

TEHRAN TIMES



Iran condemns deadly gun attack in Munich

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Iran has drawn up plan to undo nuclear work if deal is violated: Salehi

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Iran has drawn up plans to bring its nuclear activities to the previous stage if the West refrains from honoring its obligations under the nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, nuclear chief Ali Akbar Salehi has said.

Under the deal, struck July last year between Iran and the 5+1 group - the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia plus Germany -, Tehran agreed to slow down its nuclear activities in exchange for the lifting of sanctions. The pact went into effect in January 2016. However, some measures are being taken by the U.S. Congress which may jeopardize the international agreement.

"Necessary preparations have been made of for a quick reversibility in case of the violation of the JCPOA by the other side," Salehi said in an interview with the IRIB published on Saturday.

Salehi's deputy Behrouz Kamalvandi has also said that Iran is capable of restoring its nuclear activities to the pre-nuclear deal in a span of 45 days.

"In a month-and-half we can increase our centrifuges and (nuclear) material," Kamalvandi told the Mehr news agency published on Saturday.

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Tehran calls S. Arabia 'founding father of Daesh, al Qaeda'

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Reacting to a recent barrage of anti-Iranian remarks by Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir, the Iranian Foreign Ministry on Saturday lambasted the Saudi kingdom, calling it "the

founding father of Daesh and al Qaeda."

During a lecture on terrorism organized by the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Brussels and hosted by Egmont Research Center, Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir had ac-

cused Tehran of expansionist policies and "harboring" terrorism.

The acid comments were rejected by Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qasemi as "absurd, unfounded, and repetitious."

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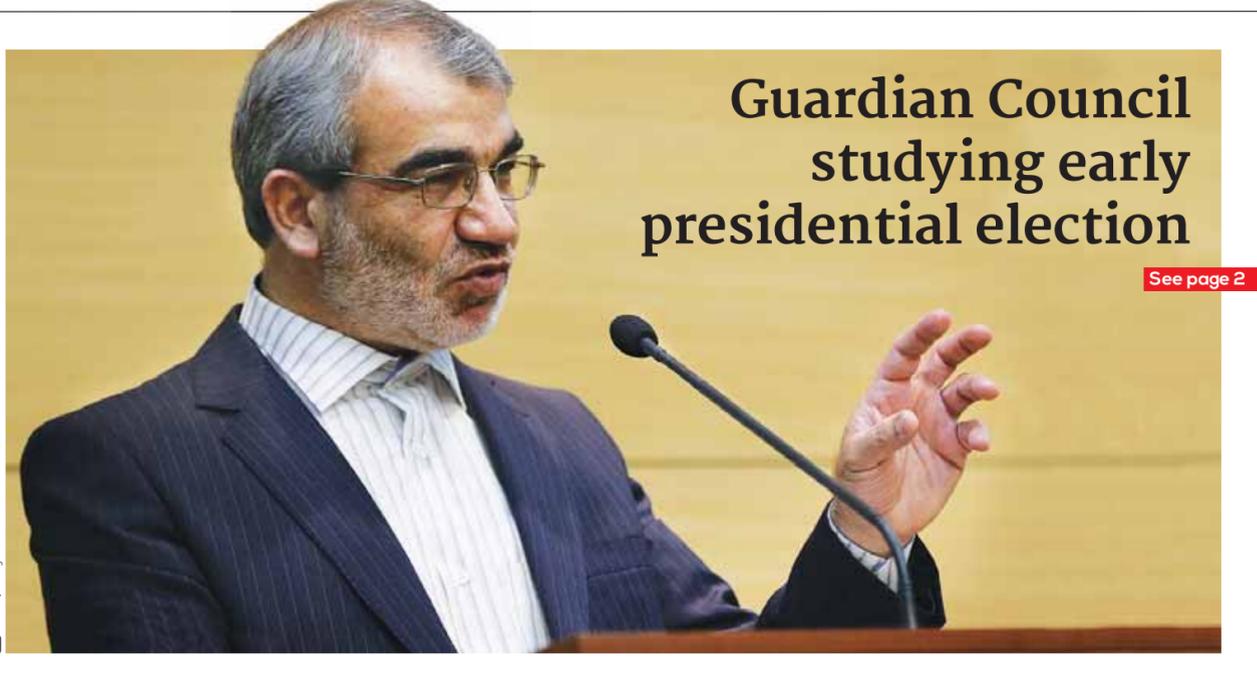
European Union deepens economic cooperation with Iran

A delegation of European Union officials visited Iran from 11-14 July to discuss deeper cooperation in the fields of economic policy, trade, investment and finance. The European Union is the largest integrated market in the world, comprising over 500 million people and represents a major opportunity for two-way economic and investment flows.

The visit was led by Eric Mamer, Director at the European Commission Directorate General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs. Meetings were held with counterparts in the Iranian administration, including the Ministry of Industry, Mines and Trade; the Ministry of Economy and Finance; the Central Bank; the Customs Administration and the Iranian Chamber of Commerce. Members of the EU delegation also included officials from the Commission Services for Trade, Economy and Finance, Taxation and Customs, External Action Service and representatives from the European Central Bank and the European Investment Bank.

As recently stated by the High Representative, Federica Mogherini, at the time of the high level visit to Tehran on 16 April, the European Union actively supports Iran's integration in the world economy and its membership in the World Trade Organization.

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Guardian Council studying early presidential election

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Rouhani to visit Azerbaijan on August 8

POLITICAL TEHRAN — President Hassan Rouhani plans to visit Baku on August 8 to attend the Iran-Azerbaijan-Russia trilateral summit.

The meeting will be held at presidential level. Rouhani is scheduled to meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ilham Aliyev, the Azeri president, during his visit.

Expansion of relations and regional issues will be discussed in the summit.

"President Rouhani will depart for Baku on eight of next month (August) for a meeting with presidents of Russia and Azerbaijan. The meeting will be held on the invitation of the Azerbaijan president, the opportunities for cooperation between the countries will be discussed," Rouhani's press office told Sputnik.

11m underprivileged provided with health insurance: minister

SOCIETY TEHRAN — Some 11 million people living in underprivileged areas are now under the coverage of health insurance services within the framework of healthcare reform plan, Health Minister Hassan Qazizadeh-Hashemi said.

"The out-of-pocket expenses for those who are provided by the insurance totals 6 percent in urban and 3 percent in rural areas," the minister explained.

He made the remarks during the inauguration ceremony of 700 hospital beds in the north-central Alborz province, IRNA reported on Saturday.

He further noted that the government is not capable of financing all projects and that the private sector must participate in implementing such plans.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Hashemi stated that "we need some 100,000 additional hospital beds in the country."

Iran's healthcare reform plan is a scheme aiming at decreasing the out-of-pocket expenses for the patients, promoting natural birth, supporting underprivileged patients suffering from rare or incurable diseases, etc. which is being administered in Iran currently.

Iranian missile program has nothing to do with JCPOA: American professor

INTERVIEW
By Javad Heirannia

TEHRAN — A professor of the State University of Minnesota says the Iranian missile program mentioned in the UN secretary general's report "has nothing to do with" the nuclear deal signed last year between Iran and great powers.

"The Iranian missile program has nothing to do with the JCPOA, and so it cannot be in contradiction to that agreement," William O. Beeman tells the Tehran Times.

Following is the text of the interview:

Ban Ki-moon, the UN secretary general, in his recent report claimed that the Iranian missile program is "not consistent" with the spirit of the Joint

Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Even the U.S. and Russia criticized Ban for the report, saying he had overstepped his mandate. Please explain.

A: I don't know why Secretary Ban Ki-moon has issued this incorrect opinion. The Iranian missile program has nothing to do with the JCPOA, and so it cannot be in contradiction to that agreement. However, some people have interpreted the missile program as pertaining to another UN sanction provision. I think that the Secretary's remarks need to be examined in context, however my opinion is that he was mistaken.

"I don't know why Secretary Ban Ki-Moon has issued this incorrect opinion," Minnesota professor says.



The Associated Press recently claimed it has obtained a document that outlines Tehran's plans to expand its uranium

enrichment program after the first 10 years of the nuclear deal. It said that "confidential document eases Iran nuke constraints". Why did the AP publish such a report at this time?

A: The AP article was written by George Jahn, who is a notoriously hostile reporter against Iran. The information in the article was based on anonymous sources that were not documented. In the past Mr. Jahn has based his inaccurate reports on anonymous Israeli sources. Many Middle East experts have complained to the AP about Mr. Jahn's inaccurate reporting and his role as a mouthpiece for right-wing Israeli propaganda against Iran, but the AP continues to defend him.

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Iran beats Kazakhstan at FIBA Asia U18 Championship

SPORTS TEHRAN — Host Iran beat Kazakhstan 90-59 on Day 2 of the 2016 FIBA Asia U18 Championship on Saturday.

Iran's Mohammad Jafari collected 25 points and made three rebounds to lead six players in

double figures.

Iran has been scheduled to face Japan in Group B on Sunday.

The top three teams from the 24th FIBA Asia U18 Championship will represent Asia at the 2017 FIBA U19 World Champi-



onship.

Results
Japan beat Indonesia 113-54
China beat India 106-66
Lebanon beat South Korea 80-67

Philippines beat Iraq 96-79
Iran beat Kazakhstan 90-59

China's crude oil imports from Iran up 16.1% in June yr/yr

China's imports of crude oil from Iran rose 16.1% in June over a year earlier to 780,000 barrels per day (bpd), up from 671,000 bpd in May. Imports for the January-June period gained 2.5%, customs data showed on Thursday.

Shipments have held relatively steady as Tehran has been focusing on recouping lost markets in Europe after sanctions were lifted,

Iranian oil sources say.

Saudi Arabia regained its position as China's top crude supplier in June, after losing out to Russia in the previous three months.

China imported 4.569 million tons of crude from Saudi Arabia in June, or 1.112 million bpd, data from the Chinese customs showed. The amount was down 14.2% on the year but compared with 961,000 bpd in May, according to the data.

Russian exports to China have climbed on demand from independent refiners since late 2015 after the country allowed them to import crude for the first time. China imported 4.107 million tons, or around 999,000 bpd, of crude in June from Russia, down from a record 1.24 million bpd in May.

Sharp gains in Chinese imports also came from smaller OPEC producer Kuwait as well as Venezuela.

(Source: Reuters)

Congress should not block sale of passenger planes to Iran: NY Times

In an editorial dated July 21 the New Times has rebuked hard-line congressmen who are trying to kill a deal which allows the Boeing Company to sell passenger planes to Iran.

Following is a summary of the editorial:

Before adjourning for the summer, lawmakers in Congress found time to pass several bills that could imperil one of the most significant global security achievements in many years: the year-old nuclear deal that President Obama struck with Iran.

This is not the first time that hard-

line Republicans and their well-funded lobby group allies have tried to sabotage the deal, struck by Iran, the United States and five other major powers and guaranteeing a lifting of international sanctions in return for strict limits on Iran's nuclear program. So far, both sides have complied with

their commitments. That encouraging track record, however, seemed to matter little when the House of Representatives voted to prevent the Boeing Company from selling 80 passenger planes and leasing 29 others to Iran Air, the national airline, at a cost of at least \$20 billion.

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Adaptation of Camus' "A Happy Death" on stage at Tehran theater

ART TEHRAN — A loose adaptation of the novel "A Happy Death" by French author Albert Camus (1913-1960) is on stage at Tehran's Molavi Hall under the new title "Algeria".



"Algeria" has been rewritten by Milad Farajzadeh, who is also the director of the play, and tells the story of a young Algerian, Mersault, who defies society's rules by committing a murder and escaping punishment, then experimenting with different ways of life and finally dying a happy man.

"The idea for the play was formed two years ago when I made a study about works by Camus and I discovered his first novel, 'A Happy Death'," Farajzadeh told the Persian service of Honaronline on Saturday.

"The novel presents an unfamiliar story dealing with some very complicated issues. I took a free adaptation of the story and changed the name as well," he added.

"A Happy Death" (original title La mort heureuse) is the study of a rule-bound being shattering the fetters of his existence; it is also a remarkably candid portrait of its author as a young man.

Mahin Fatemi, Herad Selah-Varzi, Amin Saremi, Mona Karami, Ghazal Mirzai and Mohammad-Hossein Sepanj are the main actors of the play.

The play will be on stage until August 12 at the Molavi Hall located at 16th Azar St., Enqelab Ave.

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MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Guardian Council studying early presidential election

TEHRAN — The Guardian Council is studying the prospect of holding next year's presidential election ahead of its usual date, spokesman Abbasali Kadkhodaei told a press conference on Saturday, ICANA reported.

The possibility is being considered because the election date in June 2017 will fall on the fasting month of Ramadan.



Rezaei: Saudi Arabia sending terrorists into Iran

TEHRAN — The secretary of Iran's Expediency Council on Saturday rebuked Saudi Arabia for its destructive moves in the region, saying Riyadh is supporting and sending terrorists into Iran.

"The Saudi consulate in Northern Iraq helps the Komala Party (a terrorist group active in the Kurdistan region) to interfere in Iran and Iraq's affairs and sends terrorists into Iran," Mohsen Rezaee said, ILNA reported.

"The Saudis are the most evil government on Earth and are stirring turmoil in the region because of their insanity," stated Rezaee who was the commander of the IRGC from 1980-1997.



Zarif to visit West Africa

TEHRAN — Iran's foreign minister will start a tour of West African countries on Sunday.

In his six-day tour, Mohammad Javad Zarif will visit Nigeria, Ghana, Guinea-Conakry and Mali, Foreign Ministry Director of African Affairs Hossein Molla-Abdollahi told ISNA on Saturday.



'I am non-partisan' means 'I have no family': Bahonar

TEHRAN — Mohammad Reza Bahonar, a former influential principlist MP, has refuted the statement made by some politicians when they say they do not belong to any political group.

"It would be like saying one has no family or clan," Mohammad Reza Bahonar said. "Some people ride on the back of a party as long as they can, and when it doesn't serve them, they drop it," the Shargh daily reported on Saturday.



Iran arms home-made destroyer with chaff-dispensing system

TEHRAN — The Iranian Navy commander has announced that a chaff and flare-dispensing system used for diverting incoming enemy missiles has been mounted on the home-made destroyer Damavand.

"The system is also being mounted on all destroyers and warships which are equipped with missile-launchers," Habibollah Sayyari said on Saturday, Fars reported.



Iranian border guard chief urges Pakistan to crack down on terrorists

TEHRAN — Iranian border guard chief Qassem Rezaee on Saturday said his forces stand firm against the terrorist groups day and night, but asked neighboring Pakistan to take a tougher line on terrorist activities near the border with Iran, Mehr reported.

Noting that 70 to 80 terrorist groups are active in Pakistan, Rezaee said, "We have seriously asked Pakistan to confront these groups and the Pakistani government should be held accountable for the blood of our martyrs."



New Pakistani ambassador submits credentials to Zarif

TEHRAN — Pakistan's newly-appointed ambassador to Tehran on Saturday submitted a copy of his credentials to Foreign Minister Mohammad-Javad Zarif.

Calling for "good and closer ties" during the meeting, Zarif expressed hope that relations between the two neighboring countries will expand in all dimensions, IRNA reported.

Zarif highlighted the importance of regional security, calling for cooperation among Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan to maintain stability and security especially around borders.

ICANA

ILNA

ISNA

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FARS

MEHR

IRNA

Western silence on terrorism is 'deafening': Zarif

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif tweeted on Friday that Western countries' silence over the beheading of a 12-year-old boy in Syria is "deafening".

"Apparently Western-backed terrorists beheading a 12-year innocent boy in Syria is the new normal. Western silence is deafening. Zarif said in his twitter message.

The foreign minister said this shows "hypocrisy" on the part of the West.

Nureddin al-Zenki, an opposition group which is largely based in Syria's Aleppo province, released footage on Tuesday that shows the beheading of the 12-year-old Palestinian boy with a knife on a public road in Aleppo.

The Nour el-Din al-Zinki group, that fights the Syrian government under the umbrella of the Free Syrian Army, is supported by the West.

It is shown in the footage that the brutal killers were accusing the boy of

being a member of al-Quds Brigades, the armed wing of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad resistance movement; however, the Palestinian group issued a statement denying the boy was a member and identified him as a 12-year-old Palestinian refugee.

Also Lebanon's Hezbollah issued a statement describing the beheading as a "disgusting crime" by "so-called moderate rebels backed by the U.S. and Saudi Arabia."

The Syrian government also denounced the "repulsive crime" against an innocent child in a statement to the United Nations, saying the boy was a Palestinian from the Palestinian refugee camp of Handarat on the edge of Aleppo.

Amnesty International said the video is the latest "abhorrent signal" that opposition groups are carrying out serious abuses with impunity.

"This horrific video showing the beheading of a boy suggests some members of armed groups have truly plumbed



the depths of depravity. It is yet another gruesome example of the summary killing of captives, which amounts to a war crime," said Philip Luther, Director of Amnesty International's Middle East and North Africa Program.

Commander says IRGC dismantles terrorist cells

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps' ground force said on Saturday that his forces have dismantled a number of armed-to-the-teeth terrorist cells over the past months following scattered clashes in northwestern and southeastern borders.

According to Brigadier General Mohammad Pakpour, most of the cells are equipped in northern Iraq.

"All anti-revolutionary groups lodged in northern Iraq which had been mobilized, armed, and dispatched to Iran were dismantled by IRGC forces," said Pakpour on Saturday.

Northern Iraq is where the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) rules. Iran sees the hand of Saudis behind the moves in the region.

Early July, the IRGC second-in-command Brigadier General Hossein Salami warned Kurdish officials against loose commitment to security issues, threatening to "carry out operation beyond borders if necessary."

"I warn the officials of northern Iraq adhere to their commitments as the Islamic Republic will crush threats



regardless of geographical considerations."

The IRGC commander linked the terrorist attempts with some regional countries which seek to trigger insecurity in Iran, recommending them not "play with the lion's tail."

Western and eastern borders of Iran have recently been a hotbed for terrorist activities, mainly influenced

by weak border monitoring of neighboring countries, including northern Iran.

Only over the past weeks, IRGC combat and intelligence officers had killed dozens of terrorists, seeking sabotage inside the country.

In the most recent one on July 9, an Iranian lawmaker survived an assassination attempt in the western province of Kermanshah, later announced to be a terrorist attack.

Weeks after the attempt, three suspects have been apprehended, Tasnim reported on Saturday.

On June 13, the IRGC announced its forces had killed five members of the Party for Free Life in Kurdistan (PJAK) in the northwestern border city of Sardasht.

In another clash in the southern city of Khash on June 13, police forces killed five members of a terrorist group which is an offshoot of Jaish ul-Adl.

Also, on June 28, a top IRGC commander said 11 members of an anti-revolutionary cell had been smashed in Sarvabad County in the western province of Kurdistan.

Iran condemns deadly gun attack in Munich

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi on Saturday condemned a deadly gun attack in the German city of Munich.

On Friday evening an 18-year-old German-Iranian gunman who apparently acted alone opened fire near a busy shopping mall in Munich, killing at least ten people and injuring 16.

The pistol-wielding attacker, identified by Munich police chief Hubertus Andrae as a dual national from Munich, was later found dead of a suspected self-inflicted gunshot wound.

Though Qassemi said that the international community should consider the fight against terrorism as an "immediate and serious demand", German authorities said it was too early to say whether it was

a terrorist attack but that the shooter was believed to have staged the attack alone, opening fire in a fast food restaurant before moving to the mall.

According to Reuters, Chancellor Angela Merkel was due to meet her chief of staff Peter Altmaier, Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere and intelligence officials on Saturday to review the incident.

Police said they were investigating

a video in which the gunman is heard shouting "I am German" and exchanging racial slurs and profanities with another man. "We are trying to determine who said what," a police spokesman said.

Police said the gunman had no link to the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and was mentally troubled and had extensively researched spree killings.

Tehran calls S. Arabia 'founding father of Daesh, al Qaeda'

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi on Saturday condemned a deadly gun attack in the German city of Munich.

Iran and Saudi Arabia have been supporting opposing sides in regional developments in the Middle East region, particularly in Syria.

Saudi Arabia claims Tehran launches proxy wars in the Middle East to widen its sphere of influence.

Ironically, al-Jubeir's comments come days after Washington published 28 pages of a congressional report on the September 11 terrorist attacks, part of which had hinted at the Saudi government's involvement in the attack.

"While in the United States, some of the September 11 hijackers were in contact with, and received support or assistance from, individuals who may be connected to the Saudi Government," reads part of the report released on July 15, according to Press TV.

Referring to the report, Qassemi pointed out, "Of course this is understandable that the Saudi foreign minister has been through tough days just before the confidential September 11 report and await even tough-

er days ahead." "There is no doubt that the consequences of such important information about the resources of a country which shelters terrorism will not escape the public opinion of the world and of nations which fell victim to terrorism after the September 11," the spokesman remarked.

Key here is that Saudi's regional mudslinging runs counter to what they do in practice.

On July 9, Prince Turki al-Faisal, Saudi Arabia's former spy chief, attended an annual meeting of the MKO terrorist group in Paris where he pledged backing and wished for the collapse of Iran.

For years, the group has committed acts of terrorism against Iran and the Saudi link simply means they have been feeding them financially.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman says, "Adel al-Jubeir cannot deflect the public opinion of the world from endless disgraces of his country as the founding father of Daesh and al Qaeda through propaganda."

Iran has drawn up plan to undo nuclear work if deal is violated: Salehi

Iran to join nuclear fusion project soon

Salehi, a nuclear physicist, also said that preparations have been made for Iran to join the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor and become 36th member state to the project.

Iran will be the first country from West Asia that joins the ITER project, Salehi said.

"Six French nuclear fusion experts

have made a trip to Iran and are exchanging views and studying the possibilities with experts at Iran's Atomic Energy Agency in order for us to be able increase local experts' readiness and enter the nuclear fusion project," he explained.

ITER is an international nuclear fusion research and engineering megaproject, which will be the world's largest magnetic confinement plasma physics experiment. It

is an experimental tokamak nuclear fusion reactor that is being built next to the Cadarache facility in the south of France.

Final steps to sell heavy water to Russia

Elsewhere, Salehi said that final steps to sell 40 tons of heavy water to Russia have been taken and the agreement will be signed soon.

He added some big European corporations seek to buy heavy water from Iran

and the issue is under negotiation.

Salehi, the vice president and director of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), also confirmed that Iran has sold 32 tons heavy water to the U.S. and received its money.

On July 11, Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi said, "We sold 32 tons of heavy water to the U.S. and we were paid for that."

The nuclear chief described the heavy water as a "strategic commodity".

Munich shooting: Teenage killer 'inspired by far-right terrorist Anders Breivik'

The 18-year-old German-Iranian man who opened fire in a crowded Munich shopping mall and a nearby McDonald's, killing nine people and wounding 16 others before killing himself, has been named in reports as Ali Sonboly.

Mass killer Ali Sonboly threatened to kill his friends in messages posted on the video gaming network Steam, it has emerged.

The 18-year-old, who shot dead nine people and injured several others before turning the gun on himself, was "obsessed" with video games according to German newspaper Bild, and several were found in his apartment.

He used his account on the Steam network - which allows users to play computer games against each other - to issue death threats to other players.

Posing as a teenage girl called 'Selina Akim', Sonboly is thought to have used messages posted on a fake Facebook account to lure young victims to their death with fraudulent offers of free food just hours before his murderous rampage began.

Police gave a "cautious all clear" early on Saturday morning, more than seven hours after the attack began, and brought much of the city to a standstill as all public transit systems were shut down amid a massive manhunt. They said a body found near the scene was that of the shooter and he appeared to have



acted alone.

Munich police chief Hubertus Andrae told a news conference the suspect was a dual citizen from Munich and his motive was still "fully unclear".

Mr. Andrae said the suspect's body was found about 2 1/2 hours after the attack and was identified to be the shooter based on witness statements and closed circuit television footage of the attack. He was not previously known to police and there was no evidence of any links to terrorist organisations, Mr Andrae said.

Witnesses had reported seeing three men with firearms near the Olympia

Einkaufszentrum mall. However, the police chief said two people who fled the area quickly were investigated but had "nothing to do with the incident".

Andrae said the nine fatalities included young people and children were among the 16 wounded, three of whom were in critical condition.

Kosovo President Hashim Thaci has declared Sunday a day of mourning for three young ethnic Albanians who were killed in the Munich shooting.

Thaci, who called it a terrorist attack, says he considered the two young girls and a man as "heroes in the war for the

joint freedom and values in Europe."

He adds: "That act of violence has touched our hearts and Europe's consciousness."

Neighbors in the building where Ali Sonboly, the Munich gunman, lived on Saturday spoke of their shock that a "quiet, normal guy" should have carried out such an attack.

"He was very anonymous, he kept himself to himself," a woman who lived a few floors below him, who gave her name only as Berin, said.

"He was shy."

The gunman lived with his parents in a fifth floor apartment in a smart modern apartment building in the central Moaxvorstadt neighbourhood of Munich, close to the main railway station.

Nobody was answering the door at the family flat. A mat with the word "Welcome" in German, English, French and Spanish lay on the floor outside. The family name, Sonboly, was neatly written below the bell.

Neighbors on the floors below seemed dazed by the news.

Chancellor Angela Merkel has said Munich has suffered a "night of horror."

"The people of Munich have come through a night of horror," she said in her first reaction to Friday's carnage, adding: "A night like this is difficult for us all to bear."

(Source: The Telegraph)

Erdogan, using emergency decree, shuts private schools, charities, unions

President Tayyip Erdogan tightened his grip on Turkey on Saturday, ordering the closure of thousands of private schools, charities and other institutions in his first decree since imposing a state of emergency after the failed military coup.

A restructuring of Turkey's once untouchable military also drew closer, with a planned meeting between Erdogan and the already purged top brass brought forward.

In the decree, published by the Anadolu state news

agency, Erdogan extended to a maximum of 30 days from four days the period in which some suspects can be detained. It said this was to facilitate a full investigation into the coup attempt.

Erdogan, who narrowly escaped capture and possible death during the July 15 coup attempt, told Reuters in an interview on Thursday he would restructure the armed forces and bring in "fresh blood".

Turkey's Supreme Military Council (YAS) will meet un-



der Erdogan's supervision on July 28, a few days earlier than originally planned, private broadcaster NTV reported, a sign that the president wants to act fast to ensure the armed forces are fully under the government's control.

Reinforcing that message, the YAS meeting - which usually takes place every August - will be held this time in the presidential palace, not as is customary at the headquarters of the military General Staff.

Erdogan has accused U.S.-based Muslim preacher Fethullah Gulen, who has many followers in Turkey and abroad, of masterminding the failed coup, in which at least 246 people were killed. Gulen denies the charge and has condemned the coup.

■ Gulen's nephew detained

Meanwhile, Turkey has detained a nephew of U.S.-based Muslim cleric Fethullah Gulen's after last week's attempted coup, state-run media reported on Saturday, the first time one of his relatives has been apprehended in the current crackdown.

Muhammet Sait Gulen was taken into custody in Erzurum, eastern Turkey, and will be taken to the capital Ankara, the report said. His uncle in Pennsylvania is accused of "masterminding" the failed putsch through his movement.

■ PURGES

Erdogan declared the state of emergency late on Wednesday saying it would enable authorities to swiftly and effectively root out supporters of the coup.

The state of emergency allows the president and government to pass laws without first having to win parliamentary support and also allows them to curb or suspend rights and freedoms as they deem necessary.

Turkish authorities have already launched a series of mass purges of the armed forces, police, judiciary and education system, targeting followers of Gulen, who operates an extensive network of schools and charitable foundations.

The first decree signed by Erdogan authorises the closure of 1,043 private schools, 1,229 charities and foundations, 19 trade unions, 15 universities and 35 medical institutions over suspected links to the Gulen movement, the Anadolu agency said.

Parliament must still approve the decree but requires only a simple majority, which the ruling AK Party founded by Erdogan and in power in Turkey since 2002 commands.

In an address to lawmakers late on Friday Erdogan vowed to bring to justice supporters of the Gulenist "terrorist" movement and he urged Turks to continue attending rallies in major cities in support of democracy and against the coup plotters.

Turkey expects to complete within a week to 10 days a dossier requesting Gulen's extradition from the United States, Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu told private broadcaster NTV in an interview.

(Source: Reuters)



Vacancy Announcement

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

Purchaser and Quality Control Officer

■ Main responsibilities

- Handles current purchases for the ICRC operation
- Submits various offers to logistics department and administration and ensures correct purchasing procedures
- Carries out statistics for the unit
- Takes part in the selection of suppliers
- Controls the quality of incoming non-medical goods and implements and ensures the smooth running of the quality control policy
- Handles independently storekeeping activities

■ Minimum required knowledge & experience:

- Professional diploma
- 3 - 5 years work experience in a similar field
- Good knowledge of written and spoken English. Able to write clear and concise reports in English
- Good computer skills
- Good capacity to work under pressure
- Good knowledge of the local market
- Good customer service orientation

It should be noted that the position might require travelling (on mission) outside and inside the country. All interested applicants should submit a letter of interest and a résumé in English to the following email address: teh_hr_services@icrc.org

ALL submissions MUST be received by the closing date of 07 August, 2016

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

NEWS

61 killed, 207 injured in Kabul bomb blasts

ISIL claims responsibility for suicide attacks

Afghanistan's Health Ministry says at least 61 people were killed and 207 others wounded in two bomb blasts in the capital Kabul.

The blasts were carried out at the Deh Mazang Square, where thousands of Shia Hazara demonstrators had gathered from early morning in protest against a controversial power line project.

The ISIL (Daesh) terrorists claimed responsibility for the bombing.

According to police, one of the attackers successfully detonated his explosive, while the second one only managed to defectively explode himself. A third assailant was shot dead by security forces before he could detonate his vest.

President Ashraf Ghani condemned the bombings and said he was "deeply saddened" by the terrorist attack.

"Opportunist terrorists went among the protesters and set off explosions that killed and wounded a number of our countrymen including security and defense personnel."

"Peaceful protest is the right of every citizen," the Afghan president added.

The demonstrators were chanting "Justice" and "Death to discrimination" during the protest.

The power line project, which is scheduled to be implemented by 2018, would see the establishment of a 500-kilovolt transmission line from Turkmenistan to Kabul.

Originally, the line was to pass through the impoverished provinces of Bamyan and Wardak, which host large Hazara populations. However, it was later rerouted, with the government alleging that the redesigned course cut costs.

The Hazara say they want the line to pass through Bamyan and Wardak, west of Kabul, where many of them live, to ensure their power supply.

The Hazara community, the poorest of Afghanistan's ethnic groups, accounts for about nine percent of Afghanistan's population and is the country's third-largest minority.

(Source: AFP)



Syria: Clashes in Manbij after ISIL refuses rebel offer

Sporadic clashes between the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist group and U.S.-backed fighters have erupted in the northern ISIL-held Syrian town of Manbij after the group ignored a 48-hour offer to withdraw from the besieged town without a fight, opposition activists and a Kurdish official said.

The UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said about 200 civilians fled the town on Friday. A 20-year-old woman among those fleeing died when she stepped on a land mine while trying to escape with her children, the Observatory said.

Members of the predominantly Kurdish U.S.-backed Syria Democratic Forces (SDF) have been on the offensive in Manbij for weeks, backed by coalition airstrikes.

On Thursday, the Manbij Military Council - part of the SDF - said ISIL fighters were given 48 hours to leave the town with their "individual weapons," saying this was their last opportunity to leave alive.

Sherfan Darwish of the SDF said the group did not respond to the offer and that sporadic clashes erupted on Friday. The ISIL-affiliated Amaq news agency said the U.S.-led coalition carried about 20 airstrikes on the center of Manbij on Friday.

Manbij lies on a key supply route to the group's de facto capital of Raqqa. If the town is captured by the US-backed fighters it would be the "biggest strategic defeat" for ISIL in Syria since July 2015, when the group lost the border town of Tal Abyad, said Al Jazeera's Bernard Smith, reporting from Turkey-Syria border.

■ 'Human shields'

Meanwhile, U.S.-led coalition spokesman Colonel Chris Garver said ISIL "used civilians as human shields and as bait" in an effort to draw the fire of the SDF toward civilians.

Garver's comment comes after U.S.-led coalition air strikes allegedly killed 56 civilians, including 11 children, as they fled on Tuesday from a village near Manbij.

Garver said the attack on Tuesday came after SDF fighters "observed a large group of Daesh [ISIL] fighters in a convoy who appeared to be readying for a counterattack" against US-backed troops in the area.

"A strike was called in on Daesh. The strike was against both buildings and vehicles." Afterwards, the spokesman said, the coalition received both internal and external reports "that there may have been civilians in the area who are mixed in and among the Daesh fighters."

Garver said the first phase of the investigation - what he called a "credibility assessment" - would take no longer than a week and a half.

In Geneva, spokesman Jens Laerke of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said a convoy carrying assistance for 32,000 people arrived Friday in the hard-to-reach town of Halat al-Madeh in the central province of Hama.

"This is the first inter-agency convoy to Hama in 2016," said Laerke, adding that the Syrian government had removed some "surgical and certain medical items" from the cargo.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

JUMP

European Union deepens economic cooperation with Iran

During the current visit and as a follow up to the joint statement by the High Representative and Foreign Minister Zarif, it was agreed to initiate a broad based industrial dialogue to be launched on the occasion of a "European Economic Mission" to Teheran, planned for 17-19 October, to be led by EU Commissioner Elzbieta Bienkowska, together with representatives of European Business associations. This dialogue could cover a number of key sectors of mutual interest such as textile, automotive, raw materials, tourism and construction, but also horizontal issues like business environment and SME Development. In addition, a regular macro-economic dialogue is envisaged with the Ministry of Economy and Finance.

(Source: *eeas.europa.eu*)

NEWS

Chinese premier discusses new drivers of growth with int'l economic leaders

BEIJING (Xinhua) — Chinese Premier Li Keqiang Friday had a deep discussion about the new driving forces in China's economic transition in Session II of the "1+6" roundtable meeting at Fanghua Villa, Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing.

The participants were World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim, IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde, WTO Director-General Roberto Azevedo, ILO Director-General Guy Ryder, OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría and FSB Chairman Mark Carney.

Li outlined the current state of China's economy. He said that facing the many tough challenges at home and abroad as well as downward economic pressure, the Chinese government has managed to sustain steady economic growth and accelerate economic transformation. Efforts were made to keep the direction of macroeconomic policy stable, focusing on structural reform, and to grow the new economy and foster new drivers of growth while upgrading traditional ones.

China has remained one of the fastest growing major economies, and made good gains in upgrading its economic structure. In the past three years, the service sector as a share of GDP rose by 8.6 percentage points and the contribution of final consumption to GDP growth was up by 16.9 percentage points. Fast development of the new economy has helped to transform and revitalize the traditional industries and strongly boosted employment.

Leaders of the international economic and financial institutions said that China's measures of structural reform prove to be productive, and growth has become more resilient and sustainable.

BOJ considering further easing of monetary policy during upcoming review

In the face of persistent weaknesses in private consumption and price growth, the Bank of Japan is considering further loosening monetary policy at a two-day policy review from Thursday, informed sources said Friday.

Any additional easing steps by the BOJ will likely be in line with the government's plan to compile an economic stimulus package later this autumn.

Possible additional easing will also highlight the central bank's continued commitment to its inflation target of 2 percent.

Specific measures under consideration include a further expansion of the BOJ's purchases of exchange-traded funds and corporate bonds, the sources said.

The BOJ is also examining the option of stepping up its buying of Japanese government bonds, while watching government moves to issue more JGBs to partly finance the planned stimulus measures, they said.

In addition, the bank may decide to expand the range of financial assets that it buys in the ongoing "quantitative and qualitative" easing campaign, they noted.

On the controversial negative interest rate policy, however, discussions at the Policy Board meeting are expected to be careful.

At the meeting, the BOJ is scheduled to review its inflation forecasts in the quarterly Outlook for Economic Activity and Prices report.

Within the bank, there are concerns that the basic trend in prices is increasingly sluggish, with inflation expectations receding among businesses and households.

(Source: *The Japan Times*)

Turkey's economy to miss growth targets: economists

Turkey will miss government economic growth forecasts this year and next following the failed coup that has hammered the lira and put renewed pressure on the tourism sector, according to economists in a Reuters poll.

The survey of 41 economists based in and outside Turkey, taken this week, predicted the economy would grow 3.5 percent this year and next, below the government's respective forecasts of 4.5 and 5.0 percent.

Turkish GDP grew a stronger-than-expected 4 percent in 2015 and 4.8 percent in the first quarter of 2016.

The country's tourism sector has taken a battering this year as tensions with Russia and a spate of bombings hit tourist arrivals. Economists forecast tourism revenue would drop by about \$8 billion this year, equivalent to 1 percent of GDP.

The lira slumped to a historical low Wednesday after President Recep Tayyip Erdogan declared a three-month state of emergency, which economists said could further harm tourism.

(Source: *Reuters*)

Inflation rate hits 9% in Iran

ECONOMY TEHRAN — The Statistical Center of Iran has announced that the inflation rate for the 12-month period ended in the last day of the fourth Iranian calendar month of Tir (July 21) compared to the same period in the previous year hit 9 percent.

Meanwhile, the center put the point-to-point inflation rate at 6.5 percent in the fourth month, increasing from 6.1 percent in its previous month, the Mehr news agency reported.

The Central Bank of Iran (CBI) has announced that the inflation rate in the past Iranian calendar year of 1394, which ended on March 19, 2016, compared to its previous year stood at 11.9 percent.

On February 20, Iranian Finance and



Economic Affairs Minister Ali Tayyebnia said that the country's budget plan for the Iranian calendar year of 1395 (which began on March 20) has envisaged an inflation rate of 11.3 percent.

The CBI, which had declared that it aimed to lower inflation to single digits by 2017, announced on late June that the inflation rate for the 12-month period ended in the last day of the third Iranian calendar month of Khordad (June 20) compared to the same period in the previous year hit 9.7 percent.

Curbing inflation was one of the major promises by Iranian President Hassan Rouhani during his presidential campaign. Under the previous administration, inflation skyrocketed to cross 44%.

BMI forecasts 3.8% GDP growth for Iran in 2016

ECONOMY TEHRAN — The BMI Research (formerly Business Monitor Online) predicted Iran's gross domestic product (GDP) growth for the current year to reach 3.8 percent.

In its latest report released in July, the British research institute sees the country's GDP growth standing at 5.1

percent for 2017. Despite the single-digit inflation rate recorded in recent months in Iran, the report predicted 10 percent inflation rate for the country in 2016.

In 2015, Iran's GDP registered a 0.4 percent growth and the inflation rate stood at 12 percent, according to the BMI report.

It is predicted that the country's nominal GDP will reach \$428.8 billion during the current year and further rises to \$461.4 billion in 2017.

The research institute also predicts this year's budget deficit to increase, so that this year's figure is expected to rise to 4.8 percent compared to 4.4 percent of GDP in 2015.

Based on BMI research, Iran will be one of the fastest growing economies in the region over the next five years as investment comes into the country following the removal of sanctions.

BMI Research is a research firm that provides macroeconomic, industry and financial market analysis, covering 24 industries and 200 global markets.

Iran's crude oil price falls \$1.49 in a week

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iran sold light crude oil at \$43.19 per barrel in the week ended on July 15, a \$1.49 drop from its previous week, according to the Shana news agency.

The country's light oil price stood at \$37.22 on average since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2016).

Also, Iran sold heavy crude oil at \$41.23 in the mentioned week, with \$1.6 decrease from its preceding week.

The country's heavy oil price stood at \$34.89 on average since the start of this calendar year.

Meanwhile, Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)'s basket price was \$42.95 per barrel on average in the week ended on July 15, with \$1.36 fall from its preceding week.

Iran has regained about 80 percent of the market share it held before the U.S. and European Union tightened sanctions on its oil industry in 2012, Mohsen



Ghamsari, National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC)'s director of international affairs, said on July 11, Bloomberg reported.

The country exports about 2 million barrels of its daily output of 3.8 million, the official added.

Sanctions were eased in January, and Iran plans to double crude exports.

"Our exports peak is above 4 million barrels a day, and we have plans for that and are waiting for the right conditions," Ghamsari said in an interview in Tehran, without elaborating on the timing for such an increase.

The Persian Gulf nation is seeking more than \$100 billion in investment from international partners to upgrade its oil industry and reclaim its position as the second-biggest producer in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, after Saudi Arabia. Iran targets 5.8 million barrels a day in combined production of crude and condensates by 2021. It defied skeptics with a 25 percent surge in production so far in 2016 and aims to reach an eight-year high for daily output of 4 million barrels by the end of the year.

SK Innovation sees Asian refining margins improving in second-half on tight supply

SK Innovation Co. Ltd., which owns South Korea's top refiner SK Energy, expects Asian margins to improve slightly in the second half of 2016 as more refineries shut for maintenance in autumn, leading to tighter supply of oil products.

However, steady run rates at China's independent refineries, known as teapots, and an increase in their gasoil exports will keep a lid on margins in the region, SK Innovation said on Friday, while announcing its second-quarter results.

Oil refiners in Asia are already processing less crude as they grapple with a plunge in margins to five-year lows after slowing economic growth hurt demand at key users, including China - the region's biggest consumer. To further curb losses, they will likely resort to higher-than-usual closures as the maintenance season sets in this quarter.

"We expect heavier global maintenance shutdowns in fall from a year earlier," SK Innovation said, estimating around 6 million barrels per day (bpd) would go offline globally in October for scheduled maintenance, up 1.5 million bpd from a year ago.

SK Innovation, which saw its revenue in the April-June period drop 20.9 per-

cent from a year ago to 10.3 trillion won (\$9.08 billion), will, according to trade sources, cut crude throughput in July and August to ride out the low margins.

The firm said it operated its crude distillation unit in Ulsan and Incheon at 84 percent of capacity on average in the second quarter, versus 90 percent in the first quarter.

It recorded an operating income of 1.1 trillion won in the three months to June, up 12 percent from a year ago, helped by inventory gains as oil prices rose about 25 percent.

Going forward, the company expects Asian margins to draw support from strong demand for fuel oil for power generating purposes from the Middle East and reduced supply out of Asia with scheduled maintenances in September and October.

The improvement in margins will, however, be moderate as China's teapots are expected to ramp up gasoil exports with domestic industrial demand staying weak, Lee Yunhi, head of SK Energy's corporate planning office, said on a conference call.

"Chinese teapot refiners are likely to keep run rates at the current levels in the third quarter and in the second half."

(Source: *Reuters*)

Libya's PFG to start lifting oil terminals blockade over next three days

Libya's Petroleum Facilities Guard (PFG) will start lifting a blockade on eastern oil terminals over the next three days, though a resumption of exports will depend on the state of the ports, a spokesman said on Friday.

The PFG, which protects Libya's oil terminals and fields, has blockaded the major eastern terminals of Ras Lanuf, Es Sider and Zueitina for months, and promises earlier this year to reopen them have so far come to nothing.

Even if the ports do reopen, it is unclear how much oil will flow to them, due to damage and continuing political complications.

Labor disputes, political conflict and security threats have crippled Libya's oil output over the past three years. Production in the OPEC member state has been fluctuating at less than a quarter of the more than 1.6 million bpd reached in 2011, the year an uprising toppled Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi.

Ras Lanuf and Es Sider, Libya's biggest export terminals, have a combined potential capacity of 600,000 barrels per day (bpd), but both facilities have been damaged by fighting.

A source familiar with Libya's oil operations said because of the extensive

damage at two terminals and some of the upstream fields that feed into them, it would take five weeks to bring their export capacity up to 100,000 bpd.

Initial oil exports will go to the 120,000 bpd Zawiyah refinery, the source added. The refinery has been running at half capacity because of a lack of crude.

The leader of the PFG in Libya's oil crescent region, Ibrahim Jathran, has said he supports Libya's U.N.-backed government in Tripoli, which is working with the National Oil Corporation (NOC) to try to revive production.

Jathran said he was prepared to reopen the ports after the new government's leadership, or Presidential Council, arrived in Tripoli at the end of March.

The PFG made its latest statement a day after U.N. Libya envoy Martin Kobler visited Jathran.

"There were talks about the export of oil and conditions in the region, and meetings with notables from the oil crescent region," PFG spokesman Ali al-Hasssi said.

"Ibrahim Jathran said that on 23-25 July the agreement with the Presidential Council on the export of oil will be implemented.

(Source: *Reuters*)

NEWS IN BRIEF



Fiat Chrysler recalling 410,000 vehicles

Fiat Chrysler Automobiles NV said on Friday it is recalling nearly 410,000 vehicles worldwide because of a defect that can lead to a loss of propulsion.

The automaker said it will update software and replace wire harnesses to address the electronic issue that appears in a small number of vehicles. The recall includes 2015 model Chrysler 200 midsize sedans, Ram ProMaster City small vans, Jeep Renegade and Cherokee SUVs and some 2014 Cherokees. The recall includes about 323,000 vehicles in the United States, 35,500 in Canada and about 51,000 elsewhere.

Fiat Chrysler said there were no reports of injuries or crashes related to the defect. The automaker did not disclose a schedule for when recall repairs will begin.



Apple to open first Apple Store in Taiwan

Apple Inc is planning to open its first Apple Store in Taiwan, a move that comes after the U.S. technology giant raised \$1.38 billion in a bond offering last month on the island that is home to many companies in its supply chain.

Apple was seeking "a leader for personnel training plans for the Taiwan Apple Store" and other retail positions indicating it was looking for a team in Taiwan, according to job postings dated Friday on Apple's website.

The Apple Store is the envy of many in the retail world, with the highest sales per square foot in the industry, but some say the stores have lost their edge since the first one opened 15 years ago.



CEO says Audi plans three electric car models by 2020

Audi aims to have three electric car models by 2020 and for electric vehicles to account for 25 to 30 percent of its sales by 2025, Chief Executive Rupert Stadler told a German newspaper.

Audi's electric cars push, reported by Reuters earlier this week, is part of a strategic overhaul following the emissions scandal at parent Volkswagen.

Under the plan, which Stadler presented to Audi managers this week, the group will focus more resources on electric cars, digital services and autonomous driving.

Audi plans to set up a subsidiary, to be called SDS Company, to develop an autonomous car. Stadler told daily Heilbronner Stimme in an interview published on Saturday.

Top ecotourism destinations you shouldn't miss!

Here are some top ecotourism destinations to get you thinking green. If staying in eco-friendly lodges in the midst of a rainforest sounds appealing, consider Borneo or Costa Rica.

If getting up close to wildlife and glaciers is more your speed, Alaska and Antarctica offer intrepid travelers the chance to experience both from the deck of a ship or an inflatable zodiac. And if you'd rather sleep in the great outdoors and trek to some of the world's highest plateaus, plan a camping trek in the Himalayas (and be sure to take your trash back to base camp with you).

For a list of environmentally friendly tour operators, hotels, and more, visit the International Ecotourism Society website.

Use our Travel Search price comparison tool to find the lowest rates on flights, hotels, packages, and more travel deals.

Alaska

Referred to as "The Great Land," Alaska is home to soaring snowcapped mountains, sprawling tundra, and a remote Arctic north – all of which shelter a range of wildlife that is otherwise threatened or endangered in the continental United States. Humpback whales, brown bears, lynx, sea otters, sea lions, bald eagles, and blue whales are just some of the species protected in this ecotourism destination; in many parts, caribou and moose outnumber people and the echo of a grizzly's roar can be heard in the distance. With over 100 state parks to explore, Alaska's vast, pristine wilderness beckons naturalists who can rejoice in all its splendors.

Whether it's cruising through majestic Kenai Fjords National Park, sailing past colossal glaciers in Glacier Bay National Park, glimpsing whale flukes slapping the water, or rafting down the Copper River while bald eagles soar overhead, the 49th state holds many wonders. The ongoing controversial political call to drill for oil in



the state's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge has brought even more attention to this beautiful natural resource; visit yourself to see firsthand why environmentalists would prefer to leave it untapped.

Amazon

Often described as the "Lungs of our Planet" – it produces 20 percent of the Earth's oxygen – the remarkable Amazon rain forest surrounds the world's largest river system and supports thousands of plant, bird, mammal, and aquatic species in the 1.2 billion acres it occupies. While this ecotourism spot stretches across several South American countries, the Amazon's densest section (60 percent) is found in Brazil, where eco-lovers can explore a mosaic of ecosystems: You can literally walk among the treetops in Bahia's Atlantic forest, along a 66-foot-high suspension bridge surrounded by scores of wildlife, sights, and sounds; it's the ultimate canopy tour for those who want to really understand how the rainforest works.

Down below, you can rent a canoe and paddle down the river, past local ribereños (shore dwellers); fish for piranha (which is apparently quite tasty); or venture on a bird-watching excursion. Come nightfall, the forest speaks for itself, emitting a symphony of sounds beneath a starlit sky – one of nature's finest spectacles.

Antarctica

An Antarctic winter doesn't evoke images of vacation paradise, and rightly so – the continent is surrounded by densely packed ice, near-perpetual darkness, unpredictable blizzards, and temperatures dipping as low as 90 degrees below zero. With the seasons flipped, wintertime in the Northern Hemisphere is as close to summer as it gets on the White Continent. It's also the only time of year when voyaging to this last great frontier is possible, as the warmer weather melts the ice barriers that otherwise block access to Antarctica's savage landscapes and exotic wildlife.

More than 46,000 tourists head to the South Pole each year to witness its monumental glaciers and icebergs, comical penguins, and magnificent whales. Cruising is the most popular way to reach this off-the-path ecotourism destination, on lines like Holland America and National Geographic-cooperative Linblad Expeditions, which operate sailings from Buenos Aires. Both lines are members of the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators, a voluntary organization aiming to limit the impact of tourism on the continent by adhering to strict environmental guidelines.

Blue Mountains, Australia

Designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2000, Australia's Greater Blue Mountains Area is a popular ecotourism trip for Sydneysiders seeking to trade in the buzz of the city for the calm of the great outdoors. A mere 90-minute car ride from Sydney, the Blue Mountains (named for the blue hue cast by the eucalyptus oil produced by the region's native trees) cover some 550 square miles of valleys, swamps, rocky outcroppings, and narrow canyons – topped off by stellar vantage points from which to ogle Australia's beauty. A handful of national parks and reserves comprise the area, hosting dozens of trails through breathtaking terrain loaded with unique flora (don't miss the ancient Wollemi pine, one of the world's rarest species) and fauna (some 400 species, including koalas, call the Blue Mountains home). Rock climbing, mountain biking, rappelling, canoeing, and horseback riding are just a few of the activities – aside from bushwalking – to enjoy here in the wild. Of course, the prospect of relaxing and breathing in the fresh mountain air at one of the area's many eco-friendly lodges and cabins can be equally enticing.

(Source: Shermans Travel)

TRAVEL ADVICE

What to do if you are robbed abroad

The trauma of being mugged or duped sadly does not end with the event itself. Even if you escape without loss or injury, it is still advisable to report the incident to the police; and if you do have money, possessions or passport stolen, you will need a copy of the police report to get replacements or make an insurance claim. You will also have to contact the issuers of any stolen cards and traveler's cheques at the first opportunity.

Some travel insurance policies have a special provision to cover treatment for injuries caused by a mugging. It is usually only a small amount to cover minor treatment, but it is better than nothing. Where more serious injuries are involved the normal medical cover kicks in – you should contact the insurer's emergency helpline to ensure that you get the best treatment you are entitled to. If you are travelling with a tour operator, you should also inform the rep, who will help liaise with the police and organize any medical care.

If there are any problems with the police, your first port of call should be the nearest consul. The consul or embassy can issue a new passport as long as the theft has been reported to the police, and you can answer questions about its loss.

Last credit cards can normally be replaced by the issuing bank in anything from 24 hours to three days, depending on the issuer and the country. If you are desperate for money in the short term and can get in contact with a friend. Your friend simply makes the payment online, specifying the destination where you will collect it – usually a bank or shop in the town where you are stranded. You can normally collect it within minutes.

When it comes to making an insurance claim on your return home, your biggest problem may be proving how much cash was stolen. Policies have a limit on this – up to £300 on a good policy, often less. If claiming more than about £100, you might have to produce a cashpoint or foreign currency exchange receipts. Remember that most sections of travel insurance policies are subject to an excess (typically £75), which will be deducted from your claims.

(Source: Telegraph)



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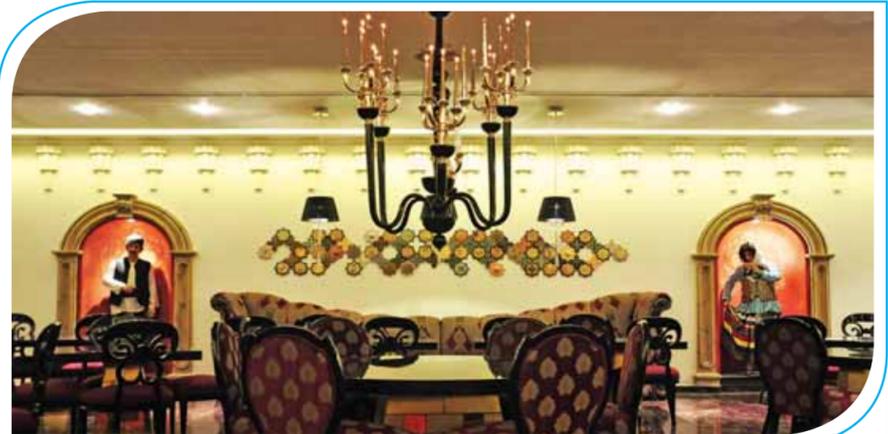


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The exhausted American voter: Ready for a change?

With a polarization perhaps at a peak in politics, Americans may be fed up – not just with 'the system' but their own acrimony. Hitting bottom in political fatigue may have its benefits.

Exhausted yet? For more than six months, American voters endured the raucous campaigning of the primaries. By the end of July, they will have witnessed two highly staged party conventions with plenty of mudslinging. After that, they will experience three more months of the presidential race until the general election.

Their opinion so far? According to a Pew poll in June, more than two-thirds of registered voters said the election campaign has been "too negative." Perhaps there's nothing new there. But in addition, most also say candidates are not focused on important issues.

And never in the history of polling have the two top party nominees, Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton, had such high negatives.

■ Polarized voters

Perhaps voters, after becoming so polarized over the past half-century, are now weary of the divisions reflected in the presidential campaigns.

Only one state primary, New Hampshire,

saw more than a 50 percent turnout, and that is because it was the first. In the rest of the primaries and caucuses, the average turnout for both Republicans and Democrats was only about 30 percent.

In addition to the emotions of fear, anger, and loss expressed during this 2016 election, maybe voters are also fatigued over the ceaseless conflict and manipulations.

President Obama represented this mood recently when he said, "We can't move forward if all we do is tear each other down."

If polarization is near a historic peak in American politics, might voters be hitting bottom in exhaustion? And if so, are they ready to return to a politics that embraces civility, respect, and compromise?

■ Divided America

In a new book, "Polarized: Making Sense of a Divided America," University at Buffalo political scientist James Campbell suggests that there are limits to voter exasperation. He says a large minority of Americans still see themselves



And never in the history of polling have the two top party nominees, Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton, had such high negatives.

as moderates, a fact that politicians cannot ignore, while many liberal and conservatives are not zealots. In addition, a large consensus still exists on the main issues, such as the economy and national security.

Politics is actually a low priority for most Americans, and the political system is set up to force compromise. "We also know many Americans are averse to conflict," he writes. He calls for humility about our political views and an understanding that no one can be right all the time.

"All of this is to suggest that intense political disagreements are exhausting and perhaps unsustainable. This may be an organic regulator or limiter of the dysfunctional consequences of extreme polarization.

Until this polarization fatigue sets in, though it rings with futility, there unfortunately may be no better advice than that given by the British government during World War II to the British public: 'Keep Calm and Carry On.'

(Source: The CSM)

Pars Diplomatic Real Estate

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Apt. in Jordan

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Apt. in Qeytarieh

150 sq.m, 3 bdrs, fully furn, Pkg, **Diplomatic, 1700 USD**
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G20 countries face calls for action to boost growth

The world's leading economies must do more to boost slowing global growth, the International Monetary Fund and Washington urged as G20 finance ministers gathered Saturday, with Britain's vote to leave the European Union threatening more disruption.

Central bank chiefs and finance ministers from the world's top 20 economies met in the southwestern Chinese city of Chengdu, and U.S. Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew told journalists it was "a time of continuing uncertainty in the global economic outlook".

Britain's new finance minister Philip Hammond on Saturday met his German counterpart Wolfgang Schaueble for the first time, and held talks with Chinese central bank chief Zhou Xiaochuan.

According to a draft communique the G20 will seek to stress the impact of Brexit can be tackled, Bloomberg News reported.

"Members of the G20 are well positioned to proactively address the potential economic and financial consequences stemming from the UK referendum," it quoted the draft document as saying.

Urgent need

Just ahead of the meeting, the IMF called on key G20 nations to boost government spending.

"Global growth remains weak, and downside risks have become more salient," the Washington-based lender said in a report. "Growth could be even lower if the current increases in economic and political uncertainty in the wake of the 'Brexit' vote continue."

In its most recent forecast, the IMF lowered its forecasts for global growth this year and next by 0.1 percent, to 3.1 percent and 3.4 percent respectively.

The IMF wants advanced economies such as Germany and the United States to channel more public spending into infrastructure investment to help boost growth, an issue that has sparked divisions among G20 members.

"There is an urgent need for G20 countries to step up their efforts to turn growth around," it said.

But Berlin, in particular, has a long history of fiscal rigor and argues that government spending is ineffective at boosting growth, while monetary moves such as ultra-low interest rates and a flood of liquidity and credit are counterproductive.

Ahead of the G20 gathering, a German ministerial source told reporters that the use of government stimulus would not be one of the meeting's main themes.

But French finance minister Michel Sapin told AFP that as well as monetary policy, which could not "do everything", fis-



cal policy should be used "as much as possible".

"Different countries are in different situations," he said, and governments that had room to support investment should do so, "even if one country or another disagrees".

Terrorism, Turkey, Trump

Other challenges loom besides Brexit, including what one official at the G20 referred to as the "Three Ts" -- terrorism, Turkey and Trump.

The recent attack in the French city of Nice which killed 84 people, the third major incident in the European country over the past 18 months, has rattled financial markets, and a gunman in the German city of Munich killed nine people on Friday.

Central bank chiefs and finance ministers from the world's top 20 economies met in the Chinese city of Chengdu, and U.S. Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew told journalists it was "a time of continuing uncertainty in the global economic outlook".

A failed coup in Turkey which had aimed at unseating President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and his huge subsequent crackdown on opponents, has alarmed Ankara's Western allies.

Turkey's Deputy Prime Minister Mehmet Simsek sought to reassure his colleagues.

"Despite what has happened a week ago in Turkey... we will continue to strongly adhere to democratic principles and apply rule of law, and not much really has changed," he said.

The U.S. presidential election, in which tycoon Donald Trump has sealed the Republican party nomination and will face Democrat Hillary Clinton, could add uncertainty if the contest is close.

In sharp contrast to an earlier G20 finance ministers meeting in February, attendees appeared less concerned about a slowdown in China's economy -- a key driver of global growth -- and persistent weakness in its yuan currency.

The Asian giant expanded 6.9 percent in 2015 -- its weakest annual rate in a quarter of a century -- as Beijing navigates a difficult transition to more sustainable growth.

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang on Friday said the world cannot depend on his country alone to save it from a Brexit-induced downturn.

"It is impossible to carry all of the burden of the whole world on our shoulders," he told leaders of multi-lateral financial institutions in Beijing. (Source: The Daily Mail)

NEWS IN BRIEF

UK economy deteriorating drastically, Brexit referendum to blame

The Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) shows a dramatic deterioration of the British economy following the Brexit referendum, when the country chose to leave the European Union, the Market Economics research company revealed.

The report surveyed over 600 companies working in sectors including transport, business services, computing and restaurants.

According to the research group, output and new orders fell in manufacturing by 4.7 points and service sector by 6.8 points since June.

"At this level, the survey is signaling a 0.4% contraction of the economy in the third quarter, though much of course depends on whether we see a further deterioration in August or if July represents a shock-induced nadir," Williamson said.

On June 23, the United Kingdom held a referendum to determine whether or not the country should leave the European Union. According to the final results, 51.9 percent of voters, or 17.4 million people, decided to support Brexit, while about 16.1 million opposed it. (Source: Sputnik)

IMF's Lagarde to stand trial in Tapie case

France's highest appeals court ruled on Friday that International Monetary Fund chief Christine Lagarde must stand trial for her role in a 400 million euros (\$440 million) state payout in 2008 to businessman Bernard Tapie.

She was French finance minister at the time when she signed off on the decision to seek an extremely rare out-of-court settlement in a dispute between the state and Tapie, costing tax-payers dearly.

The court rejected her appeal against a judge's order in December for her to stand trial at the Cour de Justice de la Republique, a special court that tries ministers for crimes in office.

The trial will be only the fifth in the history of the tribunal, which is made up of three judges and six lawmakers from both the lower and upper houses of parliament.

Her case may go to trial before the end of the year if a date can be found that suits all of the judges and lawmakers, a judicial source said.

Her lawyer Patrick Maisonneuve expressed regret over the decision and said he was convinced that the trial would show she was innocent.

IMF spokesman Gerry Rice said that its executive board had been briefed on the matter and continued to have confidence in Lagarde's capacity to carry out her functions. (Source: Reuters)

In Presence of Over 94% of Shareholders, EORC Pays Rls.200 DPS, Closes Fiscal Year with Excellent Performance



The Annual Ordinary General Assembly of Esfahan Oil Refining Company (EORC) was held at Amphitheater of Shahid Montazeri Club's Conference Hall on July 20 in the presence of more than 94 percent of its shareholders. In the beginning of the assembly, financial statements of the company were approved by the majority of shareholders after selection of Presiding board of the Assembly, supervisor, and introduction of representative of major shareholders, auditor and legal inspector of the company. According to the report, Rls.200 dividend per share (DPS) was distributed among shareholders of the company. After that, Chief Executive of Esfahan Oil Refining Company (EORC) submitted a brief report on the activities and measures taken at the company for the fiscal year closing March 19, 2016.

■ Focusing on Basic Challenges and Problems, Atop Agenda of Board

In the beginning, Managing Director of Esfahan Oil Refining Company (EORC) Lotf'ali Chavoshi pointed to the widespread and vast activities and measures taken by the company over the past year (ended March 19, 2016) and said: "In this period, the Board of Directors of the company concentrated on solving problems and challenges facing the company and for this purpose, the Board spent most of its time to solve the problem facing the company."

Then, he pointed to some of the most important issues and reiterated: "EORC was commissioned in 1979 with the production capacity of 200,000 barrels of oil products. In that time, the company was raised as leading refinery in the country but gradually, the management of the company decided to streamline and up-to-date the company observing requirements of international standards."

Effective measures were taken at the Board of Directors of the company, he said, adding: "Removing production obstacles, organizing manpower, challenges and future concerns and also constructing development projects were of the main discussions which were highlighted by the Board of Directors of the company."

As mentioned in above, the company started its activity in 1979, benefitted from the most experienced and talented manpower, he maintained.

Nowadays, most experienced manpower and experts of the company have retired, the issue of which is regarded as one of the major concerns of management of the company, the chief executive opined.

He pointed to taking advantage of experiences of old and expert manpower, organizing manpower and training talented and competent manpower for administering future activity of the company, paying due attention to the company as well as setting up new production units, etc. as effective measures taken by the company.

■ Removing Production Obstacles in EORC

Elsewhere in his remarks, he pointed to the removal of barriers facing production

sector and said: "As benefitted from the most experienced and expert manpower, the company managed to produce quality products in the best form possible."

He went on to say that refinery is a very complex and complicated unit, adding: "Once a problem is observed in the production process, whole production process will be questioned, so that effective and logical measures should first be taken into consideration in this field."

Fortunately, the company has managed to carry out all its activities from the beginning in the best form possible, he maintained.

He pointed to the issue of safety and security and said: "The Company has focused on boosting safety and security of all staff and personnel during these years."

Generally speaking, the company has focused on boosting safety and managed to gain top rank in this field for third consecutive year. All products of the company are hit the consumer market timely with the highest quality, he said, adding: "There is no problem in the field of production in a way that the management of the company has focused all its attention on boosting activities of the company in the best form possible."

He further pointed to the challenges facing the company and said: "From the time when the crude oil is delivered to the company from the earliest stage up to the final stage, the company faces critical problems in this field ranging from the provision of financial resources, water to the final production stage."

To settle the said problem, the management of the company has taken effective steps since two years ago in order to cope with the issue in the best form possible.

■ All Concerns of Extraction, Programs and Objectives Clarified

At the other part of his interview, he said: "Presently, all concerns have been extracted and micro and macro objectives have been defined. To do this, necessary programs and bylaws needed in this regard have been obtained."

According to the bylaw ratified by the government in 2007, Esfahan Oil Refining

Company was obliged to observe requirements of national and international standards. However, the government mandated all refineries in the country to boost quality of their products and also observe international standards, he observed.

The government's directive in this respect brought about two salient specifications, including production of standard products and also increase of profitability for the company.

With due observance to the said issue, the management of the company rolled up its sleeves and managed to implement two plans within the framework of optimization and improvement of process and safeguarding production capacity and also removing bottlenecks.

■ Defining 26 Projects in EORC

The senior official of the company revealed the definition of a number of 26 development projects and said: "These projects have been mainly activated."

In the past years, major portion of construction operation of gasoline-manufacturing project has been completed, he said, adding: "the management of the company has taken effective steps in recent weeks for the completion of construction operation of environmental units and also removing fuel oil and turning it to the other products."

He also pointed to the low value and profit and loss in production of fuel oil and said: "Once the company fails to observe requirements of international standards, the compa-

ny cannot offer its products both in domestic and foreign markets."

■ Promoting Environmental Performance, a Legal and Binding Obligation

At the other part of his interview, he pointed to the promotion of environmental performance as a legal duty and obligation "profitability" and said: "Once environmental issues are not taken into consideration, serious problem will be brought about for the company, so that environmental objectives will not be materialized."

With the coordination made in this regard, the company managed to receive pertinent certificate for removing its name from pollutant list of Isfahan Province Department of Environment (DoE) in 2011, so that the company was not subject to pay duties for pollution, he said, adding: "Since 2011, the company has taken more effective environmental measures, the most important of these steps can be referred to the production of gasoline observing Euro 4 standard."



Unfortunately, since the company had been delisted as pollutant industry according to the envisioned law before termination of 1393 (ended March 19, 2015), the company was added to the list of pollutant industries of the province because of pressures and false excuses illogically, he maintained.

■ Lack of Standardization of Products Meant Production Stoppage in Real Sense

Lack of observing standard rules and regulations is meant stoppage of production unit.

The Chief Executive of EORC Chavoshi announced the above statement and said: "Providing financial resources is one of major concerns in implementation of projects in the field of standardization of products."

He put the cost needed for the underway projects at the company at approx. €900 million and 34,000 billion rials. Once financial resources required for implementation of company's underway projects are provided, extraordinary profit will be brought about at the company, he maintained.

He pointed to the standardization of gasoline in the past Iranian calendar year 1394 (ended March 19, 2016) and put the proceeds and profit obtained by the company in last months of the previous year (ended March 19, 2016) as a result of difference of regular gasoline and euro at 2,200 billion rials.

It is predicted that approx. €700 million/year will need for standardization of fuel oil, he said, adding: "Once fuel oil unit of the company is standardized, extraordinary profitability will be brought about as well."

The senior official of the company pointed out that implementing standardization of products strictly hinges on observing requirements of environmental standards, the issue of which will bring about profit for the company as well.

Deadline and moratorium was given to the company for standardization of gasoline, he said, adding: "Fortunately, standardization of the unit was carried out in the best form possible. However, effective steps should be taken for standardization of other products such as gas oil and fuel oil."

■ Defining Macro Objectives and Challenges Facing EORC in 10 Main Pillars

He pointed to the definition of macro objectives and challenges facing Esfahan Oil Refining Company (EORC) in 10 main pivots and said: "Promoting Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) and social responsibility, managing and developing human capitals,

managing water and energy resources, providing feedstock and continuing production, optimal management of assets, promoting power of marketing and sales, competitive performance, improving economic power and increasing profitability, supplying optimal structure of capital, improving synergy and cooperation between strategy of the company and main pillars, preventing outbreak of emergency conditions as well as managing consequences as a result of emergency condition and crisis, etc. are considered as salient advantages of the company."

■ Daily Production of Over 10m Lit. Gasoline and Gas Oil in EORC

He put the daily production capacity of gasoline and gas oil at the company at 8.5 and 2 million liters respectively, observing requirements of international EURO4 standards.

Of the other salient measures taken by the company for preventing environment, he pointed to: installing online analyzers on output vents based on an agreement concluded with Isfahan Province Department of Environment (DoE), sending relevant environment information and data as online, substituting ozone layer-friendly gases with halogens as destructive to ozone layer in fire extinguishing systems and cooling systems, planting 20,000 stalks of saplings inside and outside the company, refining and returning 320 cubic meters/hour wastewater from operational units in industrial wastewater treatment plant, refining, treating and returning 400 cubic meter/hour wastewater of boilers and coolant towers in Reverse Osmosis Unit, treating 40 cubic meter/hour hygienic sewage, using irrigation for green space, removing flood irrigation method and substituting it with drip and pressurized irrigation system, possibility of producing gasoline according to EURO7 standard in the very near future in gasoline manufacturing unit, etc.

It should be noted that objectives have been predefined in Esfahan Oil Refining Company, each of which has also been defined for implementation in due date, he highlighted.

■ Increasing Capital of EORC to 20,000b Rials by End of Fiscal Year

The managing director of the company pointed to the initial capital of the company at 100 million rials including 1,000 shares, with nominal value of 100,000 rials for each share and said: "The capital of the company has been increased in several stages to the amount of 20,000 billion rials including 20 billion shares each worth 1,000 rials for the fiscal year closing on March 19, 2016."

Esfahan Oil Refining Company (EORC) is busy active in the petroleum products' industry, coke and nuclear fuel, he said, adding: "Presently, a number of nine oil refining companies are busy active in this field."

He put the number of active oil refining companies in the country at nine.

According to the statistics presented on the performance of refining companies in the reported fiscal year period, Esfahan Oil Refining Company (EORC) managed to stand at 1st place in terms of receiving crude oil feedstock. Moreover, the company stood at first place in terms of oil, gas and kerosene products. In terms of fuel oil, Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and gasoline, the company stood at the second rank in nationwide level.

It should be noted that the Annual Ordinary General of Esfahan Oil Refining Company (EORC) for the fiscal year closing on March 19, 2016 was approved by the majority of its shareholders, based on which, Rls.200 Dividend per Share (DPS) was distributed among shareholders.

Of the other bylaws ratified in the Assembly, it should be referred to the selection of five representatives of the Board of Directors.

With due observance to the said issue, EORC wrapped up fiscal year closing on March 19, 2016 excellently.



Hillary Clinton named Virginia Senator Tim Kaine as her vice presidential running mate on Friday, adding a centrist former governor of a crucial battleground state to the Democratic ticket.

In a text message to supporters, the presumptive Democratic nominee said, "I'm thrilled to tell you this first: I've chosen Sen. Tim Kaine as my running mate".

On Twitter a few seconds later, Clinton described Kaine as "a man who's devoted his life to fighting for others".

She called him "a relentless optimist who believes no problem is unsolvable if you put in the work to solve it".

Clinton's pick came a day after her opponent, Donald Trump, closed out the Republican Party's convention with a fiery address accusing her of "terrible, terrible crimes".

■ 'World-class senator'

Kaine, 58, had long been a favorite for Clinton's ticket. Fluent in Spanish and active in the Senate on foreign relations and military affairs, he built a reputation for working across the aisle as Virginia's governor and as mayor of Richmond.

In a recent interview with CBS News, Clinton noted that Kaine has never lost an election during his lengthy political career and praised him as a "world-class mayor, governor and senator".

A favorite of Barack Obama since his early 2008 endorsement, the president told Clinton's campaign he believed Kaine would be a strong choice during the selection process, according to a Democratic familiar with the search who was not authorized to discuss it publicly.

Those views are not shared by some liberals in the Democratic Party, who dislike his support of free trade and Wall

Clinton picks Senator Tim Kaine as running mate



Street.

They pushed Clinton to pick Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren or Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown, intensifying their criticism of Kaine late this week as his selection appeared imminent.

Clinton's campaign largely declined to comment on the search process, trying to keep the details - even the names of the finalists - under wraps to try to maximize the impact of their announcement.

She made no mention of her impending pick during a somber meeting on Fri-

day with community leaders and family members affected by the Pulse nightclub shooting in Orlando and a later campaign rally in Tampa.

She is expected to campaign with Kaine on Saturday morning at an event in Miami.

■ Centrist candidate

Before entering politics, Kaine was an attorney who specialized in civil rights and fair housing. He learned Spanish during a mission trip to Honduras while in law school, an experience he still references on the campaign trail.

During his political career, he's demonstrated an ability to woo voters across party lines, winning his 2006 gubernatorial race with support in both Democratic strongholds and traditionally Republican strongholds.

His wife, Anne Holton, is the daughter of a former Virginia governor, a former state judge and, currently, the state's Education Secretary. The couple has three children.

Clinton's plans to pick Kaine, hinted at for several days leading up her Friday announcement, had been viewed as a safe choice against the Republican ticket of Trump and Indiana Governor Mike Pence.

Some Democrats believe Trump's selection of Pence, a conservative white man from a largely Republican state, freed Clinton from pressure to add another woman or minority to her ticket.

Her short list included Warren, two Latino cabinet secretaries and New Jersey Governor Cory Booker, one of two black US senators.

Democrats argue that Kaine could help her woo moderate and even some Republican voters turned off by Trump's provocative rhetoric, which was at the centre of his 75-minute acceptance speech on Thursday night.

Kaine got some practice challenging Trump's message when he campaigned with Clinton last week in northern Virginia, where he spoke briefly in Spanish and offered a strident assault on Trump's White House credentials.

"Do you want a 'you're fired' president or a 'you're hired' president?" Kaine asked in Annandale, Virginia, as Clinton nodded. "Do you want a trash-talking president or a bridge-building president?"

(Source: AP)

Retired Saudi general visits Israel

A well-connected retired general in the Saudi military has traveled to Israel, in the latest indication of a growing link between Tel Aviv and Riyadh which has come to light in recent months.

Anwar Eshki made the visit earlier in the week, meeting with Israel's foreign ministry director general Dore Gold Yoav Mordechai and a number of Knesset members, the daily Ha'aretz reported.

The daily called the visit "a highly unusual one," as Eshki couldn't have traveled to Israel without approval from the Saudi government.

Eshki and Gold raised an uproar first in June 2015 when they held a publicized joint event in Washington, after meeting privately several times over the preceding year.

Gold attended the event a few days before assuming the role of director general of the Israeli foreign ministry. Israeli legislator Esawi Freige, who organized Eshki's

meeting with his fellow members of Knesset, shed some light on the trip. "The Saudis want to open up to Israel," he said.

"This is a strategic step for them. They said they want to continue what former Egyptian President Anwar Sadat started. They want to get closer to Israel. This is clearly evident," Freige noted.

He was referring to the former Egyptian president's negotiations with Israel, which culminated in the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty in 1979 - the first between an Arab state and Tel Aviv at the time.

Haaretz said that during the meeting with the parliamentarians, Eshki encouraged dialog in Israel on Saudi Arabia's Arab Peace Initiative.

The proposal was unveiled in 2002, offering normalized ties with Israel by 22 Arab countries in return for Tel Aviv's withdrawal from the occupied West Bank.

During an interview with the Qatari news channel Al Jazeera in April, Eshki said Riyadh would open an embassy in Tel Aviv if Israel accepted the Saudi initiative. He also said the Saudis were not interested in "Israel becoming isolated in the region."

Back in May, Israeli newspaper Arutz Sheva reported that Saudi Arabia and its Persian Gulf allies, namely Jordan and Egypt, had been sending messages to Israel through various emissaries, including former British PM Tony Blair.

They had asked Tel Aviv to resume Middle East negotiations under new terms, which included changes to the Saudi initiative, the paper said.

Most Arab governments have no diplomatic relations with Israel. Even so, reports have indicated that several of them, including Saudi Arabia, have had secret relations with Tel Aviv.

(Source: Press TV)

Iranian missile program has nothing to do with JCPOA: American professor

➔ He has been denounced regularly on expert Middle East sites. I hope you will mention him by name and document his long-standing pattern of inaccurate reporting on Iran.

■ What is your assessment about the implementation of the JCPOA?

A: Iran has adhered scrupulously to the JCPOA, but Iran has not realized the promised benefits that were supposed to accrue. As anyone can see the Republican Party still thinks that the agreement was detrimental to the United States. Recently the House of Representatives voted to block the sale of Boeing aircraft to Iran (this has not been enacted into law - it must pass the Senate and be signed by the President). This is a pattern in the U.S. Congress, where Republicans and

some Democrats are able to capitalize on continued negative feelings toward Iran for political gain. The U.S. Treasury is another source of obstruction to the realization of Iranian benefits from the agreement. They continue to drag their feet in issuing opinions about Iran's access to the international banking system. The United States maintains some old sanctions against Iran that are not related to the JCPOA. The Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) at the U.S. Treasury Department maintains that European banks "may" be violating American banking sanctions if their transactions involve

U.S. dollars. They warn that if Treasury determines that these transactions violate the non-JCPOA related U.S. sanctions, the European banks may be fined. This has made European and Asian banks afraid to enter into financial transactions with Iran because the fines in the past have been substantial--billions of dollars. By not clarifying these matters, the OFAC, which is staffed by people who are extremely hostile to Iran, has managed to unilaterally block the financial benefits for Iran involving all the other P5+1 nations.

The New York Times today (July 21) did issue an editorial advocating allow-

ing the Boeing sales to go forward, and European officials have expressed frustration with the U.S. Treasury blocking of transactions with Iran. Foreign Minister Zarif has also expressed frustration with this, and has complained to U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry.

But the reality is that the Republicans, who dominate Congress, have made the JCPOA an election issue, and will do everything possible to block the implementation of the agreement from the U.S. side. President Obama knows this and has decided not to take this up until after the election, to avoid hurting Democrat's chances in the election. If there are any regulatory changes, they will unfortunately be delayed until after the November 8 elections.

"The Republicans, who dominate Congress, have made the JCPOA an election issue."

Magnolia leadership in customer satisfaction by providing high-quality products

ECONOMY At the Second National Quality Congress held on July 19, 2016 at IRIB International Conferences Centre, Magnolia Knowledge-Based Flavor and Fragrance Company won the statuette of the congress.

As attended by Deputy Majlis Speaker Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian, Deputy Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade Dr. Ali-Ashgar Tofigh and Secretary General of Association of Owners of Standard Logo Eng. Hos-

sein Tofigh, the status of the Congress was awarded to Eng. Amin Baraktin Chief Executive of Magnolia Knowledge-Based Flavor and Fragrance Company.

Hereunder are credits of the company:

- Producing over 400 types flavors and natural colors for food industries
- 7 specialized laboratories for Flavor and Natural Colors
- Production and laboratory facilities in an area of 11,000 sq.m in Kaveh Indus-



trial City

■ Over 800 active industrial customers and over 2000 active corporate customers

■ Over 100 research projects in the food industry field

■ Recognizing and classifying various flavor profiles according to the original

It should be noted that the company was introduced as an exemplary industrial unit, focusing on producing high-quality products, the report ended.

"SMSOTP" of internet bank system of AYANDEH Bank activated

ECONOMY Short Message System One-Time Password (SMSOTP), special of customers with one-time "PSP" and "USSD" passwords, was activated in Internet Bank System of AYANDEH Bank.

Offering innovative and differentiated services in the field of electronic banking is always considered as one of the main activities of AYANDEH BANK in the banking arena of the country.

This equipped online system was launched for dear customers who use Internet Bank System of AYANDEH Bank, the report added.

If interested, customers of the bank can refer to the internet service of the bank and can select menu (new

password) in order to activate one-time password instantly.

Moreover asking their active one-time passwords, customers who intend to use one-time password with short message system should refer directly to the menu of "setting" for selecting or changing one-time password.

In order to enter the system, it is enough to insert "ID of Approval" in pertinent form and after rewriting the available security statement in form, customers can get the system easily.

One-time passwords (OTPs) sent via SMS offer the convenience of using a mobile phone while adding

the security of out-of-band delivery. Mobile phones are one of the very few devices most people already carry and actively protect. SMS offers a familiar platform for OTP delivery without the need for companies to own, distribute, or replace standalone delivery devices.

SMS can also play an important role for companies who choose to use another type of OTP device such as a token. In these instances, SMS text delivery is a secure way to confirm the token was initially distributed to the correct user, or if the token is lost or broken, SMS acts as the failsafe for OTP delivery until the token is replaced.

NEWS Yemenis launch retaliatory missile attack on Saudi base

The Yemeni army, backed by popular committees loyal to the Ansarullah movement, has fired a ballistic missile at a Saudi military base in retaliation for Riyadh's relentless attacks on the impoverished Arab nation. The missile hit the Saudi airbase in the kingdom's southern city of Najran on Saturday.

There were no immediate reports about casualties and the extent of the damage. This is the third Yemeni missile attack on Saudi Arabia over the past days. At least three Saudi troops were killed on Tuesday in a retaliatory rocket attack launched by Yemeni forces on a military base in the in the kingdom's southern province of Jizan. On July 20, Ansarullah forces also fired a ballistic missile at an army base held by troops loyal to the resigned Yemeni president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi.

According to reports, around 180 troops, including foreign mercenaries, were killed in the attack in the Bab el-Mandeb region in the country's southwestern province of Ta'izz.

Saudi Arabia's military campaign against Yemen was launched on March 26, 2015 in a bid to reinstate Hadi, a staunch ally of Riyadh, and defeat the Houthi Ansarullah movement. Meanwhile, Saudi warplanes on Saturday carried out fresh airstrikes in areas in Yemen's Hajjah and Ta'izz provinces with no immediate reports of casualties or damage.

More than 9,400 people have been killed and at least 16,000 others sustained injuries since the onset of the Saudi aggression against its southern neighbor. (Source: Press TV)

ASEAN in discord ahead of meeting with top China, U.S. diplomats

Southeast Asian nations were thrown into disarray after Cambodia on Saturday blocked them from issuing a statement referring to an international court ruling against China's territorial claims in the South China Sea, diplomats said.

The UN-backed Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Hague handed an emphatic legal victory to the Philippines in the maritime dispute earlier this month, denying China's sweeping claims in the strategic seaway.

Foreign ministers from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) will meet for the first time since the ruling on Sunday, before hosting U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, and his Chinese counterpart, Foreign Minister Wang Yi among others. The disputed sea, through which more than \$5 trillion in global trade passes each year, is the most contentious issue for the 10 ASEAN members. China claims most of the sea, but ASEAN members the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia and Brunei all have rival claims. Yi has described the Hague case as a farce, and Beijing says the ruling has no bearing on its rights in the sea.

China is adamantly opposed to an ASEAN stand on the South China Sea, preferring to deal with the disputed claims on a bilateral basis.

■ China's ally

Cambodia is China's closest ASEAN ally and is the only country opposing any reference to the ruling in a statement due to be issued after ASEAN foreign ministers meet on Sunday, an ASEAN diplomat told Reuters.

Cambodia is also pushing to strike out any reference to the militarization of the South China Sea, watering down the language in statements issued previously by ASEAN this year. Cambodia is heavily dependent on Chinese aid and investment. Last week, Cambodia's Prime Minister Hun Sen announced China would give his government around \$600 million in soft loans. "Cambodia is unbelievable," one diplomat said on condition of anonymity. "It is blocking any phrase about the arbitration and about militarization."

A committee has been working since July 20 trying to hammer out an ASEAN statement acceptable to all, said another diplomat, but Cambodia has thwarted their efforts.

Indonesia has proposed that foreign ministers hold an informal meeting late on Saturday to thrash out an agreement. (Source: Reuters)

Congress should not block sale of passenger planes to Iran: NY Times

➔ The deal could be one of the agreement's most significant economic outcomes. It would mark the largest American business transaction with Iran since the 1979 Islamic Revolution ended diplomatic relations between the two nations. It would also provide a much-needed political boost for Iran's president, Hassan Rouhani, whose constituents are disillusioned that the deal's promised economic benefits have not so far materialized. Because of years of sanctions, Iran's commercial airline fleet is so decrepit and unsafe that many people fear flying on the planes. Republicans in Congress have argued that Iran has a long record as a state sponsor of terrorism and could use the new aircraft to support President Bashar al-Assad of Syria or Hezbollah militants in Lebanon or even reconfigure the planes for military purposes. It is also possible that Iran Air could provide some of the planes to Mahan Air, an airline that remains under sanctions. There are reasons for concerns, given Iran Air's past practice of ferrying fighters and weapons across the Middle East. But the planes and engines all have unique identifying numbers, and American officials are confident that they and Boeing can track the planes. Should Iran Air misuse any aircraft, they insist, the rest of the order will be withheld, as will spare parts, which are vital to keeping the fleet in the air. Vigilant monitoring, obviously, is crucial.

More broadly, officials believe, an Iran that now finds itself free of nuclear-related sanctions and able to engage more fully in the international economy will be reluctant to act in a way that will provoke a reimposition of sanctions. It can also be argued that once Iran obtains the planes, Mr. Rouhani and other more moderate elements will be in a stronger position to defend the deal and push back against hard-liners in Tehran who, like hard-liners in Washington, are working to make it fail.

The nuclear deal has proved its value. The United States has a responsibility to make it work.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



A man who stands for nothing will fall for anything.
Malcolm X

LEARN ENGLISH
Working as a Lobbyist

Cody: You're not the kind of person I would expect to work as a lobbyist.
Jada: Why not?
Cody: I picture lobbyists as being kind of pushy and corrupt, using underhanded tactics.
Jada: It's not like that at all, at least not for me. I just use my powers of persuasion to help my clients.
Cody: So what do you do exactly?
Jada: I meet with legislators and try to sway them to support laws that are favorable to the people and companies I represent, and to discourage them from voting for laws that aren't.
Cody: You're a spokesperson for your clients, then.
Jada: I'm more than that. I work for clients in the private sector and in corporations, as well as for special interest groups. I advocate for what would benefit my clients in a way that they can't do themselves directly.
Cody: Isn't there sometimes a conflict of interest? Let's say your client this month wants a law passed and your client next month doesn't. What happens then?
Jada: I'm a gun for hire. I do my best for my client, whichever that client is at that moment.
Cody: I'm glad to hear you say that. I could use the services of a good lobbyist. I've been trying to get my wife to agree to buy a new boat...
Jada: Stop right there. In this case there is a conflict of interest. Your wife talked to me last week and wants me to have a little talk with you about that new boat...
(Source: espod.com)

Words & phrases

lobbyist: someone hired by a business or a cause to persuade legislators to support that business or cause, they get paid to win favor from politicians
picture: to imagine something by making an image in your mind
pushy: someone who is pushy does everything they can to get what they want from other people - used in order to show disapproval
corrupt: using your power in a dishonest or illegal way in order to get an advantage for yourself
underhanded: dishonest and done secretly
tactic: a method that you use to achieve something
persuasion: the act of persuading someone to do something
legislator: someone who has the power to make laws or belongs to an institution that makes laws
sway: to influence someone so that they change their opinion
favorable: to the advantage of someone or something
represent: to officially speak or take action for another person or group of people
spokesman: a man who has been chosen to speak officially for a group, organization, or government
private sector: the industries and services in a country that are owned and run by private companies, and not by the government
special interest group: a group of people or an organization seeking or receiving special advantages, typically through political lobbying
advocate: to publicly say that something should be done
conflict of interest: a situation in which different people want different things, a situation in which the concerns or aims of two different parties are incompatible
let's say: used to introduce a suggestion or possible example of something, used as a way of introducing a hypothetical situation
gun for hire: an expert who is employed to solve a problem

QUIZ OF THE DAY

188) Choose if the sentence is true or false.
I'm deadly sure.
a) True
b) False
(Quiz No. 187 answer: a)

PHRASAL VERB
Wear off

Meaning: gradually disappear
For example: The effect of the painkiller began to wear off.

ENGLISH PROVERB
In times of prosperity friends are plentiful

Explanation: you have many friends when you have no difficulties

16 die, 33 suffer injuries in bus accidents

SOCIETY TEHRAN — Two road accidents occurred in the last two days in the country, leaving 16 dead and 33 injured.

In a dreadful bus turnover occurred in Chalus road, Mazandaran province, 16 died and 12 got injured on Saturday morning, the Rescue and Relief Organization spokesman said.

The bus which was on its way to Tehran deviated from the route and crashed into an electricity pylon which finally resulted in a deadly turnover on early morning, YJC quoted Mostafa Mortazavi as saying.

Nader Rahmani, Traffic Control Police chief said that there were 28 passengers on the bus 15 of whom died right at the scene and 1 passed away at the hospital, adding, 11 of the passenger got

injured and were transferred to the hospital and one received outpatient care at the scene.

Additionally the crash took place right before the Kandovan Tunnel and caused power cut at the tunnel and the whole area, Rahmani pointed.

The driver's inability to control the vehicle and over speeding are the primary causes of the accident, he highlighted.

The identity of two of the passengers who were soldiers are confirmed as they had IDs but the rest are yet to be identified, Alborz Province forensics director Hamid Davoudabadi explained.

Moreover, a bus crashed into trailer on a road leading to Shiraz, Fars province, on Saturday morning and left 21 injured who were all transferred to the hospital, IRNA news agency reported.



The bus turnover in Chalus road



The bus crash on the road to Shiraz

EURORDIS representatives to visit Iran

SOCIETY TEHRAN — A delegation from European Organization for Rare Diseases (EURORDIS) is scheduled to visit Iran on July 25, director for Rare Diseases Foundation of Iran has said.

The delegation comprising experts, specialists, and senior managers of the organization will travel to Iran on a six-day trip for the first time, Ali Davoudian said, Tasnim news agency reported on Friday.

The delegation is due to get familiar with the latest achievements of Iran in the field of rare diseases while visiting research centers and hospitals, he explained.

Davoudian went on to say that the EURORDIS representatives are also planned to meet with Iranian health officials, sign memorandums of understanding, and visit families of patients suffering from rare diseases.

Exchanging experience and information, enhancing the

quality of treatment and meeting international standards in offering treatment to the patients would be the outcomes of this trip, Davoudian noted.

EURORDIS is a non-governmental patient-driven alliance of patient organizations and individuals active in the field of rare diseases, that promotes research on rare diseases and commercial development of orphan drugs.

By 2030, hundreds of thousands of people will die because of climate change

Climate change is a global problem, posing threat to people anywhere in the world. In New York City alone, it was predicted in a study conducted by Columbia University that by the 2080s, as many as 3,331 people could die every year from intense heat exposure during the summer months.

In yet another study headed by the World Health Organization, it was estimated that as early as 2030, the world will have approximately 250,000 additional deaths per year due to many health problems brought by climate change. Among these

are heat-related mortality in elderly people, coastal flooding, diarrhoeal disease, malaria, dengue and undernutrition.

All populations will be affected by climate change, but some are more vulnerable than others. The study said the health impacts of climate change will greatly depend on the resilience of a community. As such, those people in countries with weak health infrastructure will be the most affected as they do not have the ability to prepare, respond and cope with the stressors. According to the Deccan Chronicle, the

study was discussed at a meeting held by the French government in Paris on July 8. This is to study actions taken to implement the Paris agreement in order to reduce the health risks linked to climate change.

Experts noted that there is a strong need to ensure that overall economic growth, climate policies and health programs must include the poorest and most vulnerable populations.

The Scientific American was able to get an opinion of another expert who is not involved in the study. Jeremy Hess, an Emo-

ry University physician and epidemiologist who has studied the relationship between climate change and health conditions, told the site through an e-mail exchange that the numbers estimated by WHO might have been even smaller than the actual number due to lack of adequate data.

Experts suggest that reducing greenhouse gas emissions by choosing greener facilities for transport, food and energy can be of help in improving overall health.

(Source: Nature World News)

TAC unveils 'Graham', the 'ideal man' for survival on the roads

His name is 'Graham' and he is the latest road safety initiative from Victoria's Transport Accident Commission (TAC).

Graham was developed in a collaborative project headed by Christian Kenfield, a leading trauma surgeon at the Royal Melbourne Hospital, David Logan, a crash investigator at Monash University's Accident Research centre and world-renowned sculptor Patricia Piccinini.

Let's face it, Graham isn't an attractive man; in fact his body is equipped with the sort of features it needs to withstand the impacts involved in vehicle crashes.

In essence, Graham shows how vulnerable we all are to serious injuries every time we're on a road.



Because the reality is humans are designed to cope with

impacts at speeds we create (running, walking, jumping), and no more.

"People can survive running at full speed into a wall but when you're talking about collisions involving vehicles, the speeds are faster, the forces are greater and the chances of survival are slimmer," explained TAC chief Joe Calafiore.

"Cars have evolved a lot faster than humans and Graham helps us understand why we need to improve every aspect of our roads system to protect ourselves from our own mistakes," he added.

And he will be on display until 8 August at the State Library of Victoria ahead of a roadshow around the State.
(Source: The Motor Report)

IN FOCUS @ behdasht.gov.ir/ Heidar Nourozi



Iranian Health Minister Hassan Qazizadeh Hashemi inaugurated 150-bed Kowsar Hospital in Karaj, Alborz Province, on Saturday.



LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Over 3,300 transplants carried out in Iran last calendar year

More than 3,300 transplants were performed in Iran over the last Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2015- March 19, 2016), the director for transplant management department of Health Ministry has said.

"Iran is in quite a good situation regarding the transplants surgeries," Mohammad Kazemeini told ISNA news agency.

Some 2,500 of the surgeries are pertaining to kidney transplants, Kazemeini said, adding, 716 liver and 102 heart transplant surgeries were performed over the same period.

57 percent of kidney donors were brain dead, he noted, "We are planning on increasing the number of the transplants from the brain dead patients as in addition to kidney we can procure other organs as well."

در سال گذشته بیش از ۳۳۰۰ عضو پیوند شده است

رئیس مرکز مدیریت پیوند اعضا وزارت بهداشت گفت: سال گذشته بیش از ۳۳۰۰ عضو پیوند شده است. محمد کاظمینی در گفتگو با ایسنا گفت: وضعیت پیوند اعضا در ایران مطلوب بوده و در این زمینه شرایط مناسبی را داریم.

کاظمینی ادامه می‌دهد: ۲۵۰۰ مورد پیوند کلیه ۷۱۶ پیوند کبد و ۱۰۲ مورد پیوند قلب در همین مدت انجام شده است.

وی خاطرنشان کرد: ۵۷ درصد از موارد اهدای کلیه از طریق افرادی بود که دچار مرگ مغزی شده بودند. از طرفی رسیدن به این هدف که بیشترین اهدای عضو از افرادی باشد که دچار مرگ مغزی شده‌اند، وضعیت بسیار مناسبی است چراکه زمانی که اهدای عضو در کشور بیشتر به سمت دریافت عضو از افراد

مرگ مغزی پیش رود، علاوه بر پیوند کلیه، پیوند سایر اعضا نیز افزایش می‌یابد.

Iranian women's volleyball team starts Slovenian camp

S P O R T S Iran national women's volleyball team traveled to Slovenia on Saturday morning to hold its training camp, as part of preparation for the 5th AVC Cup for Women.

The fifth edition of the AVC (Asian Volleyball Confederation) Cup for Women will take place in Vinh Phuc, Vietnam from September 14 to 20.

The Iranian team has been scheduled in Pool A along with host Vietnam, Chinese Taipei and Thailand.

Pool B consists of China, South Korea, Kazakhstan and Japan, asianvolleyball.net reported.

The Iranian team is expected to have twelve friendly matches. The national volleyball women of Slovenia, Austria, and the champion of Italian Super League are of the rivals Iran will face against them.

Regarding the training schedule, Iran coach Majda Cicic said: "I will implant the recent training system of volleyball and I am rather confident about the result. All I try is to improve the ranking of Iran in Asia and we will next think about the better ranking in major competitions the following years."



Iran crowned Asian University 3x3 Basketball champion



S P O R T S Iran defeated Macau 21-16 in the final match of the 2nd Asian University 3x3 Basketball Championship on Saturday.

In the third-placed match, China defeated Hong Kong and won the bronze medal.

In the first edition of the competition, the Iranian team had finished in the third place.

The 2nd Asian University 3x3 Basketball Championship opened at the main gym of University of Macao.

A total of 22 teams from 12 countries and regions, namely Macau (host), Iran, Brunei, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Chinese Taipei participated in men's and women's tournaments.

The 3x3 basketball is a form of the game played three a side on one hoop. It is the largest urban team sport of the world.

The FIBA 3x3 World Championships is the highest tournament for national 3x3 teams.

CAS allowed Sardar to remain at Rostov



S P O R T S Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) has accepted the appeal by Sardar Azmoun's lawyer against the Russian club Rubin Kazan claim.

Azmoun, who spent 2015-16 season at Rostov on loan from Rubin Kazan, was supposed to return to Tatars at the end of the season; however Rostov triggered the buyout clause in Azmoun's contract. Rubin denied this clause and claimed Sardar is the player of the team but Azmoun's lawyer appealed the case to CAS. Finally CAS ruled in favor of Azmoun

and he is now included in Rostov's UEFA Champions League third qualifying round squad for the game against Anderlecht on Tuesday.

Azmoun finished seventh in 2015-16 Russian Premier League top scorer list scoring nine goals in 23 appearances, despite getting half as much playing time as some other top scorers.

He was also voted as the fifth most valuable player of the league, narrowly behind players such as Fyodor Smolov, Moussa Doumbia, and Brazilian superstar Hulk.

Masoud Shojaei joins Panionios

Iranian midfielder Masoud Shojaei signed with Greek Super League team Panionios.

Shojaei returns to European football after joining the Athens based club from Qatar's Al Gharafa.

He will join up with fellow Team Melli striker Karim Ansarifard, who also extended his contract with the Greek club.

According to several Greek sources, Shojaei signed a one-year contract with the option to extend for an additional year.

Masoud Shojaei has been an integral member of the Iranian National Team and has enjoyed a fruitful career playing

his trade with several clubs ranging from the Iranian Pro League, La Liga and most recently the Qatar Stars League. He was also a member of the Iranian National Team that featured in the 2006 World Cup in Germany, and the 2014 World Cup in Brazil.

Panionios, who finished 5th in the Greek Super League last seasons, qualified for the Europa League play-offs this year. However, due to financial and licensing issues, UEFA did not clear the club to participate in the upcoming annual tournament.

(Source: PersianFootball)



Madeira airport renamed after Cristiano Ronaldo

Cristiano Ronaldo's hometown of Madeira honoured the island's favourite son by naming their international airport after the EURO 2016 winning Portugal captain and Real Madrid star.

Miguel Albuquerque, president of the Regional Government, made the announcement after Portugal's triumph at EURO 2016, with the Santa Catarina Air-

port in Funchal to be renamed the Cristiano Ronaldo Airport.

Ronaldo, 31, captained Portugal to their first major tournament title in France earlier this month, helping Fernando Santos's men secure a 1-0 win over the host nation, despite suffering a knee injury in the final.

The announcement came on the same

day the former Manchester United forward and three-time Ballon d'Or winner Ronaldo opened his own hotel in the city.

Ronaldo and Albuquerque attended the opening - the first in a global chain of hotels in a venture with Pestana Hotel Group, with locations in Lisbon, Madrid and New York set to follow.

"The first Pestana CR7 had to be in

Funchal - my city that also is considered the best island by the World Travel Awards," Ronaldo said.

"It is a great pride for me - the opening of this my first hotel. It marks my entrance into a completely new area. This new project is going to be a huge success in the four corners of the world."

(Source: OmniSport)

Arsene Wenger: Arsenal will spend 'big money' only on the right player

Arsene Wenger insists Arsenal still plan on spending "big money" this transfer window, if he can find the right player.

The Gunners have only made one major signing so far this summer by bringing in Granit Zhaka in a deal worth around £30 million, and Wenger is still searching for that elusive top-quality striker to strengthen his attack.

But while Arsenal chief executive Ivan Gazidis told ESPN FC in an interview that the transfer window should not be seen as biggest key to the club's success, Wenger reassured fans that he is still looking to bring in reinforcements.

"I am sure my chief executive didn't want to dampen the expectations on that front," Wenger said after Arsenal's 1-1 draw at RC Lens in a pre-season game on Friday. "We are very active, and if we find the right candidates we will



spend big money. We have already spent big."

Aside from Zhaka, Arsenal have also brought in two promising young players in Japan striker Takuma Asano

and English defender Rob Holding, whose transfer from Bolton was completed on Friday.

Wenger has been linked with a handful of top strikers in this transfer window -- including Gonzalo Higuain, Alexandre Lacazette and Mauro Icardi -- but said he would not discuss any names he's interested in.

However the Frenchman, who has become known for making late deals in the window, hinted that the club's dealings could drag out into August this time as well.

"It's not over. Today we are in July, and the transfer market finishes on the 31st of August. We know as well that a lot happens many times in the last week," Wenger said. "It's a long time to go, but we are active. We are working."

(Source: Soccernet)

OLYMPICS

Michael Phelps hoping Rio 2016 Olympics swansong hits the right notes

Having qualified for Rio in three events, Michael Phelps will also be a candidate for the relays as he looks to add more medals to his name.

Having ended his career once in London on what he considered a sour note, Michael Phelps enters the Rio de Janeiro Olympics pool for his second swansong determined to bow out on his own terms.

Inspired, motivated and sober, Phelps heads to Rio with the chance to add to his record total of 22 medals and to pen the happy ending he feels he denied himself four years earlier.

At the 2012 London Olympics, which he also declared would be his last, Phelps won four gold and six medals but walked away filled with the regret that he simply went through the motions rather than embracing the moment.

"Going into '12, I just didn't want to do it," the 31-year-old said at the U.S. Olympic swim trials in Nebraska last month.

"I tried to fake it. I wanted to get in and out as fast as I could and really wanted nothing to do with it.

"That haunted me for a while.

"I came back because I wanted to. I wanted to do this for me. I'm enjoying the moment and I'm embracing the moment and taking it one step at a time.

"Being able to fall in love with the sport again is something that I've always wanted to do again and I did it on my terms."

Like many athletes, when his career finished, Phelps appeared lost and unprepared.

He talked of becoming a professional golfer but eventually found himself testing the waters of a swimming comeback.

That return was interrupted by a second drunk driving arrest in 2014 and a stint in rehab, which laid the foundation for his transformation from party boy to family man.

He reconnected with his estranged father, who was in the stands at the U.S. swimming trials watching his son qualify for a fifth Olympic team, and in May his fiancée Nicole gave birth to their son Boomer.

While Phelps has been a hero for a generation of American swimmers, he has now finally become something of a mentor and elder statesman of the U.S. team.

At each Olympics the U.S. swimming team picks a captain and until a July training camp in San Antonio, it had remained one of the very few honours not bestowed on Phelps.

Now, chosen as co-captain of the men's team for the first time, he is eager to assume the leadership mantle in Rio.

"This time around, I just want to be able to help some of the younger guys," said Phelps.

"Just being able to help them just kind of stay in their relaxed zone, not get worked up because it is the Olympics."

The growing maturity has not diminished the fierce competitiveness, however.

Having qualified for Rio in three events, the 100 and 200 metres butterfly and 200 individual medley, he will also be a candidate for the relays as he looks to add to his astonishing tally of 18 gold medals. Phelps has made the 100 fly and 200 medley gold medals his personal property at the last three Olympics and he could join discus thrower Al Oerter (1956-68) and long jumper Carl Lewis (1984-1996) as the only athletes to win gold in the same individual event at four consecutive Games.

While still an undeniable force, Phelps no longer competes with the aura of invincibility that once surrounded him.

He conceded that his times at the U.S. trials would have to dramatically improve for Rio, but is confident his longtime coach Bob Bowman will have a plan to get him to the wall first.

"I do understand that I have to swim faster to have a chance to win the gold medal," said Phelps. "I've trusted that man since I was 11 years old, and it's not going to stop.

"I'm sure he's already come up with some kind of plan to figure out what we're going to do.

"I'm not going to put a limit on myself of what I can or can't do."

(Source: Reuters)



Bundesliga remains most attended football league in the world

League registers one of the highest spectator averages per match since inception in 1963.

The excitement and thrill of Bundesliga football has once again proven to be unmatched, as the league enjoyed one of its most attended seasons in history in 2015/16.

With 12,980,815 spectators passing through the stadiums and a season average of 42,421 fans per match, the Bundesliga was the highest-attended football league in the world. This achievement in large part can be attributed to the immense fan support of top-tier clubs like Borussia Dortmund and FC Bayern München, which led the league in attendance.

Borussia Dortmund averaged 81,178 (99.88 percent capacity) fans per match, with Bayern München drawing 75,018 (100 percent capacity).

Fans are already eager for the start of the upcoming season, as the Supercup match on 14 August between Dortmund and Bayern at the SIGNAL IDUNA PARK has sold out.

(Source: Bundesliga)





Poem of the day

Thy mouth the fountain where Life's waters flow,
A dimpled well of tears is set below,
And death lies near to life thy lovers know,
But know in vain!

Hafez

Prayer Times

Noon:13:11 Evening: 20:35 Dawn: 4:28 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:07 (tomorrow)

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NEWS IN BRIEF



Adaptation of "Rumors" goes on stage in Tehran

T A R T TEHRAN — A loose desk adaptation of American author Neil Simon's comedy play "Rumors" is currently on stage at the Entezami Hall of the Iran Artists Forum in Tehran.

Director Mehdi Ahmadpanah has renamed the play "Pulp Fiction" to perform it in Iran.

"Rumors" is about some guests who are gathering for the tenth wedding anniversary of the Deputy Mayor of New York, but the host has just shot himself and lies bleeding in the room and his wife is nowhere in sight.

Mojdeh Daei, Mohammadreza Abangah, Azadeh Abdollahi and Mohammad Tayyebtaher are the main members of the cast for the play, which will be on stage until August 12.



"The Humbling" comes to Iranian bookstores

T A R T TEHRAN — A Persian version of American novelist Philip Milton Roth's thirtieth book "The Humbling" was recently released in Iran by Nimaj Publications.

The 2009 book translated into Persian by Soheil Somi tells the story of Simon Axler, one of the leading American stage actors of his generation who is now in his sixties.

It seems that everything is over for the protagonist as he has lost his magic, his talent and his assurance. His confidence in his abilities has drained away; he imagines people laughing at him; he can no longer pretend to be someone else.

A film adaptation of the novel was released in January 2015 by Millennium Films. The movie directed by Barry Levinson and starring Al Pacino also named "The Humbling".

Comedy king Mehran Modiri departs from TV

T A R T TEHRAN — Mehran Modiri, the desk director and actor of blockbuster TV comedy series such as "Good Time", "Pavarchin" and "Barareh Nights", has announced his plan to quit working for TV projects.

He is currently working as director and host for the sketch comedy and celebrity talk show "Dorehami" ("Gathering"), which is broadcast on the Nasim Channel.

Speaking on Friday night on Haft (Seven), a TV program that reviews Iranian cinema and TV productions, he said, "I will not work for a TV or the home video network anymore after I finish my work with 'Dorehami'."

He said the he would pursue his career in cinema by making a feature every year.

"I have been working 360 days out of 365 over the past years of my life and now, I think I should take a break," he added.

"In my path to filmmaking, I intend to speak louder and more biting in the fields of politics and culture," he stated.

"TV has no place for these words and its limitations do not allow these words to be spread," he noted.

Modiri made his directorial debut in TV in the early 1990s with "Flight 57", a popular series that introduced those actors, including Reza Attaran and Reza Shafijam, which later turned into the pillars of many comedy productions.

He soon improved his acting and directorial career so that his name on the title of each TV production would be enough to convince Iranian viewers to watch it. However, his works gained part of their credit from scripts written by the Qasemkhani brothers, Peyman and Mehrab.

In 2008, Modiri switched to the home video network following a disagreement with officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting.



Comedian Mehran Modiri (R) is seen talking with host Behruz Afkhami on Haft, a TV program that reviews Iranian cinema and TV productions, on July 22, 2016.

He made several series, including "Bitter Coffee" and "I Was Joking", during which he criticized some social issues in Iran.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif paid tribute to Modiri by visiting him on the set of "I Was Joking" in Tehran in December 2013.

In 2015, he returned to TV with "On the Margin", a sitcom on the Iranian medical community that caused

outrage among Iranian doctors.

Now, Modiri plans to try his hand in the motion picture industry with a comedy titled "5 PM".

In his talks with Haft host Behruz Afkhami, he described the comedy as a "difficult street film," for which he should hire 600 to 700 extras.

"The film depicts a man in the last hours that he has to carry out a task," he stated.

Germany returns two rare manuscripts of Holy Quran to Iran

T A R T TEHRAN — Two rare manuscripts of the Holy Quran recovered by the Munich police have been delivered to the Iranian consulate in the German city.

The manuscripts, which belonged to an Iranian collector living in Germany, were handed over to Iran's counsel General Abdollah Nekunam in the presence of the Deputy Director General of the Bavarian State Library at Munich, Klaus Ceynowa.

The two precious items are due to be displayed at the National Museum of Iran based on the collector's personal will, Persian media reported on Saturday.

The manuscripts belonged to an Iranian private collector who was living in Munich since 1962 and died

in 1997 at the age of 86. No name has been given for the collector.

But after his death, his children discovered that some of the invaluable items were missing and informed the police.

The items including 174 precious objects were later discovered at the house of an Iranian-German engineer (no name given) by the police.

The heir also donated two other precious manuscripts to the Bavarian State Library for their great help.

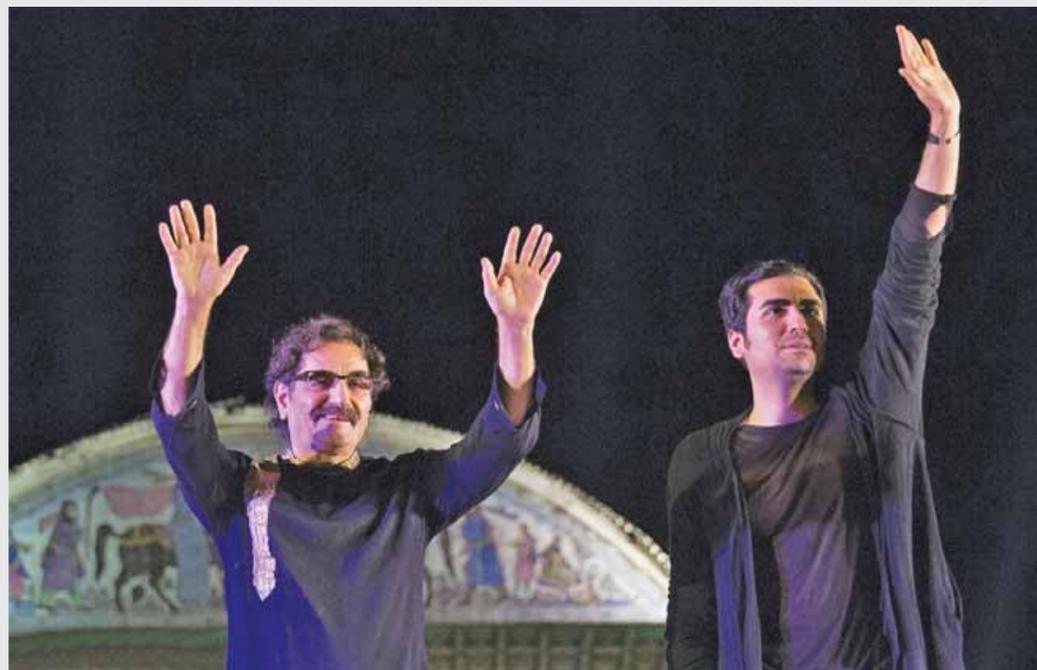
The collector's children still believe a rare manuscript by Hafez dating back 550 years and valued at over 1 million euro is still missing.



Iran's Counsel General Abdollah Nekunam (R) receives one of the manuscripts from an unidentified German official in Munich.

PICTURE OF THE DAY

IRNA/Reza Qaderi



Vocalist Shahram Nazeri (L) and his son, Hafez, wave to the audience after a performance at Afjabad Garden in Shiraz on July 22, 2016.

Ardavan Vosuqi's composition performed at Italian festival

T A R T TEHRAN — A desk composition by Iranian musician Ardavan Vosuqi was performed Thursday by the Prometeo Quartet at the Chigiana International Festival in Siena, Italy.

Violinists Giulio Rovighi and Aldo Campagnari, Massimo Piva (viola) and Francesco Dillon (cello) are the four members of the quartet.

Instructor Salvatore Sciarrino and flutist Matteo Cesari also collaborated with Prometeo in their performance.

Vosuqi is in Italy to attend a master class at the Accademia Musicale Chigiana.

Andrea Sommani and Giovanni Santini, both from Italy, were among other musicians whose compositions were performed at the concert.

The festival has been organized by the music institute of Accademia Musicale Chigiana and is running for the months of July and August.

WHAT'S IN ART GALLERIES

Painting

■ An exhibition of paintings by Farah Osuli, Gizella Varga Sinai, Aneh Mohammad-Tatari, and several other artists is currently underway at Ava Gallery.

The exhibit named "Spot" runs until July 31 at the gallery, which can be found at 9 Ramin Alley, Sharifimanesh St., in the Elahieh neighborhood.

■ Negar Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Fatemeh Shakuri.

The exhibition titled "The Outdoor Room" will run until July 27 at the gallery located at 33 Delaram Alley, East Roshanai St., in the Qeitarieh neighborhood.

■ An exhibition of paintings by Fattaneh Foruqi is currently underway at Gallery 26.

The exhibit entitled "A Place Where the Air Is Scented by Flowers" runs until August 3 at the gallery located at 26 Salmanpur-Zahir St., in the East Farmanieh neighborhood.

■ A children's painting exhibition named "Seven Valleys of Love" is on show at Gallery No. 2 of the Arasbaran Cultural Center.

Negin Arzmandkhan is the curator of the exhibit that runs until July 31 at the center, which can be found on Jolfa St., off Shariati Ave.

Photo

■ Photos by Morteza Niknahad and Behnam Zakeri are currently on show in an exhibition titled "Public Place" at Tarrahan-e Azad Gallery.

Their exhibit will be running until July 27 at the gallery that can be found at 41 Salmas Square, off Fatemi St.

"All My Sons" to appear on stage in Tehran

T A R T TEHRAN — Iranian desk director Danial Shahriari plans to stage U.S. playwright Arthur Miller's "All My Sons" in an open-air setting at the Niavaran Cultural Center in Tehran from July 27 to August 12.

The Three-act play translated into Persian by Hossein Parvaresh

encapsulates all the fallout from various offenses into a 24-hour time span.

It tells the story of Joe Keller, a successful businessman, who lives comfortably with his wife, Kate, and son, Chris, in a suburban American neighborhood. However, the couple is feeling sadness over the loss of their other son, Larry, who went missing in

World War II.

"All My Sons" draws inspiration from some works by ancient Greek tragedians Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides whose protagonists commit an offence, often unknowingly, which will return to haunt them, sometimes many years later.

Among the most popular plays by

Miller (1915 – 2005) are "Death of a Salesman" (1949), "The Crucible" (1953) and "A View from the Bridge" (1955).

Babak Jafarieh, Halimeh Noruzi, Ahmad Safarzadeh, Mahdieh Zandieh, Farzad Ayati and Parvaneh Shamekhi are among the main members of the cast, Persian media announced on Saturday.