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## Iran's external debt in 2018 down 6.5% on year: WB

**TEHRAN** — World Bank (WB) in its latest report on global debts dubbed "International Debt Statistics 2020" has put Iran's external debts for 2018 at \$6.324 billion, down about 6.5 percent from \$6.761 billion in 2017.

As per the data published by WB, Iran's foreign debts decreased by \$437 million in 2018 compared to its preceding year. Based on the report, of the country's

total external debt at the end of 2018, \$382 million was related to long-term debts, while \$3.959 billion was the share of short-term debts, and \$1.983 billion was pertain to International Monetary Fund (IMF) credit lines.

The bank also reported the total foreign direct investment (FDI) in Iran in the past year at \$3.481 billion, down 30 percent from the same period a year earlier. **→ 4**

## Turkey's Syria offensive "invasion" of Arab land: Arab League

**TEHRAN** — Arab League Secretary General Ahmed Aboul Gheit Saturday called Turkey's military operation in northeast Syria an "invasion of an Arab state's land and an aggression on its sovereignty."

Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohamed Ali Alhakim, president of the current Arab League session, also condemned Turkey's offensive into Syria during an emergency meeting for the body, called

by Egypt. He called on the League to reinstate Syria's membership in the body.

Turkey's military operation in northeast Syria is a violation of the country's territorial integrity, the Arab League's secretary general has argued.

His organization, incorporating 22 member states, held an emergency meeting at ministerial level on Saturday to discuss the incursion into Syrian territory. **→ 13**

## Al-Houthi calls on U.S. to 'learn from Vietnam'

**TEHRAN** — Head of Yemen's Supreme Revolutionary Committee has called on the US to "learn from Vietnam" after Washington announced plans to deploy about 2,000 additional troops to Saudi Arabia.

An "increase in numbers does not mean victory," Mohammed Ali al-Houthi warned in a series of tweets, adding the U.S. should also learn from its "useless

Wars" in countries such as Yemen and Iraq.

The official vowed that the Yemeni nation would continue its resistance against Saudi Arabia and other countries which are supported by the U.S. in their war on the impoverished nation.

"Your previous forces, weapons and military commanders, which proved that the U.S. is killing the Yemeni people, did not frighten us," he said. **→ 13**

## Photographer Kenro Izu shares personal experiences of "pilgrimage by camera"

By Manijeh Rezapoor

**TEHRAN** — Kenro Izu, a world-renowned U.S.-based Japanese photographer who calls his style of photography a "pilgrimage by camera," puts forth his personal experiences of life in his black and white photo series.

"Taking pictures is just a personal experience. To me, it is an experience as a human being, and that is why I call it a pilgrimage with my camera," Izu told the Tehran Times

in an interview last week in Tehran.

The U.S.-based Japanese photographer is displaying photos from his series "Sacred Places", "Still Life" and "Blue" in an exhibition at Tehran's Nabshi Center.

Born in 1949 in Osaka, Japan, Izu uses his custom-built, large-format, three-hundred-pound Deardorff camera to produce his timeless photos.

"As a human being, everybody has a journey

through the passage of life, and I personally try to seek why I am here and what is my mission and what is the passage in front of me. However, I must say I still don't know," Izu asserted.

"But in order to observe myself as to where I am, the camera has really been helpful. It forced me to concentrate, and after that I started to keep it in my mind. It provided a real opportunity like a good mirror reflecting myself," he said. **→ 16**

## Challenges facing Iran to become resilient against disasters

By Faranak Bakhtiari

**TEHRAN** — Having tackled over 34 out of 41 natural disasters identified worldwide, Iran is among the top countries most prone to natural disasters. Therefore, risk reduction and resilience is widely recognized emphasizing the need for making cities resilient to disasters. But what are the challenges on its way?

The International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction started in 1989, after a call by the United Nations General Assembly for a day to promote

a global culture of risk-awareness and disaster reduction.

Held annually on October 13, the day celebrates how people and communities around the world are reducing their exposure to disasters and raising awareness about the importance of reining in the risks that they face.

The 2019 edition continues as part of the "Sendai Seven" campaign, centered on the seven targets of the Sendai Framework. This year will focus on "Substantially reduce disaster damage

to critical infrastructure and disruption of basic services, among them health and education facilities, including through developing their resilience by 2030."

The Sendai Framework is a 15-year voluntary people-centered approach to disaster risk reduction, succeeding the 2005-2015 framework.

Iran also marks the National Disaster Reduction Day on October 13, identifying weaknesses to avoid the potential dangers of these events. **→ 12**

## Europe has not been honest with Tehran: Shireen Hunter

By Javad Heirannia

**TEHRAN** — Shireen Tahmaash Hunter, a professor of political science at Georgetown University, tells the Tehran Times that "France is not capable of doing anything to ensure the JCPOA's survival without American approval."

"Instex never was a viable alternative to normal financial a trade transactions. It has always been

an instrument to convince Iran to continue to adhere to the JCPOA," Hunter says.

She adds "Even if the entire EU joins the Instex, it would not solve Iran's problems. Europe has not been honest with Tehran."

Following is the text of the interview:

■ French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian warned that the United States and Iran

have only one month to implement the Paris plan to keep JCPOA alive. Is France in a position to warn against keeping things that the Europeans themselves failed to fulfill?

A: France is trying to push both Iran and the U.S. to change their uncompromising positions and agree to some form of compromise which could defuse tensions in the Persian Gulf. **→ 7**



## Syrian Kurdish-led authority: nearly 200,000 people displaced by attack

**TEHRAN** — The Syrian Kurdish-led administration in northeastern Syria said on Saturday that 191,069 people have been displaced as a result of Turkish military operations.

Meanwhile, the United Nations on Friday said 100,000 people have been displaced by Turkey's incursion into northeastern Syria. Turkey has vowed to push forward with its offensive targeting Kurdish forces in Syria despite continued international criticism. **→ 13**



## ARTICLE

Afshin Majlesi  
Tehran Times journalist

## Spark your wanderlust: how influencers can help?

In the current fast-paced realm of advertising and marketing, travel influencers have changed the whole game as they have succeeded to materialize a totally new and self-directed channels to reach audiences in a more authentic and personal way, even influencing to shape their wanderlusts.

We can say that the Instagram has backtracked old-school manners of travel advertising campaigns. Well-traveled influencers induce their avid followers to win sparking their wanderlusts by the means of the photo-sharing platform that enables sharing of wonderful moments and wandering adventures of their journeys.

Many believe that the Instagram has drastically changed the way people, especially the youth, travel, and it's undoubtedly not all for the better. The trend, however, has its own harms, for instance, it may lead to overtourism, a relatively new term that you may cannot look it up in many dictionaries.

That's why Iran's tourism ministry has started to make the best use of new technologies in order to portray a true image of the country based on what travelers and influencers perceive during their visits to the country.

But, how does it work for Iran? It's noteworthy to remind that Iran has been under U.S. sanctions and its anti-Iran propaganda for around four decades. Some Western media outlets have long tried to portray Iran's global image as unsafe, unwelcoming and so on.

As an example, some of their messages carry themes from U.S. State Department's travel advisory against Iran, which since 1979, warns about "the risk of kidnapping, arrest and detention of U.S. citizens."

On the contrary, when you refer to people who have visited the country or even you read their travelogues on Iran, you usually perceive that Iranians are described as warm, friendly and eager to show off their country to foreigners. Moreover, almost all international tour operators and travel agents have the same attitude towards the country and its people. **→ 10**



## ARTICLE

Hana Saada  
Journalist from Algeria

## Who is Ethiopian Premier Abiy Ahmed, winner of 2019 Nobel Peace Prize for Eritrea Accord?

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has been crowned the winner of the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize for "his efforts to achieve peace and international cooperation" with his neighbor, Eritrea, beating 16-year-old climate activist Greta Thunberg.

The prize was awarded on Friday for "his efforts for peace and international cooperation and for his decisive initiative to resolve the border dispute with Eritrea". He has been accredited by the Norwegian Nobel Committee with ending the two-decade-long conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea as they announced the award in Oslo on Friday night.

"When Abiy Ahmed became Prime Minister in April 2018, he made it clear he wishes to resume peace talks with Eritrea," the committee said.

"In close cooperation with the President of Eritrea, Abiy Ahmed quickly worked out the principles for a peace agreement to end the long no peace stalemate between the two countries."

Ahmed collaborated with Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki on a peace deal to end two decades of conflict and restored relations in July 2018 after years of hostility.

Since he took the reins of the second most populous country in Africa in April 2018, the forty three-year-old politician, also, lifted "state of emergency" in the country, granted amnesty to thousands of political prisoners, ended media censorship, legalized once-banned opposition groups, dismissed military and civilian leaders suspected of corruption and greatly increased the influence of women in Ethiopian political and community life.

The country has one of the world's few "gender-balanced" Cabinets and a female president, a rarity in Africa. **→ 7**



## Iranian security official: Evil acts in international waterways won't go unanswered

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Ali Shamkhani, secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), has condemned the Friday morning attack on Iran's SABITI oil tanker in the Red Sea and voiced Tehran's firm will to give a crushing response to the evil act in international waterways.



"Banditry and wickedness in the international waterways aimed at destabilizing movement of trade vessels will not go unanswered," the top security official underscored on Saturday.

"A committee has been formed to conduct probe into the issue of the SABITI oil tanker which came under missile attacks off the Saudi coasts in the Red Sea and its findings will soon be handed over to the relevant bodies to make the required decision," Shamkhani stated.

He added, "Main clues to the dangerous adventurism have been found following reviewing videos and gathered intelligence evidence."

Shamkhani also pointed to destructive operations against Iranian oil tankers \*\*\*\*f Helm and Happiness in recent months in the Red Sea, saying, "Destabilizing international waterways will push the world economy towards worrying threats."

He further stressed that planners, operators and suppliers of such provocative moves will ultimately be responsible for the consequences of their dangerous measures.

Two separate explosions, possibly caused by missile attacks, hit the SABITI oil tanker owned by the National Iranian Tanker Company (NITC).

According to a statement issued on Friday by the NITC, the explosions took place some 60 miles from the Saudi port city of Jeddah on Friday morning.

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 was 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 on Friday that the tanker was heading toward the Persian Gulf with a low speed.

## Iran says ready for talks with Saudi Arabia with or without mediator

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — The Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman said on Saturday afternoon that Tehran is ready to hold talks with Saudi Arabia with or without intermediary.

The remarks by Abbas Mousavi came one day ahead of Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan's trip to Tehran, who has expressed desire to deescalate tension between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Iran and Saudi Arabia have been at loggerheads over a number of issues, including the war on Yemen, the Saudi suppression of pro-democracy movement in Bahrain, and also heavy-handed crackdown on Saudi Shia community.

Asked whether Khan's visit is aimed at mediating between Iran and Saudi Arabia, Mousavi said, "I am not aware of mediation. One should see what issues he will raise during the visit. Normally, regional issues and developments in the region will feature high in his dialogue with the officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran."

He added, "Iran has repeatedly announced that it is ready to negotiate with its neighbors including Saudi Arabia with mediation or without mediation, so that if there is any misunderstandings they will be cleared up."

## MP says Iran supports Syria's territorial integrity

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Hossein Naghavi Hosseini, the spokesman for the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, has said that Iran supports Syria's territorial integrity, censuring Turkish military aggression on northeastern Syria.

"Islamic Republic of Iran's principled strategy has always been supporting countries' territorial integrity and avoiding interference and aggression. We believe that all must respect each other's territorial integrity and not take action against other countries," he told ISNA in an interview published on Saturday.

He said Tehran attaches great importance to solving problems through talks rather than taking military actions.

"Military aggression will just escalate tensions and add to problems in the region, especially in a country like Syria which has just been liberated from Daesh," he remarked.

Turkey launched military operation against Syrian Kurdish fighters, known as the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), in northeast Syria on Wednesday.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry issued a statement on Thursday urging Turkey to immediately stop offensive against northeastern Syria and withdraw its forces from the region.

The statement said, "As it has been announced earlier, the Islamic Republic of Iran considers the current regional situation a consequence of extra-regional interferences, especially by the United States.

The ministry said Iran, by capitalizing on its regional influence, has solutions to problems haunting the region. "Based on its view on solving problems within its regional capacities, Iran is ready to play a role."

The crisis can just be settled through peaceful solutions and respect for Syria's territorial integrity and national sovereignty, the statement added.

President Hassan Rouhani said on Wednesday that security at Syria-Turkey borders can just be provided by the Syrian Army.

"We have announced that security at the north of Syria and south of Turkey can just be provided by the Syrian Army and we should make the grounds for the Syrian Army's presence in this region. Other countries should help and the United States' forces leave this region, and the Kurds in this region, which is their own country, should be beside the Syrian Army," he said at a cabinet session.

# Zarif says Syria and Turkey should together guard border

### Iranian FM says the Adana agreement between Turkey and Syria is still valid

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Iranian Foreign Minister

Mohammad Javad Zarif has said that the Syrian Army together with Turkey can guard the border with Turkey.

"That's a better way to achieve security," he told Turkey's TRT World in an interview aired on October 10.

"We do not believe that security can be achieved by invading Syria, by incursion into Syria. We have better options. We have offered better options to our Turkish friends like the Adana agreement. There is an Adana agreement between Turkey and Syria which is still valid. We can help bring together the Syrian Kurds, the Syrian government and Turkey so that the Syrian Army together with Turkey can guard the border with Turkey, together with Turkey," Zarif explained.

Also in a post on his Twitter page on Saturday, Zarif said, "The Adana Agreement between Turkey and Syria—still valid—can be the better path to achieve security. #Iran can help bring together the Syrian Kurds, the Syrian Govt, and Turkey so that the Syrian Army together with Turkey can guard the border."

In his interview with the Turkish TV network, Zarif also said, "Today, I am saying what we need is inter-Syrian dialogue, revised constitution, and hopefully in 2021 when the time comes for election."

"Now there is the next election and we have to prepare for it. I think the formation of the constitutional committee is very important first step, we should follow it with serious measures including moving towards less tension," the chief diplomat stated.

Turkey launched military operation against Syrian Kurdish fighters, known as the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), in northeast Syria on Wednesday.



■ **'Iran is open to talk to Saudi Arabia'**

Zarif also said that Iran has always been open to talk to Saudi Arabia either directly or through intermediary.

"We've always been open to discussing anything with Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is our neighbor. We're going to be here together permanently. We don't have any choice but to talk to each other and we have been open to talking to Saudi Arabia either directly or through intermediary," the chief diplomat affirmed.

He added, "We have never rejected any intermediary from the former prime minister of Pakistan Nawaz Sharif, who came to Iran and we received him with open arms, and to the foreign minister of Indonesia who came

to Iran at the same time. We have always been open to mediation and we have always been open to direct talks with our Saudi neighbor."

Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan is scheduled to make a trip to Tehran on Sunday for mediation between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

■ **'Trump does not want a war with Iran'**

Zarif also said that he believes that U.S. President Donald Trump does not want a war with Iran.

"I believe President Trump does not want to go to war and he does not want to escalate tension," he said.

He continued, "But he [Trump] has an impression that through pressure he can

**Zarif says Trump "was misled to believe that it (JCPOA) was a bad deal by those who did not want to have a deal at any rate".**

## Government spokesman: Iran starts probe into oil tanker blast carefully, patiently

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Iranian government spokesman

Ali Rabiei said on Saturday that Tehran has started careful investigation into two explosions on its oil tanker in the Red Sea, refraining from any precipitancy.

The explosions, possibly caused by missile attacks, hit the oil tanker SABITI owned by the National Iranian Tanker Company (NITC).

According to a statement by the NITC, the explosions took place some 60 miles from the Saudi port city of Jeddah on Friday morning. Rabiei underlined the probe is underway in details without any hasty assessment.

"There is a question. Whether those who accused Iran hastily, without presenting any reliable document, of conducting attack on vessels, disrupting free shipping in the Persian Gulf and involvement in raids on Saudi Arabia's Aramco oil installations, are daring enough today to defend principles of free shipping in international waters once more? Do they condemn attack on the Iranian oil tanker SABITI?" Rabiei asked.

Meanwhile, Ali Shamkhani, secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, said "piracy and evil acts in international waters... will not go unanswered."

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 was 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 was 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 sources told the Iranian Students News Agency (ISNA).

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

The tanker is currently in a stable condition.

The NITC later dismissed the reports that the vessel had caught fire, according to SHANA, a news 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 was being conducted on the details of the attack and those behind it, and the results will be announced once it's done.

The NITC on Friday dismissed media reports that the oil tanker was hit by missiles

**Rabiei asks: Are those who accused Iran hastily of conducting attack on vessels and disrupting free shipping in the Persian Gulf and involved in raids on the Saudi Aramco daring enough to defend principles of free shipping in international waters once more?**

## Researcher offers UN-initiated talks between Iran and S. Arabia to possibly reduce Tehran-Washington tension

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — A former Iranian diplomat who

currently acts as a researcher at Princeton University suggests dialogue between Iran and Saudi Arabia led by the United Nations chief with involvement of the European Union and permanent members of the UN Security Council including the U.S. to end the bloodshed in Yemen, noting that such a dialogue would possibly reduce tension between Tehran and Washington in the Middle East.

"An alternative to bilateral talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia would be for the UN secretary-general to take initiative and invite both countries, as well as member countries of the European Union and permanent members of the UN Security Council to hold a dialogue aimed at ending the bloodshed in Yemen," Seyyed Hossein Mousavian wrote in the Los Angeles Times on Friday.

The article, headlined "Why Iran and the U.S. are at an impasse and how to reduce Mideast tensions in spite of that", reads as follows:

A lot of effort went in to trying to arrange a meeting between Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and President Trump last month when they were in New York to attend the UN General Assembly. President Emmanuel Macron of France, Prime Minister Boris Johnson of Britain, Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany and Prime Minister Imran Khan of Pakistan all reportedly worked to facilitate a

meeting between the Iranian and U.S. leaders. But it didn't happen.

Why? The reality is that neither the United States nor Iran is serious about negotiations, despite the obvious advantages for both countries in reducing the tensions between them.

Trump wants to hold direct talks with Iran, but only while continuing to pursue a policy of maximum pressure and sanctions. That won't fly with Iran. In Iran's view, by pulling out of the nuclear deal, Trump left the negotiating table, and by sanctioning Iran's supreme leader and foreign minister and designating the Revolutionary Guards as a terrorist organization, he killed any chance for negotiations.

The ill-advised U.S. policy of maximum pressure revolves around a central misconception that it will put enough economic pressure on Iran to force it to accept Trump's maximalist demands. It has already been more than a year since the United States has pulled out the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA, regulating Iran's nuclear activities, and none of the stated objectives of maximum pressure have been achieved. Trump's policy and actions have led only to a political impasse.

Iran, for its part, is demanding concessions from the United States that the current administration is highly unlikely to agree to. Before any talks, Iran wants to reinstate the JCPOA and eliminate all sanctions that were reimposed after the nuclear deal. These are

rational requests given that the JCPOA, the most comprehensive nonproliferation agreement in the history of nonproliferation, was ratified as UN Security Council Resolution 2231 and that Iran was in full compliance with the terms and conditions of the deal. However, since Trump has frequently called the nuclear agreement "the worst deal ever" and a "disaster," accepting Iran's precondition for talks is probably a non-starter—especially with his 2020 reelection campaign looming.

Iran too is entering an election season, with parliamentary and presidential elections in 2020 and 2021, respectively. And leaders there face similar pressures not to appear weak.

Another barrier to negotiations is the misperceptions each country has of the other. For its part, the U.S. seems to believe that Iran's economy is in imminent danger of collapse as a result of the sanctions, and that this will force Iran to come to the table. Neither assumption is accurate.

In Iran, there is a pervasive belief that the West is in decline and that U.S. hegemony in the Middle East is over. This belief has gained credence as an array of Western intellectuals and leaders have acknowledged such a decline. Iranians note that the United States has failed in almost every conflict it initiated since the Second World War. But that doesn't mean it isn't still able to exert influence on the world order.

Given the impasse between Iran and the

achieve his goals. I think it may have worked in real estate, but it does not work in dealing with other countries. It certainly does not work in dealing with a country with seven millennia of civilization."

Commenting on Washington's withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA, Zarif said that Trump "was misled to believe that it was a bad deal by those who did not want to have a deal at any rate".

Elsewhere, he said, "I think the deal is in the interests of the international community. I think the European partners to the deal need to do more in order to salvage their own integrity, to salvage the fact that they want to live independent."

He added, "I think Iran can live without the nuclear deal but can Europe live with the impression that it is not a reliable partner in any deal? That any deal that you want to make with Europe, you have to make it with the United States?"

■ **'Sanctions are war'**

Zair also said that sanctions have put heavy pressure on the Iranian people and that is why it is believed that "sanctions are war".

"The United States started a war against Iran. Maximum pressure is a euphemism for economic terrorism," he said.

Citing a quote from U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo who had said if the Iranians want to "eat" they should listen to what Washington says

"Secretary Pompeo has said publicly and that is a Newsweek headline. 'If Iran wants its people to eat, it has to follow what the U.S. says.'"

He continued, "Read the classical definition of terrorism in any law book, any law dictionary even google it, it says coercion or use of violence against the civilians for political purposes, to achieve political objectives is terrorism and the U.S. has to change its policy. So, Secretary Pompeo should in fact hire a good lawyer."



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 on Friday that 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.

United States, the most immediate and realistic step toward reducing tensions in the Middle East would be to set aside the idea of negotiations between the two countries for now and instead focus on facilitating direct negotiations between Iran and Saudi Arabia to discuss, among other things, putting an end to the devastating war in Yemen.

An alternative to bilateral talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia would be for the UN secretary-general to take initiative and invite both countries, as well as member countries of the European Union and permanent members of the UN Security Council to hold a dialogue aimed at ending the bloodshed in Yemen.

In entering into such a dialogue, both Tehran and Riyadh would need to acknowledge several points: that neither side can have security at the expense of insecurity of other side, that neither side can be the hegemon of the region and that the best option is to de-escalate tensions and work toward regional cooperation based on mutual interest, respect for each other's sovereignty and the inviolability of international borders.

Such talks would of courses benefit the Yemeni people, but they could also go a long way toward reducing tensions between Iran and Saudi Arabia. They might also reduce tension between Iran and the United States by resolving one of Trump's major foreign policy problems with respect to the Middle East: the ongoing conflict in Yemen.



# Zarif: Iran is categorically opposed to nuclear arms as a religious, moral duty and strategic imperative

**POLITICAL DESK** **TEHRAN** — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has reiterated Iran's position on development and use of nuclear weapons, saying as stated by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran is categorically opposed to nuclear arms.

"Iran's Leader has long made it abundantly clear that nuclear weapons are immoral & contravene Islamic principles," Zarif said in a post on his Twitter account on Saturday.

"Their development, acquisition, stockpiling & use is thus forbidden. We're categorically opposed to nuclear arms as a religious/moral duty & strategic imperative," he added.

Ayatollah Khamenei said in remarks on Wednesday that although Iran was able to build nuclear weapons it did not do so because according to Islamic sharia it is absolutely forbidden and there is no reason to waste resources for production and stockpile of such weapons.

"Though we were able to take such a step, based on the decree of the dear Islam we declared it completely haram (religiously



banned), therefore there is no reason to incur cost for production and stockpiling of a weapon that its use is absolutely haram," the Leader stated.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has on numerous occasions voiced its opposition to building nuclear bombs, rejecting Western countries' ostensible concerns over Tehran's

civilian nuclear program.

Tehran even signed a nuclear agreement with six major powers in 2015, which limited its nuclear program in exchange for permanent lifting of sanctions, which were imposed, in the first place, on the pretext that Iran was near building nuclear weapons. Washington, however, ditched the agreement last year, citing other flimsy pretexts.

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

So far, Iran has taken three major steps in reducing its commitments to the accord.

Ayatollah Khamenei has said Iran will continue to reduce commitments under the deal.

"Reducing nuclear commitments, for which the Atomic Energy Organization is responsible, should continue seriously and precisely as it was announced by the government till it reaches favorable result and it will definitely reach the result," he said earlier this month.

## Pompeo threatens to wreck Iran's economy

**POLITICAL DESK** **TEHRAN** — U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has threatened Iran with bringing about the collapse of its economy should it not "change its behavior".

"The Iranian regime must fundamentally change its behavior and act like a normal nation. Or it can watch its economy collapse," Pompeo said in a tweet on Friday.

This is not the first time the U.S. secretary of state threatens Iran with tough measures.

In remarks almost a year ago, Pompeo said Iranian officials must listen to Washington "if they want their people to eat".

In reaction to his comments, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said Pompeo's open threat to starve the Iranian nation was "a crime against humanity".

In January, Pompeo contradicted his earlier remarks by saying that Washington's tough sanctions against the Islamic Republic were aimed at giving the Iranian people a chance to have better lives.

"The sanctions on Iran have this ultimate goal: creating an outcome where the Iranian people can have better lives than they have today," he claimed.

U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew Washington from the 2015 nuclear deal in May 218 and restored the previous



sanctions against Iran and ordered new ones. Trump has described his government's sanctions against Iran as the "maximum pressure".

The sanctions were imposed regardless of Iran's full compliance with its commitments under the JCPOA, which was struck between Iran and six major powers, including the

United States, in July 2015.

Iranian officials describe Washington's unilateral sanctions as an "economic war" and "economic terrorism".

The Trump administration's aggressive approach toward Tehran has caused tensions in the Middle East, especially in the key region of the Persian Gulf.

The latest wave of heightened tensions came following the September 14 strikes on Aramco facilities in Saudi Arabia, which was blamed on Iran without evidence.

Iran categorically denied any involvement.

In another tweet on Friday, Pompeo announced deployment of more American forces to Saudi Arabia in the face of what he called "Iranian aggression".

"The United States is deploying additional forces and military equipment to Saudi Arabia to enhance its defensive capabilities and to help restore deterrence against Iranian aggression," Pompeo said.

The remarks came hours after an Iranian oil tanker was hit by two explosions in the Red Sea, 100 km (about 60 miles) away from the Saudi port city of Jeddah.

Tehran described the explosions, possibly caused by missile attacks, as a "dangerous adventure".

## Over two million Iranian pilgrims in Iraq for Arbæen



**POLITICAL DESK** **TEHRAN** — Secretary of Security and Law Enforcement Committee of the Arbæen Central Headquarters says more than two million Iranian pilgrims have already crossed the border into Iraq to attend the Arbæen march.

"The number of pilgrims who have crossed land and air borders has crossed the two-million mark, and the figure is expected to cross 2.2 million by midnight," Hossein Sajedinia said on Thursday, Mehr reported.

Sajedinia said border crossings are overcrowded but people are crossing through the gates smoothly.

He also asked Iranian pilgrims to use all three available border crossings to prevent overcrowding at the Khosravi border checkpoint, which is a popular exit point for Iranians leaving the country.

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

This year, Arbæen falls on Saturday, October 19. Each year, a huge crowd of people flock to Karbala, where the holy shrine of Imam Hussein (AS) is located, to perform mourning rituals.

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

This year, visa requirement was removed for the pilgrims as a "positive step" toward paving the way for Iranian pilgrims visiting the neighboring country.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said on September 18 that "the Arbæen march is an extraordinary phenomenon not only in our era but also throughout history." He added, "We cannot find such a gathering and movement that takes place every year more enthusiastically than the previous years."

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

## Shireen Hunter: Trump prefers Turkish, not Iranian and Russian, presence in Syria



**POLITICAL DESK** **TEHRAN** — Shireen Tahmaasb Hunter, a professor of political science at Georgetown University, has said U.S. President Donald Trump prefers a Turkish presence in Syria to a Russian or Iranian presence.

In an interview with IRNA published on Saturday, Hunter said Trump wants to pull out at least a group of American soldiers from the West Asian countries before the election.

At the same time, he doesn't want his moves to strengthen Assad's supporters, like Iran and Russia, she said.

She added that Trump prefers to replace the U.S. forces with forces from other countries such as Turkey in Syria to create a balance with the Iranian and Russian forces

On the United States' approach toward the Kurds, the Georgetown University professor said the U.S. and other powers have used the Kurds as tools at different points in time.

When necessary, she continued, the U.S. will cooperate with Kurds to save its interests. "But the Kurds have always repeated their mistake; they do not understand the importance of Turkey for the U.S. and others Western countries, so they easily turn into tools for them."

Regarding a possibility that the Kurds may get closer to Iran and Russia, or even the Syrian government, she said the decision of the U.S. and Turkey has put the Kurds in a bad condition.

"Their approaching to other active countries in Syria would not be easy and their approaching to Damascus depends on what privileges Assad will give them," she added.

Hunter also noted that Turkey is worried about any development that may lead to establishment of an independent Kurdish government and it's also discontent with Bashar al-Assad's remaining in power and may want to create more challenges for Damascus through such moves.

## Ambassador: Iran eyes inclusive ties with China

**POLITICAL DESK** **TEHRAN** — Iran's Ambassador to Beijing, Mohammad Keshavarz Zadeh, has called China a strategic partner of Iran, underlining Tehran's enthusiasm to broaden bilateral ties with China in different arenas.

In an interview with IRNA published on Saturday, Keshavarz Zadeh pointed out that Iran-China relationship has been upgraded in the recent two years to a comprehensive strategic one, which marks a new stage in ties.

He added that recent visits paid by senior Iranian officials to China have been promising an eye-catching promotion of relations in various fields.

"For instance, the Iranian parliament speaker, the country's armed forces' chief of staff and the agricultural

Jihad minister paid official visits to China in recent months," the envoy stated.

Highlighting China's large-scale capacities, he also said, "Such capacities must not be ignored, rather they should be utilized well."

Separately, the ambassador pointed to the U.S. hegemonic and destructive policies regarding international order in contrast to China which has been greatly contributed to global economy. "China, as one of the most powerful nations worldwide, has played pivotal and effective role in promotion of world economy."

In a relevant remarks on Thursday, Chinese Ambassador to Iran Chang Hua in a meeting with Iran's Customs Administration governor Mehdi Mirashrafi

examined a new plan to expand customs cooperation and facilitate trade between the two countries.

During the meeting, Mirsharafi pointed to strong trade relations between China and Iran, offering proposals to bolster trade exchanges.

He proposed issues like exchanging customs information in the framework of training both sides' employees, taking steps in line with revitalizing the Silk Road, creating joint trade gate and exchanging X-ray images by both sides as well as holding meetings every six months to access better and faster results.

Hua, for his part, appreciated Iranian Customs Administration's officials, and underlined that Iran is among the largest trade partners of China, so expansion of such ties is so important to China.

## Defense minister: Nanotechnology is a turning point in promotion of Iran's defense industry

**POLITICAL DESK** **TEHRAN** — Iranian Defense Minister Brigadier General Amir Hatami has called nanotechnology a source of power for any country, highlighting the technology's key role in materializing fundamental transformation in the country's defense industry.



During a visit to the 12th International Nanotechnology Festival and Exhibition in Tehran, the minister said, "Iran has accessed to a prominent standing worldwide in the nano field thanks to the country's experts and scientists' efforts."

"Manufacturing hundreds of different models of products, growth in volume of nano products and hike in exports of nano products to tens of foreign countries are among the most important achievements of the country in recent years," the minister explained.

The commander further underscored that the nano science is capable of granting fundamental transformation to the country's defense industry in space, maritime, aviation and electronic fields.

"Nanotechnology has main effect on progress of the country's defense systems," the brigadier general said.

"We will do our best to utilize nanotechnology achievements, and meantime we will provide backup for knowledge-based companies and nanotechnology," the minister vowed.

In relevant remarks, Head of Iran's Nanotechnology Initiative Council (INIC) Saeed Sarkar underlined the country's huge progress in manufacturing and exporting nanotechnology products.

"Fortunately, we are witnessing that nanotechnology products are being exported to over 45 countries of the world and we are witnessing the growing flourishing of this arena," Sarkar said on the sidelines of the festival.

He added that last year Iran had planned to lead the nanotechnology exhibition towards industrialization, and said this goal has been attained by a 50% increase in the number of companies participating in the exhibit.

## Pakistan rejects reports Khan seeking mediation between Riyadh and Tehran as Saudis' request

**POLITICAL DESK** **TEHRAN** — The Pakistani Foreign Ministry in a statement has dismissed reports that Saudi crown prince has requested Islamabad to mediate between Tehran and Riyadh, stressing that the efforts are "our own initiative" to deescalate tensions between the two key Muslim nations.

"Foreign media's reports that have claimed Saudi officials and even Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman have handed over a letter or a message to Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan to deliver it to the Iranian leader for resumption of talks between Tehran and Riyadh are baseless," the statement read, ISNA reported on Saturday.

"There has not been any letter or message in between; furthermore, the Saudi crown prince has not asked Pakistan to play mediating role between Tehran and Riyadh," it added.

The ministry reaffirmed that idea of any possible negotiations between Saudi Arabia and Iran has been stipulated in Islamabad's own initiative, adding that the efforts are aimed at reinvigorating peace in the region and putting an end to tension between the two nations.

The Pakistani prime minister was planned to pay a one-day-long visit to Iran on Saturday as part of his efforts to mediate between Tehran and Riyadh and then fly to Riyadh on Sunday. However, the Iranian Foreign Ministry said Khan's visit to Tehran will take place on Sunday.

## 500 kg narcotics seized in Khuzestan province

**POLITICAL DESK** **TEHRAN** — Five hundred kilograms of narcotics have been seized in Omidiyeh, Khuzestan province, according to Omidiyeh's prosecutor general.

Following large-scale intelligence operations, police forces seized 500 kilograms opium in Omidiyeh which was destined to Ahwaz, Mehr quoted Arsalan Karimi as saying on Saturday.

Karimi added that two drug smugglers were arrested and handed over to court.

Iran, which has a 900-kilometer-long border with Afghanistan, has been used as the main conduit for smuggling Afghan drugs to narcotics kingpins in Europe.

In comments on July 9, Iran's Ambassador to the United Nations Majid Takht Ravanchi said 3,815 Iranian law enforcement forces have lost their lives and over 12,000 others have been wounded in the war on drug trafficking over the past 40 years.

Over the past three decades, Iran has seized approximately 11,000 tons of different types of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, he added, saying that in 2018 alone, Iranian forces carried out 1,557 operations against drug traffickers, seizing approximately 807 tons of different types of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

According to the "World Drug Report 2019" of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in 2017 Iran had seized "the largest quantity of opiates ... accounting for 39 percent of the global total," the envoy stated.



STOCK MARKET	
TEDPIX	322059.8
IFX	4154.92
Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir	

CURRENCIES	
USD	42,000 rials
EUR	46,378 rials
GBP	53,130 rials
AED	11,437 rials
Source: cbi.ir	

COMMODITIES	
Brent	\$60.51/b
WTI	\$54.70/b
OPEC Basket	\$58.71/b
Gold	\$1,490.75/oz
Silver	\$817.63/oz
Platinum	\$899.605/oz
Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com	

## Intl. kitchen expo underway in Tehran

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — The third edition of Iran’s International Trade Show for Hotel, Restaurant and Catering Equipment (Iran Kitchen 2019) kicked off on Friday at Tehran’s Shahr-e Aftab Exhibition Center.

According to IRIB, over 78 exhibitors are showcasing their latest products and services in this four-day event.

The exhibition covers a variety of areas including catering equipment, food preparation equipment, storage equipment, coffee shop equipment, disposable packaging and utensils, restaurant equipment, decoration, restaurant furniture, restaurant utensils and more.

Concurrent to the exhibition, a gastronomy festival is also being held at the same venue.

## Iran to hold pavilion at Kazakhstan’s PLAST WORLD Exhibition next month

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iran will set up a pavilion at Kazakhstan’s 11th international exhibition for plastic industry (PLAST WORLD) next month, Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPO) published on its official website.



The international event, which will be held from November 20 to 22 at ATAKENT Exhibition Center in Almaty, provides an excellent opportunity to establish and strengthen business ties in the Central Asian region and expand the horizons of companies through representatives of wholesale companies and retail chains.

## Commerzbank sounds out potential mBank buyers as lenders hire advisors: sources

Commerzbank (CBKG.DE) — is sounding out potential buyers of its stake in Polish lender mBank (MBK.WA) ahead of a formal sale process which is expected to launch in coming months, people familiar with the matter said.

As per reuters.com, MBank has hired JPMorgan as an advisor, while Goldman Sachs is advising Commerzbank, two sources said.

Germany’s second-largest lender, which is seeking funds to finance its recently announced restructuring, said in September its supervisory board had approved plans to sell the 69.3% stake in mBank, worth about \$2.65 billion.



MBank is the fourth-largest lender by assets in Poland, Eastern Europe’s biggest economy. The top three lenders include two state-run banks, PKO BP (PKO.WA) and Pekao (PEO.WA), and Santander Bank Polska (SPLI.WA).

The country’s banking sector suffered a blow last week, when the European Union’s top court ruled in favor of Polish consumers who took out mortgages in Swiss Francs, allowing them to ask Polish courts to convert the loans into the local zloty currency.

MBank has one of biggest portfolios of Swiss franc-denominated mortgages, a potential source of losses for the lender.

However, a senior banking source said mBank was a “very attractive asset”, adding that potential bidders may emerge near the end of the year.

The other source said there was interest from within Poland and beyond and a formal sale process could be launched this year or early next year following informal talks that are currently underway.

Commerzbank and mBank declined to comment on Friday. JPMorgan and Goldman Sachs in Germany didn’t respond to requests for comment.

Poland’s ruling nationalist Law and Justice (PiS) party has tightened control over the banking sector and signaled a desire to increase domestic ownership.

# Iran’s external debt in 2018 down 6.5% on year: WB

**1 →** In early September, Central Bank of Iran (CBI) published a report based on which Iran’s debts to foreign lenders in the end of the third Iranian month of Khordad (June 21, 2019) stood at \$8.678 billion, showing seven percent decrease compared to the announced figure at the end of the past Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2019).

According to the data, of the total \$8.678 billion, \$6.969 billion was mid-term and long-term debts and \$1.708 billion was short-term debts.

As reported, Iran’s foreign debts were \$9.339 billion at the end of the past Iranian

calendar year.

The country’s external debts stood at \$8.816 billion at the end of the second Iranian calendar month of Ordibehesht (May, 21), the CBI data showed.

Back in July, CBI published a report saying that Iran’s foreign debt at the end of the last Iranian calendar year decreased nearly 17 percent compared to the figure for the preceding year.

The report indicated that of the country’s total external debt in the mentioned date, \$7.187 billion was long and medium-term debt while short-term debt accounted for



\$2.151 billion.

External debt is the portion of a country’s debt that was borrowed from foreign lenders including commercial banks, governments

or international financial institutions. These loans, including interest, must usually be paid in the currency in which the loan was made.

## Industry, mining sectors witness 18% growth in H1

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Reza Rahmani announced that industry and mining sectors of the country have experienced a growth of 18 percent during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22) compared to the same period of time in the past year, IRNA reported on Saturday.

Making the remarks during a ceremony to inaugurate a copper concentrate plant in the northeastern city of Ahar, the minister said that the country has witnessed a growth

of 6.5 percent in crude steel output, 9.1 percent rise in production of steel products, six percent increase in cement output, and 13 percent rise in glass production during the first six-month of this year.

He also announced that copper production has risen 18 percent in the country in the first half of the present year.

Exploration and extraction projects in mines is one of the prioritized plans of the ministry and 5 trillion rials (about \$119 million) of budget has been allocated to discovery projects in copper mines of the country in

the current year, Rahmani further stated.

As previously announced by Ardeshir Sa’d-Mohammadi, the managing director of National Copper Company, projects have been already started for increasing the country’s annual production of copper concentrate by 450,000 tons.

Production of copper concentrate in Iran during the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20, 2019), was five percent more than the planned figure, according to the data released by Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation

Organization (IMIDRO).

IMIDRO data put the country’s copper concentrate output at 1.18 million tons in the past year, which is 1.123 million tons more than the planned amount.

The data also indicate that production of copper cathode and anode in Iran exceeded the planned amount in the past year.

National Copper Company produced 247,300 tons of copper cathode and 313,700 tons of copper anode in the previous year, showing 15 percent and 21 percent rise, respectively, from the projected figures.

## Iran, Syria call for cooperation in standardization

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Head of Institute of Standards and Industrial Research of Iran (ISIRI) met with Syrian Ambassador to Tehran Adnan Hassan Mahmoud to discuss cooperation in standardization areas, IRIB reported on Saturday.

In her meeting with the Syrian envoy, Nayereh Pirouz stressed the long history of cooperation between the two countries and called for expansion of mutual cooperation in standard sector.

She further mentioned an agreement signed between ISIRI and SASMO, the Syrian Arab Organization for Standardization and Metrology, in 2006, saying that “Fortunately, collaborations in the field of standards have been expanding, but overall they are not very satisfactory and we must strive to achieve the goals set in the 2006 agreement.”

“The situation is now greatly improving

for expansion of economic, trade and investment cooperation and the standard organizations of Iran and Syria are playing a facilitating role in this regard,” she added.

She also referred to Iran’s 21st rank among the 160 ISO members, saying “We have the capacity to provide SASMO with our experiences and knowledge in various sectors.”

Adnan Mahmoud for his part, mentioned the U.S. sanctions on the two countries and noted that the two sides should strive to withstand the unjust sanctions.

“Syria welcomes any suggestion, idea or initiative that would strengthen relations with Iran, and we will always stand side by side against our enemies,” he said.

Iran and Syria have been cooperating in numerous fields and Iranian private companies are already investing in different areas.



gas and diesel)”, “access to water” and “access to the internet and mobile phone network” have been identified as the three most prominent factors in improving the environment, while “unpredictability and price changes of raw materials and products”, “difficulty of financing” and “instability of business policies, rules and regulations” were the factors which contributed the most to a high business environment index.

## Fiscal stimulus may not cure what ails Europe ETFs



at the helm of the ECB on Nov. 1, fiscal stimulus could be the next trick up the ECB’s sleeve, though some market observers don’t see that as a winning bet.

“It’s not the policies themselves which fail. QE has been at least somewhat successful in the U.S. and in Japan where negative rates have also helped to stimulate lending,” said State Street in a recent note. “Why haven’t

Eurozone stocks and the related exchange traded funds haven’t been all that bad this year. The SPDR EURO STOXX 50 ETF FEZ, +2.03%, for example, is up 12.26%. That sounds pretty good until acknowledging FEZ is trailing the S&P 500 by about 500 basis points.

As stated by marketwatch.com, FEZ tracks the EURO STOXX 50 Index and as its name implies, the fund holds just 50 stocks. While that lineup is concentrated, the fund is still a notable gauge of Eurozone equity markets because it devotes nearly two-thirds of its weight to Germany and France, the region’s two largest economies.

Germany is perilously close to a recession and France may not be far behind, traits explaining some of the lethargy encountered by FEZ this year.

To the credit of the European Central Bank, the bank has been proactive in using monetary policy to boost the region’s sagging economies. The ECB has long been a fan of negative interest rates, but the effectiveness of that monetary stimulus is up for debate.

With Christine Lagarde poised to succeed Mario Draghi

## Singapore Central Bank set to join global policy easing tide

Singapore’s Central Bank will probably ease monetary policy for the first time in more than three years as a global slowdown continues to weigh on the export-reliant economy.

According to gulfimes.com, a majority of the economists surveyed by Bloomberg predict the Monetary Authority of Singapore will reduce the slope of its currency band by 50 basis points on Monday, implying a more gradual pace of appreciation in the local dollar.

The MAS uses the exchange rate, rather than interest rates, as its main policy tool?

Central banks around the world are loosening policy to guard against the global slowdown and escalating U.S.-China trade tensions.

In Singapore, authorities are taking a gradual approach, as they monitor risks and watch the job market closely.

The “global slowdown continues to weigh on the domestic sector, with significant implications on the labor market,” Irvin Seah, senior economist at DBS Group Holdings Ltd in Singapore, said in a research note. A “robust fiscal budget is expected early next year to render support for the economy while the MAS will most likely ease the monetary policy stance moderately.”

DBS analysts are among those seeing a 50-point reduction in the slope of the currency band on Monday.

The downturn may prompt a more aggressive move by the MAS, according to eight of 22 economists in the

Bloomberg survey.

### ■ Move to a flat slope

They predict the central bank will move to a flat slope — meaning it won’t seek an appreciation in the exchange rate.

“Singapore’s economy faces the weakest growth prospects since the global financial crisis, whether or not a technical recession is averted in 3Q. That’s likely to spur the monetary authority to ease policy. We expect the slope to be lowered to zero,” said Tamara Mast Henderson, ASEAN economist.

That action may prompt the Singapore dollar to weaken, according to analysts like Vishnu Varathan, head of economics and strategy at Mizuho Bank Ltd.

For now, it looks like the economy narrowly avoided a technical recession. After contracting an annualized 3.3% in the second quarter, the median estimate in a Bloomberg survey of economists is for gross domestic product to expand 1.2% on a quarterly basis, and gain 0.2% from a year ago.

Manufacturing remains the hardest-hit sector, while other parts of the economy are still relatively healthy and retrenchments haven’t yet significantly increased. Industrial output plunged in August by the most in almost four years, with electronics posting its worst production since 2012. The MAS left its policy settings unchanged in April after tightening twice in 2018.

The central bank adjusts the slope, width, and center of the currency band to adjust the pace of appreciation or

they worked the same way in Europe? The eurozone’s wonky structure, where monetary policy is set unilaterally by the ECB, yet each individual nation state independently determines their fiscal policy, is stifling growth.”

In other words, structure matters and the structure of the European Union makes it difficult for fiscal and monetary stimulus to prop up the entire region.

Negative interests rates are a drag on FEZ because the ETF allocates almost 17% of its weight to financial services stocks, its largest sector weight. Pressure on bank stocks in the Eurozone may be the only universal result of the ECB’s easy monetary policy, indicating fiscal stimulus may prove no more effective.

“If a meaningful fiscal alignment takes place in the eurozone, the moribund economy could be revived, but the political risks are high given how long the problem has been ignored,” said State Street. “Now, with populism at the gates following a lost decade of growth politicians might just come around — if Lagarde can get them there.”



depreciation of the exchange rate. Tinkering with the width or center is a much rarer, and more aggressive, move?

Despite the U.S. and China re-igniting talks to find common ground toward a trade deal, Singapore is among economies across Asia having to prepare for the worst between their two biggest trading partners.

“Singapore, being an export-oriented economy and a price-taker, remains vulnerable to the ongoing U.S.-China trade tensions,” analysts from United Overseas Bank Ltd in Singapore said in a research note. “Singapore’s output gap has turned negative since the fourth quarter of 2018 and is at risk of remaining so for the rest of 2019.”



# Iran, the Netherlands mulling over water, power co-op

**ENERGY** **TEHRAN** – Iran and the Netherlands are considering cooperation in water and electricity sectors, especially in water management and flood control, the portal of Iran's Energy Ministry (known as Paven) reported.

The issue was discussed during a meeting between the Iranian Deputy Minister of Energy for International Affairs Mohammad Ali Farahnakian and Jacques Werner, the Netherlands ambassador in Tehran, on Saturday.

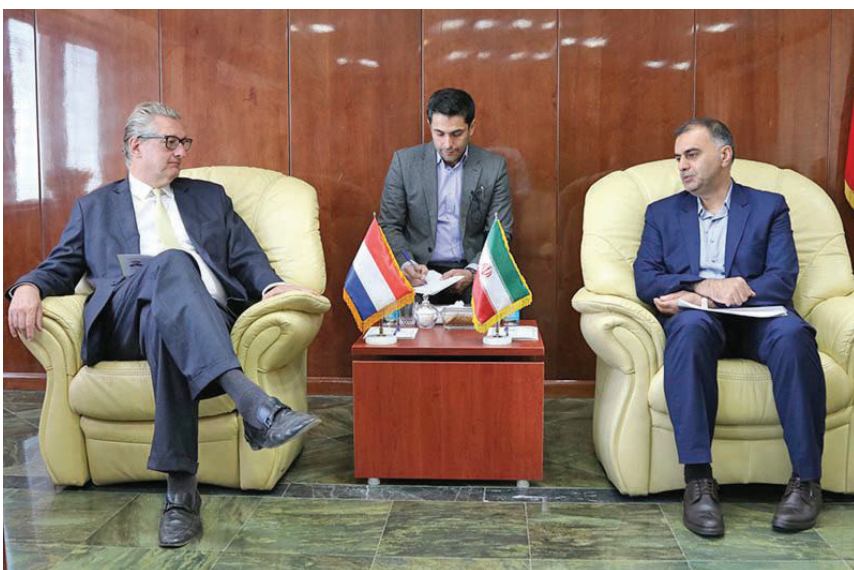
In the meeting, Farahnakian pointed to the long history of positive cooperation between the two countries, saying "Iran's relations with the Netherlands are at a good level compared

to other European countries."

He further welcomed Dutch companies' contribution in Iran's water and power projects.

Jacques Werner, the Dutch ambassador to Tehran, also emphasized the interest of the Dutch companies in cooperation with Iran in the field of water, especially flood management.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Warner mentioned the water, energy and food security nexus according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), stressing that considering the great capacities for cooperation in this regard, the two countries could benefit from those cooperation



Dutch Ambassador in Tehran Jacques Werner (L) met Iranian Deputy Minister of Energy for International Affairs Mohammad Ali Farahnakian (R) in Tehran on Saturday.

opportunities.

Referring to the Dutch government's decision to establish a circular economy net-

work by 2050, Werner noted that this could be another area for cooperation between the two countries.

## Asian oil buyers grapple with rising costs as global freight rates jump

By Nidhi Verma, Chen Aizhu

Asian oil refiners are grappling with a jump in global freight rates that shows no sign of abating, driving up costs of crude imports from all regions in the fourth quarter, industry officials said.

The cost of shipping crude from the Americas, Europe, Africa and the Middle East to Asia has surged over the past two weeks as companies shunned nearly 300 tankers on fears of violating sanctions against OPEC members Iran and Venezuela.

Higher freight rates and a jump in crude premiums after the Saudi oil attacks in mid-September have so far added about \$3 a barrel to November-lifting oil cargoes from the Middle East to China, trade and shipping sources said.

Oil tanker freight rates are expected to keep rising while COSCO Dalian's ships remain under sanctions, the sources said. The United States imposed sanctions on units of the Chinese shipper, alleging involvement in ferrying crude out of Iran.

"We've been in a net loss for most months so far this year, and the fourth quarter doesn't look good either, as premiums for Middle Eastern grades are high and freight rates have more than doubled," an official with a Chinese state-owned refinery said.



Refining margins in China will remain squeezed at least in the near term as its domestic fuel pricing tracks only the weighted average of global benchmark Dubai, West Texas Intermediate and Brent prices, excluding premiums and freight costs, he said.

In contrast, Indian refiners want refined fuel cracks to gain further to offset the impact of rising freight as pump prices of gasoil and gasoline are linked to their benchmarks in the Persian Gulf and Singapore.

"If this freight rate is not compensated by an increase

in product cracks, then it is going to affect margins," said R. Ramachandran, head of refineries at India's Bharat Petroleum Corp.

### ■ The increasing in shipping rates

The increase in shipping rates has also dented Asia's demand for arbitrage supplies from the United States, West Africa and Europe.

A "West African oil shipping fixture that we used to do for \$3 million to \$4 million has gone up to \$8 million to \$9 million," a source at one of the Indian refineries said.

Record shipping rates and a narrowing Brent-WTI price spread have shut the arbitrage window for U.S. crude to Asia. Very large crude carrier (VLCC) freights for West African crude to China and India have more than doubled.

An official at Indian Oil Corp said the Brent-WTI spread had to be at least \$6 a barrel for U.S. crude to flow to India but higher freight had further upset the economics.

"Refiners are looking at buying more short-haul oil, but Middle Eastern oil is mostly limited by OPEC quotas so there is not much choice for us," the IOC official said.

BPC's Ramachandran said the impact of higher freight rates would be accentuated for long-distance cargoes from the United States and Africa unless product cracks rose or oil prices dropped to make those crudes attractive.

(Source: reuters.com)

## Senegal launches first ever Senegal oil & power conference & exhibition

Oil and gas hotspot in Africa will host a flagship conference in Dakar, May 27-28 2020; the Senegalese government has officially named Africa Oil & Power (AfricaOilAndPower.com) as the official organizer of this event; the conference & exhibition will gather top officials and leading executives from the energy industry to discuss key issues across the energy sector, from oil and gas to power and renewable energy.

As per africanews.com, Senegal will host the first-ever Senegal Oil & Power Conference & Exhibition next year in Dakar, to be held on May 27-28, 2020 in Dakar, Senegal. Organized by Africa Oil & Power and supported by the Government of Senegal, Cos-Petrogaz, Petrosen and Senelec, the conference will herald a new era of investment in one of West Africa's leading business destinations, on the back of world-class offshore oil and gas discoveries and several dynamic energy projects that have been put in motion. The conference will be a vehicle to promote the new deepwater licensing round which was announced this week at the Africa Oil & Power Conference in Cape Town and for public-private partnerships spanning

the value chain.

Showing no signs of slowing down, Senegal is emerging as a key player in the global energy sector. Led by H.E Macky Sall, President of the Republic, the West African nation is a shining example of how African countries can #MakeEnergyWork and benefit from leveraging their hydrocarbon potential to drive greater economic growth.

Guillaume Doane, Chief Executive officer of Africa Oil & Power stated: "Senegal has quickly cemented its position as one of Africa's hottest energy markets on the back of big offshore discoveries, game-changing projects and one of the most competitive business climates in the region. Through the Senegal Oil & Power Conference, we are excited to sustain the momentum created by the country's leadership to herald a new era of investment in Senegal's energy industry."

As part of the Emerging Senegal Plan launched by His Excellency President Macky Sall's to make Senegal an emerging country by 2035, the energy sector has been established as a key pillar to drive economic growth and social inclusion. Senegal Oil & Power 2019 will support

the presidential vision by designing the event's narrative around triggering the next local and international investment wave across the energy value chain.

"With several world-class oil and gas discoveries, Senegal has built an excellent reputation globally in the energy industry. Through a new licensing round and investment drive, we are eager to capitalize on Senegal's strong track record to attract new operators and exploration," said Mamadou Faye, Managing Director of Petrosen.

Senegal Oil & Power 2019 will be a great opportunity to showcase Senegal's tremendous achievements to create a strong energy industry. In line with global demand increase for liquefied natural gas, the GTA project has triggered the implementation of a global gas-to-power framework aiming to fuel Senegal's growing demand for energy as well as opportunities for exports. A lower price of electricity will indubitably boost the competitiveness of the local industry and provide greater opportunities for consumers.

Senegal Oil & Power 2019 will also highlight the growing importance of technology in the energy industry. Thanks

to its young population and governmental commitment to developing a high-level technological readiness, the growth of energy and technology are inextricably connected.

Thanks to major oil and gas discoveries in the last five years, Senegal has major operators from the public sector such as BP and Kosmos Energy leading the Grand Tortue Ahmeyim (GTA) natural gas project as well as Woodside, Cairn Energy and FAR Ltd in the SNE oil field project. Across the energy sector, local companies are also showing tremendous commitment when it comes to creating a regional energy hub, such as Akilee and Der Mond Oil & Gas among many others.

Senegal's thriving private sector will play a key role in taking Senegal Oil & Power 2019 to the next level in terms of triggering interest, investment, and deal-making. Thanks to the country's progress in ease of doing business, we are seeing opportunities of a lifetime arise across the energy value chain from exploration and production to refining, petrochemicals, and storage as well as power and renewable energy, a sector in which Senegal is a regional leader.

## Renewable growth drives common goals for electricity networks across the globe

Electricity networks globally are experiencing significant increases in the volume of renewable capacity as countries seek to decarbonize their power sectors without impacting the security of supply. The scale of this change is creating new challenges for power networks and those responsible for keeping the lights on.

According to smart-energy.com, the latest insight paper from Cornwall Insight – Market design amidst global energy transition – looks into this issue. It examines the outlook for transmission networks, and how legacy design and policies are supporting decarbonization and shaping the system. The paper focuses on three key markets; Australia, Ireland and Great Britain.

Australia's main priority is to enhance transmission capacity and network efficiency; without this, the transmission system will be a barrier to growth for decentralized flexibility and renewables. In contrast, GB and Ireland benefit from interconnection with other national markets. This provides them with additional levers that can be pulled to manage system security and supply. However, they are still trying to hone and optimize network flexibility in light of steepening

decarbonization objectives.

Unsurprisingly, renewable energy resources have been growing in all three markets, with this expected to continue for the foreseeable future. Many of these projects are often located in places where network infrastructure is not as well developed, creating pressure on system operation as a result.

In all three markets, unit charges are rising, driven by a reduced charging base as decentralized energy grows quickly. This combination of changes is leading to network congestion, as transmission network development struggles to keep up, and flexibility markets are being optimized and changed.

### ■ Decarbonizing energy markets

In summary, reforms are on-going in each jurisdiction to accommodate the rapid physical transformation of the generation mix. Each has its objectives and tensions which are reflective of wider global reform programs being undertaken in most developed, liberalized and decarbonizing energy markets.

Gareth Miller, CEO of Cornwall Insight, said: "Despite differences in market design and characteristics, all three markets are grappling with similar

issues that comes from committing to deep decarbonization. This includes the most appropriate methods for charging for networks, managing access to them and dealing with issues such as network congestion and constraint.

"In all three countries, renewable projects are often placed in isolated locations away from the traditional infrastructure that is closer to demand. However, as renewable growth is set to continue, the networks will need to transition from being demand-centric to more supply orientated.

"Both system operators and stakeholders will need to continually evaluate their market structures and designs to alleviate issues surrounding locational congestion and grid stability. Each market is at very different stages in the process in trying to improve any problems implementing solutions to allow for higher efficiencies in renewable energy integration.

"It is uncertain whether any of the proposed changes will fundamentally resolve the issues that come with increased renewables on the system. However, despite marked differences, they certainly could all learn from each other and elements of their network arrangements."

## Japan's JERA sees LNG portfolio as 'always a work in progress'

The world's biggest LNG buyer, Japan's JERA, is continuously working to ensure it is in possession of a balanced LNG portfolio, top company official Hendrik Gordenker said in an interview with S&P Global Platts this week.

As per hellenicshippingnews.com, Gordenker, who until April was JERA chairman and is now senior corporate vice president, also said the LNG industry should use the current period of "ample supply" to work to further develop the market and further commoditize LNG.

JERA handles some 35 million mt/year of LNG — more than 10% of the global total — and its portfolio is made up of a wide range of different contracts.

"We need to have a balanced portfolio. It needs to be balanced in terms of duration. We want to have a mix of FOB and ex-ship deliveries — maybe more FOB is needed now than in the past — but we should have a mix," Gordenker said.

"We want a mix of geographical sources and an appropriate mix of pricing — there are a lot of factors to take into account when building a portfolio," he said.

Gordenker added that balancing its LNG portfolio was "always going to be a work in progress. It's not a static thing — it's a dynamic picture." "We have to look at it, think about it and take action every day."

### ■ The global LNG market

Gordenker said the global LNG market was currently "amply supplied" — a state of play the industry should use to help promote LNG in new markets and push toward a more liquid futures market.

"We should be smarter about how we see the development of the market in planning how we map this out," he said.

"We should use this period to develop the markets, develop price markers and deeper forward markets, so that in addition to being able to trade the LNG we can also begin to manage the risks and have a forward outlook on pricing." From a low base, the LNG derivatives market has seen impressive growth over the past three years, a trend that seems set to continue given the increasing volume and scope of the physical market.

JKM derivatives volume growth in 2018 stood at 256% year on year, following growth of 295% in 2017.

An "amply supplied market gives everyone the opportunity to work with a greater liquidity and to try to create more of a commodity," Gordenker said.

Low prices are also leading to new demand opening up, which could offset declining demand in Japan.

Japan has traditionally been the driver of much of global LNG demand, while the country's recent market liberalization has led to a relaxation of destination clauses.

"That kind of destination flexibility needs to be accepted. That's how the rules work, that's how all new contracts have to be," Gordenker said.

"And we're very pleased that in discussions with existing suppliers they are showing themselves open to updating contract terms to be in compliance with the current status of Japanese law."

LNG consumption in Japan is decreasing, which Gordenker said was a product of improved technology, better energy efficiency and an increase in renewable power generation.

Against that background, it is a challenge for companies like JERA to predict how much LNG is needed.

### ■ Supporting renewable energy

"There remains uncertainty about what exactly the level of LNG demand will be," he said. "We have continued uncertainty about nuclear restarts, we have the emergence of renewable energy. But the system for supporting renewable energy is under revision, and maybe that will slow down. There are a lot of uncertainties."

"LNG sits there as the way to bridge all of those uncertainties. We like to play that role very capably to make sure Japan is always reliably supplied with energy, but it's a challenge to handle that," he said.

JERA and other LNG buyers have in the past few years also joined forces to sign term import deals.

JERA most recently agreed with Taiwan's CPC a 17-year deal to jointly purchase 1.6 million mt/year of LNG from the Total-operated Mozambique LNG project.

Gordenker said this was not a new phenomenon, but was always welcomed.

"It seems a little bit forgotten that in the early days of LNG a lot of contracting was done between a seller and a buyer consortium," he said.

"That created a mechanism for buyers to easily transfer quantities among themselves and provide to the seller a more stable offtake. There's no great innovation in that concept.

"It's reviving an old technique and applying it in the modern world. We think there is a lot of merit for sellers and buyers on that — for the sellers it's great to have buyers with different demand profiles who are able to manage that offtake.

And for the buyers we get some flexibility by aggregating a larger piece of demand."

First Announcement



N.I.S.O.C

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO. : 01-31-9680033

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

Items	Material Description	Quantity
75	P/F"ROLLS-ROYCE"INDUSTRIAL AVON GAS GENERATOR AVON MK.1533-34-76G/101G REF. ROLLS-ROYCE LTD	14. 502

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 90,540 EURO or 11,405 ,817,257 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](http://www.shana.ir) [www.nisoc.ir](http://www.nisoc.ir)

تهران تایمز : نوبت اول ۹۸/۷/۲۱ نوبت دوم ۹۸/۷/۲۴

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By Javad Heirannia

**TEHRAN** — Robert David Steele, a former Marine Corps infantry officer and CIA spy as well as an activist for Open Source Everything Engineering (OSEE), regularly answers questions for Tehran Times.

■ How do you interpret the current situation between our two countries? Where is this going?

A. I believe that President Donald Trump and Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei are playing President Emmanuel Macron for the Deep State fool that he is. President Hassan Rouhani is the most perfect candidate possible to carry out a secret meeting with President Donald Trump within the USA – no one else combines perfect English, with nuclear, religious, and parliamentary experience as well as clear-cut loyalty to the Supreme Leader. I think the meeting happened and I consider everything being said in public to be theater. I believe it is inevitable for Iran, Turkey, and Egypt to be restored to their dominant positions in the Middle East while Israel is uninvented and Saudi Arabia is perhaps broken up. I want very much to see a state visit by our President to Iran within the next year, and would be quite impressed – as would the world – if General Secretary Xi Jinping and President Vladimir Putin were to make state visits at the same time. Iran is totally worthy of such international respect, such a joint visit by these three leaders would recognize the beginning of a new era of Iranian leadership in the region and in the world. My eight-point peace plan as published in Russia remains on the table.

■ You seem very confident that Palestine will be restored to the Palestinians. With a Christian Zionist as Secretary of State and the alleged anti-Christ (Jared Kushner) still in the White House, what is the basis for your confidence in President Trump on this matter?

A. As much as I despise Henry Kissinger, it is helpful to remind your readers that he himself said Israel would be gone by 2022, and Palestine restored. I consider Secretary of State Pompeo to be damaged goods and on his way out. As the President would say, Pompeo is not from “central casting.” He is a very fat, very sweaty, individual with a weak understanding of global reality, surrounded by Zionists who tell him what to think. Worst of all, he chose to align himself with the lying “leaders” at CIA still close to John Brennan, and the neo-conservatives who are the enemies of the President. Jared Kushner is probably loyal to his father – Kushner has a weak intellect but is smart enough to understand that the Netanyahu’s are headed for jail, the Adelsons have withdrawn their support for Zionist Israel, and he (Kushner) is nothing without his father-in-law’s support. The President knows Kushner is a liability, I expect Kushner to leave the White House soon, ostensibly to focus on the campaign, but never to return.

Now to the meat of your question: first, to paraphrase Tolstoy, “you may not be interested in reality but reality is interested in you.” Reality in the Middle East is that Palestine is to the Palestinians as France is to the French – Mahatma Gandhi said this in so many words – and Iran is absolutely in the right with its commitment to the restoration of Palestine and the expulsion of the Zionists (not the Jews).

The so-called two-state solution is completely illegitimate – it is rooted in Zionist bribery and blackmail of both Winston Churchill and Harry Truman and should be clearly dismissed by Palestine and Iran at every opportunity just as it was dismissed when first illegitimately proposed in the 1940’s.

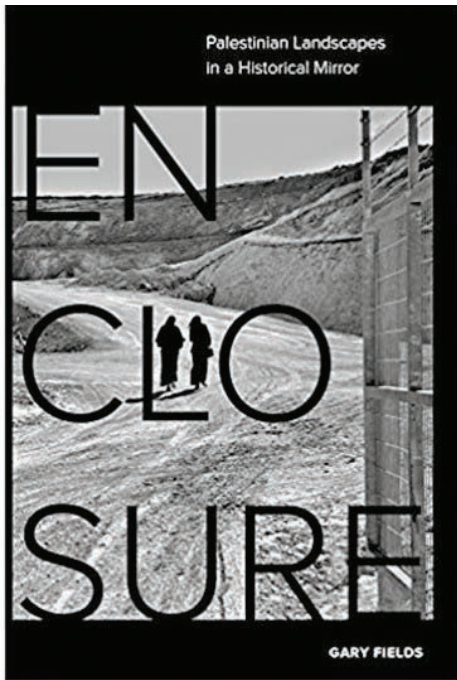
The below book and graphic – the book should be translated as soon as possible into Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, French, Russian, Spanish, and Turkish – make it quite clear that only a one-state solution that returns Palestine to Palestinians as South Africa was returned to its black majority – will overcome fifty years of criminality, genocide, and state-sponsored terrorism.

The United Nations (UN) is an agent of the Deep State and despite its proper denunciation of Zionist genocide against the Palestinians, is without authority, credibility, or power. The invented state of Israel has no legitimate claim to any part of Palestine and a two-state solution is absolutely against the will of God and totally inconsistent with every possible interpretation of history and natural law.

Second, as I have been writing for Tehran Times and the American Herald Tribune, Zionism is over. In the USA between Pastor Chuck Baldwin and myself and many others it is now clear that a majority of US Christians, and particularly evangelicals, are sick of the Zionist crimes against humanity including state-sponsored terrorism and the bribery and blackmail of our Members of Congress and state legislators everywhere. In addition and most importantly, the American Jews themselves, now led by the Adelsons and Rothschilds, have finally “come home” to place America First, not Israel First. The power of Israel in the USA will end when the President inevitably discloses the Zionist role in 9/11 and the fact that the Mossad – Ghislaine Maxwell – Jeffrey Epstein pedophilia entrapment and blackmail network was just the most public, there are at least another forty-nine such pedophilia entrapment and blackmail networks across the USA that will – once the President restructures CIA and FBI – no longer enjoy protection from CIA and the FBI.

Third and most importantly, President Trump is a pragmatist. He understands culture and history and politics at a transactional level, and there can be no question at all about the inevitability of the end of Israel. Palestine will be restored to the Palestinians within the decade, and they will have both Iran and our President – as well as their decades of honorable persistence in the face of genocidal attack – to thank for their reinstatement.

One reason to include China and Russia in what I hope will be a state visit to Iran by the three top world leaders is because on the one hand, both China and Russia have invested billions of dollars to establish adjacent and attractive Jewish Autonomous Zones immediately available for emigration by Jews if necessary to accommodate a total right of



return for all Palestinians, and on the other hand, the USA is in the process of defining and then eliminating Zionist control over the US economy, US government, and US society. The time has come to deal with the Zionist parasite at an international level, with decisive action, military if necessary (for example, the Golan must immediately be returned to Syrian control).

Separately the Zionist leaders of Israel appear to understand that they may be expelled from Palestine, and they have been investing heavily in a possible return of the Khazars (a form of criminal gypsy band) to the Ukraine, one reason why the Obama Administration generally and Victoria Nuland particularly spent billions destabilizing the Ukraine.

There continues to be a need for an eight-point peace plan for the region that addresses the Sunni – Shi’ite and Kurdish matters while also creating a regional water authority that ends the Zionist theft of water from the Jordanian aquifer while creating unlimited amounts of desalinated water for the region using free energy, which I believe will be industrialized by President Donald Trump during his second term. Free energy will destroy the current Saudi regime and make nuclear power irrelevant.

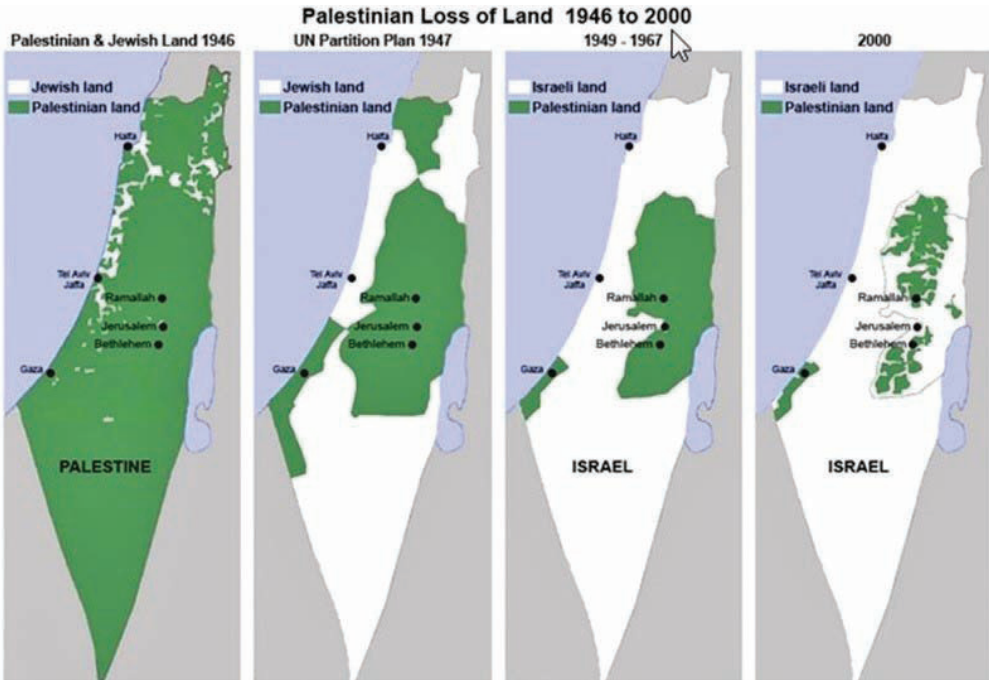
Let me say in passing that in addition to the unification and denuclearization of the Koreas – a Chinese initiative – and the restoration of Palestine and termination of Zionist and Saudi war-mongering in the Middle East – a Russian initiative – I believe that President Trump will normalize relations with Cuba, inclusive of property reinstatement for many Americans of Cuban descent, and create a new Marshall Plan for Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, and eventually South America. He knows that the only way to sustainably stop illegal immigration is to foster peace and prosperity “down there.” He also knows that the Deep State is the root cause of illegal immigration, and that we must help all countries eradicate the influence of the Deep State as manifested through the Central Banks and secret societies such as the Freemasons, Knights of Malta, the Mormon networks, and of course the Zionist networks. The restoration of America’s moral and commercial dominance of the Western Hemisphere, from the Arctic to the Antarctic, will be part of President Trump’s legacy.

■ There are rumors of a major economic shift in the world, one that radically reduces the power of the private Central Banks that have been manipulating economies in favor of the 1%. How do you see this developing?

A. While I have no direct knowledge at the highest levels, I have been told by multiple people whom I trust that General Secretary Xi Jinping, President Vladimir Putin, and President Donald Trump – along with the group known as the Elders – have agreed on and are carrying out a Global Currency Reset that includes asset-backed currencies as long advocated by Dr. Judy Shelton among others; some form of sovereign debt jubilee most helpful not only to the USA but to many Third World countries; and other country specific initiatives of which I have no knowledge. In the USA I anticipate, before Election Day in 2020, a student debt jubilee, some form of health nationalization, and an end to the federal income tax along with the formal nationalization of the Federal Reserve (but not its debt – few people seem to understand that all the Federal Reserve notes are in fact a debt burden on the private banks that have heretofore been represented by the Federal Reserve).

Let me also point out that most wealth today is both digital and fictional. The banks have been running a massive fraud operation in which wealth could be invented at will by bank owners and transferred digitally across the SWIFT system at face value. As much as 70% of the alleged wealth claimed by the 1% is not backed by tangible assets or proper documentation. This puts national leaders in a very strong position because military force can control who benefits from tangible assets such as land. I believe we are at the beginning of an era of peace and prosperity in which the public becomes the primary generator of and beneficiary of national wealth.

There is also a major potential benefit in terms of sharply reducing transnational crime. In combi-



nation, a new banking system that does not allow fictional wealth to be created, and radically improved use of coordinated Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) between the US and Russia particularly but also including China and Iran, could lead to the eradication of transnational criminal networks, both black collar and white collar. We are at the very beginning of finally doing intelligence and counterintelligence in service to the public rather than the Deep State. Such a capability will immediately gut the Khazarian criminal network comprised of Russians, Israelis, and Americans who are today beyond the reach of traditional law enforcement, in part because of the corruption of the US Congress and the FBI.

■ The world is watching the Democratic attempts to impeach President Donald Trump, now rooted in an alleged CIA whistleblower. How should international observers interpret this drama?

A. Drama is the right word. The CIA whistleblower may not even exist. There is evidence that on the one hand, treasonous intelligence officials changed the rules to allow a report that is not based on direct observation; and on the other that the actual report was written by Congressional staff or a law firm associated with the Democrats or even by Adam Schiff himself, a man known to be in the pay of foreign powers and possibly also being blackmailed by the Mossad for pedophilia. Not only does the President’s transcript not provide any basis for impeachment, but in comparison to the outright abuses of power by Barack Obama, Joe Biden, and Hillary Clinton – the sale of Libya, Syria, Yemen, and Uranium One as well as interference in the Ukraine stand out – there is every reason to believe that the Democratic Party will not survive this.

When this is all over it will be Joe Biden and his son Hunter Biden as well as the Clintons who will be criminally-indicted; Adam Schiff will certainly lose re-election after being disgraced and perhaps even charged with treason; and the Democrats will cease to exist as a political party – they will lose control of the House of Representatives in 2020 and very probably break up into two or three smaller parties. If President Trump implements #UNRIG (Unity with Integrity, Election Reform Act) prior to Election Day and in time for Independents and Libertarians to be elected in 2022, the Republican Party might also break up, there are a number of Republican Members of Congress who have betrayed the Republic -- #UNRIG would make it possible for the Constitution and Libertarian Parties, among others, to displace the now deeply discredited Republican Party.

The truth-teller for international observers is the amount of money that President Trump’s political campaign is raising – hundreds of millions of dollars – compared to the money being raised by all of the Democratic candidates together. The American people are voting in advance with their donations, and our President, by this measure, is certain of re-election and will absolutely never actually be convicted in the Senate even if impeached by the corrupt and arguably insane House of Representatives.

■ President Trump promised to do full disclosure on 9/11 and has not done so. He has also allowed the Mossad pedophilia operations managed by Ghislaine Maxwell and Jeffrey Epstein to be covered up. He has not made any arrests that have been publicly reported. How do you assess his performance in office to date?

A. No evaluation of the President can avoid his stunning accomplishments in favor of the economy, rebalancing trade, bringing jobs back to America, and closing the border to illegal aliens. Having said that, he has failed to fulfil most of his promises, largely because he has been under attack from the first day, and most of the US Government is still managed by a mix neo-conservatives and extreme leftist ideologues in constant daily betrayal of the public trust. When Jared Kushner destroyed Chris Christie’s twelve-volume 4,000 pre-qualified candidates transition plan, he virtually amputated both of President Trump’s legs. The President will triumph in spite of his enemies and in spite of his family.

Many believe that the installation of General Mark A. Milley as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of

Staff (CJCS), as occurred on 30 September 2019, is the final move before arrests and if necessary martial law in selected areas. I am on record as stating that I believe Jeffrey Epstein to be alive and in US custody, not vacationing in Israel. I cannot overstate two facts: first, that the truth about 9/11 and Zionist crimes across the USA including the bribing and blackmailing of twenty-seven state legislatures, are now widely known; and second, the rise of the Heartland in the USA which is white, not Jewish, anti-war, and pro-Constitution. America is in the process of carrying out a 2nd American Revolution, President Trump is the Chosen One for this purpose, if he does not finish the job those elected in 2024 will.

I am also informed that a number of people have died or been “retired” to their homes and I believe that the Deep State and its Zionist under-belly are now very much on the defensive. Our President controls the military and the police; the financial strings; and the political strings. He does not control the media, which urgently needs displacement by a Trump studio and truth channel, which is the last piece – along with a number of policy initiatives – necessary to assure the Mother of All Landslides in November 2020. The one negative for me right now is the failure of the President’s team to properly communicate to and also listen to the public at large.

■ The US Department of Justice (DoJ) as well as the CIA and FBI appear to be deeply corrupt and engaged in a coup d’etat against President Donald Trump. Q Anon recently suggested that CIA will be abolished and its operational element moved to NSA. Attorney General William Barr has been slow to terminate the fabricated case against General Michael Flynn. What is your view of the future of both justice and intelligence in the USA?

A. There is no question but that the DoJ, CIA, and FBI have been deeply compromised not only by Obama-Biden, but also by the Bush and Cheney crime families before them. I once wrote about how there are seven CIAs. It is now known that CIA was created by Wall Street to serve as the secret foundation for controlling the US Government. It is now known that CIA is the primary mover of both drugs and mind-control along with human trafficking across the USA going back forty years. It is now known that the FBI was founded by a pedophile who took small children as gifts from the Mafia, and pioneered political blackmail in the USA. It is now known that the DoJ is “licensed to lie,” has been totally compromised in relation to the 1%, and also fabricated the charges against General Mike Flynn, USA (Ret), and Roger Stone, while withholding exculpatory evidence. The President is absolutely correct to be contemplating major changes.

However, as my friend Bill Binney would be glad to explain to the President, NSA is not the place to put anything from CIA. Like CIA, NSA and the other elements of the secret US intelligence community need to be reduced by up to 70%, with all those dismissed given two-year “soft landings” including re-training toward new work elsewhere or early retirement. The surviving elements (30% of each agency) should be consolidated under a restored Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) with the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) terminated, and a new Open Source Agency (OSA) under Presidential direction established. The National Intelligence Council (NIC) should be moved into the Executive Office of the Presidency and co-located with a Strategy Advisory Group. The National Security Council (NSC) – which is how the Deep State controls the President’s information and options – should be abolished.

If any agency should be abolished it is the FBI. The failure of the FBI to protect America from Mossad operations particularly, and from all of the corrupt judges and prosecutors that have been bribed and blackmailed to facilitate government smuggling of drugs, guns, gold, cash, and small children, fully warrants FBI dissolution. A new national counter-intelligence corps – one that cannot be undermined by corrupt state or federal authorities – is needed.

General Mike Flynn, once exonerated by the Attorney General – the case against him was fabricated and should be dismissed because of terrible

misconduct by all the prosecutors including Robert Mueller – is ideally suited to become the new DNI who eliminates his own job and then becomes the new restored DCI. He served in the Office of the DNI after he co-authored the now very famous and respected Fixing Intel, and he understands the totality of intelligence, which should be about decision-support, not regime change, drone assassination, torture, and domestic blackmail.

Justice – fairness – depends on intelligence and counterintelligence done right. Today we have neither.

■ You are known to be a very strong supporter of President Donald Trump, but also a vocal critic of his White House and campaign staffs. What do you personally see happening between now and Election Day that might force President Trump to go beyond his comfort zone to become the “greatest President ever?”

A. President Trump is surrounded by people who filter his communications and lie to him about everything. Despite his own extraordinary knowledge base, he is being blocked from perceiving the totality of the threats, policies, and true costs that he needs to comprehend in order to be the “greatest president ever.”

The President’s communications and campaign staffs stink at communicating with the US public. The President has lost – for now – the public narrative battle. The Democrats have succeeded at persuading 47% of the public that the President should be impeached. Neither the President for the Republican Party nor the President’s surrogates are talking to the public about the fact that America is in fact in the middle of a civil war – a cultural war of values – between those who respect the Constitution and want to uphold family values, community cohesion, and state rights, and those who seek to destroy America the Beautiful with open borders, multiculturalism, and amorality – “anything goes” including pedophilia and bestiality and transgenderism (which is nothing more or less than the genocide of humanity).

A huge amount of private money is about to be spent on a replacement for the National Rifle Association (NRA) and a new 100-million strong Patriot Network of engaged educated voters that will have as its foundation a national truth channel that strives to do nothing less than displace #GoogleGestapo. #GoogleGestapo is the combination of Amazon, Facebook, Google, Twitter, YouTube, and others that has been deplatforming conservatives, manipulating survey results to interfere with US elections at all levels, and generally disrespecting the Constitution and especially the 1st Amendment.

I look for the President to abandon Twitter and start sending Trumpets by 4 July 2020, and to impose a massive RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act) investigation leading to tens of billions of dollars in penalties against Facebook, Google, Twitter and YouTube particularly. I look to Amazon losing all of its contracts with the US Government and a new massive class action lawsuit against Amazon from retailers and others who can prove that Amazon Web Services is being used to actively steal intellectual property and customers from everyone else while conducting – with Google – mass surveillance of individuals and their homes.

By 4 July 2020 our President will be able to communicate directly to over 250 million US voters and residents without interference, and will also be able to “see” on a Presidential “dashboard” what they are all thinking, by location, demographic, and issue. He will be able to “poll” all citizens qualified by cross-checked Social Security validation, on any matter and “see” their views on a single screen.

The other initiative that I see emergent is a national educational tour, perhaps led by Pastor Chuck Baldwin and the Honorable Dr. Cynthia McKinney, perhaps including such luminaries as Ron Paul, Dennis Kucinich, Marianne Williamson, and Tomi Lahren – all committed to a politics of love, a politics of truth. This national Chautauqua – a traditional form of education for rural America in the 1800’s – could also include a deep discussion of the US Constitution and the need to reinforce, modify, or cancel selected Constitutional amendments. The President has chosen not to do this – he is very busy with matters of state – but he needs an educated mobilized public if he is to be the best possible President, organizing this needed national conversation is how I will try to help our President going forward from today.

I cannot overstate the influence of Pastor Chuck Baldwin within the Christian community in the USA. He is God’s messenger. He is God’s warrior for truth, and it is he, not me, who will put the stake in the heart of the Zionist parasite that must be expelled from the USA – and from Palestine – if we are to have peace and prosperity for all.

■ Do you have any short concluding message for Iranian leaders or the Iranian people?

A. I am so glad that you asked this. Allow me to say that despite the optimistic thoughts that I offer above, I am acutely conscious of the fact that the Deep State and its Zionist and Vatican Satanic elements will fight us to the death. On that note I would like to point out that American conservatives and their values are closely aligned with the values of the Supreme Leader and Iran. We are particularly committed to family values and to a shared God as the infinite being whom we must all embrace as our common point of reference. The extremists here in the USA are more like Afghan village idiots with their dancing boys, uncultured, ignorant, with no higher purpose. I respectfully share the graphic shown here to the side, for it captures the reality of our civil war in America – our leader Donald Trump is not the religious leader you have, but he is our leader, and he represents America as a force for good. The 2nd American Revolution is about restoring morality – values – to every aspect of our lives. Morality is where your Supreme Leader and the good people of Iran, and our big-hearted decent Americans as led by President Donald Trump, can come together in what Ron Paul would call a foreign policy of freedom rooted in peace, commerce, and honest friendship.



# Who is Ethiopian Premier Abiy Ahmed, winner of 2019 Nobel Peace Prize for Eritrea Accord?

**1 →** And for the first time, Ethiopia had no journalists in prison, media groups noted last year.

A statement from Prime Minister Ahmed's office said that since taking office in 2018 he has made "peace, forgiveness and reconciliation essential elements of his administration".

"This victory and recognition is a collective victory for all Ethiopians and a call to strengthen our determination to make Ethiopia the new horizon of hope, a prosperous nation for all," the statement added.

More recently, it has expanded its program of opening up a largely state-controlled economy and is now putting all its weight behind it to hold inclusive legislative elections in May 2020.

This year's peace prize was the 100th to be awarded. According to the Nobel Institute, 301 candidates were vying for this year's Peace Prize, making it the fourth highest prize ever. The record was 376 candidates in 2016. However, the list of candidates is revealed only 50 years after the awarding of the prize.

His supporters trust in his inexhaustible personal ambition to move the country forward. "I always told my friends: When this guy goes to power, you will see huge changes in Ethiopia," says businessman Tareq Sabt, a close friend of the Prime Minister.

## ■ "We were fetching water from the river"

Born from a Muslim father and a Christian mother in a small town in the center west, Beshasha, Abiy Ahmed "grew up sleeping on the floor" in a house that had neither electricity nor water. "We were fetching water from the river," he said in a September interview with Shepher FM radio, adding that he had only discovered electricity and asphalt after the age of 10 years. He holds master degrees in business administration and transformational leadership and a PhD in traditional conflict resolution.

As a teenager, he became involved in the armed struggle against Mengistu Haile Mariam's regime. The young man, a radio operator, taught there by necessity the language of the Tigrayans, the ethnic group with a large majority in this struggle which will form the hard core of the regime after the fall of Mengistu in 1991.

## ■ Linear Ascension

He, then, began a linear rise in the ruling coalition, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), first in the security apparatus, then in politics.

He climbed the ranks of the army to become a lieutenant-colonel and in 2008 will be one of the founders of the National Intelligence Agency (INSA). In 2010, he swapped the uniform for the politician costume. He became a member of the Oromo party, a member of the ruling coalition and, in 2015, Minister of Science and Technology.

At the end of 2015, a popular anti-government protest movement grew in the two main communities of



the country: the Oromo, where Abiy Ahmed was born, and the Amhara.

## ■ He's the only one who could save the EPRDF

The movement, although violently repressed, eventually carried off Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, symbol of a coalition unable to provide answers to the aspirations of youth. In desperation, the EPRDF appointed Abiy Ahmed to save the situation, making him the first oromo to hold the post of prime minister. "It's the only one who could save the EPRDF," said Mohammed Ademo, a journalist who accompanied Abiy Ahmed on his first visit to the large Ethiopian diaspora in the United States in 2018. "My feeling is that he has been preparing for this moment all his life.

In fact, once in power, he multiplied the initiatives on the regional scene. In addition to the dramatic rapprochement with Eritrea, a nation that shares deep ethnic and cultural ties with his country, thus, conflict separated their families, complicated geopolitics, and claimed more than 80,000 lives, he played an important mediating role in the Sudanese political crisis and tried to revitalize the fragile South Sudanese peace agreement.

## ■ Grenade attack

In mid-2018, he was targeted by a grenade attack at a rally in Addis Ababa. A large group of soldiers confronted him in his office in what he called an attempt to derail his reforms. During

his interview on Sheger radio, he said: "There have been many attempts so far, but death did not want to come to me."

The prize, consisting of a gold medal, a diploma and a check of 9 million Swedish crowns (approximately 830,000 euros), will be awarded in Oslo on 10 December, the anniversary of the death of its founder, the industrialist and philanthropist Alfred Nobel (1833-1896).

In a will written a year before his death, the inventor of dynamite had wished to see rewarded "those who over the past year have rendered humanity the greatest services."

As a reminder, Nadia Murad and Denis Mukwege jointly won the award in 2018. Murad, a 26-year-old Yazidi woman, became the voice and face of those who survived the sexual violence perpetrated by the terrorist group "ISIS". Dr. Mukwege, aged 64, is a Congolese gynecological surgeon who has treated thousands of women in her war-torn country.

Since 1901, 99 Nobel Peace Prizes have been handed out to individuals and 24 organizations. While the other prizes are announced in Stockholm, the peace prize is awarded in the Norwegian capital, Oslo.

This week, 11 Nobel laureates have been named. The others received their awards for their achievements in medicine, physics, chemistry and literature.

## Europe has not been honest with Tehran: Shireen Hunter

**1 →** France is aware that the collapse of the JCPOA will intensify regional tensions. It might even increase the risk of a military confrontation between Tehran and Washington. France and other European countries have failed to live up to their commitments towards Tehran. But from the very beginning it was clear that Europe could not sustain the nuclear deal once the U.S. withdrew from it. Legally and morally Iran has the right to change its position regarding the implementation of the JCPOA. However, the collapse of the deal would increase even further international pressures on Tehran.



■ Does this warning mean a defeat in French diplomatic efforts to mediate between Iran and the United States?

A: As a rule, mediation efforts only succeed when the two parties to a dispute make the basic decision to reconcile. As long as this basic decision is not reached, mediators stand little chance of success. The Trump administration has not yet decided to reconcile with Tehran. Iran, too, is still unwilling to reach any compromise with Washington. Iran is unwilling to change some of its basic positions regarding Middle East issues. Washington, meanwhile, is still making demands on Iran that it knows Tehran cannot accept. Therefore, it is no surprise that Macron's mission did not succeed.

■ Iran has announced that by early November it will take new measures to reduce its obligations in JCPOA. Why doesn't Europe make a serious effort to preserve the JCPOA and just announce daily that the country has joined INSTEX but nothing actually happens?

A: France is not capable of doing anything to ensure the JCPOA's survival without American approval. Moreover, Paris, too, would like to see Tehran change its regional policies. Basically, in this regard Europe and the U.S. are in agreement. Both the U.S. and Europe want Iran to offer all the concessions before they would agree to any economic relief. They hope that continued pressure would force Tehran to surrender. But they are worried about Iran's change of position on the JCPOA possibly leading Iran to reconsider its giving up the development of nuclear weapons, hence their warnings.

■ Do you think that the INSTEX mechanism will be operational in light of US warnings about sanctions on the companies that work with them and meet Iran's needs?

A: Instex never was a viable alternative to normal financial trade transactions. It has always been an instrument to convince Iran to continue to adhere to the JCPOA. Even if the entire EU joins the Instex, it would not solve Iran's problems. Europe has not been honest with Tehran.

Second Announcement



Khouzeestan Steel Company

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

Khouzeestan Steel Company (KSC), intends to increase the capacity of its pelletizing plant process exhaust gas by removing the existing axial fan and installing a new radial fan on ground level, equipped with an ESP (electro static precipitator) de-duster. All the required duct works is included. The capacity of radial fan is about 15000 normal cubic meters per minute, and is equipped with VFD and IGV systems.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Second Announcement



Khouzeestan Steel Company

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

Khouzeestan Steel Company (KSC), intends to increase the Blaine of incoming purchased iron ores from 400 – 900 cm<sup>2</sup>/gr to 1800 cm<sup>2</sup>/gr by execution of High Pressure Grinding Rolls (HPGR) project with the capacity of 800 tons per hour .

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

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

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

1. Company Profile and Catalogues
2. Company references of similar projects. (Name, Location, Scope, Capacity and Contract Price)
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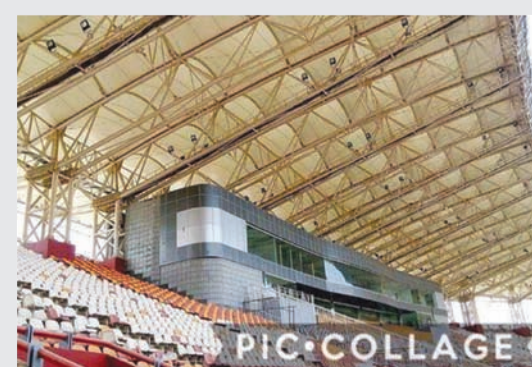
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# Aliens will likely be discovered within 30 years, Nobel Prize-winning astronomer says

A Nobel prize-winning astronomer has predicted that humans will find evidence of alien life in the next 30 years.

On Tuesday, Professor Didier Queloz, from Switzerland, said he was “convinced” of the existence of extraterrestrial life after winning the 2019 Nobel Prize in Physics.

“I can’t believe we are the only living entity in the universe,” the Cambridge University professor said while speaking at the Science Media Centre in London, according to The Telegraph. “There are just way too many planets, way too many stars, and the chemistry is universal.

“The chemistry that led to life has to happen elsewhere. So I am a strong believer that there must be life elsewhere.

“Life doesn’t just mean a green man coming to you, life started way before animals were crawling on the surface of earth.”

According to the professor, he is certain



that humans will have detected alien life in 100 years> time.

However, he is convinced it will happen much sooner than that, once we have built

more advanced technology capable of detecting life on distant planets.

Professor Queloz, who discovered the first planet outside our solar system while still a PhD student, won the Nobel Prize alongside fellow researcher Michel Mayor, his PhD supervisor at Princeton.

In 1995, Professor Queloz and Professor Mayor discovered the exoplanet 51 Pegasi b using the Doppler spectroscopy technique, which measures wobbles of a star as a planet orbits around it.

Since their initial discovery, more than 4,100 additional exoplanets have been found.

The Nobel Prize was awarded to the scientists for “contributions to our understanding of the evolution of the universe and Earth’s place in the cosmos”, with half of the prize awarded to James Peebles, for “theoretical discoveries in physical cosmology”.

(Source: The Independent)

## Scientists have successfully kept mouse brain tissue alive in the lab for weeks

We’ve seen pig brains reanimated post-mortem and kept alive for hours. Now scientists from Japan have taken tiny slivers of mouse brain tissue, and kept it alive and viable for 25 days, isolated in a culture.

This has greatly increased the timeframe that isolated brain tissue can maintain its functions, from days to weeks - which in turn could vastly improve research into therapeutic drugs.

The key to the team’s success was a new method of keeping tissue alive - which involved combining a special type of membrane with a modified microfluidic device.

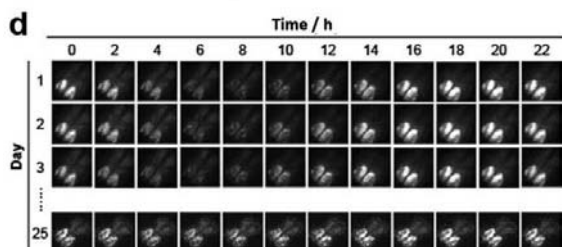
Microfluidic devices use tiny channels for delivering fluid to tissues, and they have distinct advantages over regular culture dishes for ex vivo tissue experiments.

In addition to the precision of fluid delivery, they’re more customizable, can mimic certain cell behaviors, and require smaller sample volumes, which makes it easier to study cell interactions.

But the thing about studying how systems in our bodies react to things is that a few days just isn’t enough to see long-term effects. This is where our current methods using microfluidic devices for keeping these cellular systems alive fall short.

The problem is maintaining a balance. These tissues dry out quickly, so you need to keep the system flushed with moisture and nutrients with a wet culture medium; but too much moisture prevents the cells from exchanging the gases the tissue needs to survive, essentially drowning it.

And it’s this problem that the team set out to solve with their new system.



The device, as a supervillain would say, is genius in its simplicity. It consists of a semi-permeable microfluidic channel, surrounded by a permeable artificial membrane and solid walls. These solid walls are made of polydimethylsiloxane, an organosilicon polymer commonly used in microfluidic devices.

So, rather than the tissue sitting constantly in a bath of culture medium, the fluid circulated through the channel and passed through the permeable membrane to keep the tissue moist while still allowing gases to be exchanged between the cells.

However simple it sounds, though, the researchers said it was not so easy to pull off.

“Controlling the medium flow was difficult because the microchannel that formed between the PDMS walls and the porous membrane was unusual,” said biochemist Nobutoshi Ota of the RIKEN Center for Biosystems Dynamics Research.

“However, we had success after trial and error modifications to the porous membrane and adjustments of the inlet/outlet flow rates.”

The team used a tiny piece of brain called the suprachiasmatic nucleus (SCN), responsible in mammals for maintaining the circadian clock and biological rhythms. The neuronal cells in the SCN exchange and synchronize phase information by moving peptides and small molecules between cells, which makes the SCN ideal for studying cell interactions.

The mice they harvested these SCNs from had been genetically edited so that circadian rhythm activity in the brain was linked to the production of a fluorescent protein; so when all is working as it should, the tissue fluoresces.

And fluoresce it did, for 25 days, the researchers said, compared to their control of the same tissue in a more conventional culture dish. After 10 hours, activity in the control had already declined by 6 percent.

And the only reason the tissue in the experimental system only lasted 25 days is because that was the cut-off time for the experiment. The researchers expected that it could have lasted over 100 days.

That is what they plan to try for their next experiment. They believe that it could be used for all organ tissues, not just brains. And there’s potential for lab-grown human organs, too.

“This method can be used for more than explanted tissues from animals,” Ota said.

“It will also improve research into organogenesis through long-term culturing and observation which is necessary for growing tissue and organs.”

(source: sciencealert.com)

## Astronomers use huge cluster of galaxies to ‘peer back in time’



Astronomers have used a massive cluster of galaxies to «peer back in time», looking at events that took place nearly 10 billion years ago.

Using the pioneering technique, scientists were able to see the spectacular birth of a tiny dwarf galaxy, right as it began.

It is the first time that astronomers have used the huge galactic giants to zoom in on very extreme but very distant phenomena. It allowed them to see what they think is the tiny blue speck of the birth of a galaxy which is only 1/10,000 the size of our Milky Way. It was seen churning out its first ever stars: supermassive objects that are only at the very beginning of their lives.

“It’s this little blue smudge, meaning it’s a very small galaxy that contains a lot of super-hot, very massive young stars that formed recently,” says Matthew Bayliss, a research scientist in MIT’s Kavli Institute for Astrophysics and Space Research. “This galaxy is similar to the very first galaxies that formed in the universe ... the kind of which no one has ever seen in X-ray in the distant universe before.”

Scientists now hope they can use the same technique to see other extreme and energetic events so far away that they happened right at the very beginning of the universe.

“With this technique, we could, in the future, zoom in on a distant galaxy and age-date different parts of it – to say, this part has stars that formed 200 million years ago, versus another part that formed 50 million years ago, and pick them apart in a way you cannot otherwise do,” said Bayliss.

The technique relies on one of the strangest characteristics of such huge galaxy

clusters: they are the most massive objects in the universe, so huge and powerful that they distort the very fabric of space-time. As they do, the universe and its light is bent.

That can be used something like a magnifying glass, because of a phenomenon known as gravitational lensing. Using complex processing, scientists can examine the light and use it to see «magnified» images.

Researchers have been able to use this before to study objects at optical wavelengths. But the new research is a breakthrough because they have never before used it to examine the X-ray band of the electromagnetic spectrum, which is so difficult that some thought it might be impossible.

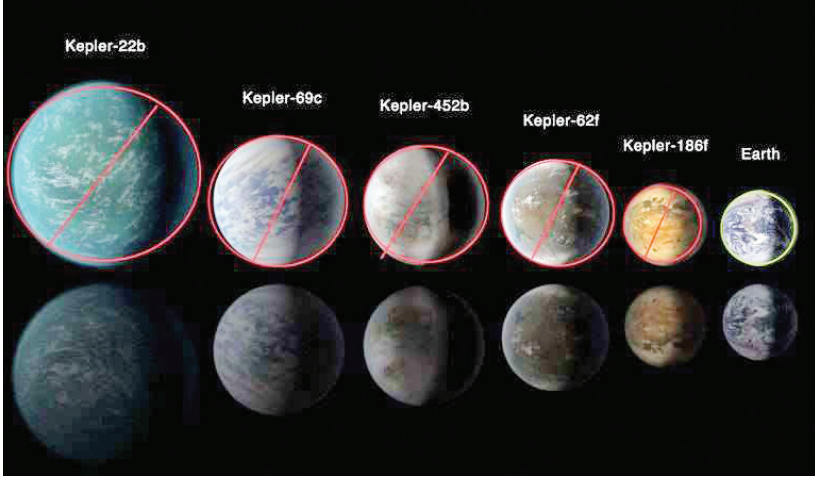
“If you’re trying to see an X-ray source behind a cluster, it’s like trying to see a candle next to a really bright light,” said Bayliss. “So we knew this was a challenging measurement to make.”

To get around that problem, researchers used NASA’s Chandra X-ray Observatory, one of the most powerful X-ray telescopes in the world. With that, they were able to start looking deeper and deeper into the universe – including at such infant galaxies.

“We’re catching this galaxy at a very useful stage, where it’s got these really young stars,” Bayliss says. “Every galaxy had to start out in this phase, but we don’t see a lot of these kinds of galaxies in our own neighborhood. Now we can go back in time, look in the distant universe, find galaxies in this early phase of their life, and start to study how star formation is different there.”

(Source: The Independent)

## Why migrating to another planet is a stupid and implausible idea



By Tristan Greene

Swiss astrophysicist Michel Mayor, whose work detecting exoplanets recently earned him a share in the Nobel prize for physics, says humans will never migrate beyond our own solar system. Maybe it’s time we started taking this whole “climate change” thing seriously.

The first exoplanet with the potential to host life as we know it, meaning it was orbiting a star similar to the one we call ‘the sun,’ was discovered by Mayor and fellow Nobel winner Didier Queloz in 1995. In the time since, researchers have confirmed the existence of more than 4,000 exoplanets. But we won’t be making the trip to any of them, says Mayor.

He told Agence France-Presse:

If we are talking about exoplanets, things should be clear: we will not migrate there. These planets are much, much too far away. Even in the very optimistic case of a livable planet that is not too far, say a few dozen light years, which is not a lot, it’s in the neighborhood, the time to go there is considerable. We are talking about hundreds of millions of days using the means we have available today.

Rather than concern ourselves with dreams of colonizing planets throughout our galaxy and beyond, Mayor says “We must take care of our planet.” He told AFP that he wanted to dissuade people from thinking of migration as a viable solution to existential threats, telling reporters he felt the need to “kill all the statements that say ‘OK, we will go to a livable planet if one day life is not possible on earth.’” He went on to call such sentiments “completely crazy.” And he’s right. The current space race

may not be a direct response to climate crisis science, but it’s turning out to be a fantastic distraction from the actual, scientifically proven catastrophe unfolding here on Earth.

We shouldn’t be online picking out curtains for some future mansion we hope to live in one day while our studio apartment is burning down around us.

Because, if exoplanets are off the table (barring some far-future tech like quantum warping), then we don’t really have any other options. The Moon? It’s not big enough. Mars? Let’s examine that one briefly.

The red planet is uninhabitable. Despite Elon Musk’s assertion that ‘nuking’ it would kick-start the atmosphere, there’s no current technology capable of “terraforming” it to make it livable. There’s a reason why people haven’t fled the crowded streets of New York, Paris, and Bangladesh to stretch their legs in the wide-open expanses of Antarctica. Because uninhabitable means you can’t survive without accommodations that don’t occur naturally. The challenge of surviving on Mars is almost infinitely more difficult than living on Earth’s south pole.

When we imagine these ventures, the ones where we send brave explorers off to carve out a new home for humanity (Battlestar Galactica anyone?), we’re not thinking about the billions of ‘regular people’ who don’t have ‘the right stuff,’ to survive in the harsher-than-anything-on-our-planet reality of space.

There’s no doubt we’ll eventually set up small colonies on the Moon and Mars, but feeding and housing billions of people?

If we’re trying to preserve the species, we need to fight the climate crisis head-on. Building cosmic arks won’t save us.

## Work of renowned UK psychologist Hans Eysenck ruled ‘unsafe’

The work of one of the most famous and influential British psychologists of all time, Hans Eysenck, is under a cloud following an investigation by King’s College London, which has found 26 of his published papers “unsafe”.

King’s says the results and conclusions of the papers “were not considered scientifically rigorous” by its committee of inquiry. Prof Sir Robert Lechler, the provost at King’s, has contacted the editors of the 11 journals where the papers appeared, recommending they should be retracted.

Eysenck, who died in 1997, published prolifically and wrote many well-known books, holding controversial views on a number of subjects, including race and IQ. The investigation centered on research that claimed personality played a bigger part in people’s chances of dying from cancer or heart disease than smoking.



There has been criticism of Eysenck’s work for decades by scientists, but his papers have continued to be cited and his ideas adopted. His work on personality and disease was carried out in collaboration with a German researcher, Ronald Grossarth-Maticek, who studied cohorts of people in Crvenka, in what was then Yugoslavia, and Heidelberg, between the 1960s and 1980s.

Prof Anthony Pelosi, consultant psychiatrist at the Priory Hospital, Glasgow, whose own investigation prompted the inquiry by King’s, said their work “led to what must be the most astonishing series of findings ever published in the peer-reviewed scientific literature, with effect sizes that have never otherwise been encountered in biomedical research”.

It took Pelosi three years to get his concerns published, after the journal Eysenck founded, Personality and Individual Differences, rejected the paper it had invited Pelosi to write. It was finally published in February in the Journal of Health Psychology, whose editor, David Marks, called for the establishment of a national research integrity ombudsperson to investigate allegations. The findings were backed by Richard Smith, the former editor of the BMJ, which had published criticisms of Eysenck as long ago as 1992.

“This research program has led to one of the worst scientific scandals of all time,” wrote Pelosi.

Among more than 3,000 people in the studies, Eysenck and his colleague claimed people with a “cancer-prone” personality were 121 times more likely to die of the disease than those without, and people with “heart-disease prone” personalities 27 times more likely.

Cancer-prone personalities were described as generally passive in the face of stress from outside. Those who were heart disease-prone were unable to leave an unsatisfactory situation alone, which made them increasingly aggressive and hostile. A healthy personality was autonomous, with a positive outlook.

Eysenck and Grossarth-Maticek apparently even had a “cure” for cancer. In one study, they gave 600 “cancer-prone” individuals a leaflet on how to be more “autonomous” and take control of their destiny. It contained such advice as: “Your aim should always be to produce conditions which make it possible for you to lead a happy and contented life.”

It appeared to deliver miracles. Over 13 years, the 600 people randomly assigned to bibliotherapy, as it was called, had all-cause mortality of 32%, compared with 82% of 600 people not fortunate enough to receive a leaflet.

“I honestly believe, having read it so carefully and tried to find alternative interpretations, that this is fraudulent work,” said Pelosi, who is concerned Eysenck’s ideas still have a following.

“His acolytes always bragged he was the most cited psychologist of all time,” Pelosi added. “In the social sciences citation index, he was number three. Number two was Freud. Number one was Karl Marx. He was hugely prolific, widely cited and very influential.”

Documents from litigation in the US show that Eysenck’s theories on personality as a stronger cause of lung cancer than smoking brought him research funding from the tobacco companies. In 1991, he published a book called Smoking, Personality and Stress, re-issued as recently as 2012, in which he claims that “while smoking is a risk factor for cancer and CHD (coronary heart disease), its effects have been exaggerated”.

Pelosi says psychological issues, such as depression or anxiety, may play some part in physical illness. “I kind of think there is something in it and it is a worthy area of study, but Eysenck undermines it all by his ridiculous claims,” he said.

(Source: The Guardian)

## 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 a 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.

(Source: phys.org)



## Spark your wanderlust: how influencers can help?

**1 →** The 2019 Travel Risk Map, which shows the risk level around the world, puts Iran among countries with “insignificant risk”, a category where the UK, Denmark, Switzerland, Norway, and Finland are placed in.

Tourism minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan said on Thursday that the ministry supports certain the Instagram influencers to travel to the country.



“Instagram influencers’ trips to Iran are backed by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts and, in the advertising arena, we do a lot of work to fight Iranophobia and introduce the true face of Iran,” Mounesan said.

“One of the areas [in travel & tourism advertising] is to bring famous figures to Iran, get the country known to them in terms of its rich culture, beautiful natural landscapes and historical

monuments...this is part of programs to introduce the country that we will definitely continue.”

With over one billion active monthly users, it seems reasonable that the Instagram has enough power to set new trends on traveling to a country that boasts hospitable people and some of the world’s oldest cultural monuments such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, gardens, rich natural, rural landscapes and 22 UNESCO World Heritage sites to name a few.

## IKIA transports over 761,170 passengers in month

**TOURISM d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Imam Khomeini International Airport has registered 761,170 passengers who were transported during the month of Shahrivar (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).

Farough Alikhani, an IKIA official, said a total of 761,170 passengers were transported by IKIA during the one-month period, IKAC News reported.



The official added that 14,710,582 tons of luggage were shipped during the same period, adding that the number of incoming flights stood at 2,116 along with 374,680 passengers and 7,371,732 tons of luggage at the airport.

The latest reports also shows 2,116 takeoffs with 386,490 passengers and 7,338,850 tons of cargo made by foreign flights during the one-month period.

Imam Khomeini International Airport registered 47,446 take-offs and landings in the last fiscal year that ended on March 20.

More than 7.27 million passengers and 141,704 tons of cargos were transported from the airport during the period to rank third on the list of Iran’s busiest airports in 2018. The figures show 19% and 14% decline year on year.



## ROUND THE GLOBE

### Camino Real de Tierra Adentro

The Camino Real de Tierra Adentro constitutes a part of the Spanish Intercontinental Royal Route from Mexico City to Santa Fe.

The property, consists of five existing urban World Heritage sites and 55 other sites related to the use of the road, such as bridges, former haciendas, historic centers/ towns, a cemetery, former convents, a mountain range, stretches of road, a mine, chapels/temples and caves within a 1,400 km stretch of the road between Mexico City and the Town of Valle de Allende.



The Camino was an extraordinary phenomenon as a communication channel. Silver was the driving force that generated the wealth and commitment of the Spanish Government and the will of colonists to ‘open up’ the northern territory for mining, to establish the necessary towns for workers and to build the forts, haciendas, and churches.

The outcome of this highly profitable process was the development of mines, and the construction of the road and bridges, the establishment of multi-ethnic towns, with elaborate buildings that reflect a fusion of Spanish and local decoration, an agricultural revolution in the countryside centered on large hacienda estates with churches, and the movement of peoples up and down the road, facilitated to a great degree initially by settlements of muleteers, all of which led to the development of a distinctive culture along the route.

The structures in the property together reflect some aspects of this interchange of ideas and people along the southern stretch of the road.

(Source: UNESCO)

# ‘Tehran holds potential to become a hub for health tourism’

**TOURISM d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Tehran has potential to become a hub for health (and medical) tourism, Tehran province governor general has said.

“There are many great potentials in Tehran that can attract hundreds and thousands of foreign tourists to be treated at hospitals in the capital,” Anoushirvan Mohseni-Bandpay said on Wednesday.

He made the remarks at the opening ceremony of the 4th International Health Congress of Islamic Countries, which was held at Tehran’s Homa Hotel.

The tree-day event brought together officials, senior scholars, academia, and travel agents from the public and private sectors in order to introduce their latest achievements, share experiences and discuss issues concerning economic and technological developments.

Most of Iran’s advanced hospitals and medical centers are located in the metropolis, which attracts the biggest share of foreigners who are seeking medical services in Iran, IRNA quoted Mohseni-Bandpay as saying.

Serbian ambassador Dragan Todorovic told IRNA: “We are here with four representatives of our companies, one of which is a big spa with huge foreign clientele. We in Serbia want to deepen cooperation with Iran in terms of health tourism.”

Afghanistan, Turkey, Malaysia, India, Azerbaijan Republic, Oman, and Russia were among countries that sent their representatives in order to create a networking platform for big medical centers to connect with each other and expand their market.

In his keynote speech, Alireza Zaali, the president of congress, said, “There is no specialized operation that can’t be carried out in Iran.”

He mentioned that Iran has taken leaps in development of cutting-edge science and that common cultural and historical backgrounds of regional countries make Iran a great health tourism spot in the region, noting that Iranians’ hospitality makes every foreign patient feel at home.

“It’s going very great. We have had many patients from various countries such as the Arab littoral states in the Persian Gulf,” Qafuri, head of Tehran’s Treata General Hospital’s International Patients Department (IPD), which has been active in



health tourism for past five years, told IRNA during the event.

“We are not limiting ourselves to regional patients. In Treata we are thinking to open a VIP section for Europeans, especially the British if and when the country leaves the European Union,” Treata IPD head said.

“Iran’s health sector is very interesting for Europeans for state-of-the-art equipment used in treatment. It’s also very cost-effective like a doctor’s visit is only 10 dollars, which is nothing for a European national in comparison to their own or other countries,” she stressed.

“Over the past 10 years, the number of foreign tourists

visiting Iran for medical treatment and health tourism has increased 10 times,” Iran’s deputy health minister Harirchi was quoted as saying in June.

Medical tourism in Iran made an economic contribution of around \$1.2 billion to the country in the past Iranian year (March 2017-March 2018), according to the Health Ministry.

Iran attracted around 300,000 medical tourists in 2017 and the number nearly doubled over its next year, the ministry says.

Iran has set its goals to exceed its yearly medical tourists to around two million in the Iranian year of 1404 (2025).

## Iran’s first space theme park in the pipeline

**TOURISM d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Iran plans to create its first space theme park in the southern Qeshm Island in the Persian Gulf.

In this regard, the Iranian Space Agency and the Qeshm Free Zone Organization have recently inked a memorandum of understanding in order to design and develop the theme park, IRIB reported on Saturday.

Based on the agreement, new destinations will be defined, located and planned for both domestic and foreign travelers. The scheme is intended to take advantage of

tourism potentials of the region, such as the natural capacities of Darre-ye Setaregan (“The Valley of Stars”) and its clear night sky.

Experts say that the vast island has great potentials for becoming a hub for astronomers in the region.

Qeshm Island embraces a wide range of ecotourism attractions such as the Hara marine forests and about 60 villages dotted mostly across its rocky coastlines. The island has an abundance of wildlife, including birds, reptiles, dolphins and turtles as well.

## Iran submits dossier to UNESCO for listing Uraman landscape

**HERITAGE d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Iran has recently submitted a dossier to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization for possible inscription of the Uraman cultural landscape which is situated west of the country.

Some eighty experts in various fields have compiled and developed the dossier in terms of anthropology, archeology and history, natural sciences, architecture, historical documents and other related fields, IRNA reported on Saturday.

Local officials believe that inscription of the property on the prestigious list of the UN body could jumpstart tourism in the region and also look at it as a tool for better conservation of its natural landscapes and unique cultural scenes for the next gen-



A view of the Uraman landscape. Dense and step-like rows of houses are also seen in the picture in a way that roof of each house forms the yard of the upper one.

erations, saying its unique rural texture, architecture, lifestyle and agriculture is a prominent example of integration of man into the nature.

“The inhabitants integrated themselves into the nature through utilization of sharp slopes in agriculture,” UNESCO says.

Uraman is considered a cradle of Kurdish art and culture from the days of yore. Pirshalyar, which is named after a legendary local figure, is amongst time-honored celebrations and rituals that are practiced annually across the region.

Stretched on a steep slope in Uraman Takht rural district of Sarvabad county, the village is home to dense and step-like rows of houses in a way that roof of each house forms the yard of the upper one, a feature that adds to its charm and attractiveness.

## Ancient teeth reveal social stratification dates back to Bronze Age societies

In ancient Rome, the wealthy patricians ran the empire. The second-class plebeians worked the farms, baked the bread and built the walls. The rest of the workforce—a full third of the Roman population—were slaves.

Human history is, sadly, entwined with inequality. Most early civilizations, the Sumerians, Egyptians and Harappans among them, had social classes—strata of inequity that left some better positioned than others. Yet it has long been assumed that prior to the Athenian and Roman empires,—which arose nearly 2,500 and more than 2,000 years ago, respectively—human social structure was relatively straightforward: you had those who were in power and those who were not. A study published Thursday in Science suggests it was not that simple.

As far back as 4,000 years ago, at the beginning of the Bronze Age and long before Julius Caesar presided over the Forum, human families of varying status levels had quite intimate relationships. Elites lived together with those of lower social classes and women who migrated in from outside communities. It appears early human societies operated in a complex, class-based system that propagated through generations.

By analyzing the DNA of more than 100 ancient skeletons from a burial site near Augsburg, Germany, the researchers determined the sex and relatedness of individuals buried together on single farmsteads. They were members of Central European farming communities that spanned from the late Neolithic period through the Bronze Age—or from around 2800 BC through 1300 BC. Related individuals, the study’s authors found, were laid to rest with goods and belongings that appeared to be passed down through generations. The unrelated people in the household were buried with nothing, suggesting they were a lower class of “family members,” who were not given the ceremonial treatment.

“We don’t know if the low-status individuals in Augsburg were slaves, menial staff or something else,” comments Philipp Stockhammer of the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, who was a co-author of the new study. “But we can see that in every household, individuals of very different status were living together.”

By radio dating the teeth samples and comparing them with regional geographical radioactivity profiles, Stockhammer and his collaborators also determined where each person grew up. Traces of radioactive elements called isotopes are all around us, including in our food and water. From childhood, these elements are incorporated into our bones and can be used to determine where someone was raised. The results show that in nearly all of the households studied, there were females who hailed from elsewhere.

Whereas the remains suggest that farmsteads were passed through many generations of males—up to five in some cases—females only persisted in a community for one generation. This observation means a system of patrilocality was followed: men stayed in their place of upbringing, while women moved in with their husband’s family. Patrilocality cultures had previously existed, including far back in the Paleolithic, but the findings support the idea that the practice became more common as the organization of societies developed.

Stockhammer points out that social structure has long been a major topic in archeology and that countless studies have explored the communal interactions of ancient societies. Yet he feels the new study illuminates the transition of societal organization as we moved, from the late Stone Age to the Bronze Age, toward individual families living with those of a subservient class and women from other communities. “We added a new aspect to the current state of the art: the integration of genetic, isotopic and archaeological data,



Reconstruction of dwellings from the Bronze and Stone ages at Lake Constance in Germany. Credit: Getty Images

which helped us understand the complexity of past social structures,” Stockhammer says. Though he is resolute that his findings cannot directly be correlated with other ancient societies, he does draw a comparison with classical Greece’s oikos family structure and Rome’s familia, in which slaves and those of lower status were part of the family.

University of Michigan archeologist Alicia Ventresca Miller, who was not involved in the paper, shares Stockhammer’s enthusiasm and feels this new work reveals a lot about early human inheritance of goods and property. “As far as I can tell, there are no other studies that have such large sample sizes and multiple analyses to come to these conclusions, especially for prehistoric groups,” she says. “Their finding that wealth was inherited, rather than achieved, has real impacts for research on inequality and will likely change our understanding of ancient Europe. The results give us insight into the complexity of ancient lifeways.”

(Source: Scientific American)



# Reuters coverage of national day celebrations in Iran and Saudi Arabia contrasts markedly

By Alireza Hashemi

**TEHRAN** — The British-run Reuters appears to adopt a double standard in covering national day celebrations in Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia's national day is September 23, the day that King Abdulaziz Ibn Saud announced the formation of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia after his army, assisted by the UK, managed to topple several local governments inside the Arabian Peninsula.

Saudi Arabia is to large extent a British creation, just like all other sheikhdoms in the Persian Gulf.

However, according to Reuters, Saudi national day "marks the unification of the desert kingdom in 1932".

## ■ Show of Resilience

The Reuters article is titled "Saudis project resolve, flash military might after Aramco attack".

The article said thousands of Saudis "flocked to" public celebrations that featured "an air of heightened patriotism following last week's attack on the kingdom's energy industry".

Another paragraph said that "nationalism, already on the rise under the powerful Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, appeared amplified in the wake of Sept. 14 strikes on Saudi Aramco plants..."

It seems the author has managed to feel "an air of heightened patriotism", understand that nationalism has been "amplified" and be informed that the celebrations "project resolve" of Saudis.

Reporting words by people in the streets, Reuters writes "Saudis said they were unfazed by the assault and hailed this year's celebrations as a show of resilience".

The report quotes people as saying that the celebrations are "a defeat for" enemies; the people and leadership and army are "united"; Saudis "are all together"; "they will not stop us"; Saudis "are not scared of anything"; and they are celebrating with their "heads held high".

The article also portrays MBS' Vision 2030 in a bright light, saying that the annual festivities have expanded to include more music and art shows, in line with a "broad reform agenda that has introduced once-taboo public entertainment and granted women more rights".

The article also repeats the typical MSM narrative on the September 14 attacks, saying Saudi Arabia and the US blame Iran for the attack. But the report fails to mention no credible evidence proving the allegations have so far been offered.

## ■ Show of hatred

But Reuters' coverage of the public celebration of the anniversary of 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran stands in stark



contrast with its coverage of the national day in Saudi Arabia.

The title of the Reuters report on the latest celebrations, held February this year, is titled "militant Iran taunts U.S. on revolution's 40th birthday".

Looking at the title and the lede, what see a "militant" Iran who shows off "ballistic missiles" and makes the US upset by burning "U.S." flags.

And the first group of people who took part in the demonstrations were "soldiers", who shout "Death to Israel, Death to America".

The rest of articles talks about Iran increasing its military strengths, Iranian generals threatening to wipe off Israeli cities, and western efforts to counter Iranian "proxies" in Syria, Lebanon and Yemen and Iraq.

Reuters and other mainstream outlets also appeared to play down the annual event.

The celebrations were frequently referred to as "state-organized" marches that saw tens of thousands or at best hundreds of thousands of people in Iran's 31 provinces in attendance.

## ■ Iranians fed up with regime

Reuters and other MSM outlets also generally followed a line long echoed by US politicians that Islamic Republic is close to demise.

The Reuters article says "Iranians face mounting economic hardships many blame on the country's clerical leaders".

We have also read another paragraph saying Iran has "cracked down" on protests over poor living standards that posed the "most serious challenge" to its "clerical elite" since a 2009 "uprising".

The article also says Washington and the Arab world have viewed Iran with great suspicion since the revolution, fearing "Khomeini's radical ideology" would inspire "militants" across the Middle East.

This narrative was also echoed by other MSM outlets. Even before the 40th anniversary of the revolution, western media were publishing mountains of commentary and strident headlines raising the familiar theme of Iran's need for change.

Reuters ran the story of a former judge who is frustrated with the revolution, the Daily Telegraph remembered "horrors" of the post-revolution Iran, and Bloomberg asserted Iranians have endured 40 years of "terror, deprivation and cruelty" under the Islamic Republic.

Moreover, Wall Street Journal said the revolution has failed to fulfil promises, Washington Post believed the "decaying" Islamic Republic is "showing its age" and the Christian Science Monitor claimed the country has reached a turning point.

Likewise, Financial Times reported many of those born since the 1979 revolution want reform, France 24 quoted an expert saying the Iranian state represses its people and deprives them of the country's wealth, and Deutsche Welle predicted the Islamic Republic is likely to be toppled in near future.

## ■ No surprise

And this was no surprise. Throughout the years since the 1979 revolution, U.S. officials and the western press have periodically asserted the Islamic Republic is merely months away from collapse.

But the tone has been hardened since Donald Trump came to power in the United States.

People inside the new US administration claimed there are many parallels between Iran and the former Soviet Union, believing the current president could play a part similar to former president Ronald Reagan by taking an uncompromising position toward Iran.

Soon, western government's propaganda mouthpieces took up the Soviet analogy as their watchword and started repeating a nearly forgotten mantra: Iranians want change.

The narrative was set up skillfully: Iran's youth, particularly the army of the unemployed, have been hit hard by the economic downturn and other challenges and are fed up with a regime full of mischief.

The western MSM's audience were endlessly told that Iranians have grown weary of the regime's corruption and are yearning from within for transformation.

For the western press, it seems that Saudi Arabia is the good guy and Iran is the bad guy.

## Does Twitter love dictators?

By Belen Fernandez

**MEE** — On 2 October, Egyptian film star and political activist Amr Waked tweeted his opinion that Twitter and its CEO Jack Dorsey "should investigate their management and behavior of dictator loving @TwitterMENA@", a reference to what Twitter defines as "the official Twitter account for the Middle East and North Africa".

Waked continued: "Why are they leaving obvious dictator bots active and suspending anti dictator activists[?]"

Has Twitter wilfully politicised itself, or is it merely haphazardly finding its way in a chaotic and often unregulatable digital realm?

This would seem to be a valid question in light of reports of a Twitter crackdown on critics of President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi's regime, which has pursued a typically "draconian response" to recent demonstrations across the country and once again exhibited its penchant for mass arbitrary arrests.

Waked himself announced back in March that he had been sentenced in absentia to eight years in prison for "insulting state institutions". Middle East Eye reported that he was additionally "facing fresh charges" for tweeting against the death penalty - clearly a much greater crime than, you know, manically executing people.

But in an age in which social media is lamentably central to - and sometimes a substitute for - life itself, just how "dictator loving" is Twitter? More broadly, has Twitter wilfully politicised itself, or is it merely haphazardly finding its way in a chaotic and often unregulatable digital realm?

## ■ Site integrity

According to a June blog post by Twitter's head of site integrity on the subject of account removals and suspensions, the "Site Integrity team is dedicated to identifying and investigating suspected platform manipulation on Twitter", with a special focus on "state-backed information operations".

These "coordinated, state-backed activities" are of particular concern, we're told, in terms of "transparency" and public awareness: "We believe that people and organisations with

the advantages of institutional power and which consciously abuse our service are not advancing healthy discourse but are actively working to undermine it".

Why is it fine and dandy to tweet John Bolton's New York Times intervention on behalf of bombing Iran - or for the Israeli military's Twitter account to churn out justifications for the slaughter of Arabs?

Never mind that the suspension of accounts belonging to political dissidents should itself technically qualify as a "state-backed information operation" - or that Twitter might be said to possess its own unique "institutional power".

The blog post highlighted Twitter's latest release to the public of datasets containing "tweets and media associated with known state-backed information operations on Twitter", a disclosure policy that the company undertook in October 2018 and that has to date entailed five distinct dataset releases.

The June release consisted of an archive of removed and suspended accounts from Iran, Russia, and Venezuela. Thrown into the mix were 130 accounts from Spain that were said to be "primarily engaged in spreading content about the Catalan Referendum", one of the pet peeves of the Spanish far-right.

The Iranian accounts were accused of tweeting "global news content, often with an angle that benefited the diplomatic and geostrategic views of the Iranian state" - a clear case of "platform manipulation".

## ■ Politically motivated messaging

Beyond the fact that the Twitter-targeting of Iran, Russia, and Venezuela would appear to be suspiciously consistent with the diplomatic and geostrategic views of the United States, where does one even draw the line when it comes to politically-motivated messaging?

Why is it fine and dandy to tweet John Bolton's New York Times intervention on behalf of bombing Iran - or for the Israeli military's Twitter account to churn out justifications for the slaughter of Arabs?

Meanwhile, couldn't the US president's entire Twitter-based existence be described

as egregious "platform manipulation"?

Couldn't the US president's entire Twitter-based existence be described as egregious 'platform manipulation'?

As for other Twitter-related phenomena involving "state-backed information operations", it's worth revisiting Middle East Eye's recent exposé that the "senior Twitter executive with editorial responsibility for the Middle East is also a part-time officer in the British Army's psychological warfare unit".

The article specifies that Twitter "declined to answer questions about its executive's British Army duties".

So much for "transparency" and all that good stuff.

## ■ Deleted accounts

I myself contacted Twitter, as well as the head of site integrity, for a response to Waked's allegations, but as of the time of writing had yet to hear back. Perhaps they were offline.

Oddly enough, on 20 September - the very day that anti-government protests broke out in Egypt - Twitter released its latest datasets, which, at least on a superficial level, would seem to indicate that the company was engaging in more equal-opportunity account targeting.

Among the affected Middle Eastern accounts were 4,248 in the United Arab Emirates, 271 from UAE/Egypt, and a whopping six in Saudi Arabia.

An official blog post from @TwitterSafety - reiterating that "transparency and openness are deep-seated values at the heart of Twitter" - briefly detailed the transgressions of the removed accounts.

The UAE/Egypt accounts were said to have conducted a "multi-faceted information operation primarily targeting Qatar, and other countries such as Iran. It also amplified messaging supportive of the Saudi government", an entity synonymous with the brutal obliteration of human rights.

Separately suspended was the account of former Saudi adviser Saud al-Qahtani "for violations of our platform manipulation policies", although his account was "not included in the

archives disclosed today".

This is the same al-Qahtani who, in addition to being implicated in the October 2018 murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, previously oversaw a Twitter troll farm in Riyadh that worked "to smother the voices of dissidents like Khashoggi", as the New York Times revealed shortly after the journalist's killing.

## ■ Trend suppression

That it took Twitter nearly a year to suspend al-Qahtani's account is thus nothing short of confounding, especially given his quite lethal "state-backed activity".

Over at the Washington Post, Marc Owen Jones, assistant professor of Middle East studies and digital humanities at Qatar's Hamad bin Khalifa University, speculated that Twitter was perhaps exploiting the one-year anniversary of Khashoggi's death "to appear proactive in tackling information operations".

Indeed, Jones wrote, "Saudi Arabia has rarely been publicly rebuked by Twitter", in spite of its "reputation for malicious behaviour". In a lengthy thread on Twitter, he relayed some findings from his own research, such as that, in the month Khashoggi was killed, "his name trended the least in Saudi, by a long way. Despite that, the majority of tweets on the #Jamal\_Khashoggi hashtag were pro-Saudi, and with user locations in Saudi itself!"

Noting that "trend suppression" may not necessarily occur with Twitter complicity, Jones alluded to another potentially key part of the equation: Saudi Arabia's contemporary service as "one of Twitter's largest shareholders". In 2015, Saudi Prince Alwaleed bin Talal became Twitter's second biggest shareholder, out-owning company CEO Dorsey.

As is clear from other sectors of the present corporate-capitalist dystopia, profit and repression often go hand in hand - just think the US arms industry. And while it's a stretch to say that Twitter is "dictator loving" across the board, there's certainly some sketchy business going down.

In the very least, it will give us all more to tweet about.

## Fast forward 2028: The future of print media in the digital age

By Avi Bhojani

**GULFNEWS** — In today's day and age, particularly in a fast-evolving environment such as Dubai, a brand turning 40 is an extremely significant milestone, with virtually no merger, acquisition, name change or significant change in the product offering. Sure, Gulf News has evolved over the past four decades, quite significantly at that. But the fundamental value proposition, business model and delivery mechanism, both to readers and advertisers alike, has not changed.

The author had the good fortune to have been given the opportunity of helping Gulf News with its strategy as well as promotional delivery three decades ago, and, since then, has continued to be engaged with Gulf News intimately, not only as a reader, but also as the leader of one of Gulf News top two or three advertising revenue aggregators, BPG. Therefore, the author is bound to have some insights, which are entirely his, not necessarily subscribed by his current or past organisational affiliations.



Will Gulf News survive the next decade? Going by the news package's shrinkage over the past few weeks, there is a lot of scepticism amongst the tons of naysayers. Yes, it is true that even a non-digital native like myself tends to get news nuggets through Twitter and my social/cultural dose by Instagram. The digital transformation of the media landscape is challenging even global institutions such as the New York Times and WPP, by yesterday's start-ups such as Google, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, as well as new-age colonisers like Amazon.

However, an interesting trend is that the founders of such amazingly successful businesses — if financial success of its founding team is a principal metric — are beginning to invest hundreds of million dollars of their personal wealth into acquiring iconic newspapers and assets. Jeff Bezos, Founder of Amazon and the wealthiest man on the planet, bought The Washington Post five years ago. Since then, it is rumoured that he is spending almost as much time in Washington DC as Seattle. This was followed by the acquisition of a majority stake of The Atlantic by Steve Jobs' widow, Laurence Powell Jobs, through Emerson Collective, an organisation she leads.

The Los Angeles Times was bought earlier this year by an extremely successful medical entrepreneur Patrick Soon-Shiong, and last week Mark Benioff, the founder of Salesforce.com successfully acquired Time, founded in 1923 by Henry Luce and Briton Hadden. The list goes on. These are all extremely smart and successful individuals, who are betting on print media with their own money, not shareholders or venture capital.

Is my case of Gulf News' ability to celebrate its 50th year based solely on the personal investments of these individuals in the US? Most certainly not. Yes, the US trend is worthy of learning from, the fact remains that, as we have witnessed recent history being made (the election of Donald Trump being a classic example) digital and social media can have a near fatal influence on all of us. But one look at the results

**Even as the venerable newspaper celebrates four decades of publishing, Gulf News will need to adapt to changing times to stay relevant in the long term**

Just the other day, an extremely credible news organisation broke a story on Twitter of the possible merger of Emirates and Etihad, which was quickly and correctly refuted by the print media as a figment of someone's wishful imagination. Yet, when it is in black and white you believe in the story. Because for generations, the fourth estate has ensured that what the reporters and editors bring to the reader every morning has arrived through adequate due diligence and reference checked to ensure that the newspaper is not propagating figments of imagination of some of its members or motivated by any economic or material desire other than succeeding to retain and grow its franchise amongst its subscribers and advertisers.

In conclusion, this author has no doubt that this 40-year-old will be there to celebrate its golden anniversary, and I congratulate all those who have been working diligently over the past four decades to ensure that come rain or sandstorm, both subscribers and advertisers get their promised content and eyeballs without fail every morning.

## ■ Digital convergence

That said, I also believe that this will necessarily happen with significant and positive changes that Gulf News will have to make, now more than ever before. Some changes, such as the recent shrinking both in its sections/pages as well as its organisational cadre, go with the territory. There is no doubt that Gulf News will need to innovate dramatically to stay as or more relevant to the local community than global digital assets such as Google or Amazon by proactively developing digital assets like apps and other mechanisms to ensure that it helps the local community bond better.

After all, a newsboy of Gulf News knows the geography of his territory far better than a FedEx or Fetchr delivery person would. A business journalist on the ground is far better connected with the emerging trends that a global digital media content creator can dream to understand on the back of desk Google research. And the list goes on.

## NICICO Welcomes New Ideas in Increasing Safety, Productivity and Indigenization: CEO

National Iranian Copper Industries Company (NICICO) welcomes new ideas in the field of increasing safety, productivity and indigenization.

Rosy and bright future awaits investment in copper mines. Chief Executive of the National Iranian Copper Industries Company (NICICO) Ardashir Sa'd-Mohammadi made the above remarks in the inaugural ceremony of 8th International Conference and Exhibition of Metallurgy and Materials Engineering and reiterated, "NICICO welcomes all new ideas and creativities and also new investors in the field of increasing safety, increasing productivity and indigenization wholeheartedly."

With regards to the future analysis of nonferrous metals, the following factors should be taken into consideration, he said, adding, "increase of world population is the first indicator that should be taken into serious consideration."

Presently, the world is home 7.9 billion people, expandable to about 9 billion in 2035, he said.

Increase of world population will increase consumption of ferrous and nonferrous metals in different fields, he said,

"hence, the country should plan logically according to the growth trend."

About 35 percent of vehicles will be operated electrically in very near future, he said, adding, "cars with gasoline fuel consume 23 kg copper on average, the rate of which will hit 80 kg in electrical vehicles."

In the field of policy setting on electrical vehicles, the Chinese government has invested \$6 billion for encouraging car manufacturers, Sa'd-Mohammadi added.

Elsewhere in his remarks, CEO of NICICO said that the income rate of countries per capita and their economic growth in the global demand for metals are correlated with each other.

These figures specify planning in the field of nonferrous metals, he said, adding, "hence, it is necessary to make more investment in the field of production and explorations in order not to lag behind the global market."

Up to the present time, Canada has conducted exploration activities on a land area as large as 6.5 million cubic meter since 2003 while Iran has conducted exploration operations on only six million cubic meters over the past 50 years which



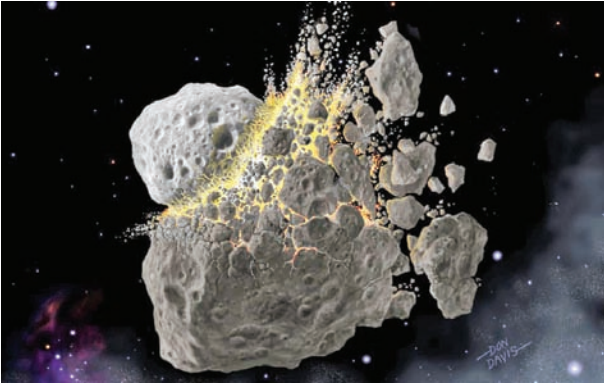
is negligible, he criticized.

"We need to change our attitude and approach towards investment, promote technical knowhow and knowledge and also plan logically for moving towards the development and growth, Chief Executive of NICICO Sa'd-Mohammadi added.



## Asteroid dust cloud may have sparked new life on Earth 470m years ago

Astronomers have discovered intriguing evidence that an asteroid break-up blanketed Earth with dust millions of years ago. The event dramatically cooled the planet and triggered an ice age that was followed by major increases in numbers of new animal species.



The work, led by Birger Schmitz of Lund University in Sweden, was recently published in Science Advances and provides new insight into the impact of interplanetary events on our planet's evolution. "We know about the 10km asteroid that crashed on Earth 67 million years ago and killed off the dinosaurs, but this event was very different," Schmitz told the Observer. "It occurred about 470 million years ago when an asteroid 3,000 times bigger than the dinosaurs-killer was destroyed during a collision with another asteroid beyond the orbit of Mars. It filled the solar system with dust and caused a major dimming of sunlight falling on Earth."

Reduced radiation caused Earth to cool significantly, setting off a succession of ice ages. Water froze, ice caps spread and sea levels dropped, creating isolated shallow seas that were ideal for generating new species. Cold water also holds more dissolved oxygen, which would also have boosted speciation. Scientists already knew ice ages appeared at this time and that life went through a spectacular increase in biodiversity, particularly in the sea. The first coral reefs began to grow then, and strange tentacled predators called nautiloids appeared. This is known as the great Ordovician biodiversification event, or Gobe.

Scientists have argued over the cause of Gobe, but now Schmitz, after studying dust particles in seabed sediments laid down at this time, says it was triggered by clouds of asteroid dust. "The sediments laid down at this time are rich in the isotope helium-3 – which they could only have picked up travelling through space," he said. "It is a crucial clue."

Other scientists have backed his idea. "It isn't necessarily the answer to every question we have about Gobe, but it certainly ties together a lot of observations," Rebecca Freeman, of the University of Kentucky, Lexington, told the journal Science recently.

However, Schmitz's research has also caused interest for another reason. As the world warms dangerously, some scientists have proposed spreading a veil of dust that would sit in space above the Earth and reflect sunlight away from our overheating planet. The idea is controversial because it could have many unpleasant side-effects, say critics.

Now evidence shows such an experiment occurred naturally 470 million years ago. The result was a major change in our meteorology and the evolution of life here. "It is certainly worth bearing in my mind in coming years," added Schmitz.

(Source: The Guardian)

## WORDS IN THE NEWS

### Radio’s first 100 years

(December 26, 2001)

On Wednesday 12th December 1901 an Italian engineer, Guglielmo Marconi, made the first international radio broadcast, sending a signal across the Atlantic from the coast of Cornwall in the extreme south west of England to Newfoundland in Canada. In 1897 Marconi had demonstrated that **electromagnetic** radio waves could be sent over short distances, but transmitting across the Atlantic was to show the **potential commercial use** of this technology and challenge the **conventional scientific** wisdom of the time.

Building the transmission site on a windswept Cornish cliff top proved to be the most time consuming part of the project. Each piece of equipment had to be hauled there using a horse and cart. Initially the site was dominated by a huge **array of aerials**, twenty masts each sixty meters high arranged in a circle. But these blew down in a gale and were replaced with a much simpler design using four posts.

Marconi travelled to St Johns in Newfoundland, Canada where he set up a receiving station in an old military hospital looking out to sea. The aerial to **pick up the transmission** was simply a long piece of wire attached to a kite.

The Cornish station sent its signal. Marconi heard the simple message dot dot dot, the **Morse** code letter S. It had been thought that electromagnetic radio waves would travel only in straight lines, and so not be capable of covering huge distances. But with the success of the experiment Marconi **demonstrated that they would bend**, following the **curvature of the earth**.

His discovery was hailed as revolutionary. Until then all long distance signals had been transmitted through telegraph cables. The **potential of this technology** was quickly **realized** and led directly to the development of television and radio.

■ **Words**  
**electromagnetic:** magnetic forces and effects produced by an electric current  
**potential commercial use:** could be used to generate a profit  
**conventional scientific wisdom:** what most scientists believed at the time  
**array of aerials:** a number of aerials (pieces of wire that receive radio or TV signals) linked together  
**to pick up the transmission:** to receive or hear the transmission  
**Morse:** international code for messages - letters are represented by dots and dashes  
**demonstrated that they would bend:** showed that they would curve and were not just straight  
**curvature of the earth:** a smooth bending line - part of the earth's circumference  
**potential of this technology:** what the technology is capable of becoming and doing  
**realized:** if something is realized it actually happens  
(Source: BBC)

# Challenges facing Iran to become resilient against disasters

➡ Although in recent years, related bodies are gearing up to provide coordinated support in natural disasters and prevent them from reoccurring, measures taken so far are not responsive to such events and organizations can only meet a very small part of the needs.

To eradicate such shortcomings, long-term measures and practical action plans need to be scaled up while a thorough understanding of the disaster's scope is required to expand the capacity of national bodies to reduce disaster risk.

In Iran, the occurrences of natural disasters have increased sharply, causing damage and loss to infrastructures and economy, while claiming the lives of many people.

Over the past few years, a series of wide-spread disasters hit several parts of the country, which challenged risk reduction and management.

Recent floods haunted 28 out of 31 provinces on March 19, a destructive earthquake measuring 7.3 on the Richter scale hit Sarpol-e Zahab in Kermanshah in 2017, and severe sand and dust storms frequently hit the southern provinces. These are some of the major catastrophic disasters over the past decade, which caused devastating and long-term impacts.

In addition to floods, droughts, earthquakes, land subsidence and extreme temperatures, Iran is currently facing a wet spell while dealing with an outbreak of locust swarms that are threatening farmlands.

### ■ Actions taken so far to reduce disaster risk

Various laws and regulations have already been adopted to prevent the damage caused by such disasters, including in the Fourth Five-Year National Development Plan (2010-2015) which highlighted fortifying buildings against the force of seismic waves which have been predicted to be ineffective in reducing damage.

Looking closer, the laws only set out the general principles for designing and constructing buildings resilient to earthquake, but neither of these constitutes a guarantee to prevent violations.

Therefore, there should be an organization to oversee these cases, while there is only one which is tasked with rebuilding residential units or areas affected by earthquakes, land-slides and floods.

Apart from identifying the reason behind disaster reduction laws failure and funds spent in this regard, more efficient crisis management solutions must be discovered, including using world experiences in preventing natural disasters.

To do so, the establishment of a national disaster risk reduction strategy can help the country focus on how to reduce disaster risks and set priorities for action.

Therefore, conducting researches on how



to make cities resilient to natural disasters will find the best policies while the most efficient and cost-effective methods and technologies.

### ■ What is the main factor in disaster management?

Disaster management is a cycle consisting of mitigation, preparedness, response and ended with recovery; the most neglected among which is preparedness in the country.

However, the response cycle is the most experienced part, with preparedness effectiveness and efficiency of response will increase.

Generally, crisis planning needs sufficient information from databases, but Iran suffers from lack of access to great databases like spatial database information and Geographic Database Information and communication among organizations to interchange information.

Another problem is lack of an organization to compensate for the destruction, as insurance plays a main role in risk transfer and funds for rebuilding.

Finally, preparedness of people for emergency situations is a vital factor which needs appropriate public education in self-protecting behaviors, relief aids, mitigation etc. and Iran has not done much to improve effectiveness except for some maneuvers and limited educations.

Having even sufficient knowledge of how to prepare for emergencies does not guarantee that people would take self-protection measures, so past disaster experience is not the prime factor to enhance awareness or even maneuvers and school education cannot rationally provide useful information as a knowledge base for earthquakes.

### ■ History of a common natural disaster

The first law in Iran on flood hazards and damages was enacted as the law on prevention and tackling flood hazards in 1969, which was

passed to protect people's lives and property from destructive floods, and the Ministry of Interior was required to take all necessary measures to preserve, correct and rebuild floodwaters and drainage.

Ministries and government agencies were required to provide the Ministry of the Interior with all the facilities to confront flood threat and other natural disasters throughout the country.

A few years later, another bill was passed by the parliament to form a national committee to reduce the impact of natural disasters.

The purpose of this law was to exchange information, study, conduct scientific research and find reasonable solutions to prevent and mitigate the effects of natural disasters caused by storms, floods, droughts, etc.

Of course, the laws faced failure due to the weaknesses in its implementation, the Central Insurance Company has introduced a bill establishing a natural disaster insurance fund aimed at helping natural disaster victims and enhancing their ability to recover. With the anticipation of damage and reducing the government's financial burden to compensate for damage, it was approved by the Cabinet in 2001 but still awaiting implementation due to lack of budget.

Now, being affected by climate change, rainfall fluctuations have resulted in numerous flood events in the country which have been said to be tackled with dam construction.

"Preventing the construction in the river beds and banks play an important role in flood control; in addition, structures such as bridges built on rivers should be of sufficient strength, although in many areas small dams in flood-prone areas can be of great help," said Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian.

Due to the belief claiming that dams are solutions to flooding, currently, 109 dams are under construction in the country, 43 of

which are for drinking purposes.

This is while, with the deterioration of the country's poor water resources in recent years, different approaches to dam construction have been developed and dam construction has been contained to some extent.

The recent floods and its dire consequences, especially in Mazandaran, Golestan and Fars provinces, showed that neglecting 'prevention' can cause irreparable damage to the country.

Multiple floods in the country caused millions of cubic meters of water to flow into the areas aimlessly, which experts believe could be used in agriculture sector by advanced technology.

### ■ A manmade high impact disaster

Forests are the other natural resources which are potentially vulnerable to threats posed by hazards especially those caused by human.

Less protection of forests also can intensify natural disasters impact like lack of vegetation cover that can considerably increase the flood devastation.

Vegetation depletion can be caused whether by deforestation or wildfire.

Qasem Sabz'ali, commander of the forest protection unit of the Forests, Range, and Watershed Management Organization, said in April 2018 that some 15,000 hectares of forests burn in wildfires annually in Iran that 95 percent of them are caused by humans, ISNA reported.

Forest wildfire brings heavy economic burden amounting to 560 million rials (about \$13,000) per hectare for the country, he added.

It should be possible to set up independent firefighting system in forests and rangelands in order to function properly when fire strike, and to have the ability to control fire in natural environments. It is also possible by training specialized forces.

### ■ What is the main challenge?

Two catastrophic events, one said to be caused by human, the other by nature, have been discussed, both of which rooted in human actions, namely, poor policies, lack of law enforcement, environmental degradation, lack of consideration by officials or people.

The lack of regulatory frameworks, unplanned urbanization and development of cities, lack of efficient environmental plans and policies, old buildings and at risk infrastructure, inadequate capacities of municipalities, lack of funding and qualified human resources, are among the major challenges in creating disaster resilient cities in Iran, as well.

To overcome it, responsible bodies should be better equipped to understand their disaster risk landscape, also better positioned to enhance their early warning system, plans and laws should be prepared, and the communities should be better alert in advance of a potential disaster, to reduce future losses.

## Huge global carbon tax hike needed in next 10 years to head off climate disaster, says IMF

A global agreement to make fossil fuel burning more expensive is urgent and the most efficient way of fighting climate change, an International Monetary Fund (IMF) study found on Thursday.

The group found that a global tax of \$75 (£59) per ton by the year 2030 could limit the planet's warming to 2C, or roughly double what it is now. That would greatly increase the price of fossil fuel-based energy - especially from the burning of coal - but the economic disruption could be offset by routing the money raised straight back to citizens.

"If you compare the average level of the carbon tax today, which is \$2 (£1.60) [a ton], to where we need to be, it's a quantum leap," said Paolo Mauro, deputy director of the fiscal affairs department at the IMF.

The IMF report comes out as financial institutions increasingly grapple with the risks associated with climate change, including damage from sea level rise, extreme weather events and billions in fossil fuel reserves that might be in excess of what can be burned while also limiting warming. The Federal Reserve, for example, is taking a closer look at how climate change may pose a risk to economic stability.

In the United States, a \$75 tax would cut emissions by nearly 30% but would cause on average a 53% increase in electricity costs and a 20% rise for petrol at projected 2030 prices, the analysis in the IMF's Fiscal Monitor found.

But it would also generate revenue equivalent to 1% of GDP, an enormous amount of money that could be redistributed and, if spread equally, would end up being a fiscally progressive policy, rather than one disproportionately targeting the poor.

The impact of a \$75 a ton tax would also hit countries differently depending on burning or exporting coal, which produces the most carbon emissions per unit of energy generated when it is burned.

In developing nations such as China, India and South Africa, a \$75 carbon tax reduces emissions even more - by as much as 45% - and generates proportionately more revenue, as high as 3.5% of GDP in South Africa's case, the IMF found.

The idea of making it expensive to produce greenhouse gas emissions is hardly new, and has been widely embraced by economists despite the immense political difficulties involved in imposing such taxes.

"No environmental economist should disagree with the main argument of the paper: Carbon pricing is the single most powerful tool we have for reducing CO2 emissions from burning fossil fuels, and our current

set of policies leaves us nowhere close to meeting our climate goals," said Marc Hafstead, a climate policy expert with Resources for the Future.

But several experts said that the IMF stance was important even as they noted that the carbon price may need to be a lot higher, rendering an already gigantic lift even more difficult.

Kenneth Gillingham, an economics professor at Yale University who worked on environmental issues during a stint as part of the Obama administration's Council on Economic Advisers, said the IMF's position added to the urgency recent scientific and economic assessments had shown in discussing how to tackle the climate problem.

"From my perspective this is an exciting change in that they're thinking more deeply than they had previously," he said.

But Mr Gillingham said a \$75 per ton carbon tax may actually be too low to hold climate change to 2 degrees, noting that he had expected the figure to be closer to \$100 (£79) per ton, given the world's high emissions path.

Gernot Wagner, who studies climate policy at New York University, agreed. He co-wrote a paper published Monday arguing that a carbon price should start high and gradually be reduced to take into account future damage costs from global warming.

(Source: The Independent)

### First Announcement



## NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO. : 01-31-9680034

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

Items	Material Description	Quantity
40	P/F"ROLLS-ROYCE"INDUSTRIAL AVON GAS GENERATOR AVON MK.1533-34-76G/101G REF. ROLLS-ROYCE LTD	1. 854

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 35,925 EURO or 4,525 ,689,345 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](http://www.shana.ir) [www.nisoc.ir](http://www.nisoc.ir)

تهران تایمز : نوبت اول ۹۸/۷/۲۱ نوبت دوم ۹۸/۷/۲۴



# Al-Houthi calls on U.S. to ‘learn from Vietnam’ as U.S. announces deployment in Saudi Arabia

➔ “An increase in your numbers will surely not be a concern for us,” al-Houthi added.

The remarks came a few hours after Washington announced the deployment of 1,800 additional troops, two fighter squadrons, two Patriot batteries, and a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense System (THAAD) in the oil-rich kingdom.

The deployment follows a successful Yemeni drone attack on Saudi Arabia's Khurais and Abqaiq oil facilities last month in retaliation for the kingdom's U.S.-backed aggression against the country.

## ■ ‘Surprise the world’

On Friday, al-Houthi called on the United States to “surprise the world” and demonstrate the “little bit of humanity that they claim to have” by turning away from its “hostile policy” despite its role in “creating the worst humanitarian crisis in the world”.

“Such a policy has led to nothing but

frustration and harm for you,” he added, referring to recent statements made by U.S. President Donald Trump highlighting the high costs of America's wars in the Middle East.

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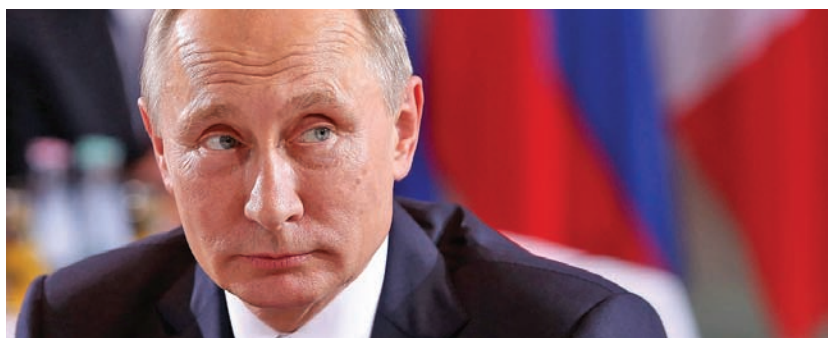
## ‘Surprise the world’

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## Syria must be free of foreign military presence: Putin



**TEHRAN** — The territorial integrity of Syria must be fully restored and all foreign forces should withdraw, including Russia if Damascus decides it doesn't need Moscow's help anymore, according to President Vladimir Putin.

“All the forces deployed illegitimately inside any sovereign state – in this case Syria – must leave,” Putin said in a joint interview with RT Arabic, UAE-based Sky News Arabia, and Saudi Arabia's Al-Arabiya broadcasters.

This is true for everyone. If Syria's new legitimate government chooses to say that they have no more need for Russia's military presence, this will be just as true for Russia.

Meanwhile, Moscow's stance on the settlement in Syria remains unchanged and was already relayed to its partners Iran, Turkey and the U.S., the president noted. “Syria must be free from other states' military presence. And the territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic must be completely restored.”

Earlier this month, U.S. President Donald Trump announced the withdrawal of U.S. troops from border areas in north-eastern Syria, saying it was time to “get out of ridiculous endless wars.”

Unlike the Russian military, which arrived in the country at an invitation of the government in Damascus, US forces have been in Syria illegally since 2016. The Syrian government has repeatedly blasted the American military presence as a violation of its sovereignty.

According to RT, Putin was also asked about Moscow's attitude towards NATO's eastward expansion and buildup near Russian borders.

“We are not happy about it... and voiced our concerns,” he replied.

Claims that Russia “has nothing to fear” and that NATO “does not have belligerent intentions” shouldn't be taken for granted as long as “the North Atlantic Treaty remains in place, in particular, Article Five... which guarantees military support to other members.”

## More than two million Iranian pilgrims enter Iraq for Arba'een pilgrimage



**TEHRAN** — More than two million Iranian pilgrims have entered Iraq a week before annual Arba'een processions are held in the holy city of Karbala.

Speaking with Iran's ISNA news agency, deputy chief of operations for Iran's police force Hossein Sajedi-Nia said the pilgrims have entered Iraq during the past two weeks.

About three million Iranians have registered for the rally on Iran's SAMAH automation system, a legal process which does away with the need to get an Iraqi visa, Iran's Central Arba'een Committee said.

Iranian authorities have predicted that more than three million mourners will take part in this year's rally, topping numbers in previous years. Thousands of non-Iranian pilgrims have also entered Iran, joining the trek for Karbala.

The foreign pilgrims come mostly from Iran's neighboring countries, such as Pakistan, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan and Turkey.

Earlier this week, Sistan and Baluchistan provincial police chief Brigadier

General Mohammad Qanbari said that more than 40,000 pilgrims had entered the country from Pakistan alone.

According to Press TV, the reports come as millions from Iraq and around the world travel to the holy Iraqi cities of Najaf and Karbala to attend Arba'een.

The gathering is known to attract about 20 million participants every year. This year's Arba'een falls on October 19.

The event marks the 40th day after the anniversary of the martyrdom of the third Shia Imam, Hussein ibn Ali (AS).

Imam Hussein (AS) was martyred along with dozens of his companions during a laststand battle against the tyrant of the time, Yazid I, more than thirteen centuries ago.

The martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS) has turned into a symbol of righteous revolt and social and political reform.

Imam Hussein (AS) is consequently a highly-venerated figure not only among Shia Muslims but also among Sunnis and people of other faiths.

## Spain: Catalan separatist leaders to get ‘up to 15 years in jail’

**TEHRAN** — Spain's Supreme Court plans to sentence Catalan separatist leaders to a maximum of 15 years in prison over a 2017 bid for independence, a judicial source said on the country's Independence Day.

Some of the Catalan leaders on trial would be found guilty of charges of sedition and misuse of public funds but not of the more severe charge of rebellion, the source told Reuters news agency on Saturday.

The verdict is expected to be made public next week, most likely on Monday, the source said.

A Supreme Court spokeswoman declined to comment.

The public prosecutor had sought the longest prison term - 25 years - for Oriol Junqueras, former deputy leader of the Catalan regional government.

But the court plans to sentence him to 13-15 years in jail, the judicial source said.

Major Spanish newspapers including El Pais, La Vanguardia and El Mundo have published similar information about the sentence, also citing sources.

The fate of 12 Catalan leaders for their role in the failed independence bid sparked the country's worst political crisis in decades.

In the face of the verdict, tension was palpable with police sending in reinforcements to Catalonia where separatists pledged a mass show of civil disobedience, calling for rallies, roadblocks and a general strike.

The government is hoping the long-awaited ruling will allow it to turn the page on the crisis and resume dialogue with this wealthy northeastern region where support for independence has been gaining momentum over the past decade.

Al Jazeera's Sonia Gallego, reporting from Barcelona, said the pro-independence movement regards the leaders on trial as “political prisoners”.

“Essentially, they are being held up as symbol of what the pro-independence movement says are Spain's very rigid and overly tough stance on the independence movement here [Catalonia].”



“Whatever the charges will be on Monday, it will rekindle the whole debate again, and of course brings into question: where does Catalonia go now?” she added.

## U.S. benefiting from Saudi royals’ ‘profligacy’ by selling arms

**TEHRAN** — The Western countries - notably the United States and the UK - have tried to take advantage of Saudi Arabia's “wealth and corruption” by selling arms to the kingdom.

They have long benefited from the “boundless profligacy” of the Saudi royal family, selling large amounts of arms and weapons systems to the kingdom, Press TV's “Under-reported” program reported on Saturday.

At another level, Western businesses, key personalities and even actors have been keen to benefit from the largesse of Saudi

royals, notably the princes who vacation in Western Europe and North America.

“Decades of uncontrolled behavior at home ... has installed a deep sense of indulgence and self-entitlement into the minds of the Saudi princes. The result is reckless, lawless and even dangerous behavior”, the program reported.

Washington has formally approved weapons sales to the kingdom totaling more than \$1 billion despite growing pressure from rights groups to halt arms deals with Riyadh which is waging a brutal war in Yemen.

The United States has also announced to deploy a large number of additional forces and equipment to Saudi Arabia, including air defenses and fighter aircraft, a move that officials say will help the kingdom protect itself against the kind of attacks that last month destroyed its oil facilities.

According to Press TV, last month, Yemen's Houthi Ansarullah movement conducted retaliatory drone and missile strikes on two of Saudi Arabia's oil facilities. The attacks led to a halt in about 50 percent of the Arab kingdom's crude and gas production,

causing a surge in oil prices.

On Friday, Pentagon spokesman Jonathan Hoffman said in a statement that U.S. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper has authorized the deployment of additional forces, including two fighter squadrons, two Patriot batteries, and a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense System (THAAD).

Meanwhile, Donald Trump said Friday that Washington was sending more troops to Saudi Arabia to help them, but added Riyadh had agreed to “pay us for everything we're doing.”

## Germany bans exports of arms to Turkey

**TEHRAN** — Germany has banned arms exports to Turkey as a reaction to the country's assault on the Kurdish YPG militia in northeast Syria, a foreign ministry spokeswoman said on Saturday. Turkey launched the military operation on Wednesday days after U.S. troops pulled back from the area, with air strikes and artillery hitting YPG militia positions near the border.

Turkey's actions have drawn widespread international

criticism and warnings from the United States and European Union of possible sanctions.

“Against the backdrop of the Turkish military offensive...”, the Federal Government will not issue any new permits for all military equipment that could be used by Turkey in Syria”, Foreign Minister Heiko Maas said, according to the spokeswoman.

Defense Minister Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer said on

Friday that Germany expected all NATO partners - which include Turkey - to contribute to stabilizing the region.

Germany exported arms worth 243 million euros (\$268 million) to Turkey in 2018, accounting for almost one third of its weapons exports, according to Bild Am Sonntag.

According to Reuters, in the first four months of 2019, Turkey received weapons from Germany worth 184 million euros, making it the biggest recipient country, the paper said.

## Nasrallah, Bassil hold lengthy meeting

**TEHRAN** — Hezbollah Secretary General Sayyed Hasan Nasrallah met with Lebanon's foreign minister and head of the Free Patriotic Movement Gebran Bassil, as the lengthy meeting, which was also attended by the party's security official Hajj Wafiq Safa, tackled the latest developments locally and regionally.



According to a statement issued by Hezbollah Media Relations, the meeting was lengthy and focused on the means of coping with the socio-economic crisis in Lebanon.

The statement added that Sayyed Nasrallah and Bassil stressed the importance of increasing the state's financial revenues in 2020 budget law and reforming the national economy so that it becomes more productive.

Sayyed Nasrallah and Bassil also called for activating the governmental and parliamentary work and maintaining the political stability, highlighting the encountering the crisis of the displaced Syrians in Lebanon.

## Syrian Kurdish-led authority: nearly 200,000 people displaced by attack

➔ Some half-million people are thought to be at risk in the two countries' border region. The World Food Program (WFP) has warned of an impending humanitarian crisis, something Ankara has dismissed as “fabricated in order to discredit Turkey's counterterrorism efforts.”

The provinces of al-Hassakeh and al-Raqqa were expected to be the hardest hit by the shelling.

Some 32 Kurdish militiamen have been killed in the Turkish campaign, the UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) said on Friday, while Ankara claimed it had killed 342 fighters.

At least six Syrian civilians, seven Turkish civilians and four Turkish soldiers have also been killed in the three-day offensive.

“The operation is going as planned,” said Turkish Defense Minister Hulusi Akar on Friday. “We are being extremely careful to ensure no civilians are harmed.”

The UN's World Food Program (WFP) said that 70,000 people have been forced to flee the provinces of al-Hassakeh and al-Raqqa due to the Turkish onslaught. Turkey had slammed the warning of an impending humanitarian crisis as “fabricated in order to discredit Turkey's counter-terrorism efforts.”

On Friday morning, thick columns of black smoke could be seen billowing out of the Syrian border town of Tal Abyad as Turkish forces bombarded the area. The Turkish border town of Suruc was also hit by shelling.

## Trump says China trade talks have succeeded

**TEHRAN** — After the second day of high-level trade talks, United States President Donald Trump has announced that the U.S. and China reached a “very substantial phase one deal”.

US officials had signalled good news was coming on Friday after the discussions ended, boosting investor hopes that the world's two largest economies are cooling the fires of their 15-month trade war.

Trump said the agreement averts a threatened tariff hike and covers agricultural purchases, currency and some aspects of intellectual property, adding that it will take up to five weeks to get the deal written.

The remarks to reporters came after Trump's meeting with Chinese Vice Premier Liu He, Beijing's lead trade negotiator for the talks in Washington.

The partial agreement is expected to lay the groundwork for a broader deal that Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping could sign later this year. But key sticking points remain around enforcement.

Major U.S. stock indexes were trading significantly higher on hopes the talks would produce some sort of a deal, with the Dow Jones Industrial Average up over one percent, Al Jazeera reported.

## Turkey's Syria offensive “invasion” of Arab land: Arab League

### ➔ Turkey launched

its military operation against Kurdish fighters in northeast Syria on Wednesday, following US President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw American troops stationed in the region.

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said the operation aims to put an end to a “terror corridor” at his country's southern border. By creating a “safe zone,” Turkey can help facilitate the return of

hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees, he added.

According to RT, many countries – including Turkey's own NATO allies – have harshly criticized the military operation.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Saturday that Moscow believes that “forces deployed illegitimately” inside Syria must leave the country.





## Olympic relay champion Dwyer given 20-month doping ban and will retire

American double Olympic champion Conor Dwyer is to retire from swimming after being given a 20-month doping ban.

The 30-year-old tested positive for an anabolic agent in three out-of-competition urine samples in November and December last year.

He was found to have had testosterone pellets inserted in his body, the US Anti-Doping Agency (Usada) said.

“My doctor assured me that the United States Olympic Committee had approved the treatment,” said Dwyer.

“Regardless of the result of the arbitration ruling, I have decided to retire from swimming to pursue other professional interests.

Dwyer said he was following a doctor-prescribed medical treatment that he did not realize contained the banned substance testosterone and noted that the panel said in its report that he was not significantly at fault for the violation.

He was part of the US 4x200m freestyle teams that won gold at the 2012 and 2016 Olympics. He also claimed bronze in the individual 200 freestyle at Rio in 2016.

Usada chief executive Travis Tygart said: “As noted in the panel’s decision, Usada is independent of sport and here to help athletes ensure they compete clean and protect their health and wellbeing within the rules.

“It’s frustrating that Mr Dwyer did not take advantage of this support and hopefully this case will convince others to do so in order to protect fair and healthy competition for all athletes.”

(Source: BBC)

## Czechs upset England to end 10-year run in qualifiers

England suffered their first tournament qualifying defeat for 10 years when they lost 2-1 away to the Czech Republic in their Euro 2020 qualifying Group A clash on Friday.

It was a fully deserved win for the Czechs. They played with verve and determination against a sluggish England who delivered their worst performance since Gareth Southgate took over as manager.

The defeat ended England’s decade-long unbeaten run in European Championship and World Cup qualifiers going back to a 1-0 loss to Ukraine in Dnipropetrovsk exactly 10 years ago.

Southgate’s side lacked precision in their passing, fluency in their movement and solidity at the back and the coach was clearly not happy with the display.

“I think we have had a lot of credit over the last couple of years and tonight we did not do enough. Our performance was not good enough, it’s as simple as that. The goals we conceded were typical of the chances we gave away,” he said.

“Collectively we have to accept there were not enough good performances. We conceded too many poor chances and we gave the ball away too many times,” added Southgate.

Substitute Zdenek Ondrasek grabbed the winner five minutes from time when he confidently fired past keeper Jordan Pickford after Lukas Masopust burst down the right and picked him out.

(Source: Mirror)

## Koulibaly: ‘Racists hide in a crowd’

Napoli defender Kalidou Koulibaly told L’Equipe magazine about his experiences of racism. “They’re thugs and would never dare make those noises to my face.”

The Senegal international centre-back was born in France to Senegalese parents and described “swimming in diversity from birth” at Saint-Die-des-Vosges with friends of varied nationalities.

“There might’ve been a racist tinge to some of the comments at FC Metz and Genk, but I didn’t have a single problem of genuine racism.

“I heard a lot about the stereotypes of Italy being racist and people not liking Serie A because of that. However, my family is very happily settled in Naples, as are my friends when they come to visit. The Senegalese street sellers here get called Koulibaly and they’re very happy with that. It’s not a problem.

“The first experience of real racism was against Lazio during my second season. During that match (February 2016), I really lost it. The monkey chants were so loud, I lost focus. I was no longer thinking about football and that really hurt.

“The staff was worried, the Coach (Maurizio Sarri) offered to stop the match and walk off if it continued. The truth is, I felt embarrassed, as if I didn’t deserve to be there.

“Looking back, I should’ve felt the opposite: the racists should’ve felt ashamed. They’re thugs and would never dare make those noises to my face. They can hide in a crowd and be anonymous.

“We’ve got to clamp down on it. Other countries are further ahead in the fight against racism, as for example in England they ban people for life. We need more drastic measures like that in Italy.”

(Source: Football Italia)

## Barcelona to offer Lionel Messi ‘lifelong contract’

Barcelona plan to renew the contract of star player Lionel Messi for the remainder of his career, according to Cadena Ser.

The Blaugrana president Josep Maria Bartomeu is said to be intent on extending the Argentine forward’s contract until after the 2022 World Cup.

Bartomeu and Jorge Messi, the player’s father and agent, have not sat down to speak recently but the president is said to be intent on resolving this issue as soon as possible.

Messi recently said he has not spoken to Bartomeu since the Champions League exit at Liverpool six months ago but added that he was open to discussing the renewal.

Barça wants to close the renovation as soon as possible, although in the club they think it will be Messi who decides when the renovation is done.

They want to offer Messi a de facto lifelong contract that goes beyond football which would include the link between the “Messi” brand and Barcelona for at least ten years.

The 32-year-old has starred for the Catalan giants across 16 successive seasons and has scored a remarkable 604 goals - a club record - in 692 appearances for the team.

(Source: Marca)

# ‘Super-human’ Kipchoge smashes mythical two-hour marathon barrier

Kenya’s Eliud Kipchoge on Saturday made history, smashing the mythical two-hour barrier for the marathon in the “best moment” of his life on a specially prepared course in a vast Vienna park.

With a time of 1hr 59min 40.2sec, the Olympic champion became the first ever to run a marathon in under two hours in the Prater park with the course readied to make it as even as possible.

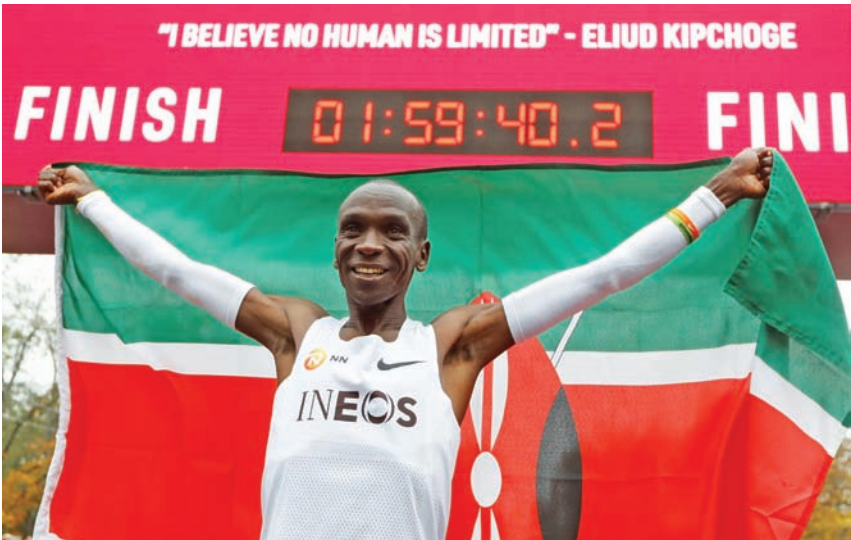
“I’m the happiest man today. The message that no human is limited is now in everybody’s mind,” an elated Kipchoge told reporters after the run, adding he expected more athletes to match his feat in the future.

“From the first kilometers I was really comfortable. I have been training for it for the last four and a half months, and above all I have been putting in my heart and in my mind that I’ll run an under-two-hour marathon.”

The 34-year-old already holds the world record for the distance with a time of 2hr 01min 39sec, which he set in the flat Berlin marathon on September 16, 2018.

But accompanied by a posse of 41 pacemakers, who took turns to support him, and a car in front of them setting the pace, Kipchoge bested his mark, making good on a failed attempt two years ago in Monza, Italy.

Maintaining a very regular pace at around 2:50 minutes per kilometer, he passed the finish line gesturing and smiling, describing his approach to the finish as “the best moment of my life”.



The founder of the main sponsors, Ineos, British billionaire Jim Ratcliffe, took a personal interest in the challenge.

“That last kilometer where he actually accelerated was super human,” said Ratcliffe, who himself competes in Ironman triathlons.

Kipchoge had been 11 seconds in advance at mid-race as fans lining the course, many waving Kenyan flags, loudly cheered him on.

Kipchoge’s coach, Patrick Sang, said the Kenyan had “inspired all of us that we can stretch our limits in our lives”.

## Next generation smells fear after Federer, Djokovic exit Shanghai



Defeats for Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic mean that the winner of the Shanghai Masters will be aged 23 or under -- more proof that the next generation of men’s tennis stars is closing in.

With Rafael Nadal absent from the tournament with a wrist injury, none of the vaunted “Big Three” will win the title on Sunday.

Nobody should be writing the triumvirate off: the 32-year-old Djokovic is number one and the player poised to take top spot off him in the coming weeks is the 33-year-old Nadal.

The 38-year-old Federer is third in the world, while Nadal and Djokovic divvied up all four Grand Slams between them this year.

But in making the last four in Shanghai, Stefanos Tsitsipas, 21, Alexander Zverev, 22, and the 23-year-olds Matteo Berrettini and Daniil Medvedev made a piece of history.

For the first time in 20 years at a Masters 1000 event, all four semi-finalists are 23 and under, according to Shanghai Masters organisers.

“They’re knocking on the door big time,” Federer said after the 20-time Grand Slam champion was handed a penalty point in a three-set quarter-final loss to Zverev on

Friday.

Earlier in the week, before his title assault turned sour, the Swiss said that he had noticed “big improvements” in the performances of the next generation.

“Not like there were none beforehand, but now they are playing with the big boys and really able to challenge us, beat us,” he said.

“Having good rivalries also within each other, which I think is important for them to improve as players.”

The Greek Tsitsipas dumped out reigning champion Djokovic, who until that point had looked imperious in Shanghai and did not drop a set in winning the Tokyo title last week.

Tsitsipas has now defeated Federer, Nadal and Djokovic in 2019.

In an interview with AFP last month in Zhuhai, southern China, the world number seven gave an insight into the mindset which propelled him to those victories.

Tsitsipas drew accusations of arrogance after saying that he was not prepared simply to tread water and wait for Federer and the others to play themselves into retirement.

“I don’t think it’s right to wait because you kind of surrender when you wait,” he said.

(Source: France 24)

## Suzuka on typhoon lockdown as F1 bosses hope Japan GP can go ahead



Japanese Grand Prix organizers were hoping that Sunday’s race would be able to go ahead as Typhoon Hagibis began to lash a deserted Suzuka Circuit with wind and heavy rain on Saturday.

A huge ground operation to protect the track and infrastructure was launched as soon as Friday practice ended and lasted late into the night after Saturday’s entire programme was cancelled on safety grounds.

Thousands of sandbags were deployed to protect pit lane garages from flooding, electronic timing gear was moved inside and even the victory podium signage dismantled and packed away.

Formula One sporting director Steve Nielson said the aim of the massive lockdown was to ensure that “when we come in on Sunday morning, the timing, the start lights, the GPS, the light panels around the circuit are in an environment where they have a chance of surviving the storm.”

He told Formula1.com on Friday that the sport’s technical staff faced an unprecedented logistical task to keep at bay one of the biggest typhoons to hit Japan in decades and would work throughout Saturday night “connecting everything back up again and systems-checking” once the worst of the storm had passed

avoid injury.

Pacemakers took turns to support him throughout the 42.195-kilometre (26.219-miles) race. They included 1,500-metre Olympic champion Matthew Centrowitz and former world champion Bernard Lagat.

The course comprised a 4.3 kilometer-long straight alley, which the Kenyan ran up and down several times amid dry but foggy weather.

Throngs of fans cheered on Kipchoge whenever he passed by.

William Magachi, 33, from Nairobi, was one of many Kenyans watching in Vienna.

“It’s amazing. He is a super human being, the positivity, what he has been able to achieve.

“It’s a record breaking moment. It never happened and may never happen again in my lifetime... I’m a lucky man.”

Another fan, Markus Parzer, 32 and from Vienna said: “It’s absolutely amazing. I’m a runner as well, a hobby runner. Just running his pace for a few hundred meters, I can’t do it longer.

“This really shows the magnitude of what he achieved today... It’s really history made here in Vienna.”

Fans from around the world also followed the run, broadcast live over YouTube and on many television channels, as well as on a giant screen near Eldoret in west Kenya, where Kipchoge’s family lives.

His number one fan, his mother Janet Rotich, was watching from her home.

(Source: AFP)

## Hockey hurts just like football says Petr Cech



“Also the coach gives you information before the game, tells you what he wants from the team and you.”

■ **In Dominik Hasek’s footsteps**

“The only difference is that I don’t know anything about the opponents here -- I would be able to gather more information at Chelsea,” Cech complained.

Like in football, the goalkeeping chore was the obvious choice for Cech, who loved watching and playing ice hockey as a child.

“I wasn’t keen to turn into a forward. I can only skate well

enough for a netminder -- I don’t think I could play up front,” he said.

Cech won four Premier League titles, four FA Cups, three League Cups, the Champions League and the Europa League during his Chelsea career, with a further FA Cup success coming at Arsenal.

With Guildford, success is uncertain, but Cech, who owns the all-time record for the most clean sheets in the Premiership, is looking forward to the first game.

“I was allowed to practice with the team but I couldn’t play games. It’s great to have the opportunity now and I hope it will end well.”

As if to boost his chances, Cech chose a shirt number 39 once worn by Dominik Hasek, his childhood idol, two-time Stanley Cup winner and six-time Vezina Trophy holder for the NHL’s best goaltender.

Hasek, who is currently contemplating running for the Czech president, led the Czechs to a sensational win at the 1998 Winter Olympics in Nagano, the first-ever Olympic tournament bringing together all NHL stars.

If there is a cause for concern, it is media interest, Cech said after his new career had made the headlines across the world.

“Nobody expected this. We have no idea what it will come down to at the rink on Sunday, but I guess we’ll have to curb the media interest somehow,” Cech said.

(Source: Eurosport)



# Sharpshooters star on Matchday Three

On a night which produced 74 goals across 16 matches, Asia's top marksmen found their range on Matchday Three of the Asian Qualifiers for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 and AFC Asian Cup China 2023.

Seven players netted hat-tricks on Thursday, as the Continent's heavyweights, and some rising powers, flexed their muscles in a series of emphatic home wins.

The-AFC.com looks at two Iranian effective front men on Matchday Three.

**■ Sardar Azmoun – Iran v Cambodia**

With goals against the likes of Benfica and Olympique Lyonnais in the weeks prior to the match, it was always going to be a serious challenge for Cambodia to keep Sardar Azmoun quiet, and so it proved as the Zenit Saint Petersburg star posted a hat-trick before half-time in Islamic Republic of Iran's 14-0 win.

Azmoun stroked home his first to make it 2-0 in the 11th minute, then took further advantage of Cambodia's porous defense and goalkeeper Keo Soksela's night to forget, tapping home two more from close range to bring up his 32nd international goal in less than 50 caps.

Still only 24, Azmoun is now fifth on Iran's all-time scorers' chart, with Javad Nekounam (39 goals) and Ali Karimi (38) both conceivably within striking distance during this Asian Qualifiers campaign.

**■ Karim Ansarifard – Iran v Cambodia**

It isn't often that a hat-trick scorer misses out on player of the match honors, but that was the fate which befell Azmoun as teammate Karim Ansarifard went one better with a four-goal haul against the Cambodians.

It took until the 40th minute for the Al-Sailiya forward to open his account from an indirect free-kick inside the penalty area and he never looked back from there, scoring three more goals after the interval to top the



scoring in Iran's biggest win in 19 years. Appearing for Team Melli for the 80th time, Ansarifard's hat-trick was his first at international level and came a full decade after he made his senior debut.

(Source: the-afc)

## Iran beach soccer start World Beach Games in style



**S P O R T S   TEHRAN** — Iran national beach soccer team came from 4-1 down to earn a thrilling 5-4 victory over Ukraine at the the Association of National Olympic (ANOC) Committees World Beach Games on Friday.

Mohammad Mokhtari scored two goals and Amirhossein Akbari, Mohammad Ahmadzadeh and Mehdi Shirmohammadi scored one goal each for Team Melli in

Group C at the Katara Beach.

Ivan Glutskiy, Yuri Shcherytsia and Oleg Zborovskiy (two goals) scored for Ukraine.

Senegal also defeated Paraguay 3-0 in another group match.

Iran will meet Senegal on Sunday.

Beach soccer is one of 14 sports being showcased at the World Beach Games, which are being held in Doha, the capital of Qatar, from 11-16.

## Iran U23 football team to play Australia



**S P O R T S   TEHRAN** — Iran U23 football team will meet Australia U23 team in a friendly match in Doha, Qatar.

The match has been scheduled for Monday.

The warm-up game will be held as part of preparation for the 2020 AFC U23 Championship.

Iran have been handed a tough group in

the competition, where they are drawn in Group C along with defending champions Uzbekistan, China and South Korea.

The competition will be held in Thailand from Jan. 8 to 26 and the top three teams of the tournament will qualify for the 2020 Summer Olympics men's football tournament in Japan as the AFC representatives.

Iran have not been in the Olympics since the 1976 games in Munich.

## Iranian girl Mahdian wins bronze at World Youth Chess C'ship

**S P O R T S   TEHRAN** — Anousha Mahdian from Iran claimed a bronze medal in the World Youth Chess Championship 2019 on Saturday.

The competition is being held in Mumbai, India from Oct. 1 to 13.

This is the first time that India is hosting this prestigious event. After this event, India will also host the World Junior Chess Championship 2019 in New Delhi from October 14-26.

Mahdian claimed a bronze medal at the U16 Girls category with eight points.

Russian Leya Garifullina won the gold medal with 8.5 points while the silver medal went to Nurgali Nazerke Kazakhstan who also earned 8.5 points.

The World Youth Chess Championship includes six events in three age categories split between the open and the girls' section.

A total of 464 players from some 64 countries have participated in the competition.



## Cycling: Mollema snatches biggest career win in Il Lombardia

**COMO, Italy (Reuters)** — Dutchman Bauke Mollema claimed his biggest career victory when he won the Il Lombardia one-day race, a 243-km ride from Bergamo on Saturday.

Il Lombardia is the last of five 'Monument' classics in the cycling season after Milan-San-

remo, the Tour of Flanders, Paris-Roubaix and Liege-Bastogne-Liege.

The Trek-Segafredo rider attacked 20 km from the finish and never looked back, holding off former world champion Alejandro Valverde of Spain who finished second

ahead of Colombia's Tour de France champion Egan Bernal.

The peloton slimmed down to a group of top riders in the Sormano ascent and Mollema dropped the reduced bunch in the Civiglio climb.

Defending champion Thibaut Pinot of France did not start the race after his season ended prematurely following his withdrawal late in the Tour de France because of a thigh injury.

## Gianluigi Buffon named Goodwill Ambassador of the United Nations WFP

Italian footballer Gianluigi Buffon, has today been appointed Goodwill Ambassador of the United Nations World Food Program (WFP), the Rome-based agency that provides food assistance to over 90 million people affected by conflicts and natural disasters.

Considered one of the best goalkeepers in the history of football Gianluigi Buffon played 176 matches for Italy's national team – 80 of them as captain. In a stellar 20-year career he captained Italy's leading football team Juventus and was named UEFA goalkeeper of the year five times. Buffon holds the record for the longest streak without conceding a goal in the history of Italy's Serie A championship.

"On behalf of the nearly 90 million people we serve each day, I want to thank Gigi Buffon for joining our cause as Goodwill Ambassador. The courage, skill and dedication that he brought to every match will now be applied to helping the hungry and vulnerable all over the world. I believe he will help WFP bring even more teammates to our Zero Hunger squad", said David Beasley, Executive Director of World Food Program.



"I couldn't be more proud to be named Goodwill Ambassador for WFP, the United Nations agency that fights hunger worldwide and reaches the millions of vulnerable people. I am enthusiastic to accept this nomination, and share such a hopeful message, as I bear witness to the tireless efforts of WFP staff each day in the field. Their work deserves to be known as do the stories of people so much less fortunate than us. We can beat hunger when

we work as a team!" said Gianluigi Buffon.

"We need Gigi's amazing outreach to make sure the world knows about the millions of people suffering from hunger and the work that WFP does to change their lives", says Marina Catena Chief of the Goodwill Ambassadors and Brand Building. "Football is a universal language. One day I visited an orphanage in Baghdad: we did not speak the same language. But once the children knew I was Italian, they started to chant the names of Juventus players: 'Trezeguet, Buffon, Del Piero' and the ice was broken."

As a goalkeeper Buffon is the last line of defense for his team. As goodwill ambassador, he'll be helping WFP lead the attack on hunger which afflicts 821 million people around the world.

In his role as WFP Goodwill Ambassador, Gianluigi Buffon will have the opportunity to travel to some of the 83 countries where WFP helps communities rebuild shattered lives and livelihoods. He will see first-hand what WFP does to save and change lives and use his immense reach to engage his millions of supporters in working to achieve a Zero Hunger world by 2030.

(Source: Wfp.org)

## Esteghlal have 25 million fans: Andrea Stramaccioni

**PLDC** — Iranian football team Esteghlal have 25 million fans, Italian coach Andrea Stramaccioni said.

"Esteghlal are a popular football team in Iran and have 25 million fans. I've taken so many selfies with the fans since I've come to Iran - something I had never experienced in my life," Stramaccioni said in an interview with Sky Sports.



"Esteghlal fans live with their team and the women fans also attend the training. I think the West is wrong about Iran," the Italian added.

Esteghlal lost to their arch-rival Persepolis 1-0 in Tehran derby in September.

"It's a classic match between two teams. I think we were very close to win but conceded a goal in the final minutes of the match," he stated.

"I had some problems after arrival to Iran but the Embassy of Italy in Tehran and Iran's foreign ministry resolved the issues. Now, I concentrate on Esteghlal," Stramaccioni concluded.

## Iran's girls pair win bronze at WDF World Cup Youth

**TASNIM** — The Iranian team claimed a bronze medal in Girls Pair of the World Dart Federation (WDF) World Cup Youth.

The Iranian team, consisting of Fatemeh Karimi and Fatemeh Safi, lost to England 5-1 and seized a bronze medal.

England won the title after beating Scotland 6-5 in the final match.

Iran's Mehrdad Seifi has also advanced to the final match in Boys Singles.

The prestigious competition brought 488 players from 54 countries together in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, from October 7 to 12.

## Girls win silver at Pakistan Jr. Tennis C'ship 2019

Iran's Mahta Khanloo and Meshkatolzahra Safi won a silver medal at the ITF Pakistan Jr. Tennis Championship 2019.

The Iranian pair lost to Turkey's Mert Aysegul and Russia's Valitova Arina in the final match of the Girls Doubles.

The one-week event was held at S. Dilawar Abbas PTF Tennis Complex in Islamabad, Pakistan.

Tennis players from Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, Russia, Hong Kong, Kazakhstan and Mali participated in the competition.

(Source: https: Urdupoint)

## Iran's Alireza Faghani officiates his first A-League

Western Sydney profited from a gamble by coach Markus Babel and a late VAR decision, as captain Mitchell Duke bagged a double in Saturday's 2-1 opening-round A-League home win over Central Coast.

Former Mariner Duke blasted home a decisive 82nd-minute penalty, which was taken around four minutes after the incident.



Highly regarded Iranian referee Alireza Faghani, officiating his first A-League game since moving to Australia, ultimately awarded the penalty for a Dylan Fox hand ball, after reviewing the incident following a break in play.

A crowd of 17,091 attended the Wanderers' first A-League game in more than three years at their rebuilt stadium.

Duke headed a 41st-minute equalizer from a Pirmin Schwegler corner, five minutes after Mariners A-League debutant Milan Duric gave the visitors the lead with a fierce, deflected 20-metre drive.

The Mariners had more possession and built up well from the back, but struggled to hit the target in the first half.

Western Sydney had more shots on goal before halftime, but the visitors created some good opportunities after the break, with the Wanderers' Swiss goalkeeper Daniel Lopar pulling off some crucial saves.

As was the case in Friday's opening match of the season between Adelaide United and Sydney FC, the time taken through VAR intervention to make decisions was topical.

Stajic felt his team deserved something out of the match and Babel admitted it was a "50-50 game".

Hard-running Duke, who missed almost two months of the pre-season, inspired a Wanderers team, which Babel stressed included several underdone players, who he decided to use despite not being fully fit.

He expected Tarek Elrich to miss two to four weeks after coming off early with a hamstring injury.

(Source: Australian Associated Press)



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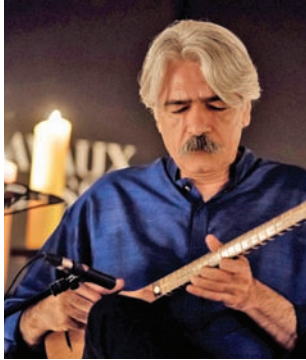
GUIDE TO  
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

If a creature knows his destiny, he will certainly  
dislike his desires, and his pride subsides.

Imam Ali (AS)

## Kayhan Kalhor cancels Istanbul concert in protest at Turkey's assault on Kurds in Syria

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Kurdish Iranian kamancheh virtuoso Kayhan Kalhor has canceled his upcoming concert in Istanbul, Turkey, in protest over Turkey's assault on the Kurds in Syria.



Kurdish Iranian musician Kayhan Kalhor performs in an undated photo.

Kurdish militias in northern Syria have been a crucial U.S. ally in the fight against ISIS. But Turkey launched an attack on the U.S.-backed Kurdish forces after U.S. troops withdrew this week.

"These days are very hard for us Kurds," Kalhor said in a video published on his Instagram account. The video depicts Kalhor talking to the audience on Friday before his concert with Rembrandt Frerichs Trio at London's Royal Festival Hall.

"The violence and the war in Syria have caused a lot of grief for the Kurds and this catastrophe will cause heavy casualties and make many people homeless, but some politicians do not realize these issues," he added.

"I was scheduled to perform a concert in Istanbul in the near future, but I canceled it in sympathy for my Kurdish brothers and sisters [in Syria]," he noted.

"I also dedicate the last piece of our repertoire tonight to the Kurdish children, and hope that once again we will live in a world with no war and children can sleep peacefully in their homes," Four-time Grammy Award nominee Kalhor added.

## "American Idol After Iraq" comes to Iranian bookstores

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — "American Idol After Iraq: Competing for Hearts and Minds in the Global Media Age", a book co-written by American author Nathan Gardels and his fellow film producer Mike Medavoy, has been published in Persian in Tehran.



Front cover of the Persian version of "American Idol After Iraq: Competing for Hearts and Minds in the Global Media Age" co-written by Nathan Gardels and Mike Medavoy.

The writers also argue that Hollywood is a key player in U.S. foreign policy and builds a global cultural infrastructure that will make the world safe for interdependence.

## Gauguin, Gauguin, Gone - Tahiti painting to be auctioned in Paris in December

**PARIS (Reuters)** — A painting by French post-impressionist painter Paul Gauguin is to be sold in Paris in December in an auction expected to fetch at least 5 million euros (\$5.48 million).

The oil on canvas titled "Te Bourao II" and believed to have been created in 1897 when Gauguin was living in Tahiti, French Polynesia, is one of a series of nine paintings produced by the artist while working on a much larger scale project later titled: "Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?"

The current owner of "Te Bourao II", whose name is not public, loaned the painting to the Metropolitan Museum of Art of New York City between 2007 and 2017.

Out of the nine paintings of the Tahiti series, "Te Bourao II" stands as the only work still in private hands, the others hanging on the walls of prestigious museums around the globe.

# Photographer Kenro Izu shares personal experiences of "pilgrimage by camera"

**I →** In 1970, Izu visited New York to learn photography as he was studying art at Nippon University in Tokyo. He subsequently decided to stay and work. In 1975, after working as an assistant to other photographers, Izu established Kenro Izu Studio in New York City, to specialize in still life photography, both commercial and fine art.

All photos in Izu's series are black and white. He found the black and white photos to be more beautiful.

"Black and white images give a person more peace than color photos. I actually invite viewers to peace and calmness with my black and white photos," he said.

"When you take a color photo in the desert in the evening, it is red with the blue sky. But when I take it in black and white it is all different shades of grey, and I think it is very beautiful because grey has an infinite way of expressing the feeling of nature," he explained.

"When visitors see these photos they start to be quiet without exception. They begin to calm down. I myself am the same, especially in sacred places which are very holy places, and people usually go there to think and pray," he said.

Izu said that he even immediately changes the photos he takes with his small camera into black and white photos.

In 1979, Izu made his first trip to Egypt, which inspired him to begin his series "Sacred Places", an exploration that is still in progress.

He traveled the world to capture the sacred ancient stone monuments in their natural settings and considers the act of picture making a type of spiritual practice, capturing essence and light.

"Concerning sacred places, those places in various locations that have survived for a thousand years attract me the most. They give such a feeling of peacefulness, and I try to reflect the peacefulness to the visitors through my photos," he said.

He said that his photography is not about capturing a moment, and that he often spends one or two days doing some kind of meditation just to take a single picture.

"I begin to concentrate and become very empty inside, and then I can start to feel the wind blowing or changing direction. I can feel natural and supernatural things. When I am looking around, it is an ordinary moment, but when I stop talking and concentrate on watching, I find many things.

"I keep watching, then the concentration takes me away from everything—my child, my wife, dinner, business, everything. I get



Art aficionados visit an exhibition of photos by Japanese photographer Kenro Izu at Tehran Nabshi Center on September 27, 2019. (Honaronline/Mehdi Azadbakht)

a piece of relief, then I start to hear things like the slightest wind, the lowest sound. I use my every sense and then smell. Those are the things that start altogether. Those are the things that come together. Of course, light is important too. Sound, wind, shade together they all are important. Then I start to begin and take my photo," Izu explained.

Despite an abundance of holy sites in his homeland of Japan, Izu has no photos of these sites in his series, "Sacred Places".

"I tried several times in the past. I had a few, but the sacred places in my country have become commercialized, the fences, kiosks, cameras and many tourists are here and there."

"In contrast, what I am looking for is a historical site which remains in a natural state, without any concrete or chains around it," he noted.

"I believe Stonehenge in England has the wisest way of preservation. They have dragged and pulled the metal poles and ropes so people can walk around on the natural grass field. And when I got permission for photography, they pulled the sticks and ropes aside and took them down. The site looked

quite natural, like it did 3000 years ago," he mentioned.

"Even the parking lots are invisible being located in underground levels, and when I took photos from any direction, there were no cars, no kiosks. I hope the Japanese do the same. It is the wisest way to preserve," he added.

He said that when he is taking photographs, he finds himself constantly challenged by a voice urging him to take a "nice picture." Despite his mastery of technique, this is not what he is after. Instead, he aims at capturing something of the spirit or the inner life of his chosen subject matter.

"That is why I don't want to take more than one or two photos in a day," he said.

Izu next added that he has to hire some assistants for help because his equipment is so bulky, but he always asks them to go away and keep distant until he calls them back.

"Once I took an assistant to Egypt who could speak Arabic. After sitting beside the camera for an hour, he started to talk and asked, 'What are you doing!'"

"Nobody understands what I am waiting for. I am only waiting for the right moment

that I can sense," he said.

Izu's photos on view at the Tehran gallery bear no caption.

"I don't like to ascribe too much detail and I try to leave it to the audience. I'm not concerned that the photo is of a pyramid in Egypt or Stonehenge in England. Here I just leave it to the visitors to decipher," he noted.

Considering the country of Iran with so many sacred places, Izu said that he has problems with carrying his bulky equipment, especially when he intends to enter a country, which is dealing with conflicts.

"I am frequently stopped at borders. It is very difficult to convince them that this is a still camera and not a movie camera, and even during peace time I still have lots of problems. The problem gets worse in the Middle East," he concluded.

Izu has published 14 books and his work has been featured in dozens of solo exhibitions around the world. He has received numerous awards and fellowships throughout his prolific career.

His Tehran exhibit will continue until November 1 at the gallery located at 51 Khosro Alley, Ostad Nejatollahi St.

## 62nd DOK Leipzig picks six Iranian films

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — A lineup of six Iranian films will go on screen during the 62nd DOK Leipzig, the international festival for documentary and animated films running in the German city from October 28 to November 3.

"Family Relations" by Nasser Zamiri will be screened in the International Competition, the organizers have announced.

The documentary depicts a tragicomic family saga, in which all the members of a large Iranian family are against their father, Haji Baba.

"Exodus" by Bahman Giarostami, "Khatemeh" by Hadi and Mehdi Zarei and "None of Your Business" by Kamran Heidari are the other Iranian films selected to be screened at the event.

"Exodus" is about thousands of Afghan migrants who have lined up to leave Iran as the renewed U.S. sanctions have sparked a recession, but first, they must endure interrogations



A scene from the documentary "Family Relations" by Nasser Zamiri.

at an immigration center in Tehran.

"Khatemeh" centers on a 14-year-old Afghan girl who was married to a man twice her age. They live in the Iranian city of Shiraz. She has run away to a kind of women's refuge, because she couldn't stand it any longer and wants a divorce.

"None of Your Business" is named after a song that is played in several versions during the film, and was written by poet Ebrahim Monsefi from the southern region of the country.

"Asho" by Jafar Najafi and "Am I a Wolf?" by Amir-Hushang Moein will be competing in the short competition section.

Asho is a shepherd's son who not only knows how to deal with goats, but also knows about films. He tries to see at least one a day and dreams of being an actor.

"Am I a Wolf?" is about a group of children who perform the familiar story of the wolf and the yearlings in school as a puppet show. The nanny goat grieving for its yearlings and the angry wolf in its solitude face each other.

## Neyanban virtuoso Mohsen Sharifian to perform at Irish festival



Neyanban virtuoso Mohsen Sharifian gives a performance with his band Lian on July 10, 2019. (Mehr/Masud Saki)

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Iranian vocalist and neyanban virtuoso Mohsen Sharifian will be attending the William Kennedy Piping Festival running in the Irish town of Armagh from November 14 to 17.

Sharifian will be performing accompanied by his fellow percussionist Mohammad Jafari in several performances during the event, the organizers have announced.

In addition, Irish musicians Emer Mayock and Niall Vallely, and Sylvain

Barou from France will join them to give a performance at the Market Place Theatre on November 16 in a project named "An Exploration of Piping in Ireland and Iran".

Barou and Mayock play flute and uilleann pipe, the national bagpipe of Ireland, and Vallely plays concertina, a free-reed musical instrument like accordion.

Sharifian is the leader of the Lian ensemble from the southern Iranian city of Bushehr.

## Calligraphy Week opens with nastaliq exhibition in Tehran



A poster for an exhibition of Persian calligraphy underway at Tehran's Aseman Art and Culture Center.

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Iran's Calligraphy Week officially opened with displaying works by a number of prominent Persian calligraphers in an exhibition at Tehran's Aseman Art and Culture Center on Friday.

The opening ceremony of the exhibition was attended by a number of cultural officials and artists, including Iran Calligraphers Association director Gholamhossein Amirkhani.

Iranian master of calligraphy Ali Shirazi was honored for his lifetime achievements

during the ceremony.

Organized by the association in collaboration with the Iranian Academy of the Arts, the exhibit is showcasing 150 works created in nastaliq, a style of Persian calligraphy.

Calligraphy Week celebrates the National Day of Persian Calligraphy, which falls on October 13, with weeklong exhibitions in different cities, several sessions with experts and scholars and commemorating ceremonies for veteran calligraphers.