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Iran volleyball team beats Japan at WOQT

11

Zanganeh: Iran's oil export rise has no negative effect on market

Iran's doubling of oil exports has had no negative effect on the market, the country's oil minister said on Wednesday before flying to Vienna to attend an OPEC meeting, the ministry's news agency Shana reported.

"Iran's oil exports have been doubled, in between OPEC's 168th and 169th meetings. This increase has had no negative effect on the market and has been absorbed in the market," Bijan Namdar Zanganeh was quoted as saying.

Iran says will not commit to any oil output freeze

Iran will not commit to any oil output freeze, the country's representative to the OPEC said on Wednesday a day ahead of the group's meeting in Vienna, adding that output rationing could be discussed only when the market had been stabilized.

"Iran supports OPEC's efforts to bring stability to the market with fair and logical prices, but it will not commit to any output freeze," Mehdi Asali was quoted as saying by Iranian oil ministry news agency Shana.

"The issue of output rationing can be discussed after the market stabilizes," Asali said.

(Source: Reuters)

Zarif calls Iran a safe place for investment



POLITICAL TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Wednesday that Iran is a safe place for investment.

"I encourage all to cooperate with Iran, because you will not find a safer place than Iran and the reason behind this safety is trust on people not military power," he said during an Iran-Sweden joint economic committee in Stockholm.

He said that attendance of the Iranian and Swedish private sectors in the meeting indicates economic capacities in the two countries.

The chief diplomat also said Iran has fulfilled its commitments based on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action which was reached in July 2015 and implemented in January 2016.

The Iranian foreign minister also met with Swedish Minister of Enterprise Mikael Damberg on Wednesday.

Damberg and Zarif expressed hope that the two countries' relationship would be expanded in the post-JCPOA atmosphere. Zarif also help a separate meeting with Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on Wednesday. The prime minister said he is planning to pay a visit to Iran. Zarif has started a tour of Europe which has for taken him to Poland, Finland, and Sweden. The last leg of Zarif is Latvia.

Foreign Minister Zarif is heading a 60-member business delegation to these countries.

'MOU on political consultation'

Zarif and his Swedish counterpart Margot Wallstrom also signed a memorandum of understanding on periodic political consultations between the two countries' foreign ministries.

Zarif also described Iranians residing in Sweden as cultural links between the two nations. For her part, Wallstrom congratulated Iran for clinching a win-win nuclear deal with world powers.

Nation is loyal to goals of revolution: Rouhani

POLITICAL TEHRAN — President Hassan Rouhani told a cabinet meeting on Wednesday that the goals set by Imam Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic, is strongly and perfectly followed by his

successor Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

"Today the path of Imam Khomeini is pursued by his competent successor very well in the country, region and the world," the president remarked.

The remarks by Rouhani came as the Islamic

Republic on Friday will mark the memory of Imam Khomeini who died on June 3, 1989.

"Our people learned very well from the Imam the lesson of resistance" in guarding the "independence and dignity" of the country, the president noted. → 2



Minister unveils indigenous defense tech

See page 2

Iranians set to mark departure of Imam Khomeini

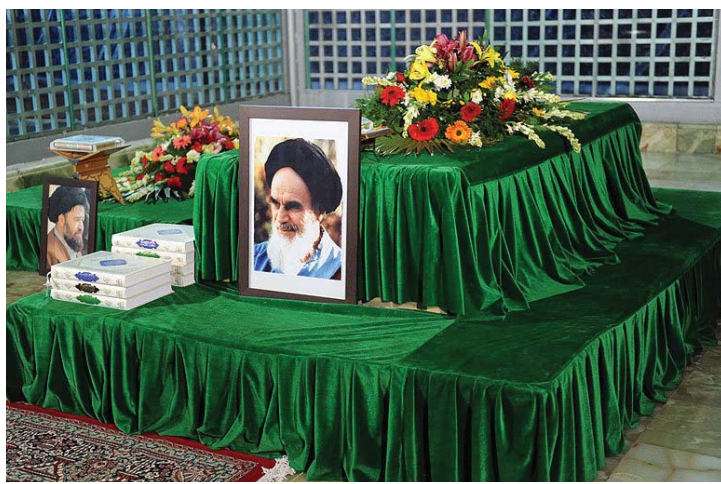
SOCIETY TEHRAN — Iranians are set to mark the death anniversary of Imam Khomeini, with the mourning starting late on Thursday and lasts until Friday.

The mourning for Imam Khomeini will start late on Thursday and President Rouhani will give a speech in the shrine on Thursday.

Later on Friday Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei will address the nation at the shrine.

Like past years, people from across Iran, lovers from abroad, foreign ambassadors in Tehran, and many others will attend the event.

The occasion will be observed in the same manner around the



country. The Iranian embassies around the world will also hold

ceremonies to mark the memory of Imam Khomeini who died on

June 3, 1989.

Other ceremonies are also being held in relation to the occasion, including a conference entitled "Imam Khomeini: Dialogue in Political Islam the Contemporary World" which was held on Wednesday, where scholars exchanged views.

Some 25,000 police forces have been mobilized to secure the ceremony, Police Chief Hossein Ashtari announced on Tuesday. According to Ashtari the forces went on standby on Wednesday and will remain so until Saturday.

Ashtari predicted that 20,000 buses and 7,000 cars from across Iran will arrive in Tehran for the ceremony.

Armenia, Iran soon to abolish visas

Armenia and Iran plan to sign an agreement on abolishing visas. A corresponding draft agreement is included in the agenda of a cabinet meeting to be held on June 2, Novosti Armenia reports.

The agreement is aimed at the further development of relations between the two countries, strengthening mutually beneficial economic, trade and other ties, as well as the regulation of mutual visits of citizens of both states.

According to the document, Armenian and Iranian citizens may stay without visas on the territory of the other party for up to 90 days in any half year



period. Relevant authorities of both states can extend the period of the stay.

Also, the agreement provides a list of documents allowing to enter the territory of a neighboring country without a visa.

(Source: panarmenian.ne)

Indian €6b oil payment backlog to Iran to be cleared soon: official

ISTANBUL (Reuters) — Indian oil refiners will clear around 6 billion euros (\$6.7 billion) of outstanding debt to Iran through Turkey's Halkbank within a short period, a senior Iranian economy official said on Wednesday.

India is one of the biggest buyers of Iranian crude and built up a payments backlog when Iran was under Western sanctions, with its refiners owing about \$6.5 billion to Iran. They cleared around \$770 million in euros through Halkbank to the National Iranian Oil Co. (NIOC) earlier in May.

"As per the instructions of the Central Bank of Iran, the



local banks in India will transfer the money to Halkbank," Sadeq Akbari, the general director for foreign economic relations at Organization for Investment, Economic and Technical Assistance of Iran, told reporters at a conference in Istanbul.

Festival of Iranian films underway in Paris

ART TEHRAN — The 4th Iranian Film Festival opened at Arthouse theatre Le Nouvel Odeon in Paris on Wednesday.

A large number of latest movies of Iranian cinema are scheduled to be screened during the weeklong event.

Asghar Farhai's acclaimed film "The Salesman", which won the best screenplay award and the Palme d'Or for best actor by Shahab Hosseini at the 69th Cannes Film Festival this year, will be screened.



A poster for the 4th Iranian Film Festival in Paris

Among the news films also are "Inversion" by Behnam Behzadi, "Risk of Acid Rain" by Behtash Sanaei, and "Wednesday, May 9" by Vahid Jalilvand.

The festival is also planned to review a lineup of Iranian films, which have been produced over the past three decades. "The Tenants" by Dariush Mehrjui, "Lizard" by Kamal Tabrizi, "Ceasefire" by Tahmineh Milani and "Tambourine" by Parisa Bakhtavar are the highlights of the lineup.

Iran inks \$1.2b economic co-op documents with Poland, Finland

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Head of Iran's Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture Mohsen Jalalpour announced that \$1.2 billion worth of economic cooperation documents was signed during the visit of Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad-Javad Zarif to the European countries.

"Some of the documents are in the form of memorandum of understanding, and some in the form of contract," IRNA quoted Jalalpour as saying on Wednesday.

The Iranian economic delegation accompanying Zarif in his trip signed a total number of 50 documents, 30 of which were done with Poland's economic actors and 20 documents with Finnish business owners.

The official declared the value of the contracts signed in Poland to be \$700 million, of which \$240 million is allocated to projects in power plants, \$200 million in fisheries and the rest will be spent on various spheres.

"The value of signed documents in Finland is estimated at \$500 million in sectors such as industry, machinery as well as information and communications technology (ICT)," he added. → 4



PERSPECTIVE

By Harun Yahya
political expert

Winds of change in Turkey

A new dawn has arrived for the AK Party with the handover of duties from Ahmet Davutoglu to Binali Yildirim. According to Yildirim's words, this new era will be a period of change vis-a-vis urbanization, globalization, innovation and improvement in the country's infrastructure, economy, trade and foreign relations. Our new PM Yildirim has been recorded as a man of action during his twelve years of power as a minister of transport and communications. Individually he is very hard working and a well-adjusted team player; he is a man of goals and projects making sure that they are completed timely, and he is also very well-known known for his witty remarks. One of his important characteristics is that he is calm and cool while executing very large projects. It is a specific trait that has attained him notoriety amongst his colleagues and ministers. Some of the projects he completed include:

- 17,500-kilometer long dual carriageway between the years 2003-2013
- In 2002, the number of 26 active airports increased to 55
- Marmaray project that combines Asia and Europe by undersea rail tunnel under the Bosphorus strait
- 3rd Bosphorus Bridge named "Yavuz Sultan Selim" in Istanbul combining Asia to Europe
- Istanbul-Izmir highway and Osman Gazi Bridge (aka Izmit Bay Bridge), it will be the fourth-longest suspension bridge of the world by the length of its central span
- Istanbul's 3rd airport which will be one of the greatest in the world
- Candarli Port, one of the biggest container ports in Europe
- 1,213 kilometer long high speed railway construction, renewal of the 9,350 kilometer long conventional railway
- Turkey's 15% growth in aviation industry while the global growth is only 5%

→ 9

MEDIA MONITOR



Iran unveils indigenous defense tech

TEHRAN — Iran has unveiled three homemade defense technologies, including a GPS system, in a ceremony attended by the defense minister.

Hossein Dehqan visited the Malek-Ashtar University of Technology in Tehran, where the advancements were showcased, Press TV reported on Wednesday.

They comprised a one-megawatt local positioning system (LPS) transmitter which Dehqan said would render the defense forces independent of the global positioning system (GPS).

The minister said the LPS apparatus can be availed of when the GPS proves inaccessible during critical conditions or does not provide the desired precision.



Islamic world in need of dialogue: Hassan Khomeini

TEHRAN — “Today we are in need of some dialogue accepted by the thinkers of the Islamic world so that it would bring unity to the Islamic society,” said Hassan Khomeini on Wednesday while addressing a conference on “Imam Khomeini: Dialogue in Political Islam the Contemporary World”.

“The Islamic Republic has the potential to be accepted as the dominant dialogue and the savior thinking in the Islamic world,” he stated, ISNA reported. Elsewhere in his remarks, he underlined that terrorism has never had a place in the Islamic Republic of Iran’s logic.



Official urges Iranians not to go to Hajj from a third country

TEHRAN — The head of Iran’s Hajj and Pilgrimage Organization has called on the country’s nationals to avoid making pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia from a third country due to the anti-Iran psychological atmosphere created by Riyadh.

Speaking to the Tasnim news agency on Wednesday, Saeed Ohadi pointed to his recent talks with Saudi Hajj officials, saying in the second round of the negotiations Saudis followed the same “improper” approach they had adopted toward the issue of Hajj pilgrimage in the first round.

Regarding this year’s Hajj, Saudi authorities’ discrimination and hatred as well as their attempts to take political revenge have “reached a peak”, he said.



We consider all legal tools to make West comply with JCPOA: Aref

TEHRAN — Top parliamentarian Mohammad Reza Aref said on Wednesday that Iran will use all the available legal tools in order to make the West comply with its commitments under the JCPOA, Mehr reported.

Elsewhere, the MP commented on his agenda in the new parliament, saying he will join the Majlis education committee.



Iran orders teaching of Turkish, Kurdish languages

TEHRAN — The government has issued an order to include local languages such as Kurdish and Turkish in the education system, according to vice president for minorities’ affairs.

Ali Younesi, who was speaking to IRNA on Monday on the sidelines of the president’s visit to West Azarbaijan province, said the order shows high regard for minorities.



White House: Iran, U.S. have no common plan to fight Daesh

TEHRAN — White House spokesman Josh Earnest on Tuesday said no plan exists for any military co-operation between Iran and the U.S. to fight against the terrorist group of Daesh.

However, he said the fact that Iran and the U.S. are fighting against Daesh is based on a joint awareness regarding dangers caused by sectarian divisions in Iraq.

The U.S. and other members of anti-Daesh coalition believe that any action to spread sectarian tension in Iraq will be in Daesh’s favor, Earnest added.

He said the U.S. is ready to help forces under the command of Iraqi government to fight Daesh.

Ayatollah: Riyadh has politicized hajj due to failures in Yemen, Syria

POLITICAL DESK TEHRAN — Garand Ayatollah Naser Markaem Shirazi said on Wednesday that Saudi Arabia has politicized hajj in order to compensate for its failures in Yemen, Syria and Iraq.

Saudi Arabia has been the main financier and military supporter of militants fighting the Syrian government. These militants who have been claiming they seek to overthrow the Assad government have committed unspeakable crimes against civilians.

Likewise, the Saudi regime launched an offensive against Yemen since March 2015 which some human rights bodies have described as war crimes. ---‘Private property’

On Sunday, Iran officially announced that it has canceled decision to send pilgrims to hajj as Saudi Arabia had refused to give guarantees on the safety of Iranian pilgrims.

Ayatollah Markaem Shirazi said the Saudis have turned the holy shrines in Mecca and Medina into “their own private property”.

The grand ayatollah said when the Iranian Hajj and Pilgrimage Organization and also officials noticed that Saudi Arabia, under different pretexts, wants to



impose some conditions on Iran, which were against national dignity, decided to cancel hajj for this year.

Speaking to his theology students in the shrine city of Qom, the grand ayatollah also said the Friday prayer leaders of Medina and Mecca have launched a serious anti-Shia campaign calling Shia “pagan” and due to this reason even if Iran had reached an agreement with the

Saudi government on the pilgrimage the Iranians would have been insulted by the young Saudis who have been provoked by “infidel muftis”.

The ayatollah defended the decision by the officials to cancel hajj as he said a “surprising” anti-Shia sentiment has been launched in Saudi Arabia which would have put Iranians in danger.

The decision not to send pilgrims was

Iran condemns jail extension against Bahraini opposition leader

POLITICAL DESK TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Hossein Jaber Ansari condemned on Tuesday extension of jail sentence for Bahraini opposition leader Sheikh Ali Salman.

On Monday, a Bahraini appeals court extended jail sentence of Sheikh Ali Salman, the secretary general of al-Wefaq

party, from four to nine years on claimed charges of inciting violence.

“Such actions against moderate political leaders do not solve the problems,” Jaber Ansari noted.

These acts will further complicate the problems and benefit the extremists, he added.

Sheikh Salman was sentenced on June

16, 2015 to four years in prison.

His appeal had been pending for eight months but the Supreme Court of Appeal increased Salman’s prison sentence to nine years from the original four.

Al-Wefaq is a political society and the largest party in the country, both in terms of its membership and its results at the

a “divine expediency”, he noted.

The grand ayatollah also suggested that the holy shrines in Mecca and Medina should managed by a team of competent religious scholars from different Islamic states.

He said this goal will not be realized soon but suggested that this idea should be pursued so that ulama take the holy the shrines out of the control of a group of “prejudiced”, “Wahabi” and “even takfiri” fanatics.

He predicted that Saudi officials will finally be forced to delegate the authority of the holy shrines to religious scholars from Islamic world.

The decision not to send pilgrims to hajj came after several rounds of talks between Iranian and Saudi officials failed to produce a result.

Iranian Culture Minister Ali Jannati said on Sunday that “no pilgrims would be sent to the Muslim holy sites of Mecca and Medina, because of obstacles created by Saudi officials.”

A disproportionate number of Iranian pilgrims died in a stampede in Mena last year. An independent investigation by The Associated Press put the death toll at 2,411. Of this number 464 were from Iran.

Saudis have political view on Hajj, official says

POLITICAL DESK TEHRAN — Keyvan Khosravi, spokesman of the Supreme National Security Council, said on Tuesday that the Saudi government has a political view on Hajj and this deprived the Iranians from participating in the annual rite.

The Saudi government refused to accept Iran’s “logical”

suggestions which sought to guarantee the Iranians’ safety during the Hajj pilgrimage, he said during a meeting with Maghreb Arab Press director Khalil Hachimi Idrissi.

He said that sectarian clashes in certain Islamic countries will portray an unrealistic image of Islam and marginalize efforts to counter the Zionist regime of Israel.

Elsewhere, he said the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, commonly referred to as nuclear deal, has created many opportunities for Islamic countries to expand economic relations with Iran.

For his part, Idrissi highlighted the importance of dialogue among the Islamic countries’ media outlets.

Nation is loyal to goals of revolution: Rouhani

Imam Khomeini's path is followed very well by Ayatollah Khamenei as the most qualified successor, president says



He added the Islamic movement in Iran was not linked on any country or power and the Imam only relied on people

Imam Khomeini succeeded to bring the Islamic revolution to fruition through bravery, resistance, and confidence in people, he pointed out.

Imam Khomeini also founded the Islamic Republic system by turning to public vote and this showed his discretion in creating

harmony between religious beliefs and democratic principles, Rouhani stated.

He added the loyalty of the people to the principles set by Imam Khomeini shows that the Iranians are the most committed people to their “leadership” and they will not waver in this path.

The president said the election of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei as the person to succeed Imam Khomeini in the shortest possible time was a “historic” move.

“... the election of the most competent person by the Assembly of Experts heartened the friends of the Islamic Republic and disappointed the enemies which had pinned their hopes on the post-Imam days,” the president remarked.

He added the election of Ayatollah Khamenei as the leader of the revolution at the “time of sorrow” created calm in the Iranian society.

And the Iranian nation and officials, through the guidelines of the Supreme

Leader, will continue to seek the ideals of Imam Khomeini.

Rouhani also said implementing the policies of resistance economy, creating jobs for the youth, stimulating the economy and raising the people’s standard of living are among the main goals of the Islamic Revolution.

“All these goals are achievable through unity, moderation, and coordination among all state bodies and people,” the president remarked.

Time for convergence: Iran-Afghanistan relations after the nuclear deal

By Sarah Lohschelder and Amanda Zeidan

The Afghanistan-Iran relationship is bolstered by extensive historical ties and colored by the colonial powers and conflicts in the neighborhood both countries share. Iran’s support for the Northern Alliance severely strained relations between the two countries when Afghanistan was ruled by the Taliban. The 9/11 attacks and the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan also brought a significant change: Iran supported the state-building process and participated in the Bonn Conference on Afghanistan, leading to a dramatic improvement in the relationship.

The latest event that will have a major impact on the region is the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. This agreement between the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, Germany, and Iran on the latter’s nuclear program, will significantly shape the Iran-Afghanistan relationship.

Specifically, the Iran nuclear deal will likely have a major impact in two key areas of the bilateral relationship: trade and security. Economically, Afghanistan stands to gain from the Iran nuclear deal. With sanctions lifted and Iran reintegrating into the global economy, Afghanistan will benefit from increased dealings with Iran in the short term and has prospects of developing into a transport hub for regional trade in the long term. In the security realm, Iran could prove a vital ally for Afghanistan in combating narco-trafficking originating in Afghanistan and in balancing against Pakistani influence in Afghan security matters.

Bilateral economic relations are already growing, with Afghanistan courting Iranian investment. According to an Iranian state news agency IRNA report from March, Afghanistan agreed to a customs exemption for Iranian businesses that relocate to the country. The same day, Iran and Afghanistan signed a mining agreement that gives Iranian companies access to Afghan mineral resources. As Iran and Afghanistan become economically tied to one another, so too will security ties begin to take a more formal shape. The Iranian government may also

increase its funding of development projects in Herat province, a strategic hub close to the Iranian and Turkish borders, where Iranian investment since the fall of the Taliban regime has been a stabilizing influence.

After Iran sees relief from more than a decade of sanctions, its open economy stands to benefit Afghanistan by turning the latter into a regional trading power. With the unfreezing of billions of dollars in assets, trade will become more straightforward. Countries will no longer have to circumvent rules and regulations that isolate Iran from the formal financial system and, perhaps, even offer the opportunity to build direct trade routes. India is likely to develop the Iranian port of Chabahar, presenting an opportunity for Afghanistan to diversify trading partners and generate billions of dollars in trade revenue.

Regional economic integration also offers an opening for countries to come together and pursue security interests. Iran stands to emerge as an important trade route to Central Asia and Europe: the country has unparalleled land and sea rights to Central Asia. As Iran seeks to polish its image on the international stage, there could be a unique opportunity to pursue joint security efforts in the region that benefit all parties, including the United States, especially against the narco-trafficking groups that bedevil Iranian, Afghan, and U.S. officials alike.

The Afghanistan-Iran connection over drugs is a complex relationship that has persisted over the past several decades. Iran is desperately trying to reshape its identity as a drug transit country. Narcotics trafficking from Afghanistan has created a chronic drug problem in Iran, which has blamed the Afghan government and the United States

for failing to curb opium production. Iran also serves as a major corridor for shipping narcotics to Europe and the Persian Gulf. Opium use has increased alarmingly in Iran, while revenues from narcotics have financed much of the anti-American insurgency in Afghanistan. Thousands of Iranian security agents have been killed in clashes with drug rings. Several claim that Jundallah, a terrorist group responsible for killing scores of Iran’s Revolutionary Guards, is closely tied to drug trafficking rings. Thus, addressing narco-trafficking in Afghanistan will serve as an effective point of collaboration between the United States, Iran, and Afghanistan; one where political will, through enforcement efforts, could be explicitly demonstrated.

Despite the country’s strident anti-Western rhetoric, Iran has more in common with the United States than Pakistan in securing Afghanistan’s stability in the long run. Iran, like the United States, would prefer an Afghanistan devoid of the influence of militant Sunni groups. The question remains of how to forge this partnership given current relations with Pakistan. The underpinnings of the Iran-Afghanistan relationship capitalizes on linguistic, cultural, and religious ties and such a links could be a catalyst for the two countries as they rebuild and strengthen ties post-Taliban. Capitalizing on the historical and cultural ties between Afghanistan and Iran also creates a path for partnership that curbs the influence of Pakistan, an unwieldy counterterrorism partner in the region, and bolsters Iran as a reliable security partner, vested in Afghanistan’s stability.

Iran is on the economic rebound and reshaping the geopolitical context of its neighbors, particularly Afghanistan. With this renewed bilateral engagement, there are opportunities for greater cooperation along shared trade and security interests, which could have positive implications for the entire region. Thus, at least with respect to the Iran-Afghanistan relationship, Iran’s rise should be seen as an opportunity to bolster regional security.

(Source: The Diplomat)

With respect to the Iran-Afghanistan relationship, Iran’s rise should be seen as an opportunity to bolster regional security.

Istanbul locked down on anniversary of 2013 demos

Turkish police on Tuesday detained several activists and imposed a heavy security blanket in Istanbul on the third anniversary of protests that posed the biggest challenge to the rule of Turkish President, Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

The May-June 2013 protests began as a grassroots movement to stop plans for the redevelopment of Gezi Park in central Istanbul but snowballed into a wave of nationwide wave of anger against Erdogan.

The demonstrations eventually fizzled out after a heavy-handed police response and the security forces have since reacted harshly with water cannon and tear gas to even the smallest anti-government rallies.

Hundreds of armed police were deployed in Taksim Square next to Gezi Park, with access to the centre of the square and the park barred to the public throughout the day, an AFP correspondent said.

Despite the centre of the square being fenced off with metal barriers, hundreds of opposition activists held a march in the evening down the Istanbul's main shopping avenue Istiklal Street nearby.

The protest largely went off peacefully but police scuffled with a splinter group of dozens of people, making arrests, the correspondent said.

Similar protest rallies were also held in the capital Ankara and the southern resort of Antalya but there were no reports of major unrest.

Meanwhile, police detained 16 activists at the offices of the city's architects chamber near the Ottoman-era Yildiz Palace, which had opposed the Gezi Park development and strongly backed the protests, local media reports said.

Those detained included the chamber's general secretary Mucella Yapici and lawyer Can Atalay, both prominent figures in the Gezi movement. Reports said they had failed to obey an eviction order.

An AFP reporter saw them being taken away in a police bus. They were later released and took part in the Istiklal protest rally.

Eight people were killed in the nationwide unrest which followed the Gezi Park protests. Erdogan, who was prime minister at the time, famously rubbished the



protesters as "hooligans".

The low-key anniversary came a day after Erdogan laid into the western media for being allegedly "blind, deaf and dumb" to a police crackdown on demonstrators in strike-hit France, despite broadcasting "uninterrupted" coverage of Turkey's 2013 protests.

In apparent response to his words, pro-Erdogan bloggers on Twitter launched a campaign urging people to beware of France as it stages the upcoming Euro football championships in France, under the hashtag #FranceisnotsecureforEuro2016.

(Source: AFP)

MI5, MI6 suffered 'serious rift' over Libya rendition flights & torture

Britain's involvement in secret rendition operations during the 'War on Terror' caused a serious breakdown between Britain's domestic and foreign intelligence services, MI5 and MI6, it has emerged.

Baroness Manningham-Buller, head of MI5 from 2002 to 2007, was so furious when she discovered the role MI6 played in abductions to Libya - which led to torture - she banned its staff from her department at Thames House, the Guardian reports, citing Whitehall sources.

She also wrote to then-Prime Minister Tony Blair complaining that MI6 officers' actions had threatened Britain's intelligence gathering and may have compromised the security of MI5 officers and their informants.

The letter came at the height of the so-called War on Terror launched after the September 11 attacks on the United States, and caused a major breakdown between the agencies.

"When [Manningham-Buller] found out what had gone on in Libya, she was evidently furious," a source told the newspaper.

"I have never seen a letter quite like it. There was a serious rift between MI5 and MI6 at the time."

Investigators found the letter when examining whether British intelligence officers should face criminal charges over the rendition of an exiled Libyan opposition Leader, Abdul Hakim Belhaj.

Belhaj, a staunch critic of former Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi, was seized in the Thai capital, Bangkok, in 2004 in a joint Britain-United States operation and handed over to the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency).

He says he was tortured and injected with "truth serum" before he and his family were flown to Tripoli to be interrogated.

According to documents found in Tripoli, five days

before Belhaj was secretly flown to the Libyan capital, MI6 gave Gaddafi's intelligence agency the French and Moroccan aliases used by Belhaj and provided the Libyans with intelligence that allowed the CIA to kidnap him.

Belhaj told the Guardian he was "very surprised that the British got involved in what was a very painful period of my life."

"I wasn't allowed a bath for three years and I didn't see the sun for one year."

"They hung me from the wall and kept me in an isolation cell. I was regularly tortured."

The British role was revealed after documents were found in ransacked offices of Libya's intelligence offices following Gaddafi's fall.

One, dated March 18, 2004, was a note from Sir Mark Allen, then-head of counter-terrorism at MI6.

"I congratulate you on the safe arrival of [Abdul-Hakim Belhaj]. This was the least we could do for you and for Libya to demonstrate the remarkable relationship we have built over the years. I am so glad. I was grateful to you for helping the officer we sent out last week," it said.

"[Belhaj's] information on the situation in this country is of urgent importance to us. Amusingly, we got a request from the Americans to channel requests for information from [Belhaj] through the Americans. I have no intention of doing any such thing. The intelligence on [Belhaj] was British. I know I did not pay for the air cargo [Belhaj]. But I feel I have the right to deal with you direct on this and am very grateful for the help you are giving us."

The investigation into the involvement of intelligence officers in Libyan rendition operations has been concluded by Scotland Yard. An announcement about whether or not to prosecute is imminent.

Whitehall sources have told the Guardian that police and prosecutors have been reviewing the issue for months. They say key witnesses claim they are unable to recall who authorized Britain's involvement in the rendition program, who else knew about it or details of Belhaj's abduction.

A lawyer at the international human rights organization Reprieve, which is representing Libyan families in their attempts to secure accountability, says the MI5 chief has a "right to be disgusted" over the MI6 involvement.

"You know MI6 under Blair's government were running amok when their role in CIA kidnap operations turned even the stomachs of MI5. Yet now, according to this report, officials are exercising mass tactical amnesia over who signed off the most appalling abuses in the 'war on terror'."

"Lady Manningham-Buller was right to be disgusted. The rendition of the Belhaj and al-Saadi families to Libya wasn't just illegal. It broke every value Britons hold dear. It's a damning assessment when even the hard-nosed head of MI5 could see that delivering a pregnant woman and four children to Gaddafi's dungeons was wrong, pointless and made Britain less safe."

"There clearly is a case to answer here, and Reprieve aren't the only ones who think so. We eagerly anticipate the long-delayed decision of the [Crown Prosecution Service]."

The relationship between MI5 and MI6 has now been repaired, the sources say.

Belhaj is demanding an apology and an acceptance of British guilt. He has taken his case to the Supreme Court, which is yet to hand down a judgment.

(Source: RT)

U.S. 'provocations' may force China to declare air defense zone in S. China Sea

Beijing is reportedly planning to launch an air defense identification zone (ADIZ) in the South China Sea, the timing of which will depend on the United States' "provocations." Billions of dollars of trade passes annually through the area, which is subject to rival claims.

A source close to China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) told the South China Morning Post daily that security conditions in the region, namely the U.S. military presence, would define the timing of the ADIZ declaration.

"If the U.S. military keeps making provocative moves to challenge China's sovereignty in the region, it will give Beijing a good opportunity to declare an ADIZ in the South China Sea," the source told the newspaper.

The country's Defense Ministry told the South China Morning Post in a written statement that it was "the right of a sovereign state" to designate an ADIZ.

"Regarding when to declare such a zone, it will depend on whether China is facing security threats from the air, and what the level of the air safety threat is," the ministry wrote.

In November 2013, Beijing set up an ADIZ in the East China Sea, causing an immediate backlash from Tokyo, Seoul and Washington.



It covered the Diaoyu Islands, which Tokyo controls and calls the Senkakus.

Tensions have run high between Washington and Beijing over a reclamation project in the South China Sea, where China has built artificial islands. Beijing has various territorial disputes in the area - which is rich in deposits of natural resources - with Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam.

To bolster its claim over the disputed territory, Beijing has been rapidly setting up defense installations in the area. The U.S. Navy is actively opposing the Chinese initiative, deploying additional warships to the disputed zone and conducting maneuvers near the Chinese artificial islands. It has also flown over them, using the "freedom of navigation" principle as justification.

Beijing has called the U.S. involvement in

the dispute the "greatest" threat to the region.

"We urge them to stop stirring up a storm in a teacup and stop sowing seeds of discord so as to maintain peace and stability in the South China Sea, which conforms to the common interests of all parties," Yang Yujun, spokesman for the Ministry of National Defense (MND) said at a briefing, China Military Online reported.

Last month Beijing asked the U.S. to stop its surveillance activities near China after two of its fighter jets carried out what the Pentagon labeled an "unsafe" intercept of a U.S. military reconnaissance aircraft over the South China Sea.

The incident added fuel to the fire in the already tense relations between the two countries.

"What needs to be pointed out is that the U.S. always likes to distort facts and draw media attention to the distance between the military aircraft of the two sides. But in essence, the root cause for security hazards and potential accidents in the air and at sea between China and the U.S. is the long term, large-scale and frequent close-in reconnaissance activities against China by the U.S. military vessels and aircraft," a Chinese Defense Ministry spokesman said.

(Source: RT)

NEWS

N. Korea: Trump isn't screwy at all, a wise choice for president



North Korea has backed presumptive United States Republican nominee Donald Trump, with a propaganda website praising him as "a prescient presidential candidate" who can liberate Americans living under daily fear of nuclear attack by the North.

A column carried on Tuesday by DPRK Today, one of the reclusive and dynastic state's mouthpieces, described Trump as a "wise politician" and the right choice for U.S. voters in the Nov. 8 U.S. presidential election.

It described his most likely Democratic opponent, Hillary Clinton, as "thick-headed Hillary" over her proposal to apply the Iran model of wide sanctions to resolve the nuclear weapons issue on the Korean peninsula.

Trump instead has told Reuters he was prepared to talk to North Korean Leader Kim Jong Un to try to stop Pyongyang's nuclear program, and that China should also help solve the problem.

North Korea, known officially as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), is under United Nations sanctions over its past nuclear tests. South Korea and the United States say its calls for dialogue are meaningless until it takes steps to end its nuclear ambitions.

DPRK Today also said Trump's suggestion that the United States should pull its troops from South Korea until Seoul pays more was the way to achieve Korean unification.

"It turns out that Trump is not the rough-talking, screwy, ignorant candidate they say he is, but is actually a wise politician and a prescient presidential candidate," said the column, written by a China-based Korean scholar identified as Han Yong Muk.

DPRK Today is among a handful of news sites run by the North, although its content is not always handled by the main state-run media.

It said promising to resolve issues on the Korean peninsula through "negotiations and not war" was the best option for America, which it said is "living every minute and second on pins and needles in fear of a nuclear strike" by North Korea.

The North has for years called for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the South as the first step toward peace on the Korean peninsula and demanded Washington sign a peace treaty to replace the truce that ended the 1950-53 Korean War.

Its frequently strident rhetoric also often threatens nuclear strikes against South Korea and the United States.

(Source: Reuters)

Turkey: German vote on Armenia killings may harm ties

Turkey's relations with Germany will be harmed if the parliament in Berlin votes to describe the killings of Armenians last century as genocide, the Turkish prime minister said on Wednesday.

Binali Yildirim said, however, that Turkey wouldn't nix a key deal with the European Union on curbing migrant flows to Europe over the genocide issue.

Historians estimate that up to 1.5 million Armenians were killed by Ottoman Turks around the time of World War I, an event viewed by many scholars as the first genocide of the 20th century.

Turkey denies that the killings that started in 1915 were genocide and contends that those who died were victims of civil war and unrest. Turkey also insists the death toll has been inflated.

Germany's parliament will hold a vote on a motion describing the deaths as genocide on Thursday.

"Of course relations with Germany will be harmed, there is no doubt about it," Yildirim said.

"Turkey is not a country that engages in blackmail, threats, and makes counter-plans," Yildirim said in response to a question on how the German resolution would affect the Turkey-EU deal. "There can be no question of disregarding deals if this resolution is passed."

The prime minister, who took office last week, also called the planned vote in German parliament "nonsense" and said the deaths were "ordinary" events occurring under war conditions.

"The events were one of (those) ordinary events that can take place in any community, in any country and which occurred in 1915, within the conditions of World War I," Yildirim said.

He said the German parliament should "not turn a deaf ear to the voice" of around 3 million ethnic Turks living in Germany.

"God willing, common sense will prevail and such a disturbing decision won't emerge," Yildirim said.

(Source: AP)

French vessel detects signals likely from EgyptAir jet black box

A French naval search vessel has picked up signals believed to originate from one of the black boxes of EgyptAir flight MS804 which crashed into the Mediterranean last month, the Egyptian investigation committee said on Wednesday.

It said in a statement the search for the black boxes was intensifying ahead of the expected arrival within a week of another vessel, the John Lethbridge, from Mau-

ritius-based company Deep Ocean Search to help retrieve the devices.

"Search equipment aboard French naval vessel Laplace... has detected signals from the seabed of the search area, which likely belong to one of the data boxes," the committee said.

Investigators are searching in some of the deepest waters of the Mediterranean for flight recorders from

the Airbus A320 which crashed on May 19, killing 66 people.

The jet's flight recorders or "black boxes" are designed to emit acoustic signals for 30 days after a crash, giving search teams fewer than three weeks to spot them in waters up to 9,840-feet (3,000-meters) deep, which is on the edge of their range.

(Source: Reuters)

Japan PM delays sales tax hike, puts fiscal reform on back burner

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced on Wednesday his widely expected decision to delay a scheduled sales tax increase by two-and-a-half years, putting his plans for fiscal reforms on the back burner due to growing signs of weakness in the economy.

While the decision may help Abe win votes at an upper house election on July 10, it could fan doubts about his plans to curb Japan's huge public debt and fund ballooning social welfare costs of a fast-ageing population.

Mindful of opposition criticism that the delay is a sign his "Abenomics" stimulus policies have failed to spur growth, Abe justified the decision, saying it was needed to forestall risks posed by external factors - notably slowing Chinese growth.

"Abenomics has been steadily producing results, but the global economic environment has changed unexpectedly quickly in the past year. The biggest risk is the slowdown in emerging economies," Abe told a news conference.

"Faced with global risks, we must fully reignite the engine of Abenomics and speed up efforts to escape deflation," he said.

It is the second time Abe has delayed an increase in the sales tax to 10 percent from 8 percent, after a rise from 5 percent in April 2014 tipped the economy back into recession.

"From an economic standpoint, the market is likely to view the delay as a positive surprise for domestic demand," said Lee Jin Yang, macro research analyst for Aberdeen Asset Management in Singapore.

Abe, whose premiership will end when his term as LDP president finishes in September 2018, had repeatedly said he would raise the tax as planned unless the economy faced a shock from a financial crisis or natural disaster.

But he laid the groundwork for a delay at last week's Group of Seven summit, insisting his G7 partners shared a "strong sense of crisis" about the global economy, and he drew parallels to the 2008 world financial crisis that followed the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers.

Abe said that while the global economy was not on the verge of another financial crisis, Japan must spearhead efforts to boost global demand by loosening fiscal policy.

"We'll deploy a comprehensive, bold economic package this autumn," he said, without indicating the scale of spending envisaged.

Many economists found Abe's comparisons to the Lehman Brothers failure far-fetched, but there is consensus that Japan's economic data has been disappointingly weak.

(Source: Reuters)

China's banks ramp up compliance as global push hits snags

China's biggest banks are beefing up their risk management and compliance programs, following a series of high-profile judicial investigations and regulatory probes in the United States and Europe.

These legal and regulatory headaches are likely to be a drag on their aggressive overseas expansion until suitable anti money-laundering (AML) and know-your-customer (KYC) controls are in place, bankers and compliance experts say, but they are taking action.

A survey by LexisNexis Risk Solutions, which provides compliance services to China's big state-owned commercial banks and smaller financial services companies, showed that about half expect to increase their compliance budgets by 20 percent or more this year, and the rest will raise it by a lesser amount.

"Chinese banks are going through a learning curve," said Ellen Zimiles, Global Head of Investigations and Compliance at Navigant Consulting in New York. "They're going to have to come up to standards if they're going to have branches in the United States and Europe." China's top four banks, which together control \$700 billion of overseas assets, have added more than 70 branches and offices to their global network in the last three years, following Chinese businesses abroad and extending their reach in countries from the Czech Republic to Chile.

The expansion has exposed shortcomings.

Last year the U.S. Federal Reserve instructed both Bank of China Ltd. (BoC) and China Construction Bank Corp. (CCB) to improve their AML procedures.

Their failings pale next to the abuses some European banks have been recently fined for by U.S. authorities, but a senior banking source said the deals BoC and CCB struck with the Fed would likely prevent them opening new branches or lines of business for at least three years. In Spain, six Industrial and Commercial Bank of China Ltd. (ICBC) bankers were arrested in February, suspected of facilitating money laundering and fraud. The bank has said it implemented AML regulations and operated strictly within the law.

In Italy, prosecutors are seeking a trial for BoC officials in a money laundering investigation into billions of euros allegedly smuggled back into China. BoC has denied any wrongdoing.

(Source: Reuters)

JUMP

Iran inks \$1.2b economic co-op documents with Poland, Finland



Zarif kicked off an EU trade drive in Poland on Sunday, in one of Tehran's first moves to drum up business with the West after the lifting of sanctions earlier this year. The official's tour of Europe continued to Sweden and will wrap up in Lithuania on June 4.

Tehran plans to attract \$185b in oil sector by 2021

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iranian Deputy Oil Minister for International Affairs Amir-Hossein Zamaninia said that Iran plans to attract \$185 billion of new oil investment in the next 5 years, Tasnim news agency reported on Wednesday.

According to the report, the expected investment will be in all major spheres including the upstream sector as well as petrochemical industries.

"Implementation of the new model of Iran's oil contracts, known as Integrated Petroleum Contract (IPC), is one of the ways of attracting investors to develop Iran's oil industry along which we also plan to diversify our funding sources", Zamaninia told Tasnim.

Deputy oil minister for international



Iran seeks to amend post-sanctions oil contracts

Iran's first vice president has asked Oil Minister Bijan Zanganeh to amend new petroleum contracts aimed at facilitating foreign investment in the post-sanctions era, a government website reported on Tuesday.

"Thank you for your efforts to take critical views into account: please present the government with your proposals for amendments for adoption as soon as possible," the site reported Es'haq Jahangiri as writing to Zanganeh.

In November, a new model for contracts was presented at a Tehran conference attend-

ed by 183 Iranian companies and 152 foreign firms including oil majors.

At the time, Zanganeh said the new contract models were "not perfect or ideal, but an effective and responsive model for both sides".

He said Iran hoped to attract 25 billion in oil and gas investment with the new standard contract after international sanctions were lifted in January following a deal with world powers on Iran's nuclear program.

The new Iran Petroleum Contract (IPC)

was to replace the old "buy back" system under which a foreign firm developed an oil or gas field, but then an Iranian company took over production.

The IPC will instead launch joint ventures for crude oil and gas production with international companies being paid a share of the total output, officials said.

The Iranian partner in a joint venture must have a majority stake of at least 51 percent.

But in the months since the new model was introduced, there has been growing criticism, particularly among conservatives who

Iran plans oilfield tenders in June for international companies

Iran plans to invite international companies to bid for oilfield development rights in June, a government official said, as the Persian Gulf country seeks to revive its energy industry after years of sanctions.

The Oil Ministry will solicit bids in a tender round starting June 21 and running for a month, state-run Islamic Republic News Agency reported Tuesday, citing Mehdi Hosseini, chairman of the ministry's oil contracts revision commit-

tee. National Iranian Oil Co. is working on a model investment contract for any development agreements, he said.

Iran is rebuilding its oil and natural gas industries and restoring sales of crude after international sanctions were lifted in January. The country, which will meet other OPEC members this week in Vienna, is targeting an increase in production and exports to pre-sanctions levels. It refused to join other producers in a push to freeze output at a meeting

in Doha in April.

Seventy fields

Foreign companies have been awaiting details of the investment contracts and bidding rules since Iran in November identified about 70 oil and gas fields that it would offer. International conferences planned as early as 2014 never took place due to sanctions. Would-be investors may now hesitate to commit to Iran out of concern that the U.S. may toughen its policy toward the country

PICTURE OF THE DAY IRNA/Davoud Ghahrdar



The 23rd edition of Iran's international exhibition of agricultural products, foodstuff, machineries, and related industries, known as Iran Agrofood 2016, ran at the Tehran International Permanent Fairgrounds from May 30 to June 1. The event hosted 710 Iranian and 746 foreign exhibitors from 46 countries.

affairs also noted that the share of upstream sector from the expected investments would be \$85 billion.

On February 9, Iran's Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said that \$200 billion investment is required to develop the country's oil industry.

"Internal resources are not enough to meet such need, therefore we should attract foreign investment", the minister noted.

He said IPC has been drawn up to materialize this objective.

In November 2015, Iran introduced IPC, which will replace buy-back contracts. It is expected to offer more flexible terms on oil price fluctuations and investment risks to make the sector more financially attractive.

(Source: AFP)

say it gives too many advantages to foreign companies.

Iran's oil production has risen sharply to nearly 4 million barrels per day, around the same level before the international sanctions were imposed.

The country has doubled oil exports since the nuclear accord took effect on January 16.

A member of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, Iran ranks second in the world in natural gas reserves and fourth in proven crude oil reserves.

(Source: AFP)

after choosing a new president in November, according to Edward Bell, a commodities analyst at Emirates NBD PJSC in Dubai.

"There's plenty of opportunity in Iran," Bell said Tuesday by phone. "It's been two years now that we've been waiting for these contracts. But regardless of how ready or not Iran is to accept investment, nobody is going to be dying to move into Iran until after the U.S. election."

(Source: Bloomberg)

Brexit would trigger 'substantial shock': OECD

A vote to leave the European Union would have "substantial negative consequences" for the UK and the global economy, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) says.

In its latest outlook forecast, the OECD says fears of a possible Brexit have already knocked growth in the UK economy.

The report says that business confidence has eased, policy uncertainty has risen and investment growth has slowed in the lead-up to the referendum on 23 June.

It adds: "A decision to exit would result in considerable additional volatility in financial markets and an extended period of uncertainty about future policy developments, with substantial negative consequences for the United Kingdom, the European Union and the rest of the world."

The report forecasts that a Brexit would, in the short term, increase uncertainty and see asset prices fall, with households and companies postponing spending decisions amid tighter credit conditions.

A "sharp decrease" in the pound could offset these effects, but it would hurt other European economies at the same time and raise UK inflation.

(Source: news.sky.com)



U.S. court rules \$24.9 Dell buyout underpriced by 22%

NEWS IN BRIEF

Michael Dell and Silver Lake Partners underpriced their 2013 \$24.9 billion (£17.1 billion) buyout of Dell Inc. by about 22 percent and may have to pay tens of millions to investors who opposed the deal for the computer maker, a Delaware judge ruled on Tuesday.

The ruling, which applies to about 5.5 million Dell shares, is a victory for the specialized hedge funds that have increasingly tried to squeeze more money from mergers using a type of lawsuit known as appraisal.

The lawsuits allow investors who oppose a deal, such as the bitterly contested Dell buyout, to sue and ask a Delaware judge to determine a fair deal price.



Microsoft sells patents to Xiaomi, builds long-term partnership

Software maker Microsoft Corp is selling about 1,500 of its patents to Chinese device maker Xiaomi, a rare departure for the U.S. Company and part of what the two companies say is the start of a long-term partnership.

The deal, announced on Wednesday, also includes a patent cross-licensing arrangement and a commitment by Xiaomi to install copies of Microsoft software, including Office and Skype, on its phones and tablets.

Both companies declined to discuss financial terms of the deal.

"This is a very big collaboration agreement between the two companies," Wang Xiang, senior vice president at Xiaomi, said by telephone ahead of the deal.



Top Alibaba shareholder Softbank plans to sell \$7.9b in stock

Japanese telecommunications and internet firm Softbank Group Corp said on Tuesday it will sell at least \$7.9 billion (£5.4 billion) of shares in Chinese e-commerce company Alibaba Group Holding Ltd in order to raise funds to reduce its debt.

The transaction marks the first sale of Alibaba shares by its largest shareholder since Softbank began investing in the company in 2000. Softbank's Alibaba stake will fall to about 28 percent of the Chinese firm from 32.2 percent in March.

Both companies said they would maintain a strategic partnership. Softbank Chairman and Chief Executive Masayoshi Son will remain a director at Alibaba, while Alibaba Executive Chairman Jack Ma will remain on the board of Softbank.

Persian odyssey: Tales from the real Iran

The old man paused for breath beneath a walnut tree. A part-time philosopher, he was called Rahmatollah (meaning "Offer of the Gods"). He had wobbly knees and clutched a walking stick. His mind, however, showed no sign of slowing down.

He sat in the shade quoting the 13th-century Iranian poet Saadi Shirazi and musing over his 80-something years living in the sleepy mountain village of Abyaneh, 340km south of the capital Tehran. "I used to walk in these peaks as a boy, searching for wolves and hunting ibexes. Back then, Abyaneh was a very different place," he said, almost mournfully.

Once a thriving agricultural community, Abyaneh was home to thousands and blessed with an almost semi-autonomous existence, even boasting its very own dialect. Completely isolated until the 17th-century, its hard-to-reach location kept it safe from interference and invasions from the Afghans, Turks and Indians. With the next village 20km away, locals even formed their own dialect.

Today barely 80 residents remain living in red mud-brick houses. Bizarrely, though, Abyaneh is located close to the epicenter of the country's biggest problems, a lonely spot in the desert that has seen it exiled from the international community.

Guide Majid has been showing off his homeland to curious visitors for the past 15 years. "Iran is a deeply misunderstood country," he said, cross-legged on a Persian rug sipping a cup of saffron chai in a teahouse high in the quiet hill-sides north of Tehran. Beyond the walls, mules ferried sacks of pomegranates along deserted trails.

Many miles to the south, the city of Yazd was doing a roaring trade. The pavements were heaving with shoppers browsing the father-and-son kerbside stalls selling fruit, sweet-smelling rose water and Persian rugs.

The busiest place, however, seemed to be Haj Khalifeh Ali Rahbar, a confectionary store started by two brothers more than 60 years ago. The place was stacked with all manner of sugar-dusted treats with exotic names such as noqhl, loze nargil and qotab.

And while it cannot trade on a world famous name like other Iranian heavyweights such as Shiraz and Isfahan, Yazd proved to



Persepolis, Iran

be one of the most enlightening stops on our two-week tour, thanks mostly to the famed Towers of Silence. These large manmade monuments found in the desert on the outskirts of town is where Zoroastrians leave their dead to be consumed by vultures.

We broke up the long journey to Shiraz beside a roadside pistachio farm. The small shrubs, all neatly planted in regimented rows that swept up the hillside, were decorated with ripening shells like faded rubies dangling from the tip.

But the single most memorable individual we met was Abbas Barzegar, the Richard Branson of Iran who lives in the absurdly beautiful Bavanat Valley. In a previous life, Abbas was a humble man working on a farm with little prospects on the horizon.

"Sixteen years ago I wasn't happy. I had no money, no cows, nothing. I thought God had deserted me. Now I have a magical business, a garden, a family, even a donkey," he beamed.

So, what brought about this change in fortune? Well, two hapless German backpackers. Lost and with nowhere to stay, Abbas offered them his spare room and an idea was born. With the help of a \$600,000 grant from former President Ahmadinejad, he built his own guesthouse, which now has 33 rustic rooms, a small museum and even

a petting zoo.

Success, however, may have gone to his head. Over a breakfast prepared by his demure wife and served by his daughters, he spoke to his dreams of owning his own valley and populating it with his own tribe who would all wear the same clothes and be ruled over by his infant son. Several of us exchanged knowing glances in between mouthfuls of homemade cheese and walnut bread.

A boy of no more than 13 years old emerged from within a haze of dust kicked up by the dozens of goats he was trying to herd. He was having limited success, his desperate pleas lost amongst the plumes of swirling sand.

Having a much more leisurely day were the Abedi family. Like the rest of the 14,000 nomads that spend six months of the year in the Bavanat Valley (winters are spent on the warm shores of the Persian Gulf), they were busy tending to their cattle and drinking tea outside their large tents.

Tea was extended to us and we sat on rugs placed on grass and talked about our respective lands. Mr. Abedi turned his attention to the Yank in our party. "Why does America hate us so much?"

More than 150 years in the making, subjects from far and wide travelled great distances to this ancient city to pay hom-

age to their rulers. They didn't come empty handed, bringing offerings of gold, spices and baby giraffes from their exotic lands including Arabia and the Indian subcontinent.

It was undoubtedly a place of great splendor but a drunken attack launched by Alexander the Great one fateful night saw Persepolis burn to the ground. That, along with centuries of abandonment (the city wasn't rediscovered until 1620), took its toll. Nonetheless, the ruins that stand today boast splendor of a different kind.

Majid led us around the site, pausing to admire the crumbling columns and carved stone staircases that stand today as a testament to one of mankind's most powerful ever empires.

Aside from Persepolis, the tour's most anticipated stop came at the end. Legends surround the fabled city of Isfahan, former capital of Persia, and its grandeur remains. Just as it did in the days of Shah Abbas the Great in the 17th-century, life in Isfahan revolves around Meidan Emam, one of the largest public squares in the world.

"Only Tiananmen is bigger," said Majid with an air of great pride. Once upon a time, kings would sit in balconies overlooking the square and watch polo matches play out against a backdrop of mighty mosques and madrassas.

(Source: The Telegraph)

NEWS

U.S. issues travel alert for terrorism risks in Europe



French police took part in a training exercise on Tuesday near the Stade de France in Saint-Denis (Getty Images/ Kenzo Tribouillard)

The State Department on Tuesday alerted U.S. citizens traveling to Europe to heightened risks of terrorism, citing events in France and Poland this summer that are expected to draw large crowds.

The European soccer championships and the Tour de France bicycle race, both hosted in France in June and July, could be terrorist targets, the alert said. The Catholic Church's World Youth Day in Krakow, Poland, in late July, expected to draw up to 2.5 million visitors, will result in stricter security screenings there, the alert said.

The alert was issued because of the start of summer and the approach of high-drawing events, said State Department spokesman John Kirby.

"I'm not aware of any specific, credible terrorist threat around these events or in any particular place in Europe," Mr. Kirby said, adding the alerts were based on an "accumulation of information."

"We took the opportunity because it's the beginning of summer, to make our concerns known," he said.

The message distributed Tuesday was an alert, not a warning. Warnings are seen as indicative of a higher-level threat. The State Department often issues alerts for large-scale events, such as the Olympics.

The State Department last issued a travel alert for Europe in March after terrorist attacks in Brussels killed nearly three dozen people. That message said terrorist groups continue to plan attacks throughout Europe in such public venues as sporting events and tourist sites.

(Source: Wall Street Journal)

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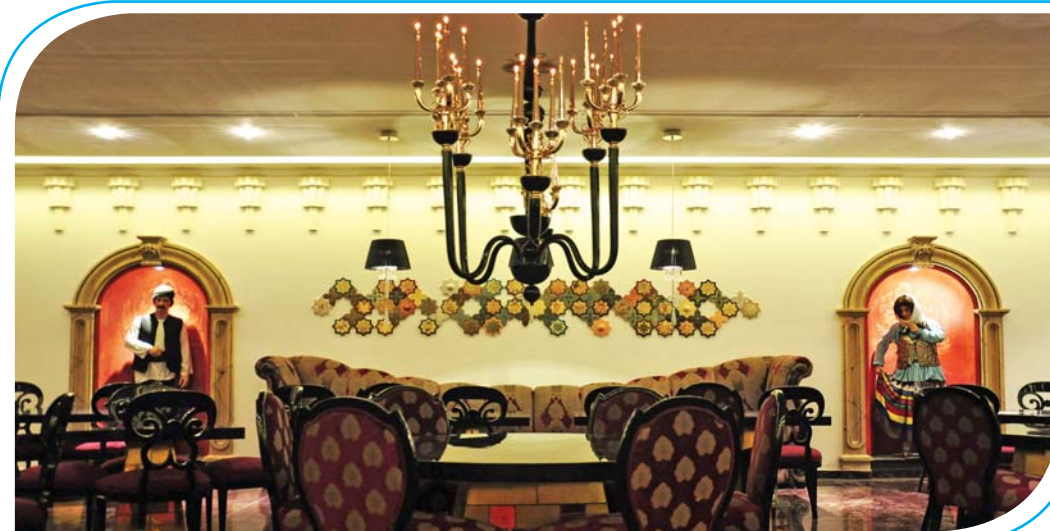


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Taiwan shines a light on a dark past

A new president starts a truth and reconciliation commission about the island's past repression with the hope of improving democracy and ties with China.

In her inaugural speech May 20 as Taiwan's first female president, Tsai Ing-wen announced a truth and reconciliation commission for her island nation.

Her action did not receive as much attention as her comments about ties with China. But an official probe of Taiwan's own dark past may do far more to help keep the peace with the mainland.

Ms. Tsai and her ruling Democratic Progressive Party want the panel to investigate human rights abuses committed under military rule between 1947 and 1987.

Taiwan was ruled then by the Kuomintang (KMT), or the nationalist party of Chiang Kai-shek, which had

fled the mainland as the communists took power.

Thousands of Taiwanese were killed by the KMT during that long period of repression, leaving the island divided in its politics and society.

While many victims were acknowledged and memorialized in the 1990s as Taiwan moved to democracy, much of the truth about the perpetrators remains hidden.

■ Historical past

Tsai hopes Taiwan's democracy can be improved if it faces the "historical past in the most sincere and cautious manner."

By uncovering the truth, she said, social wounds can be healed. Political consensus will be easier.

Taiwan will be more united and become an active "communicator for peace" in Asia. To achieve that, she will need to make sure that the commission does not become a political tool to bash the current KMT, which lost power in a recent election.

If Taiwan can achieve a measure of reconciliation by this truth-telling process, it may be a model for China in coming to grips with the horrific past of the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution.

In mid-May, the ruling Communist Party barely mentioned the 50th anniversary of the start of that social upheaval, which resulted in the persecution of more than 100 million citizens.

While the party did allow some

historical assessment in the late 1970s, it has since shut down academic research and only allows an official version of the Cultural Revolution to be published.

A deeper probe of the party's mistakes might erode its legitimacy and lead to a challenge to its monopoly on power.

As Tsai said in her speech, taking to heart the mistakes of the past can help propel Taiwan forward. If both nations can admit the errors of their darkest periods, they might be able to someday reconcile.

The truth about past wrongs is a first step to restore the bonds that can ensure peace.

(Source: The CSM)



As Tsai said in her speech, taking to heart the mistakes of the past can help propel Taiwan forward. If both nations can admit the errors of their darkest periods, they might be able to someday reconcile.

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Siemens, Airbus warn Brexit would put jobs at risk as vote looms

Bosses of Siemens AG, Airbus Group SE and GKN Plc will issue a warning that a vote to leave the European Union later this month would endanger future investment and manufacturing jobs, as the "Remain" campaign steps up efforts to show how a so-called Brexit would hurt ordinary workers.

Quitting the EU would put at risk more than 107,000 manufacturing jobs that the Centre for Economics and Business Research projects will be created by 2030 because of a deepening of the 28-nation bloc's single market, the Britain Stronger in Europe campaign said in an e-mailed statement.

Airbus's UK president, Paul Kahn, GKN Chief Executive Officer Nigel Stein and Siemens UK CEO Juergen Maier will share a platform in Bristol, western England, on Wednesday to deliver their warnings.

"The economic disruption and uncertainty that would accompany a 'Leave' vote would inevitably impact on long-term investment decisions," Kahn is due to say. A Brexit would make Britain "less attractive," according to Stein, with Maier warning the country will "miss out on fantastic future opportunities and the jobs and economic prosperity that go with them." Their three companies employ a combined 35,000 people in Britain.

Investor concerns about the outcome of the June 23 referendum were demonstrated Tuesday when the pound dropped after an ICM phone poll unexpectedly put "Leave" in front. The question now is whether the poll was an outlier following a series of surveys showing the "Remain" camp in the lead, or whether it marks the start of a broader shift toward "Leave."

■ Fantasy economics

The campaign has become increasingly heated in recent days, with both sides deriding each other's arguments



about the fallout of the referendum result.

On Tuesday, Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne attacked the assertion that leaving the EU would lead to cheaper energy bills as "fantasy economics," saying taxes would rise instead. Brexit supporters seized on a report from Migration Watch, which campaigns for more controls on immigration, saying as many as 480,000 refugees who have fled to Europe since the start of 2015 could head to Britain after 2020 if voters opt to stay in.

The "Remain" campaign is now trying to reach out to ordinary workers to show how they benefit from EU membership. In a fillip to its efforts, the

Trades Union Congress, Britain's umbrella labor body, released a report on Wednesday arguing that a Brexit could push manufacturing into a "steep decline," with average weekly wages 38 pounds (\$55) lower by 2030.

■ Continuing hardship

"For millions of workers, it's the difference between heating or eating, between struggling or saving, and between getting by or getting on," TUC General Secretary Frances O'Grady said in a statement. "At a time of continuing hardship, Brexit would be a disaster for working people -- for our wages, for our jobs and for our rights."

O'Grady was backed up by the opposition Labour Party, whose business

spokeswoman, Angela Eagle, said in a statement that leaving the EU "would hit working people hard, prolonging the squeeze on wages. It would also be a devastating blow to our manufacturing sector, which depends on access to the largest single market in the world."

■ Becoming absurd

The "Leave" side hit back at the CEBR report.

"These daily threats are becoming absurd," John Longworth, who heads the Vote Leave Business Council, said in an e-mailed statement. "The jobs they refer to don't even exist -- so how can they be at risk?"

The ICM telephone poll put "Leave" on 45 percent compared with 42 percent for "Remain." The pollster questioned 1,004 respondents from May 27 to May 29. A simultaneous online poll of 2,052 adults also gave "Leave" a 3-point lead.

The findings of the phone survey were "interesting and unexpected," Anthony Wells, the YouGov Plc research director who runs the U.K. Polling Report website, said by phone. It's "very out of line in terms of other telephone polls," which have been showing leads of about 8-10 points for "Remain."

"Suddenly showing 'Leave' ahead raises all sorts of questions," Wells said. He raised two caveats: Firstly, it's only one poll, raising the question of whether it will actually be echoed by other telephone surveys; and secondly it was conducted over a bank-holiday weekend, when it may be harder to reach respondents if they're away for short vacation breaks.

Bookmaker Ladbrokes Plc shortened its odds on leaving the EU, noting "the sheer volume of bets for Brexit coupled with the latest poll movement." Even so, its probability of a Brexit is still only 23 percent.

(Source: Bloomberg)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Oil prices fall on rising Middle East output, China demand concerns

Oil prices fell early on Wednesday as production from the major Middle East exporters was expected to remain high or even increase just as concerns over the state of China's economy weighed on its fuel demand outlook.

International benchmark Brent crude oil futures were trading at \$49.59 per barrel at 0041 GMT, down 30 cents, or 0.6 percent, from their last settlement.

U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude futures were down 23 cents, or 0.47 percent, at \$48.87 a barrel.

Traders said that the dips were a result of the prospect of rising output from Middle East members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), which meets this week in Vienna to discuss its market policy, which most analysts say will continue to focus on defending market share instead of propping up prices by controlling output.

"Many OPEC members ... have plans to grow, so cutting supply now may interfere with those objectives," Morgan Stanley said in a note to clients.

(Source: Reuters)

Russia-led economic bloc seeks trade deal with China

The Russia-led Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) is starting negotiations on a trade deal with China, officials said on Tuesday, and aims to forge an agreement within two years.

Comparing the planned deal to the proposed EU-US Transatlantic partnership agreement, Igor Shuvalov, Russia's First Deputy Prime Minister, said the talks would be very difficult.

Shuvalov told reporters in the Kazakh capital Astana that the decision was taken by the presidents of member states and former Soviet republics Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan who met in Kazakhstan.

Shuvalov said Beijing wanted the EEU to cut customs duties on Chinese goods or even remove them completely, but no decision has been taken within the bloc on whether to do so.

Russia and Kazakhstan, the two biggest economies in the EEU, mostly supply commodities such as oil and metals to China and import goods ranging from textiles to cars and electronics. Another major oil exporter, Iran, "could potentially become a member of such a partnership", Shuvalov said.

(Source: Reuters)

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Could old, cold water rising in Antarctic seas solve climate change mystery?

A persistent chill in the ocean off Antarctica that defies the global warming blamed for melting Arctic ice at the other end of the planet is caused by cold waters welling up from the depths after hundreds of years, scientists said on Monday.

The Southern Ocean off Antarctica may be among the last places on Earth to feel the impact of man-made climate change,

with a lag of centuries to affect waters emerging from up to 5,000 meters (16,000ft) deep, the U.S. study said.

Many people who doubt mainstream scientific findings that human use of fossil fuels is warming the planet often point to the paradox of expanding winter sea ice off Antarctica in recent decades and a rapid shrinking of ice in the Arctic.

"Our findings are a step toward resolving the mystery," lead author Kyle Armour of the University of Washington, Seattle, told Reuters of the study in the journal Nature Geoscience.

He noted the upwelling of cold water helped to explain the persistence of sea ice but not its expansion, a trend other studies have linked to shifts in winds off the vast frozen continent.

Monday's report found that warm waters in the Gulf Stream cool as they flow north into the North Atlantic, then sink and loop south towards Antarctica as part of an aquatic conveyor belt that takes centuries to complete.

Eventually, gale force winds in the Southern Ocean around Antarctica blow surface waters northwards and draw the chill, ancient waters from the depths. (Source: The CSM)

Scientists just discovered dozens of new sources of air pollution

Scientists may have significantly underestimated a dangerous source of pollution in the atmosphere, new research suggests. A satellite study, published Monday in the journal Nature Geoscience, has revealed nearly 40 previously unreported major sources of sulfur dioxide emissions — a pollutant that can cause multiple harmful health and environmental impacts and even exacerbate global warming.

Sulfur dioxide pollution can come from a variety of sources, both natural and industrial, including volcanoes, oil refineries and the burning of fossil fuels. Although it has a relatively short lifespan in the atmosphere — a few hours to a few days — it's important for scientists to keep track of its presence to help inform air quality and climate models and create pollution-cutting policies.

Until now, scientists have mostly relied on emissions inventories drawing on national reports to identify the world's sulfur dioxide sources and the amount of pollution they're putting out. Satellite information has been able to help scientists further quantify sulfur dioxide emissions — but this method has mostly been useful when the scientists already know where the emissions are coming from. That's because winds can help obscure sulfur dioxide hotspots, making it difficult to pick them out if their location isn't already known.

But in the new study, researchers from Canada's environment and climate change department and other institutions in the United States and Canada have described a new method that allows them to identify and map sulfur dioxide sources all over the world — including sources that may not have been previously identified or reported. And they've found that anywhere from 7 to 14 million metric tons of sulfur dioxide may be missing from global inventories each year.

(Source: The Washington Post)

Women with migraine may face higher threat of heart disease, stroke

Women who suffer from migraine headaches may have a slightly increased risk of heart disease or stroke, a new study suggests.

"Migraine should be considered a marker for increased risk of cardiovascular disease, at least in women," said lead researcher Dr. Tobias Kurth, director of the Institute of Public Health at Charité-Universitätsmedizin in Berlin, Germany.

But, Kurth cautioned that this study can't prove that migraines cause heart attack or stroke, only that they may make these events more likely.

Also, men may be similarly affected. "We have no reason to believe that this is limited to women," Kurth said.

Migraines are headaches marked by intense throbbing or pulsing, often accompanied by nausea, vomiting and sensitivity to light and sound. They had previously been linked to an increased risk for stroke, but this new study also ties them to possible heart attack, death and the need for heart surgery, the researchers noted. "Physicians should be aware of the association between migraine and cardiovascular disease, and women with migraine should be evaluated for their risk," Kurth said.

For the study, researchers analyzed data on more than 116,000 U.S. women who took part in the Nurses' Health Study II. At the start of the study, the women were aged 25 to 42, free from heart disease, and were followed from 1989 to 2011.

(Source: HealthDay News)



Recycled cigarette butt bricks slash energy consumption by 58%

Familiar habit: step outside, smoke a cigarette to relieve urban stress, toss what's left on the concrete. This small action, multiplied a few trillion times around the world, produces 1.2 trillion tons of waste. This waste is not strictly organic; mixed in with the plant products are heavy metals that can contaminate land and water.

Even the increased popularity of vaping will do little to combat the increase of cigarette waste, which is predicted to grow by up to 50 percent by 2025. Perhaps inspired by the concrete on which so many butts have been dumped, Dr. Abbas Mohajerani, engineer at RMIT University in Melbourne, has proposed repurposing this waste into bricks for building.

"I have been dreaming for many years about finding sustainable and practical methods for solving the problem of cigarette butt pollution," says Mohajerani. If the material for only 2.5 percent of the global production of bricks was sourced from cigarette butts, it would offset the waste produced by cigarette butts. Bricks produced using cigarette waste are



The resulting bricks are more insulating, which would cut down the cost of heating or cooling a home, and easier to move due to their lighter weight.

cheaper and less energy intensive than traditional bricks.

■ Cigarette butt

The cigarette butts are mixed into traditional clay bricks, reducing the energy required by 58 percent. The resulting bricks are more insulating, which would cut down the cost of heating or cooling a home, and easier to move due to their lighter weight.

Mohajerani believes that his techniques could make a huge dent in the problem of global pollution.

"Incorporating butts into bricks can effectively solve a global litter problem as recycled cigarette butts can be placed in bricks without any fear of leaching or contamination," says Mohajerani. How these cigarette butts will be effectively collected is unclear.

Although the mass production of cigarette butt bricks is still far on the horizon, the work of Mohajerani and his team have helped to clarify a creative solution to an enduring human problem. If we must smoke, let us build something too.

(Source: Inhabitat)

Moon's water came mostly from asteroids, not comets, study says

Icy comets may have a reputation for being the inner solar system's ancient water delivery system, but a new study finds that most of the water in our nearest neighbor, the moon, was actually delivered by asteroids around 4.5 billion to 4.3 billion years ago.

The findings, published in the journal Nature Communications, offer a window on the processes that shaped the moon and gave the Earth much of the water for its oceans — and may shed light on the dynamics of the giant planets in the solar system's early days.

The moon had long been thought to be exceedingly dry, based on rocks brought back by NASA's Apollo lunar missions starting in the late 1960s. But more advanced techniques in recent years have actu-



ally picked out significant signs of water in those samples, said study coauthor David Kring, a planetary scientist at the Lunar and Planetary Institute in Houston.

In fact, he added, though the surface is parched, the lunar interior might actually have about 10,000 to 10 million times more water than the surface seems to hold.

But how exactly could all that water get to the moon and the Earth? Scientists have gone back and forth on whether the water came mainly from comets, which are full of ice but reside far beyond the orbit of Pluto, or asteroids, which are much closer (lying, today, between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter) but thought to be rockier and drier.

(Source: The Los Angeles Times)

Effects of maternal smoking continue long after birth

Early exposure to nicotine can trigger widespread genetic changes that affect formation of connections between brain cells long after birth, a new Yale-led study has found. The finding helps explain why maternal smoking has been linked to behavioral changes such as attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder, addiction and conduct disorder.

Nicotine does this by affecting a master regulator of DNA packaging, which in turn influences activity of genes crucial to the formation and stabilization of synapses between brain cells, according to the study published online May 30 in the journal Nature Neuroscience.

"When this regulator is induced in mice, they pay attention to a stimulus they should ignore," said Marina Picciotto, the Charles B.G. Murphy Professor of Psychiatry, professor in the Child Study Center and the Departments of Neuroscience and Pharmacology, and senior author of the paper.

■ Hyperactivity disorder

An inability to focus is the hallmark of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and other behavioral disorders, which have been linked to maternal smoking and exposure to second-hand smoke. However, scientists did not understand how early environmental exposure to smoking could create behavioral problems years later.

Picciotto's lab found that mice exposed to nicotine during early development did indeed develop behavioral problems that mimic symptoms of attention deficit disorder in humans. They then did extensive genomic screening of mice exposed to nicotine and found higher levels of activity in a key regulator of histone methylation -- a process that controls gene expression by changing the DNA wrapping around chromosomes. The researchers found that genes essential to the creation of brain synapses were heavily affected.

Furthermore, the scientists found that these genetic changes were maintained even in adult mice. However, when researchers inhibited the master regulator of histone methylation, these adult mice were calmer and no longer reacted to a stimulus they should ignore. In a final test, they triggered expression of this regulator in mice never exposed to nicotine, and the mice exhibited behavior that mimicked attention deficit disorder.

"It is exciting to find a signal that could explain the long-lasting effects of nicotine on brain cell structure and behavior," Picciotto said.

(Source: EurekAlert)

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Iraq delays Fallujah operation over civilians safety concerns

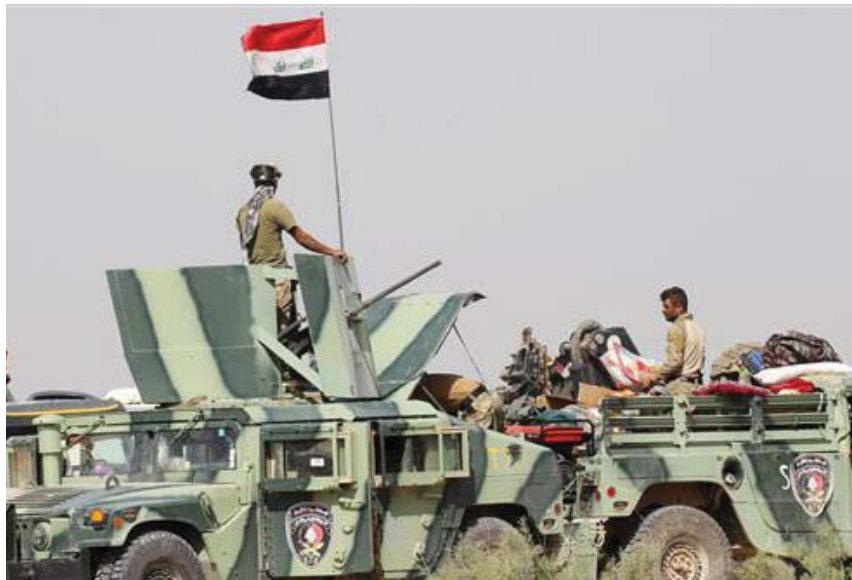
Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi has announced the postponement of the massive military offensive to liberate Fallujah from the grip of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group due to fears for the safety of civilians trapped in the city.

"It would have been possible to end the battle quickly if protecting civilians wasn't among our priorities," Abadi told military commanders at the operations room near the frontline in footage broadcast on state television on Wednesday.

He further noted that the Iraqi army units are stationed "at the outskirts of Fallujah and victory is within reach."

ISIL overran Fallujah in the western Anbar Province in January 2014, six months before the terrorist group proceeded with its offensive, taking more areas in Iraq.

On May 23, the Iraqi military started a large-scale push to drive out the militants from Fallujah, located 65 kilometers (40 miles) west of the capital, Baghdad.



Iraqi commanders say they have killed dozens of ISIL elements since the beginning of the Fallujah liberation operation. Fallujah is believed to be the base

from which militants have staged a campaign of bombings in Baghdad.

Even though the majority of Fallujah's population is believed to have fled dur-

ing six months of siege, 50,000 people are still thought to be holed up with limited access to water, food or healthcare.

Earlier on Wednesday, the United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF) said at least 20,000 children remain in Fallujah.

"We are concerned over the protection of children in the face of extreme violence," representative of the UN children's agency in Iraq, Peter Hawkins, said in a statement, adding, "Children face the risk of forced recruitment into the fighting" and "separation from their families" if they manage to escape the city.

Gruesome violence has plagued the northern and western parts of Iraq ever since ISIL launched an offensive in the Arab state two years ago.

The Iraqi military and volunteer fighters are engaged in joint military operations to win back militant-held regions.

The Iraqi military recaptured the city of Ramadi, Anbar's provincial capital, in December 2015.

(Source: agencies)

Two-day humanitarian truce agreed in Syria's Darayya

A two-day ceasefire has been agreed in the Syrian town of Darayya near the capital, Damascus, starting from Wednesday to allow the delivery of humanitarian aid to the residents.

"On the initiative of Russia and in agreement with the leadership of Syria and the American side a 'regime of silence' has been introduced for 48 hours on June 1 2016 from 00:01 am in the settlement of Darayya to ensure the safe delivery of humanitarian aid to the population," said Lieutenant General Sergei Kuralenko, the head of the Russian coordination center in Syria.

On May 24, Russia called for a three-day regime of silence in the conflict zones of Eastern Ghouta and Darayya near Damascus, urging the United States to push militants under its influence to join the truce.

Syria has been gripped by a foreign-backed militancy since March 2011. According to United Nations Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura, over 400,000 people have been killed in the conflict.

A ceasefire brokered by the U.S. and Russia went into effect on February 27 in Syria, but it does not apply to the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) and al-Nusra Front (Jabhat al-Nusra) terrorist groups.

The Syrian army has vowed to press ahead with its counter-terror military operations and drive terrorists out of their major positions.

Since September 30, 2015, Russia has been conducting airstrikes against ISIL and other terrorist groups in Syria at the Syrian government's request.

The strikes have killed hundreds of ISIL terrorists and other foreign-backed militants and inflicted heavy material damage on them.

The U.S. and its allies have also been carrying out airstrikes in Syria purportedly against ISIL positions since September 2014. The Syrian government says the airstrikes have targeted the country's infrastructure in many instances and done little to stop the advances of terrorists.

(Source: Press TV)

Torkham restrictions stir Pakistan-Afghanistan tension

Pakistan has tightened security at its border with Afghanistan, a move it says will prevent fighters from entering.

The Torkham crossing is usually used by about 15,000 Afghans every day. But now it will be closed to anyone who does not have a visa and a valid passport.

The crossing is a way of making ends meet for many. It is usually packed with cargo-filled trucks, minibuses crammed with passengers - including the sick and elderly.

Some walk, from entire families and merchants to children, often on their own.

New regulations mean Afghans living along the border, which stretches 2,000km, would need a visa.

When Al Jazeera's Mohamed Vall tried to film from the Afghan side, Pakistan border police closed the crossing when they saw the camera.

There are also fears that the new measures will stoke a historical dispute over this border.

In late 19th century, Mortimer Du-

rand, a British colonial diplomat, drew a line in the sand which Afghans say had cut a third of their territory and placed it in Pakistan, by then part of former British India.

It included the present Pakistani provinces of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Afghans never came to terms with the arrangement that was signed off by an Afghan king at the time.

"I blame the Afghan authorities at that time," Faridon Momand, an Afghan MP said.

Some of Faridon's family members are prominent politicians in Pakistan and their native village is divided in two by the Durand Line.

Khan Wali Shinwari, an Afghan army general, says the Durand is "a line on paper with no markings" on the ground.

With the Pakistani and Afghan governments accusing each other of harboring armed groups across the border, there is little sign that the tension will ease any time soon.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

Report: ISIL losing in Iraq, Syria; gaining in Libya

The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group is losing ground in Iraq and Syria, but Libya may be the group's next key battleground, according to a United Nations report obtained by Al Jazeera.

The report on the threat of ISIL, which has not been publicly released yet, says the global threat emanating from the armed terrorist group remains high and continues to diversify.

In the aftermath of the Paris attacks last year, the UN Security Council asked for regular reports on ISIL from Ban Ki-moon, the UN secretary-general.

While it is true that ISIL and former Gaddafi loyalist forces have expanded territory in Libya around the eastern city of Sirte in recent months, since the release of this report to Al Jazeera things have changed on the ground.

Several Libyan militia forces, backed by British and French Special Forces, have managed to push the group back into Sirte. The fight against ISIL is so far concentrating on a series of checkpoints based around the outskirts of the city.

One militia based in Misrata captured a checkpoint 50km west of Sirte from ISIL just a few days ago. Other militias have also taken checkpoints. The checkpoints are crucial as they allow Libyan forces to take and hold ground in preparation for a push into Sirte, and to establish a supply route for that fight.

Western air strikes have played a crucial role as have Special Forces troops. Libyan and Western sources have



said the Special Forces - American, British and French - have played a limited role in backing Libyan forces. One Libyan source suggests that the Western troops help call in air strikes.

But the Western role has been kept secret from the public. In Britain it hasn't been discussed in parliament and Michael Fallon, the defense secretary, has denied any role for British forces in Libya when answering a question to a parliamentary committee in late May. A key British MP has accused his government of misleading the public over the British role in Libya.

According to the findings, there has been military setbacks for ISIL in Syria and Iraq, two countries where it has seized territory.

Oil revenues the terrorist group earns in these countries significantly have also decreased as a result of the air strikes by the United States-led coalition.

Ban says in the report that ISIL continues to earn money through taxation in the areas it controls and extortion of civilians in the two countries.

The report also suggests that ISIL is looking for potential alternative regions and one of those places is Libya.

There is a "real threat" from ISIL in Libya, the UN reports say, adding that the group is trying to use the country as a base to spread into other areas in Africa.

According to one UN Security Council member, which is not named in the report, ISIL has been raising money by selling oil from captured production facilities in Libya and using the country to distribute money to other groups around the world.

A unity government has been formed in Libya recently and replaced two rival administrations - one based in Tripoli, the other in the eastern city of Tobruk - that have been battling each other for more than a year.

The international community hopes that the unity government can bring together Libya's armed factions and tackle ISIL there.

However, the new government faces a tough task integrating Libya's complex web of armed groups and has failed to win support from key political and military factions in the east.

ISIL has presence along some 250km of Mediterranean coast on either side of Sirte in Libya and it is fighting to extend it further.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

Deadly attacks target UN peacekeepers in Mali's Gao

➔ The list will go on for good. During his era as the new prime minister, he will focus on economics as we can guess from the AK Party members elected for the MKYK (Central Decision Board) with the majority economy-rooted. Therefore, Turkey is expecting to encounter radical economic reforms. He will shift more towards an understanding of growth and be investment oriented. A special "substructure fund" will be established for this purpose. The number of foreign students will increase with the help of supplementary incentives in universities. Also, a qualified workforce

flow to Turkey will be encouraged during his power.

PM Yildirim's statements regarding foreign policy give a clue that important advances will occur, "We'll increase the number of our friends and we'll decrease the number of our enemies. The history gives us very important responsibilities. We'll either discharge this responsibility today or we'll forever feel the sin of the disappointment in our hearts." It is important for Turkey to improve the relations with neighboring countries and normalize relations with the countries it has issues with such as its long-term former

friend Russia. Additionally, since Turkey and Iran are two key players in the region, they should focus on finding new ways of collaboration. They can be more than friends or brothers under the favor of collaboration agreements and mutual visits, which will produce a very positive impact for the others. Both can lift the visas and form an exemplary alliance.

History changes around the clock

The governments and politicians always change what always remains is solidarity and friendship. Sometimes politicians fall into the trap of imitating what was done in history with the belief that

history repeats itself. However, history does not necessarily repeat itself, our present world changes constantly. Systems usually change over time. If politicians find themselves making the same mistakes like the others before them, they are doomed to fail. Usually it is because they act emotionally with the biases carried over from the past. Our world should always move ahead to a bright future with lots of positive changes. Our era is one of science, solidarity, love, reason, and faith. Triumph only comes with faith and solidarity; there is no other way of achieving it.

VIENNA (TASS) — Russia's oil major Lukoil is studying two projects in Iran, the company's president Vagit Alekperov said Wednesday, adding that Lukoil is also interested in returning to the Anaran project.

"There are two agreements and there is an area of mutual interests. We're interested in several sites there, though we're currently involved in preliminary studies of the documents submitted by Iran," he said.

"Of course we're interested in returning to our historic projects," Alekperov said and mentioned "Anaran implemented jointly with Statoil" as an example.

PROMOTIONAL ITEM

Determining jurisdiction of banks' board members urged

TEHRAN TIMES Chief Executive of EN (Eqtesad-e Novin) Bank Hassan Mo'tamedi called for determining a clear framework to assess competency of the Board members of banks in the country.

Speaking in Monetary and Currency Policies' Seminar, he said: "From corporate governance point of view, there is a lawyer and client relationship between Board of Directors and shareholders, the issue of which should be taken into consideration."

While emphasizing the issue that full implementing principles of corporate governance is impossible in state-owned banks, he said: "The Board of Directors has a complex definition in public banks, so that undefined management structure forces the Board of Directors to enter executive affairs simultaneously, based on which, definition of relationship between executive and policymaking pillars for attaining transparency and accountability will be scratched."

Like gradual move taken at Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO), banking system of the country should take the said issue into serious consideration i.e. confirming competency and jurisdiction of Board members prior to introducing them as Board members, he maintained.

In the end, Chief Executive of EN (Eqtesad-e Novin) Bank Hassan Mo'tamedi called for setting up consultation centers at banks in order to offer quality consultation services to shareholders.

It should be noted that the Monetary and Currency Policies' Seminar was also attended by Hamid Tehranfar Expert Official in Monetary and Banking Affairs, Dr. Gholam-Reza Zaalpour Member of Higher Council of Stock Market, Dr. Yousef Padeganeh an Expert in Monetary and Banking Affairs, Mohammad-Ali Sahmani Asl Chief Executive of Tose'eh Ta'avon Bank and Samad Aziznejad Expert Official at Iranian Parliament Research Center.

Extender and PIG carrier device designed by expert engineers

TEHRAN TIMES Expert engineers in northeast region managed to design and manufacture PIG extender and carrier device.

According to a report released by Public Relations Department of Iranian Oil Pipeline and Telecommunications Company (IOPTC), Head of Oil Installations Department in Northeast region in Mashhad, Hamid Zabihi announced the above statement and said: "In order to facilitate carrying PIG, an equipped device had been designed by Energy Conservation Committee at Imam Taqi Oil Transfer Center of the region, so that manufacturing efficient sample of the device was put atop agenda after exertion of some changes on its prototype."

Given the above issue, two expert staff named "Mohammad Gholami" and "Karim Elahi" in Transport Department of the region managed to design and manufacture PIG carrier and extending device successfully in 90 man/hour."

All scrap iron, aluminum and steel parts were used for manufacturing the device especially in the year named after "Resistance Economy, Action and Implementation", the official added.

Observing environmental and safety standards are considered as salient and important features of the manufactured device, he said, adding: "For this purpose, steel and elastic plates were used in order to prevent materials from emitting."

It should be noted that average three PIGs are received monthly in Mashhad installations.

Once the device is put into operation, less manpower will be needed to run the device, based on which, materials will be received and carried away with more precision, he ended.

A glance at salient geopolitical situation of Maku Free Zone

TEHRAN TIMES Located in West Azarbaijan Province in northwest of Iran, Maku Free Zone is located on a land area as large as 500,000 ha and is world's second largest free zone. It has 140-km common borders with the autonomous Nakhichevan region (Azerbaijan) and some 130-km long sea and land border with Turkey. The Zone is located on crossroad of world's important trade corridors. As the main land border between Iran and Turkey, Bazargan Customs Office is located in this zone and functions as the gateway for transiting goods to Europe and the other way round.

The Zone is connected to the autonomous Nakhichevan region at Poldasht Customs Office and to Turkey at Sari Customs Office. Approximately, 1,000 Turks commute through this border crossing point every day. The Zone is home to rich metal and nonmetal ore mines which are among other natural capacities of the region and can strengthen economic development based on supply chain of neighboring countries particularly strong desires of Turkish businessmen and artisans to participate in manufacturing and industrial activities of the Zone are other geopolitical advantages of the Zone.

Bankers stress broadening cooperation between SINA Bank and Turkish banks

TEHRAN TIMES The ways for broadening and enhancing cooperation between Iran's SINA Bank and Turkish banks were discussed in an expert-level session.

Deputy Investment and Intl. Affairs of SINA Bank Saroukhani and Currency Operation Manager of the bank Nourollahi in their visit to Turkey stressed enhancement of banking relations with Turkish Halkbank, Active and Zera'at (Agriculture) banks.

It should be noted that senior officials of SINA Bank held separate talks with CEOs of the Turkish banks in relevant issues.

For their parts, chief executives of Turkish banks expressed their satisfaction for broadening mutual cooperation and welcomed brokerage relationship and interactions in this respect.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



Remember that the most valuable antiques are dear old friends.
H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

LEARN ENGLISH

Eating Genetically Modified Foods

■ **Ralph: What's that?**
Nicky: It's a bigger and better tomato. It's been **genetically modified**.
Ralph: You're not going to eat that, are you?
Nicky: Of course I am. I'm making a salad. Want one?
Ralph: No way. I don't want to eat something that's been **genetically engineered** in a laboratory. Who knows what kind of strange DNA it has.
Nicky: It's perfectly safe. It's been modified to grow faster, have more **nutrients**, and be **resistant** to disease and **pests**.
Ralph: And it may contain strange **mutations** as part of its **genetic makeup** that they didn't tell you about. I really wouldn't eat that if I were you.
Nicky: Where did you get this **aversion** to genetically modified foods? Scientists and farmers have always used **selective breeding** with animals and crops to bring you bigger and better food. This is nothing different.
Ralph: Of course it is. And just because it's bigger, doesn't mean it's better. I'll eat food that's been modified by the only person I **trust**.
Nicky: Who's that?
Ralph: **Mother Nature!**

(Source: [eslpod.com](#))

■ **Words & phrases**
genetically modified food: it can be defined as organisms (i.e. plants, animals or microorganisms) in which the genetic material (DNA) has been altered in a way that does not occur naturally by mating and/or natural recombination
genetically engineered: the deliberate, controlled manipulation of the genes in an organism with the intent of making that organism better in some way
nutrient: a chemical or food that provides what is needed for plants or animals to live and grow
resistant: not damaged or affected by something
pest: a small animal or insect that destroys crops or food supplies
mutation: a change in the genetic structure of an animal or plant that makes it different from others of the same kind
genetic makeup: it refers to the genes that determine what you look like and what physical characteristics you have
aversion: a strong dislike of something or someone; hatred
selective breeding: the process of choosing only plants and animals with desirable characteristics to reproduce
trust: to believe that someone is honest or will not do anything bad or wrong
Mother Nature: used to talk about nature, especially when it is thought of as a force that affects people and the world

QUIZ OF THE DAY

162) What does the idiom mean?
I only have eyes for you.
a) I don't like looking somewhere
b) you have nice eyes
c) I don't find others attractive
(Quiz No. 161 answer: b)

PHRASAL VERB

Stick with

Meaning: continue using or doing something
For example: I'll stick with this grammar book because it has everything I need.

ENGLISH PROVERB

Every rose has its thorn

Explanation: every good thing has an unpleasant side



Iranian Space Agency to launch environmental monitoring satellites

SOCIETY TEHRAN — The Iranian Space Agency (ISA) signed a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Environment (DoE) on Tuesday setting out on lunching three environmental monitoring satellites.

To enhance the environmental safety in the country the MOU was signed between ISA director Mohsen Bahrami and DoE deputy director Farhad Dabiri.

The three satellites are designed for detecting forest fires, observing the Earth's vegetation, and monitoring river-sides etc., said an official with ISA.

Homayoun Sadr noted that "we have already cooperated with agriculture, energy, and communication and information technology ministers and we are entering into cooperation with the De-

partment of Environment as well."

Food and water safety, sustainable development, environment assessment, and earth monitoring are of the issues the two organizations have agreed upon by signing the aforesaid MOU, Sadr highlighted.

Environmental monitoring satellites are kinds of Earth observation satellite that can assist environmental monitoring by detecting changes in the Earth's vegetation, atmospheric trace gas content, sea state, ocean color, and ice fields. By monitoring vegetation changes over time, droughts can be monitored by comparing the current vegetation state to its long term average.

ISA is an organization affiliated with the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology.



Mohsen Bahrami (2nd L) and Farhad Dabiri (2nd R)are signing the MoU.

One third of schools in Iran not earthquake resistant: minister

SOCIETY TEHRAN — One third of the schools in Iran are not earthquake resistant and would easily collapse by an earthquake of magnitude 5, Education Minister Ali-Asghar Fani said on Tuesday.

Fani made the remarks in a festival for the philanthropists who donate money for school construction here on Tuesday, Fars news agency reported.

"We need to make a move towards retrofitting

schools' buildings. The government and philanthropist can help in doing so," the minister explained.

He stated that the current condition of the schools is scheduled to be improved by the end of the 6th five-year development plan (2021).

Last year, philanthropists spent 7.5 trillion rials (nearly \$215 million) on constructing new schools and the number is expected to increase to 10 trillion rials (nearly \$285

million) in this year, he added.

Out of 13.5 million students 2.5 million are studying at the schools built by philanthropists, he said, adding, in general one fifth of the classes are built by contributions made by such benefactors.

Since the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran (1979), seven classes have been built by philanthropists nationwide on average per day, Fani noted.

Kayak completes solo voyage from Australia to New Zealand

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP) — Stuart Cleary set out in late 2014 to paddle solo from Australia to New Zealand. But in the end, it was his homemade kayak that completed the 2,000-kilometer (1,200-mile) journey on its own.

Just hours into the trip, Cleary ran into equipment problems. Later, his kayak started taking on water, and he was forced to abandon the vessel before being rescued at sea. Eighteen months later, the kayak has washed up on a New Zealand beach close to where Cleary had intended to make landfall.

Nathan Marshall said he was taking his dogs for a run on Muriwai Beach near Auckland on Wednesday morning when he found the barnacle-encrusted kayak. He approached it cautiously.

"I thought there was going to be a body," he said by phone.

Instead, he found a vessel that was stained and battered but remarkably intact considering its odyssey. Inside the cabin were remnants of the failed voyage: rusted cans of food, a radio, a waterlogged first-aid kit.

Marshall posted a message seeking

information about the vessel on a community Facebook page and within a few hours was talking to Cleary in Australia.

"It's just incredible, just unbelievable," Cleary told The Associated Press by phone from his Gold Coast home. "It seems like the kayak had a mind of its own. If only I'd known that it knew the way."

Cleary, 54, a former oil-field diver, had spent four years training and preparing for his voyage.

He designed and built the 6-meter (20-foot) kayak, using a wooden mold that he covered in high-grade foam and layered with fiberglass. He included a cabin that was just long enough for him to sleep in.

Cleary initially had wanted to circumnavigate the Tasman Sea, but changed his plans due to the weather. And nobody had ever completed a solo, unassisted kayak crossing from Australia to New Zealand.

He left in December 2014 from the town of Ballina in New South Wales with food to last 70 days, hoping to reach land within a month.

But 12 hours later, Cleary's GPS device started failing. Then it was his steering rudder. He turned back to the Australian



In this photo provided by Nathan Marshall, a kayak lays on Muriwai Beach, New Zealand, Wednesday, June 1, 2016.

coast, only to get hit by heavy seas. At one point, he opened the hatch and a wave crashed in.

"Everything went pear-shaped," he

said.

When rescuers arrived, the waves were too large for them to tow or retrieve the kayak, so they abandoned it. Cleary said he figured it would wash up in Australia or circle about and sink in the notoriously rough Tasman Sea.

Six months after the rescue, Cleary tossed out the trolley he'd used for transporting the kayak, giving up hope that he'd ever see it again.

But on Wednesday, the kayak was found washed ashore just 25 kilometers (16 miles) from the entrance to Auckland's Manukau Harbour, where Cleary was initially headed.

Cleary said he plans to visit the farm later this week, although this time he'll be traveling to New Zealand by plane. He said the kayak will likely need to be thrown away, but first he wants to see if there's anything he can learn from the damage it sustained.

That's because he's considering making a second crossing attempt.

"It feels like unfinished business," Cleary said. "Particularly now that the bloody kayak beat me there."

Seattle's 'man in tree' sent to psychiatric hospital

A man who spent 25 hours high atop a sequoia tree in downtown Seattle in March has been found incompetent to stand trial on a malicious mischief charge.

Cody Lee Miller has been held on \$50,000 bail since he climbed the tree March 22 and ignored police efforts to coax him down, throwing branches and apples at responders, before climbing down.

KOMO-TV reports Miller will be sent to the state's largest psychiatric hospital for a 45-day evaluation with another competency hearing set for July 11.

The drama sparked intense interest on social media, with new Twitter accounts and the hashtag #ManInTree trending.

Miller's mother, Lisa Gossett of Wasilla, Alaska, said previously the family has tried to get him help for mental illness but was told there was nothing anyone could do unless he posed a danger to himself or others.

(Source: [Yahoo News](#))

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ↔ چ

Iran to join insulin producers club in four years

Iran will join the five countries producing insulin once the Pars Novo Nordisk pharmaceutical company comes on stream in the next four years, said the vice president and general manager of Novo Nordisk.

Cem Ozenc made the remarks in an international conference on foreign investment here on Sunday.

After the construction of the Pars Novo Nordisk in Iran, the country can supply its product both to the domestic market and to Western Asia, Mehr news agency quoted Ozenc as saying.

ایران تا چهار سال آینده به جمع کشورهای تولید کننده انسولین می پیوندد

دکتر «جم اوزنج»، مدیرعامل شرکت نوونوردیسک پارس، روز یکشنبه در همایش بین المللی سرمایه گذاری خارجی گفت: با بهره برداری از شرکت دارویی نوونوردیسک پارس تا چهار سال آینده، ایران به جمع ۵ کشور تولید کننده انسولین می پیوندد.

به گزارش خبرگزاری مهر، اوزنج گفت: با بهره برداری کامل از این واحد صنعتی تولیدی، ضمن تامین نیاز دارویی بیماران ایرانی، امکان تامین داروهای مورد نیاز بیماران در کشورهای غرب آسیا نیز بوسیله این واحد تولیدی فراهم می شود.

Iran volleyball team beats Japan at WOQT

T T SPORTS Iran defeated Japan 3-1 (25-20, 19-25, 25-22, 27-25) at the Men's World Olympic Qualification Tournament at Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium on Wednesday.

Seyed Mohammed Mousavi scored half of the total Iranian block output of 16. The talented middle blocker intimidated Japan's key players Kunihiro Shimizu and Yuki Ishikawa particularly in the fourth set. Shahram Mamoudi likewise operated the Iranian offence and finished with 22 points, including 21 attacks and a block. Shimizu top scored again for Japan with 23 points, followed by Ishikawa, who scored 18 points, fivb.com wrote.

Iran gained control of the tempo in the first set as their players were determined to contain strong Japanese hitters Shimizu and Ishikawa. The two Japanese hitters still managed to notch some points but their scoring efforts could not completely stage a comeback in the first set. Iran ruled the opening set 25-20. Japan responded with a victory in the second set, as Ishikawa and Shimizu got some scoring support from their teammates. They secured the set at 25-19 with an excellent block.

Iran led again in the third frame but their setter Mir Saeid Marouf started to feel the pressure and committed some errors that slowed their offence down. As Japan started to make a run before the second technical



timeout, Iran regrouped and protected their lead. Iran further increased their lead as Marouf found his great rhythm back to set-up Mahmoudi and Mousavi on offence.

Iran secured the set 25-22 for a 2-1 set-advantage. In the fourth set, Iran had some defensive lapses that allowed Japan to take the lead at 16-14. Japan still led at 20-17 but Iran

managed to tie the game as Mousavi scored crucial blocks on Ishikawa. Japan became predictable, which made it easier for Mousavi to defend the net. Iran took set and match 27-25.

Iran wheelchair basketball schedule announced for Rio Paralympics



T T SPORTS Iran wheelchair basketball team will play its first game in the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games against Germany on September 8.

Iran then play England and USA on the 9th and 10th, respectively in Pool B.

The Iranian team will play the other two group teams against host Brazil and Algeria on September 11 and 12.

The International Wheelchair Basketball

Federation (IWBF) will be held from September 8 to 17.

The first game will tip off on 8 September at the Rio Olympic Arena, with the England women taking on Canada, and the England men facing Algeria. Other preliminary sessions will simultaneously take place in the Carioca Arena 1.

The women's medal events will be held on 16 September in the Rio Olympic Arena, and the men's medal events on the following day.

Iran football 5-a-side can advance to the final, coach says



T T SPORTS Iran football 5-a-side coach Javad Felfeli says that they can qualify for the final match at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games.

Iran has been pitted against host Brazil, Morocco and Turkey in Group A.

Group B consists of Argentina, China, Mexico and Russia.

The top two teams in each group will qualify for the semi-final.

"Our group is very difficult because Iran has been drawn with South American champion Brazil, European champion

Turkey and African champion Morocco. It means we have a difficult task ahead of us," Felfeli told Paralympic.ir.

"Iran finished in sixth place in London and we are going to get better results in Rio. I think we can advance to the semi-final and I believe that Iran can even book a place in the final," he added.

Iran football 5-a-side will leave Tehran to participate in a warm-up tournament in Brazil, where the team has been pooled with Brazil A, Mexico and Japan in Group A.

Iranian weightlifter Kianoush Rostami sets two world record



T T SPORTS Iran's weightlifter Kianoush Rostami sets two new World Record in the clean & jerk and total for the 85kg weight class.

Rostami lifted 175kg in the snatch and 220kg in the clean & jerk, bettering the world record by 2 kg in the clean and jerk.

The new 85kg total record — 395kg — breaks that

of Andrei Rybakou, who totalled 394kg at the 2008 Olympics (but lost on bodyweight to Lu Yong, who also totalled 394kg).

"I am so happy to set two world records since to earn the achievements I trained hard," Rostami said.

The Fajr Cup IWF Grand Prix has brought 32 weightlifters from eight countries together.

New system could help USA enjoy strong Copa America

Jürgen Klinsmann loves to experiment with his teams — U.S. national team fans and players have learned this over the years. Be it position changes for players or experiments with formations, Klinsmann has never been afraid to try new things, even if, at times, some such experiments feel very forced.

Klinsmann's latest experiment feels different. The United States' deployment of a 4-3-3 formation in recent matches has the team looking very comfortable, and the U.S. could wind up reaping considerable rewards at Copa America because of it.

"Ultimately, the ability for us to be able to play in different ways, to do different things on different days is important, but in the last few games there has certainly been a lot of good that has come from playing this way," U.S. midfielder Michael Bradley told Goal USA of the team's recent use

of the 4-3-3. "Now, we start to prepare and make sure that we're ready in every possible way for this game and fine-tune how we work as a group."

Klinsmann tried to downplay the impact of the team using a 4-3-3 formation.

"There is no end formation that we are going for because, as we often talk about, the modern era of soccer is a fluid type of game where everybody defends and everybody joins the attack," Klinsmann said on Tuesday. "No matter what formation or shape you prefer, it kind of leads to the same goals. No matter what system you want to choose."

"With a 4-3-3, and based on the players that we have, this is definitely interesting to see because we have now wingers that we maybe a couple of years ago didn't have," he added. "So we can try to bring their strengths out in that formation. The advantage of a 4-3-3 in that way, is it goes into a



4-5-1 defensively. That makes us a little bit more compact, and makes it easier to press the ball."

(Source: Goal)

FOOTBALL

Alireza Mansourian takes charge of Esteghlal football team

T T SPORTS Naft Terhan head coach Alireza Mansourian was appointed as Iranian giant Esteghlal on Wednesday.

Mansourian replaced Parviz Mazloumi in Esteghlal football team on a one-year contract for an undisclosed fee.

Mazloumi failed to win the Iranian league and finished in third place behind Esteghlal Khuzestan and arch rival Persepolis.

Under management of Mazloumi, Esteghlal lost to Zob Ahan 5-4 in penalty shootout in the Iran's Hazfi Cup final.

Dragan Skocic, Javad Zarrincheh and Majid Namjoo Motlagh were also shortlisted for the post.

Mansourian narrowly missed the 2013-14 IPL title on the final day to finish third while he led Naft to fifth place in 2014-15 season.

French Open organizers under fire as backlog grows

Fans spent more time looking at the murky Parisian sky than watching tennis on Tuesday as French Open organizers were accused of "not caring about the players" after the event was disrupted by more rain following the previous day's washout.

Czech seventh seed Thomas Berdych summed up everyone's frustration on a day when nine hours of play was lost by tweeting: "Hey @AustralianOpen can you send us one roof here to Paris?! You have 3 down there."



The inability to play under cover, with Roland Garros being the only one of the four grand slam venues that does not have a court with a retractable roof, certainly proved costly for Agnieszka Radwanska and Simona Halep -- fourth-round losers in the only two matches that were completed on day 10.

With the fixture list piling up, the women in top seed Serena Williams' half of the draw would now need to play on four successive days to win the title if the final takes place on Saturday as scheduled -- though more rain is forecast.

World number one Novak Djokovic and the men in his half of the draw, including Berdych, can also forget about enjoying the traditional rest days between each round as they would have to play on four of the next five days to contest Sunday's final.

Radwanska, the world number two, and 2014 runner-up Halep -- who both started their last-16 matches on Sunday -- were forced to play in misty rain on Tuesday as organizers made a desperate attempt to clear the huge backlog.

"No one cares about the players in my opinion," sixth seed Halep said after she was beaten 7-6(0) 6-3 by Australian Sam Stosur in a battle of former finalists.

"It was impossible to play. To play tennis matches during the rain is a bit too much. I was close to getting injured with my back... but no one cares."

Radwanska had been leading Bulgaria's Tsvetana Pironkova 6-2 3-0 when rain halted play on Sunday.

When the match resumed more than 40 hours later, the Polish second seed suffered a monumental meltdown as she lost 10 successive games in a 2-6 6-3 6-3 defeat by an opponent ranked 100 places below her.

"I'm just so surprised and angry that we have to play in the rain. I mean, it's not a \$10,000 tournament. It's a grand slam," said Radwanska, the highest seed to exit the tournament.

"How can you allow players to play in the rain? I cannot play in that condition. They really don't care what we think."

BACK TO THE LOCKER ROOM

Ernest Gulbis and David Goffin did get on court for their fourth round showdown but took matters into their own hands by marching back into the locker room even before organizers had a chance to make a call.

It was a decision that Halep welcomed. "Good. Well done to them," the Romanian said as she gave them a thumbs-up.

While matches at the three other majors -- Wimbledon (grass), Australian and U.S. Opens (both hardcourts) -- are halted at the first sight of any raindrops, the brittle claycourt surface at Roland Garros means competitors are often told to play on in drizzle.

Roger Federer did just that in the 2009 men's final when he beat Robin Soderling to win his solitary French Open trophy.

Unsurprisingly, Pironkova did not think Tuesday's conditions were unplayable, though she acknowledged they were far from ideal.

"Well, it's happened before, of course. We have played in all sorts of conditions," said the Bulgarian, a semi-finalist at Wimbledon in 2010.

"Usually if the court is not fit for play, like if it's slippery, they would cancel the match right away. But today the court was still hanging in, it was okay. We could have played, and so we did."

Radwanska and Halep's exit meant that at least five of the top eight women's seeds failed to make their allotted quarter-final spots.

Only two of 10 scheduled matches were completed as the claycourt major suffered its sixth day of showers, with Djokovic -- leading Spaniard Roberto Bautista Agut 3-6 6-4 4-1 -- one of 16 players still stranded in the fourth round.

(Source: Reuters)

