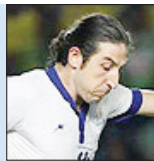




Terror has nothing to do with race or religion, Zarif says **2**



Mohsen Hashemi sole candidate for Tehran city council chairman **12**



Ando's goal against Buriram among ACL quarterfinals' spectacular goals **15**



Social reform must start with ourselves: actor Reza Kianian **16**

Lebanon seizes U.S. arms left by Nusra

ISIL members surrender to Hezbollah in Syria

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Lebanese soldiers fire artilleries in Ras Baalbek, Lebanon August 17, 2017.

Rouhani's cabinet awaiting approval

By Ali Kushi

TEHRAN — President Hassan Rouhani will be speaking to the parliament today in a last-ditch effort to persuade 290-seat parliament into casting a vote of confidence for his 17-member cabinet roster.

Rouhani handed his list of ministerial nominees to parliament three days after he was sworn in on August 5. He delayed introducing a nominee for the Science Ministry.

Nearly 24 million of 56 eligible voters cast their ballots for Rouhani, a moderate sexagenarian cleric, for a second four-year tenure.

"We do our best to announce the vote by tomorrow's midday," said Behrouz Ne'mati, the parliament's presiding board speaker, on Saturday.

The parliament began debating whether to approve Rouhani's proposed ministers on Tuesday. Rouhani said on the same day he was hoping all the picks will be granted votes of confidence.

"I'm very hopeful that all the 17 ministers receive confidence vote from the Islamic Consultative Assembly (parliament)," the president told lawmakers. **→2**

Zanganeh: Development of joint fields is main priority

ECONOMY

TEHRAN - Attraction of investment for development of the oil and gas fields that Iran shares with its neighbors will be the main priority of the Oil Ministry, Bijan Namdar Zanganeh, the proposed oil minister, told the parliament on Saturday.

Zanganeh, who was defending his four-year agenda if approved again as minister, said Iran's new model of oil contracts (known as IPC) is intended to boost production in these fields as it will also bring technology to the country and create jobs.

"We should attract \$200 billion investment in the Oil Ministry in a course of five years, of which \$120-130 billion

should be foreign investment", the proposed minister said, adding, "If so, it will create an economic flourishing and will create huge number of jobs."

Zanganeh mentioned more production of oil and gas to increase Iran's share in the global energy markets his other major program for the Oil Ministry.

He referred to completing development phases of South Pars (the huge gas field Iran shares with Qatar in the Persian Gulf), rebuilding and renovating oil installations which requires ten billions of dollars in investment, second leap in the petrochemical output, and no natural gas flaring as his next top priorities.

CHP member: Iran and Turkey won't allow division of Iraq

By Payman Yazdani

TEHRAN — Calling the Kurdish independence referendum as the eye of the next hurricane in the region, a senior member of the Peoples' Democratic Party (CHP) says Turkey and Iran won't allow any efforts to divide Iraq.

The remarks by Osman Faruk Logoğlu comes as General Mohammad Hossein Baqeri, the Iranian armed forces chief of staff, made a visit to Ankara for talks with high ranking Turkish officials. During his three-day trip, which ended on Thursday, Baqeri met his Turkish counterpart General Hulusi Akar, Defense Minister Nurettin Canikli, and President Erdogan.

The talks were primarily aimed at narrow-

ing differences on the Syria crisis and coordinating policy on Iraq.

"They (Turkey and Iran) would not allow any effort that could lead to the division of Iraq," Logoglu tells the Mehr news agency.

Here is the full text of the interview:

*What is the importance of General Mohammad Hossein Baqeri, the chief of staff of the Iranian armed forces, to Turkey?

Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Baqeri's visit to Turkey at the invitation of his Turkish counterpart is highly important for at least several reasons. First, the visit is significant because of its timing. Important developments in Iraq, Syria and in the fight against terrorism are creating com-

mon security concerns and thus drawing the two neighbors closer together to consult and coordinate their policies. The importance of the visit is also attested by his reception and the length of his stay in Turkey. He is being received by President Erdoğan and is to meet with the Minister of National Defense and chief of intelligence. Finally, the symbolism of the visit: it is the first visit by an Iranian Chief of Staff to Turkey in nearly four decades. The last such visit was in 1979.

The visit once again demonstrates the ability of these two regional powers to come together when their national interests converge, despite ongoing differences over other issues. **→2**

Digging deep into human-carnivore conflicts in Iran

By Farnaz Heidari

Human-carnivore conflicts is rapidly increasing in Iran. For instance just recently a young boy who was tending his sheep was attacked by a black bear on July 10, 2017 on the outskirts of a village in Jiroft, southeastern province of Kerman.

Such problems can be prevented by setting aside wildlife areas but the biggest threat by far to wildlife and human beings is the ever-increasing lack of information.

However, there are still grounds for optimism because some scientists such as Dr. Igor Khorozyan from Göttingen University in Germany

and his colleagues in Iran are trying to apply some jaw-dropping methods, at least for the most important carnivore of Iran: the Persian leopard.

The conflict with leopards in Iran has escalated, resulting in extermination of leopards in many parts of their range. About two years ago, Dr. Khorozyan and his fellows worked on the relationship between climate, disease of domestic animals and human-carnivore conflicts which is still a new topic. The Tehran Times conducted an interview with Dr. Khorozyan.

Below is an excerpt of the interview:

■ Would you please explain why precipitation of the driest quarter has been

the main determinant of the existence of carnivores in humid tropical forests?

A: Iran does not have tropical forests and the western, most humid part of the Hyrcanian forest belongs to the subtropical humid broadleaf forest. Golestan National Park, where we keep on working, lies in the temperate zone. Answering your question, tropical species are adapted only to a narrow range of environmental conditions, including high precipitation and humid climate. More precipitation means denser vegetation where it's easier to hide and there is more shadow for successful hunting. **→12**



ARTICLE

By Hanif Ghafari
Political analyst

Fresh waves of terror attacks in Europe

The recent terror attacks in Spain and Finland have reignited security concerns in Europe. In the wake of the Paris terrorist assaults in 2015, the scope of such attacks in Europe was thought to be restricted to one or two countries.

The Brussels terrorist attacks and other sporadic ones across the continent including the recent ones, however, have unraveled what I would like to call a "security crisis."

As a case in point, the Barcelona attack indicated that security crises in Europe are persisting. The development also rendered it wrong that terrorism in the continent is delimited to a specific geography.

Meanwhile, those nations in the Schengen area are more susceptible to terror. The security crisis in the united Europe is strongly felt now and its common security policies have not only failed to shore up border security but have turned into the bloc's intelligence weakness.

Failure of European intelligence services to curb far-right and fascist groups and their support for Takfiri currents in western Asia have strengthened the extremists in the West.

Arms support for Arab dictators by European countries such as Germany, England, and France are a contributing factor, as well.

A key dimension of the fresh security crisis in Europe is its geographical scope, making it more challenging to bring terrorists under control as they are sprawling across larger territorial swathes.

That certain European countries are trying to boost Takfiri currents in western Asia as a measure to prevent the terrorists from entering Europe is a dangerous security calculus which definitely fires back.

There is need for a change in Europe's security approach at macro level toward western Asia. Backing Takfiri groups in the region and encountering them in Europe is a dual policy, whose outcome is nothing but the return of terrorism in the West.



ARTICLE

Harun Yahya
political analyst

A crucial visit to Turkey

The Iranian Chief of Staff, Major General Mohammad Baqeri, paid a crucial visit to Turkey on August 15-17 to exchange views with top officials in Turkey including President Erdogan, Defense Minister Nurettin Canikli and the Chief of the General Staff of the Turkish Armed Forces Hulusi Akar. What makes this visit important is that it is the first visit of a Chief of Staff to Turkey since the 1979 Iranian Revolution. Additionally, the timing of the meeting is significant due to the ever-changing situation in Syria affecting the countries involved.

The scope of the meetings varied from the decision of the Northern Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) to hold an independence referendum, scheduled to take place on September 25, to counter terrorism and regional security. Even though Turkey and Iran have had their ups and downs due to being on the opposite sides of the Syrian conflict, both countries and Russia took a major step at the end of 2016 at the Moscow Summit to establish a ceasefire in Syria. The nexus was persistent in its endeavors and carried out the Astana talks and made progress for the first time in the ongoing conflict. Turkey and Iran have always been conscious of their responsibilities in the security of the region and they cooperated for the well-being of the innocent Muslims inhabiting the region despite being on conflicting sides.

Regarding the planned referendum by the KRG, voters living in Northern Iraq will be asked whether they want an independent Kurdistan. Consisting of a single question, the referendum will no doubt bring with it concerns, despite the fact that the IKRG authorities claim otherwise. A similar popular vote took place in 2005, but what makes this one different is that this will be an official and binding vote. More importantly, it is perhaps the last step before the KRG formally secedes from Iraq and this will result in the fragmentation of the country. **→13**



© Jame Jam/ Mohammadreza Zaeenla

Bodies of fallen soldiers returned to country

Hundreds of Iranians participated in a procession held in Mashhad, north eastern Iran, for 19 Iranian servicemen killed during the Iraqi invasion of Iran in the 1980s. Bodies of the fallen soldiers had been recently excavated. The eight-year war left hundreds of thousands of soldiers and civilians dead and much more injured.

August 19: World Humanitarian Day

"Every year on World Humanitarian Day, we shine a spotlight on the millions of civilians around the world whose lives have been caught up in conflict. On this day we also take a moment to honour the brave health and aid workers who are targeted or obstructed as they set out to help people in need, and pay tribute to the government employees, members of civil society and representatives of international organizations and agencies who risk their lives to provide humanitarian aid and protection."— UN Secretary-General, António Guterres



World Humanitarian Day (WHD) is held every year on 19 August to pay tribute to aid workers who risk their lives in humanitarian service, and to rally support for people affected by crises around the world.

■ **2017 WHD campaign: #NotATarget**
Around the world, conflict is exacting a massive toll on people's lives. Trapped in wars that are not of their making, millions of civilians are forced to hide or run for their lives. Children are taken out of school, families are displaced from their homes, and communities are torn apart, while the world is not doing enough to stop their suffering. At the same time, health and aid workers – who risk their lives to care for people affected by violence – are increasingly being targeted.

For WHD 2017, humanitarian partners are coming together to reaffirm that civilians caught in conflict are #NotATarget. Through a global online campaign featuring an innovative partnership with Facebook Live, together with events held around the world, we will raise our voices to advocate for those most vulnerable in war zones, and demand that world leaders do everything their power to protect civilians in conflict.

This campaign follows on the UN Secretary-General's report on protection of civilians, which was launched earlier this year. Laying out his 'path to protection', the Secretary-General calls for enhanced respect for international humanitarian and human rights law, and protection of civilians, including humanitarian and medical workers as well as civilian infrastructure.

■ **Background**
On 19 August 2003, a terrorist attack hit the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad, killing 22 people. Among those who lost their lives was Sergio Vieira de Mello, the UN's top representative in Iraq.

Five years later, the General Assembly adopted a resolution designating 19 August as World Humanitarian Day. Every year since then, the humanitarian community has organized global campaigns to commemorate WHD, advocating for the safety and security of humanitarian aid workers, and for the survival, well-being and dignity of people affected by crises.

(Source: un.org)

LEARN ENGLISH

New Guy in Town III

A: Please **make yourselves at home**. Let me take your coats. Dinner is almost ready; I hope you brought your **appetite**.
B: Your house is lovely, Armand! Very interesting decor...very... **Gothic**.

C: I think it's amazing! You have such good taste, Armand. I'm thinking of re-decorating my house; maybe you could give me a few **pointers**?

A: It would be my pleasure. Please **have a seat**. Can I offer you something to drink?

C: We would love some!

A: Here you are. A very special drink brought directly from my home country. It has a unique ingredient which gives it a pleasant **aroma** and **superior flavor**.

C: Mmm... It's delicious!

B: It's a bit **bitter** for my taste... almost tastes like... like...

C: Ellen! Ellen! Are you okay?

A: Did she **pass out**?

C: Yeah...

A: I hope that you didn't poison her drink too much! You'll ruin our meal!

■ **Key vocabulary**
make yourselves at home: get comfortable and feel like you are in your own home
appetite: a desire for food
gothic: of or in the style of architecture prevalent in western Europe in the 12th–16th centuries (and revived in the mid-18th to early 20th centuries), characterized by pointed arches, rib vaults, and flying buttresses, together with large windows and elaborate tracery
pointer: tips, advice, hints
have a seat: sit down, take a seat
aroma: the way something smells
superior: of very good quality
flavor: the way something tastes
good taste: refers to liking nice things
bitter: opposite of sweet
pass out: faint, loss consciousness
■ **Supplementary vocabulary**
sweet: containing a lot of sugar
spike: to add alcohol or drugs to (food or drink)
sour: having an acid taste that is like the taste of a lemon
exclusive: only allowing in people from a high social class

(Source: irlanguage.com)

Have an idea?
Be in touch!
lifestyle.tehrantimes@gmail.com

Mohsen Hashemi sole candidate for Tehran city council chairman

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — As it had been agreed in the last informal session of the new Tehran city council on Wednesday, Mohsen Hashemi remains the sole candidate for the post of chairman in the council.

The new council, the fifth of its kind, has not formally convened yet and as per a statement issued by the Interior Ministry the inaugural session of the council will take place on August 23.

With Morteza Alviri, the interim chairman of the council, and Ahmad Masjed-Jamei withdrawing their candidacy, Hashemi is the sole candidate for the post.

In addition to the new chairmen, Mohammad Ali Najafi, the final candidate for the post of Tehran mayor, will be formally elected at the first session of the council which is said to fall on Wednesday.

“The new mayor of Tehran would



be different from the former one and relatively speaking would largely rely on the city council,” Hashemi said during the session.

“The city council is a valuable pillar of a city to interact with other organizations,” he added.

Hashemi had earlier suggested that

the expansion of mass public transit fleet can help resolve the problem of choking air pollution and traffic congestion in metropolis of Tehran.

He further pointed out that the urban railway system should increase to four times its current capacity.

Hashemi, the eldest son of the late Ayatollah Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, who received the highest number of votes in the May 19 city council election was seriously considered as the next mayor, but he withdrew candidacy due to intra-council concerns.

He served as CEO of Tehran Metro for 13 years, from 1998 until 2011. He competed for the post of mayor in 2013, but lost to Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf by one vote.

The pro-reform Hope list succeeded to win all the 21 council seats in Tehran in the election, concurrent with the presidential polls.

Digging deep into human-carnivore conflicts in Iran

➡ By definition, the driest quarter (e.g. summer) has minimum precipitation and least optimal vegetation conditions, so it is the most limiting factor for the survival of tropical carnivores. However, leopards are successful hunters well-adapted to live in different habitats, from semi-deserts to forests, due to their phenomenal ability to hide and stalk. For this reason, leopards depend more on their prey than on vegetation.

Q: What is the relation between bioclimatic factors and some specific livestock diseases?

A: All conflict villages near Golestan are located in the western sector of the park where humid Hyrcanian forests grow. We originally thought that these conflicts might be related to the forests because they provide excellent opportunities for leopards to hide and attack livestock from ambush. But during the questionnaire surveys, we found out that six villages located in Golestan forests do not have conflicts at all, so the cause of conflicts is probably something different, not forests. Our research has shown that livestock diseases, most commonly hoof infections, are common in humid conditions and so higher humidity leads to more diseases and morbid livestock become more vulnerable to leopard attacks. Sick individuals are very likely to straggle, or stay behind other livestock, and thus fall victim to leopards. Of course, we are at the very beginning of this investigation and much more research effort is essential to study the behavior of attacked livestock and attacking leopards, such as whether leopards select morbid livestock individuals or they take them randomly from morbid stock, and if diseases can be transferred from livestock and dogs to leopards.

■ **Which diseases were considered in your survey as an indicator and why?**

A: We did not study diseases directly. We just found that villages which receive less attention from veterinarian services lose more livestock. Veterinarian services are responsible for vaccinating, treating and diagnosing diseases in livestock. So, we have hypothesized that if veterinarian services do not come to villages or come seldom, then more livestock become morbid and are more likely to be killed by leopards. Yet, we do not know which diseases are primarily responsible for this, but the first candidate is the hoof infection caused by *Fusobacterium necrophorum*. Infected animals might be killed by leopards because they cannot move fast and keep up with the herd. Again, this is just the first step in the investigation of relationships between diseases and conflicts. A special veterinarian research is essential to develop this study.

■ **Is your method reliable to predict the probability of dangerous disease occurrences?**

A: We did not develop a new approach to link diseases



Dr. Igor Khorozyan

and human-leopard conflicts. We just applied common statistical and computer modeling techniques to local data in the Golestan NP area villages and found out the relationship. Such a study can be conducted also in other villages in Iran which have significant conflict between humans and carnivores (wolves, leopards, bears, etc.). Not only diseases, but many other factors can cause conflicts. Situations can be different from site to site.

■ **Weak prey are more desirable for carnivores but in some cases leopards kill healthy and young prey, even in cattle. Why?**

A: Carnivores prefer to take prey that is easily available and profitable (giving more food and energy). That is why larger carnivores, like male leopards, may take cattle. Preferences of individual leopards can play a significant role in this, but scientists know very little about this phenomenon. For example, some leopards can be very skilled in preying on dogs while the others like to prey on sheep or calves.

■ **Why some leopards kill a large number of livestock at once?**

A: This is called “surplus killing”, when a carnivore kills several livestock individuals in a single attack. This phenomenon is quite rare in leopards, but much more common in wolves, lions and snow leopards. Snow leopard is a different species living in high mountains of Central Asia, which does not live in Iran. Surplus killing occurs usually in corrals when livestock panic from a carnivore's attack and start running without purpose in a closed space. All this awakens the carnivore's hunting instinct. Less often, several livestock individuals can be killed by a group of mother and grown-up cubs, which

demand much more food. Lions hunt in groups and also may kill multiple individuals.

■ **Do you think the increasing rate of aridification in Golestan National Park and decreased number of wild prey will increase the number of human-leopards conflicts in the future?**

A: The pattern is opposite – aridification will decrease the occurrence of conflicts. In Golestan, like in many other regions of the world, conflicts are confined to humid areas or seasons. For this reason, increasing air temperatures and declining precipitation will move depredation down. On the other hand, it is possible that in extreme cases some carnivores may learn to kill livestock around limited waterholes and thus increase depredation under arid conditions.

■ **How can these conflicts be managed? In other words, what is the responsibility of the Department of Environment (DOE) and other organizations? How can they be of any help?**

A: International experience shows that the best way to cope with conflicts is to combine efforts of the government, scientists, non-governmental organizations and local people. The government alone cannot solve the problem if local people stand against it. The main problem in Golestan is that villagers do not have sufficient lands to graze their livestock, that is why they are forced to take livestock inside the national park and thus to violate the protection regime. It would be better for local people to keep livestock near their villages, where carnivores usually do not attack, but they do not have large enough pastures.

Compensation of economic losses does not solve the problem of conflicts, because villagers receive money but do not improve their practices to minimize losses. It is of key importance for the DOE to limit poaching of wild prey species, especially ungulates, which are the main prey for leopards. If leopards have sufficient prey inside the park, they will not kill as much livestock as they do it now. The DOE should also improve its current methods used to count and regularly monitor ungulates in the park. The utilized method should be scientifically reliable, standardized and applicable to all ungulate species. A serious flaw is that park rangers do not accurately record wild boars, which are the main prey for leopards.

On the other hand, villagers should pay more attention to protecting their livestock from carnivores. A great majority of livestock is killed by leopards during daytime grazing, since during the night time they are safely locked in corrals in villages.

➡13

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ↔ ب

Iran to expand centers for emergency social services

Iran's Welfare Organization is set to launch new centers for emergency social services in 140 cities with a population of 50,000 or more in the next Iranian calendar year, starting on March 21, 2017. Currently emergency social services centers are operating in 197 cities which would react to cases of child abuse, suicidal behaviors, street children, domestic abuse, family violence, etc., IRIB quoted Habibollah Masoudi-Farid, an official with the welfare organization, as saying. Emergency social services came into operation since 1999 in Iran, Masoudi-Farid said, adding that new social services centers were set up in 20 cities over the current Iranian calendar year. Mentioning the inclusion of emergency social services in the sixth five-year development plan he highlighted that budget for setting up new centers in 140 cities will be approved by the administration and Majlis (Iranian parliament).

ENGLISH PROVERB

A word to the wise is enough

■ **Explanation:** someone who is wise heeds a warning or a piece of advice, even if it is very brief
■ **For example:** I heard about a terrible traffic jam on the news, so I'm avoiding the highway. A word to the wise is enough!

PHRASAL VERB

Divvy something up

■ **Meaning:** to share something between several people
■ **For example:** We can divvy up the profits between us.

ENGLISH IDIOM

Bent out of shape

■ **Explanation:** to become annoyed or upset about something that is usually not that important or cannot be avoided
■ **For example:** Don't get bent out of shape if you're delayed. We'll wait for you.

Lebanon seizes U.S. arms left by Nusra

The Lebanese military has launched an offensive against ISIL (Daesh) terrorists in eastern Lebanese territory along the border with Syria.

Lebanese army chief General Joseph Aoun announced the start of the operation, dubbed Jaroud Dawn, on Saturday.

A Lebanese security source also said that the army was now targeting Daesh positions close to the village of Ras Baalbek in eastern Lebanon with rockets, artillery, and helicopter gunfire.

The military campaign began with an attack on the terrorists' positions in the Western Qalamoun Jaroud region from the north, south, and east.

In a televised news conference later on Saturday, a spokesman for the Lebanese army, Brigadier General Ali Qansowa, said that the military operations would continue until Daesh terrorists were expelled from Lebanese territory.

"Victory is 100 percent assured in offensive, no matter how long it takes and no matter the cost," he added.

"It's the most difficult battle so far waged by the Lebanese army against terrorist groups," he said, citing the nature of the terrain and enemy tactics.

He estimated that the Lebanese military was facing 600 Daesh terrorists.

Separately on Saturday, the Hezbollah resistance movement said that it had started a joint operation with the Syrian army inside Syrian territory, according to al-Manar TV station.

■ **'Daesh terrorists surrendering'**
Meanwhile, Hezbollah's media bureau reported later on Saturday that



Daesh terrorists had started laying down their arms and surrendering themselves to the resistance movement and the Syrian army in Zamrani crossing in Syria's Qalamoun region.

In recent years, terrorists have infiltrated into Lebanon's border areas from inside Syria.

Some 400 Daesh terrorists are holed up in areas on the Lebanese side of the frontier, while hundreds more are on the Syrian side, according to Lebanon's Interior Minister Nohad Machnouk.

Last month, Hezbollah concluded a joint counter-terrorism campaign with the Syrian army at Lebanon's highlands of Aarsal.

The militants of the al-Nusra Front group, recently renaming itself Fateh al-Sham, withdrew from Aarsal following a series of consecutive defeats that forced them to agree to a ceasefire deal.

■ **Lebanon finds U.S. made arms left by Nusra terrorists**

In another development, Lebanese army has discovered a weapons cache left behind by defeated militants from the Jabhat Fateh al-Sham terror group, formerly known as al-Nusra Front, in the northeast of the country.

The Lebanese National News Agency (NNA), citing an unnamed official from Lebanon's General Directorate of General Security, reported on Friday

that a patrol of the intelligence agency had found an ammunition and missile cache in Wadi Hamid Valley east of the border town of Aarsal, without providing further details.

However, Reuters quoted an unnamed security source as saying on Friday that the cache contained at least a surface-to air missile (SAM) and a number of U.S.-made TOW anti-tank missiles as well as plenty of other types of shells and rockets.

On July 29, commanders of Lebanon's Hezbollah resistance movement said the group had successfully concluded a week-long military offensive against al-Nusra on the outskirts of Aarsal and the adjacent town of Flita in Syria, seizing land in the rugged, mountainous area and killing about 150 terrorists.

In August 2014, the al-Nusra and Daesh Takfiri terrorist groups overran Lebanon's northeastern border town of Aarsal, killing a number of Lebanese forces. They took 30 soldiers hostage, most of whom have been released.

Since then, Hezbollah and the Lebanese military have been defending Lebanon on the country's northeastern border.

Friday's development come as the Lebanese army has been targeting Daesh hideouts along the Syrian border over the past several days, regaining more areas from the terror group. It also comes after Syria accused the U.S. and the UK of supplying chemical weapons to terrorists in the country.

(Source: agencies)

Donald Trump is 'just six Senate votes from impeachment'

Donald Trump is just six Senate votes from impeachment, according to an analyst at a prominent independent think-tank.

Support for the President among Republican Senators has waned to the extent that Trump is likely to only hang onto his seat by six votes, according to Elaine Kamarck of the Washington-based research group The Brookings Institution.

Ms. Kamarck, who is director of the Centre for Effective Public Management, said 12 Republican Senators had "no fear of the President" and had indicated they could vote against him in a vote.

Among the Senators likely to rebel was John McCain, who delivered the killer blow to Trump's replacement for Obamacare, Kamarck said in an article on the think-tank's website.

The U.S. constitution allows Congress to remove a president before they have completed their term if enough members vote to say they committed "treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors".

An article of impeachment must get a majority vote in the House of Representatives before reaching the Senate. Once there, at least two-thirds of senators must find the President guilty for him to be removed.

Kamarck said that 12 rebellious Republican Senators combined with 48 Democrats "who have shown no inclination to work with this President" meant Trump was six votes away from a Senate conviction.

Three presidents have been subjected to impeachment proceedings in the past. Andrew Johnson in 1898 and Bill Clinton in 1998 and 1999 were impeached but acquitted, while Richard Nixon resigned in 1974 to avoid impeachment.

Meanwhile, Senator Bob Corker, unleashing one of the most pointed attacks from a Republican official on President Donald Trump, said the president had not yet shown the "stability and competence" the United States needs, nor an understanding of the nation's character.

"The president has not yet been able to demonstrate the stability, nor some of the competence, that he needs to demonstrate in order to be successful," Corker, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations, told reporters after an event in Tennessee.

"He also recently has not demonstrated that he understands the character of this nation," Corker said. A video of his remarks was posted on Facebook by a Tennessee-based reporter.

(Source: Yahoo News)

Finnish police investigating stabbing spree as terror crime

Finnish police are investigating Friday's knife attacks that killed two and wounded eight in the city of Turku as terrorism-related crimes, they said on Saturday.

The suspect arrested on Friday was an 18-year-old Moroccan, police said, adding that the two people killed were Finns and an Italian and two Swedish citizens were among the injured.

The attacks shocked the Nordic country where violent crime is relatively rare and which has been named as the world's safest place to visit by the World Economic Forum.

Following the attacks on Friday, police shot the suspected attacker in the leg and arrested him.

"Due to information received during the night, the Turku stabbings are now being investigated as murders with terrorist intent," the National Bureau of Investigation said in a statement.

Security was reinforced nationwide with increased patrols and more surveillance in case more people were involved.

"First thing we heard was a young woman, screaming like crazy. I thought it's just kids having fun ... but then people started to move around and I saw a man with a knife in his hand, stabbing a woman," said Laura Laine, who was sitting in a cafe during one of the attacks.

"Then a person ran towards us shouting 'he has a knife', and everybody from the terrace ran inside. Next, a woman came in to the cafe. She was crying hysterically, down on her knees, saying someone's neck has been slashed open."

The police arrested a number of people during the night as part of their investigation.

Local media said the police raided an apartment in the eastern Turku suburb of Varissuo, which is home to a large immigrant population and located about 7 kilometers from the market square where the attack took place.

The arrested suspect had been in Finland for only a short time before the attack, Helsingin Sanomat newspaper reported.

Four of the wounded were still in hospital, three of them in intensive care, while the other injured persons would be sent home on Saturday, the hospital said.

Flags were at half mast on Saturday across the Nordic country whose Security Intelligence Service (SIS) raised the terrorism threat level in June to 'elevated' from 'low', saying it had become aware of terrorism-related plans in Finland.

Leaders of Turku's Iraqi and Syrian

community condemned the attacks and said they would hold a rally of solidarity in the city's main square. An anti-immigration group was planning a demonstration in Helsinki.

The SIS has said anti-immigration groups have been on the rise in the country after it received about 32,500 asylum seekers during the migration crisis in 2015.

"Terrorists want to pit people against each other. We will not let this happen. Finnish society will not be defeated by fear or hatred," Interior Minister Paula Risikko said on Twitter.

On Thursday, a suspected militant drove a van into crowds in Barcelona, Spain, killing 13 people and wounding scores of others.

(Source: Reuters)

A crucial visit to Turkey

organizations. One of the important outcomes of the meeting with Major General Baqeri is that Iran and Turkey agreed to exchange military intelligence in the fight against this terrorist organization, which has caused the deaths of 40,000 people in Turkey since 1977. A few days prior to the meetings with Iran's top military official, the construction of a wall - expected to be 144 km long - started along the Iran-Turkey border. The reason for erecting this wall is to secure the border from the violent operations of the PKK/PJAK. These terrorists not only perpetrate bloody actions, but are also intervening in the trade between the two countries by either preventing it or slowing it down.

In the Syria conflict, all eyes are on Idlib province, since it has become home to several jihadist groups. The armed group of Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), which is dominated by a former al-Qaeda affiliate, took control of the city as rival rebel group Ahrar Al-Sham withdrew; HTS and Ahrar al-Sham were once allies and fought alongside each other to capture most of Idlib province from Syrian government forces in 2015. Following the U.S. Rakka operation, Idlib is considered the next move. Since Idlib is a threat to all of Syria and the neighboring countries, it is probable that Iran and Turkey will join forces to protect themselves from jihadist groups infiltrating their borders following a possible maneuver.

The Russian chief of staff's announcement of a visit to Turkey in a few days time is considered to strengthen the cooperation of Iran and Turkey, which will play a significant role in ending the conflict in Syria. Many analysts interpret Turkey's approach to Iran and Russia as a shift from the Western allies and from NATO. However, Iran has been our brother country for centuries and we share a border, unchanged for more than 300 years. Iran was on our side during the night of the bloody coup attempt and Foreign Minister Javad Zarif followed up the situation with his Turkish counterpart till the morning. The Russian president also showed his support immediately, while the Western allies were indifferent and did not even denounce the attempt until it had failed. Turkey will always remember their loyalty at such a time of hardship.

It is crucial to form an alliance of Turkey, Iran and Russia to cease the conflict that resulted the deaths of hundreds of thousands of civilians. Such a union will make a great contribution to help restructure the warzones and bring stability to the region after the area is cleared from the fighting. These three countries will gain great benefits from this bond and this will influence other countries to step up and make every effort for the security of the region.

Qatar says worried about pilgrims' safety in Saudi Arabia

Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman al-Thani says his country is concerned about the safety of its citizens in Saudi Arabia during the annual Hajj pilgrimage after Riyadh's move to reopen its border with Doha.

Speaking at a news conference during his visit to Norway, Thani said Saudi authorities have not yet responded to queries from Qatar's Ministry of Islamic Affairs regarding the security of Qatari citizens during the Hajj rituals.

"The level of tension between the two nations, the language and the tone of the Saudi media spreading hatred against Qatari people represents a great concern for us," he said.

"Those people crossing the border right now are under the responsibility of the Saudi authorities for their security and safety," the foreign minister added.

He noted that "more than 100" Qatari pilgrims had crossed since the reopening of border on Thursday.

Qatar has welcomed Saudi Arabia's decision to reopen the Salwa border crossing, also known as Abu Samrah, to Hajj pilgrims, but called it "politically motivated."

The key passage for Muslims on the annual Hajj pilgrimage has been closed since June in a major diplomatic crisis that saw Saudi Arabia and its regional allies cut relations with Qatar.

Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates cut their diplomatic ties with Qatar on June 5, accusing it of sponsoring terrorism and destabilizing the region. The Saudi-led bloc has also imposed sanctions against the country, including restrictions on Qatari aircraft using their airspace.

(Source: Press TV)

How to roll back fanaticism

➔ It means understanding there are no easy answers or malevolent conspiracies that can explain the big political questions or the existential problems. Progress is not made by crushing some swarm of malevolent foes; it's made by finding balance between competing truths — between freedom and security, diversity and solidarity. There's always going to be counter-evidence and mystery. There is no final arrangement that will end conflict, just endless searching and adjustment.

Modesty means having the courage to rest in anxiety and not try to quickly escape it. Modesty means being tough enough to endure the pain of uncertainty and coming to appreciate that pain. Uncertainty and anxiety throw you off the smug island of certainty and force you into the free waters of creativity and learning. As Kierkegaard put it, the "more original a human being is, the deeper is his anxiety."

Over the next few months I'm hoping to write several columns on why modesty and moderation are superior to the spiraling purity movements we see today. It seems like a good time for assertive modesty to take a stand.

(Source: The NYT)

Digging deep into human-carnivore conflicts in Iran

➔ That is why it is important to improve the quality of shepherds and dogs used for grazing. For example, in Golestan, cattle usually graze freely in forests without shepherds, which is the main reason for cattle getting killed by leopards in Golestan. On the other hand, sheep and goats are often (but not always) guarded, but shepherds and dogs cannot react efficiently even if they see a leopard attack. More shepherds should accompany sheep and goat flocks to improve their protection. The quality of guarding dogs is crucially important. Special attention should be paid to villages which are located close to the boundary of Golestan, as they experience higher losses from leopards.

■ **What do you think of Iran's attempts in protecting wildlife? Which important steps must be taken in this regard?**

A: Iran has a very good network of large reserves — national parks, wildlife refuges and protected areas. However, the Iranian reserves suffer from the same problems as protected areas in other developing countries. The major problem is poaching, and many areas do not have enough rangers to patrol and capture the criminals efficiently.

The second problem is overgrazing and deforestation, which are insufficiently managed in most of the Hyrcanian forest, even inside protected areas and wildlife refuges. The third problem is that reserves, even if they are large, become increasingly isolated because of intense human activities around them. Roads, crop fields, factories and other infrastructure separate protected areas and hinder free movements of animals. Many animals die on roads from car collisions (like in Golestan) and roads also provide easy access to poachers.

Of course, human development is essential and unavoidable, but we all need to think on how to enlarge existing protected areas, establish new protected areas and connect these areas with each other. We need serious involvement of Iranian scientists, NGOs and the government in studies of animal movements (especially in leopards, wolves and other wide-ranging species) in order to identify the key corridors and most important landscapes for protection.

Iran has a unique experience of establishing no-hunting areas, usually for five years. However, we do not know if this approach is cost-efficient and effective in practice. To know this, DOE and scientists should monitor populations of wildlife, especially ungulates and predators, before and after the no-hunting areas are established so that to see the difference. This is very important.

■ **Are there any other important details you would like to add?**

A: Our project was conducted in cooperation with the Persian Wildlife Heritage Foundation (PWHF), Department of Environment and the Golestan provincial office of environment. I would like to express my gratitude to these organizations and also to mention that our University of Göttingen has signed memoranda of understanding with Shahid Beheshti University and College of Environment in Karaj. We hope to enlarge and deepen our partnership with these and other universities in Iran. And, of course, we thank Iranian people for their openness and hospitality.

➔ Given the current situation in the region, another conflict or national breakdown is the last thing anyone needs. Therefore, both Iranian and Turkish officials strongly oppose this poll by insisting on the unitary structure of Iraq.

Another important topic discussed with Major General Baqeri was the common enemy of both countries: The PKK terrorist organization. The very same terrorist group goes by the name PJAK when operating in Iran. As a matter of fact, the U.S. has been supplying ammunition to the same terrorist group fighting in Syria, where they use the name PYD and the YPG is its armed wing. Even though the U.S. lists the PKK in their terrorist list, they distinguish the PYD/YPG groups, which serve the same agenda. In an interview in 2013, Osman Ocalan, the brother of the PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan, stated the following:

"I founded the PYD, as I did PJAK (the PKK's Iranian arm). We did not use the word 'Kurdistan' in the party's title since we did not want to provoke the Syrian regime. The PYD is connected to the PKK, and acts upon on PKK orders. We founded the PYD in Qandil. We held the first general PYD congress in October 2003. We trained the cadres in Qandil."

In the last two months alone, the U.S. has supplied more than 1,000 trailer trucks of arms to these terrorist