. The Marshal Islands-flagged Front Altair and the Panama-flagged Japanese-owned Kokuka Courageous were hit in suspected attacks in the Gulf of Oman.

At that time, Iranian rescue workers rushed to the assistance of two tankers hit by the unspecified accidents in the Sea of Oman, transferring all of their 44 crew members to its southern shores.

Second 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

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Zarif calls on regional countries to back HOPE initiative

All will benefit from security in the Persian Gulf or all will be deprived of it, FM says

TEHRAN (mfa.gov.ir) — Iran's foreign minister has, in an article written for the Kuwaiti newspaper Al-Rai, called on regional countries to contribute to the implementation of the Hormuz Peace Endeavour (HOPE), an initiative put forward by President Hassan Rouhani.

In his Al-Rai article published on Thursday in Arabic, Mohammad Javad Zarif argued that either all countries in the Persian Gulf region will benefit from security or all of them will be deprived of it.

The full text of the article follows:

The Hormuz region is of strategic significance in international and energy trade. Some 15 million barrels of oil are supplied to consumers on a daily basis, and at the same time a large amount of goods are traded between countries dependent on this region and those beyond. For the regional countries, security and stability are an undeniable necessity in a bid to guarantee access to international markets. It has been centuries that regional security has been ensured by regional states, and doing so would not be possible without cooperation and interaction.

The current critical situation should lead us to believe that what the region is in dire need of to achieve lasting security, but has not attained yet, is to develop the common understanding that security cannot be achieved by purchasing massive amounts of weapons and signing military accords with foreign powers, which pose the greatest threat to regional security with their relentless interference and by supporting the Zionist regime. Rather, security is contingent upon reliance on people and national potentialities as well as boosting relations to enjoy good neighbourliness with other countries in the region. Our region is suffering from a lack of comprehensive regional dialogue in different domains, which can uproot peace and prosperity forever. Our region is more in need of intra-regional dialogue than accusations, harsh and aggressive rhetoric, and stockpiling of weapons and an arms race. The Islamic Republic of Iran has, in the past, realized the dangers ahead and put forward two initiatives: a forum for regional dialogue and a non-aggression treaty. Now, with an awareness of growing threats and challenges, we feel the need for the realization of new dialogue in the region more than ever in order to save the region and bring it back from the brink of annihilation. We believe it is the common responsibility of all regional countries to ensure security in the region, and we are confident that with the cooperation of all countries in the Hormuz region, it would be possible to steer the region through rough and rogue waves towards the coast of tranquility, progress and prosperity. It is the key responsibility of all regional states to ensure security in the region. Security should be endogenous and not affected by foreign intervention. The destiny of people and nations in the Persian Gulf region is closely intertwined thanks to religious, cultural, traditional, historical, geographical and family commonalities. Security in that region cannot be divided. Either all in the region enjoy security or all are deprived of it. Accordingly, the Hormuz Peace Endeavour (HOPE) initiative was presented by President Rouhani during his speech at the UN General Assembly meeting.

The Hormuz Peace Endeavour brings together eight countries, namely the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Republic of Iraq, the Sultanate of Oman, the United Arab Emirates, the State of Kuwait, the State of Qatar, the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Islamic Republic of Iran. The proposed plan has what it takes to realize lasting security in the region through intra-regional dialogue.

This plan is based on principles such as commitment to



“Our region is more in need of intra-regional dialogue than accusations, harsh and aggressive rhetoric, and stockpiling of weapons and an arms race.”

objectives and axioms of the United Nations, good neighbourliness, respect for territorial sovereignty and integrity, non-violability of international borders, peaceful settlement of all differences, rejection of threat or use of force or participation in any military coalition or accord against one another, non-interference in each other's domestic affairs and foreign relations, respect for one another's national, religious and historical sanctities and symbols, mutual respect, mutual interests and the welfare of all governments and peoples in the region, promotion of mutual understanding and peaceful and cordial relations, cooperation to eradicate terrorism, extremism and sectarian tensions, resolving tensions and settlement of all divisions and conflicts through peaceful means and dialogue, enhancement of relations and preventive warnings, collective provision of energy security, freedom of shipping and free transfer of oil and other resources, support

ing the environment and expansion of collaboration, interaction, business, trade and investment at different levels and in different areas between governments, people and the private sector.

Achieving the above-mentioned objectives will be pursued by holding meetings at the levels of experts, ministers and heads of state as well as specialists, think tanks and the private sector along with forming the necessary action groups in high-priority areas.

Areas of cooperation and issues on the agenda of talks by actions groups and meetings of the eight countries may include a non-aggression and non-interference agreement, control of weapons and confidence-building measures, creation of areas free from Weapons of Mass Destruction, military communications and the exchange of information and data, permanent contact lines, preventive warning systems, war on drugs, terrorism and

human smuggling, improvement of energy security and freedom of shipping for all, joint investment in the areas of oil, natural gas, energy, transit and transportation, boosting transactions in the private sector, business and trade, cultural and social cooperation including dialogue among religions, cultural exchanges and tourism, scientific collaboration including the exchange of scientists and university students, joint scientific-technological projects, cooperation in emerging cyber-domains such as cybersecurity, nuclear safety, protection of the environment, especially the marine environment and the negative effects of dust particles and particulate matter, humanitarian cooperation, particularly with regards to migrants, asylum-seekers and homeless people.

Also, the United Nations' potential will be tapped to create an international coverage and allay the possible concerns of some parties and ensure the legitimate interests of the international community.

It goes without saying that the success of any plan entails the contribution of all members as well as mutual trust. President Rouhani has instructed me to begin my consultations in order to learn about the viewpoints of governments and elites in the region and complete and reinforce the Hormuz Peace Endeavour initiative. The elites, think tanks and the private sector can offer their constructive opinions and suggestions to contribute to the formation and reinforcement of the Hormuz Peace Endeavour initiative. We have pinned our hopes on the implementation of this initiative and await positive reaction to the proposed plan by the regional countries. We hereby announce our readiness to enter into comprehensive and overarching talks within the framework of the above-said principles and objectives.

MP warns Europe to fulfil JCPOA duties or face Iran's next step

1 → Under the nuclear agreement, Tehran undertook to put limits on its nuclear program in exchange for the removal of economic and financial sanctions.

Following the U.S. withdrawal, Iran remained fully committed to the JCPOA for a year, but announced on the anniversary of Washington's bellicose move that its “strategic patience” is over and would gradually reduce its commitments to the deal at 60-day intervals, which were designed as deadlines for Europe to protect Tehran's interests under the deal.

So far, Iran has taken three steps in that regard.

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

Tehran has repeatedly said its measures



will be reversed as soon as Europe finds practical ways to shield the Iranian economy from unilateral U.S. sanctions.

Zonnour said Iran has many options to

choose from in the fourth step.

He emphasized that Europe should pay the price if it wants to salvage the nuclear accord. “Europe is capable to do this, but

instead it takes steps in line with U.S. goals, and accordingly it does not have the necessary will to preserve Barjam,” the top MP added.

Pointing to remarks by U.S. officials that they would not lift the sanctions before any dialog with Iran, Zonnour said the Americans proved their deceptive and lying nature to the world by exiting the JCPOA and today nobody has any doubt that the United States does not honor its “commitments”.

The U.S. has announced that it's been actively 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.

Iran not to represent Yemenis in possible talks with Saudis: Gov. spokesman



POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian government spokesman Ali Rabiei said that his country does not intend to be representative of Yemen in possible talks with Saudi Arabia, Fars reported on Friday.

“There is no need for Iran to take part in possible negotiations with Saudis on behalf of Yemenis,” the spokesman said.

He also pointed to the intentions of Pakistani Premier Imran Khan to mediate between Iran and Saudi Arabia, saying, “Several well-intentioned countries have thus far sought to be a mediator between Tehran and Riyadh, some of them were delivering Saudis' messages too.”

“At media level, at least, the Pakistani premier announced officially that the Saudi crown prince has called on him to hold talks with the Iranian president over resumption of negotiation with Saudis,” Rabiei added. In late September, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman

Seyed Abbas Mousavi stressed his country's continued support for the Yemenis against the Saudi-led war on their country.

“Iran supports the legal government of Yemen against the aggressors. Iran has always supported the Yemenis spiritually and politically,” Mousavi told reporters in a press conference in Tehran at the time.

Asked about Iran's position on Yemenis' attacks against Saudi Arabia, he said, “In our view, what the Yemenis do are defensive measures.”

Mousavi also underlined that resolution of the Yemen crisis depends on acceptance of ceasefire and halt of attacks on Yemeni civilians.

The Pakistani prime minister is due to pay a one-day-long visit to Iran on Saturday as part of his efforts to mediate between Tehran and Riyadh.

He will leave Tehran for Riyadh on Sunday, according to Indo-Asian News Service.

Salami: Foes retreat from places Iran steps in

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN**— The Islamic Republic has become so powerful that the enemy withdraws from wherever Iran steps in, says Chief of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Hossein Salami.

“Today, the power of the Islamic Republic of Iran has reached a level that... the enemy rapidly withdraws from wherever we step in,” Major General Salami said on Thursday, Tasnim reported.

He was highlighting the U.S. military's failures in the face of the Iranian armed forces.



The senior general argued that Saudi Arabia and Israel, as U.S. friends, know that Washington won't be able to support them in their tough days.

The remarks came against the backdrop of increased tensions between Tehran and Washington, after the Islamic Republic shot down an advanced U.S. spy drone over its territorial waters.

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps said on June 20 that a U.S. spy drone that violated the Iranian territorial airspace in the early hours of the day was shot down by the IRGC Aerospace Force's air defense unit near the Kooh-e-Mobarak region in the southern province of Hormozgan.

Tensions between the U.S. and Iran escalated further after Yemeni armed forces conducted a large-scale operation against Saudi Arabia's Aramco oil installations last month, in response to the Saudi-led war on their country.

The Yemeni Houthi Ansarullah movement immediately took credit for the attacks, but U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo swiftly accused Iran of being behind the assault, without providing any evidence. Tehran categorically rejected the allegations.

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia claimed that the strikes on its oil infrastructure came from the “north” and were “unquestionably” sponsored by Iran, adding that the Houthis were not responsible for the assault despite claiming it.

Navies from Caspian Sea states ink fresh MOU

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — In a quintet meeting in Saint Petersburg on Friday, commanders of the Caspian Sea littoral states' navies signed a fresh memorandum of understanding (MOU) to boost their multilateral cooperation in various fields.

Navy commanders of Iran, Russia, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan in the last day of their 4th meeting of this kind signed the MOU to expand cooperation in various arenas of training, exchange of information, relief and rescue and operational activities.



Rear Admiral Hossein Khanzadi, the Iranian navy commander, attached significant importance to the newly-agreed MOU, saying, “The all five navy commanders, who participated in the meeting, came to the conclusion that the entire technical, training, repair and maintenance, and producing requirements of level and under-level sea vessels of their navies must be met by the Caspian Sea littoral states.”

The MOU was signed following a recent joint ratification by presidents of the five Caspian Sea littoral states forbidding presence of other countries in the sea.

In relevant remarks earlier this week, Rear Admiral Khanzadi said that Iran and Russia were planning to hold a joint naval maneuver in the near future.

‘Iranian Army playing pivotal role in countering plots’

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Director of the Army's Ideological-Political Bureau said on Friday that the Iranian Army is a spiritually-oriented force that enjoys key and determinative role in foiling the enemies' plots.

Abbas Mohammadi Hassani, who was addressing worshippers in Tehran before Friday prayer sermons, said, “Today, the army is a perfect spiritually-oriented force and is among durable honors of the Islamic Republic of Iran.”

He further quoted Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei as saying that the army is a “large exhibition for Islamic values”.

Last week, Commander of the Army Major General Seyed Abdolrahim Mousavi reminded that the Islamic Republic has maintained security in the Persian Gulf region for the past 40 years, reassuring that all threats at all levels from enemies would be vehemently responded.

“It is now 40 years that the security of the Persian Gulf has been maintained by the efforts of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and if the countries of the region contribute [to these efforts], this region will be the safest in the world,” Major General Mousavi said on Monday.

Mousavi officially opened the “Persian Gulf Air Defense Headquarters” in the southern province of Bushehr on Monday. The new air defense base is intended to tighten Tehran's grip over security of the region and counter trans-regional plots.

STOCK MARKET	
TEDPIX	313049.1
IFX	4069.65
Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir	
CURRENCIES	
USD	42,000 rials
EUR	46,142 rials
GBP	51,356 rials
AED	11,437 rials
Source: cbi.ir	
COMMODITIES	
Brent	\$59.78/b
WTI	\$54.22/b
OPEC Basket	\$58.65/b
Gold	\$1,486.50/oz
Silver	\$817.52/oz
Platinum	\$895.30/oz
Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com	

Iran, China confer about customs cooperation

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iran and China discussed expansion of customs cooperation and trade facilitation in a meeting between Chinese Ambassador to Tehran Chang Hua and Head of Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) Mehdi Mirashrafi, IRIB reported.

In the meeting, the Chinese ambassador stressed his country's willingness for expanding trade relations with Iran. "Iran is one of China's largest trading partners. A large number of goods are annually traded between the two countries, so expanding these relations is one of the most important issues for China and we will do our best to improve our relations," Chang Hua said.

The Iranian official, for his part, offered suggestions such as exchanging customs information, holding mutual staff training programs, reinforcing the Silk Road project, establishing a common trade gate, using the two countries' shared experiences, exchanging X-ray images and etc. in order to facilitate customs cooperation between the two sides.

He further suggested that the officials from both sides gather in a meeting every six months to discuss relevant issues and find ways to further improve the relations.

According to the customs reports, with 24.37 percent share of Iran's total imports in H1 of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22) China is Iran's top importer of non-oil goods.

Iran's non-oil exports from March 21 to September 22 stand at 70,009 tons valued at \$20,948, which shows a 10.55 percent decrease in terms of value and a 22.5 percent increase in terms of weight compared to the same six-month period last year.

Meanwhile, China was the top exporter to Iran in the same six-month period with 25 percent share of Iran's total imports, valued at \$5.304 million.

The Bulgarian economy is the most competitive in the Balkans

The Bulgarian economy is ranked 49th in the global competitiveness ranking according to the World Economic Forum (CIF) ranking. In 2019, Bulgaria climbs two positions in the prestigious ranking, comprising 141 countries worldwide. The country's score is 64.9 points.

As per novinite.com, the Bulgarian economy is more competitive than most economies in our region. Bulgaria is two places ahead of Romania, which is 51. We also perform better than Greece (59th place), Turkey (61st place), Croatia (63rd place), Serbia (72nd place), Montenegro (73 place), Albania (81st place) and Northern Macedonia (82nd place).



This year, the most competitive economy in the world is the one of Singapore, which climbs from second to first, replacing last year's U.S. leader. Germany and Japan are out of the top five, with Hong Kong and the Netherlands on their place. Switzerland is on the fifth place. Japan, Germany, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Denmark are also in the top 10.

One of the specific features of this rating is that it does not evaluate the rules of law and procedures, as in the World Bank ranking, but takes into account investors' subjective assessment of the investment climate.

The CIF exists since 1979, with the 141 economies in it accounting for 99% of world GDP. The study finds that, in the decade since the global financial crisis, most economies are still in a cycle characterized by low output growth.

Economies investing in labor retraining and infrastructure strengthening will best resist the global slowdown.

"Countries that focus on infrastructure, knowledge, research and development in their economic policies are more successful than those that focus solely on traditional growth factors," said Prof. Klaus Schwab, founder and president of the Davos World Economic Forum.

Investment in Iran's petchem industry to rise 75% by 2026

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Head of Iran's National Petrochemicals Company (NPC) said investment in the country's petrochemical sector is going to increase by 75 percent by the end of the Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 2026), IRNA reported.

"So far, \$53 billion has been invested in the country's petrochemical industry, and with the third leap in this sector, the number is going to increase to \$93 billion by the [Iranian calendar] year of 1404, which means a 75-percent growth," Behzad Mohammadi said in a conference on oil and energy in Tehran.

The official pointed to the country's petrochemical industry as a stable and sustainable industry which has the second biggest share of the country's economy, adding that any leap in this sector will lead to development in the downstream industries as well.

"With a 66-million-ton capacity, this industry receives about 33 million tons of oil and gas as feedstock annually, equivalent



to 650,000 barrels of crude oil," he said. According to the official, there are currently 55 operating petrochemical complexes in the country, which will be increased to 83

complexes in two years and the consumed feedstock also increases to 62 million tons equivalent to 1.4 million barrels per year. "By the [Iranian calendar] year 1404,

Intl. building industry expo running in Isfahan

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — The 22nd International Exhibition of Building Industry kicked off on Thursday at Isfahan International Fairground, in the central province of Isfahan.

As reported by IRNA, the exhibition is attended by more than 130 Iranian and foreign exhibitors from various countries including China, Turkey and Russia, which are presenting their latest and most advanced plans and designs in three major areas of modern technologies, structures and facades.

The exhibition features a variety of areas in the building industry including steel, concrete and prefabricated structures, interior design and decoration, smart buildings, energy-efficient doors and windows, elevators and escalators, aluminum profiles and insulation as well as thermal and acoustic proof material, ventilation, tubes and polymers, ceramic tiles, valves, and new building designs.

According to the organizers, the exhibition aims to present the capacities

and capabilities of Iranian builders, and also to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the country's construction industry, and to get the participants acquainted with the latest developments in the industry in Iran and around the world.

Several scientific and educational conferences, workshops and meetings with engineers, academics and lecturers from universities and relevant institutions are also planned to be held on the sidelines of this four-day event.



TEDPIX down 13,069 points in a week

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), has fallen 13,069 points to 313,048 during the five working days of the past Iranian calendar week (Saturday to Wednesday) which was the third week of the seventh Iranian calendar month of Mehr, IRNA reported.

As reported, the value of trades at TSE and also at Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) exchange market, known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB), both dropped four percent to 11.633 trillion rials (about \$276.9 million) and 3.234 trillion rials (about \$77 million), respectively, during the past week.

While lagging the parallel markets of foreign currency, gold coin, and real estate behind, Iran's stock market hit a new record during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22), as TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange, closed at an all-time high of 302,103 points.

It is while the index had stood at 178,000 points at the



end of the previous calendar year. Experiencing a growth of 74 percent during the first six months of the present year, TSE witnessed its best per-

formance since the Iranian calendar year of 1382 (March 2003-March 2004).

Also as reported, IFB has experienced a noticeable positive performance during the first half, as its main index, IFX, gained 78 percent during the mentioned period of time.

It seems that these markets will preserve their positive performances also during the second half of the year, as TEDPIX gained 9,367 points (the highest rise so far) in the first day of the second half and the value of trades at TSE and IFB reached 32 trillion rials (about \$761.9 million).

It shows that some huge liquidity is moving toward the stock market. The power of this liquidity will probably bring new records for this market in the second half.

Also given that no growth is being seen at the markets of foreign currency and gold coin, and housing market is expected to witness drop in prices during the second half, another positive performance is anticipated for the stock market.

China using economic muscle to bend Western companies to its will

In 2012, Japanese automakers saw Chinese orders sink during a land dispute. Two years ago, an impasse with South Korea led to the closing of Korean-owned stores and Chinese media encouraging a boycott of Hyundai Motor. Two months ago, Beijing effectively barred Cathay Pacific employees who participated in Hong Kong protests from flying into China.

As per businesstimes.com.sg, for Western companies, the latest incident began on October 4 thanks to Mr. Morey, general manager of the Houston Rockets. He tweeted a slogan supporting Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement days before National Basketball Association pre-season games in China. The country retaliated by cancelling broadcasts, and Chinese sponsors instantly disappeared.

It was one of China's most aggressive efforts yet to bend a Western company to its will, and it pins corporate officials between the imperative of profits and loyalty to open societies that nurture their businesses.

"This skirmish between American capitalism and the China model is only going to increase in the future," said John Paul Rollert, who teaches ethics at the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business. "How American companies deal with it now will suggest how likely China is to give in on these matters or change the value system of American companies."

After years of declining public trust, U.S. businesses have been trying to prove that their values extend beyond the bottom line. In August, the Business Roundtable, one of the country's most influential lobbying groups, abandoned a long-held view that shareholders' interests should come before all else.

■ A crucial market
China will be a big test of whether that's mere talk. For companies including Nike and Starbucks, the country is a crucial market that is only growing in importance. And the attention paid to China's behavior probably will increase as U.S. politicians rail against its rising power and human-rights abuses.



China's punishment of offending foreign entities "isn't new, but the speed and ferocity of the responses has grown", said Scott Kennedy, a senior adviser at the Center for Strategic & International Studies in Washington.

Opportunities for international incidents are increasing. The U.S. alone conducted about \$737.1 billion in trade with China last year, according to federal figures, and President Donald Trump has been pursuing a bitter trade war for more than a year.

The Internet has allowed almost anyone - government officials, corporate officers, backroom worker bees - to send out potentially offensive messages.

That's a chancy environment for entities such as the NBA, Nike or movie studios, which are lashed to entertainers and athletes who like to speak out online.

The NBA has deep ties to China, striking a TV deal in the late-1980s and now claiming that 500 million people there watch its programming. The Rockets gained traction thanks to former player Yao Ming, a 7-foot-6 (2.3-meter) star who now heads the Chinese Basketball Association.

From China's perspective, it's hard to imagine worse timing for Mr. Morey's tweet.

Last week, the nation celebrated 70 years of Communist rule. There was a massive military parade. President Xi Jinping promised to continue China's greatness.

Chinese-owned companies quickly distanced themselves from the NBA. Sponsors including China's largest sportswear maker, the second-biggest dairy business, a smartphone brand and a local joint venture of Nissan Motor all pulled out.

Eurozone puts pressure on Dutch, Germans to spend more

Germany and the Netherlands, which run budget surpluses, should invest more to help boost economic growth at home and throughout the eurozone, top eurozone officials said on Wednesday, echoing a call from the European Central Bank last month.

According to hellenicshippingnews.com, the German and Dutch finance ministers insisted their governments were already doing a lot to boost domestic demand.

Eurozone economic growth is slowing as its biggest economy, Germany, teeters on the brink of a recession, keeping inflation subdued. But despite an ECB call for a fiscal stimulus, the euro zone is not planning any concerted action.

Instead, top euro zone officials put pressure on Germany and the Netherlands to use their "fiscal space" — EU jargon for sound public finances — to invest more and boost growth in their own economies and in the whole eurozone.

"There are two kinds of countries — those who need to go further with their fiscal efforts and those who need to invest in growth," European Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs Pierre Moscovici said.

Germany and the Netherlands "have to understand that, because it is in their own interest and in the collective interest of the euro zone", he added.

But German Finance Minister Olaf Scholz, arriving for a monthly meeting of eurozone finance ministers in Luxembourg, said Berlin was running a "very expansionary finance policy".

"We have an all-time high in investments. We have now another huge impulse with our measures to tackle climate change. We're spending 150 billion euros extra over the next 10 years," he said.

Dutch Finance Minister Wopke Hoekstra also brushed aside the pressure to spend more.

■ An expansionary budget
"We have quite an expansionary



budget already and you've also heard about our objective to come up with an investment fund, which is meant to address structural issues in the Dutch economy," he said.

In a discussion paper, the European Union's executive arm said the slowing eurozone economy needs pre-emptive fiscal stimulus or it will face a long period of low growth.

The chairman of the 19 ministers representing eurozone countries, Mario Centeno, told reporters: "We need to look carefully ... who has fiscal space to act and ... who does not, (so they) continue to reduce their debt."

The French and Italian finance ministers also urged Germany and the Netherlands to act.

The Commission paper said governments should move quickly as it took time for fiscal policy changes to affect the economy.

It said that to spur growth, further ECB monetary policy easing would be less effective and have larger unwanted side effects than fiscal stimulus by governments, which it said would now be more effective than in normal economic times.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel has long resisted calls to draft a fiscal stimulus package for her country. Some officials said that even two quarters of contracting gross domestic product — a recession — might not be enough to persuade Berlin to loosen its purse strings.

Oil output from West Karoun region to rise by March 2020

ENERGYdesk

TEHRAN — Production of oil from West Karoun oilfields is expected to increase by 10,000 barrels per day (bpd) by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 19, 2020), IRNA reported on Thursday, quoting an oil official as saying.

According to Reza Dehqan, National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC)'s deputy of development and engineering affairs, oil production from the fields in this region increased by 10,000 bpd in the first half of the current year.

The official also noted that NIOC is in talks with China's Sinopec for developing Yadavaran oil field.

"Oil production from Azar oil field is also going to increase by 35,000 bpd in the mentioned period, to reach 65,000, while the output from West Paydar and Aban fields are set to rise to 12,000 by yearend," he said.



According to Dehqan, a Russian consortium is working on the development project of West Paydar and Aban oil fields. Referring to Azadegan oil field, the of-

ficial said we have no plans to cooperate with any Chinese company in the South Azadegan and this field is expected to be developed by an Iranian company, however CNPC is already working on North Azadegan and the field is operational.

West Karoun oilfields which Iran shares with Iraq at the western part of Iran's southwestern region of Karoun include five major fields namely North Azadegan, South Azadegan, North Yaran, South Yaran and Yadavaran.

West Karoun holds great importance for the country's oil industry since according to the latest studies, its in-situ deposit is estimated to be 67 billion barrels containing both light and heavy crude oils, and therefore it could have a big impact on Iran's oil output increases in the future.

With the fields fully operational, their output could add 1.2 million bpd to the country's oil production capacity.

Last platform of South Pars phases 22-24 loaded

ENERGYdesk

TEHRAN — Platform SPD-24B, which is the last platform of the phases 22, 23, 24 of developing South Pars gas field (in the Persian Gulf), was loaded at Sadra yard in the southwestern province of Bushehr on Thursday.

According to a report released by Pars Oil and Gas Company (POGC), which is in charge of the gas field development, the 2,500-ton structure loaded on FLB124 barge through pull-push method.

Phases 22-24 are expected to produce 56 million cubic meters of sour gas, 75,000 barrels of gas condensate, and 400 tons of sulfur per day, in addition to 50 million cubic meters of methane, 2,900 tons of LPG and 2,750 tons of ethane.

South Pars gas field, which Iran shares with Qatar in the Persian Gulf, covers an area of 9,700 square kilometers, 3,700 square kilometers of which, called South Pars, are in Iran's territorial waters. The remaining 6,000 square kilometers, called North Dome, are situated in Qatar's territorial waters.

The field is estimated to contain a significant amount

of natural gas, accounting for about eight percent of the world's reserves, and approximately 18 billion barrels of condensate.

On September 15, POGC managing director announced that all the remaining platforms of the field will be installed by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 19, 2020).

Speaking to the state TV, Mohammad Meshkinfam said "By the end of this year, the five remaining South Pars platforms at Sadra industrial yard will be installed [on their designated offshore spots] and recovery from all South Pars gas blocks (except for phase 11) will be realized."

The development of South Pars Field started 22 years ago and 29 different phases were defined for the project along with a separate oil block.

"After the full development of the South Pars joint field, we should consider maintaining production based on the prospect of supplying 75 percent of the country's gas consumption for 25 years," Meshkinfam said.

According to the official, although there has been no



noticeable decrease in the field's recovery factor so far, but it is anticipated that it will decrease within the next three to four years.

"Focusing on the blocks [like Belal gas field] around the South Pars field is one of the long-term solutions for maintaining the field's recovery factor," he said.

Oil posts biggest gain in a month after reports of Iranian tanker attack

Oil prices jumped more than 2% on Friday after Iranian media said a state-owned oil tanker had been struck by missiles in the Red Sea near Saudi Arabia, raising the prospect of supply disruptions weeks after attacks on Saudi oil plants.

As per reuters.com, the Suezmax crude tanker Sabiti was ablaze and suffered heavy damage after being hit by two missiles, Iranian media reported.

Both oil benchmarks recorded their biggest daily rise since Sept. 16, the first trading day after the attacks on Saudi installations pushed oil prices up around 20%.

International benchmark Brent crude futures LCOc1 were up \$1.39, or around 2.4%, at \$60.49 a barrel by 0829 GMT.

U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude CLc1 futures rose \$1.16 to \$54.71 a barrel.

"Spare capacity remains fragile and with supply chain vulnerability a worrying concern at virtually every Middle East oilfield, traders continue to hedge supply risk premium," said Stephen Innes, Asia Pacific market strategist at AxiTrader.

The Sept. 14 attacks on two Saudi Arabian oil-processing plants knocked out more

than half of the kingdom's crude output.

Tensions in the Middle East have escalated in the wake of attacks on tankers and U.S. drones in the Strait of Hormuz, a key shipping artery of the global oil trade.

Keeping a lid on prices, the International Energy Agency said on Friday global oil markets had quickly recovered from the attacks on Saudi facilities and even faced oversupply next year as global demand slows.

Troubled economic prospects for 2020 prompted the IEA to reduce its forecast for oil demand growth by 100,000 barrels per day to a "still solid" 1.2 million bpd.

The "Iranian tanker" event is a reminder to the market that heightened geopolitical tensions in the region can affect supply, recalling the incidences in June of tanker attacks near the Strait of Hormuz," BNP Paribas global oil strategist Harry Tchilinguirian told the Reuters Global Oil Forum.

The "market will be weighing this attack against the more bearish headlines stemming from the IEA's latest monthly oil market report."

Also putting a damper on oil prices this week was U.S. government data showing rising domestic crude stocks.

OPEC chief hints at deeper cuts in December

All options are on the table, including a deeper cut from OPEC and its allies in December, OPEC Secretary General Mohammad Barkindo said on Thursday, as the OPEC+ coalition tries to rebalance the market amid floundering economies.

The "conference will take appropriate, strong, positive decisions that will set us on the path of heightened and sustained stability for 2020," OPEC's chief said at a news briefing in London, where he was a keynote speaker at the Oil & Money Conference.

Asked about whether OPEC and allies could decide at their meeting in early December to deepen the cuts in the production cut pact currently expiring in March 2020, Barkindo said "All options are open."

"As we approach December, we will be faced with real data for 2020 which will enable us to probably review the current arrangement and come up with a decision that probably will cover the whole of the year," Barkindo said, as carried by Reuters.

The comments from OPEC's chief came on the same day in which the organization revised down, yet again, its world oil demand

growth estimate for 2019 to just below 1 million bpd, citing slowing economic growth momentum amid the ongoing trade disputes.

OPEC, the International Energy Agency (IEA), and the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), as well as many other organizations and analysts have trimmed their oil demand growth estimates several times this year already, on the back of signs of slowing economic growth in the world, also due to the U.S.-China trade spat.

Earlier this week, the EIA revised down its oil price forecast by \$5 a barrel, due to expected increase in global oil inventories in early 2020.

In its Short-Term Energy Outlook (STEO) for October, EIA acknowledged there is a higher level of oil supply disruption risk than previously assumed, due to the attacks on Saudi oil infrastructure in mid-September.

Yet, EIA says, those risks are more than offset by "increasing uncertainty about economic and oil demand growth in the coming quarters, resulting in a lowered oil price forecast."

(Source: oilprice.com)

Largest oil traders: oil prices aren't going anywhere

Oil prices are not going anywhere, at least until this time next year.

Brent Crude will still trade range-bound in the \$50s a year from now, the heads of the world's largest independent oil and commodity trading groups said on Wednesday.

As per oilprice.com, the still unresolved U.S.-China trade dispute, mounting evidence that global economies are slowing, and rising U.S. oil production will continue to keep a lid on oil prices in a market that has factored in too little—or none at all—geopolitical risk premium, the chief executives of oil traders Vitol, Trafigura, and Gunvor said at the Oil & Money Conference in London this week.



Vitol is bearish on oil prices, Trafigura is also bearish in the short term, while Gunvor thinks prices could inch higher but with swings in between, the managers said at the panel 'Executive Forum: The View from the Trading Floor' at the conference.

"Without some resolutions to the trade wars then we remain a little bit bearish, a five handle for us," Russell Hardy, chief executive officer at Vitol, the world's largest independent oil trader, said at the event, predicting where oil prices will be a year from now, as carried by S&P Global Platts.

A \$50s handle for oil prices is the price at which oil currently trades, with Brent Crude at around \$58 early on Thursday.

Like many other analysts, the executives of the top oil traders in the world see trade disputes and faltering economies as the chief oil market driver these days, despite the increased geopolitical risk following the unprecedented attack on critical Saudi oil infrastructure that took 5 percent of global oil supply offline in the middle of September.

Vitol has been revising down its global oil demand growth estimates and now sees growth at just 600,000 bpd-650,000 bpd this year, Hardy said in early August.

In early September, Hardy said that Vitol expects oil prices to weaken in the fourth quarter this year, although prices are unlikely to be below \$50 a barrel for a sustained period of time.

A month later, Hardy continues to believe that concerns about growth in economies and oil demand are driving the bearish market sentiment.

"The risk premium vanished pretty quickly after the Saudi attacks. Concerns over the future are winning," Hardy told the Oil & Money Conference.

Jeremy Weir, executive chairman and CEO at Trafigura, also sees oil prices in the \$50s in 12 months, maybe slightly lower than they are now.

According to Torbjörn Törnqvist, chief executive at Gunvor Group, oil prices will likely trade below \$60 a year from now.

Gunvor's chief executive also believes that OPEC may need to take further action to rebalance the market.

"I suspect OPEC will need to rein the market in," Törnqvist told the Financial Times. "Supply is rising and the market is signaling there is more than enough oil," he added.

Just as Vitol's Hardy, Törnqvist also believes that "there seems to be very little risk premium from the geopolitical issues associated with the Saudi strikes."

On the sidelines of the same event, Shell's chief executive Ben van Beurden said it was "a bit puzzling" over how well the market took the attacks in Saudi Arabia in stride.

"The market is a little bit anesthetized by trade wars and the glut of shale to the point where it has become blasé about geopolitical risk. I think it's not representative of the real picture," van Beurden told Bloomberg TV's Annmarie Hordern on the sidelines of the Oil & Money Conference.

Not all analysts, however, are as bearish on oil prices as are the world's top oil traders. S&P Global Platts Analytics sees Brent Crude ending this year trading at \$65 to \$70 a barrel, expecting crude oil stock draws in November and December to turn around the current bearish sentiment.

The market is currently driven by sentiment "rather than the real strong fundamentals of it," Shell's van Beurden told Bloomberg.

"It's very hard to make sense out of the market even on the best of days."

Qatar sees new LNG mega-trains coming online in 3-6 month intervals: Al-Kaabi

The head of Qatar Petroleum, Saad al-Kaabi, said his country's four new LNG mega-trains would come online at intervals of three to six months after the first starts up in 2024.

According to hellenicshippingnews.com, Al-Kaabi, who is also Qatar's energy minister, told the Oil & Money conference in London that the producer was also not concerned about the state of the global gas market, preferring to focus instead on being the "lowest-cost producer."

Qatar Petroleum plans to raise the country's LNG production capacity to 110 million mt from 77 million mt a year with the construction of four new mega-trains of 8 million mt/year each.

The exact timeline of the expansion, which also involves new developments at the giant offshore North Field, depends on the award of construction contracts, al-Kaabi said.

"We will start in 2024," he said, with the trains coming online in a "staggered" way of three to six months after that.

"We are on track but it is the construction scheduling that will determine some of that," al-Kaabi said.

Al-Kaabi said there were currently three "very capable" consortiums in the running for the main construction contract.

The "main contract is going to one contractor to build the trains," he said.

■ The LNG expansion project

The LNG expansion project could also involve some international oil companies taking equity stakes, though al-Kaabi reiterated that Qatar was also happy to go it alone.

"We have selected a few good partners that have worked with us, and we are going to look at the offers that we get to decide," he said, adding: "We are not in a hurry."

Al-Kaabi said much depended on the value the partners could bring, including in offering Qatar Petroleum the potential to take an interest in assets elsewhere.



"It could be something that we want to do outside Qatar — it could be swaps, some support in the market, an offtake (arrangement). It could be a lot of things."

Asked about Qatar's view of the evolution of the LNG market — given that the four new trains are due online at a time that other new projects could also be starting up — al-Kaabi said the state of the market was not his concern.

"We are focused on what we do. We don't compete with anyone. I don't pay attention to that," he said.

"My focus is how we can be the lowest-cost producer. We are price takers," he said, adding that if gas prices stayed low, and other producers went out of business, then Qatar "will always have a market."

The only price risk, al-Kaabi said, was the oil price, given that much of Qatar's LNG is sold at oil-indexed prices.

The "oil price is up and down — we've seen many cycles," he said, adding that Qatar still always preferred a crude oil link in its LNG sales.

Al-Kaabi also said there was little likelihood of new gas-to-liquids projects being developed in the future.

Qatar is home to the major Pearl gas-to-liquids plant, but al-Kaabi said higher oil prices were needed to make new projects economically viable.

Second Announcement



N.I.S.O.C

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 GRADEL-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.I:1)QCP/MP5 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 Islam (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

By Saeed Sobhani

TEHRAN — U.S. President Donald Trump is having a terrible day! According to the latest news and opinion polls inside the United States, most American citizens now agree with his impeachment and removal from office. Of course, Trump is not concerned about his impeachment, given the combination of the Senate and the Republican presence in the Senate, but he is deeply concerned about the impact this has on public opinion. Trump is worried that his impeachment in the House and Senate will affect his popularity. Trump's popularity is now dwindling in important states like Ohio, Florida, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin. If this trend continues, Trump will no longer be President of the United States of America! Here's a look at the latest news and polls in the United States:

■ Fox News Poll: Record support for Trump impeachment

Just over half of voters want President Trump impeached and removed from office, according to a Fox News Poll released Wednesday. A new high of 51 percent wants Trump impeached and removed from office, another 4 percent want him impeached but not removed, and 40 percent oppose impeachment altogether. In July, 42 percent favored impeachment and removal, while 5 percent said impeach but don't remove him, and 45 percent opposed impeachment. Since July, support for impeachment increased among voters of all stripes: up 11 points among Democrats, 5 points among Republicans and 3 among independents. Support also went up among some of Trump's key constituencies, including white evangelical Christians (+5 points), white men without a college degree (+8), and rural whites (+10).

Among voters in swing counties (where Hillary Clinton and Trump were within 10 points in 2016), support for impeachment increased to 52 percent, up from 42 percent in July. A lot has happened since the July Fox poll on impeachment -- namely, the launch of an impeachment inquiry in the House following allegations Trump improperly pressured Ukraine to investigate the Bidens' dealings in that country. The 9-point increase in support for impeachment since July, however, doesn't appear to be based solely on the latest allegations. To that point, more Democrats favor impeaching Trump (85 percent) than consider his call with Ukraine's president an impeachable offense (76 percent). The same holds true among independents: 39 percent favor impeachment, while 30 percent describe the Ukraine call as impeachable.

The 4-in-10 voters opposing impeachment give a variety of reasons, including: Trump did nothing wrong (21 percent), it is politically motivated (20 percent), and don't believe allegations (15 percent). Approval of Trump's job performance is down a couple of points to 43 percent, while 55 percent disapprove. Last month, it was 45-54 percent. Currently, 86 percent of Republicans approve compared to 89 percent in September.

Some 51 percent of voters think the Trump administration is more corrupt than previous administrations, up from 46 percent last month. By a 66-25 percent margin, voters say it is generally inappropriate for Trump to ask foreign leaders to investigate political rivals. When asked about Trump's phone call with his Ukrainian counterpart that is at the heart of the impeachment inquiry, 17 percent believe it was appropriate. Most either describe it as an impeachable offense (43 percent) or as inappropriate but not impeachable (27 percent). Trump has called the Ukraine phone call "perfect." Even some Republicans aren't convinced: 9 percent say it was an impeachable offense, 38 percent inappropriate but not impeachable, and 36 percent appropriate.

Overall, by an 11-point margin, more voters believe Trump is "getting what he deserves" rather than that the impeachment inquiry is driven by "people out to get him."

During President Bill Clinton's 1998 impeachment, by a 3-point margin, more thought "people were out to get" him than believed Clinton was "getting what he deserved."

Meanwhile, voters think President Trump is just out for himself. Fifty-five percent overall and 18 percent of Republicans say he is doing what's best for Trump. Thirty-nine percent think he puts the country first. Thirty-eight percent find the situation surrounding Trump's dealings with Ukraine extremely troubling, while 19 percent say the same about the allegations about Biden and his son's business dealings in Ukraine.

Negative views outnumber positive views for the impeachment players. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's personal favorability rating is under water by 6 points (42 percent favorable vs. 48 percent unfavorable). Still, that's a new high, and gives her the highest favorable rating of Capitol Hill leadership tested in the poll.

House Intelligence Committee Chair Adam Schiff (D-CA) is also viewed more negatively than positively by 6 points (27-33), although 4 voters in 10 are unable to rate him.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell is in negative territory by 23 points (26-49) and 25 percent can't rate him. Voters have a negative view of both Trump attorney Rudy Giuliani by 22 points (31-53) and Attorney General William Barr by 14 points (24-38). Trump's popularity ticked up a point since the inquiry: 43-56 percent vs. 42-56 percent in August. Hillary Clinton's ratings roughly match Trump's: 41 percent favorable, 54

Independent voters also want Trump's impeachment

Trump: one step to fire!



percent unfavorable. The previous Fox News poll showed her at 40-57 percent in June 2017. Vice President Mike Pence stands at 40-49 percent compared to 39-48 percent two months ago. Trump has an 84 percent favorable among Republicans compared to 70 percent for Pence and 43 percent for McConnell, while 69 percent of Democrats have a favorable view of Pelosi.

More have a positive rather than a negative view of the Democratic Party by 2 points (49 favorable vs. 47 unfavorable), while the Republican Party is under water by 15 (40-55). Part of that is explained by more Democrats (85 percent favorable) viewing their party positively than Republicans do theirs (79 percent favorable).

Voters are inclined to see the motives of Republican lawmakers as more political. By a 3-point margin, more think congressional Democrats truly believe Trump committed an impeachable offense than say Democrats just want to hurt him politically.

On the other side, by a 23-point margin, more think congressional Republicans just want to protect Trump politically than say GOP lawmakers sincerely believe what he did is not impeachable. Overall, voters remain dissatisfied with the job Congress is doing: 21 percent approve, while 63 percent disapprove. In May, it was 21-66 percent. Conducted October 6-8, 2019 under the joint direction of Beacon Research (D) and Shaw & Company (R), this Fox News Poll includes interviews with 1,003 randomly chosen registered voters nationwide who spoke with live interviewers on both landlines and cellphones. The poll has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus three percentage points for all registered

■ Trump approval dips among Republicans

As The Hill reported, President Trump's approval rating dipped slightly among Republican voters, though is relatively steady among voters overall, according to the latest Hill-HarrisX poll released Friday. The nationwide survey shows 83 percent of GOP voters saying they approve of the president's job performance, marking a 2-point drop from an identical poll conducted Aug. 18-20.

Trump's overall approval rating remains steady, ticking up 1 percentage point from the previous poll to 47 percent, while 53 percent disapprove. The president's approval rating rose 3 points among independent voters compared to the previous poll; he now is supported by 46 percent of independents in the poll. Former South Carolina Gov. Mark Sanford (R) last week became the third Republican to launch a bid to challenge Trump for the GOP's presidential nomination in 2020.

He joins former Massachusetts Gov. Bill Weld (R) and former Rep. Joe Walsh (R-III.) in announcing a primary campaign against Trump, who remains widely popular in the party.

Sanford insisted Wednesday that his presidential bid isn't about hurting Trump's chances for reelection, but rather about improving the ideas of the Republican Party as a whole. All three challengers face an uphill battle in seeking to take on Trump. Some states, including South Carolina and Nevada, have moved to cancel their primary elections recently. The Hill-HarrisX survey was conducted online among 1,000 registered voters between Sept. 11-12 with a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points.

■ Independents move in favor of impeachment inquiry; GOP stays firmly against

Also NPR reported that Support for the House impeachment inquiry into President Trump is on the rise. A slim majority of Americans now approve of the Democratic House-led impeachment inquiry into President Trump, a new NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist poll finds. Fifty-two percent say they approve of the inquiry, while 43% disapprove. That's a slight increase in support

from two weeks ago, when 49% approved and 46% disapproved. The numbers are in line with other polls that have been released this week also showing majority support or an increase in support for the inquiry.

Adam Schiff, The Surprising Face Of The Impeachment Inquiry Into President Trump

The uptick in support in the NPR poll comes mostly from a swing among independents. In late September, more independents disapproved of the inquiry than approved, by a 50-44% margin. Now, in a reversal, more independents approve of the inquiry than disapprove, by a 54-41% margin, a net change of 19 points. On the questions of whether Trump should be impeached or removed from office, Americans are split — 49-47% in favor of impeachment and 48-48% on whether the Senate should vote to remove him.

While Americans' support is growing for the impeachment inquiry and a slim majority (51%) thinks the inquiry is a very serious matter and not "just politics," they are unconvinced impeachment is the right way to decide the future of Trump's presidency.

By a 58-37% margin, Americans think his future should be decided at the ballot box rather than by the impeachment process.

"There's a danger point in this for the White House, but also some danger points for Democrats in Congress, because people are not convinced this is the way to go," said Lee Miringoff, director of the Marist Institute for Public Opinion, which conducts the poll.

The survey was conducted from Oct. 3 through Tuesday, Oct. 8. The previous poll from Marist dealing with impeachment was conducted Sept. 25, after the White House released its record of the phone call between Trump and President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine, but before the whistleblower complaint was made public.

■ Republicans firmly against, but Americans don't approve of Trump's behavior

Republicans are dug in against the impeachment inquiry with nearly 9 in 10 disapproving of it. Two-thirds also say they would be less likely to vote for their representative from Congress if that lawmaker votes to impeach Trump. Despite the lack of enthusiasm for impeachment, Americans clearly don't approve of Trump's recent behavior, don't think he shares Americans' moral values and are pessimistic about the direction the country is headed. For example, 68% say it's not acceptable to ask a foreign country's leader for help investigating a potential political opponent; that includes 40% of Republicans. And 61% say Trump does not share the moral values most Americans try to live by; and just 35% say the country is headed in the right direction. The moral values question is similar to how Americans viewed former President Bill Clinton in the year he was impeached — 62% said Clinton did not share Americans' moral values, according to a CBS News/New York Times poll from September 1998.

What's more, 59% say the identity of the whistleblower who filed a complaint about Trump's call with Zelenskyy should be protected. That includes 6 in 10 independents and about a third of Republicans. Other answers in the survey should continue to raise red flags for the president and his reelection campaign team, including that 52% say they will definitely vote against Trump in 2020, and just 42% approve of the job the president is doing.

Those numbers have barely budged and have been consistent throughout Trump's presidency. Part of the reason for the lack of movement, the pollsters say, is the lack of overall trust in institutions that the survey measured. The courts were the most trusted (58%), followed by the intelligence community, including the CIA and FBI (57%), that elections are fair (51%), Democrats in the U.S. House (41%), the Trump administration (40%), Republicans in the U.S. Senate (39%),

Congress (31%), and lastly, the media (29%).

While 70% of Democrats trust the intelligence community, just 54% of Republicans and independents do. And while 60% of Democrats trust the media, just 8% of Republicans and only a quarter of independents do.

What's more, views of Congress have changed dramatically since the impeachment of Clinton in 1998. Back then, 58% said they thought most members of Congress share the moral values most Americans try to live by, according to the CBS News/New York Times poll. Today, it's the opposite — just 37% say members of Congress share the moral values of most Americans, while 56% say they don't. There's some evidence that Republicans are beginning to check out of news on the controversies surrounding impeachment. In the last survey at the end of September, 80% of Republicans said they were following the news about the impeachment inquiry at least fairly closely. In this poll, that's dropped 12 points, while Democrats and independents have essentially maintained their levels.

"We're in a period of time that the institutions that guided us through these processes are not trusted," Barbara Carvalho, director of the Marist Poll said of impeachment during the Clinton and Nixon years. "There's really a lack of trust among those institutions, so that makes this uncharted terrain, because people are being guided by whose side that they think they are on."

Trump has continued to accuse former Vice President Joe Biden and his son Hunter of wrongdoing in Ukraine, though evidence does not support those claims. Trump has pointed to the Bidens' "corruption" amid accusations of his own wrongdoing in dealing with the country.

Most people, by a 50%-28% margin, think that effort will hurt Biden. His favorability rating has ticked down slightly from 44% in September to 41% now — within the poll's margin of error.

The controversy has not hurt Biden with Democrats, but there has been a slight eroding with independents and Republicans. In September, Biden had a 72%/20% positive rating from Democrats, and now, it's a near-identical 71%/19%. Among independents, though, it went from 43%/48% positive to 39%/46%; and among Republicans, it was 21%/72% positive in September and is 16%/74% now. By a 45-42% margin, Americans say Biden shares their moral values. That's higher than Trump, but clearly the jury is still out, suggesting that Biden's response to the controversy over the next several weeks before the first voting in the Democratic nominating contest will be critical. Overall, Americans are split 44-43% on whether impeachment will help Democrats or whether it will help Trump. How impeachment is handled could be crucial in determining who Americans want to put in charge of Congress after 2020 as well. Democrats have just a 3-point advantage, 43-40%, on the question of which party's candidate people would vote for in their district if the elections were held today. That's half of what it was in November 2018 (50-44%), just as Democrats took back the U.S. House by sweeping a net of 40 seats out of Republican hands in the midterms.

Fox News Poll: Biden and Warren gain ground in Democratic race

Biden calls for Trump's impeachment for first time. 2020 hopeful Joe Biden says the president has violated his oath of office and betrayed the nation; Griff Jenkins reports from Washington. Together Joe Biden and Elizabeth Warren capture the support of more than half of Democratic primary voters, according to the latest Fox News national poll on the 2020 election. Biden stays on top in the race with 32 percent support among primary voters, up 3 points since September. He's followed by Elizabeth Warren at 22 percent -- that's up 6 points and a new high for her. Bernie Sanders is at 17 percent,

down 1 point since last month. While Biden's support has stayed between 29-35 percent since March, his current 10-point advantage is about half of his 19-point lead in June.

The rundown continues with Kamala Harris at 5 percent, Pete Buttigieg at 4 percent, Beto O'Rourke at 3 percent, and Cory Booker, Amy Klobuchar and Andrew Yang each at 2 percent. Michael Bennet, Julian Castro, Tulsi Gabbard, Tim Ryan, Tom Steyer, and Marianne Williamson receive 1 percent apiece. Biden retains top billing with strong support among non-whites, voters over age 45, and moderates/conservatives. Warren has strengthened her position by increasing support among suburban voters, very liberals, and men.

When Democratic primary voters' first and second choice preferences are considered together, Biden and Warren tie at 45 percent support, Sanders is at 34 percent, Harris 15 percent and Buttigieg 13 percent. President Trump's allegations about improper actions by Biden and his son have so far failed to chip away at Biden's support in the primary race -- and Democratic primary voters continue to believe the former vice president is the candidate best equipped to beat Trump in 2020: 43 percent feel that way, up from 42 percent last month. Nineteen percent think Warren has the best chance to oust Trump and 15 percent say Sanders. At the same time, the poll finds the three top Democratic candidates with sizable leads over the president in potential head-to-head matchups. The poll, released Thursday, shows Biden (50-40 percent) and Warren (50-40 percent) both top Trump by 10 points, and Sanders is up by 9 (49-40 percent). This marks the first time all three Democrats have held a lead outside the poll's margin of error. Last month, Biden was up by 14 points, Warren by 6 and Sanders by 8. "If Warren continues to poll as strongly against Trump as the former vice president, it makes it increasingly difficult for the Biden team to keep making the argument he is the most electable candidate," says Democratic pollster Chris Anderson, who conducts the Fox News Poll with Republican Daron Shaw.

The impeachment inquiry hasn't caused any real shifts in the ballot test, as Trump's support in the two-way matchups has been between 37-42 percent all year. However, the poll finds an 8-point shift since last month in the number expecting Trump will be re-elected. In September, more thought he would win by a 6-point margin and now more expect he won't by 2 points. And while most Republican primary voters want to keep Trump as their party's nominee, nearly one in five, 17 percent, would like to see someone else run. "So far, Trump has been able to keep his Republican base on board," says Shaw. "If the percentage opposing his re-nomination creeps into the 20s, that would be a troubling sign."

Meanwhile, voters continue to believe Donald Trump is dishonest. Sixty-three percent say that -- far more than the 35 percent who think he is honest and trustworthy. By the way, that's the same number who said Trump was honest before he won the 2016 election. Vice President Mike Pence does a bit better than his boss, although not by much: 39 percent say he's honest and 54 percent say dishonest.

On the other side, each of the top three Democratic candidates receives positive ratings on this measure. Sanders performs best with 59 percent saying he is honest and trustworthy (36 percent disagree). Fifty percent think Warren is honest vs. 44 percent dishonest, and for Biden voters split 48-47 percent. Among Democrats, 87 percent think Sanders is honest and trustworthy, while 81 percent feel that way about Warren and 75 percent Biden. Seventy-three percent of Republicans say Trump is honest.

Currently, 51 percent of voters have a favorable opinion of Sanders, while 43 percent view him negatively. That puts him in positive territory by 8 points. More view Warren positively by 7 points (46 favorable vs. 39 unfavorable) and Biden by 6 (50 favorable vs. 44 unfavorable). The ratings are closer to even for Buttigieg (+3 points), Yang (+3), Booker (-2), Harris (-3) and O'Rourke (-4). They each also have large numbers who have never heard of them or have no opinion of them. For example, 43 percent of voters are unable to rate Yang, while 36 percent can't rate Buttigieg and 32 percent can't rate Booker.

Voters view Trump more negatively than positively by 13 points (43-56). His personal favorability rating was underwater by 22 points in the days leading up to the 2016 election (38-60).

Twice as many primary voters say Trump's allegations make them more likely to vote for Biden (21 percent more vs. 10 percent less), while twice as many say health concerns make them less (31 percent) rather than more likely (15 percent) to vote for Sanders in the primary. Sanders is off the campaign trail since suffering a heart attack October 3. He's 78 years old, while Biden is 76, Trump is 73, and Warren is 70. Conducted October 6-8, 2019 under the joint direction of Beacon Research (D) and Shaw & Company (R), this Fox News Poll includes interviews with 1,003 randomly chosen registered voters nationwide who spoke with live interviewers on both landlines and cellphones. The poll has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus three percentage points for all registered voters and 4.5 points for Democratic primary voters (484). ➔7

Asian century impossible without China-India cooperation

By Ai Jun

GLOBALTIMES — The phrase “Asian century” has been hotly debated for some time. Quite a few Asian leaders and strategists believe that the world was Europeanized in the 19th century, Americanized in the 20th century and is now being Asianized. The India-based think tank Observer Research Foundation in August elaborated on the concept, saying the so-called Asian century “has been defined by the rise of China” and “India’s economic growth.”

As President Xi Jinping’s second informal summit with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in India approaches, relations between Beijing and New Delhi have entered another period, one of the most prominent trends of which is increased cooperation.

Chinese companies have in recent years proactively participated in India’s initiatives, such as “Make in India” and “Digital India,” expanding investment in the country’s industry parks and e-commerce, creating substantial job opportunities in India. India’s investment in China is also rising.

ut for a long time, vigilance toward each other, particularly New Delhi’s distrust toward Beijing, has been holding back the two Asian giants’ economic integration. At this point, collaboration between China and India is needed more than ever.

Their bilateral cooperation is connected with their peaceful development. Take the border disputes. How to properly resolve them is testing the wisdom of Beijing and New Delhi while providing a chance for them to establish a new model for ties between major powers adjacent to one another. Without stable cooperation between China and India, the rise of Asia will look impossible. If the two countries don’t exercise rationality in handling bilateral relations, current divergences between the two will be exploited by forces outside the region.

Collaboration between China and India also plays a significant role in the world. In February, NASA issued a report saying “the world is literally a greener place than it was 20 years ago,” and it is China and India that have prompted the change. “The effect stems mainly from ambitious tree planting programs in China and intensive agriculture in both countries,” said NASA. It mirrors the two countries’ weight in the world, as reports also note that “by 2040, Asia is likely to generate more than 50 percent of world GDP, and could account for nearly 40 percent of global consumption.”

The West tends to have the misinterpretation over the Asian century as it believes it would be a China-centered century. But late Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping articulated long ago that no genuine Asian century would come without the development of China, India and other regional developing countries. Some observers say Beijing and New Delhi “never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity.” This might be exaggerated but makes sense. Only when the two overcome their disagreements and start sincere collaboration can they send encouraging messages over the arrival of a real Asian century.

■ **With Xi’s visit, the spring of China-Nepal ties has arrived**

At the invitation of Nepalese President Bidya Devi Bhandari, Chinese President Xi Jinping is to pay a state visit to Nepal on October 12 and 13. As the first visit by a Chinese state leader to Nepal in 23 years, it will mark a major breakthrough in bilateral relations.

Linked by rivers and mountains, China and Nepal are closely related and interdependent. Xi’s visit will undoubtedly inject positive energy and add significant impetus to bilateral ties.

Since China and Nepal in May 2017 signed a memorandum of understanding on bilateral cooperation under the framework of the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative, the two neighbors have joined hands to develop a Trans-Himalayan Multi-Dimensional Connectivity Network as well as a cross-border Special Economic Zone, and enhance cooperation on trade, investment, production capacity, railways, highways, ports, aviation, energy and people-to-people exchange, which has promoted Nepal to transform from a land-locked to a land-connected country. Xi’s visit, though a short one, will further propel the Trans-Himalayan Multi-Dimensional Connectivity Network between China and Nepal, cement mutually beneficial bonds, and upgrade the existing China-Nepal comprehensive cooperative partnership with ever-lasting friendship. In a nutshell, it will breathe new life into bilateral relations.

With China-Nepal cooperation that could “level” the Himalayas, the region may develop as a new growth engine of the world and become a fertile ground for other countries to invest in. Nepal is an inland country with only two neighbors: China and India, two rising powers with vast potential for future economic development. Situated between the two, Nepal can naturally play a role as a bridge and bond.

It will be of great strategic significance and interest for the three neighbors - China, India and Nepal - to establish an economic corridor and build a community with a shared



future. If all three work together to strengthen connectivity, the Himalayas will no longer be a barrier, but will be able to link neighbors geographically and culturally.

Nepal is an independent sovereign state. It has a right to choose its own development model and pursue an open strategy that is in line with its own interests. Instead of being made a pawn in geopolitical games, Nepal should be seen as a stage for practicing the China-India Plus formula. China, India and Nepal should give up the zero-sum mentality, replace geopolitical games with geo-economic cooperation and make full use of the geographic advantages to bring real benefits to their people.

Meanwhile, some Western media outlets still stick to their pattern of negative reporting about China. Certain Westerners have always seen China-Nepal cooperation with prejudice. Neither China nor Nepal should be bothered about this.

China and Nepal have long respected, understood, trusted and supported each other, treated each other as equal and shared a symbiotic relationship, which is good enough to serve as a model. Nepal has always adhered to the one-China principle. It never allows Tibet’s secessionist forces or any other forces to engage in anti-China activities on its territory. China highly appreciates this. No country wants its own territory to be used as a base for hostile acts against a third country. Nepal’s practices are highly compatible with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, are conducive to maintaining Nepal’s domestic security, stability and socio-economic development, and demonstrate the country’s role as a responsible regional player. Certain countries may be accustomed to their old habit of infiltrating other states, acting subversively against governments, and being behind color revolutions, so they can hardly understand the synergy between China and Nepal over core interests.

■ **Spying slur looms large over Chinese in US**

In a testimony before the Senate Intelligence Committee last February, Christopher Wray, director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), indicated that all Chinese living in the US are potential informants working for Beijing. “One of the things we’re trying to do is view the China threat as not just a whole-of-government threat, but a whole-of-society threat on their end,” he said, and recommended “a whole-of-society response” from the US side.

Since then, law enforcement in the US has ratcheted up scrutiny against Chinese living in the US, and those who work in academia and science are in the front row. Last November, the US Department of Justice launched the “China Initiative” to counter what it called intellectual property espionage emanating from China by among other tactics fending off “nontraditional collectors” working as researchers and scholars and educating American universities about the risk of working with Chinese scholars. More and more universities have been approached by authorities with inquiries about the activities of their Chinese researchers.

I have no means to provide a “yes” or “no” answer to whether some Chinese scientists are collecting information for China. And I do believe if a real espionage case is uncovered, the person or persons responsible should be punished. What worries me is the chill these seemingly ever-expanding operations have sent in academic and scientific circles, a chill that seems to have started disrupting normal academic exchanges.

The latest signs came from the 27th Annual Convention of Chinese Association for Science and Technology, USA that was held on October 5 at Columbia University in New

York. Founded in 1992, the organization now has close to 10,000 members in the US working in technology, education, law, finance and other fields, including many leading scientists and academics.

Its annual convention has been a platform for Chinese and American researchers to communicate and join hands. This year, the keynote speakers were as appealing as ever, including Nobel laureates and members of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the US National Academy of Sciences. But the organizers told me the number of attendees from China, who used to travel to the US for the convention, has sunk this year. The Chinese scientists I talked to at the convention, both Chinese nationals living in the US and American citizens, shared their concerns about the current overcharged atmosphere. But many also talked gingerly and anonymously, worrying that a quote in the media, even a innocuous one, could draw unnecessary attention from suspicious FBI agents.

Xiaoxing Xi, a Chinese-American physicist at Temple University, joined a panel discussion via Skype to offer advice to scientists and scholars in a state of trepidation. Xi gained some unwanted fame after being wrongfully charged by the federal government in 2015 for allegedly sending restricted technology to China. The charges were dropped after law-enforcement authorities realized they had misunderstood the technology Xi had dealt with.

Nevertheless, Xi said he still lives in the pall of the incident: He and his family live in fear - not knowing whether their phone calls and e-mails are still being monitored by the government and fearing any word they say would be misunderstood and get them dragged through the mud. Xi said most scholars in universities focus on fundamental research that is far from becoming commercially applicable intellectual property. And international exchanges and collaboration at this level are not only necessary but also encouraged by governments. The over-look of this distinction and the ignorance of law-enforcement agents about particular science and technology subjects makes him worry more innocent scholars could easily be mistreated. “I’ve been telling Chinese scientists: Don’t think this won’t happen to you,” Xi said.

During the question and answer session, a woman in the audience shared her experience of working on a US government contract for a nuclear submarine project at the defense giant Lockheed Martin. When she needed to renew her security clearance, she was repeatedly interviewed by government officials, and even the fact that she had not been back to China in the previous decade was questioned. Her security clearance was eventually renewed but she decided to leave the company and vowed never to work on government contracts again.

The audience sighed knowingly. An official of the association acknowledged some of its members have been interviewed by FBI agents. Law enforcement in the US has a duty to protect the interests of this country. But there are different ways to approach the goal. They seem to be taking an approach of, to quote a Chinese warlord in the early 20th Century, “rather wrongfully beheading a thousand innocent than risking missing out one guilty.”

But an overstretched net may drag things in the opposition direction from the cater’s wish. As David Ho, a leading AIDS treatment researcher reminded me at the convention, Qian Xuesen, the physicist who helped America build its first atomic bomb, was driven back to China by the “red scare” in the 1950s. And then he helped China build its own bomb.

Palestinians face torture in Israeli administrative detention

By Ramzy Baroud

ANTIWAR — On August 20, Heba Ahmed al-Labadi fell into the dark hole of the Israeli legal system, joining 413 Palestinian prisoners who are currently held in so-called administrative detention. On September 26, Heba and seven other prisoners declared a hunger strike to protest their unlawful detention and horrific conditions in Israeli prisons. Among the prisoners is Ahmed Ghannam, 42, from the village of Dura, near Hebron, who launched his hunger strike on July 14.



Administrative detention is Israel’s go-to legal proceeding when it simply wants to mute the voices of Palestinian political activists, but lacks any concrete evidence that can be presented in an open, military court.

Not that Israel’s military courts are an example of fairness and transparency. Indeed, when it comes to Palestinians, the entire Israeli judicial system is skewed. But administrative detention is a whole new level of injustice. The current practice of administrative detention dates back to the 1945 Defense (Emergency) Regulations issued by the colonial British authorities in Palestine to quell Palestinian political dissent. Israel amended the regulations in 1979, renaming them to the Israeli Law on Authority in States of Emergency. The revised law was used to indefinitely incarcerate thousands of Palestinian political activists during the Palestinian Uprising of 1987. On any given day, there are hundreds of Palestinians who are held under the unlawful practice.

The procedure denies the detainees any due process, and fails to produce an iota of evidence to as why the prisoner – who is often subjected to severe and relentless torture – is being held in the first place.

Heba, a Jordanian citizen, was detained at the al-Karameh crossing (Allenby Bridge) on her way from Jordan to the West Bank to attend a wedding in the Palestinian city of Nablus. According to the Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network Samidoun, Heba was first held at the Israeli intelligence detention center in Petah Tikva, where she was physically abused and tortured.

Torture in Israel was permissible for many years. In 1999, the Israeli Supreme Court banned torture. However, in 2019, the court explicitly clarified that “interrogational torture is lawful in certain circumstances in Israel’s legal system”. Either way, little has changed in practice before or after the Israeli court’s “clarification”.

Of the dozens of Palestinian and Arab prisoners I interviewed in recent months for a soon-to-be published volume on the history of the Palestinian prison experience, every single one of them underwent a prolonged process of torture during the initial interrogation, that often extended for months. If their experiences differed, it was only in the extent and duration of the torture. This applies to administrative detainees as much as it applies to so-called “security prisoners”.

Wafa Samir Ibrahim al-Bis, a Palestinian woman from Jablajiya refugee camp in Gaza, told me about the years she was held in Israeli jails. “I was tortured for years inside the Ramleh prison’s infamous ‘cell nine’, a torture chamber they designated for people like me,” she said. “I was hanged from the ceiling and beaten. They put a black bag on my head as they beat and interrogated me for many hours and days. They released dogs and mice in my cell. I couldn’t sleep for days at a time. They stripped me naked and left me like that for days on end. They didn’t allow me to meet with a lawyer or even receive visits from the Red Cross.”

Heba is now lost in that very system, one that has no remorse and faces no accountability, neither in Israel itself, nor to international institutions whose duty is to challenge this kind of flagrant violation of humanitarian laws.

While Israel’s mistreatment of all Palestinian prisoners applies equally regardless of faction, ideology or age, the gender of the prisoner matters insofar as the type of torture or humiliation used. Many of the female prisoners I spoke with explained how the type of mistreatment they experienced in Israeli prisons seemed often to involve sexual degradation and abuse. One involves having female prisoners strip naked before Israeli male interrogators and remaining in that position during the entire duration of the torturous interrogation, that may last hours.

Khadija Khweis, from the town of Al-Tour, adjacent to the Old City of Occupied East Jerusalem, was imprisoned by Israel 18 times, for a period ranging from several days to several weeks. She told me that “on the first day of my arrival at prison, the guards stripped me completely naked”.

“They searched me in ways so degrading, I cannot even write them down. All I can say is that they intentionally tried to deprive me of the slightest degree of human dignity. This practice, of stripping and of degrading body searches, would be repeated every time I was taken out of my cell and brought back.”

Heba and all Palestinian prisoners experience humiliation and abuse on a daily basis. Their stories should not be reduced to an occasional news item or a social media post, but should become the raison d’être of all solidarity efforts aimed at exposing Israel, its fraudulent judicial system and Kangaroo courts. The struggle of Palestinian prisoners epitomizes the struggle of all Palestinians. Their imprisonment is a stark representation of the collective imprisonment of the Palestinian people – those living under occupation and apartheid in the West Bank and those under occupation and siege in Gaza. Israel should be held accountable for all of this. Rights groups and the international community should pressure Israel to release Heba al-Labadi and all of her comrades, unlawfully held in Israeli prisons.

Trump: one step to fire!

6 → But USATODAY reported that Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren has taken over the top spot in several recent national presidential primary polls as candidates prepare to debate Oct. 15. Most national polls since the end of September have found Warren – not former Vice President Joe Biden – leading the pack, but by relatively narrow margins. Biden had led in almost every national poll, usually by double digits, going back to 2018. But Warren has come out on top in four of the past five and six of the past 10.

And she recently pulled ahead in the RealClearPolitics average, a frequently cited polling benchmark. Though she is in front of Biden only by 0.2%, it marks the first time Biden has not held the lead in the race’s RCP average since the site began comparing the polls in December. The most recent poll to place her at the top was released Tuesday by Quinnipiac University. That poll found her ahead of Biden 29%-26%. Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont came in third at 16%. Among those who described themselves as

“very liberal,” Warren led Biden 38%-26%, and among the “somewhat” liberals she led 37%-23%. Biden led among moderate and conservative Democrats 35%-22%.

“Warren maintains her strength in the Democratic primary, which has been consistently growing since the start of her campaign. This poll confirms her status as a co-frontrunner with Biden,” said Quinnipiac University Polling Analyst Tim Malloy. The poll found that Warren held narrow leads with both men and women and that she had a 12-percentage-point lead with white voters. Biden was favored by black voters 36%-20% and by voters over 65 by a 41%-26% margin.

The survey was conducted Oct. 4-7 from among 1,483 self-identified registered voters with a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1%. Warren also has performed well in the early primary states that can be key to securing the nomination. Last month, a Des Moines Register/CNN/Mediacom Iowa Poll found her leading in the first-in-the-nation caucus state, and a Monmouth University poll put her

narrowly ahead of Biden in New Hampshire. A Suffolk University/USA TODAY Network Poll released on Sept. 24 placed her just 4 points behind Biden in Nevada, the third state where primary voters will cast their ballots.

Biden maintains a comfortable 41%-12% lead over Warren in South Carolina, the fourth state on the primary calendar, according to a recent Fox News poll. The former vice president’s drop in the polls comes as President Donald Trump and his personal attorney Rudy Giuliani have mounted a public campaign accusing Biden of impropriety in Ukraine during his time in office. Trump’s effort to pressure Ukraine to dig deeper into the matter has sparked an impeachment inquiry.

Tuesday’s poll from Quinnipiac shows that voters approve of the impeachment inquiry 53%-43% and that 45% think Trump should be removed from office while 49% do not. The margin had been 37%-57% in a Quinnipiac poll before the inquiry launched. Only 34% said they approved of the way Trump has responded to the impeachment inquiry, compared with 57%

who disapproved. But 43% agreed with the president that it was a “political witch hunt,” while 51% said it was a “legitimate investigation.”

Though Trump has said his effort to push Ukraine to investigate Biden was motivated by a desire to battle corruption rather than taint a political opponent, only 33% of voters bought that explanation, and 48% said he was out to hurt a rival. Twenty percent weren’t yet certain or thought both reasons were true. Polls have consistently found that Democratic voters care more about picking a candidate in 2020 who can defeat Trump than any particular policy issue. When asked whom they would vote for if the election was held today, Quinnipiac found that both Warren and Biden would beat the incumbent president – Biden by a margin of 51%-40% and Warren by a margin of 49%-41%. Trump indirectly acknowledged Warren’s rise in the polls in a tweet Tuesday in which he called on his 2016 Democratic opponent Hillary Clinton to “enter the race to try and steal it away from Uber Left Elizabeth Warren.”

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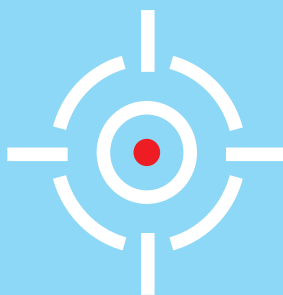
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Tiny walking rover bound for the moon

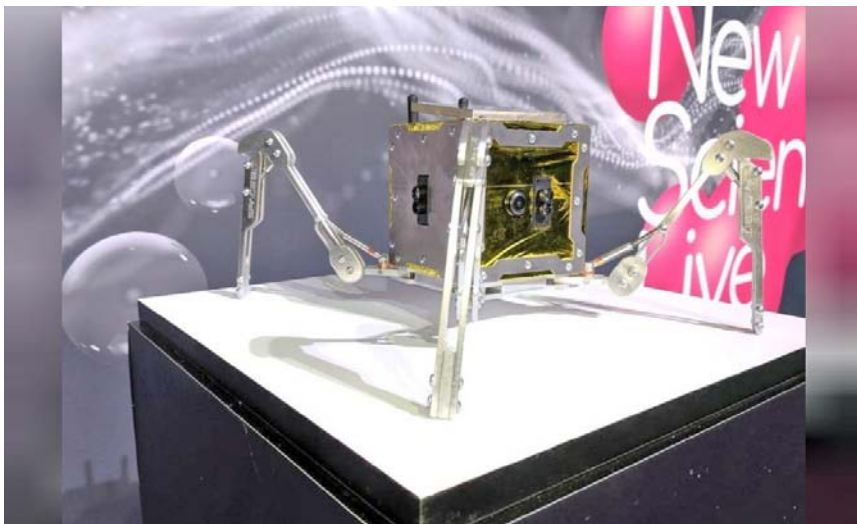
A lunar rover which will explore the moon on foot in 2021 was unveiled in London on Thursday.

The new concept, with four legs rather than wheels, will send data back to a larger mothership, which will transmit it back to Earth.

UK startup Spacebit signed a contract with U.S. space robotics company Astrobot to get the rover on board their Peregrine lander, which will carry 14 NASA instruments to the moon.

Once the lander reaches the moon's surface, the rover will drop from beneath it to the surface and attempt to explore a lava tube. "It's very important to explore the lunar tubes to know the environment that we have there so potentially humans can live in those lunar tubes when they go back to the moon," SpaceBit founder and CEO Pavlo Tanasyuk told Reuters.

The rover is the smallest lunar rover ever and incorporates some off-the-shelf parts which drastically reduces the cost, according to SpaceBit. "We believe that in



space exploration what is important is to have low-cost missions and this rover provides potential for very low-cost missions. It's many, many times cheaper than any competition

on the market," Tanasyuk said.

The first mission will see just one rover explore the surface for only one day, until the solar night falls and it ceases to operate.

Spacebit says the plan is for subsequent missions to deploy swarms of rovers connected to motherships which protect them at night and relay the data back to Earth. "In the future we're going to commercialize this robot by selling the data we get from the moon's surface... very valuable data for the future human missions on the moon. And also we are planning to potentially go into mass production of this rover so we can explore our solar system and run low-cost missions to the moon and beyond," Tanasyuk said.

British astronaut Tim Peake welcomed the Spacebit project and also said the UK's plans to develop its space industry would not be affected by Brexit. "The European Space Agency is not part of the EU so Britain's membership of ESA post-Brexit will still be confirmed," Peake said.

Spacebit plans to run a competition to allow the public to choose the name for the new rover - despite a recent poll to name a new British research ship being won by 'Boaty McBoatface.'

(Source: Reuters)

Battery pioneers who made mobile revolution possible win Nobel chemistry prize

Three scientists have won the 2019 Nobel Prize for Chemistry for putting power in peoples pockets by developing rechargeable lithium-ion batteries which made the global information technology, mobile and fossil-fuel free revolutions possible.

American John Goodenough, at 97, became the oldest winner of a Nobel prize and shares the 9 million Swedish crown (\$906,000) award equally with Stanley Whittingham from Britain and Akira Yoshino of Japan, the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences Nobel Committee said on Wednesday.

"Lithium-ion batteries have revolutionized our lives since they first entered the market in 1991. They have laid the foundation of a wireless, fossil fuel-free society, and are of the greatest benefit to humankind," the committee said.

With peals of infectious laughter, Goodenough asked reporters at a hastily called news conference in London to speak up with their questions so that his "old ears" could hear.

He had not been expecting to win a Nobel prize, he said, but was "very happy" to get it. "Life is full of surprises," he said.

After Whittingham developed the first functional lithium battery in the early 1970s, Goodenough doubled the battery's potential in the following decade. Yoshino then eliminated pure lithium from the battery, making it much safer to use.

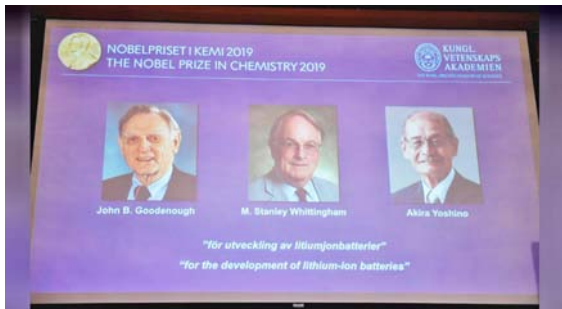


Photo: A screen displays the portraits of the laureates of the 2019 Nobel Prize in Chemistry (L-R) John B. Goodenough, M. Stanley Whittingham, and Akira Yoshino "for the development of lithium-ion batteries" during a news conference at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences in Stockholm, Sweden, October 9, 2019. (Naina Helen Jama/TT News Agency/via Reuters)

Speaking on Japanese TV after hearing of his win, a smiling Yoshino said he was glad to have helped the environment.

"I am happy that the lithium-ion battery won the prize in that context," he said, adding that he also hoped it would

inspire others: "I hope this will become an encouragement for young researchers."

Gregory Offer, an expert in mechanical engineering at Imperial College London, said the scientists' work had led to "one of the key enabling technologies of the 21st century".

"They have already underpinned the mobile revolution, and are now essential to help us solve the problem of climate change by electrifying transport and storing renewable electricity generation," he said in an emailed comment.

Paul Coxon, a materials science expert from Britain's Cambridge University, said lithium-ion batteries were now "the hidden workhorses of the mobile era".

"All three Nobel winners played vital roles in this energy storage revolution which has now placed power in our pockets," he said. "It's a wonderful example of taking research from the lab. We can literally hold the result in our hands."

The prizes for achievements in science, literature and peace were created and funded in the will of Swedish dynamite inventor and businessman Alfred Nobel and have been awarded since 1901.

The Nobel prizes for medicine and physics were awarded earlier this week. The awards for literature, peace and economics will be announced in the next few days.

(Source: Reuters)

Researchers discover how water is regenerated on asteroids



Scientists have discovered how water molecules can be regenerated on asteroids moving through space, in an exciting breakthrough that could extend to other bodies such as the Moon.

Published in the journal Nature Astronomy, the new research shows water can be replenished on the surface of asteroids if both solar wind and impacting meteoroids come together at very low temperatures.

Lead Australian author Dr. Katarina Miljkovic, from Curtin University's Space Science and Technology Centre, said the research proved that two components of the space weathering—both electrons and thermal shock—were necessary to maintain supplies of water molecules on asteroids, rather than just one as previously thought.

"This complex process to regenerate surface water molecules could also be a possible mechanism to replenish water supplies on other airless bodies, such as the Moon," Dr. Miljkovic said.

"This research finding has potentially significant implications because we all

know the availability of water in the solar system is an extremely important element for habitability in space."

The NASA-funded project saw the team take a piece of Australia's own Murchison meteorite, which fell to earth in Victoria 50 years ago, and simulate the weather conditions of an asteroid belt inside a specially built machine that mimics the conditions of an asteroid's surface.

The team then used energized electrons to simulate solar winds and lasers to mimic small meteoroids slamming into the asteroid, while monitoring water molecule levels at the surface.

Meteoroid impacts initiate the reaction, then solar winds blast the surface leaving unbounded oxygen and hydrogen atoms to bond, creating water.

Dr. Miljkovic's role as an impact expert, based in Curtin's School of Earth and Planetary Sciences, was to validate the use of laser ablation as a substitute for micrometeoroid bombardment.

(Source: phys.org)

First meat grown in space lab 248 miles from Earth



Lab-grown meat has been successfully cultured in space for the first time.

The food technology startup Aleph Farms grew the meat on the International Space Station, 248 miles (399 km) away from any natural resources.

Bovine cells were harvested on Earth and taken to space, where they were grown into small-scale muscle tissue using a 3D bioprinter. The method relies on mimicking a natural process of muscle-tissue regeneration occurring inside a cow's body.

The experiment took place on 26 September on the Russian segment of the space station, and involved the assembly of small-scale muscle tissue in a 3D bioprinter under controlled microgravity conditions. In future the technique could be used to provide meat for people living on the space station.

The development marks a further step forward for a nascent industry that aims to provide people with real meat without the environmental impact and welfare problems of intensive livestock production.

In December, Aleph Farms announced it had produced a prototype "strip" of steak grown from cells in the lab in two weeks,

although it admitted the taste needed to be improved.

"We are proving that cultivated meat can be produced anytime, anywhere, in any condition," said Didier Toubia, co-founder and chief executive of Aleph Farms. "We can potentially provide a powerful solution to produce the food closer to the population needing it, at the exact and right time it is needed."

"In space, we don't have 10,000 or 15,000 liters of water available to produce 1kg of beef," added Toubia.

"This joint experiment marks a significant first step toward achieving our vision to ensure food security for generations to come, while preserving our natural resources."

Recent scientific studies have found that huge reductions in meat-eating are essential in order to cut greenhouse gas emissions and avoid dangerous climate change. One found that avoiding meat and dairy products was the single biggest way to reduce an individual's environmental impact on the planet.

(Source: The Guardian)

Nobel prize winner laments lack of money for young physicists

Swiss scientist Michel Mayor, who shared the 2019 Nobel Prize for Physics, said on Wednesday he was concerned about how hard it is for young physicists to make a living from their science work.

"For young people doing science it is always a problem to find a permanent position, and some of them are extremely

good," Mayor said in an interview with Reuters Television at an event near Madrid.

While there is financial support for some top researchers, such as himself, many young scientists do not have enough resources to develop their own careers, he said.

"In some sense there is enough money, and in another

(...) it is a very competitive domain," he said.

Mayor was speaking the day after jointly winning the Nobel Prize for physics with Swiss colleague Didier Queloz and Canadian-American cosmologist James Peebles for their work in astronomy.

(Source: Reuters)

NASA aims for first manned SpaceX mission in first-quarter 2020

SpaceX's new Crew Dragon astronaut capsule will be ready for its first manned flight into orbit in the first quarter of next year provided "everything goes according to plan" in upcoming tests, NASA chief Jim Bridenstine said on Thursday.

The pronouncement of a revised time frame signaled NASA believes SpaceX is getting the Crew Dragon project back on track following an explosion during a ground test in April and technical challenges with its re-entry parachute system.

Bridenstine said successful development of the capsule was key to achieving NASA's top priority - the resumed "launching of American astronauts on American rockets from American soil" for the first time since the space shuttle program ended in 2011.

The NASA administrator spoke to reporters at the end of a visit to the SpaceX headquarters in Hawthorne, California, just outside Los Angeles, where chief executive Elon Musk led him on a tour of the sprawling manufacturing plant.

Their joint appearance by a giant glass-enclosed "clean room" where engineers were working on a Crew Dragon marked a show of unity following a rare public spat over delays in the project.

NASA and SpaceX had previously aimed to launch the Crew Dragon on an initial test flight carrying two astronauts to the International Space Station in 2019.

The revised time line hinges on a series of system tests that SpaceX hopes to conduct by year's end, Bridenstine said.

These include a high-altitude test of an in-flight abort system designed to propel the crew capsule to safety in the event of a rocket failure on the way to orbit.

The schedule also includes at least 10 more mid-air "drop tests" to gauge the resilience and performance of parachutes used to slow the capsule's descent into the ocean after it re-enters the atmosphere from space.

"If everything goes according to plan, it would be the first quarter of next year," Bridenstine said when asked how soon he the capsule would be ready to fly astronauts into orbit. He was quick to add that the new time line could slip again.

"We are not going to take any undue risk," he said, standing beside Musk and the two astronauts slated to fly aboard the Crew Dragon - Doug Hurley and Bob Benkoe.

Bridenstine also praised SpaceX for its "fail fast, then fix" approach to spacecraft development, an ethos he said that differed from the cultures of other NASA contractors.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration is paying commercial launch companies SpaceX and Boeing Co (BA.N) \$6.8 billion to build rocket-and-capsule systems enabling NASA to resume human space travel with U.S.-made hardware.

SpaceX has so far never flown humans into orbit, only cargo. But the company successfully launched an uncrewed Crew Dragon to the International Space Station in March.

Musk said overcoming problems with re-entry parachutes had proved especially challenging.

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"It's a pretty arduous engineering job to get the parachutes right," Musk said, declaring that Crew Dragon's parachutes will be at least twice as safe as those used during NASA's Apollo moon missions.

He expected that "testing will be complete and hardware at the Cape (Canaveral) by the end of December."

The top executive for Boeing's rival Starliner program, John Mulholland, said on Wednesday that its own key test of an abort system was slated for Nov. 4, while its uncrewed orbital test flight was set for Dec. 17. Under that time frame, the first Starliner manned mission is all but certain to slip into 2020.

NASA is currently paying Russia about \$80 million per seat for rides to the space station.

Bridenstine said the agency was "still buying seats" for ride-alongs aboard Russia's Soyuz as an "insurance policy" against future delays in U.S. crew capsule development.

While providing few concrete details on their joint investigation into an explosion during a ground test of Crew Dragon's abort thrusters in April, Musk said such setbacks were inevitable in rigorous testing of complex systems.

(Source: Reuters)

'Imagined Life' envisions the odd critters of other planets

An organism is shaped by the environment in which it dwells. Considering the rampant diversity of species on Earth, just imagine the oddities that could evolve on radically different sorts of planets — perhaps black-leafed "plants" that thrive in dim light or even creatures made of metal rather than carbon.

In Imagined Life, physicist James Trefl and planetary scientist Michael Summers set out on a safari through the cosmos, conjuring up the menagerie that might inhabit some of the thousands of exoplanets discovered thus far. Many of the book's chapters explore potential life on various types of worlds, each vastly unlike Earth. Though fanciful and fun, the pair's efforts are grounded in science and adhere to two main principles: that a small number of general rules govern the physical universe, and that Earth's laws of physics, including thermodynamics and electricity and magnetism, apply everywhere else in the cosmos. Trefl and Summers also propose that in all but a few scenarios, natural selection drives evolution on other planets.

No matter the environment, life needs a source of energy. But that energy doesn't have to come from a star's radiation, the authors note. An ice-smothered world or even a rogue planet floating in interstellar space could, like Earth, have oceans with seafloor hydrothermal vents driven by heat from the decay of radioactive elements in the planet's core or from heat left over from when the planet coalesced. Whether such oceans are ice-covered or not, life in these oceans would probably evolve to take advantage of the energy-rich chemicals spewing from those vents and need to be mobile, as vents can spring into being and just as quickly fade away. Vent creatures might either resemble those living in similar ecosystems on Earth or be completely unrecognizable.

On other types of worlds, life-forms could be even stranger. On a planet that has one side permanently facing its star, the most hospitable temperatures for life as we know it would exist in a thin north-south halo around the planet, where the sun always sits on the horizon. Supersonic winds would buffet the surface, scientists have suggested, so species would have to be low-slung and streamlined to minimize air resistance, the authors argue. On a rocky planet much larger than Earth, land organisms would have to deal with stronger gravity and would thus be short, squat and have strong bones or exoskeletons.

(Source: Sciencenews.org)

Ancient Egyptian coffin contains ‘oldest map of the underworld’ inscribed 4,000 years ago

A MAP of ‘hell’ has been found scrawled on a 4,000-year-old coffin in Egypt.

The ancient doodle was designed to help the dead reach the afterlife by guiding them through the perilous obstacles of the underworld.



Scientists found this inscription on two boards of wood from an Ancient Egyptian coffin (Credit: Harco Willems)

The coffin and its artwork were discovered in a burial shaft in the Egyptian necropolis of Dayr al-Barsha.

An inscription on two wooden panels recovered by archaeologists is a mix of hieroglyphs and symbols known to the Ancient Egyptians as The Book of Two Ways.

It depicts two zigzagging lines that detail two routes the dead can use to reach Osiris – the Ancient Egyptian god of the dead – in the afterlife.

Spells were written into the text to help the deceased ward off demons on their dangerous journey.

‘In many ways, the Book of Two Ways can be described as the first illustrated book in history,’ Ancient Egypt expert Dr Foy Scalf, of the University of Chicago, told The Times.

‘It offers the first illustrated guide to a sacred geography.’

While the find was made in 2012, a new study reveals it’s the oldest known example of The Book of Two Ways.

The guidebook was written on the inside of a coffin of a high-ranking woman called Ankh.

It’s one of few artefacts found inside the tomb, which grave robbers ransacked over multiple visits centuries ago.

Archaeologists dated the tomb and its contents to around 4,000 years ago based on inscriptions carved within.

They depict Djehutinakht I, an ancient governor who ruled the region from around the 21st to 20th century BC.

If true, that would make the copy of the book found on the coffin around 500 years older than any other found.

Several copies have been found before, written on everything from tomb walls to mummy masks.

They were typically reserved for high-ranking officials of the Kingdom of Egypt.

The book is part of a huge body of work known as The Coffin Texts, which includes more than 1,000 spells and religious writings on the afterlife.

Little is known about the Book of Two Ways, including when it was written and by whom.

Scientists hope to use the discovery to uncover more of the text’s secrets.

The opening of the tomb is likely to spark fears of the Ancient Egyptian ‘Curse of the Pharaohs’.

The alleged hex is believed by some to be cast upon anyone who disturbs the mummy of an Ancient Egyptian person.

The research was published in The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology.

(Source: The Sun)



ROUND THE GLOBE

Early Christian Monuments of Ravenna

The serial property Early Christian Monuments of Ravenna in north-east Italy consists of eight monuments, namely the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, the Neonian Baptistery, the Basilica of Sant’Apollinare Nuovo, the Arian Baptistery, the Archiepiscopal Chapel, the Mausoleum of Theodorici, the Church of San Vitale and the Basilica of Sant’Apollinare in Classe, built between the 5th and 6th centuries CE.



These religious monuments, decorated with precious marble, stuccos and mosaics, reflect the major historical, political and religious events that took place in Ravenna, which became the capital of the Western Roman Empire in 402 CE, and remained prominent first Ostrogothic and then Byzantine capital in Italy through the fifth and sixth centuries.

The Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, small but lavishly decorated in the inside with inspiring mosaics against a dark blue background, reflects the Western Roman architectural tradition.

The Neonian Baptistery, ornate with its inlaid marble, stuccos and multi-colored mosaics in the cupola, is the finest and most complete surviving example of an Early Christian baptistery.

The Basilica of Sant’Apollinare Nuovo was also built during the reign of Theodorici as a Palatine chapel, with mosaics in traditional Roman style that also show a strong Byzantine influence.

Lastly, five kilometres from Ravenna we find the Basilica of Sant’Apollinare in Classe, an imposing building with its impressive forms, cylindrical bell tower, spacious interiors and rich marbles and mosaics.

(Source: UNESCO)

‘ECO cultural capital status to foster Ardebil’s sustainable development’

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Selection of Ardebil as a cultural capital for the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) will be a turning point to foster sustainable development in the province, governor general of Ardebil said on Wednesday.

Akbar Behnamjoo said that the selection can guarantee enhanced development of tourism across Ardebil, Mehr reported.

The city of Sari (the capital of Mazandaran province) along with Ardebil were picked as the cultural capitals for the ECO in 2022 and 2023 respectively, during the third meeting of ECO tourism ministers, which was held in Tajikistan on October 3 and 4.

The recent ECO tourism ministers meeting in Tajikistan approved principles of sustainable tourism development and also devised an action plan in line with the goal of sustainable tourism development among ECO member states, Behnamjoo stated.

The official went on to say that creating an integrated network of tour operators and other tourism beneficiaries in ECO region was another decision which was taken by the tourism ministers of ECO member states. It was also agreed upon defining mechanisms for facilitating transport of tourists which will have great advantages for the target countries, especially the Islamic Republic of Iran, the governor general emphasized.

Turning to the high capacities and capabilities of Ardebil province in the tourism sector and drastic measures taken in the past two years, he added, “Ardebil province enjoys unique natural and historical attractions which can be interesting for tourists of



Sprawling on a high, windswept plateau, Ardebil is well-known for having lush green landscapes.

ECO member states.”

Sprawling on a high, windswept plateau, Ardebil is well-known for having lush natural beauties, hos-

pitable people and its silk and carpet trade tradition. It is also home to the UNESCO-registered Sheikh Safi al-Din Khanegah and Shrine Ensemble.

2,451 tourism projects worth \$47b underway: minister

1 → “I believe that the prospects of tourism is very favorable and it will take the first or second place [in the country’s economy] in the not-so-distant future.”

Referring to the country’s eastern provinces, the minister said that they have high potentials for medical tourism. “In addition, they are benefiting from large regional markets that are considered as tourism potentials of this region.”

Some 7.8 million foreign nationals visited Iran during the past Iranian calendar year 1397 (ended on March 20),

which shows 52.5 percent growth from a year earlier, according to data compiled by the tourism ministry.

Tourism officials said earlier in May that the U.S.-led sanctions, targeting Iran’s economy, has failed to lessen foreign arrivals to the Islamic Republic, adding “Decrease in Iran national currency value has made Iran tour packages more competitive.”

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

Iranian historical objects, artworks to go up for auction at Christie’s

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** — On October 24, Christie’s in London will auction 57 artworks and historical objects from Iran along with tens of counterparts from other Islamic countries and India.

The auction titled “Art of the Islamic and Indian Worlds Including Oriental Rugs and Carpets” will be offering a selection of rare and beautiful objects, paintings and manuscripts from across the Islamic and Indian worlds.

Amongst the Iranian objects are three silver and brass overlaid steel rams dating from second half 19th century, an enamelled gold qalyan bowl dating from circa 1840-50; two lacquered papier-mache mirror cases and two lacquered papier-maché pen cases (qalamdars) from the 19th century.

Highlights, according to organizers, include three royal works on paper which exemplify the virtuosity of the art of the book in 15th century Persia- two Nahj al-Faradis ‘Pathways to Heavens’ folios written in rare Uyghur text which are known for their fantastic stories and dramatic pictures; and a recently discovered Divan manuscript made for the



Three silver and brass overlaid steel rams dating from second half of 19th century (Credit: Christie’s)

Qaraqyunlu prince Pir Budaq.

Further important works of art include an opulent 14th century Mamluk Qur’an and 76 folios from an impressively large late 8th century Kufic Qur’an section.

The sale also features a splendid 16th century Ottoman tombak helmet and an intricate mother-of-pearl inlaid casket from Western India. Important private collections include a selection of 19th century Qajar works of art and two groups of magnificent Indian jewelled objects.

In addition, there is a fascinating selection of early classical Oriental rugs and carpets from the Safavid and Ottoman empires, including a 14th century fragment from the Mongol period and a rare 16th century Damascus ‘Chequerboard’ rug. An intriguing silk polyptych Samarkand carpet, one of only three known of this design, has a cryptic past and an imposing late 19th century Agra carpet, has jewel-like colours which echo the former grandeur of the Maharaja’s courts of the Mughal Empire.

Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie’s is a British auction house. Its main premises are in London and the New York City.

Up for a uction: Snapshots of Jackie Kennedy in India and Pakistan

Photographs of the first lady and her sister, Lee Radziwill, are among the items up for sale next week at an auction at Christie’s.

When Jacqueline Kennedy and her younger sister, Lee Radziwill, began a tour of India and Pakistan in March 1962, the first lady was described in Life magazine as “arguably the most famous woman in the world.”

In India, crowds gathered to see Mrs. Kennedy in Jaipur, New Delhi and Fatehpur Sikri. In Pakistan, she was welcomed by people lining the streets of Lahore, Karachi and the Khyber Pass.

The sisters spent two weeks in the countries, and were photographed riding camels and elephants, on a boat ride along the Ganges, at a horse and cattle show and at black-tie dinners with politicians, diplomats and other dignitaries.

Beginning on Friday, Mrs. Radziwill’s personal photo albums of the trip will be on display at Christie’s New York, a week ahead of an auction of jewelry, fine art, books, decorative arts and other memorabilia (including the albums) from her home in New York City. Mrs. Radziwill died of natural causes in her home on Feb. 16. She was 85.

Mrs. Radziwill became a princess when she married a Polish emigre nobleman, Prince Stanislas Radziwill in 1959.

“It’s interesting to see how Princess Radziwill’s way of life — the way in which she lived, the interiors of the apartments — reflected her travels,” said Jonathan Rendell, a deputy chairman at Christie’s who is working on the auction.

Despite having a complicated relationship, the sisters often traveled together; they even wrote a book about their first trip to Europe. The fact that the first lady brought her sister on the trip to India and Pakistan signaled that they were on good terms.

“There was no need for Mrs. Kennedy to take her sister, but she wanted to,” Mr. Rendell said. “You can see that they’re enjoying being in each other’s company.”

India and Pakistan had been divided for 15 years when the women arrived. The Sino Indian War would begin later that year.

“The moment of the sisters going there is very pivotal — there’s a slow moving timebomb between the struggle of Kashmir, what’s happening with India and China, and Pakistan and Afghanistan,” said Manan Ahmed, a historian at Columbia University.

■ In India

On March 12, after taking a chartered Air India flight from Rome, the sisters arrived to a red carpet rolled out on the runway at Palam Airport in New Delhi. They were accompanied by John Kenneth Galbraith, the United States ambassador to India, and his wife, Kitty. The sisters were greeted by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and his daughter, Indira Gandhi.

In a blue album with a golden inscription — “Visit of Mrs. John F. Kennedy to India (March 1962)” — are color and monochrome photos of Mrs. Kennedy alone in front of the Taj Mahal in a green dress and white gloves, and of both sisters at a black-tie dinner attended by Braj Kumar Nehru, the Indian Ambassador to the United States, along with Mr. Nehru and his daughter. The album has 89 photographs.

In the 1960s, Mr. Rendell said, first ladies did not typically play roles in American relations elsewhere in the world. Mrs. Radziwill’s photographs, however, show Mrs. Kennedy and her sister with Prime Minister Nehru and others in semi-official situations. “This type of diplomacy has almost disappeared,” he said. “I think it’s a pity, because they projected a certain version of American culture.”

■ Onward to Pakistan

After eight days in India, Mrs. Kennedy and Mrs. Radziwill made their way to Pakistan, where they were welcomed by crowds with flowers and gifts.

Clint Hill, a Secret Service agent on the trip, later told



Jacqueline Kennedy at the Taj Mahal in 1962.

Radio Free Europe that a “whole damn bouquet” of flowers would occasionally be flung at Mrs. Kennedy as she was driven through the streets. “I’d have to rise out of my seat to fend it off so it didn’t knock her in the head,” he said.

A green album inscribed “Visit to Pakistan, March 21-26, 1962” shows the women with President Mohammad Ayub Khan (above).

The women also met with a camel driver, Bashir Ahmad, and his family at the president’s residence in Karachi. They rode one of his camels through the grounds.

“These photographs are a little slice of Americana that has gone completely,” Mr. Rendell said. “They look so happy, and you know what’s going to happen — and you know you can’t prevent it.”

(Source: The New York Times)

Is France selling media freedom for Saudi petrodollars?

By Ali Radmanesh

TEHRAN — Dozens of journalists have been charged with revealing state secrets and questioned by France's intelligence services under President Emmanuel Macron, fueling criticism that the French government is selling press freedom for money.

One of the latest examples showing press freedom is at risk is the French government's treatment of the investigative website Disclose, which has exposed use of French arms in Saudi Arabia's Yemen invasion.

Disclose founders Geoffrey Livolsi and Mathias Destal, along with journalist Benoît Collombat, were summoned by France's domestic intelligence agency in May after the French defence ministry filed a complaint for "compromising national defence secrecy".

Disclose's investigation is centred on a leaked classified note by France's DRM military intelligence agency detailing the position of French-made arms used by the Saudi-led coalition fighting Houthi rebels in Yemen.

In addition to the leaked document, it uses satellite images, video and photographs to show that the Saudi-led coalition has made much wider use of French arms than officials in Paris acknowledge, and that swathes of Yemen's civilian population live within their range.

■ France's claims debunked

Emmanuel Macron's government has been facing criticism for selling arms and military equipment to Saudi Arabia and other nations accused of war crimes or suppression of their citizens.

Macron's government has repeatedly claimed that French arms sold to Saudi Arabia and its allies are used solely for defensive purposes, a stance that has become increasingly hard to maintain as the death toll from the devastating conflict continues to rise.

The four-year conflict has shattered the country's economy and created the world's worst humanitarian crisis, according to the United Nations, whose investigators say both sides may have committed war crimes. More than 10,000 civilians have been killed during the conflict and some 10 million people have been driven to the brink of famine.

The scale of the bloodshed has prompted growing criticism of the Western powers — chief among them the US, Britain and France — that arm the Saudi-led coalition. France is the world's third-biggest arms



Paris has always insisted that the arms are only used in defensive circumstances [Getty]

exporter, its sales having increased four-fold under Macron's predecessor, François Hollande.

Between 2008 and 2017, Saudi Arabia and the UAE were, respectively, its second and sixth biggest export markets, according to the French defence ministry.

■ Colleagues move to support Disclose

Thirty-seven major French news organisations have voiced their support for the three men in a joint statement.

"We express our whole and full solidarity with our colleagues, who were only doing their jobs: bringing information of public interest to citizens on the consequences of French arm sales," the statement said.

"We stuck to the facts, and only the facts. And I think that's in part why we have so much professional support," Livolsi said. "But it's also because this is an unprecedented attack on the right to disseminate information, and on the public's right to be informed."

Last month, the investigative website won the Visa d'or for Best Digital News for its part in revealing the extent of French weaponry being used in Yemen's gruesome civil war.

According to France 24, the award, which is sponsored by France Media Monde, was presented at the annual Visa pour l'image photojournalism festival in Perpignan, in southwest France.

■ Intimidation campaign?

The report triggered a sharp reaction by the French government, which has pressed charges against the journalist for revealing

state secrets.

Destal and two other journalists at Disclose have been questioned by the secret services.

"We were received by two female officers who took us four floors below ground level into an interrogation room — it was quite intimidating," Destal told DW in June.

The interrogators had numerous questions about Disclose's editorial policy, how it is financed and whether Destal understood what the term "state secret" means.

"One of my colleagues was even asked about some of his Twitter and Facebook posts that are unrelated to this report," he said.

Only one question had to do with the journalists' sources, which has made Destal think it was above all an attempt to frighten him.

"As a journalist, you normally get sued for libel in front of a special court. But in this case, the investigators don't seem to question the accuracy of what we wrote. And the inquiry is not led by independent judges but by the public prosecutor who is, at least formally, under the authority of the Justice Ministry," he said.

Destal could go to prison for five years and have to pay a fine of up to €75,000 (\$85,400).

And Disclose is not the only media being targeted by the government. The secret services have questioned eight journalists from various publications as well as the managing director of Le Monde newspaper over the past three months about the Yemen arms story and the so-called Benalla affair, concerning Alexandre Benalla, a former top presidential aide who allegedly overstepped

his authority.

■ Amnesty International's anti-war efforts

Meanwhile, the human rights organization, Amnesty International has announced to launch a campaign, named "Silence, on weapon!", to condemn the sale of French weapons to nations that use them against civilians.

Through this campaign, Amnesty International will highlight serious failures of the French authorities in maintaining transparency and controlling the arms exports. The NGO seeks to persuade the government to ensure "transparency in its arms exports" and sign a petition launched during the campaign.

The campaign is also signed by DDB Paris, which denounces the immoral sale of French weapons by the government to countries complicit in war crimes, including Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Egypt etc. Aggressively publicized on the streets and in magazines, the details of the campaign will be unveiled during the Fashion Week, and will rub shoulders with the visuals of major French fashion brands.

The vast media campaign entitled #Frencharms, will condemn the use of French weapons in war-torn Yemen and other MENA countries, "where human rights violations are committed and widely documented."

Member of Parliament Bastien Lachaud said, "In Yemen, we have evidence of the lie of ministers on the use of French arms in the blockade that starves the population, in violation of international treaties that France has ratified. Ministers must take their responsibilities."

Recently, Dutch investigative media "Lighthouse reports" along with its French partners, such as Disclose, Arte, Radio France, Médiapart, have denounced the use of Airbus helicopters by Indonesian army to repress West Papua, the use of Egyptian Rafale in Libya and the use of French weapons by Egyptian forces accused of abuses in Sinai. These exports have been documented, mostly dating back several years.

Member of the European Parliament Hannah Neumann tweeted, "More weapons do not make a region more secure. And #EUArms are a big part of the problem."

Amnesty International and investigative media appear to be determined to increase the pressure on the French government to suspend the export of French weapons to Saudi Arabia and UAE.

Six ways the media can regain lost credibility

By Douglas Heye

CNN — In the past few weeks, we've seen the editorial pages lock arms in organized opposition to President Donald Trump, the host of "Meet the Press," Chuck Todd, call for a more aggressive approach to reporting, and The New York Times give precious space to an anonymous "insider" attack on the White House.

Meanwhile, as recent Gallup and National Public Radio polling has shown, confidence in the media is dangerously low. There are many reasons for this -- from viewers perceiving the news as acting as Donald Trump opposition or Trump state-run media, to the increase in relevance of tabloid outlets such as the National Enquirer, to plain old bias and mistakes.

But while ratings and circulation are up (Trump has been great for the business of media), about two-thirds of Americans don't trust the media anymore. And this is not a red or blue state issue: It is a problem for the nation as a whole.

Here are six steps the media can take to improve its relationship with the American people.

■ 1. Focus on policies, not personalities

Whatever the day, even during important hurricane coverage, much of the conversation still centers on Donald Trump. And Trump is particularly adept at ensuring the media reacts to his whims, rather than the critical issues facing everyday Americans.

In short, the media falls into the Trump trap, guaranteeing the back and forth with current, former or anonymous staffers, and hyperbolic tweets, take precedence over real questions Trump would much rather not talk about.

Of course, ignoring Trump's personality and the effect it has on government is impossible and unwise. But on cable news, in particular, critical issues, such as opioid addiction and rising health care costs, continue to get short shrift over personality-driven news.

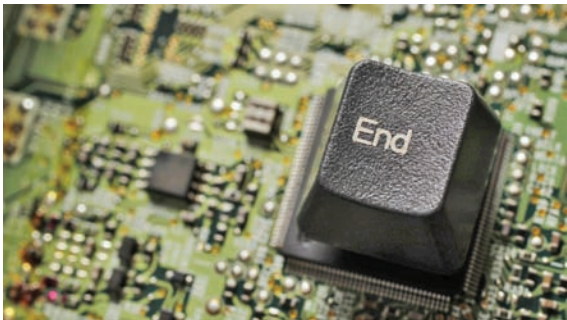
■ 2. It's not about you.

There seems to be no topic the press loves to cover more than itself.

And each spring, a series of dinners, culminating in the White House Correspondents Dinner, are held where, in addition to awarding youth journalism scholarships and honoring breakthrough investigative reporting, the press congratulates itself, telling those in attendance how their "speaking truth to power" matters "now more than ever." It is as if the press holds up a mirror to itself and channels Sally Field's Oscar acceptance speech, "You like me. You really like me," while admonishing any Trump administration officials or supporters in attendance.

This is part of the swamp Trump was elected to drain and why, as President, he has boycotted these events.

Meanwhile, the American people decidedly do not like the media. Trust in the media has plummeted to the point



that we have gone from George H.W. Bush's milquetoast and ultimately ineffective "Annoy the media, re-elect Bush" to Trump's daily war on the press being a very effective, if troubling, strategy.

■ 3. Be Clark Kent, not Superman

Sloganeering from the media -- such as the Washington Post proclaiming on its front page "Democracy Dies in Darkness" -- positions them as the opposition to Trump. And, worse yet, many journalists hide behind the First Amendment -- using it as a Superman-like shield -- which infuriates many Americans, who think journalists assign an enlarged sense of self-worth to what they do.

Reporting matters, and quality reporting is threatened -- both by tightening newsroom budgets and layoffs. But much of the media posturing against Trump appears to be more about self-aggrandizement than hard-hitting reporting. This is far from being a "mild-mannered reporter at a great metropolitan newspaper" like Clark Kent. And it's not even the more aggressive, fact-based reporting Todd calls for.

Many journalists may bristle at the Clark Kent/Superman comparison, but the reality is, at least privately, they view Trump as a political Lex Luthor, and cover him as such. "Step aside, Lois, I'll protect you," they tell voters daily.

■ 4. Less click-driven, fact checking columns; more internal ombudsmen

Politicians should be held accountable. But rating a political speech as "Pants on Fire" or "4 Pinocchio's" and boldly declaring the "Lie of the Year" has taken precedence over some of the deeper dives into politicians' actions.

Politicians often lie. But the press also gets it wrong, sometimes wildly wrong. Indeed, as Todd writes, "unforced errors by high-profile anchors to the biggest missed news story of the 21st century -- the lack of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq -- we have handed critics some lethal ammunition."

The media cannot afford to get a story wrong. Even innocent mistakes will be viewed and portrayed as bias. They must increase scrutiny of their organizations' own stories to ensure they get it right before going to print or on air. And when a story is wrong, address it immediately,

which is why The New York Times and Washington Post eliminating their ombudsman/public editor roles has a real impact.

This is true whether the story in question is a major news story, such as the discredited ABC Michael Flynn story, or a smaller story, like Friday's New York Times misleading article about the curtains in Ambassador Nikki Haley's official residence.

With media scrutiny at an all-time high, getting it right matters, yes, now more than ever. Failing to do so only further enables Trump's anti-media agenda.

■ 5. Get rid of editorial pages

Anyone who has worked with the press can recite the familiar refrain from reporters of how editorial pages -- specifically unsigned editorial pieces by company brass telling politicians how to act and voters how to vote -- and the newsroom are separate entities. To the public, there is neither a distinction nor a difference. When they see an editorial from their local paper, they see the paper, not this section or that page or even the byline.

Editorial pages like to think they represent the community, but unless they are in a completely homogeneous area, they only represent the subset that already agrees with them. Similarly, when opinion pages feature several anti-Trump opinion pieces and few pro-Trump opinion pieces, this further erodes their credibility in the eyes of readers. By definition, this represents what members of the media say they oppose: bubbles, echo chambers and ivory towers.

Aloofness or even disdain toward opposing views raises the question of whether editorial pages -- which in print, at least, usually do not run ads -- create a profit, or are expensive vanity pages at a time when papers are facing newsroom layoffs and buyouts.

■ 6. Don't run anonymous opinion pieces

This should be a no-brainer.

By running an anonymous opinion piece -- so vaguely sourced that it could be one of hundreds of Trump administration officials -- the Times hurt not Trump's credibility, but that of the entire news media. Several pro-Trump voters who contacted me about the piece dismissed it out of hand, not for the content, but for the fact that the attack was anonymous. The Times' explanation of the vetting process essentially boiled down to "trust us." But the public does not trust the media, and the anonymous piece demonstrates why.

And, it's worth noting, if the "senior administration official" turns out to be an individual no one has ever heard of, the damage could be even worse for the news media writ large.

As Trump's war on the media continues, a free press is fundamental to our republic and should be a model for the world. For the press to be that, it must take proactive steps to repair the damage it has done to its own standing with the public.

Five examples that show internet censorship is as much a threat to the left as the right

By Danielle Ryan

RT — The banning of right wing controversialist Alex Jones from multiple social media platforms last week was a cause of celebration for many liberals, but should those on the left really be so complacent about creeping censorship?

So far, the evidence suggest that there is indeed plenty for the left to worry about when it comes to corporations like Facebook and Twitter and their alliances with government censors.

■ 1. Facebook censorship of Venezuelan news

In May, Facebook partnered with the Atlantic Council in an effort to weed out "inauthentic content" on the platform. This organization is funded by various NATO governments and a slew of arms manufacturers like Raytheon, Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman. Its board includes names like Henry Kissinger and former CIA director Michael Hayden — and it has consistently lobbied for regime change in Syria and, you guessed it, Venezuela, where it has funnelled large amounts of money into pro-opposition groups for years.

So, it's no surprise that weeks after Facebook partnered up with this less-than-objective group, it deleted from its platform the page belonging to top English-language, left-leaning Latin American news outlet Telesur without any explanation at all. The page was restored two days later, with Facebook citing vague "instability on the platform" as the cause of the block.

Telesur just so happens to be one of the only major outlets reporting on events in Venezuela in a manner that goes against the US government position and US mainstream media perspective — so obviously, out with Alex Jones it must go.

It wasn't just Telesur, though. Facebook deleted the pages belonging to independent grassroots Venezuela Analysis and Haiti Analysis, which are also leftist websites highly critical of US foreign policy in Latin America and the Caribbean region.

■ 2. Facebook complying with Israeli deletion orders

Last year, journalist Glenn Greenwald reported that Facebook met with Israeli government officials to determine which Palestinian activists should have their accounts deleted. The Israeli government threatened to enact laws forcing Facebook to comply with its deletion orders if it did not do so voluntarily.

Of course, Facebook capitulated immediately and set about deleting accounts owned by Palestinian activists. Of some 158 requests submitted (over just four months) by Tel Aviv to Facebook asking for the removal of Palestinian content, 95 percent of them were granted. According to the same Intercept report, Facebook hasn't been overly concerned about what Israelis themselves are saying on Facebook and even calls for murder can be ignored by the social media giant.

■ 3. Google and Facebook censorship of left/socialist websites

The World Socialist Web Site reported last year that changes to Google's algorithms had seriously negatively impacted left-wing socialist and anti-war websites. An analysis by WWSW found that 13 such websites had seen their traffic plunge by a whopping 55 percent in the six months since Google had changed its algorithms. WWSW itself experienced a 74 percent drop in traffic between April and July last year. The changes also affected sites like Alternet, which saw its traffic plunge by 71 percent between April and September, Democracy Now (50 percent drop) and Truth-out.org (49 percent drop).

Similarly, Police the Police (a page dedicated to exposing US police brutality) and the Free Thought Project (which focuses on government transparency) also saw their Facebook page traffic tank in 2018 after Facebook made changes to its newsfeed and search algorithms in an effort to combat "fake news". PTP traffic dropped from between 12-15 million people per week to about 4 million — and the website had to fire its writing staff as a result. "The left is cheering this on, when historically the left is usually the side cheering for free speech," PTP founder Jason Bassler told Mic.

Amidst all of the celebration over the banning of Jones, some on the left cautioned that in fact, the left may indeed be the "real target" in all of this — and that those celebrating while people like Jones are banned are in fact being "conditioned" into accepting further censorship down the road.

■ 4. Legitimate left-wing protests targeted?

A particularly strange example of Facebook's commitment to banning "fake news" and promoting a nice, cozy atmosphere for everyone online is its decision to delete event pages for anti-racist and anti-fascist protests happening in Washington D.C.

The "No Unite the Right 2-DC" event (a counter-rally against a previous white nationalist event in the city) was taken down after Facebook decided it displayed some "coordinated inauthentic behavior" (the kind of random phrase that can no doubt be arbitrarily applied to anything without explanation).

The event organizer said in a statement: "This is a real protest in Washington, D.C. It is not George Soros. It is not Russia. It is just us."

■ 5. Twitter suspending and banning anti-war activists

Twitter has come under fire recently for "shadowbanning" conservative accounts, making them harder to find on the platform and having their tweets appear less prominently in people's feeds in an effort to limit their audience. But again, it's not just the right.

Twitter recently suspended the accounts of Daniel McAdams, the executive director of the libertarian and antiwar Ron Paul Institute and Scott Horton, the editor of the AntiWar.com website. Explaining what happened, McAdams said that he and Horton were suspended after defending former US diplomat Peter Van Buren who had just been banned permanently from Twitter after heated exchanges with journalist Jonathan M. Katz over what Van Buren said was his "unwillingness to challenge government lies". In one of his tweets to Katz, Buren sarcastically commented: "I hope a MAGA guy eats your face". Katz reported him for "promoting violence" and Twitter later caved and removed Buren's account.

In explaining his suspension, Twitter told McAdams that he could not "promote violence against, threaten, or harass other people on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, religious affiliation, age, disability, or serious disease" — none of which he accepts that he did.

Perhaps the really amazing thing about all of this is that it is happening in front of our eyes and the powers that be are not even bothering to lie about it. Elected US officials are openly promoting this kind of censorship as a way to prevent the "sowing of discord" among populations. At a Senate Judiciary Committee last year about "Extremist Content and Russian Disinformation Online," Democratic Hawaii Senator Mazie Hirono called on social media platforms to prove their commitment to preventing "the fomenting of discord" online.

Working hand-in-glove with governments, corporations like Facebook have been handed enormous power to decide what constitutes free speech and which opinions are worthy of being heard. How long will it be before people realize banning Alex Jones wasn't really a victory at all?

Over 3m Iranians so far registered to attend Arbaeen march

1 → Arbaeen pilgrimage is a distinctively spiritual exercise, gathering Shias as well as Sunnis, even Christians and Zoroastrians, etc. from various nationalities altogether making their ways to the holy Iraqi cities of Najaf and Karbala, walking towards the holy shrine of Imam Hussein (AS) commemorating the 40th day of his martyrdom in the battle of Karbala, in 680 AD.

Last year about 1.8 million Iranians took part in the ceremony. This is while in 2011 only 50,000 took the trek to Karbala which shows a great surge in the number of pilgrims taking the long walk to pay tribute to the third Shia Imam.

Madrid to begin ‘humane slaughter’ of parakeets

Madrid’s city council has grown sick of its parrots.

Or, more precisely, of the thousands of shrill, bright green monk parakeets that screech through the capital’s skies and build vast nests in its trees.

The council has announced plans to reduce the number of parakeets after a recent survey showed the population had grown from 9,000 birds three years ago to 12,000 today. In 2005, there were only 1,700 of them in Madrid.

Although the birds are native to Argentina, many were imported as pets before ownership was outlawed eight years ago.

The city council says the swelling population needs to be brought down as the parakeets are competing with other species for food and damaging the environment by stripping vegetation to build their huge stick nests.

It also says they pose a public health risk as they can pass illnesses such as psittacosis (parrot fever), avian flu and salmonella on to humans.

And then there is the size of their nests.

“As time goes on and they get bigger, these nests can become dangerous and weigh up to 200kg,” the council said in a statement. “That represents a threat to the branches that support them and also to the people on whom they could fall.”

The city authorities are working with the Spanish Ornithological Society, SEO Birdlife, and will begin “humane slaughter” and egg sterilisation over the coming months.

“We’re going to put into effect a plan to control and reduce the number of monk parakeets in the city of Madrid as they have become a worry for people and we’ve had a lot of complaints,” said Borja Carabante, the council’s environmental representative.

The council said it had received 197 complaints about the birds between January and the end of August this year – almost as many as the 218 registered for the whole of last year.

Carabante did not reveal how many parakeets would be targeted, but Santiago Soria, the council’s head of biodiversity, said it would not eradicate the entire population. Without action, he added, the numbers would only continue to grow.

The cull, however, is not the city council’s most controversial environmental initiative. The council – a coalition between the rightwing People’s party and the centre-right Citizens party, backed by the far-right Vox party – has also sought to scrap the popular low-emissions zone introduced by the previous mayor, the leftwing former judge Manuela Carmena.

At the end of September, it announced plans to allow cars banned from the city centre back into the low-emissions zone and to reduce parking charges.

According to the environmental group Ecologists in Action, Camena’s Madrid Central scheme brought about record reductions in nitrogen dioxide levels in the city centre, with pollution from the gas 48% lower in April 2019 than during the same month last year. Nitrogen dioxide levels across the city were down by 16%.

(Source: The Guardian)

WORDS IN THE NEWS

Shoe bomber to be charged

(December 24, 2001)

The man who was restrained on a transatlantic flight on Sunday after apparently trying to blow up explosives hidden in his shoes is due to appear in court in the United States later today. The man **identified** by the British passport he was carrying as twenty-eight-year-old Richard Reid will **appear before** a federal court later today. He’s **charged with** interfering with the performance of a flight crew by assault or intimidation. The maximum **sentence** is twenty years in jail. The FBI has published an **affidavit** which describes how a flight attendant first smelled smoke from a match. When she identified Reid, he hid the match in his mouth. After **raising the alarm**, she then **saw him trying to light** one of his training shoes and saw a wire coming out of it. The FBI hasn’t said whether they believe the man was **acting alone** or as part of a wider group. French authorities are examining why the man was allowed to fly with a one-way ticket and no baggage, and **after being stopped** and questioned as he tried to board a flight **the previous day**.

■ **Words identified:** if something identifies you it makes it possible for people to recognize you
■ **appear before:** when someone appears before a court they go there to answer charges
■ **charged with:** formally accused of having committed a crime
■ **sentence:** the punishment a person receives in a law court after they have been found guilty
■ **affidavit:** a written statement in which you swear that what you say is true
■ **raising the alarm:** warning people of danger
■ **saw him trying to light:** saw that he was attempting to set fire to
■ **acting alone:** not doing this with other people
■ **after being stopped:** after the authorities had prevented him from getting on the plane
■ **the previous day:** here, Saturday

(Source: The BBC)



Every action has a reaction. We have one planet; one chance.

WHO delivers 3 mobile clinics to Iran

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — The World Health Organization (WHO) has delivered 3 fully equipped mobile clinics to the Ministry of Health of Iran.

“These mobile clinics will provide health services and save lives in communities beyond health centers and health posts both in good times and during the crisis,” said Dr. Christoph Hamelamann, WHO Representative in the Islamic Republic of Iran, according to un.org.ir.

The mobile clinics will provide outreach services to populations and communities where health facilities do not exist, are not functional or are inaccessible.

They will also reach communities in areas that are hard-to-reach and subsequently, cater for a population with limited access to health services. As the clinics are deployed and move around within a specific area, vulnerable and often displaced



communities will be able to receive access to life-saving health services.

The mobile clinics provide diagnosis, treatment, immunization, early diseases detection, control and response services, to ensure adequate follow up of patients with specific medical needs, referral of critical cases to advanced care, and detection of possible outbreaks of diseases. Each mobile clinic is accompanied by a medical team and pharmaceutical supplies to cover a range of essential health services for children, women and older people.

The mobile clinics specifically deployed on their first mission in the country to Ilam province for the mass gatherings in Arbaeen will save lives by providing first aid, stabilizing patients and referring them to the nearest health facility as needed. Some mobile clinics can also assist with more complicated cases, such as deliveries.

Are you malnourished? Quite possibly.

By Kundhavi Kadiresan

The word ‘malnutrition’ tends to invoke images of starving children in refugee camps, fleeing conflict or drought in lands far-away. While that image does reflect a reality of hunger, it does not solely define malnutrition nor those who suffer from it.

Certainly with more than 820 million hungry people in the world, most of them living in our Asia-Pacific region, undernourishment is definitely a huge problem and one that has stubbornly vexed attempts to crack.

But there are other malnutrition phantoms in our midst and these are probably lurking closer to your own home than you might realize. Waistlines of men and women have been expanding in recent decades and there are now more than two billion overweight adults in the world – while 670 million of them are obese. More than 120 million children and teens are also defined as obese.

What we eat, of course, defines how well-nourished (or malnourished) we are. In other words, it’s not simply quantity (as in how much we eat) that’s causing the malnourishment, it’s more to do with what we’re eating – or not eating. Simply put, the world is facing a triple burden of malnutrition – from undernourishment, micronutrient deficiencies (lack of vitamins and minerals) and from becoming overweight or obese.

There are, of course, reasons (and excuses) for the weight gain. Lifestyles and diets have changed. Increased urbanization indirectly contributes to it as does the pressure of everyday life – and the reliance on processed, fast food. Indeed, in many countries of the Asia-Pacific region, we are bombarded by advertisements encouraging us to eat more junk food high in sugars, salt and fats.

Meantime, many people consume fewer fruits, vegetables and other foods high in fibre. It seems we’ve forgotten that an apple a day keeps the doctor away!

Technologies such as computers and smart phones, which

bring us much of our entertainment these days, encourage more sedentary lifestyles which mean the additional calories we are absorbing are not being burned due to a lack of exercise. That’s simply a ‘fat fact.’

This phenomenon of poor diets is not restricted to urban areas or richer countries or wealthier people within poorer countries. Some people, due to where they live, don’t even have the option to buy healthier foods. Fruits and vegetables, in some cases, are either not available or might be deemed too expensive – so they eat whatever is available – often fried street foods.

■ **Paying the price of a poor diet and amending our ways**

As with most excesses, there is a human and monetary price to pay for all of this. Diets have become so unhealthy, that when combined with sedentary lifestyles, they rank as the world’s primary risk factor for disability and death from non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, some



Kundhavi Kadiresan is Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

Half the world’s coral reefs already have been killed by climate change

The oceans have long been the biggest buffer for humankind’s dangerous greenhouse-gas emissions. Around a quarter of all the carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere since the 1980s—from driving cars, running factories and churning out electricity with fossil fuels—has ended up sunk into the waters.

As the planet has warmed from mounting emissions, the oceans warmed first and fastest, absorbing 90% of that excess heat. A report released last month by the UN-based Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the foremost scientific authority on the subject, warned that damage to the oceans is accelerating and may be at the point of irreversibility. That makes delicate coral reefs around

the world something of a leading indicator for the collapse of the ocean ecosystem. Half of all reef systems have already been destroyed, putting a quarter of marine life at risk. Even if global warming is limited to the 1.5 degree Celsius target outlined in the 2016 Paris Agreement—a longshot goal, at the current rate of emissions—the IPCC now concludes that “almost all warm-water coral reefs are projected to suffer significant losses of area and local extinctions.”

In a perverse consequence, lost reefs will leave nearby coastlines even more vulnerable to erosion and storms, as well as from accelerating sea-level rise, which could go up by as much as two feet this century as a

result of glacier melt.

Corals are so sensitive to rising sea temperatures that you can see their demise. When water is too warm, corals enter a stress response and lose the symbiotic algae that give them their distinctive colors—a process known as bleaching. If a coral is severely bleached, chances of disease and death increase.

In 2014, an El Niño-driven coral bleaching event swept the world’s reefs that lasted three years—the longest and most damaging of its kind on record. Bleaching was evident in 75% of tropical reefs and brought nearly 30% to mortality level.

Some of the planet’s most important habitats are within 12 nautical miles from

shore—the coral reefs, seagrass and mangrove areas plied by over 50 million fishers for food and livelihood. Reefs that manage to survive the onslaught of warming and acidification will be left with less marine diversity, the IPCC warns, which will “greatly compromise” seafood supplies and tourism revenue.

That could leave 680 million people who live in low-lying coastal zones in a bind, especially those in smaller island states.

Fishing and tourism contribute an estimated \$16 billion annually to 52 economies particularly intertwined with coastal reefs. Almost 20% of gross domestic product in the Maldives is directly tied to reefs.

(Source: Bloomberg)

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → €

Female Asiatic lion to join male companion in Iran

Iran will play host to a female Asiatic lion from Ireland to accompany the recently returned male lion under a population management program aiming at endangered species reproduction by the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA), a veterinarian at Eram Zoo has said. The female lion, born 4 years ago, now is coming back to its motherland after being extinct for 8 decades, YJC quoted Iman Memarian as saying on Saturday.

He went on to say that the lion has undergone genetic tests and diagnostics under the EAZA supervision, and the results have showed that the animal is completely healthy.

Both will be kept at Tehran Zoological Garden separately for a period, and then will live together, Memarian concluded.

PREFIX/SUFFIX

“-ship”

■ **Meaning:** position

■ **For example:** True **friendship** is about trusting one another.

PHRASAL VERB

Pare something down

■ **Meaning:** to reduce something, especially by making a lot of small reductions

■ **For example:** The list was pared down for the final interviews.

IDIOM

On cue

■ **Explanation:** to happen at exactly the appropriate or expected moment

■ **For example:** My grandmother was blowing out the candles on her birthday cake when, right on cue, the flowers arrived.

شیر ماده ایرانی به جفت نر خود می پیوندد

دامپزشک پارک پردیسان و مدیر باغ وحش ارم از پیوستن شیر ماده ایرانی از ایرلند به جفت نر خود تحت نظر برنامه تکثیر گونه‌های در خطر انقراض خبر داد.

ایمان معماریان در گفتگو با خبرنگار حوزه محیط زیست گروه اجتماعی باشگاه خبرنگاران جوان، اظهار کرد: شیرماده ایرانی که در باغ وحش دوبلین ایرلند به دنیا آمده و ۴ ساله است، پس از ۸۰ سال در راه بازگشت به وطن است.

وی افزود: شیر ماده ایرانی از نظر ژنتیک و نبود بیماری چک شده و هیچ گونه مشکلی نداشته، این شیر پس از استانداردسازی مورد تایید اتحادیه باغ وحش‌های اروپا به ایران جابه جا شد.

دامپزشک پارک پردیسان و مدیر باغ وحش ارم ادامه داد: دو شیر ماده و نر ایرانی مدتی جدا از هم زیست خواهند کرد و به صورت تدریجی این دو گونه به هم معرفی خواهند شد.

Yemen's Ansarullah offers new prisoner swap deal to Saudi-backed ex-govt.

TEHRAN — Yemen's Houthi Ansarullah movement has offered the Saudi-backed former government a new deal for exchange of prisoners over a week after the popular movement unilaterally released hundreds of detainees.

Head of Yemen's National Committee for Prisoners Affairs (NCPA), Abdulqader al-Mortada, said Friday the group had told "local mediators" that it was ready to implement a prison exchange within one week.

"We are waiting for the other side to respond," he noted, according to a report by Al Masirah TV.

The Ansarullah official said the deal offered to the other side would cover 2,000 prisoners in the "first phase".

The offer came days after the Houthi movement released hundreds prisoners, including three Saudi nationals, in its latest goodwill gesture.

Through the release, the Ansarullah movement and its allies in the Yemeni army said they sought to underline their commitment to peace negotiations held in Sweden last December.

The talks with Yemen's Saudi-backed former government resulted in an agreement, which calls for a ceasefire in Hudaydah, a



prisoner exchange and a statement of understanding on the southern city of Ta'izz.

The unilateral release of prisoners proved Ansarullah's "credibility in implementing the Sweden agreement and we call on the other party to take a comparable step," the

NCPA head said at the time.

The released detainees were "included in the prisoner lists of the Sweden deal," Mortada said in a press conference.

Mortada noted that the Ansarullah movement launched the initiative due to

the big delay in the implementation of the prisoner swap deal.

It is the latest goodwill gesture from the Ansarullah movement which called for a cessation of strikes in September.

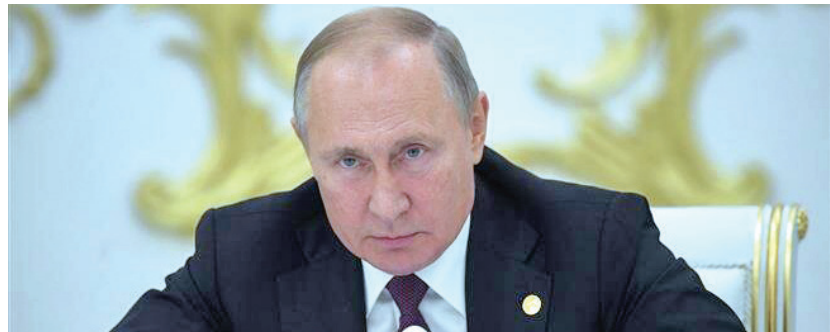
President of the Supreme Political Council in the Yemeni capital, Mahdi al-Mashat, on September 20 said the Ansarullah movement would stop targeting Saudi territories with drones and ballistic missiles, hoping Riyadh would reciprocate the gesture.

According to press TV, Saudi Arabia and a number of its allies launched a devastating campaign against Yemen in March 2015, with the goal of bringing the former regime of Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi back to power.

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

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

Turkish operation in Syria threatens to revive Daesh: Putin



TEHRAN — Russian President Vladimir Putin has warned that the Turkish military incursion into northeastern Syria could lead to the revival of the Daesh terrorist group in the region.

Putin issued the warning in a televised address during a visit to Turkmenistan on Friday, saying that members of the Takfiri outfit held in northeast Syria could escape from jail as a result of the Turkish offensive.

"I'm not sure whether the Turkish army will be able to take this under control -- and how soon," Putin was quoted as saying by the Russia's Interfax news agency. "This is a real threat to us."

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced on Tuesday that his country's military forces and the Turkish-backed militants of the so-called Free Syrian Army

(FSA) had launched an offensive in Syria's northeast.

According to Press TV, Erdogan has claimed that the offensive only targets militants affiliated with Daesh as well as Kurdish militants in order to establish a Turkish safe-region there and resettle millions of refugees in the area.

Ankara views US-backed YPG militants as a terrorist organization tied to the home-grown Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) militant group, which has been seeking an autonomous Kurdish region in Turkey since 1984.

The YPG also constitutes the backbone of the so-called Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), an anti-Damascus alliance of predominantly Kurdish militants, which has much of northern Syria under control.

Ethiopian PM Abiy Ahmed Ali wins Nobel Peace Prize



TEHRAN — Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali of Ethiopia has won the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize, the awards committee announced in Norway on Friday.

He was recognized for starting peace talks with Eritrea and establishing a peace agreement to end the long stalemate between the two countries.

"When Abiy Ahmed reached out his hand, President Isaias Afwerki grasped it and helped to formalise the peace process between the two countries," said Berit Reiss-Andersen, chair of the Nobel Peace Prize Committee.

"In Ethiopia, even if much work remains, Abiy Ahmed has initiated important reforms that give many citizens hope for a better life and a brighter future."

"He spent his first 100 days as prime minister lifting the country's state of emer-

gency, granting amnesty to thousands of political prisoners, discontinuing media censorship, legalising outlawed opposition groups, dismissing military and civil leaders who were suspected of corruption and significantly increasing the influence of women in Ethiopian political and community life."

The office of the Ethiopian prime minister said: "We are proud as a nation" for winning the prestigious award.

"This victory and recognition is a collective win for all Ethiopians, and a call to strengthen our resolve in making Ethiopia - the new horizon of hope - a prosperous nation for all," a statement read.

According to Al Jazeera, Abiy has helped mediate between Kenya and Somalia in a maritime territory dispute.

Russia, U.S. veto European statement on Turkey's Syria action

TEHRAN — Iraq appointed new education and health ministers on Thursday, a day after Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi promised to reshuffle his government and enact reforms to try to stem unrest.

Suha Khalil is one of few women to have become a minister in Iraq. Her appointment was approved by parliament, which also voted for the appointment of the new health minister, Jaafar Allawi, after his predecessor quit before the wave of unrest.

The changes are unlikely to satisfy Iraqis after more than 110 people were killed in a government crackdown

on protests that began last week over jobs, services and corruption.

The protesters blame a corrupt and divided political class for failing to improve their lives even in peacetime, some two years after Islamic State was declared defeated in Iraq. The unrest is the biggest security challenge for the country since then.

Abdul Mahdi on Wednesday declared three days of national mourning, said he had not ordered use of live ammunition and announced measures aimed at placating protesters including a cabinet reshuffle, punishment of

corrupt officials, job opportunities for the unemployed and stipends for the poor.

In a sign that parliament remains divided, dozens of lawmakers boycotted the rest of Thursday's session after approving the two ministerial appointments.

"We voted for two ministries that were vacant so they could actually start doing their work, but the prime minister should have also presented changes to ministries riven with corruption," said lawmaker Husham al-Suhail who walked out of the session, without giving further details, Reuters reported.

Human Rights Watch, rights group condemn Bahrain's denial of medical care to prisoners

TEHRAN — Human Rights Watch and the UK-based Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD) have censured Bahraini officials for failing to provide adequate medical care to jailed political activists, as the ruling Al Khalifah regime presses ahead with its clampdown on human rights activists and pro-democracy campaigners in the kingdom.

Two detained human rights defenders, as well as the family members of four jailed

opposition activists, told HRW and BIRD that prison authorities are arbitrarily denying the inmates urgent medical care, refusing to refer them to specialists, failing to disclose their medical examination results, and withholding medication as a form of punishment.

The family of 57-year-old Abduljalil al-Singace, an academic who was a spokesman for the dissolved Haq Movement for Liberty and

Democracy, said his health has deteriorated significantly in detention.

Singace's daughter said that he saw the prison doctor on August 28, for the first time since 2017.

Earlier requests for medical attention for neck and back pain that his family said resulted from torture had been denied.

Moreover, prison officials did not authorize white blood cell checkups he needs

as a result of complications he suffered due to a prolonged hunger strike in 2015, Press TV reported.

On August 28, the prison doctor recommended that Singace should see a heart specialist in Bahrain Defense Forces (BDF) Hospital. Prison authorities told him on the day of the appointment that they would not take him there as he had refused to put on the prison uniform or wear shackles.

Iranian university students raise Kashmir issue

TEHRAN — Ambassador of Pakistan H.E Riffat Masood addressed a ceremony organized in Tehran by Iranian Students Organization "Tahkim-e-Vahdat" to highlight the Kashmir issue. A large number of Iranian students from different universities across Iran attended the ceremony.

Mr. Abdollahzadeh, head of International section of Tahkim-e-Vahdat, in his introductory remarks, welcomed the guests and shed light on long outstanding Kashmir dispute between Pakistan and India.

Ambassador Ms. Riffat Masood, in her speech, highlighted the Kashmir dispute and plight of Kashmiris after the abrogation of special status of Jammu & Kashmir under the Presidential decree of 5 August 2019 by Indian Government.

The Ambassador briefed the audience on the illegal action taken by the Indian Government, in contravention of International law and the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions to suppress the popular aspiration

of the people of Kashmir to exercise their right of self-determination.

The Ambassador added that Prime Minister in his speech at the United Nations General Assembly session in New York had urged on the United Nations and the International community to play their role in resolving the Kashmir dispute and in defusing the current situation as any conflict between the two neighbours with nuclear capabilities would entail grave implications for the region and the world.

The Ambassador answering the questions raised by students briefed them on the history of Kashmir issue and human rights violations in Indian Occupied Kashmir and the brutalities being committed by the tyrannical Indian forces. The Ambassador also urged the Iranian students to prevail upon and speak up against atrocities being committed against Muslims around the world especially the people of Indian Occupied Kashmir.



Ambassador Riffat Masood briefing Iranian students on Kashmir issue at a ceremony organized by "Tahkim-e-Vahdet" in Tehran on October 10, 2019.

Heavy fighting rages as Syrians flee Turkish attacks

Turkey forces 'kill 342'

Kurdish fighters

➤ Since the beginning of the Turkish invasion on Wednesday, at least 10 civilians along with least 29 Kurdish militants have been killed, according to the Observatory. Another six fighters belonging to armed groups led by Turkey have also been reported killed.

The Turkish Defense Ministry confirmed on Friday that it had lost one soldier and that another three had been injured, marking Turkey's first confirmed casualties since it began the incursion.

The US granted Turkey the green light to launch the incursion into northeast Syria earlier this week by withdrawing its troops from Syria's Kurdish-controlled border region.

The move was seen by Kurdish forces as a "stab in the back" from their supposed ally in Washington.

Ankara seeks to create a "safe zone" stretching about 120 kilometers south of the Turkish border and 30 kilometers deep into the Kurdish-controlled region in northern Syria.

Humanitarian crisis

The United Nation's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs announced on Thursday that an estimated 70,000 people have been displaced since Ankara launched the incursion.

Civilians were reported to be fleeing the affected areas by vehicle and on foot, carrying their belongings on their backs.

Fourteen humanitarian organizations, including Doctors of the World, Oxfam and the Norwegian Refugee Council, issued a statement warning of the potential humanitarian costs of the conflict.

"An estimated 450,000 people live within five kilometers of the Syria-Turkey border and are at risk if all sides do not exercise maximum restraint and prioritize the protection of civilians," the joint statement said.

Kurdish fighters have warned that the Turkish incursion may enable detainees belonging to the Daesh terrorist group to escape. About 12,000 men linked to Daesh are held in seven detention centers across northeast Syria, according to the Kurds.

On Thursday, Kurdish authorities said a prison housing terrorist fighters was hit by Turkish bombardment.

EU plans sanctions on Turkey

French State Secretary for European Affairs Amelie de Montchalin said Friday sanctions against Turkey will "be on the table" during the European Union's summit next week.

"We will not remain powerless when faced with a situation that is shocking for civilians, the free Syrian forces and the stability of the region," she said.

The incursion has drawn strong condemnation from the Syrian government which denounced it as an infringement on its national sovereignty.

Regional states such as Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Egypt, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia as well the Europeans have voiced their opposition to the Turkish move.

Erdogan's dreams in northern Syria won't be realized

➤ Now the question is that will U.S. goals in Syria be pursued by Turkey? These goals include, overthrowing Bashar al-Assad, establishing the administration of their own agent, undermining Hezbollah and Hamas movements, securing Israel, decreasing Russia and Iran's influence in Syria, looting oil and other resources with the U.S. withdrawal from Syria, and reaching a location near Iran.

To what extent Turkish pragmatic president can meet U.S. interests in Syria and lands near the Golan Heights? It is obvious that he is not able to do that. The Turkish government cannot stand against the axis of resistance, even if it eliminates all Syrian Kurds and takes the control of northern Syria. In addition, the fragile Turkish economy and international community's reaction will not allow Erdogan to do so.

The Turkish president is pursuing some goals in northern Syria, including restoring lost credibility in Turkey, escaping political and social failures of last election, defeating the Idlib front, removing thousands of Syrian refugees in border camps, and diverting public opinion from terrible economic situation.

Under current circumstances, Erdogan's dreams of expanding territory to Homs and Aleppo, changing the demographic context in northern Syria, preventing social, political and cultural connection of the Kurdish people in southeastern Turkey with Syrian Kurds, settling Arabs and Turkmens at Syrian-Turkish borders, reaching to Iran and Russia's level, and gaining more power in Syria, will not be realized.

Political and military experts believe that the only way to save Syrian Kurds and preserve their legal rights is to agree with Syria and using its army and allies to remove Turkish threats.

Countries with influence in Syria, including Iran, said that they will support Kurds' agreement and alliance with Syria.

"Hiring infiltrator", the British old-fashioned sedition in Iraq

➤ Economic and social problems and corruption has paved the way for the enemies to incite people and create insecurity. The role of infiltrators to exploit the problems and engage people and the government in marginal issues is very complex and important.

At this point in time, the government's main focus should be on reforming defective and corrupt structures to resolve people's problems. The Iraqi citizens should be aware of enemies' sedition who have targeted Iraq's most important wealth that is the security achieved by the pure blood of thousands of sincere youth.

Indeed, demonstrating the protests at the time of the Arba'een march has no purpose other than to undermine the greatest event of friendship and reform in Iraqi community.

The Arba'een connects the Iraqi people to each other and is the heart of national unity and integrity. The Arba'een will not be eliminated by adversarial approaches of enemies and will always inspire people of this land.

FIFA bans former Afghan general secretary in sexual abuse enquiry

The former general secretary of the Afghanistan Football Federation (AFF) has been banned for five years and fined after FIFA's ethics committee found him guilty of violations relating to the abuse of female players.

The world soccer body said in a statement that the investigation into Sayed Aghazada concerned complaints lodged by several female Afghan football players against former AFF president Keramuudin Karim.

Karim was banned for life in June.

The female players' complaints related to sexual abuse between 2013 and 2018, at a time when Aghazada was the AFF's general secretary.

"In its decision, the adjudicatory chamber ruled that Mr Aghazada was aware of this abuse and had the duty to report and prevent it according to the FIFA Code of Ethics," FIFA said on Friday.

"Consequently, the adjudicatory chamber found that Mr Aghazada had breached ... the FIFA Code of Ethics and sanctioned him with a ban ... for five years. In addition, a fine in the amount of 10,000 Swiss francs (8,009.63 pounds) has been imposed."

Aghazada was also a FIFA standing committee member and Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Executive Committee member. *(Source: Reuters)*

Vardy's wife receives death threats after Coleen Rooney's leak allegations

Rebekah Vardy says she has received death threats even aimed at her unborn child since Wayne Rooney's wife Coleen accused her of leaking stories.

Seven-months pregnant Vardy, a reality TV star married to former England striker Jamie Vardy, told Friday's Daily Mail she has received abuse via social media since Rooney went public with her accusations on Wednesday.

Rooney, 33, said she had a suspicion of who might be the source of the leaks and blocked everyone apart from an Instagram page belonging to Vardy from seeing her stories.

The wife of England's record goalscorer told her 1.3 million Twitter followers she had worked out Vardy was the culprit after she had posted a series of false stories, some of which made it into The Sun.

"Over 24 hours, this has escalated and escalated," said Vardy, speaking to the Daily Mail from Dubai where she is on holiday.

"I wasn't going to say anything but it has gone so extreme.

"I have been told that I should die, that my children should die, my unborn child should die. It would be unacceptable for anyone.

"I am tough, but this has made me cry. It is hard to explain how horrible it has been."

Vardy, 37, said confronting Rooney had been a waste of time.

"(It) would be like arguing with a pigeon," said Vardy.

"You can tell it that you are right and it is wrong, but it's still going to s*** in your hair.

"I said to her: 'Coleen, what on earth have you done?'

"It was not an easy phone call. She said to me: 'I'm not pointing the finger' and I said: 'You have just annihilated me in public and hung me out to dry. The whole world hates me!'" *(Source: AFP)*

Kaepernick camp quash 'false statements'

Colin Kaepernick's representatives have moved to quash "false statements" regarding the quarterback's future.

The 31-year-old left the San Francisco 49ers in March 2017, the year after he began kneeling for the national anthem in protest against racial injustice in the USA.

He has been without a team since, despite being available to play.

Kaepernick's representatives said "in 25 years" they had "never seen anything like it".

In a statement titled "facts to address the false narratives regarding Colin Kaepernick", Jeff Nalley and Jasmine Windham added that their client had not demanded a specific salary to join a team.

"Not a single team has brought Colin in for a workout," said the statement. "Seattle brought Colin in for a visit but did not work him out.

"Afterwards, (Seattle coach) Pete Carroll said Colin is a 'starter in this league'.

"No other NFL team has interviewed or worked out Colin in the past three seasons, despite other false statements in the media to the contrary."

Nalley and Windham said they had "reached out to all 32 teams about Colin's employment, with little or no response".

In February, Kaepernick reached a settlement with the NFL over a 'collusion' case against team owners.

He believed owners were conspiring not to hire him because of his protests.

He has recently tweeted videos of himself working out as he awaits a return to NFL.

Kaepernick's former 49ers teammate Eric Reid also settled his own collusion case and has since signed with the Carolina Panthers. *(Source: BBC)*

Conor McGregor appears in court in assault case

Conor McGregor appeared in court on Friday over an alleged assault on a man in a Dublin pub in April.

The incident occurred April 6 at the Marble Arch pub. McGregor was captured on camera punching a man, who was sitting at the bar, in the face. The man is in his 50s.

In an August interview with ESPN, McGregor expressed remorse for his "unacceptable behavior" in the situation.

The 31-year-old Irish fighter stood at the back of the Dublin courtroom as his solicitor, Michael Staines, asked for the case to be adjourned until Nov. 1 pending the disclosure of evidence.

Judge Marie Keane asked the twice Ultimate Fighting Championship title-holder, dressed in a navy pattern suit, to appear again in three weeks' time when he would be asked to enter a plea or seek a date for the case to be heard.

McGregor was charged in a separate case in April 2018 with three counts of assault and one count of criminal mischief after police said he attacked a charter bus in New York carrying UFC fighters.

He pleaded guilty to a reduced disorderly conduct charge in that case. *(Source: ESPN)*

Federer loses cool and follows Djokovic out of Shanghai

Roger Federer was given a point penalty as he followed Novak Djokovic out of the Shanghai Masters quarter-finals in a bad-tempered defeat to Alexander Zverev on Friday.

The 22-year-old German won 6-3, 6-7 (7/9), 6-3 as the Swiss legend was penalised after twice hitting the ball out of the court in anger and rowing with the umpire.

The sixth-ranked Zverev faces Austria's Dominic Thiem or Matteo Berrettini of Italy in the semi-finals on Saturday.

Former number one Federer evaded questions about the umpire afterwards, shrugging his shoulders and firing back at one reporter: "So you can write something on Twitter, yeah?"

■ "Next question."

The 20-time Grand Slam champion saved five match points to force a deciding set, but he then became engaged in a continual war of words with the chair umpire.

The 38-year-old's trademark cool evaded him as the new generation of men's tennis stars took centre stage in Shanghai.

His point deduction came at 3-0 and 30-15 down in the third set, as he threatened to unravel.

He said that he "played alright", but was effusive about the rise of Zverev, Daniil Medvedev and Stefanos Tsitsipas, all in the semi-finals in Shanghai.

"The young guys are knocking on the door big time, it's exciting, it's great," he said.



Tsitsipas said that he scares the "Big Three" after the young Greek stunned world number one Djokovic in their quarter-final.

The 21-year-old has now defeated Djokovic, Federer and Rafael Nadal this year to burnish his fast-growing reputation.

On Saturday though he faces the red-hot 23-year-old Medvedev -- who he has never beaten.

Tsitsipas recovered from losing the opening three games in just seven minutes to shock the reigning champion Djokovic 3-6, 7-5, 6-3.

Man Utd could be dumped by £450m shirt sponsors Chevrolet



Manchester United are reportedly looking for a new shirt sponsor with Chevrolet considering their future due to the Red Devils' slump since Sir Alex Ferguson retired.

The American car manufacturer's deal to have their logo on the front of United jerseys runs out in 2021.

And according to The Times, they are unsure whether to extend the deal because of the Red Devils' poor form.

Chevrolet brokered a whopping £450million deal in 2012 - worth a Prem-high £64m a year - to sponsor Manchester United's shirts from the 2014/15 season through until the end of the 2020/21 campaign.

But some at General Motors - the parent company - believed paying double that of previous sponsors Aon was simply too much.

In fact, global marketing chief Joel Ewanick left General Motors soon after negotiating the deal in 2012 - although he maintained the deal was a "no-brainer".

Now as the clock ticks towards the expiry date and Chevrolet yet to commit again, United may be forced to look elsewhere to secure a new sponsor.

A United spokesperson told The Times: "Chevrolet is a fantastic partner. The sponsorship continues to achieve the brand and business objectives for both parties and

we will continue to work to activate and maximize it."

Since agreeing the contract in 2012, United have won the Premier League once, in 2013, in Ferguson's final year in charge.

Although the shirts still had Aon on the front for that season. The insurance company still sponsor the training kit and training ground, for £17m a year.

They have not even gone close in the past six seasons and are well off the pace again this term.

The Red Devils sit 12th - two points clear of the relegation zone and already 15 adrift of leaders Liverpool - and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer is fighting to keep his job.

United do remain a business powerhouse, with the club announcing record revenue of £627.1m for the year ending June 30 2019 with £171.8m coming through sponsorships alone.

They have a staggering 59 partners including Chevrolet, Aon and Kohler - whose logo is on the shirt sleeves - as the principal partners and Adidas the official kit supplier.

Some of the more obscure partners include a soft drinks partner for Nigeria, a denim partner, a music partner and a spirits partner.

(Source: The Sun)

Belgium first team into Euro 2020 finals after 9-0 win



Belgium became the first side through to the Euro 2020 finals after thrashing San Marino 9-0 on Thursday with Romelu Lukaku scoring his 50th and 51st international goals.

Russia were on the verge of joining the world's top ranked nation as second qualifiers from Group I after running out 4-0 winners at home to Scotland with all the goals coming in the second half.

Unbeaten Belgium have 21 points from seven games, with only one goal conceded, while Russia have 18 and Cyprus, 2-1 winners over Kazakhstan in Astana, are on 10. The top two qualify directly.

San Marino managed to keep a clean sheet for 27 minutes against the 2018 World Cup semi-finalists before, as expected, the floodgates opened at Brussels's King Baudouin stadium and the goals poured in for Roberto Martinez's side.

nter Milan striker Lukaku became the first Belgian to reach a half century of international goals with a right-footed shot to open the scoring.

He set up Nacer Chadli three minutes later before an own-goal from Cristian Broli put Belgium 3-0 up in the 35th.

Lukaku grabbed his second on 41 minutes assisted by Real Madrid's Eden Hazard.

season-ending ATP Finals.

Tsitsipas sealed the deal with a gleeful smash and held both arms aloft. Djokovic met his opponent with a warm embrace at the net.

Djokovic, who had looked imperious up until now, had no complaints.

Asked if Tsitsipas has the potential to be number one, the 32-year-old Serbian replied: "He definitely has, yes."

■ 'Really tight'

Djokovic says that he is fully recovered from a shoulder injury and he did not drop a set in winning the title in Tokyo last week.

He had carried that ominous form into Shanghai and threatened to blow Tsitsipas away in the first set.

But Tsitsipas found his feet in the second set, then went 3-1 up in the decider when Djokovic planted a forehand wide on the third break point.

Tsitsipas grabbed his place at the ATP Finals after fourth-ranked Medvedev tamed self-styled "wild horse" Fabio Fognini 6-3, 7-6 (7/4).

US Open finalist Medvedev has beaten Tsitsipas in all their four matches, but he said: "They were all really tight. He's improving also every week.

"He's still so young. He has even, let's say, two years of more improving than me, talking about age."

(Source: Independent)

NBA scraps media access to teams in China amid HK tweet backlash

The National Basketball Association said on Friday it won't make the Brooklyn Nets and the Los Angeles Lakers available to media for the rest of their China visit, amid a furor over a tweet by a Houston Rockets executive supporting Hong Kong's protesters.

The teams had been scheduled to address news conferences on Friday afternoon in Shenzhen, ahead of Saturday's exhibition game in the southern Chinese city on the border with Hong Kong that the league says will proceed as planned.

"We have decided not to hold media availability for our teams for the remainder of our trip in China. They have been placed into a complicated and unprecedented situation while abroad and we believe it would be unfair to ask them to address these matters in real time," the league said in a statement.

No players or executives were made available for official briefings this week in China as the league grappled with the backlash from the quickly deleted tweet by Rockets general manager Daryl Morey last weekend in support of Hong Kong anti-government protests. The China market is estimated to be worth more than \$4 billion for the NBA.

China has accused the West of stirring up anti-Beijing sentiment in Hong Kong, and Chinese state media has characterised Morey's tweet as the latest example of meddling in China's affairs. NBA Commissioner Adam Silver defended Morey's freedom of expression in a statement issued on



Tuesday, further angering Beijing.

Fan events were cancelled this week and partners have cut ties with the NBA, underscoring the severity of the situation for the league. Athletes such as Lakers star forward LeBron James and league figures have also declined to answer questions when spotted by reporters at various venues in Shanghai and Shenzhen.

■ Packed stands

The first of the two exhibition games scheduled in China took place on Thursday night, which the Nets won 114-111.

It was well-attended and saw little in the way of patriotic protest. The crowd waved Chinese flags in the arena before the game started, but the packed stands gave the players a huge welcome on court and shouted enthusiastically throughout the game.

But Chinese fans who did not have a ticket could not watch: state television CCTV and Tencent, who hold the rights to show the NBA in the country, are not carrying any of the China games on their platforms.

Houston Rockets sneakers and other merchandise have been pulled from several Nike and NBA stores in major Chinese cities, with the franchise's direct association with Morey making it a central target of the furor. Managers at some of the Nike stores said they had been instructed to remove the goods via an internal memo from management.

In a Facebook post on Sunday, Nets owner Joe Tsai, the co-founder of Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba, attempted to play mediator. But his post invited more controversy in the United States after he labelled protesters in Hong Kong as "separatists".

Chen Mingqi, a 20-year-old Chinese Lakers fan, said outside the hotel in Shenzhen where the Lakers were staying that Morey shouldn't interfere in other countries' affairs.

"Still, sport is sport and we shouldn't punish the Lakers and the NBA for his mistake," Chen said.

(Source: Reuters)

Iran too strong for Cambodia at World Cup qualifier

S P O R T S TEHRAN — Iran earned an impressive 14-0 win over minnow Cambodia at the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 and AFC Asian Cup China 2023 on Thursday.

It's Team Melli's second successive win in the competition after a 2-0 win over Hong Kong in September in Group C.

Iran scored seven goals in the first half in Tehran's Azadi Stadium, where the Iranian women attended an international match for the first time after many years.

Ahmad Nourollahi opened the scoring in the 5th minute and Sardar Azmoun made a hat trick. Hossein Kananizadegan, Mehdi Taremi and Karim Ansarifard also scored for Iran in the first half.

Just two minutes after the interval, Iran goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand brought Cambodia's player down in the penalty area and the referee awarded the visiting team a penalty.

Beiranvand saved the penalty.

Ansarifard scored three more goals in the second half and Taremi also registered his name on the scoreboard.

Mohammad Mohebbi scored a brace in the second half and Milad Mohammadi also was on target for Team Melli.

Marc Wilmots's team will meet Bahrain in Riffa on Tuesday.

Iran have been drawn in Group C alongside Iraq, Bahrain, Cambodia and Hong Kong.

The eight group winners and four best runners-up will advance to the AFC Asian Cup China 2023 Finals and the final round of qualifying for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022.

The next best 24 teams from the second round of the joint qualifiers will compete in a separate competition for the remaining 12 slots in the 24-team AFC Asian Cup China 2023.



Iran learn fate at Intercontinental Beach Soccer Cup



S P O R T S TEHRAN — Iran have been drawn in a tough group at the 9th edition of the Intercontinental Beach Soccer Cup.

The prestigious competition will be held at the Kite Beach in Dubai, the UAE from Nov. 5 to 9.

Defending champions are pitted against three-time winners Russia, Mexico and Egypt for the two semi-final spots from Group B.

Hosts the UAE will meet European

powerhouses Italy and Spain and Asian champions Japan in Group A.

The Intercontinental Cup is second only to the FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup as the largest and most prestigious event on the international beach soccer circuit, featuring an exclusive assembly of the world's very best national teams from each continent.

Since the World Cup is a biannual competition, this event is now the most important annual international beach soccer tournament.

Nothing done yet: Mark Wilmots



S P O R T S TEHRAN — Iran national football team head coach Marc Wilmots says that they have not done anything yet after beating Cambodia 14-0 in Group C of the Qatar 2022 World Cup Asian qualifiers on Thursday.

The win was Team Melli's second in a row following a 2-0 win over Hong Kong in their opening game last month.

"I had said we would play an attacking football against Cambodia. We're still in a transition phase and the new players have

been added to the team," Wilmots said in the post-match news conference.

"We have an important match with Bahrain and need to keep our concentration. We want one more three points. We haven't done anything yet," the Belgian coach added.

The Iranian women attended the match for the first time after many years.

"It was a historic day for the Iranian women. I want to thank them for their presence at the stadium," Wilmots stated.

Iran edge past Argentina at FIVB World Cup

S P O R T S TEHRAN — Iran earned a hard-fought 3-2 (25-27, 25-23, 25-19, 17-25, 15-10) win over Argentina at the International Volleyball Federation (FIVB) Men's World Cup on Friday.

Porya Yali led Iran with 18 points and Argentina's Ezequiel Palacios scored 20 points in Hiroshima in the second phase of round-robin play.

«It was a tough game with a lot of emotion on both sides. We did not lose our concentration. We had a good service after the third set. Our service was crucial in this match. Their setter was precise and fast getting the ball to outside hitters, but our service decided the match,» Iran coach Igor Kolakovic said.



Iran will play hosts Japan on Sunday.

The 2019 FIVB Volleyball Men's World Cup is the 14th staging of the FIVB Volleyball Men's World Cup, contested by the senior men's national teams of the members of the Fédération Internationale de Volleyball (FIVB), the sport's global governing body.

The tournament is being held in Japan from Oct. 1 to 15. Japan played hosts for this event for the twelfth consecutive time since 1977.

This is the first time since 1989 that FIVB decided not to allocate any spots in the Olympics, due to Japan hosting the 2020 Summer Olympics.

Two-time Paralympian Peters appointed chief executive of IPC

Two-time Paralympian Mike Peters has been announced as chief executive of the International Paralympic Committee (IPC).

The football seven-a-side player captained the United States at the Atlanta 1996 and Athens 2004 Paralympic Games.

He joined the IPC in 2015 as chief of staff and acting director of the membership engagement department.

Peters became chief operating officer in 2018 and has been interim chief executive since March, following Xavier Gonzalez's departure.

"As a Paralympic athlete, I witnessed firsthand the ability of the Paralympic Movement to change lives and communities," said Peters.

"It is the privilege of my professional life to lead the IPC and I am very excited about the role and the trust the IPC Governing Board has placed in me."

Peters has volunteered on national and international governance committees for more than 12 years and served for six years on the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee's Athletes Advisory Council.

IPC President Andrew Parsons said: "Following an extensive six-month long global search, the IPC Governing Board was unanimous that Mike was the best person to be the new CEO and lead the IPC management team into a new and exciting era."

"We are thrilled he has accepted our offer. This was a key appointment for the IPC Governing Board which is why we called upon a leading external agency to support us in the recruitment."

"Mike was the sole internal applicant and was judged against the same criteria as all external candidates."

"His knowledge, experience and passion for the role and the Paralympic Movement, as well as his vision to transform the culture of the IPC and make the organization more membership focused, placed him head and shoulders above all other candidates."

Peters, who earned a PhD in communications during his time on the USA football seven-a-side team, was a legal officer for the IPC during the London 2012 Paralympic Games.

Based in Bonn, Peters is ready to dive into his role.

"With the IPC celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, it is important to recognize that we are part of a lasting legacy, comprised of immensely dedicated and talented individuals from around the globe," said Peters.

"It is also important to recognize this new and exciting era facing the IPC, one that requires a meaningful shift in how we do business."

"In the office, we are fostering an environment where individuals are recognized for their unique contributions, empowered to make decisions and encouraged to be bold in pursuing our mission and upholding our values."

"With members, we are embracing our commitment to be an open, fair and collaborative organization for all, and are working to create new and helpful engagement opportunities."

"What the IPC has achieved during its first three decades has been absolutely incredible, and I am thrilled about what more we can do in the Paralympic Movement together in the years to come."

(Source: Insidethegames)



Gary Lineker deletes tweet about Iranian women

S P O R T S TEHRAN — Former England captain Gary Lineker's tweet about the Iranian women, who attended their national team's match against Cambodia, sparked outrage and he was forced to delete it.

Iran earned an impressive 14-0 win over Cambodia in Group C of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 and AFC Asian Cup China 2023 on Thursday.

The Iranian women attended the historic match in Tehran's Azadi Stadium for the first time after many years.

Lineker tweeted: "See Iran beat Cambodia 14-0. Can someone please explain to the Iranian women allowed to watch their first game that it's not always this easy."

The tweet infuriated many Iranians, especially the country's women and they wrote the tweet was clearly inappropriate and offensive.

Lineker deleted the tweet.



Shahin Bushehr coach Abdollah Veisi resigns

TASNIM — Abdollah Veisi parted company with Iranian Shahin Bushehr football club by mutual consent on Thursday.

He was appointed as Bushehr-based coach in February but was forced to quit due to poor results.

Shahin Bushehr has appointed Mehrdad Karimian as interim coach.

Under tutelage of Veisi, Shahin Bushehr has suffered five defeats and earned one draw in Iran Professional League (IPL).

Iran futsal still fifth in world ranking

IRNA — The Iranian national futsal team remained unchanged in the latest Futsal World Ranking released on Thursday.

Team Melli are fifth with 1643 points.

Brazil and Spain are first and second with 1847 and 1782 points, respectively.

Russia and Argentina are third and fourth with 1676 and 1644 points.

The Iranian national futsal team are preparing for the 2020 AFC Futsal Championship Qualifiers and also 2020 FIFA Futsal World Cup.

Iran finished third at the FIFA Futsal World Cup Colombia 2016 after a 4-3 penalty shootout win over Portugal following a 2-2 draw.

Sanchez full of praise for 'impressive' Qatar display

Qatar head coach Felix Sanchez has praised both his side's character and performance after the Group E leaders overcame difficult playing conditions to beat Bangladesh 2-0 on Matchday Three of the Asian Qualifiers.

Yusuf Abdurisag's first-half goal and a late strike from Karim Boudiaf helped seal all three points for Sanchez's charges on a night when, despite the damp conditions, they maintained their push to qualify for the AFC Asian Cup China 2023.

With a crucial trip to second-placed Oman looming large on Tuesday, the Spanish tactician was left in doubt as to the importance of the victory following a job well done for 2019 AFC Asian Cup winners at Dhaka's Bangabandhu National Stadium.

"We had a good match despite the difficult conditions," Sanchez told reporters after the match.

"However, the players showed excellent character throughout the match and they had an impressive performance. I am happy that the players avoided injuries, which is a big bonus for us."

"I expected our opponents to play defensively, and they tried to deny us any space to go forward or create any scoring chances."

"However, I am satisfied with the performance and proud with what the players showed in the match. This was an important victory for us, especially given that we are on top of the standings," he added.

(Source: the-afc)

Nike shuts down Oregon Project after ban of coach

Nike Inc shut down its Nike Oregon Project training group on Thursday, following the recent four-year ban of founder and coach Alberto Salazar by the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency (USADA).

The Nike Oregon Project (NOP) was a camp designed primarily to develop U.S. endurance athletes and Salazar, a celebrated distance runner who had won three consecutive New York City marathons from 1980, had been its head coach.

Nike Chief Executive Mark Parker announced the move in a memo provided to Runner's World magazine.

"This situation, along with ongoing unsubstantiated assertions, is a distraction for many of the athletes and is compromising their ability to focus on their training and competition needs," Parker said in the memo, according to the magazine.

"I have therefore made the decision to wind down the Oregon Project."

The news of the project's closure comes amidst preparations by Oregon Project athletes Jordan Hasay and Galen Rupp for Sunday's Chicago Marathon.

Nike will help athletes find new training arrangements, Parker said in the memo, adding that no evidence had been found that performance-enhancing drugs were ever used on Oregon Project athletes.

Salazar has appealed against the ban for doping violations was announced on Sept. 30, which included violations for trafficking and tampering. Salazar has been unable to coach during the appeal process.

(Source: Reuters)

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GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

People's hearts are shy and timid, and turn to him who tames them and shows them affection.
Imam Ali (AS)

WHAT'S IN ART GALLERIES



Calligraphic painting

■ An exhibition of calligraphic paintings by a group of artists, including Shadi Talai, Anita Ashrafi, Mohsen Rahbari, Parisa Abbasi, Hassan Mehrabani, Zahra Bahrami and Barbod Yazdani, is underway at Negar Gallery.

The exhibition will run until October 17 at the gallery located at 33 Delaram Alley, Roshanai St. in the Qeitarieh neighborhood.



■ Idea Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of calligraphic paintings by Leili Montazeri.

The exhibit entitled "The Whisper of Love" will run until October 16 at the gallery located at 26, 18th St. off Sanai St., Karim Khan Ave.



Painting

■ An exhibition of paintings by Yazdan Sadi is currently underway at Seyhun Gallery.

The exhibit named "Iran Newspaper" will be running until October 23 at the gallery located at No. 11, 4th St., Vozara Ave.



■ Paintings by Alireza Chalipa are on display in an exhibition at O Gallery.

The exhibit will be running until October 22 at the gallery that can be found at 18 Shahin St., Sanai St.



■ Ali Khaleq, Saeid Ahmadsadeh, Ehsan Nasri, Nazar Musavinia, Behnam Kamrani, Masud Keshmiri and nine other artists are showcasing their paintings in an exhibition at Mojdeh Gallery.

The exhibit titled "Intangible Silence" runs until October 18 at the gallery located at No. 27, 18th Alley off North Allameh Blvd. in the Saadatabad neighborhood.



■ A collection of paintings by Parsa Payandeh is currently on view in an exhibition at Farmanfarma Gallery.

The exhibit entitled "Desert World" will run until October 22 at the gallery located at 2nd Araabi St., North Kheradmand St. in the Karim Khan neighborhood.



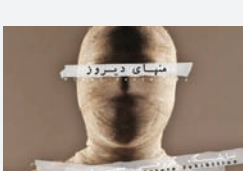
■ An exhibition of paintings by Jeiran Tavalloodi, Sara-Khatun Soleimani, Monir Arab and Ladan Moshir-Fatemi is underway at Shalman Gallery.

Entitled "The Color of Life", the exhibit will be running until October 16 at the gallery located at 27 Kavusi Alley, West Rudbar St., off Mirdamad Blvd.



■ Kiumars Kiasat is showcasing his latest paintings in an exhibition at Dena gallery.

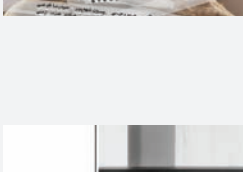
The exhibit named "Disfiguration of History" will run until October 25 at the gallery located at 4 Sussan Alley off Qarani St.



Sculpture

■ An exhibition of sculptures by a group of artists, including Soheil Bastami, Payam Qorbani, Bijan Ghoncheper, Rasul Kazami, Maryam Rahimi and Hamidreza Fotuhi, is underway at Ace Gallery.

The exhibit entitled "Minus Yesterday" runs until October 28 at the gallery, which can be found at 1831 Shariati Ave. near the Qeitarieh neighborhood.



Photo

■ Photos by Samira Mohammad-Qoli are on display in an exhibition at Sheis Gallery.

The exhibit titled "24 Infinite Choices" will run until October 18 at the gallery located at Shirzad Alley near Daneshju Park.



■ A collection of photos by Najla Dadbar is on display in an exhibition at Golestan Gallery.

Tallinn Black Nights festival picks “When the Moon Was Full”

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian filmmaker Narges Abyar's award-winning drama "When the Moon Was Full" will be screened in the official competition of Estonia's Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival.

The film will compete with seven other films, including "Girl with No Mouth" by Can Evrenol from Turkey, "Gutterbee" by Ulrich Thomsen from Denmark, "Monster" by Tom Sullivan from Ireland and "Through Black Glass" by Konstantin Lopushansky from Russia, the organizers have announced.

"When the Moon Was Full" tells the story of a woman from Tehran who marries a man from an Iranian province near the border of Pakistan. Soon after, she discovers that her new brother-in-law is a religious extremist trying to recruit her husband for his bloody cause.

The true love story had its premiere in Tehran during February at the 37th Fajr Film Festival where it won the Crystal Simorgh for best film and Abyar was named best director.

In addition, the movie also won Hutan Shakiba the award for best actor, while Elnaz Shakerdooost was crowned best actress for her role in the film.

In 2016, the Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival honored Abyar with the award for best director for her "Breath". The 2019 edition will take place from November 15 to December 1.



Elnaz Shakerdooost and Hutan Shakiba act in a scene from Narges Abyar's award-winning drama "When the Moon Was Full".

Filmmaker emerges to bring dramas from Iran political history to life

1 → "Lottery" was my most independently produced film, but it failed to satisfy the critics," he added.

A year later, Mahdavian's second movie, "The Midday Event" on the terrorist activities of the Mojahedin-e-Khalq Organization (MKO) in Iran in the 1980s, demonstrated his passion for factual political stories taken from modern Iranian history.

In this film, the new government, after toppling the Shah in 1979, assembles a security group to fight against MKO's terrorist attacks in 1982.

His third film, "Lottery" about trafficking Iranian women to the United Arab Emirates was viewed as regressive by critics.

"I have the courage to make a film and accept the negative reviews. But what urges me to continue on this path is the people for whom I make the films," he noted.

"Trace of Blood", also known as "Blood Trap", is a sequel to "The Midday Event". In this film, Iranian security forces come together in 1988 to trace the MKO's undercover agents, which had penetrated the security forces in 1982. They also want to foil Operation Eternal Light, which the MKO carried out against Iran with the full support of the Iraqi dictator, Saddam.

The stories of "The Midday Event" and "Trace of Blood" were set in the 1980s when Mahdavian and



Iranian director Mohammad-Hossein Mahdavian in an undated photo.

Ebrahim Amini, with whom he co-wrote the screenplays for the films, were only children.

However, in an interview with Mahdavian, veteran critic Hushang Golmakani, who works for the Persian monthly Film, called the details of the sets and dialogues of "Trace of Blood" perfect.

"The film has the potential to be biased, but it has maintained its balance. The film has very good dialogues and perfect ending," Golmakani noted.

It appears that a perfect filmmaker who is genuinely

skilled in transforming real political narratives into films has emerged. However, he wants to try his hand at other genres.

"There is no time to lose; life is too short and I haven't made a lot of films. Certainly, I will try other genres—I don't know when—but I want to try something different," he said.

"If I find a different story appropriate enough to be turned into a film, of course I will make it. Once, I even wanted to make a film for children, because whenever we intend to take our children to the cinema, we can't find films entertaining enough for children," he added.

The social theme of the story in "Lottery" from his short but brilliant career reflected a shift. Centering on topics such as sex trafficking rings in Iran is a bit much for this cinema. His camera should be focused on major stories such as the Iran hostage crisis in 1979, which has been distorted by numerous biased movies from Iranian and foreign filmmakers, including Ben Affleck's 2012 movie "Argo".

Mahdavian seems to go his own way in filmmaking. He is clever enough to avoid joining specific currents, which tend to categorize everything by the rules of politics. His avoidance of these trends should help prevent him from being tagged as a governmental filmmaker.

“Driving Lessons” name best short at Religion Today Film Festival

A R T TEHRAN — "Driving Lessons" by Iranian filmmaker Marzieh Riahi won the award for best short film at the 22nd edition of the Religion Today Film Festival in Trento, Italy on Thursday.

The film tells the story of Bahareh, a young girl who, according to Iranian

law, must have a man from among her relatives accompany her on driving lessons so she and her male instructor won't be alone.

Italy-based Iranian filmmaker Amir-Ali Alai received the award on behalf of Riahi, who could not attend the closing ceremony of the festival.

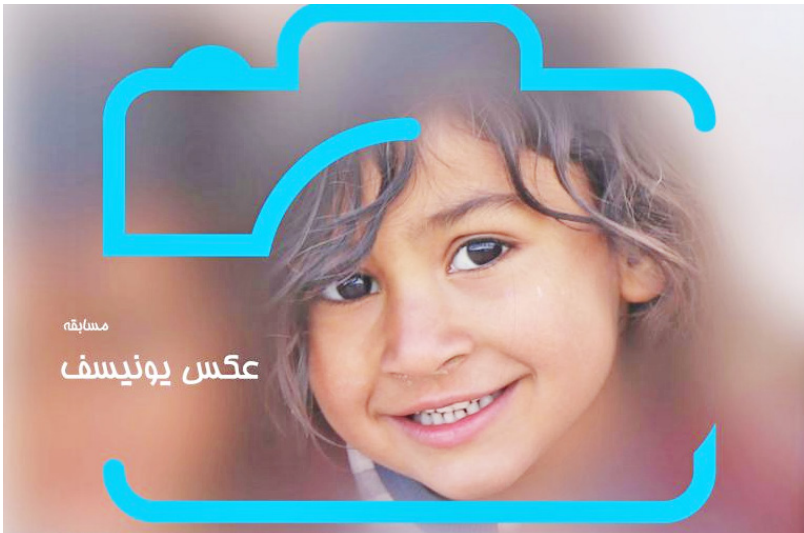
Iranian filmmaker Yasser Talebi's acclaimed documentary "Beloved" also received an honorable mention.

Iranian movies "Life Again" by Reza Fahimi and "Wild Jonquils" by Rahbar Qanbari were also screened at 22nd Religion Today Film Festival, which was held from October 2 to 10.



Iranian filmmaker Amir-Ali Alai accepts the award for best short on behalf of his fellow director Marzieh Riahi for "Driving Lessons" at the closing ceremony of 22nd Religion Today Film Festival in Trento, Italy on October 10, 2019.

Children's hopes under spotlight at UNICEF photo contest



A poster for "Children and Hope" photo contest.

A R T TEHRAN — The branch office of the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) in Iran plans to organize a photo contest under the title "Children and Hope".

The contest, which will be held in collaboration with the Press Affairs Department of Iran's Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, aims to promote the moral principles of children's photography.

Only Iranian photographers under 40 who work for official Iranian media are allowed to participate in this competition. The photos must reflect and narrate hope, happiness and wishes of children under age 18.

Topics such as Iran's collaboration with UNICEF including health, education, food and children's support are also included.

The photos must be submitted to the secretariat of the contest before November 7.

Tehran cultural center to celebrate Hafez Day



Mausoleum of Hafez, Shiraz.

A R T TEHRAN — A number of Iranian scholars, poets and literati will gather at Tehran's Ebne Sina Cultural Center to observe Hafez Day on Saturday.

The center will organize a poetry night, in which a number of poets, including Abdoljabbar Kakai, Mohammad-Ali Bahmani, Hamidreza Shekarsari and Mohammad Salmani,

are expected to attend.

Hafez is one of the finest lyric poets of Persian classical literature.

The late poet and expert on Hafez Hossein Ahi will also be commemorated during the meeting, which will be attended by his family.

Ahi was well-known for his religious compositions and the literary programs created for the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB).