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The U.S. wrestlers planning to travel to Iran despite travel ban

USA Wrestling said that the U.S. still plans to compete next month in Iran, one of seven Muslim-majority countries whose citizens were temporarily banned from the U.S. by an executive order from President Donald Trump.

USA Wrestling's Rich Bender told The Associated Press that the Americans have "every intention" of traveling to Kermanshah for the men's freestyle World Cup on Feb. 16-17.

Bender said the U.S. federation been given assurances from the Iranians that special attention is being given to their applications.

The scheduled trip to Iran will be the first major test for U.S. athletes travelling to one of the seven nations affected by Trump's 90-day ban, issued last week.

"We're going to respect the laws and orders of those in leadership positions in government and figure out how to embrace those and work with them to secure proper documentation for athletes to come here and us to go there," Bender said.

Iran's senior vice president Ishaq Jahangiri, through the official IRNA news agency, said that Trump's executive order was "illegal, inhumane and against human rights." ➔15

Iran, France shore up trade, sign deals



French FM Jean-Marc Ayrault met with President Rouhani on Tuesday. Welcoming Ayrault, Rouhani highlighted that the message of the nuclear deal was much more important than its content. Rouhani also insisted that all sides have to honor their commitments to the nuclear agreement.

See page 4

Zarif says missile program, nuclear deal unconnected

POLITICS TEHRAN — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Tuesday Iran's missile program is neither related to a 2015 nuclear accord with world powers nor a breach of a United Nations Security Council resolution backing it.

Zarif made the comments after Fox News quoted two U.S. officials as having said that Iran had secretly tested a new ballistic missile on Sunday at a launch site outside Semnan, about 140 miles east of Tehran.

The Khorramshahr medium-range ballistic missile flew 600 miles before exploding, in a failed test of a reentry vehicle, officials had further said.

Iranian officials has not reacted to the news so far.

"The missiles aren't part of the nuclear accords," Zarif told a joint press conference in Tehran with French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault.

Under the nuclear deal Iran accepted to roll back its nuclear program in exchange for relief from economic sanctions.

At the request of the United States, the UN Security Council was to discuss Iran's latest ballistic missile test at an emergency meeting on Tuesday. ➔2

Quebec mosque shooting suspect charged with murdering six people

A French-Canadian university student was the sole suspect in a shooting at a Quebec City mosque and was charged with the premeditated murder of six people, Canadian authorities said on Monday, in what Prime Minister Justin Trudeau called "a terrorist attack."

Court documents identified the gunman in the attack on Sunday evening prayers as Alexandre Bissonnette, 27, and charged him with six murder counts and five counts of attempted murder with a restricted weapon. The slightly-built Bissonnette made a brief appearance in court under tight security wearing a white prison garment and looking downcast.

Prosecutors said all of the evidence was not yet ready and Bissonnette, a student at Université Laval, was set to appear again on Feb. 21. No charge was read in court and Bissonnette did not enter a plea.

"The charges laid correspond to the evidence available," said Thomas Jacques, a representative of the prosecutor's office, when asked why Bissonnette was not charged with terrorism-related offences.

Among the six men killed were a butcher, a university professor, a pharmacist and an accountant, according to police and Canadian media. The government of Guinea said in a statement that two of its citizens were among those killed in the mosque attack. Police declined to discuss possible motives for the shooting at the Centre Culturel Islamique de Québec.

"They consider this a lone wolf situation," a Canadian source familiar with the situation said. In Washington, United States government security experts were leaning to the view that the gunman most likely was motivated by hatred for Muslims, a U.S. government source familiar with official reporting said.

Trudeau, who has made a point of welcoming refugees and immigrants from Muslim-majority countries, told parliament in Ottawa: "Make no mistake, this was a terrorist attack."

In addition to the six killed, five people were critically injured and 12 were treated for minor injuries, a spokeswoman for the Quebec City University Hospital said. (Source: agencies)

Threats and blusters have lost their efficiency: expert

By Javad Heirannia

TEHRAN — Threats and blusters have lost their usefulness in the world, Professor Nader Entessar from South Alabama University says of Donald Trump's policy toward China.

Trump took a harsh line against China during the race for the White House, accusing China of stealing jobs in the U.S. His telephone talks with the Taiwanese president before swearing in on January 20 also faced a backlash from Beijing which considers Taiwan as a renegade province.

Entessar says the behavior by Trump may be intended to get concessions from China. "Trump the businessman may be using the threat of ending the 'One China Policy' to get concessions on trade and other issues from China."

However he says, "There is a limit to the efficacy of conducting foreign policy through threats and blusters."

In an interview with the Tehran Times, the political science professor says, "If Trump indeed goes ahead and ends the 'One China

Policy' that has been the cornerstone of U.S.-China relations for over four decades, this will lead to the most fundamental shift in Washington's policy in Asia and will signal a radical shift in how Washington views China as a regional and global power."

The professor also believes Obama's "Pivot to Asia" strategy "may face challenges, especially if Trump decides to alienate" China.

■ 'Trump stance towards JCPOA is fluid'

The South Alabama professor also views Trump's approach toward the internationally backed nuclear deal with Iran as fluid.

"Trump's current stance towards the JCPOA can best be described as fluid and shifting."

According to the Middle East Eye, Trump and Saudi King Salman want to "rigorously" enforce the nuclear deal. "[They] agreed on the importance of rigorously enforcing the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with Iran," the White House said.

■ 'U.S.-NATO relations will face challenges'

Trump has also cast doubt over the

usefulness of NATO, calling it "obsolete".

Worried about the direction of the new U.S. government, Conservative French presidential hopeful Francois Fillon wants a new European military alliance to protect the continent.

Fillon outlined the plan in an interview with Le Monde and Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung ahead of a meeting on January 23 in Berlin with German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

"I think U.S.-NATO relations will face challenges under Trump's presidency," Entessar notes. However, he says, "It is difficult to predict how far Trump will push the button in this regard, but it is clear by now that during Trump's presidency we will enter a new, and at times, contentious period in Washington's relations with some of its European NATO allies."

On why Trump ordered withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement, he said, "During his entire presidential campaign, Donald Trump attacked what he called 'unfair trade agreements,' and singled out such agreements as NAFTA and TPP."

Central banks will keep policies unchanged for now

By Mohamed A. El-Erian

With all the attention being devoted to the policy intentions and actions of President Donald Trump, there has been a lot less focus on this week's four meetings at systemically important central banks -- the Bank of England, the Bank of Japan, the Federal Reserve and the European Central Bank (though that meeting doesn't involve monetary policy).

Here are the six things to know about what is likely to transpire and why.

The general shift in policy attention away from central banks is understandable. After too many years of excessive reliance on unconventional monetary policies, the ability of these institutions to significantly move the economic needle now pales in comparison to what governments can do -- good and bad.

Central banks are waiting, and hoping, for

governments to get their policy act together. Most importantly, by pursuing pro-growth structural reforms and by deploying more active fiscal policy where there is room, governments can take a good part of the excessive policy burden off central banks. This would allow the gradual and orderly normalization of monetary policy, especially as the benefits of unconventional measures are dissipating and the risks of collateral damage and unintended consequences are rising.



Tehran Times/Mehran Razi

Ten Day Dawn celebrations start

"Neither West nor East, but the Islamic Republic" and "Oh Imam, welcome," read the words written down on the palms of the young girls who attended a ceremony to mark the beginning of the "Daheyyeh Fajr" (the Ten Day Dawn) on Jan. 31, 2017.

The celebrations continue to be part of national festivities nearly four decades after the Islamic revolution in 1979.

February 11 marks the 38th anniversary of the revolution, which toppled the regime of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, putting an end to monarchy in Iran.

Condolences

Dear Colleague Hamid Bayati, we at the Tehran Times offer condolences over the death of your cherished mother. May her soul rest in peace.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Inflated salaries back in treasury

TT POLITICS TEHRAN — Davud d e s k Mohammadi, the head of Article 90 Committee of the Majlis, said on Monday the inflated salaries have been returned to the treasury, Khorasan newspaper reported.

Adel Azar, the Supreme Audit Court, also said on Tuesday that 233 billion rials (around 6 million dollars) have been returned to the treasury.

He also said 87 suits have been filed against those receiving inflated salaries. The cases are under investigation by the court, he added.



Larijani after blood money, pension for porters

TT POLITICS TEHRAN — The Majlis speaker is d e s k after arranging blood money and pension to go to the porters who lost their lives or were injured in snow storms at Iran's western borders, MP Rasul Khezri said.

Speaking to Mizan on Tuesday, he said Ali Larijani has been asked in a letter by a group of MPs to take measures to facilitate help to the victims and their families.

He also said the western Iranian region should be given economic activity permits in order to create jobs and prevent people from smuggling goods as porters.



'Judiciary needs time to replace capital punishment for drug offenders'

TT POLITICS TEHRAN — The Iranian d e s k Judiciary has asked more time to come up with a replacement for capital punishment for drugs-related crimes, the spokesman for the Majlis Legal and Judicial Committee told Tasnim on Tuesday.

Hassan Noruzi said the Majlis had sent a letter to the Judiciary in November asking the body to name a replacement for execution.

He said once receiving the response, the lawmakers will attend the details of the Judiciary's proposed plan.



'Iran reserves right to reciprocate U.S. travel ban'

TT POLITICS TEHRAN — The spokesman d e s k for the Iranian administration has said it is the right of the Iranian nation and government to take reciprocal measures against U.S. President Donald Trump's order to bar citizens of seven countries, including Iran, from entering the U.S.

As in the past, whenever there is a breach of commitment by others, the administration reserves the right to take reciprocal action, Mohammad Baqer Nobakht told Tasnim on Tuesday.



Araqchi meets with Qom clerics

TT POLITICS TEHRAN — Deputy Foreign d e s k Minister Abbas Araqchi on Tuesday traveled to Qom to visit a number of grand ayatollahs.

In the morning, Araqchi met with Ayatollah Alireza Araf, director of seminaries, and Grand Ayatollahs Nasser Makarem Shirazi, Vahid Khorasani, and Mohammad Alavi Gorgani, Mehr reported.

In the afternoon, he met with Ayatollah Abdollah Javadi Amoli. He also attended a local council meeting in Qom to discuss local governmental issues.



Iran, Luxembourg to ease visa conditions

TT POLITICS TEHRAN — Tehran and Lux- d e s k embourg plan to take measures to ease the issuance of visas for the two countries' travelers, a senior official with the Iran-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Iralux) has said.

"Companies everywhere in Europe, even in America, are pushing, lobbying in favor of relaxing sanctions or removing all of the barriers to be able to work with Iran," Mahmoud Kouchesfahani, the executive board member of Iralux underlined during an interview with Delano news website on Monday.

Armenia says seeks to increase defense ties with Iran

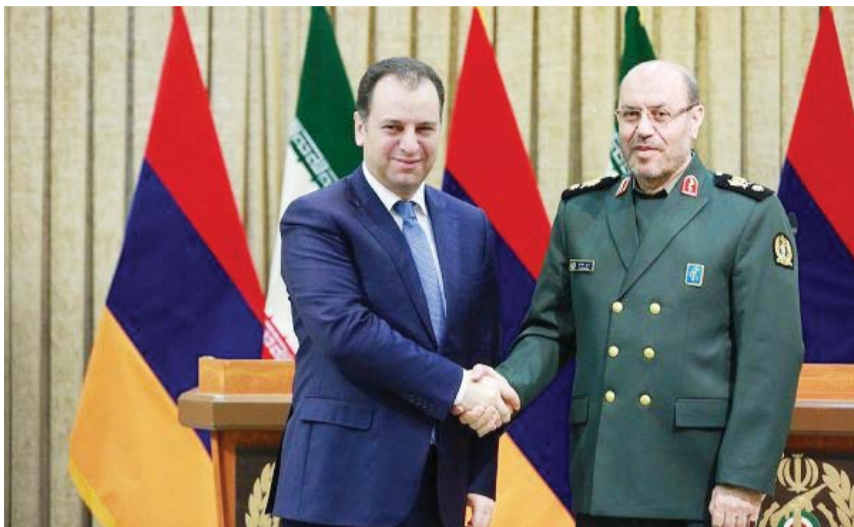
TT POLITICS TEHRAN — Armenian d e s k Defense Minister Vigen Sargsyan who visited Iran on Tuesday said his country is seeking to expand cooperation with Iran in the area of defense.

"We seek to boost and expand defense cooperation with Iran and we believe that this trip will lay the ground to do so," he said during a meeting with his Iranian counterpart Hossein Dehqan.

Sargsyan also praised Iran's efforts in line with helping regional peace.

The Armenian defense chief added Yerevan is ready to cooperate with Iran in fight against terrorism.

As neighbors Iran and Armenia have expanded close economic ties. The visit to Tehran by the Armenian defense chief indicates that Iran and its northern neighbor also seek to close their ranks in terms of military cooperation.



Iran has paid heavy cost for regional stability'

For his part, Dehqan said Iran has

paid high costs to help establish peace, security and stability in the region and has always had good relations with

neighboring countries.

Dehqan added Iran will spare no effort to help settle crises in the Middle East region.

Iran's defense minister also said the Islamic republic is unwavering in its relentless war against terrorism. "Incessant and resolute fight against terrorism and the elements that undermine regional security and stability is one of the Islamic Republic of Iran's principled policies."

He added crises in the region can be settled through dialogue.

He also said that Iran is ready to expand cooperation with Armenia in various spheres.

Elsewhere, Dehqan said the Zionist regime of Israel's moves in expanding settlements in the occupied lands and violating international law are the actions which undermine regional security.

Zarif says missile program, nuclear deal unconnected



Washington claims the test violates the U.S. Security Council resolution which confirmed the nuclear deal.

Resolution 2231 calls upon Iran "not to undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using such ballistic missile technology," until eight years after the implementation of the deal.

It does not ban the testing of conventional weapons by Iran.

Tehran has rejected that its missile program, including periodical missile launches, contravenes the

resolution, citing tested missiles are conventional and are not capable of carrying nuclear warheads.

"No Iranian missiles have been produced to carry nuclear warheads," Zarif insisted.

Iran uses its "conventional" missiles to "legitimately" defend its territory, the top Iranian diplomat maintained.

"To defend itself, Iran will not wait for the permission of the other sides (to the deal)."

Iran has emphatically rejected claims that its missile program is a threat to the Middle East region, saying it is only for defensive purposes.



Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif (R) at a joint press conference with his French counterpart Jean-Marc Ayrault in Tehran on Jan. 31, 2017.

Iran criticizes MKO activities in France



TT POLITICS TEHRAN — Secre- d e s k tary of the Supreme National Security Council Ali Shamkhani on Tuesday criticized the activities of the MKO terrorist group in Paris, France.

"Any support for this terrorist group will send unfriendly messages to the Islamic Republic of Iran," he said during a meeting with French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault in Tehran.

Shamkhani said that the Iranian people will not forget the treasonous acts of the MKO who sided with Saddam Hussein in his war against Iran in the 1980s.

The security official also highlighted the importance of countering terrorism, saying adoption of double standards in war against terrorism will just lead to spread of violence.

"It is essential to take practical

steps to cut financial, media, and arms support for the terrorist groups," he insisted, adding this should be done "through joint efforts of the international community".

Commenting on the Syrian crisis, he said that the crisis should be settled politically.

He also welcomed expansion of relations, especially in banking area, between Iran and France in the post-nuclear deal atmosphere.

Ayrault, for his part, said that there is a bright future for political and economic relations between the two countries.

He cited the sale of Airbus plane to Iran as an example of the bright future which has been created with the conclusion of the nuclear deal.

The first plane, Airbus A321 that Iran purchased from the European aviation giant Airbus landed in Tehran's Mehrabad airport on Jan. 12.

Jahangiri urges government branches to fight corruption



TT POLITICS TEHRAN — Vice Pres- d e s k ident Eshaq Jahangiri on Monday urged the three branches of government to put sincere efforts into fighting corruption, ISNA reported.

Speaking in a session attended by Tehran Prosecutor General Abbas Jafari-Dolatabadi, vice parliament speaker Masoud Pezeshkian and some other officials, Jahangiri called for nonpartisan efforts in fighting corruption.

All those who have responsibility are ethically committed to play a nonpartisan role in fighting corruption within the laws and regulations, he added.

The vice president said people should not feel that the authorities are biased or prejudiced in taking legal action against corruption.

He also differentiated between those who receive advantages through nepotism and refuse to repay their debts and those who have failed to repay their debts due to the economic

situation, urging firm legal action against the former and support for the latter so that "they could revive their production units".

"Being in debt does not amount to crime and corruption," asserted Jahangiri, the head of the committee tasked to fight corruption.

Jafari-Dolatabadi also spoke on the latest issues surrounding Babak Zanjani, a 42-year old billionaire tycoon who has been sentenced to death for a number of charges including forgery, money laundering and disrupting the country's economy.

He said an accomplice of Zanjani has been arrested. Jafari-Dolatabadi emphasized that the Judiciary is following up on the case with seriousness.

One of Iran's richest men, Zanjani was arrested in December 2013 and was accused of withholding \$2.7 billion of government money owned by the Ministry of Petroleum.

Iranian embassy to resolve travelers' problems in Austria

TT POLITICS TEHRAN — Iranian d e s k embassy in Austria issued a statement on Monday saying it is striving to resolve the problems Iranian citizens face after U.S. President Donald Trump issued an executive order banning immigrants and citizens of Iran and six other countries from entering the United States, IRNA reported.

Three Iranian citizens, expecting to catch connecting flights to

the U.S. to visit family members, were stuck in transit at Vienna airport due to the travel ban. They canceled their trip after three days.

The embassy said it will do its responsibilities as to offer consular services to Iranian citizens.

As Tehran and Washington do not have diplomatic relations, Austria has been acting as the go-between for travelers and immigrants.

Thomas Schnoell, Austrian foreign ministry spokesman, said as a result of the suspension, around 300 people in Iran who had been told they would receive Austrian visas have been told that they cannot now travel.

Trump's move has also sparked mass protests at airports across the United States, with thousands of people denouncing the ban as xenophobic.

Foreign Minister Javad Zarif has said that Iran will take reciprocal measures.

Also, Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi said on Tuesday that the ministry has issued an important order to Iranian embassies across the world in regard to the travel ban.

Qassemi added Iran will take appropriate measures in response to the ban.

Iran plans to unveil four new satellites

TT POLITICS TEHRAN — Iran plans to mark d e s k national day of space technology on Wednesday by unveiling four new satellites.

President Hassan Rouhani plans to attend the ceremony.

The four satellites are ready to be launched.

One of the satellites, named "Friendship" and is designed by Sharif University of Technology, weighs 50 kilograms.

AUT Sat is another one which is designed by Amirkabir University of Technology.

Nahid 1 is also ready to be launched.

The other satellite is Zafar which weighs 100 kilograms.

Omid was Iran's first domestically made satellite which is a data-processing satellite for research and telecommunications and was successfully launched on February 2, 2009. The launch was verified by NASA the following day as a success.

Iran marks the anniversary of launching Omid satellite as national day of space technology.



NATO, Trump agree on dialogue with Russia: Stoltenberg

The United States President Donald Trump and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) have underscored the need to establish dialogue with Russia "from a position of strength," the chief of the military coalition says.

Speaking with reporters at the NATO headquarters in Brussels on Tuesday, Jens Stoltenberg pointed to his recent phone conversations with Trump and U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis, noting, "They all conveyed the same message that the United States remains committed to NATO and the transatlantic bond."

"The message of the new administration is that they also want dialogue with Russia but from a position of strength," he said.

Earlier this month, Trump caused alarm in NATO as he called the Western military alliance "obsolete," arguing that NATO was a coalition through which the U.S. was spending tremendous funds to protect other extremely rich countries and that many NATO member states were not paying their fair share for U.S. protection.

During his presidential campaign, the billionaire businessman had appeared to be conciliatory toward Russia, praising President Vladimir Putin.

However, over the recent days, the new top-echelon U.S. military officials, including the defense secretary, have reiterated Washington's support for NATO.

The U.S. accounts for nearly 70 percent of NATO's budget and has long urged its European allies to step up their contributions, particularly in the face of what Washington calls the "Russian aggression" in Ukraine.

In July 2016, NATO leaders agreed on the coalition's biggest military build-up since the end of the Cold War after the Crimean Peninsula joined Russia in 2014.

NATO leaders also called for dialogue with "a more assertive" Russia in an attempt to ensure transparency and avoid misunderstandings.

■ **NATO shows off firepower at 'not just a training exercise'**

Meantime, on a snowy Polish plain dominated by Russian forces for decades, American tanks and troops sent a message to Moscow and demonstrated the firepower of the NATO alliance on Monday.

Amid concerns that President Trump's commitment



to NATO is wavering, the tanks fired salvos that declared the 28-nation alliance a vital deterrent in a dangerous new world.

The tank rounds of "The Iron Brigade" of the 4th Infantry Division were not directed towards Russia, but the signal to the Kremlin was clear: "Don't mess with Poland, or any other NATO member — an attack on one, is an attack on all."

The 87 tanks, 144 armored vehicle and 3,500 troops represent the biggest U.S. deployment in Europe since the end of the Cold War.

Russia sees the deployment very differently; not

as a warning, but as a provocation, a "security threat," according to Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov.

But in the past year, Russian forces have carried out massive military exercises and deployed missiles capable of carrying nuclear weapons on the Polish border.

Tensions are rising between a resurgent Russia and a nervous NATO, including some members which were once part of the Soviet Union.

Former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev even warned Friday that "it all looks as if the world is preparing for war."

(Source: agencies)

Dutch mosques lock doors at prayers after Canada attack



Four of the largest mosques in the Netherlands said on Monday that they will shut their doors during major prayer meetings after six people were killed in an attack on a Canadian mosque.

The Blue Mosque in Amsterdam, The Hague's as-Sunnah Mosque, Rotterdam's Essalam Mosque and the Omar Al Farouq Mosque in Utrecht said in a statement: "We feel compelled to close mosque doors during prayers".

Additional safety cameras have also been set up at the Blue Mosque, which is in the southwestern suburbs of the Dutch capital.

Several thousand people attend prayers at the four mosques daily.

"Merciless acts such as in Quebec contribute to the growing global hatred of Muslims," Said Bouharrou, of the Dutch Moroccan Council of Mosques (RMMN), told the AFP news agency.

The Netherlands will hold parliamentary elections in March with Islamophobic politician Geert Wilders leading in opinion polls.

Wilders has advocated closing all mosques and Islamic schools and banning the Quran, the Islamic holy book, if he becomes the country's next prime minister.

Although no specific threats have been made against mosques in the Netherlands, Bouharrou said the RMMN was keeping a close eye on political developments, in the run-up to next month's vote.

In 2015, Islamophobic harassment in the Netherlands rose sharply and at least 446 incidents of violent or verbal attacks were recorded, according to Dutch police. In 2014, police recorded 142 such incidents.

(Source: agencies)

Bangladesh pushes on with Rohingya island plan



Bangladesh is pushing ahead with a controversial plan to relocate tens of thousands of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar to a remote island, despite warnings it is uninhabitable and prone to flooding.

The government has set up a committee made up of state officials in the coastal districts, ordering authorities to help identify and relocate undocumented Myanmar nationals to Thengar Char in the Bay of Bengal.

"The committee will assist transferring both registered and unregistered refugees from Myanmar to Thengar Char near Hatiya island in Noakhali district," according to an order issued by the Cabinet Division last week and posted online.

The relocation plan prompted outrage from Rohingya community leaders, while a United Nations agency said forced relocation would be "very

complex and controversial".

Hatiya is on the estuary of the River Meghna and a nine-hour journey away from camps where the Rohingya have taken shelter.

Some 232,000 Rohingya Muslims - both registered and unregistered - were already living in Bangladesh before more than 65,000 stateless Rohingya fleeing violence in neighboring Myanmar's western state of Rakhine began crossing into the country last October.

Most of those who fled to Bangladesh live in squalid conditions in refugee camps in Cox's Bazar district, which borders Rakhine state and is Bangladesh's biggest tourist resort.

Bangladesh has also asked officials in the border districts to identify Myanmar nationals who have "illegally infiltrated" the country.

(Source: AFP)

Morocco rejoins the African Union after 33 years

The African Union has decided to allow Morocco back into the fold after a 33-year absence, despite stiff resistance from some member states over the status of Western Sahara.

After an emotional and tense debate, member states decided by consensus to leave the question of the disputed territory of Western Sahara for another day, and resolve it with Morocco "back in the family".

"Morocco has been admitted to join the AU with a view that it will become the 55th member of the continental body. That's made with the understanding that Western Sahara will remain a member of the AU," said Lamine Baali, ambassador of Western Sahara to Ethiopia and the AU.

"All the debates were focused on [the issue] that Morocco should respect the internationally recognized border of Western Sahara."

The only African country not to belong to the AU, Morocco left its predecessor, the Organization of African Unity, in 1984 after the body recognized the independence of Moroccan-occupied Western Sahara.

(Source: agencies)

Yemeni forces target off-shore UAE-run base

Yemeni army soldiers, backed by fighters from allied Popular Committees, have reportedly launched a missile attack against a naval base run by soldiers from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) off the western coast of Yemen.

Yemeni forces and their allies fired a Borkan-1 (Volcano-1) missile at the al-Ghazat base on Zuqar Island in the Red Sea, which lies between the coasts of mainland Yemen and Eritrea, on Tuesday morning, Arabic-language al-Masirah television network reported.

Information was not immediately available on possible casualties and the extent of damage caused.

The House of Saud regime launched a war on Yemen in 2015 in an attempt to bring back to power a former regime that had been Riyadh-friendly.

According to the United Nations humanitarian coordinator for Yemen, Jamie McGoldrick, the Yemeni conflict has claimed the lives of 10,000 people and left 40,000 others wounded.

McGoldrick told reporters in Sana'a on January 16 that the figure is based on lists of victims gathered by health facilities and the actual number might be higher.

Local Yemeni sources say the Saudi war has killed at least 11,400 people.

Yemeni forces have been fighting the Saudi war back, including by launching retaliatory measures against Saudi forces and their local mercenaries.

■ **Yemeni forces foil mercenaries' advance in Hajjah**

Separately, scores of Saudi-sponsored militiamen loyal to Yemen's former government were killed and wounded in the Midi district of the northwestern Hajjah Province as Yemeni soldiers and Popular Committee fighters thwarted their offensive.

Saudi soldiers also fired a missile at a gathering of pro-Saudi Arabia gunmen in the central Yemeni province of Ma'rib, leaving scores of them injured.

Meanwhile, Yemeni soldiers and their allied fighters have shot and killed a Saudi soldier in the hilly Qomamah area in Saudi Arabia's southwestern border region of Jizan.

Yemeni forces also launched a barrage of artillery shells at the Mohtam outpost in the same Saudi region, but no words on casualties were available.

In a separate development, Yemeni soldiers and Saudi-backed armed men swapped prisoners in the northern province of al-Jawf under an earlier agreement reached between the two sides.

A local source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Ansarullah (Houthi) movement fighters released 54 pro-Hadi militiamen in exchange for 58 fellow fighters.

Also on Tuesday, Saudi regime fighter jets targeted Jubah Bridge in the Hays district of Yemen's coastal western province of Hudaydah. Initial reports said two people sustained injuries in the airstrike.

Saudi regime warplanes also dropped a number of internationally-banned cluster bombs in the Rahban district of the northwestern mountainous province of Sa'ada, leaving several buildings damaged there.

Dozens of civilians lost their lives and sustained injuries as Saudi military aircraft bombed the bridge linking the Red Sea port city of Mokha to the city of Hudaydah.

Moreover, Saudi regime jets carried out a series of airstrikes against the city of Sirwah, which lies about 120 kilometers east of the capital, though no reports of casualties were quickly available.

A radio mast was also brought down in the al-Maraw'ah district of Hudaydah Province as Saudi warplanes targeted it.

■ **Yemen loses decade of health gains due to war, economic woes: UN**

Elsewhere, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) says Yemen has lost a decade in terms of growth in the public health sector due to the ongoing Saudi aggression against the impoverished country, voicing concern that many children are succumbing to malnutrition.

"Because of the crumbling health system, the conflict and economic crisis, we have gone back to 10 years ago. A decade has been lost in health gains," Meritxell Relano, the UNICEF representative in Yemen, said in the Swiss city of Geneva Tuesday.

The official also noted that 63 out of every 1,000 live births are now dying before their fifth birthday in the Arabian Peninsula country, compared to only 53 children recorded in 2014.

Some 3.3 million Yemenis, including 2.2 million children, are suffering from acute malnutrition while 460,000 under the age of five have severe acute malnutrition, Relano said.

Recently, Jamie McGoldrick, the UN humanitarian coordinator in Yemen, warned that the country had only three months left of wheat stocks.

UNICEF is seeking \$236.5 million for Yemen this year, as part of a wider appeal to help women and children in 48 countries across the globe.

(Source: agencies)

Intense heat grips eastern Australia

Eastern Australia is in the grip of an intense heat wave which has seen temperature records broken in many parts. Daytime highs have soared into the mid-40s Celsius in parts, leading to fire bans across the country's southeast.

As is often the case, the highest temperatures have been across the interior. The town of Moomba, in the northeast of South Australia, had a top temperature of 45C on Monday. That is still well short of the January record of 49.6C.

Meanwhile, the town of Moruya, in southeastern New South Wales, had a high of 43C. The town is located around 300 kilometers to the south of Sydney.

Sydney has been sweltering for some time now and the city's Observatory Hill, has recorded nine days where temperatures have reached 35C and above, equaling the previous record set in the summer of 1895/96.

(Source: agencies)

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Passenger car imports to Iran rise 54% in 10 months yr/yr

TEHRAN — Iran imported 45,298 passenger cars in the first 10 month of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20 2016-January 19, 2017), recording 54.48 percent rise compared to the same period last year, Fars news agency reported on Tuesday.



The imported cars were at the value of \$1.16 billion, according to a report released by the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI).

Tehran to receive 2 new airbus jetliners within a month

TEHRAN — Iranian Transport Minister Abbas Akhoundi announced that two new Airbus jetliners will be delivered to the Islamic Republic of Iran within four next weeks, Tasnim news agency reported on Tuesday.

As he said, the first plane (Airbus A321) that Iran had purchased from the European aviation giant Airbus landed in Tehran's Mehrabad airport on January 12 and the two other new jetliners will arrive in four weeks.

Bank of Japan maintains inflation forecast

The Bank of Japan stuck to its ultra-easy monetary policy Tuesday and held back from raising its inflation forecast for the coming year, underlining its nervousness about the uncertain path of President Donald Trump's policy.



Central bank officials met as Trump's recent tough remarks on Japan's trade surplus and its auto makers continued to reverberate through Tokyo's policy circles.

At its latest meeting, the BOJ board voted to keep interest rate targets unchanged at very low levels and leave its closely watched inflation forecast for the next fiscal year starting April at 1.5 percent in a quarterly outlook. That came despite upward revisions made to the bank's growth projections for that year in addition to the current fiscal year.

The caution shown in not revising up the price forecast despite reasons favoring a higher projection add to signs that Japan's policy making has started to become influenced by Trump's remarks in a wide range of areas from defense to trade to monetary policy. *(source: The Market Watch)*

JUMP

Central banks will keep policies unchanged for now



Central banks also know that governments, should they opt instead to pursue anti-growth economic policies such as protectionism and trade wars, can confront them with one of the most difficult policy challenges of having to counter stagflation, or the tricky combination of lower growth and higher inflation.

Although they are likely to recognize a baseline shift in favor of a more comprehensive policy response, central banks attach a considerable uncertainty factor to the policy outlook. As a result, they are eager to maintain their policy options. With that comes a preference to err on the side of remaining too loose for too long rather than end up inadvertently tightening policy prematurely.

All this speaks to the high likelihood that all central banks will keep their policies unchanged when their high-level committees meet this week. If there is a policy change -- and that is a big if -- it would come from the Bank of Japan, which has become uncomfortable with the extent that its interest rate targeting is being challenged by the generalized rise in yields on global government debt in advanced economies.

The economic and policy signaling will also be watched closely. Here again, central banks will look to craft guidance that keeps their options open. Recognizing a slight improvement in economic conditions and the hope for beneficial government policies, they will mix encouragement for longer-term policy normalization with assurances that they are ready to go the other way if need be.

The central bank meetings this week are unlikely to be major market movers. Like the rest of us, the four institutions will be trying to determine whether, how and when other policy-making entities are likely to influence the economic and financial outlook. *(Source: Bloomberg)*

Iran, France shore up trade, sign deals

TEHRAN — Iran and France took another step to boost cooperation in different fields of economy by signing five agreements at the end of a business forum in Tehran on Tuesday.

The agreements, signed at the place of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), included cooperation on developing Mashhad International Airport, establishing a bioethanol plant, expanding fish farms, and holding pilot training courses in Iran.

French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault, his Iranian counterpart Mohammad Javad Zarif, and ICCIMA Chairman Gholam-Hossein Shafeie attended the signing ceremony.

Ayrault was accompanied by 100 delegates including some top officials from well-known companies such as Airbus, Alstom, and Total as well as several representatives from French companies active in metallurgy, construction, banking, information technology (IT), steel industry and etc.

Some 250 Iranian private sector's entrepreneurs took part in the forum, too.

200% rise in economic co-op

During the past year, economic ties and collaboration between the two sides has witnessed a 200-percent increase, the French foreign minister said during the forum.

Underlining the positive impact of Iran's sanctions' removal on enhancement of Frances ties in the past year with Iran, Ayrault voiced his country's readiness to transfer knowledge and provide technical and engineering services for Iran's renewable energy sector, and implement various projects including those in railway transportation and those for expansion of ports in the Islamic Republic.

Iran-France business forum is a turning point in the two countries' economic relations, he asserted.

Prague, Tehran can be complementary economic partners: Czech minister

TEHRAN — Czech Republic Minister of Industry and Trade Jan Mládek has said Iran and Czech Republic's economies could be complementary to each other, IRNA reported.

Mládek made the remarks in an Iran-Czech business forum, attended by 130 economic entrepreneurs from the two countries, in Prague on Monday.

Headed by Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) Chairman Masoud Khansari, representatives from 30 Iranian companies active in various fields attended the event.

During the meeting, the Czech minister also noted that the two countries can cooperate in various areas including industrial machinery and energy.

"Bilateral investment is also on the agenda and both sides can invest in various sectors," he added.

'Post-sanctions paves way for bilateral co-op'

Following Mládek's remarks, the Czech Republic



Bolstering bilateral trade

The Iranian foreign minister, for his part, vowed that his ministry will pave the way for development of bilateral ties between Iran and France, adding that Iran-France bilateral trade stood at €1.7 billion during January-November 2016, becoming three-folded, compared to the same period in 2015.

He, however, did not express content about the current trade volume saying that it does not accord with

the two countries' potentials.

Removal of banking barriers

As ICCIMA head said, both sides believe in removing impediments on development of mutual banking ties as the most significant factor in improvement of Iran-France trade bonds.

"Iranian and French companies can cooperate in various sectors namely infrastructure, construction, medicine, medical instruments, transportation, environment, etc," he added.



Head of Industries Confederation Yaroslav Hanak said the post-sanctions era has presented a great opportunity for expansion of the two countries cooperation.

U.S. does \$220b in trade with Muslim countries

President Trump's travel ban on the citizens of seven Muslim-majority countries has created confusion and concern across the Middle East and parts of Asia.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation, which represents dozens of Muslim countries, expressed "grave concern," warning that it would "embolden the radical narratives of extremists." The Arab League slammed it as unjustified.

Only one of the countries on Trump's list -- Iraq -- has a significant trading relationship with America. It is the sixth biggest source of U.S. oil imports.

But the ban could damage wider U.S. interests. There are around 47 countries and territories in the world where Islam is the dominant religion. Total U.S. trade in goods with those countries topped \$220 billion in 2015, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. In the first 11 months of 2016, the value of trade reached \$194 billion.

Put another way, the U.S. does roughly 6% of its total trade with Muslim-majority countries.

The bulk of the trade in goods -- 94% -- was with just 15 countries, including

Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Indonesia and Iraq.

Here are the U.S.' top trading partners in the Muslim world.

Malaysia

The U.S. runs a \$22.9 billion trade deficit with Malaysia.

American firms including Exxon Mobil (XOM), Chevron (CVX), ConocoPhillips (COP), Murphy Oil (MUR) and Dow Chemical (DOW) have invested billions in the country through subsidiaries and in contracts with local companies.

Other hot areas include financial services and manufacturing.

The Bureau of Economic Analysis said U.S. companies invested nearly \$14 billion in Malaysia in 2015.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia and the U.S. traded over \$31 billion worth of goods in the first 11 months of 2016. American companies exported cars, industrial machinery, construction equipment, civil aircraft, defense systems, IT and health care products to the Kingdom.

In return, the U.S imported 386 million

barrels of oil from Saudi Arabia in 2015, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. The country is the second biggest source of foreign oil into the U.S.

American firms have invested \$10 billion in the country, according to the BEA. General Electric (GE) alone has invested \$1 billion.

UAE

The U.S. and the UAE traded \$23.3 billion worth of goods in the first 11 months of 2016.

It's the single largest market for U.S. exports in the Middle East, and American companies have invested \$15.6 billion into the country.

More than 1,000 American firms operate in the country.

Boeing's Middle East headquarters is in Dubai. It has partnered with local investment company Mubadala to manufacture parts for the 777 and 787 Dreamliner aircraft. The deal, announced in 2013, is worth \$2.3 billion over 10 years.

Lockheed Martin (LMT), GE and ExxonMobil (XOM) also have long-term

business partnerships in the country.

Indonesia

Indonesia is home to the world's largest Muslim population.

Trade in goods between the country and the U.S. reached \$23 billion in the first 11 months of 2016.

Indonesia, which is a member of the G20 group of world's biggest economies, has attracted \$13.5 billion in American investments, mainly in the mining sector.

General Motors (GM) has a plant near the capital Jakarta. Cargill also has a major presence in the country.

Turkey

Trade between the U.S. and Turkey grew to \$17.4 billion in 2015 from \$10.8 billion in 2009.

U.S. companies have invested \$3.6 billion in Turkey in recent years, led by the banking and manufacturing sectors.

Ford, General Electric and Unilever (UL) all do business in the country. With over 10,600 staff, Ford (F) is the biggest employer in the Turkish automotive industry.

(source: CNN Money)



McDonald's to open at least 50 new restaurants in Russia in 2017

McDonald's plans to open more than 50 restaurants in Russia this year and hopes to sign more franchising deals to expand in existing and new regions, the local unit's chief executive said on Tuesday.

The fast-food chain opened 73 restaurants in Russia last year, exceeding its forecast. Of the newly-opened restaurants, 65 are company-owned, Khamzat Khasbulatov, head of McDonald's Russia, told a news conference.

Khasbulatov said the target for new outlets in 2017 did not signify the company was slowing the pace of its expansion.



Health insurer Aetna's quarterly revenue rises about 5%

Health insurer Aetna Inc., whose \$34 billion deal for Humana Inc (HUM.N) was blocked last week, reported a rise of about 5 percent in quarterly revenue on Tuesday, helped by higher premiums.

The No. 3 U.S. health insurer's net profit fell to \$139 million, or 39 cents per share, in the fourth quarter ended Dec. 31, from \$321 million, or 91 cents per share, a year earlier.

The decrease in quarterly net income was primarily due to an increase in restructuring costs, which included a \$215 million expense recorded during the quarter related to a voluntary early retirement program.



Halliburton asks workers from banned countries not to travel to U.S.

Halliburton Co. has advised workers from the countries named in President Trump's immigration ban not to travel to the U.S., according to an email from a spokeswoman.

The U.S. President on Friday announced a four-month hold on allowing refugees into the United States and a temporary ban on travelers from seven Muslim-majority countries.

The Halliburton employees from the banned countries are being notified that travel to the U.S. is not advisable during the travel restriction period, the spokeswoman said.

Asia's Dec. imports of Iranian oil more than double on year

Imports of crude oil by Iran's four major buyers in Asia more than doubled in December compared with the same month a year earlier, for the third straight month, with purchases by South Korea up sevenfold and India's more than three times higher.

Iran's top four Asian buyers - China, India, South Korea and Japan - imported 1.89 million barrels per day (bpd) last month, data from governments and ship-tracking services showed.

In absolute terms, imports slipped for a second consecutive month, from a peak of just under 2 million bpd in October, which was the highest since at least 2010, according to data by International Energy Agency.

Iran was exempted from an OPEC deal in January to reduce output by 1.2 million bpd, a boon for Tehran which had argued it needs to regain the market share it lost under Western sanctions targeting its nuclear program. Across the first full year since the sanctions were lifted,



Iran has boosted exports to its biggest Asian customers by nearly 60 percent to 1.63 million bpd. The country has been offering discounts to buyers in return for increasing their purchases,

industry sources have said. Iran's crude oil imports cost Japan an average \$43.87 a barrel for December, the third cheapest after Ecuador and Colombia, trade data from Japan's Ministry of Finance showed on Monday.

Japan's trade ministry on Tuesday released official data showing its imports jumped more than 40 percent from a year earlier to 246,243 bpd last month. China's imports rose 30 percent to 689,530 bpd, meaning the country regained top spot among consumers after buying less than India for three consecutive months.

India's imports grew to 546,600 bpd, while South Korea's purchases rocketed to 410,387 bpd. Iran's total monthly oil exports are set to climb slightly in February from January, as Indonesia takes its first shipment since sanctions were lifted, a person with knowledge of Iran's tanker loading schedule told Reuters last week. January exports were set to fall to the lowest since July at about 2.16 million bpd, with February loadings likely to be just over 2.2 million bpd, according to the person, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

(Source: Reuters)

Oil prices fall as rising U.S. output offsets OPEC-led cuts

Oil prices fell on Tuesday as rising U.S. drilling activity offset efforts by OPEC and other producers to cut output in a move to prop up the market.

Brent crude futures, the international benchmark for oil prices, were trading at \$55.10 per barrel at 0516 GMT, down 13 cents from their last close.

Since their January peak, Brent has lost over 5.6 percent in value.

U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) futures were at \$52.41 a barrel, down 22 cents from their previous settlement, and WTI is down almost three percent since its January peak.

The falls reflect a sentiment that efforts led by the Organization of

the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to cut output by almost 1.8 barrel per day (bpd) in order to end overproduction were not big enough to offset rising U.S. drilling.

U.S. investment bank Jefferies said that while "OPEC adherence to production targets has been strong", growth in U.S. shale oil production was undermining OPEC's efforts to balance global oil markets by bringing production levels in line with consumption.

"Higher prices will inevitably lead to growth in U.S. production, and activity levels are already picking up," Jefferies said.

As a result, the bank said it is "not inclined to change our Brent price

forecast - \$57.75 per barrel in 2017, \$71.75 per barrel in 2018".

Following months of increased drilling, U.S. oil production has risen by 6.3 percent since July last year to almost 9 million bpd, according to data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

Goldman Sachs estimates that year-on-year U.S. oil "production will rise by 290,000 bpd in 2017" if a backlog on rigs that are still to become operational is accounted for.

With the differing outlook between global oil markets and that in the United States, traders said a renewed focus on the spread between Brent and WTI futures has emerged.

The Brent premium over WTI for

March delivery is currently over \$2.7 per barrel, reflecting a tighter global market as OPEC's cuts bite and a more over-supplied U.S. as drilling continues to rise.

Yet by November this year, this Brent premium is down to just over \$1 a barrel.

"You've already seen U.S. crude coming into Asia and Europe, as traders take advantage of arbitrage between the U.S. and the rest of the world," one crude trader in Singapore said. "But at some stage, that exported U.S. crude will get priced into the global market and out of the American one, bringing down the spread between Brent and WTI."

(Source: Reuters)

U.S. companies face no ban entering Iran's oil industry: Zanganeh

ECONOMY TEHRAN — "The U.S. companies will face no limit from our side for entering Iran's oil industry," Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh was quoted by ILNA news agency on Tuesday.

The minister however noted that so far Iran has not received any direct request from U.S. companies regarding contribution to the country's oil industry.

In January, Iran's Oil Ministry prequalified 29 international companies to bid for its oil and gas projects based on the new model of contracts, known as Iran Petroleum Contract (IPC).

Anglo-Dutch Shell, France's Total, Italy's Eni, Malaysia's Petronas, Russia's Gazprom and Lukoil, Austria's OMV, Germany's Wintershall, as well as companies from Spain, Poland, China, Japan, India and some other countries were included in the list.

Shell to sell North Sea assets to Chrysaor for \$3.8 billion

Royal Dutch Shell has agreed to sell a package of oil and gas fields to private equity-backed Chrysaor for \$3.8 billion, giving the Anglo-Dutch group a major boost in its drive to reduce debt.

The deal, which accounts for more than half of Shell's production in the North Sea, will breathe new life into the ageing North Sea where production has steadily declined since the late 1990s and where oil majors such as Shell and BP have struggled to generate profits.

Shell earlier on Tuesday announced the sale of a stake in Thailand's Bongkot gas field to Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company for \$900 million.

The Anglo-Dutch company said in a statement the North Sea deal included an initial consideration of \$3 billion and a payment of up to \$600 million between 2018-2021 subject to commodity prices, with potential further payments of up to \$180 million for future discoveries. Reuters reported on the nearing deal last week.

The deal is subject to partner and regulatory approvals, with completion expected in the second half of 2017.

Chrysaor, led by veteran North Sea executive Phil Kirk and backed by private equity funds Harbour Energy and EIG Global Energy Partners, will become the largest independent operator in the North Sea after the deal's completion.

(Source: Reuters)



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Canada must match words with actions

By Jillian Kestler-D'Amours

Justin Trudeau broke several hours of silence following American President Donald Trump's executive order on immigration, taking to Twitter on Saturday afternoon to reaffirm Canada's commitment to welcoming refugees and asylum seekers.

"To those fleeing persecution, terror & war," the prime minister wrote, "Canadians will welcome you, regardless of your faith. Diversity is our strength, welcome to Canada."

Trudeau's words are an encouraging step in countering Trump's executive order on refugees, which has thrown thousands of families in the United States and abroad into a tailspin of confusion and anxiety.

It is especially important for Trudeau to speak out as the nearly 40,000 Syrian refugees who have been resettled in Canada since late 2015 look on with fear and anxiety, while their new neighbors south of the border shut down resettlement efforts.

Canada has also said it will extend temporary visas to anyone who has been stranded inside the country and is now unable to enter the U.S. due to the executive order.

But Canada must, and should, do more – and actions speak louder than words. The country now also faces the issue of how to respond to the Quebec mosque attack on Sunday evening. At least six people were killed and several more injured when shots were fired at the Quebec Islamic Cultural Centre.

It was condemned as a terrorist attack by Trudeau, who said that "Muslim-Canadians are an important part of our national fabric, and these senseless acts have no place in our communities, cities and country".

Safe Third Country Agreement

Canada remains committed to the Safe Third Country Agreement (STCA), a deal that came into effect in 2004 that was based on the premise that both the U.S. and Canada are safe countries for asylum seekers and refugees.

The STCA agreement makes it impossible for asylum seekers who first land in the U.S., and whose demands for protection are denied, to seek asylum in Canada, and vice-versa.

Anyone who arrives at the U.S.-Canada border crossing to make that second claim will be turned back (save for a few exceptions), without having their case so much as glanced at.

This has inevitably led many people to take great personal risks to cross the border undetected in search of asylum. That's because once they are inside the country, Canadian officials must evaluate their demand for refugee status.

Most recently, two Ghanaian men trekked through waist-deep snow in subzero temperatures to enter Manitoba after their asylum claim was rejected in the U.S.

They suffered frostbite and almost died in a farmer's field before being picked up by a truck driver; one man had his fingers and toes amputated after narrowly surviving the harrowing journey.

Residents in towns near the expansive U.S.-Canada border have reported seeing entire families lugging suitcases into Canada.

Canada must not only speak out against Trump's order, which serves no real security purpose and will only tear families apart and create undue hardship for hundreds of thousands of people, but it must rescind the Safe Third Country Agreement.

Never has it been more clear that the U.S. is not a safe country for refugees and asylum seekers, which alone should invalidate this outdated and dangerous agreement.

Refugees must be allowed to arrive in a safe and orderly fashion at the U.S.-Canada border, where Canadian officials will then evaluate their asylum claims.

With the current agreement in place, Canada is complicit in forcing hundreds of people into dangerous situations, including placing their fate in the hands of people smugglers, as they search for safe harbor.

Trudeau's government has said Canadian citizens, including dual passport holders from one of the seven countries impacted, will be exempt from the restrictions.

But he must answer questions about how the new U.S. immigration measures will restrict individuals living in Canada who hold valid tourist, work and student visas to enter the U.S. Citizens from the seven countries are being denied entry into the U.S. despite holding valid visas.

Lifting the annual quota on refugee resettlement from private sponsorship groups, especially for individuals from the seven countries affected, would go further than a tweet in making Canada a viable alternative for families who have fled persecution, war and violence.

Until this point, Trudeau's government has enjoyed international praise for how it responded to the Syrian refugee crisis.

How it responds now to the attack on civil liberties, refugee protection and basic human decency on its southern border is even more important.

(Source: The National)

Trump to reverse 70 years of U.S. foreign policy



By Fareed Zakaria

Indian American journalist and author

In his first days in office, Donald Trump has begun to reverse the domestic policies of the previous eight years. But with regard to America's relations with the world, Trump seems far more radical. In word and deed, he appears to be walking away from the idea of America at the center of an open, rule-based international order. This would be a reversal of more than 70 years of American foreign policy.

Three principles

In an essay in The New York Review of Books, Jessica Mathews points out that since 1945, Americans of both political parties have accepted three principles. First, that America's security is enhanced by its broad and deep alliances around the world. Second, that an open global economy is not a zero-sum game but rather allows America to prosper and others to grow. And finally, while there was debate about whether dictatorships were to be "tolerated, managed, or confronted," in the end there was a faith in democracy and its advantages. Mathews notes that for 30 years now, Donald Trump has attacked these views as costly naiveté that has allowed the world to rip off America.

Given the magnitude of the policy shift, it is worth recalling why America adopted this outward-looking approach in the first place. It all started with Franklin Roosevelt, as Nigel Hamilton explains in his superb book "Commander in Chief" By 1943, while victory was still a distant prospect, Roosevelt began to imagine a postwar international system. Hamilton brilliantly sets out Roosevelt's foresight, determination and skill in establishing a new world order.

Neither of FDR's key wartime allies was much interested in his approach. Josef Stalin, a communist autocrat, would resist many of his ideas, and Winston Churchill was stubbornly committed to continuing Britain's rule over its vast empire. Roosevelt wanted something different: to establish an enduring peace in which freedom could flourish. That meant the unconditional surrender of Germany and Japan, to wipe the slate clean of fascism and militarism. And it meant that Britain and France would have to decolonize Asia and Africa. Roosevelt despised the system of colonial exploitation, and he believed that ultimately it created the conditions that led to revolution and war. He also wanted open trade, rather than the ruinous protectionism of the 1930s. To secure all this, FDR understood that America would need to be permanently engaged with the world in a way it had never been before.



Regard to America's relations with the world, Trump seems far more radical.

Hamilton vividly describes how, in the midst of directing military strategy in the largest conflict in human history, Roosevelt always kept his eye on postwar planning. With Congress and the public still suspicious of American involvement, he juggled various plans and proposals to make sure that this time, unlike after World War I, America would help keep the peace. He needed Churchill's and Stalin's support, which is why he kept trekking around the globe to meet them at summits. (To understand the strain on FDR, keep in mind that Roosevelt's trip to meet Churchill at Casablanca in 1943 entailed a long train ride to Miami, a 10-hour flight to Trinidad, a nine-hour flight to Brazil, a 19-hour flight to Gambia, and finally a nine-hour flight to Casablanca. All this for a man who was paralyzed, had a failing heart, and had not taken a plane since 1932.)

A global system

Roosevelt's vision for a global system did not work exactly as he had hoped, chiefly because of the Soviet Union and its postwar behavior. But much of it did happen, from the United Nations to an open global trading system to the decolonization of Europe's empires. And the great holdout

to America's vision, the Soviet Union, itself collapsed in 1991.

The results have been astonishing. Many historians have pointed out that we live in unprecedented times. The period since 1945 has been marked by the absence of war between the world's major powers. Most of prior human history is a tale of economic mercantilism, political conflict and repeated war. Since 1945, we have lived in what John Lewis Gaddis called, "the Long Peace." Through the Long Peace we have also had decades of rising incomes, living standards and health throughout the world, including in the United States.

When Roosevelt was beginning to design his system, he was the dissenter. The dominant foreign policy ideas in America at the time were represented by a movement called "America First." Nativist, isolationist and anti-Semitic, the movement held that an outward-oriented America was a policy for suckers. It took Hitler and World War II to make Americans recognize that, for a country of America's size and scale, isolation and narrow self-interest would lead to global insecurity and disaster. One wonders what it will take to make today's America Firsters learn that same lesson.

(Source: The Daily Star)

Angela Merkel's take on how to make a country great (again)

By Matthew Qvortrup

In 2013, German Chancellor Angela Merkel fractured her hip while skiing in St. Moritz, Switzerland. Doctors ordered her to rest. Feeling bored, she picked up "The Transformation of the World," a 1,500-page tome by the German historian Jürgen Osterhammel. It argued that the most successful 19th century economies championed open markets and liberal immigration laws, and that these policies spurred technological advances. Merkel liked what she read; she felt it reflected her world view. She even invited the academic to give a lecture when she turned 60 later that year.

Merkel has been described as "the liberal West's last defender" and the virtual antithesis to President Trump. And so she is in many ways. She promotes free trade; she espouses ethnic tolerance; she opposes isolationism. She is also a defender of women's rights (she introduced Germany's current abortion law) and an advocate of green policies. But often lost in the conversation is the fact that Merkel adheres to liberal and globalist principles because she thinks that's best for Germany, not for abstract ideological reasons.

It was Merkel's illiberal personal history that shaped her governing philosophy.

"I once lived behind a fence. That is something I do not wish to do again," Merkel said at an EU summit when the Hungarian prime minister criticized Germany's decision to accept refugees fleeing the Syrian crisis.

Merkel grew up in East Germany, the land of exit visas, where travel was allowed only in exceptional circumstances. More than 100 people were shot and killed when they tried to flee the Stalinist state. As she has said in numerous interviews, Merkel empathizes with the



She believes that you can make a country great only if its companies are allowed to — indeed, are forced to — prove their worth in open and healthy competition on the world markets.

Syrian refugees trying to escape from the Islamic State (ISIL). But she also understands that they can contribute positively to German society, just as communist refugees contributed to Western European and American society.

"No nation can confine itself any more to considering only its own concerns; if it still does so, it will sooner or later inflict harm on itself," Merkel said in 2014, another opinion substantiated by her past.

The Communist regime imposed punitive tariffs on products from non-communist countries to protect East German factories from competition. Simultaneously,

these factories were guaranteed a market for their goods in the Soviet Union. In essence, the Soviet economy was based on the principle "buy Communist, hire Communist." We all know how that went: Protectionism led to inefficiency, scarcity and inferior products.

To Merkel, it's obvious that the best way to keep German factories humming is not to force German consumers to buy German, but to make quality products — and to advance policies that help foreign consumers become wealthy enough to buy them.

Hence Merkel's approach to the European Union. She has endorsed providing economic aid to poorer countries, in part for their advantage, but also — why deny it? — to increase German exports.

Some have criticized Merkel for turning the EU — in Trump's words — into "basically a vehicle for Germany." It's certainly the case that Germany has benefited from EU economic policies, but so too did America benefit from the Marshall Plan after World War II. Merkel, not surprisingly, is concerned about the economic fortunes of the country she leads; but in her universe, cross-border trade ultimately improves conditions everywhere.

Trump believes he can "Make America Great Again" by putting tariffs on imported goods and by shielding American industry. Merkel believes the opposite. She believes that you can make a country great only if its companies are allowed to — indeed, are forced to — prove their worth in open and healthy competition on the world markets.

It is strange indeed that the current great champion of free-market economics is a woman from a former communist country, and not a billionaire capitalist from America.

(Source: The NYT)

MP Moradi Congratulates Glorious Victory Anniversary of Islamic Revolution to Noble Nation

Ahmad Moradi Representative of People of Bandar Abbas, Qeshm, Hajiabad, and Bandar-e Khamir in the Islamic Consultative Assembly (Iranian Parliament also called Majlis) expressed his heartfelt congratulations on the advent of glorious victory anniversary of the Islamic Revolution "Ten-Day Dawn ceremonies" to the supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution and martyr-fostering and noble nation of Islamic Iran.

He also endeared the name and memory of founding father of the Islamic Revolution the late Imam Khomeini (RA) and martyrs of Islamic Revolution.

Ten-Day Dawn is a golden opportunity to respect and cherish the Islamic Revolution which is indebted to the martyrs who quenched the statured tree of this glorious revolution with their pure blood.

Definitely, Ten-Day Dawn is the best opportunity to test performance of these noble people who devoted their lives for the Islamic Revolution and also it is a time to honor and respect self-sacrifice of people who bestowed their body and soul for the sake of this land and territory.



پیام تبریک احمد مرادی نماینده مردم بندرعباس، قشم، حاجی آباد، بندر خمیر به مناسبت سالگرد پیروزی شکوهمند انقلاب اسلامی

اینجانب بعنوان خدمتگزار مردم عزیز با تبریک ایام الله دهه مبارک فجر و ۲۲ بهمن ، سالروز پیروزی انقلاب اسلامی و ورود امام راحل خمینی کبیر (ره) به رهبر معظم انقلاب و ملت همیشه در صحنه ایران اسلامی تبریک گفته و یاد و خاطره بنیانگذار انقلاب اسلامی حضرت امام خمینی (ره) و همه فجر آفرینان و شهیدان انقلاب را گرامی می‌دارم.

ایام الله دهه مبارک فجر فرصت مغتنمی است که بدانیم این نظام و انقلاب مروه خون شهدای گرانقدر و عزیزی است که درخت تناور این انقلاب را با خون خود سیراب نموده اند و انقلاب اسلامی ایران، بدون شک معجزه ای الهی بود که به دست معجزه گر مردی از تبار نور و یاکي رسول خدا (ص) به انجام رسید و چشم امید مظلومان و مستضعفان جهان را به خود خیره ساخت.

قطعا این ایام زمان مناسبی برای محک زدن عملکردهاست تا بدانیم چه اندازه دین خود را به انقلاب وامام شهدا ادا کرده ایم.

By Andy Worthington

Trump's dystopian America: The unforgivable first ten days

Ten days ago, reality as we knew it seemed to disappear with Donald Trump's inauguration, and the bleak, insular, threatening speech at its heart, which bore all the hallmarks of the miserable white supremacist world view of his most trusted advisor, Steve Bannon, a man who needs constantly exposing as the genuinely malevolent force behind Trump's throne.

I was in New York City at the time of the inauguration, staying in a house in Brooklyn. My hosts had gone out to work, and I was alone as the realization that no last minute miracle had spared us from Trump truly sank in. I was chilled, and spent the day in a fog of anxiety, as did tens of millions of other Americans.

The following day, the Women's March played a hugely important role in establishing the resistance to Trump. Millions of women (and supportive men), inspired by opposition to Trump's misogyny, marched in Washington, D.C., in New York and in other cities across the U.S. and around the world. I wrote about the inspiring New York event here, and my photos are here.

That evening, I returned to the UK, but what was apparent to me from my two weeks in the U.S. (from Jan. 9-21, scheduled in particular to coincide with the 15th anniversary of the opening of Guantánamo) was how a figure as divisive as Trump ought, at the very least, to be capable of inspiring a huge new people's movement against him, uniting all those opposed to his bigotry, his misogyny, his corrupt business dealings — the list could go on and on.

I stand by this assessment, but since last week-end Trump has marked his first week in office with a tsunami of horrendous executive orders, almost too many to keep up with, which have both confirmed the need for unity in everyone who opposes him, whilst almost making it impossible to focus on everything important that is being so fundamentally undermined.

Trump's first week executive actions included ordering the dismantling of Obamacare, reviving the Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines, and ordering the Mexican wall to build. In addition, a draft executive order, not yet issued, was leaked, which promised to revoke President Obama's executive orders ordering the closure of Guantánamo and a ban on the use of torture and CIA "black sites."

All of these moves threaten to backfire. Obamacare has improved access to affordable medical care for tens of millions of Americans, including, crucially, many who voted for Trump, and it ought to blow up in his face. In addition, when it comes to the environment, Trump has probably ensured that renewed protest in the native Americans' ancestral lands in Dakota will be bigger than ever, and on torture the leak drew widespread condemnation in the U.S. and around the world.

But then, on Friday — just after all our desperate Prime Minister Theresa May dashed to the White House to visit Trump in the vain hope of securing a favorable trade deal to offset the self-inflicted economic suicide of Brexit (while most other world leaders were biding their time, in no hurry to meet such a bullying aberration to the norms of power) — Trump delivered his most devastating executive order to date: an outrageous ban on citizens from seven countries — Iraq, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen (at least 134 million people) from entering the U.S. — for an initial period of 90 days, with Syrian refugees were banned indefinitely. The ban was so scattershot and chaotic that, incredibly, it also included permanent U.S. residents who were abroad when it took effect, and even dual nationals, born in any of the proscribed countries.

The ban took immediate effect, with devastating results. At U.S. airports, hundreds of people were detained pending deportation, and around the world untold numbers of dual national citizens, green card holders, visitors and refugees from the targeted nations were prevented from flying to the U.S.

Lawyer and protestors were swift to respond, rushing to airports to make their voices heard, and, in the cases of the lawyers, including the ACLU and others, to begin the urgent work of challenging the ban. By Saturday morning, a U.S. federal court judge, Ann Donnelly in Brooklyn, "ordered an

emergency stay, blocking the deportation of any individual currently being held in airports across the United States," as the Guardian put it.

"I think the government hasn't had a full chance to think about this," Judge Donnelly told a packed courtroom, as she granted the stay in the case of two Iraqi refugees detained at JFK — "Hameed Khalid Darweesh, who had worked for the U.S. government for a decade, and Haider Sameer Abdulkhaleq Alshawi, who arrived in the country to join his wife, a U.S. contractor."

A follow-up hearing was scheduled for February 21, but in the meantime lawyers are preparing for another fight if any of those affected — "at least 100-200 people currently being held in airports across the country," according to ACLU head Anthony Romero — are held in immigration detention facilities until the Feb. 21 hearing, rather

of the Republican Party. One dominant question is now forming in the minds of all decent people, which clearly won't go away: How do we get rid of Donald Trump?"

In an editorial on Tuesday, the Guardian is asking the same questions. "Donald Trump has been president of the United States for 10 days," the editorial began. "Many were prepared to give Mr Trump a chance. But even they must conclude he has been in office 10 days too long."

Writing of the immigration ban, the Guardian's editors described it as "a cruel, stupid and bigoted act, designed to hurt and divide," adding that it was "also cowardly, as bullies' actions sometimes are," and noting that the ban also "avoids predominantly Muslim countries such as Pakistan and Afghanistan with deep terrorist connections, and ones such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the

Trump's first week executive actions included ordering the dismantling of Obamacare, reviving the Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines, and ordering the Mexican wall to build.



than being released.

Unfortunately, the judge's stay only applies to "those who were 'on American soil' — i.e. those who had been mid-flight or had landed while the executive order was being signed by the president," as Romero described it. Around the world, countless others from the seven countries banned by Trump — including green card holders and dual nationality citizens — were left unable to return to the U.S.

This sweeping, punitive, racist policy was implemented so swiftly that attorneys for the government were largely in the dark. In Brooklyn, one told the court, "Things have unfolded with such speed, that we haven't had time to review the legal situation yet."

And yet, the impact of the chaotic ban is horrendously widespread, and no one can estimate in how many cases it is also life-threatening. The Guardian explained how, "[a]lerted by the ACLU to the fact that a Syrian woman with a valid U.S. green card had been detained upon arrival into the United States and had been placed on a plane due to take off 'back to Syria' within 30 minutes," Judge Donnelly issued a stay on her being sent back, having pressed government lawyers in vain to confirm whether they "could give assurances that the woman would suffer no 'irreparable harm' upon her arrival in Syria" (they couldn't).

As I wrote on Facebook, "And so, just ten days into Donald Trump's presidency, we can see clearly what happens when incoherent populist racism is given form by a simplistic bigoted clown who surrounds himself with white supremacists, would-be fascists and the most unsavory far-right elements

Emirates in which Mr. Trump has business interests."

■ The editorial continued:

The United States is a nation of laws, of immigrants and of freedoms. Much of the world still looks to it as a beacon. Mr Trump's order violates all three identities, and douses the beacon. The order has been stayed by a judge in New York. But the stay is temporary. Mr Trump is not going to stop there. His instinct, to which on past intemperate experience he is likely to succumb, will be to react with further cruelty, stupidity and bigotry [...]

The executive order has backfired. The reaction against it in the U.S. has been inspiring. The legal action sends a vital message about due process. So do the rallies and welcoming demonstrations at airports, which appear to be as spontaneous as anything can be in the modern world. The big challenge for the U.S. now is political. Will anti-Trump Republicans stand up for law, justice and order, or will they bow the knee? Will Democrats mount an effective opposition? This is a stand up and be counted moment for all, and both things need to happen. Both sides should remember the concentration camp survivor Martin Niemöller's words about the Nazis. "First they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out ... Then they came for me — and there was no one left to speak for me."

The Guardian also, correctly, took aim at Theresa May, pointing out that she was "played for a sucker" by Trump, and that, in response to the ongoing petition against Trump's proposed state visit in summer, which already has over 1,400,000 signatures, and is gaining around 50,000 new signatures every hour, she "needs to recognise that the Trump state visit must be put on hold or truncated into a political visit." The editorial concluded, "A line has been crossed in Washington. The public gets it. Sir Mo [Farah, one of those banned from visiting the U.S. for the next 90 days] gets it. The prime minister needs to get it too. She needs to speak and act for Britain, alongside France, Canada, Germany and other allies. Britain must not be, or be seen as, a lackey of possibly the worst leader the U.S. has ever elected."

In the US, meanwhile, the struggle to take down Trump continues. Absurdly, as the graphic to the left shows (which, I note, Kim Kardashian tweeted yesterday to her 49.8m followers), Trumps deluded, bellicose rationale for the ban — that the U.S. is threatened by terrorist refugees from the countries subjected to the ban — has so basis whatsoever in reality. Two people a year in the U.S. have been killed by "Islamic jihadist terrorists" in the last ten years, compared to 21 a year killed by armed toddlers, 69 a year killed by lawnmowers, and, of course, 11,737 a year



killed by other Americans.

And yet, early on Sunday morning, Trump tweeted, "Our country needs strong borders and extreme vetting. NOW. Look what is happening all over Europe and, indeed, the world — a horrible mess!" and later that morning sent out another tweet stating, "Christians in the Middle-East have been executed in large numbers. We cannot allow this horror to continue!" By the afternoon, he had issued a statement, but he was refusing to back down in any way. "America is a proud nation of immigrants and we will continue to show compassion to those fleeing oppression, but we will do so while protecting our own citizens and border," he said, adding, "To be clear, this is not a Muslim ban, as the media is falsely reporting. This is not about religion — this is about terror and keeping our country safe."

Wrong on all counts, Trump also faced criticism from two senior Republicans, Sen. John McCain, the chair of the influential Senate Armed Services Committee, and Sen. Lindsey Graham, an aggressive defender of America's national security, who issued the following statement:

Our government has a responsibility to defend our borders, but we must do so in a way that makes us safer and upholds all that is decent and exceptional about our nation.

It is clear from the confusion at our airports across the nation that President Trump's executive order was not properly vetted. We are particularly concerned by reports that this order went into effect with little to no consultation with the Departments of State, Defense, Justice, and Homeland Security.

Such a hasty process risks harmful results. We should not stop green-card holders from returning to the country they call home. We should not stop those who have served as interpreters for our military and diplomats from seeking refuge in the country they risked their lives to help. And we should not turn our backs on those refugees who have been shown through extensive vetting to pose no demonstrable threat to our nation, and who have suffered unspeakable horrors, most of them women and children.

Ultimately, we fear this executive order will be-

come a self-inflicted wound in the fight against terrorism. At this very moment, American troops are fighting side-by-side with our Iraqi partners to defeat ISIL. But this executive order bans Iraqi pilots from coming to military bases in Arizona to fight our common enemies. Our most important allies in the fight against ISIL are the vast majority of Muslims who reject its apocalyptic ideology of hatred. This executive order sends a signal, intended or not, that America does not want Muslims coming into our country. That is why we fear this executive order may do more to help terrorist recruitment than improve our security.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) also pledged that the Democrats, who it should be noted, have largely been silent on this most disgraceful of policies, "will propose legislation to overturn Trump's executive order," as Politico described it, and "16 state attorneys general, including those from California and New York, spoke out against the executive order and warned that they will 'use all of the tools of our offices to fight this unconstitutional order and preserve our nation's national security and core values.'"

Trump was not moved, tweeting, absurdly, that McCain and Graham were "looking to start World War III," but there is no way the immigration ban can be regarded as anything other than a massive, self-inflicted wound, however much his racist core supporters believe in it.



By Sunday night, as Politico reported, "Conflicting interpretations spurred Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly to clarify that green card holders were ... exempt from Trump's broad order," but today the fallout from this thoroughly unacceptable and lamentably poorly-executed ban has, I hope, penetrated so deeply into countless ordinary people's perceptions of the reality of the Trump administration that his days are numbered.

I certainly hope so, as the kind of anxiety and uncertainty that Trump is unleashing against millions of people, and the chaos he is causing worldwide to America's reputation, surely cannot be allowed to continue for the next four years.

(Source: Eurasia Review)

This executive order sends a signal, intended or not, that America does not want Muslims coming into the country. That is why we fear this executive order may do more to help terrorist recruitment than improve our security.



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What is prediabetes and why does it matter?

By Monique Tello

When I'm seeing a new patient, I am especially alert to certain pieces of their history. Do they have a strong family history of diabetes? Are they of Latino, Asian, Native-American, or African-American ethnicity? Did they have diabetes in pregnancy? Are they overweight or obese? Do they have polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS)?

Why do I care about these things? Because they may be clues that the patient is at risk for developing adult-onset (type 2) diabetes, and that can lead to multiple major medical problems.

Many people have heard of type 2 diabetes, a disease where the body loses its ability to manage sugar levels. Adult-onset diabetes most often affects people with known risk factors and can take years to fully develop, unlike juvenile (type 1) diabetes, which can develop randomly and quickly.

Here is why high blood sugar is a problem

Untreated or undertreated diabetes means persistently high blood sugars, which can cause horrible arterial blockages, resulting in strokes and heart attacks. High blood sugars also cause nerve damage, with burning leg pain that eventually gives way to numbness. This, combined with the arterial blockages, can result in deformities and dead tissue, which is why many people with diabetes end up with amputations. The tiny blood vessels to the retina are also affected, which can cause blindness. And don't forget the kidneys, which are especially susceptible to the damage caused by high blood sugar. Diabetes is a leading cause of kidney failure requiring dialysis and/or kidney transplant. But wait! There's more. High blood sugar impairs the white blood cell function critical to a healthy immune system, and sugar is a great source of energy for invading bacteria and fungi. These factors put folks at risk of nasty infections of all kinds.

These facts scare me. Not just because I'm the doctor who gets to help manage these not-fun issues, but because I'm of Latina descent and diabetes runs in my own family. I'm at risk too.

So, what can we do? If we know who is at risk for diabetes, and it takes years to develop, we should be able to prevent it, right? Right!



Adult-onset diabetes most often affects people with known risk factors and can take years to fully develop, unlike juvenile (type 1) diabetes, which can develop randomly and quickly.

Keeping prediabetes from becoming diabetes

A recent in-depth article by endocrine experts declares prediabetes a worldwide epidemic (which it is). Prediabetes is defined by fasting blood sugars between 100 and 125, or an abnormal result on an oral glucose tolerance test. What can we do to treat prediabetes? The authors reviewed multiple large, well-conducted studies, and all showed that prediabetes can be targeted and diabetes delayed or prevented.

One of the largest studies was conducted here in the U.S. Over 3,000 people from 27 centers who were overweight or obese and had prediabetes were randomly assigned to one of three groups:

- Standard lifestyle recommendations plus the medication metformin (Glucophage);
- Standard lifestyle recommendations plus a placebo pill;
- An intensive program of lifestyle modification.

The intensive program included individualized dietary counseling, as well as instruction to walk briskly or do other

exercise for 120 minutes per week, with the goal of some modest weight loss.

Investigators followed the subjects over three years, and the results were consistent with those from many other studies: the people in the intensive lifestyle modification group (nutrition counseling and exercise guidance) were far less likely to develop diabetes in that time span than those in either of the other groups. The estimated cumulative incidence of diabetes at three years was 30% for placebo, 22% for metformin, and 14% for lifestyle modification. The incidence of diabetes was 39% lower in the lifestyle modification group than in the metformin group. As a matter of fact, they shut down the study early because it was deemed unethical to keep the subjects in the placebo and metformin-only groups from proper treatment.

The authors of the prediabetes review also looked at the multitude of other studies that more closely examined what kinds of diets are useful and concluded that "The consensus is that a diet rich in whole grains, vegetables, fruit, monounsaturated fat, and low in animal fat, trans fats, and simple sugars is beneficial,

along with maintenance of ideal body weight and an active lifestyle."

It's really just common sense. And that's why my husband and I greatly limit our intake of sugar and carbs, get four-plus servings of plant-based foods daily, and exercise.

A word about medication

For my patients who for whatever reason cannot change their diet and lifestyle, I do recommend a medication. For patients who are on the cusp of diabetes and who have multiple risk factors or other diseases, medication really is indicated. There are also people who want to add a medication to diet and exercise in order to boost weight loss and further decrease their risk, and that's fair as well.

I know that using medications for prediabetes is controversial. Other doctors have warned that the label "prediabetes" is over-inclusive and that it's all a vast big-pharma marketing scam. It's true that we have to be informed about what we're prescribing and why. But based on what I've seen in my career, I definitely do NOT want to develop diabetes myself, and if you're at risk, believe me, you don't either. So, consider the pros and cons of everything, talk to your doctor, and decide for yourself what action you want to take. And then, take action.

(Source: health.harvard.edu)

3 ways to stop eating so much at night

Learn to curb your appetite in the evening hours

By Malia Frey

You stick to your diet all day and eat healthy well-balanced meals. Then, the evening comes and you find yourself making repeated trips to the refrigerator or pantry to eat food that you don't really need. Sound familiar? If it does, you're not alone. Nighttime calories are a struggle for many dieters who find that they continue eating after dinner. If you're serious about losing weight, use these tips to stop eating so much at night.

Why do I eat so much at night?

You're normal if you like to snack and graze after eating dinner. But if you are trying to lose weight, the calories you consume from snacks in the evening could easily undo a day's worth of smart food choices. So, the first step to eating less is to find out why you eat when you don't need to.

For most of us, the reason we overeat is related to the fact that we are less busy at night and we are near food. We like to relax and enjoy more leisurely activities, and food is a common source of comfort. Without the distraction of work or other daytime activities, it's easy to grab for snacks that are nearby. If you can find other ways to unwind, then you'll be likely to eat less at night. You can also use these strategies to curb nighttime eating.

How to stop eating after dinner

The best way to curb your nighttime eating behavior for good is to use short-term strategies to break the habit.

If you can replace snacking with a healthier habit, then you won't feel the urge to overeat in the evening. Use one of these tips (or all three) to change your nighttime snack habit.

- Move away from the food. You're more likely to eat too much at night if you are always around food. So, after dinner, move away from the kitchen. This might mean that you postpone clean-up tasks, so that you aren't tempted to eat leftovers. Or better yet, delegate the job to someone in your house who isn't on a diet.

Another great way to get away from food is to go for a walk after dinner. Even if your walk is just 15-20 minutes long, physical activity helps to break up the eating momentum. It also gives your body a chance to feel the sensation of fullness, so the urge to eat is less strong.

- Use a "meal-ender" to curb your appetite. Some dieters use mint-flavored gum to diminish the desire to eat after dinner. Most of us don't like the taste of food when we have a mint flavor in our mouths. Brushing your teeth after dinner provides this same benefit — along with a dental health bonus.

You can also try using MealEnders. These small candies claim to "reset" your taste buds so that you don't feel the urge to eat, and I can attest that they can help to dull post-meal hunger. MealEnders contain no stimulants and are regulated as a food product, so they have to follow strict guidelines of the Food and Drug Administration, unlike many diet and weight loss supplements.

- Be a smart television watcher. Most of us eat too much at night when we snack mindlessly in front of the television. Some researchers even believe that certain action shows make us eat too much food. Regardless of your show preference, however, you can create healthy eating habits in front of the television to eat less and lose weight.

My favorite way to eat less is to keep my hands active. I fold laundry or do other simple chores while I watch TV. If I really want to eat — and I know I've eaten enough for dinner — then I use specific diet strategies to control snacking in front of the TV. I also make sure that I follow good portion control guidelines if I choose to snack while watching TV.

Remember, snacking isn't bad for your diet. But eating when you're not hungry is never a good plan. Learn to eat a healthy dinner and then create habits to stop eating so much at night. You'll reach your goal weight faster and keep your weight off for good.

(Source: verywell.com)

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10 hot titles of IT world

By Alireza Khorasani

Here are high rated IT titles in the world that reviewed by savvy tech users:

1 As part of the largest crisis campaign of its company history, Google is expected to raise \$4 million in support of people affected by President Trump's immigration order. News of Google's campaign follows statements against the controversial ban by company CEO Sundar Pichai and the participation of its co-founder Sergey Brin in a protest at San Francisco International Airport, USA Today reports.

2 The Entertainment Software Association, the game industry's top trade group in the United States, issued a statement asking the White House to use caution in the implementation of its travel ban on visitors from seven countries in the Middle East and Africa.

3 Fitbit is laying off 6% of its staff, and its stock is tanking. Fitbit says the "reorganization" will eliminate 110 jobs, or about six percent of the company's workforce. Yesterday, the Information said Fitbit would cut between 5 and 10 percent of its staff in order to reduce costs.

4 Cloud file syncing and sharing software company Dropbox announced the launch of Smart Sync (formerly known as Project Infinite). The feature, which is meant to provide easy access to all your data without taking up all the space on your computer, is becoming available for users of the Dropbox Business service tier in an early-access program.

5 Owners of Amazon Echo and other Alexa-enabled devices can now use the Starbucks Reorder skill to order coffee. To make orders, customers must create a Starbucks Mobile Order & Pay account so orders are preset and paid for before entering a local Starbucks location.

6 Gap envisions a future with augmented-reality 'dressing rooms'. Gap's "DressingRoom" app built in collaboration with Google and San Francisco-based startup Avametric, uses augmented reality to let shoppers "try on" clothes without having to step into a store.

7 Lyft now books rides based on your calendar. Lyft has added its own calendar syncing feature, making it easy to pick the address of your next meeting as the destination. It works on both Android and iOS -- the only stipulation is that you use your native calendar app. It's a simple addition, but important if you regularly hail rides around town.

8 Mobilcom-Debitel to bring Nokia Android devices to Germany. The latest bit of online gossip by the popular leakster Roland Quandt has it that MobiCom-Debitel is looking to form long-term partnership with HMD Global, bringing the Nokia 6 to Germany in the forthcoming months. It will be following the Nokia 150 featurephone that is already available on the German market.

9 Apple Watch gets 'Theater Mode' in watchOS 3.2 beta. Aside from SiriKit (which aims to fix a disconnect between the iPhone and Watch-versions of Siri), Theater Mode lets you keep the Apple watch powered on anywhere you wouldn't like your notifications to flash on your wrist, likewise, this also disables the 'lift-to-wake' gesture.

10 Google announces Android 7.1.2 beta, rolling out now. Google has announced that it's ready to begin rolling out a 7.1.2 beta build to all testers of compatible devices. This is an incremental update to squash bugs and refine existing features "along with a small number of enhancements for carriers and users." Perhaps, the update will enable VoLTE on some carriers.

Razer buys Nextbit, "unique mobile design and experiences" coming in the future

Nextbit, the young company behind the interesting Robin smartphone, today revealed that it's joining Razer, famous for its gaming-oriented products (including PCs and accessories). Razer says that the acquisition was closed earlier this month, though financial details haven't been revealed.

As part of Razer, Nextbit will operate as an independent unit focusing "on unique mobile design and experiences." The acquisition makes sense because, per Nextbit, the folks at Razer are "rebels like us" and "share our need to push boundaries."

Those concerned about the future of the Nextbit Robin phone (pictured above) should know that this will still be supported. Warranties will be fulfilled for 6 more months from now, while software updates, including security patches, will be rolled out until February 2018. However, the handset is no longer being sold via official channels.

Razer and Nextbit did not say if they have specific plans for new smartphones. Nevertheless, while Razer may not be working on a smartphone of its own, it certainly looks ready to invest in upcoming Nextbit handsets. We're looking forward to seeing what will come out of this.

(Source: Nextbit)

U.S. tech without Iranian immigrants: No eBay, Oracle, Google, DropBox, Tinder

By Adam Gahramani

Last year, when we were debating whether or not the U.S. should ramp up its acceptance of Syrian refugees, one image of a tech icon went viral, inspiring social media posts, news coverage, and a Banksy tribute. That image was of Steve Jobs with the caption "Steve Jobs was the son of a Syrian refugee."

While the image should probably have read "biological son of a Syrian immigrant," it put a relatable face on the situation and added tangible stakes. Imagining a U.S. without Syrians is easy if you don't know any Syrians, but imagining a U.S. without Steve Jobs means bearing the loss of Apple and Pixar's economic, design, technological, and cultural influences. It would be a veritable alternate timeline.

Trump's new order threatens to cripple immigration from seven countries: Iran, Syria, Iraq, Libya, Yemen, Sudan, and Somalia. So far, no one's done a good job of expressing the tech and business costs of what it means to lose the best and brightest from those countries. Instead, we get limp statistics, images of strangers suffering, and vague lamentations like "we're losing our values" or "this will make it harder to hire programmers from abroad."

Since I'm an Iranian-American and know the community's accomplishments well, I'd like to paint a brief picture of what the U.S. tech landscape would look like had Iran been stonewalled over the last few decades. This should give you an idea of what's at stake (the people below were either born in Iran or had Iranian parents).

* eBay, if it existed at all, would be a French company (Pierre Omidyar, founder)

* Your searches might be on Yahoo instead of Google, since Google would have lost its business founder (Omid Kordestani)

* If Google did survive, its acquisition of YouTube might have wrecked the platform without a key employ-



ee's stewardship (Salar Kamangar, former YouTube CEO and Google employee #7)

* You'd be storing your files locally instead of on DropBox. Other cloud storage services inspired by Drop-Box wouldn't exist. (Arash Ferdowsi, cofounder and CTO)

* Twitter would be in deep trouble, because it would lose its Executive Chairman (also Kordestani) and its COO (Ali Rowghani).

* Oracle would just be a character from The Matrix, because Larry Ellison would be missing his cofounder (Bob Miner)

* If you're a gamer, the ambitious World of Warcraft might never have made it out the door (Shahram Dabiri, Lead Producer)

New York City tech leaders object to Trump immigration ban

If it wasn't already clear that the tech industry is opposed to President Trump's immigration restrictions, it is now. Hundreds of New York City tech luminaries have signed a letter that urges Trump to change his mind on the policies, many of whom are from companies you'll recognize -- Airbnb, Blue Apron, Comcast Ventures, Foursquare, Indiegogo and Kickstarter are just a few examples. Many of them are CEOs or founders of influential firms, including Uber chief Travis Kalanick.

The collective argues that the ban, which covers both refugees as well as immigrants from several Muslim-majority countries, will both "undermine" New York City's diverse tech community and "send a dangerous message"



* If you're single, you'd have no Tinder, which also means no Tinder knock-offs. If you're not single, that also means no swipe-right UX (Sean Rad, founder)

* Your business or computer science or engineering alma mater would lose international standing because Iranian-Americans are over-represented as professors and administrators in these fields.

The list goes on, and Iran is just one of the seven countries Trump is targeting. But it gets worse, because even if you think turning people away from these seven countries is an acceptable loss, there's a cascading effect.

- Immigration will fall from neighboring countries. Would a brilliant Turkish programmer accept a job in the U.S. now, knowing that their work visa could be revoked on a whim?

- Immigration will fall from dual citizens (and many people with immigrant parents are automatically dual citizens). Would a born-and-raised British student study abroad in the U.S. if they had immigrant parents, knowing they could be stranded there indefinitely?

- Immigration will fall from those with affected friends. Would someone weighing multiple international job offers pick the U.S. if their best friend was being unfairly treated by us?

- Immigration will fall from those with empathy. Would a wealthy Swiss angel investor want to retire in the U.S. if they disagreed adamantly with our refugee policy?

Talented people in other countries don't disappear if we reject them. They'll shrug and move on to the burgeoning tech scenes of Europe and Asia, where they'll be greeted with easy funding, a low cost of living, fast Internet, vibrant communities, and exotic workspaces. Many American tech startups have even been flocking to these destinations of late. If we limit immigration, we'll be accelerating Europe and Asia's tech position while massively sabotaging our own.

(Source: venturebeat)

MacBook Pro Touch Bar banned from multiple state bar exams



Here's an unexpected drawback of Apple's latest flagship laptops: law students in several states are being asked to disable the Touch Bar on their new MacBook Pros, or leave them at home entirely, if they plan to use the machines when they take the bar exam in February. According to an announcement from testing software company ExamSoft, the Touch Bar's predictive text feature could compromise "exam integrity."

If you do bring your fresh new MacBook Pro to a state bar examination in North Carolina, for example, be aware that test proctors have been instructed to keep a look out for models with the Touch Bar and technicians will be on hand to ensure the feature is disabled. Test takers will be approved to use the laptops provided they followed ExamSoft's helpful instructions for reverting the Touch Bar back to a row of standard function keys and save those Doom

sessions for later.

In other states, however, the new model of MacBook Pro is banned outright. According to notices from the New York State Board of Law Examiners and the Colorado Supreme Court, users who show up with a Touch Bar-equipped model in those states will have to write their answers by hand, but they will be allowed to re-download the ExamSoft software to another machine for free if they do it in advance. Although not every state has issued a formal notice yet, Ohio State University law professor and Bar Exam Wizard blogger Katherine Silver Kelly, reports that the Touch Bar is also banned in California, Oklahoma, Massachusetts, West Virginia and Pennsylvania. So prospective lawyers should do their due diligence and check with their local jurisdiction before heading to their exam site.

(Source: Apple Insider)

Twitter admits 'didn't move fast enough' on abuse, changes coming

After years of hearing users cry out about the abuse on its platform and reacting in ways that may have made its problems even worse, Twitter says it's listening. VP of engineering Ed Ho tweeted tonight that "We heard you, we didn't move fast enough last year..We'll be rolling out a number of product changes in the days ahead." Also asserting that changes will continue until there is an impact people can feel, Ho was backed up by Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey tweeting that "We're taking a completely new approach to abuse on Twitter. Including having a more open & real-time dialogue about it every step of the way," and recently-added VP of product Keith Coleman.

There aren't a lot of details on exactly what is



changing, but according to Ho, this week they'll start with "long overdue fixes on mute/block" (mute and report got a refresh in November) and stopping repeat offenders from creating new accounts.

Of course, we've heard this rhetoric before, without much impact to speak of. If Twitter will have more success this time around, it will need to listen to users about what's going wrong. The execs say they're open to suggestions, so if you something, say something.

"We're taking a completely new approach to abuse on Twitter. Including having a more open & real-time dialogue about it every step of the way https://t.co/a1SV7URPEK

(Source: Reuters)

Antibiotics can boost bacterial reproduction

The growth of bacteria can be stimulated by antibiotics, scientists at the University of Exeter have discovered.

The EPSRC-funded researchers exposed *E. coli* bacteria to eight rounds of antibiotic treatment over four days and found the bug - which can cause severe stomach pain, diarrhea and kidney failure in humans - had increased antibiotic resistance with each treatment.

This had been expected, but researchers were surprised to find mutated *E. coli* reproduced faster than before encountering the drugs and formed populations that were three times larger because of the mutations.

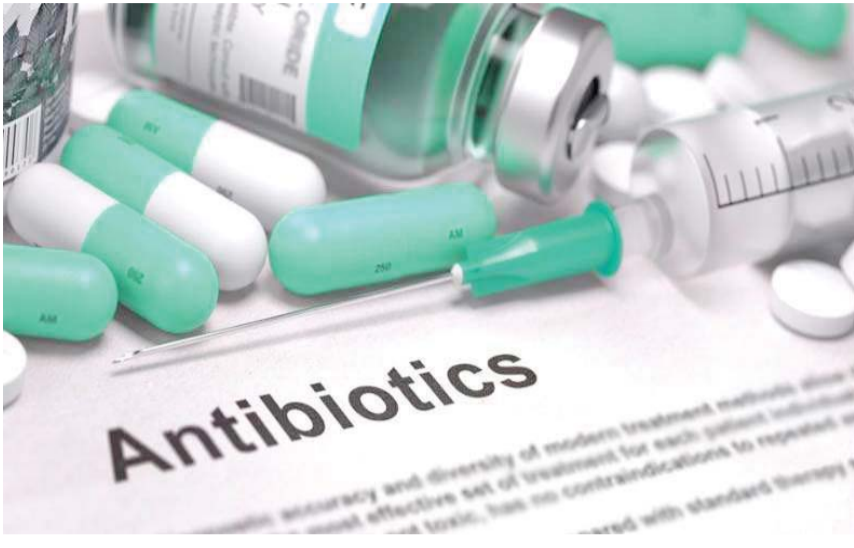
This was only seen in bacteria exposed to antibiotics - and when researchers took the drug away, the evolutionary changes were not undone and the new-found abilities remained.

Levels of antibiotic

"Our research suggests there could be added benefits for *E. coli* bacteria when they evolve resistance to clinical levels of antibiotics," said lead author Professor Robert Beardmore, of the University of Exeter.

"It's often said that Darwinian evolution is slow, but nothing could be further from the truth, particularly when bacteria are exposed to antibiotics.

"Bacteria have a remarkable ability to rearrange their DNA and this can stop



The researchers tested the effects of the antibiotic doxycycline on *E. coli* as part of a study of DNA changes brought about by antibiotics.

drugs working, sometimes in a matter of days.

"While rapid DNA change can be dangerous to a human cell, to a bacterium like *E. coli* it can have multiple benefits, provided they hit on the right changes."

The researchers tested the effects of the antibiotic doxycycline on *E. coli* as part of a study of DNA changes brought about by antibiotics.

Genetic sequencing

The *E. coli* "uber-bug" that subse-

quently evolved was safely frozen at -80C and the scientists used genetic sequencing to find out which DNA changes were responsible for its unusual evolution.

Some changes are well known and have been seen in clinical patients, like *E. coli* producing more antibiotic pumps that bacteria exploit to push antibiotics out of the cell.

"Our best guess is that losing viral DNA stops the *E. coli* destroying itself, so we see more bacterial cells growing once the increase in pump DNA allows them to resist the antibiotic in the first place," said Dr. Carlos Reding, who was part of the study.

"But our study used liquid conditions, a bit like the bloodstream, so the *E. coli* could give up on its biofilm lifestyle in favor of increasing cell production."

Dr. Mark Hewlett, also of the University of Exeter, added: "It is said by some that drug resistance evolution doesn't take place at high dosages but our paper shows that it can and that bacteria can change in ways that would not be beneficial for the treatment of certain types of infection.

"This shows it's important to use the right antibiotic on patients as soon as possible so we don't see adaptations like these in the clinic."

(Source: EurekAlert)

Liquid-based analysis can find alien life on ocean worlds

NASA scientists are working on a liquid-based technique to detect signs of alien life on extraterrestrial ocean worlds. How does the capillary electrophoresis method work? Pictured is Saturn's moon Enceladus in an image taken by the Cassini spacecraft.

Ocean worlds are among astronomers' best bet to finding extraterrestrial life outside of planet Earth.

Scientists also believe that one of the best opportunities to find life on ocean worlds is to use powerful liquid-based analyses.

In a bid to boost chances of finding signs of life in extraterrestrial worlds, NASA researchers are developing a tool that can tell the difference between amino acids that come from nonliving sources such as meteorites and amino acids that come from living organisms.

Alien life on planets

The liquid-based technique known as capillary electrophoresis has existed since the 1980s but scientists have now customized it so it can be used to detect alien life on other planets.

The new detection method, which can be used by robotic missions exploring extraterrestrial worlds, is designed to detect the presence of amino acids, the compounds that make up protein, which play an important

role in almost all biological processes.

Jessica Creamer from NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory explained that the method, which has already been successfully used to identify amino acids in the salty water of Mono Lake In California, allows scientists to detect amino acids at very low concentrations regardless if the analysis involves highly salty samples.

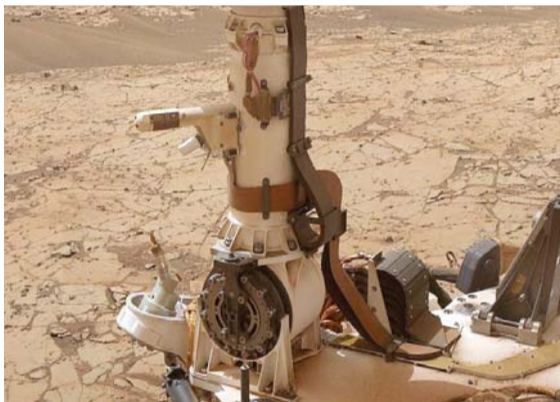
Experiments at the Mono Lake allowed the researchers to analyze 17 different amino acids simultaneously. Using a mix-and-analyze process, scientists can tell the differences between amino acids that come from nonliving and living sources.

"These methods allow detection limits down to 5 nM for the neutral amino acids and 500 nM for acidic amino acids and were used to analyze samples collected from Mono Lake with minimal sample preparation," Creamer and colleagues wrote in their report.

Liquid-based technique

The liquid-based technique can make significant contributions in the search for alien life particularly on ocean worlds, which scientists believe are the best places outside of Earth to find signs of life.

The Cassini mission has so far detected sodium and



potassium in the geyser-like plumes of Saturn's moon Enceladus. Methane, water and nitrogen have also been found on the moon. Scientists said that organics, energy and a salty ocean make the existence of extraterrestrial life in these worlds plausible.

"Our best chance of finding life is by using powerful liquid-based analyses like this one on ocean worlds," said Peter Willis of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

(Source: Tech Times)

AFZO Chief Expounds on Attraction of Significant Domestic and Foreign Investors in Past Year

Considerable domestic and foreign investors were attracted for a number of 69 development projects in Anzali Free Zone Organization (AFZO).

Chief Executive of Anzali Free Zone Organization (AFZO) Reza Masrour announced the above statement and said: "Domestic and foreign investors have been attracted for the development of 69 projects in the past year in this Zone."

To date, the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) has not thus far issued the license for setting up bank branches from Turkey and Russia in this Zone, he maintained.

Speaking in his weekly press briefing, he said: "Smuggling phenomenon is very few in this Zone since surrounding areas of the Zone have been fenced. In general, strict monitoring and control measures are adopted in free zones."

Elsewhere in his remarks, the senior official of the



Organization put the total value of goods carried along with passengers in the 10 months of current year (March 20 - Jan. 21) in this Zone at \$20 million.

With the coordination made in this regard, neighboring Turkey has planned to launch a project in tourism sector of the country, he maintained.

ism sector of the country, he maintained.

He went on to say that a tourism project in the country which has attracted foreign capital, costing approx. 100 billion toman.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the CEO of Anzali Free Zone Organization pointed to the request of foreign investors for setting up a bank branch in this Zone and said: "Money transfer is one of the major concerns of foreign investors in the Zone."

In the end, Chief Executive of Anzali Free Zone Organization (AFZO) Reza Masrour said: "Although effective steps have been taken in the field of transferring money especially after the implementation of Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), it is not enough in this respect."

However, Iran's economy has been ameliorated after the implementation of JCPOA in global arena.

BSI Chief Attends "Odyssey" Ceremony as Eternal Journey

On the sidelines of the 35th Fajr Intl. Theater Festival, performing and reading "Odyssey" was held at VAHDAT Hall at the initiative taken by Bank Saderat Iran (BSI).

The ceremony was attended by the Managing Director of Bank Saderat Iran (BSI) Siyavsh Zera'ati as key speaker of this prestigious ceremony, Public Relations Dept. of the bank reported.

This grand ceremony was held on Thursday in the Luminaries Hall of City Theater Complex in the presence of

Greek Ambassador to Iran, respected ambassadors of some other countries and a number of artists and enthusiasts to this Greek epic.

In the beginning of this prestigious ceremony, chief executive of Bank Saderat Iran elaborated on the details of this grand epic and compared it with Shahnameh (Book of Kings) written and narrated by legendary Iranian poet Ferdowsi.

It should be noted that the bank holds the largest banking network over-

seas, he said, adding: "BSI embarked on setting up a branch of the bank in Athens, capital of Greece. Moreover facilitating trade and commercial ties between the two countries, BSI has played a leading role in establishing cultural interaction and cooperation between the two nations."

Given the above issue, positive and constructive approach of respected Greek government is of paramount importance in international interactions and supporting activities of Iranian eco-

nom ic enterprises in global arena, he maintained.

It is worth mentioning that "Odyssey" Collective Ready Poetry has been planned at the initiative taken by the Greek Embassy in Iran at International Section of the 35th Fajr Intl. Theater Festival with performance of "TELMA House Group", which is supported by Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) entitled "Readers of Homer" and "Alnicos Theater", the report ended.

IKAC Plans to Construct Iranshahr Terminal in IKIA

Imam Khomeini Airport City Company (IKAC) is undertaking a major expansion of the Imam Khomeini International Airport (IKIA) airside and terminal facilities. The main project is the delivery of the new Iranshahr Terminal with a first phase capacity of 25 million annual passengers (MAP). This project will be delivered under either a Build-Lease-Transfer (BLT) or a Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) framework.

An Investors Conference was organized on the 30 January 2017 to provide interested companies with more information about the Iranshahr Termi-



nal project and the considerations for the tender procedure.

It should be noted that the 1st International Iranshahr Investment Conference was held at the venue of hotel of Imam Khomeini International Airport (IKIA) in the presence of Eng. Mahmoud Navidi Chairman of the Board of Directors and Chief Executive of Imam Khomeini Airport City Company (IKAC) as well as members of the Board of Directors, deputies and directors of 47 domestic and foreign firms.

The entire universe could be a hologram

A new study suggests that the universe could be a hologram, and reality could be an illusion. Talk about a reality check: The entire universe could be a "vast and complex hologram," scientists reported Monday. Also, even more unsettling, what we think of as reality may be just an illusion.

"Imagine that everything you see, feel and hear in three dimensions (and your perception of time) in fact emanates from a flat two-dimensional field," said study co-author Kostas Skenderis of the UK's University of Southampton.

The "idea is similar to that of ordinary holograms where a three-dimensional image is encoded in a two-dimensional surface, such as in the hologram on a credit card," Skenderis said. "However, this time, the entire universe is encoded."

A sketch of the timeline of the holographic universe. Time runs from left to right. The far left denotes the holographic phase and the image is blurry because space and time are not yet well defined. At the end of this phase (denoted by the black fluctuating ellipse) the universe enters a geometric phase, which can now be described by Einstein's equations. The cosmic microwave background was emitted about 375,000 years later.

Patterns imprinted in it carry information about the very early universe and seed the development of structures of stars and galaxies in the late time universe (far right). It's similar to watching a 3-D movie in a cinema, according to the study. While we see the pictures as having height, width and depth, they in fact all originate from a flat two-dimensional screen.

The study authors say they found the evidence for a holographic universe by studying the "afterglow" of the Big Bang with powerful new telescopes.

(Source: USA Today)

Our cars could soon be powered by human waste

With the industrialization-associated human population boom, there is an ever-increasing concern over the biohazards associated with excrement. Going back to using this product as a fuel source is proving to be considerable improvement on current waste processing, from creating a new fuel source, to disease control.

Human sludge is the solid product of primary sewage treatment. Most primary-treatment sewage plants have two by-products: a relatively clean water, and this sludge. Relatively recently, in 1987, scientists in Japan looked into turning this product into heavy oil as a replacement for crude oil.

The modern science varies, but thermochemical or hydrothermal liquefaction (turning human solid waste into hydrocarbon liquids) has come a long way with startups such as Danish Mash Biotech starting operations in Africa and Asia. In the U.S., Utah's Genifuel has partnered with the Pacific Northwest Laboratory to build a \$6 million pilot plant that's set to launch in 2018.

The processes take the sludge, pressurize it to 200 times atmospheric pressure (3000 psi), heat it up to a good roasting temperature (315 Celsius, 600 Fahrenheit), and create liquid bio-crude and a small amount of phosphorus-rich solids, which can be used as disease-free fertilizer.

If using only human solids of 10 liters (2.6 gallons) of biofuel per year, this sustainable fuel source can supply about 0.5% of the world's crude oil. If animal byproducts are also included, this number changes to about 1-1.2%, around the annual crude production of the UK or Colombia. In the U.S. alone, this translates to 30 million BOE per year for humans, and over 50 million BOE per year if livestock are included.

(Source: oilprice.com)



100-mile-long crack in Antarctic ice shelf keeps growing

A massive iceberg the size of Delaware is now even closer to breaking free from Antarctica, due to a widening crack in the ice shelf, scientists report.

The Larsen C Ice Shelf in Antarctica is cut through by a growing rift, which stretches nearly 109 miles (175 kilometers) long, new satellite data has revealed. Already in 2017, the rift has grown by 6.2 miles (10 km), and now only 12.4 miles (20 km) of ice are anchoring the massive iceberg to the ice shelf, according to Project MIDAS, an Antarctic research project based in the United Kingdom.

It's not a matter of if the iceberg will break off (an event known as calving), but when, scientists warn. According to MIDAS researchers, when the iceberg separates, the Larsen C Ice Shelf will lose more than 10 percent of its area - about 2,000 square miles (5,000 square km). The resulting iceberg would be one of the largest in recorded history, the scientists said.

"This event will fundamentally change the landscape of the Antarctic Peninsula," MIDAS researchers wrote in a blog post. "We have previously shown that the new configuration will be less stable than it was prior to the rift, and that Larsen C may eventually follow the example of its neighbor Larsen B, which disintegrated in 2002 following a similar rift-induced calving event."

As the South Pole's fourth-largest ice shelf, the Larsen C Ice Shelf holds back many land-based glaciers just behind it, according to scientists. If the ice shelf deteriorates as the Larsen B Ice Shelf did in 2002, those slow-flowing glaciers will have one less barrier in moving toward the ocean.

(Source: Live Science)

Rouhani tasks agriculture, foreign ministries to fight duststorm

SOCIETY TEHRAN — President Hassan Rouhani **d e s k** has tasked agriculture and foreign ministries with taking measures to fight duststorm ravaging the southwestern province of Khuzestan, the chief of the Department of Environment has said.

Mentioning the cabinet meeting on Sunday Masoumeh Ebtekar highlighted that the president has urged Agriculture Minister Mahmoud Hojjati to speed mulch pouring operations in duststorm hotspots and planting trees in these areas, Mehr news agency reported on Monday.



He additionally ordered Foreign Minister Mohammad-Javad Zarif to follow up on the issues concerning both Iran and Iraq regarding dust storms and trans-boundary hotspots, Ebtekar pointed.

A report outlining Hour-al-Azim wetland current status was also presented at the meeting indicating that almost 70 percent of the wetland is restored.

However, MP Qasem Saedi has refuted the claims about Hour-al-Azim restoration saying that the wetland is almost dried up due to the oil extracting activities in the region.

"Despite what Department of Environment says the sources for the sandstorms are inside Iran and there is no evidence supporting the restoration of Hour-al-Azim wetland," Saedi told Tasnim news agency.

LEARN ENGLISH

Pizza Delivery

A: Good evening, Pizza House. This is Marty speaking. May I take your order?

B: Um yes... I'd like a **medium** pizza with **pepperoni**, olive, and extra cheese.

A: We have a **two-for-one** special on large pizzas. Would you like a large pizza **instead**?

B: Sure, that **sounds good**.

A: Great! Would you like your second pizza to be the same as the first?

B: No, make the second one with ham, pineapple and green peppers. Oh, and make it thin **crust**.

A: Okay, thin crust. Your **total** is \$21.50 and your order will arrive in thirty minutes or it's free!

B: Perfect. Thank you. Bye.

A: Sir, wait!! I need your address!

■ Key vocabulary

medium: an average size, not too big or small

pepperoni: a spicy sausage usually on pizza

olive: a small, egg-shaped black or green fruit that is used as food or for making oil

two-for-one: pay for one and get another one free

instead: in replacement of

sounds good: seems or appears to be okay, I agree

crust: the border of a pizza, or bread

total: complete amount you must pay

■ Supplementary vocabulary

total: sum of everything

fast food: food that is quickly made and convenient if you are in a hurry

delivery: transported or taken to your house

dough: a mix of flour and water that is used to make the base of a pizza

take-out: food you take away from the restaurant to eat

(Source: irlanguage.com)

Blizzard hits Iran, 9 killed in avalanche

SOCIETY TEHRAN — Nine **d e s k** people have been killed by avalanche in Iran as raging blizzard and snow storms has hit 24 provinces of the country over the past few days.

East and West Azarbaijan, Isfahan, Ilam, Alborz, Ardebil, Tehran, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari, North Khorasan, Khorasan Razavi, Khuzestan, Zanjan, Semnan, Fars, Qom, Qazvin, Golestan, Lorestan, Kordestan, Kermanshah, Kohgiluyeh and Boyerahmad, Mazandaran, Markazi, and Hamedan provinces were struck by snow which began on January 25.

Some 29,000 individuals received rescue and relief services in 241 cities, towns and villages and 2,010 were accommodated, the Rescue and Relief Organization director Morteza Salimi said.

He added that 21 pregnant women were also rushed to the hospitals, Mehr news agency quoted Salimi as saying.



A snow plow was stranded by the avalanche on a road linking Marivan to Saqqez in Kordestan province.

Mother-baby room set at Tehran subway stations

SOCIETY TEHRAN — The eighth mother-**d e s k** and-baby room designated for breastfeeding and changing babies' diapers was set up at the Tajrish subway station, northern Tehran, on Monday.

In line with baby-friendly-city policies introduced and adopted Tehran City Council and municipality so far eight mother-and- baby rooms have been set up at subway

stations, an official with Tehran Urban and Suburban Railways Company Ali Abdollahpour said, IRIB reported.

"Currently some 16 people are working at the eight rooms and now we are planning on setting up places to take care of babies for some hours," Abdollahpour added.

The rooms are beautifully decorated and equipped with stuff mothers and babies may need, he highlighted.



A mother-and-baby room set up at Tehranpars subway station, eastern Tehran.

Ohio teen zaps cop with stun gun to fulfill bucket-list wish



NEWARK, Ohio (AP) — Police in central Ohio helped a teenage leukemia patient cross off a bucket-list item that was seriously shocking: She wanted to use a stun gun on someone.

Sixteen-year-old Alyssa Elkins got to do that Sunday. After a bit of training from Newark police, she zapped Sgt. Doug Bline — whod been first among the police department employees who volunteered for the task — as a crowd of supporters watched. Bline winced and fell onto a mat, guided by spotters.

"It is unpleasant to say the least, but if for

five seconds if it makes somebody's kind of dream come true, especially in her situation, I think it was well worth it," Bline said.

Alyssa described the experience as "awesome."

"I'm very grateful that people would put themselves out there to allow me to do that to them," she told WCMH-TV.

She had made her bucket list earlier in January, after her leukemia returned and she decided not to undergo further treatment, meaning she'd likely have just a few months to live. She added the stun-gun item to the list half-jokingly

after recalling video of her uncle, Josh Barry, a state trooper, being hit with a Taser during his training, The Columbus Dispatch reported.

It happened to Barry again Sunday, as he gave Alyssa a second chance to use the stun gun."I'll do anything for my niece," he told the Dispatch.

Alyssa's parents say working to check things off of her bucket list helps turn the focus to things other than her illness. One of the items up next is a planned family trip to Disney World in February.

Adult swaddling therapy fad hits Tokyo

TOKYO (Reuters) — Wrapped up from head to toe in a white bag and gently rocking from side to side, five Japanese mothers are hopeful Tokyo's latest health trend can cure their post-pregnancy aches and pains.

According to its exponents, Otonamaki, which translates as "adult wrapping", was devised by a Kyoto midwife who thought replicating how children are swaddled at birth could help mothers overcome post labor shoulder and hip pain.

The five mothers at a recent session in Tokyo lay on their backs with their knees on their chests bundled up in white cloths. Staff then helped them rock over cushions.

"It felt warm and there was this feeling with my body," said one mother who tried the 20 minute session.

"I have never experienced this before so its quite hard to describe properly." Not everyone is a fan. Chiropractor Shiro Oba was skeptical about its powers of healing and encouraged mothers with back pain to visit a physician. "There may be cases where people with asthma may find it easier to breath (in that position), but once the cloth is off it's the same thing," said Oba.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ↔ E

Ambassadors' wives join "I'm Lake Urmia" campaign

Wives of 12 ambassadors to Iran joined "I'm Lake Urmia" campaign, which aims to collect one million signatures required by the United Nation to help restore the lake, Mehr news agency reported.

Last weekend a group of ambassadors' wives from Malaysia, New Zealand, Hungary, China, Aljazeera, Tunisia, India, Indonesia, Cuba, the Philippines, Czech Republic, and Sierra Leone took a trip to the lake and joined the campaign to announce their support for the lake.

همسران سفرا به کمپین من دریاچه ارومیه هستم پیوستند

به گزارش خبرگزاری مهر همسران سفرای ۱۲ کشور مقیم ایران به کمپین من دریاچه ارومیه هستم که قصد دارد تا با جمع آوری یک میلیون امضا سازمان ملل را موظف برای کمک به احیای این دریاچه نماید پیوستند. هفته ی گذشته گروهی از همسران سفرای کشورهای مالزی، نیوزلند، مجارستان، چین، الجزایر، تونس، هند، اندونزی، کوبا، فیلیپین، چک و سیرالئون در جریان سفری به دریاچه ارومیه با امضای خود به عضویت کمپین من دریاچه ارومیه هستم درآمدند تا حمایت خود از دریاچه را اعلام کنند.

ENGLISH PROVERB

Time and tide wait for no man

■ **Explanation**: things will not wait for you when you are late

■ **For example**: Ellen: It's time to leave. Aren't you finished dressing yet? Fred: I can't decide which necktie looks best with this shirt. Ellen: Time and tide wait for no man, dear.

PHRASAL VERB

Cancel something out

■ **Meaning**: if two things cancel each other out, they are equally important and have an opposite effect to each other, so that neither one has any effect

■ **For example**: The losses in our overseas division have cancelled out the profits made in the home market.

ENGLISH IDIOM

Barefaced liar

■ **Explanation**: someone who lies easily, with a total lack of shame, is a barefaced liar

■ **For example**: That barefaced liar stole my watch and said he'd found it!



PUBLIC CALL FOR PRE – QUALIFICATION OF TENDERERS TWO

PHASES TENDER NO : 4917-33/6 – p /95

SUBJECT:PROVISION OF ADVANCED RESERVOIR LOGGING SERVICES ONCALL-OUT BASIS

National Iranian Drilling Company (NIDC) a wholly subsidiary of National Iranian oil Company (NIOC) intends to grant the provision of above-mentioned services to a well known and qualified contractor through the public call for Tenderers pre-qualification & signing the related contract.

A: Brief of the Scope of required Services.

PROVISION OF ADVANCED RESERVOIR LOGGING SERVICES IN ALL OFFSHORE & ONSHORE OIL & GAS OILFIELD OF IRAN ON CALL-OUT BASIS

B : Quality evaluation criteria of Tenderers

1- The Natural / Legal entities

2- Financial ability for the above- mentioned services and Bank Tender Guarantee in the amount of Iranian Rials five Billion nine hundred eighty eight million (5/988/000/000) for Iranian Companies and Euro one hundred eighty six thousand (186/000) for foreign companies

3- Planning and technical ability.

4- Ability for providing the Equipment and Machinery

5- Necessary experience and knowledge in the respective field.

6- Company good reputation

7- Appropriate standby capacity for work

C: The minimum acceptable quality score is 80

D: Tenderers may visit this Pre-qualification advertisement by referring to the National Information Center of the Iranian Tenders (<http://iets.mporg.ir>) with Call code number 1/475/012

E: Tenderers may obtain the pre – qualification documents by sending their formal application to the NIDC's Contracts Department

Fax : +98-61-34148320-1 Or

Email: ahkarimi@nidc.ir

F: All competent tenderers may complete and deliver the prequalification documents to NIDC by handing over them to room 107- Tender Committee-First Floor-Operational building- Koyee Mellat – Ahvaz – Iran within 14 days from the date of the second issuance of this advertisement

G: Final Tender documents will be sent to the Emails of the competent and qualified contractors approved by NIDC.

National Iranian Drilling Company
Contracts Department

The Tehran Times new pocket-sized glossary is now available on the market. The reader-friendly is a rich source of the most common journalistic terminology collected by the daily's retired staff.

It can benefit a wide range of tastes from students to professional journalists. Persian equivalents have been given for all entries, including idioms and expressions. The glossary also includes example sentences for entries the authors thought it would be a bit difficult to learn.

For more information contact:

(021) 430 51 603-4



U.S. attorney general Sally Yates fired in Muslim ban row

By staff & agencies

The United States President Donald Trump has sacked the country's acting attorney general after she took the rare step of defying the White House by refusing to enforce his sweeping immigration ban.

Sally Quillian Yates had early on Monday ordered Department of Justice lawyers to stop defending Trump's executive order, resulting in her dismissal just hours later.

"The acting attorney general, Sally Yates, has betrayed the Department of Justice by refusing to enforce a legal order designed to protect the citizens of the United States," the White House press secretary's office said in an unusually caustic statement.

"Ms. Yates is an Obama Administration appointee who is weak on borders and very weak on illegal immigration."

Yates had agreed to serve in an acting capacity until Senator Jeff Sessions, Trump's pick for U.S. attorney general, was confirmed by the Senate. The White House said that Dana Boente, U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, would now be acting U.S. attorney general until Sessions is approved.

Democrats blasted Trump's dismissal of Yates and pledged to make it and the new Trump order a part of the debate over Sessions' nomination.

■ Trump replaces ICE Chief Ragsdale, appoints Homan

Elsewhere, Trump on Monday quietly replaced the acting director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), an arm of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), following a chaotic weekend during which DHS customs officials struggled to interpret and comply with Trump's controversial executive order barring travelers from seven Muslim-majority countries.

In a statement released late Monday evening, the newly confirmed DHS secretary, John Kelly, announced that Thomas Homan had been named the new acting director of ICE. The statement did not mention Daniel Ragsdale, who was being replaced. (Ragsdale resumes his role as deputy director, according to an ICE official.)

The announcement from DHS capped off a night of political drama that began when acting Attorney General Sally Yates announced that she would not direct the Justice Department to enforce Trump's executive order on immigration.

By promoting Homan, who most recently led the arm of ICE that enforces detentions and deportations, the Trump administration signaled its intent to place a greater emphasis on the harsh enforcement measures that Homan carried out.

As the associate director of ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO), Homan "led ICE's efforts to identify, arrest, detain, and remove illegal aliens, including those who present a danger to national security or are a risk to public safety, as well as those who enter the United States illegally or otherwise undermine the integrity of our immigration laws and our border control efforts," the DHS statement read.

Homan's appointment also raises the possibility that Trump might attempt to carry out a campaign promise to deport many of the 11 million undocumented immigrants currently living in the United States. The Trump administration previously said that it will ini-



tially focus deportation efforts on immigrants convicted of violent crimes.

■ Defiant Trump mocks Democrats over order

Meantime, a night after firing his acting attorney general Yates, Trump mocked his Democratic congressional critics on Tuesday and demanded that the Senate confirm his pick to lead the Department of Justice, Jeff Sessions.

"Nancy Pelosi and Fake Tears Chuck Schumer held a rally at the steps of The Supreme Court and mic did not work (a mess)-just like Dem party!" Trump tweeted, referring to the top Democrats in Congress, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer.

■ State Dept. officials should quit if they disagree with Trump, White House Warns

The development follows as the White House on Monday warned State Department officials that they should leave their jobs if they did not agree with President Trump's agenda, an extraordinary effort to stamp out a wave of internal dissent against Trump's temporary ban on entry visas for people from seven predominantly Muslim countries.

Career officials at the State Department are circulating a so-called dissent cable, which says that Trump's executive order closing the nation's doors to more than 200 million people with the intention of weeding out a handful of would-be terrorists will not make the nation safer, and might instead deepen the threat. These career bureaucrats have a problem with it?" Sean Spicer, the White House press secretary, told reporters. "They should either get with the program or they can go."

It was yet another stark confrontation between the new president, who is moving swiftly to upend years of policies, and a federal bureaucracy still struggling with the jolting change of power in Washington.

At the White House, where questions about the ban overshadowed all other issues on Monday, Spicer acknowledged the State Department's dissent channel has long been a way for its staff to register objections over administration policies. But he displayed little patience for it.

"The president has a very clear vision," Spicer said. "He's been clear on it since the campaign, he's been clear on it since taking office — that he's going to put the country first."

"If somebody has a problem with

that agenda," he added, "that does call into question whether or not they should continue in that post."

■ Hundreds of U.S. diplomats protest trump's immigration ban in internal memos

Separately, in a rare move, dozens of American diplomats across the world have drafted a formal "dissent memo" to express their objection to Trump's entry ban against several Muslim countries, according to a report.

The draft, which has been circulating among diplomats and associates abroad over the past few days, denounces the ban as an "un-American" move and warns that it would actually harm efforts to protect the U.S. from terrorists, ABC News reported on Monday. The draft criticizes the Trump administration for "alienating" the governments of the Muslim-majority countries, who view the "knee jerk" directive as an "attack on Islam," the report added.

Additionally, the memo warns that most terrorist attacks on U.S. mainland have been carried out by native-born or naturalized U.S. citizens "who have been living in the United States for decades, if not since birth."

■ U.S. states, Democrats, rights groups move to block Trump's anti-Muslim order

The Monday backlash included an announcement by the state of Washington to sue.

The statement came as 348 visa holders were kept from boarding flights heading for the U.S. this week, and more than 200 people came to the country but were denied entry, according to a Homeland Security document seen by Reuters.

Over 735 people, including 394 green card holders, were also questioned in U.S. airports by the Customs and Border Protection officers.

Waivers from the ban are also being issued this week to allow 872 people to enter the country.

"It is an insult and a danger to all of the people of the state of Washington, of all faiths," Governor Jay Inslee told reporters.

Washington state Attorney General Bob Ferguson spoke of a lawsuit against the new president that includes reference to the violation of the First Amendment of the U.S. constitution.

Microsoft, Amazon and Expedia Inc, all based in the state, have come out on support of the move.

Attorneys general in other states, including New York and California, are considering a similar lawsuit.

The order signed over the weekend is being challenged in the courts by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) also held a press conference at its headquarters in Washington, DC, to announce that they have filed a lawsuit.

At U.S. Congress, Democratic lawmakers introduced legislation to rescind the order.

■ Trump's ban

Trump issued an executive order late on Friday to impose a 90-day entry ban on citizens from Iran, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Sudan, Libya and Somalia, block refugees from Syria indefinitely, and suspend all refugee admissions for 120 days.

The decision came as Trump pressed into his second week in office, defending his sweeping immigration ban in what has become a quickly escalating political crisis.

According to a draft document obtained by The Associated Press news agency, Trump is now considering an executive order that would target some immigrants for deportation if they become dependent on government assistance.

The draft order calls for the identification and removal "as expeditiously as possible" of any foreigner who takes certain kinds of public welfare benefits.

■ Global outrage over Trump's immigration ban

Trump's ban prompted global condemnation and has sparked protests within the U.S., with activists there gathering at airports across the country to demand that U.S. authorities release detained nationals from the affected countries.

The executive order unleashed chaos at U.S. airports as customs officials struggled to determine who should be allowed to enter the United States and who shouldn't. It also sparked scores of protests around the globe and garnered harsh opposition from elected officials across the political spectrum.

There is open hostility to Trump's ideas in some pockets of the government, and deep frustration among those enforcing the visa ban that the White House announced the order without warning or consulting them.

The visa ban has rattled other agencies, as well: the Defense Department, which says it hurts the military's local partners in conflict zones like Iraq; the Department of Homeland Security, whose customs officers are struggling to enforce the directive; and the Justice Department, whose lawyers are charged with defending its legality.

The reverberations extended beyond Washington. Corporate chiefs from Detroit to Silicon Valley sharply criticized the ban, saying it was inconsistent with their values.

Trump also faced mounting legal challenges, as two Democratic-leaning states, Massachusetts and Washington, signaled they would attack the policy in court and a Muslim advocacy group filed a lawsuit calling it an unconstitutional religious test.

Major Republican figures like Senators John McCain and Lindsey Graham have also criticized the ban, creating further confusion in Washington.

The hastily crafted plan has also caused, the US stocks to suffer their biggest drop in the year 2017.

Israeli forces shoot, injure Palestinian teenager near West Bank checkpoint

Israeli military forces have shot and injured a Palestinian teenage boy near a security checkpoint in the northwestern part of the West Bank.

Yahya Omar Ali Sarhan, 19, said he was walking toward the Jabara checkpoint in the city of Tulkarm, located about 15 kilometers west of Nablus, on Monday when he saw two Israeli soldiers wandering in a nearby olive orchard. Sarhan said that one of the soldiers opened unprovoked fire at him, injuring him in the knee.

The Palestinian teenager added that the soldiers then ran toward the checkpoint. The Palestine Red Crescent Society said its staff transported Sarhan to a hospital.

The development came shortly after Israeli settlers threw stones at Palestinian vehicles traveling on the main road between the occupied West Bank cities of Ramallah and Nablus, leaving a Palestinian man injured.

Ghassan Daghlis, a Palestinian official who monitors settlement-related activities in the northern West Bank, said Nahed Qabaha sustained injuries on Monday afternoon when illegal settlers pelted his minibus with stones near As-Sawiya town, located 18 kilometers south of Nablus.

Daghlis added that Qabaha was taken to a hospital for treatment. Ten vehicles were reportedly damaged in the stone-throwing attack.

The occupied Palestinian territories have witnessed tensions ever since Israel imposed restrictions on the entry of Palestinian worshippers into the al-Aqsa Mosque compound in East al-Quds (Jerusalem) in August 2015.

Nearly 280 Palestinians have lost their lives at the hands of Israeli forces since the beginning of October that year.

■ Palestinians decry Israel's settlement bill

Meantime, Palestinian politicians in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory have warned of dangerous consequences if Israel's parliament passes a bill to legalize land grabs in the West Bank.

Speaking to Al Jazeera, Hanin Zoabi, a Palestinian politician in Israel's Knesset, said the bill is "an act of annexation" and part of Israel's broader plans to "expand settlements and Judaize Jerusalem".

Zoabi, a member of the predominantly Arab Joint List electoral coalition, argued that Israel's headline Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu "is no longer worried about international criticism" now that Donald Trump has become the United States president. "Netanyahu wants there to be no rationale and no reason to negotiate with Palestinians," she said.

More than half-a-million Israelis live in Jewish-only settlements across the occupied West Bank, including East al-Quds (Jerusalem), according to the Israeli rights group B'Tselem.

Although all settlements are considered illegal under international law, there are more than a hundred outposts that were built without authorization and are considered illegal by even the Israeli government.

In practice, Israel has confiscated Palestinian land since its military occupation of the West Bank, including al-Quds, and the Gaza Strip started as a result of the 1967 Middle East war.

Though Prime Minister Netanyahu had previously opposed the bill, he has now declared his support for it. Writing on Twitter on Sunday, he said the bill would "prevent recurrent attempts to harm the settlement enterprise".

■ Flurry of settlement construction

Settlement expansion has been particularly rampant in recent weeks, particularly since the United Nations Security Council voted in favor of a resolution demanding the halt of settlement activity by Israel in the West Bank last year, with the U.S. abstaining under the administration of former President Barack Obama.

After that vote, Trump, who was sworn in on January 20, vowed to change things at the UN.

Under Netanyahu's reign, settlements expanded some 23 percent between 2009 and 2014.

Though Trump has not made official statements about settlement growth, Palestinians in the West Bank are already seeing the effects of his presidency on the occupied territory.

The White House has announced that the U.S. is in the early stages of fulfilling Trump's pledge to move the American embassy from Tel Aviv to al-Quds (Jerusalem), a move that has been opposed by Palestinian leadership and by Palestinians in Israel and the West Bank.

(Source: agencies)

Barack Obama hits out at Donald Trump, warning 'American values' are at stake

Ex-president of the United States Barack Obama has re-entered the political fray just ten days after he handed power over to his successors Donald Trump, stating that he supports mass protests against the "extreme vetting" orders.

"The President fundamentally disagrees with the notion of discriminating against individuals because of their faith or religion," Obama's spokesman said in a statement that was the former president's first since leaving office.

"Citizens exercising their Constitutional rights to assemble, organize and have their voices heard by their elected officials is exactly what we expect to see when American values are at stake."

It is rare for former presidents to criticize their successors - and certainly not just a week and a half after they are sworn in.

Protests continued across America and around the world - including in Britain.

In the U.S., at least three top national security officials - Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly and Rex Tillerson, who is awaiting confirmation to lead the State Department - have told associates they were not aware of details of the directive until around the time Trump signed it. Leading intelligence officials were also left largely in the dark, according to U.S. officials.

Tennessee Senator Bob Corker, the top Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations committee, said that despite White House assurances that congressional leaders were consulted, he learned about the order in the media.

(Source: The Telegraph)

Nationwide protests in Britain over Trump's Muslim ban

Tens of thousands of people across Britain have protested against Prime Minister Theresa May's decision to formally invite the United States President Donald Trump to the country.

Protesters at Monday evening's gatherings demanded that the government withdraw its invitation in light of Trump's decision to ban citizens of

seven Muslim-majority countries from entering the United States.



The rallies, which were held in every major British city and several smaller towns, drew huge crowds despite being announced less than a day earlier.

May, who met Trump a day before the ban was announced, has refused to rescind the invitation despite strong

rebukes from opposition politicians and a parliamentary petition that has so far collected more than 1.5 million signatures.

The opposition leader, Labour's Jeremy Corbyn, has called May a disgrace and demanded that Trump be banned from Britain until the bar on Muslims entering the U.S. is lifted.

(Source: agencies)

 <p>N.I.O.C 1395.4707</p>	<p>PUBLIC CALL FOR PRE – QUALIFICATION OF TENDERERS</p> <p>TWO PHASES TENDER NO .4963-33/6 – S O/95</p> <p>SUBJECT: THE LEASE OF 125 JOINTS OF DOWN HOLE MOTORS.</p>	 <p>National Iranian Drilling Company</p>
<p>National Iranian Drilling Company (NIDC) a wholly subsidiary of National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) intends to grant the provision of above-mentioned services to a well known and qualified contractor through the public call for Tenderers pre-qualification & signing the related contract.</p>		
<p>A: Brief of the Scope of required Services. THE LEASE OF 125 JOINTS OF DOWN HOLE MOTORS FOR UTILIZATION IN THE OIL & GAS WELLS OF IRAN</p> <p>B : Quality evaluation criteria of Tenderers</p> <p>1- The Natural / Legal entities</p> <p>2- Financial ability for the above- mentioned services and Bank Tender Guarantee</p> <p>3- Planning and technical ability.</p> <p>4- Ability for providing the Equipment and Machinery</p> <p>5- Necessary experience and knowledge in the respective field.</p> <p>6- Company good reputation</p> <p>7- Appropriate standby capacity for work</p> <p>C: The minimum acceptable quality score is 60</p> <p>D: Tenderers may visit this advertisement by referring to the National Information center of the Iranian tenders (http://iets .mporg.ir)with call code number 1/474/825</p> <p>E: tenderers may obtain pre – qualification and Tender Draft documents by sending their formal application to the NIDC's Contracts Department Fax : +98-61-34148320-1 Or Email: ahkarimi@nide.ir</p> <p>F: All competent tenderers may complete and deliver the prequalification documents to NIDC by handing over them to room 102- Tender Committee-First Floor-Operational building- Koyee Mellat – Ahvaz – Iran within 14 days from the date of the second issuance of this advertisement</p> <p>I: Final Tender documents will be sent to the Emails of the competent and qualified contractors approved by NIDC.</p>		
<p>National Iranian Drilling Company Contracts Department</p>		

Real Madrid fans whistling Cristiano Ronaldo is ‘madness’ - Iker Casillas

Former Real Madrid captain Iker Casillas has defended former teammate Cristiano Ronaldo after he reacted angrily to more whistles from his own team’s fans at the Estadio Santiago Bernabeu.

Ronaldo has been barracked by Madrid supporters on and off over recent years, even as he became the club’s record all-time scorer and helped them win two Champions League trophies in the last three years.

There were more whistles and boos after he had misplaced some passes early in Sunday’s 3-0 La Liga win at home to Real Sociedad, with video appearing to show the Portugal captain



responding by mouthing an offensive phrase in the direction of the stands. He then provided an assist and goal as Zinedine Zidane’s side stretched their lead at the top of the title.

Casillas, now at Porto, told Onda Cero’s “El Transistor” show that he could not understand the “madness” of the Ronaldo criticism.

“These things happen in stages, Cristiano sells a lot, and demands a lot of himself,” Casillas, who also

faced whistles during his time with Madrid, said. “Along with [Leo] Messi he is the best in the world -- he has this ... this responsibility.

“As a Madridista, sometimes you don’t understand why it can happen. Six months ago Madrid were European champions, one month ago they were world champions. He has just won the trophy as the world’s best player. Last year I remember a difficult moment before [Rafa] Benítez left. Then at the end of the season they were in the clouds with the Champions League.

“If he scores two or three goals a game, that is just what he is supposed to do. It is madness. You must help him -- have people around him and the club who help to protect the players. He must continue trying to be the player he is, the best in the world.”

On “El Larguero,” ex-Madrid striker Hugo Sanchez said Ronaldo might be better off “biting his tongue” in future.

“It is difficult. I suffered many difficult situations, lots of insults, but playing away from home,” Sanchez said. “At the Bernabeu, you expect support and affection to lift you. I never confronted the fans there -- at the Camp Nou yes, but not the Bernabeu. Maybe Cristiano needs to bite his tongue and think about it as a bad relationship does not help. You have to just take it, they can insult you, but you cannot insult them.”

Sanchez said that even if the 31-year-old’s contribution to the team would inevitably drop a little as the years passed, his team’s fans should help him.

“It is something strange that is happening with Cristiano,” he said. “The fans are very demanding, and even more when Ronaldo season after season is the leader and goal scorer who gets the team out of difficult moments.

“They get used to him scoring so many goals and just expect it to always happen. So when his level drops a little, it seems he is in freefall. It is impossible to repeat what he did last year, but he still has two or three years at the maximum level for Madrid.

“Maybe some people don’t like some of his attitude, but Cristiano is like that, that is his personality. He was signed from Manchester United because he is like that, because he played like this. So if we have loved him so much for that, we must keep respecting him, supporting him, and helping him.”

(Source: Soccernet)

Bundesliga posts more than €3 billion in revenue for the first time

Professional soccer in Germany continued on its successful course in the 2015/16 season. For the first time, the 18 clubs making up the Bundesliga posted a total of more than €3 billion in revenue.

At €3.24 billion, total revenue was up 23.7 percent compared with the previous financial year (€2.62 billion), marking the 12th revenue record in succession. Of the 18 Bundesliga clubs, 13 posted revenue in excess of €100 million in 2015/16. Christian Seifert, Chief Executive Officer of the Bundesliga, announced these figures today during his presentation of the Bundesliga Report 2017 in Frankfurt/Main.

Germany’s second division (Bundesliga 2), which had generated total revenue of over €500 million for the first time in the prior year (€504.6 million), posted revenue of €608.3 million in the 2015/16 season, up 20.6 percent. Together, the 36 clubs in the Bundesliga and Bundesliga 2 generated a record €3.85 billion in revenue (up 23.2 percent).

At €206.2 million, the 18 Bundesliga clubs generated four times more profit after tax than in the prior year – an amount that exceeds the aggregate profits of the Bundesliga over the previous four years. It is far and away the best result in the history of the league. Sixteen of the 18 Bundesliga clubs earned a profit. On the basis of EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization), all 18 clubs were in the black in 2015/16. If both leagues are viewed together, 34 of the 36 clubs were profitable, as was the case in the prior year.

Despite higher expenses for players, coaches and support staff, the Bundesliga personnel cost ratio – i.e., personnel expenses in relation to total revenue – declined to 32.6 percent.

The positive business trend was also noticeable in the taxes and charges paid, which for the first time totaled more than €1 billion. The clubs paid an aggregate amount of €1.13 billion in taxes, social security and accident insurance contributions. The number of people directly employed or commissioned by the 36 professional clubs and their subsidiaries rose once again, from 50,237 to 53,114.

(Source: Bundesliga)

How brilliant is Bayern captain Philipp Lahm?

UEFA.com sets up a shrine to Philipp Lahm ahead of his 500th appearance for Bayern München. “The most intelligent footballer I’ve ever coached,” said Josep Guardiola, for starters.

Philipp Lahm has lifted more than his fair share of major club and international trophies. Diminutive in stature, the FIFA World Cup-winning captain has always been a giant on the field for Bayern München and Germany. Allow UEFA.com to pay tribute to a player lauded as much for his attitude and intelligence as he is for his talent ahead of what will be his 500th appearance for Bayern at the weekend.

■ What they say

“One of the reasons for my success at Bayern is the relationship with Philipp Lahm; he helped me a lot from the beginning. He always performs. I have never seen Philipp have a poor match. He will always be a special person in my life, and he is an absolute legend. Philipp Lahm is the most intelligent footballer I have ever coached.”

■ Josep Guardiola, former Bayern coach

“Philipp is the perfect professional who will give everything to be successful. He was always a key person for me to discuss ideas with. For almost ten years, Philipp Lahm provided consistency, reliability and the highest standard in the national side. He has a natural authority, takes on responsibility, is communicative and is a natural leader.”

■ Joachim Löw, Germany coach

“As one of his ex-coaches said: ‘Philipp started playing football in my womb’. He started walking aged one and always had a soft ball at his feet – he was only allowed to play with a soft ball, otherwise his shots would have broken everything! Sometimes we went to FT Gern – where his dad and uncle played – to watch and play on the sidelines. He was five when the coach told him to pack his things and sign up!” Daniela Lahm, his mother

Current tally

International: 113 appearances, 5 goals

UEFA club competition: 128 appearances, 3 goals

Domestic competition: 441 appearances, 17 goals

Claims to fame

Bayern

- Born and bred in Munich, Lahm started playing at a local club in the district of Gern. Bayern and 1860 München wanted to sign him at the age of 12 – he chose the former because they also offered him the opportunity to serve as a ball boy during senior matches.

- He has won seven Bundesliga titles, as well as two Under-19 domestic championships with Bayern.

- His positional evolution down the years is a topic for a book in itself. When Lahm joined Stuttgart for a two-year loan in 2003, Felix Magath converted him into a left-back, where he then excelled for Germany and Bayern. He then stated he would prefer to play on the right of defence – where he is normally deployed now – having also been transformed into a fine midfielder during Guardiola’s time in Bavaria.

- He cited defeat by Chelsea in the 2012 UEFA Champions League final on home soil as the driving force behind victory at Wembley 12 months later. He said: “After that match, a team can either fall apart completely or it can grow closer together. We chose the latter.”

- Last year he overtook Oliver Kahn as Bayern’s leading appearance maker in the UEFA Champions League. “But Oli, like me, has one title,” said Lahm. “I want to overtake him in that regard as well.” Kahn happily returned the banter: “103 matches and not a single goal? That’s a feat in itself!”

UEFA.com users’ Team of the Year: 2006, 2008, 2012, 2013, 2014

■ Germany

- On his dream opening goal six minutes into the first game of the 2006 FIFA World Cup: “The ball was supposed to go exactly into that spot. It was probably the goal of my

lifetime.” His most important strike for Germany came two years later, though, a last-minute winner against Turkey in the UEFA EURO 2008 semi-finals.

- From the 2006 World Cup onwards, he made the all-star team for all five major tournaments he competed in: the 2006, 2010 and 2014 World Cups, as well as UEFA EURO 2008 and 2012.

- Fernando Torres has been one of Lahm’s tormentors-in-chief down the years. Their first encounter came in 2002, when Torres scored Spain’s winner in the UEFA European Under-19 Championship final. Six years later, in the senior showpiece, El Niño did it again, outpacing Lahm before finishing deftly to win the title for his country. As if that was not enough, Torres was also in the winning team when Lahm suffered heartache in the 2010 World Cup semi-finals, as well as the 2012 UEFA Champions League final and 2015 semis.

- Lahm’s humble personality is reflected by his comments after Germany’s 7-1 semi-final victory against Brazil in 2014. “It was oppressive,” he said. “Nobody wants opponents to make mistakes of this magnitude, as they usually don’t happen at this level.”

■ What you might not know

- Lahm runs a foundation bearing his name which mostly focuses on improving lives in South Africa through football. In 2008, he helped to found a club just outside Johannesburg, and the foundation regularly runs activities and tournaments there.

- Lahm did not commit a foul in the Bundesliga between September 2014 and October 2015.

- It’s hard to find many negatives regarding Lahm, but here is one: his seven defeats by Borussia Dortmund are more than any other Bayern player has ever suffered.

- Lahm was Germany’s youngest-ever World Cup captain when, aged 26, he took over from the injured Michael Ballack in 2010.

■ What he says

“[On the Wembley final triumph in 2013] The pressure was immense, I had never felt anything like that before. It’s an incredible feeling, that’s for sure, especially after we lost the final so narrowly at home in a penalty shoot-out. You could see at the beginning of the match that there was great pressure on the team, as we knew it would be even harder to lose a third final.” [Speaking in 2004] I am still a very young player and have not achieved anything yet. I have still got so much to learn.”

“No matter what happens I will always be able to look back on a career that I thoroughly enjoyed and I consider successful. I’d love to win the Champions League again. If you have won it once, you want to have that feeling again.”

“It was always a pleasure for me to help guide the style of play of my teams. Be it on the pitch, in training or through discussions with the players and the coaches. Being captain is the highest manifestation that this attitude is recognised.”

“A professional footballer today must have a minimum level of social qualities, otherwise he will become isolated from the team and he will fail in the end. Every good player needs talent, ambition, discipline and social competence.”

■ What he might achieve yet

- He could become Bayern’s most-decorated Bundesliga



Chelsea midfielder N’Golo Kante says Didier Drogba’s rise inspired him



Chelsea midfielder N’Golo Kante has told SFR Sport that Didier Drogba’s unconventional rise to the top fuelled his own progress from amateur football to the Premier League.

Drogba was 26 when he arrived at Chelsea from Marseille in 2004 after spending the early part of his career battling for recognition at Le Mans and Guingamp.

Like Ivory Coast legend Drogba, Kante did not attend a club youth academy in France, instead playing amateur football and then learning his trade at Boulogne and Caen before the 12 months that changed his life after he joined Leicester City in 2015.

The 25-year-old, who joined Chelsea in the summer after Leicester’s shock title triumph, said: “I came from amateur football.

“The professional world makes a lot of young amateurs dream, and to go from one to the other can inspire others, like me, when I heard stories of Didier

Drogba and [France defender] Adil Rami, who went from being amateurs to becoming pros.

“It was a source of strength, and told me that it was possible, even if you start from a long way off.”

After playing football in Suresnes in the Paris suburbs, Kante joined Boulogne on an amateur contract in 2010, working his way up to becoming a member of France’s Euro 2016 squad last season.

“My failures were something for me -- it was my first contact with professional football,” he said. “Though it didn’t go all that well, it’s not a regret, it’s just like that.

“But looking back, those failures helped me consider football differently, consider the pro world differently.

“Perhaps I would have been different, I would have left my home earlier, my family, my friends. I grew up just as my friends did until 19 before leaving home, and it’s because of that I’m who I am now.”

(Source: ESPN)

La Liga to introduce video referees from 2018



Video referees are expected to be used in Spanish soccer by the 2018-19 season when they are fully approved by FIFA, La Liga president Javier Tebas has said.

Tebas was speaking after Sunday’s 1-1 draw between Barcelona and Real Betis, a game in which champions Barca appeared to have been denied a clear goal.

Video replays showed that after Betis’ Cristiano Piccini diverted Aleix Vidal’s pass towards goal the ball crossed the line by around a metre before defender Aïssi Mandi slid in and scrambled the it away.

“The tests are already underway. We have been working on video referees for the last eight months,” Tebas told El País.

“We will be testing it from next season in La Liga,” he added.

“If FIFA finally approve it, we will start using it from July 2018.”

Football’s law-making body IFAB approved last March a two-year trial of the video assistant referee (VAR) system with

access to replays to help match officials review key decisions.

Unlike other top leagues in Europe, La Liga does not have goal-line technology available because it is considered too expensive to be put in place.

Barcelona coach Luis Enrique believes the officials need assistance.

“The referees need help, whether it’s with cameras or whatever, for decisions that favour us or go against us,” he said. “The technology can help us. I’ve already said that before.”

Not everyone, however, is in favour of the technology.

“I’m against video refereeing because it would break the essence of what soccer is,” Atletico Madrid president Enrique Cerezo told Marca.

“Referees make mistakes and get it right. There are times that those go in favour and others were they go against. I don’t see a problem with this.”

(Source: Reuters)

The U.S. wrestlers planning to travel to Iran despite travel ban

1→ The U.S. and Iran — two of the world's top wrestling countries — have long found common ground on the mat. The U.S. wrestling team was the first American sports team to compete in Iran in nearly 20 years back in 1998, and the Iranian team has competed in the U.S. more than a dozen times since the 1990s.

American wrestlers are typically treated well by the Iranians and their fans, too. Former Olympic champion Jordan Burroughs said this summer that he was mobbed by selfie-seeking supporters at the airport during his last trip to Tehran — and in June the Iranian Federation sent a gift to Burroughs to commemorate the birth of his daughter.

"Wrestling has shown a long, rich history of transcending politics and participating despite governmental disagreements," Bender said. "That's the beauty of sport and the Olympic movement. It's about competition, not politics."

USA Wrestling plans to send 13 wrestlers, two coaches, a referee, a medical staff member, a videographer and other official delegates to Kermanshah, which is in western Iran some 310 miles southwest of Tehran.

The annual World Cups in each discipline are among the most prestigious tournaments in the world. Iran will also host the Greco-Roman World Cup in Tehran in March.

The U.S. team has yet to be fully approved to make the trip to Iran. But Bender said that last-minute approvals to travel there are commonplace because of how long the process can take.

"Reasonable people would say 'Well, why would you go through that hassle and take that risk of not going?' Well, the reward is the competition. It's really important for our athletes," Bender said.



Saeid Ezatolahi linked with Olympiacos: Report

SPORTS Greek giant Olympiacos showed **d e s k** interest in signing Iranian rising star Saeid Ezatolahi, the local media reported.

Ezatolahi's contract with Rostov expired at the end of 2016 and he is weighing up his offers.

The 20-year-old defensive midfielder has caught the eye of Anderlecht, Panathinaikos, Hamburg, Persepolis,

Stoke City and an unnamed Chinese team.

Ezatolahi made headlines when he became the youngest player to appear in the Iranian Pro League and, at international level, he went on to be the youngest person to score for his country.

He ended up at Rostov in Russia via Atletico Madrid but, at 20, he has been keen for more game time.

Iran U23 wheelchair basketball players were determined to win title: coach



SPORTS Iran U23 wheelchair basketball coach said that they took part at the IJBF Asia Oceania Zone Championships with the aim of winning the title.

The Iranian team finished in first place after beating Japan 67-51 in the final match.

The tournament brought six teams Thailand (host), Iran, Japan, Australia, China and India together in Bangkok.

The Iranian team advanced to the world championship along with Japan and Australia. The prestigious event will be held at the Mattamy Athletic Centre in downtown Toronto, Canada from June 8 to 16.

"I am satisfied with our performance since several strong teams had participated in this edition. Our players tried hard in the final match because we had previously lost to Japan," Palar told Paralympic.ir.

"Since the early start of the tournament, we wanted to win the title and have accomplished our goals. Our players trained hard in pre-tournament training camps and now they have earned what they wanted in the start of the event," he added.

"We are going to get good results in the world championship and will begin our training camps from the next month. We need more facilities to improve," Palar added.

Dejagah experience and abilities will help us, says VfL Wolfsburg coach



SPORTS Wolfsburg head **d e s k** coach Valerien Ismael is happy with the signing of Iranian midfielder Ashkan Dejagah as he believes that player's abilities will help his side to come out of crisis.

"I am delighted that Ashkan is now with us. His abilities and experience, will bring the team further. It is of course clear that he will first have to get used to things, but I am quite sure that will happen very quickly, as Ashkan is a player who lives from his determination and mentality," commented VfL head-coach Valerien Ismael.

Tomorrow Dejagah will train with the team for the first time, before later being officially presented as a new

Green-White in the media room in the 'VfL-Center'.

"Over the past few days, we have repeatedly commented on our wish to make use of the transfer window, if a spontaneous opportunity should arise or if a creative solution should become available. In Ashkan, we have signed an experienced footballer, who is eager to play for VfL Wolfsburg and is a true team player. With his versatility, we have a further option available to us in the squad," noted VfL Sporting director Olaf Rebbe.

The right-sided attacker played for Wolfsburg between 2007 and 2012 and helped them win the Bundesliga in 2008/09 before leaving for English side Fulham FC in 2012.

Iran's Alireza Haghighi to join England's Port Vale

Iranian international goalkeeper Alireza Haghighi has reached an agreement to join English club Port Vale.

The 28-year-old goalie has cancelled his contract with Portuguese club Maritimo following disagreements with the coach.

Haghighi started his playing career at Persepolis in 2006 at the age of 16.

He joined Rubin Kazan of Russia in 2012 and then moved to Sporting Covilha on loan. He has also played

for Portugal's Penafiel.

Haghighi represented Iran national football team in the 2014 World Cup and showed a decent performance against Argentina in group stage.

Port Vale Football Club is a professional association football club based in Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent, England. The team competes in League One, the third tier of the English football league system.

(Source: Tasnim)



Werder Bremen manager gives 'red card' to Trump's travel ban



The German-Iranian coach would be forbidden from traveling to the United States under the president's executive order.

Werder Bremen manager and former Seattle Sounders player Alexander Nouri has issued a strong rebuke to President Donald Trump's executive action, which personally affects the Bundesliga boss.

Nouri was born in Germany but has Iranian citizenship through his father. Under Trump's decree, Nouri is unable to travel to the United States until the travel ban is lifted.

"In sports, the U.S. president would probably get a red card for unsporting behavior," the Bremen coach

said in quotes published in Bild. "I have great confidence in our policy and am concerned about how our democratic achievements of recent decades have just been trampled on."

he 37-year-old coach played for the Seattle Sounders briefly in 1999 during the club's USL days. Though he said he wasn't planning a trip to the United States, Nouri still felt compelled to speak out about the controversial measure.

"I consider it right and absolutely necessary to say something about it," Nouri said.

(Source: Goal)

Wrestler Jordan Burroughs: World Cup event in Iran also about diplomacy

There is no place five-time world champion Jordan Burroughs enjoys competing more than wrestling-crazed Iran. The passion of the fans and level of competition is unmatched anywhere in the world. So you can imagine his concern this weekend when the Iranian Foreign Ministry responded to Donald Trump's immigration ban by saying it would not allow to Americans to enter Iran indefinitely.

Burroughs and a handful of other Americans are scheduled to leave Feb. 8 for a World Cup tournament in Kermanshah, Iran.

"All of the sudden it became this overnight thing," Burroughs said. "Here is this country that has been so instrumental to the culture and sport of wrestling. They are the greatest fans in the world. You just hope because of politics they don't say, 'Sorry, but this time the show is going to go on without you.'"

At least for now, that doesn't appear to be the case. Travel arrangements have already been booked and the visa and qualification process is complete, Burroughs said. On Monday, USA Wrestling president Rich Bender assured them the trip would happen as planned, the 16th time U.S. wrestlers will compete in Iran since 1998, when the U.S. freestyle team was the first American sports team to do so.

"This tour continues a long history of goodwill and cooperation between the United States and Iran through wrestling, which is an impressive example of diplomacy between the people of these nations through sport," Bender said in a statement. "This is an important international competition, and we look forward to competing against the World's best wrestling teams."

The tournament is of heightened importance to Burroughs, the big gold-medal favorite who disappointed last summer in Rio when he failed to medal. The World Cup will mark Burroughs' first major international tournament since the Olympics. Though he admitted there could be added anxiety in Iran given the current political climate, he reiterated Bender's suggestion that the visit is as much about diplomacy as it is winning.

"Sports is one of the few institutions that transcends race, religion, culture and government," Burroughs said. "For me, making America great again starts internally with how you deal with the people around you. At the same time, of course you think, 'what if they want to retaliate? Here's a plane with 25 Americans landing in Tehran. That's a scary place to be. [President Trump] doesn't have to be there. He's making these decisions from his office while we will be in an arena with 13,000 Iranian fans. But you just try to be as diplomatic and respectful as possible regardless of what you believe or our government's decisions. You try to show that it's character that matters most."

The tournament is scheduled for Feb. 16 and 17. The decision for the U.S. to compete in Iran isn't entirely a surprise. During the Cold War, the U.S. competed regularly in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and those teams competed stateside. And since the Cuban revolution, U.S. teams have competed in Cuba on nearly an annual basis.

In Iran, Burroughs will be part of a U.S. delegation that will feature 13 athletes, two coaches, a referee, a medical staff member and a videographer, plus other official delegates. Burroughs said the passion for wrestling is so high in Iran that he has more Instagram followers from Tehran than any other city in the world. He anticipates security will be similar to previous tournaments in Iran, where the U.S. wrestlers are not allowed to leave the team hotel and receive a police escort to and from the arena.

"You just try to maintain your focus," he said. "When we arrived in 2013, it wasn't a great time between our governments either. We met the president of Iran and it was great. It really said a lot for sport that we were able to go over there and compete even though our governments are at odds. Hopefully this time will share that same message. And win."

(Source: abcnews)

I want to help Wolfsburg get out of trouble: Ashkan Dejagah

The Iranian international midfielder Ashkan Dejagah says that he has returned to Wolfsburg to help the team get out of trouble.

Dejagah has re-signed for VfL Wolfsburg on Monday on a free transfer after leaving Qatari club Al-Arabi SC.

"I'm delighted to be back in Wolfsburg and I'm looking forward to playing in the Bundesliga again," Dejagah told the club's official website.

"We're in a difficult situation right now and I want to help the team get out of trouble as quickly as possible.

"A lot has occurred and developed in Wolfsburg since I left and being a part of this club again makes me very, very proud. I'd like to thank Olaf Rebbe and Valerien Ismael for giving me this chance. I intend to pay that belief back with my performances," emphasized Ashkan Dejagah.

The right-sided attacker played for Wolfsburg between 2007 and 2012 and helped them win the Bundesliga in 2008/09 before leaving for English side Fulham FC in 2012.

He scored 18 goals in 132 Bundesliga appearances in his first spell for the club.

A Germany-born Iran international represented his country at the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil.



Poem of the day

The bird of gardens sang unto the rose,
New blown in the clear dawn: "Bow down thy head!

Hafez

Prayer Times

Noon:12:18

Evening: 17:51

Dawn: 5:38 tomorrow

Sunrise: 7:04 (tomorrow)

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“Shape and Color” entertaining babies in Tehran

T A R T **TEHRAN** — Iranian director Fahimeh d e s k Mirzahosseini is staging a play entitled “Shape and Color” for an audience of babies between 6 and 16 months old at the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (IIDCYA) in Tehran.



Babies are taken by their parents to the stage where a cast of performers tries to communicate with them by some colorful geometrical shapes, the designer of the play, Atusa Shamlu, said in a press release published by the IIDCYA on Tuesday.

“The play aims to teach the basic concepts of shapes and colors to babies,” she added.

“Theater for Early Years or TEY has been designed and performed for many years in other countries but this is the first time we have decided to experience it in Iran after considering the requests of the babies’ parents,” she said.

“Color and Shape” is an experimental performance, which is based on several research studies and child psychology.

“Khomeini, Oh Imam!” registered on National Intangible Cultural Heritage list

T A R T **TEHRAN** — d e s k “Khomeini, Oh Imam!”, a chant sung in praise of Imam Khomeini, the founder of Islamic Republic, by a group of university students weeks before the victory of the 1979 Islamic Revolution, has been registered on the list of the National Intangible Cultural Heritage.

A number of culture figures and officials attended a ceremony organized on Tuesday in Tehran by the Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization to

inscribe the song on the list.

The song was composed by Hamid Sabzevari and Hamidreza Shahangi put the words to music.

The student group also performed the song at Tehran’s Mehrabad Airport on February 1, 1979 when Imam Khomeini returned to Iran years after living in exile outside of the country.

The registration was conducted on the first day of the Ten-Day Dawn Celebration, which is annually held to commemorate the anniversary of the revolution.



Official lauds Iranian artists’ decision over Oscars boycott

T A R T **TEHRAN** — d e s k Cinema Organization of Iran Director Hojatollah Ayyubi has called the decision to boycott the Oscars ceremony by “The Salesman” filmmaker and leading actress praiseworthy.

“The Salesman” filmmaker Asghar Farhadi and star Taraneh Alooosti have announced they would boycott the ceremony in protest of U.S. president Donald Trump’s “unjust” and “racist” ban on people from their country Iran and six others.

“I believe their decision is quite admirable and it has been lauded in every part of the world and we as Iranian citizens also feel proud of their decision,” Ayyubi said in a press conference on Monday held on the sidelines of the film screening programs of the 35th Fajr Film Festival underway in Milad Tower.

“The Salesman” is among the five movies nominated for an Oscar in the best foreign-language film category at the 89th Academy Awards, which is scheduled for February 26, 2017.

“I regret to announce via this statement that I have decided to not attend the Academy Awards Ceremony along with my fellow members of the cinematic community,” Farhadi said in a statement published by the New York Times on Sunday.

The Writers Guild of America also released a statement Sunday calling president Trump’s travel ban



both “unconstitutional” and “deeply wrong” as well as voicing support for Asghar Farhadi, who has declined his invitation to the Oscars ceremony.

Some of Britain’s leading actors, directors and producers, including Julie Christie, Kevin Macdonald, Keira Knightley and Terry Gilliam, have asked for permission to hold a screening of “The Salesman” outside the U.S. embassy in London on Academy Awards night.

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences called Trump’s travel ban “extremely troubling” after noting that Farhadi and his cast and crew could be barred.

“The Academy celebrates achievement in the art of filmmaking, which seeks to transcend borders and speak to audiences around the world, regardless of national, ethnic or religious differences,” it said on Saturday.

Trump signed an executive order Friday suspending refugee arrivals and banning entry to the United States from seven Muslim-majority countries, including Iran and Syria.

“Hidden Figures”, “Fences” lead politically charged SAG awards

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) — “Hidden Figures” was the surprise best film ensemble winner at Sunday’s Screen Actors Guild awards, a show overshadowed by politics as stars slammed U.S. President Donald Trump for restricting entry for travelers from seven Muslim-majority nations.

“Hidden Figures,” the true story of three black female mathematicians during the 1960s space race, ousted awards front-runners “Manchester by the Sea” and “Moonlight” to claim the night’s top prize.

“This story is about what happens when we put our differences aside and we come together,” star Taraji P. Henson said.

“Thank you for appreciating these women, they are hidden figures no more,” she added.

“Fences”, based on August Wilson’s award-winning stage play about blue-collar African-Americans, claimed two major acting awards.

With awards darling “La La Land” out of the running for the top SAG prize for best ensemble, the win put “Hidden Figures” firmly into the race for the best picture Oscar, the top accolade in the film industry.

Voted for by about 120,000 U.S. actors, the two-hour televised SAG awards show often anoints top Academy Award winners since actors comprise the largest body within Oscar voters.

A surprised Denzel Washington won best actor for “Fences,” beating out front-runners Casey Affleck for “Manchester

by the Sea” and Ryan Gosling for “La La Land.”

Washington’s co-star Viola Davis, who won best supporting actress, thanked the late playwright Wilson for honoring “the average man, who happened to be a man of color.”

The SAG awards honored many actors of color in a year when diversity in Hollywood has been in the spotlight. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences announced seven Oscar nominees of color among its acting categories this month after two years when only white actors were nominated, prompting the hashtag #OscarsSoWhite.

Politics took center stage at the SAG awards as many stars delivered fiery speeches to directly or indirectly criticize Trump’s ban on Muslim travelers.

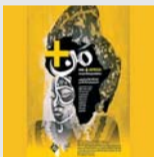
Julia Louis-Dreyfus, who won best comedy TV actress for playing flawed fictional U.S. President Selina Meyer on HBO’s political satire “Veep,” called Trump’s ban a “blemish.”

“Because I love this country, I am horrified by its blemishes, and this immigrant ban is a blemish,” she said. “It is un-American.”

Mahershala Ali, who won best supporting actor for his role in independent drama “Moonlight,” noted that he is the Muslim son of a mother who is a Christian minister.

“She didn’t do backflips when I called her to tell her I converted 17 years ago, but I tell you now, we put things to the side,” he said.

NEWS IN BRIEF



Tehran center to host “Me + Africa”

T A R T **TEHRAN** — d e s k An exhibition titled “Me + Africa” displaying 30 paintings by Leila Razi and her pupils will open today at the Saba Art and Cultural Institute in Tehran.

The exhibit will run until February 8 at the institute located on Mozaffar St., off Taleqani Ave. near Felestin Square.



Iranian scholars to discuss new finds on Manichean art

T A R T **TEHRAN** — d e s k New findings on Manichean art in China and Japan will be discussed during a session at Tehran’s Advanced Research Institute of Art on February 4.

Iranian scholars Mohammad Shokri-Fumeshi and Sonia Mirzai are scheduled to deliver speeches at the meeting.

Manichean art refers to objects with aesthetic appeal that were made for and used in association with the Manichean religion, a major religious movement that was founded by the Iranian prophet Mani during the Sassanid era.



Tehran museum to screen Godard’s “La Chinoise”

T A R T **TEHRAN** — d e s k French director Jean-Luc Godard’s 1967 “La Chinoise” will go on screen at the Cinematheque of the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art at 4 p.m. today.

The screening will be followed by a review session by Iranian scholar Saleh Najafi.

“La Chinoise”, a loose adaptation of Fyodor Dostoyevsky’s 1872 novel “The Possessed”, tells the story of five Parisian university students with different ideological persuasions and personality types.

Pedro Almodovar named Cannes Film Festival jury president

CANNES (Los Angeles Times) — Pedro Almodovar will head the jury of the Cannes Film Festival when the prestige gathering kicks off May 17.

The Spanish auteur, who has brought five films to competition, will return to a group he first served with a quarter-century ago. In 1992, Almodovar was a part of a jury headed by Gerard Depardieu; the group selected Bille August’s “My Best Intentions” for the top prize, the Palme d’Or.

In a statement, Almodovar said he was “aware of the responsibility that entails being the president of the jury and I hope to be up to the job.” Festival organizers called the director a “unique and hugely popular artist.”

PICTURE OF THE DAY Honaronline/Alireza Farahani



Press photographers take pictures during red carpet arrivals at the 35th Fajr Film Festival at Tehran’s Milad Tower on January 30, 2017.

“A Premeditated Crime” translated into Persian

T A R T **TEHRAN** — d e s k Iranian scholar Asghar Nuri has recently completed translating “A Premeditated Crime”, a novel by Polish writer Witold Gombrowicz (1904–1969).

The book is scheduled to be published in Tehran during March, Nuri told the Persian service of ILNA on Tuesday.

Nuri rendered the book into Persian from a second language and it will be published by Ofoq Publications.

“I personally do not like to translate books from a second language into Persian but Witold Gombrowicz was such as great author that I thought his books are really missing among the books translated into Persian,” he said.

“Gombrowicz has been hailed by Milan Kundera as one of the 20th century’s great novelists, and I have long desired to introduce this Polish literary icon to Iranian readers,” he added.

In “A Premeditated Crime”, the narrator travels to the countryside to meet a man whom he finds dead upon his arrival, and he becomes convinced the man was murdered. There’s little evidence to back it up, but so determined and ultimately convincing is the narrator that he retroactively manages to transform the death into a premeditated murder.