

# TEHRAN TIMES

Kuwaiti parliament speaker felicitates Larjani on his post



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## U.S. not serious in fulfilling JCPOA commitments, Zarif says

**POLITICAL** TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Monday that the Western side, especially the U.S., is not serious to the extent that is essential to fulfill its commitments under the JCPOA.

The U.S. government should assure the world that it will not fine financial institutions and companies that do trade with Iran, he noted.

## Chomsky: S. Arabia 'spreads Salafi doctrine and funds terrorists'

**EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW**  
By Javad Heirannia

**TEHRAN** — Noam Chomsky asserts that Saudi Arabia is not only spreading "Wahhabi/Salafi doctrine" but also "funding terrorist groups".

In an exclusive and yet short interview with the Tehran Times, the renowned U.S. academic also says the claim by Western countries that they support human rights values is a "farce".

In an interview with Democracy Now in mid-May, Chomsky also said the Saudi kingdom is "a source of not only funding for extremist radical Islam and the jihadi outgrowths of it, but also, doctrinally, mosques, clerics and so on, schools, you know, madrassas, ... is spreading all over the huge Sunni areas from Saudi influence."

Following is the text of Tehran Times' interview with Chomsky:

**■ Mr. Chomsky you have said that Saudi Arabia is a "center of radical Islamic extremism". What are your evidences for such a claim?**

A: The huge literature on Saudi efforts to spread Wahhabi/Salafi doctrine and fund terrorist groups.

**■ If Saudi Arabia is the main center of radicalism is it because of Wahhabi ideology?**

A: Primarily. That plus huge wealth and missionary culture.

**■ Why do Western countries such as the United States claim support for liberal values but back a country like Saudi Arabia which you have said "has one of the most grotesque human rights records in the world?"**

A: Because their claim of liberal values is a farce.



## Iraqi forces enter Fallujah



See page 3

## Steigenberger Hotel Group set to build 10 hotels in Iran

**TOURISM** TEHRAN — German hospitality company, Steigenberger Hotel Group, is set to build 10 hotels in different parts of Iran over the next ten years.

The CEO of Steigenberger Hotels, Puneet Chhatwal, signed an agreement with the deputy director of Iran's Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization (CHTHO), Saeid Shirkevand, during a meeting at Tehran's Espinas Palace Hotel on Sunday.

The German group visited Iran's hotel building holdings and private sector entities on Saturday and decided to build the hotels under the brand name Steigenberger Hotels or InterCity Hotels in the coming years.

CHTHO Director Masoud Soltanifar also attended the meeting. During the event, he pointed to measures Iran has taken to facilitate tourism industry during past two years.

"Facilitation of visa obtaining for some nationalities, expanding number and destination of flights as well



Steigenberger Hotels CEO Puneet Chhatwal and CHTHO Deputy Director for Investments Saeid Shirkevand shake hands after signing an agreement for building 10 hotels by Steigenberger Hotel Group in Iran on Sunday (ISNA/Peyman Yazdani)

as road and rail transport systems are some tourism infrastructures improved by Iran during past years," he explained.

Soltanifar also explained about the plan to increase the number of 4-star and 5-star hotels in the next ten years, saying that "Iran will build 25 four- and five-star hotels annually in the future".

"The hotels will be built by Iran's private sector and investors from other countries. Investors from Turkey and Azerbaijan signed agreements with CHTHO to build hotels in different parts of Iran recently," he explained.

Steigenberger Hotels CEO Chhatwal, for his part, talked about the improvement in Iran's tourism industry in recent years.

He said that experts from Steigenberger Hotels visited different cities of Iran including Shiraz, Isfahan and Tehran four times during past six months and explored tourism market in the country.

Steigenberger Hotels already has 120 hotels in 13 countries and will begin building hotels in Iran until ending of 2016, he added.

Chhatwal said that they are searching for an Iranian partner to build the hotels.

The Steigenberger Hotels has improved investment in the Middle East during recent years. The Steigenberger Hotel Dubai Business Bay has been receiving guests since November 2015.

The first InterCityHotel outside Europe is scheduled to open in July 2016 in Salalah, the second largest metropolitan area in Oman and the InterCityHotel Dubai Culture Village and the Steigenberger Hotel Doha Airport Road in Qatar are scheduled for completion in 2017 and 2018 respectively.

## Lithuania inclined to invest in Iran's LNG, shale projects

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — Iranian Deputy Oil Minister for International Affairs Amir-Hossein Zamaninia after a Sunday meeting with the visiting Lithuanian Deputy Energy Minister Aleksandras Spruogis told

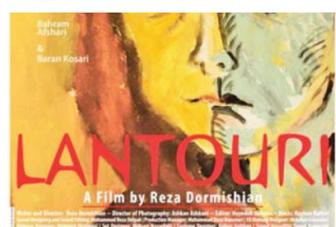
Shana news agency that his country is investigating a proposal made by the southern European country about technical cooperation and investment in liquefied natural gas (LNG) sector. While the European country's private sector

has shown tendency towards buying crude oil and oil products from Iran, there are also some suggestions made by the Lithuanian side about future cooperation in shale oil and shale gas sectors, he said.

## German Film Museum to spotlight Iranian cinema

**ART** TEHRAN — The German Film Museum (Deutsches Filmmuseum) in Frankfurt is scheduled to host a festival of Iranian movies on June 4 and 5.

"Risk of Acid Rain" directed by Behtash Sanaeiha, "Starless Dreams" by Mehrdad Oskui, "Bazaar: From Teheran to Teheran" by Reza Khanlari are among the films the museum



will screen.

The festival will also show "Lantoury" and "I'm Not Angry", both by promising filmmaker Reza Dormishian.

According to the organizers, the museum is dedicated to the medium of film through showcasing its history, aesthetics and influence in a multitude of ways such as exhibitions and screenings in its own theater.

## Indonesia to buy 80,000 tons of LPG from Iran

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — Indonesia inked a contract with Iran to buy 80,000 tons of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) from the Islamic Republic, the Shana news agency reported.

The contract was signed in the presence of Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh and Indonesian Energy Minister Sudirman Said in Tehran on Monday.

Based on the contract, the figure would reach 500,000 tons in the next year.

Iran has no limitation in expanding ties with Indonesia, Zanganeh said in his meeting with Said, adding that Iran opens all doors for the cooperation of Indonesian state-run and private companies in the country's oil, gas and petrochemical sectors. Earlier in March, Iran and Indonesia inked a memorandum of understanding on expanding cooperation in oil, gas and petrochemical industries, among other fields.

An Iranian delegation traveled to Indonesia on February 23 to attend the two countries' first joint economic committee, which was held in Bogor, West Java.

An agreement was signed on February 24 by Wiratmaja Puja, the oil and gas director general at Indonesia's Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, and Marzieh Riahi, the director of Asia and Pacific affairs at the Department of International Affairs of Iran's Oil Ministry.

## EDITORIAL

By Hassan Lasjerdi  
Tehran Times editor-in-chief

## Fighting back irrationality with toleration

Tehran and Riyadh failed to clinch a deal on making arrangements favored by the two sides for Iranians to perform this year's hajj.

This resulted in officials of the two regional powerhouses trading accusations on who was to blame for the impasse.

A statement from the Saudi pilgrimage ministry said the Iranian government "will be responsible in front of Allah Almighty and its people for the inability of the Iranian citizens to perform hajj for this year."

On the other hand, Iranian Culture and Islamic Guidance Minister Ali Jananati slammed Saudis for the cancellation, saying, "Performing the hajj ritual this year is virtually impossible" because of the Saudis' continuous sabotaging of the process."

Seen from a pathological perspective, it can be noticed that Saudis have confronted Iranian decision makers with difficult decisions through their overambitious dreams. Although Tehran has continued to react diplomatically, trying to close the gap, Saudis have shown little interest in Tehran's peace-making initiatives, giving rise to new challenges.

The Saudis' hostile approach to Tehran is well documented in bilateral ties between the two countries, dating back to decades back.

However, it seems that Saudi princes have declined to acknowledge or better to say learn rules of the game, even if this is a game of animosity and feud. That is, nobody can deny the competitive nature of international interactions but competition should not develop into animosity.

A close look at the Saudis' performance indicates lack of rationality and principle and an aspiration for pushing rivals out of the scene by hook or crook. And for this, they have lost their grip on reality, seeing themselves constrained by no obstacles.

## COMMENT

By Ali Asghar Pahlavan  
Tehran Times journalist

## Quit smoking today

After more than three decades of smoking, one morning I turned up and said enough is enough and decided to go cold Turkey.

In two weeks' time, I checked into a nicotine treatment center affiliated to Tehran Municipality for counseling.

The rehab centers provide good exit plans for smokers, who, otherwise, seem bound to fail without them.

Sure, it wasn't an easy task, but as they say, the greater the hardship, the greater the reward.

What I needed most, then, was an Iron determination to respect my body and family, not to mention the environment by keeping the air clean. That was history. Today, I delightedly announce to the world that almost 21 months have passed since I kicked off the bad habit.

At the age of 57, my firsthand experience has taught me that putting aside smoking has nothing to do with age but has all to do with determination.

### ■ Cigarette smoking on the rise

Unfortunately, Smoking cigarette and hookah have taken its momentum among Iranian youths.

Smoking hookah, water pipes used for smoke, is by far more dangerous than cigarettes smoking.

Despite the fact that developed countries have taken decisive measures to lower smoking since 1999's, smoking in several developing countries like Iran shows an upward trend.

One of the major stumbling blocks on the way of addicts in Iran is teahouses.

In recent years, teahouses have offered hookahs to the young generation regardless of their age. Once they played a role of cultural centers nationwide, as epic poems of Ferdowsi's masterpiece Shahnameh were recited there to familiarize Iranians with their cultural and national heritage, today, however, teahouses have become hotbed for addiction and drug smuggling.

Teahouses, as many families may not be aware, are threatening the very fabric of our society.

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**MEDIA MONITOR**



**Supreme Leader to address nation on Friday**

**TEHRAN** — Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei will address the nation on Friday on the occasion of the death anniversary of the Late Imam Khomeini.

The late Imam's shrine will also see a mourning ceremony on Thursday night, with Hassan Khomeini leading the prayers and President Hassan Rouhani giving a speech later the night.



**Russia's Rosatom may purchase Iranian heavy water**

**TEHRAN** — Russian nuclear agency Rosatom is considering the possibility of buying Iranian heavy water, Russian envoy to international organizations Vladimir Voronkov said.

"To date the Americans have bought a significant amount of it [heavy water]. Moreover, Rosatom is thinking and is likely to follow this path," Voronkov told RIA Novosti on Monday.

He added a new report from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) indicating Iran's compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is a sign of the efficiency of the document agreed last year.



**Truce imposed on Syria to empower terrorists: Iran**

**TEHRAN** — A ceasefire in Syria had been imposed in order to save foreign-backed militants from a total rout, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Ali Shamkhani said on Monday.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran, while supporting the ceasefire, was aware that the truce should not pave the way for terrorist groups to regain their power," Press TV quoted him as saying.

During the ceasefire, Shamkhani said, terrorists entered Syria from neighboring countries and seized Khan Tuman in Aleppo in early May.



**Aref not to run for permanent speakership**

**TEHRAN** — In a tweet on Monday, Mohammad Reza Aref said he will not run for the post of parliament speaker.

The statement by Aref came after he got only 103 votes in comparison to Ali Larijani who secured 171 out of 281 ballots for the post of interim parliament speaker.



**Kuwaiti parliament speaker felicitates Larijani on his post**

**TEHRAN** — Speaker of the Kuwaiti National Assembly Marzouq Al-Ghanim has congratulated Ali Larijani on his election as new Iranian Majlis speaker.

Al-Ghanim expressed congratulations during a telephone conversation with Larijani on Sunday afternoon, IRNA reported.

During the conversation, the Kuwaiti speaker wished success for Larijani in the job.

Larijani, for his part, expressed hope that Iran and Kuwait would take effective steps towards solving regional problems.



**MPs' credentials approved**

**TEHRAN** — The credentials of the members of the upstart Majlis have been approved, Fars reported on Monday.

All the credentials in all 15 teams were studied and approved, the report said.



**'Bahrain's espionage claims against Iran baseless'**

**TEHRAN** — An Iranian Foreign Ministry official has refuted as baseless a claim by a Bahraini court that four nationals of the country have been working as spies for Iran.

The unnamed source said the claim is part of desperate efforts by the ruling Bahraini government to derail public view from the real cause of the Arab country's domestic problems, ILNA reported on Monday.

SETAD

RIA

PRES TV

TWITTER

IRNA

FARS

ILNA

# Tehran says will continue advisory role in Iraq, Syria

**POLITICAL TEHRAN** — Deputy Foreign Minister for Arab and African Affairs said on Monday that Iran will "honorably and resolutely" continue to play its advisory role in Iraq and Syria which are in serious war against terrorists.

"Honorably and resolutely, Iran will continue with offering its advisory helps in the region to counter terrorism, deeming it vital for the security and stability of the region and world," Hossein Amir-Abdollahian stated.

The remarks come as an implicit reaction to the U.S. weird concerns over Iran's growingly important role in Iraq and the assault to retake Fallujah.



According to New York Times, unlike the Syrian battlefield where American commandos are on the front lines in a new push toward the Islamic State's de facto capital in Raqqa, it is Iran, not

the United States, that has become the face of an operation to retake the jihadist stronghold of Falluja from the militant group. Amir-Abdollahian further stated "had it not been for Tehran's helps and effective

counterterrorism measures taken by Iraqi and Syrian armies and public mobilizations, there would have been no safe spot in Western Asia."

Over the past the days, Iraqi regular and public forces have launched a major assault on Fallujah to re-capture ISIS's stronghold near the Iraqi capital.

The success of the Fallujah offensive will be a major blow to territories ruled by ISIS, dealing the coup de grace to the group's caliphate by paving the way for an assault on Mosul.

Being used as a redoubt in the proximity of Baghdad, Fallujah was the first Iraqi city in 2014 which fell into the hands of ISIS.

While in recent days, some foreign players and their regional allies have pointed an accusing finger at Tehran for its advisory helps, Tehran has announced the helps are offered at formal requests of Syria and Iraq.

## No military solution to crises in West Asia: Zarif

**POLITICAL TEHRAN** — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Monday that a "comprehensive solution" is needed in the campaign against terrorism, reiterating the long-held view by Tehran that there is no military solution to the crises in West Asia.

During a meeting in Warsaw with the chairman of Poland's National Security Bureau Pawel Soloch, Zarif said it is necessary to promote "true Islam" and prevent violence against Muslims.

He also expressed hope that Iran and Poland would expand ties in various areas.

Soloch said that Poland is willing to expand political, cultural and economic relations with Iran.

He expressed hope that the Iranian foreign minister's trip to Poland would open a new chapter in cooperation between the two countries.

He also described Iran's nuclear

agreement a "great achievement" for Iran and the international community.

Iran and the 5+1 group (the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia plus Germany) reached the nuclear agreement in July 2015. The deal took effect in January 2016.

Zarif also held a separate meeting with Polish Culture Minister Piotr Gliniski on Monday.



## Rafsanjani says Tehran and Riyadh can hash out disputes via negotiation

**POLITICAL TEHRAN** — While Iran and Saudi Arabia are locked in an escalating dust-up over a number of issues, seasoned politician Ali Akbar Rafsanjani has said the two can bury the hatchet through negotiation, citing examples.

"I see the issue (the Tehran-Riyadh gridlock) soluble," Rafsanjani stressed, referring to a private conversation with Malek Abdullah, the then ruler of Saudi Arabia, in which Tehran and Riyadh agreed to help increase oil prices in 2005 as crude prices had decreased sharply.

The détente demands both sides listen to one another's concerns, he alluded to, saying, "Of course they have also expectations of us."

Once friends, Tehran and Riyadh disagree on a number of issues.

**The Syrian crisis**

Tehran and Riyadh have been sailing in turbulent waters from 2011, which has set the region's two biggest powerhouses on a collision course over the future of the Syrian government.

While Iran has been backing a political settlement for the Syrian conflict, the Saudi kingdom has been insisting on an "Assad must go" policy, backing financially, ideologically, and logistically oppositions in Syria.

**Mina hajj stampede**

In 2015 during a hajj stampede in Mina, hundreds of pilgrims, including more than 460 Iranian nationals, were killed.

Tehran has kept blaming the stampede on Saudis, demanding an apology from Riyadh, criticizing Saudis over for lack of cooperation to immediately repatriate the bodies.

Iranian officials suggested Riyadh was incapable of managing the event, holding the country accountable for the disaster.

**Execution of Shiite cleric**

Bilateral ties between the two countries deteriorated after Saudi Arabia executed the Shiite cleric Sheikh Nimr Baqr al-Nimr, a move which ignited outrage among Shiites across the Middle East and beyond.

In retaliation to the execution, Riyadh's diplomatic posts in Tehran and Mashhad

were stormed by angry mobs. As a result, Riyadh severed diplomatic ties with Tehran even though top Iranian officials condemned attacks on the diplomatic missions.

**Hajj impasse**

All these divergences rendered rounds of negotiation over reaching a deal on making arrangements for Iranian pilgrims to perform hajj this year futile.

A recent communique issued by Hajj and Pilgrimage Organization of Iran (HPOI) announced Iran won't dispatch pilgrims this year to Mecca because of inconsistency at decision-making level by Saudis.

Iranians said the decision was linked with, inter alia, Saudis' lack of cooperation to allay Tehran's concerns over "safety" of Iranian pilgrims in Saudi Arabia.

Iranian Culture and Islamic Guidance Ali Jannati also said "performing the hajj ritual this year is virtually impossible" because of Saudis' continuous sabotaging of the process.

Earlier, he had said, "We are seriously seeking to dispatch pilgrims to Mecca."



**Other challenges**

The two also disagree on what is happening in Iraq and Yemen.

In a recent interview with RT Arabic, Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir had claimed Tehran is meddling in Iraq's domestic affairs.

Tehran strongly rejected the claim, calling Saudi Arabia "the biggest agent and backer of instability and terrorism in Iraq, the region and the world over the past 15 years."

Saudi Arabia has been also accusing Iran of backing Yemeni Houthis group, a claim categorically rejected by Tehran.

## Ayatollah Khamenei hoisting flag of Muslim unity: Velayati

**POLITICAL TEHRAN** — Veteran politician Ali Akbar Velayati said on Monday that Iran supports unity among Muslims and consolidating Shia-Sunni unity is the Islamic Republic's policy.

Velayati said Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei is now the flag bearer of unity among Muslims.

"Today, Leader of the Islamic Revolution is hoisting banner of unity among the Muslims and we see its results in the world of Islam," he said during a meeting with a group of Indonesian Sunni scholars in Tehran.

Velayati, a senior foreign policy adviser to the Leader, also said that support for terrorist groups is aimed at creating rift among Muslims.

He went on to say that formation of Takfiri groups and empowering them is a "new weapon of colonialism".

The conflicts in Iraq and Syria are in line with creating division between Shia and Sunni Muslims, the senior



politician noted.

**'Iraqi government and people will defeat terrorists'**

On the sidelines of a meeting with a group of Indian Sunni scholars, Velayati also said Iraq has taken the "stra-

tegic" step of liberating Fallujah from the hands of Daesh and this shows that the Iraqi government and people will defeat the terrorists.

"The occupation of Fallujah", which from a "strategic point of view" was a blow to the Iraqi government, will be ended and it will be a great victory for the Iraqi nation and government," he noted.

He congratulated the Iraqi government and people in their advances against terrorists.

He added that retaking Fallujah will lead to liberation of Mosul and other occupied regions in Iraq.

Iraqi special forces were on the outskirts of Fallujah, the Iraqi army said on Monday, marking a new phase in efforts to take the city from Daesh.

Velayati also said that Saudis have created crisis in Iraq and undermined security in the country through supporting the Takfiris.

## Sale of heavy water to Russia not finalized, Salehi announces

**POLITICAL TEHRAN** — Ali Akbar Salehi, chief of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, said on Monday that sale of 40 tons of heavy water to Russia has not been finalized yet.

"We will cooperate with Russia in area of producing stable isotope in Fordow," he said on the sidelines of a ceremony held to sign a cooperation agreement between the AEOI and Oil Ministry.

He said that Russia has expressed read-

iness to buy 40 tons of heavy water from Iran, however the issue is under negotiation and has not been finalized.

The nuclear chief also said the AEOI has made preparations for producing stable isotopes and will negotiate with Russia on optimizing the centrifuges that produce isotope.

Sputnik reported on Monday that Russia's Rosatom nuclear agency may purchase Iranian heavy water.



"To date the Americans have bought a significant amount of it [heavy water]."

Moreover, Rosatom is thinking and is likely to follow this path," Russian envoy to international organizations Vladimir Voronkov told RIA Novosti.

Commenting on selling heavy water to the U.S., Salehi said Iran will not send the material to the U.S. if it is not sure about receiving money.

On Sunday, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi said the U.S. is about to pay for the heavy water it has purchased from Iran.

## FM says U.S. not serious in fulfilling JCPOA commitments

Iran and the 5+1 group - the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia plus Germany - finalized the text of the nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, in Vienna in July 2015. The deal took effect in January 2016. According to the JCPOA, Iran

must slow down its nuclear activities and instead economic sanctions, including financial restrictions, be lifted against the country.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Zarif said that the post-JCPOA atmosphere should be used in order to expand cooperation with the world.

The policy of the "government of prudence and hope", a title President Rouhani has selected for his administration, is "positive and constructive" interaction with the world, he added.

Zarif also said that results of the nuclear talks are indebted to the Iranian people and not the government or ne-

gotiators, because it was the people's resistance that disappointed the West from exerting pressure and imposing sanctions against the country.

He also said that the world should be aware of the fact that Iran has many capacities the most important of which is its "security" in the volatile Middle East.

# Iraqi forces enter ISIL-held Fallujah

'ISIL to use 50,000 trapped civilians as human shields'

By staff & agencies

Iraqi commanders say their forces have entered Fallujah in a major victory against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group.

One commander, quoted by AFP, said troops entered the city from three directions on Monday in a new phase of the operation to recapture it.

"We started early this morning our operations to break into Fallujah," Sabah al-Norman, a spokesman for Iraq's elite counter-terrorism service, said.

The city, located about 40 miles west of Baghdad, is one of the last major ISIL strongholds in Iraq. The terrorist group still controls territory in the country's north and west, including Iraq's second largest city of Mosul.

Some 1,500 ISIL terrorists holed up in the centre, which has been under their control for more than two years, were putting up fierce resistance with bombings and rocket attacks, Daily Telegraph reported.

They attempted to distract the army's attention away from the frontline with a wave of deadly car bombs in the Iraqi capital of Baghdad 50 miles away which left dozens dead.

The exiled mayor of Fallujah expected it would be fully liberated within a week, however the commander of the offensive warned the battle for the strategic city is likely to be a protracted one.

"They are dug in," Lt Gen Abdul Wahab Al Saadi told the Telegraph. "We think they will fight to the last."

In a televised speech to parliament on Sunday, Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi called on residents of Fallujah to either leave the city or stay indoors.

Government officials and aid groups estimate that more than 50,000 people



remain inside the center of the city.

For most of those living in the centre however leaving is not an option, as ISIL is threatening anyone who tries to flee with execution.

So far only 1,000 people, mostly from the outlying areas, have managed to get to safety; they have told how the ISIL terrorist group has been using residents as human shields as the army closes in.

Fallujah, which saw some of the heaviest fighting of the United States military invasion between 2003 and 2011, was the first city in Iraq to fall to ISIL.

The Takfiri terrorists seized control of Fallujah in January 2014, six months before they swept across northern and western Iraq and declared a caliphate.

## ■ Baghdad bombing

Meanwhile, at least 24 people have

been killed and scores of others injured in bombing attacks in the north and north-east of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad.

A car bomb exploded at a market in northeast Baghdad on Monday, killing at least 11 people and injuring some 14 others. Two cars laden with explosives were to target a police station, but security forces foiled one of the attacks.

In another incident, a car bomb killed 10 people in a northern Baghdad neighborhood. Twenty four people were also wounded in that attack.

A third explosion occurred when a motorcycle rigged with explosives was blown up in Baghdad's Sadr City on Monday. At least three people have been reported killed in the blast. Ten people were also injured.

The attacks on Monday came as Iraqi

commanders said their forces have entered Fallujah in a major victory against ISIL terrorists.

The city, located about 40 miles west of Baghdad, is one of the last major ISIL strongholds in Iraq.

The attacks were the latest in a new spate of bombings to have hit the Iraqi capital over the recent past. ISIL has claimed responsibility for most of the attacks.

Iraqis say ISIL is trying to make up for its loss of ground to Iraqi security forces over the past months.

New estimates by the government show ISIL now controls only 14 percent of Iraqi territory, down from the 40 percent it held in 2014, with top officials vowing to clear the entire Iraqi soil from militants in 2016.

## Chief negotiator of Syria's Saudi-based opposition quits talks

Chief negotiator of the Saudi-based Syrian opposition has resigned over what he called the failure of United Nations-brokered negotiations to end the conflict in the Arab country.

Mohammed Alloush, a senior figure with the Jaish al-Islam (Brigade of Islam) militant group in the so-called High Negotiations Committee (HNC), on Sunday called peace talks a "waste of time."

The negotiations, he said, could not bring about a political settlement to the conflict, citing the failure to secure the release of thousands of detainees or to push President Bashar al-Assad out of office.

Jaish al-Islam is one of the Saudi-sponsored Takfiri groups operating to topple Assad.

The HNC said it has not yet elected its new chief representative in the Geneva talks after Alloush tendered his resignation.

Head of the main Syrian opposition delegation Asaad al-Zoubi also told the Saudi al-Hadath TV channel that he wanted to be relieved of his post, but did not confirm if he had taken a similar step.

Last peace talks were suspended on April 27 after the opposition abandoned them and declared a "new war" on the Syrian government.

UN Syria envoy Staffan de Mistura said this week there were no plans for new talks in the next three weeks.

## ■ Ceasefire strengthens al-Nusra

Elsewhere, al-Qaeda's branch in Syria has recruited thousands of militants, including teenagers, and taken territory from government forces in an offensive in the north, Associated Press reported on Sunday.

It is "illustrating how the ceasefire put in place by Rus-



sia and the United States to weaken the militants has in many ways backfired," the news agency said.

Since March, al-Nusra Front (Jabhat al-Nusra) has recruited 3,000 new militants, including teenagers, in comparison to an average of 200 to 300 a month before, AP quoted the so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights as saying.

Other sources said hundreds living in camps for displaced people in the northern parts near Turkey have joined the al-Qaeda branch.

Al-Nusra and other Takfiri terrorists hold most of the northwestern province of Idlib and parts of neighboring Aleppo province.

The House of Saud regime and its allies as well as Turkey are considered as the main supporters of Takfiri groups fighting to topple the Syrian government.

According to de Mistura, some 400,000 people have lost their lives in more than five years of foreign-backed

militancy in Syria.

## ■ New mass grave of 150 bodies unearthed in Syria's Palmyra

Meantime, a new mass grave containing the bodies of 150 people believed to have been killed and tortured by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorists has been found in the recently-liberated Syrian city of Palmyra.

The mass grave, the second largest of its kind in the city, was discovered a few days ago near Palmyra Airport's runway during restoration works.

A preliminary examination showed that the corpses had gunshot injuries and marks of torture on them.

The Syrian army, backed by popular forces and a wave of Russian air strikes, retook the ancient city of Palmyra from ISIL on March 27 following weeks of military operations against the Takfiri group.

The city, located in the Homs Province, had fallen to ISIL in May 2015.

Since its liberation, graves have been discovered in the city as workers continue the repair work aimed at demolishing terrorist fortifications and restoring historical sites.

A mass grave was uncovered by Syrian forces in the northeastern parts of Palmyra on April 1. The grave contained the bodies of 42 people, including women and children, who were killed by ISIL.

According to reports, ISIL committed a massacre in Palmyra on May 24, 2015, leaving at least 400 people dead, most of them women, children and elderly people.

(Source: agencies)

## Khan, Cameron bury hatchet in supporting EU Remain vote

London Mayor Sadiq Khan has joined British Prime Minister David Cameron in opposing the so-called Brexit option, in the run-up to the crucial June 23 referendum that will decide the country's future in the European Union (EU).

The pair is expected to jointly launch a battle bus dubbed "Britain Stronger in Europe" at a Remain rally later.

Cameron told a campaign event in London that he and the new Labor mayor backed Britain's EU membership because "we love our country and we want our country to be the best it possibly can," just weeks after accusing Khan of repeatedly appearing with Muslim extremists.

"I'm proud to be here with the Labor mayor of London," said Cameron.

Khan defended his decision in an interview with ITV on Sunday, saying that teaming up with Cameron would benefit London.

"Is it in London's interest for me to hold grudges? Is it in London's interests for the mayor of London to be at permanent war with the Conservative prime minister?" he asked.

The move comes after Khan, London's first ever Muslim mayor, was accused by Cameron in the mayoral race of having a "poor judgment" and being linked with terror "sympathizers," which he firmly re-

jected. "We're never going to be best friends, but what is important is that the mayor of London argues the case for London and for Londoners to remain in the European Union," he added.

Cameron and most of his cabinet are trying to convince Britons to vote against leaving the EU, but about half of his MPs support an exit.

The prime minister has consistently warned against the Brexit, saying that it poses an economic risk to the country and can undermine Britain's security.

The economy and the impact of a possible Brexit on jobs, wages and trade are a key battleground for both the "Remain" and "Leave" campaigns before Britons vote on June 23 on whether to stay in the 28-member bloc.

Opinion polls have indicated that British voters believe staying in the EU would be best for Britain's economy, but that support for leaving and remaining still remains at a virtual tie.

## ■ 'Cameron is toast'

Andrew Bridgen and Nadine Dorries – both pro-"Brexit" and longstanding opponents of the prime minister – said on Sunday they could stage a leadership coup in the event of a tight result.



Cameron also came under fire from senior pro-Brexit Tories Boris Johnson and Michael Gove, who said his pledge to reduce immigration had "corroded public trust" as latest figures showed a marked increase.

Speaking on Monday, the prime minister praised the "incredibly broad range" of support with the "remain" camp.

Cameron admitted he himself was "a euroskeptic," but said his campaign's crit-

(Source: agencies)

## NEWS

### Libyan forces advance in push on ISIL strongholds

Libyan forces loyal to the country's United Nations-brokered government are advancing in a push on two key strongholds of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group.

Salem Jedran, the mayor of the town of Ajdabiya, says the troops with the so-called Petroleum Facilities Guards are advancing on the town of Bin Jawad, which fell under ISIL in January.

Jedran says clashes are underway on Monday in the eastern outskirts of the town. Bin Jawad is 160 kilometers (99 miles) from the central city of Sirte, the main ISIL bastion in Libya.

Elsewhere, Libyan militiamen from the western city of Misrata – who are also loyal to the UN government – are pushing toward Sirte, the militant group's main stronghold.

The militia's media office says the fighters are now nearly 30 kilometers (18 miles) from Sirte's city center.

(Source: AP)

### Former Chad dictator Habre sentenced to life in jail

Former Chadian dictator Hissene Habre has been sentenced to life by a special court in Senegal.

The Extraordinary African Chambers (CAE), a special tribunal set up by the African Union under a deal with Senegal, convicted Habre on Monday of involvement in war crimes, crimes against humanity and a litany of other charges, including rape.

"Hissene Habre, this court finds you guilty of crimes against humanity, rape, forced slavery, and kidnapping," as well as war crimes, Gberdao Gustave Kam, president of the special court said, adding, "The court condemns you to life in prison."

Habre had been accused of kidnap, rape and torture of 40,000 people during his rule as president of Chad from 1982 to 1990. Rights campaigners have been seeking his prosecution, although he has always denied the crimes were committed upon his direct order.

Members of Habre's defense team unsuccessfully sought to convince the court that he had not been aware of the abuses committed by his notorious secret police, the Documentation and Security Directorate (DDS).

Habre fled to Senegal after his 1990 ouster by Chad's current President Idriss Deby. The skilled desert warrior, who was known for his combat fatigues during the leadership, has lived freely in an upmarket suburb of the Senegalese capital, Dakar, with his wife and children for more than 20 years.

The prosecution in Senegal was the first time a country in Africa has prosecuted a former leader of another nation for rights abuses.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

### Egypt court sentences Muslim Brotherhood leader to life in prison

An Egyptian court has sentenced the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood and 35 other members of the outlawed movement to life in prison over their alleged role in protests following the 2013 ouster of the country's first democratically-elected president, Mohamed Morsi.

Egyptian judicial officials said on Monday that Mohamed Badie and the 35 defendants in the trial were found guilty of participating in clashes in the Suez Canal city of Ismailia that left three people dead in July 2013.

The Brotherhood leader had already received prison terms, including a death sentence, in other trials.

The court also convicted and sentenced 48 other members to jail terms ranging from three to 15 years. It also exonerated 20 people involved in the case.

Egypt's military courts have been under fire by rights groups for their harsh verdicts.

The Muslim Brotherhood has faced crackdown since Morsi was ousted in a coup led by the then military chief and current president, Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, in July 2013.

Since the ouster of Morsi, thousands of anti-government protesters, mostly Brotherhood supporters, have been sentenced to jail by civilian and military courts.

The Brotherhood was later blacklisted as a terrorist organization by officials in a bid to prevent its affiliates from running in elections.

International rights groups have repeatedly blasted the government of Sisi for launching a heavy-handed crackdown on anti-government protesters and stifling freedom of speech.

The clampdown has led to the deaths of more than 1,400 people and arrests of 22,000 others, while hundreds have been sentenced to death in mass trials, according to human rights bodies.

Morsi himself has been sentenced to death.

(Source: Press TV)

NEWS

**Gas condensate exports from Iran over \$1b in 2 months**

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — The exports of gas condensate from Iran's South Pars gas field hit \$1.088 billion during the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-May 20, 2016), according to a report by Iran Customs Administration.



The figure shows 14.68 percent fall compared to the same period of time last year, the IRIB news reported on Monday.

"Exports from South Pars gas field have witnessed an upsurge as of the implementation of the nuclear deal between Iran and the P5+1 and the upward trend will be continued specially after having the international banking embargo entirely lifted," Customs Director General of the Pars Special Economic Energy Zone (PSEEZ) Khodadad Rahimi said on April 26.

South Pars field, which Iran shares with Qatar in the Persian Gulf, is estimated to contain a significant amount of natural gas and condensate, accounting for about eight percent of the world's reserves.

The huge offshore field covers an area of 9,700 square kilometers, 3,700 square kilometers of which are in Iran's territorial waters in the Persian Gulf. The remaining 6,000 square kilometers are situated in Qatar's territorial waters.

**The real question for OPEC: who'll be its new top official?**

As internal opposition to Saudi Arabia's plan to squeeze rival suppliers fades, OPEC might not have a big policy question to debate when it meets next week. Nevertheless, the group will still have one thing to argue about: Who will replace Abdalla El-Badri as the next secretary-general?

**Why does OPEC need to pick a new top official?**

El-Badri, a Libyan, was originally due to stand down in 2012 after serving the maximum six years in the position. The group has been extending the 76-year-old's term ever since as squabbling members failed to agree on a successor. That approach seemed to reach its limit at The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries' last meeting in December, which was dominated by bitter arguments over the role.



Frustrated at their inability to push OPEC into cutting crude production to boost prices, Venezuela, Ecuador, Iran and Algeria pressed for El-Badri's departure. The final communiqué from the meeting resulted in a compromise, with the Libyan's title modified to acting secretary-general and a July deadline set for his exit.

**Who are the candidates?**

Iraq, Iran and Saudi Arabia all nominated candidates for the position in 2012, but political tensions between the Persian Gulf rivals meant each blocked the others' applicants. In recent months, three new hopefuls have emerged to try and break the impasse: Nigeria's Mohammed Barkindo, Indonesia's Mahendra Siregar and Venezuela's Ali Rodriguez.

Barkindo, who briefly headed the Nigerian National Petroleum Corp., has experience in the role, having been acting secretary-general in 2006 after serving for a number of years as one of country's representatives to OPEC. While Venezuela's Rodriguez was the group's top official from 2001 to 2002 and headed state oil giant Petroleos de Venezuela SA, he is two years older than El-Badri. Indonesia's Siregar, a former deputy finance minister, doesn't have management experience in the oil industry.

**How important is the role?**

The Secretary-General doesn't decide OPEC policy, which is set by member countries. Still, as the organization's public representative, the position gives the power to shape its message, making the holder an important voice in oil markets who sometimes has the ability to move the price of crude. El-Badri has often acted as the group's chief diplomat, brokering an agreement on record output cuts in 2008 and resolving OPEC's internal differences after a 2011 meeting that ended in acrimony.

**What happens if there's no decision?**

If no unanimous decision is reached to choose a new secretary-general, the position "shall be appointed on a rotational basis for a term of two years," according to article 28 of OPEC's statute. This is what happened for much of the decade before El-Badri's appointment, with the position filled by representatives from countries holding OPEC's presidency -- a largely ceremonial role that is transferred alphabetically between members.

Qatar's Energy Minister Mohammed al-Sada is the current OPEC president, and the next will be Khalid Al-Falih, the recently appointed energy minister of Saudi Arabia. This is potentially an unappealing prospect for members still dissatisfied with OPEC's Saudi-led market strategy. Of course, OPEC could simply repeat its habit of the past four years and invite El-Badri to stay on.

(Source: Bloomberg)

**Electricity generation in Iran to witness 1,000 MW boost by Mar. 2017**



**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — "Iran plans to add 1,000 megawatts (MW) to the generation capacity of its power plants by the current Iranian calendar year end (March 20, 2017)," according to Energy Minister Hamid Chitchian.

"Iran generates over 75,000 MW of electricity per annum at the present time and is scheduled to add 47,000

MW-50,000 MW to this figure in the upcoming ten years," Tasnim news agency quoted Chitchian as saying in the opening ceremony of the 11th International Energy Conference of Iran on Monday.

"The efficiency of domestic plants will rise to 50 percent from its current 35 percent," he added.

**'Annual electricity exports to regional countries stands at 10b kw/h'**

Iranian Energy Deputy Minister Houshang Falahatian announced in the same event that the country could manage to export 10 billion kilowatts/hour of electricity to the countries in the region during the past Iranian calendar year of 1394 (ended on March 19, 2016), IRNA reported.

Boasting that Iran possesses the highest electricity generation capacity among the Middle East countries, the deputy minister said that "some 35 percent of the total 74,000 MW of the country's electricity generating capacity belongs to gas-fueled power plants, 25 percent goes to combined-cycle plants, and 14 percent is supplied by hydroelectric ones."

According to him, Iran could increase its electricity generation capacity by 37,000 MW during the past 10 years and now stands at the fourth place among all the countries



across the world.

Being held on 30-31 May in Tehran, the 11th International Energy Conference is the greatest event in Iran in the field of energy and aims to create a forum to reach on specialized and outstanding national and international deliberations, accomplishments and contemporary research activities in energy sector.

**Kiev seeks gas supplies from Tehran**

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — "Negotiations are underway to commence exports of natural gas or liquefied natural gas (LNG) from Iran to Ukraine," Iranian Deputy Oil Minister for International Affairs Amir-Hossein Zamaninia told Shana news agency on Sunday.

The deputy minister, who made the remarks after his meeting with the Ukrainian Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin in Tehran, added that the two sides have also held talks on storing gas, purchase of oilfield equipment, and establishing a joint company in their meeting.

Visiting Klimkin, for his part, said that Tehran can supply energy demands of Kiev and Ukraine can help to ensure food security in Iran.

He pointed to the opportunities for

closer ties with Iran following the implementation of Iran's nuclear deal or the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), saying that Kiev is after establishing strategic ties with Tehran.

Klimkin said the lift of anti-Iran sanctions under the JCPOA has made it possible for Iranians and Ukrainians to open banking accounts in both countries, paving the way for enhancing interactions between the two countries' big and small businesses.

He also voiced Ukraine's readiness for cooperation with Iran in the power plant industry, aviation, renewable energies, nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and student exchange programs via Iran-Ukraine joint commission on trade and economic cooperation.

**India caps refiners' dollar buying to settle Iran dues: sources**

**NEW DELHI (Reuters)** — The Reserve Bank of India has capped weekly dollar purchases by oil refiners to pay off their debts to Iran in order to avoid pressure on the rupee, three sources said on Monday.

India is one of the biggest buyers of Iranian crude and built up a payments backlog when Iran was under Western sanctions, with its refiners owing about \$6.5 billion to Iran.

They have cleared \$770 million in euros through Turkey's Halkbank to National Iranian Oil Co (NIOC). State-run Union Bank of India facilitated the payments.

The refiners had been holding back 55 percent of payments to Iran after a channel through Halkbank was closed in 2013, although payment of

some of those funds was allowed after an initial temporary deal to lift the sanctions.

Last week, on the basis of an RBI advisory, India's oil ministry wrote to refiners saying the remaining dues can be settled in three months from May 30 and told companies to ensure demand for foreign exchange is limited to \$500 million per week, the sources told Reuters.

"RBI wants to stagger payments to Iran to pre-empt any undue volatility in the domestic forex market," said one source.

The rupee touched a near three-month low of 67.77 to the dollar last week, partly due to dollar purchases to settle a portion of the Iranian oil dues the week before.

**Iranian, Polish chambers of commerce ink co-op MOU**

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — Iranian and Polish chambers of commerce signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) during Polish-Iranian Economic Forum in Warsaw on Monday.

According to ISNA, the agreement was endorsed by the two chambers' officials and in the presence of Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad-Javad Zarif and Polish Deputy Energy Minister Michal Kurtyka.

As reported, 60 tradesmen and companies' managing directors from Iran as well as a number of Polish businessmen took part in the signing ceremony.

**Poland in talks with Iran over oil, gas cooperation**

Warsaw is in talks with Tehran over cooperation in the oil and gas sector, which could result in exploration



Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad-Javad Zarif addressing Polish-Iranian Economic Forum in Warsaw on Monday

and production contracts for the Polish industry, Reuters quoted Kurtyka.

"We are looking forward to cooperation with Iran when it comes to both PGNiG- Polish state-run gas firm- and our oil companies. Talks are being conducted on concrete contracts in exploration and output, but also regarding trade agreements," he elaborated.

Iran's foreign minister kicked off an EU trade drive in Poland on Sunday, in one of Tehran's first moves to drum up business with the West after the lifting of sanctions earlier this year.

Zarif is also expected to travel to EU members Finland, Sweden before winding up his trip in Latvia on June 2.

**Oil prices dip on strong dollar, rising Canadian output**

Oil prices dipped on Monday as a strong dollar weighed on markets and Canadian oil sands production was expected to increase this week.

Crude markets, however, did receive some support from the start of the U.S. summer driving season coinciding with a fall in U.S. crude output to its lowest since September 2014.

U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures were trading at \$49.22 per barrel at 0656 GMT (02:56 a.m. EDT), down 11 cents from their last settlement.

International Brent futures were at \$49.10 a barrel, down 22 cents.

The dollar hit a one-month high against the yen on Monday and stood

tall against other leading currencies. DXY after comments by Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen increased the likelihood of a near-term U.S. interest rate hike.

A strong greenback makes it more expensive for countries using other currencies to import dollar-traded fuel, a potential knock on demand.

An expected rise in Canadian oil sands production also weighed on WTI, traders said. Oil producer Suncor Energy is planning to ramp up output at its fields in Alberta this week after it was forced to shut them down earlier in May due to massive wildfires.

Despite the expected rise in Canadian output, ANZ bank said that WTI price

support "still lingers" after a large fall in U.S. oil inventories by 4.2 million barrels to 537 million barrels due to strong demand.

Traders said the official start to the U.S. peak demand summer driving season, which kicks off with Memorial Day on Monday, was the main reason for rising seasonal demand.

This also came just as U.S. oil production fell to 8.77 million barrels per day (bpd), the lowest level since September 2014, and down 8.77 percent since a June 2015 peak.

"The yoy (year-on-year) declines in production would be 470,000 bpd in 2016 and 305,000 bpd in 2017 if we account for

the impact of the estimated county-level well backlog being gradually brought back online between June 2016 and December 2016," Goldman Sachs said.

In global oil markets, Brent prices have been supported by a series of supply disruptions in Nigeria, where militants have been staging a wave of attacks on oil pipelines, cutting the country's output to the lowest in more than two decades.

Attention will also be on a meeting by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in Vienna this week, although most analysts do not expect any decisions that would lead to changes in production.

(Source: Reuters)



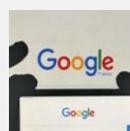
**Boeing set to win \$2.9 billion contract from UK MoD**

Boeing Co is set to win a 2-billion-pound (\$2.92 billion) contract from the UK Ministry of Defense (MoD) for new Apache helicopters, the Telegraph reported.

The MoD has decided to give Boeing a 50-aircraft contract, including servicing, and the announcement could come as early as July, the newspaper said.

Italian aerospace manufacturer Leonardo Finmeccanica SpA had been a contender for the contract, the Telegraph said.

U.S. plane maker Boeing is offering the helicopters at a lower price by tacking them on to the end of a larger Apache order from the U.S. military, the paper added.



**Data analysis from Paris raid on Google will take months, possibly years**

Analysis of data seized by investigators in last week's raid of Google's Paris headquarters could possibly take years, French financial prosecutor Eliane Houlette said on Sunday.

Dozens of French police raided Google's offices on Tuesday, escalating an investigation over suspected tax evasion.

"We have collected a lot of computer data," Houlette said in an interview with Europe 1 radio, TV channel iTele and newspaper Le Monde, adding that 96 people took part in the raid.

"We need to analyze (the data) ... (it will take) months, I hope that it won't be several years, but we are very limited in resources".



**AirAsia has had \$1 billion takeover offer for leasing unit**

Asia's largest budget airline AirAsia Bhd has received a \$1 billion offer for its aircraft leasing unit, Bloomberg News quoted Chief Executive Tony Fernandes as saying.

AirAsia intends to divest the business, Asia Aviation Capital Ltd, at some point, Fernandes told Bloomberg on Monday but added that the offer needs to be discussed further with the board.

He was quoted as saying that the business was a "powerful cash generator".

Reuters reported in October that AirAsia has been in talks with lessors, including cash-rich Chinese companies, to sell a stake in its leasing subsidiary.

Chinese companies are seeking to grow aggressively in the leasing industry that provides about 40 percent of the planes used by airlines globally.

NEWS IN BRIEF

# KNAUF aims to increase output and introduce new products



Iran's KNAUF Company is the first and largest manufacturer of drywall construction systems in Iran and all the products of the company are produced using the world's latest technologies and with the best possible quality approved by the KNAUF companies all over the world. The company has a high sensitivity regarding environment and the factories are equipped with pollution filters which are used in modern countries. KNAUF has done a lot regarding promoting, educating and familiarizing consumers, designers, architects and civil engineers with this system. The company has held many seminars and training courses for technical and engineering groups.

**As The first question may I ask you to tell us a little about the company and its history?**

Let me start with the German history of the company, KNAUF is a multinational, family-owned company based in Iphofen, Germany well known for drywall gypsum boards, originally founded in 1932. The company is a producer of building materials and construction systems comprising construction materials for drywall construction, plasterboard, cement boards, mineral fibre acoustic boards, dry mortars with gypsum for internal plaster and cement-based external plaster and insulating materials; glass wool, stone wool and other insulation materials under the company KNAUF Insulation. It has more than 150 production sites worldwide, it is one of the seven producers which hold approximately 81% of the worldwide wallboard market.

**Could you tell us a little more about gypsum boards?**

Sure, gypsum boards are in fact what the com-

pany is known for and along with are other products and accessories the company provides mainly construction materials for drywall construction.

Acoustic and thermal insulation and light weight are of important characteristics of these systems which is vital in countries like Iran with a high risk for earthquakes.

The products are very sustainable and are environmentally friendly because they are 98 percent plaster, which is a natural substance and is highly compatible with human nature.

**What has been done regarding educating and environmental issues, so far?**

The company has a high sensitivity regarding environment and the factories are equipped with air filters similar to those used in Germany and other modern countries. The company has done a lot regarding promoting, educating and familiarizing consumers, designers, architects and civil engineers with this system, and it has held many seminars and training courses for technical and engineering groups.

Unfortunately, our educational system does not teach these systems in standard courses. While in the whole world this system is being taught in higher education as a standard and well-established construction system.

**Does the company have any special plans for the current year?**

Our products grew very quickly in the market and have found a foothold. In fact, every consumer or designer who uses or works with this system becomes fascinated by its capabilities and benefits. KNAUF system is earthquake-resistant and it is also suitable to make the buildings lighter and since Iran is an earthquake potent country KNAUF has found a significant place in the construction market, so the company has increased its production capacity by 100 percent for the current year.

One of the activities that we started in Iranian calendar year of 1394 was increasing production capacity after which new products such as ceiling

grid profiles were also introduced to the market.

And we also introduced VERMIPLASTER as a fire protection gypsum plaster for interior application and as a cover for beams and Columns. Of course, with the production capacity increased, gypsum mines have also got expanded and new mines were exploited and we were able to increase the extraction of gypsum. We also started exporting minerals to India and other Persian Gulf states.

**Since construction has decreased in recent years, how your company has managed to increase production capacity? Is it because your products are of different from traditional materials?**

Yes, we are experiencing the peak of construction market downturn but KNAUF has a very goal oriented and comprehensive program and such periodical recessions won't be a problem for us. Our perspective is that in the upcoming year the market will regain its strength and since our product is very popular we have made this investment and we hope for the best.

**From what we have learned about KNAUF so far, it could be said that the company has been very successful in reaching its goals and plans, is there anything else to add?**

Fortunately Iranian Consumers, engineers and architects are very open minded about new products and they are very keen to use modern and up to date technologies so when they get to know KNAUF as a new system in construction they'll definitely be interested in using it because this product will give them a high range of design and creativity. In fact this is the reason why this product has become one of the most popular construction systems in the country.

**Considering the post-sanctions opportunity and with the market condition getting better, what are your plans this year?**

As mentioned earlier, we plan to increase the production capacity and as a result our goals is to establish a new factory producing gypsum panels

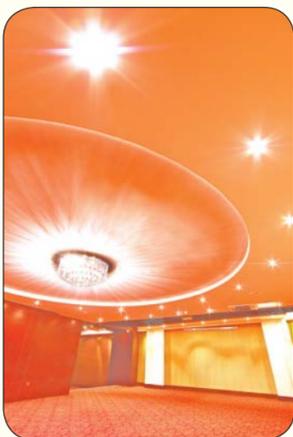
and accessories in Fars province. A new factory will also be constructed near Tehran. We will also expand our activities in the North West. Bringing the production line of new products is also on the

agenda and it is very popular among architects. **Could you explain about the KNAUF investment in Iran and also about your strategies for increasing the production ceiling?**

As I mentioned before, considering the expanding market and having the region countries like Iraq and Afghanistan's markets on the agenda, the company plans to establish a new factory in Fars province. Having abundant gypsum resources, Fars province is a strategic region for us both in terms of construction and in terms of having access to neighbor markets. The exports to Afghanistan and Iraq is being done from Tehran and we plan to Use Fars to do so in the future. Also considering the fast growing market of Tehran and the fact that Tehran constitutes 40 percent of Iran's market we are going to set up a new factory in the region. This factory will be operational in two years.

**And the last words?**

Extracting Gypsum is very economical in Iran, This is because the energy cost is relatively low. But the important issue is that it requires high technology and support from professionals in the field. KNAUF Company with more than 80 years of experience in the industry is using high technology and high quality design machinery. This has made the company able to produce high quality products in the country. Raw material is a key feature in making high quality products so it needs a high degree of expertise. Production also needs highly specialized employees so our staff are trained for years at home and abroad to see the needs of a high quality product.



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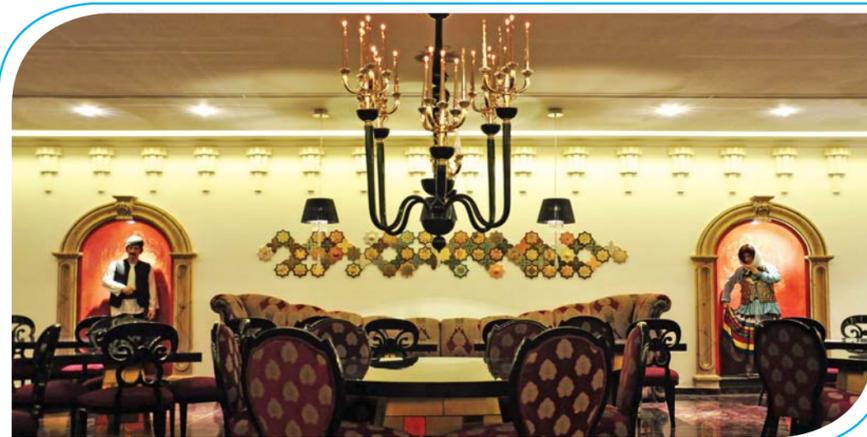


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# A 'nation' with pride and purpose

By John Yemma

With both resettlement and repatriation unlikely, the world's displaced people constitute the refugee crisis in 70 years.

In the ruins of World War II, people displaced by violence, intolerance, and destitution were everywhere – 8 million in Germany, 3 million in oth-

er parts of Europe, tens of millions throughout Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. It was the biggest refugee crisis in history, and it came at the end of a conflict of almost unimaginable brutality that left economies in shambles and cities, factories, and farms unable to provide for even the most basic needs.

Today, the world is largely at

peace. There are no interstate wars of the kind that tore Europe and Asia apart 70 years ago. Everywhere, even in subsistence cultures, humans are more prosperous, productive, and interconnected than at any time in history. And yet there are more refugees today than during the dark days of 1945-46.

There are now 60 million. If that



would be equal to that of Italy, just below France and Britain.

The refugees of the 21st century are fleeing for the same reasons as those after World War II – violence, intolerance, destitution. What's different now is that resettlement or repatriation is taking so long that for many it never occurs.

## Pars Diplomatic Real Estate

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**Apt. in Elahieh**  
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**Diba: 09128103206**

**Apt. in Kamranieh**  
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**Apt. in Zafranieh**  
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**Duplex Villa in Farmanieh**  
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**Whole Bldg. in Zafranieh**  
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# Winning month for Europe stocks goes uncelebrated as votes loom

The biggest monthly gain for European stocks since November is doing little to relieve investor anxiety.

In most respects the opposite is happening, as a 2.4 percent advance in the Stoxx Europe 600 Index through Friday has been met with falling volume, outflows from mutual funds and an evaporation in price momentum.

European stocks extended a third weekly increase in May, amid optimism that the economy is strong enough to withstand higher U.S. borrowing costs, as traders awaited a speech by Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen.

The number of shares on the gauge changing hands was about 20 percent lower than the 30-day average, before holidays in the UK and U.S. on Monday.

European shares posted their best weekly gains since February, resuming a rally that had stalled after a 16 percent rebound from a low that month. After hawkish comments from Fed officials, traders increased the chances of an interest-rate increase in June to 30 percent and to 54 percent for July. Data showed the U.S. economy in the first quarter expanded at a slightly faster pace than initially estimated, and Yellen is due to speak on Friday after the close of European markets.

After starting the year with bullish calls, strategists and analysts have become increasingly skeptical about European equities, projecting flat annual returns in the Stoxx 600 and a decline in corporate profits. Following a mixed earnings season, European investors are facing a referendum on Britain's membership in the European Union and a general election in Spain.

"No one is pretending there is a smooth road ahead," said Ben Kumar, an investment manager at Seven Investment Management in London, who helps manage \$14 billion. "The first-quarter earnings we saw were not enough to say the market is strong enough to ride out any political uncertainty."

Last week, the Stoxx 600 failed to breach its 200-day moving average, struggling to push toward a more positive longer-term trend. The measure has declined in 10 of the last 15 Junes.

Britons will vote on whether to stay or leave the EU on June 23, and Spain will hold an election three days later, following a December ballot that failed to produce a government.

After spending most of May in a tight range, the Stoxx 600 broke from its torpor and posted its biggest weekly rally since February. But as shares rose, investors continued to pull money out of the region's funds, bringing the total withdrawals to \$39 billion in 16 weeks, according to a



Bank of America Corp. note citing EPFR Global data. With an average of about 2.7 billion shares changing hands each day in May, trading in the Stoxx 600 was the slowest since December.

Benno Galliker, a trader at Luzerner Kantonalbank AG in Lucerne, Switzerland, says last week's gains are a proof that appetite for stocks is coming back. Polls showed Britons are leaning toward staying in the EU, while improving data boosted speculation that the global economy can withstand higher U.S. borrowing costs. Traders are pricing in a more than 50 percent probability that the Federal Reserve will increase rates by July.

**After starting the year with bullish calls, strategists and analysts have become increasingly skeptical about European equities.**

"It seems Brexit risk is out of the way and a U.S. interest rate hike is already on the cards," Galliker said. "It feels the economy is getting stronger, and the market seems to be ready for a small U.S. hike in June or July. The European market is still lagging behind the U.S., and there's plenty of room from here on."

The Stoxx 600 is still down 4.4 percent for the year, while the S&P 500 has swung to gains. Political uncertainty aside, European stock investors also have to contend with lingering concerns including the impact of China's slowing economy.

"The problem in Europe is that even when it's addressing its own issues in quite a satisfactory way, global issues tend to also get caught in the sentiment," Seven Investment Management's Kumar said. "What do we need to get things really firing in Europe? We need everything in the global economy to be OK -- a benign Fed, a rate hike dealt with well by the market, an increase in confidence in China."

(Source: Bloomberg)

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Saudi Arabia's net foreign assets fall to four-year low in April

Saudi Arabia's net foreign assets fell for a 15th month in April, as the kingdom announced its "vision" for a post-oil future.

The Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency said on Sunday net foreign assets declined 1.1 percent to \$572 billion, the lowest level in four years. The slump in crude prices has forced the government to sell bonds and draw on its currency reserves. Net foreign assets fell by \$115 billion last year, when the kingdom ran a budget deficit of nearly \$100 billion.

The fiscal crunch has pushed Saudi Arabia's rulers to look beyond oil, consider new taxes, and plan an initial public offering of Saudi Arabian Oil Co.

Oil declined for a third day, falling 0.5 percent to \$49.07 a barrel at 9:42 a.m. in Dubai, bringing the drop for the past year to 24 percent. It traded above \$100 a barrel two years ago.

The strain on reserves has also fueled speculation that the kingdom will adjust its decades-old riyal peg to the dollar.

(Source: Bloomberg)

### Gold hits 3-1/2 month low on dollar strength after Yellen

Gold fell below \$1,200 for the first time since mid-February on Monday, as comments from Federal Reserve chief Janet Yellen on the likelihood of higher U.S. interest rates sent the dollar to two-month highs.

The Fed should increase interest rates "in the coming months" if the economy picks up as expected and jobs continue to be generated, Yellen said on Friday, bolstering the case for a rate hike in June or July.

St. Louis Fed President James Bullard said on Monday that global markets appear to be "well-prepared" for a summer rate hike, although he did not specify a date for the policy move.

An increase in rates would raise the opportunity cost of holding gold, which does not earn interest. It would also bolster the dollar, making gold more expensive for other currency holders.

Gold fell as much as 1.1 percent to \$1,199.60 an ounce, its lowest since Feb. 17, and was down 0.6 percent at \$1,204.18 an ounce by 0853 GMT. The metal was on track for nine sessions of losses, its longest losing streak of since March 2015.

(Source: Reuters)



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# Shazand Petrochemical Co. Gains Highest Production and Sales Record in Previous Year

## SPC Allocates 1,350 Rials DPS (Dividend per Share)



**Annual Ordinary General Assembly of Shazand Petrochemical Company (SPC) was held on May 25, 2016 in the presence of more than 90 percent shareholders of the company. As headed by Mr. Mahmoudi, the Annual Ordinary General Assembly was supervised by Messrs. Dr. Hashemi, Hamzeh Dabiri and Ali Akbari. After reading the report of the Board of Directors and legal inspector of the company, the followings were approved by shareholders. The decisions adopted in the Annual Ordinary General Assembly are as follows: 1) Financial statements of the company for the fiscal year closing on March 19, 2016 were approved. 2) 1,350 rials dividend was distributed among shareholders of the company. 3) State Audit Organization was selected as independent auditor and main legal inspector of the company for the fiscal year 2016. 4) Ettela'at Persian Daily was elected as widely circulated paper for publishing upcoming advertisements of the company.**



off and scraping tax penalties amounting to 364 billion rials.  
5- Correcting the way of calculation of gas price in bills issued by the National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) since 2015. NIGC calculated 4.9 percent gas volume received from the company with the rate as determined for feedstock of petrochemical complexes, the ate of which declined up to 1.1 percent.

6- Selling silver extracted from used catalyst in EO/EG Unit, amounting to €4.6 million, to Germany's Hereaus Company, based on which, the mentioned company refrained from paying or refunding relevant fund as of 2011 due to the international sanctions imposed on Iran. (Subject of Paragraph 4 of independent auditor's report in 2014). Shortly after implementation of Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Shazand Petrochemical Company, as the first Iranian company, managed to receive its outstanding demands from European companies.

7- Constructing and operating naphtha reservoir tanks with the production capacity of 16,000 cubic meter in order to reduce risk in provision of raw materials.

8- Constructing and commissioning export tanks in Mahshahr with the production capacity of more than 14,000 cubic meters in order to prevent stoppage of industrial and production units in emergency cases, increasing capacity of warehousing liquid products in export ports and removing cost for renting tank.

9- Obtaining feedstock license as much as 5.3 million normal cubic meter/gas per day for Ardebil petrochemical project and Naft Nik Qeshm project.

10- Selling stocks of Petroshemiran Company through bid notice to the highest offer, amounting to 3,331 billion rials.

The company is honored to announce that it observes and safeguards interests of all beneficiaries and shareholders in the best form possible and will take effective steps to meet demands of its dear customers, staff and shareholders incessantly. The company owes its success to the unflinching and unsparing efforts of its shareholders who supported objectives of the company since its establishment up to the present time. With constructive proposals and guidance of respected shareholders of the company and relying upon the assistance of the Almighty God, it is hoped that Board of Directors of the company will take giant strides towards materialization of most of objectives of the company.

### History

The company was established on April 6, 1987 in the name of Arak Petrochemical Company (Pvt.J.S) and was registered under Reg. No. 2-2/64473 at Tehran Industrial Ownership and Companies Registration Department. The company was turned into public joint stock company on Nov. 20, 1998 and its stocks were accepted at Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE) in Sept. 1999. It should be noted that stocks of the

company are transacted at TSE as of stock admission date. The Central Office of the company is located at the following address: No. 68, West Taban St., Vali-e Asr Ave., Tehran. The factory of the company is located at: Km 22 of Arak - Boroujerd Road.

According to the bylaw ratified in the extraordinary general assembly on May 30, 2010, Arak Petrochemical Company (P.J.S) to Shazand (Arak) Petrochemical Company (P.J.S).

### Shazand (Arak) Petrochemical Company

Shazand (Arak) Petrochemical Company is one of strategic and infrastructural plans in the country which was approved by Higher Council of Economy in 1984 in line with strategic and principled policy of development of petrochemical industry with the following objectives: meeting demands of domestic industries of country to base polymer ad chemical products, training competent, skilled and the most experienced manpower for development of this industry and transferring technical know-how and knowledge. The construction operation of this giant national project started in 1989 officially, so that its first phase was put into operation in 1993. With more than two decades of brilliant experience in petrochemical industry of the country, the company enjoys high potentials in a way that it can produce more than 1,800,000 tons of intermediate and final products (polymer and chemical products). In this regard, the company managed to produce 2,000,874 tons of products and ranked 58th among country's top 100 companies. With owning 15 active industrial and production units, the company produces unique combination of its chemical and polymerized products. Given the monopoly of producing some vital products including oxide ethylene, vinyl acetate, di-ethyl hexanol, normal butanone, ISO butanone, ethanol amines, and autoxylates, the company plays an important role in meeting strategic demands of various industries of the country. Broadly speaking, the company is considered as the largest and most important petrochemical industry in central and northern part of the country due to its two salient specifications i.e. variety of production of products and high production capacity. Safeguarding values and human capitals, respecting prestige and dignity of all industrial staff and personnel and promoting living standard of all staff are the main objectives of management of the company. It is obvious that the company owes its success to the unsparing cooperation and cooperation of all functionaries of the company. Accordingly, management and staff of the company will make their utmost effort to adopt effective decisions for progress and development of the company.

### Strategies and Operational Plans of Co. in 2016 Fiscal Year

Measuring activities of the company consecutively, boosting efficacy of all processes of the company to attain organizational excellence, turning current structure of the company into process-based economic enterprise, gaining satisfaction of staff through improvement of pro-

cess of human resources, developing communications system, setting up an integrated software and hardware system, compiling IT Governance system, paving suitable way for implementing BPM, BSC and DM systems, promoting organizational culture based on organizational values, designing system for developing creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship in the field of human resources, setting up excellence of human resources, planning an integrated management system for reducing costs and managing performance of organizational productivity for competitiveness of products in global markets, producing high-quality products observing requirements of international standards, implementing expansion projects in tandem with supplying feedstock for producing new products in line with the completion of value chain, promoting brand of the company, planning, identifying and meeting demands of customers in present and future, studying and analyzing performance of rivals with regard to identifying proper strategies to supply equipment and parts from reliable suppliers, etc.

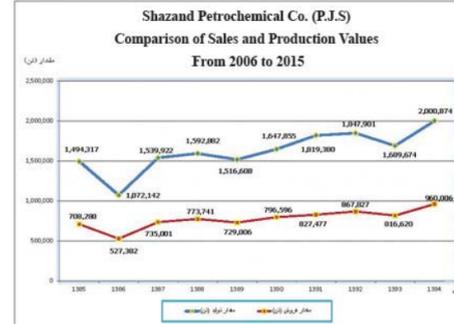
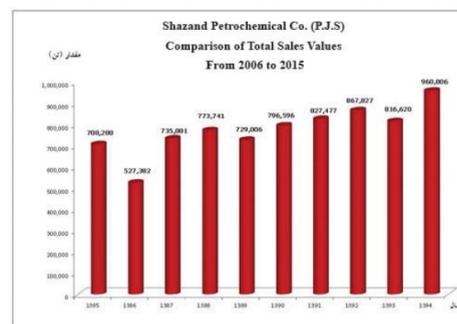
### Highlights of Activities Considered in Current Year

The most important activities of the company considered in the current Iranian calendar year in 1395 (started March 20, 2016) are as follows: Eyeing new target markets for exporting products, conducting new feasibility studies for launching software project (management of relationship with customers) in line with strategic objectives of the organization and gaining customers' satisfaction, marketing new products with the aim of increasing added value, getting lion's share of domestic market and identifying potential markets, participating in markets of neighboring states strongly, increasing rail transportation share and also transporting domestic and foreign consignments in bulk form, boosting sales share of special grades of polypropylene, polyethylene, and other bespoke grades for customers, moving in line with executive policies of country with regard to producing and selling special and strategic products in order to meet demands of domestic market, equipping and developing research and development (R&D) unit, sales engineering department in order to identify new target markets and predicting market's upcoming developments and world and regional prices of products, etc.

### Future Programs of Company

Having active presence in regional markets of neighboring countries such as Turkey, Afghanistan, Caspian Sea littoral states and Europe, conducting research activities in line with acceleration of strategic programs of the company, revising sales strategy of special products in order to increase profit in special regional and world markets, determining macro objectives of the organization (safeguarding and promoting long-term value of stocks, gaining satisfaction of key stakeholders and beneficiaries, increasing share of new target markets, defining projects in the field of IT and communications management in order to improve performance and increase productivity in line with organizational strategies and priorities, etc.

**Shazand (Arak) Petrochemical Company obtained the highest sales and production record in the last Iranian calendar year in 1394 (ended March 19, 2016). Thanks to its best performance, the company allocated 1,350 rials net profit for each share.**



## Balance Sheet of Shazand Petrochemical Co. (P.J.S) for the Fiscal Year Closing on March 19, 2016

Assets	Mar. 19, 2016 (Million rials)	Revision Presented Mar. 19, 2015 (Million rials)	Liabilities and Owner's Equity	Mar. 19, 2016 (Million rials)	(Revision presented) Mar. 19, 2015 (Million rials)
<b>Current Assets</b>			<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Cash stocks and balance	1,894,380	449,543	Trade and nontrade payables	3,462,505	4,406,032
Short-term investments	212,688	174,138	Payable tax	588,147	1,087,511
Trade and nontrade receivables	4,736,142	3,737,770	Payable dividend	2,226,497	1,785,358
Inventory of goods and materials	4,257,992	4,849,086	Financial facilities	0	1,017,425
Advance payments	1,088,061	1,523,380	Advance receivables	919,094	1,073,015
Assets kept for sale	26,518	8,973	Total current liabilities	7,350,665	9,369,341
Total current assets	12,215,781	10,742,890	Noncurrent liabilities		
			End-service reserves	1,220,042	966,143
<b>Noncurrent assets</b>			Total liabilities	8,570,707	10,335,484
Long-term investments	449,821	1,161,904	Total owner's equity		
Intangible assets	18,999	19,591	Capital	3,600,000	1,200,000
Fixed tangible assets	5,634,472	5,775,992	Increased capital flow	0	2,400,000
Other assets	785,576	994,764	Legal reserve	360,000	120,000
Total noncurrent assets	6,888,868	7,952,251	Other reserves	1,785	1,785
			Cumulative dividend	6,572,157	4,637,872
			Total owner's equity	10,533,942	8,359,657
Total assets	19,104,649	18,695,141	total liabilities and owner's equity	19,104,649	18,695,141

## Profit and Loss Account of Main Company of Shazand Petrochemical Co. (P.J.S) for the Fiscal Year Closing on March 19, 2016

	March 19, 2016	(Revision presented) Mar. 19, 2015
	Million rials	Million rials
Operational incomes	24,010,924	26,795,005
Cost price of operational incomes	(19,206,244)	(21,184,470)
Gross profit	4,804,680	5,610,535
Sales, administrative and general costs	(1,791,283)	(1,941,635)
Other operational items	22,677	477,229
Operational profit	3,036,074	4,146,129
Financial costs	(354,520)	(17,425)
Other nonoperational incomes	3,401,788	293,593
Operation profit underway before taxation	6,083,342	4,422,297
Income tax	(309,057)	(523,855)
Net profit of operation under continuation	5,774,285	3,898,442
Base profit of each share:		
Operational	801	1,455
Nonoperational	803	98
Base profit of each share - rials	1,604	1,553
Average number of stocks	3,600,000,000	2,510,744,101
Cumulative Account Turnover		
Net profit	5,774,285	3,898,442
Cumulative dividend in the beginning of year	5,548,616	7,925,310
Yearly adjustments	(910,744)	(1,185,880)
Cumulative dividend - adjusted	4,637,872	6,739,430
Approved dividend	(3,600,000)	(6,000,000)
	1,037,872	739,430
Profit appropriation	6,812,157	4,637,872
Cumulative dividend in the yearend	6,572,157	4,637,872

A court in Bahrain has extended the jail term of prominent Shia cleric Sheikh Ali Salman, who is the secretary general of the country's main opposition bloc, by five years.

The Supreme Court of Appeal increased Salman's prison sentence on charges of inciting violence and calling for anti-regime demonstrations to nine years from the original four.

The al-Wefaq opposition group, headed by Salman, denounced the court ruling as "unacceptable and provocative," saying it "entrenches the exacerbating political crisis" in Bahrain.

Al-Wefaq was Bahrain's largest parliamentary bloc until its 18 MPs walked out in February 2011 to protest violence used against demonstrators.

On Friday, an international human rights organization called on the US administration to demand the immediate release of the 50-year-old dissident.

"If the US government is serious about helping Bahrain escape its political crisis, it should publicly call for his immediate release so he can be part of a much-needed dialogue with the govern-

## Bahrain court increases Sheikh Salman's jail term by five years



ment," Brian Dooley, with the US-based Human Rights First, said. Sheikh Salman was arrested in De-

cember 2014 on charges of attempting to overthrow the Manama regime and collaborating with foreign pow-

ers.

He denies the charges, saying he has been seeking reforms in the country through peaceful means.

In June 2015, a Bahraini court sentenced him to four years in prison on charges such as insulting the Bahraini Interior Ministry and inciting others to break the law. He was acquitted of seeking regime change.

The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has repeatedly called on the Manama regime to release the al-Wefaq leader.

Since February 14, 2011, anti-regime protesters have held numerous demonstrations on an almost daily basis in Bahrain, calling for the Al Khalifah family to relinquish power.

In March that year, troops from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates were deployed to the country to assist the Bahraini regime with its crackdown on the peaceful protests.

Scores of people have been killed and hundreds of others injured or arrested in the crackdown.

(Source: Press TV)

## Erdogan alarmed by French crackdown on protests

Under fire over the state of democracy in Turkey, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan Monday took aim at strike-hit France, expressing his alarm over police violence against French demonstrators.

He accused the media of selective reporting in turning a blind eye to police repression in the West while appearing overly keen to focus on Turkey's alleged shortcomings.

His remarks echoed Western criticism of the Turkish police's heavily-handed tactics against peaceful protesters during anti-government demonstrations in 2013.

"I am concerned over what's happening in Paris," Erdogan said in a televised speech in Istanbul.

"I condemn the violence committed by the French police against people who use their right to demonstration," he added.

He complained the same Western media who had been only too keen to report on anti-government protests in Turkey three years ago were silent over the treatment of French protesters. "Today, Paris and Brussels are on fire," said Erdogan. "In other Western cities there are very serious protests. Media organizations that held uninterrupted live broadcasts three years ago have stayed almost blind, deaf and dumb to the current events." (Source: AFP)

## NATO urged to show stronger resolve on Russia, boost defense

NATO's Parliamentary Assembly urged alliance members on Monday to stand up to Russia's military assertiveness and to do a better job sharing the burden of collective defense.

A unanimously approved declaration called on alliance members "to provide reassurance to those allies who feel their security is under threat, focusing on the eastern and southern flanks of the alliance."

The declaration sought to strengthen conventional and nuclear deterrence measures, heighten NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) military preparedness, and boost cooperation with non-NATO members Sweden and Finland. All are expected objectives of the alliance's July 8-9 summit in Warsaw.

The assembly president, American lawmaker Michael R. Turner, declared that "Russia's aggressiveness comes with a price" as he appealed to European partners to

boost defense spending.

"Moscow has decided that its own interests are better served if it works against us rather than with us," said Turner, a Republican member of the United States House of Representatives from Ohio. "The challenge from Russia is real and serious."

NATO Deputy Secretary-General Alexander Vershbow said NATO would maintain dialogue with Russia "but there can be no return to 'business as usual' ... until Russia once again demonstrates respect for international law and the norms of international behavior."

Vershbow said NATO members would seek to strengthen the alliance's defense capabilities and logistical support for other allies bordering Russia at the Warsaw summit. He urged members to follow through on their previous commitments to increase defense spending to at least 2 percent of national

economic output.

Monday's declaration specified that all members should achieve this target by 2020. It said NATO nations also should "continue to explore ways to reduce tensions with Russia and avoid miscalculations and incidents."

About 250 lawmakers from 28 NATO member countries and partners gathered in the Albanian capital, Tirana, amid tight security. They also debated NATO policy on terrorism, mass migration, the Ukraine crisis and security in the Western Balkans during the three-day assembly, which concluded Monday.

The assembly hailed Montenegro's recent invitation to become a full member and hoped eventually to offer membership to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Russian neighbor Georgia.

(Source: AP)

## ISIL terrorists sell sex slaves on Facebook

The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorists use Facebook to sell sex slaves to fellow extremists, justifying the price by "supply and demand."

The worrying report by the Washington Post sheds more light on hundreds of women held captive and traded by the terrorist group.

Photos of a young girl of about 18 were posted on Facebook by an ISIL terrorist called Abu Assad Almani, which is Arabic for "German," the Washington Post reports.

"To all the brothers thinking about buying a slave, this one is \$8,000," said Almani's post dated May 20. The same man reportedly posted a second image a few hours later, this time showing a pale young face with weepy red eyes.

"Another sabiyah [slave], also about \$8,000. Yes or no?" he wrote in the posting.

Displaying the images, Almani told his Facebook friends to "get married and

come to dawah [the ISIL-held territory in Iraq and Syria]." A heated discussion erupted between him and different commenters who doubted the \$8,000 asking price was reasonable. Some mocked the girls' looks, while others slammed Almani for showing women wearing no veil.

"What makes her worth that price? Does she have an exceptional skill?" one of his correspondents asked about the woman in the second photo. "No," he replies. "Supply and demand makes her that price."

The images and Almani's profile were deleted by Facebook within hours, according to the newspaper. But the posts highlight a worrying sign of a growing slave trade, with probably hundreds of women being held and sold as sex slaves by ISIL terrorists.

As the terrorist group has been pinned down in Iraq and, especially, Syria, where government troops and the Russian Air Force continue to hit ISIL, female sex slaves

appear to be increasingly traded by terrorists. Various media reports suggest the militants are running low of cash, food and medicines, which could be explained by the shrinking supply routes stretching between ISIL-held territory and Turkey.

In August last year, the United Nations said it obtained a hard copy of the ISIL's sex price list, alleging the extremist fighters can get children aged 1 to 9 for about \$165, adolescent girls for \$124 and women over 40 for as little as \$41.

"The girls get peddled like barrels of petrol," Zainab Bangura, the UN's Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sexual Violence in Conflict, told Bloomberg. "One girl can be sold and bought by five or six different men."

Sometimes these fighters sell the girls back to their families for thousands of dollars of ransom."

Earlier in March, Nadia Murad, a Yazidi girl who survived ISIL sex slavery, told

RT that all the females in several Kurdish villages in Syria were abducted, including small children: "There were thousands of women. In the first days I witnessed fighters taking girls who were over the age of nine to rape them."

Other social media conversations suggested ISIL terrorists discussed harvesting human organs for better profit from sex slaves. In one conversation, an extremist supporter expressed his desire to buy kidneys or livers, calling them merely "spare parts."

"These social media conversations also reveal information on where and under what conditions the women are being held, on the going prices for them, and even on other issues relating to them - such as possible trafficking in human organs," said a report released by the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), a Washington-based research organization. (Source: RT)

## Schwarzenegger says he's not ready to endorse Trump — or anyone — just yet

Arnold Schwarzenegger says he isn't ready to endorse Donald Trump for president — at least not yet.

"I will make an announcement before the election, you can be sure of that," Schwarzenegger said on NBC's "Meet the Press" on Sunday. "But I will do it my way, which is always an unusual way."

The Republican former governor of California announced his 2003 gubernatorial run on "The Tonight Show." Schwarzenegger, who earlier this year campaigned for Ohio Gov. John Kasich, said he plans to "study the various different candidates, what they represent, all of them" before making his endorsement.

But Schwarzenegger also carefully avoided criticizing the soon-to-be Republican nominee, whom he will replace as host of "Celebrity Apprentice."

"I think it is important that we go and bring both of the parties together," he said. "The more we go to the left, the more we go to the right, I believe of what President Eisenhower said, 'Politics is like the road. The left and the right represents the gutter, and the middle is drivable.'" The 68-year-old bodybuilder turned actor turned two-term governor said he doesn't think about the similarities between his unlikely political rise and the one Trump is currently experiencing.

"I don't really study that much of what is the difference," Schwarzenegger said.

While stumping for Kasich in February, Schwarzenegger compared the Ohio governor to his most famous role. "This is you," Schwarzenegger said. "You are the Terminator."

Meanwhile, Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders — whom Trump is refusing to debate — is forging ahead in the Democratic race against Hillary Clinton with the California primary and its 475 delegates just 10 days away.

"Obviously, if we don't do well in California, it will make our path much, much harder," Sanders said on "Meet the Press." "California is the big enchilada."

Sanders was asked if he would consider being Clinton's running mate. "Well, right now, here we are in California," Sanders said. "I'm knocking my brains out to win the Democratic nomination."

He added: "That's where I am right now. What happens afterwards, we will see. But right now, my focus is on winning the nomination."

(Source: AP)

## Bank Shahr CEO urges ranking Iranian banks to interact with foreign banks

**ECONOMY** Iranian banks were urged to be ranked in order to establish more interaction with foreign banks.

Chief Executive of Bank Shahr Dr. Hossein Mohammad Pourzarandi announced the above statement and placed special emphasis on the necessity of empowering Iranian banking system in order to compete with foreign banks in international level.

Iranian banking system was sidelined

and lagged behind from international banking system during sanctions period, he said, adding: "Under current circumstances, rating and obtaining international rank should be taken into serious consideration in banking system of the country."

Monetary and financial policies of country should be defined in tandem with modern-day banking terms and conditions, he observed.

He called on responsible officials

to take effective steps in the field of launching worldwide financial messaging system dubbed SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication) for Iranian banks, accelerating interaction with European banks and financing small- and medium-sized economic enterprises in the country.

Elsewhere in his remarks, senior official of the bank emphasized on revising Islamic banking rules and regulations

and said: "There are many problems for implementing usury-free banking and effective steps should be taken in order to solve problem in this respect."

In the end, Managing Director of Bank Shahr Dr. Hossein Mohammad Pourzarandi said: "Financial structure of Iranian economy, bylaws, regulations and outstanding claims have been cited as the major problems of country's banking network system in sanctions period."

## NEWS

### Japan puts military on alert for possible North Korea missile launch

Japan put its military on alert on Monday for a possible North Korean ballistic missile launch, ordering naval destroyers and anti-ballistic missile Patriot batteries to be ready to shoot down any projectile heading for Japan.

A government official confirmed that an order was issued. The official declined to be identified as he is not authorized to speak to the media.

The order was first reported by state broadcaster NHK. A spokesman for the Ministry of Defense earlier declined to comment, as did South Korea's defense ministry.

Japan has put its anti-ballistic missile forces on alert at least twice this year after detecting signs of launches by North Korea.

North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test in January and has followed that with test launches of various missiles.

Japan has advanced Aegis vessels in the Sea of Japan that are able to track multiple targets and are armed with SM-3 missiles designed to destroy incoming warheads in space before they re-enter the atmosphere and fall to their targets.

Patriot PAC-3 missile batteries, designed to hit warheads near the ground, are deployed around Tokyo and other sites as a second and final line of defense. (Source: Reuters)

### Fighting back irrationality with toleration

Pressuring rivals by such limitless over-ambitiousness to achieve goals may end in more and more countries being involved in regional conflicts as seen in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Lebanon.

Such adventurism and intervention in other geographies to remove regional rivals or show muscle can escalate not only regional conflicts, but can make it difficult to predict what would be the next step.

From this perspective, it should be understandable why adopting a policy of toleration works with rivals who are irrational and unpredictable.

### Quit smoking today

In my opinion, a socio-cultural campaign against the crippling consequences of cigarette and hookah smoking should be established.

For example, I suggest a campaign against tea-houses to cease serving hookahs. At the same time, mass media outlets have great responsibility to bold the harmful effects of smoking, as more and more victims fall in the trap of addiction every day.

#### Social movement against smoking

In a news study, aired a few months back on Channel 1 of Islamic Republic of Iran broadcast (IRIB), the citizens of Sanandaj, provincial capital of Kurdistan province, in a symbolic gesture broke all hookahs in the main square of the city.

In recent years, Tehran Municipality has taken dramatic steps for quitting the bad habit of smoking. In many districts, rehabilitation centers have been organized to counter with this phenomenon. As today, we observe World No Tobacco Day (WNTD), it is expected that other cities of Iran follow, simply, because we the people have the will power to do so.

### During separate meetings announced:

South Korea, China to Invest in Iran's Aluminum and Brine Sectors

**ECONOMY** Tehran, May30, IMIDRO\_ DAELIM Corporation, a South Korean firm, is willing to invest in Iran's mining industries and infrastructure affairs sectors and a Chinese company, RDI, is willing to buy brines from Iran, during separate meetings with Chairman of the board of IMIDRO, they announced.

According to the report of public relations of IMIDRO, some senior managers of DAELIM Corporation headed by Kyo in Choo, CEO of DAELIM Corporation, met Mehdi Karbasian, Chairman of the board of IMIDRO. "One of our aims for cooperation with Iran is to be an investor or to make a joint venture in infrastructure projects such as ports, railways and mines and mining industries chains such as aluminum sector", Kyo in Choo announced. Current visit of South Korean president to Iran made several opportunities for us to broaden bilateral ties, Karbasian said. He added: "there are limit opportunities for implementation of development projects, so companies which earlier attend in implementation activities are in our top priorities for cooperation."

He also invited DAELIM Corporation to attend in the 2nd Iran mine and mining industries summit (IMIS2016) which will be held on July 11-12 in Tehran. During a separate meeting, delegations of RDI, a Chinese company, met chairman of the board of IMIDRO yesterday.

RDI is willing to invest in Iran's mine and mining industries sector especially in brine sector, they said.

"Regarding the Iran's rich brine reserves, we are willing to invest in production and export obtained materials from these reserves and we aim to export approximately 80 percent of these products to China, Chen Qianjun, executive manager of RDI said. Construction of industrial parks for brine extraction and processing is one of our plans for cooperation with Iran. Also Karbasian noted the rich brine reserves in Iran Qom, Semnan and Esfahan provinces as appropriate opportunities for bilateral cooperation."

So far, we are producing potash from brines but now we are negotiating with several foreign firms for further utilization of these brines. However, if Chinese companies are ready to have activities in this sector so these projects could be implemented quickly, he said.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



"We love our mother unknowingly, and only realize how deep-rooted that love is at the ultimate separation." *Guy de Maupassant*

NEWS

UK Muslim women face gender, religious discrimination: study

A study has found that Muslim women face a double bind of religious and gender discrimination in the British society, which subjects them to harassment and abuse.

Britain's Faith Matter group and the European Network against Racism conducted a research about the impact of Islamophobia on Muslim women across the UK.



File photo shows Muslim women in Britain.

The study showed that Muslim women have experienced serious barriers at work, such as pregnancy discrimination, pay gap and racial profiling in applications.

Muslim women are less likely to get a graduate level job than Christian women with similar qualifications. They are also less likely to get responses to their job applications when sending CVs, researchers said.

Some 43% of Muslim women faced discrimination at job interviews for their religion. This is while 50%

of women who wear a hijab said they have "missed out on progression opportunities because of religious discrimination and that the wearing of the hijab had been a factor," the study showed.

Women in the research also said they experienced verbal harassment in public areas, such as being spat at and people trying to take off their scarves.

"Muslim women face multiple discrimination when searching for employment, in career progression, and in gender-based pay equity. This multiple discrimination is a [combination] of gender-based, ethnic, and religious factors," the researchers said.

Labour MP Tulip Siddiq said the report revealed that Islamophobic discrimination is still a major issue in the UK. She urged the government to ensure legal frameworks do not ignore the serious issues that Muslim women face.

"We must have a robust framework for anti-discrimination laws to ensure that we do not have a two tiered system of treatment," she said.

(Source: Press TV)

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Chicken breasts with herb basting sauce

"Chicken breasts basted with a medley of herbs. Can also be made with skinless, boneless meat."

Ingredients:

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon minced onion



- 1 clove crushed garlic
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon dried rosemary, crushed
- 1/4 teaspoon ground sage
- 1/4 teaspoon dried marjoram
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon hot pepper sauce
- 4 bone-in chicken breast halves, with skin
- 1 1/2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

Directions:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F (220 degrees C). In a bowl, prepare the basting sauce by combining olive oil, onion, garlic, thyme, rosemary, sage, marjoram, salt, pepper, and hot pepper sauce.

Turn chicken breasts in sauce to coat thoroughly. Place skin side up in a shallow baking dish. Cover.

Roast at 425 degrees F (220 degrees C), basting occasionally with pan drippings, for about 35 to 45 minutes. Remove to warm platter, spoon pan juices over, and sprinkle with fresh parsley.

Empowering women entrepreneur, breadwinner on agenda: VP

**WOMEN TEHRAN** — A memorandum of understanding is to be signed by the presidential office's department for women's affairs and the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization (CHTHO), aiming at empowering entrepreneur and breadwinner women, vice president for women and family affairs said.

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide support for female entrepreneurs and heads of families who are active in the field of handicrafts, ISNA quoted the vice president Shahindokht Molaverdi as saying on Thursday.

Creating jobs for breadwinner women and university graduate girls is among the most important goals of the memorandum, she said, adding "In this regard I am seriously engaged with creating a handicrafts market for women in cooperation with the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization."



The government is dealing with women's problems and the draft of a document on empowering women and their social support is being prepared with the participation of the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare, the female VP noted.

Molaverdi further hoped that all the supportive strategies for empowering women would be included in this document and to be approved by the end of the coming month.

However, there are some bottlenecks in women's affairs, including their insurance coverage, which have been identified over the past three years, she added.

Creating a handicrafts market for women is among the duties of the CHTHO, Molaverdi noted, adding that it [the market] will be opened definitely by the end of the current administration's term, which falls in August 2017.

Rising number of female hookah smokers worrying

**WOMEN TEHRAN** — The growing trend of hookah-smoking among women and the youth is worrying and if it is not curbed immediately, it will spread among teenagers, Hassan Azaripour, a health ministry official, said on Thursday.

According to studies, the two groups of women and the youth were the major hookah smokers in the country in 2003, he added.

Girls accounted for about nine percent of hookah smokers aged between 13 and 15 in 2003, but the figure rose to 19.5 percent in 2007, he noted.

There has been an increase in the number of tobacco smokers aged 13-15 from 12 percent to 17.5 percent, of them 2 percent were the



smokers of cigarette, YJC quoted Azaripour as saying.

The numbers grew by 24 percent and 2 percent respectively in 2007, he added.

Basij official calls on Majlis to support female entrepreneurs

**WOMEN TEHRAN** — Head of Women's Basij Organization, Mino Aslani, here on Sunday called on the new Majlis (parliament) to support female entrepreneurs to improve their economic activities.

One of the main gaps in the activities of female entrepreneurs is lack of support, especially for those women who do work-at-home jobs or those who work in the field of handicrafts, carpet-weaving in particular, she noted.

MPs can provide opportunities for women to fulfill their social duties and create a logical balance between their jobs, social activities, and family affairs, IRNA quoted Aslani as saying.

The plan to establish a parliamentary women's committee in the new Majlis



can help realize women's goals, she said, adding that gender equality means that women can play their role in households as well as be active in the society.

Aslani also stressed the importance of utilizing women's capabilities and views in a way that it would not harm the foundation of family.

Chronic sleep deprivation tied to more depression for young women

One night of short sleep may lead to less depression the following day, but chronic short sleep is tied to greater depression overall for young women, according to a new study.

"The overall message that poor quality and insufficient sleep lead to poor mood, which, in turn, worsens sleep was not surprising," said lead author David A. Kalmbach of the University of Michigan Medical School in Ann Arbor.

More noteworthy, he added, was that these relationships were evident in healthy, young women, not just insomniacs or depressed people.

The researchers studied 171 female college students for two weeks, beginning with an in-person questionnaire assessment of anxiety and depression levels and continuing with daily self-reported measures of mood and anxiety. The women also reported their total sleep time, time to fall asleep, and ratings of sleep quality each night.

On average, the women slept for seven hours and 22 minutes each night, taking 21 minutes to fall asleep. Overall, they rated their sleep quality "fairly good."

At the start of the study, a third of the women scored in the "at risk" range for depression and 17 percent had clinically significant anxiety.

Women who averaged less sleep per night over the



two-week period tended to report greater "anhedonic" depression symptoms, or the inability to enjoy pleasurable things. But they also tended to report more of these symptoms the day after a night of particularly long sleep, as reported in Sleep Medicine.

One night of sleep deprivation may improve mood the following day. But unfortunately, "therapeutic effects of a night of sleep deprivation are typically short-lasting, and because chronic sleep deprivation increases depression-risk, the therapeutic benefit of sleep deprivation on depression is modest at best," Kalmbach said.

When women felt greater general distress, they took longer to fall asleep and slept more poorly. Higher levels of depression symptoms tended to come before a night

of longer time to fall asleep, shorter total sleep time and poorer sleep quality.

Depending on the cause of the sleep problems, treatment for depression and anxiety can improve sleep quality, Kalmbach told Reuters Health by email.

"Unfortunately," he added, "for depressed and/or anxious individuals who have successfully gone through psychiatric treatment and no longer have a diagnosis, what we see is that sleep problems often linger, because they do not fully resolve."

Treatments for sleep apnea and insomnia have helped ease depression symptoms, but treatments for sleep disorders are not a cure for depression or anxiety, he said.

"Sleep and mood are similarly related in men and older women such that sleep problems worsen mood and vice versa, and that the relationship between depression and poor sleep is stronger than the relationship between anxiety and sleep," he said.

"People who are concerned with their sleep or believe they may have a sleep disorder should seek the help of a sleep physician or sleep psychologist to discuss treatment options," Kalmbach said. "Early attention toward sleep problems is likely to lessen risk for depression or anxiety, which can develop over time when sleep problems are not addressed."

(Source: Reuters Health)

IN FOCUS Mehr/Masoumeh Fariborzi



A nomad woman is baking traditional bread in Arasbaran region, East Azarbaijan Province.

Muslim women thank Orange ice cream shop owners for standing up to racist customer

**ORANGE, Calif. (KABC)** — Two Muslim women who were harassed by a customer at an Orange ice cream shop headed back to the store to show their appreciation to the owners.

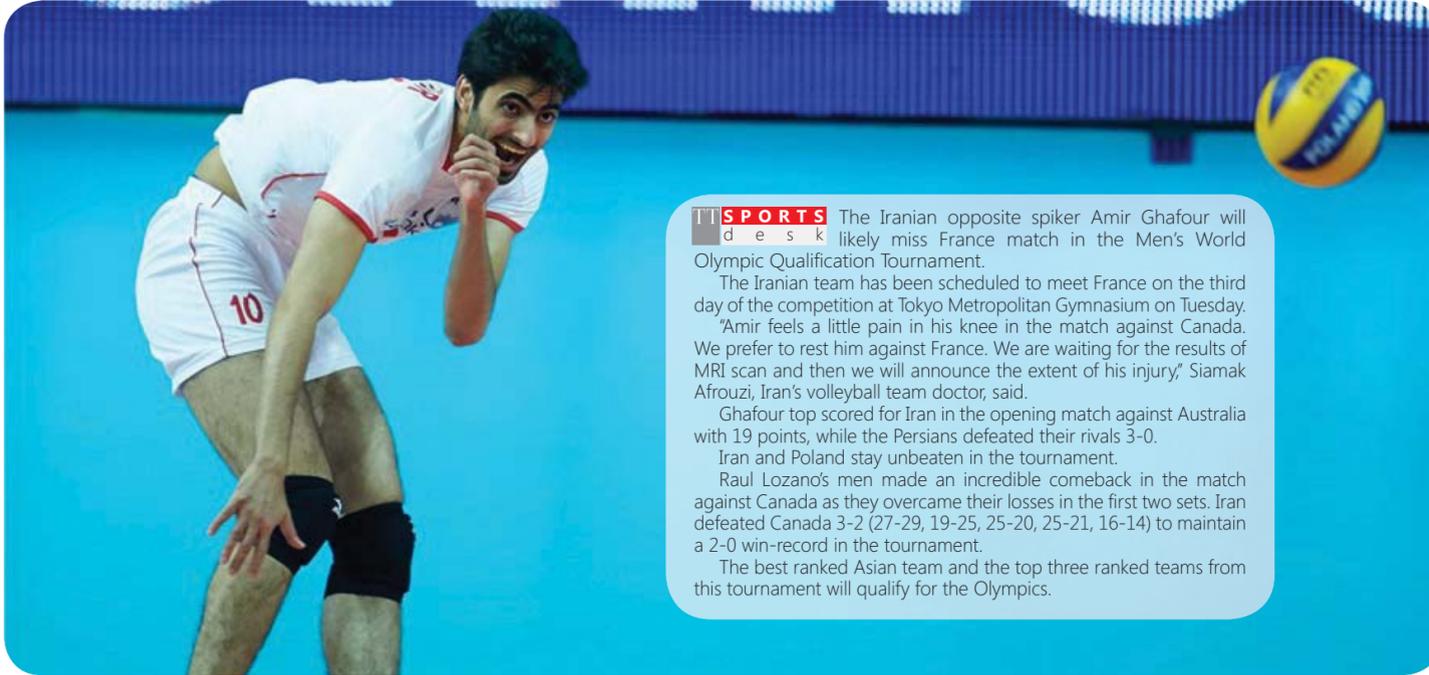
The incident was captured on cell-phone video of a man telling Malaak Ammari and Nura Takkish that he didn't want them in the country.

"This guy - literally out of nowhere - he just decided to start talking badly about us," Ammari said.

Cynthia Ramsay, who co-owns Andrew's Ice Cream and Desserts with her husband, said she was upset by the man's offensive comments. She wants everyone to feel comfortable in her shop.

"Usually you end up with someone joining in on the Islamophobia and bullying or harassing the Muslim, whereas in our case, we've had them defend us and show us what being an American is really about," Ammari said.

# Iran's Amir Ghfour a doubt for crucial France clash in WOQT



**S P O R T S** The Iranian opposite spiker Amir Ghfour is likely to miss the crucial France match in the Men's World Olympic Qualification Tournament.

The Iranian team has been scheduled to meet France on the third day of the competition at Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium on Tuesday. "Amir feels a little pain in his knee in the match against Canada. We prefer to rest him against France. We are waiting for the results of MRI scan and then we will announce the extent of his injury," Siamak Afrouzi, Iran's volleyball team doctor, said.

Ghfour top scored for Iran in the opening match against Australia with 19 points, while the Persians defeated their rivals 3-0. Iran and Poland stay unbeaten in the tournament.

Raul Lozano's men made an incredible comeback in the match against Canada as they overcame their losses in the first two sets. Iran defeated Canada 3-2 (27-29, 19-25, 25-20, 25-21, 16-14) to maintain a 2-0 win-record in the tournament.

The best ranked Asian team and the top three ranked teams from this tournament will qualify for the Olympics.

## Naft coach Alireza Mansourian set for Esteghlal job



**S P O R T S** Naft Tehran head coach Alireza Mansourian is set to join Esteghlal as Parviz Mazloumi successor, according to the local media.

Esteghlal football club is reluctant to cooperate with Parviz Mazloumi after the Blues were defeated against Persepolis in Tehran derby.

Esteghlal also finished in third place in the Iran Professional League and lost Hazfi Cup final against Zob Ahan.

Amir Ghalenoei, Dragan Skocic and

Alireza Mansourian are among the candidates while the latter has more chance to take the job.

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

Mansourian's 39 wins in 77 games during two seasons in charge of Naft gives him a %50.65 win percentage. He has previously managed Esteghlal youth team, Pas Hamedan and Iran U-23.

## Zob Ahan wins Iran's Hazfi Cup back-to-back



**S P O R T S** Zob Ahan of Isfahan football team claimed Iran's Hazfi Cup on Sunday for the second time in a row.

Zob Ahan beat Esteghlal in penalty shootout 5-4 in Khorramshahr's Nafto Gaz Stadium after the game finished 1-1 after 120 minutes.

Danial Esmaeilifar's strike deflected into the net in the 20th minute but Omid Ebrahimi scored from the penalty spot in the 56th minute to equalize the match.

"I am so happy with the way my players played against Esteghlal. Zob Ahan players were tired since they had played Al Ain twice in a week. I think we deserve to win the title," Zob Ahan coach Yahya Golmohammadi said in the post-match news conference.

Zob Ahan won Hazfi cup for the fourth time.

Esteghlal tops the table with six cups and its arch rival Persepolis has won the cup five times.

## Iran's Mashhad chosen to host Iraq matches in World Cup qualifiers

The Iraq Football Association confirmed that their matches in the 2016 World Cup qualification will be held in Mashhad, northeast of Iran.

The Iraqi football team has been drawn in Group B along with Japan, Australia, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Thailand.

According to the association, Mashhad has been chosen

the host their matches since a large minority of Iraqis live in the city and can support their national team in the stadium.

Iraq national football team will host Thailand on October 11 in Mashhad.

Saudi Arabia football team will not play Iraq on Iranian soil and their matches will be held in on neutral soil.

(Source: Tasnim)



## Navab Nassirshalal misses Rio Olympics

Iranian weightlifter Navab Nassirshalal has missed Rio 2016 Olympic Games.

The 105kg weightlifter won a silver medal in the men's 105 kg event at the 2012 Summer Olympics.

"I am not going to participate in the Fajr Weightlifting Cup in Tehran. To partake in the event I need spinal injection and I think it's dangerous for me. I don't take any risks," Nassirshalal said.

"I think I have to quit weightlifting in case of surgery, however I will always keep in touch with the sport," he added.

(Source: Tasnim)



INSTAGRAM



@toni.kr8s Good morning Madridistas



@aubameyang97 Smiley face dream come true #favoriteplayer #legend #R9 #nike #aubameyang



@annaortiz34 #disneylandparis #lovelyfamily @andresiniesta8

## FOOTBALL

### ISIS killed 12 more Real Madrid fans in Iraq during Champions League final

ISIS terrorists slaughtered at least 12 Real Madrid fans while they were watching the Champions League final in a fresh attack against club supporters in Iraq.

Four gunmen started firing indiscriminately at their victims after bursting into a Real Madrid Supporters' Club based in Baquba around 40 miles north of the capital Baghdad.

The group's president Ziad Albidani told Spanish sports daily AS the attack happened towards the end of the match before the penalty shoot-out decided by Cristiano Ronaldo.

The number of dead has been put at 12 with eight injured. The extent of their injuries are not known.

The terrorists, believed to be ISIS members, fled and have yet to be captured. All the victims, said to be aged between 18 and 30, are thought to be Iraqi nationals.

Saturday's incident comes just over two weeks after a group of ISIS terrorists armed with AK-47s attacked the headquarters of a Real Madrid Supporters Club in Balad near Baquba.

Three gunmen killed at least 16 people after opening fire at the Al Furat cafe on May 13.

Most of the victims were Real Madrid fans but cafe staff and other customers were also killed with 20 people injured.

ISIS later claimed responsibility as gruesome pictures and video emerged of the bloodbath.

Real Madrid president Florentino Perez dedicated the club's Champions League victory over Atletico de Madrid to the fans killed in that massacre before news of the latest attack emerged.

He told a Spanish television channel: 'I would like to dedicate this cup to our fans in Iraq.'

In a statement in the aftermath of the attack earlier this month, Real Madrid said: 'Real Madrid profoundly laments the terrible attack today in Iraq which has ended the life of 16 members of a Madrid fan club and that injured more than 20.'

'The club expresses its total sadness and offers its thoughts and condolences to the families and friends of the victims.'

'Real Madrid extends its solidarity to the people of Iraq that suffers the injustice of extremist violence.'

'Football and sports will always be places of meeting, harmony and peace which no savage terrorism will overcome.'

'Madrid fans around the world weep today for its fans, who will never be forgotten.'

(Source: DailyMail)



## Bayern Munich and Bayer Leverkusen chiefs critical of Premier League

Bayern Munich CEO Karl-Heinz Rummenigge and Bayer Leverkusen sporting director Rudi Voller have both questioned the quality of the Premier League and the desire of the world's best players to move to England.

Bayern might have lost coach Pep Guardiola to the Premier League, where he will take charge of Manchester City in July, but Thomas Muller, Manuel Neuer, Jerome Boateng and David Alaba have ignored reported interest from English clubs.

All had been linked, to differing degrees, with moves to the Premier League over the course of the last year, but instead have renewed their deals with the German champions until 2021.

"What we've shown with those contract extensions is that the door is closed, no matter who comes [to sign players]," Rummenigge told kicker. "All those players are world class and there was a great demand."

"The players feel well here, in the city and in the [Allianz] Arena. We don't have to discuss that finances also play a role."

"We don't have to be excessive like it's the case in England. I don't believe the English market is very popular with the players. It's no coincidence that the football there lags behind the Spanish or the German."

Rummenigge's theory was backed by Bayer Leverkusen sporting executive Rudi Voller.

Leverkusen sold Son Heung-Min to Tottenham Hotspur for a reported transfer fee of €30 million last summer, and used the cash to bring in Manchester United forward Javier Hernandez and Dortmund midfielder Kevin Kampl. They finished the Bundesliga season in third, one place higher than the previous season.

"We got a lot of money from Tottenham and were able to get Kampl and Chicharito, you have to realise that," Voller told kicker. "It's nothing against Son, but we improved because of it."

Whereas Voller believes that there will also be painful transfers to the Premier League for Bundesliga clubs, he also claimed that the football in England will not be more competitive in Europe until clubs spend more wisely.

"There are clubs in England that spend much more money, but don't do a lot of things as properly as Bayern," Voller added. "That's the difference."

"Bayern buy the best players, and it fits. You can see they have a plan. With English clubs you sometimes get the impression that's not case."

"I follow Spanish, Italian and English football, and Premier League is least fun to watch. Maybe the level of excitement is higher because more teams compete for the title than it's the case in Spain or Germany."

"But the best players currently don't play in England. [Lionel] Messi, [Cristiano] Ronaldo and Neymar all are under contract in Spain. Despite all the money, England does not get a lot of things right."



### Poem of the day

It is best to a worshipper for his transgressions  
To offer apologies at the throne of God.

Sadi

### Prayer Times

Noon:13:02 Evening: 20:34 Dawn: 4:06 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:50 (tomorrow)

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## NEWS IN BRIEF



### "The Glass Bead Game" hits Iranian bookstores

**CULTURE TEHRAN** — A Persian version of German author Hermann Hesse's last full-length novel "The Glass Bead Game" has recently been released by Tehran Publications.

Rendered into Persian by Mohammad Baqai, the novel is set in a fictional province named Castalia in central Europe centuries into the future around the start of the 25th century.

Hesse started writing the book in 1931 in Germany and published it in Switzerland in 1943, after his request for its publication in Germany was rejected due to his anti-Fascist attitudes.



### Jean Genet "Maids" on stage in Tehran

**CULTURE TEHRAN** — Iranian theater troupe Alma led by director Reyhaneh Nabian is currently performing French playwright Jean Genet's "The Maids" at Tehran's Da Theater.

The play which first premiered at Théâtre de l'Athénée in Paris in 1947, centers on housemaids Solange and Claire who enact bizarre fantasies while dressed in the clothes of their employer, Madame, whose murder they are secretly plotting.

The play has separately been rendered into Persian by translators of French literature Bahman Mohasses and Media Kashigar.

Two Persian translations of the play by Bahman Mohasses and Media Kashigar have previously been published in Iran.

The play will remain on stage at the theater until June 2.



### Tehran center to showcase photos on Imam Khomeini

**CULTURE TEHRAN** — An exhibition displaying photos of the funeral of Imam Khomeini in June 1989 is currently underway at the Fanus Gallery of Tehran's Razi Cultural Center.

The exhibition entitled "Eternal Pictures" has been organized in collaboration with the Institute for the Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's Works to commemorate the death anniversary of the founder of the Islamic Republic.

The showcase runs until June 5 at the center located on Kargar Ave. near Razi Square.



### Iranian Artists Forum to review Abbas Kiarostami's "Traveler"

**CULTURE TEHRAN** — The world-renowned Iranian filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami's 1974 documentary "The Traveler" will be screened at the Iranian Artists Forum (IAF) in Tehran this evening.

"The Traveler" is about a grade-school-age boy, neglected by his parents, lies, cheats, and steals to accumulate enough money to afford a bus ride to a large city and a ticket to see his favorite soccer team play.

The IAF also plans to screen Abbas Ruzbahani's documentary "The Travel of a Traveler", which is about a Kiarostami's fan in a remote area who begins a journey to visit him in Tehran.

## Depp's 'Alice' bombs, 'X-Men: Apocalypse' on top with \$65m

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Johnny Depp's "Alice Through the Looking Glass" bombed over the Memorial Day weekend with just \$28.1 million through Sunday in North American theaters, while "X-Men: Apocalypse" debuted on top with an estimated \$65 million.

The anticipated showdown of the two big-budget films turned out to be little contest for 20th Century Fox's latest "X-Men" installment. Both films were lambasted by critics, and neither drew the audience many expected over the holiday weekend.

Disney's "Alice Through the Looking Glass" had more than bad reviews to deal with. On Friday, as the film was hitting theaters, Amber Heard, Depp's wife, was granted a restraining order after alleging the actor previously assaulted her. She appeared in Los Angeles Superior Court on Friday with a bruise on her right cheek. Some fans called for a boycott of "Alice Through the Looking Glass".

# Inscription of ornate copy of Quran completed

**ART TEHRAN** — A group of Iranian artists has completed the inscription of a copy of the Quran, which is believed to be the most ornately illuminated version of the holy book.

The copy, with an estimate value of 60 billion rials (over \$1.7 million), was financed by the Janfaza family in Isfahan, Mehdi Janfaza, the elder son of the family who is also the manager of the project, under which the book was produced, told the Persian service of Tasnim on Monday.

The family funded the project based on their father's last will and testament, said Janfaza and added that the copy of the Quran is the most ornately illuminated version of the holy book.

Masters of the art of embossing Reza Qaderan and Mohammad-Ali Saei; master illuminator Majid Sadezadeh; and preeminent calligrapher Gholamreza Maahrui have spent 18 years completing the copy.

The verses have been inscribed on handmade gilded papers. The artists have used over 1,400 brilliants (gems cut with numerous facets) to embellish a silver cover, which bears the inscription of 120 names of God.

Measuring 57x42 centimeters, the copy of the Holy Quran contains 175 pages, each one enjoying unique designs of illuminations.

The book will be unveiled during the 24th International Holy Quran Exhibition, which will be held in



Tehran from June 13 to 28. The Janfaza family plans to sell the book in a charity event to raised funds to establish an orphanage in Isfahan.

## Paintings inspired by Persian carpets on show at Tehran gallery

**ART TEHRAN** — A new exhibition of paintings, inspired by the wonderful motifs and attractive colors of Persian carpets, has opened at Tehran's Etemad Gallery.

Entitled "Where Is My Ney?", the collection created by the young artist Homa Arkani was placed on exhibit in the gallery on Friday.

"In all the paintings, carpet is the symbol of the living world and the motifs repeated on each carpet resemble the roles we are playing in this world," Arkani told the Persian service of Honaronline on the opening day.

"The existing world in a carpet somehow resembles the repetition and the rhythm of birth, death and the rebirth again," she added.

She also explained that she has made use of Rumi's Masnavi in her works as the source of inspiration, and



Painter Homa Arkani poses at an exhibition of her works at Tehran's Etemad Gallery on May 28, 2016. (Honaronline/Farzan Qasemi)

said, "I have had a different look at the Masnavi focusing on its social and cultural aspects, for they can be quite useful in the world of today.

### PICTURE OF THE DAY Honaronline/Alireza Farahani



Ukrainian countertenor Vadym Mityrayev performs with Iran's Rhetoric Orchestra during a concert conducted by Reza Marivand at Tehran's Rudaki Hall on May 29, 2016.

## Watercolor exhibit highlights Iran's beautiful landscapes, nomadic life

**ART TEHRAN** — Images of Iran's beautiful landscapes, nomadic life, traditions and costumes painted by three watercolor artists have been put on display at Tehran's Shokuh Gallery.

Nader Mohazabnia, and Nasser Nur-Mohammadzadeh and his son, Behnam, are the artists whose works are on display in the exhibition "Paradise of Colors", the Persian service of ISNA reported on Monday.

Images of beautiful landscapes and villages created by Behnam portray the artist's great interest in nature.

"I like to work on subjective topics with no models in my works. I have

highly been impressed with works by my father; however, I like to work on free topics," Behnam said.

Mohazabnia, whose watercolors center on nomadic life, their traditions and costumes, also says that he has tried to reflect part of Iranian culture and identity through the joyful, fresh colors.

"I like my paintings to portray a portion of Iranian culture and add the old traditions of Iran to the homes where they should be on the walls," he added.

The exhibit will be running until Wednesday at the gallery, which is located at 19 Amir Nuri Alley, North Salimi St. near Andarzgu Blvd.

## Italian theater actor, director Giorgio Albertazzi dies

**ROME (AP)** — Giorgio Albertazzi, a theater and film actor and director famed especially for playing, well into old age, the emperor's role based on "Memories of Hadrian", died Saturday in his native Tuscany.

His family and Italian Premier Matteo Renzi's office announced the 92-year-old's death, with the Italian leader hailing him as a "great personality our culture." President Sergio Mattarella described Albertazzi, who was known for his good looks, as a "maestro to generations" of directors and actors.

On stage, often in Shakespeare's plays, Albertazzi worked with some of Italy's most celebrated directors, in-

cluding Luchino Visconti, for whom he debuted in 1949, and Franco Zeffirelli.

He was most identified with a role he played more than 1,000 times and into his 90s in Italy and abroad - that of Hadrian, drawing on Marguerite Yourcenar's popular book. Albertazzi first played the role when he was 66, in 1989, and would later say he identified much of himself with it, especially the process of growing old.

"Doing it, I also speak of myself," Albertazzi said when he was 90. "After all, I feel - a lot - the end of beauty that is consumed, that runs through the text, that seizes the moment in which the harmony of body and mind breaks and enters in conflict."

## Pope gives awards to Richard Gere, George Clooney and Salma Hayek

**VATICAN (Reuters)** — Pope Francis on Sunday awarded medals to American actors Richard Gere and George Clooney and actress Salma Hayek at an event held at the Vatican to promote the work of a foundation inspired by the pontiff, Scholas Occurrentes.

Clooney attended the event with his wife Amal, a lawyer. The foundation, whose name means "schools that meet" in Spanish, links technology with the arts, aiming at social integration and a cultural of peace.

Francis had created a similar organization when he was Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio in Buenos Aires, but Scholas has now become an international foundation working out of the Vatican.

"Important values can be transmitted by celebrities," said one of the organizers, Lorena Bianchetti, adding that the actors had agreed to be ambassadors for one of the foundation's arts projects.