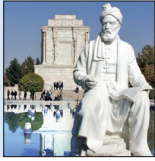




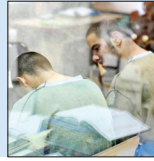
EU is united to swiftly preserve nuclear deal, Mogherini says **2**



CHHTO plans to expand, renovate Ferdowsi mausoleum **10**



Sareh Javanmardi named Iran's flag-bearer for Asian Para Games opening ceremony **15**



"20th Circuit Suspects" named best doc at Vienna Ethnocineca festival **16**

# 20% enrichment if EU fails to save JCPOA



See page 2

## Rouhani sets out six-point plan to assist Palestinians

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — In a speech at the Organization of Islamic Cooperation summit in Istanbul on Friday, President Hassan Rouhani of Iran proposed a six-point formula to help Palestinians and counter the Zionist regime of Israel and the U.S. for their joint moves and crimes against the Palestinians.

The summit took place after the U.S. relocated its embassy from Tel

Aviv to Jerusalem al-Quds on Monday (May 14) and Israeli snipers shot dead 62 Palestinians and wounded 2000 as they were peacefully protesting the relocation.

The U.S. move in relocating embassy happened a day before the anniversary of the forcible Israeli eviction of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from their homeland in 1948 known as Nakba Day, meaning Day of Catastrophe. **→2**

## Tehran sets August 8 as deadline for Europe to counter U.S. sanctions

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Behrooz Kamalvandi, spokesman for the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), on Saturday called on European countries to take appropriate measures to counter U.S. sanctions, saying time is needed to determine if they are determined to save the Iran nuclear

agreement. Pointing to a trip to Tehran by the European Commissioner for Energy and Climate, Miguel Arias Canete, Kamalvandi told reporters that the visit conveyed a "positive message" to the international community and that the deal will survive despite U.S. pressure. **→2**

## UN Human Rights Council approves int'l probe into Israeli crimes in Gaza

The United Nations's top human rights body has voted in favor of a resolution calling for "urgently" sending an independent commission to investigate Israeli deadly attacks on peaceful Palestinian protesters.

The UN Human Rights Council voted on Friday to "urgently dispatch an independent, international commission of

inquiry" -- the council's highest-level of investigation -- to probe the killing of Gaza protesters by Israeli troops.

The resolution was adopted by 29 votes. Only two of the council's 47 members, the United States and Australia, voting against it, while 14 abstained, including Britain, Switzerland and Germany. **→13**

## Internally weak EU cannot be a strong international player: Italian expert

**EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW**  
By Payman Yazdani

**TEHRAN** — Commenting on the EU capabilities to protect its interests against the U.S. unilateralism, Italian political science professor, Dr. Pastori Gianluca believes that an internally weak EU cannot be a strong international player.

The U.S. president's decision to withdraw from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) despite the U.S. key European allies' opposition has raised so many questions about the global weight of the EU.

Despite many promises from EU key states to keep the JCPOA alive without the U.S., many believe even if the EU decides to do so the block won't be able to challenge the U.S. President's decision due to its internal disunity and limitations.

The issue was discussed with political science associated professor of Milan Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, Dr. Pastori Gianluca.



■ How can the EU protect the right of its companies working and investing in Iran? Is it feasible?

A: European companies have always had good economic relations with Iran and these relations have grown even stronger in the last few years. I do not think that this attitude will really change in the coming months. In the past, the U.S. already adopted secondary sanctions against countries

investing in Iran (e.g. with the 'Iran and Libya Sanctions Act' in 1996), but their impact on the behaviour of foreign investors was quite limited. At that time, even some U.S. companies managed to bypass the sanctions operating through foreign branches. Moreover, U.S.-EU relations are currently quite tense, also due to the US will to introduce tariffs on European export. For this reasons, I think that, while the European governments will take a low profile in face of new U.S. sanctions, on the political level they will keep on supporting their national presence in Iran.

■ Despite being an economic superpower, the EU is not able to protect its interest against the U.S. unilateralism in recent year. Why?

A: The main problem is that the EU still faces difficulties in transforming its economic power into political power. Traditionally, the EU has been quite effective in promoting and protecting the economic interests of its members but has been far less effective in the political filed. **→13**

## Afghanistan: Jalalabad cricket match bomb attack kills eight

At least eight people were killed in a series of bomb explosions at a cricket match in Afghanistan's eastern Nangarhar Province, a provincial official said.

The attack took place as hundreds of people gathered at Spinghar cricket stadium in the provincial capital Jalalabad to watch a Ramadan night-time cricket tournament.

Three bombs exploded in quick succession. Attallah Khogyani, spokesman for the provincial governor, said at least 45 others were wounded in the blasts, adding that the organizer of the cricket match, Hedayatullah Zahir was also among the dead.

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani strongly condemned the attack.

"The terrorists did not stop killing our people even during the holy month of Ramadan ... by carrying out a terrorist attack in a populated sport stadium, once again they have proved that they are not bound to any creed or religion, and they are the enemy of humanity."

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack. The Taliban sent a statement to Al Jazeera saying they were not involved in the attack.

During the Taliban regime in the 1990s, cricket was forbidden and deemed a distraction from

religious studies, as were other sports tournaments and activities. Kabul's Ghazi Stadium was known to be a ground for executions carried out by the Taliban.

But in the recent years, cricket's popularity has surged as Afghanistan's national cricket team became part of the Test nations in 2017.

■ **Taliban pledge not to target army, police who leave 'enemy ranks'**

Meantime, the Taliban says it will not target Afghan police and military in the country if they leave their ranks, due to the high number of casualties suffered by the security forces in the ongoing conflict. **→13**



### ARTICLE

**Hanif Ghaffari**  
Political analyst

## Le Pen slams Macron over JCPOA

Although the President of the French National Front, "Marine Le Pen" has seriously slammed French President Emmanuel Macron for his approach towards the nuclear deal, the criticism has been censored in French media! In other words, only a few French news sources has reflected Le Pen's words, while others simply ignored them.

Criticizing Trump's decision to walk out of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), France's Far-right leader stressed that this decision is "putting French citizens at risk and is depriving the French economy of very lucrative markets". She then described Trump's decision in this regard as dangerous.

"Similar to the harsh sanctions in 2012 against Iran, the U.S. has an entire arsenal of means to prevent [foreign companies] from maintaining any trade relations with Tehran. Such diktat is impermissible and can't be tolerated." Le Pen noted.

The fact is that a number of French companies, including Total, Renault, and Sanofi, are based in Iran and could, according to the new sanctions, be affected by the U.S. measures.

"By withdrawing from the 5 + 1 agreement, the United States, once again, broke their promise... for a second time in less than a month." Le Pen said.

She also mentioned that Emmanuel Macron bears his share of responsibility for the "illusions" he had about his ability to talk Trump out of withdrawing from the nuclear deal with Tehran.

"I resolutely condemn the position of Donald Trump and also that of the French diplomacy which, in its attempts to be even more neo-Conservative than (U.S. national security adviser) John Bolton, has found itself without U.S. patronage and no alternative way to go, ... He [Macron] finally refused to go to Tehran to defend the national interests [of France] and to listen to the position of the regime. He was only interested in the American-Israeli-Saudi axis." Le Pen said in a statement released on Friday.

Marine Le Pen's remarks in criticizing the misguided policies of the French President on the JCPOA are totally in line with current realities in French foreign policy equations. **→7**



### ARTICLE

**Maryam Qarehgozlou**  
Head of the Tehran Times  
Social Desk

## Is Iran pulling out of Paris Agreement?

While the cabinet of ministers and the Majlis (parliament) have approved the Paris Climate Agreement, the Guardian Council, that constitutionally holds veto power over all legislations approved by the Majlis, has not ratified the deal.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif signed the Paris Agreement on climate change during a ceremony at the United Nations headquarters in New York, April 22, 2016.

"However, the agreement was brought before the Guardian Council, but the council did not approve it and proposed amendments, so the deal is now being hammered out in agriculture, water and natural resources group of the Majlis," ISNA quoted Karim Shafie, deputy environment chief for legal affairs, as saying on Saturday.

Paris Climate Agreement, also known as Paris climate accord, is an agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) dealing with greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, adaptation, and finance starting in the year 2020. The Agreement aims to address the global climate change threat by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

The language of the agreement was negotiated by representatives of 196 parties at the 21st Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC in Paris and adopted by consensus on 12 December 2015.

As Shafie said, Iran has submitted Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) to the UNFCCC committing to cut the greenhouse gas emissions by 4% percent in 2030. However, subject to termination and non-existence of unfair and brutal sanctions, availability of international resources in the form of financial support and technology transfer, exchange of carbon credits, accessibility of bilateral or multilateral implementation mechanisms, transfer of clean technologies as well as capacity building, Iran has the potential of mitigating greenhouse gas emission up to 12%. **→12**



## Ramadan, the holy month of fasting begins

Ramadan, a brief spell of abstinence, the holy month of fasting, introspection and prayer for Muslims has begun in Islamic countries worldwide.

Fasting is one of the five fundamental principles of Islam. Each day during Ramadan, Muslims do not eat or drink from sunrise to sunset. They are also supposed to avoid impure thoughts and bad behavior.

The photo is depicting a man preparing Zulfia (traditional deep fried sweets) that is normally served during Iftar meal, with which Muslims end their daily Ramadan fast at sunset.



MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Jahangiri congratulates Hungarian PM on re-election

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri has congratulated Viktor Orban on his re-election as Hungarian prime minister, Mehr reported. In a message on Saturday, Jahangiri expressed satisfaction regarding the increased cooperation between the two countries in recent years.

He also called for cementing ties in various areas and implementing previous agreements during Orban's new term.

Orban won a two-thirds parliamentary majority in last month's vote and took office for a third straight term.



'Resistance sole way to secure rights of Palestinians'

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Following the U.S. move in relocating its embassy from Tel Aviv to al-Quds (Jerusalem), a senior foreign policy advisor to the Iranian parliament speaker said on Saturday that resistance is only way for Palestinians to secure their rights.

"Palestinian resistance will not allow the U.S. embassy to remain unscathed in al-Quds," Hossein Amir Abdollahian said in a meeting with Hamas representative in Tehran Khaled Al-Qadoumi.

"The main agents of disability and insecurity in the region are the U.S. and the Zionist regime," added Amir Abdollahian, who once served as Iran's point man for Arab affairs.



Tehran sympathizes with Cuba over plane crash

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi on Saturday expressed sympathy over a plane crash in Cuba that has killed more than 100 people.

In a message, Qassemi offered sympathy to the Cuban government and families of the victims, Tasnim reported.

More than 100 people died after a Boeing 737 airliner crashed near Cuba's main airport in Havana on Friday. The plane was carrying 104 passengers and six crew members.

Cuban authorities have launched an investigation, and two days of national mourning have been declared.



Saudis release Iranian fishermen after nine months

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Saudi Arabia has freed two Iranian fishermen detained by the kingdom's coast guards last year, Bushehr province's fisheries department chief has said.

"Two fishermen from the province's Kharg Island, who had been arrested by the Saudi coast guards were released Friday after nine months," IRNA quoted Ardeshtir Yarahmadi as saying.

The release came after consultations between the two countries' foreign ministries, he said without elaboration.

Tension between Iran and Saudi Arabia has run high in recent years and diplomatic contacts between the two countries have become very rare.



Iranian bureau in The Hague burglarized

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Robbers raided the office of the Iranian president's international legal affairs department in The Hague, stealing more than 100,000 euros.

In a statement on Saturday, the presidential department confirmed that its office in The Hague had been burglarized, but denied reports that classified documents had been also stolen in the incident.

A section of the rented building of the department's office in The Hague was robbed on May 16 in the morning, and more than 100,000 euros used for running the branch has been stolen, it added.



Turkey sees no reason for U.S. exit from JCPOA

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Turkey doesn't see any reason why the U.S. has withdrawn from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), since Iran was standing by its commitments in the agreement, the ambassador of Turkey to Iran has said.

"We were disappointed with the U.S. decision to withdraw from the JCPOA. We work to support the regional stability, together with Azerbaijan and Iran and we would like to see the full implementation of the international agreements," Reza Hakan Tekin told Trend.

"Iran's position on the agreement was also supported by the International Energy Agency and many other countries and organizations," said the ambassador.

# Rouhani meets Erdogan, says stronger ties will boost regional security

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Iranian President Hassan Rouhani met his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Istanbul on Friday, saying a closer Iran-Turkey ties will help boost security and stability in West Asia.

"Expansion of consultations and relations between Tehran and Ankara benefits the two nations and the regional security and stability," said Rouhani who had visited Turkey to participate at the OIC emergency meeting on Palestine.

Rouhani described the relations as "friendly" and "brotherly" and said Tehran attaches great importance to relations with Turkey, especially in areas of economy, politics and culture.

The Iranian president also called for expanding banking relations between the two neighboring states.

For his part, Erdogan said that efforts to strengthen ties.

Erdogan in a recent interview spoke against



## Salehi: Iran to resume 20% enrichment if EU fails to save JCPOA

Energy commissioner Canete says EU firm to keep nuclear deal alive without U.S.

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Ali Akbar Salehi, director of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization, announced on Saturday that the European Union has made proposals and also taken initial steps to use euro in transactions with Iran.

During a joint press conference in Tehran with Miguel Arias Canete, the European commissioner for energy and climate, Salehi also expressed hope that the EU's efforts in salvaging the 2015 nuclear deal after the U.S. withdrawal from the multilateral agreement would be materialized.

On May 8, Trump withdrew the U.S. from the UN-endorsed nuclear agreement and vowed to reimpose sanctions on Iran, a move which Salehi described as "unwise".

Salehi said it would be disastrous if EU efforts fail to preserve the deal. "The ball is in their (EU leaders) court," Salehi said. "We hope their efforts materialize."

Federica Mogherini, the EU foreign policy chief, issued a statement on Friday saying that the 28-nation bloc is united in preserving the 2015 international nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA. Salehi said, "The European Union's efforts show that the JCPOA

is a very important international agreement which is in line with our national interests and also the international community's interests. Withdrawal of one country may cause some difficulties but it is not in a way that it causes a serious impediment for us."

The atomic chief also said Iran had several options, including resuming its 20 percent uranium enrichment if the European countries failed to keep the pact alive.

Under the 2015 deal, Iran's level of enrichment must remain at around 3.6 percent. Iran stopped producing 20 percent enriched uranium and gave up the majority of its stockpile as part of the agreement.

In exchange for such limitations, all nuclear related economic and financial sanctions on Iran had to be removed; however big companies failed to enter serious transactions with Iran, fearing a punishment by the U.S.

**The EU energy chief says, "We will try to intensify our flows of trade that have been very positive for the Iranian economy."**

## EU is united to swiftly preserve nuclear deal, Mogherini says

Federica Mogherini, the European Union foreign policy chief, issued a statement on Friday saying that the 28-nation bloc is united in preserving the 2015 international nuclear deal.

"The European Union is acting in unity and swiftly to preserve the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and the steps taken today by the European Commission are a strong confirmation of this commitment," the statement said.

Following is full text of the statement published by the EU website:

The European Union is acting in unity

and swiftly to preserve the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and the steps taken today by the European Commission are a strong confirmation of this commitment. They follow the very quick action we have taken over the past days, since the announcement on 8 May of the U.S. withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal and of the re-imposition of U.S. sanctions. In a sequence of steps since then, I have issued a declaration on behalf of the EU, reconfirming our commitment to the continued full and effective implementation of the Agreement

and our determination to work with the international community to preserve it, so long as Iran continues to respect its commitments. I have convened the Foreign Ministers of France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Iran, to address the implications of the announcement and to agree on a common set of lines of action and measures to put in place. I have, together with President Juncker, presented to the College of Commissioners possible measures to preserve the Agreement and protect European interests. These measures were presented the very same day

to the EU leaders in Sofia who reiterated their strong commitment to the JCPOA as critical to European security. In the meantime, intensive expert discussions have been launched to arrive at practical solutions in order to maintain and deepen economic relations with Iran.

As next steps the Joint Commission will meet in Vienna on 25 May in EU/E3 + 2 and Iran format at the level of Deputy Foreign Ministers/Political Directors. The EU 28 Foreign Ministers will revert to the issue at the next Foreign Affairs Council in Brussels on 28 May.

## Tehran sets August 8 as deadline for Europe to counter U.S. sanctions

**1 ->** According to ISNA, he further said European countries' measures to counter U.S. sanctions must be put into work until August 8, the day U.S. sanctions will go into force.

"Such mechanisms support European firms against America's anti-Iran sanctions and obligates European firms to ignore extra-territorial sanctions," he stated.

The official said the European signatories of the nuclear pact, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), are trying to provide a banking channel for financial transactions between Iran and Europe.

U.S. President Donald Trump announced his country's withdrawal from the JCPOA on May 8 and vowed "the highest level" of economic bans on the Islamic Republic.

Tehran has threatened that if it cannot reap the benefits of the multilateral nuclear agreement if will not hesitate to remove cap on its nuclear activities.

Ali Akbar Salehi, the AEOI chief, said on Saturday that the European commissioner for energy and climate has promised that euro would be used in bilateral trade between Iran and the European Union (EU).

## Rouhani sets out six-point plan to assist Palestinians

The president proposes political and economic boycott of Israel and U.S. at OIC summit

**1 ->** "In order to assist the Palestinian nation and counter the destructive decision by Trump, we call on Muslim governments and freedom-seeking nations in the world to revise their political, economic and commercial ties with the U.S. administration, and also cut all their relations with the occupying Zionist regime and boycott the products and companies of the Zionists," Rouhani suggested.

Following is an excerpt of Rouhani's speech published by the presidential website:

Today, we are mourning the last act of the 70-year-old genocide against the innocent in Palestine. The criminal Zionists have challenged the global community before the tearful eyes of the world by trampling human dignity and belittling all values. While hundreds of thousands of innocent people are deprived of the most basic human rights, the Zionist regime is falsely introducing its own apartheid and ethnocentric system as democracy, calling its religious extremism secularism; what is more unfortunate is that some Western countries are justifying the invasions of the occupiers.

In these conditions, the government of the United States moved its embassy to Bayt al-Maqdis. This arbitrary action which is contrary to international regulations gave the Zionist regime the go-ahead to commit another brutal killing. The White House has shown that it does not hesitate to destroy foundations and rules of international order, and goes to war against the right with force. Just days before the U.S. embassy was transferred to Bayt al-Maqdis, the President of the United States delivered

another blow to international security and credibility of the international community and withdrew from a multilateral nuclear agreement that had been approved by the UN Security Council. The move, in pursuit of a unilateral withdrawal from some of the other important international agreements, has shown that the new U.S. government is a dangerous threat to the global legal system and world peace and security.

But on the other hand, the popular resistance in Black Monday showed that the new and young Palestinian generation is aware of its rights; ... that it is possible to reveal the violent face of the usurper and show the moments of perseverance of believers at the early Islam to the world. Palestine has shown that it deserves peace and full respect for its legitimate rights.

Today, the resistance front is not limited to Palestinian men and women, but rather it includes a growing number of freedom-seekers around the world whose conscience has become enraged by this tyranny and crime.

Now it is time to ask ourselves how we can prevent the Zionist enemy from assailing the dignity of the Islamic Ummah? If, instead of boycotting the only victorious group against the occupying government, everybody would echo the message of resistance; if Zionists saw a powerful region

before themselves instead of being certain that some would remain silent and some would make despicable whispers, would they be bold enough to commit such savagery?

If the Zionist Regime is surrounded by developed, democrat countries, facing with a united Ummah, it will never be able to continue its crimes in such a relief.

In this regard, the following suggestions and initiatives are proposed:

1. Request from the United Nations to hold a special General Assembly to discuss the illegal decision of the U.S. administration and the recent crimes of the Zionist Regime against the people of Palestine in Gaza must be proposed and followed.

2. Formation of an expert group consisting of legal, political and economic experts of member countries to closely discuss and propose solutions to confront the recent illegal decision of the U.S. administration at international, regional and national levels.

3. Taking political, economic and commercial measures against the government of the United States and the Zionist Regime. In order to assist the Palestinian nation and counter the destructive decision by Trump, we call on Muslim governments and freedom-seeking nations in the world to revise their political, economic and commercial

**Rouhani says: "The Zionist regime is falsely introducing its own apartheid and ethnocentric system as democracy, calling its religious extremism secularism."**

the U.S. for its withdrawal from the Iran deal. "Continuity between states is fundamental, especially the agreements are the assurance of the international continuity," he said.

The Turkish president expressed surprise at the fact that while France, the U.S. and some other countries possess nuclear weapons, they take the oddly conjured possibility of another country's nuclear weapons as a threat to the world.

**■ Iranian president, Jordan king**

Rouhani also held a short meeting with Jordanian King Abdullah on Friday on the sidelines of the OIC conference in Istanbul.

According to Tasnim, it was the first meeting between the Iranian and Jordanian heads of state after 15 years.

The relations between Iran and Jordan have not been cordial since the 1979 Islamic Revolution because of Jordan's policies against Iran and its support for former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein's war against Iran in the 1980s.



# Erdogan calls on Muslim countries to unite and confront Israel

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has called on Muslim leaders to unite and confront Israel, days after scores of Palestinians were killed by Israeli snipers as they marked 70 years of Israeli occupation.

Speaking at an extraordinary summit of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on Friday, Erdogan said Israel should be held accountable over the killings which drew widespread international condemnation and triggered a wave of protests from Asia, through the Middle East, to North Africa.

"To take action for Palestinians massacred by Israeli bandits is to show the whole world that humanity is not dead," Erdogan told the group of Muslim leaders gathered in Turkey's largest city, Istanbul.

The Turkish president described Israel's killing of Palestinians as "thuggery, atrocity and state terror," and said the U.S.' recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital would inevitably haunt it.

## ■ U.S. part of the problem

On Monday, as the United States went ahead with the controversial relocation of its embassy to al-Quds (Jerusalem), 62 Palestinians, including five children, were killed and more than 2,700 wounded as the Israeli army fired live ammunition and tear gas at protesters who had assembled hundreds of meters from a 1949 armistice line between Gaza and Israel.

The protesters in the besieged enclave had gathered for Nakba Day - a commemoration of the events of 1948 when Zionist paramilitaries ethnically cleansed Palestinian cities and towns. About 750,000 people were forcibly expelled from historical Palestine.

Several heads of state attended the Istanbul summit, but the House of Saud regime, the host of the 57-member OIC, sent only a senior foreign ministry official. Bahrain, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) also sent lower-level ministers.

Speaking at the conference, Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani said the Palestinian cause had "become a symbol for oppressed peoples everywhere" and con-



demned Israel for the "brutal massacre" of peaceful demonstrators.

"Who among us does not know the declared siege forced on the Gaza Strip and the collective punishment against its population?" the Emir said.

"The Gaza Strip has been transformed into a large concentration camp for millions of people who are deprived of their most basic rights to travel, education, work and medical treatment."

"When their sons take arms they are called terrorists, and when they stage peaceful demonstrations, they are called extremists, and are shot dead with live ammunition."

For his part, Palestinian Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah said the United States had become "part of the problem and not the solution" and called the relocation of the em-

bassy "an act of aggression against the Islamic nation, against Muslims and Christians".

Jordan's King Abdullah II urged the adoption of urgent measures to back "the resistance of Palestinians", while Iranian President Hassan Rouhani called for economic and political measures against the U.S. and Israel.

Late on Friday, the OIC issued a final communique calling on the United Nations to launch an international investigation into the killings in Gaza, the creation of an international protection force for Palestinians, and for the OIC to place economic restrictions on any countries, companies or individuals who recognize Israel's annexation of al-Quds (Jerusalem).

## ■ Thousands protest in solidarity with Palestine

Earlier in the day, Erdogan told a raucous crowd of more than 10,000 people in Istanbul's Yenikapi fairground that the Muslim world had to unite and "pull themselves back together".

"Muslims are way too busy fighting and disagreeing with themselves, and shy away when confronted by their enemies," he told the audience.

"Since 1947, Israel has been free to do what it likes in this region. They do whatever they feel like. But this reality can be undone ... if we unite."

Earlier this week, Turkey recalled its envoys to Israel and the U.S. following the killings of Palestinians and the relocation of Washington's embassy from Tel Aviv to al-Quds (Jerusalem).

(Source: Al Jazeera)

## 'High number' feared dead in Cuba plane crash

An aging Boeing 737 with 110 people aboard crashed and burned shortly after taking off from Havana's airport, leaving three survivors and investigators sifting through debris for clues as to what caused the airliner to go down.

It was Cuba's worst aviation disaster in three decades and its third major air accident since 2010.

Skies were overcast and rainy at the airport at the time of Friday's disaster and Cuban state television said the 39-year-old jet veered sharply to the right after departing on a domestic flight to the eastern city of Holguin.

Fire crews and ambulances rushed to the scene, while images posted on social media showed a thick column of smoke rising above the crash site.

The plane was almost completely destroyed in the crash and subsequent fire.

Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel said a special commission had been formed to find the cause of the crash.

The plane had 104 mainly Cuban passengers and six crew members.

State airline Cubana, which operated the flight, has had a generally good safety record but is notorious for delays and cancellations and has taken many of its planes out of service because of maintenance problems in recent months, prompting it to hire charter aircraft from other companies.

Mexican officials said the Boeing 737-201 was built in 1979 and rented by Cubana from Aerolineas Damojh, a small charter company that also goes by the name Global Air.

Cubana Flight 972 went down just after noon a short distance from the end of the runway at Jose Marti International Airport.

## ■ Three survivors

Meantime, four crash survivors were taken to a Havana hospital, and three remained alive as of late Friday.

State media reports stopped short of openly declaring that the rest on board were dead, but there was no word of other survivors by Friday night.

Relatives of those aboard were ushered into a private area at the terminal to await word on their loved ones.

A statement from Mexico's Transportation Department identified the pilot and co-pilot as Captain Jorge Luis Nunez Santos and first officer Miguel Angel Arreola Ramirez.

It said the flight attendants were Maria Daniela Rios, Abigail Hernandez Garcia and Beatriz Limon. Global Air said maintenance worker Marco Antonio Lopez Perez was



also aboard.

In addition to the Mexican crew, Cuban Communist Party newspaper Granma reported that the passengers were mostly Cubans plus five foreigners from countries it did not identify.

Argentina's Foreign Ministry said two of its citizens had died in the crash.

In November 2010 a Global Air flight originating in Mexico City made an emergency landing in Puerto Vallarta because its front landing gear did not deploy.

The fire was quickly extinguished, and none of the 104 people aboard were injured. That plane was a 737 first put into service in 1975.

Mexican aviation authorities said a team of experts would fly to Cuba on Saturday to take part in the investigation.

First Vice President Salvador Valdes Mesa had met with

Cubana officials on Thursday to discuss improvements to its service.

The airline blames its spotty record on a lack of parts and airplanes because of the United States trade embargo against the communist-run country.

Last year a Cuban military plane crashed into a hillside in the western province of Artemisa, killing eight soldiers.

In 2010, an AeroCaribbean flight from Santiago to Havana went down in bad weather, killing all 68 people on board, including 28 foreigners, in what was the country's worst air disaster in more than two decades.

The last deadly accident involving a Cubana-operated plane was in 1989, when a charter flight from Havana to Milan, Italy, crashed shortly after takeoff, killing all 126 people on board and at least two dozen on the ground.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

## Russia unveils world's first floating nuclear power station



Russia on Saturday unveiled the world's first floating nuclear power station at a ceremony in the port of the far northern city of Murmansk where it will be loaded with nuclear fuel before heading to eastern Siberia.

Built in Saint Petersburg, the Akademik Lomonosov arrived in Murmansk on Thursday where it was moored in the port and presented to the media on Saturday.

Constructed by the state nuclear power firm Rosatom, the 144 by 30 meters ship holds two reactors with two 35 megawatt nuclear reactors that are similar to those used to power icebreaker ships.

The 21,000-ton barge will be towed in the summer of 2019 to the port of Pevek in the autonomous Chukotka region in Russia's extreme northeast, 350 kilometers north of the Arctic Circle.

The barge can produce enough electricity to power a town of 200,000 residents, far

more than the 5,000 live in Pevek, Russia's northernmost town.

It will be primarily used to power oil rigs as Russia pushes further north into the Arctic to drill for oil and gas and needs electricity in far-flung locations.

Vitaly Trutnev, who is in charge of the construction and operation of floating nuclear power stations at Rosatom, said such units would "supply electricity and heat to the most remote regions, supporting also growth and sustainable development."

He said use of such floating reactors can save 50,000 tons of carbon dioxide emissions per year.

The barge had initially been scheduled to be fueled in Saint Petersburg, but that work was moved to Murmansk instead due to concern in countries along the Baltic Sea.

(Source: AFP)

## Lavrov: Russia's mission in Syria is not over yet

The Russian military presence in Syria will remain as long as it is needed by the authorities and the people, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said.

"Our country has played a decisive role in eradicating the military-political focus of terrorism, which is a terrorist bandit," Lavrov said in an interview with the Argentine daily Clarin.

"It is therefore logical to start from the fact that the military presence of our state in Syria will remain as long as there is a need for this by the legitimate authorities and the Syrian people."

Russia's special envoy to Syria, Alexander Lavrentev, said on Friday that the withdrawal of foreign troops from Syria must be carried out comprehensively.

"This has to be done comprehensively," Lavrentev told reporters when asked if the talks were being held about the immediate withdrawal of foreign forces from Syria.

"This is a signal, it will be in the final step, because a supporter has almost been defeated," the Russian envoy said.

"The talk is about all the foreign military units in Syria, including the Americans, the Turks, Hezbollah, and of course the Iranians," Lavrentev said.

"On the other hand, except for our two bases, there is nothing, and as the situation stabilizes, we will of course have two bases, and actually we do not have any other units," Lavrentev said.

## ■ U.S. to focus on 'priorities' in Kurdish-populated northeast Syria

Meanwhile, informed United States officials say the administration of the U.S. President Donald Trump will step up its activities in the Kurdish-populated northeastern Syria, reinforcing fears of the Arab country's partition and mounting tensions with Turkey.

The unidentified officials said that the U.S. government had decided to shift its focus from terrorist-held northwestern Syria to the Kurdish-inhabited northeast.

CBS News quoted the officials as saying that the decision was made over the last few weeks following Trump's call for a review of all U.S. operations in Syria.

Tens of millions of dollars will be cut from previous U.S. programs, including projects for "countering violent extremism, supporting independent society and independent media, strengthening education, and advocating for community policing," CBS reported.

A State Department official told Reuters, "U.S. assistance for programs in northwest Syria are being freed up to provide potential increased support for priorities in northeast Syria."

A second source also noted that Washington wanted to move the assistance to the areas in Syria where the U.S. had more control.

U.S. officials, however, claimed that "humanitarian assistance" would not be affected in northwestern Syria around Idlib Province, the last major stronghold for Takfiri militants in the country.

Washington has stepped up its alliance with Kurdish forces active in Syria despite opposition by Turkey that is worried about the formation of an autonomous Kurdish state on its borders.

About 2,000 U.S. troops are deployed in northeast Syria in territories under the control of Kurdish militants. Both Moscow and Damascus have repeatedly warned that the illegal U.S. presence in Syria is meant to disintegrate the country.

Last December, Trump approved providing weapons worth \$393 million to what Washington calls partners in Syria, including the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG).

The following month, the U.S. announced plans to create a 30,000-strong force comprised of Kurdish militants, which would be deployed along the Turkish border.

The U.S. measures infuriated Ankara and led it to launch a military campaign against Kurdish forces in Syria.

(Source: agencies)

## Moqtada al-Sadr's alliance wins Iraq's parliamentary elections

Iraq's electoral commission has announced the Sa'iroun (Marchers) political bloc, cleric Moqtada al-Sadr's alliance with communists, as the winner of the country's parliamentary elections.

Sadr's alliance, which contested in Iraq's elections for the first time, captured 54 parliamentary seats, the commission said on Saturday.

Sadr's movement forms the backbone of the Sa'iroun alliance, but the senior Shia cleric himself, who enjoys a strong support, did not contest the elections.

The Conquest Alliance, led by former transport minister and secretary general of Badr Organization Hadi al-Ameri, came in second with 47 seats and the Victory Alliance, headed by incumbent Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi, took the third place with 42 seats.

The Conquest Alliance is a new alliance that entered the elections for the first time. It consists of 18 political parties many of which are former factions of the Popular Mobilization Units (PMU/Hashd al-Sha'abi). The PMU, as key in defeating the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorists last year. The main units have handed over their weapons to the state in order to enter the political process.

Iraqis voted last Saturday in the first national elections since the country declared complete victory over ISIL.

The electoral commission of Iraq announced that 44.5 percent of those eligible had cast their ballots in the elections.

Over 7,000 candidates contested the 329 seats in the parliament that will choose a new president, prime minister and government in Iraq.

This is the fourth such polls since the 2003 U.S. invasion that led to a sharp rise in sectarian tensions and ensuing terror-related violence in the country.

The next prime minister will face the huge task of rebuilding a country shattered by the war against ISIL and the U.S. invasion.

ISIL unleashed a campaign of death and destruction in Iraq in 2014, overrunning vast swathes in lightning attacks. Iraqi army soldiers and allied fighters then launched operations to eliminate the terrorist group and retake lost territory.

Last December, Abadi declared the end of the anti-ISIL campaign in Iraq. The group's remnants, though, keep staging sporadic attacks across Iraq.

(Source: Press TV)



STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	95103.1
IFX	1007.07

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	49,676 rials
GBP	56,951 rials
AED	11,437 rials

Source: mehrnews.com

COMMODITIES

WTI	71.37/b
Brent	78.51/b
OPEC Basket	76.75/b
Gold	\$1,293.55 /oz
Silver	\$16.49/oz
Platinum	\$892.10/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

NEWS IN BRIEF



**1,700 industrial units to operate at full production capacity by Mar. 2019**

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Some 1,700 industrial units with inefficient production capacities are scheduled to be run at full capacity by the current Iranian calendar yearend (March 20, 2019), Managing Director of Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO) Sadeqh Najafi announced.

“Among its top priorities, ISIPO has maximizing the production level of 15 industrial sectors and making 10 percent of the products of domestic small industries export-oriented by the said time,” he told IRNA on Friday.



**European oil equipment companies continuing co-op with Iran**

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Chairman of the Society of Iranian Petroleum Industry Equipment Manufacturers (SIPIEM) said European companies active in the field of oil industry equipment are continuing their cooperation with Iran.

As reported by IRNA on Saturday, touching upon the effect of U.S. withdrawal from the nuclear deal on European companies, Reza Khayamian noted that although big upstream companies may act cautious in their relations with Iran, but small downstream companies active in various fields especially in manufacturing equipment will continue cooperating with Iran without any worrisome.

“They have even signed some deals in recent days,” he added.

Global insurers review business after U.S. exit from Iran deal

Global insurers are taking stock of how the U.S. withdrawal from Tehran nuclear deal, and threatened sanctions against companies that do business with Iran, could affect them.

Insurance broker Arthur J. Gallagher & Co said on Friday it will continue to monitor developments following the U.S. withdrawal from the Iran deal, while Zurich-based Swiss Re said it is “assessing the impact” of the U.S. decision on its business.

Arthur J. Gallagher (AJG), based in Rolling Meadows, Illinois, has British and Norwegian subsidiaries that have brokered insurance and advised clients on activities related to Iran’s oil and gas industry, as recently as the 2018 first quarter, according to a filing.

Rebuffing appeals from France, Germany and Britain, U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew the United States 10 days ago from the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and six major powers and ordered sanctions reimposed on Tehran.

The move has spurred global insurers and other companies to rethink their dealings in Iran as they await further guidance from the United States and European Union.

AJG subsidiaries have helped clients obtain insurance and reinsurance for a variety of activities in Iran. They include transporting oil and gas to and from Iran and operating vessels that provide support to offshore oil platforms that supply Iran with oil, according to the filing.

“Whatever the decision from the U.S. administration, we will take appropriate action in compliance with all applicable laws as is our customary practice,” an AJG spokeswoman said.

On Tuesday, German insurer Allianz said it was preparing to wind down Iran-related business due to possible U.S. sanctions.

“We are analyzing our portfolio to identify Iran-related business,” an Allianz spokesman said in an e-mailed statement, calling it “totally minimal.”

Allianz is also “waiting for and will consider any guidance that the EU and the German government may provide,” he added.

“This analysis is ongoing and we are developing wind down plans for relevant business to ensure appropriate termination within the defined periods,” the spokesman said.

A Lloyd’s of London spokesman, on May 10, said the company is also reviewing the implication of “re-imposition of previously suspended U.S. sanctions against Iran and will issue guidance to the Lloyd’s market in due course.”

(Source: Reuters)

No drop in Iran’s oil exports if EU supports nuclear deal: Zanganeh

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN**— Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said that the U.S. president’s withdrawal from Iran’s nuclear deal will not affect Iran’s oil exports if the EU supports the deal.

“Every new decision in OPEC needs unanimity... I believe that the help of the European Union helps us... the level of our oil exports will not change,” Zanganeh told reporters after a meeting with EU Energy Commissioner Miguel Arias Canete in Tehran on Saturday, Reuters reported.

Following Trump’s decision on May 8, the U.S. Treasury said Washington would reimpose a wide array of Iran-related sanctions after the expiry of 90- and 180-day wind-down periods, including sanctions aimed at Iran’s oil sector and transactions with its central bank.

The EU wants to salvage the 2015 nuclear deal, which offers the Islamic Republic relief from economic sanctions in exchange for



*Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh (R) and EU Energy Commissioner Miguel Arias Canete met in Tehran on Saturday*

curbs on its nuclear program. Europe sees the agreement as an important element of

international security. Ahead of his visit to Tehran, the EU energy

commissioner said: “The objective of my visit is to continue to strengthen energy relations with Iran, most importantly now against this new challenging background of President Trump’s announcement. The lifting of nuclear related sanctions is an essential part of the nuclear deal. The European Union has repeatedly stressed that the lifting of nuclear related sanctions has not only a positive impact on trade and economic relations with Iran, but also and mainly crucial benefits for the Iranian people. Since the Iran nuclear deal has been signed in January 2016, it is delivering. In 2017, Iran’s trade with the EU stood at close to €20 billion, registering a 60% increase compared with the previous year. The European Union is fully committed to ensuring that this continues to be delivered on. The EU is also determined to act in accordance with its security interests and to protect its economic investments.”

Iran’s light crude oil price tops \$73 in a week

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iran’s light crude oil price jumped \$3.02 in the week ended on May 11 to cross \$73 per barrel, its highest since November 2014.

The Iranian light crude price settled at \$73.79 per barrel in the mentioned week, Shana reported on Saturday.

The country’s light oil price was reported \$66.38 on average since the beginning of 2018 until May 11.

Iran’s heavy crude oil also experienced a \$3.02 rise in the said week to settle at \$71.55 per barrel.

During the said week, Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)’s basket price stood at \$73.48 per barrel with \$2.74 increase compared to the preceding week.

Oil prices rose to late 2014 highs in the



mentioned week, buoyed as U.S. crude inventories declined and as expectations rose that Saudi Arabia would keep withholding supply to prop up the market.

As Reuters reports indicate, oil prices rose several dollars on the barrel in recent weeks on fears that the U.S. withdraw from the Iran nuclear agreement will bring more volatility to the oil-producing region.

French law firm to stay in Iran whatever fate of JCPOA

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Christophe Eck, a senior partner at GIDE, says that the French law firm will remain active in Iran regardless of Trump’s decision to withdraw from the Iran nuclear deal.

Eying Iran for a while, after the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) initiation, the reputable French law firm decided to open a branch in Tehran. The firm already had some exposure to Iran with consulting work for Iranian cellphone service provider, Iran Cell, and advising Iran’s government around some power and energy projects.

“Iran is a big country with huge potential and smart, well-educated people. We decided to take the opportunity and enter Iran market,” Eck told the Tehran Times during the Iran oil show this year.

The plan came to fruition in early 2017 when Mehrnoosh Aryanpour, a perfect



candidate for the job, took at the helm of the international law firm in Tehran’s office.

The firm, knowing all too well that it’s tough to build a “good reputation”, took its

time opening an office in Tehran, because they didn’t want to “compromise” on the quality of staff that includes renowned Iranian professor Rabia Eskini who acts as a counselor for the office in Tehran. Thus, Eck said, the employees at GIDE provide “top services for major clients with high expectations.”

The firm intends to remain in Iran despite the abrogation of the Iran deal by the U.S. President Donald Trump, because GIDE won’t be directly subject to sanctions as “legal advisor” and won’t provide advice for companies on the sanction lists.

However, the firm can indirectly be affected by the U.S. sanctions on Iran, because some of the clients may “reconsider”, “postpone” or “halt” their investments in Iran.

The firm has stayed ahead of the game with plans to explore other countries for investment in Iran in Eastern Europe and Asia, and to stay atop the adjustments to

the changes ahead in Iran.

“Business needs medium and long-term visibility and stability, but with Trump’s actions, we are in a gray zone which is not very satisfactory for businesses,” Eck said.

“Trump is a business man and wants to run the U.S. like his business. History will judge whether he succeeds or not,” Eck added.

Although Eck remains optimistic about the medium and long-term regarding the JCPOA. It is just the matter of wait and see to discern the ultimate fate of the Iran deal, he said.

Eck hopes the regional countries stay together and carry on political discussions. “There are challenges to meet as the need for peace is pressing.”

Gide, a reputable leading international law firm operating in France and Europe, operates in 14 locations worldwide and offers consulting services in various sectors of national and international law.

Commodities are posting their best returns in a decade and Goldman thinks there’s more to come

Goldman Sachs warns that investors are starting to cool on commodities and could miss out on further gains for the year’s best-performing asset class.

Earlier this week, the bank raised its outlook for its commodities index, which tracks assets like crude oil and copper. It now thinks the Goldman Sachs Commodities Index will return 8 percent over the next 12 months, up from its previous forecast for a 5-percent gain.

Commodities are now posting their best year-to-date gains in a decade, according to Goldman. The fuel for that performance is crude oil. International benchmark Brent crude prices have risen more than 51 percent over the last year, while the cost of U.S. crude is up nearly 45 percent.

“The rally likely has room to run, particularly from a returns perspective. Oil fundamentals are now more bullish as robust demand faces supply disappointments,” wrote Jeffrey Currie, Goldman’s global head of commodities.

But Goldman says the market’s mounting concern over a slowdown in global growth and rising U.S. interest rates are weighing on sentiment around commodities. Goldman notes that record-setting long positions in

oil — or bets that crude prices will keep rising — have moderated since the commodity crossed \$73 a barrel.

Goldman thinks the market’s fears are largely unfounded, saying “Growth concerns will likely prove temporary” and “realized demand remains robust.”

Brent crude briefly topped \$80 a barrel on Thursday, approaching Goldman’s target of \$82.50. Falling output in Venezuela and Angola, the return of U.S. sanctions on Iran and bottlenecks in America’s premier shale oil region threaten to leave a finely balanced market undersupplied by about 1 million barrels a day, Goldman says.

It also stresses that physical markets — the buyers who actually take delivery of commodities to meet real-world demand — tend to ignore growth concerns and rising rates. They also tend to shrug off a strengthening U.S. dollar, which makes commodities priced in the greenback more expensive to holders of other currencies.

In other words, the world doesn’t stop consuming things like corn, copper and crude just because of headwinds that might sideline financial traders, who swap derivatives to take advantage of rising or falling prices.

The bank also notes that the 14-member

oil producer group OPEC is currently limiting its output — and it has historically failed to restore production fast enough to meet demand. That means OPEC’s current deal with Russia and other producers to keep 1.8 million barrels a day off the market is likely to cause at least a short-term undersupply of oil.

“OPEC has never been able to catch late-cycle demand growth to replenish inventories before a recession occurs,” Currie says.

Currie compares the current environment to 2000. Then, OPEC upped production by 3 million barrels a day in the first nine months of the year, after cutting supply to contend with the fallout of the late-90s Asian financial crisis.

Then as now, growth in developed markets was coming to an end while emerging market growth was ramping up. Rising rates were creating inflationary pressure, a technology boom was underway and the U.S. dollar was strengthening. In the oil market, U.S. sanctions were limiting output from a major OPEC member, crude stockpiles were moderate and oil prices were lower for delivery in the future.

Despite OPEC’s exit from production cuts, demand for oil outstripped supply, and the United States had to tap strategic oil reserves

S. Korean gov’t discusses contingency plans on Iran sanctions

The South Korean government held an inter-agency meeting Friday to explore ways to minimize local business impact from the U.S. decision to exit the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran.

Last week, the Donald Trump administration announced that it would quit the agreement, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), saying it’s flawed and incomplete.

The U.S. plans to reinstate sanctions against Tehran, with

firms given 90-day or 180-day grace periods, depending on their business sector.

The measure also affects foreign countries that trade with Iran.

In the session hosted by Yun Kang-hyeon, deputy foreign minister for economic affairs, representatives from the ministry and other related government bodies discussed a strategy to deal with the new situation.

South Korea is preparing for consultations with the U.S. on the matter, as it apparently seeks an Iran sanctions waiver.

“The government will make constant efforts based on close cooperation among relevant authorities to minimize effects from future U.S. steps to the South Korean economy and firms with business ties with Iran,” the ministry said.

(Source: Yonhap)



# Oil's rally above \$80 stokes fears that demand will suffer

Oil's rise to \$80 a barrel is stoking concerns that the price rally will erode demand, but OPEC's giants so far aren't worried.

Crude surged above \$80 a barrel in London for the first time since 2014, as global supply tightens and the U.S. moves to restrict oil exports from Iran.

"At \$80 per barrel, there will be some impact on demand," warned Patrick Pouyanne, chief executive officer of French oil explorer Total SA. The problem could worsen if Iran's exports are curbed later this year. "I wouldn't be surprised to see \$100 per barrel in the coming months," he said in Washington.

## Demand concerns

Pouyanne's comments echoed concerns raised by both the International Energy Agency and India's petroleum minister this week.

The IEA on Wednesday warned that demand is at risk of being eroded in the second half of this year thanks to the price rally that's been orchestrated by Saudi Arabia and allied oil producing nations including Russia.

Indian Petroleum Minister Dharmendra



Pradhan relayed similar concerns during a phone conversation with his Saudi counterpart, according to Pradhan's tweets. India, the third-largest consumer of oil after the U.S. and China, would be especially hard-

hit if prices keep rising.

Pradhan said Khalid Al-Falih assured him that Saudi Arabia and other producers will ensure supplies are sufficient to offset any shortfalls and maintain reasonable prices.

Separately, Al-Falih and United Arab Emirates Energy Minister Suhail Al Mazrouei said recent moves in oil prices have been driven by geopolitics and that global supply remains ample, according to a statement released by the Saudi energy ministry.

## Iran effect

U.S. President's Donald Trump's decision to withdraw from the 2015 nuclear deal and re-impose sanctions on Iran, now a major exporter of crude, has roiled markets.

"We are back to the situation where we were before the 2016 agreement and in the meantime Iran has grown its exports by 1 million barrels a day," Pouyanne said. "It's why you see the oil price going up and up and up."

A day earlier, Total said it wouldn't commit any more funds to Iran's South Pars 11 natural gas project, in which it took a controlling stake last year. The French company won't risk investing in Iran following the return of U.S. sanctions unless it can obtain a waiver.

"I'm not sure it would be easy to obtain, to be honest," Pouyanne said.

(Source: Bloomberg)

## LNG remains in tight supply in this key market



PetroChina has begun cutting natural gas deliveries to certain industrial clients signaling still tight supply of the fuel that caused rather severe shortages in northern China in December.

Reuters quotes four unnamed sources as saying the move aimed to reduce the risk of new shortages this winter and also included raising gas prices for some large buyers, including gas distributors and liquefaction plant operators.

The news comes after the supply order deadline for state gas suppliers with their larger clients, which, as per the state planning commissions' requirement, was the end of April. The deadline was set in a bid to gain clarity into demand and supply patterns early on in the year.

In January-April, China's gas consumption increased by 14 percent to 71.1 million tons, which has driven LNG prices even higher on the spot market after a surge in December prompted by an urgent boost in imports to fight the shortage created by the rush to reduce the country's reliance on coal power generation capacity.

Last year, gas imports jumped by 27 percent to 68.57 million tons, including pipeline and LNG shipments, with LNG prices hitting a three-month high on the spot market.

This year, China's largest refiner, Sinopec, signaled efforts were being made to avoid a repeat of the December shortages. In April, the company said it had plans to boost its LNG import capacity to 26 million tons annually over the next six years from the current 9 million tons. State energy companies have also begun turning depleted gas fields into gas storage facilities to avoid a repeat of this winter's supply crunch.

This capacity build takes time, however, so it seems PetroChina is trying to avoid a supply crunch by limiting supply before the peak in demand. According to one source from a gas liquefaction plant in Inner Mongolia, this is the first time PetroChina has cut supplies before the summer, and this will deal a blow to the plant's profit margins.

(Source: oilprice.com)

## Russian gas 'will remain cheaper in the long run' than U.S.' LNG: German media



Although the EU has said that it may consider buying U.S. liquid gas under certain conditions, the step might be difficult to implement. Here is why.

EU governments have agreed to discuss the possible supply of liquefied gas (LNG) from the U.S. if Washington refrains from introducing taxes on steel and aluminum imports, Deutsche Wirtschafts Nachrichten reported, citing an EU official.

U.S. President Donald Trump has threatened to introduce a 25 percent tariff on steel and a 10 percent tariff on aluminum imports to the United States in June 2018.

The agreement was reached at an informal dinner in Sofia, Bulgaria on Wednesday evening. But the newspaper argues that the implementation of the idea wouldn't be that easy.

"Russian natural gas will remain significantly cheaper in the long run than shipments across the Atlantic. With the Nord Stream 2 pipeline, Germany wants to ensure a technologically secure basis for supplies from Russia," the article said.

So far, the route across Ukraine has

been the main transport route for Russian natural gas to Europe. However, the infrastructure provided by the Ukrainian Naftogaz is outdated, the newspaper noted.

The Nord Stream 2 pipeline is projected to deliver 55 billion cubic meters of Russian natural gas annually to the EU across the Baltic Sea to Germany, bypassing Ukraine.

Construction permits have already been issued by Germany and Finland. But the project has been severely opposed by the United States, which seeks to export its own LNG to Europe.

Sandra Oudkirk, U.S. deputy assistant secretary of state for energy, has declared that the White House is willing to impose economic sanctions against the Nord Stream 2 pipeline project, Spiegel Online reports.

According to her, the undersea pipeline will allegedly provide Russia with an opportunity to install surveillance equipment beneath the Baltic Sea and may also increase Europe's reliance on Russian natural gas supplies.

(Source: Sputnik)

## Why oil prices will head even higher

Get ready for another surge in crude oil prices.

The cost of a barrel of crude oil is now at its highest level since 2014, but there will likely be another jump in the coming weeks. Primary among the reasons is that despite all the screeching, European companies will not be likely to get a waiver from soon-to-be-imposed U.S. sanctions on Iran.

Earlier this month the Trump administration refused to recertify the so-called nuclear deal with Iran. That sent prices for Brent crude, the European benchmark, above \$80 a barrel for the first time in four years, and almost three times the cost in early 2016 when it hit a low of \$29, according to data from Bloomberg.

Under the sanctions, U.S. companies will not be able to buy crude oil from Iran. In addition, companies outside the U.S. that continue to do business with Iran will need to avoid sending any money through the U.S. banking system or risk the ire of the American government.

Meanwhile in Europe, political and busi-

ness leaders spent much effort after the U.S. sanctions announcement trying to salvage the deal and find a way for European companies to continue to trade with Iran. Although that situation seems unlikely to happen, oil traders haven't get realized it yet.

"Next move [in oil prices] will be when markets come to grips that the U.S. will not provide waivers for European energy companies to do business in Iran," says Joe McMonigle, senior energy policy analyst at Hedgeye Risk Management, and a former Department of Energy chief of staff.

Months ago McMonigle correctly forecast that the Trump administration would nix the nuclear deal.

McMonigle sees about a million barrels of oil a day of Iranian production coming off the global market as a result of the sanctions. But so far oil traders are only taking into account around half of that amount with 500,000 barrels a day still expected to hit the world market via the E.U.

When it becomes clear that E.U. com-

panies, such as French energy giant Total S.A., won't get special protected status, then prices for crude will surge again.

How high will they go? Not as high as \$100 says McMonigle.

Still, it would seem that up nearer \$90 is in the cards. It is only around \$10 away from recent prices of approximately \$80.

The factors supporting the price are a much tighter market than there was a few years ago. U.S. commercial inventories of petroleum, excluding the U.S. strategic petroleum reserve, fell by 17 percent in the latest 12 months to less than half a billion barrels, according to a May 11 report from the U.S. Energy Information Administration. While that report looks only at the U.S., it is indicative of the broader declining inventories of the energy across the world.

Supply is also falling dramatically in Venezuela. The country's production of oil has dropped to a multi-year low of 1.5 million barrels a day in March from a high above 2.8 million barrels as recently as early 2014, ac-

cording to data from TradingEconomics.com.

Saudi Arabia, the traditional swing producer in the Middle East, has little incentive in the short term to increase output significantly to moderate the oil price rally. A swing producer typically raises or lowers production to stop prices going to extreme highs or lows that can damage either customers or the producing companies.

One reason that Saud has an incentive to let prices rally at least a little is that higher oil prices mean higher revenue for the Kingdom. The second is that lofty oil prices will help get a better price for the partial sale of the state-owned oil company Aramco. That sale is the centerpiece of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's efforts to diversify the Saudi economy away from dependency on oil exports. While no date is set for the Aramco sale, another rally in crude may help move it closer to reality. The prince needs a successful and lucrative transaction to help grease the skids for the rest of the reinvention of the economy.

(Source: Forbes)

U.S. drillers added 1 rig to the number of oil and gas rigs this week, according to Baker Hughes, with oil rigs holding steady and gas rigs adding one. The oil and gas rig count now stands at 1,046—up 145 from this time last year.

Meanwhile, neighboring Canada gained 4 oil and gas rigs for the week—the first gain in weeks.

Both the Brent and WTI benchmark were trading up on the day at 9:46am EST with Brent crude surpassing the \$80 mark at one point on Thursday. The shaky geopolitical landscape in major oil-producing regions has sent oil prices to near four-year highs, as the market grows increasingly wary over possible supply crunches by U.S. sanctions on Iran, Venezuela's colossal mess that has sent PDVSA production fall month after month with no end in sight, and OPEC's almost too-good adherence to its production cut deal.

In the wake of the higher oil prices, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have made public statements that promised to fill



any supply gaps, should they in fact materialize, although this has done little to calm the market.

WTI was trading up 0.06 percent at \$71.53, with Brent

trading up 0.39 percent at \$79.60. Western Canada Select (WCS) was trading flat at \$56.44—a massive discount to WTI.

Working the other side of the push/pull for oil prices, U.S. oil production rose again in the week ending May 11, reaching 10.723 million bpd—the twelfth build in as many weeks—and less than 300,000 bpd shy of the 11.0 million bpd forecast that many are predicting for 2018.

U.S. production has steadily increased since OPEC engaged in a supply cut deal that sought to remove 1.8 million bpd from the market. At the time the deal was announced, the U.S. was producing 8.6 million bpd. Today, the U.S. is producing more than 2.0 million bpd over that figure, while OPEC/NOPEC continues to curb supply on its end.

At 5 minutes after the hour, WTI was trading down 0.36 percent at \$71.23, with Brent trading down 0.24 percent at \$79.06.

(Source: oilprice.com)

## OPEC secretary general comments on reappointment of Russian energy minister

The reappointment of Alexander Novak to the office of the Russian energy minister is particularly an acknowledgment of his role in structuring the OPEC and non-OPEC oil production capping agreement, Secretary General of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Mohammed Barkindo told TASS on Friday.

"The reappointment of Alexander Novak as Russian Energy Minister by President Vladimir Putin is an acknowledgment of his sterling qualities and exemplary leadership he continued to display in the OPEC and Non-OPEC strategic partnership," Barkindo said in the comment for TASS.

Novak has earned the respect and admiration in the global oil industry, Barkindo said. "He remains that strong, reliable and dependable bridge between OPEC and Non-OPEC participating countries in the Declaration of Cooperation," the OPEC Secretary General added.

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev suggested reappointing Novak as the Russian Energy Minister earlier today at the meeting with President Vladimir Putin.

(Source: Tass)

## UK's top Qatari LNG importer seeks to broaden supply as cargoes slump

Britain's busiest liquefied natural gas (LNG) import terminal, South Hook, is seeking to broaden its sources of supply as robust Asian demand diverts cargoes from Qatar - the world's biggest exporter and the terminal's majority shareholder.

Volumes to the terminal, in which Qatar Petroleum owns a controlling stake, have halved so far this year from a year ago to 1.2 million cubic meters (mcm) and amount to just 15 percent of 2016 volumes for the same period.

South Hook, in Wales, has been seeking to broaden the specification of its gas since January, a proposal that was approved late on Thursday by the Joint Office of Gas Transporters (JOGT), which administers the rules for transporting gas in Britain.

The terminal received approval to raise oxygen limits within the gas it delivers to Britain's network, "allowing greater diversity of gas composition of future cargoes at South Hook LNG Terminal", according to its proposal document to the JOGT.

"The UKCS (UK continental shelf) decline, Groningen production cuts and the closure of Rough long-range storage facility are all resulting in an increase in GB's (Britain's) gas import dependency," it wrote, referring to falling regional supplies. "This modification supports this enhanced gas security of supply requirement."

The Dutch government said in March it will phase out gas production at the Groningen field, once Europe's largest, by 2030 as part of efforts to reduce the danger caused by small but damaging earthquakes.

The terminal, with ExxonMobil and Total as minor shareholders, has been importing LNG from Qatar since it was fully commissioned in 2010. With capacity of 15.6 million tons a year, it is one of the biggest in Europe.

South Hook declined to comment beyond its public documents on the issue, which did not specify from which other countries it planned to source its LNG.

However, analysts have noted the rapid expansion of U.S. LNG exports thanks to the launch of two liquefaction plants in the past two years, Sabine Pass in Louisiana and Cove Point in Maryland, to take advantage of domestic shale gas production.

Surprisingly strong demand in the past year from China, South Korea and India has up-ended past predictions from industry watchers that there would be a glut of supply due to rising output from the United States, Russia and Australia.

Broadly speaking, this meant Qatari LNG has been much in demand in Asia while Atlantic-based cargoes have come to Europe. In Britain, South Hook's quieter rival, Dragon LNG, has seen an uptick in its deliveries from a variety of sources.

The joint venture of Royal Dutch Shell and Malaysia's Petronas received almost as much LNG so far this year as all of last year, including one of the first cargoes from Novatek's Yamal LNG project in northern Russia and the maiden cargo from Dominion Energy's Cove Point.

Dragon, which shares the Milford Haven port with South Hook, received four cargoes last year, all of them from Qatar, compared to six this year from Egypt, Trinidad, Russia and both U.S. terminals, according to Thomson Reuters Eikon data.

(Source: Reuters)

## India is concerned about rising oil prices

India is seeking assurances from Saudi Arabia, OPEC's biggest producer, that oil prices will remain "stable and moderate," its government said in a statement on Friday.

Energy minister Dharmendra Pradhan spoke with Saudi oil minister Khalid Al-Falih late on Thursday to "express his concern about rising prices and its negative impact on consumers and the Indian economy," it said.

World oil prices have spiked by nearly 20 percent in 2018, and are up more than 40 percent over the past 12 months. President Donald Trump's decision to pull out of the Iran nuclear deal -- leading to concerns about Iranian supplies -- and a collapse in Venezuelan production have accelerated the price rise in recent weeks.

Brent crude, the global benchmark, crossed \$80 per barrel on Thursday, while U.S. crude futures hit \$71.60 per barrel early Friday, their highest level since 2014.

Oil markets were already getting tighter following nearly 18 months of a deal between OPEC and Russia to curb their output to mop up a supply glut.

"We're not saying oil should be \$25 a barrel, it should be at a price that is reasonable," Sanjay Sudhir, joint secretary for international cooperation at India's energy ministry, told CNNMoney. "\$80 is way above a reasonable price, this is not a market-driven price."

Al-Falih told his Indian counterpart that Saudi Arabia would work with other OPEC producers and Russia "to ensure availability of adequate supplies to offset any potential shortfalls," the kingdom's official news agency said.

Saudi Arabia has been discussing how to respond to the recent market volatility with the United Arab Emirates, the current OPEC president, and they'll consult with Russia next week on the sidelines of a conference in St. Petersburg, the agency reported. OPEC producers are due to meet in June to review their production cuts.

(Source: CNN)



## Why calling Trump an ‘animal’ doesn’t fix anything

By Katy Steinmetz

When President Donald Trump sat at a roundtable on Wednesday and referred to certain immigrants as “animals,” he was engaging in a practice that has been around for millennia. Go back to ancient Mesopotamia and there are examples of people using language to describe other humans as something less than human, whether insects or parasites or donkeys. “It really goes back to the beginning of history,” says David Livingstone Smith, a professor of philosophy at the University of New England. And, he says, it’s always been a dangerous way of thinking.



figure like the President makes that comparison, Smith explains, is essentially people think, immigrants = evil = monsters.

Many people who were offended by Trump’s language in turn made dehumanizing comments of their own on Twitter, saying that Trump — or anyone who continues to support him — are the real animals. But that is falling prey to the same bad instinct. “We often dehumanize the dehumanizers, as if to say, ‘This has nothing to do with us,’” Smith says, “and that really prevents us from understanding that we’re all vulnerable to forming these kinds of derogatory attitudes towards others.” Smith suggests that sets us back in eradicating this kind of behavior altogether.

One reason that experts raise flags about such language is that dehumanizing words are often precursors to sticks and stones, because they “disable inhibitions against acts of harm,” as Smith puts it. “We are permitted to treat non-human animals in ways that are impermissible in the treatment of human beings,” he says. “People can roast pigs but they can’t roast their mother.”

Genocides throughout history have involved the victims being compared to something subhuman. Germans used the word Untermenschen, which literally means subhuman, to describe Jews while making plans to exterminate them. During the Rwandan genocide, Tutsis were described as “cockroaches.” More recently, Buddhist monks in Myanmar have been describing the persecuted Rohingya population as reincarnated snakes and scorpions — all of which can enable the attitude that certain groups are to be dealt with using the same guiltless violence one inflicts on pests. It’s easy to see how this works when considering an opposing example: activists crusading to have animals granted the legal status of “personhood” with hopes that humans would treat them with more respect and care.

Dehumanizing language can help enable policy changes too. Sociolinguist Ben Zimmer recalls the example of “superpredator,” a word popularized by a Princeton academic in 1995 to describe juvenile criminals — and a term Hillary Clinton was criticized for using back in the ‘90s. That label likened violent youth to predatory animals, beings that other humans must protect themselves from by asserting their more dominant place in the hierarchy. (It became particularly associated with African-American youth.) As Retro Report explains in the short documentary The Superpredator Scare, that framing helped the passage of state laws that made it easier to treat juveniles as adults in courts, even though the data about the perceived threat of “superpredators” proved overblown.

This is one of the key concerns surrounding Trump’s “animals” comment: that it will enable policies that are less humane by spreading the idea that there is some species-level difference between people who have citizenship and those who don’t. “It’s of a piece with other dehumanizing rhetoric that Trump has used to appeal to his base and their anxieties about immigration,” Zimmer says. “It’s the same kind of moral panic.”

That association is only helped along by “alien” language already in use, as well as the fact that immigrants tend to speak languages other than English. After all, speech is a defining feature of the species, and it’s easier to deny someone the dignity of viewing them as part of the species if they don’t speak your tongue. Zimmer notes that the roots of the word barbarian are related to the word babble, a pejorative label that conjures disdain for “the unintelligible speech of foreigners.”

Some researchers have suggested that having dehumanizing attitudes toward other groups may have neurological effects, dampening empathetic responses in the brain. While academics have debated that idea, Smith says that this old habit persists precisely because its effect on our minds can be so strong. Humans are a highly social species, “and for any social animal, there have to be very strong inhibitions against lethal violence in the community, because you can’t maintain a social way of life if you’re at each other’s throats,” he says. Yet humans can also come to see how violence could be advantageous, whether it allows them to take someone else’s land or exploit their labor. “So over the millennia, we’ve developed ways of disabling those inhibitions,” he says, one of which is dehumanizing other people so individuals can “express certain impulses that you would normally keep under wraps.”

World War II provides more examples than the obvious one. The Americans dehumanized the Japanese before they dropped nuclear bombs on them, Smith says. (And, he adds, they actually dehumanized the Germans less because of racial similarities.) The Japanese in turn dehumanized the Allies. And there are countless people who have denied the humanity of Adolf Hitler. It makes sense: humans don’t want to believe one of their own is capable of such atrocities. But Smith argues that by making exceptions — by being dehumanizing to others when it feels righteous or popular or even right — is still breaching life into a generally destructive habit.

“No matter how heinous someone’s crimes are, they’re still human beings,” he says. When people who are angry about Trump’s comment then go and paint him as a beast, “that doesn’t help us to manage this terrible problem,” Smith adds. “If we want to prevent dehumanization and the atrocities that flow from it, we really need to accept how vulnerable we are to slipping into that way of thinking.” That impulse doesn’t make someone a bad person, Smith adds, but once that way of thinking is established, it is hard to control.

(Source: Time)

# British government accused of funding human rights abuses in Bahrain

By Karen McVeigh

Human rights group Reprieve has accused the Foreign Office of being complicit in abuses in Bahrain and failing to be transparent about its £5m security and justice reform program in the kingdom.

Between 2012 and 2017, funding for the program was argely drawn from the controversial conflict, security and stability fund, a cross-government reserve that supports global security and peace building in conflict zones, according to freedom of information requests.

The fund has a budget of £1.2bn a year, split between overseas development assistance, which counts towards Britain’s 0.7% aid target, and other funding. It was set up under the auspices of key government departments, including the Department for International Development and the Foreign Office, and its priorities are dictated by the national Security Council.

The CSSF was recently criticized by the UK aid watchdog for serious shortcomings in the way it operates. It was found to have been insufficiently rigorous in applying safeguards to prevent collaboration with foreign entities with suspect human rights records.

In its report, Reprieve said that despite the training of prison officers, police and other officials by British companies in the kingdom since the Arab spring, the number of inmates on death row has tripled, torture in detention has continued, and executions have resumed for the first time since 2010.

Three men, Sami Mushaima, 42, Ali al-Singace, 21, and Abbas al-Sameea, 27, were executed in January last year, despite torture and forced confessions, according to Human Rights Watch.

Reprieve, said that, by providing training to groups that later backed the executions of dissidents - and because of its failure adequately to investigate torture allegations - the British government was complicit in human rights abuses in Bahrain. The report was co-authored by Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy.

The report comes after an aid watchdog criticized the conflict, security and stability fund [CSSF] recently for



**Human rights group Reprieve, said that, by providing training to groups that later backed the executions of dissidents - and because of its failure adequately to investigate torture allegations - the British government was complicit in human rights abuses in Bahrain.**

serious shortcomings in the way it operates, including that it had been insufficiently rigorous in applying safeguards to prevent collaboration with foreign entities with suspect human rights records.

Maya Foa, director of Reprieve, called on Britain to require Bahrain to take basic anti-torture steps as a condition of further assistance, and to be more transparent about funding.

She said: “A global Britain should be proudly promoting human rights and

the rule of law, not undermining them in secret.”

“The only way for the British public to be confident their money is not leading to abuses abroad is for the government to publish a full and transparent account of projects we are funding and the human rights assessments for each.”

Between 2016 and 2017, the FCO spent £1.5m on British expertise to reform Bahrain’s security and justice system, through the CSSF.

However, this year, the UK’s

contribution to the project will come from two new sources, the Global Britain Fund and the Integrated Activity Fund, which Reprieve say is more opaque.

A Foreign Office spokesperson said: “We regularly raise concerns on specific issues at a senior level with the government of Bahrain, but it is not good enough just to criticize countries from the sidelines. Only by working with Bahrain can we bring about the changes we would like to see in the country.”

(Source: alahednews.com)

## The missing piece in Macron’s Asia vision: Japan France’s conflicting visions of strategic balances in the Indo-Pacific

By Valérie Niquet

A few weeks before a historical meeting between Donald Trump and Kim Jong-un, with major developments going on around the Korean Peninsula, the future of Northeast Asia is the focus of the world’s attention. Despite this, while visiting Australia in early May, French President Emmanuel Macron appeared oblivious of the close strategic connections between the Northeast Asian theater, where Japan is a major player, and the “Indo-Pacific axis” that he stressed during his trip.

It was Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe who, in 2007, launched the idea of a security network, based on common interests and values, with all the willing democratic powers. It is also Abe who relaunched the theme in 2012, after his return to power, around the concept of a “security diamond” comprising the United States, Australia, India, and Japan. This format is also the basis for the resurrected Quad discussions between these major players in the region.

Confronted with an increasingly ambitious and aggressive Chinese strategy since Xi Jinping came to power, the region’s democratic powers, who had been hesitant for a long time, have rallied behind this initiative.

Beijing has a particular notion of strategic balance in Asia, based on the rejection of the concept of universal values, a determination to move the lines on international norms, and the goal of eventually excluding the United States in favor of a “community of destiny” for Asia. Against this China-centered vision, Japan proposes a much more balanced networked security architecture between equal partners contributing according to their capabilities.

Given this context, the omission of Japan in Macron’s speech on the Indo-Pacific conveys a worrying lack of awareness of strategic issues in Asia.

A truly global strategic vision, for a power like France, should go beyond a block by block construction based on the conclusion of contracts, as important as they are. Nevertheless, it seems that Macron’s aspiration to place France “at the heart” of an axis connecting Australia to France via India had as its primary logic the negotiation of significant arms contracts with these countries, more than a global consideration of the situation in the area as a whole.

Moreover, this stress on the Indo-Pacific “axis” is also inconsistent with the China policy expressed during the president’s visit to Beijing in January 2018. The choice of China as Macron’s first destination in Asia was explained by the “Great Power” status of China, a member of the UN Security Council and the second largest economic power in the world. French diplomacy also remains influenced by a Chinese “neo-Gaullist” tropism and the weight of large companies that believe the People’s Republic of China (PRC) must remain the most important partner of France in Asia. However, Macron went further, promising to go “every year” to Beijing and mainly answering to (or perhaps even exceeding) the expectations of the Chinese leadership.



**It seems that Macron’s aspiration to place France “at the heart” of an axis connecting Australia to France via India had as its primary logic the negotiation of significant arms contracts with these countries, more than a global consideration of the situation in the area as a whole.**

In that context, Macron’s recent speech at a naval base in Australia, which went far past the commitments he made in India, proclaiming that France, Australia, and India have the responsibility to protect the region against the risk of hegemony can only upset Beijing, was significant. To the Chinese leadership, the idea of an “Indo-Pacific” architecture, involving the United States, is to hedge against China’s rise is anathema.

At the same time, Macron’s omission of Tokyo, whose security role in the region, including in terms of capacity building, is increasing, with the support of all regional powers except China, could also have damaging consequences for the future of the Franco-Japanese relationship, and therefore on the real place given to France in the region.

Unlike Beijing, Japan does not pose any threats: it is not a permanent member with veto right at the United Nations Security Council; and it may not be good at offering commercial contracts that allow for important

announcements during official visits. Decision-making can be slow, as in any democracy, and the government does not have the means to impose decisions on companies.

Finally, any relationship with Japan — including in its economic spin-offs — can only be built in the long term, taking into account the constraints faced by Tokyo, particularly in its defense relationship with the United States.

Japan occupies a significant place in the French economy, both regarding investments and job creation. Japan remains by far the first among Asian investors in France. As of 2018, 490 Japanese companies employed nearly 80,000 people in diversified sectors, a figure far above the 17,000 jobs created by Chinese companies, Hong Kong included.

Japan might be now the third economy in the world, behind China, but it remains a rich consumer country, where France has major trade interests. Consumption growth, particularly for luxury goods, is, by nature in a mature economy, less impressive than in China, though political uncertainties and the anti-corruption campaign put a massive blow to that sector. But if Beijing represents 5 percent of global French exports, and Japan only 1.4 percent, it is also with China that our deficit is the largest, five times more than with Japan.

Regarding real innovation, Tokyo remains far ahead of China, both in qualitative and quantitative terms, and bilateral cooperation in this area can be more balanced and confident for French companies than with China, which has a state-sponsored policy of imposing technology transfers as a major element of its own capacity building.

At a more strategic level, Japan recognizes and appreciates the position of France as a “Pacific power,” the only one inside the EU, and the French ability to maintain a balance vis-à-vis China’s increasing influence in the Pacific. Paris hopes to develop a bilateral dialogue with Tokyo, on matters like cooperation in the maritime domain, climate change, or the role that Japan could play to support the autonomy of France’s Pacific territories. Japan also remains an essential provider of development aid, and its role in stabilizing Africa, based on values that France shares, is far from negligible.

In these circumstances, Macron’s endorsement of the Indo-Pacific concept, long anticipated by Tokyo, is positive; but it is unfortunate that Paris did not perceive the need to fully integrate Tokyo, and to connect more coherently the two poles of France’s Asian policy: Northeast Asia and the Indo-Pacific axis.

2018 marks the 170th anniversary of diplomatic relations between France and Japan, and the 100th anniversary of the French Chamber of Commerce, the oldest in the archipelago. However, beyond this long history and the importance of cultural exchanges around the theme of “japonism,” it is time for France to become truly aware of the major economic and strategic role that Tokyo is playing in the region and beyond.

(Source: The diplomat)



–Regardless of the EU's dependence on the U.S. politically and for its security, the volume of the EU trade with the U.S. is not comparable with the Union's trade volume with Iran. And there is a great interdependency between the transatlantic economies as well. Any EU economic retaliatory act against the U.S. to save the JCPOA will be counterproductive and face the U.S. reaction which can finally end in trade war. It is totally unreasonable to think that the EU will endanger its economy by triggering a trade war with the U.S. for Iran's sake.

"If we are not making real and substantial



Varadkar added: "If the UK wants to put forward alternatives to that whether alternative text to the backstop or an alternative future relationship between the UK and the EU, we're

The EU has already said UK plans for a so-called “customs partnership” are based on “magical thinking” and that a separate, vaguer proposal involving technology called MaxFac


“France needs real world politics and rid itself of the neo-Conservative ideology, which has led to such destructive consequences [in the Middle and Near East] and finally to start defending the interests of France,” Le Pen emphasized.

- This is Palestinians' land and Al-Quds will never be Israel's capital. That's according to the entire Muslim world. With help from the U.S. and UK, Israel took territory by force and embarked on ethnic-cleansing. Now Palestinians are reclaiming their rights as civil and bloodless as possible. The United Nations must also play a better role in addressing Gaza's humanitarian crisis and stop this escalating violence. The world body should boycott Israel and introduce mechanisms that would lift the




It's an uphill battle, but if Palestinians can seize the momentum around this global solidarity, mobilize massive pressure on the Zionist regime, and harness as much diplomatic power as they can coming out of this Great March of Return – both at the UN and the OIC – they could ultimately win, seeing a free and prosperous future for themselves, their families, and their future generations. To that end, there is not a minute to lose.

With no doubt, the French President is to be blamed in this equation, and he is way behind being a «defender» of the JCPOA! Currently the leaders of Britain, France and Germany have urged all the signatories to the JCPOA to stick to its provisions. This is while the role of people like Emmanuel Macron, “Theresa May” and “Angela Merkel” in breaking the nuclear deal with Iran is no less than the U.S. and Trump! «Standing against Trump’s illusions» was the least responsibility of the European troika, but France, Britain and Germany refused to fulfil it. On the contrary, those like Immanuel Macron did their best in feeding the illusions of the incapable and controversial President of the United States, the illusions that today have stuck European countries, including Britain, Germany and France.



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**Public Calls For Quality Evaluating Of Tender(First Publish/Seconed Publish)**  
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TENDER GUARANTEE		ESTIMATED VALUE (Rial)	Subject of Tender	Tenders Portal Reg. No.	TENDER NO. / INDENT NO	No
Euro	Rial					
<b>46,408</b>	<b>2,332,000,000</b>	<b>50,597,619,28 6</b>	<b>PARTS FOR AIR WRENCH VARCO SSW40</b>	<b>3,161,702</b>	<b>Tender No.:FP/17-97/004 Indent No.: 48-22-9622043</b>	<b>1</b>

**Brief discription of subject:**  
National Iranian Drilling Company(NIDC) address pasdaran Blev., Airport Saqare, Ahvaz, Iran hereby intends to purchase its requirements from qualified and interested tenderers through one-stage public tender (compressed) upon following terms and conditions:

**A) Qualitative evaluation of tenderer:**  
The evaluation is based on article ( J ) implementing regulations of the law of tenders and also carried out base on worksheets qualitative evaluation in the tender doucments. Minimum acceptable point of quality is 60.

**B) Preparation of tender documents:**  
**Purchasing of documents:**  
In order to receive the tender documents, **510,000 Rials** should be paid to account number 4001114004020491 in central bank of Islamic Republic of Iran under the title of “centralized income funds” of National Iranian Drilling Company and providing the original deposit receipt.

**Reciving of documents:**  
Tenderers must be obtain the quality evaluation documents along with tender documents maximum 10 days after the date of second publication in person at the following address: Hall No.:113, 1thfloor, Foreign Procurement Dept., National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN  
Notice: Only the real or legal persons who apply to purchase and recieve tender ducments from foreign procurement department in due date and participates in tenderwill be known as tenderer from tender committee.

**C) Delivery of envelopes of bids and call quality evaluating:**  
Tenderers shall submit simultaneously envelopes of bids including bank guarantees(A), financial offer(C) and stamped and signed of tender documents(B) along with qualificaion worksheets in form of software in CD and documentary within 40 days from last day of document received deadline to the following address: Hall No.:107, 1thfloor ,Tender Committee, Building operations, National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN.  
Notice: The deadline for the refusal of bidders participation in the the tender is the last day of determined for submission of bids.

**D) Tender Guarantee:**  
**Type of guarantee:**  
A)Bank guarantees or guarantees issued by non-bank institutions that have activites licensed by the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran.  
B) The original cash deposit receipt paid to the account number 4001114006376636 under the title of “centralized guarantee funds” of National Iranian Drilling Company to the central bank of Islamic Republic of Iran.

**Duration of credit guarantee & quotation:**  
This duration should be valid for 90 days and extendable maximum For one time in initial credit amount.  
More on this & other tenders is accessible by click on. [WWW.NIDC.IR](http://WWW.NIDC.IR)  
News Channel of NIDC : [@nidc\\_pr](mailto:@nidc_pr)  
**Foreign Procurement Dept**  
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# Will patriotism push America into an unconstitutional war?

By Mickey Edwards

Last week I had the good fortune to hear one of America's leading military officers deliver a thoughtful and inspiring address to a small group — there were about fifty of us — of people who have been concerned about the direction of the country. The meeting was private so I won't reveal the speaker's name, but despite my own high regard for him, and the pleasing tenor of his remarks, there was nonetheless a moment in his presentation that was deeply disturbing; it's not too much to say it was genuinely frightening.

Throughout his talk, the speaker made comments that generally reinforced why he is so widely admired, by me as well as others. He urged young men and women to take the time to engage in public service. He issued a resounding call to honor and uphold America's great founding values — free speech, a free press, due process. He even mixed

his own personal praise for White House Chief of Staff John Kelly and Secretary of Defense James Mattis with the observation that it is nonetheless not a good idea to have military officers serving in the highest ranks of what is supposed to be a civilian-led government.

Encouraged by the direction of his talk, I asked him a question: Last July, I observed, the admiral in charge of the U.S. fleet in the Pacific, Scott Swift, told attendees at a security conference that if he were ordered by President Trump to launch a nuclear missile strike aimed at China, then he would do so in keeping with his commitment to the constitutional model of civilian control. It was a stunning comment that revealed a stark lack of understanding of the Constitution that Swift and other military officers are sworn to uphold. I asked our speaker whether he agreed with Admiral Swift that the military would launch nuclear missiles if

Donald Trump ordered them to do so; he said he agreed with Admiral Swift and he gave the same reason: loyalty to the concept of civilian rule.

But in fact the only "civilian authority" that is empowered to decide on whether and when to go to war is not the president; unless another country has launched its own attack against the United States or the nation is endangered by an insurrection, as was the case during the Civil War, the power to declare war is exclusively with the Congress. Yes, the American model is civilian control but it is not just any civilian who can send the country into battle, and when it comes to sending the U.S. to war in any other circumstance other than insurrection or to respond to an attack, the president is just another civilian.

-----Decider on wartime strategy  
The Founders were well versed in history and knew that historically the commander-in-chief

was the person designated to serve as the ultimate decider on wartime strategy and tactics in order to prevent any paralyzing disagreements within the senior ranks of the military. The commander-in-chief was the person who called the shots after war had commenced, not the person or group of persons who decided whether or not there was to be a war. That is why the Founders deliberately wrote a Constitution that designated the president as commander-in-chief but unambiguously left the power to declare war solely to the representatives of the people.

It is heartening to know that America's military forces are commanded by patriotic, well-meaning, highly competent men and women, but it is frightening to see how little they understand who it is that can send them to war. When President Ronald Reagan was shot in March, 1981, another military man, Secretary of State Al Haig, declared

that with Vice President George Bush away from Washington, it was he, General Haig, who was in charge (actually, if the president and vice president are unable to perform their duties, it is the Speaker of the House, not a cabinet secretary, who is "in charge").

With a president inclined toward impetuosity and the nursing of grievances, it is frightening to know that the men and women who control the nuclear weapons know very little about the authority required to allow them to fire missiles that can destroy countries and kill millions of people. War is sometimes unavoidable but as Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman said during the Civil War, "war is hell"; if we are to launch "hell," it cannot be on the whim of a single person and automatic obedience by well-meaning men and women who profess loyalty to a Constitution they don't understand.

(Source: The Washington Times)

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## CHHTO plans to expand, renovate Ferdowsi mausoleum

**HERITAGE** **TEHRAN** — The Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization has announced plans to expand, restore and renovate mausoleum of the illustrious Persian poet Ferdowsi in Tus, northeastern Khorasan Razavi province.

A total sum of 280 billion rials (some \$6 million) has been allocated to the project, which aims to turn it to a “garden-mausoleum” resembling the ones dedicated to poets Sadi and Hafez in Shiraz, ILNA quoted Abolfazl Mokaramifar, the provincial tourism chief, as saying on Saturday.



A view of Ferdowsi mausoleum with a statue of him in the foreground

“We are looking to restore the splendor of Tus,” the official added.

The garden-mausoleum will cover six hectares after being stretched. Then it will be encircled by 42-hectare project to the Roodbar Gateway, which will embrace restaurants, cafes, supermarkets and other complexes in order to provide tourist services in this area, the official explained.

Many Iranians regard Ferdowsi as the greatest of their poets. Down through the centuries they have continued to read and to listen to recitations from his masterwork, the Shahnameh.

Though written some a millennia ago, the poem collection is somehow intelligible to the average modern Iranians, to them it is the history of their country’s glorious past, preserved for all time in sonorous and majestic verses.

## Antarctica tourism regulation urgent for environment

Tourism regulation in Antarctica has become an urgent matter due to environmental threats, officials from the 53 member countries of the Antarctic Treaty warned at their annual meeting, held this week in Buenos Aires.

In the absence of rules, travel agencies offer trips to the region on boats sometimes equipped with helicopters or submarines, according to Segolene Royal, French ambassador for the Arctic and Antarctic poles. “This activity creates considerable disturbance ... we are witnessing a race toward large-scale tourism that is dangerous for ecosystems,” she said at the assembly on Wednesday.

During the austral summer of 2016/2017, around 44,000 tourists set off for Antarctica, compared with just 9,000 in 1995/1996, according to French authorities.

(Source: Jakarta Post)



### ROUND THE GLOBE

#### Petra

Situated between the Red Sea and the Dead Sea and inhabited since prehistoric times, the rock-cut capital city of the Nabataeans, became during Hellenistic and Roman times a major caravan center for the incense of Arabia, the silks of China and the spices of India, a crossroads between Arabia, Egypt and Syria-Phoenicia.

Petra is half-built, half-carved into the rock, and is surrounded by mountains riddled with passages and gorges. An ingenious water management system allowed extensive settlement of an essentially arid area during the Nabataean, Roman and Byzantine periods.

It is one of the world’s richest and largest archaeological sites set in a dominating red sandstone landscape.

The Outstanding Universal Value of Petra resides in the vast



A view of the UNESCO-registered Petra in Jordan

extent of elaborate tomb and temple architecture; religious high places; the remnant channels, tunnels and diversion dams that combined with a vast network of cisterns and reservoirs which controlled and conserved seasonal rains, and the extensive archaeological remains including of copper mining, temples, churches and other public buildings.

The fusion of Hellenistic architectural facades with traditional Nabataean rock-cut temple/tombs including the Khasneh, the Urn Tomb, the Palace Tomb, the Corinthian Tomb and the Deir (“monastery”) represents a unique artistic achievement and an outstanding architectural ensemble of the first centuries BC to AD.

The varied archaeological remains and architectural monuments from prehistoric times to the medieval periods bear exceptional testimony to the now lost civilizations which succeeded each other at the site.

(Source: UNESCO)

# Ramadan tips for foreign travelers

**TOURISM**  
d e s k

**TEHRAN** — For many foreigners, traveling to Iran or other Muslim-majority countries are not complete without wandering around downtown streets and labyrinthine bazaars with savoring local street food.

More specifically, during the holy month of Ramadan, traveling or swaying around may come with some restraints and inconveniences due to the fact that Muslims fast during daylight hours. The ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, Ramadan, commenced on May 17 in Iran this year.

Ramadan is amazingly a significant and sacred time for Muslims and brings a lot of joy to them.

On the bright side, it gives a chance to international visitors to perceive a different side of life in Muslim-majority countries. For such inbound passengers it would be beneficial to gain some basic knowledge about this special tradition.

Let’s delve into some insights about traveling during Ramadan:

#### ■ Try to be considerate

During Ramadan, one might find streets and bazaars slightly quieter and of course with no refreshments normally available on the streets.

Avoid eating in front of Muslims during the month, just eat somewhere quiet, or at least in obvious tourist areas.

Eating, drinking and smoking in public are strictly prohibited as they are considered acts of temptation; especially for locals, where failing to observe Ramadan may attract penalties. However, there are exceptions for the ill, pregnant or physically weak people and even long-distance travelers!

#### ■ Where to grab meals

Finding public restaurants open is often difficult because Ramadan affects businesses during daylight hours when locals fast. It also includes public restaurants and fast food chains, however, there are some exceptions including country-road stops and hotel restaurants.

Moreover, one can buy fruits, snacks, drinks or whatsoever throughout the day from grocery stores and shops.

#### ■ Iftar, a time for fellowship

After a long day’s observance of fasting from dawn, Muslim families gather at sunset to break their fast over a meal known as Iftar.

The meal generally starts with the eating of dates according to the tradition of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). In Iran, sometimes the fast is broken with a cup of tea or



People visit the Shah Cheragh shrine in Shiraz, southern Iran.

plain lukewarm water. The Iftar is more than just food at the end of a ritualistic day.

It is also a time for fellowship with families, friends and the Muslim community in general. Perhaps this is one of the reasons as to why the Iftar has grown into banquet festivals and large communal gatherings at mosques, banquet halls and in large open spaces. Sometimes dinner is skipped or the Iftar and dinner are combined into one full meal.

Most common Iftar items in Iran include tea, Naan (bread), cheese along with Sabzi Khordan (fresh greens and herbs), dates, fruits and Halva.

During Ramadan, confectionary shops are crowded with

customers who love to the devour the popular Persian sweet of this month, Zoolbia and Bamiyeh, a pastry made of deep fried dough soaked in sugar syrup or honey and cinnamon, and sometimes sprinkled with sesame and spices. Thick soups like Aash and Halim are also popular dishes of the month.

#### ■ Eating from sunset to sunrise

During Ramadan, you can eat your heart out from sunset to sunrise. Pretty much every restaurant, food stand and even households have food ready after dark.

Ramadan comes to an end by Eid al-Fitr, a joyful holiday when Muslims celebrate 29 or 30 days of dawn-to-sunset fasting.

## Marlik collection finds way home after five decades

**HERITAGE**  
d e s k

Photos depict magnificent Marlik collection being on display at the Rasht Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, northern Iran, May 19, 2018.

The Iron-Age collection is temporarily back home after being excavated some five decades ago from a royal cemetery near Roudbar, Gilan province, neighboring the Caspian Sea.

The collection comprises some 60 artifacts including exclusively-ornamented golden vessels, figurines, personal ornaments, amongst others, all on loan from the National Museum of Iran, ISNA reported.

The artifacts were excavated in the early 1960s through several rounds of excavations supervised by prominent Iranian archaeologist Ezzatollah Negahban.

Marlik yielded a handful of tomb chambers, skeletal remains and artifacts with amazing gold workmanship, which are estimated to date form over three millennia ago.

In total, fifty-three tombs were discovered at the mount of Marlik and they were dug into the overlaying sediments, sometimes hitting and penetrating into the underlying bedrock, according to Encyclopedia Iranica.

The Iron Age is the final epoch of the three-age system, preceded by the Stone Age (Neolithic) and the Bronze Age.

The exhibit will be running through June 3.



## Best way to see supermoon? On a Chinese moon-viewing flight

It’s a hat trick for moon lovers.

This year’s September 27 marks three important lunar events -- a supermoon, a total lunar eclipse and Asia’s Mid-Autumn Festival, also known as the Moon Festival.

The Moon Festival falls on the 15th day of the eighth lunar month. In China and parts of Asia it’s believed to be the day with the brightest moon of the year.

It’s also the first time in more than 30 years that a supermoon and a total lunar eclipse are happening on the same day.

To welcome the day, companies in China are introducing a range of “moon-viewing flights.”

#### ■ Unobstructed moon view

Spring Airlines, the country’s budget airline, will offer around 100 scenic flights from September 26 to 28.

“Festivals are the days when homesickness is at its worst,” Yi Mao, the airline’s head of marketing, tells CNN. “And Moon Festival is an important festival for the Chinese.”

It’s a day of reunions for families and friends in China, who will come together to eat mooncakes under the full moon.

“We hope the moon-viewing flights will take care of the emotional needs of our customers who are still on the road during the festival.”

Even if the weather’s cloudy on the ground, there will be an unobstructed view once the plane climbs above the clouds.

More than 100 of Spring Airlines’ seats dedicated to the festival have been sold so far.



#### ■ ‘Sit on the right when flying from Shanghai to Tokyo’

According to the China Meteorological Administration, the supermoon will actually be closest to China on September 28 rather than 27. But there won’t be much difference when looking with the naked eye. “Spring Airlines’ operations control center analyzed the movement of the moon and the flights’ routes to come up with a list of moon flights,” says Mao.

From 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on the Mid-Autumn Festival, the moon will be appearing in the east.

If you’re flying from China’s north to south during this period -- from Luoyang, Henan, to Hong Kong, for example -- it’s best to sit on the left side of the aircraft.

Likewise, if you’re flying north you should sit on the right.

From 8:30 p.m. to 10 p.m., the ideal seats are on the left if the plane is moving from east to west and on the right if going from west to east -- like from Shanghai to Tokyo.

“We’ll also embrace Moon Festival traditions on some flights -- with activities including writing couplets, giving out mooncakes and guessing lantern riddles,” adds Mao.

The carrier reminds passengers that mobile phones shouldn’t be turned on during the flights.

Moon-gazers should plan to take pictures with a regular camera instead.

#### ■ Moon-viewing around the world

A supermoon happens when the moon moves to the point on its orbit when it’s closest to Earth.

The moon will appear 14% larger and 30% brighter than when it’s at the farthest point on its orbit.

According to NASA, the eclipse will be visible in the Americas, Europe, Africa, parts of West Asia and the eastern Pacific, with the action starting on September 27 at 8:11 p.m. EDT.

The total eclipse will commence at 10:11 p.m. EDT and last for one hour and 12 minutes.

Catch it while you can. The next time a supermoon is expected to coincide with a total lunar eclipse is in 2033.

(Source: CNN)

## China’s insatiable appetite for foreign travel

It is said to be the second-most-popular destination for Chinese visitors to Britain after Buckingham Palace, yet Liu Xiaoming, China’s ambassador to the country since 2009, jokes that he has refused invitations to take part in tree-planting ceremonies there. The attraction is Bicester, a town in Oxfordshire of little note for tourists except for its shopping center, called Bicester Village (pictured). It is a kilometer-long strip of more than 160 clipboard outlets selling luxury brands at a discount: Boss, Gucci, Salvatore Ferragamo, Versace and many more.

Mr Liu’s excuse for not visiting Bicester,

as he informed a think-tank audience in 2011, is that “China is a developing country” and it would not be right for him as its ambassador to promote the shopping mecca. Still, last year the outlets received some 6.6m visitors, about the same as the British Museum, of whom about half were foreigners. Half of those were from China—including diplomats, in their unofficial capacity. Without China, Bicester would not be what it is today. As trains approach Bicester Village station, passengers are alerted in Mandarin.

A middle-aged Chinese bureaucrat on a

week-long trip to Britain shows off several bags filled with shirts from Charles Tyrwhitt and a jacket from Burberry. He says he has spent more than £1,000 (\$1,400). Another Chinese visitor, a retired professor of art, has splashed out over £200 on T-shirts from Boss. A woman from the central Chinese province of Hunan shows a couple of bottles of Estée Lauder skincare lotion that she picked up for £190—one for herself, another for a friend. They all say the goods they have bought are much cheaper than they would be in China, helped by a weak pound and rebates of value-added tax for foreign visitors.

According to Global Blue, a tax-free-shopping firm, Chinese visitors bought more than one-quarter of all the tax-free products sold in Britain last year. Their spending was up by nearly one-third on the year before. To make life easier for them, Bicester Village has recently introduced facilities to pay through WeChat, a Chinese social-media and payments platform. Chinese travelers abroad often grumble about other countries’ backwardness in electronic payments. Their own big cities are almost cashless.

(Source: The Economist)



# Eating fish twice a week could strengthen heart health, study says

The American Heart Association released a new advisory that recommended that Americans should increase their fish intake. Researchers believe that consuming fish at least twice a week could strengthen heart health.

On Thursday, May 17, the health organization released an advisory in their journal, *Circulation*. The bulletin encouraged Americans to increase their fish intake. They strongly recommended that Americans consume fish that contain higher amounts of Omega-3 fatty acids.

The AHA advised eating fresh salmon, albacore tuna, mackerel, herring, sardines, and lake trout. They also suggested that Americans should consume either 3-1/2 ounces of cooked fish or a three-fourths cup of flaked fish twice a week.

The AHA's advisory pointed out that the fish's Omega-3 fatty acids would significantly strengthen the heart. The research team thoroughly investigated numerous studies and trials that focused on how Omega-3s affected cardiovascular health.

**Coronary heart disease**

They found that people who ate seafood four or more times a week had a 22 percent chance of getting coronary heart disease than those who ate fish once a month. Also, if people eat fish twice a week, then it would help reduce the risk of heart failure and cardiac arrest.

The research team recommended that



while pregnant women and young children should avoid consuming these kinds of fish, they added that no one should stop consuming fish just because of their mercury levels.

**The “benefits of fish are likely due in part to the omega-3 fatty acid content, but may also be due to choosing fish in place of high-saturated fat foods like steak.**

The health organization stated that people who actively dislike seafood should eat it over taking a fish oil supplements. The AHA noted that there is no evidence that taking fish oil pills prevent heart attacks, stroke, or heart failure.

**Fatty acid content**

The “benefits of fish are likely due in part to the omega-3 fatty acid content, but may also be due to choosing fish in place of high-saturated fat foods like steak. Just taking a supplement isn’t the same as making healthier choices in your diet,” said Alice H. Lichtenstein, Tufts University’s Director and senior scientist at the Cardiovascular Nutrition Laboratory and a co-author of the AHA advisory to Consumer Reports.

A study published in the *Nature Communications* journal believe that hippopotamus feces could be a factor in the deaths of countless fish in Kenya’s Mara River. Scientists discovered that the hippos excrete 9.3 tons of waste into the Mara River every day. Their hippos’ waste volume not can trigger fish deaths because the waste depletes oxygen from the water during composition.

The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources posted a photo of a sheephead fish on May 9. The fish caused quite a stir on social media because they have human teeth. The sheephead fish’s teeth allow the fish to chomp on shrimp, oysters, and clams.

(Source: Tech Times)

## Astronomers release most complete ultraviolet-light survey of nearby galaxies



Capitalizing on the unparalleled sharpness and spectral range of NASA’s Hubble Space Telescope, an international team of astronomers is releasing the most comprehensive, high-resolution ultraviolet-light survey of nearby star-forming galaxies.

The researchers combined new Hubble observations with archival Hubble images for 50 star-forming spiral and dwarf galaxies in the local universe, offering a large and extensive resource for understanding the complexities of star formation and galaxy evolution.

The project, called the Legacy ExtraGalactic UV Survey (LEGUS), has amassed star catalogs for each of the LEGUS galaxies and cluster catalogs for 30 of the galaxies, as well as images of the galaxies themselves. The data provide detailed information on young, massive stars and star clusters, and how their environment affects their development.

**Ultra-violet light**

“There has never before been a star cluster and a stellar catalog that included observations in ultraviolet light,” explained survey leader Daniela Calzetti of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. “Ultraviolet light is a major tracer of the youngest and hottest star populations, which astronomers need to derive the ages of stars and get a complete stellar history. The synergy of the two catalogs combined offers an unprecedented potential for understanding star formation.”

How stars form is still a vexing question in astronomy. “Much of the light we get from the universe comes from stars, and yet we still don’t understand many aspects of how stars form,” said team member Elena Sabbi

of the Space Telescope Science Institute in Baltimore, Maryland. “This is even key to our existence -- we know life wouldn’t be here if we didn’t have a star around.”

The research team carefully selected the LEGUS targets from among 500 galaxies, compiled in ground-based surveys, located between 11 million and 58 million light-years from Earth. Team members chose the galaxies based on their mass, star-formation rate, and abundances of elements that are heavier than hydrogen and helium. The catalog of ultraviolet objects collected by NASA’s Galaxy Evolution Explorer (GALEX) spacecraft also helped lay the path for the Hubble study.

**Massive young stars**

The team used Hubble’s Wide Field Camera 3 and the Advanced Camera for Surveys over a one-year period to snap visible- and ultraviolet-light images of the galaxies and their most massive young stars and star clusters. The researchers also added archival visible-light images to provide a complete picture.

The star cluster catalogs contain about 8,000 young clusters whose ages range from 1 million to roughly 500 million years old. These stellar groupings are as much as 10 times more massive than the largest clusters seen in our Milky Way galaxy.

The star catalogs comprise about 39 million stars that are at least five times more massive than our Sun. Stars in the visible-light images are between 1 million and several billion years old; the youngest stars, those between 1 million and 100 million years old, shine prominently in ultraviolet light.

(Source: sciencedaily.com)

## Exercise does not slow dementia brain decline: study



The UK-based researchers concluded that exercise cannot be used as a treatment for cognitive disorders such as dementia, which affects around 50 million people worldwide. Some 5.7 million Americans are living with Alzheimer’s, the most common form of the disease.

Previous studies have produced conflicting evidence on whether the popular idea that exercise eases the symptoms of dementia is true. The team investigated the potential benefits of exercise in a trial involving almost 500 adults with mild to moderate dementia, with an average age of 77, living across the U.K. Published in *The BMJ*, the study had a larger sample size than previous studies, and the team followed up with participants more frequently.

First, the health and fitness levels of the individuals were measured, and researchers either randomly assigned them a supervised exercise and support program or asked them to continue with their usual care.

Those given the exercise regime were asked to complete 60- to 90-minute gym sessions — which involved equipment such as static bikes, weight belts and dumbbells — twice a week for four months. They also exercised at home for one hour a week.

**Quality of life**

After 12 months, the participants were assessed according to the commonly used Alzheimer’s disease assessment score (ADAS-Cog), which measures cognitive and rationalizing abilities, as well as outcomes such as their quality of life and number of falls.

The researchers were surprised to find that individuals assigned the exercise program had higher ADAS-cog scores, compared with those who didn’t. On average, those who exercised saw their score change from 23.8 to 25.2. And while their fitness improved, outcomes such as the number of falls and quality of life didn’t change.

The authors said in a statement, “This trial suggests that people with mild to moderate dementia can engage and comply with moderate to high intensity aerobic and strengthening exercise and improve physical fitness. These benefits do not, however, translate into improvements in cognitive impairment, activities in daily living, behavior, or health related quality of life.”

“We don’t want to alarm members of the public with dementia and their families. We used a very specialized exercise program. We know that gentle exercise is good for you. We don’t want people to stop what they are doing,” she said.

Although the results may appear concerning, the study’s authors said they might be due to two factors: The time spent exercising was too short to have a positive return, or the participants or care-givers were aware of which group they were in.

He went on, the “participants included all types of dementia and were mildly or moderately impaired. We know that for Alzheimer’s disease the degeneration of brain cells starts many years before symptoms start, and so the likelihood of altering the disease at a late stage is less than with early intervention.

(Source: Newsweek)

## Scientists explore DNA secrets of green-blooded lizards

A group of lizards inhabiting the island of New Guinea boasts one of the most exotic traits of any animal: green blood. And scientists have been trying hard to figure out what benefit this characteristic — caused by high levels of an ordinarily toxic green bile pigment — may give them.

Researchers said on Wednesday a DNA study resolved their family tree, finding that green-bloodedness evolved four different times among lizards called skinks on New Guinea.

“Our key finding was that green-blooded lizards are not each other’s closest relatives, and they all likely evolved from an ancestor that had red blood. This means that green blood likely emerged independently in different lizards, suggesting that green blood has beneficial properties,” said evolutionary biologist Zachary Rodriguez.

The high blood concentration of the green bile pigment biliverdin overwhelms the intense crimson color of red blood cells, resulting in a striking lime-green coloration of their blood, muscles, bones and mucosal tissues, said LSU biologist Christopher Austin, a curator at the museum.

High levels of biliverdin cause jaundice in most animals. But these lizards thrive despite biliverdin levels many times greater than the lethal concentration in people.

Scientists remain uncertain about the advantage green blood may provide the lizards. Several fish, frog and insect species also are green-blooded.

“Our current hypothesis is that this novel and toxic physiology might have evolved to reduce or preclude the infection of blood parasites such as malaria,” Austin said.

The researchers examined DNA from the six green-blooded lizard species and 45 closely related red-blooded species. They are now looking into the genes responsible for green-bloodedness, hoping an understanding of the genetic factors that let these lizards remain jaundice-free may lead to a cure for jaundice.

(Source: Reuters)

## Gunshot sensors pinpoint destructive “fish bombs”

Rogue fishers around the world toss explosives into the sea and scoop up bucketloads of stunned or dead fish, an illegal practice in many nations that can destroy coral reefs and wreak havoc on marine biodiversity.

Catching perpetrators amid the vastness of the ocean has long proved almost impossible, but researchers working in Malaysia have now adapted acoustic sensors — originally used to locate urban gunfire — to pinpoint these marine blasts within tens of meters.

Growing human populations and international demand for seafood are pushing fishers to increase their catches. “Fish bombing,” which is practiced not only in Malaysia but also in Nicaragua, Tanzania and other places, is a “brutally efficient” way to do so, says George Woodman, founder of the Hong Kong–based Teng Hoi Conservation Organization. Shock waves from the explosions rupture the fishes’ swim bladders, causing some immobilized animals to float to the surface.

He and his colleagues detonated 19 fish bombs in a part of a bay devoid of marine life in Sabah, a state in East Malaysia. They recorded the explosion sounds with sensors developed by Shot-Spotter, a California company that employs similar technology to home in on gunshots in cities. The team used time-stamped data — recorded by four devices mounted on piers and two attached to boats — to triangulate the positions of 16 explosions to within 60 meters in about 10 seconds.

But eradicating fish bombing will take more than just enforcement, cautions Elizabeth Wood, a marine biologist working in Sabah, who was not part of the new study. “It’s vital that local fishing communities appreciate the immediate and long-term benefits of sustainable fishing,” she says.

(Source: Scientific American)

## Simpler scan still effective in deciding stroke treatment

A study led by a neurologist from McGovern Medical School at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) showed that a computed tomography (CT scan) could be sufficient for determining thrombectomy treatment in stroke.

Thrombectomy surgery can be performed to remove a large blood clot lodged in a blood vessel. It has been shown to be an effective treatment for improving clinical outcomes in stroke up to 24 hours from onset. Stroke is the leading cause of long-term disability and fourth leading cause of death globally. Imaging must be done to determine the location of the clot and whether the patient is a good candidate for thrombectomy.

The “results show that simple imaging, while not perfect, may be good enough. This basic technique is faster, which means patients could potentially be treated more quickly,” said Sarraj, associate professor of neurology at McGovern Medical School at UTHealth. The “advanced imaging of CT perfusion isn’t available everywhere, so this could open up the door to identify more people for potential treatment, especially in remote areas.”

The clinical trial enrolled 445 patients who received both simple and advanced imaging at nine academic health centers across the U.S. from January 2016 to February 2018. Senior author was Gregory Albers, M.D., of Stanford University.

The results showed that patients who were treated based on simple imaging had identical clinical outcomes to those treated based on advanced imaging. In addition, those patients who had a good imaging profile - a smaller area of dead brain tissue - had the same clinical outcomes regardless of which imaging was used.

(Source: eurekalert.org)



## Planning for Constructing Mines & Mining Projects Underway by Yearend

Planning is underway for the construction operation of more than \$3.6 billion worth of mines and mining projects before the termination of the current Iranian calendar year in 1397 (to end March 20, 2019), the Public Relations Dept. of Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) reported.

IMIDRO Strategic Supervision and Planning Manager

Somayyeh Kholousi announced the above statement and said, “the projects that would be constructed by the yearend include as follows: Mokran Steel Company of Chabahar, Phase 2 of Zarshouran Mine Deposit, Alumina Company of Persian Gulf, Direct Reduction Iron (DRI) Unit of Kord-estan Steel Company, Sefid Dasht Cold Rolling Mill, Shahid Kharrazi Hot Rolling of Esfahan’s Mobarakeh Steel Com-

pany, expansion project of Hormozgan Steel Company, etc. In the end, Kholousi pointed to the issue of synergy of small and mid-sized mines as well as increasing competitive capability and reiterated, “improving internal processes of Investment Insurance Fund, setting up responding system to customers, increasing capital of Investment Insurance Fund, etc. are of the necessities of this comprehensive plan.”

## Registration of 594,000 Tons of Products in IME

Statistics show that about 594,329 tons of various types of commodities, valued at more than \$13,922 billion, were traded at Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) during the week ending April 17, the Public Relations Dept. of the Exchange reported.

Given the above issue, 76,673 tons of products, valued at 3,531 billion rials, were

transacted in industrial and mineral products’ hall during the recent week.

In this regard, 65,873 tons of steel, 4,160 tons of copper, 5,000 tons of sponge iron, 4,500 tons of aluminum, 12 tons of concentrate of precious metals as well as 140 tons of molybdenum concentrate was purchased by customers, the report added.

In the same period, 449,827 tons of various types of goods, valued at 9,567 billion rials, was sold in oil and petrochemicals division of Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME).

153,043 tons of bitumen, 65,875 tons of polymer materials, 132,680 tons of vacuum bottom, 22,220 lobe cut, 31,356 tons of chemicals, 12,450 tons of sulfur, 648 tons of

humid insulation, 4,000 tons of slaps wax and also 21,572 tons of oil were purchased in IME, the report added.

The access market of Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) in the previous week witnessed transaction of 5,800 tons of agricultural products and also 510 tons of mental wastes, the IME Public Relations Dept. concluded.



## Tehran subway short of 10,000 cars: councilor

**ENVIRONMENT** **TEHRAN** — Tehran subway is short of some 10,000 cars in order to be fully operational, councilor Mohammad Alikhani has said.

It is a high priority for us to equip the current operational subway lines, Fars quoted Alikhani as saying. Adding 2,000 new cars carries a cost of 100 trillion rials (nearly \$2.4 billion) and equipping the station and subway lines drives up the costs to 220 trillion rials (\$5.2 billion), he explained.



The aforesaid expenses greatly exceed the municipality's budget and it takes some 10 years to achieve this goal, Alikhani lamented, adding, "But we are looking into other options to raise fund for equipping subway lines by drawing from the National Development Fund."

He further expressed hope that at least 50% of the intended projects will be completed within the next four years.

Currently, there are five operational subway lines in the city of Tehran which deliver some 2.2 million rides on a daily basis, and once lines 6 and 7 are completed they can increase the metro ridership to some 5 million a day which would certainly help tackle air pollution in the metropolis of Tehran.

### ■ The despicable air pollution

The latest figures released in April by the World Health Organization (WHO) show that nine out of 10 people are breathing air containing dangerous levels of pollutants.

An overwhelming majority of the world's population breathes polluted air, according to a new report released in April from State of Global Air.

95 percent of the world's population lives in an area where the air quality does not meet the World Health Organization's healthy air guideline, which is PM2.5. PM2.5 means particulate matter in the air — caused by motor exhaust or anything combustible — that is less than 2.5 micrometers.

The State of Global Air report also includes data detailing the number and rate of deaths attributable to air pollution in each country in 2016. Afghanistan with 406 deaths per 100,000 people, Papua New Guinea with 322 deaths per 100,000 people, Central African Republic with 320 deaths per 100,000 people, Guinea-Bissau with 317 deaths per 100,000 people, Niger with 267 deaths per 100,000 people, Guinea with 265 deaths per 100,000 people, Somalia with 265 deaths per 100,000 people, Sierra Leone with 261 deaths per 100,000 people, Chad with 252 deaths per 100,000 people, Solomon Islands with 250 deaths per 100,000 people, Togo with 250 deaths per 100,000 people, North Korea with 249 deaths per 100,000 people, and Cote d'Ivoire with 248 deaths per 100,000 people were the 13 countries with the highest death rates from air pollution.

### ■ Free of charge public transportation

According to a report published in March in Telegraph, European cities are increasingly looking toward free transport in a bid to combat air pollution. Anne Hidalgo, the Paris mayor, is the latest local leader hoping to make public transport free across the city, emulating the success of a handful of small towns across France which let residents board buses and trams without paying a cent.

The German government is also considering rolling out free transport across the entire country - with the same aim as in France of reducing air pollution - if a pilot scheme in five big cities this year works out.

Brussels has moved to make the city's public transport and bike share system free on the smoggiest days in a bid to drive down pollution levels and meet EU air quality directives, the Guardian reported in February.

## LEARN ENGLISH

### Making A Dinner Reservation

A: Bruno **Bistro**, how may I help you?

B: Yes hello, I would like to **make a reservation** please.

A: Certainly sir, for which day and time please?

B: Tonight at seven.

A: I'm sorry sir, but we are **fully booked** tonight until eight.

B: **In that case**, eight o'clock is fine.

A: Very well, and how many people will **attend** tonight?

B: Four people.

A: Lastly, may I please know what name I should make the **reservation** under?

A: Mark.

### ■ Key vocabulary

**bistro**: mid-priced restaurant

**make a reservation**: to make an arrangement to hold something for later

**fully booked**: all sold out or full of reservations

**in that case**: if something said earlier is true

**attend**: go to

**reservation**: Something that is kept back or withheld

### ■ Supplementary vocabulary

**steakhouse**: a restaurant that specializes in beef steaks

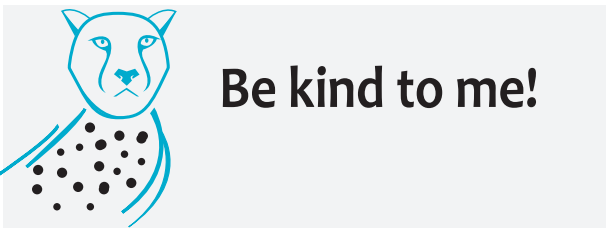
**diner**: a place that offers a wide range of foods, mostly American, a casual atmosphere and late operating hours

**soup kitchen**: a place where food is offered to the hungry for free or at a reasonably low price

**saltshaker**: a container with a perforated top for sprinkling salt

**cutlery**: utensils such as knives, forks, and spoons used as tableware

(Source: irlanguage.com)



# Is Iran pulling out of Paris Agreement?

1 → “By ratifying the Paris agreement, Iran should make commitments which might put the country into significant expenses,” the deputy environment chief said.

There are proponents and opponents of the agreement in Iran, he said, adding, those who are opposing the deal believe that ratifying the deal would carry considerable costs, and the costs should be funded by developed countries or international entities.

On the other hand those who are advocating the deal believe that the deal would help Iran to mitigate environmental pollutants and that “we” can mitigate greenhouse gas emission in sectors which may not carry high costs.

He further suggested that there are some concerns the deal may “act against our national interest” and that’s why “we should proceed with extreme caution”.

“We should be wary of not being forced to make and legally binding commitments which may later result in more sanctions and penalties for us,” he warned.

### ■ Parties and signatories to Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement was open for signature by states and regional economic integration organizations that are parties to the UNFCCC (the Convention) from April 22, 2016 to April 21, 2017 at the UN Headquarters in New York.

The agreement stated that it would enter into force (and thus become fully effective) only if 55 countries that produce at least 55% of the world-s greenhouse gas emissions ratify, accept, approve or accede to the agreement. On 1 April 2016, the United States and China, which together represent almost 40% of global emissions, issued a joint statement confirming that both countries would sign the Paris Climate Agreement. 175 Parties (174 states and the European Union) signed the agreement on the first date it was open for signature. On the same day, more than 20 countries issued a statement of their intent to join as soon as possible with a view to joining in 2016. With ratification by the European Union, the Agreement obtained enough parties to enter into effect as of 4 November 2016.

On August 4, 2017, the Trump Administration delivered an official notice to the United Nations that the U.S. intends to withdraw from the Paris Agreement as soon as it is legally eligible to do so. The formal notice of withdrawal cannot be submitted until the agreement is in force for 3 years for the U.S., in 2019. In accordance with Article 28, as the agreement entered into force in the United States on 4 November 2016, the earliest possible effective withdrawal date for the United States is 4 November 2019.

When Donald Trump announced he intended to leave the Paris climate deal, he blamed the “draconian financial and economic burdens the agreement imposes on our country”.

### ■ Climate finance

According to UNFCCC official website the contribution of countries to climate change, and their capacity to prevent and cope with its consequences, varies enormously. The Convention and the Protocol therefore foresee financial assistance from Parties with more resources to those less endowed and more vulnerable. Developed country Parties shall provide financial resources to assist developing country Parties in implementing the Convention. To facilitate this, the Convention established a financial mechanism to provide funds to developing

## One third of world's protected areas threatened by human activities

Vast areas set aside to protect the world's animals and plants are being destroyed as human activities like road building and urbanization encroach on them.

A third of the land in the world's wildlife sanctuaries and national parks — a total area of 2.3 million square miles — faces destruction due to human activities.

Hardly any of the global protected land remains untouched, with over 90 per cent of it bearing some evidence of damaging human activities.

The news serves as a “stunning reality check” for those who consider such spaces to be safe havens for the world's wildlife, according to the authors of the new report documenting these findings.

“Governments are claiming these places are protected for the sake of nature when in reality they aren't,” said Professor James Watson, a Wildlife Conservation Society research director and one of the authors of the study.

“It is a major reason why biodiversity is still in catastrophic decline, despite more and more land being protected over the past few decades.”

Past studies have described a “biological annihilation” that will see many of the world's species vanish with decades.

Some of the UK's best known wildlife is facing “alarming” declines, and agricultural practices have been linked with a drop of over 50 per cent in populations of the country's farmland birds.

The new study, published in the Journal Science, places some of the blame for these declines on a global failure to adequately police zones set aside specifically for conservation.

The research found that major infrastructure projects including highways, industrial agriculture and even entire cities are located within these spaces.

Since 1992, the total protected land area has roughly doubled in size, covering over 15 per cent of the world's land. The current plan is to expand this to 17 per cent coverage within the next two years.

However, the new report by Professor Watson and his colleagues shows that humans are spilling over into these zones — particularly in densely populated regions in Asia, Europe and Africa — rendering many of them ineffective.

In total they looked at 50,000 protected areas, making use of data from a comprehensive global map of human pressure on the environment called the Human Footprint.

(Source: Independent)



Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif signs the Paris Agreement on climate change during a ceremony at the United Nations headquarters in New York, April 22, 2016. (AFP)

## In order to fulfill our climate commitments, be it 4% or 12%, we need to modernize the current system and that entails international cooperation, which is, unsurprisingly, hindered by the sanctions.

country Parties.

In 2015, at the Paris Conference, where the Agreement was negotiated, the developed countries reaffirmed the commitment to mobilize \$100 billion a year in climate finance by 2020, and agreed to continue mobilizing finance at the level of \$100 billion a year until 2025.

### ■ Is the deal legally binding?

In an article titled “is the Paris climate deal legally binding or not?” published in November 2017 on Climate Change News website, it is stated that the truth is that some parts of the deal are legally binding and some aren't. The text is littered with modal verbs — should, shall, may, etc. — that carry different legal weight. Shall is the big one; it obliges countries to undertake that action. The Paris deal contains 117 ‘shalls’.

So why is the Paris Agreement so flexible? A look at previous international climate agreements suggest that the Paris Agreement aimed to change things up by steering away from the binding nature of previous agreements. That rigid structure had failed many times before.

So how could the Paris Agreement actually work? Since it is mostly non-binding on substance but binding on reporting, the efficacy of the whole deal depends on countries “naming and shaming” each other to do better.

With current estimates of warming that will occur even if countries meet their Paris pledges varying from 2.7C to 3.5C, there will need to be a lot of effective shaming. Nonetheless, it is unusual for countries to

call each other out in public venues for fear that they will themselves face such an attack. And, of course, poorer countries may fear criticizing nations on whom they depend for significant financial and military aid.

Proponents argue that the Paris system of accountability might work by allowing nations to take greater action voluntarily than they would have if they were forced.


### ■ What is the best thing to do?

Brutal sanctions imposed on Iran are the main obstacles which make any progression difficult for the country. In order to fulfill our climate commitments, be it 4% or 12%, we need to modernize the current system and that entails international cooperation, which is, unsurprisingly, hindered by the sanctions.


Granted, making such a commitment would help in cutting pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions and accordingly climate change. In fact, climate change is causing a great deal of inconvenience for our region. Low precipitation amounts, drying up wetlands, deforestation and water shortage are only a few of the catastrophic outcomes of climate change.

However, taking on a commitment which may not be actually possible to meet might not be very wise under the current circumstances. Nonetheless, regardless of global deals and commitments, the country should move towards sustainability as it is the only way to respond to the current environmental challenges.

Second Announcement



N.I.O.C  
1397.621



National Iranian  
Drilling Company

Public Renewed Calls For Quality Evaluating of Tenders						
TENDER GUARANTEE		ESTIMATED VALUE (Rial)	DESCRIPTION	Tenders Portal Reg. No.	TENDER NO. / INDENT NO	No
Euro	Rial					
37,294	1,874,000,000	37,466,226,000	Casing Pipe 7"	3161139	Tender No.PFP/AZD/95/007 Indent No:48-22-9522022	1

**Brief discription of subject:**  
National Iranian Drilling Company(NIDC) address pasdaran Blev., Airport Saqare, Ahwaz, Iran hereby intends to purchase its requirements from qualified and interested tenderers through one-stage public tender(semi –pressed) upon following terms and conditions:

**A) Qualitative evaluation of tenderer:**  
The evaluation is based on article (C) implementing regulations of the law of tenders and also carried out base on worksheets qualitative evaluation inquiry in the tender doucments. Minimum acceptable point of quality is 60.

**B) Preparation of tender documents:**  
**Purchasing of documents:**  
In order to receive the tender documents, **510,000 Rials** should be paid to account number 4001114004020491 of NIDC in Bank Meli Iran and providing the original deposit receipt.

**Reciving of documents:**  
Tenderers must be obtain the quality evaluation documents along with tender documents maximum 10 DAYS after the date of second publication in person at the following address: A) Hall No.:316, 3thfloor, Foreign Procurement Dept.(DRILLING PROJECTS), National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN  
B) jomhouri street , yaghma alley nioc 8thbuilding floor no : 04 room no 428- Tehran-iran.

Note 01: Only the real or legal persons who apply to purchase and recieve tender ducments from foreign procurment department in due date will be known as tenderer from tender committee.

Note 02 : the tender would be held in a tight period so the participants. Should over all prequalification documents along with all envelopes (A,B,C) before closing date.

**C) Delivery of call quality evaluating including prequalification documents and envelopes (A.B.C) should be submitted before closing date:**  
Tenderers shall submit the completed documents including qualification worksheets in from of software in CD and documentary within 14 days from last day of document recived deadline to the following address: Hall No.:107, 1thfloor ,Tender Committee, Building operations, National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN.

**D) Tender Guarantee:**  
**Type of guarantee & quotation:**  
A)Bank guarantees or guarantees issued by non-bank institutions that have activites licensed by the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran.  
B) The original cash deposit receipt paid to National Iranian Drilling Company. account number 40011414006376636

**Duration of credit guarantee:**  
This duration should be valid for 90 days and extendable maximum For one time in initial credit amount.  
More on this & other tenders is accessible by click on. [WWW.NIDC.IR](http://WWW.NIDC.IR)  
News Channel of NIDC : [@nide\\_pr](mailto:@nide_pr)  
**Foreign Procurement Dept**  
**National Iranian Drilling Company**

تهران تایمز نوبت اول ۹۷/۰۲/۲۵ نوبت دوم ۹۷/۰۲/۲۶



# UN Human Rights Council approves int'l probe into Israeli crimes in Gaza

**➔** The text said the team of international war crimes investigators should “investigate all alleged violations and abuses... in the context of the military assaults on large scale civilian protests that began on 30 March 2018 ... including those that may amount to war crimes.”

The special UN session comes after more than 100 Gazans were killed by Israeli snipers in six weeks of protests dubbed the “Great March of Return”, which began on March 30 and climaxed on May 15, coinciding with the 70th anniversary of Nakba Day (Day of Catastrophe), when Israel was created.

Tens of thousands of people have been protesting along the border between the besieged Gaza Strip and occupied territories, calling for Palestinian refugees and their descendants to be allowed to return to their homes now inside Israel. Israeli forces killed at least 62 Gazans in a single day of protests that coincided with Monday's move of the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to the occupied al-Quds (Jerusalem).

Earlier on Friday, the UN human rights chief, Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein, opened the special session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, saying Israel has systematically deprived Palestinians of their human rights, with 1.9 million in Gaza “caged in a toxic slum from birth to death.”

The official backed calls for an international probe into Israel's deadly reaction to protests along the Gaza fence which he described as “wholly disproportionate.”



Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad al-Maliki welcomed the Friday resolution. “The Human Rights Council's formation of an international committee of investigation is a step towards doing justice to the Palestinian people,” he said in a statement, calling for speedy implementation “to stop Israeli war crimes”.

Meanwhile, Tel Aviv's ambassador to the UN in Geneva, Aviva Raz Shechter, criticized the resolution as “shameful” and “biased”.

U.S. representative Theodore Allegra also echoed Raz Shechter's remarks, condemning

the council's “biased focus on Israel”.

**■ Israeli massacre of Gazans sparked outrage across the world, prompting people in several Muslim countries to hold rallies to condemn Israel's recent killing of Palestinians and the relocation of the U.S. embassy to al-Quds.**

Iranians took to the streets on Friday to express their solidarity with the Palestinians.

In Turkish city of Istanbul, a huge crowd took part in a rally called by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in solidarity with Palestinians.

Jordanians also protested in Amman, chanting slogans against the U.S. and Israel.

People in Pakistan staged anti-Israel rallies in the capital Islamabad and in the port city of Karachi.

Similar protests also took place in India's capital, New Delhi, where Muslim and social activists and students condemned Israel's atrocities in Gaza, and the relocation of the U.S. embassy to al-Quds.

**■ Palestinians to UAE, Saudi, Bahrain: We are not hungry**

Meanwhile, Palestinians have launched a campaign with the hashtag “We are not hungry” on the social media, calling for the boycott of Iftar or the fast-breaking meals offered by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) at al-Aqsa mosque in protest at the policies of some Persian Gulf Arab states.

The UAE offers Iftar meals to the worshippers at al-Aqsa mosque annually during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, but this year it was met with Palestinian rejection.

Palestinian activists in al-Quds (Jerusalem) attributed their rejection to the stance of some Persian Gulf Arab states, including the UAE, Bahrain and the House of Saud regime, towards the Palestinian cause and their complicity with the Israeli regime, citing the participation of Bahraini and Emirati teams in the 101st Giro d'Italia cycling competition which kicked off in Israel.

(Source: agencies)

## Whereabouts of Sheikh Zakzaky Now Unknown

**TEHRAN (MNA)** – The Islamic Movement in Nigeria has expressed great concerns about the whereabouts of its Leader, Sheikh Ibraheem Zakzaky, claiming that he was last seen or heard from yesterday soon after he was arraigned before a Kaduna state high court.



In a statement made available to newsmen by the president of the Media Forum of the Islamic Movement, Ibrahim Musa, the Movement said the open mobile phone lines with which close family members of the Sheikh hitherto used to contact him were switched off since the early hours of yesterday morning when he was forcibly taken to court from his previous detention site in Abuja.

“As of this dawn, I would like to inform all those who may be concerned that I have lost all contact with my parents,” his only surviving son, Muhammad said in a social media post today.

“All the lines of the family members staying with the Sheikh while in detention in Abuja have been switched off all day as well,” according to the Movement's statement.

“Followers of the Sheikh are deeply concerned with this latest development because those detaining him have never hidden their intention to see to his demise, had it not been for Allah's protection. This was evident right from the December 2015 Zaria massacre by the Army.”

“We therefore call on the DSS in whose hand the court entrusted the Sheikh on Tuesday, to as a matter of urgency inform at least his close family members of the whereabouts of our leader, Sheikh Zakzaky.”

“The enemies of Sheikh Zakzaky and the Islamic Movement should be reminded that the world has seen when he was brought to court and when he was taken from the court. Therefore the federal government should be held responsible should anything untoward happen to our leader,” the statement concluded.

Signed by

Ibrahim Musa

President of the Media Forum of Islamic Movement in Nigeria  
16/05/18

## Afghanistan: Jalalabad cricket match bomb attack kills eight

**➔** The armed group declared in a rare statement on Friday “a general amnesty to all military formations, national army, national police, Arbakis (local police) and all employees of the regime to safeguard their lives and wealth”, in case they leave “enemy ranks”.

While stating that the main target of its recently launched spring offensive in the country are the United States and its allies, the armed group said security officials often come under fire because they are “protecting the foreign invaders and the corrupt regime which they have installed”.

The Taliban, which was removed from power by the U.S.-led forces in 2001, also vowed to further intensify attacks in the country.

(Source: agencies)

## Internally weak EU cannot be a strong international player: Italian expert

**➔** There are many reasons to explain this state of things. As an economic community, the EU exists since 1957, when the European Economic Community was established, while the political union is far more recent. Moreover, the different member states have different visions of the international system and different interests to pursue. Finally, many of them are very jealous of their own sovereignty in international matters and are not ready to submit this kind of matters to a meaningful coordination or – even more – to subordinate them to a common foreign and defence policy.

**■** The EU officials have talked about independent EU over the recent years. Considering the existing facts and EU potentialities, how feasible is it? What are the obstacles to this end?

A: The EU is currently facing one of the most difficult phases in its history. Anti-European parties are gaining strength in several member states, while the results of the referendum held in 2016 on the exit of the UK from the Union (‘Brexit’) have shown that integration is a reversible process. In the long term, this is the main problem that the EU has to face to affirm its international role. An internally weak EU cannot be a strong international player. At the same time, the development of a strong international profile can help to re-launch the European project, showing to the member states that the EU can be helpful even in the political field. Worth noting, since 2017, several countries are striving to implement a more effective common security and defence policy, largely due to Donald Trump's proclaimed will to reduce the U.S. engagement in Europe.

## Texas teen charged after deadly shooting in Santa Fe school

A 17-year-old boy armed with a shotgun and a revolver has opened fire at a school in the United States state of Texas, killing at least 10 people and wounding 10 others, according to authorities.

The gunman, identified by police as Dimitrios Pagourtzis, was taken into custody on murder charges after the Friday morning attack at Santa Fe High School, located about 50km southeast of Houston,

Texas Governor Greg Abbott said the shooting, which took place shortly before 8am (13:00 GMT) was “one of the most heinous attacks that we've ever seen in the history of Texas schools”.

“It's impossible to describe the magnitude of the evil of someone who would attack innocent children in a school,” Abbott told reporters on Friday afternoon.

“As of this time, there have been 10 lives that have been lost, and another 10 wounded,” Abbott said.

“It's time in Texas that we take action to step up and make sure this tragedy is never repeated ever again in the history in the state of Texas,” he added.

“One or two” other “people of interest” have been detained and are being questioned by officials, according to Abbott.

The governor said the suspected shooter carried out the attack with a shotgun and a 38 caliber revolver he had apparently taken from his father, who legally owned both weapons.

**■ Everyone started running**

The suspect had also planted various types of explosives in a home and a vehicle, including a Molotov cocktail, authorities said.

The 17-year-old was held without bond in the Galveston County jail on charges of capital murder, according to Henry Trochesstet, county sheriff.

Wesley Hill, a student at the school, said he had been there for only about 25 minutes when police evacuated his



classroom. He told the local ABC News affiliate his teacher helped lead them to safety.

“It was scary. I didn't know what to think ... My heart started beating real fast; I didn't know what to do,” Hill said.

Another student, Dakota Shrader, said she heard an alarm sound in the high school, and then three loud booms.

“Everyone started running,” she told ABC-13 KTRK in tears and visibly shaken.

**■ Horrible tragedy**

Among those wounded was one officer, who was being treated at a local hospital, Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez told reporters.

At least six injured people, including the police officer, were transported to local hospitals, said Chief Walter Braun of the Santa Fe Independent School District (ISD) police.

David Marshall, chief nursing officer at UTMB hospital in Galveston, Texas, said three people - two adults, one male and one female - and one boy under 18 - were brought in with gunshot wounds.

The female patient was undergoing surgery after being shot in the leg, Marshall told reporters.

The adult male was also undergoing surgery after being shot in the arm, and the underage patient had a gunshot wound to the leg.

“It's a horrible tragedy. Our hearts go out to those folks in Santa Fe ... We're doing the best we can to be a community partner to take care of them,” Marshall said.

Safi Madain, medical director in the ER at Clear Lake Medical Center, said eight high school students received treatment at the hospital for gunshot wounds.

Local officials called on residents to be vigilant and report any suspicious packages to the authorities.

Leigh Wall, the Santa Fe ISD superintendent, said the community had “experienced an unthinkable tragedy”.

“We have received an outpouring from across the state, and we appreciate your continued prayers for our students and our staff and our community,” Wall told reporters.

U.S. President Donald Trump expressed “sadness and heartbreak” over the shooting.

Describing the incident as “absolutely horrific,” Trump said: “This has been going on too long in our country.”

This is the third school shooting in eight days in the U.S., according to CNN, and the 22nd so far this year.

A shooting at a high school in Parkland, Florida, that killed 17 students and staff in February sparked a movement for stricter gun control laws in the U.S.

Parkland students sent “love and support” to Santa Fe on Friday.

“Though this is the 22nd school shooting this year, we urge those reading this not to sweep it under the rug and forget,” the students said in a statement.

“This is not the price of our freedom. This is the most fatal shooting since the one at our school and tragedies like this will continue to happen unless action is taken.”

(Source: Al Jazeera)

## Saudi regime troops replace UAE forces on Yemen's Socotra

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has reportedly withdrawn most of its troops from Yemen's Socotra island under a deal and let the Saudi regime forces take over the oasis of breath-taking beauty, a Turkish news agency reports.

The UAE forces left the island on Thursday under the agreement between Abu Dhabi and the Saudi regime-backed former Yemeni government, Turkey's official Anadolu news agency said.

The deal was reached following the mediation of the Saudi regime Ambassador to Yemen Mohammed al-Jaber, it added.

Supporters of the Saudi regime-backed former Yemeni president Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi and the UAE, a key part of the Saudi regime-led coalition in war on Yemen, were

locked in a dispute over the Emirati troop deployment to Socotra earlier this month.

Hadi loyalists have accused the UAE of abandoning an initial cause to fight Yemen's Ansarullah (Houthi) movement fighters, saying Emirati forces were instead providing support to those seeking a separation of southern Yemen territories from the north.

The Saudi regime forces will now be replacing the Emiratis under the Friday's agreement. Riyadh also promised what it called security training for the locals following the departure of the Emirati forces.

Last week, Saudi regime authorities confirmed that the country had deployed troops to Socotra amid anger over the UAE's

military build-up on the island as rivalry grew between the two allies.

Turki al-Malki, spokesman for the Saudi regime operations in Yemen, said on Sunday that the Saudi regime forces had landed on Socotra on a mission to train and support loyalists to Hadi.

Socotra, home to some 60,000 people, sits at the entrance to the Gulf of Aden. The island has a unique ecosystem and been listed by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) as a world natural heritage site.

Shipping traffic passes by the island on the way to the Bab al-Mandab Strait and Suez Canal, giving its added strategic importance.

Reports have said the UAE sought to

exploit the natural resources of the island and turn the place into a permanent military outpost-cum-holiday resort.

The island has largely escaped the the House of Saud regime war, which has destroyed Yemen's infrastructure and killed over 14,000 people in the poor country.

The House of Saud regime and the UAE are key members of a coalition that has been waging a deadly war on Yemen since March 2015 but divisions have emerged in the face of clashing vested interests.

Residents of the strategic island have already staged angry protests against the deployment of foreign troops but it has yet to be seen how they would react to the presence of the Saudi regime troops.

(Source: Press TV)

**■ Protesters demand pull-out of U.S. naval forces from Bahrain**

Meantime, thousands of people have staged demonstrations across Bahrain, demanding the immediate withdrawal of American marines from the tiny Persian Gulf kingdom and closure of the U.S. naval base there.

The protesters took to the streets in the capital Manama on Friday evening, carrying placards reading “Leave Our Land” and shouting slogans in condemnation of Washington's support for the ruling House of Khalifah regime.

The demonstrators also condemned the recent massacre of dozens of Palestinians during anti-occupation protest rallies along the border between the Gaza Strip and occupied territories, and stepped on the images of the U.S. President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Similar rallies were held in the villages of Abu Saiba, Shakhurah, al-Daih, Karabad and Buri.

(Source: Press TV)

## U.S. approves sale of bombs, bunker busters to Bahrain

The United States has approved a possible sale to Bahrain of thousands of bombs, armed with special warheads, for the regime's U.S.-made F-16 fighter jets.

The State Department said on Friday that it approved to provide Bahrain with 3,000 bomb bodies worth an estimated \$45 million, in request of Manama.

It said the arms sale is aimed at boosting the regime's F-16 combat jets operations.

The sale, according to the department “will enhance the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States by helping to improve the security of a major non-NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) ally which is an important security partner in the region.”

It was, however, not immediately clear where and against whom the regime will use the U.S.-supplied bombs.

Bahrain is part of the House of Saud regime-led coalition that has launched a war in Yemen in 2015. The operations have so far killed and injured over 600,000 civilians, according to the Yemeni Ministry of Human Rights.

The coalition is also accused of indiscriminately bombing populated areas in the impoverished country and causing hundreds of civilian deaths.

Human Rights Watch reacted to the prospective arms sale to the regime, saying “Instead of pressing Bahrain on its persecution – and prosecution – of human rights defenders, the US blindly sells it millions of dollars worth of weapons without conditions.”

Last month, the U.S. approved the sale to Bahrain of several attack helicopters, dozens of missiles and rockets of various kinds and a variety of navigation, missile planning, communications and electronic warfare systems at an estimated cost of \$911.4 million.

The administration of Barack Obama had imposed human rights conditions on a large sale of F-16 fighter jets to Bahrain. The Trump administration, however, lifted the conditions in March, last year. Later in September, the State Department approved the sale of 19 Lockheed Martin F-16V aircraft to Manama.



## Groin strain puts Del Potro’s French Open in jeopardy



Juan Martin del Porto has suffered a groin strain and is a doubt for the French Open, the Argentine world number six said on Friday.

Del Porto was forced to pull out of the Italian Open in Rome on Thursday after feeling a pain in his left groin. At the time, the 2009 U.S. Open champion was 2-6 5-4 down in his last 16 encounter to Belgian David Goffin.

“After the medical examinations today, it has been determined that I have suffered a groin strain (grade 1) in Rome,” the 29-year-old Del Potro said on his verified Twitter account.

“I have started to do rehab and will evaluate the situation in the upcoming days to decide whether I can play the French Open.”

The injury comes at a bad time for Del Potro, who has started the season well with tournament wins in Acapulco and Indian Wells. The French Open starts on May 27 in Paris. *(Source: Mirror)*

## French play-off clash cancelled after violence

A French Ligue 2 play-off clash between Ajaccio and Le Havre had to be abandoned on Friday night after home supporters launched a terrifying attack on their opponents’ bus prior to kick-off.

The winner of the match would have gone on to face Ligue 1’s 18th-placed team Toulouse for a place in the top flight next season.

Images show a group of around 150 supporters launching missiles and stones at the Le Havre bus as it arrived from the team hotel. Fans then prevented it from entering the Stade Francois Coty in Corsica.

Footage shows the group of fans marching up the street towards the bus while throwing firecrackers, holding flares and chanting.

Reports suggest one policeman suffered minor injuries during the incident. A flare thrown at the bus caused a small explosion that damaged the vehicle’s steering and air conditioning systems.

‘The players have only one desire to go home,’ said Le Havre coach Oswald Tanchot.

‘The players are a little shocked. This decision (to postpone the match) is logical, in terms of timing, preparation, the psychological conditions are not met for us to prepare. This is valid for us, but for the players of Ajaccio too.

‘This is an unprecedented situation.’ After the incident had unfolded the Ajaccio players, wearing their full kit, walked from the stadium to meet the Le Havre players but they refused to talk to them.

Le Havre’s players were left stuck on their bus to wait for another vehicle to transport them back to Ajaccio airport.

‘The match has been cancelled and postponed, but we don’t have a new date yet,’ regional security official Xavier Delarue said.

The winner of the game was scheduled to meet Toulouse in the first-leg of that play-off on Wednesday.

*(Source: Daily Mail)*

## Joachim Low hits back at Sandro Wagner’s ‘ridiculous’ World Cup criticism

Wagner, 30, was not included in Low’s initial 27-man squad and angrily announced his retirement from the national team, telling tabloid newspaper Bild: “It’s clear that my open, honest nature doesn’t fit with the coaching staff.”

But the suggestion that Low only selects obedient yes-men for international duty has struck a nerve with the usually calm and collected World Cup-winning coach.

“He’s portraying some of our most experienced players, leaders in the squad, as complete idiots,” Low said at an event in Berlin hosted by the newspaper.

“As if they’re only in the squad because they don’t voice their opinions? What should the likes of Mats Hummels or Jerome Boateng think of that? It’s ridiculous.”

Wagner, who joined Bayern from Hoffenheim in January and who scored 12 Bundesliga goals last season, was excluded from the squad in favor of fellow strikers Timo Werner (RB Leipzig), Mario Gomez (VfB Stuttgart) and Nils Petersen (SC Freiburg), and allegedly cried during training following the announcement.

“Of course I understand that he’s disappointed but I think his reaction is over-the-top,” continued Low. “Everyone who works with us knows that we always encourage the players to speak their minds, to be open and honest, and to be critical. We place great value on that.”

Wagner has found little support from his club either.

“I was a little bit surprised,” Bayern president Uli Hoeness told broadcaster Sky. “There was no need for him to react so angrily.”

“I think he reacted too quickly and too emotionally,” said head coach Jupp Heynckes, adding that Wagner has otherwise integrated well in Munich. “He’s completely focused and very ambitious and always the first player to arrive at training.”

Wagner and Low could come face to face at the German Cup final on Saturday when Bayern Munich face Eintracht Frankfurt. Low will be in the stands at the Olympic Stadium while Wagner hopes to be on the pitch.

*(Source: AFP)*

# Will Neuer make it to the World Cup?

Manuel Neuer established himself as the embodiment of the modern goalkeeper at the 2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil™. While he was by no means the first shot stopper capable of creating something with the ball at his feet and his exceptional skill was already beyond doubt to football fans across Germany, his courageous displays in South America four years ago captivated audiences around the world. He was ultimately rewarded with the World Cup Trophy and the adidas Golden Glove as the tournament’s best goalkeeper.

Although it may have escaped the notice of some fans around the globe, many in Germany have been preoccupied by the fact that Neuer has been injured for more than a year with two successive metatarsal fractures. The most recent of his four appearances this season was in mid-September, while he was last capped for his country in November 2016.

The road to recovery is proving to be a difficult one. “It’s really important that nothing happens to my foot now, otherwise it could put my career at risk,” he said back in March, before providing a further update in April: “There are still plenty of question marks. I have to be happy with my performance and be honest with myself. Can I hold my own again after such a long absence?”

The 32-year-old has since returned to training. Although there was initially speculation that he would be fit enough to return for Bayern Munich’s penultimate or last Bundesliga match, such estimates proved to be premature. The latest news from the German champions is positive ahead of the DFB Cup final against Eintracht Frankfurt in Berlin on Saturday, with the club confirming on Friday that Neuer will be included in the matchday squad.

But what does all this mean for his place in the national team at Russia 2018? Although national coach Joachim Low included his captain Neuer as one of four goalkeepers when announcing his provisional squad on Tuesday, he made it clear that he would only take three of them to this summer’s World Cup finals.

“Manuel and I know the responsibility we have,” Low said. “He has already played at four major tournaments and



knows what a goalkeeper needs. We will give him time and hope he will be able to come.”

There is a Plan B, of course, with Marc-Andre ter Stegen now Germany’s clear number two goalkeeper behind Neuer after an impressive FIFA Confederations Cup last summer. There are certainly worse backup plans than having Barcelona’s 26-year-old starting custodian ready to step into the breach, especially as Ter Stegen shares much of Neuer’s attacking mindset and is currently one of the world’s best goalkeepers in his own right.

Despite this, Low’s assertion on Tuesday that “nobody

can go to a tournament like this without game time” came as something of a surprise. Will a cup final and/or the international friendly against Austria on 2 June be enough game time for a World Cup, or is the national coach gently preparing the country for the news that Neuer will not make the plane?

“We’re being very frank with each other,” Low said. “[After the South Tyrol training camp] we’ll talk openly and honestly about whether he can play at the World Cup or not, and make a final decision on 4 June.”

*(Source: FIFA)*

## Parma back in Serie A after third successive promotion



Twice UEFA Cup winners Parma will return to the Italian top flight next season after a 2-0 win at Spezia in their final Serie B fixture on Friday earned the club an unprecedented third successive promotion.

The club, which also won the European Cup Winners’ Cup and three Coppa Italias during their heyday of the 1990s and early 2000s, was relegated to Serie D after going bankrupt in 2015.

A reconstituted club easily secured promotion from Serie D in 2015-16 and won the Serie C promotion playoff the following year to move into the second flight. The victory over Spezia, secured courtesy of goals from Fabio Ceravolo and Amato Ciciretti, combined with Frosinone’s 2-2 draw against Foggia ensured they finished second in Serie B behind Empoli and will return to the top division.

The return was particularly emotional for club captain Alessandro Lucarelli, who stuck with the Parma through their journey down the divisions and deferred his retirement to complete the trip back up.

“I made a promise. I said I’d take Parma back to Serie A. I kept my promise,”

the tearful 41-year-old defender told Sky Sport Italia.

“This is a journey we started three years ago in front of these amazing fans. We had difficult moments, we always got back on our feet. They never gave up and I am proud to have been their captain.

“Now I can stop. I don’t know, we’ll see. I just need to celebrate right now.”

Frosinone were leading Foggia 2-1 with a minute remaining but conceded an equaliser to miss out on automatic promotion due to an inferior head-to-head record against Parma.

That led to dramatic scenes at Spezia as the news came through from Lazio.

“It can’t be real, it’s impossible,” Lucarelli added. “Nobody could’ve imagined a finale like this, not even in my wildest dreams. The others were celebrating, but we heard a huge cheer from the stands. I don’t know what happened.”

Frosinone, who spent one season in Serie A two years ago, could still return to the top flight through the promotion playoffs, which also feature Venezia, Perugia, Bari, Cittadella and Palermo.

*(Source: Mirror)*

## Michel Platini claims ‘trickery’ over 1998 tournament draw



“A little trickery” was employed for the 1998 World Cup draw to ensure France and Brazil did not meet until the final, disgraced former Uefa president Michel Platini has claimed.

The French hosted and won their first World Cup 20 years ago, beating holders Brazil 3-0 in the final in Paris.

Former France captain Platini was on the tournament’s organising committee.

“When we organised the schedule, we did a little trickery,” he told radio station France Bleu Sport.

“France-Brazil in the final, it was the dream of everyone.

“If we finished first in the group and Brazil finished first, we could not meet before the final.”

He laughed as he went on: “We did not spend six years organising the World Cup to not do some little shenanigans. Do you think other World Cup hosts did not?”

Brazil and France were the top teams in the Fifa rankings heading into the tournament and were among the eight top-seeded teams.

Two days before the draw took place, world governing body Fifa announced

that holders Brazil would be allocated to Group A while France were in Group C.

It meant that if the two teams finished top they would be on opposite sides of the draw for the knockout stages.

Both made it through to the final at Stade de France where two goals from Zinedine Zidane and another from Emmanuel Petit gave the French a famous victory.

However, at all of the World Cup final tournaments since 1986 - with the exception of 2002 which had two hosts - if the hosts and the holders won their group, they have been kept apart for the knockout stages.

In a statement, Fifa said it had no comment to make on Platini’s remarks.

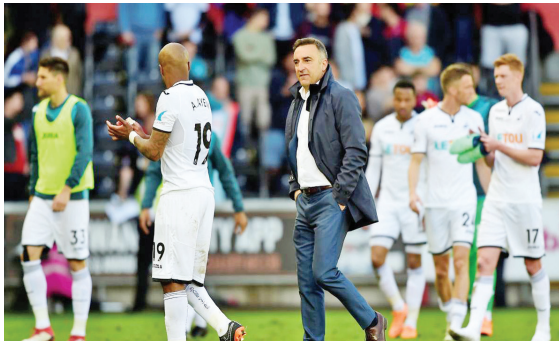
Platini and former Fifa counterpart Sepp Blatter were found guilty in 2015 of ethics breaches over a 2m Swiss Franc (£1.3m) “disloyal payment”.

Platini was given an eight-year ban from all football-related activities - later reduced to four on appeal.

The 62-year-old has always maintained his innocence and in January it was reported he had taken the case to the European Court of Human Rights.

*(Source: BBC)*

# Premier League’s managerial shake-out gathers pace



after being appointed in January, it certainly wasn’t due to a lack of effort, professionalism and dedication on his part.”

The departures came with Arsenal, Everton and West Ham United looking for new managers and more heads likely to roll.

Everton sacked former England boss Sam Allardyce on Wednesday, after six months in the job, and on the same day

that West Ham dispensed with the service of David Moyes.

Moyes, like Carvalho, was also brought in on a short term contract to steady the ship and had done what was asked of him in avoiding the drop.

Arsenal have yet to name a replacement for Arsene Wenger, with former Gunners captain Mikel Arteta emerging as a frontrunner.

Bottom side West Brom kept their faith in Moore, however, after their former defender took them on an unbeaten run in April as caretaker after replacing the sacked Alan Pardew.

“He (Moore) embodies the spirit of the club and the spirit of what we are striving to achieve in this new chapter ahead,” West Brom chief executive Mark Jenkins said in a statement.

There were also moves in the Championship, with former England manager Steve McClaren appointed by Queens Park Rangers on a two-year contract.

He replaces Ian Holloway, who was sacked by the West London club after finishing 16th in the second tier last season. *(Source: Reuters)*



# Javanmardi named Iran’s flag-bearer for Asian Para Games opening ceremony

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Paralympic gold medalist Sareh Javanmardi has been named as the flag-bearer for Iran at the 2018 Asian Para Games opening ceremony.

In the 2018 World Shooting Para Sport Championships held in Cheongju, South Korea in early May, Javanmardi repeated her success from the last World Championships in 2014 held in Suhl, Germany. There, she secured a slot for the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games – where she won the P2 Paralympic title. Her gold medal in Cheongju brought back old feelings.

Furthermore, Samira Eram, who also booked a ticket to the 2020 Paralympic Games in Cheongju, has been named as Iran’s flag-bearer in the closing ceremony.

It’s for the first time that Iran’s National Paralympic Committee chose two women para athletes for the Asian Para Games ceremonies.

The third Asian Para Games will take place in Indonesia from 6th – 13th October 2018.

A total of 4000 athletes from 43 countries are expected to take part in thirteen Paralympic and four non-Paralympic sports. The Games will take place in the same venues as the 2018 Asian Games.

The Asian Para Games is a multi-sport event held every four years after every Asian Games for athletes with physical disabilities.



## Nothing is impossible for Iran in World Cup: Ghoochannejhad

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iran international striker Reza Ghoochannejhad believes “nothing is impossible” for Team Melli at this year’s World Cup in Russia.

Team Melli have been drawn in Group B of the 2018 World Cup along with Spain, Morocco and Portugal.

The Iran national football team will open the campaign with a match against Morocco at Saint Petersburg on June 15.

Team Melli, meanwhile, face Spain in Kazan on June 20 before meeting Cristiano Ronaldo’s Portugal in Saransk five days later.

“We have been drawn in a tough group but nothing



is impossible for Team Melli. We will prepare ourselves with three warm-up matches against Uzbekistan, Turkey and Greece,” Ghoochannejhad said.

Iran are a strong team in frontline with Alireza Jahanbakhsh, Sardar Azmoun, Karim Ansarifard, Saman Ghoddos and Mehdi Taremi, however, they can’t yet be sure of a starting place.

“It doesn’t matter who plays in the main team. Team Melli will participate at the 2018 World Cup to book a place in the knockout stage for the first time. That’s really important for us,” the Heerenveen striker concluded.

Ghoochannejhad scored Iran’s only goal at the 2014 World Cup in Brazil.

## Wenger ‘still in a state of shock’ after leaving as Arsenal manager



Arsene Wenger has said he is “in a state of shock” at no longer being Arsenal manager but wants to make a decision on his future before the World Cup.

Wenger, adjusting to life away from the club he led for 22 years, told beIN Sports he would decide whether to manage another team or possibly move into a director’s role.

“I haven’t even emptied my desk yet and in a way I am still in a state of shock,” he said. “I am going to give myself until June 14, the day the World Cup begins, to decide.

“The question is do I still want to coach, to be on the bench, or is it time to take up different functions?

“The one thing I can say for sure is that I will continue to work, but do I want to continue to suffer as much? I want to continue to defend my ideas of football, that’s for sure.

“Spontaneously, I would say I still want to coach, but I can’t really say that yet for sure.”

Wenger has said he would not take over at another English team because he could not see himself managing against Arsenal.

However, the 68-year-old said he had not had talks about a chief executive role at Paris Saint-Germain despite his close ties with chairman Nasser Al-Khelaifi.

“I have had no discussions with them recently, I can tell you that in all honesty,” he said. “I have always been close to those in charge of PSG -- I advised them to buy the club because I was convinced there were great things that could be done in a city which loves football.

“They have worked well and made a good start. I think people are too hard on them, too demanding. PSG just won all four national trophies in France and it’s not enough, apparently.

“But you cannot build a club with the idea that if you don’t win the Champions League then it’s a failure.”

Wenger added that he could not see himself enjoying retirement and a life away from football, saying: “I have friends who can go and lie on a beach all day long for the whole of their holidays and I envy them.

“I just can’t do that. I get bored. I need to be doing something. I need a challenge. I have lived and breathed football all these years and it’s a passion -- I can’t imagine doing anything else.

“That’s why, in a way, this is an exciting moment for me too. I have a new page, a blank page in front of me. As all good writers know, that can be a time of anguish, but I hope I won’t have too much of that. It’s also a chance to write new chapters.”

(Source: ESPN)

## World Cup Countdown: The ones to watch for Iran



With 25 days to go until the 2018 World Cup kicks off, we round off the ones to watch in Group B.

Having looked into Portugal, Spain and Morocco, attention turns to Iran and whether Carlos Queiroz can guide his side to the knockout stages of the World Cup for the first time in their history.

Group B is arguably the toughest group at Russia 2018, with all four teams backing their chances of progression. With Spain up against Portugal first, Iran will hope to steal a march on the European powerhouse with three points against Morocco. Easing past the Atlas Lions will be easier said than done, of course, with Herve Renard’s side having not conceded in six matches in qualifying, but Iran have the quality to really pressure the Morocco backline.

There is plenty riding on Alireza Jahanbakhsh’s goalscoring form coming into the World Cup and he’ll aim to successfully transfer his stunning league form to the international stage this summer.

The 24-year-old scored more goals (21) than any other Eredivisie player this season and had a direct hand in 33 goals, more than any other player.

He was one of three players to register double figures for goals and assists and was named the WhoScored.com man of the match on 14 occasions. With a WhoScored.

com rating of 8.20 after a stunning campaign, the AZ Alkmaar sensation is the star man in this Iranian outfit. His international record leaves little to the imagination, but Jahanbakhsh is undoubtedly the poster boy for Iran coming into the tournament.

Opponents will focus their efforts on keeping the AZ star at bay and it may allow those around him to flourish, notably Sardar Azmoun. The striker has been dubbed the Iranian Messi in the past and boasts a fine return of 23 goals in 31 international appearances. He scored five and assisted three for Rubin Kazan in the Russian Premier League this season, a respectable return considering his slow start to his return to the side.

Azmoun’s notable international record is reason for optimism in Queiroz’s side and having gone through qualifying unbeaten, topping a group that contained South Korea, they’ll fancy their chances in Russia, even considering their opponents next month. However, away from Iran, they faltered.

Two wins from five is respectable, but just two goals scored, and admittedly zero conceded, is a worry ahead of the World Cup. However, if they can hit the ground running, Iran could be ones to be wary of, particularly if Jahanbakhsh and Azmoun can bring their excellent form to Russia.

(Source: WhoScored.com)

### ■ Nejadmahdi presence sorely missed

After Zob Ahan center-back Mohammad Nejadmahdi picked up two yellow cards in the first leg last week, manager Amir Ghalenoei was always going to struggle to replace the 25-year-old at the heart of his defense. Giorgi Gvelesiani, who started in midfield and scored the winning goal in the first leg, deputized in the heart of his side’s defense in Tehran.

His partner in the center of defense, Vahid Mohammadzadeh, made five successful clearances, but could not win a single tackle.

### ■ Inability to test Rahmati costs Zob Ahan

Unlike last week, Zob Ahan only managed a measly two shots on target over 90 minutes, one of which was a speculative effort from long range that surprisingly went in after goalkeeper Mehdi Rahmati was caught off-guard.

(Source: the-AFC)

## President Rouhani to honor Iranian medal winners

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iran President Hassan Rouhani will participate in an Iftar ceremony to honor the Iranian medal winners.

The event has been scheduled to take place on Tuesday.

Iranian athletes and Para athletes claimed 2700 medals in the international competitions over the past two years.

The Iranian elite federations will be respected in the ceremony as well.

The 2016 Olympic and Paralympic medal winners will also be honored in the ceremony.

## Carlos Queiroz quite familiar with Spain and Portugal

Iran national football team head coach Carlos Queiroz is quite familiar with Spain and Portugal.

Iran have been drawn in Group B of the 2018 World Cup along with Spain, Morocco and Portugal.

The Iran national football team will open the campaign with a match against Morocco at Saint Petersburg on June 15. Team Melli, meanwhile, face Spain in Kazan on June 20 before meeting Cristiano Ronaldo’s Portugal in Saransk five days later.

With just one win in its past 12 World Cup matches, Iran is seeking a better showing this time around.

Carlos Queiroz is quite familiar with Spain and Portugal, having coached Real Madrid and the Portuguese national team.

(Source: Miami Herald)

## FC Augsburg interested in Karim Ansarifard

**TASNIM** — Iranian international striker Karim Ansarifard has reportedly caught the eye of German top-flight football team FC Augsburg.

According to sid.de, Augsburg is going to sign the Olympiacos star in the 2018 summer transfer window.

Ansarifard will cost six million euros, Greek LiveSport had already reported.

The Eredivisie teams Heerenveen and Utrecht had previously shown interest in signing Ansarifard.

The 28-year-old striker, who will be a member of Iran national football team in the 2018 World Cup, has scored 16 goals in 61 matches for Team Melli.

## Nader Dastneshan appointed Sepidrood Rasht coach

**PLDC** — Nader Dastneshan took charge of Iranian top-flight football team Sepidrood.

The 57-year-old coach replaced Ali Karimi in the Rasht-based team.

Sepidrood avoided relegation last season under guidance of Karimi. The team finished 13th in Iran Professional League.

Ali Karimi, however, says he will continue his work as head coach because he’s still under contract with Sepidrood.

Dastneshan started coaching career in Payam Mashhad in 2004 and has coached many Iranian clubs.

He is known as a coach who upgrades teams to Division 1 of Iranian football but he doesn’t managed for more than one year in each club.

## Iran defeat China 4-1 in CFA International Youth football tournament

**Press TV** — The Iran national under-17 football team posted its first win at the Chinese Football Association (CFA) International Youth football tournament in China, beating the hosts.

The Iranian team, which sustained a narrow 0-1 loss from Japan in their opening match on May 16, clinched a 4-1 win over the Chinese side in a fixture staged in the eastern-central coastal city of Jiangyin.

Both teams started the game with vim and vigor, and were assessing each others’ strengths and weakness and the likelihood of scoring.

Iranian footballers found themselves 1-0 down after just 12 minutes thanks to a own goal.

Abolfazl Alizadeh attempted to play the ball out, but made a terrible mistake and it went horribly wrong as goalkeeper was unable to stop the rolling ball into the net.

The Iranian team quickly retained composure. Amir Ja’afari slammed a header two minutes later that kissed the net and equalized the match.

Even though Iran and China had a number of scoring chances in the remainder of the first half, both sides ended the period tied at one.

Nojavanan head coach Abbas Chamanyan brought Hossein Hajizadeh and Mehdi Seyyedi as substitutes after the interval. They replaced Shervin Rezaei and Amirhossein Azizi respectively.

It took young Iranian footballers only 10 minutes, when Hajizadeh penetrated through the opposite side’s half of the field, beat two Chinese defenders and put Iran 2-1 in front.

Iranians then achieved fairly greater dominance over the pitch, and had more ball possession.

Only ten minutes from the end of regulation time, Alireza Bavieh sent a long pass to Hajizadeh who made no hesitation to jab Iran’s third goal.

But it was not enough for Nojavanan. China’s custodian tried to clear the ball two minutes into the added time, but failed as Hajizadeh had stood at the edge of the box.

He completed his hat trick and sealed Iran’s 4-1 victory.

The Iran national under 17 football team is scheduled to play against Kyrgyzstan in its last match of the tournament on Sunday.

## Analysis - Esteghlal v Zob Ahan

After failing to convert their dominance to goals last week, Esteghlal were ruthlessly clinical in a 3-1 win at home against Zob Ahan, as they sealed their passage into the AFC Champions League West Region quarter-finals.

Mame Baba Thiam was the hero on the night; his treble of strikes eased Esteghlal past their Iran Pro League rivals, who could only find the back of the net once, after the damage had been done.

### ■ Prolific Thiam too hot to handle

Mame Thiam joined Esteghlal last February, penning a permanent deal with the Blues after terminating his Juventus contract with mutual consent. Until that point, he had been stuck in a perpetual cycle of short-term stints at European clubs, so Iran provided a fresh opportunity for the Senegalese forward to



jump-start his career.

Three of those shots beat goalkeeper Mohammad Rashid Mazaheri, while Thiam also won four duels and created one chance for his teammates.



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“20th Circuit Suspects”  
named best doc at Vienna  
Ethnocineca festival

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Iranian filmmaker Hesam Eslami’s acclaimed documentary “20th Circuit Suspects” has won the International Documentary Award (IDA) at the Ethnocineca – the Vienna International Documentary Film Festival.

Produced at Iran’s Documentary and Experimental Film Center, the film depicts an unlikely friendship that forms between Eslami and Ehsan, the leader of the Iranian youth gang that breaks into his car.



A scene from director Hesam Eslami’s documentary “20th Circuit Suspects”

“In ‘20th Circuit Suspects’, director Hesam Eslami develops a rich and intriguing portrait of a male adolescent gang that runs the streets of Tehran breaking into cars,” the festival jury wrote in a statement published on the closing day of the event on May 11.

“The access he gained with the young criminals, who relate to him with candid familiarity, allows Eslami to show their work, lives and aspirations, without any judgment of values or superficial morality. The guerrilla style of film-making combined with a subtle reflexive approach suits the subject matter perfectly. Not simply another coming of age tale, what we have here is an engaging story of becoming a man under precarious social and political conditions in an increasingly alienating world,” the statement added.

“Mabacher - #Ungebrochen” by Stefan Wolner won the Austrian Documentary Award, while the Excellence in Visual Anthropology Award (EVA) went to “Remake of a Summer” by Magali Bragard und Enjolras Séverine from France.

“The Lake” by Russian filmmaker Daria Blokhina received the International Shorts Award (ISA) and “Miedzy Nami – Between Us” by Maciej Miller from Poland won the Ethnocineca Student Shorts Award (ESSA).

“Café Pulcherie”  
restaged in Tehran

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Iranian actress and stage director Elham Pavenejad is currently performing “Café Pulcherie” based French writer Alain Vettese’s monolog “Chez Pulcherie” at Tehran’s Shahrzad Theater.



Actor/director Elham Pavenejad performs “Café Pulcherie” at Tehran’s City Theater Complex in April 10, 2017. (Tiwall/Zia Safavian)

Earlier in April 2017, she staged the play at Tehran’s City Theater Complex.

Pavenejad is playing the role of the sole character in the one-act monolog, which is about a middle-aged woman who owns and runs a café independently, and will be on stage for about a month.

Pavenejad’s colleagues, including director Hassan Fat’hi, and actors Amir-Hossein Rostami, Gelareh Abbasi and Kamand Amir-soleimani, attended the opening performance held on Thursday.

“13 Reasons Why” premiere  
canceled after Texas shooting

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — Netflix canceled the premiere party for its second season of the teen drama “13 Reasons Why” because of a school shooting near Houston.

The streaming service announced the cancellation hours before the scheduled premiere and red carpet event, citing the Friday morning shooting at Santa Fe High School that left 10 people dead.

Despite the canceled premiere red carpet and party, the entire Season 2 is available on Netflix.

Intl. Holy Quran Exhibition  
opens at Imam Khomeini Mosalla

**C U L T U R E d e s k** **TEHRAN** – The 26th International Holy Quran Exhibition opened at Tehran’s Imam Khomeini Mosalla on Saturday during a special ceremony attended by Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Abbas Salehi and a number of cultural figures.

Copies of the Holy Quran published by various Iranian and international publishers have been put on view at the exhibit, which is organized every year during the holy month of Ramadan that is known as the spring of the Holy Quran.

The annually-held exhibit has also dedicated sections to display top translations and interpretations of the Holy Quran.

According to the Deputy Culture Minister Abdolhadi Feqhizadeh, a number of Quran activists and those figures active in promoting the Quran will be honored during the exhibit that will be running until June 4.

A number of meetings, seminars and art exhibitions on the Holy Quran are scheduled to be organized on the sidelines of event.

In addition, a number of academics and cultural scholars from several Muslim countries are expected to attend the exhibit.

Dozens of publishers from other countries are scheduled to showcase their latest offerings on the Holy Quran.

In addition, groups of international artists have been invited to hold workshops and exhibitions during the event.



This file photo taken on June 5, 2017 shows a visitor looking at a copy of the Holy Quran on display at the 25th International Holy Quran Exhibition at Tehran’s Imam Khomeini Mosalla. (Tasnim/Mohammad Hassanzadeh)

Persian novel on Bin Laden’s  
death published

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Young Iranian writer Mehdi Rezaei’s latest novel, in which several U.S. Navy SEALs recount the story of the death of Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, has recently been published.

The Aradman Publishing House is the publisher of the novel “I Killed Bin Laden”.

The novel also carries criticism of the U.S. policies and corruption at the UN between the lines.

Bin Laden, the founder and first leader of the terrorist group Al-Qaeda, was killed in Pakistan on May 2, 2011 by the United States Navy SEALs of the U.S. Naval Special Warfare Development Group.

Rezaei has previously authored the novels “Who Isn’t Afraid of the Insane?”, “The Forgotten Eras” and “The Song of the Sheep”.

Aradman also is the publisher of Rezaei’s research work, “Writing Mistakes and Writing Experiences”.



Front cover of “I Killed Bin Laden” by Iranian writer Mehdi Rezaei

Actor Hossein Shahab  
dies at 72

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Veteran stage and screen actor Hossein Shahab, mostly famous for doing stunts in the Iranian film projects, died on Friday. He was 72.

Shahab, who was suffering from heart and liver disorders, had been hospitalized since early March, but he went into a coma last month and passed away on Friday, Persian media announced on Saturday.

He was highly interested in wrestling and was practicing at different sports clubs when he was young.

During his career that spans over three decades, he played minor roles in many movies and TV series, including “Hezar Dastan” by Ali Hatami, “Fisheries” by Reza Mrilohi and “The Nights of Tehran” by Dariush Farhang.

He will be buried in the Artists Section of Tehran’s Behesht-e Zahra Cemetery today.



Actor Hossein Shahab in an undated photo.

“Made in China” label sheds light on old Java Sea shipwreck

**WASHINGTON (Reuters)** — A fresh examination of Chinese ceramics and other cargo from an important Java Sea shipwreck has led researchers to conclude that the vessel sank a century earlier than previously thought, providing insight into Asia’s maritime trade more than 800 years ago.

Inscriptions akin to a “Made in China” label found on two of the thousands of recovered ceramics provided crucial evidence that the 92-foot (28-meter) long wooden ship went down, perhaps in a storm, in the second half of the 12th century, not the mid- to late 13th century, researchers said on Thursday.

The shipwreck was discovered in the 1980s west of Indonesia’s island of Sumatra. Florida-based salvage company Pacific Sea Resources later worked at the site and donated half of the artifacts it recovered, more than 7,500 items, to the Field Museum in Chicago and the rest to Indonesia’s government in the 1990s.

“The Java Sea Shipwreck is informative in many ways. It demonstrates not only the scale of maritime trade at the time but also its complexity,” said Field Museum archaeologist Lisa Niziolek, lead author of the research published in the Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports.

The ship, likely built in Indonesia, carried nearly 200 tons of wrought iron bars and cast iron works and cooking



A Chinese storage jar from the Java Sea Shipwreck, which was discovered in the 1980s west of Indonesia’s island of Sumatra, is shown in an image released by the Field Museum in Chicago, Illinois, U.S., May 17, 2018. (Courtesy Gedi Jakovickas/The Field Museum/Handout via Reuters)

pans, as well as about 100,000 pieces of ceramic from China. The cargo also included resin perhaps from India, elephant tusks possibly from East Africa and a collection of ritual vessels probably from Thailand. The ship likely was headed to Indonesia’s island Java from China.

The name of a specific Chinese locale, Jianning Fu, on the two ceramics inscriptions permitted a more accurate shipwreck time estimate. After the 1270s invasion of the Mongols that toppled the Song dynasty, that area was reclassified as Jianning Lu. The Jianning Fu reference meant the sinking may have occurred as early as 1162, Niziolek said.

A carbon-dating technique used on ivory and resin supported the idea that the shipwreck was older than previously thought, Field Museum archaeologist Gary Feinman said.

The earlier date shifted the shipwreck’s historical context away from the period right before or after the Mongols established China’s Yuan dynasty in the 1270s to the earlier part of the Southern Song dynasty.

This dynasty encouraged Chinese traders to go abroad instead of relying on foreign missions traveling to China, Niziolek said. This was also a time of heightened competition between Southeast Asia’s maritime societies, Niziolek added.

Weird romance “Border” wins Un  
Certain Regard at Cannes

**CANNES, France (Reuters)** — An unusual Scandinavian movie about a relationship between two outsiders that Variety said was “destined to be a cult classic”, won the Un Certain Regard prize at Cannes on Friday.

Directed by Iranian-born Ali Abbasi and co-written by John Ajvide Lindqvist, the author of Swedish vampire movie “Let the Right One In”, “Border” entertained and baffled audiences at the festival which closed on Saturday.

It is the story of Tina, a strange-looking Swedish customs officer who finds herself drawn to a similarly odd man, Vore, and discovers an uncomfortable truth about her own identity.

Variety critic Alissa Simon called it an “exciting, intelligent mix of romance, Nordic noir, social realism and supernatural horror that defies and subverts genre conventions”.

Lead actress Eva Melander said:



Courtesy of Meta Spark And Kärnfilm

“It’s a very unpredictable story and people watching it are really touched by it. They go out from the cinema and they kind of forget their mobile phone and wonder: ‘What’s this and what did I just see?’”

Un Certain Regard is the second-tier competition at Cannes, which closed on Saturday with the award of the Palme d’Or and other prizes for the films in the main selection.

Legacy of “Love” artist Robert Indiana  
is subject of new lawsuit

**NEW YORK (Reuters)** — The legacy and works of American pop artist Robert Indiana, best known for his iconic “Love” image, are the focus of a lawsuit filed on Friday in Manhattan federal court.

Morgan Art Foundation, which said it has been Indiana’s agent for more than two decades, accused American Image Art and others of exploiting the now “bedridden and infirm” artist, by forging some of his famous works and selling them for millions of dollars to unsuspecting collectors.

Indiana, who turns 90 in September, is best known for his image of the letters L, O, V and E arranged in a square, with the O tilted diagonally to the right.

He created it in 1965 for a Christmas card by the Museum of Modern Art in Manhattan. The image appeared on a U.S. postage stamp in 1973.

Morgan Art Foundation said Indiana has become isolated since giving Jamie Thomas, whom he had allegedly employed to run errands and do work around his Maine home, power of attorney two years



A young couple has their photo taken in front of Robert Indiana’s iconic LOVE sculpture in Philadelphia, February 12, 2015. (Reuters/Charles Mostoller)

ago, enabling American Image Art and its founder Michael McKenzie to profit at the artist’s expense.

“We filed this action to protect Robert Indiana and his legacy,” Luke Nikas, a partner at Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan representing the plaintiff, said in a phone interview.