

TEHRAN TIMES

WWW.TEHRANTIMES.COM INTERNATIONAL DAILY

12 Pages | Price 10,000 Rials | 37th year | No.12541 | Sunday | MAY 1, 2016 | Ordibehesht 12, 1395 | Rajab 23, 1437



Iran runner-up at Asian Weightlifting Championships 11

Bombing against pilgrims kills 23 in Iraq as hundreds protest

A car bomb targeting Shia pilgrims killed at least 23 people near Baghdad on Saturday, as hundreds protested in the capital for reforms and parliament made another attempt to reshuffle the cabinet.

Iraq has been hit by weeks of political turmoil surrounding Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi's efforts to change the government.

Both Washington and the United Nations have warned the crisis could distract from the fight against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/ Daesh) terrorist group, which carries out frequent bombings against civilians.

The car bomb, which also wounded at least 38 people, struck a road in the Nahrawan area used by Shia pilgrims who are walking to the shrine of Imam Musa Kadhim in northern Baghdad for annual commemorations, officials said.

ISIL claimed the attack and said it was carried out by a suicide bomber who detonated a vehicle laden with three tons of explosives.

ISIL considers Iraq's majority Shia to be heretics.

ISIL overran large areas north and west of Baghdad in 2014, but Iraqi forces have since regained significant ground.

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Rouhani: Tehran ready to expand ties with EU

5+1 must meet its commitments in terminating all sanctions on Iran, Zarif says

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — President Hassan Rouhani said on Saturday that Iran is ready to expand relations with European Union member states, especially Belgium.

Rouhani made the remarks during a meeting in Tehran with President of Belgium's Senate Christine Defraigne.

"Iran and Belgium have many capacities to

boost cooperation which should be used in the post-JCPOA opportunity," Rouhani said in reference to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, commonly called the nuclear deal.

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IRNA/Mahdi Ghorbani

Iran's parliamentary election in a nutshell

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — After the first round of parliamentary elections on February 26, Iran held the runoff leg on Friday, where 136 candidates vied for the remaining 68 parliamentary seats.

The runoff was held in 55 constituencies across the country, which involved 121 cities in 21 provinces. Out of the 136 candidates who failed to secure victory in the first round, 37 and 55 were in principlist and reformist's tickets, respectively. The rest represented no faction, acting independently.

Although news outlets differ a bit in terms of categorizing winners under different factions, it is the pro-Rouhani moderate-reformist candidates who have won the slim majority.

Now that the runoff election has been held, a general picture is emerging out of the outcome.

According to ISNA news agency, moderate-reformist candidates took 119, or 41 percent, of the 290 seats. The conservative principlist faction, which has dominated the Majlis over the past 12 years, scored 29 percent, or 83 seats, and independents captured 81 seats (28 percent) in the 290-strong parliament. Also, five seats (2 percent) were grabbed by candidates representing minorities.

Two of the legislature's seats are still undecided, ISNA reported, including one in Isfahan, which was won in the first round by reformist female candidate Minoo Khaleghi before she was disqualified by the Guardian Council, the top supervisory body.

The other seat yet to be announced is in the rural town of Mamasani in the southern Fars province, where a dispute between rival political supporters led to skirmishes.

It seems that the parliamentary elections have hit the spot as the reformist fabric of the legislative body may make it easier for the Rouhani administration to implement its reformist agenda.

Workers urge officials to prioritize resistance economy

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — Workers held a rally in Tehran on Saturday to mark the International Workers' Day, May 1, urging authorities to give a major priority to the resistance economy and its elements and employ practical measures in this regard.

The workers also called on the government to bring smuggling or importing foreign goods to a halt, particularly goods that can be domestically produced.

They asked for extreme punitive measures against smugglers.

The workers additionally demanded for proper arrangements for production units which are either forced to lay off or fire their employees and fail to pay them timely to get



back on their feet in no time again.

They also protested at the prevailing wage established by the Supreme Labor Council for the current year asking for a wage that can meet their needs properly and that they won't accept any excuses from the government.

The workers further called on a program to reduce the rising unemployment, especially among university graduates and women.

They finally thanked president Rouhani's administration for its efforts to finalize the nuclear deal, expressing hope for the deal to help improve workers' situation.

In an official decree in February 2014, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei called on the government to secure the utilization of the country's resources, struggle to promote a knowledge-based economy, take efforts to increase energy consumption efficiency and boost domestic production as the requirements for the materialization of the resistance economy.

Oman and Iran: Friends with many benefits

As Iran gradually reintegrates into the global economy, Oman is becoming a stepping stone for Iranian companies seeking to penetrate new African, Asian and Arab markets. Oman's emergence as a critical trade hub linking Iran to several continents is consistent with the sultanate's independent foreign policy, which often operates outside the PGCC framework.

Now that Iran is shedding the sanctions it has borne for years, Oman has new opportunities to

position itself as an increasingly important trade corridor.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was implemented Jan. 16. Six days later, Gulf News reported that Tehran's ambassador to Muscat, Ali Akbar Sibaveh, declared that Iran will "repay" Oman's capital, Muscat, for its influential role in getting the nuclear deal passed and the sanctions lifted. Sibaveh said, "Friends at times of need are few and Oman stood with us through

thick and thin, and we do not forget our friends."

Iran made good on that promise in March when it announced it is establishing a \$200 million joint venture with Oman. The venture, Orchid International Auto, will build an automobile plant in Duqm, situated along Oman's Arabian Sea coast. Oman's state-owned investment fund will share ownership with Iran Khodro Co. — Iran's largest car company — and an Omani investor.

The Iranian automotive group intends to begin production next year to produce 20,000 units before mid-2018. Iran Khodro's chief executive, Hashem Yekke-Zare, announced that only 5,000 units are intended for Oman and that the other 15,000 are destined for Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan and Yemen. Iran also plans several other projects in Oman, including a nanotechnology plant, a hospital complex and the inauguration of flights between Oman and Chabahar, Iran. →4

French distributor Diaphana purchases "Inversion"

ART **TEHRAN** — Noori Pictures, a Paris-based Iranian studio, has sold Behnam Behzadi's social drama "Inversion" to Diaphana, an independent French distribution and production company.

The company has acquired the franchise to distribute the film across France, Diaphana has announced on its website.

This is the first time Diaphana will be distributing a film from Iran.

"Inversion" is currently competing in the Un



Sahar Dowlatshahi (R) and Setareh Pesyari act in a scene from "Inversion".

Certain Regard section of the 69th Cannes Film Festival, which will be held in the French city from May 11 to 22.

The movie starring Ali Mossafa and Sahar Dowlatshahi is the story of three siblings, which masterfully features Tehran's air pollution.

Noori Pictures Managing Director Katayun Shahabi has previously said that distributors from Norway, China, Sweden, Turkey, Switzerland and several other countries are eager to purchase "Inversion".

Diplomatic activities fruitless without defense power: Velayati

TEHRAN (Tasnim) — Head of the Strategic Research Center of Iran's Expediency Council Ali Akbar Velayati has highlighted the importance of defense power, saying that without it diplomatic activities do not yield results.

"In fact, diplomatic efforts without relying on a powerful govern-

ment will be futile," he said, referring to the direct relation between countries' military might and their diplomatic status in international circles.

"If a diplomat from the Islamic Republic of Iran speaks on behalf of a powerful Iran, his words will be influential and if Iran has no (mili-

tary) power, nobody will listen to that diplomat," Velayati, who also acts as senior foreign policy advisor to the Supreme Leader, told the Tasnim news agency.

Iranian officials have repeatedly underscored that the country will not hesitate to strengthen its military capabilities, which are entirely

meant for defense, and that Iran's defense capabilities will never be subject to negotiations.

Tehran has made it clear time and again that its military might poses no threat to regional countries and that the Islamic Republic's defense doctrine is entirely based on deterrence.

ARTICLE

Seyed Hossein Mousavian

Head of Foreign Relations Committee of Iran's National Security Council (2005-1997)

Sina Toossi

International Relations Researcher & Analyst

U.S. torpedoing the nuclear deal will reaffirm Iran's distrust

The nuclear deal reached between Iran and the P5+1 world powers last summer, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, was predicated on a basic give-and-take. In exchange for Iran agreeing to intrusive international inspections and monitoring and limits on its enrichment and heavy water capacity for a confidence-building period, the P5+1 would respect Iran's right to nuclear enrichment and remove all nuclear-related sanctions. Today, the future of this quid pro quo is under threat — and not from the Iranian side.

The consequences of the JCPOA falling through would not only be on the size and scope of the Iranian nuclear program. For Iran, the JCPOA was a criterion for judging whether it could trust the West to cooperate on other issues. If the United States faithfully abides by its commitments under the deal, then the view of Iranian leaders towards broader negotiations would be positively affected. However, if the United States acts with ill intent and makes it difficult for Iran to receive the benefits it is due under the deal, then the belief of Iranian leaders that the United States is insincere and cannot be trusted will be reaffirmed. Years of diplomacy will be undone and a zero-sum mentality will once again take hold between the two countries — with disastrous consequences for the region.

By the JCPOA's "implementation day" on Jan. 16, Iran had followed through on all of its commitments; reducing its enriched uranium stockpile by 98 percent, capping its number of centrifuges enriching uranium to 6,000, modifying its heavy water reactor and implementing strict surveillance measures, among other obligations the International Atomic Energy Agency has verified and Iran has abided by. →2

MEDIA MONITOR



Iran replaces Canada in U.S. heavy water market

TEHRAN — Iran has replaced Canada in selling heavy water to the U.S., spokesperson for the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran has said.

“Earlier the U.S. was trying to shut down Iran’s heavy water plant, but now they buy its product and admit its high quality,” Behrouz Kamalvandi said, IRNA reported on Saturday.

The U.S. has purchased even more heavy water from Iran compared to the amount bought from Canadian firms, he added.

Kamalvandi also dismissed reports which claim that Iran has sold its heavy water to the U.S. at a low price, saying Tehran has sold the product at the market price.



Iran has met commitments in JCPOA: Chomsky

TEHRAN — Iran has acted to its commitments under the JCPOA, Noam Chomsky has said.

But it is a pity that it cannot be said that the U.S. has done the same, the American political commentator has told Alahram weekly.

Republicans have made their best efforts to dissipate the agreement, he stated, adding that they are likely to decide to take the U.S. out of the JCPOA cooperation if they take the stage.



Next Majlis to pursue the confiscated \$2 billion: MP

TEHRAN — Head of the Majlis Research Center has said MPs will pursue the case of \$2 billion Iranian assets confiscated by the U.S. in the next term of the Majlis.

Kazem Jalali said once the new parliament take office, it is likely to form a committee to investigate the issue, the YJC reported on Saturday.

The next Majlis will start work on May 28. Jalali observed that although the U.S. act in confiscating the money is not a breach of the JCPOA, it is against international norms.



Korean president, leading biggest trade team, due in Iran

TEHRAN — South Korea’s president heads to Iran on Sunday in a landmark visit targeting billions of dollars of economic and energy deals.

A presidential spokesman said Park Geun-hye will help establish a “foundation of cooperation” with Iran by becoming the first South Korean president to visit Tehran since the two nations established diplomatic ties in 1962, Press TV reported on Saturday.

Park will be accompanied by Seoul’s biggest-ever traveling business delegation of over 230 executives during the three-day visit. Local reports suggested the two countries are expected to seal deals worth \$10 billion.

She will meet President Hassan Rouhani on Monday and possibly hold talks with Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.



Amazon to suspend Iranian accounts

TEHRAN — U.S. electronic commerce company Amazon says it will suspend the accounts of several Iranians who shopped on its website.

According to the company, Iranian officials had bought products worth approximately \$110,000 in total on Amazon over the past three years.

Amazon claimed that the accounts that made those purchases were subject to sanctions prohibiting economic activities between the U.S. and Iran, and it will no longer sell to them.



Iran to legally pursue U.S. seizure of assets: VP

TEHRAN — Iran is going to legally pursue the recent U.S. Supreme court ruling which has voted to confiscate the Central Bank of Iran’s assets, the vice president for legal affairs has announced.

The seizure of Iranian assets is in violation of the international law, in that resources of a country’s central bank are legally immune from seizure, Elham Aminzadeh said on Saturday, according to the IRIB.

UN says Iran playing ‘constructive’ role in Iraq

IT POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Jan Kubis, the UN special envoy for Iraq, has said Iran has been playing a “constructive” role in Iraq as it has been seeking to end the miseries of the Iraqi people.

In a meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif in Tehran on Saturday, Kubis also elaborated on current developments in Iraq, especially in political, security and economic areas.

For his part, Zarif said, “It is essential that the regional countries and the UN help find a logical and wise solution to the Iraqi people’s problems.”

Elsewhere in his remarks, Zarif said extra regional powers have a “strategic view” toward Iraq in the wider Middle East region and this viewpoint is different from



those of the Iraqi government and nation.

“This view causes the Iraqi nation and a humanitarian view to their problems be pushed to sidelines,” the minister lamented.

Zarif added Tehran prioritizes fight against extremism and terrorist groups, especially ISIL militants, in Iraq.

Iran was the first country reaching out to Iraq in 2014 when ISIL caught the country off guard, killing many Iraqi people.

Iraqi officials have always impressed on neighboring countries and the world the importance of Iran’s supports at logistic and advisory levels.

In spite of goodwill shown by Iran, Arab countries have accused Iran of supporting terrorism.

Rouhani: Tehran ready to expand ties with EU



Iran welcomes investment by Belgian private and public sector, the president said, adding there is no impediment to expansion of Iran-Belgium economic ties.

The JCPOA, signed in July 2015, went into effect on January 16.

Rouhani also said the nuclear agreement proved that “the complicated international problems” can be resolved through “dialogue” and “negotiation”.

The nuclear agreement should be considered as a “role model” to solve problems in the world, he noted.

Elsewhere, he said that terrorism is a “serious international challenge”.

The president said terrorism is rooted in economic and cultural problems. “One of the roots of terrorism is disappointment and the fact that some experience discrimination and do not see the existing regulations efficient enough to resolve their problems.”

He said military invasion is not the way to fight terrorism.

Rouhani also said that terrorists should not be divided into “good” and “bad” and called for serious efforts to cut financial support for terrorists.

For her part, Defraigne called for a new chapter in Iran-Belgium ties.

Defraigne also praised Iran’s position in fighting terrorism and said that Belgium is ready to enjoy Iran’s experience in this respect.

Belgium has a special status in the EU. Brussels, the Belgian capital, hosts the official seats of the European Commission, Council of the European Union, and European Council, as well as a seat of the European Parliament.

■ Zarif: 5+1 must ‘precisely’ meet commitments in lifting sanctions on Iran

In a separate meeting with Defraigne on Saturday, Iranian Foreign Minister Mo-

hammad Javad Zarif said that Iran has fulfilled its commitments under the JCPOA and the 5+1 group must also meet its obligations “precisely”.

Under the nuclear deal between Iran and the 5+1 group - the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia plus Germany – Iran must allow more intensive nuclear inspections and freeze some of its nuclear activities and instead all nuclear related sanctions against the country be terminated.

However, some banks are hesitant to resume banking transactions with Iran, fearing a punishment by the United States.

Marietje Schaake, the vice president of the European Parliament’s Delegation for Relations with the United States, has said, “Europe is being taken hostage by American policy.” He also has said, “We negotiated the nuclear deal together, but now the U.S. is obstructing its execution.”

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khome-

nei has also said, “They [the United States] write on paper that banks can cooperate with Iran, but in practice they promote Iranophobia so that no one trades with Iran. American officials say that sanctions are still in place so that foreign investors get scared and do not come.”

■ Economic and banking transactions

Zarif also said that presence of Belgian parliamentary delegation in Tehran can play an “important” role in expanding ties.

The foreign minister called for an increase in ties especially in economic and banking transactions.

Commenting on developments in the Middle East, he said that “political solution” is the only way out of the regional crises.

The Belgian official said that Iran has always played an important role in helping establish peace and stability in the region.

UN ready to help settle Iran-U.S. dispute over frozen assets

By staff and agencies

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is ready to help settle a dispute between Iran and the U.S. over Tehran’s frozen assets, but only if both countries make that request, a UN spokesman said on Friday.

“The secretary-general’s good offices are always available should both parties to whatever tensions or issue request it,” Middle East Eye quoted UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric as saying.

In a letter sent on Thursday, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif called on Ban to use his “good offices” to press the U.S. to release all of Iran’s frozen assets in U.S. banks.

Zarif wrote to Ban in response to a U.S.

Supreme Court ruling on April 20 that said Tehran’s frozen assets can be used to compensate victims of attacks blamed on Iran which are denied by Iran.

In part of his letter Zarif said, “The Islamic Republic of Iran holds the United States Government responsible for this outrageous robbery, disguised under a court order, and is determined to take every lawful measure to restore the stolen property and the interest accrued to it from the date it was blocked by the United States.”

According to Reuters, State Department spokesman Mark Toner said the United States was aware of the letter.

“To the extent that this letter was

prompted by the recent Supreme Court decision in the Bank Markazi v. Peterson case, we believe the U.S. laws and the application of those laws by the courts ... comport with international law,” he claimed.

Iranian officials have called the expropriation of Iranian assets by the U.S. a “flagrant theft”.

A U.S. official made clear Washington saw no need for UN involvement.

“We have open lines of communication with Iran and we’ll continue to try to address any issues of mutual concern through those channels,” the official said on condition of anonymity.

Iran has become increasingly frustrated



at the failure of the United States to keep its promises regarding sanctions relief agreed under an historic nuclear deal struck last year by Iran and six world powers.

Velayati: Efforts to break up Muslims states is a ‘failed dream’

IT POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Ali Akbar Velayati, head of the Expediency Council Center for Strategic Research, has called it a “failed dream” by enemies to disintegrate regional Islamic countries and rule over them.

Velayati made the remark in a meeting with Ramadan Abdullah, head of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement, on Saturday.

Defending integrity and unity of the Islamic world is a basic policy of Iran, though there have been challenges, Velayati noted.

“The Islamic republic will continue to back the oppressed Palestinian people and the other regional oppressed nations.”

Elsewhere in his remarks, the former foreign minister stressed that Iran keeps monitoring resistance groups.

“Those who have failed to take an ‘exact and rational’ stance have incurred losses themselves.”

Velayti’s remarks are a not-so-veiled allusion to Hamas, which turned its back on Iran, siding with Saudis in the Syrian crisis.

Abdullah, for his part, said Iran has a strategic, unique status in the Islamic movement’s manifesto and what would have happened to the movement and Islamic countries without Iran is unimaginable.

Referring to sensitivity to Palestine of Arab countries, Abdullah said, “Arab countries show no sensitivity to Palestine and its oppressed people and they have done their utmost attempts to represent Iran as the arch foe.”

“This is while the Islamic Republic is the cause of stability and peace in the region,” he noted.

Aref says to form parliamentary ‘hope’ group in next Majlis

IT POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Mohammad Reza Aref, a key reformist figure who led parliamentary elections in Tehran, said on Saturday the parliamentary group Omid (hope) will be formed within days now that the runoff is all done.

Reformists and moderates also campaigned under the slogan of hope.

Aref, who led the coalition of reformist and moderate candidates in the crucial parliamentary contest in Tehran, was happier with runoff results in which reformists and moderates secured more than half of the 68 seats in the runoff election on Friday.

In the first round of parliamentary elections on February 26, reformists sprang a surprise on polit-

ical analysts when they swept all 30 parliamentary seats for Tehran.

The parliamentary group can set the scene for reformists to be back in the game after almost eight years of marginalization by their principal archrivals.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the former vice-president said it is premature to predict who will take the helm in the Majlis.

People familiar with the issue say competition over the influential seat will be a duel between Aref and incumbent Larijani who won a re-election in the religious city of Qom, coming second.

The new parliament will formally open on May 28 amid high hopes for better economic performance now that Iran is emerging from international sanctions.

U.S. torpedoing the nuclear deal will reaffirm Iran’s distrust



However, now that the JCPOA has been implemented, Iran has yet to derive the expected benefits from sanctions relief. As Iran’s Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has said: “They [the United States] write on paper that banks can cooperate with Iran, but in practice they promote Iranophobia so that no one trades with Iran. American officials say that sanctions are still in place so that foreign investors get scared and do not come.”

Indeed, fearful of existing non-nuclear sanctions and the prospect of new sanctions, international banks and corporations with U.S.-based operations have been fearful of trading with or investing in Iran. Major European banks have in the past paid billions in fines due to supposed Iran sanctions violations. As a consequence, Iran has not been able to receive expected foreign investment or have international banks facilitate the business agreements it has signed since the JCPOA’s implementation.

“The most important problem is that the United States is taking a back seat after eight years of scaring everybody off, imposing heavy penalties on people who wanted to do business with Iran,” Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif said in a recent interview with The New Yorker’s Robin Wright. “The United States needs to do way more. They have to send a message that doing business with Iran will not cost them.”

U.S. sanctions have also prevented Iran from repatriating its much-hyped frozen oil revenues, which have been held at

If the deal collapses, not only would there be no chance for any compromise between Iran and the U.S on any other issue, but Iran would also lose its faith in the Security Council.

banks abroad. For Iran to retrieve this money, much of which was denominated in U.S. dollars, requires the foreign banks to conduct dollar-clearing sanctions for Iran, which they are hesitant to do for fear of running afoul of U.S. sanctions. According to U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, Iran has so far been able to repatriate only \$3 billion of its \$55 billion to \$100 billion in frozen funds abroad.

Adding insult to injury, the U.S. Supreme Court also recently broke all precedent by ruling that families of American victims of a 1983 Beirut bombing can sue Iran for \$2 billion worth of frozen Iranian assets. Iran’s centrist and pragmatic president, Hassan Rouhani, called the decision a “continuation of hostilities against Iran” and a “flagrant theft and a legal disgrace.” Iran’s Central Bank Chief Valiollah Seif also placed blame on the Mahmoud Ahmadinejad administration for making investments in dollars, which were among the frozen assets the Supreme Court ruled on.

Yemen foes begin direct peace talks in bid to end conflict: UN

Yemen's warring parties began face-to-face peace talks on Saturday on "key issues" in a bid to end the conflict in the impoverished country, the United Nations said.

"All delegations are present. Key issues will be addressed," Charbel Raji, spokesman for Yemen's UN envoy Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, told AFP about the negotiations taking place in Kuwait.

Most of the meetings in talks which began April 21 have so far been confined to encounters between rival delegations and Ould Cheikh Ahmed.

More than 6,800 people have been killed and around 2.8 million displaced in Yemen since the House of Saud regime-led coalition began operations in March 2015 against defenseless Yemeni people as well as Ansarullah (Houthi) movement.

Key issues to navigate include the withdrawal of armed groups, a handover of heavy weapons, and the resumption of a political transition and the release of prisoners.

The new phase of meetings comes after the government and Ansarullah delegations each submitted a framework for a political and security solution to end



the 13-month war.

The fugitive government delegation said their proposal is based on implementing UN Security Council Resolution 2216, which states that the revolutionaries must withdraw from seized territories

and disarm before talks can progress.

Meanwhile, sabanews.net website quoted an unnamed source from Ansarullah delegation as saying that their proposals include "forming a consensus authority that would oversee (political) transition."

The Ansarullah proposals also include lifting of the blockade imposed by the Saudi-led military coalition on Yemen.

Sabanews.net website reported that a "new phase in the negotiations begins Saturday, which would truly test the positions of the United Nations and international community" in the search for peace.

Both sides said that they were committed to ensuring the success of the talks in Kuwait, which were preceded by a shaky ceasefire that came into effect on April 11.

The main sticking point remains that the revolutionaries want to discuss a political settlement before surrendering arms while the government delegation insists that implementing the United Nations resolution is a priority.

The fugitive government delegation on Friday urged the UN envoy to pressure the insurgents to end what it called ceasefire violations by the Ansarullah movement.

The UN Security Council on Monday stressed the importance of agreeing on a "roadmap" to implement security measures including the withdrawal of heavy weapons from Yemeni towns.

(Source: AFP)

NATO expanding towards Russia frontiers: Lavrov

Russia's foreign minister says the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) military alliance is moving closer to Russia's borders, warning that Moscow will take necessary measures to protect its security.

"In fact, NATO borders are getting closer to Russia, not the opposite," Sergei Lavrov said in an interview with the Swedish newspaper Dagens Nyheter.

Lavrov also rejected NATO claims that Russia is conducting "dangerous activities" near the borders of its member states, saying this is an "unscrupulous attempt to distort the reality."

"NATO military infrastructure is inching closer and closer to Russia's borders. But when Russia takes action to ensure its security, we are told that Russia is engaging in dangerous maneuvers near NATO borders," he added.

The top Russian diplomat further noted that NATO's deployment of anti-missile systems and troops near his country's frontiers have already violated the basic 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act.

Moscow pays no attention to NATO's soothing words, but rather reacts to the alliance's military build-up near

Russia's borders, he went on to say.

Russia and NATO have been locked in a deepening dispute. Tensions surged earlier this month after the United States guided-missile destroyer USS Cook sailed close to a Russian naval base in the Baltic Sea, an action which resulted in the scrambling of Russian jets that buzzed the ship.

American officials denounced the move and said the Russian bombers were flying so close that they caused "wakes in the water."

Lavrov, however, described the actions of the Russian warplanes as completely legitimate, emphasizing that they decided to take a look at the vessel "from a safe distance."

NATO has stepped up its military build-up near Russia's borders since it suspended all ties with Moscow in April 2014 after the Crimean Peninsula re-integrated into the Russian Federation following a referendum.

Moscow has on many occasions slammed NATO's expansion near its borders, saying such a move poses a threat to both regional and international peace.

(Source: Press TV)

Istanbul braces for police lockdown on May Day

Istanbul braced for a major security lock-down for May Day Sunday, with almost 25,000 police on duty and numerous roads closed for an occasion that regularly sees clashes between Turkish protesters and police.

The Istanbul governor's office said in a statement on Saturday that in order "to provide for the security of citizens" on labor day, 24,500 members of the Turkish security forces would be on duty in the city.

The metro station on the main Taksim Square will be completely closed and the station at the end of the main shopping street Istiklal Caddesi will be closed to exiting passengers.

Security measures are already evident in Taksim Square -- a focus for protests in the past -- with metal security barriers lining the roads and dozens of anti-riot police present, an AFP correspondent said.

Numerous roads -- in particular those leading to Taksim -- will also be closed, it added.

The authorities, as in previous years, have refused to allow a sanctioned protest to take place on Taksim Square, meaning clashes are highly probable.

The May Day is taking place at a

period of particular tension in Turkey after a succession of deadly attacks this year blamed on extremists and Kurdish militants.

Controversy is also growing over the rule of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who critics accuse of increasingly authoritarian tendencies.

Several foreign missions have warned their citizens over the risk of violence in Istanbul on May 1, with the United States embassy warning of the "potential for violent confrontation between demonstrators and security personnel".

On May 1 last year, Turkish police used water cannon and tear gas to disperse May Day protesters in Istanbul, while police and demonstrators engaged in pitched battles in some areas.

Parliament last year passed a controversial security bill giving the police greater powers to crack down on protests.

Taksim has been a flashpoint for clashes on Labor Day since dozens of people were killed there on May 1, 1977 when modern Turkey was going through one of its most turbulent periods.

(Source: AP)

U.S.: Strike on Afghanistan MSF hospital not a war crime

The United States military has said that a deadly air strike on a Doctors Without Borders (MSF/Médecins Sans Frontières) hospital in Afghanistan last year was a mistake and therefore not a war crime.

Technical and human error led to the attack, General Joseph Votel said on Friday as he presented the results of an internal investigation into the October 3 incident in the northern Afghan city of Kunduz.

At least 42 people, including 24 patients, 14 staff and four

caretakers, were killed and 37 others wounded in the air strike, which destroyed the MSF hospital building and prompted widespread condemnation from human rights groups.

"The personnel involved did not know that they were striking a medical facility," the investigation report concluded.

"The intended target was an insurgent-controlled site which was approximately 400 meters away from the MSF Trauma Center."

The hospital was mistaken for another building controlled by the Taliban, Votel told reporters at the Pentagon.

The hospital was on a list of buildings not to target, but the aircraft crew did not have access to the list due to problems with a radio system, he added.

"The investigation determined that all members of both the ground force and the AC-130 air crew were unaware that the aircraft was firing on a medical facility throughout the engagement," Votel said.

"The investigation ultimately concluded that this tragic incident was caused by a combination of human errors, compounded by process and equipment failures."

"The label war crimes is typically reserved for intentional acts - intentional targeting civilians or intentionally targeting protected objects or locations."

MSF said it was reviewing the report to determine if it addressed questions that remained after the attack, but the international medical charity said it was not satisfied with an investigation carried out only by the military rather than an independent body.

"Today's briefing amounts to an admission of an uncontrolled military operation in a densely populated urban area, during which U.S. forces failed to follow the basic laws of war," MSF President Meinie Nicolai said in a statement.

"It is incomprehensible that, under the circumstances described by the U.S., the attack was not called off."

The United States cannot "escape their responsibilities on the battlefield simply by ruling out the intent to attack a protected structure."

Sixteen military personnel, including a general officer, were singled out for discipline, but none will face criminal charges, Votel said.

Punishments included suspension and removal from command, letters of reprimand, counseling and retraining, the military said. Five people were ordered out of Afghanistan.

Exact details about punishments and who was involved were withheld due to privacy concerns.

The U.S. will also make payments to the victims and their families and spend \$5.7m to rebuild the hospital, the DPA news agency reported.

The military was also instituting reforms to prevent such mistakes in the future, including changes into how its no-strike list is accessed.

U.S. President Barack Obama had been briefed on the report, spokesman Josh Earnest said.

(Source: DPA)

NEWS

Bombing against pilgrims kills 23 in Iraq as hundreds protest

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The ISIL terrorist still control a large part of western Iraq, and are able to carry out frequent attacks against both civilians and security forces in government-held areas.

Last year's pilgrimage was also marred by attacks against worshippers that killed at least 13 people.

The Saturday bombing came as hundreds of people turned out in Baghdad for a demonstration aimed at pressuring the government to carry out reforms, the latest in a series of such protests in the capital.

Demonstrators gathered at Baghdad's Tahrir Square and near the heavily-fortified Green Zone, where the government is headquartered.

Abadi has called for the current government of party-affiliated ministers to be replaced with technocrats, a move opposed by powerful political parties that rely on control of ministries for patronage and funds.

Key government posts have for years been shared out based on political and sectarian quotas, a practice demonstrators want to end.

Parliament has repeatedly been hit by chaos related to efforts to change the cabinet in recent weeks, with MPs holding an overnight sit-in at parliament, brawling in the chamber and seeking to sack speaker Salim al-Juburi before electing an interim replacement who has chaired his own rival sessions.

Lawmakers approved some of Abadi's nominees for the new cabinet on Tuesday, but MPs who opposed Juburi and sought to disrupt the session were barred from attending, raising questions about its legality.

Iraqi MPs were due to meet Saturday for a vote on additional candidates, but failed to reach a quorum for a morning session, leading Juburi to call for another in the afternoon. (Source: AFP)

UK, Cuba agree on debt restructuring

Visiting British Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond reached an agreement on restructuring Cuban debt payments in a meeting with President Raul Castro, officials in Havana said.

The agreement deals with Cuba's mid and long-term debt with Britain, according to a Cuban government statement.

The agreement "should contribute to the development of economic, commercial and financial relations between the two nations," the statement reads.

At the meeting, Castro and Hammond "verified the advances" in bilateral relations and "the potentials" in areas of mutual interest.

Neither the British embassy in Havana nor Cuban officials gave a figure for the debt, nor any further details on the agreement.

In December, Cuba reached an agreement with its creditors in the Paris Club -- which include Britain, France, and Spain -- to pay \$2.6 billion in debt unpaid to foreign creditors for the last 25 years.

In exchange, the Paris Club is writing off the interest accumulated of \$8.5 billion.

Hammond is the first British foreign secretary to visit Cuba since the 1959 revolution.

The visit also follows meetings in recent months between Castro and other top officials and leaders from the European Union.

Castro met with French President Francois Hollande on a visit to Paris in February.

Although Havana and Washington restored diplomatic ties last year, the U.S. trade embargo on Cuba dating to the 1960s remains in place. (Source: AFP)

ISIL to hit back at West over airstrikes: ex-member

A European member of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group says the militants will have their revenge for United States-led strikes by targeting Western targets.

Harry Sarfo, who joined the ISIL terrorist group in Syria and appeared in a terrorist execution video, told The Independent that the so-called U.S.-led coalition against ISIL will prompt the insurgents to launch more terror attacks in the West, the British daily reported on Friday.

The ISIL terrorist, who once worked for Britain's Royal Mail as a postman, made the comments in an exchange with the British daily from a German prison where he awaits trial on terror charges.

Sarfo said the U.S.-led strikes drive the militants to carry out further attacks in Europe.

"The bombing campaign gives them more recruits, more men and children who will be willing to give their lives because they've lost their families in the bombing," said the former ISIL terrorist.

"For every bomb, there will be someone to bring terror to the West," said Sarfo, adding, "They know the West is scared to put boots on the ground. Even if that happens one day, they've got plenty of men waiting for Western troops to arrive."

He was arrested upon his return to Europe three months later and has now been indicted on charges including being a member of a foreign terrorist group and violating German weapons laws.

The German-born man, who grew up in Britain, was reportedly disillusioned with the scale of ISIL's brutality and fled the terrorist group three months after joining them in April 2015. He was arrested upon his return to Europe three months later.

(Source: Press TV)



Vacancy Announcement

The Mission of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in IRAN is seeking to fill the following vacant position in Tehran:

Quality Control Assistant

Main responsibilities

- In charge of QC documentation management (elaborates, maintains and improves all documentation related to the Quality Management System)
- In charge of QC equipment management (calibration, identification and registration of all equipment used by ICRC controllers)
- Responsible for verifying QC reports accuracy before validation by Quality Control Technician (reference samples testing, internal QC and labs reports)
- Source of proposal to purchasers, QC technician & Q manager regarding QC findings analysis, products acceptance, nonconforming products management and specification improvement
- Reviews current work practices to identify areas in which QC process could be improved and developed

Minimum required knowledge & experience:

- University degree
- 2 - 3 years work experience in a similar field
- Very good knowledge of written and spoken English
- Very good computer skills
- Good analytical skills
- Similar working experience with an international organization would be an asset

It should be noted that the position might require travelling (on mission) outside and inside the country.

All interested applicants should submit a letter of interest and a résumé in English to the following email address:

teh_hr_services@icrc.org

ALL submissions MUST be received by the closing date of 14 May 2016

Please be informed that only shortlisted candidates will be notified for further process.

NEWS

Global giants to participate in Iran Oil Show

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — International prominent oil companies will take part in the 21st International Oil, Gas, Refining and Petrochemical Exhibition of Iran (Iran Oil Show 2016), the Director of Iranian Oil Ministry's Public Relations Department Akbar Ne'matollahi announced, the ministry's public relations department reported on Saturday.



“Renowned international companies namely Gazprom, Lukoil, Sulzer, Lincoln Electric, and FUCHS are the definite participants of the oil show, while some Italian companies are conducting negotiations to confirm their presence in the show,” Ne'matollahi, who is also the head of policymaking council of oil ministry's exhibitions, said.

The official said that by the time, more than 900 Iranian companies and above 800 foreign ones have purchased their booths in the exhibition. The total number of participant companies will surpass 1,900 ones, he added.

According to him, the companies come from 38 countries across the globe, including Germany, Ukraine, China, Switzerland, Italy, the United Arab Emirates, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, France, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, Monaco, the Netherlands, Poland, the United States, Canada, Venezuela, South Korea, Australia, Russia, Spain, Singapore, Turkey, England, Azerbaijan, Norway, Sweden, Brazil, Bulgaria, Romania, Japan, New Zealand, Taiwan, Portugal, Indonesia, and Finland will participate in the event.

Admitting that China, South Korea, Turkey, Germany, Spain, Italy, France, Austria and Finland are among the countries that plan to set up their special pavilions in this show, the Iranian official expressed content that the number of foreigners' booths in this edition of the exhibition has recorded a 60 percent rise, compared to the previous one, which proves their tendency in making investments in Iran.

Ne'matollahi underscored that transfer of technological know-how into the country is the focal point of the oil show. Tehran will host the named exhibition, which is the country's first oil show in post-sanction era, at Tehran Permanent International Fairground from May 5 to 8.

Italian, Greek refiners to receive Iran's crude post sanctions

Two European refiners are set to receive their first oil cargoes from Iran since international sanctions were lifted in January against the country, which is ramping up crude exports in a battle to take back market share.

Iran has pledged to increase production following sanctions lifting, and it declined to participate in a meeting on April 17 of producer group OPEC and non-member nations aimed at reaching a deal to freeze output to prop up prices. The talks collapsed.

Italy's IPLOM booked a 1 million barrel cargo of Iranian crude that is sailing towards the country aboard the Poetic, industry sources told Reuters. It will be the first post-sanctions cargo to arrive in Italy.

Oil trading and shipping sources said Greek refiner Motor Oil Hellas would also receive its first post-sanctions delivery of Iranian crude aboard the Kriti Breeze, which loaded at Kharg Island on April 20.

The company did not respond to a request for comment. Both refiners bought Iran's oil before sanctions against the country's nuclear program effectively halted its shipments to Europe, which had accounted for more than a third of its exports. France's Total, Spain's Cepsa and Greece's Hellenic Petroleum have booked Iranian crude for their European refineries this year.

Others, including Italy's Saras and ENI, have expressed interest in buying. But exports have been much slower than Iran targeted due to struggles with shipping and insurance.

Iran's exports peaked at just over 2.5 million barrels per day (bpd) in 2011, making it the second-largest exporter that year after Saudi Arabia. Its exports fell to a little more than 1 million bpd after tougher sanctions in 2012.

According to data from Energy Aspects, global imports of Iran's crude rose in March to 1.90 million bpd, from 1.51 million bpd in February. *(Source: Reuters)*

India's Essar buys 21% more Iran oil in 2015/16

NEW DELHI (Reuters) — Essar Oil, Iran's key Indian client, imported about 21 percent more oil from Tehran in 2015/16 as it stepped up shipments in the last quarter of the year after western sanctions against the Persian Gulf nation were lifted, according to tanker arrival data obtained from trade sources and ship-tracking services on the Thomson Reuters terminal.

Essar shipped in 204,500 barrels per day (bpd) of oil from Iran last month, a jump of 66.3 percent from February, the data showed.

The private refiner skipped purchases from Iran in March 2015 under pressure from sanctions.

Essar's oil imports from Iran averaged at about 120,000 bpd in the year to March 31, 2016, the data showed.

Iran's share in overall imports by Essar Oil in the last fiscal year rose to about 37 percent from about 28 percent a year earlier.

In the last fiscal year, Indian refiners shipped in 14.4 percent more oil from Iran at about 251,100 bpd, the data showed. The increase was the largest since the 2007/08 fiscal year, according to Reuters data.

'Tehran-Ankara trade could hit \$100 billion'

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Elsewhere in his remarks, he addressed the issue of improving joint telecommunication relations and asked for establishment of a Turkish information technology park in Iran.

On April 16, Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu in a meeting with the Iranian President Hassan Rouhani in Tehran, underlined his country's decisiveness in expanding vigorous relations in various economic fields, specifically in banking, and noted that some measures have been done on the way to reinforce cooperation between the two sides' stock exchange markets.

The Turkish prime minister also underscored the vitality of converting the current preferential trade agreement (PTA) between the two countries into free trade agreement (FTA) in future.

Earlier in the same month, Vaezi visited Davutoglu in Iran-Turkey Joint Economic Committee, where expressed Iran's readiness to develop ties with Turkey in banking and tourism sectors.

Davutoglu, for his part, said that his country is keen to invest in Iran's different sectors, including tourism, emphasizing that the administrations of both countries should direct their private sectors toward the realization of shared economic aims.



Chairman of Istanbul Chamber of Industry Erdal Bahcivan (L) shaking hand with Iranian Minister of Communications and Information Technology Mahmoud Vaezi in Tehran on Saturday

Warsaw determined to take part in Iran's oil, gas projects: Polish min.

1→

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Polish Energy Minister Krzysztof Tchorzewski in a meeting with Iran's ambassador to Warsaw Ramin Mehmanparast on Friday expressed his country's readiness to make joint investments in Iranian oil and gas projects.

"The Polish government seeks new avenues to meet its energy demand and Iran

can be a good partner due to its numerous capabilities in fossil energy sector," the Shana news agency quoted Tchorzewski on Saturday.

The Iranian ambassador, for his part, underlined the existing capacities for cooperation in various areas such as fossil fuels, oil and gas, nuclear energy and renewable energies, asserting that Iran

welcomes Polish companies' joint ventures with Iranian counterparts in the oil and gas sectors.

As the Polish official announced, a 35-member Polish energy delegation from oil and gas companies will pay a visit to Tehran on May 6 to attend the 21st International Oil, Gas, Refining and Petrochemical Exhibition of Iran (Iran Oil Show 2016).

This is Iran's first oil show in post-sanction era and number of foreign participants has notably increased.

China, South Korea, Turkey, Germany, Spain, Italy, France, Austria and Finland are among the countries that plan to set up their special pavilions in this show, which will be held at Tehran Permanent International Fairground.

OPEC oil output near record high in April as Iran, Iraq growth offsets outages

OPEC's oil output rose in April to close to the highest level in recent history, a Reuters survey found on Friday, as production increases led by Iran and Iraq more than offset a strike in Kuwait and other outages.

Top exporter Saudi Arabia, however, made no major change to output, the survey found, despite the kingdom hinting it could boost supply after OPEC and non-member nations failed to agree to freeze output at a meeting on April 17.

Oil has rebounded more than 75 percent from a 12-year low in January to reach \$48 a barrel, helped by the freeze initiative and signs that lower prices are starting to curb higher-cost supply, despite high inventories and other persistent reminders of a glut.

"The market is massively oversupplied," said Eugen Weinberg, analyst at Commerzbank in Frankfurt. "This rally doesn't have strong legs."

Supply from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries rose to 32.64 million barrels per day (bpd) this month, from 32.47 million bpd in March, according to the survey, based on shipping data and information from sources at oil companies, OPEC and consultants.

That almost matches January's 32.65 million bpd, when Indonesia's return as an OPEC member boosted production and output from the other 12 members was the highest in Reuter's survey records, starting in 1997.

OPEC output has surged since it abandoned in 2014 its historic role of cutting supply to prop up prices, led by higher supply from Saudi Arabia and Iraq.



Iran saw the sharpest increase in production in April after Western sanctions were lifted in January. Tehran, which wants to recover the market share it lost, has refused to limit its supply until it reaches pre-sanctions output.

At 3.40 million bpd, Iranian output is within sight of the 3.50 million bpd it pumped at the end of 2011 before sanctions were tightened, according to Reuters surveys. However, some of the crude may have come from storage, giving a temporary boost to April supply, sources said.

Iraq, which saw the fastest growth in production in OPEC in 2015, also raised output. Southern exports have risen to what may be a new record in April - depending on whether tankers loading at the end of the month are treated as April or May. Shipments of Kurdish crude from

the north also rose.

OPEC's third-largest supply increase in April came from the United Arab Emirates, following the end of maintenance work on oilfields that produce Murban crude.

Of the countries that reduced output, the largest decline was in Kuwait due to a three-day workers' strike which temporarily more than halved oil output and curbed refinery operations.

Nigerian output fell due to the continued lack of Forcados crude exports and a brief disruption to shipments of another stream, Brass River. Repairs on a pipeline to the Forcados terminal will take until June, the government said.

Loading problems, power failures and other problems dented Venezuela's supply by an estimated 40,000 bpd. Oil services firm Schlumberger is cutting activity in the cash-strapped nation, posing a threat to future output.

Saudi Arabia kept output steady compared with March, sources in the survey said, even though use in domestic power plants is rising. Saudi production was estimated at 10.15 million bpd versus 10.18 million in March.

"Exports are lower," said a source who monitors Saudi output. "The month is not over yet so let's wait for the final number, but that's what I am seeing here and now."

OPEC meets on June 2 in Vienna and may discuss the freeze initiative again. However, OPEC officials have been encouraged by the price recovery, which may take the urgency out of a renewed attempt to forge a deal.

(Source: Reuters)

Oman and Iran: Friends with many benefits

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Plummeting oil prices have severely damaged Oman's state finances, pushing the Arab nation into a financial squeeze. Like other PGCC states, Oman is determined to diversify its sources of revenue. In fact, 21 years before Saudi Arabia's Deputy Crown Prince announced the kingdom's Vision 2030, Oman outlined its Vision 2020, which was also aimed at growing the nation's private economy, increasing revenues

outside of the oil sector and investing in the country's human capital.

During Iranian President Hassan Rouhani's visit to Muscat in March 2014, Omani and Iranian officials agreed to establish a 124-mile-long undersea gas pipeline connecting the two countries. As Oman turns to liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports as a means of decreasing dependence on oil, importing Iranian gas for the sultanate's domestic consumption can free up the Persian Gulf

Arab state to sell more of its LNG to foreign countries.

Oman offers Iran a stepping stone to Africa, but the lifting of sanctions on Iran also enables the sultanate to deepen energy relations via Iran with gas-rich Central Asia. The passage of the interim nuclear agreement in November 2013 marked an important step toward building a Central Asian-Iranian-Omani trade nexus. In August 2014, the foreign ministers of Oman, Iran, Turkmenistan

and Uzbekistan met in Muscat to sign a memorandum of understanding — "Establishment of the International Transport and Transit Corridor" — within the framework of the Ashgabat Agreement, signed in 2011 to establish a corridor among the four countries. (Since then, India and Kazakhstan have joined.) The foreign ministers also reviewed principles for opening up the Omani ports of Sohar, Duqm and Salalah to Central Asia. *(Source: Al-Monitor)*



Daimler hires Deloitte for internal emissions probe

Daimler has hired auditor Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu to help with an internal investigation into its diesel-engine emissions technology requested by the U.S. Department of Justice, the luxury car maker said.

The investigation is to see if Daimler used devices to manipulate emissions tests and comes after another German carmaker, Volkswagen AG, admitted installing software that did so.

Daimler said last week that it was conducting an internal investigation of its certification process for diesel exhaust emissions in the United States at the request of the Justice Department.



Bombardier family has no plans to relinquish majority control: chairman

Bombardier Inc's dual-class share structure is vital to protect the long-term interests of the Quebec-based aerospace and transportation company, and the Bombardier-Beaudoin family has no plans to relinquish its majority control, Executive Chairman Pierre Beaudoin said on Friday.

"For the family, the success of this company has always been important. The family was there in good and bad times," Beaudoin said in response to a question at Bombardier's annual meeting. "The multiple voting right shares enable us to invest in the long term and allow us to protect the company against its dismantling, and we do not want to change anything."



Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer got a \$6 million pay cut last year

Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer's total compensation was worth \$36 million last year, down \$6 million, or 15% from the year before, according to regulatory filings on Friday.

Most of the cuts came from her option awards, which went down roughly \$9 million from the previous year, largely because of the 15% drop in Yahoo's stock price over the past year.

Her base salary remained the same at \$1 million, as nearly all of her pay is tied to performance-related stock awards.

Still, her 2015 compensation is much higher than what she made two years before that, when her total pay was worth about \$25 million.

Enjoy beauties of Qeshm through the eyes of bloggers

By Setareh Behroozi

Many wonders of the Persian Gulf island of Qeshm are already listed for tourists, but there are much more to be discovered. This is what twenty-eight Iranian bloggers who attended "the first Qeshm Island bloggers' travel writing festival" proved after updating their weblogs.

During their four-day sojourn the bloggers updated their weblogs to compete in the festival. Eventually, four winners were announced during a ceremony on Friday, marking Iran's National Persian Gulf Day.

Most of the bloggers, who attended the event, were adventurers and professional travelers who suggested new ways for enjoying a trip to Qeshm.

The best prize of the festival went to the Iranian globe-trotter and blogger Hossein Abdollahi, who has held several seminars and meetings on budget traveling during his adventurous trips to different parts of the world.



A turtle near Hormuz seashore (Photo: Hossein Abdollahi)

■ Hormuz, the Thousand-Color Magic of the Persian Gulf

On his weblog, jahangasht.blogfa.com, he has shared his experience of traveling to Hormuz Island, near Qeshm, in a post titled "Hormuz, the Thousand-Color Magic of the Persian Gulf".

In his post, he has described his one-day excursion with a motorcycle he borrowed from a local boy, named Hamzeh. The description ended at the house of Hamzeh and his generous hospitality.



Room decorated for bride and groom on Qeshm Island (Photo: Nafiseh Hajati)

■ Salakh is not a Wasteland!

The second best prize of the festival went to the tourism journalist, traveler, and blogger Nafiseh Hajati.

In her weblog, she has shared experience about her one-day residence at Zinat homestay in Salakh village on Qeshm. In her note "Salakh is not a Wasteland", she has written about traditional cuisines served in the village as well as rituals during traditional wedding ceremonies.



Hands of women are decorated with Henna Tattoo (Photo: Mina Kamran)

■ In the Land of Lovely Wooden Giants

Adventurer and cyclist Mina Kamran, and tourism expert, photographer, and blogger Majid Erfanian shared the third best prize of the festival.

In her weblog, 2charkheha.blogfa.com, Mina Kamran has explained her experiences under the title of "In the Land of Lovely Wooden Giants" about a launch building workshop in Guran village and her enjoyable stay at a local house, her trip to Laft port and wedding ceremony in Suza village.

■ By the Qeshm!

Meanwhile, Erfanian's notes titled "By the Qeshm" can be found on his weblog majiderfanian.com. In his post, Erfanian has written about his experience in old parts of Qeshm and his sojourn in Laft port. His writing is adorned with conversation he had with local people in different locations of the place.



Wind catchers at Laft port (Photo: Majid Erfanian)

Affable citizens of Qeshm, whose houses' doors are always open to travelers, provide a great opportunity for bloggers and every tourist to witness their lifestyle and traditions during daily life.

"We do believe that bloggers can boost Iran's tourism activities a lot. This is one of the most influential ways to introduce tourism capacities of places to the people," the president of Iran Federation of Tourist Guide Associations Arash Nooraghayee told the Tehran Times on Friday.

The event was organized by Qeshm Investment and Development Company and Iran Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (IFTGA).

Travel writer Masnour Zabetian, IFTGA President Arash Nooraghayee along with tourism photographer Asad Naqshbandian were the festival's jury members.

Experiences you shouldn't leave Iran without!

Most travelers see Iran as a once in a life opportunity that's probably not going to be happening anytime soon. They take as many days off as they can and squeeze in as many cities possible in a 10-day voyage. No wonder why by the end of the trip they are shattered and actually in need of another holiday to recover.

Let's pretend you're short on time, you're not the couch surfing type who stays with locals and you've brought a camera that needs to go back with a full memory, but you actually crave a little something that would make you feel more of a local and less of a tourist.

■ Buy bread right from the oven and have it with cheese and fresh veggies

Bread in Iran is holy and very unique to this part of the world. It's so sacred that we avoid cutting it with a knife and it's so exclusive that it's one of the first things we crave away from home. Barbari, Sangak, Taftoon and Lavash are the leaders and each is cooked in their own bakery. We swoon over a piece of fresh crusty Barbari and relish over the extra doughy sides.

■ Have a picnic

We Iranians are experts when it comes to picnics and we don't compromise with sandwiches and a can of coke. We take a huge pot of warm Lubia Polo (beans with rice) and do not dare to leave our Shirazi salad behind. We set a whole feast and eat with style. You'll witness a ton of this strolling in Shiraz or Esfahan on a delightful afternoon and you'll see everything at full glory if you get the chance to visit Iran on Nature's day on April 2nd, when picnics are not just out of pleasure but a tradition to follow.

So instead of spending another night in a fancy restaurant and munching on another plate of Kebab, consider a picnic. Ask for a take out, buy a bowl of Ash if it's winter and have it in a local park, in the middle of Naqsh-e Jahan or besides Arg-e Karim Khan in Shiraz. And don't be shy to ask a local family for a cup of tea



Sangak is one of the favorite breads in Iran

before you leave. You never know what else could come with it.

■ Sleep in a caravanserai

It's not just a starry night, but also getting to see the sunrise peaking from behind the mountains that makes a sleep over at a caravanserai such a rewarding experience.

It's not every day that you get to live like a wealthy merchant and sleep under a blanket of stars in the middle of nowhere. Due to the huge number of abandoned caravanserais in Iran, many of them are now being converted into hotels and restaurants. Some as fancy as 5 start hotels and others more humble.

■ Dizi on a weekend

Lazy weekends in Iran are supplemented with Dizi for lunch. Known as one of the oldest food recipes of Iran, Dizi or Abgoosht – however you like to call it – is

mashed meat with chickpeas, onion and potatoes and is served with pickles. It's not something you find in a fancy posh restaurant. It's rather found in traditional places or Dizi Saras, which are exclusive to serving Dizi. You'd find a ton of places where you could try it, but Azari restaurant near Tehran's railway station has been serving it for decades and knows the trick. Not to mention the atmosphere is also a bonus point. But for my favourite Dizi place in Tehran, you'd have to be a bit more adventurous and head over to the old Jewish neighbourhood of the capital to have it served in the once oldest bank of the country.

Fitting a few, if not all of these experiences to your already overloaded itinerary won't set you back so much but it's bound to leave you with some memories that will be etched in your memory for a lifetime.

(Source: travestyle.com)

PICTURE OF THE DAY © IRNA/Morteza Aminoroayae



U.S. historian and orientalist Richard W. Bulliet, who has done several studies on history of Iranian city of Neishabur, poses for a photo in historical site of Neishabur in Iran on Friday. Bulliet is a professor of the Middle Eastern History at Columbia University.

Where did the famous portrait of Che Guevara come from?

The French freighter, La Coubre, was carrying munitions from Belgium to Cuba – where the Argentina-born Guevara had been instrumental in putting Fidel Castro in power a year earlier – when it exploded. Castro was quick to blame the Americans in his speech given at the service.

The photographer Alberto Korda was there, trying to get a snap of all the notable people milling about. Guevara, who was keeping a low profile, had been obscured by other men around him, but suddenly, a gap appeared and Korda was able to get a couple of quick-fire photos.

No one appreciated the image at the time – it certainly didn't immediately strike anyone as iconic or particularly impressive. Korda liked it, however, and put it up in his home.

The photo wasn't even published abroad until August 1967, when Che Guevara's last revolutionary message "Create Two, Three, Many Vietnams" was broadcast as he fought in Bolivia.

Two months later, Guevara was shot by Bolivian high command.

(Source: History Extra)

A CLOSER LOOK

Kill it with tech: Ways to locate and lock luggage with technology

It's now possible to travel with smarter locks.

Sadly, this doesn't mean your luggage security item will point out various landmarks or regale you with interesting historical anecdotes.

It just means that more technology is being pumped into the industry, which means it's now easier to maintain a careful watch on your items with things like Bluetooth.

READ MORE: 5 Travel Items That Keep Thieves at Bay

What we have below are just some of the various items you might consider that are available now or in the near future.

Of course, if we missed anything, feel free to holler with your amazing and completely valued suggestion.

■ AirBolt:

The AirBolt is a newfangled lock that uses your smartphone to do the unlocking. That means you can actually open your bag from a distance — in the rare case that you need a document and are away from home or the hotel.

And you can even track the lock's location so you never have to wander the airport paranoid again.

■ G-RO:

The upcoming G-RO (ships this November) has a great many attributes, such as giant wheels, a durable construction and optional electronic module.

All of this makes it the kind of carry-on that we are confident will last years. The fact that you can also track its location sells us on that fact.

■ Dynotag:

Dynotag has a large catalog of various tags that you can affix to your luggage.

From the hefty items that professionals might ship to that smaller check-in luggage, the tags allow you to digitally pair documents to the luggage to ensure all of your important items are noted and archived.

■ Trakdot:

Another way to make sure your luggage is exactly where it should be is to stuff in a tiny sleuth.

Seeing as how you can't ask a friend to get in, you might want to consider this device.

■ BlueSmart:

Your smartphone does the heavy lifting as it can unlock and track your most crucial of travel items with the handy app.

The luggage looks sleek too, which is an added bonus.

■ LugLoc:

And if you aren't sold on a bag upgrade, you can still locate your luggage with tech that is similar to the Trackdot above.

LugLoc will have you tethered to your luggage via its app.

In time, the best kind of luggage management may come from the airlines themselves. It will be some time before this happens, but we can dream in the interim.

(Source: travelpulse.com)

Early humans may have been food for carnivores 500,000 years ago

Tooth-marks on a 500,000-year-old hominin femur bone found in a Moroccan cave indicate that it was consumed by large carnivores, likely hyenas, according to a study published April 27, 2016 in the open-access journal PLOS ONE by Camille Daujeard from the Museum National D'Histoire Naturelle, France, and colleagues.

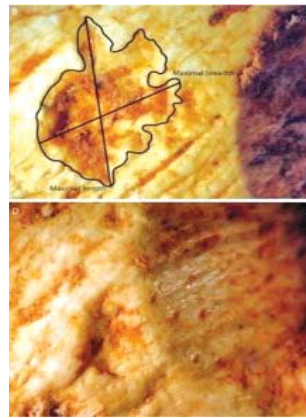
During the Middle Pleistocene, early humans likely competed for space and resources with large carnivores, who occupied many of the same areas. However, to date, little evidence for direct interaction between them in this period has been found. The authors of the present study examined the shaft of a femur from the skeleton of a 500,000-year-old hominin, found in the Moroccan cave "Grotte à Hominidés" cave near Casablanca, Morocco, and found evidence of consumption by large carnivores.

The authors' examination of the bone fragment revealed various fractures and tooth marks indicative of carnivore chewing, including tooth pits as well as other scores and notches. These were clustered at the two ends of the femur, the softer parts of the bone being completely crushed. The marks were covered with sediment, suggesting that they were very old.

While the appearance of the marks indicated that they were most likely made by hyenas shortly after death, it was not possible to conclude whether the bone had been eaten as a result of predation on the hominin or had been scavenged soon after death. Nonetheless, this is the first evidence that humans were a resource for carnivores during the Middle Pleistocene in this part of Morocco, and contrasts with evidence from nearby sites that humans themselves hunted and ate carnivores. The authors suggest that depending on circumstances, hominins at this time could have both acted as hunter or scavenger, and been targeted as carrion or prey.

Camille Daujeard notes: "Although encounters and confrontations between archaic humans and large predators of this time period in North Africa must have been common, the discovery ... is one of the few examples where hominin consumption by carnivores is proven."

(Source: Science Daily)



Refugee crisis: When is a tragedy a massacre?

By Richard Seymour

The recent drowning of 500 refugees and migrants in the Mediterranean Sea was not only preventable, but arguably caused by policy. A policy known colloquially as "Fortress Europe", designed to make the journey to Europe as difficult as possible for asylum seekers. The European Union's two-faced approach to human rights has rarely been so crudely apparent as in its treatment of refugees. Article 4

of the European Convention on Human Rights is unequivocal. "Collective expulsion of aliens is prohibited." That is the full extent of the article. It is not qualified or mitigated in any way, so self-evident is the principle taken to be.

But mark the sequel. The first line of the recent agreement between the EU and Turkey, on the other hand, states that: "All new irregular migrants crossing from Turkey to the Greek islands as of 20 March 2016 will be returned to Turkey." Only by the most strained linguistic tort

is this not "collective expulsion".

The "quid pro quo" with Turkey includes money and faster EU accession.

But this policy merely builds on what was already in place. According to the European Council of Refugees and Exiles, "illegal pushback" has always been a part of the strategy of "Fortress Europe". But it is now a fully centralized, explicit plank of the EU's anti-refugee policy.

Those refugees who do manage to pass into Europe are frequently subject to violence



and extortion at the hands of authorities.

Inhuman conditions

They are likely to be held in what Amnesty calls "inhuman conditions" - whether in Lampedusa, where the island's mayor compared the conditions for refugees to those of a concentration camp, or Bulgaria, where migrants live in fear of racist assault, or Calais, where authorities think nothing of demolishing the makeshift homes in which refugees are forced to live even if they have nowhere else to go.

→ 9

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Europe's economy, after 8-year detour, is fitfully back on track

On Friday, the European Union released data showing that the overall economy of the 19 countries that use the euro advanced 0.6 percent over the first three months of the year, compared with the previous quarter.

That gain, equivalent to an annual rate of 2.2 percent, brought the Eurozone's gross domestic product for the period to slightly above the previous peak reached in the early months of 2008, before the crisis emerged and Europe's core economy descended into a pair of crippling recessions.

"The long-awaited recovery may finally be consolidating," said Iain Begg, a research fellow at the European Institute of the London School of Economics.

Yet as milestones go, Europe's return to pre-crisis levels of economic activity came with so many qualifiers that any celebration seemed premature, at best, and at worst like a mockery for the tens of millions of ordinary Europeans who have far from recovered. New unemployment data on Friday showed that the Eurozone jobless rate, while edging down slightly, remained above 10 percent — more than twice the level in the United States.

The strongest economies in the Eurozone — major exporters like Germany and the Netherlands — have recovered more handily. But in the worst-hit countries — Cyprus, Greece, Ireland and Italy — ordinary people continue to grapple with the consequences of deep job losses and wage cuts, which have slashed incomes.

In Italy, disposable income for the average household shrank 4 percent from 2008 to 2014, according to European Union data. Over those years, Greek households lost 24 percent of their disposable income, and Cyprus suffered declines of 22 percent. At the same time, German households gained more than 15 percent.

Major banks across the Continent remain reluctant to lend, starving even



healthy businesses of capital needed to expand and hire. Concerns about the global economy — especially the slowdown in China — threaten to crimp Europe's export growth, which has been at the center of the recovery.

A long, uneven recovery

Since the first quarter of 2008, the overall economy of the Eurozone has taken a full eight years to regain the level it had reached then, before the global financial crisis. While some individual members of the 19-country currency union surpassed their 2008 economic levels sooner, others have still not climbed back to that plateau.

To be sure, Friday's preliminary data — a new early-stage snapshot of growth released by the European Union — showed

the Eurozone advancing during the first quarter at a stronger pace than the United States economy, which managed only a 0.5 percent annualized rate in the same period.

But clouding the Eurozone growth data was another new figure on Friday, indicating that consumer prices in the currency union were down 0.2 percent in April. Low inflation, or even periodic falling prices in the Eurozone, has been a persistent problem, a sign of economic stagnation that continues to resist efforts by the European Central Bank to raise inflation, spending and borrowing to healthier levels.

Many economists now discuss Europe's prospects with the grim vernacular long used to describe Japan. The terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels have left Eu-

rope on knife's edge, with policy makers and investors cognizant that people with lethal intentions are no doubt plotting more. Refugees and migrants continue to stream toward the Continent, propelled by terrible conflicts in Libya, Syria and elsewhere. This has thrown another fraught and complex problem at European governments that have shown little mastery of coordinated action.

In Britain, voters face a June 23 ballot to decide whether their country ought to remain part of the European Union. If they opt for a so-called Brexit that will initiate a two-year period in which leaders in London and Brussels will need to negotiate a divorce.

The Eurozone, which generated €2.48 trillion in economic activity during the first quarter, is only now on track to surpass its 2008 full-year gross domestic product. Of just below €10 trillion, or about \$11.3 trillion.

In other countries, economic weakness generally pushes down the value of the currency, making goods cheaper on world markets relative to competitors' and lifting exports. But in the Eurozone, all the countries are stuck with the same value for their currency, regardless of their individual troubles.

Germany, which plays the dominant role in setting Eurozone economic policy, has been unwilling to allow national governments to run larger deficits to stimulate their economies, while demanding that they enact policies that make it easier for employers to hire and fire. The result has been Continent-wide austerity marinated in acrimony.

The ability of European businesses to continue to rack up export growth faces challenges. China, the European Union's second-largest trading partner behind the United States, absorbed roughly 10 percent of Europe's exported wares last year, according to the bloc's data.

(Source: NYTimes)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Oil market deja vu triggers predictions of a return to \$30

Oil's climb above \$45 a barrel is reassuring influential figures from BP Plc to the International Energy Agency that the industry is finally recovering from the worst slump in a generation. Others say the market is about to fall into the same trap as last year.

There's a sense of deja vu at Commerzbank AG, BNP Paribas SA and UBS Group AG, who say crude's gain of about 70 percent from a 12-year low in January resembles the recovery that took hold this time last year — only to sputter out by May as the supply glut endured. Prices will sink back towards \$30 a barrel in the coming weeks, BNP and UBS warn.

"There are dangerous parallels to 2015," said Eugen Weinberg, head of commodities research at Commerzbank in Frankfurt. "The market already appears overheated and a correction is overdue."

Last year, Brent crude rose 45 percent from January to almost \$68 in May as traders anticipated a rapid decrease in U.S. output as drilling rigs were idled. The rally reversed when production kept rising, peaking at 9.61 million barrels a day in June 2015, a year after the price slump began. While drilling cutbacks eventually took their toll and the nation's output slipped to 8.9 million barrels a day last week, the current recovery could boost industry activity and slow the decline.

(Source: Bloomberg)

Global smartphones see smallest growth in first quarter

The shipments of smartphones worldwide in the first quarter marked the smallest year-on-year growth on record, and Chinese smartphone makers Oppo Electronics Corp and Vivo Mobile Communication Technology Co Ltd pushed out previous fourth and fifth place players Lenovo Group Ltd and Xiaomi Corp, a report said.

According to a report released by the research company International Data Corporation, vendors shipped a total of 334.9 million smartphones worldwide in the first quarter of this year, up slightly from the 334.3 million units in the same period last year.

The minimal growth this quarter is primarily attributed to strong smartphone saturation in developed markets, as well as a year-on-year decline from two market leaders Apple Inc and Samsung Electronics Co Ltd, the report said.

Samsung remained the leader in the worldwide market despite its shipments falling to 81.9 million in the first quarter from 82.4 million in the same period last year, a year-on-year decline of 0.6 percent.

Apple saw its shipment volume drop to 51.2 million in the first quarter, down 16.3 percent from last year, and its market share fell by three percent to 15.3 percent.

(Source: China Daily)

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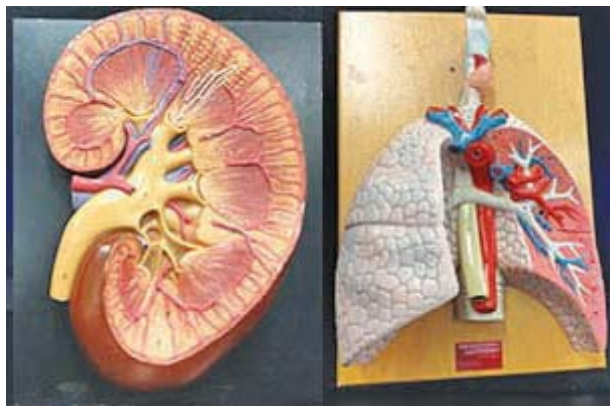
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- Good for bones

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran comes out tops in anatomical sciences: ISAS chief



MEDICAL TEHRAN — The president of the Iranian desk Society of Anatomical Sciences (ISAS) says Iran is the leading country in the field of anatomical sciences in the region, IRNA reported on Saturday.

According to Mohammad-Taqi Joghtaei, Iranian anatomical scientists are among pioneering stem cell researchers in the world. Joghtaei added, "Iran has contributed much to the world in the area of in vitro fertilization (IVF)," which is the most common and most effective type of assisted reproductive technology (ART) to help women become pregnant.

For Iran to hold its position and continue competing with the regional countries, the head of ISAS called for increasing investments in this field, urging the government to "pay due attention to basic sciences."

The 12th conference of Iranian Anatomical Society is to be held at Tehran's Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences on May 4-6.

A new 'robo-mermaid' can hunt for deep-sea treasure with a delicate touch

Robots and artificial intelligence have opened doors in the fields of manufacturing and machine learning, but now they have gone where few expected them to go: deep sea diving.

Stanford University professor of computer science Oussama Khatib developed his new deep ocean avatar in response to a need to dive deeper than humans can comfortably go. The robot he created, named OceanOne, is so revolutionary that it could change the field of deep sea diving, forever.

"OceanOne will be your avatar," Dr. Khatib said in a Stanford press release. The "intent here is to have a human diving virtually, to put the human out of harm's way. Having a machine that has human characteristics that can project the human diver's embodiment at depth is going to be amazing."

Unlike other submersibles, this robot is humanoid – it is described as a "robotic mermaid." The robot's humanlike construction and touch sensors mean that OceanOne's operators are able to use the robot to complete a variety of tasks previously out of reach for submersible technology. It was developed to explore coral reefs in the Red Sea, at levels far too deep for a human diver.

OceanOne is approximately human sized, with flexible, jointed arms that function much like human arms, and a mermaid-like tail, which holds the robot's computer system and eight multi-dimensional thrusters.

Haptic sensors on the robot's hands allow operators to handle potentially fragile objects without fear of crushing them. Soon, the robot may be equipped with touch sensors for even greater usability.

(Source: The CSM)

Iranian scientist develops new nano-coating to protect wood surfaces

An Iranian researcher at the University of Zagreb after three years of hard work succeeded to produce water-based Nano-coating to protect wood surfaces.

Arezoo Assarian, Ph.D. researcher of chemical engineering at the University of Zagreb in Croatia in an interview with Iranian Students News Agency (ISNA), said that this has been achieved after three years of hard working.

The main advantage of this protective coatings is to create a tough and flexible at the same time on film surface. In the structure of this coating are used the combination of Polyol polymer chain and Polyurethane (NHCO) groups.

Along with using nano pigment added the other additive such as UV filter, Silicon dispersing agent and the surface tension reducer, she noted.

She added that main characteristics of this product are excellent resistance to chemicals, moisture, thermal shock, resistance to sun light, UV, non-yellowing coating as well as resistance to abrasion, Impact, scratches, bending and other mechanical damages.



Arezoo Assarian



Assarian said this coating could be used in wood industry, including interior and exterior wood surfaces, building walls, furniture and cabinets, wall systems and windows in wood applications.

■ **Eco-friendly product**

She mentioned that with using Nano

titanium dioxide it has great coverage on the surface and since VOC materials are

not used in this coating it is an eco-friendly product. At the same time the product dries very fast and the time interval between applying the next layer is too short.

She explained that wood after usage, there is still life effects and the so-called wood "breathes" That causes major problems such as cracking on the film coatings which is applied, and on the hardwood such as oak coming out Tannin which destroy coating layer. But with applying the wood surface with this Nano coating all these problems will be removed.

The researchers said that applying this coating is very easy and is based on conventional methods of applying paint.

Assarian said this coating could be used in wood industry, including interior and exterior wood surfaces, building walls, furniture and cabinets, wall systems and windows in wood applications.

She mentioned that the result of standard tests were excellent and was produced in industrial scale. In order to transfer the knowledge and Technology will be interested in cooperation with investor to produce in our lovely country.

(Source: ISNA)

Eating chocolate every day good for your health: study

If you're a chocoholic, and concerned that your sweet tooth could be playing havoc with your health prospects, a new study published in the British Journal of Nutrition features some good news for you.

Eating chocolate every day could help prevent type 2 diabetes and insulin resistance - a well-established risk factor to cardiovascular disease.

Researchers at the Luxembourg Institute of Health, the University of Warwick Medical School, the University of South Australia and the University of Maine studied data from 1,153 people aged 18-69 - all participants in the Observation of Cardiovascular Risk in Luxembourg study.

Those who ate 100g of chocolate a day - equivalent to a bar - were found to have reduced insulin resistance and improved liver enzymes.

Those who claimed to eat chocolate were also found to be younger, more physically active and had higher levels of education than those who claimed not to eat chocolate on a daily basis.

■ **Cocoa-based products**

Professor Saverio Stranges, Visiting Academic at the University of Warwick Medical School and Scientific Director of the Department of Population Health at LIH said: "Given the growing body of evidence, including our own study, cocoa-based products may represent an additional dietary recommendation to improve cardio-metabolic health; however, observational results need to be supported by robust trial evidence.

"Potential applications of this knowledge include recommendations by healthcare professionals to encourage individ-

uals to consume a wide range of phytochemical-rich foods, which can include dark chocolate in moderate amounts.

However, it is important to differentiate between the natural product cocoa and the processed product chocolate, which is an energy-dense food. Therefore, physical activity, diet and other lifestyle factors must be carefully balanced to avoid detrimental weight gain over time."

Dr. Ala'a Alkerwi, Principal Investigator of the study at LIH said: "It is also possible that chocolate consumption may represent an overall marker for a cluster of favorable socio-demographic profiles, healthier lifestyle behaviors and better health status. This could explain, at least in part, the observed inverse associations with insulin and liver biomarkers."

(Source: The Telegraph)

Novel genetic method could lead to vaccine for cancer, asthma



Ali Salanti



Danish researchers have developed a novel genetic method that could lead to the development of safe and effective vaccines for controlling diseases such as cancer, asthma, and allergies.

The "major research breakthrough is that we have created a general and user-friendly platform for the development of a special type of effective and safe vaccines," said one of the researchers Adam Sander from University of Copenhagen in Denmark.

The "highly effective method opens a new door for controlling diseases such as cancer, asthma, allergies and cardiovascular diseases by means of vaccines," Sander pointed out.

The idea behind the new technique is to mimic the structure of a virus. When you have made the virus structure, it is used as a platform onto which are glued harmless parts of the disease which you want to vaccinate against.

■ **Virus-like structure**

This creates an overall virus-like structure, which constitutes an important danger signal for the body. The immune system would therefore produce antibodies against the disease — a mechanism which has been difficult to activate by traditional vaccines.

The technology is also so effective that it can trick the immune system into attacking the body's own cells, which may be used in the treatment of a number of serious diseases, such as cancer, which are not caused by foreign organisms, the study said.

"Previously, it was a major problem to activate the immune system and get an adequate response. We have lacked the possibility to easily create a vaccine which mimics something that will trigger a natural response from the body, but the new virus-like platform now allows us to do so," Susan Thrane from University of Copenhagen noted.

"In other words, we now have a unique technique that enables us to develop vaccines against diseases that we have so far been unable to fight," Thrane pointed out.

"It will be a game changer for low-income countries, which can now make vaccines targeted at widespread diseases such as tuberculosis and malaria. There is no doubt that the new results will have a significant impact on tomorrow's vaccines and public health," Ali Salanti, professor at University of Copenhagen, said.

(Source: canindia.com)

Fertility researchers use skin cells to create human sperm



Scientists in Spain say they have created human sperm from skin cells, a medical feat which could eventually lead to a treatment for infertility.

The researchers said on Wednesday that they were working to find a solution for the roughly 15 per cent of couples worldwide who are unable to have children and whose only option is to use donated sperm or eggs.

"What to do when someone who wants to have a child lacks gametes (eggs or sperm)?" asked Dr. Carlos Simon, the scientific director of the Valencian Infertility Institute, Spain's first medical institution fully dedicated to assisted reproduction.

"This is the problem we want to address: to be able to create gametes in people who do not have them."

The result of the research, which was undertaken with Stanford University in the United States, was published on Tuesday in Scientific Reports.

The researchers were inspired by the work of Japan's Shinya Yamanaka and Britain's John Gurdon, who in 2012 shared the Nobel Prize in medicine for discovering that adult cells can be transformed back into embryo-like stem cells.

■ **Mature skin cells**

Dr. Simon and his team managed to reprogram mature skin cells by introducing a cocktail of genes needed to create gametes.

Within a month the skin cell was transformed to become a germ cell, which can develop into sperm or an egg, but it did not have the ability to fertilize, they found.

"This is a sperm but it needs a further maturation phase to become a gamete. This is just the beginning," Dr. Simon said.

It is a step further than that reached by Chinese researchers, who earlier this year announced they had created mice from artificial sperm.

"With the human species, we must do much more testing because we are talking about the birth of a child," Dr. Simon said.

The researchers also must take into account legal constraints since the technique involves the creation of artificial embryos, which is allowed only in some countries.

"We are talking about a long process," he said.

(Source: straitstimes.com)

Gene linked to youthful looks has been discovered, scientists claim

Those in search of the fountain of youth should not hang up their boots, but in a laboratory in the Netherlands lies what may be the answer to a more realistic mystery: why some people look younger than others of the same age.

In a study, scientists in Rotterdam claim for the first time to have found a gene that specifically affects how old people look. The gene came to light when researchers noticed that people who carried mutations in the gene appeared, on average, two years older than they were.

The work, if verified, could help scientists unlock at the molecular level how people's faces change with time, and ultimately develop ways to slow down the most visible effects of aging.

"This is the first gene we have found for perceived age,

and this single gene has an effect of two years," said Manfred Kayser, professor of forensic molecular biology at Erasmus Medical Center in Rotterdam. "We know there are others out there. We are just at the beginning."

Scientists have long known that people appear to age at different rates, and that genes and lifestyle are both involved. Smoking and too much UV from sunlight speed up skin aging, but the genetics at work in looking old - or young - have so far proved elusive.

■ **Estimating different ages**

Working with scientists from Unilever, Kayser asked a group of observers to estimate the ages of nearly 3,000 people who had provided pictures of their faces and DNA

for what is called the Rotterdam study. He found that people consistently rated women as being older than their years, and men as being younger. The finding might reflect the media's obsession with images of young women, suggested one scientist who was not involved in the work.

But that was not the study's main result. After scouring the people's genomes, Kayser found that variations in one gene, called MC1R, were more common in those who looked old for their age. To check the finding, he repeated the search in two other groups of people, one in Netherlands, the other in the UK. The MC1R gene, which is responsible for red hair, cropped up again.

(Source: The Guardian)

British support for staying in the European Union is split 50-50 according to an opinion poll published by research firm ORB which also suggested United States President Barack Obama has not won over many voters with his call for the country not to leave the bloc.

The online poll of 2,082 people, carried out between Wednesday and Friday for the Independent, showed the balance shifting slightly toward the "Leave" campaign when accounting for the likelihood of respondents to actually vote in the referendum in June.

That weighting gave the "Out" campaign 51 percent of the vote against 49 percent for "In," ORB said on Friday.

Britons will vote on June 23 on whether to end the country's 43-year membership of the bloc. Many opinion polls have shown the outcome is too close to call.

Supporters of the "In" campaign,

British support for EU membership split 50-50: poll



Germany: 400 arrested at protest against AfD congress

German riot police have arrested around 400 protesters trying to block access to the congress of the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) political party, as clashes broke out between party members and left-wing activists in the German city of Stuttgart.

Heavily-armored riot police used pepper spray to hold off protesters, many dressed in black and masking their faces, as officers escorted AfD members into the congress hall.

Clashes erupted between left-wing activists and AfD delegates, while demonstrators burned tires and threw firecrackers at journalists and police.

"No rights for Nazi propaganda," cried one group of demonstrators.

No serious injuries were reported as a result of the clashes and despite the protest and arrests, the conference began as planned on Saturday morning.

Formed three years ago in opposition to eurozone bailouts, the AfD has morphed into an anti-immigration party over the past year: it has kicked out its founder and seized on a record influx of refugees to lure new voters and steal disaffected members of Chancellor AN-

gela Merkel's conservatives.

At the moment, the party is represented in half of Germany's state legislatures.

Polls put AfD at 20 percent in the east, trailing behind Merkel's Christian Democrats, which means that the party is challenging the Social Democrats. The AfD's popularity has climbed to 13 percent overall in Germany.

Around 2,400 members are expected at the weekend congress, which comes after AfD deputy leader and European parliament member Beatrix von Storch last week caused anger by labeling Islam a "political ideology that is incompatible with the German constitution".

Von Storch said the congress would call for a ban on Islamic symbols in Germany such as minarets on mosques, the call to prayer and full-face veils for women.

The party's other policies include a call to deport foreigners convicted of crimes and to reinstate military service for young men. In foreign affairs, the AfD wants to build a better relationship with Russia.

(Source: agencies)

China rejects Hong Kong port call by U.S. carrier: Pentagon

China has denied the United States aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis and accompanying naval vessels permission to make a port call in Hong Kong, a Pentagon spokesman said on Friday.

It was not immediately known what prompted the Chinese action, but it comes amid growing tension between the two countries over Beijing's moves to assert its claims to much of the South China Sea.

"We were recently informed that a request for a port visit by a U.S. carrier strike group, including the USS John C. Stennis and accompanying vessels, to Hong Kong was denied," Commander Bill Urban, a Pentagon spokesman, said.

"We have a long track record of successful port visits to Hong Kong, including with the current visit of the USS Blue Ridge, and we expect that will continue," he said.

It was the first time U.S. naval ships had been denied permission to make a Hong Kong port call since August 2014, Urban said.

(Source: Reuters)

which has been led by Prime Minister David Cameron, had hoped that support from by President Obama, during a visit to London last week, for Britain to stay in the EU would help their cause.

Obama stressed the importance for Washington of Britain remaining an influence in the bloc, but he also warned that the country would go "to the back of the queue" for trade talks with Washington if it left the EU.

ORB said 66 percent of respondents disagreed when asked if Obama's comments made them more likely to vote to stay in the EU compared with 23 percent who agreed.

A spokesman for ORB said the overall, unadjusted 50-50 percent split in voting intentions compared with a 51-49 percent advantage for "In" found in an online poll by the firm in March.

U.S. Defense Secretary Ashton Carter visited the Stennis on April 15 as it sailed off the Philippines near the disputed area where China has expanded islets and reefs into islands capable of supporting airfields and other installations.

During a preceding stop in Manila, Carter had emphasized that the United States would support the Philippines and other allies as they faced "coercion and intimidation."

The two countries also announced they have begun joint naval patrols in the South China Sea, and Carter said a contingent of 275 U.S. troops and five A-10 ground attack aircraft in the Philippines for an annual exercise would remain in the country until the end of the month.

China claims nearly all of the South China Sea, through which pass some of the world's most active shipping lanes. The Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan also have overlapping claims.

(Source: AFP)

California protesters surround Donald Trump rally

Protests have continued for a second day against United States Republican presidential hopeful Donald Trump in California.

On Friday, protesters tried to block the billionaire businessman from making a speech before the Republican Party Convention in the Hyatt Regency hotel in Burlingame.

They chanted obscenities and threw raw eggs at police but they were blocked by a line of police in riot gear.

Several physical altercations, including shoving, could be seen between protesters and police officers, who were using batons to push them back.

"He's not a uniter, he's a divider," one protester told Al Jazeera. "I think he should not run for president, he's not what America stands for."

Some protesters infiltrated the hotel building and hung a giant banner reading, "Stop Hate."

The Secret Service led Trump into the hotel through a rear entrance.

Burlingame Police said five people were arrested in the altercations.

"The protesters here are denouncing Trump as a racist," Al Jazeera's Rob Reynolds said, reporting from Burlingame. "They are denouncing him for his inflammatory comments about Mexican immigrants and his plan to bar all Muslims from entering the United States."

On stage, inside the hotel which was still surrounded by protesters, Trump joked about the protesters who



had tried to block his motorcade.

"That was not the easiest entrance I've ever made. My wife called and said there are helicopters following

you. And then we went under a fence and though a fence," he said.

"Oh boy, it felt like I was crossing the border actually."

A day earlier, police in riot gear and on horseback clashed with anti-Trump protesters and about 20 people were arrested.

About 20 people were arrested, said the Orange County Sheriff's Department.

California holds its primary on June 7, and polls show Trump far ahead of his rivals, Texas Senator Ted Cruz and Ohio Governor John Kasich.

"It probably will be the state that gets Trump either very, very near or over the top," Henry Brady, the dean of Goldman School of Public Policy, told Al Jazeera.

"So it's the place where everything will become absolutely crystal clear," he said.

Regardless of who prevails on the Republican side, California, the most populous U.S. state, leans leftward and seems certain to go Democratic in November's general election.

"This is a very Democratic state, Republicans have about a quarter of the political registration," Brady said, "So there's just not many republicans left in this state."

Front-running Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton is popular in California, leading rival Bernie Sanders by about 7 percentage points in recent polls.

No Republican has won California in the general election in 28 years.

(Source: agencies)

U.S. torpedoing the nuclear deal will reaffirm Iran's distrust

➔ In January, the United States also adopted new visa regulations requiring Europeans who visit Iran to attain a visa before entering the United States, creating another barrier to European trade with Iran. All of these measures have not just spurred frustration in Iran, but also in Europe.

"Europe is being taken hostage by American policy," declared Marietje Schaake, the vice president of the European Parliament's Delegation for Relations with the United States. "We negotiated the nuclear deal together, but now the U.S. is obstructing its execution."

With all of this said, there is still reason to hope that these hurdles will be overcome and Iran will reap the benefits it is due from sanctions relief. Secretary Kerry and Foreign Minister Zarif met twice last week to discuss how to resolve the problems with Iran receiving sanctions relief. Kerry said after his meeting with Zarif: "The United States is not standing in the way and will not stand in the way of busi-

ness that is permitted with Iran since the (nuclear deal) took effect."

He added: "We've lifted our nuclear-related sanctions as we committed to do and there are now opportunities for foreign banks to do business with Iran. Unfortunately, there seems to be some confusion among foreign banks and we want to try to clarify that as much as we can."

The Obama administration recognizing these problems and declaring it is willing to clarify what transactions foreign financial institutions can conduct with Iran

is a hopeful sign. The JCPOA was the first major agreement between Iran and the United States, and also involved the rest of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany. For it to be a step towards a more constructive relationship between Iran and the West, it is imperative that all sides faithfully implement their commitments.

Foreign Minister Zarif said in this regard recently: "As the Leader [Ayatollah Ali Khamenei] said last year, if the experience of the nuclear negotiations proves that the United States is chang-

ing its approach toward Iran — is basing its approach to Iran on mutual respect and interests — then there is a chance of change."

If the JCPOA collapses, not only would there be no chance for any compromise between Iran and the United States on any other issue, but Iran would also lose its faith in the UN Security Council. Unfortunately, there are powerful forces in U.S. politics that seek to increase U.S.-Iran enmity and revert Iran and the United States back onto the path to war. These special interest groups are doing everything in their power to destroy the landmark diplomatic agreement and have strong sway over Congress, which is pushing for a dozen new sanctions against Iran. The efforts of these groups, sadly, are done more at the behest of the Israeli and Saudi governments and done more for the purpose of obstructing President Obama's foreign policy goals than enhancing global peace and security.

JUMP

Germany mulls bolstering NATO in east

Germany says it is looking into the potential deployment of troops in Lithuania as means of reinforcing the eastern front of the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) military alliance.

"We are currently reviewing how we can continue our engagement and perhaps even bolster it... in order to ensure the security of all (NATO) states, particularly in the east," said German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Friday.

The comments came amid continued strain in relations between Russia and NATO, which have been at odds since Ukraine's Crimea region integrated into the Russian Federation following a referendum last March.

On April 1, 2014, the military alliance ended all practical cooperation with Russia over the ensuing crisis in Ukraine.

Last November, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said the alliance might station permanent military units in member states against what it calls threats from Russia.

His remarks signaled a transition from the policy the alliance has been maintaining vis-à-vis Moscow since 1997, when the two sides inked an agreement called the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation, and Security.

Under the deal, NATO agreed to refrain from any "additional permanent stationing of substantial combat forces" that might alarm the Kremlin.

Merkel, however, said, "I personally always stress that it is very important to us that we act within the framework of the NATO-Russia act."

The heightened tension between the two, billed by some as a resurgent Cold War, has seen NATO resorting to military buildup in Russia's backyard and the latter staging domestic military maneuvers and flying its aircraft close to US destroyers in the Baltic Sea.

The standoff has been exacerbated by Poland's recently asking for a permanent NATO presence on its soil, Sweden considering potential membership, and the alliance welcoming the prospect of accession by Finland.

Most recently, Russia's foreign minister said the NATO military alliance was moving closer to Russia's borders, warning that Moscow will take necessary measures to protect its security.

"NATO military infrastructure is inching closer and closer to Russia's borders. But when Russia takes action to ensure its security, we are told that Russia is engaging in dangerous maneuvers near NATO borders," Sergei Lavrov said in an interview with the Swedish newspaper Dagens Nyheter.

(Source: agencies)

Refugee crisis: When is a tragedy a massacre?

➔ Even the measures purportedly offered in a humanitarian spirit have a sting in their tail. After last year's drownings, the EU member-states agreed to triple funding for Operation Triton.

This was widely represented as a search-and-rescue mission. In fact, as the BBC made clear, Operation Triton is a maritime patrol whose goal is to deflect migrant boats, thus "stemming the flow of African migrants".

European leaders like to blame traffickers for the drownings at sea, and even threatened to "bomb" them last year. But they have themselves empowered the traffickers and created the conditions for catastrophes like this.

With illegal pushbacks, brutal detainment, and harassment at sea, the options for refugees are increasingly severe. They will be driven out if they arrive in Greece via the overland routes.

And so they risk sinking to their deaths in overpacked boats crossing from Libya to Italy, or from Morocco to Spain, while trying to evade Frontex patrols.

The numbers are not the issue. Political will is the issue. The EU is simply determined not to be a destination for refugees, and member-states are busy making political hay out of fearmongering.

The result is that the number of deaths at sea in the Mediterranean has been rising for years, while decreasing in other parts of the world.

■ Rising deaths

As the International Organization of Migration reported in 2014, the rising arc of deaths at sea is related to the ramping up of border controls. Citing Frontex figures, they show that as travel overland has declined in response to greater obstacles, the popularity of sea routes has increased.

Governments claim, in their defense, to have great difficulty in handling the number of refugees. This is no doubt a popular claim, in light of years of moral panics around immigration, national security and Islam. But it is totally unfounded.

In 2014, Sweden took the largest number of refugees relative to its population size, and it was still only 0.3 percent of its total population. Across the EU, the total number of irregular migrants varies between 0.38 percent and 0.77 percent of the population - and most of those arrive legally, by plane, and with a work visa.

The EU is obsessed with controlling clandestine migration, despite the fact that it is a small trickle relative to total migration. The numbers are not the issue. Political will is the issue. The EU is simply determined not to be a destination for refugees, and member states are busy making political hay out of fearmongering.

The 500 who drowned earlier this month can be added to a total of more than 22,000 migrants who died trying to get to Europe since 2000. They wanted to cross the border to save their lives. Instead, the border killed them. (Source: Al Jazeera)

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



Teheran Times / Designed by Seyed Rouhollah Mirmohammadi

Teacher's Day, observed in Iran on May 1, appreciates teachers for their endeavors and honors them for their huge contribution to the society by educating students. Congratulations to teachers on this day.

IN THE NEWS

69 injured in Qazvin-Karaj highway pile-up

SOCIETY TEHRAN — on Saturday, 13 cars got involved **d e s k** in a chain-reaction crash on Qazvin-Karaj highway, leaving 69 injured, Fars news agency reported.

At 1:37 a.m., 13 vehicles including 11 passenger cars, one bus, and one truck crashed into each other, said Mustafa Mortazavi, a spokesman for the Relief and Rescue Organization.

The vehicles involved in the multi-car collision were heading to Tehran, Mortazavi noted, adding, 13 of the injured were transferred to the nearest hospital and the rest received outpatient care.

LEARN ENGLISH

Planning a Children's Party

Sara: Come on! We need to buy all of the things we need for Gabriel's party before the store closes.

Paul: Are you sure we need a party? Maybe we can just have a cake and some party hats.

Sara: Are you kidding?! We are going to **pull out all the stops**. We'll have **streamers**, balloons, **noisemakers**, and **party favors**. This is going to be really fun.

Paul: I don't even know if he'd like all that. What are you doing?

Sara: I'm getting lots of **confetti** to throw when we sing "Happy Birthday."

Paul: The confetti is going to get all over the ice cream and the **icing** on the cake. And it'll be a **nightmare** to clean up.

Sara: Don't worry about the cleanup. I'll take care of that. Now, where are the **goodie bags**...

Paul: Are you sure all of this is necessary?

Sara: Of course, it is. Ooo...What do you think of hiring a clown and renting an **inflatable** castle for the party?

Paul: You do remember that Gabriel is **turning** one, don't you?

Sara: So?

...
It's just as I suspected. Some birthday parties aren't for the children. They're for the adults who never grew up!

(Source: eslopd.com)

■ Words & phrases

pull out all the stops: to do everything you possibly can to make something happen and succeed

streamer: a long narrow piece of colored paper, used for decoration on special occasions

noisemaker: a device for making a loud noise at a festivity or sports match

party favor: a small gift that people give to children at a party

confetti: small pieces of colored paper that you throw into the air over people who have just got married or at events such as parties, parades etc.

icing: a mixture made from very fine light sugar and liquid, used to cover cakes; frosting

nightmare: a very difficult, unpleasant, or frightening experience or situation

goodie bag: a bag containing candy, small toys, or other gifts given to party-goers or attendees of an event

inflatable: an inflatable object has to be filled with air before you can use it

turn: to become a particular age, or to reach a particular time

suspect: to think that something is probably true, especially something bad

QUIZ OF THE DAY

148) What does the idiom mean?

His eyes popped out of his head.

a) it was difficult to see

b) he saw something that was surprising

c) he needs new glasses

(Quiz No. 147 answer: a)

PHRASAL VERB

Sign over (to)

■ **Meaning:** transfer ownership of something

■ **For example:** He signed over the house to his two children.

Al Gore attacks CSIRO's climate cuts and praises Labor's proposals

Former U.S. Democratic vice-president says agency's decision will deeply affect the source of valuable research for the entire world

Al Gore has said the decision by Australia's science agency CSIRO to cut climate research should be "re-evaluated at the highest level", since they limit a source of critical information for the entire world as it attempts to solve the challenges posed by climate change.

The former U.S. Democratic vice-president also praised the government's support for renewable energy and the Labor party's recent climate change policy announcement.

The comments by Gore, a leading climate change campaigner, were made in a wide-ranging conversation in the latest edition of the Australian literary quarterly the Griffith Review, which has also been published online by Guardian Australia.

"In the face of this harsh new climate reality, there have been political forces in your country working to prevent Australia's ability to act as the global leader it once was in the effort to solve the climate crisis," he said, in conversation with Don Henry from the University of Melbourne, and former director of the Australian Conservation Foundation.

"The most recent example of this is the announcement of major cuts to Australia's CSIRO, a global leader and reference point for climate science. These cuts will deeply affect the source of valuable research for the entire world at a time when such information is critical to solving the challenge of our changing climate," he said. "They should be re-evaluated at the highest level."



These cuts will deeply affect the source of valuable research for the entire world at a time when such information is critical to solving the challenge of our changing climate," he said. "They should be re-evaluated at the highest level."

The comments follow remarks Gore made in February, shortly after the cuts were announced. "Further development of climate modelling and observations by CSIRO and colleague scientific organizations is essential to planning for climate mitigation and adaptation to

global warming," he said at the time. "This effort needs strengthening, not weakening, after the Paris Agreement in December."

Besides praising state governments and businesses that are driving investment in solar PV, he also singles out the Australian Labor party's recent climate policy announcement.

"These examples, along with the Labor party's pledge to adopt a 50% renewable energy target by 2030, show that there is a strong support and opportunity for climate action in this country."

In order to solve the challenge, Gore said the world needed "a highly functioning global ideology". He said capitalism needed to find a way to price environmental damage and democracy needed to be fixed after it was "hacked by large corporations and special interests," which meant it was "dominated by the unchecked influence of money in politics".

But Gore said there was hope all this could be achieved. Previous estimates of how quickly renewable energy would be adopted have regularly been far exceeded, and the agreement in Paris sent a signal around the world that "we can and we will solve the climate crisis," he said.

(Source: The Guardian)

60,000-pound whale carcass removed from California beach

It literally was a whale of a job. Crews on Friday finished removing the 60,000-ton carcass of a rotting whale from a Southern California beach.

A contractor working for the state parks department spent two days using an excavator to cut up the 40-foot whale, which was hauled off to a San Diego County landfill.

The end of the two-day, \$30,000 project included skimming the top layer of sand off the Lower Trestles, a surfing beach near San Clemente where the whale washed ashore on Sunday.

That was to eliminate any sand contaminated by the whale's body fluids.

"As they started to dismember the carcass, they said it was messy but it wasn't as messy as it could have been," Rich Haydon, area state parks superintendent, told the Orange County Register.



"It's to be expected there will be a little bit of a smell down there for a while," he said, "but I think we dodged a bullet."

The whale was a tourist attraction for a few days. Despite an overpowering stench, some people skipped work or school to snap photos with the towering carcass. However, few people were on hand Friday for the finish.

Nick Lind of Newport Beach and Matthew Howell of San Clemente were surfing as the last remnants of the whale were being removed.

"It did have an interesting stench to it, sort of like a rotten baked potato," Lind said. "It was overpowering when we were near shore."

Lind said he wasn't worried about sharks that might have been attracted by the whale's remains.

(Source: WRAL.com)

IN FOCUS 📹 International Space Station/ Tim Kopra



NASA astronaut Tim Kopra aboard International Space Station has taken a picture from Tehran at night. He has uploaded the picture on his twitter account captioned 'good night Tehran'.

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ↔ ع

Iranian, Korean firms ink MOU on traditional medicine

Iranian Hekmat Pajouhan Company and South Korean ViroMed Company inked a memorandum of understanding to boost cooperation on traditional medicine, Tasnim news agency reported.

Iran's government fully supports traditional medicine and aims to commercialize it, said Mahmoud Khodadoust, director general for Islamic-traditional medicine office of the Health Ministry during a meeting with Professor Kim Sun-Young of Seoul National University and the founding CEO of ViroMed.

Professor Kim also delivered a speech on botanical products and their functions with the universities chairmen in attendance.

Hekmat Pajouhan Company is a knowledge-based firm affiliated with Tehran University of Medical Sciences.

امضای تفاهم‌نامه همکاری بین دو شرکت ایرانی و کره جنوبی در حوزه طب سنتی

به گزارش خبرگزاری تسنیم شرکت ایرانی حکمت‌پژوهان و شرکت کره‌ای وایرومد (Viomed) برای افزایش همکاری‌ها در زمینه‌ی طب سنتی تفاهم‌نامه‌ای را امضا کردند.

محمود خدادوست — مدیرکل دفتر طب سنتی ایرانی — اسلامی وزارت بهداشت در دیدار پروفسور سانیاگ

کیم استاد دانشگاه ملی سئول و مؤسس شرکت Viomed به تبیین حمایت صد در صدی دولت جمهوری

اسلامی از طب سنتی ایرانی و تجاری‌سازی آن پرداخت.

همچنین پروفسور کیم در حضور رؤسای دانشکده‌ها به ایراد سخنرانی در زمینه محصولات گیاهی پرداخت.

شرکت حکمت‌پژوهان از شرکت‌های دانش‌بنیان وابسته به دانشگاه علوم پزشکی می‌باشد.

Veisi linked with Sepahan job - report

SPORTS Esteghlal Khuzestan head coach Abdollah Veisi has been linked with Sepahan job according to the local media.

Veisi who has made Esteghlal Khuzestan to a title contender this season is currently at the center of attention as big teams have approached him.

The 45-year old coach was almost relegated last season finishing in 14th place but he made his team a big surprise this season who is currently in second place two weeks before the end of the season.

Veisi believes his priority is staying at Esteghlal Khuzestan but if the club doesn't give him a decent transfer budget he would leave.

"Sepahan approached me two month ago but my priority is Esteghlal Khuzestan. If we are going to have a strong next season and attend at the AFC Asian Champions League we would need a strong squad and a decent transfer budget otherwise I won't stay," Veisi said.

Reigning champion Sepahan is struggling this season and has appointed its second coach recently. They are going to hire Veisi to return to the glory days.



Iran runner-up at Asian Weightlifting Championships



SPORTS Iran finished in second place in 46th edition of Senior Men's Asian Weightlifting Championships in Tashkent, Uzbekistan on Saturday.

The Iranian team claimed one gold, two silver medals and one bronze in the event.

Mohammad Reza Barari snatched a gold medal in the 105kg with a total of 401kg.

Iran's Ayoub Mousavi in the 85kg and Ali Hashemi in the 94kg took two silver medals in the event, hoisting a total of 356kg and

374kg respectively.

Bahador Molaei also seized a bronze medal in the +105kg after lifting a total of 427kg.

Iran took part in the competition with eight lifters.

China won the title with 506.7 points, followed by Iran (500.8) and Uzbekistan (463.8).

The tournament brought a total of 161 lifters from 30 countries together in Tashkent, Uzbekistan and served as a qualification event for the Olympics.

Iranian weightlifter Barari dreams of winning Olympic gold



SPORTS Iranian heavy-weight weightlifter Mohammad Reza Barari is dreaming of winning Olympic gold medal.

Barari claimed a gold at the 2016 Asian Weightlifting Championships on Saturday.

In the 105kg weight category, Barari claimed a gold medal with a total of 401kg.

"I am back after many years and

could snatch a gold medal in the Asian championships. I could participate in the IWF Houston World Weightlifting Championships 2015 but was not invited to the team due to some reasons," Barari said.

"I am so happy since I made the Iranian people happy and I want to make them happy once again this time in the Rio 2016 Olympic Games," he added.

Iranians will be ready for Turin OQT

TEHRAN(2016FIBAOlympicQualifyingTournaments)—There is an attitude Iran's veteran players share that allowed them to reach the top in Asia and compete at Olympics and FIBA Basketball World Cups.

Coach Dirk Bauermann recognized it immediately after taking the helm last year, the qualities that made the difference for Iran in winning three of four FIBA Asia Championships from 2007 through 2013. He shared his thoughts with FIBA.

Well first of all, they all have the heart of a lion - each and every one of them. They all play to win and they're willing to rip their hearts off their chest, throw it on the floor and compete for their country, and I think that's a real important foundation and basis for what we do. And then secondly, all of them have a very high basketball IQ, good work ethic, and they're very coachable. - Bauermann

Such qualities are what every coach wants to see in his players. They were evident in 2015 as Iran claimed a spot in the FIBA Olympic Qualifying Tournament (OQT) in Italy.



Bauermann's squad sealed an OQT place when they made it to the Semi-Finals of the FIBA Asia Championship in China. They signed off from the tournament with a victory over Japan in the battle for third place.

It's those very characteristics that Bauermann spoke of that will make Iran a dangerous team to face in Turin, with

the OQT being staged 4-9 July. They will go up against Greece, who are No. 10 in the FIBA World Ranking, and Mexico, who are No. 19. Iran are No. 17.

A top-two finish would put Iran into a Semi-Final against Italy, Croatia or Tunisia at the OQT. The winners of the Semi-Finals will square off with a spot in the Rio de Janeiro Games at stake.

Iran know at least a couple of their warm-up games will be good tune-ups for Turin as they will be facing teams that are playing in other OQTs. They will take on New Zealand, who are in the Manila OQT, and Latvia, who are playing in the Belgrade OQT, in late June.

In remarks carried by the Tasmin News Agency this week, Bauermann shared his thoughts on how players and teams best give themselves a chance to be winners.

"There is no secret to success," he said. "You have to work harder than others. You have to do your best."

(Source: FIBA)

Iran's compound men wins Archery World Cup

Iran's compound men claimed the title of the Archery World Cup after defeating USA in the final match in Shanghai, China on Saturday.

The Iranian team consists of Esmaeil Ebadi, Majid Gheidi and Omid Taheri defeated the USA trio of Steve Anderson, Alex Wifler and Reo Wilde 229-228.

Iran upset The Netherlands in a shoot-off and France by one point to make the final against USA.

"We want to stay on top for a long time," said Taheri. "We have a great relationship, the three of us, and it's a team that thinks it can win, all the time, every time."



In the third-placed match, Australia defeated France.

(Source: Tasnim)

Iran loses to India at AFC U-14 Girls' Championship

SPORTS Iran failed to advance to the AFC U-14 Girls' Regional Championship final, losing to India 4-3 On Saturday.

Maral Torkaman (22'), Maryam Mohammadi (25'), Roghayeh Jalal Nasab (32') scored for Iran and Susmita Tanty (43', 57') and Sunita Munda (9', 11') were on target for India.

Iran had already defeated Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Bhutan in the competition.

Reigning champion Bangladesh also thrashed Tajikistan 9-0 in another semis. Iran will play host Tajikistan on Sun-



day in the 3rd/4th placing match while India and Bangladesh face in the final.

Hummels to Bayern is logical, he can win trophies there - Hitzfeld

Former Bayern Munich boss Ottmar Hitzfeld says Mats Hummels would be making the correct decision should he leave Borussia Dortmund for the Allianz Arena.

Dortmund announced this week that the Germany international has informed the club that he wants to leave at the end of the season in order to join the reigning Bundesliga champions.

Hitzfeld - who delivered league and Champions League success to both Bayern and Dortmund during a stellar coach-

ing career - believes Hummels will give himself the best chance of winning trophies by moving to the Allianz Arena.

"This would be a logical transfer - especially for Mats and Bayern. It would be a great acquisition for those in Munich," he told RND.

"He can win trophies consistently, not only the Bundesliga, but he'll have the chance to get the Champions League every year.

"Bayern would be attractive for Mats because he can play alongside Jerome Boateng and Manuel Neuer in in

goal behind them."

Dortmund have watched Mario Gotze and Robert Lewandowski join Bayern in the last three years and Hitzfeld accepts it will be difficult for Thomas Tuchel's side to watch another star join their rivals.

"For BVB, it's extremely bitter, because another top performer is leaving the team," he said. "Hummels was not simply a captain, he's a leader, a role model, the head of the team."

(Source: Goal)

PAPER ROUND

Jose Mourinho agrees Manchester United deal, Daniel Sturridge won't commit to Liverpool

Jose Mourinho will take over at Manchester United and be given a teenage Brazilian striker, and Daniel Sturridge could leave Liverpool.

■ **Daniel Sturridge refuses to commit his future to Liverpool**

The Daily Mirror's interview with Daniel Sturridge hints that the player will move on sooner rather than later from Anfield. Sturridge says that any player planning on staying at a club for many years is 'deluded' because teams look to change their squad every year. Sturridge also says that he wants to play every minute of every match, which might just be an admission that he has struggled for consistent fitness over his career, but could also be seen as a veiled complaint over Jurgen Klopp's willingness to rest the striker.

Paper Round's view: Sturridge and Klopp have had an odd relationship, with the German manager at times seemingly hugely frustrated with Sturridge's personality and readiness to play. Given Klopp's approach can't carry any passengers, it would be no surprise if one of the areas he chose to refresh in the summer was the striker position, and that he would get rid of Sturridge and Christian Benteke for his kind of players. Sturridge appears open to the idea of moving on at some point, so realistically the only question here is who would take a risk on a player like Sturridge.

■ **Manchester United look to Jesus to improve their strikeforce**

The Sun think that United are preparing to add to their attack this summer. It seems that employing Marouane Fellaini and Wayne Rooney as their first and second choice strikers has not been Louis van Gaal's finest plan in his career, as Marcus Rashford and Anthony Martial have shown themselves to be far better. However, Two strikers are not enough for a club, and so they have looked to Brazil, where Gabriel Jesus has emerged at Palmeiras.

Gabriel has an especially lowered released clause for the biggest clubs in the world, and Manchester United, meaning they could get him for £18.8 million.

Paper Round's view: United had an extensive South American scouting operation under Alex Ferguson, which is how they ended up with the Da Silva twins, Rodrigo Possebon and Angelo Henriquez. It's not clear if that is still working, but it is obvious that they are planning to get transfer business done regardless of who is manager next season. A striker is needed, and at a young age and cheap price, would provide the profit potential that the Glazers love.

■ **Pep Guardiola wants West Ham's Reece Oxford**

Pep Guardiola is not a daft man, which is why he wants to replace many of the defenders at his disposal at Manchester City. Apart from Vincent Kompany, when fit, none of the defenders can make a compelling case to be kept at the club. With Fernando and Fabian Delph underwhelming fans, more steel is needed in midfield, especially if Yaya Toure moves on in the summer. According to the Daily Mail, Guardiola has turned to Reece Oxford, the West Ham teenager, to provide cover in defence.

Paper Round's view: Oxford is one of the most promising young England players at the moment, and is so young that he would unlikely cost a fortune. Playing in an unglamorous position, even if he is still very versatile, would further dent any asking price. Oxford would have to weigh up the chances he would get under Slaven Bilic, the chance to work with Guardiola, and the poor track record of young players coming through at the Etihad.

■ **Jose Mourinho has an agreement to take over at Old Trafford**

Rumours persist that there is some form of agreement between Jose Mourinho and Manchester United, and the Telegraph believe it too. Mourinho is apparently in line to take over in the summer, but United are wary of announcing anything official unless it unduly affects on-pitch results.

Paper Round's view: It is odd to consider that Manchester United's board think that performances could actually get worse than they already have been under Van Gaal.

(Source: Eurosport)

Chinese clubs warned off 'key player' Willian

Guus Hiddink expects Willian to stay at Chelsea as a "key player" amid speculation he could be the subject of a £50 million bid from Guangzhou Evergrande.

The Chinese club has already splashed out on Brazil midfielder Paulinho and Colombia striker Jackson Martinez this year.

Incoming boss Antonio Conte will make decisions on the futures of a number of players when he takes over after Euro 2016 but Hiddink believes Willian will continue to be one of the Blues' most important players.

"He is doing a very good job in a difficult year with his natural ability, he is working very hard to defend and sacrifice himself and he has the attitude to do so," Hiddink told reporters.

"That's why I think he is already and can be in the future a key player for this club."

Chelsea sold Ramires to Jiangsu Suning in January for £25m and the likes of Diego Costa, Jon Obi Mikel and Oscar have all been linked with Chinese clubs in recent months as the Asian league looks to exert its financial muscle.

"I've known Willian for many years already before my Chelsea time," Hiddink added. "As a person, he is a very down to earth and nice person, although it is not that important for top performances."

(Source: Goal)



Poem of the day

Balm to mine eyes the dust, my head I bow
Upon thy stair.
Where shall I go, where from thy presence? thou
Art everywhere.

Prayer Times

Noon:13:01 Evening: 20:11 Dawn: 4:38 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:11 (tomorrow)

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■ Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603
■ www.eshtarak.ir Distributor: Padideh Novin Co. Tel: 88911433
■ Webmaster: webmaster@tehrantimes.com
■ Printed at: Kayhan - ISSN: 1017-94

NEWS IN BRIEF



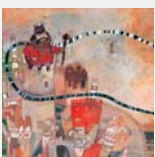
Icelandic choreographer Bárá Sigfúsdóttir to hold workshops in Tehran

T A R T TEHRAN — Icelandic theater expert and choreographer Bárá Sigfúsdóttir is scheduled to hold workshops on the sidelines of the 19th International Iranian Festival of University Theater.

Theater movement techniques are the focus of the workshops, which will held on May 16 to 18.

Sigfúsdóttir will also stage her highly-acclaimed play "The Lover" at the festival on May 19. The play made in collaboration with artist Noémie Goudal is about the complex relationship between humans and nature.

The festival, which is organized by the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology every year, will be held in Tehran from May 15 to 29.



Iranian illustrator receives honorable mention at Sharjah festival

T A R T TEHRAN — Iranian illustrator Fereshteh Najafi has received an honorable mention at the 8th Sharjah Children's Reading Festival (SCRF), which came to an end yesterday.

She participated in the festival with her works for "Golabetoon and the White Horse" by children's book writers Fatemeh Kavandi and Mahmudreza Bahmandpur.

Over 1300 publications from 46 countries were put on display at the Sharjah Exhibition for Children's Book Illustrations that was part of the 11-day festival.



"Survival" named best experimental film at Swedish festival

T A R T TEHRAN — Iranian director Masud Hatami's short film "Survival" received the award for best experimental film at the Stockholm Experimental and Animation Film Festival, which was held in the Swedish capital on April 24.

Produced by the Iranian Youth Cinema Society (IYCS), the film is about the concepts of empathy and human dignity.

The award for best animated film went to Morgan Miller from the U.S. for "There's Too Many of These Crows".

Iranian projects win Architizer A+Awards

T A R T TEHRAN — Four Iranian architectural projects are among the winners at the Fourth Annual Architizer A+Awards.

Polour Rock Gym, a sports center under construction located near Tehran, won the public and jury awards in the Unbuilt Sports & Recreation category, the organizers announced on April 12.

The center has been designed by Lida Almasian and Shahin Heidari at New Wave Architecture.

Termeh Office, a retail building designed by Ahmad Bat'hai and Farshad Mehdizadeh in Hamedan, was the jury winner in the category of Low Rise Commercial Office (1-4 Floors).

Kurosh Rafiei's design for the Sohanak Swimming Pool in Tehran in the Recreation Centers category was the public winner.

Afsharian's House in Kermanshah was named public winner in the Low Rise Multi Unit Housing (1-4 Floors) category.

The structure has been designed at the ReNa Design institute.

This year, the A+Awards received thousands of entries from more than 95 countries. Popular choice winners were determined by the more than 400,000 public votes cast from more than 100 countries and territories.

Over 400 luminaries from the worlds of architecture, art and design will gather for the A+ Awards gala on May 12 at Highline Stages in New York City.

"The A+ gala is more than just a party. It represents a moment for us to stand up and champion our art, recognizing the transformational role that architecture plays in our lives," said Architizer CEO Marc Kushner.

Architizer is the world's largest database of architecture online. With more than 40,000 architecture firms that have uploaded 100,000+ buildings, Architizer is the premier online destination for architects and architecture fans.



Termeh Office was the jury winner in the category of Low Rise Commercial Office (1-4 Floors) at the Fourth Annual Architizer A+Awards.

Sculptor Parviz Tanavoli's students display works

T A R T TEHRAN — An exhibition of sculptures by students of the internationally-acclaimed sculptor Parviz Tanavoli, famous for his sculptures of "Heech", opened in Tehran's Niavaran Cultural Center on Friday.

Tanavoli, who was attending the opening ceremony, expressed his happiness over seeing works by his students from the Mah-e Mehr Art Institute, the center announced in a press release published on Saturday.

"I saw very good works being displayed today. Considering the thoughts, the concepts and the ide-



Sculptor Parviz Tanavoli (R) and Deputy Culture Minister for Artistic Affairs Ali Moradkhani pose during an exhibition of his students at Tehran's Niavaran Cultural Center on April 29, 2016. (Honaronline/Hassan Motahhari)

as, I believe this exhibit is of high standards and the artists have made their best efforts," Tanavoli said.

He said that his students have consulted with him in creating their works, adding that he sees a bright future for the art of sculpture in the country.

Deputy Culture Minister for Artistic Affairs Ali Moradkhani also visited the exhibit and said that Tanavoli's "Heech" has turned into an international image, having brought a great honor for the country.

Yekta Darvish, Leili Taheri, Masih Ahmadi and Mar-yam Ebtekar are among the students whose works will be on display for ten days.

PICTURE OF THE DAY Honaronline/Alireza Farahani



Men converse at an exhibition of paintings from Masud Keshmiri's series "Silent Beings" at Saleh Gallery in Tehran on April 29, 2016. The showcase will run until May 18 at the gallery located at 143 Karim Khan Zand Ave.

Persian Gulf Encyclopedia introduced in Tehran

T A R T TEHRAN — The Persian Gulf Encyclopedia, a two-volume book containing over 700 articles, was introduced during a ceremony at the Iran Encyclopedia Compiling Foundation (IECF) on Saturday.

The articles include documents and agreements about the Persian Gulf by national and international organizations, world tourists, as well as cultural and political figures.

A number of maps, images and diagrams are also included in the books, the foundation has announced on its website.

The Minister of Science, Research and Technology, Mohammad Farhadi, who was attending the unveiling ceremony, praised the efforts made by scholars of the foundation in compiling the encyclopedia.

"The Persian Gulf is one of the major gulfs in the world which is of great strategic importance, and also enjoys a significant historical position for Iran," Farhadi said.

He added that there have been attempts by the regional countries to distort the Persian Gulf's name; however, there are great number of documents to prove the official name of the Persian Gulf.

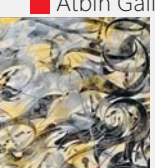
WHAT'S IN ART GALLERIES

Painting



A painting collection by Alemeh Bagerian is on display in an exhibition at Seyhun Gallery.

The exhibit named "War, Peace, Love" runs until May at the gallery, which can be found at No. 11, 4th Alley, Vozara St.



Atbin Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Mani Mehrzad.

The showcase entitled "The Lost Riders" will be running until May 10 at the gallery located at 42 Khakzad Alley, Parkway Intersection, off Vali-e Asr Ave.



An exhibition of paintings by Amir Farhad is currently underway at Homa Gallery.

The exhibit runs until May 10 at the gallery located at No. 8, 4th Gharbi Alley, Sanaii St., and Karim Khan Blvd.

Multimedia



Performance art by Hamed Sahihi is on display in an exhibition at Tarrahan-e Azad Gallery.

The exhibit entitled "Phobophobia" will be running until May 17 at the gallery that can be found at 41 Salmas Square, off Fatemi St.

Photo



Amir Musavi's latest collection containing minimal photos of walls and bridges is being shown in an exhibition at Aran Gallery.

The exhibit named "Edge" runs until May 4 at the gallery located at 12 Dey Alley, North Kheradmand St., off Karimkhan Ave.

Walt Disney Family Museum showcases Pinocchio

NEW YORK (Euronews) — Pinocchio is one of our best-loved fairy tales, and now Walt Disney is ensuring its incarnation of the wooden hero gets a never-before-seen exhibition at the mighty mouse's Family Museum.

Produced at the end of the Depression, the feature-length "Pinocchio" was considered a masterpiece when it opened in 1940, becoming the first animated feature to win an Academy Award.

In the decade from the mid-1930s, besides "Snow White" and "Pinocchio", the Walt Disney Studios also created "Fantasia" (1940),

"Dumbo" (1941), and "Bambi" (1942). These and all Disney films as well as Disney's life and career are documented in detail at the museum.

Objects in the show include original hand-drawn artwork, character model sheets, cels, maquettes, paintings, conceptual artwork, artifacts, flipbooks, and film clips.

"It's a pretty spectacular story. In 1940 the New York Times called Pinocchio the best film that Walt Disney had ever made. So therefore it was the best animation ever created. You'll see remarkable works of art that have sustained the test of time. They're

approaching eighty years old," says the Director of Collections Michael Labrie.

The comprehensive exhibit allows visitors to discover the artistic process and step behind the scenes to explore how one of the most influential animated films in history was produced.

The show will contain more than 300 objects, from original hand-drawn artwork to three dimensional models, and showcases the intricate, labor-intensive process of traditional pre-digital animation.

"The whale is actually a statue made out of plasticine, which is a non-drying clay. It

was used by the animators when they were creating and doing character development for the drawings. The animators actually used the sculptures to move around and get different angles as they studied the characters," says Art Conservator Tonja Morris.

The story of a puppet turning into a real boy whose nose grows when he tells a lie continues to resonate with children of all ages today.

There are a dozen films and TV series about Carlo Collodi's 19th century Italian creation beyond Disney's, including Italian and Korean versions.

Filmmaker Coppola cements legacy

NEW YORK (Reuters) — Veteran filmmaker Francis Ford Coppola left a permanent mark on Hollywood on Friday, after his hands and feet were imprinted in cement to be displayed at the landmark TLC Chinese Theatre.

The ceremony honored the 77-year-old Oscar-winning director's 50-year career, highlighted by films such as

"The Godfather" trilogy and "Apocalypse Now" and five Oscar wins. It took place during Turner Classic Movies' annual Classic Film Festival in Hollywood, which will run through Sunday, where Coppola's films will be played.

"Maybe 40 years ago people might not have appreciated a film like 'Apocalypse Now', which was kind of unu-

sual to say the least," Coppola told Reuters about receiving the honor after so many years in the industry.

"If you're looking as an artist for some type of assurance that what you are doing is OK or going in the right direction then I think you have to wait for the judgment of time before you know".