



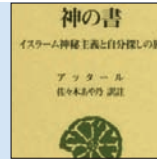
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# Multilateralism has become a necessity



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## ‘Budget bill to include development, employment, subsidy plans’

**TEHRAN**— Head of Iran's Planning and Budget Organization (PBO) said that three biennial plans on development, subsidies and employment will be attached to the national budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year of 1399 (begins on March 20, 2020) to be submitted to the parliament.

The official also announced that a biennial budget bill has been decided to

be prepared for the next year in a way that the incomes and expenditures will be envisaged for both years of 1399 and 1400, IRIB reported on Monday.

In this bill oil revenues will not be used for any expenditure, and as they are generated from selling the country's capital assets they will be spent on augmenting capital assets through development projects, he noted. **→4**

## Iran says to take next nuclear step if remaining parties fail to honor obligations

**TEHRAN** — Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi on Monday reiterated Iran's position that Tehran is ready to take the next step to reduce commitments to the 2015 nuclear deal, formally known as the JCPOA, if the remaining parties to the agreement fail to take action to shield the Islamic Republic from sanctions effects.

Under the nuclear agreement struck in July 2015, Iran agreed to put limits on its

nuclear program in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions.

The agreement, endorsed by the UN Security Council Resolution 2231, was signed between Iran, the United States, Britain, Germany, France, the European Union, Russia and China. However, the U.S. President Donald Trump abandoned the deal in May 2018 and returned sanctions and imposed new ones. **→2**

## Iraq needs international support in fight against terrorism: Abdul Mahdi

**TEHRAN** — Iraqi PM Adel Abdul Mahdi on Monday in the meeting with his Norwegian counterpart emphasis on the need for international support for Iraq in the fight against terrorism.

Abdul Mahdi received Prime Minister of Norway Erna Solberg in his office and the two discussed means of enhancing bilateral ties in various fields and continuing cooperation in fighting against terrorism,

as well as regional issues, said a statement by Iraqi prime minister media office.

"This visit (of Solberg) is of special importance and gave a strong impetus to the relations between the two countries and the two friendly peoples towards the establishment of strategic relations in the cultural and social aspects and the fight against corruption," the statement quoted Abdul Mahdi as saying. **→13**



### EDITORIAL

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## The secret behind continued protests in Lebanon

The poor economic and living conditions in Lebanon have prompted thousands to stream into the streets to express their anger over the current situation.

Protests started in Lebanon a few days ago. The demonstrations have been held in protest to tax raise and poor living conditions. The protests erupted when the Lebanese government approved a plan to impose tax on calls in Whatsapp and other messaging apps, describing it as a plan to increase the government's revenue in the 2020 budget.

Meanwhile, Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri asked the minister of information to halt the plan, as the protests intensified in Beirut and other cities.

Meanwhile, a few days ago, fire engulfed forests in Lebanon and displaced many families. Hariri's administration could not contain the fire due to the breakdown of helicopters and the government's negligence to maintain and repair them. These events infuriated Lebanese people more.

Without God's blessing and raining, Lebanon would suffer a major disaster.

To counter budget deficit, the government imposed new taxes by introducing austerity measures, a move which made the Lebanese angry. The Lebanese lira has lost its value and caused protests. The protests have also led to fuel crisis. The Bread Baker Guild has also threatened to go on strike.

In such difficult economic conditions, the Lebanese demonstrators blocked the roads between cities. There were clashes between the protesters and security forces who were trying to prevent the protesters from reaching the prime minister's office. Following the protests, schools, universities and banks were closed.

**Hezbollah secretary general's position toward the protests**  
Hezbollah Secretary General Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah has taken a position on the developments in Lebanon that can be summarized as follows:

- Emphasizing the need to take responsibility. Criticizing some leaders and political groups for evading their duties and shifting their responsibility on others. **→7**

## Iran is a hugely 'friendly' country despite propagandas, New Zealander professor says

**TEHRAN** — David Robie, a New Zealander author, journalist, media educator and retired university professor believes that Iran is a hugely friendly country despite propagandas by Western media.

Robie has spent several weeks traveling in the country on sabbatical and finds that the media negativity far from the reality of the "most friendly" country he has ever visited.

"Iran attracts an onslaught of negative media in New Zealand and Western media. But is it

fair or deserved?" the senior journalist wrote in an article released by Asia Pacific Report on Friday.

"Given the rising geopolitical tensions, as I was about to visit the country for several weeks as a visitor on sabbatical, I was keen to see the realities on the ground in Iran behind the sabre-rattling."

"The headlines were chilling as we flew into Turkey and then Iran. 'All out war', trumpeted The New Zealand Herald, as being an imminent response to last month's surprise drone attack

knocking out almost 50 percent of Saudi Arabia's oil production, blaming the attack on the Islamic Republic without convincing evidence," he explained.

"The next day the Herald belatedly ran the other side of the story, quoting Iranian President Hassan Rouhani's response denying the allegations and warning that Iran would defend itself in the case of a U.S.-Saudi attack while offering the 'hand of friendship and brotherhood' for overseeing security in the Persian Gulf." **→10**

## The five-day pause in Turkish offensive: Did Turkey achieve goals

By Hanif Ghaffari

**TEHRAN** — The military attack, which Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan Erdogan had launched on northern Syria on Oct. 9, was temporarily halted for five days due to an agreement brokered between Turkey and the United States. Now, we should wait and see if this situation will last.

The agreement was made after a 300-minute negotiations between Turkish and U.S. officials.

The ceasefire started at 10 p.m. local time and will continue for five days.

The 120-hour (five-day) halt in military operations in northern Syria was made during negotiations between Erdogan and U.S. Vice President Mike Pence who visited Ankara on Thursday.

Joint U.S.-Turkish Statement on northeast Syria is as follow:

1. The U.S. and Turkey reaffirm their relationship as fellow members of NATO. The U.S.

understands Turkey's legitimate security concerns on Turkey's southern border.

2. Turkey and the U.S. agree that the conditions on the ground, northeast Syria in particular, necessitate closer coordination on the basis of common interests.

3. Turkey and the U.S. remain committed to protecting NATO territories and NATO populations against all threats with the solid understanding of "one for all and all for one". **→7**

## As we mark 40 days from Ashura

By Muhammad Bin Ibrahim

**NIGERIA / KADUNA** — On the 10th of October, year 680 AD (which coincides with 10th of Muharram, year 61 AH), in the field of Karbala (today's Iraq), around the banks of Euphrates, the Grandson of Islam's Prophet, Husain, was killed together with his sons, brothers and companions. Before the killing they were denied even water

for days. A child of his, Aliyu al-Asghar, an infant of about six month old was crying profusely because the breast of its mother could not produce the milk due to hunger and thirst. Husain took the child, moved closer to the side of the killers, raised him up saying: "O People! If you show no mercy to me; have mercy on this thirsty child!" At that moment, someone from the Kufan army

shot an arrow at the infant as a response to his request. The infant died immediately.

Robert Durey Osborn, the Major of the Bengal Staff Corps, writes, "Husain had a child named Abdallah, only a year old. He had accompanied his father in this terrible march. Touched by its cries, he took the infant in his arms and wept. At that instant, **→7**



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## Fishing season starts in northern Iran

Fishing season has just started in the Caspian Sea provinces of Mazandaran and Gilan, northern Iran. The fishing season starts routinely in mid-October and lasts for about six months. Roughly four thousand people in the two coastal provinces are engaged in fishing during the period.

Last year, some 2,700 tons of bony fish, worth around 700 billion rials (about \$16 million) were caught by fishermen.



### ARTICLE

**Mahnaz Abdi**  
Head of the TehranTimes Economy Desk

## Outlook plan required for copper industry development

Holding 34 million tons of copper reserves, Iran accounts for four present of the world's total reserves of this metal which is 830 million tons.

But the country's production of copper is just 1.5 percent of the global figure and it is why preparing an outlook plan for development of copper industry in Iran seems necessary.

Preparation of such plan, at the first step, requires removing various barriers this industry is facing. Some of these hindrances are mentioned as follows.

Lack of liquidity, low technology, fluctuations in commodity market, investment challenges, inflation, fluctuations in foreign currency exchange rate, and also limitations created by the sanctions have been mentioned as some of the major obstacles in the way of developing copper industry in Iran.

For implementation of copper projects a number of barriers have been mentioned including not-realistic schedule and illogical deadline for implementation, weakness in management, lack of expert engineers in some fields, objectives being unclear for the team, changes in the project, weakness in risk management, and lack of balance between authorities and responsibilities of the directors.

Some experts and those active in copper industry also believe that the government's interference is high in some parts of this industry, and it is another challenge in the way of development.

They say that through different by-laws the government makes the producers confused and interrupts their planning.

Downstream industries are also facing obstacles for development in this sector, as their production is not economically viable in many fields; therefore, the country should take steps for making operations such as melting and refining economically viable through providing necessary condition. **→4**



## Judiciary chief says transparency is anti-dote to corruption

**POLITICAL** TEHRAN — Judiciary Chief Hojjatoleslam Ebrahim Raeisi said on Monday that the economic system should be transparent in order to prevent corruption. “The main strategy to prevent corruption is making the country’s economic system transparent and institutionalizing transparency,” he said in a meeting of the Supreme Council of the Judiciary.



He added that systems related to customs, tax and banking transaction should be active and coordinated to monitor entrepreneurs, investors and businessmen.

Elsewhere, he thanked officials and police forces for the efforts they made during the Arbaeen season.

The top judge also said that enemies tried to cause division between the Iraqis and Iranians, however, the unity of the two nations was demonstrated more than ever.

In a message on Sunday, President Hassan Rouhani said the Arbaeen ritual shows unity and solidarity between the Iraqis and the Iranians and is an example of forming a “united front against violence and discrimination”.

Arbaeen comes 40 days after Ashura, the day marking the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (AS) in the battle of Karbala in 680 AD.

Each year, a huge crowd of people flock to the Iraqi city of Karbala, where the holy shrine of Imam Hussein is located, to perform mourning rites.

Considering one of the largest religious gatherings in the world, this year about 18 million pilgrims visited the shrine of Imam Hussein, the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the third Shia Imam.

According to reports, more than three million Iranian pilgrims traveled to Iraq this year to attend the mourning rituals.

## Government: Maximum pressure unable to bring Iranians to their knees

**POLITICAL** TEHRAN – Government spokesman Ali Rabiei said on Monday that the U.S. has gained nothing by adopting the policy of maximum pressure against Tehran, noting such approaches are unable to bring the Iranian people to their knees.

Touching upon participation of millions of Iranians in the glorious and historic Arbaeen march coupled with its social, political, religious and cultural messages for the region and the world, Rabiei said, “This year’s Arbaeen march had a clear message for the U.S. that the Iranians are not the nation whose voice remains unheard; furthermore they will never come to their knees under maximum economic pressure.”

He further pointed out, “Amid unprecedented sanctions, the Iranian people and government organized such a great march which was testifying our nation’s enthusiasm and the highest level of passion for life.”

In relevant remarks earlier this month, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said, “The U.S. policy of maximum pressure has failed.”

The Leader added, “The Americans presumed that they can force Iran to make concessions and bring it to its knees by focusing on maximum pressure, especially in area of economy, but they have troubled themselves.”

## Zarif: FATF policy toward Iran merely political

**POLITICAL** TEHRAN – Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif announced on Monday that Iran has been following anti-money laundering measures inside the country, saying policy of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) towards Iran is not based on realities but politically tainted.

“Iran, in its own internal laws, has recognized anti-money laundering activities as a necessity and main objective. The FATF’s decision towards Iran is perfectly political. We fully oppose such a decision.” Zarif told reporters on the sidelines of the first session of unilateralism and international rights conference in Tehran.

“But to protect our national interests, we have carried out the entire necessary measures to counter terrorist financing and money laundering,” the chief diplomat remarked.

The Paris-based FATF said on Friday it gave Iran a final deadline of February 2020 to tighten its laws against money laundering in compliance with the global watchdog’s financial standards.

“If before February 2020, Iran does not enact the Palermo and Terrorist Financing Conventions in line with the FATF Standards, then the FATF will fully lift the suspension of counter-measures and call on its members and urge all jurisdictions to apply effective counter-measures, in line with recommendation 19,” the FATF said in a statement on Friday, Reuters reported.

“The FATF expects Iran to proceed swiftly in the reform path to ensure that it addresses all of the remaining items by completing and implementing the necessary Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing reforms.”

One of the actions Iran is required to take to appease the FATF is joining the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), which is also called the Palermo Convention, a 2000 United Nations-sponsored multilateral treaty against transnational organized crime.

The other action is to ratify the CFT, the convention combatting financing of terrorism.

On October 7, 2018, the parliament voted in favor of the CFT. However, the oversight Guardian Council rejected the bill by finding 22 faults with it, which put the fate of the bill on the hands of the Expediency Council.

Earlier this month, the secretary of the Expediency Council said the government is not permitted to join the Palermo Convention.

# Zarif says multilateralism has become a necessity

Unilateralism is “dangerous” and “doomed to failure”, Iranian FM notes

**POLITICAL** TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Monday

that multilateralism has become a necessity in the world.

“In today’s world, the West cannot take all decisions for the international developments,” he said during a speech at a conference at Allameh Tabataba’i University.

Zarif, who was speaking at an international conference on unilateralism and international law at the university, added, “Governments have come to the conclusion that they can neither solve their problems by themselves nor can they prevent others’ transgressive actions. So, they adopted multilateralism.”

Zarif also noted, “Governments cannot decide for the world unilaterally, because they have lost their monopoly over the international decision making.”

Zarif said that unilateralism is “dangerous” and “doomed to failure”.

■ **‘No one can trust signature of the United States’**

Zarif also said that no one can trust signature of the United States, citing Washington’s withdrawal from international agreements, including the 2015 nuclear deal, as examples.

“The United States is following unilateralism without respecting the importance of international law. So, no one can trust the United States’ signature,” the chief diplomat remarked.

He said many countries that follow Washington’s policies have no choice because of the United States’ power. However, he added, countries have been starting to downgrade their relations with the U.S.

Pointing to the European Union’s special financial mechanism for trade with Iran, known as INSTEX, Zarif said the Europeans are trying to distance themselves from their ally.

“INSTEX may not have much value for us, however, the important point is that it has been for a year that the United States’ close allies are escaping from their biggest military ally through their slow and unacceptable methods



Allameh Tabataba’i University hosted an international conference on unilateralism and international law. A number of experts in international law from various nations including Italy, India, Russia, Finland, Poland, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Macedonia and Afghanistan were expected to participate at the forum.

(in implementing INSTEX). It means that the players do not accept to be under control of just one player who acts unpredictably and violates international law,” Zarif pointed out.

INSTEX – the Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges - is a European special purpose vehicle aimed at facilitating legitimate trade between Europe and Iran.

The EU announced on June 28 that its special financial mechanism for trade with Iran, known as INSTEX, has

gone into effect. However, Iran says the mechanism is far short of Iran’s expectation.

■ **‘United States is addicted to sanctions’**

Zarif also said that the U.S. is addicted to unilateral sanctions.

He said sanction is an instrument that an “individual, society or country uses to make others respect regulation” but the United States is using sanctions to “impose its own policies”.

## Iran says to take next nuclear step if remaining parties fail to honor obligations

Foreign Ministry says Turkey can have military bases on own soil, but not in Syria

➡ “We hope that we would witness special action by the remaining countries to the JCPOA, otherwise Iran is ready to take the fourth step,” Mousavi said in a regular press briefing.

Mousavi added that the mechanism for the next step (fourth step) has been devised.

Iran’s next step falls on early November.

Reportedly, in the next step Iran intends to limit nuclear inspections by the United Nations’ International Atomic Energy Agency.

Mousavi also said Iran’s action in reducing its commitments is within the framework of the JCPOA and the Europeans have no right to complain about it.

“If they are concerned, they must fulfil their commitments so that Iran returns to full implementation of its commitments,” he suggested.

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

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

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

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

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

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said on October 2 that Iran will continue to reduce commitments under the nuclear deal.

“Reducing nuclear commitments, for which the Atomic Energy Organization is



responsible, should continue seriously and precisely as it was announced by the government till it reaches favorable result and it will definitely reach the result,” Ayatollah Khamenei said during a meeting with IRGC commanders.

■ **‘Iran has not agreed to France and Japan’s mechanism yet’**

Mousavi also said that Iran has not yet agreed to France and Japan’s proposed mechanism to save the JCPOA.

Sputnik reported on Sunday that France and Japan have jointly proposed offering Iran over \$18 billion in credit lines if Tehran comes fully back into compliance with the JCPOA.

The Persian language website of Sputnik reported that the Japanese government has decided to provide backup for France’s initiative after Tehran demanded further credit to compensate negative impacts of U.S. sanctions.

The news agency added that the newly-offered credit line will be at least \$18.42 billion. It seems the guarantee for the mentioned credit line will be Iran’s crude exports and that the credit line will be restricted to importing food stuff and medicine by Iran.

■ **‘Not joining FATF not synonymous with self-imposed sanctions’**

Mousavi also refuted arguments that joining the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) will lead to self-imposed sanctions.

“We hope that the Expediency Council will come to a conclusion about interests

of the country, system and people and act according to that,” he said.

The Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF) said on Friday it has given Iran a final deadline of February 2020 to tighten its laws against money laundering in compliance with the global watchdog’s financial standards.

“If before February 2020, Iran does not enact the Palermo and Terrorist Financing Conventions in line with the FATF Standards, then the FATF will fully lift the suspension of counter-measures and call on its members and urge all jurisdictions to apply effective counter-measures, in line with recommendation 19,” the FATF said in a statement on Friday, Reuters reported.

Gholamreza Mesbahi-Moghadam, a member of the Expediency Council, told ISNA in an interview published on October 14 that the council has set aside studies to approve the Palermo bill.

“Palermo and CFT will help the United States to identify the ways we circumvent the sanctions. We will not tighten sanctions by our own hands,” Mesbahi-Moghadam remarked.

One of the actions Iran is required to take to appease the FATF is to ratify the CFT, the convention combatting financing of terrorism.

■ **‘Iran has notified UN on the attack on tanker in Red Sea’**

Mousavi also said that Iran has informed the United Nations about the September 11

attack on its oil tanker in the Red Sea.

Two separate explosions, possibly caused by missile attacks, hit the SABITI oil tanker owned by the National Iranian Tanker Company (NITC). The vessel was struck 60 miles from the Saudi port city of Jeddah.

■ **‘Iran welcomes easing tension with UAE’**

Mousavi also said that Iran welcomes any action in easing tension with the regional countries, especially the United Arab Emirates.

“We hope our friends in the Persian Gulf region will come to this point that they will not find a friend better than Iran if they want peace and stability,” he said.

■ **Turkey can have bases on own soil, but not in Syria**

The Foreign Ministry spokesman also expressed Tehran’s opposition to a move by Turkey to establish military bases inside Syria, calling on Ankara to respect Syria’s territorial integrity.

“The Turks can have bases on their own side of the border but establishing bases on Syrian soil is unacceptable and amounts to violating [the sovereignty] of a member of the United Nations,” Mousavi remarked, according to Press TV.

Mousavi said Turkey’s security concerns, while legitimate, should be resolved amicably and with full respect for Syria’s sovereignty.

“Syria’s sovereignty and integrity must be respected by all countries of the region,” he said, noting there were already various mechanisms and agreements in place that could be used to address Turkey’s concerns.

The spokesman said Iran was ready to engage Syrian Kurds, Syria’s government as well as Turkey in order to bring them closer.

Turkish military forces and their FSA proxies launched an invasion of northeast Syria on October 9 in a bid to clear Kurdish militants of the so-called People’s Protection Units (YPG) from its border areas.

Ankara has blacklisted the U.S.-backed YPG as a terrorist organization tied to the homegrown Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) militant group, which has been waging a bloody war on Turkey since 1984.

The Syrian government has condemned the offensive as an act of aggression.

## Iran sends U.S. list of names for proposed prisoner swap

**POLITICAL** TEHRAN — The Iranian Foreign Ministry said Monday it has sent the United States

a list of names it is demanding in a proposed prisoner swap, opening a potential new channel with Washington amid recent growing tensions.

Iran did not detail the names it relayed, but Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said he hoped to hear soon “good news” about the release of Iranian scientist Masoud Soleimani.

U.S. federal authorities arrested Soleimani last year on charges that he had violated trade sanctions by trying to have biological material brought to Iran.

Zarif said he raised the issue last month in his visit to New York to attend the UN General Assembly, according to the semi-official Fars news agency.

Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said the Islamic Republic has relayed which Iranians should be included in the suggested swap with the United States and other Western nations. Iran holds several American nationals and did not detail whom it would consider freeing.

“We have handed over a list of names (to the United States) who must be freed,” Mousavi said, in a briefing with reporters. “We hope that these efforts, if paired with good will, would pay off soon and we would see freedom of Dr. Soleimani and other Iranians from the Americans’ captivity.”

Tensions between Iran and the United States have steadily escalated since President Donald Trump pulled the United States out of the 2015 nuclear deal last May and re-imposed sanctions on Iran.

A prisoner swap could offer a breakthrough following a

pair of conciliatory moves.

According to the Associated Press, prosecutors in Atlanta got an indictment the following month against Soleimani, who works in stem cell research, hematology and regenerative medicine. U.S. officials revoked his visa and arrested him in October when he landed in Chicago.

A month ago, the U.S. deported Iranian Negar Ghodskani who was brought to the U.S. to face criminal conspiracy charges. She was sentenced to time served for conspiracy to illegally export restricted technology from the U.S. to Iran.

In June, Iran released Nizar Zakka, a U.S. permanent resident from Lebanon who advocated for internet freedom and has done work for the U.S. government. He was sentenced to 10 years on espionage-related charges and was freed after serving less than four years.



# Larijani highlights Iran's support for Syrian territorial integrity

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani on Monday voiced Iran's full support for Syria's territorial integrity, security and stability.

Larijani's remarks came in a meeting with Syrian Ambassador to Tehran Adnan Mahmoud.

"Preservation of Syria's integrity has always been highly regarded by Iran and that Tehran has permanently been in close consultation with other countries on this matter," Larijani remarked.

He further said, "Any damage to integrity of Syria will intensify the problems of the country's people."

The remarks by Larijani followed after Turkish troops and militias backed by Ankara invaded northeastern Syria on October 9 to drive out Kurdish forces near the border with Turkey. The Turkish move sparked an international outcry.

Earlier this month, Larijani cancelled his official trip to Turkey to participate in a parliamentary summit in Istanbul in protest to Turkish forces' incursion into Syria.

Ambassador Mahmoud, for his part, said, "In spite of Turkey's agreement with the U.S. to end military operation (in northern Syria), Turkish troops' incursion into Syria is underway."



"Ankara has forwarded more troops to the borders with and inside Syria. Recep Tayyip Erdogan said yesterday (Sunday) that the safe zone that Turkey is planning to create will cover a large area with 444km length and 32km width."

The ambassador admired Tehran's unsparing efforts to put an end to the Syrians' difficulties and said, "As the U.S. plan in Syria has failed, it is necessary to prevent Turkey from creating a safe zone in northern Syria." In relevant remarks on Saturday, an

Iranian parliamentarian suggested that influential countries, including Iran and Russian, mediate and persuade Turkey to halt military operation in northern Syria in order to prevent a fresh human catastrophe.

"People around the world hate wars and massacre of innocent civilians, including what is happening in Yemen and Afghanistan by the Saudi and American forces," said Kamal Dehqani, who is in charge of the international relations of the parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee.

The Turkish president is trying to justify attack on northern Syria to counter Kurdish fighters that Ankara calls terrorist. Erdogan sees the SDF an extension of the PKK.

Kurdish fighters, known as the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), lost 10,000 members in the battle against Daesh (ISIL).

"Of course, terrorist acts are not acceptable by anybody, but no country accepts aggression against another country, destabilizing security under pretext of countering terrorists," the MP emphasized.

"In such cases, influential countries including Russia and Iran need to start playing a mediating role to prevent massacre of innocent people and maintain the Syrian government's sovereignty," Dehqani remarked.

## Zarif says ready to visit Riyadh to reduce regional tension

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has said he is ready to visit Riyadh to resolve disputes with Saudi Arabia if conditions are ripe.

"Iran welcomes any initiative to reduce tension in the region, and we are ready to cooperate with any step to end the war in Yemen," Zarif said on Monday, News1 reported.

"Iran will always stand by the Yemeni people, and we believe that ending the war will help the Yemeni people at first glance," he added.

He pointed out that "contacts are continuing with Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan on the situation in Yemen," reiterating Iran's readiness to help end the war in Yemen.

Saudi Arabia and a coalition of its vassal states launched the war on Yemen in March 2015 in an attempt to reinstall the Riyadh-backed former regime of Mansour Hadi and eliminate the Houthi Ansarullah movement.

The Western-backed military aggression, coupled with a naval blockade, has destroyed the country's infrastructure, and led to a massive humanitarian crisis.



On September 14, Yemeni armed forces conducted a large-scale operation against two Aramco installations, knocking out half of Saudi Arabia's oil production.

The Yemeni Houthi Ansarullah movement took responsibility for the attacks and stressed that they came in response to the Saudi-led war on their country. However, Riyadh and

Washington — the main sponsor of the war on Yemen — pointed the finger at Iran, without providing any evidence. Iran, however, flatly rejected the allegations.

In the meantime, Iran's Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani said last week that Iran will be ready to act as mediator on the issue of Yemen if Saudi Arabia accepts a political solution.

"If Saudis accept political solution, Iran will mediate on the Yemen issue. However, the United States thinks that the time to stop milking Saudi Arabia has not come yet," Larijani said during a meeting with Bundestag Vice President Claudia Roth on the sidelines of 41st summit of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Belgrade on Tuesday.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has also said that ending war in Yemen will have positive effects on the Middle East.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran presented a four-point plan to end war in Yemen a long time ago and if this war ends in a right way, it can have positive effects in the region," the Leader said on October 13, during a meeting with visiting Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan.

## 'MP criticizes FATF for 'harsh tone against Iran



**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — A member of the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee has criticized the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF) for taking a "harsh tone" toward Iran in its latest statement.

"The recent statement of the FATF demonstrates heavy political pressures in the Financial Action Task Force against Iran," Heshmatollah Falahatpisheh said, ISNA reported on Monday.

"Since Iran is not in this group, hostile policies against the Islamic Republic of Iran has been formed," he added.

The FATF said on Friday it had given Iran a final deadline of February 2020 to tighten its laws against money laundering in compliance with the global watchdog's financial standards.

"If before February 2020, Iran does not enact the Palermo and Terrorist Financing Conventions in line with the FATF Standards, then the FATF will fully lift the suspension of counter-measures and call on its members and urge all jurisdictions to apply effective counter-measures, in line with recommendation 19," the FATF said in a statement, according to Reuters.

"The FATF expects Iran to proceed swiftly in the reform path to ensure that

it addresses all of the remaining items by completing and implementing the necessary Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing reforms."

The statement's tone provoked a backlash from Tehran, in part because in its previous statement in June, the body had praised Iran's actions in line with reforms to counter money laundering, while extending the deadline until October.

Falahatpisheh said the FATF's statement showed that a radical and powerful political movement is trying to threaten Iran.

One of the actions Iran is required to take to appease the FATF is joining the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), which is also called the Palermo Convention, a 2000 United Nations-sponsored multilateral treaty against transnational organized crime.

The other action is to ratify the CFT, the convention combatting financing of terrorism.

On October 7, 2018, the parliament voted in favor of the CFT. However, the oversight Guardian Council rejected the bill by finding 22 faults with it, which put the fate of the bill on the hands of the Expediency Council.

## Iran ready to take fourth nuclear step, says legislator



**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — A top lawmaker says the Islamic Republic is ready to take the fourth step of scaling back its commitments to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), commonly known as the Iran nuclear deal.

"Given the lack of commitment by the European side and failure to fulfil their commitments until now, the Islamic Republic of Iran definitely has the fourth step of reducing its Barjam (JCPOA) commitments on the agenda, unless the Europeans take practical measures to fulfil their duties before the fourth step," Hossein Naghavi Hosseini, the spokesman for the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, tweeted on Sunday evening.

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

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

Following the U.S. withdrawal, Iran remained fully committed to the JCPOA for a year, but announced on the anniversary

of Washington's bellicose move that its "strategic patience" is over and would gradually reduce its commitments to the deal at 60-day intervals, which were designed as deadlines for Europe to protect Tehran's interests under the deal.

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

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

Tehran has repeatedly said its measures will be revered as soon as Europe finds practical ways to shield the Iranian economy from unilateral U.S. sanctions.

In another tweet on Monday, Naghavi Hosseini explained that in the first, second and third steps, Iran ended restrictions regarding research, uranium enrichment capacity and uranium enrichment stockpile.

He then suggested that in the fourth step, Iran will reduce the level of supervision of its nuclear activities by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

## Army chief: Unveiling of homegrown combat jet trainer had a message for enemies

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Unveiling the homegrown combat jet trainer had a clear message for the arrogant powers and enemies, Army Chief Abdolrahim Mousavi said on Tuesday.

Iran on Thursday unveiled a state-of-the-art combat jet trainer dubbed "Yasin" which was completely designed and manufactured by domestic military experts.

In a message, Major General Mousavi thanked Chief of the Islamic Republic of Iran Air Force (IRIAF) Aziz Nasirzadeh and all those who helped with design and production of the jet trainer, Mehr reported.

The unveiling of the aircraft "brought joy to the hearts

of the devotees of the [Islamic] Revolution and Iran, and it had a clear message for the [Global] Arrogance, especially the Islamic Republic's enemies," he said.

The aircraft was unveiled during a ceremony in Shahid Noje Airbase in the western province of Hamedan, attended by high-ranking officials including Defense Minister Amir Hatami, Vice President for Scientific Affairs Sorena Sattari, and Brigadier General Aziz Nasirzadeh.

According to the Public Relations Department of the Army, Yasin made its first official flight over the Shahid Noje Airbase on Thursday morning at the behest of the Air Force's commander.

Yasin jet trainer is 12 meters long, four meters high, and

weighs five and a half tons.

The aircraft's ejection seat is capable of working at zero speed and under any circumstances, propelling the pilots out of the fighter jet in a fraction of a second to a height of up to 100 meters.

Iranian military experts and technicians have in recent years made great headways in manufacturing a broad range of indigenous equipment, making the armed forces self-sufficient in the arms sphere.

Iranian officials have repeatedly underscored that the country will not hesitate to strengthen its military capabilities, including its missile power, which are entirely meant for defense, and that Iran's defense capabilities will be never subject to negotiations.

## Jalali rejects U.S. claims of cyber-attacks on Iran

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Gholamreza Jalali, chief of Iran's Civil Defense Organization, announced on Monday that claims by Washington that the United States has launched cyber-attacks against Iran are nothing but lies.



"The Americans have so far claimed two times that they have launched cyber-attacks on Iran in response to interception of their drone by the Iranian air defense force, but we have not witnessed any sign of their cyber-attacks," Jalali told a press conference marking the anniversary of the establishment of his organization.

On June 20, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps downed that a U.S. spy drone that violated the Iranian territorial airspace over the Persian Gulf. The drone, an RQ-4A Global Hawk, was shot down in the early hours of June 20 by the IIRGC Aerospace Force's air defense unit near the Koohe-e-Mobarak region in the southern province of Hormozgan.

The intruding drone was shot by Iran's homegrown air defense missile system "Khordad-3rd".

"Since the enemy officially announced cyber war against us, we informed the entire relevant centers nationwide about the cyber war and compiled five basic plans in this field. We held several meetings with relevant bodies, trained them and later we launched the process of controlling and inspecting. We further handed over our findings and conclusions to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution," General Jalali explained.

Jalali added, "The U.S. claims of launching two cyber-attacks on the country and Tehran's rejection of such attacks testify Iran's cyber defense might and our valuable measures in this arena."

## Over 15 million pilgrims visited Karbala this year: report

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — More than 15.22 million pilgrims entered the holy city of Karbala from five cities of Baghdad, Najaf, Babylon, al-Hurr and Hussainiyeh, according to a report.

In a Saturday statement, the al-Abbasi Holy Shrine announced that the number of the visitors during the Arbāeen season this year — from October 6 to 19 — has reached 15,229,955, Mehr reported.

The following is the text of the statement:

As usual for more than 13 centuries, the holy city of Karbala was honored by the guests and visitors of Aba Abdillah al-Hussein (peace be upon him) in the blessed Ziyarat of Arbāeen this year.

The servants of the holy shrines had the great honor to receive them and render their services to the visitors. These services included many activities such as documenting the number of visitors by the electronic counting system for arrival at the main entrances of Karbala. This system was installed and managed by the Communications' division of the al-Abbasi Holy Shrine for the fourth year in a row, and the statistical analysis documentation of the rest of the services in the holy city of Karbala by the al-Kafeel Center for Information and Statistical Studies.

The number of visitors registered according to the electronic counting system in five axes (Baghdad - Karbala, Najaf - Karbala, Babylon - Karbala, Hussaynia - Karbala, and al-Hurr-Karbala.) is 15,229,955 visitors, in the said period.

The number of visitors in the preceding year was 15,322,949.

## Aref may not top reformists' election list: party leader

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Chief of the pro-reform Union of Islamic Iran People Party has expressed doubt that Mohammad Reza Aref would be at the top of the reformist camp's list of candidates for the upcoming parliamentary election.



"My take is that Mohammad Reza Aref will not become the head of reformists' list in the Majlis elections," Ali Shakouri Rad said on Monday, according to Tasnim.

He also said the reformists have not come up with a list and it's early to speculate on the names of final candidates.

Aref is currently leader of reformists' Hope faction in the Majlis, representing Tehran, Rey, Shemiranat and Eslamshahr.

He has also been heading the Reformists' Supreme Council for Policymaking since its establishment in 2015.



STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	302177.2
IFX	3706.51

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	46,867 rials
GBP	54,206 rials
AED	11,437 rials

Source: cbi.ir

COMMODITIES

Brent	\$58.96/b
WTI	\$53.59/b
OPEC Basket	\$59.54/b
Gold	\$1,491.30/oz
Silver	\$817.74/oz
Platinum	\$896.15/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

Tehran hosting intl. fishery exhibition

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** —The Iranian capital is hosting the 4th International Fisheries Industry Exhibition (IFEX 2019) from October 21 to 24 at the Tehran Permanent International Fairground, IRNA reported on Monday.

Some 96 Iranian and foreign companies from Italy, Turkey, and China are participating in this year’s exhibition, which started operation in the presence of the Deputy Agriculture Minister Nabiollah Khoun Mirzaei.

As reported, the exhibition is aimed at increasing production in fishery industry and boosting economic development and employment in this sector.

Outlook plan required for copper industry development

**1 →** Although the statistics released by the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade indicate that copper production in the country is on a rising trend, as the output has increased 18 percent during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22) compared to the first half of the past year, it should not be used as an excuse for ignoring the existing impediments.



Because due to a number of factors including the rising trend of using electric vehicles and growth in IT industry throughout the world, demand for copper is increasing, and that is why Iran should develop its domestic industry to achieve a larger share of the global market of this mineral.

Expansion of exploration and discovery activities, boosting productivity of production units, promotion of technology, and scrap copper recycling are some strategies that the industry experts refer to for development of copper sector.

The good news is that Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Reza Rahmani has announced that some fruitful activities are being conducted in mining sector of the country and in fact a revolution is underway in this sector which promises some good future.

TEDPIX rises after consecutive days of fall

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), rose 785 points to 302,176 on Monday, after some consecutive days of drop since the beginning of autumn (start of the second half of Iranian calendar year), IRNA reported.

The report said that 3.116 billion securities worth 12.955 trillion rials (about \$308.4 million) were traded at TSE on Monday.

As previously announced, the index has fallen 3,402 points to 309,647 during the five working days of the past Iranian calendar week (Saturday to Wednesday).

Some 16.496 billion securities worth 75.752 trillion rials (about \$1.803 billion) were traded through 1.677 million deals at TSE during the past week.

The stock market experts mention the emotional influence created by the new shareholders as the main reason behind the drops that this market has been experiencing recently.

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

Experiencing a growth of 74 percent during the first six months of the present year, TSE witnessed its best performance since the Iranian calendar year of 1382 (March 2003-March 2004).

Also as reported, Iran’s over-the-counter (OTC) market, known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB), has experienced a noticeable positive performance during the first half, as its main index, IFX, gained 78 percent during the mentioned period of time.

‘Budget bill to include development, employment, subsidy plans’

**1 →** Earlier this month, the official had said that the revenues gained from elimination of hidden energy subsidies as well as increased tax incomes will replace oil revenues in the next year’s budget bill.

“This does not mean a rise in tax income; but by setting new tax bases and eliminating unnecessary exemptions at a time of economic warfare, more tax revenues will be provided,” he explained.

Back in September, Nobakht had announced that the government was going to submit the budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year

to the parliament on December 6 as scheduled.

According to the official, this year, PBO has decided to send the information about the state-owned companies’ budget to the Majlis (Iranian parliament) a month earlier so that the parliament would have enough time to review it.

The members of the budget preparation committee at PBO are seriously working on the bill and while the views may differ in some areas, the consensus among all members will be the base for the final decision making, Nobakht said.



NIMA supplies over €20b for imports of goods, services since April 2018

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iran’s domestic Forex Management Integrated System (locally known as NIMA) has supplied over €20 billion for imports of goods and services since it was launched in April 2018 up to October 20, 2019, IRNA reported.

NIMA, which seeks to boost transparency, create competitiveness among exchange shops and a secure environment for traders, is a new chance for importers to supply their required foreign currency without specific problems and for exporters to re-inject their earned foreign currency to domestic forex market. It was inaugurated to allow exporters of non-oil commodities to sell their foreign currency earnings to importers of consumer products.

According to the Governor of Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Abdolnasser Hemmati, establishing direct communication between importers and exporters has significantly increased the volume of exchanges in the NIMA system during the past few months.

In late May, CBI unveiled a directive package which provided the country’s exporters with guidelines about how they should re-inject their foreign currency incomes into the country’s economy.

Based on the new directive, for the



petrochemical sector, the exporters should present at least 60 percent of their foreign currency incomes into NIMA, and a maximum 10 percent could be injected into the financial system in the form of hard currency and the rest could be used for importing necessary goods.

As for other exporters, at least 50 percent of the total earnings should be presented at the NIMA system and a maximum 20 percent could be distributed in form of hard currency and the rest can be used for imports.

The instructions, aimed to lead the export revenues from the non-oil exports back into the country’s economy through NIMA, mandate all the exporters of goods and services to guarantee bringing back to the country the foreign currency amount allocated to them by the government at lower prices than the free market.

PMO offers strategies for boosting non-oil exports

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Head of Iran’s Ports and Maritime Organization has outlined four major strategies followed by his organization for supporting non-oil exports, IRIB reported on Monday.



According to Mohammad Rastad, upgrading the capacity of the country’s ports in north and south, providing the necessary infrastructure and equipment for non-oil exports, increasing the efficiency of export operations, and providing appropriate discounts for export products to make them competitive in global markets are PMO’s four major strategies for encouraging non-oil exports.

Speaking on the occasion of national exports day in Tehran, the official noted “Since more than 90 percent of the country’s imports and exports take place through sea routes, therefore, the country’s commercial ports are of great importance for the country’s foreign trade and especially its non-oil exports.”

“Currently, a major part of the capacity of the country’s commercial ports is allocated to non-oil exports, so that since last [Iranian calendar] year (started in March 2018) the total weight of the commodities exported through the country’s ports has been twice the weight of imports,” Rastad said.

According to the official, PMO has introduced special incentives for non-oil exporters, including granting of a 25-percent discount on the freight fare and duties of cargo ships, in order to increase the competitiveness of the country’s export products.

He further mentioned the private sector’s investments in the country’s ports, saying «Fortunately, this year we have witnessed a great boost in terms of domestic investment in our ports, so that we have attracted over 50 trillion rials (nearly \$1.2 billion) of investment in this sector with an especial focus on non-oil exports.”

‘Eliminating tax exemption in free zones not on agenda’

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — The secretary of Iranian Free Zones High Council said eliminating tax exemptions in the country’s free zones is not on the agenda of any official government or legislative bodies, IRNA reported.

Mentioning recent comments by some government officials about changing the regulations regarding the tax exemptions in free zones, Morteza Bank said, “In the country’s law regarding the free trade zones, a 20-year period has been provisioned for the current tax exemptions.” For many years, Iran’s free and special economic zones have provided various incentives to attract investors, one of which is tax exemption. This issue has recently been criticized by some government officials and some are demanding elimination of such exemptions.

“Taxation is a central issue in free zones. One of the most important elements of free zones is tax exemptions and customs fee exemptions, and this is the case not only in Iran, but throughout the world,” Bank said.

Earlier on Sunday, Iran’s deputy finance and economic affairs minister announced that his ministry is planning on amending the regulations pertain to tax exemptions in the country’s free eco-

nomic zones.

Mentioning the criticism facing the tax exemptions in free zones regarding their ineffectiveness, Mohammad-Ali Dehghan Dehnavi noted that supporting the country’s free zones as gateways to development of trade is important, however considering the abuses that is resulted from such support, it seems that some amendment is in order.

“The solution is to reform the current path; it can include removing exemptions altogether or regulating and monitoring them,” he said adding that “Iranian National Tax Administration (INTA) is just needed to be provided with sufficient information on economic activities in the mentioned zones [to make the necessary decision].”

According to Dehnavi, the country’s free zones are currently in charge of their economic information, and the Tax Administration has no authority in this regard.

“If this information is made available to the tax office [INTA], it will certainly help prevent tax evasion,” he said, adding “If all the country’s economic information could be collected into one comprehensive database in the form of a tax plan, we would surely see good results.”

First Announcement

IN THE NAME OF GOD

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING

INTERNATIONAL TENDER

**Tender Holder:**

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING (IRIB)

**Subject of Tender :**

The Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting Organization intends to use the capacity of the private sector for the Direct Sale of Iranian goods via the Internet online and on live stream television broadcasting on IRAN KALA TV Network by eligible and experienced legal entities. To this end, all companies and individuals active in this field who have good record of fulfilling similar projects and are fully familiar with this field are invited to submit technical and professional documentation, together with Introduction of the company, the number of specialist personnel along with previous experience & projects to the following address.

**Deadline for Delivering (RFI):**

9:00 a.m. Wednesday 2019/10/23 until 16:00 p.m. on Tuesday 2019/11/05.

**Place of Receiving the (RFI) document:**

Interested participants must refer to International Purchase Management (KALA) Dept. ,4<sup>th</sup> Floor of IRIB Administration Complex, Hotel Esteghlal St., Vali - Asr Ave., Tehran, Iran

**Deadline for Envelope delivery (RFI):**

The Sealed envelopes must be delivered no later than 16:00 pm on Wednesday 2019/11/27 to the International Purchasing Management Office.

**Time and Place of Opening Envelopes (RFI):**

The date of opening the envelopes is on 09:00 a.m. on Saturday 2019/11/30 at the International Purchasing Management office.

For More information please call: 009821-22167053:

Obviously a meeting will be arranged upon request of IRIB for further explanation.

This call does not create any responsibility for IRIB and no rights for the responsive company, and a comprehensive and sufficient explanation of the tender subject by the interested companies will be effective only in identifying and making the right decision for IRIB.

Purchasing (Kala) Dept., IRIB



# Efforts for halting Iranian oil industry's development failed: Zanganeh

**E N E R G Y** **TEHRAN** — Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said the U.S. efforts for stopping development of the country's oil industry has failed, Tasnim news agency reported.

"Although many efforts have been made to halt the development of Iran's oil industry, not only the development of our oil industry is not stopped but we are also witnessing contract signings and launching and implementation of numerous projects in the country's oil and gas industry," Zanganeh told Tasnim.

The official noted that oil and gas exploration continues across the country and the public will be informed when any new discovery is made.

Zanganeh has repeatedly denied the idea of U.S. sanctions' long-term impact on the country's oil production and exports capacity, saying output could be back to normal very quickly once the sanctions are removed.

Earlier this month, the minister had



said that despite the U.S. sanctions, Iran will use any possible way to export its oil,

stressing that exporting crude was the country's legitimate right.

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

Back in August, the oil minister had stressed that the development of the upstream oil sector was the ministry's top priority in the current Iranian calendar year, 1398 (March 2019-March 2020).

"The first phase of developing the upstream sector includes boosting production and rising recovery rates in 20 oil and gas fields comprising 52 reservoirs in cooperation with universities and research centers," he said.

Since the U.S. withdrew from Iran's nuclear pact in May 2018, the Islamic Republic has been taking various measures to counter U.S. actions and to keep its oil production and export levels as high as possible.

Iran has repeatedly announced that it is mobilizing all its resources to keep the country's oil industry afloat and it has done so to some extent.

## Nearly \$1.2b needed to reduce losses in power grid: Energy Ministry

**E N E R G Y** **TEHRAN** — Iranian Energy Ministry has announced that 50 trillion rials (nearly \$1.2 billion) of investment is needed to reduce the energy losses in the country's electricity network to less than 10 percent, IRNA reported on Monday.

According to the Energy Ministry, this amount of investment is economical and justifiable given the fact that this cost is much lower than the costs for power plant construction and it will also lead to lower fuel consumption.

As reported, since the Iranian calendar year of 1392 (started on March 21, 2013) up to the end of the calendar year of 1397 (ended on March 20, 2019) the losses in the Iranian electricity network has been reduced by 4.1 percent.

During the mentioned time span, electricity losses fell from 15.2 percent to 11.1 percent.



A four-percent reduction in losses means saving the costs for construction of 2500 megawatts capacity of new power plants (about €5.1 billion) and a reduction of eight billion cubic meters of natural gas consumption (equivalent to annual production of one of the South Pars gas field's phases).

According to the data released by the Energy Ministry, Iran's electricity grid losses were less than those of Mexico, Turkey, and Brazil in the Iranian calendar year of 1397.

With a nominal electricity generation capacity of 84,795 megawatts [84.795 gigawatts (GW)], Iran has one the biggest power networks in the Middle East.

The country's total power generation capacity stood at 80,000 MW in the Iranian calendar year of 1397, up from the 78,484 MW of its preceding year.

## Oil prices fall as global demand concerns grow

Oil fell on Monday as concerns about economic growth combined with signs of ample global supplies pressured prices, outweighing bullish signals from Europe, where fears of an economically damaging no-deal Brexit have eased.

As stated by reuters.com, global benchmark Brent crude LCOc1 was down 57 cents at \$58.85 a barrel by 0944 GMT. U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude oil CLc1 declined 39 cents to \$53.39 a barrel.

U.S. and Chinese trade negotiators are working on nailing down a Phase 1 trade deal text for their presidents to sign next month, hoping to resolve a trade war that has rumbled on over the last year, slowing global economic growth.

But adding to tensions, China is now seeking \$2.4 billion in retaliatory sanctions against the United States for non-compliance with a WTO ruling in a tariffs case dating back to the Obama era, a published document showed.

A "rebound in upside potential looks unlikely at this stage given that bullish catalysts are in short supply," said Stephen Brennock of oil broker PVM. "Only a meaningful U.S.-China trade agreement or deeper OPEC cuts will change the negative status quo, neither of which seem to be forthcoming."

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, Russia and other oil producers, an alliance known as OPEC+, agreed in December to cut supply by 1.2 million barrels per day

(bpd) from the start of this year.

Russia, the world's second-largest oil producer, said on Sunday it did not meet its supply reduction commitment in September because of an increase in natural gas condensate output as the country prepared for winter.

Additionally, talks between OPEC members Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to resume oil production from joint fields in the Neutral Zone between the two countries, with capacity of 500,000 barrels per day, could mean more supply returning to the market.

China's economic growth slowed to 6% year-on-year in the third quarter, its weakest in 27-1/2 years.

However, a 9.4% year-on-year increase in China's refinery throughput for September signaled that petroleum demand remained robust.

"This level of crude intake would imply that every province had simultaneously processed close-to-record volumes of crude based on their historical regional reporting," JBC analysts said in a note.

European shares opened slightly higher on Monday and UK government bond yields rose as investors remained hopeful that Britain would be able to avoid a disorderly exit from the European Union.

Analysts have said any British-EU agreement that avoids a no-deal Brexit should boost economic growth and oil demand.



## Is this the end of the Aramco IPO?

**By Cyril Widdershoven**

The Aramco IPO has become a headache for many investors having been delayed yet again last week. Banks are now worried that it will be delayed until the end of 2019, which would have a knock-on effect in the financial world as the banks would have been counting on the earnings that the IPO was expected to bring. At the same time, there are no clear signs of the IPO being called off altogether.

The very positive statements made by Russian officials, such as Kirill Dmitriev, the chief executive of the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) during the visit of Vladimir Putin to Saudi Arabia, combined with the positive sentiment in the PGCC and Asian markets, would suggest the Aramco IPO will eventually become a reality.

In recent weeks, reports emerged that the IPO will be supported by several large sovereign wealth funds, such as Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA), Singapore's GIC, Abu Dhabi's Mubadala and others, investing in the domestic leg of the Aramco listing. Sources even indicated that these SWFs had already ordered banks to start preparing for the IPO.

Chinese parties have also indicated they are on board. Russian investors, present during Putin's state visit to the Kingdom, indicated a clear willingness to be a part of the IPO adventure. Inside Saudi Arabia, the support of local bankers, investment groups and family offices has been all but ensured by the Saudi government. The only real negative statement was made by Singapore's investment fund Temasek which openly said it would not invest in Aramco's IPO.

■ **The largest oil company**

But behind the positive news, there



remain some worrying issues. The most pressing of these is that the overall risk profile of the world's largest oil company has increased substantially in recent weeks. Some risks had already been identified, such as transparency, accountability and the possible interference of the Saudi government. While these issues have been legally dealt with by Aramco, analysts remain very wary of the potential impact of taking a share in a still largely government-owned and influenced entity. Listing on a stock-exchange will not remove these fears. The opaque decision-making nature of the IPO has made a large group of investors and banks very wary of the outcome. The lack of transparency within the oil Kingdom will always be an issue for the company.

Another issue not yet dealt with fully, even if oil markets seem to be shrugging off geopolitical risks at present, is the Abqaiq issue. The fact that a proxy or third-party actor could bring the world's largest oil company to its knees has shocked investors.

Political risks can be addressed easily enough, but full-scale military threats are new to most investors. Even though Aramco

has been able to restore production and exports to former levels, Aramco's façade of invincible has been severely dented.

For the IPO to be a success story Aramco would have to be valued at \$1.5-2 trillion, and the issues highlighted above may well have dragged the company below that mark.

■ **Battling to restore stability**

With global oil markets still battling to restore stability, demand being under pressure, and regional instability causing fear, the valuation of an Aramco IPO has taken a big hit. Rumors of OPEC targeting new harsh production cuts at the next meeting aren't helping the situation either.

All of these issues could have been assessed and taken care off well before this point. Saudi Arabia's strategists can be blamed for having either a lack of willingness or knowledge to prevent this situation from occurring. And now, the "ghost of Greta" has set its evil eye on the IPO too.

Growing international pressure from climate change activists, coming from both NGOs and media sources, is pressuring Western and Asian financial groups to remove themselves from the Aramco IPO

venture.

Western environmental groups, such as Sierra Club, 350.org and Friends of the Earth, are targeting Wall Street bankers. U.S., British and Dutch green activists have openly asked banks such as Bank of America, Citigroup, Goldman Sachs and others, not to underwrite the IPO of Saudi Aramco.

The NGOs, partly even supported by European political parties, are taking advantage of the "Greta effect". As shown by Singapore's Temasek Holding, pressure from environmental groups can change strategy. Most Western banks and institutional investors are susceptible to NGO and political pressure on climate change.

All of this combined means that things are not looking good for the Aramco IPO. With each delay, all of these pressures and risks are only increasing. After years of haggling with NYSE, LSE and others over the Aramco listing, Riyadh now could be looking at a situation in which appetite is waning, options to list are disappearing, and global oil markets are weakening. That the IPO backers are getting scared is clear.

The splitting up of the IPO has already seen by many as a sign of weakness. At the same time, listing Aramco on the Tadawul, Tokyo and other 2nd line exchanges is far from positive news for Aramco or the stock exchanges. If Aramco is valued at \$1.5 trillion, the Saudi Tadawul will become the Aramco Exchange and nothing else. For Tokyo, Aramco's listing would make the exchange extremely exposed to political and geopolitical developments in the Middle East. These unforeseeable and unpredictable non-financial risks are too high to be taken lightly.

(Source: oilprice.com)

## Japan rushes to establish LNG bunkering hub as environmental rules push global fleet to natural gas

**By Osamu Tsukimori**

A UN-led call for action to tighten sulfur oxide emissions may also be a trigger accelerating a shift to natural gas as fuel for the global shipping fleet, and Japan is wasting no time trying to establish a refueling hub in Asia.

Some 80,000 vessels worldwide are weighing how to comply with the International Maritime Organization's new requirements to cut sulfur emissions that take effect Jan. 1. Though the vast majority will likely shift to low-sulphur fuel oil, a growing number of vessels are turning to sulfur-free liquefied natural gas (LNG) amid heightened calls for curbing emissions.

To spur new demand for LNG bunkering, Japan is subsidizing projects in a rush to build vessels that make ship-to-ship LNG supply possible. Though some places including Yokohama allow supply of LNG to ships via trucks and pipelines on shore, LNG-powered ships usually refuel when they stop at ports for unloading or loading goods, making it necessary to build LNG supply vessels.

Two consortiums of private Japanese firms are planning to launch the nation's first LNG bunkering ships by the end of 2020. They would provide services in Tokyo Bay and Ise and Mikawa bays in central Japan as the equivalent of a mobile gas station for LNG-fueled ships.

Globally, 170 LNG-fueled vessels operate mainly in Europe, with 184 ships on order, according to the Society for Gas as a Marine Fuel. A total of 10 vessels supply LNG as fuel worldwide, with 19 more on order.

The LNG bunkering ship set to operate in Ise and Mikawa bays will be used to supply gas to two car-carriers ordered by Toyota Motor Corp. to transport automobiles to the United States, said Koji Takasaki, a professor emeritus at Kyushu University. The government-subsidized carriers will begin operations in 2021, he said.

■ **The shipping fleet**

The shipping fleet will likely undergo a revolution in the coming decades, as the IMO has, separately, targeted reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 40 percent by 2030 and 50 percent by 2050. Experts say this will require a shift to gas-powered vessels. LNG-powered ships curb greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent compared with oil-fueled alternatives.

But the regulation on sulfur emissions from 2020 is already having an impact on the shift to gas.

A "clear trend is that shippers tend to place orders on the shipping lines that operate low greenhouse emission-ships for transporting goods," Takasaki said. "Even without holding a banner on halving carbon dioxide emissions, the environment-conscious shipping lines are getting more orders, and the competition means that if one company does it, others will follow. So the LNG-powered vessels are set to soar in number."

A sense of urgency around streamlining LNG bunkering posts is growing in Japan at a time when Singapore, South Korea and China are also beefing up such facilities. Akiko Tanba, general manager of JERA Co.'s LNG bunkering unit, said in an interview.

JERA, a joint venture of Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings Inc. and Chubu Electric Power Co., is a member of a consortium that's building Japan's first LNG bunkering ship.

"Japan is a little behind in LNG-powered ships, but that is about to change with the start of the new regulation from 2020," Tanba said.

Starting Jan. 1, the IMO will curb the sulphur content in marine fuel oil to 0.5 percent from 3.5 percent in all general sea areas. High-sulfur fuel oil, which accounts for the vast majority of shipping fuel at present, will no longer be allowed unless ships install costly exhaust cleaning devices called scrubbers. Scrubber-equipped ships will be able to continue using cheap high-sulfur fuel oil, but the large space needed for scrubbers does not make this an option for small vessels, experts say.

Another option is to use low-sulphur fuel oil, but its higher price presents a disadvantage. The cleanest solution is LNG. The NYK Line and Mitsui O.S.K. Lines Ltd. have introduced Japan's first LNG-powered tugboats, which are refueled via truck.

The hurdle for choosing LNG ships is the high investment, as they typically cost 20 to 30 percent more than conventional vessels, Tanba said.

■ **LNG bunkering vessel**

NYK Line, Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha ("K" Line), JERA and Toyota Tsusho Corp. are set between September and December 2020 to launch Japan's first LNG bunkering vessel in central Japan, with tanks capable of storing 1,500 to 1,600 tons of LNG, enough to allow a round trip between North Asia and North America.

Tanba said Ise and Mikawa bays will be the only place in Japan allowing three types of LNG bunkering: Ship to ship, shore to ship and truck to ship.

Another project, led by Sumitomo Corp., is also planning to launch an LNG bunkering vessel by the end of 2020. An LNG-powered working vessel is also on order by the transport ministry, which is set to begin operations in March 2021.

Elsewhere in Japan, LNG bunkering using a portable LNG tank is being considered at Tomakomai in Hokkaido, and experiments using truck-to-ship LNG bunkering are underway in Kyushu and the Setouchi region in western Japan. JERA is conducting an upgrade at its Kawagoe gas-fired power plant in Saitama Prefecture so shore-to-ship LNG bunkering from LNG tanks will be possible.

These projects all fit into Japan's strategy to become an LNG hub in Asia. The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry is aiming to cooperate with Europe and Singapore in establishing a hub, as Japan is well placed geographically to serve as a refueling station for vessels sailing to North America.

A sense of crisis at the United Nations climate summit last month has provided a tailwind for LNG shipping. The Norway-based classification society DNV-GL estimates that 6 to 11 percent of the global shipping fleet is set to shift to LNG by 2025, while the Boston Consulting Group put the projection for 2025 at a range of 5 to 27 percent.

The shift could have major repercussions on the global LNG market. Currently, about 300 million tons of fuel oil is consumed annually by vessels. If 10 percent of that became LNG, for example, it would create new LNG demand of 30 million tons annually, equal to the nearly 10 percent of 2018 global demand of 319 million tons, according to Shell LNG Outlook 2019.

Despite growing momentum for using LNG, it will not be a remedy in the long term. The IMO's 40 percent carbon dioxide reduction target for each vessel by 2030 can be achieved by operating LNG ships at slow speeds to get better mileage, but the 50 percent cut in greenhouse gas emissions for 2050 compared with 2008, imposed on the entire shipping industry, will be a major challenge as additional measures, including using a considerable amount of biofuel, hydrogen or other alternatives, will be essential, Kyushu University's Takasaki said.

"Though Japan did not play an active role as a major bunkering port for fuel oil, it has a chance to become a major hub for LNG bunkering for global shippers," Takasaki said.

(Source: japantimes.co.jp)



## Trump’s ending of wars could derail the Democrats

By Maj. Danny Sjursen

**ANTIWAR** — I hate to say I told you so, but well... as predicted, in the wake of Trump’s commanded military withdrawal from northeast Syria, the once U.S.-backed Kurds cut a deal with the Assad regime. (And Vice President Mike Pence has now brokered a five-day cease-fire.) Admittedly, Trump the “dealmaker” ought to have brokered something similar before pulling out and before the Turkish Army — and its Sunni Arab Islamist proxies — invaded the region and inflicted significant civilian casualties.

One must admit that a single phone call between Trump and President Erdogan of Turkey has turned the situation in Syria upside down in just over a week. The Kurds have requested protection from Assad’s army, Russian troops are now patrolling between the Kurds and invading Turks, and the U.S. is (for once) watching from the sidelines.

The execution has been sloppy, of course — a Trumpian trademark — and the human cost potentially heavy. Nonetheless, the US withdrawal represents a significant instance of the president actually following through on campaign promises to end an endless American war in the Mideast. The situation isn’t simple, of course, and for the Kurds it is yet another fatalistic event in that people’s tragic history.

Still, while the situation in Northeast Syria constitutes a Byzantine mess, it’s increasingly unclear that a continued US military role there would be productive or strategic in the long term. After all, if Washington’s endgame wasn’t to establish a lasting, U.S.-guaranteed Kurdish nation-state of Rojava, and it hardly appeared that it ever was, then what exactly could America expect to accomplish through an all-risk, no-reward continued stalemate in Syria?

What’s truly striking, though, and increasingly apparent, is that President Trump possesses — as a foreign policy autocrat, of sorts — the power to derail the Democrats and place 2020 hopefuls in an awkward position of defending US forever wars. It’s already happening, at least among mainstream “liberal” media and political personalities who’ve flooded the networks with anti-Trump vitriol since the Syria withdrawal.

Lest we confuse Donald Trump with a consistent antiwar dove, it’s important to remember that his behavior is erratic and often turns on a dime. Take, for example, his decision to impose sanctions on Turkey right after greenlighting the very invasion he now seeks to punish. He’s also prone to contradictory moves. Also, just as he pulled troops from Syria, he added an even larger number to Saudi Arabia, justifying the move on the grounds that the Saudis will foot the entire bill, making rather official the US military’s gradual transformation into a mercenary force ready to serve the highest bidder. Trump has also surpassed, in his first two years, the number of drone strikes his predecessor Barack Obama launched overseas during the same phase of Obama’s presidency.

Nonetheless, Trump’s Democratic opponents have bet big on using Syria to attack the president without providing any real alternatives to withdrawal. In doing so, they might just hand Trump a winning hand for 2020. In fact, I haven’t seen so much foreign policy coverage of a US war by the establishment media for over a decade, at least since Democrats finally turned against Bush’s failing war in Iraq as a tool for midterm electoral success.

The attention suddenly focused on Syria is rather cynical, of course, with the country’s civil war only receiving notice now because it’s a cudgel used to reflexively attack Trump. It’s not about Kurdish ethnic rights or women’s, rights — and it never was. No, this is all about partisan political advantage. And it might just backfire on the Dems.

Trump isn’t all that scared of criticism on Syria, even from the establishment wing of his own party. Firing back at critics this week, Trump tweeted: “Others may want to come in and fight for one side or the other [in Syria]. Let them!”

See, this president knows what many congressional Republicans do not appear to realize: that the old conservative coalition — which included a powerful hawkish national security wing — is breaking down. The Republican base, well, they’re just about as sick of endless war as is Trump himself. Consider this remarkable turnaround: In recent polls, 56% of Republicans supported Trump’s Syria withdrawal, while 60% of Democrats opposed it. Which brings us back to the mainstream Democratic machine and the potentially awkward position of even the most progressive of the 2020 presidential hopefuls on the “left.” By flipping the script and demonstrating that Trump and his conservative backers constitute the only serious antiwar coalition, he could expose that establishment Dems — who’ve almost all stood tall with the neocon retreads against Trump’s move — represent little more than Sen. Lindsey Graham lite. He could show that they’re hawks too, opportunistic hawks at that, figures mired in the Washington swamp. Disgust with that bipartisan beltway elite is exactly what got Mr. Trump elected in 2016 (along with a peculiar outdated Electoral College, of course), which is exactly why responding to Trump’s (tentative) war-ending propensity will be sensitive and awkward for Democratic leaders and presidential candidates.

Look, even America’s usually conservative, if (purportedly) apolitical, soldiers and veterans are now against these forever wars that Trump ostensibly seeks to end. A series of polls this summer indicated that nearly two-thirds of post-9/11 vets say they believe the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the military engagement in Syria “were not worth it.” This should have been an alarm bell for both major parties, but expect the Democrats to once again squander the opportunity presented by these frustrated, alienated troopers.

By ignoring foreign policy — generally having ceded that political territory to the Republicans since midway through the Cold War — the Dems have ensured that most of these antiwar veterans won’t find a home, or land in the Democratic Party.

I personally know dozens of these sorts of exhausted veterans. Almost none have followed my own journey toward the left. In fact, the vast majority tell me they trust Trump, wars and all, over figures like Hillary Clinton, Joe Biden or any of the other Democratic elites that they find even more corrupt than the reality-TV-star-in-chief. My friends and colleagues may be wrong, may be off-base, but most truly believe it, which ought to worry Democrats. Only it won’t, or at least not in enough time.

So, while I’m cautious about giving sensible advice to Trump (luckily, he doesn’t read Truthdig, or read much at all), I think there’s potential for him to craft a winning strategy for 2020. Here’s a modest proposal on just how it might go: He could end one of America’s illegal wars, particularly those clearly not covered by the post-9/11 AUMFs [Authorization for Use of Military Force], every three months. Little-to-no warning, ignoring the complaints of senior generals and national security officials; just pick an ill-advised military intervention (there’re plenty to choose from) and announce its end.

Not only would this distract from impeachment, but it would force Trump’s potential 2020 opponents to perform some awkward intellectual gymnastics. They’d be obliged to double-down and promise to end even more wars, even more quickly, than Trump. Or, more likely, they could join the bipartisan swampy establishment and halfheartedly (and disingenuously) defend continuing the very unwinnable wars with which the American people have grown so tired.

I know all of that’s unlikely, but it’s not unthinkable. Trump could even wrap himself in a new brand of patriotism and emphasize his concern for America’s beloved troops. Now, this president isn’t known for his sincerity, but he has previously claimed that signing condolence letters for the families of fallen servicemen “is the hardest thing he does.” So in my fantasy, Trump would address the nation in prime time, and, noting that 18-year-olds have begun to deploy to Afghanistan, assure the people that he intends to end these wars before a kid born after 9/11 dies in one of them.

# What about the fate of Brexit? Johnson’s political nightmare

By Saeed Sobhani

**TEHRAN** — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is deeply concerned about his political future. He fears becoming the third victim of his country’s exit from the European Union. Now the political situation in London is extremely complicated! This complexity has reached its climax in recent days. At what point will the British Parliament and the Prime Minister’s war really get to that point? Undoubtedly either of them giving up on each other, London will face a new crisis. Here’s a look at the latest news and analysis on Britain and how it exits the EU:

What next for Boris Johnson’s Brexit deal?

As The Guardian reported, The prime minister tried to have a meaningful yes/no vote on his Brexit deal on Saturday, but parliament passed an amendment withholding support until full legislation on the withdrawal agreement has been scrutinised. This meant he had to send a letter to the EU requesting a three-month extension to article 50. Not to be deterred, Johnson will try again on Monday to secure parliament’s support for his Brexit deal in a yes/no meaningful vote. But there is widespread suspicion that he just wants it to pass in order to be able to withdraw his request for a Brexit delay.

There are two ways this could be thwarted. Firstly, John Bercow, the Speaker, could rule it out of order because the motion was already debated on Saturday. Secondly, MPs could stage a repeat of Saturday and amend the motion to again withhold support for it until full legislation is passed. It could be Brexit Groundhog Day.

Regardless of the meaningful vote, Johnson is planning to bring forward the withdrawal agreement bill this week. A vote on second reading could come as soon as Tuesday. MPs would have to say aye or no on whether to let it go through to the next stage of its journey through the House of Commons. Then comes the interesting bit: if it passes, MPs have the opportunity to debate possible amendments, likely to be on whether to add a customs union, a second referendum and to extend transitional arrangements with the EU to prevent the UK crashing out in 2020. It is quite possible that customs union and transition extension amendments could pass with support from the opposition, some Tory rebels and former Conservatives. The second referendum amendment looks trickier from a numbers point of view.

If opposition amendments were to pass, Johnson would have to decide whether he could live with them. Conservative hardliners would be unlikely to accept a new mandate to negotiate a customs union, but No 10 might be able to accept a parliamentary vote on whether to extend transitional arrangements in 2020. If the amendments are deemed unacceptable, the prime minister might decide to pull the bill entirely and try to proceed to a general election.

Labour could then agree to an election or try to find a way of forcing a second referendum in alliance with other parties. However, first the EU would have to grant an extension to article 50. If it rejected an extension, parliament would then face a choice of deal or no deal (or revoking article 50).

The UK will probably only leave the EU at the end of the month if a deal has been passed through parliament or the EU rejects a request for an extension, which it will consider next week. The House of Commons and House of Lords could potentially have to sit round the clock and through the weekend in order to pass all the necessary legislation in time to get a deal done. It would only leave without a deal if the EU refused an extension and parliament refused to approve Johnson’s Brexit deal.

**■ Brexit: Johnson ‘has the numbers’ in Commons to pass deal, says Raab**

As BBC reported, The UK government says it will push ahead with efforts to pass its Brexit deal, despite a major setback to its plans. Boris Johnson had to ask the EU for an extension to the UK’s 31 October exit date after MPs backed a move to delay approval of the deal on Saturday. But Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said he was confident enough MPs would back the deal next week, and Brexit would still happen by the deadline. Labour, however, has said it will back moves to put the deal to a referendum.

No 10 said the PM sent “Parliament’s letter” to Brussels - unsigned - and accompanied it with a second letter - which was signed - explaining why he believed a delay would be a mistake. The government has vowed to press ahead with the legislation - the Withdrawal Agreement Bill (WAB) - to implement the Brexit deal next week.

Why has the PM asked for another extension?

Having reached a new Brexit deal with the EU last week, the prime minister had intended to bring it to Parliament and ask MPs to approve it in a so-called “meaningful vote”.

However, in the first Saturday sitting in the Commons for 37 years, MPs instead voted in favour of an amendment withholding approval of the deal until all the necessary legislation to implement it had been passed.

Tabled by Tory MP Sir Oliver Letwin, the amendment was intended to ensure that Mr Johnson would comply with the terms of the so-called Benn Act designed to eliminate any possibility of a no-deal exit on 31 October. Under that act, Mr Johnson had until 23:00 BST on Saturday to send a letter requesting a delay to the UK’s departure - something he did, albeit without his signature.

Mr Raab told the BBC’s Andrew Marr show that “notwithstanding the parliamentary shenanigans, we appear to have now the numbers to get this through”.

He said there were “many people in the EU” who were “deeply uncomfortable” about a further delay to Brexit and urged MPs to “get on, get it through the House of Commons, and move on.”

Media caption Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab says he’s confident the UK will leave the EU on 31 October

His colleague, Michael Gove, chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, accused those who backed the Letwin amendment of voting “explicitly to try to frustrate this process and to drag it out”. He told Sky News’ Sophie Ridge on Sunday “we have a deal that allows us to leave” on 31 October, but the government would now trigger Operation Yellowhammer - its contingency plan to handle a no-deal Brexit - because



there was no guarantee the EU would grant an extension. The government is set to ask for a further meaningful vote on Monday, presenting MPs with a binary choice to approve or oppose the deal in principle. However, it will be up to Commons Speaker John Bercow to decide whether to allow that vote. BBC Deputy Political Editor John Pienaar says the thinking at Westminster is that Mr Bercow will not permit a re-run of the vote.

He says to “expect a good row about that”, adding that the Speaker has been clear in the past that he sees no reason to repeat a debate “just because the loser doesn’t like losing”.

Labour had planned to vote against Boris Johnson’s deal - although a few rebels would likely have backed it - arguing it would be bad for the economy, jobs, workers’ rights and other areas like the environment. Shadow Brexit secretary Sir Keir Starmer accused the prime minister of “being childlike” by sending a second letter to the EU contradicting the first stipulated by the Benn Act. He told Andrew Marr his party would seek to amend the deal when the WAB is brought to Parliament, for example by demanding a UK-wide customs union with the EU and single market alignment.

**■ Media caption Labour’s Keir Starmer says Boris Johnson has been “childlike” with his unsigned letter**

He said Labour would look for ways to avoid “a trapdoor to no-deal at the end of 2020” - some critics of Mr Johnson’s agreement fear there are no provisions to prevent a no-deal exit at the end of the transition period if no free trade agreement has been reached with the EU. Sir Keir also said his party would support an amendment requiring the deal to be put to another referendum. He said he believed that would most likely be tabled by a backbencher, but insisted: “It’s got to go back to the public.”

Organising another public vote would take a minimum of 22 weeks, according to experts at the Constitution Unit at University College London (UCL), and Sir Keir accepted that sort of timescale was reasonable. A government also cannot just decide to hold a referendum. Instead, a majority of MPs and Lords would need to agree and vote through the rules, and there would likely be deep divisions over the wording of the question, the number of options on the ballot paper and the voting system.

Lucy Powell, Labour MP for Manchester Central, told Sky News “those advocating a second referendum know the numbers aren’t there”. The PM’s deal was “now likely to pass”, she continued, adding that next few days and weeks “are our final chance to shape Brexit”.

EU Council President Donald Tusk has acknowledged receipt of the UK’s extension request and said he would consult EU leaders “on how to react”.

Ambassadors from the 27 EU nations met for about 15 minutes in Brussels on Sunday morning and continued the legal process of ratifying the Brexit deal on the EU side.

The EU’s Chief negotiator, Michel Barnier, told diplomats the passage of the Letwin amendment did not mean that the deal had been rejected.

Mr Letwin himself told the BBC’s Andrew Marr on Sunday his amendment was “an insurance policy” and now it had passed, he would give his full support to the prime minister’s deal.

All 27 EU nations must agree to any extension to Brexit, and French President Emmanuel Macron has already signalled he believed a new Brexit extension was not good for anyone. However, BBC Europe editor Katya Adler said if the alternative was a no-deal Brexit, the EU was unlikely to refuse - although it would want to know what any extension was for - a general election, another referendum, or merely a bit more time needed to pass Brexit-related legislation?

Just weeks after the Supreme Court ruled Mr Johnson’s prorogation of Parliament was unlawful, some suggest his attempts to undermine the Benn Act with a second letter could see him back there again. Shadow chancellor John McDonnell suggested the PM could be “in contempt of Parliament or the courts”. That was echoed by SNP Westminster leader Ian Blackford, although he refused to be drawn on any court action this week. Scotland highest court, the Court of Session, is due to meet on Monday to consider the matter. It was asked earlier this month to sign a letter fulfilling the terms of the Benn Act on the prime minister’s behalf if he failed to do so, but judges delayed giving a ruling to allow the political debate to play out. The SNP’s Joanna Cherry pointed out that the government gave an undertaking to the court not to frustrate the act, but she said “now arguably that is what he has done”.

The government insists it has complied with the requirements of the Benn Act.

What is the Withdrawal Agreement Bill?

The UK needs to pass a law to implement the withdrawal agreement - the part of the PM’s Brexit deal which will take the country out of the EU - in UK law.

It has to secure the backing of a majority of MPs and peers, and a vote for the Brexit deal itself is no guarantee of a vote for the legislation required to implement it. The bill gives legal effect to any agreed transition period and fulfils requirements on the rights of EU citizens in the UK after Brexit. It will also allow ministers to make “divorce payments” to the EU foreseen under the current deal.

MPs will be able to vote on amendments - changes or add-ons - to the bill, for instance stipulating Parliament’s role in the future relationship negotiation, or for the deal to be put to a referendum. If the government cannot get the WAB through Parliament the default legal position is that the UK cannot ratify the deal, and so would leave on 31 October without a deal. However, that is dependent on no extension beyond that date having been already agreed with the EU.

Johnson asked EU leaders for a Brexit delay.

Also CNN reported that Government aides were furious at the result of the vote in Parliament, as it denied Johnson the chance to declare a Brexit victory on Saturday. After two days of arm-twisting since Johnson returned with a new deal from Brussels on Thursday, Downing Street believed it had secured the numbers required to pass it, albeit by a razor-thin margin. Johnson’s nemesis was former Conservative government minister Oliver Letwin, expelled from the party when he voted for the law that prevents a no-deal Brexit. Proposing the measure that delayed Parliament’s approval, Letwin said it was an “insurance policy” to ensure the UK would not “crash out” of the European Union without a deal on October 31. Under legislation known as the Benn Act, the UK government was required to request an extension to the Brexit process until January 31, if a deal was not ratified by the end of Saturday.

Those provisions would have fallen away if Johnson had succeeded in getting his deal through the House of Commons. But Letwin and his allies were concerned that a no-deal Brexit could still happen at the end of October if, by then, lawmakers had failed to pass the complex set of legislation required to enact the departure deal.

In the end, the Letwin amendment passed by 322 votes to 306. Not even the backing of former Prime Minister Theresa May, who spoke in favor of her successor’s deal despite having once rejected a not dissimilar proposal from the EU, was enough to prevent the defeat.

In a twist of political fate, the outcome was decided by the 10 MPs of the Democratic Unionist Party, the Northern Ireland group that nominally props up Johnson’s minority government in the House of Commons.

The DUP was deeply unhappy with terms of Johnson’s deal, under which Northern Ireland effectively remains in the EU customs union, separating the province economically from the rest of the UK. Its MPs were particularly furious that Johnson had cast them aside, travelling to Brussels on Thursday to sign his Brexit deal with EU leaders without securing their support. “We are cut off from the country to which we belong,” said Sammy Wilson, the DUP’s Brexit spokesman, in an impassioned speech in the House of Commons.

What happens next?

Johnson’s contradictory correspondence to the EU is bound to land him in front of a judge. A related case was already due to be heard at Scotland’s highest court, the Court of Session in Edinburgh, on Monday, and this will likely be the venue for the first legal challenge. Joanna Cherry, the Scottish National Party lawmaker who has led many of the legal challenges over Brexit, confirmed the hearing would go ahead.

Opposition lawmakers were furious at the developments. John McDonnell, Labour’s finance spokesman, said on Twitter: “Johnson is a Prime Minister who is now treating Parliament and the Courts with contempt. His juvenile refusal to even sign the letter confirms what we always suspected that Johnson with his arrogant sense of entitlement considers he is above the law and above accountability.”

Meanwhile Jacob Rees-Mogg, the leader of the House of Commons, said the government would bring forward another vote on Johnson’s Brexit deal on Monday.

Ordinarily, the same provision can’t be voted on twice in a parliamentary session. That convention thwarted ex-Prime Minister May’s plans to hold repeated votes on her withdrawal deal. But it was not clear whether Saturday’s proceedings in Parliament counted as a vote on Johnson’s deal, because it was amended by the Letwin measure. Speaker of the House John Bercow said he would rule on the matter Monday.



# The five-day pause in Turkish offensive: Did Turkey achieve goals

➡ 4. The two countries reiterate their pledge to uphold human life, human rights, and the protection of religious and ethnic communities.

5. Turkey and the U.S. are committed to D-ISIS/DAESH activities in northeast Syria. This will include coordination on detention facilities and internally displaced persons from formerly ISIS/DAESH-controlled areas, as appropriate.

6. Turkey and the U.S. agree that counter-terrorism operations must target only terrorists and their hideouts, shelters, emplacements, weapons, vehicles and equipment.

7. The Turkish side expressed its commitment to ensure safety and well-being of residents of all population centers in the safe zone controlled by the Turkish Forces (safe zone) and reiterated that maximum care will be exercised in order not to cause harm to civilians and civilian infrastructure.

8. Both countries reiterate their commitment to the political unity and territorial integrity of Syria and UN-led political process, which aims at ending the Syrian conflict in accordance with UNSCR 2254.

9. The two sides agreed on the continued importance and functionality of a safe zone in order to address the national security concerns of Turkey, to include the re-collection of YPG heavy weapons and the disablement of their fortifications and all other fighting positions.

10. The safe zone will be primarily enforced by the Turkish Armed Forces and the two sides will increase their cooperation in all dimensions of its implementation.

11. The Turkish side will pause Operation Peace Spring in order to allow the withdrawal of YPG from the safe zone within 120 hours. Operation Peace Spring will be halted upon completion of this withdrawal.

12. Once Operation Peace Spring is paused, the U.S. agrees not to pursue further imposition of sanctions under the Executive Order of October 14, 2019, Blocking Property and Suspending Entry of Certain Persons Contributing to the Situation in Syria, and will work and consult with Congress, as appropriate, to underline the progress being undertaken to achieve peace and security in Syria, in accordance with UNSCR 2254.



Once Operation Peace Spring is halted as per paragraph 11 the current sanctions under the aforementioned Executive Order shall be lifted.

13. Both parties are committed to work together to implement all the goals outlined in this Statement.

## ■ Trump's enthusiasm for temporary agreement and Erdogan's response

Donald Trump thanked Erdogan in his first reaction, calling the deal a lifesaver for civilians.

In his tweets, in response to the temporary ceasefire deal, Trump stated the deal would save the lives of thousands of civilians. In response to Trump's remarks, Erdogan said that if we beat the biggest humanity's enemy, the terrorism, more lives will be saved.

According to Erdogan, this joint effort will reinforce peace and stability in the region.

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said that Ankara got "exactly what we wanted" under the Erdogan's presidency on the battlefield. He added, "Turkey and the U.S. agreed on collecting the heavy weapons of the YPG, destroying their positions and fortifications". Cavusoglu claimed that the recent agreement with the U.S. does not mean a ceasefire in northern Syria.

According to Cavusoglu, not only the

withdrawal of the YPG, but also the disarmament of this group has been agreed with the United States, and Turkey has intended to establish a safe zone with the depth of 32 kilometers into Syria.

## ■ The Russians' reaction

Russia responded to Turkey-U.S. agreement in northern Syria on Friday morning, October 18.

"We expect to receive information from Turkey," said the Kremlin about the agreement.

## ■ What was Guterres reaction?

The UN Secretary-General Guterres welcomed Turkish pause in the Syria assault, saying in a statement that he welcomed "any efforts" to de-escalate the situation in northern Syria and protect civilians.

The statement said the secretary-general recognizes that there is still a long way to go for an effective solution to the crisis in Syria.

## ■ Damascus describes the agreement as "vague"

The Syrian president's political adviser Bouthaina Shaaban reacted to Turkey's pause in military attack in northern Syria, saying the Turkey-U.S. deal is "vague". In the current situation, she said, the term "safe zone" is not correct, and instead the term "occupied zone" should be used. Shaaban added the whole world opposed the Turkish military attack on northern Syria.

She called Erdogan a dangerous and aggressive man who should be confronted with. According to the advisor, Erdogan promotes the Muslim Brotherhood's ideology in the region and Europe.

"In our point of view, Erdogan is an aggressor who has invaded our territory... and without Turkey's help, so many terrorist would not have come to Syria," Shaaban told Al Mayadeen.

She also said Syria's relations with Iranian and Russian allies will continue and there will be complete trust between the sides.

Regarding the possibility of the Kurdish breakaway, she said we "cannot accept" another Iraqi Kurdistan in Syria. The advisor said most of the Kurdish brothers are members of the Syrian nation and described them as a great people who protect their homeland.

## ■ The Kurds gravely welcome the truce

In response to the pause in the assault, the commander of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) Mazloum Abdi (Kobani) stated that he would accept the agreement. He said the agreement is just the beginning because Turkey would not achieve its goals.

Kobani said the group would accept the ceasefire agreement with Turkey in northern Syria but said it was limited to the border areas running between the towns of Ras al-Ain and Tal Abyad. He added that the fate of the rest of areas has not been determined yet. The U.S. is responsible for keeping the population in the region unchanged and it should return residents to their homes.

A Kurdish commander, Aldar Khalil, told AFP that SDF welcomes the deal, but the Kurds will defend themselves if they are attacked. The commander said Erdogan intended to enter 32 kilometers deep inside Syria, an attempt that "we have already rejected".

However, the deal is temporary and fragile, and one should wait and see how long it will last. Regardless of what Turkish officials, especially the foreign minister, have said about the realization of the operation's goals, ambition and military attacks will not solve the problem. The best way for establishing the security is to reach an agreement with Syria.

## Arba'een: Global rise of original Islam

By Yusuf Abdullah

**NIGERIA / ABUJA** — In the name of Allah Who states "Surely, those who disbelieve spend their wealth to turn men away from the way of Allah. They will surely continue to spend it; but then shall it become a source of regret for them, and then shall they be overcome. And the disbelievers shall be gathered unto Hell." Q8:37

May the everlasting peace and blessings of Allah be upon His noble servant, our master Muhammad and his pure progeny.

Despite the lies, tales and increasing calumniation against Shiism, the result, to greatest surprise is always in favor of the faith. The world witnesses how the blind critics are sponsored by the petrodollars in collaboration with their Western masters writing the baseless freely distributed versions across the globe. Most recent criticism apparently intended to undermine the Arba'een - the greatest human gathering on earth - was the BBC program on what it called women sexual exploitation in the name of Mut'a and related to the faith. The drive was specifically against Shi'ism and generally Islamophobic. Ideally, the station ought to seek religious perspective of temporary marriage from the Shi'ah religious authorities, not to ignorantly and deformatively in the name of investigative journalism. The criticism was clearly intended to affect the forthcoming Arba'een not only in Iraq where the world converge to celebrate Imam Husain (AS), but the world at large. It was clearly meant among others to make Sunnis criticize the Shiites thereby widening the gap as the West has no concern for morals. However, among other questions we always ask are; what does future hold for Shi'ism? What impacts do the joint efforts of the media and other paid agents make against the spread and growth of Shi'ism? Of what significance are the conspiracies of the world arrogant and Wahhabism in an attempt to jeopardize the faith? What will transpire on the Shiite persecution in Bahrain, Yemen, and Nigeria among others? Inevitably, justice will finally prevail.

To do justice as Allah enjoins, why people do not read Shi'ah books to logically disprove their claims? If proof is the weapon of a believer, why are those opposed to Shiism afraid of reading their books or discussing with them on any topic of interest? Why is the geometric spread of Shiism amidst unending conspiracies? Is it due to ignorance or brain

wash? Allah states "O you who believe! Stand out firmly For Allah, as witnesses To fair dealing, and let not The hatred of others To you make you swerve To wrong and depart from Justice. Be just: that is Next to piety; and fear Allah, For Allah is well-acquainted With all ye do" Q5:8

Shi'ism is no doubt the original Islam. We have established this times without number. In a prophetic tradition narrated by Ibn Athir who died in 606 AH, the Prophet (S) addressed Ali "O Ali! you and your Shi'ah will reach Allah being pleased with him and well pleasing Him, and your enemies will reach Him, being angry and will be seized by their necks. Then the Prophet demonstrated how this would be by putting his hand on his neck". In the narration of Ibn Abbas by Ibn Hajar who died in 974, the Prophet said to Imam Ali after the revelation of "Surely those who believe and do good deeds are the best of creation" Q98:7. Those are you and your Shi'ah. On the day of resurrection, you will be pleased and well pleasing (to Allah) and your enemies will come angry and will be seized by their necks. Then the Prophet demonstrated how this would be by putting his hand on his neck. (Ibn Hajar, Section 11, Chapter 1, Verse 11. In a prominent narration by Ibn Asakir who died in 571 AH, from Jabir Ibn Abdullah who said: "Once we were with the Prophet Muhammad, when Ali arrived, upon which he said, I swear by Him Who has my life in His hand that surely this man and his Shi'ah will be happy on the day of resurrection" then the verse "Surely those who believe and do good deeds are the best of creation" Q98:7 was revealed. From then, whenever companion saw Ali coming, he would say, the best of creation has come. -Ibn Asakir, Volume, 2, page 442 and al-Suyuty, Volume, 6, page 589

It was narrated as recorded in Mustadrak and Kanzul Ummal; the Prophet said "whoever wishes to live and die like me, and to abide in the Garden of Eden after death should acknowledge Ali as his patron and follow Ahlul-bait after me, for they are my Ahlul-bait and they have been created out of the same clay, and were blessed with knowledge and understanding as myself. Woe unto those followers of mine who will deny their distinctions and who will disregard their relationship and affinity with me. My Allah never let them benefit from my intercession". Did any of the companions compare to Ali in Badr, Uhud, Hunain and Khandaq among others? Af-

ter the non-tactical retreat of the famous companions in Khaibar, the Prophet said "Tomorrow I will give my flag to a man who loves Allah and His messenger, and Allah and His messenger love him, ever going forward and never retreating, Allah had tested his heart with the faith". On that very day, he handed over the flag to Imam Ali in whose hands Allah gave the victory. Virtually, the Imam categorically compared to none in knowledge, bravery, brevity, piety and other sterling qualities. But out of envy some fabricated a number of sayings linking same to the noble messenger and his purified progeny for promotions and demotions on selfish grounds. For example, why could not Imam Ali narrate more with his young age, exceptionally gifted talent and retentive memory? On the day of Ghadeer, the Prophet declared; "Do you witness that I have a prior right to and superior authority over all the faithful? They replied yes o messenger of Allah. There upon he said 'Ali is the master of all those of whom I am master. O Allah! Love him who loves him and hate him who hates him, help him who helps him, forsake him who forsakes him, and turn justice with him wherever he turns.

Unfortunately, the dirty politics in the early history of Islam turned things upside down leading to stopping the great Prophet from writing for the Ummah his will. In Bukhari, Ibn Abbas narrated that the Prophet was in his last moment and many people had gathered in his house at that time. He said "I want write a will for you so that you will never go astray after me" Some people said "the prophet was affected by pain. We have the Qur'an with us; the book of Allah is sufficient for us" people gathered in the house started opposing one another on this point. When the noise increased, the Prophet ordered the people to leave him alone. The questions commonly asked; why was the Prophet not allowed to write his will? And what would he write if he were allowed? Could we relate the oft-related sayings of the Prophet on his pure progeny as the will? In relation to this, Abdullahi Ibn Abbas described deterring the messenger of Allah from writing his will as the greatest calamity that has befallen the Ummah. And no doubt, the perpetrators must pay expensively being the cause for the misguidance and confusion witnessed today.

Allah states "....if ye turn back (from the path), He will substitute in your stead Another people; then they would not be like you" Q47:37. Abu Hurairah narrated as re-

corded by Imam al-Tabari, the companions asked the messenger; with whom should we be substituted if we turn back? He touched the shoulder of Salman saying this and his people! Imam Jaafar al-Saadiq (as recorded in volume two of Bihar al-Anwar, pages 445 and 446) said "A great man of Qom will invite people towards truth and freedom, and they will accept his call resolutely and with an iron will gather round him. They are individuals who fear no calamities and unpleasant happenings and never tire of combat and endeavor. Their only hope and refuse is Allah. Ultimate victory and success belong to chaste and virtuous people and those who follow the way of Allah"

Glory be to Allah, the creator and disposer of all things. It is very clear today that it is the Shi'ah that practice the actual Islam which is neither approved nor accepted by the White House, in other words, the original Islam. It is the Shi'ah following the teachings of Imam Husain (AS) as revived by Imam Khomeini (QS) as individuals, or Islamic republic as a nation that are neither subservient to West nor East "O ye who believe! take not the Jews and Christians for friends. They are friends one to another. And whoso among you take them for friends is indeed one of them. Verily, Allah guides not the unjust people" Q5:52. They are the actual people who practice the teachings of Islam and the ones to prosper in due course. The Arba'een is a harbinger of good news whose effect will be multifaceted, multidimensional and global. For those claiming absolute compliance with the teachings of Islam but apparently subservient to West persecuting the believers for Shiism, no doubt Allah will humiliate them for their tyranny "Shall We treat those who believe and work deeds of righteousness the same as those who do mischief on earth? Shall we treat those who guard against evil, the same as those who turn aside from the right?" Q38:28

For the believers who persevere the persecution of tyrants for their faith strictly complying with the prophetic mission, success and salvation await them here and hereafter "We will give a pure and wholesome life to every one man or woman who acts righteously and has faith and we will reward them in accordance with the best of what they used to do" Q16:97

While wishing well for millions multinational pilgrims in the holy city of Karbala and other symbolic trekkers across the world, I call for the unconditional release of Sheikh el-Zakzaky (H) and his disciples.

## The secret behind continued protests in Lebanon

➡ - Severe opposition to imposing tax on poor classes. - Emphasizing that the current situation is the result of the unsolved problems.

- Warning about the dangers that threaten the country, including financial and economic collapse and the anger of people due to wrong resolutions.

- Calling the allegations against Hezbollah incorrect, allegations that claim Hezbollah is taking actions against the banks.

- Emphasizing the need for the politicians to gain the trust of the Lebanese people.

- Opposing the fall of the cabinet and emphasizing the need for continuation of the current government.

- Clarifying the inefficiency of technocratic government that some are defending.

- Opposing premature election since it requires a great funding and does not make any difference.

- Emphasizing that neither political parties nor the embassies were involved in the popular protests.

- Hezbollah's support for people and assuring that it will not allow Lebanon to degenerate into a breakdown.

- Advising the protestors to not follow those politicians who want to take advantage of the current situation.

- The big steps that should be taken to save the country from crisis.

- The protestors should not attack security forces.

On the protests in Lebanon, the Raialyoum newspaper reported that Hariri's government has shown that it is alien to people and their problems by taxing Whatsapp calls and services. This move revealed that Hariri is indifferent to people's lives, economic, political and social conditions as well as unemployment, rising prices, and corruption. The six-dollar fee that the Lebanese government intended to impose on free phone calls and services acted like a spark that fueled the people's anger and brought thousands of Lebanese, who are on the brink of poverty, to the streets.

A caricature mocked the situation, showing that the Lebanese are paying tax as Switzerland and receiving services as Somalia. The difference is that the Somalis are caught in a civil war and terrorist groups have created a mayhem in the country. But what is the justification for such circumstances in Lebanon!

According to Raialyoum, a Lebanese expert wrote, "How does Lebanon want to break out of its current state with annual expenditure of \$19 billion and national income less than \$5billion, while asking for the help of donor countries to tackle its budget deficit?"

The source also added that Lebanon's total debt has reached \$110 bn. The donor countries have agreed to lend Lebanon provided that it fights corruption, increases tax and decreases costs. The Lebanese officials did not make any effort to meet those conditions because they have plunged the country into such a situation to add cash to their accounts in Lebanese and foreign banks. They have turned to imposing tax on poor people who do not have anything to eat and cannot afford medical costs for their children. The officials are trying to find a way out by impoverishing the poor people.

From experts' prospective, the only solution for saving Lebanon is to move toward productive economy, review monetary policy, impose tax on the rich people and take other measures in various sectors.

## As we mark 40 days from Ashura

➡ a shaft from the hostile ranks pierced the child's ear, and it expired in his father's arms. Husain placed the little corpse upon the ground. 'We come from God, and we return to Him!' he cried; 'O Lord, give me strength to bear these misfortunes!' [Islam Under the Arabs, Delaware, 1976].

From there the killers, proceeded without remorse. They showered hundreds of arrows at Husain. After he felt down, they decapitated him and hung his head on a spear, raised it high in jubilation, marched to Kufa, from Kufa to Damascus (Syria) taking his family members (women and children) who were the grand and great grandchildren of the Prophet (sawa) as captives.

Charles Dickens (English novelist) writes: "If Husain had fought to quench his worldly desires...then I do not understand why his sister, wife, and children accompanied him. It stands to reason therefore, that he sacrificed purely for Islam."

Why would the Grandson of the Prophet (sawa) be allowed to be killed so mercilessly? What are the occurrences that led to this inhumane treatment to this man, Husain?

When Yazid was dictatorially installed by his father, Mu'awiya as the ruler of the Muslim Ummah, he requested from Husain a hand of allegiance in order to straighten his leadership. Husain refused, saying somebody of his noble status will never bow to an unjust ruler like Yazid. For this sole reason Husain, his sons, brothers and companions were made to pay for that single act. They were massacred at the desert of Karbala.

Antoine Bara (Lebanese writer) writes: "No battle in the modern and past history of mankind has earned more sympathy and admiration as well as provided more lessons than the martyrdom of Husayn in the battle of Karbala." [Husayn in Christian Ideology].

This is why the Shiites, continuously mourn on the 10th of Muharram of every year and 40 days after. They mourn for the remembrance of that tragedy, appreciating the sacrifice made by Husain which has become the reason for the preservation of Islam and the source of inspiration for all freedom fighters and justice seekers of the world regardless of their religion or tribe.

Edward Gibbon, considered as the greatest British historian of his time writes: "In a distant age and climate the tragic scene of the death of Husain will awaken the sympathy of the coldest reader." [The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, London, 1911]

Sir William Muir, the Scottish scholar and statesman writes: "The tragedy of Karbala decided not only the fate of the caliphate, but of the Mohammedan kingdoms long after the caliphate had waned and disappeared." [Annals of the Early Caliphate, London, 1883]



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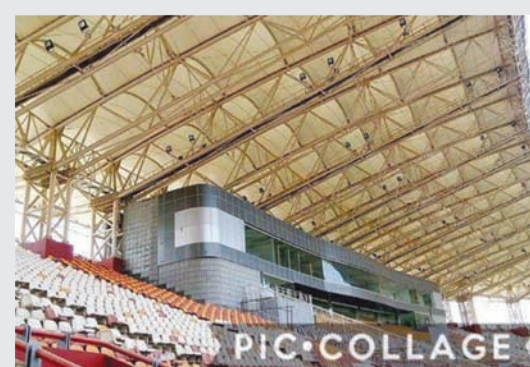
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# Scientists create ‘artificial skin’ that could make smartphones ticklish

Scientists have developed an “artificial skin” that they say can wrap around devices such as smartphones and make them ticklish.

The prototype, which has been designed to look like and mimic human skin, responds to different forms of human contact such as tickling, caressing and pinching.

Called Skin-On interface, it can be attached to mobile phones, wearable devices and laptop touchpads.

One of the things the researchers said they were able to demonstrate was “tactile emotions” with use of emojis.

“A strong grip conveys anger while tickling the skin displays a laughing emoji and tapping creates a surprised emoji,” said the study’s lead author, Marc Teyssier, a PhD student at Telecom ParisTech.

“This skin has a subtle surface texture – the sensing is performed in the dermis and the hypodermis layer (fat layer) and the elasticity is what allows us to perform expressive gestures such as pinching.”

The technology was developed by researchers at the University of Bristol in partnership with Telecom ParisTech and Sorbonne University in Paris.

The team says their work opens the door for a possible future with “anthropomorphic devices” – where gadgets have human characteristics.



Dr. Anne Roudaut, associate professor at the University of Bristol, said the artificial skin “may look unconventional probably because we are used to our senseless and rigid casings, but we feel there are strong advantages of using more malleable technologies”.

She added: “The familiarity of the skin provides a more natural interface for end-users.” The artificial skin was created using two

layers of silicone – dubbed “dermis” and “hypodermis” layers – with an electrode layer in the middle made up of ultra-thin wires that act as sensors.

Two different types of silicone were dipped in pigment and molded to give the creation a skin-like texture.

Researchers said their artificial skin allows devices to “feel the user’s grasp”

and has the ability “to detect interactions such as tickling, caressing, even twisting and pinching”.

The team believe that their work, which is being presented at the 32nd ACM User Interface Software and Technology Symposium in the US, could allow people to have a richer emotional experience while using mobile phones or smart watches.

Mr. Teyssier said: “When we are talking to someone face to face, we sometimes use touch to convey emotions and more generally enrich the discourse. Now that mediated communication is performed through the devices, we lost this communication modality.”

“With this project, we tried to combine the best of the two. The prototypes we developed propose a possible future with anthropomorphic devices.”

While the concept of artificial skin has been explored in the field of robotics as scientists attempt to develop robots that look and act like humans, the researchers said they were more interested in working with everyday devices.

Dr. Roudaut added: “We have seen many works trying to augment humans with parts of machines, here we look at the other way around and try to make the devices we use every day more like us, i.e., human-like.”

(Source: The Independent)

## Is this how we’ll live on Mars?

By Jacopo Prisco

What would a home on Mars look like? What sort of clothes would we wear on the Red Planet? And how would we grow our food? The answers to some of these questions are beautifully imagined in a new exhibition, “Moving to Mars,” at London’s Design Museum.

The race is on for a successful manned mission to Mars, with NASA leading a pack of public and private institutions competing to be the first to land, including Elon Musk’s Space X, Jeff Bezos’ Blue Origin, Boeing, and the China National Space Administration.

NASA plans to launch a manned mission in the 2030s, a timeframe shared by other private groups, although this goal might be more aspirational than realistic. Many technologies required don’t yet exist, including the spacecraft, which are either under development or at the prototype stage. What a Mars mission would look like is far from clear, with some teams planning to build a full-blown Martian habitat, while others foresee orbiting stations that could function as launch pads for limited trips to the surface. But it’s not too early to dream, nor to start imagining how it will all take shape.

Centered on the role that design will play in sending humans to Mars, the exhibition is rich with historical materials but also more forward-looking or speculative elements, with a wide range of works by designers from various fields.

Curator Eleanor Watson said the designs on show were response to questions about future Mars missions. “Such as what would microgravity clothing need to look like, what would a Mars habitat look like, very speculative questions on what the planet might look in 1,000 or even 10,000 years,” said Watson in a phone interview.

Among the experimental works is a fashion collection by sustainable design company RÆBURN, which imagines



clothing to be used inside Martian habitats, tailored from recycled spacecraft materials.

“At \$18,000 per kilo of payload, sending stuff to Mars is expensive, so anything that you bring with you, you have to be able to reuse intelligently. All of the rovers that are being flown over, for example, come with landing parachutes. What are you gonna use these parachutes for after the landing? Well, one option would be to make all of the clothing for the astronauts from them,” said Watson.

The exhibition includes five architectural projects for potential Mars habitat modules, all derived from NASA’s 3D Printing Habitat Challenge, a \$3 million competition to build 3D-printed homes for deep space exploration. One of them, by London-based international design firm Hassell, is scaled up to full size, for people to get into and explore.

“Hassell very kindly agreed to make a one-to-one scale mockup of one of their modules and it’s six meters in diameter. It includes a system that would allow you to reconfigure the space easily. They’ve created a group of six modules that link together and are covered by a shield to protect from radiation. These six modules are in a ring, so that you have an internal courtyard and when you’re in one module, even

though it’s quite small, there’s a big window and you can see across and see what other people are up to,” said Watson.

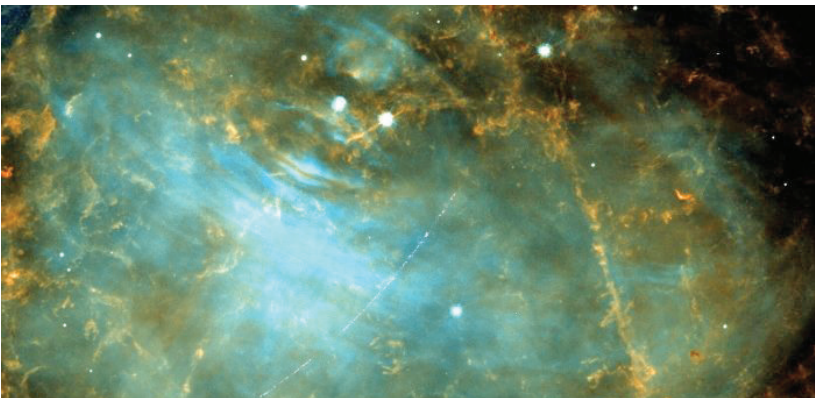
Outside of habitats, normal clothes won’t cut it in the thin and unbreathable Martian atmosphere. Astronauts will need space suits, such as the NDX-1, one of the very first designed for Mars, by two University of North Dakota engineers, Gary L. Harris and Dr. de Leon. Compared to suits designed for the Apollo Moon program, for example, Mars suits would need to be much more flexible, as they would be worn for months or even years rather than just days.

Currently, exploration of Mars is done solely by robots, and there have been four successful landings of rovers on the surface of the planet, with only one of them, Curiosity, still operational. The exhibition includes a replica of Rosalind Franklin, a Mars rover that will be launched in 2020 by the European Space Agency and will land in 2021. It’s named after an English scientist who made crucial discoveries about DNA, and was previously known as ExoMars. “It’s a lab on wheels and it’s going to drill quite far down into the Martian surface, to try and find traces of life,” said Watson.

Among the historical documents on display is the very first map of Mars, drawn by Italian astronomer Giovanni Schiaparelli in 1877. He identified darker and lighter features of the map as seas and continents. “He also famously described the straight lines he saw on the surface as canals, which then was translated as “canals” rather than “channels” and sparked the canal craze that led to the misconception that there might be or have been intelligent life on Mars,” said Watson.

The interactive components of the show will focus on a multi-sensory experience designed to simulate the conditions on the surface of Mars, complete with smells and sound, and a family trail that invites visitors of all ages to solve their own design challenges, by completing tasks set by experts including British astronaut Tim Peake.

## Hubble catches incredible ‘photobomb’ of an asteroid streaking past Crab Nebula



That’s not a glitch or an artefact - the ‘scratch’ in this beautiful image is in fact an asteroid, streaking across the field of view while the Hubble Space Telescope recently imaged the Crab Nebula.

To take an image, Hubble generally has to be fixated on a patch of the sky for a period of time. Just as a long exposure of the night sky can result in star trails, Hubble can capture the trails of other astronomical objects.

Sometimes software programs can be used to identify interesting elements in pictures; one such example is the software used to pick out dimming stars from exoplanet-hunting telescopes like TESS.

But for the more unusual, random elements, there’s nothing better than the human eye.

This asteroid trail was actually spotted by a volunteer named Melina Thévenot from Germany, who pored through images uploaded to citizen science project Zooniverse to identify asteroids that might otherwise go unnoticed in Hubble images.

The initial image was uploaded in black-and-white; after she discovered the asteroid trail, Thévenot got to work, processing the data from Hubble’s RGB filters to recreate the scene in full color.

The asteroid itself has been known since 2001. Astronomers have identified it as 2001 SE101. It’s a type of object known as a ‘main belt’ asteroid, orbiting the Sun in the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter.

NASA estimates put the number of asteroids larger than 1 kilometer (0.6 miles) in diameter as high as 1.9 million, with millions smaller than that size; yet, combined, they only make up around 4 percent of the mass of the Moon - one third of which is made up by dwarf planet Ceres.

The reason all Hubble’s images taken through the Solar System’s orbital plane aren’t teeming with asteroids is because many of the asteroids are very small, and there’s a lot of space between them.

Images that include the asteroid trails are highly valuable from a scientific perspective. Knowing the date, time and location of the image lets astronomers calculate the asteroid’s past and future trajectory and velocity.

In turn, this image can help to refine our asteroid tracking techniques - which will come in handy when it comes to protecting our Earth from giant rogue space rocks.

(Source: sciencealert.com)

## Brexit hits UK science funding, deters international researchers



Uncertainty surrounding Britain’s exit from the European Union has hit science funding to the tune of almost half a billion euros and is putting off international researchers from coming to Britain, a leading institution said on Wednesday.

An analysis conducted by the Royal Society scientific academy found that the UK’s annual share of EU research funding has fallen by some 460 million euros (\$509.40 million) since 2015, making it a less attractive destination for international science talent.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has vowed to take Britain out of the EU with or without a deal by the end of October.

Venki Ramakrishnan, the Royal Society’s president, said the potential paralysis of a no-deal Brexit and the current state of chaos had already lead to a dramatic drop in the number of leading researchers who want to come to the UK.

“People do not want to gamble with their careers when they have no sense of whether the UK will be willing and able to maintain its global scientific leadership,” he said in a statement as the analysis was published.

On funding, the Royal Society report found that in 2015 prior to the UK’s referendum on Brexit, Britain secured

1.49 billion euros, or 16% of total grants awarded, under Horizon 2020 - the EU’s research and innovation program which has around 77 billion euros of funding between 2014 and 2020.

By 2018, that had fallen to just over 11% of grants, or 1.06 billion euros.

Britain has historically been an attractive place for ambitious and leading researchers to work, the Royal Society report said - but Brexit is tarnishing that reputation.

It cited data from an EU-run scheme known as the “Marie Curie Fellowships”, which is designed to help scientists relocate to foreign institutions.

In 2015, before the referendum, 515 scientists took up these fellowships in British institutions. By 2018, this had dropped to 336.

At the same time, the number of fellowships for scientists relocating to work in Switzerland and Italy rose by 53 each, and Ireland, Spain, Belgium, Norway and Sweden also attracted greater numbers.

“The UK has therefore missed out on attracting 179 internationally excellent scientists to its institutions through this scheme alone in 2018. And our international competitors are benefiting,” the report said.

(Source: Reuters)

## Physicists discover new stable form of plutonium

By Brooks Hays

Using the European Synchrotron, a team of physicists have identified a new stable form of plutonium. The newly discovered compound exists in a solid state and features an unexpected, pentavalent oxidation state.

The discovery, detailed this week in the journal Angewandte Chemie International Edition, was an accident. Researchers originally set out to develop improved methods for preventing nuclear meltdowns and accidents, as well as the scope of the ensuing fallout.

To replicate the release and spread of radioactive nuclides into and throughout the environment – and thus, develop preventative and control strategies – scientists at the Helmholtz Zentrum Dresden-Rossendorf synthesized and observed the behavior of actinides, a group of metallic elements that are heavy, radioactive and very unstable.

To create actinides, scientists use precursors. The researchers discovered the new compound while attempting to create plutonium dioxide nanoparticles using a Pu (VI) precursor.

“Every time we create nanoparticles from the other precursors Pu(III), (IV) or (V) the reaction is very quick, but here we observed a weird phenomenon half way,” Kristina Kvashnina, physicist from HZDR, said in a news release.

When the scientists synthesized a stable phase of Pu(V), they assumed they had made a mistake.

“Chemists were in complete disbelief, but the results were quite clear,” said Kvashnina, who is currently working with the ROBL beamline at the European Synchrotron in France.

To confirm the surprise discovery, scientists use the ROBL beamline to image the edge of a plutonium isotope called Pu M4. As before, they spotted the stable plutonium form.

“Our choice of beamline was straightforward: the ESRF-ID26 beamline, as it is the best place, regarding the intensity and energy resolution, where such high-energy resolution X-ray absorption spectroscopy studies at low energies can be done,” Kvashnina said. “In fact the Pu M4 edge HERFD experiment was done at ID26 for the first time. To the best of our knowledge, HERFD data at the Pu M4 edge have never been reported in the literature and never been exploited.”

When scientists looked again three months later, they got the same results, confirming the stability of the new form of plutonium.

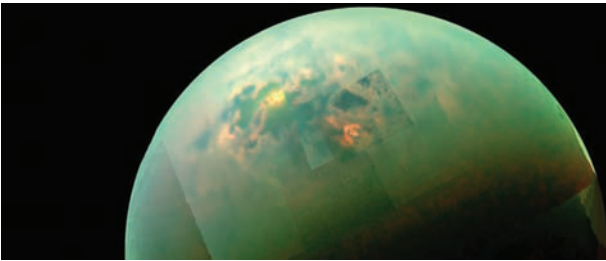
To better understand how to store nuclear waste and prevent it from escaping into the environment, scientists build models to predict the behavior of actinides like plutonium. The latest discovery will force scientists to tweak those models.

“It is a difficult task and only theoretical predictions are possible, but the existence of this new Pu(V) solid phase, which is stable, will have to be taken into account from now on,” said Kvashnina. “It will change, for sure, the theoretical predictions of plutonium behavior in the environment over a period of millions of years.”

## Origin and chemical makeup of Saturn’s Moon Titan’s dunes

A team led by a University of Hawaii at Manoa chemistry professor and researcher has been able to provide answers to key questions about the surface of Saturn’s moon Titan.

Physical chemist Ralf I. Kaiser and fellow researchers examined remote sensing data regarding NASA’s Cassini-Huygens mission to Titan – the only solar system body besides Earth with a solid surface, lakes and a thick atmosphere with a pressure of about 1.5 atmosphere at surface level. Images and data from Cassini-Huygens exposed the existence of vast longitudinal dunes on Titan’s surface across the equatorial deserts reaching heights of up to 100 meters, close to the size of the Egyptian pyramids of Giza. Whereas Earth’s dunes are made of silicates or the largest class of minerals, imaging studies revealed that Titan’s dunes contain dark organics of until now undetermined origin and chemical composition.



The UH Manoa team, which also consisted of Matthew Abplanalp, former chemistry graduate student at UH’s W.M. Keck Research Laboratory in Astrochemistry, exposed acetylene ice – a chemical that is used on Earth in welding torches and exists at Titan’s equatorial regions – at low temperatures to proxies of high-energy galactic cosmic rays. The researchers exposed a rapid cosmic-ray-driven chemistry which converts simple molecules like acetylene to more complex organic molecules like benzene and naphthalene – a compound which is found in mothballs – on Titan’s surface. These processes also happen in the interstellar medium – the space between stars – on hydrocarbon rich layers of interstellar nanoparticles.

“Titan’s dunes represent the dominating surface sink of carbon in Titan’s organic chemistry,” said Abplanalp, current researcher at the Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division at China Lake. “Therefore, unraveling the origin and chemical pathways to form this organic dune material is vital not only to understand Titan’s chemical evolution, but also to grasp how alike the chemistries on Titan and on Earth might have been like before life emerged on Earth 3.5 million years ago.”

“These processes eventually furnish the molecular building blocks not only for Titan’s organic dunes, but also for organics on airless bodies in general such as on Kuiper Belt Objects like dwarf planet Makemake,” outlined Kaiser.

“The low temperature synthesis of PAHs from acetylene ices represents a fundamental shift from currently accepted perceptions that PAH formation takes place solely in the gas phase at elevated temperatures of a few 1,000 K such as in combustion processes.”

These findings will have unprecedented implications for the next space mission to Titan. NASA aims to land a flying robot, Dragonfly, on the surface of Titan, the top target in the search for alien life and its molecular precursors. The car-sized quadcopter, equipped with instruments capable of identifying large organic molecules, is slated to launch on a rocket in 2026, arrive at its destination in 2034 and then fly to multiple locations hundreds of miles apart. Dragonfly will land near Titan’s equator close to the organic dunes thus providing an in situ glimpse of potentially biorelevant organics at a frozen stage – boldly going where no one has gone before.

(Source: Science Daily)



## Archaeology Without Borders restarts Persepolis restoration work

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** — A team of international archaeologists and restorers who are affiliated with the Archaeology Without Borders foundation has commenced the second season of its activity in Iran's UNESCO-tagged Persepolis, which was once the ceremonial capital of the mighty Achaemenid Empire.



The first season came to an end in summer based on an agreement with Iran's cultural heritage department, in which restorers partially rehabilitated some ruined monuments and bas-relief carvings in the ancient site.

Archaeology Without Borders aims to support archaeological education and training in developing countries and help strengthen regional networks of students in archaeology.

The open-air stone works of Persepolis face threats of spreading lichens, and eradication from periodic moisture that many experts believe that is impossible to eradicate.

Persepolis boasts extensive structures, including monumental staircases, exquisite reliefs and imposing gateways as one of the great wonders of the ancient world.

## Nickelodeon Universe -- the largest indoor theme park in North America -- opens this week

Nickelodeon Universe, which at 8.5 acres will be the largest indoor theme park in North America, will open on October 25 at the American Dream mall in East Rutherford, New Jersey.

The park features more than 35 rides, roller coasters and attractions. Nickelodeon characters such as SpongeBob, Dora The Explorer and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles will be at the mall to meet.

The roller coasters include one named the Shellraiser, which features a plunging 122-foot drop.

Since no Nickelodeon attraction would be complete without slime, visitors can enjoy entertainment on the Nickelodeon Slime Stage.

Prices for the park are available but it is unclear when they will be on sale. A general ticket is priced at \$39.99. For those interested in a more thrilling experience, there is an all-access ticket for \$49.99. Children under 2 are free.

Besides Nickelodeon Universe, American Dream's NHL-regulation size ice rink will open on October 25 with open skating, figure skating and hockey tournaments.

In November, the DreamWorks Water Park is set to open at the mall featuring more than 40 water slides and 15 attractions. *(Source: MSN)*



### ROUND THE GLOBE

#### Archaeological site of Troy

Troy, with its 4,000 years of history, is one of the most famous archaeological sites in the world. Its extensive remains are the most significant and substantial evidence of the first contact between the civilizations of Anatolia and the burgeoning Mediterranean world.



Excavations started more than a century ago have established a chronology that is fundamental to the understanding of this seminal period of the Old World and its cultural development. Moreover, the siege of Troy by Mycenaean warriors from Greece in the 13th century BC, immortalized by Homer in The Iliad, has inspired great artists throughout the world ever since.

Troy is located on the mound of Hisarlik, which overlooks the plain along the Turkish Aegean coast, 4.8 km from the southern entrance to the Dardanelles. The famous archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann undertook the first excavations at the site in 1870, and those excavations could be considered the starting point of modern archaeology and its public recognition.

Research and excavations conducted in the Troia and Troas region reveal that the region has been inhabited for 8,000 years. Throughout the centuries, Troy has acted as a cultural bridge between the Troas region and the Balkans, Anatolia, the Aegean and Black Sea regions through migration, occupation, trade and the transmission of knowledge.

A total of 24 excavation campaigns, spread over the past 140 years, have revealed many features from all the periods of occupation in the citadel and the lower town. *(Source: UNESCO)*

# Iran is a hugely 'friendly' country despite propagandas, New Zealander professor says

**1 →** During the journey Robie held talks with some Iranian academics, including Professor Reza Ebrahimzadeh of the Islamic Azad University at Isfahan, who argues that foreign news organizations need to do a far better job in providing "context and history" about Iran to promote global understanding.

Robie, who covered the Asia-Pacific region for international media for more than two decades and was an associate professor in Auckland University of Technology School of Communication Studies in 2005 and a professor in 2011, concludes that "more journalists from New Zealand need to go to Iran to see for themselves."

**■ Where does the wrong perception come from?**

Many visitors to Iran believe that certain Western media often portray Iran negatively, saying there is a widespread misunderstanding about the true nature and safety of the country, which is tainted by the reputation of some of its more politically unstable neighbors.

In this regard, Skift Inc., a New York City headquartered media company that provides news, research, and marketing services for the travel industry, in a July article noticed a hint of a "perception problem" deemed to be fueled by the Trump administration's rhetoric toward Iran.

Official answers to the query comes from the U.S. State Department, which has had a travel advisory against Iran since 1979, citing "the risk of kidnapping, arrest and detention of U.S. citizens."

"It is a country that is often portrayed as unwelcoming, but the reality is quite



David Robie (C) poses for a photo surrounded by "friendly" Iranians who are "keen for a chat, selfies and swapping Instagram accounts". (Image: David Robie)

the opposite," said Jenny Gray, the global product and operations manager of the Australia-based Intrepid Travel.

"Iranians are warm, friendly and eager

to show off their country to foreigners. The feedback from our travelers is a testament to this."

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.

## Achaemenid, Parthian clay seals unearthed in northeast Iran

**HERITAGE** **TEHRAN** — A team of Iranian and German archaeologists has recently discovered historical clay stamps, which are estimated to date from Achaemenid and Parthian eras.

The objects were found in an archaeological zone situated in Rivi region, Maneh-Samalqan county, northwest Iran, IRNA reported on Sunday.

"The seals were found alongside clay urns in a large hall and the seals are imprinted in a variety of geometric patterns [depicting] plants, animals, and human figures. Studying the findings can yield valuable information on economy, culture, and arts of the ancient societies," said Mohammad Javad Jafari who heads Iranian archaeologists.

"These stamps represent the widespread and complicated economic relations that people of the time had with other communities in such a way that made them to bring together and store goods."



Evidence suggests that residents of this area sealed the urns that were loaded with particular goods then tied them with ropes, the archaeologist said.

Head of German archaeologists also noted that the

## Hamedan hosting national crafts exhibit

**HERITAGE** **TEHRAN** — Iran's ancient city of Hamedan is playing host to a national handicrafts exhibit.

A total of 182 stalls, set up in an area of about 2,500 square meters, are showcasing visitors works made in the provinces of Lorestan, Isfahan, South Khorasan, Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari, Zanjan, Golestan, Yazd, Sistan-Baluchestan and Hamedan, CHTN reported.

Running through October 25, the sales exhibit offers leatherwork, metalwork,

woodwork, traditional embroidery, painting glassware, potteries, ceramics, semi-precious stones, and embossed arts amongst dozens of other arts and crafts.

Handicrafts exports from the Islamic Republic reached \$289 million in the past Iranian calendar year (ended March 20), demonstrating three percent growth year on year, according to data compiled by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts.

Traditional ceramics, pottery vessels,



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

Known in classical times as Ecbatana, Hamedan was one of the ancient world's greatest cities. Pitifully little remains from antiquity, but significant parts of the city center are given over to excavations, and there's a scattering of historical curiosities.

## What is the Bermuda Triangle, and do pilots really avoid it?

The Bermuda Triangle has always been shrouded in mystery. It's a place of alien abductions, strange disappearances, and ghostly sightings, so naturally people get a little nervous when they think about flying over it.

**■ What is the Bermuda Triangle?**

Also known as the Devil's Triangle or Hurricane Alley, this area of the Atlantic Ocean has been credited for causing a mass disappearances and a number of wrecks over the years. While people love to throw around conspiracy theories about each of these Bermuda Triangle stories, there may be perfectly logical explanations for all of them.

Still, the superstition continues around this relatively small slice of ocean, so much so that some people refuse to travel around it. Despite the spooky stories, you'd be surprised at how many times people have sailed or flown over the area and not noticed anything out of the ordinary.

**■ Where is the Bermuda Triangle?**

The Bermuda Triangle, according to the Encyclopedia Britannica, is an area of the Atlantic Ocean that doesn't necessarily have an agreed-upon boundary, but it is generally considered to be the area bounded by the southeastern coast of the U.S., Bermuda, and the islands of Cuba, Hispaniola, Jamaica, and, Puerto Rico. According to some calculations, the area makes up anywhere between 500,000 and 1.5 million square miles and is triangle-like in shape. It's a pretty big area of ocean in general, though relatively small considering the ocean covers about 70 percent of the planet, or about 139.7 million square miles.

According to Encyclopedia Britannica, there's no telling how many ships or planes that have "disappeared" in the Bermuda Triangle, but some estimates guess around 50 ships and 20 aircraft have gone missing there. Despite these figures, data does not show that disappearances are more likely in this spot. There are two incidents that are considered mysteries of the Bermuda Triangle, specifically the disappearances of

Flight 19 in 1945 and the USS Collier in 1918. There is no clear indication that these disappearances have anything to do with the supernatural, but they are still unexplained.

**■ Have people gone missing in the Bermuda Triangle?**

Conspiracy theorists have proposed many different, though mostly superstitious and inconceivable, reasons as to why disappearances and disasters occur in the Bermuda Triangle. Some have theorized that the area is a hotbed of alien activity, positing that these extra terrestrial beings are abducting humans for study, according to the New York Post. Alien theorists have considered this spot to be a sort of maritime Area 51. Others have suggested that it's the real-life locations of the lost continent of Atlantis, therefore making it a portal to another dimension, according to History.com.

The most likely culprit for these mysteries isn't really a mystery at all. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), most scientific explanations include the many tropical storms and hurricanes which pass through this area and the Gulf Stream Current, which can cause sudden and extreme changes in the weather. There may even be some evidence that suggests that this area has a particular geomagnetic anomaly that can cause a ship or plane's navigation to point to "true" north rather than "magnetic" north. This can lead to navigation failure, though it should be noted that magnetic fields are found all over the world and are not exclusive to this area. Other theories also include explosive methane gas that can float up to the water's surface and cause ships to sink, according to Live Science, and simple, human error. In the case of Flight 19, according to Live Science, it is most likely that the squadron of bombers ran out of fuel and crashed into the ocean. It's a tragic disaster, but it may not be a true mystery.

The superstitions and stories still prevail, mostly because this area is perceived to have more disap-

pearances or tragic accidents than other parts of the world. However, this is actually untrue. According to the Huffington Post, the World Wildlife Fund found the most dangerous waters on the planet, but the Bermuda Triangle isn't one of them. In fact, it's not even mentioned in the report.

According to Live Science, a third of all of registered and privately owned ships in the U.S. are registered in the area considered to be part of the Bermuda Triangle, and about 82 percent of incidents in 2016 were due to people having little experience at sea. Inexperienced people using road maps or their smartphones to navigate, rather than specialized equipment, may also be contributing to the so-called mystery.

**■ Do pilots actually avoid it?**

Considering the superstition surrounding the Bermuda Triangle, many people assume that airline pilots actively avoid this area of the ocean. Of course, anyone who has flown from Miami to San Juan, Puerto Rico probably knows that's not true. In fact, if it were, pretty much everyone's Caribbean vacation would be ruined. A check on Flightradar24 will show that there are many flights that crisscross over the Bermuda Triangle, so it's clear that the area is not actively avoided.

In terms of navigation, flights are constantly monitored by air traffic control, so pilots have support if there is a navigation failure. Weather conditions are also closely tracked every time a plane is scheduled to take off. Accidents, of course, still happen, but not any more so than in other parts of the world.

Investigating Bermuda Triangle conspiracy theories, in general, is more of a paranormal pursuit than a scientific one, so if there are any pilots who do avoid the Bermuda Triangle, they are probably just interested in the supernatural or UFOs. While entertaining these theories can certainly be fun, you can rest assured that the airline industry definitely doesn't plan its routes around campfire stories.

*(Source: MSN)*



# MSM echoes manufactured narrative on Iranian women’s stadium attendance

By Alireza Hashemi

**TEHRAN** — Many western outlets failed to accurately report the first official presence of female football lovers in Iranian stadiums this month, and instead peddled a distorted narrative of the case that serves Iranophobic agendas.

On October 10, Iranian women attended Team Melli’s World Cup qualifier against Cambodia, which resulted in a shameful 14-0 defeat for the East Asian team at Iran Azadi stadium.

The match was the first time women could watch a men’s match by buying tickets. Before that, Iranian women had rarely attended men’s matches, though foreign women have often been allowed access.

The move came following months of efforts and increased pressure from FIFA, world soccer’s governing body, who had threatened with banning Iran’s football federation.

The match was not a huge draw and most of the seats in the 80,000-capacity stadium sat empty.

Many outlets cheered the attendance and portrayed it a historic, joyful moment for Iranians.

Some other outlets lamented that the world must work to end Iran’s “gender apartheid”, as “the ban on women entering stadiums has not been completely lifted”.

They objected why women were allocated just 4,600 seats, were guarded by police officers and were segregated.

**■ Discrimination?**

Many MSM outlets cheered it as a victory in the path to restore rights of women and end gender-based discrimination.

Detche Welle wrote the participation of women was a “step forward in their decades-long struggle against the rules put in place by the clergy as well as against their discrimination in general”.

Financial Times lauded Khodayari as a “potent symbol for the restriction of women’s rights in the Islamic Republic”.

The Iranian people have not cheered the decision that much, since this is an unimportant issue for many people in the country.

Overall, Iranian women are in a much better condition than many countries and many of them don’t like football.

Iran has one of the highest shares of



female students in universities globally and Iranian women are free to participate in many activities, including sports.

**■ Sex-Segregation**

Many outlets failed to explain the reason behind the male-only policy in Iranian stadiums, and omitted certain parts of the story.

For example, AP reported, “Hard-liners and traditional Shiite clerics, citing their own interpretation of Islamic law, believe in segregating men and women at public events, as well as keeping women out of men’s sports.”

AP also wrote the game “marks a decades-long push by Iranian women to be able to watch soccer matches, something hard-liners in Iran’s Shiite theocracy to this day still oppose”.

But the segregation has its root in Islam, and came into effect in many public places such as schools early after the 1979 revolution.

Anyone who has visited Iran can testify that the country is far from some kind of segregationist society, since it does not exist in universities, theaters, cinemas, restaurants, urban transport, offices, mosques, holy shrines, etc.

Moreover, there is no official rule prohibiting women from attending sporting

events, and women have rarely witnessed games.

Many men avoid stadiums because of the masculine atmosphere and foul language, and they believe the atmosphere could hurt the dignity of Iranian women.

By the way, one of those “hardliners”, former Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, advocated the presence of Iranian women in stadiums.

**■ Blue girl**

The reports also misrepresented the case of self-immolation of an Iranian girl named Sahar Khodayari.

The story grabbed international headlines and went viral on social media, sparking heated debates in political and media circles over women’s rights.

The September death has led to criticism of the country’s judiciary and local rules banning women from entering stadiums to watch men’s football.

But the MSM heavily emotionalized the case to manipulate the global opinion of Iran and prepare the ground for increased pressure on Iran.

The case was full of fake news, with fake pictures of Sahar being circulated by unknown social media account and fabricated rumors being spread.

**Many MSM outlets cheered it as a victory in the path to restore rights of women and end gender-based discrimination.**

The storyline goes something like this: a female football fan tried to enter the men-only Tehran’s Azadi stadium in March this year, but she was arrested by the security guard only because she was a woman. Ealey September, she attended a court in Tehran and after she found out about the prison sentence, she poured petrol on herself and set herself on fire outside the courthouse. She died one week later.

The Guardian wrote, “Sahar Khodayari, 29, set herself on fire outside a stadium after learning she might face six months in jail for trying to sneak into a match, reportedly disguised as a man.

It is true that several women have been detained and charged for defying the ban and sneaking in stadiums disguised as men in recent years.

But Khodayari was not arrested for trying to enter the stadium.

According to Sahar’s family, her arrest was not for her attempt to sneak into the stadium, but for violating the country’s law on Hijab and insulting policemen at the gates of Azadi stadium.

The girl was diagnosed with bipolar disorder who had committed a suicide attempt and stopped taking pill for over a year.

She violently attacked the policemen at the stadium gates, which is totally expected of a bipolar person.

Yes. Khodayari should have not been treated like a normal person. But most probably the police forces didn’t know about her mental conditions, and it was very hard for them to find out about the case.

But can one imagine what would happen to Khodayari if he was attempting to enter somewhere illegal in the west? What would happen if someone refuses a security check and violently attacks policemen at the US stadium gates?

Exploiting the tragic death of a mentally ill person for political purposes of any kind is disgustingly shameful and below any human level.

The same outlets who advance a pro-war agenda on Iran are suddenly furious why Iranian women are not allowed into schools

Iranians can hardly believe they really care about Iranian women’s rights, sex-segregation in the country and self-immolation of mentally ill people in Iran.

## Golden boy no more: As an election looms, two-faced Justin Trudeau has betrayed Canada

By Danielle Ryan

**RT** — Justin Trudeau rode to power four years ago on a wave of progressive enthusiasm. With an Obama-like ‘hope and change-y’ vibe, plenty of social media savvy and an almost cult-like following, he was more a brand than a politician.

The media loved him. He was the “youthful,” “geopolitical golden boy” – even a “dreamy heartthrob.” They applauded his progressive promises, lauded his half-female and racially diverse cabinet, and fawned over his penchant for novelty socks. His team’s PR savvy even landed him on the cover of Vogue as the “new young face of Canadian politics.”

At a time when Donald Trump was just bursting onto the political scene in the US in a more serious way than ever before, liberal Canadians were proud to show off their anti-Trump – and progressive Americans swooned and cooed with jealousy.

These days, the picture could not be more different. Once a shining beacon of hope, Trudeau’s approval ratings are today even lower than Trump’s – and as another election rolls around, the fresh-faced political wonderboy and media darling has lost his shine. With a trail of broken promises behind him and a serious corruption scandal on his hands, the 2019 incarnation of Justin Trudeau comes with significantly more baggage than before – and the controversies seem to keep piling up.

The most recent being the blackface scandal. Trudeau’s decision to dress up twice in blackface (and ‘brownface’ on another occasion) was a bad one, and yes, he should have known better. But let’s be honest, in the scheme of Trudeau’s worst political sins, it does not crack the top 10. Yet, it seems to have been the moment at which the media began to realize they were fooled – and thank heavens for that, because after the blackface scandal, Trudeau’s desperate PR stunts have started to look a lot more like... well, desperate PR stunts. Case in point: He showed up to a recent campaign event in a red canoe. “Brownface, Blackface and About-Face. Is Trudeau Who He Says He Is?” asked the New York Times last month. The answer, of course, is no.

**■ Two planes, two faces**

There is no one issue where Trudeau’s hypocrisy is laid bare more than that of the environment and climate change. One day he declares a climate emergency, the next (literally) he’s expanding oil pipelines. One day he’s marching with climate activists, nodding in agreement with Greta Thunberg and giving speeches about cutting carbon emissions – and the next, we hear he’s been using two airplanes to drag his campaign staff and equipment around the country instead of one. Look, no one would expect the PM to ride around the country campaigning on a zero-emissions bike, but surely if he wants to lead by example, one gas-guzzling jet would suffice.

One tweet succinctly summed up the futility of Trudeau marching with environmental activists fairly well: “You don’t need to march bro, you’re literally the f\*cking guy in charge.”

However, Trudeau’s environmental hypocrisy had already been well-established before the Conservative Party whipped out the travel logs and photographs of his two campaign planes. See, usually avowed environmentalists don’t tend



to be in the habit of building pipelines, but green-conscious Trudeau seems to have missed the memo on that one.

After promising to usher in a new era of environmentalism, Trudeau infuriated millions of Canadians when he bought the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline for \$4.5 billion on the taxpayer’s dime – and promised federal support for its expansion. Trudeau revealed his true colors in siding with corporate oil interests, despite a wave of protests from local communities, environmentalists and First Nations peoples. The pipeline, set to ride roughshod over indigenous lands, poses serious environmental risks, including to drinking water.

In a win for activists, Canada’s energy regulator in July revoked previous route approvals for the pipeline and ordered that the entire route be reviewed. Some now believe the project, wrapped up in legal challenges and appeals, will cause so much of a headache and financial burden, that it would be easier to pull the plug entirely.

**■ Facilitator of US imperialism**

Time’s opinion columnist Nicolas Kristof named Trudeau’s Canada a “moral leader of the free world” in a column a few months ago. Indeed, Canada enjoys a generally positive image of being kinder and softer than the US on the world stage – but peel back the facade, and Canada, like most of Washington’s major allies, is a quiet partner in and facilitator of US aggression. From Ukraine to Venezuela to Iran, Ottawa plays a major supporting role to Washington, always unquestioningly supporting and amplifying US narratives.

Under Trudeau, Canada deployed 200 troops to Ukraine to train soldiers and National Guard personnel to “liberate” the country, sticking carefully to the US’ anti-Russia drive

in Eastern Europe and providing aid to a post-coup government that was propped up by neo-Nazis. Trudeau also enthusiastically threw his support behind Trump’s provocations and campaign of “maximum pressure” against Iran, painting Tehran as an “aggressor” and essentially endorsing any future action the White House may take.

On China, Trudeau has aligned himself with Trump on the anti-Beijing trade war – and in Venezuela, the Canadian PM lined up with other US allies to back coup leader and self-proclaimed interim president Juan Guaido earlier this year, making sure to slap its own sanctions on the government of President Nicolas Maduro. Trudeau also continues to sell billions of dollars in military equipment to Saudi Arabia, despite its ongoing slaughter in Yemen.

**■ Corruption and bullying?**

Then there’s the minor issue of Trudeau’s embroilment in a major corruption scandal. The supposed goody-two-shoes PM is alleged to have pressured Canada’s ex-attorney general Jody Wilson-Raybould to abandon a bribery probe into his wealthy friends at engineering firm SNC Lavalin. The Canadian firm is accused of having bribed officials to win lucrative contracts in Libya.

Wilson-Raybould, who was removed from her post as attorney general and demoted to a less important cabinet position, claims Trudeau made “veiled threats” to drop the case. She resigned when the story broke and Trudeau denied subjecting her to months of pressure. This doesn’t sound like the behavior of a man who would wear a pink anti-bullying T-shirt bearing the slogan “Kindness is One Size Fits All” now, does it?

Perhaps in future, progressives in Canada and beyond should heed the words of activist actress Jane Fonda, who eviscerated Trudeau during a tour of the Alberta oil sands two years ago. Trudeau, she said, knows all the right words to say and “talks so beautifully” about the environment, but has, in reality, “betrayed everyone of the things that he committed to” during the Paris climate talk. “I guess the lesson is, we shouldn’t be fooled by good lookin’ liberals, no matter how well spoken they are,” she added.

None of this is to say that Trudeau’s Conservative Party opponent Andrew Scheer is a better alternative – but like the Barack Obamas and the Emmanuel Macrons of the world, Trudeau’s failure to deliver should be another warning to progressives.

It’s time to recognize the hypocrisy and duplicity of the smooth-talking liberals who quickly reveal themselves to be wolves in sheep’s clothing – and admit that “peoplekind” would do well to avoid them as best they can.

**There’s the minor issue of Trudeau’s embroilment in a major corruption scandal. The supposed goody-two-shoes PM is alleged to have pressured Canada’s ex-attorney general Jody Wilson-Raybould to abandon a bribery probe into his wealthy friends at engineering firm SNC Lavalin. The Canadian firm is accused of having bribed officials to win lucrative contracts in Libya.**

## Major media bury groundbreaking studies of pentagon’s massive carbon footprint

By Joshua Cho

**FAIR** — In 2010, Project Censored (10/2/10) found that the “U.S. military is responsible for the most egregious and widespread pollution of the planet, yet this information and accompanying documentation goes almost entirely unreported.”

Almost a decade later, Project Censored’s observations are still applicable, with two major studies published in June remaining buried by most major media outlets. The first study, Pentagon Fuel Use, Climate Change, and the Costs of War, by Neta Crawford for Brown University’s Costs of War Project, confirmed previous findings that the U.S. military is “the single-largest producer of greenhouse gases (GHG) in the world,” and that the Pentagon is responsible for between “77 percent and 80 percent of all U.S. government energy consumption” since 2001, and that from the beginning of the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 to 2017, the U.S. military emitted approximately 1.2 billion metric tons of CO2 equivalent.

The second study, Hidden Carbon Costs of the ‘Everywhere War’: Logistics, Geopolitical Ecology, and the Carbon Footprint of the U.S. Military, published by Oliver Belcher, Benjamin Neimark, and Patrick Bigger from Durham and Lancaster universities in the Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers (6/19), found that if the U.S. military were a country, its “fuel usage alone would make it the 47th largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the world, sitting between Peru and Portugal.”



Authors of both studies note how “existing military aircraft and warships” are “locking the U.S. military into hydrocarbons for years to come.” (Photo: Scott Nelson/Getty Images).

Yet these groundbreaking studies received no coverage in virtually all the U.S.’s biggest newspapers and TV news channels. An initial search in the Nexis news database from June 1 to Oct. 4 of the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, NPR, PBS, ABC, MSNBC, CBS, and CNN turned up nothing.

A broader Nexis search of all the English-language outlets only confirmed that the biggest media outlets in the country, with much better resources for reporting, are burying the study.

Here’s a list of the outlets, according to the Nexis news database, that mentioned the Costs of War study:

- Arab American News (U.S.)
- Indian Agriculture News (India)
- Yerepouni Daily News (Armenia)
- Pressenza International Press Agency (Ecuador)
- Washington Examiner (U.S.)
- Defense Monitor Worldwide (U.S.)
- International Business Times India (India)
- The Conversation (U.S.)
- Straits Times (Singapore)
- The Nation (U.S.)
- Defense One (U.S.)
- Real News Network (U.S.)

Here’s a list of the outlets, according to Nexis, that mentioned the study published in the Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers:

- Daily Mail (U.K.)
- Asian News International (India)
- Science Daily (U.S.)

To be fair, Nexis isn’t able to catch every report or reprints in other outlets. On my own, I found nothing that contradicts the finding that these studies are being buried by most of the biggest media outlets in the U.S. But these studies were mentioned by Reuters (6/12/19), Grist (6/12/19), Gizmodo (6/13/19), Bloomberg (6/13/19), USA Today (6/14/19), Forbes (6/13/19), GQ (9/13/19), The Hill (6/13/19), New York Post (6/13/19), CNBC (6/13/19), U.K. Independent (6/13/19), Intercept (9/15/19), TomDispatch (6/23/19), and Mic (6/26/19). The Real News Network (7/10/19) provided exemplary reporting on these two studies by featuring their authors in an interview to discuss their findings.

Aside from the findings, these studies are also especially significant because they’re the first to use comprehensive data based on the publicly available emissions data from the Department of Energy, and on multiple Freedom of Information Act requests to the U.S. Defense Logistics Agency managing the U.S. military’s supply chains, which includes hydrocarbon fuel purchases and distribution. Most greenhouse gas accounting focuses on how much energy and fuel civilians use, because it has always been difficult to obtain reliable and consistent data on the Pentagon’s carbon footprint; the Pentagon doesn’t publicly and regularly report its fuel consumption or greenhouse gas emissions.

Despite not signing the 1992 Kyoto Protocol international agreement to fight climate change, the U.S. succeeded in obtaining an exemption for all countries’ militaries from having to report, let alone cut, their carbon emissions, which Congress later locked in. Although that exemption was later removed by the 2015 Paris Accord—despite the Obama administration’s longstanding policy of undermining international climate agreements—the Trump administration has the U.S. due to withdraw from the Paris Accord in 2020 (New York Times, 6/1/17), which would make it harder to collect data and conduct future studies like the ones above. This is why it’s especially important for media outlets to cover studies like this when they’re published.

Although the authors of both studies acknowledge that the U.S. military has been cutting its emissions over the years, they both note how “existing military aircraft and warships” are “locking the U.S. military into hydrocarbons for years to come,” and that the “Pentagon does not acknowledge that its own fuel use is a major contributor to climate change.” That shouldn’t be surprising. Given corporate media’s propagandizing for starting and staying in wars (FAIR.org, 10/23/17, 9/11/19) and for neverending arms races (FAIR.org, 5/17/19, 7/12/19), one should expect corporate media to bury evidence that the U.S. military is a threat to itself and its citizens with its massive carbon output.



## SOCIETY

### IUMS launches health startup acceleration center

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — Iran University of Medical Sciences (IUMS) has established an acceleration center, named Healthinno, aimed at supporting startups active in the digital health sector, according to the IUMS public relations department.

Healthinno is the first health startup accelerator affiliated to a university of medical sciences.



The center was officially inaugurated on October 14 with Ahmed Al-Mandhari, World Health Organization Regional Director for Eastern Mediterranean, and Reza Malekzadeh, deputy health minister, in attendance.

Seyed Abbas Motevalian, vice chancellor of IUMS, said that the Healthinno accelerator is currently supporting 12 startups which will soon reach up to 40.

Groups with creative ideas in digital health receive help and support to commercialize their business, he added.

Regarding the support and facilities offered by the accelerator to the startups, he noted that seed investment, shared workspace, conference room, mentorship, training workshops and specialized lectures with the presence of leading professors and specialists are among the supports provided.

### UK urges World Bank to channel more money into tackling climate crisis

UK backing for a World Bank fund to help poor countries will hinge on reforms at the global institution to channel more money into tackling the climate crisis, improving gender equality and ensuring vulnerable countries can pay their debts.

Speaking in Washington, the international development secretary, Alok Sharma, said the size of the UK's contribution to the Bank's concessional loan facility for the world's least-developed countries would depend on a more focused anti-poverty approach.

The Bank is currently seeking contributions from rich countries for the 19th replenishment of the International Development Association (IDA 19), which provides soft loans and grants for countries in financial difficulty.

Britain is one of the few countries to meet the United Nations target for spending 0.7% of national income on development assistance, and the size of the aid budget meant it was the biggest single donor to IDA 18, a three-year \$75bn (£58bn) round of funding which expires in 2020.

Sharma, with the Bank keen to raise even more money for IDA 19, made it clear he intended to use the UK's leverage to secure change. In a meeting with Malpass at the Bank's annual meeting in Washington, Sharma said action was needed to:

- \* Increase the Bank's financial support to tackle the climate crisis, including helping the most vulnerable communities to become more resilient and preparing for potential natural disasters
- \* Preserve biodiversity and invest in innovative nature-based solutions such as reforestation
- \* Focus on mobilizing private-sector investment for the poorest countries – and making a priority of green, quality infrastructure projects that form the backbone of economic growth
- \* Bring about improved debt transparency and sustainability, through balancing the need for finance with limits on how much governments are borrowing from different sources before the International Development Association agrees more loans

(Source: The Guardian)

### WORDS IN THE NEWS

#### Rumsfeld defends treatment of Prisoners

(January 23, 2002)

The US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has dismissed criticism from British MPs about the treatment of prisoners at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba.

Donald Rumsfeld was at his most **lacerating**. The debate at Westminster was, he said, just amazing. It is amazing, he continued, **oozing sarcasm**, the insight that parliamentarians can gain from five thousand miles away. This was the Defense Secretary's theme, that the allegations made by many from a comfortable distance are just **plain false**. The detainees at Guantanamo Bay are being treated **humanely**, in conditions **consistent with** the Geneva Convention. Mr Rumsfeld insisted that it was right that the detainees were not classed as Prisoners of War - they had not carried their weapons openly, they had hidden their **insignia**, they had not fought on behalf of a legitimate government. And **more to the point**, said the Defense Secretary, they were still dangerous. 'Will any single prisoner be treated humanely? **You bet**. When they are being moved from place to place will they be restrained in a way so that they are less likely to be able to kill an American soldier? You bet. Is it inhumane to do that? No. Would it be stupid to do anything else? Yes.'

One prisoner, said Mr Rumsfeld, had already bitten a soldier guarding him. The purpose of their continued detention was, according to the Defense Secretary, to keep them off the streets, out of the airlines, and out of nuclear power plants. This was Donald Rumsfeld's most **robust** performance yet on the issue. Concern may have been voiced across Europe. America is **unbending**.

■ **Words**

**lacerating**: cutting or hard-hitting

**oozing sarcasm**: being insulting or mocking

**plain false**: completely incorrect

**humanely**: in a considerate and respectful way

**consistent with**: not contradicting

**insignia**: a badge or sign that shows that a person belongs to a particular organization

**more to the point**: here, most importantly

**you bet**: emphatic way of saying 'yes'

**robust**: strong

**unbending**: here, not going to change its view

(Source: BBC)

# Last Siberian crane wings its way back to Iran

**ENVIRONMENT** **TEHRAN** — The last remaining western Siberian crane, called 'Omid' (meaning Hope in Persian), has returned to Iran once again to spend the winter but one month earlier than the previous years, IRNA news agency reported on Monday.

The eye-catching snow-white bird has been taking wing to Iran for years in the first week of the Iranian calendar month of Aban falling on the last week of October.

For the past 12 years the Siberian Crane has been taking a two-month incredible fly of 5,000km from Uvat in western Siberia to Fereydunkenar Damgah [structures built in rice paddies for harvesting wild ducks in autumn and winter by farmers].

Initially, two other cranes also made the same trip but they were shot, leaving a sole traveler from the western Arctic population.

Over the past two years, Omid flew to Iran 1-2 months late which made the environmentalist worried, however, this year weather conditions and sufficient food supply have made the Siberian crane return back to its wintering land one month earlier.

Korous Rabiei, Mazandaran province's department of environment chief, said that Omid was arriving at the wetland with delay during the past few years due to improper climate conditions, adding that his wintering trip is timely this year and is not considered early.

Highlighting that no human-caused threat is imposing on the bird, he said that everyone is taking care of the last remaining crane and



**According to the International Crane Foundation, Siberian crane is critically endangered and is now only found in one main population in East Asia, with a few birds remaining in the historic Western/Central population.**

any hunting or shooting is also prohibited in Fereydunkenar wetland.

He went on to say that the bird rarely leaves the wetland and permanently rests during its four-month stay, environmental

lovers can see him every day.

Despite losing his couple Arezoo (meaning Wish in Persian) five years ago, he comes back to winter in the wetland every year ever since, except for two years during the past 12 years.

### ‘17% of Iranians aged over 30 suffering from osteoporosis’

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — Seventeen percent of Iranians over the age of 30 and 20 percent of women aged over 50 are suffering from osteoporosis, Fars quoted Ahmad Raeisodadat, secretary of the association of physical medicine and rehabilitation, as saying on Sunday.

He made the remarks on the occasion of World Osteoporosis Day (WOD) which is marked globally on October 20 each year.

WOD aim at raising global awareness of the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of osteoporosis, also to make osteoporosis and fracture prevention a global health priority by reaching out to health-care professionals, the media, policy makers, patients, and the public at large.

In 2019, it featured under the theme of “THAT’S OSTEOPOROSIS”, and, for the first time, highlighted emotionally impactful visuals and stories of real people living with osteoporosis in all regions of the world.

He stated that 17 percent of adults over 30 years of age are diagnosed with osteoporosis, and the number of people infected with the disease in northern provinces such as Golestan, Mazandaran, Tehran and Azerbaijan are more than southern provinces of Fars and Bushehr.

Women are more exposed to osteoporosis than men, he said elaborating that averagely, all over the country, one in three women and one in five men aged over 50 get fractures due to osteoporotic each year.

Although osteoporosis is mainly rooted in genetics, low physical activity or unhealthy diet with small amount of calcium, gradually reduces bone calcium and causes osteoporosis is, the physician explained



Osteoporosis is referred to as the silent epidemic disease of the century, because it does not create serious pain until a bone fracture is occurred, he noted.

Osteoporosis is preventable and can be stopped with proper diet, exercise and annual checkup, he concluded.

Mina Kermani, rheumatologist, announced in February that about seven million Iranian people were suffering from osteoporosis.

Osteoporosis is a condition that weakens bones, making them fragile and more likely to break. It develops slowly over several years and is often only diagnosed when a minor fall or sudden impact causes a bone fracture.

The most common injuries in people with osteoporosis are wrist fractures and hip fractures.

According to International Osteoporosis Foundation, currently it is estimated that over 200 million people worldwide suffer from this disease. At least 40 percent of the women and 15-30 percent of men will sustain one or more fragility fractures in their remaining lifetime. Ageing of populations worldwide will be responsible for a major increase in the incidence of osteoporosis in postmenopausal women.

### Air pollution is now a ‘health emergency’, head of NHS England warns

The head of NHS England has warned of a “health emergency” as new figures revealed hundreds more children and adults are suffering cardiac arrests, strokes or severe asthma attacks because of days of high air pollution.

Stunted lung growth in children and links between pollution and lung cancer was also found by researchers who looked at nine cities across England.

Higher air pollution triggered each year an extra 124 cardiac arrests in people not already in hospital, 231 cases of stroke and 193 children and adults being admitted to hospital for asthma, the study found.

The figures, from King's College London and UK100, a group of 94 local government leaders, highlighted the “immediate, short-term and avoidable” impact of high air pollution, the experts said.

Government data has previously shown that pollution contributes to up to 36,000 deaths every year.

In London, days with worse pollution accounted for 87 extra cardiac arrests and 251 people being admitted to hospital for asthma or strokes, the research suggested.

In Birmingham, they were responsible for 12 more cardiac arrests and 53 children or adults being taken to hospital for asthma or a stroke.

Simon Stevens, chief executive of NHS England, said that it was clear that the climate emergency was in fact “also a health emergency” and that it meant the NHS needed to cut its own greenhouse gas emissions.

“Since these avoidable deaths are happening now – not in 2025 or 2050 – together



we need to act now,” he said. “For the NHS that is going to mean further comprehensive action building on the reduction of our carbon footprint of one-fifth in the past decade.

“So our NHS energy use, supply chain, building adaptations and our transport will all need to change substantially.”

Polly Billington, director of UK100, added: “Local government needs additional powers and resources to address this public health crisis, alongside a timetable for when air pollution levels will meet World Health Organisation guidelines.”

The research, which will be published in full in November, was released before an international clean air summit hosted by Sadiq Khan, the mayor of London, and UK100 next week.

The summit is expected to push the government to provide new powers and resources to local authorities to clean up the air alongside a timetable for implementing World Health Organisation targets on one of the most dangerous forms of pollution.

Rita Issa, a GP in Tower Hamlets, east London, and member of Doctors for Extinction Rebellion, said the findings were “shocking but not surprising”.

(Source: The Independent)

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ع

### ‘Playing to learn’ scheme piloted in elementary schools

A plan dubbed “playing to learn” aiming at using educational games toward deeper learning was implemented for first time in elementary schools across the capital, with the Education Minister in attendance, Fars reported on Saturday.

Through the first phase of the scheme, 1,000 schools from 10 provinces nationwide will implement the playing to learn scheme, including Tehran, Khorasan Razavi, Fars, Hamedan, Mazandaran, Kordestan, Kerman, West Azarbaijan, Qazvin, and Sistan-Baluchestan.

According to the report, schools regarding their proper environment and conditions volunteered and chose to hold game-based classes and assess the results, currently in each province 50 girls' schools and 50 boys' schools among state-run and private schools have piloted the scheme; 20 percent of which are private schools.

## PREFIX/SUFFIX

### “hepato-, hepat-”

- **Meaning:** liver
- **For example:** There is no specific treatment for this disease and complete recovery from any form of **hepatitis** may take four months or longer.

## PHRASAL VERB

### Hang over something/ somebody

- **Meaning:** if something bad is hanging over you, you are worried or anxious about it
- **For example:** It's not very nice to have huge debts hanging over your head.

## IDIOM

### Have a brush with something

- **Explanation:** when you have a brush with something, such as the law, you encounter or experience it briefly
- **For example:** He had a brush with the law for speeding a few years ago, but he has had a clean record ever since.



# U.S. forces transferring ISIL terrorists from Syria to Iraq

**TEHRAN** — U.S. military forces are transporting to safe sanctuaries hundreds of members of the ISIL (Daesh) Takfiri terrorist group from the desert region of al-Jazirah in Syria's northeastern province of Hasakah to neighboring Iraq, a report says.

Syria's official news agency SANA, citing media and local sources, reported that American forces had recently transported the terrorists to an unknown location. The Daesh members were being kept at al-Hol refugee camp, which lies close to the Syria-Iraq border and is run by the Kurdish-dominated Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF).

According to Press TV, the report said that less than a day before, 230 foreign terrorists from Daesh were transferred from al-Malikiyah prison to a detention center in al-Shaddadi town in southern Hasakah.

Since October 9, SANA said, U.S. forces have transported hundreds of Daesh extremists and their relatives from Syrian territories to Iraq in six batches. The date is when Turkey and its allied militants launched a ground offensive against Kurdish forces in northeastern Syria.

According to the report, American forces



have also turned their illegal base in Shaddadi, Hasakah into a place of accommodation for Daesh terrorists and their families, who are being brought from al-Hol camp and

prisons across Syria to the base in order to be transported on board military helicopters to Iraq.

U.S. forces have until recently been air-

lifting Daesh terrorists from one place in Syria to another, under the cover of darkness, in order to save them in the face of advancement and territorial gains by Syrian government forces, and prevent revelation of their alliance with the Takfiri extremists.

■ **Syrians celebrate army deployment in border towns amid Turkish incursion**

In Syria's eastern province of Dayr al-Zawr, dozens of people gathered to express support for the deployment of government forces in the Kurdish-populated border towns in the wake of Turkey's offensive.

On Sunday, the residents of the provincial capital city of Dayr al-Zawr gathered at al-Intisar roundabout to denounce the Turkish aggression, and demand the full withdrawal of U.S. troops from Syrian territories, SANA reported.

The participants waved the national Syrian flag and lifted pictures of President Bashar al-Assad. They described the Turkish aggression on Syrian soil a criminal act, vowing that the sons of Syria will all confront the offensive, dubbed Peace Spring Operation.

## Lebanon approves emergency economic reforms

**TEHRAN** — Lebanon approved an emergency package of economic reforms on Monday, in response to a wave of anti-government protests that Prime Minister Saad al-Hariri praised for breaking down sectarian barriers and restoring a sense of national unity.

Across the country, people blocked roads for a fifth day. Schools, banks and businesses closed. Hundreds of thousands of people have flooded the streets, furious at a political class they accuse of pushing the economy to the point of collapse.

The protests have been extraordinary because of their size and geographic reach in a country where political movements are normally divided on sectarian lines and struggle to draw nationwide appeal.

Lebanon has one of the world's highest levels of government debt as a share of economic output. The government includes most major parties under a power-sharing system that many Lebanese say has entrenched corruption and made it impossible to halt waste.

Protests continued after the measures unveiled by Hariri in a televised speech from the presidential palace.

The reforms included the symbolic step of halving the salaries of government ministers and lawmakers, as well as moves toward implementing long-delayed changes seen

as vital to putting Lebanon's public finances on a sustainable path.

Hariri said the government would approve within three weeks the first phase of a capital investment program that donors have pledged to finance with \$11 billion conditional on Lebanon implementing reforms.

"We have today taken steps to fight corruption, fight waste, we have made big projects," Hariri said, adding that the moves were not designed to get people out of the street and the government must work to win back the confidence of the people.

Maya Mhana, a teacher listening to the speech in central Beirut with other protesters, was not convinced. "We are remaining in the streets, we don't believe a single word he said," she said.

"Lies, lies, lies," said another protester who declined to give his name. "They have been governing for a long time. If they had wanted, they could have done anything."

The government approved a 2020 budget with no new taxes and a deficit of around 0.6% compared to the targeted level of around 7% for 2019, Hariri said.

Cost-cutting steps included abolishing the ministry of information and other public institutions immediately and merging other unnecessary ones to save money.

The government also approved the establishment be-



fore the end of the year of a committee to fight corruption.

Lebanon's large banking sector would contribute 5.1 trillion Lebanese pounds (\$3.4 billion) to deficit reduction, including through an increase in the tax on bank profits, Hariri said.

The government would also accelerate the long-delayed reform of the state-run power sector, which drains \$2 billion from the treasury every year while failing to deliver enough power for Lebanese who depend on private generators to fill the gap.

## China seeks \$2.4 billion in sanctions against U.S. in Obama-era case: WTO

**TEHRAN** — China is seeking \$2.4 billion in retaliatory sanctions against the United States for non-compliance with a WTO ruling in a tariffs case dating to the Obama era, a document published on Monday showed.

WTO appeals judges said in July that the United States did not fully comply with a WTO ruling and could face Chinese sanctions if it does not remove certain tariffs that break the watchdog's rules, Reuters reported.

The WTO's Dispute Settlement Body effectively gave Beijing a green light to seek compensatory sanctions in mid-August. The United States said at the time that it did not view the WTO findings as valid and that the judges had applied "the wrong legal interpretation in this dispute".

China continued to be the "serial offender" of the WTO's subsidies agreement, the U.S. delegation said. Contacted by Reuters on

Monday, the U.S. mission in Geneva had no immediate comment.

China, in its request posted by WTO, said: "In response to the United States' continued non-compliance with the (WTO Dispute Settlement Body's) recommendations and rulings, China requests authorization from the DSB to suspend concessions and related obligations at an annual amount of \$2.4 billion."

The United States had failed to comply with the DSB recommendations and rulings within the specified period and no agreement on compensation had been reached, it said.

China went to the WTO in 2012 to challenge U.S. anti-subsidy tariffs, known as countervailing duties, on Chinese exports including solar panels, wind towers, steel cylinders and aluminum extrusions, exports that China valued at \$7.3 billion at the time.

## Australian newspapers redact front pages to protest media curbs

**TEHRAN** — Australia's biggest newspapers ran front pages on Monday made up to appear heavily redacted, in a protest against legislation that restricts press freedoms, a rare show of unity by the usually partisan media industry.

Australia has no constitutional safeguards for free speech, although the government added a provision to protect whistleblowers when it strengthened counter-espionage laws in 2018. Media groups say press freedoms remain restricted, Reuters reported.

Mastheads from the domestic unit of Rupert Murdoch's conservative News Corp (NWSA.O) and fierce newspaper rivals at Nine Entertainment (NEC.AX) ran front pages with most of the words blacked out, giving the impression the copy had been censored, in the manner of a classified government document.

Parliament has long been passing laws in the guise of national security that impeded the public's right to know what the government did in its name, the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance (MEAA) said.

"Journalism is a fundamental pillar of our democracy," said Paul Murphy, the chief executive of the industry union. "It exists to scrutinise the powerful, shine a light on



wrongdoing and hold governments to account, but the Australian public is being kept in the dark," he said in a statement.

Monday's media protest aimed to put public pressure on the government to exempt journalists from laws limiting access to sensitive information, enact a properly functioning freedom of information system, and raise the benchmark for defamation lawsuits.

Communications Minister Paul Fletcher did not immediately respond to questions on Monday. The government has previously said press freedom was a "bedrock principle".

Opposition leader Anthony Albanese told reporters that while journalists should not be prosecuted for doing their jobs, defamation laws provided a "good constraint on ensuring that there is some level of accuracy".

The campaign for media freedom is a rare moment of unity in Australia's tightly-held sector, where media houses compete vigorously for advertising spend and offer very different visions for the country.

The issue came to a boil soon after the May re-election of Australia's Liberal-led conservative government, when police raided the head office of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) in Sydney and the home of a News Corp editor on suspicion of receiving national secrets.

The raids, which involved police examination of about 9,000 computer files at the ABC and sifting through the female News Corp editor's underwear drawer, drew international condemnation.

The British Broadcasting Corporation called the raids "deeply troubling".

## N. Korea: Actions of U.S., South to blame for rising tensions on Korean Peninsula

**TEHRAN** — North Korea blames actions of the neighboring South and the United States for rising tensions on the Korean Peninsula, urging Washington and Seoul to find new solutions to help break an impasse in the diplomatic process with Pyongyang and resolve the standoff in the volatile region.

The North's Vice Minister of the People's Armed Forces Kim Hyong Ryong made the comments on Monday at the three-day Xiangshan Forum in Beijing, which is themed "Maintaining International Order and Promoting Peace in the Asia-Pacific."

The top official said it has been more than one year since a joint statement was adopted following a summit between U.S. President Donald Trump and the North's

leader Kim Jong-un in Singapore last year.

However, "there is no progress in improving bilateral relations between the two countries," said the official, arguing this is "completely because of the U.S. 'anachronistic, hostile policies against' the North.

Based on that statement, the two sides agreed to work toward denuclearization, but that agreement, made in a written document, was broadly worded and the details of such cooperation remain to be worked out.

Following that agreement, Pyongyang took several steps toward denuclearization; it demolished at least one nuclear test site and agreed to allow international inspectors into a missile engine test facility.

But diplomacy snagged as the U.S. refused

to reciprocate unilateral North Korean steps. And later, the country's leader indicated that Pyongyang would resume its nuclear and missile tests.

At the Beijing forum, the North Korean official said his country has made efforts towards the establishment of lasting piece on the Korean Peninsula, but that the situation has degenerated into a "dangerous, vicious cycle" of exacerbating tensions because of the actions of the American and South Korean governments.

"Bearing in mind our firm will to safeguard peace in the region, the United States and the South Korean authorities must refrain from any actions disrupting the stability of the situation and come up with a new way

for solving the problem," Kim said.

The North Korean official slammed South Korea for its "double-dealing attitude" because of Seoul's refusal to stop joint war games with the U.S. and purchases of advanced weapons from Washington.

According to Prss TV, Pyongyang and Seoul engaged in unprecedented talks in early 2018. Late last year, the two Korean leaders agreed in a meeting in Pyongyang to take a step closer to peace by turning the Korean Peninsula into a "land of peace without nuclear weapons and nuclear threats."

However, inter-Korean talks have also stalled since a second summit between Trump and Kim collapsed without an agreement in Vietnam.

## Iraq needs international support in fight against terrorism: Abdul Mahdi

➔ Abdul Mahdi also said that the two sides "stressed the importance of maintaining security and stability in the region and working for global peace and security," he added.

For her part, Solberg said that "Norway will remain committed to its partnership with Iraq and will continue to support the government of Iraq in its efforts to combat terrorism and to train Iraqi forces to bring stabilization in the country," according to the statement.

## Lebanon's Aoun voices solidarity with street protesters

**TEHRAN** — Lebanon's President Michel Aoun has expressed solidarity with the protesters who have flooded the streets of the country in recent days, saying their agitation shows "people's pain."

"What is happening in the streets expresses people's pain, but generalizing corruption (charges) against everyone carries big injustice," Aoun's office quoted him as saying during a cabinet session on Monday.

Aoun also said the government must at least begin by lifting banking secrecy from current and future ministers, the office of the Lebanese president added in a tweet.

Lebanon has been rocked by nationwide protests over the past four days against rising inflation and living costs as the government struggles to attract investment amid increasing economic hardships and a decreasing capital flow to the country.

The protesters blame the faltering economy on widespread corruption and abuse of privileges among politicians.

In response to the protests, Prime Minister Saad Hariri has reportedly given the nod on a package of reforms in an attempt to tackle an economic crisis. The package urges a 50-percent reduction in the salaries of current and former officials.

The reforms were expected to be approved during the cabinet meeting on Monday.

According to Press TV, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, secretary general of the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah, on Saturday said he was against calls for the resignation of the government, vowing not to allow anyone to "burn" Lebanon and cause chaos in the country.

Nasrallah also stated that the Hezbollah party was "determined to work hard" to solve the country's problems and "not allow anyone to drown this country and take it to the abyss".

## Morales confident of election win despite count suggesting a run-off

**TEHRAN** — Bolivian President Evo Morales shrugged off an early vote count showing Sunday's election heading for a second round run-off, saying he was confident that uncounted rural votes would help propel him to an outright victory and congressional majority.

Morales was seen leading the election with 45 percent of votes against 38 percent for chief rival Carlos Mesa, according to a preliminary account of nearly 84 percent of ballots by Bolivia's electoral board, the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE), Reuters reported.

However, that was short of the minimum 50 percent majority or 10-point lead over his closest rival Morales needed to avoid a December 15 second round run-off to decide who will govern Bolivia, a landlocked country of 11 million people, from 2020 to 2025.

Many people, including Mesa, considered the run-off a certainty but Morales, who has governed Bolivia since 2006, confounded them by heralding his victory at a news conference and saying rural votes should help see him home.

"We won once again. Four consecutive elections we've won in Bolivia," said Morales, South America's longest-serving leftist leader. "We're confident about the votes from the countryside."

An abrupt halt to vote counting by the TSE also sparked concern. One official observer, the Organization of American States, called on it to explain why transmission of the data had stopped.

Brazil's Foreign Ministry said on its Twitter account it was watching the election in Bolivia and was worried about the "unexpected interruption" of the official reporting of results.

## Defense minister says 'no force' can stop China reunification

**TEHRAN** — China's defense minister said on Monday that resolving the "Taiwan question" was China's greatest national interest, and that no force could prevent the country's "reunification".

Separatist activities were doomed to failure, Defense Minister Wei Fenghe said at the opening in Beijing of the Xiangshan Forum, which China styles as its answer to the annual Shangri-La Dialogue security forum in Singapore.

According to Al Jazeera, tensions between China and Taiwan have ratcheted up ahead of a presidential election on the island in January.

"China is the only major country in the world that is yet to be completely reunified," Wei said.

"Resolving the Taiwan question to realize China's full reunification is the irresistible trend of the times, China's greatest national interest, the righteous path to follow and the longing of all Chinese people."

Beijing sees Taiwan as a renegade province that needs to be retaken by force if necessary, a message President Xi Jinping reiterated at the start of this year.

■ **South China Sea claim**

Proudly democratic Taiwan has lambasted China for its authoritarian rule and for being a threat to regional peace.

Defeated Nationalist forces fled to Taiwan in 1949 at the end of the civil war that led to the founding of the People's Republic of China.

China has also been angered by support given by the United States to Taiwan, including arms sales.

Washington has no formal ties with Taipei, but is bound by law to provide the island with the means to defend itself.



## France calls for referee to be investigated

France want Rugby World Cup referee Jaco Peyper to be investigated after he was pictured mocking the red card he awarded Sebastien Vahaamahina for an elbow on Wales' Aaron Wainwright.

But the South Africa official has invited controversy on to himself after a picture emerged on social media showing him posing with Welsh fans and playfully landing an elbow on to the head of one.



French Rugby Federation vice president Dr Serge Simon said on Twitter: "This photo if it is true is shocking and explanations will be necessary."

A World Rugby spokesperson has responded: "World Rugby is aware of a picture on social media of referee Jaco Peyper with a group of Wales fans taken after last night's quarter-final between Wales and France in Oita. It would be inappropriate to comment further while we are establishing the facts."

Wales head coach Warren Gatland and his France counterpart Jacques Brunel endorsed Peyper's decision to issue the eighth red card of Japan 2019.

The 28-year-old forward, scorer of his side's opening try, spent the rest of the game sat on the bench with his hands on his head.

"The officials dealt with it appropriately. I don't think anyone could complain about that. The right decision was made," Gatland said.

"Rugby is heat of the moment stuff and he made an error of judgement. When you have got a lot of testosterone involved in some pretty high intensity games, that will sometimes happen. He's made a poor decision."

Brunel agreed Vahaamahina deserved to be dismissed. "The red card I don't contest - when you see the images it's very clear. He did have contact with the face so we can't deny that," Brunel said.

"Of course it changed the game. When you're playing half the match with 14 men it's difficult."

World Rugby announced Vahaamahina will face a disciplinary hearing on Thursday following his dismissal.

He will appear before an independent judicial committee chaired by England's Mike Hamlin.

(Source: Sky Sports)

## Two men arrested for racial abuse

The Metropolitan Police has confirmed two men have been arrested on Monday morning following reports of racist abuse during an FA Cup tie between Haringey Borough and Yeovil Town.

The men -- aged between 23 and 26 -- were arrested in Chard and Yeovil on suspicion of racially aggravated common assault.

The fourth-round tie was abandoned on Saturday after Haringey walked off the pitch after racist abuse was aimed at goalkeeper Valery Douglas Pajetat by Yeovil supporters.

Both men were taken into custody at a police station in Somerset. Pajetat, who is from Cameroon, told BT Sport that he was racially abused by fans, and that they had thrown objects and spat at him.

A spokesperson for the FA later tweeted: "We are deeply concerned about the allegation of discrimination from an area of the crowd towards a player during the FA Cup fourth-round qualifying match between Haringey Borough and Yeovil Town, which resulted in the fixture being abandoned."

The incident comes days after England players were subjected to racist abuse during their Euro 2020 qualifier against Bulgaria in Sofia.

Bulgaria FA president Borislav Mihaylov and head coach Krasimir Balakov both resigned from their respective positions following the incident.

(Source: ESPN)

## Roma tweet apology to Sampdoria's Ronaldo Vieira for racist boos

AS Roma have vowed to ban the fans responsible for aiming racist abuse at Sampdoria midfielder Ronaldo Vieira during a 0-0 Serie A draw on Sunday and took to social media to apologize for the incident.

Italian news network ANSA reported that the 21-year-old was targeted with monkey chants by travelling supporters at the Stadio Luigi Ferraris.

Roma's official Twitter account said: "AS Roma would like to apologize to Ronaldo Vieira for the racist boos he was subjected to.

"Roma does not tolerate racism of any kind and the club will support the authorities in identifying and subsequently banning any individuals found guilty of racially abusing the midfielder."

The chants were heard coming from the away end, occupied by around 2,000 Roma fans, during the first half. The abuse continued and was noted by fourth official Antonio Giua.

"I heard it but I don't want to talk about it. This happens too often, it shouldn't be this way," Vieira told Rai Sport.

Corriere dello Sport reported that an announcement was made on the stadium loudspeaker warning fans that the match would be suspended if the chants continued.

Vieira was born in Guinea-Bissau but has represented England at youth level, having moved to the country at a young age.

He joined Sampdoria from Leeds United in 2018.

Last month, Roma banned a fan for life for sending racist insults to defender Juan Jesus on social media.

There have already been several incidents of racism in Serie A this season.

Inter Milan striker Romelu Lukaku received abuse from Cagliari fans in September and a game was briefly suspended when Fiorentina defender Dalbert said he had been racially abused by Atalanta supporters.

(Source: Independent.co.uk)

# Klopp: Man Utd 'just defended' against Liverpool, but Solskjaer says otherwise

Jurgen Klopp said Man Utd "just defended" against his Liverpool side in the 1-1 draw at Old Trafford, but Ole Gunnar Solskjaer thought otherwise.

Adam Lallana's late equalizer cancelled out Marcus Rashford's opener on Super Sunday, in a game littered in VAR controversy. Liverpool, on a 17-game winning run, were clear favorites, but United gave them a tough time throughout.

United had 32.1 per cent possession, the second-lowest they've registered in a Premier League game at Old Trafford since 2003/04, and though Klopp insisted he meant no offence, he says United "just defended" for the third consecutive year in this fixture.

Asked whether United's style frustrated Klopp, the German said: "Why should it frustrate me? I'm not the person who should be frustrated by Man United's style.

"It's just a fact, when we come here, this year, last year, year before, they just defend. That's how it is, that's OK, it's no criticism, it's just a fact. It's not the usual way you think United plays against Liverpool, you would think both teams are trying like this.

"Again, the quality, we are the one team everybody is on their toes when United plays against us. It's no excuse, we need to do better, we can do better, but you cannot play against each team like this, how they played today.

"We are a good team, and when we play against somebody it is normal for them to say: 'How can we stop them?'"

Solskjaer responded by saying: "We set a team out to attack, aggressive and create chances. And I thought we did that."

The United manager added: "I thought we did well, well enough for them to change system, that's a pat on the back for the boys.

"We are better when we attack quickly, no dilly-dallying on the ball. I spoke about it before the game, take more risks, be braver, it doesn't matter if you lose the ball up there, you can win it back. Being more direct helped us.

"I'm disappointed that I can't sit here and talk about



the win, but of course the performance is very positive, and I think they were so disappointed in the dressing room. I'm sure they will go back tonight and think: 'We've played against a good team.' We just have to kick on."

Manchester United are now in 13th place, following their worst start to a Premier League campaign.

### ■ What the pundits said

Who did the pundits agree with? Speaking on Sky Sports, Jose Mourinho felt Liverpool were stuck against United, while Graeme Souness believed Liverpool were

outworked by the hosts.

Jose Mourinho: "I feel like Liverpool have some limitations when they come up against teams with low blocks. They have fantastic results but sometimes they win just in the limits.

"Sometimes, they smash opponents that play the way they want to play against, but clearly there's a bit of frustration for Jurgen. At Old Trafford, which is a special place for Liverpool to win, he's never done it."

(Source: Sky Sports)

## Koeman has clause allowing him to join Barcelona in Netherlands contract



Netherlands boss Ronald Koeman has a clause in his contract which would allow him to leave if Barcelona came in for him, a KNVB director said.

Koeman, whose goal won Barca their first-ever European Cup in 1992, has enhanced his reputation as a manager since taking over the Dutch national side. He led them to the UEFA Nations League final, following successive major tournaments for which they failed to qualify before he arrived, and his team's impressive performance has led to strong links he could return to Camp Nou as manager.

"I hope that we can work together for a very long time, because I think it is going very well," Nico-Jan Hoogma told FOX Sports NL. "But Ronald has long indicated that he wants to be a Barcelona

coach someday.

Asked whether there was a specific Barcelona clause, Hoogma added: "Agreements have been made about that. They have to pay for that."

Koeman was named Netherlands boss in February 2018 following the failure to qualify for that summer's World Cup, and his contract will take him up to Qatar 2022. Barca boss Ernesto Valverde came under pressure over the summer after giving up a three-goal first leg lead to crash out of the Champions League for a second successive season before suffering defeat to Valencia in the Copa del Rey final.

Koeman was among the names linked as a potential replacement, but Valverde stayed.

(Source: FOX Sports NL)

## Steelers LB Anthony Chickillo arrested on multiple charges



Pittsburgh Steelers linebacker Anthony Chickillo was arrested early Sunday morning and charged with simple assault, criminal mischief and harassment, the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette reported.

Details surrounding the alleged incident were unclear, though the newspaper reported the arrest occurred in southern Pennsylvania. It added Chickillo, 26, was arraigned before 8 a.m. ET Sunday, released on bond and scheduled to return to court for a preliminary hearing later this month.

WTAE reported Chickillo was arrested following an altercation with his girlfriend. If the report is accurate, it's possible the NFL could put Chickillo on the commissioner's exempt list, which

often occurs with players involved in domestic violence cases.

A Steelers spokesperson released a statement saying, "We are aware of an incident involving Anthony Chickillo last night and are still gathering information. Until we have further details we will not provide any further comments."

The Steelers (2-4) were on a bye this weekend and will play host to the Miami Dolphins on Oct. 28.

Chickillo, a sixth-round draft pick in 2015 out of Miami (Fla.), signed a two-year, \$8 million contract before the season. A foot injury has limited him to three games this season, in which he has three assisted tackles and 0.5 sacks.

(Source: Reuters)

## Day wins Japan Skins as Woods emerges unscathed

**CHIBA, Tokyo (Reuters)** — Jason Day won the Japan Skins game on Monday but the real winner was probably Tiger Woods, who reported a clean bill of health in his first competitive round since undergoing knee surgery two months ago.

Australian Day birdied the final hole to pick up \$100,000 for a total of \$210,000 designated to charity, while Woods (\$60,000), Rory McIlroy (\$60,000) and Hideki Matsuyama (\$20,000) collected the crumbs at Narashino Country Club.

Though some 2,000 tickets were sold to spectators at Yen 170,000 each, and most eyes were on Woods, playing in Japan for the first time since 2006, the afternoon was primarily a made-for-TV exhibition.

Nevertheless, it also afforded Woods a chance to assess his condition after having his left knee surgically repaired for the fifth time.

"I did not play well at the beginning," Woods said.

"I hit a lot of bad shots. It took five or six holes to find it but once I found my feet it came around quickly."

Woods has only this week's PGA Tour event, the Zozo Championship starting here on Thursday, to assess his form before finalising his team for December's Presidents Cup in Australia.



He will captain the American team, and can choose himself as one of the four wildcard selections he must make in a fortnight.

"I've got full range of motion and have no pain squatting," said Woods.

The 15-times major champion probably had more riding on Monday's skins than the other three at an event created for a worldwide television and streaming audience

watching on GolfTV and, in the United States, Golf Channel.

He last year signed a long-term contract to provide exclusive material to GolfTV, the PGA Tour's global streaming partner.

"We wanted to do something that's different, something unique," Woods said.

"I just thought the competitive atmosphere was fantastic, the shots we hit were great, and on top of that, I think

the banter back and forth, the needling, the jabbing, it was all good fun."

Though televised skins games, so called because a player must win a hole outright to avoid the skin carrying over to the next hole, petered out in the U.S. a decade ago, a couple a new features on Monday created something of novelty.

With the Rugby World Cup being staged in Japan, four retired rugby players played the par-three seventh "charity challenge hole" — Englishman Mike Tindall, Irishman Brian O'Driscoll, Australian George Gregan and South African Bryan Habana, each teaming up with a pro.

Matsuyama sank a 35-foot birdie that prompted partner Habana to jump into his arms, but he did not even win the skin as the birdie was matched by McIlroy's partner O'Driscoll, who rolled in a 25-footer to halve the hole.

The players also had to use one club only at the 525-yard par-five 14th.

McIlroy chose a four-iron, Woods a five-iron, Day and Matsuyama six-irons, and Day showed his skills by splashing out a deft bunker shot.

"I honestly think we all played some pretty nice golf out there, so hopefully the fans enjoyed it on TV around the world," Day said.



(Source: DailyNews)



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GUIDE TO  
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

He who turns away from right, is soon destroyed.  
Imam Ali (AS)

## Attar's Elahi-nameh published in Japanese

**CULTURE** **TEHRAN** — The Elahi-nameh (The Book of God), one of the masterpieces of Persian literature by the mystic and poet Farid ud-Din Mohammad ibn Ebrahim Attar (C. 1142-1220), has recently been published in Japanese.

Heibonsha, a Tokyo-based publishing house best known for producing dictionaries, encyclopedias and books on art, history and philosophy, is the publisher of the book, Iran's Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO) announced on Monday.

The book has been translated by Ayano Sasaki, a professor of Persian literature at the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies.

In a preface to the book, Sasaki wrote that she has rendered the book into Japanese based on a version of the Elahi-nameh that was corrected by Mohammadreza Shafiei Kadkani and published in 2006.

The idea to translate the book dates back about ten years when Sasaki was invited by Yuko Fujimoto, a professor of Persian literature at the Osaka University of Foreign Studies, to collaborate on a study project on women in the Elahi-nameh, she explained.

For the first time, Sasaki announced her collaboration on translating the Elahi-nameh during a two-day conference on Attar organized at the University of Isfahan in April 2015.

"It is hard to translate a literary text, especially a Persian one, into Japanese. Cultural and literary differences cause these difficulties," Sasaki said.

"One of the differences is the melodies that the words have in the classical Persian literature," she stated and added that it is impossible to transfer the melodies in translation.

"Japanese people welcome instructive, sweet and satirical stories, including the narratives that are in Attar's works," said Sasaki who is the author of many articles including "Basic Principles of Persian Prosody" and "Selection of Classical Persian Poetry Meters".

Attar is mostly known for the Mantiq at-Tayr (The Conference of the Birds), an allegorical poem describing the quest of the birds (i.e., Sufis) for the mythical Simorgh, or Phoenix, whom they wish to make their king (i.e., God).

His Elahi-nameh and the Mosibat-nameh ("Book of Affliction") both are mystical allegories similar in structure and form to the Mantiq at-Tayr.

## Tehran center to hang photos of Arbaeen pilgrimage

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — A collection of photos of this year's Arbaeen march taken by Iranian photojournalists will be showcased in an exhibition scheduled to open today at Tehran's Arsabaran Cultural Center.

Over 3 million Iranian individuals took part in the Arbaeen march and numerous Persian media covered the gathering with their news images, a selection of which will be on view at the exhibition entitled "Wave of Love".

Arbaeen, which was commemorated on October 19 this year, marks the end of the 40-day mourning period following the martyrdom of the Imam and his loyal companions on Ashura.

Imam Hussein (AS) and his companions were martyred in Karbala on Ashura, the 10th day of Muharram, standing against the injustices of the oppressive Umayyad dynasty in 680 CE.

Iranians and Shia Muslims from other countries embark on a journey to the Iraqi city of Karbala to observe the day of Arbaeen at the holy shrines of Imam Hussein (AS), the third Imam of the Shia, and his brother, Hazrat Abbas (AS).

The exhibit will be organized in collaboration with the Press Affairs Department of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance and run until October 28.



A poster for "Wave of Love".

# Play to recount life story of Eric Hermelin at Tehran theater



A poster for "Hermelin, the Scandinavian Lunatic", which will be staged by director Behzad Vaziri at Tehran's Shahrzad Theater on October 30.

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — An Iranian play titled "Hermelin, the Scandinavian Lunatic" will feature the life story of Baron Eric Axel Hermelin, a Swedish author and prolific translator of masterpieces from classical Persian literature, will go on stage at Tehran's Shahrzad Theater on October 30.

The play was written by Behzad Vaziri who will also direct it, a public relations team announced on Monday.

Hermelin, who had an unsuccessful life in Sweden, began a wandering life abroad in 1883 when he was 23. He traveled and lived in several countries and ended up as a soldier in the British army in India, where he started to learn foreign languages including Persian.

He was an alcoholic and a user of narcotic drugs. He also suffered from deep depression. In 1908, when he

returned to Sweden, he was taken to a lunatic asylum in Stockholm, and later he was moved to the asylum of St. Lars in Lund, where he spent the rest of his life.

In this period of time, Hermelin started reading, writing and translating works from German, English and Persian.

Hermelin, who translated more than 10,000 pages of Persian Sufi poetry, published his first Swedish translation from Persian of Sadi's Bustan (The Orchard) in 1918.

From 1918 to 1943, he translated Sadi's Gulistan (The Rose Garden), Shabestari's Golshan-e Raz, the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam and Sanai's Hadiqat al-Haqiq.

However, his greatest achievement was his translations of Farid ad-Din Attar's Tadkerat al-Awlia (Saints' Lives),

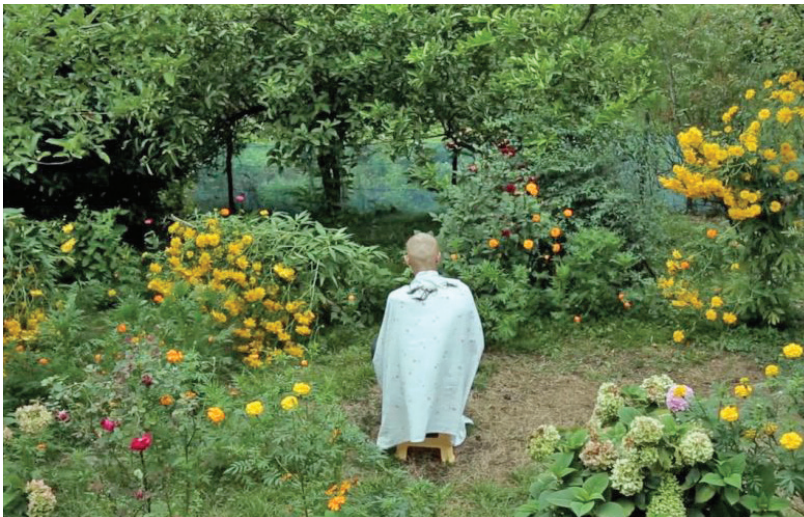
Pand-nameh and Mantiq at-Tayr (Conference of the Birds) as well as Jalal ad-Din Rumi's masterpiece Masnavi-ye Manavi in six volumes.

Hermelin also published translations of excerpts from Ferdowsi's Shahnameh and the full texts of the Kelileh and Demneh and Nezami's Eskandar-nameh.

By the 1940s, there were more translations of classical Persian literature available in Swedish than in most other European languages as a result of Hermelin's work, but he himself never became a public figure because of being a patient in a lunatic asylum.

Farid Sajjadi-Hosseini, Khosro Ahmadi, Reza Fayyazi, Bijan Afshar, Neda Maqсуди and Amir Joshagani are the members of the cast for the play, which will remain on stage for one month.

## Iranian cinematographers receive nominations at Poland Camerimage



A scene from "A House for You" by director Mehdi Bakhshi-Moqaddam.

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Iranian cinematographers Mohammad Haddadi and Aiin Irani have been nominated for awards at the 27th Camerimage International Film Festival, the greatest and most widely recognized event dedicated to the art of cinematography that is organized in Torun, Poland.

Haddadi received the nomination for his collaboration in "A House for You" directed by Mehdi Bakhshi-Moqaddam. It will be screened in "Image of the World and World in Images", a section dedicated to documentary features.

This section aims to recognize the art of documentary filmmaking as a creative interpretation of reality.

The documentary is about Davud, a 30-year-old man who has been diagnosed with lung cancer, and his dream is to build a house for his beloved wife.

Irani was nominated for his cooperation in "17 Hours" directed by Pedram Nuri. It is an entry to the Student Etudes Competition. The short film depicts the last moments of a ten-year-old girl named Julia, who has been trapped under debris from an earthquake in Italy for 17 hours.

The Student Etudes Competition supports the development of novice filmmakers and provides a unique opportunity to showcase the cinematic achievements of students from various parts of the world.

The Camerimage festival will be held from November 9 to 16.

## Tehran meeting to review Andrei Bely's masterpiece "Petersburg"



Front cover of the Persian version of Russian author Andrei Bely's novel "Petersburg".

**CULTURE** **TEHRAN** — Saless Publications in Tehran will organize a session on Wednesday to review the Persian version of Russian writer Andrei Bely's novel "Petersburg".

Translator Eftekhar Nabavinejad and literati Mahnaz Sadri, Bijan Ashtari and Mehdi Yazdanikhorram are scheduled to attend the review session.

Written in 1913, the symbolic novel follows Nikolai Apollonovich Ableukhov, a young revolutionary during the Russian Revolution of 1905 who has been ordered to assassinate his own father, Apollon Apollonovich Ableukhov, a high Tsarist official, by planting a time bomb.

Instead of focusing on the immense task he has agreed to undertake, Nikolai

Apollonovich attends parties and gets himself into the newspaper's gossip columns with his antics. His father notices these exploits and decides that his son is a scoundrel. Eventually, Nikolai Apollonovich experiences a change of heart about his mission and throws the bomb into a river.

"Petersburg" is considered Bely's masterpiece, although it received little attention when it was published and was not translated into English until 1959 by American-Russian translator John Cournos over 45 years after it was written.

Prominent Russian author Vladimir Nabokov ranked the book one of the four greatest masterpieces of the twentieth century after "Ulysses" and "The Metamorphosis" and before "In Search of Lost Time".

## YouTube deletes illegal copy of Iranian movie "Hussein, Who Said No"

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — YouTube has deleted an illegal copy of the Arabic version of the controversial Iranian movie "Hussein, Who Said No" from its platform following a threat from the film's director and shareholders to take legal action against the video-sharing website.

YouTube said that it has taken some technical measures so that if the film is uploaded again on the website, it would automatically be deleted, the Persian service of ILNA reported on Monday.

Iranian director Ahmadreza Darvish's movie about the uprising of Imam Hussein (AS) against the Umayyad dynasty in 680 CE was illegally uploaded on YouTube from a neighboring country and has been there and on several other websites since September.

Iran's Farabi Cinema Foundation, as one of the main



A scene from Ahmadreza Darvish's movie "Hussein, Who Said No".

shareholders of the movie, which was officially banned in 2015, had previously announced its decision to take legal action against those involved in this piracy.

Darvish had also asked Iran's police, Foreign Ministry, Interior Ministry, Legal Department of the Presidential Office and other relevant organizations to investigate the issue and to stop illegal copying of his film.

However, the film is still available on several channels of Telegram, but Darvish has called on people not to watch, download, or copy his film, and also to prevent others from doing these "haram and illegal actions."

Darvish spent 11 years making the film, which was completed in 2013. Its premiere during the 32nd Fajr International Film Festival in Tehran in February 2014 sparked a storm of protest from some of the ulema over its depiction of Shia saints.

## "Abominable" film axed in Malaysia after rebuffing order to cut China map

**KUALA LUMPUR (Reuters)** — DreamWorks' animated movie "Abominable" will not be released in Malaysia after its producers declined to meet a censor board requirement to cut a scene showing China's "nine-dash line" in the South China Sea, the movie distributor said on Sunday.

The U-shaped line is used on Chinese maps to illustrate its territorial claims over vast expanses of the resource-rich South China Sea, including areas claimed by other countries.

Vietnam pulled the movie from cinemas

last week, while the Philippines' foreign minister has called for the scene showing the map to be cut and the film boycotted.

Malaysia's Film Censorship Board said last week that it has given the green light for the movie to be screened in cinemas without the scene depicting the map.

"Universal has decided not to make the censor cut required by the Malaysian censor board and as such will not be able to release the film in Malaysia," a spokeswoman for the film's distributor, United International

Pictures, told Reuters.

Malaysia's Film Censorship Board did not have an immediate comment.

The film was set to be released in Malaysian cinemas on Nov. 7.

"Abominable", about a Chinese girl who discovers a yeti living on her roof, was jointly produced by Shanghai-based Pearl Studio and DreamWorks Animation. Comcast owns DreamWorks and its parent company Universal Pictures.

China claims most of the South China

Sea, through which more than \$3.4 trillion worth of goods are transported annually, under its unilaterally declared "nine-dash-line". The line overlaps territorial claims made by Malaysia, Vietnam, the Philippines, Brunei and Taiwan.

Last week, Malaysian Foreign Minister Saifuddin Abdullah said the country needs to boost its naval capabilities to prepare for possible conflict in the South China Sea even as it pursues non-militarization of the waterway.