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## Halting Iranian oil export is an illusion: Jahangiri

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — First Deputy Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri said on Monday that Iran is able to counter the looming U.S. sanctions, noting that those at the White House who think they can halt Iran's oil export are living in "illusion". Iran will apply various methods to thwart the U.S. sanctions, Jahangiri said during a meeting of the

resistance economy headquarters. Iran will use various methods to prevent a possible reduction in its oil exports after re-imposition of the U.S. sanctions. "Continuation of exporting oil is symbol of victory against the U.S. sanctions and I hope we would witness this great victory through planning by the Oil Ministry," the vice president explained. **->2**

## Iran names ten new ambassadors

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — The Iranian Foreign Ministry on Sunday released the names of new representatives and ambassadors appointed to ten countries and international bodies. The list is as follows:  
 1- Esmail Baqaei Hamaneh, ambassador to the United Nations Office in Geneva, Switzerland.  
 2- Kazem Gharib-Abadi, ambassador to the offices of United Nations and other International Organizations in Vienna, Austria.  
 3- Mohammad-Jalal Firouznia, ambassador to Beirut, Lebanon.

4- Mohammad-Reza Haji-Karim Jabbari, ambassador to Bern, Switzerland.  
 5- Abdol-Nasser Hemmati, ambassador to Beijing, China.  
 6- Massoud Edrisi Kermanshahi, ambassador to Warsaw, Poland.  
 7- Fereydoun Haqbin, ambassador to Canberra, Australia.  
 8- Morteza Rahmani-Movahed, ambassador to Tokyo, Japan.  
 9- Seyyed Taha Hashemi, ambassador to Vatican City, Vatican.  
 10. Kazem Shafiei, ambassador to Ljubljana, Albania.

## British jets bombed Syrian forces in Tanf: Sunday Times

*By staff & agencies*  
 A British warplane directly attacked Syrian forces near the border with Iraq and Jordan last month, killing an army officer and injuring seven others, the Sunday Times daily has reported.  
 A Typhoon fighter jet dropped a 500-pound (226-kilo) bomb on Syrian forces who were fighting Takfiri terrorists

near the al-Tanf base where British and the United States Special Forces train militants, it said.  
 The bombing is the first since the British military took part in a series of airstrikes in Syria in April following an alleged chemical attack which the U.S. and its allies blamed on Damascus. **->13**

**ARTICLE**  
 Hamid Bayati  
 Tehran Times journalist

## Obama's uprising to scramble Trump

Barack Obama ended his presidency with pride and successes such as reaching an agreement with Iran over the nuclear deal, also known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, JCPOA. Leaving the arena to Trump, the ex-U.S. president has recently made headlines again.

Trump's effort to eliminate everything that was signed or approved during Obama's presidency has led Democrats, and most of all, Obama himself to begin wrestling with the now U.S. president.

Ending the Obamacare, cancellation of the U.S. - Cuba agreement, pulling out of the JCPOA, calling off the international commitments, not only has it mobilized individuals and groups inside the U.S. against Trump, but also has created an anti-American front among Washington's former allies.

This comes at the time when the U.S. is facing congressional elections in November 2018, a possible run-up to the presidential election of 2020. On the basis of the recent congressional election, one can predict that the winners in Capitol Hill, will, too, win a seat in the White House.

On November 6, the Congressional mid-term election will vote for all 435 seats in the House of Representatives and 34 seats out of 100 in the Senate. A party that can gain 235 seats in the upcoming election will have a majority of the House of Representatives and will lead the parliament.

Currently, in the House of Representatives, the Republican Party holds the majority seats, 235 out of 435, and the remaining 193 seats are Democrats.

Therefore, Obama has come to the scene to prepare Democrats for victory in the presidential election of 2020 in November and that is why he has had meetings with Democrats in recent months.

The Express Daily has also released a report referring to Obama's meetings with Democrats, saying, "Former U.S. President Barack Obama, who has kept a low public profile since leaving the White House a year and half ago, is wading back into politics ahead of the November elections. He met with nine electoral rivals against U.S. President Donald Trump, including Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren, Joe Biden and Deval Patrick, members of the Democratic Party of America." **->7**

## I don't think Iranian officials will succumb to coercion of U.S.: Phillips

**EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW**  
 By Javad Heirannia

TEHRAN — David L. Phillips, Director of the Program on Peace-building and Rights at Columbia University's Institute for the Study of Human Rights, believes that "Through secondary sanctions, the U.S. can act unilaterally to punish foreign corporations doing business with Iran, especially foreign banks."

Phillips, who is also a former senior adviser to the U.S. State Department and deputy director of the Council on Foreign Relations, believes that "Persian pride is a strong factor. I don't think Iranian officials will succumb to coercion."

Following is a brief interview with David Phillips:

**Q** What is your assessment about U.S. new sanction on Iran? Some argue that these new sanction will not be effective as last sanctions that impose before JCPOA. What do you think?

**A:** It is important to understand President



Trump's motive. US sanctions may be more than an effort to effect Iran's policy. They could also be vindictive.

**Q** It is true that U.S. sanction after its withdrawal from JCPOA is unilaterally, but U.S. can impose its will on the other countries by imposing penalty on their corporations such as European ones and they oblige to give up Iran market. Then actually JCPOA will not

fulfill Iranian goals. What is your opinion?

Through secondary sanctions, the US can act unilaterally to punish foreign corporations doing business with Iran, especially foreign banks.

**Q** U.S. announced that the other countries should cut importing oil from Iran until November. If Iran could not export its oil do you think will stay in the agreement?

Each country will act according to its national interests. Some countries, like Turkey, are dependent on energy exports from Iran. Turkey has been violating US sanctions on Iran for years as evidenced by the trial of Reza Zarrab, which confirmed that sanctions-busting was sanctioned by the highest levels of the Turkish government.

**Q** According new developments about JCPOA, what is your prediction about this agreement?

**A:** Trump is adamant about renegotiating the agreement to have a longer sunset clause and permanently dismantle Iran's nuclear program. Persian pride is a strong factor. I don't think Iranian officials will succumb to coercion.

## MKO and gathering of zealots

**By M.A.Saki**

On Saturday a bunch of zealots got together in Paris to mark the annual meeting of the Mujahedin Khalq Organization (MKO), also referred to as Mujahedin-e Khalq (MEK) in foreign media outlets.

Participants at the gathering were a number of American hawks such as Rudy Giuliani - Donald Trump's personal lawyer and former New York mayor - a number of other former U.S. officials, former Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, and a number of MKO members.

According to the Guardian, groups of

bored-looking Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Germans and Syrians also attended the event. The Guardian said they responded to a Facebook campaign promising travel, food and accommodation to Paris for a mere €25.

Anybody who is little bit familiar with the record of the MKO and the personality of its ringleaders including Maryam Rajavi cannot stop laughing when he notices that Giuliani told the gathering that the ruling system in Iran "must be replaced by a democratic government which Madam Rajavi represents".

The MKO, a totalitarian cult group, is detested

by all Iranians with different political persuasions. The people can never forget that they sided with Iraq's Saddam Hussein during his war against Iran in the 1980s. The Iraqis also hate this group as Saddam Hussein used them to suppress opponents, especially the Kurds in northern Iraq.

In addition to terrorist activities in the days of the 1979 revolution which the number of their victims reach about 17000, the MKO still commits acts of terror whenever it finds an opportunity. The assassination of Iranian nuclear experts on orders of the Israeli spy agency Mossad is an example. **->13**



## 'Pahlevan Ali Mirza' Zurkhaneh in Hamedan

'Pahlevan Ali Mirza' is among oldest Zurkhanehs of the Hamedan Province. The practitioners of this ancient sport are expected to display chivalrous values and embrace high integrity.

Pahlevani and zoorkhaneh rituals is the name inscribed by UNESCO for varzesh-e pahlevani or varzesh-e bastani, a traditional system of athletics originally used to train warriors in Iran and adjacent lands.

**ARTICLE**  
 Syed Zafar Mehdi  
 Journalist  
 from New Delhi

## Understanding Iran's traditional position on Kashmir

Almost two months ago, the Supreme Leader of Iran, during a meeting with top government functionaries and foreign emissaries, spoke of myriad problems facing the Muslim world and emphasized the importance of resisting against the arrogant, oppressive powers. He referred to conflict-marred states like Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Palestine, Myanmar and Kashmir.

The mention of Kashmir, like always, raised a few eyebrows in New Delhi, since the Indian government deems Kashmir as an 'internal issue' and does not appreciate 'outside interference'. The leader said the people of Kashmir will push back their enemies by unwavering resistance in the near future, the way he has repeatedly said Israel would be wiped off the map in next 25 years.

For those who think Iran has an ambiguous position on Kashmir and the Leader does not consider the issue of Kashmir at par with Palestine or Nigeria or Myanmar should pause and skim through his statements made over the years in the context of Kashmir's freedom struggle.

His most powerful and widely-reported statement till date came on the occasion of Eid ul Fitr last year. Known to weigh his words carefully, the Leader spoke of "many wounds inflicted on the body of Muslim world" and urged the Ummah to "express its disdain for the oppressors". He singled out Bahrain, Yemen and Kashmir, and said the Muslim world should "openly support" people in these countries.

The statement was, much to the chagrin of mandarins in New Delhi, welcomed in Kashmir. The octogenarian Kashmiri leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani hailed the statement as "timely and pragmatic", while his Hurriyat counterpart Mirwaiz Umar Farooq expressed his gratitude to Iran for supporting the "just freedom struggle" of the people of Kashmir.

Was the Leader trying to send a strong message to New Delhi or was he merely reiterating and reaffirming what Imam Khomeini had quite unequivocally said decades ago? Why did he club Kashmir with Bahrain and Yemen? Who are the "oppressors" he was referring to and what did he mean by "open support"? These questions generated palpable buzz on social media after the statement was issued and reported by big media outlets. **->6**

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



**Iranian, Omani FM's meet in Muscat**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and his Omani counterpart Yusuf bin Alawi sat for talks on a range of issues in Muscat.

During the Sunday talks, the two sides exchanged views on mutual as well as regional and international issues, the official website of the Foreign Ministry reported.

The meeting was held within the framework of regular consultations between Iranian and Omani delegations.



**IRGC chief: 'Arab Jahiliyyah coalition' facing defeat in Yemen**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Chief of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) said on Monday that the "Arab Jahiliyyah coalition" is facing "defeat" and "disgrace" in Yemen.

The defeat of the coalition was achieved in the light of the Islamic resistance which is rooted in the depth of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's thoughts, said Mohammad-Ali Jafari, Tasnim reported.

UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash announced on his Twitter account on Sunday that military operations in Hudaida port city had temporarily been stopped, while claiming that the halt to the operations was an attempt to facilitate the mission of the United Nations special envoy to Yemen Martin Griffiths to secure an unconditional surrender of Hudaida.



**Parliament set to hold meeting on economic issues**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — On Tuesday the Iranian parliament is scheduled to host a closed session on the economic situation attended by Industry and Trade Minister Mohammad Shariatmadari and Planning and Budget Organization chief Mohammad Baqer Nobakht.

Behrouz Nemati, spokesman for the parliament's presiding board, said on Monday that the economic problems is to be assessed during the session, Mehr reported.

A devaluation of national currency, rial, against foreign currencies and a consequent price rises have prompted the parliament and government to take speedy measures.



**Iran says not involved in Azerbaijan border clash**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — The commander of border police has dismissed a claim that Iranian forces were involved in a border clash in Azerbaijan's border with Iran, saying the incident happened between the Azeri border guards and human traffickers from Azerbaijan.

Brigadier General Qassem Rezaei said according to the report, the clash erupted in Azerbaijan's territories and had nothing to do with Iranian border guards, Tasnim reported.

The Azerbaijani State Border Service has claimed that the Azeri border guards had detected a group of armed persons from Iran trying to cross the border into Azerbaijan opening fire at the Azeri border guards.



**Embassy in Paris issues statement on ambassador's interview**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — The Iranian embassy in Paris has released a statement about a mockery of an interview of Ambassador Abolghassem Delfi by a French satire program after it went viral in Iranian media.

In the statement issued on Monday, the embassy slammed the program's producer for his/her anti-religion agenda, saying some parts of the interview were removed and changed to serve such purpose.

The statement said the program is not taken seriously in the French media. It also provided a link to an unedited version of the interview.



**1.18 tons of opium seized in Yazd Province**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — The Iranian police have confiscated 1.18 tons of opium in the central province of Yazd during the past 24 hours, a provincial anti-narcotics official announced on Monday.

Mohammad Hossein Sotoodehnia, chief of the anti-drug office in Yazd province, said five drug traffickers have also been arrested, IRNA reported.

He added that the drug traffickers planned to transfer the opium from south of Iran to Yazd Province and then transport it to other cities across the country.

Drug combat squads seized over 30 tons of illicit drugs in the central province of Yazd in the last Iranian year (ended March 20, 2018).

# Foreign hands might be behind low precipitation in Iran: official

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Head of the Civil Defense Organization said on Monday that a drop in rain and snowfall in Iran seem "suspicious", noting that foreign hands might be behind the phenomenon.

"There are scientific centers in the country that conducted a study in this regard and the results confirm this point," said Brigadier General Gholam Reza Jalali, ISNA reported.

"Joint teams from Israel and one of the neighboring countries are deceiving the clouds entering Iran," he said, adding, "Also, we are faced with other phenomena such as cloud stealing and snow stealing."

In the study, the general continued, "the highlands of Afghanistan to the Mediterranean were studied, and the result was that all the highlands with the height of over 2,200



meters were covered with snow while our highlands were arid."

In recent years, Iran has been suffering from low precipitation and experiencing a rise in temperature.

Last week, the director of the national center for drought and crisis management said all Iranian provinces experienced an average 0.8 degrees on the Celsius scale temperature rise over spring compared to the long-term mean.

The long-term mean temperature in spring was 20.3 degrees on the Celsius scale nationwide, Sadeq Ziaieian said.

According to Iran's meteorological organization, Iran has experienced a 56-percent decrease in average precipitation over the period from September 23 to December 25 in 2017 compared to the same period in the long run.

## Khuzestan water crisis said to be settled by July 6

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Iranian officials have pledged to resolve water scarcity and increased salinity of municipal water in the southwestern province of Khuzestan by July 6.

Late on Saturday, protests sparked in the cities of Khorramshahr and Abadan in Khuzestan Province mainly over the poor quality of the water, with 11 people, including 10 police forces, sustaining injuries in an ensuing shootout.

Unfounded rumors circulating about water transfer from Karun River in Khuzestan to neighboring countries provided more grounds for the demonstrations. The rumor was

categorically denied by Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian. The minister further pledged to resolve the water-related issues by July 6 within the framework of a water project called Ghadir.

Abdollah Sameri, the Khorramshahr representative to the Majlis (parliament), told Mehr news agency that broken water pipes in Hoveyze had disrupted treated water flow to the cities of Khorramshahr and Abadan.

Sameri blamed unsustainable agricultural practices for depleting water resources in the area. He also counted the Persian Gulf sea level rise responsible for affecting freshwater quality, saying it has increased the salinity of coastal

the rivers Karun and Arvand.

The damaged and broken pipes coupled with high temperatures forced the provincial water company to tap the Persian Gulf as the source of water supply to these cities, he added.

In the meantime, Khuzestan Governor-General Gholamreza Shariati said that people had been provided with bottled water for drinking over the past few days.

Deputy Governor-General Faramand Hashemizadeh also explained that there is hope to solve the problem of water salinity by July 6 by transferring water from the Dez Dam to the Karkheh Dam.

## Europeans' invitation to Rouhani sends message to Washington: ex-U.S. ambassador to NATO



**POLITICS** TEHRAN — A former United States permanent representative to NATO believes that European countries' invitation of President Hassan Rouhani sends an important message to Washington.

Speaking to IRNA in an interview published on Monday, Robert E. Hunter said Rouhani's trip can be an attempt to sabotage U.S. attempt to isolate Iran and destroy the nuclear deal, aka the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Rouhani's trip shows Iran's attempt to tap all existing opportunities to strike back at the anti-Iran coalition created by the U.S. and its allies in the region, he said.

He further said that a killing of the JCPOA would pose great danger to Europe and the whole world, one of which would be a start of nuclear race in the region.

Rouhani on Monday left Tehran on a trip to Switzerland and Austria to discuss ways of improving mutual relations amid the looming imposition of U.S. economic sanctions on Tehran.

Heading a high-ranking politico-economic delegation, Rouhani first headed to Bern on the first leg of his tour at the invitation of his Swiss counterpart, Alain Berset.

Besides holding talks with Berset, Rouhani was slated to meet Iranian nationals residing in Switzerland.

The two countries were also to sign

several documents for bolstering cooperation in various political, economic and cultural sectors.

The Iranian president will later set off for Vienna to meet Austrian President Alexander Van der Bellen and Chancellor Sebastian Kurz, where Tehran and Vienna would sign documents for cooperation.

A number of Iranian representatives from the private sector are accompanying Rouhani.

U.S. President Donald Trump announced on May 8 that Washington was walking away from the nuclear agreement, which was reached between Iran and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council - the United States, Britain, France, Russia and China - plus Germany in 2015.

Trump also said he would reinstate U.S. nuclear sanctions on Iran and impose "the highest level" of economic bans on the Islamic Republic.

Under the JCPOA, Iran undertook to put limits on its nuclear program in exchange for the removal of nuclear-related sanctions imposed against Tehran.

Since the U.S. president pulled Washington out of the historic nuclear deal, European countries have been scrambling to ensure that Iran gets enough economic benefits to persuade it to stay in the deal.

The remaining parties have vowed to stay in the accord.

## Europe to offer package to save nuclear deal in coming days: Rouhani



**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said on Monday that Europe will offer in coming days its package to save the 2015 nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

"The Europeans are supposed to offer their package to preserve the JCPOA in upcoming days about which we will hold talks with top officials of Austria as country which holds presidency of the European Union," he told reporters before his departure to Zurich, Switzerland.

Rouhani is also scheduled to visit Austria.

Donald Trump withdrew the United States from the multilateral nuclear agreement in May and plans to reintroduce sanctions against Iran. He has threatened to sanction any foreign company that cooperates with Iran.

"Today, Europe opposes unilateralism with a louder voice," Rouhani said.

He described the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA as a violation of international agreements.

The nuclear deal, struck in July 2015 between Iran, the European Union, Germany and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council.

The agreement was endorsed by the UN Security Council Resolution 2231.

The deal went into force in January 2016.

Rouhani also attached great importance to relations and cooperation with European countries.

"Relations with European countries and negotiations with them is of importance, because the three European countries [Britain, France and Germany] and China and Russia are making efforts to preserve the JCPOA without the U.S.," he stated.

He added, "All feel that the survival of the JCPOA benefits the region and unanimously condemn the U.S. for pulling out from the 2231 resolution of the United Nations."

Iran has repeatedly warned that if its interests are not guaranteed under the nuclear agreement it would resume its nuclear activities with a greater speed.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi said on June 23 that the three European signatories to the JCPOA alongside with the European Union had promised to offer a package of practical steps that would fulfill Iran's demands under the nuclear agreement. He said the package will include Iran's oil sales, payments for its oil and transportation.

## U.S. policies have led to spread of human trafficking networks, Tehran says

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi said on Monday that the U.S. "destabilizing" and "interfering" policies have led to formation and spread of human trafficking networks.

His comments came after the U.S. State Department released its annual report on Trafficking in Persons on June 28. It is claimed in the report that Iran does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. The report singled out Belarus, Iran, Russia, and Turkmenistan as among the worst offenders of human trafficking and forced labor.

"This report is biased and politically motivated," he said. In this report "unfounded and unrealistic accusations



pointed out. The Foreign Ministry official said the report about Iran is being written "based on invalid sources and information".

Through such accusations the U.S. is seeking to divert the public opinion from its "destabilizing" and "interfering" actions, he noted.

"Unilateral actions, especially ranking the countries in organized crimes such as human trafficking and preparing biased reports against the independent countries, run contrary to international law which also undermine international cooperation and efforts in fighting such crimes. So, the U.S. government should be accountable for its actions," Qassemi explained.

## Halting Iranian oil export is an illusion: Jahangiri

**1 ->** He added, "We will prove that the U.S. claim to stop exportation of Iran's oil is an illusion."

The senior executive official also at-

tached great importance to continued importation of commodities during the time of sanctions.

The vice president also noted that the

"vulnerable" social layers should be helped after re-imposition of sanctions.

On May 8, President Donald Trump officially withdrew the U.S. from the UN-en-

dorsed nuclear agreement and threatened Iran with worst sanctions.

The sanctions are going to go into effect in August and November.





# Oil falls as Saudi, Russian output rises

Oil prices fell on Monday as supplies from Saudi Arabia and Russia rose while economic growth stumbled in Asia amid an escalating trade dispute with the United States.

Benchmark Brent crude oil LCOc1 fell \$1.24 a barrel to a low of \$77.99 before recovering to \$78.40, down 83 cents, by 0735 GMT. U.S. light crude CL1 was 50 cents lower at \$73.65.

Oil prices rose strongly last week, with the U.S. crude contract hitting its highest in 3-1/2 years at \$74.46.

But a flurry of U.S. announcements over the weekend unsettled oil markets.

U.S. President Donald Trump tweeted on Saturday that Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud had agreed to pump more oil, "maybe up to 2,000,000 barrels". The White House later walked back on the comments.

Saudi Arabia's output is up by 700,000 barrels per day (bpd) from May, a Reuters survey showed, and close to its 10.72 million bpd record from November 2016.

Russian output rose to 11.06 million bpd in June from 10.97 million bpd in May, the Energy Ministry said on Monday.



U.S. production C-OUT-T-EIA has soared 30 percent in the past two years, to 10.9 million bpd, meaning the world's three biggest oil producers now churn out almost 11 million bpd each, meeting a third of global oil demand.

Also weighing on oil demand are trade disputes between the United States and other major economies including China, the European Union, India and Canada.

Asia's main economic hubs of China, Japan

and South Korea reported a slowdown in export orders in June amid escalating trade disputes with the United States.

"Recurring salvos in the trade war and falling asset prices raise the question of how much tariffs could damage the global economy," U.S. bank JPMorgan said.

The bank said a "medium-intensity (trade) conflict would likely reduce global economic growth by at least 0.5 percent, "before accounting for tighter financial conditions and sentiment shocks".

Despite the relief from Saudi Arabia and Russia, oil markets remain tense because of unplanned outages from Canada to Venezuela and Libya.

Looming U.S. sanctions against Iran further contribute to expected tightness.

Trump threatened in an interview that aired on Sunday to put sanctions on European companies that do business with Iran.

"The Trump administration's plan for Iran sanctions is now abundantly clear. They seek to push Iranian exports of crude, condensate, and oil products to zero," energy consultancy FGE said in a note.

(Source: Reuters)

## Trump tweets, Saudis scramble: Here's how the U.S. steers OPEC

The U.S. isn't a member of OPEC, a cartel that's anathema to the free-market capitalism of the world's biggest economy. Yet presidents have long pressured its top producer Saudi Arabia to adjust oil production policies, usually to lower gasoline prices. U.S. President Donald Trump has abandoned quiet leverage for loud protest, tweeting last month: "Oil prices are too high. OPEC is at it again. Not good!"

### What does Trump want from OPEC?

Lower gasoline prices as Americans head into the summer driving season. Average pump prices in the U.S. are up 13 percent this year, rising above \$3 a gallon in April for the first time since 2014. He has tweeted about the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries at least 63 times since 2011, repeatedly saying the group is "ripping us off" and that crude should cost no more than \$25 a barrel. U.S. oil closed Friday at \$74.15 a barrel.

His most recent shot came on Saturday when Trump said Saudi Arabia's King Salman agreed to boost output by as much as 2 million barrels a day to make up for lower production in Venezuela and potential disruptions in Iranian supplies. While the White House later backed away from an agreement, the tweet came after oil and gasoline prices surged last week even after Saudi Arabia convinced OPEC to potentially add nearly 1 million barrels a day to the market. U.S. oil prices jumped 8 percent last week.

### Have other U.S. presidents tried to influence OPEC?

OPEC has been a punching bag for U.S. politicians since the 1970s, when the group had far more power over oil prices than it does today. Republican presidents, especially George H.W. Bush and his son, used diplomatic channels with Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest exporter which pumps almost one-third of OPEC's output. Prior

to Trump's public berating, Bill Richardson, the energy secretary during the second administration of Bill Clinton, phoned the Saudi oil minister in the middle of an OPEC meeting in 2000 asking for a production increase, enraging other members of the cartel and exacerbating a schism between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

### How is Trump different?

President Trump has been a vocal critic of OPEC for decades, first in his books and then via Twitter. He has gone further than other presidents in commenting on specific oil prices and production levels, and has mused about "how much money the average American would save if we busted the OPEC cartel." This track record is important because U.S. lawmakers have resurrected the "No Oil Producing and Exporting Cartels Act," or NOPEC, which could make the group subject to the Sherman antitrust law, used more than a century ago to break up the

oil empire of John Rockefeller. U.S. politicians haven't succeeded in passing the NOPEC bill despite several attempts since 2000.

### Can Saudi Arabia make up for OPEC's losses?

Many OPEC members have been struggling to keep their production up. Venezuela's oil industry is in shambles and conflict in Libya has caused large swings in supplies. Trump's administration in early May said that it would renew U.S. sanctions on Iran and has sought to reduce other foreign buyers' purchases of Iranian oil. Saudi Arabia has the largest spare capacity of about 2 million barrels, which would be stretched to the limit if the kingdom would have to make up for lost supplies. Bringing all those barrels to market could take up to a year, and render OPEC agreements irrelevant.

(Source: Bloomberg)

## Big Oil, utilities are lining up for an electric vehicle war

A red-hot electric vehicle market has triggered a face-off between Big Oil and utilities.

Oil majors, who've sold fossil fuels to cars for a century, are now moving into an electricity sector that's preparing for exponential growth. The problem is that utilities, the primary power suppliers for a century, have the same idea.

BP Plc predicts electric vehicle sales will surge by an eye-watering 8,800 percent between 2017 and 2040, making it an attractive business for oil companies as demand for gasoline and diesel are forecast to slow. Big Oil will have to battle the traditional utilities for charging at people's homes, on the road and even offices of green-car owners.

### Power move

"It's the banging together of" industries "in a way that's never happened before," said Erik Fairbairn, the founder and CEO of Pod Point Ltd., one of the U.K.'s largest electric-vehicle charging companies. Power providers are, for the first time, meaningfully interacting with car companies and the oil industry "is realizing if they get this wrong then the requirement for them in the future is significantly diminished," he said.

The logic for oil companies is clear. Gasoline and diesel sales have been a backbone of their business since the internal combustion engine went commercial at the turn of the last century. But with drivers now becoming more conscious about emissions and the environment, most analysts forecast growth in demand of these fuels to slow and eventually drop.

Vehicle charging points are a way to bring drivers to oil companies' retail forecourts, keep the cash registers ringing and also bring in revenue from the sale of coffee and snacks. Tufan Erginbilgic, chief executive officer of BP's downstream business, estimates about half of the gross margin at its retail sites comes from non-fuel sales.

The British oil major said last week it would spend about \$170 million to buy electric-vehicle charging company, Chargemaster, with plans to add the technology to its existing network of retail stations. It follows similar moves by Royal Dutch Shell Plc, the world's second-biggest oil company by market value.

The deal "makes sense," Oswald Clint, an analyst at Sanford C. Bernstein Ltd. wrote in a report. "BP wants to remain a fuel retailer of choice, therefore they need an EV offering as those vehicle types rise in number."

### Charging at home

However, Pod Point's Fairbairn estimates only 3 percent of car charging will occur while drivers are in transit, with the overwhelming majority plugging them in overnight at home or wherever they leave their vehicles sitting idle. This directly plays into the hands of existing utilities.

For power companies, EV charging is less of a hedge against losing customers and more of an opportunity to capitalize on what will likely be a big surge in electricity demand. Sweden's Vattenfall AB and Finland's Fortum Oyj are currently installing chargers at homes and outside offices.

"What we see is that most charging takes place when the car is parked for four hours or more," said Tomas Bjornsson, vice president of e-mobility at Vattenfall. "Essentially at home, at work or at a destination like if you're going to a shopping mall, football game or whatever it could be. So this is really where we want to make sure that EV drivers get access."

(Source: Bloomberg)

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# U.S. renewed sanctions not effective as those imposed beforehand: Nephew

## EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

By Javad Heirannia

**TEHRAN** — Richard Nephew, who served as the lead sanctions expert for the U.S. team negotiating with Iran, is of the opinion that "I am skeptical that the renewed sanctions can be as effective as those imposed beforehand because of the lack of international consensus."

The fellow at the Center on Global Energy Policy at Columbia University, says, "The JCPOA will not fulfill Iran's goals if it does not deliver useful sanctions relief."

Following is the text of the interview:

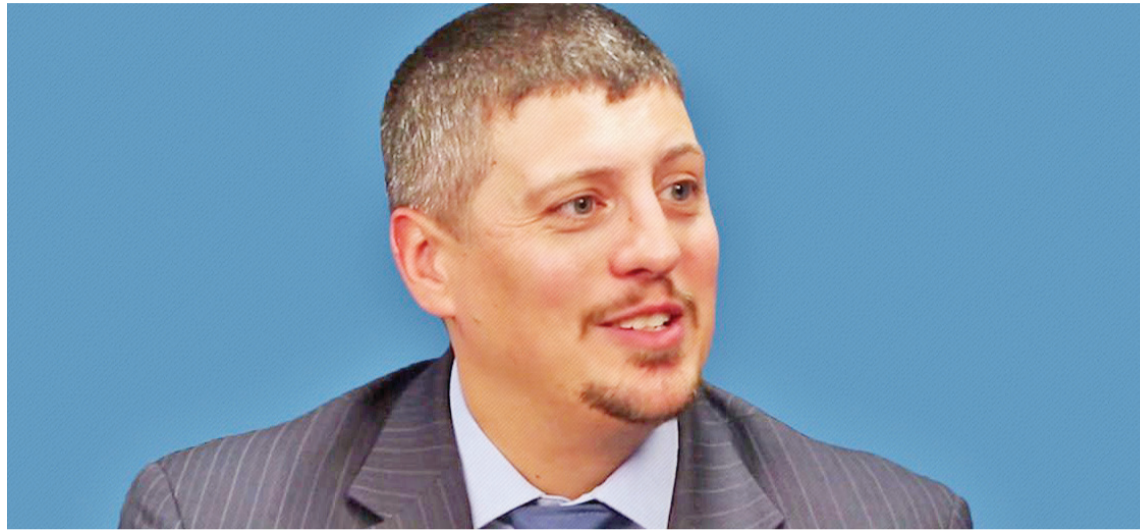
**Q:** What is your assessment about U.S. new sanction on Iran? Some argue that these new sanction will not be effective as last sanctions that impose before JCPOA. What do you think?

**A:** Effectiveness has to be measured in two ways: having an impact; and, leading to change in Iranian policy.

On the first, I am skeptical that the renewed sanctions can be as effective as those imposed beforehand because of the lack of international consensus. I think that the impact will be somewhat muted and the ability of the United States to enforce sanctions and close loopholes will also be less. That said, sanctions are going to bite Iran, no question, given the centrality of the United States to international finance and commerce.

On the second, I think that even if U.S. sanctions can impose costs on Iran, I do not detect a willingness to go beyond what Iran committed to do in the JCPOA. By that measure, I think that the sanctions will be ineffective in meeting the demands placed on them by the U.S. government.

**Q:** It is true that U.S. sanction after its withdrawal from JCPOA is unilaterally, but U.S. can impose its will on the other countries by imposing penalty on their corporations



**I think that even if U.S. sanctions can impose costs on Iran, I do not detect a willingness to go beyond what Iran committed to do in the JCPOA.**

such as European ones and they oblige to give up Iran market. Then actually JCPOA will not fulfill Iranian goals. What is your opinion?

**A:** I agree. The JCPOA will not fulfill Iran's goals if it does not deliver useful sanctions relief.

**Q:** U.S. announced that the other countries should cut importing oil from Iran until November. If Iran could not export its oil do you think will stay in the agreement?

**A:** No. Selling its oil is one of the most important aspects of Iran's economy. I think Iran's leaders would find it hard to sustain the agreement in that context.

**Q:** According new development about JCPOA, what is your prediction about this agreement?

**A:** I have long been skeptical that the JCPOA would survive with Donald Trump as U.S. president. I see no reason for optimism now.

## Obama versus Trump

By Hossein Yari

**TEHRAN** — Barack Obama, who has ended his presidency with pride and success with the completion of plans such as Iran's nuclear deal, has once again attracted the attentions of the political and social circles inside and outside the U.S. recently. Trump's attempts in destroying whatever that was signed or confirmed during the Obama's presidency, has encouraged Democrats, and most of all, Obama in trying to pull Trump down.

The termination of Obamacare subsidies, cancelling Cuba Deal, pulling out of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), withdrawal from the international treaties, has mobilized many groups within the United States against the Trump's government. Moreover, it has led to the formation of an anti-American front among Washington's former allies. This is while the United States is facing the Congress elections in November 2018, an election that could turn to a prelude to the 2020 presidential election. Based on the results of the upcoming Congress elections, it can be somehow predicted that which party is going to find way to the White House in the next U.S. presidential elections.

On November 6, 2018, which is the day for the U.S. midterm elections, all 435 seats in the United States House of Representatives and 35 of the 100 seats in the United States Senate will be contested. The party which receives 235 seats in the upcoming elections, will have a majority of the House of Representatives and will be the head of the parliament. Right now, in the House of Representatives, Republicans hold the majority with 235 out of 435 seats in this House, while 193 seats belongs to the Democrats. Obama has therefore proceeded to prepare the Democrats' victory in the 2020 presidential elections, through their winning the in the U.S. midterm elections. This is the reason for his meetings with prominent figures of the Democratic Party



**Trump's attempts in destroying whatever that was signed or confirmed during the Obama's presidency, has encouraged Democrats, and most of all, Obama in trying to pull Trump down.**

in recent months.

In the same vein, the Express Daily wrote in a report referring to Obama's meetings with Democrats; «BARACK Obama has been preparing for the next U.S. presidential election in 2020 as the world leader has met with at least nine contenders to run against Donald Trump including Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren, Joe Biden and Deval Patrick for one-on-one meetings at his Washington office.»

The report then continued; «It is understood the meetings have taken place at Obama's personal office on the third floor of the World Wildlife Fund building, and

have included discussions on the future of the Democratic Party.»

In another report, the Daily Express revealed more of Obama's plans and activities regarding the presidential elections; «PRESIDENT Obama is set to return to U.S. politics by leading a fundraiser to help Democrats challenge the Republican Party by changing voting boundaries. The former U.S. president will throw his weight behind a Democratic fundraiser that looks to challenge gerrymandering through state races and lawsuits.

The report also noted that «Obama's

spokesman Kevin Lewis said the 44th President wants to support the committee's "efforts to address unfair gerrymandering practices that leave too many American voters feeling voiceless in the electoral process".

Perhaps it's for fearing Obama's actions that Trump is emphasizing the need for Republicans to win the midterm elections in 2018 in his tweets. Although some experts believe that Obama's return to power would be possible if he decides to nominate himself for the 2020 election, given the traditions existing in the United States, many analysts state that Obama isn't going to be the Democratic Party's candidate for the 2020 election. The eyes are rather fixed on the popular figures of the Democratic Party like Michelle Obama and Joe Biden.

Although Michelle Obama has formerly announced that she doesn't have any inclinations to be involved in the electoral campaign, but it is quite likely that the former first lady of the United States would decide to face Trump. On the other hand, Joe Biden, one of the most prominent figures in the Democratic Party, and Obama's vice president, spoke of his desire to participate in the electoral campaign.

Meanwhile, some Democratic donors think former Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick could beat any of the other major potential party candidates in a 2020 primary.

Under these circumstances, and while Trump uses every opportunity to attack Democrats and ridicule Obama's actions, it's hard to foresee the results of the competition between the Donkeys and the Elephants. In the 2016 election, Russia was accused of supporting Trump and taking additional steps which led to his victory in the presidential competitions. Who knows, maybe in the 2020 elections, Europeans, the Washington allies who are seriously disturbed by Trump's lack of commitment, would be accused of supporting American Democrats and attempts for their victory in the elections.

## Obama's uprising to scramble Trump

**1-2** In another report on Obama's campaign, the newspaper wrote: "Obama will actively help Democrats in competitive races, and he is stepping up fundraising efforts for the party. The committee aims to challenge unfair division of the electoral districts through the regulation of complaints. This division of the electoral districts is the process of changing the scope of the constituencies so that a party can gain benefits by ensuring supporters concentrated in a region."

Obama recently predicted that if the Democratic Party wins the majority of the House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi will once again become Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Concerns over Obama's actions, has brought Trump in his tweets to address the need for Republicans to win the congressional elections in 2018.

**Hopes for Michelle Obama and Joe Biden**

Although some experts believe Obama's return to power is likely after the 2020 election, American tradition suggests otherwise. Analysts say there is a slim chance for Obama to win personally as a Democratic candidate in the next election.

In the meantime, all eyes are on the popular figures of the Democratic Party, and those are no one but Michelle Obama and Joe Biden.

Although, in the past months, Michelle has announced that she is not willing to take part in the electoral campaign, it is not unlikely that the ex-First Lady of the



United States faces Trump.

Democrat and Obama's Vice President, Joe Biden, also spoke of his desire to take part in the electoral campaign.

Some believe that Deval Patrick is best option to lead Democrats in the November congressional election.

With Trump taking every opportunity to attack Democrats and ridicule Obama's actions, one must wait and

see to find out who wins the election in Washington, donkeys or elephants.

In the 2016 election, Russia was accused of supporting Trump in the presidential race in the U.S. Who knows, maybe in the 2020 election, Europeans and Washington allies who are plagued by Trump's policies, will be accused of supporting American Democrats for trying to have them win the election.

## Another setback for Saudi and UAE in Yemen



**TEHRAN (FNA)** — Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates pumped billions of dollars into fighting in the port city of Hodeidah in Yemen, but the desperate campaign to occupy the besieged city failed after their local and international allies either turned against each other or quit.

It's a serious setback for the Saudi-led coalition whose thousands of US-backed air strikes have so far failed to deliver victory over seasoned Ansarullah Houthi fighters. Strange enough, Riyadh, the United Arab Emirates and their allies still see victory in Yemen, where they are backed by US weapons and intelligence, as "vital" if they are to counter Iran's growing influence in the Middle East, a priority for Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. But coalition prospects were dimmed once more this week by a popular resistance front that has nothing to do with Iran and everything to do with a nation which wants to determine its own political future and destiny.

This comes at a time when the Saudi-UAE war effort has already been running into trouble everywhere else in the war-torn country. Like in Hodeidah, there has been no sign of a victory, much less to assert their supremacy in the South.

This also comes at a time when Saudi Arabia is fast losing allies. International pressure on Western nations selling weapons to Saudi Arabia is also mounting. The uproar in the West against the selling of weapons to the Saudis has been growing louder as well, particularly in light of the worsening humanitarian disaster.

From Canada under fire for a \$15 billion contract to Sweden cutting off military cooperation that had been going on since 20015, to the UK, where talk of halting arms exports if humanitarian laws are broken in Yemen. The situation is serious because even the UN is calling on the United States to take a tough stance on Riyadh for the ongoing human rights violations in the poorest country in the Arab world.

The West isn't the only one trying to distance itself from Saudi Arabia. In fact, tensions with close allies have increased since the arrival to power of King Salman. Recent remarks by the new Malaysian Defense Minister Mohammad Sabo on the Malaysian Armed Forces (ATM) withdrawal from the offensive of the Saudi-led coalition are highly debatable. «Malaysia has never been involved in the attack on Yemen, which is also a Muslim country. The ATM presence in Saudi Arabia has indirectly involved Malaysia in the Middle East conflict. If Malaysian troops are to be involved in such attacks, they should be solely through the United Nations," Sabo has said in a statement this week.

All in all, Saudi Arabia, and to a lesser extent the UAE, are too arrogant to accept defeat in Yemen, particularly in Hodeidah. That doesn't change the fact that indeed they have lost the war. Framing the violence in Yemen as a proxy war involving Iran is flat-out wrong as well.

There's a total blockade of sea and Iranian weapons cannot get through, personnel cannot get through. Iran has no air forces involved. The real driving force of the hostilities in Yemen is Saudi Arabia that has been shelling the country since March 2015 with a helping hand from the US and NATO allies. Riyadh is desperate to be a regional power and has instigated a number of conflicts, including those in Bahrain and Syria. The regime seeks to strengthen itself so as to ensure the continuation of its dictatorship.

To that end, Saudi Arabia is committing war crimes in Yemen. Western powers who are supplying logistical assistance and weapons are also complicit in these crimes against humanity. In spite of the far-reaching support of the Western allies, the Saudis are stuck in a quagmire similar to that being experienced by their American masters in Afghanistan. The national resistance front in Yemen, led by the Ansarullah faction, disorganized at the beginning of the war, has now become a fighting machine, manufacturing its own weapons and being able to sustain themselves, despite the ongoing blockade. Any doubters should ask the Saudi-led invading forces that lost the battle of Hodeidah this week.

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## Masterpieces or replicas?

Reza Abbasi Museum to showcase moulage collection



**HERITAGE** TEHRAN — Reza Abbasi Museum in north-central Tehran will host a retrospective of works by Reza Mohammadi to turn the spotlight on 25-year career of the Iranian artist.

The exhibit aims to support the “declining art”, which Mohammadi debuted in the country some 25 years ago under the auspices of the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization, CHTN reported on Sunday.

His exhibits of replicas was highly acclaimed in the past, however, it is becoming somewhat forgotten over the recent years, the report added.

Moulage is a technique assumed to improve realism by the means of special modeling and casting techniques.

It is predominantly the art of applying mock injuries for the purpose of training emergency response teams and other medical and military personnel.

Reza Abbasi Museum embraces several permanent exhibition halls that showcase various eras of the Iranian history with objects belonging to the pre-Islamic era, paintings and calligraphy works amongst them.

## Antalya welcomes more than 2m tourists in June

Antalya welcomed more than 2 million tourists in June, including 1.94 million foreigners and 68,710 local tourists, according to Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism data yesterday.

The city hosted about 1.506 million tourists in June of last year. In terms of nationalities, Russians topped the list in June with 826,963 Russians visiting the city, an increase of 28.55 percent, while Russian tourists accounted for 42.56 percent of all visitors. It was followed by Germany with 254,406, Ukraine with 153,961, the U.K. with 91,518 and Poland with 66,221 tourists.

The number of tourists coming from Germany increased by 23.71 percent compared to the same period last year, while the number of tourists from Ukraine, the U.K. and Poland increased by 5.45 percent, 100.17 percent and 165.34 percent, respectively. (Source: Daily Sabah)



## ROUND THE GLOBE

### Early Christian Necropolis of Pécs

In the 4th century CE a remarkable series of decorated tombs were constructed in the cemetery in the town of Sopiana, in the Roman Province of Pannonia, the ruins of which survived under the ground and are situated in the current city of Pécs, in South Hungary.

The burial chambers, chapels and mausoleum excavated on the site of the Sopiana cemetery form a complex that bears witness to an ancient culture and civilization that had a lasting impact.



An interior view of Early Christian Necropolis of Pécs, a World Heritage in Hungary

It is the richest collection of structural types of sepulchral monuments in the northern and western Roman provinces reflecting a diversity of cultural sources.

These monuments are important both structurally and architecturally as they were built above ground and served as both burial chambers and memorial chapels.

They are also significant in artistic terms because of their richly decorated murals of outstanding quality depicting Christian themes.

The Roman cemetery was found by archaeological excavations which began two centuries ago. Subsequent excavations revealed that the early Christian complex of monuments provides exceptional evidence of a historical continuity that spanned the turbulent centuries from the decline of the Roman Empire in the 4th century to the conquest of the Frankish Empire in the 8th century.

Sixteen structures constitute the World Heritage property, although the cemetery includes over five hundred more modest graves which cluster around the major monuments. (Source: UNESCO)

# A general renaissance: Iranian art and architecture under Sassanids

**HERITAGE** TEHRAN — On Sunday, UNESCO added an ensemble of Sassanian historical cities in southern Iran to its world heritage list.

The Sassanid era (224 CE–651) is of very high importance in the history of the nation, under which Persian art and architecture experienced a general renaissance.

Architecture often took grandiose proportions such as palaces at Ctesiphon, Firuzabad, and Sarvestan that are amongst highlights of the ensemble.

Crafts such as metalwork and gem-engraving grew highly sophisticated, yet scholarship was encouraged by the state. In those years, works from both the East and West were translated into Pahlavi, the language of the Sassanians.

Rock-carved sculptures and bas-reliefs on abrupt limestone cliffs are widely deemed as characteristics and striking relics of the Sassanian art, top examples of which can be traced at Bishapur, Naqsh-e Rostam and Naqsh-e Rostam in southern Iran.



A Sassanid-era sculpture of horse head

Efforts made by the Sassanids also yield a revival of Iranian nationalism took place, for example, Zoroastrianism was declared as the state religion.



Bas-relief features an equestrian depiction of Sassanid king Shapur I at Naqsh-e Rostam, Fars province, southern Iran.

The dynasty evolved by Ardashir I and destroyed by the Arabs during a period of 637 to 651. The dynasty was named after Sasan, an ancestor of Ardashir I.

Under his leadership who reigned from 224 to 241, the Sassanians overthrew the Parthians and created an empire that was constantly changing in size as it reacted to Rome and Byzantium to the west and to the Kushans and Hephthalites to the east, according to Britannica Encyclopedia.

At the time of Shapur I (reigned 241 CE–272), the empire stretched from Sogdiana and Iberia (Georgia) in the north to the Mazun region of Arabia in the south; in the east it extended to the Indus River and in the west to the upper Tigris and Euphrates river valleys.

Titled “Sassanid Archaeological Landscape of Fars Region”, the newly UNESCO-registered ensemble is comprised of eight archaeological sites situated in three geographical parts of Firuzabad, Bishapur and Sarvestan. The archaeological landscape reflects the optimized utilization of natural topography and bears witness to the influence of Achaemenid and Parthian cultural traditions and of Roman art, which later had a significant impact on the architecture and artistic styles of the Islamic era.

## Iran’s ancient engineering marvel

Dating back around 3,000 years, the qanat is an ingenious and sustainable solution to Iran’s dearth of easily accessible water.

The followings are excerpts from a full article that Joobin Bekhrad posted to BBC on June 20, 2018:

What on Earth are those? I thought to myself shortly before landing in the Iranian city of Esfahan one summer. From the aeroplane window, I could see what looked like a cross between freakishly large anthills and obscure symbols left by an extraterrestrial race. Little could I – then only a teenager – have guessed what lay beneath their mysterious surfaces.

To find pure water in an arid and unforgiving landscape, and create lush vistas in (literally) the middle of nowhere, might have seemed an impossible undertaking. However, they found an effective and sustainable solution to Iran’s dearth of easily accessible water in the marvel of ancient Iranian engineering known as the kariz, more popularly known by its Arabic name, the qanat. Dating back some 3,000-odd years, and added to UNESCO’s World Heritage list in 2016, the qanat is a testament to the ingenuity of the ancient Iranians.

Simply put, a qanat is an underground channel that carries fresh water from an elevated source in the mountains to an opening at a lower altitude for the purposes of irrigation – a perfect solution in a region with an abundance of mountains. Once a possible source of fresh water



Anthill-like shafts were bored into the earth to reach underground water sources

is identified, indicated by the presence of an alluvial fan (a triangle-shaped sedimentary deposit at the base of a mountain), a shaft like one of the ‘anthills’ I’d seen is bored underground until the water source is reached. While in some cases not much digging is required, other shafts can extend up to 300m below ground. Numerous other anthill-like shafts are then bored at regular intervals to extract soil as well as provide ventilation for the workers excavating the earth below. To make things even more difficult, the slope of the qanat must be precisely calculated: too steep an incline, and the water’s downward force will erode the qanat; too flat, and the water won’t flow.

The complex system was well worth the effort, however. These underground aqueducts have allowed Iranians for millennia to access and transport water in some of its most arid regions. One of the most impressive examples is in the Fars province of south-west Iran. Here, the city of Persepolis was built by the Achaemenid Persians (550-330BC) in a hot and dusty plain surrounded by the Zagros Mountains. The location was not exactly endowed with nature’s bounty. Yet, by way of the qanat, Persepolis became the epicenter of an empire that stretched from Greece to India, and was regarded by many as the most luxurious city in the world, famed for its opulent palaces and exquisite gardens. As such, it’s easy to see why the distinctly Iranian hue of blue – known as abi



Having access to water from the qanat allowed the ancient Achaemenid city of Persepolis to become the epicentre of a vast empire

### The ancient Iranians had a huge task not only to survive, but also to conquer almost all their then-known world

in Persian, literally meaning ‘water-like’ – is nothing short of ubiquitous throughout the country.

The qanat system was so effective that it soon spread to other corners of the world, first through the ancient Persians’ conquests, and later by way of the Muslim Arabs, who adopted the system from the Persians and carried it with them as far as Andalusia, Sicily and North Africa. According to William B Hemsley in *The Qanat: An Ancient Water Supply*, so highly did the ancient Egyptians value the qanat system that the Persian emperor Darius the Great “was later honoured with the title of Pharaoh” in return for introducing it to them.

Not only does the qanat provide necessary drinking water, it also helps lower indoor temperatures. In Yazd in central Iran, where summers can be stiflingly hot, the qanat is as indispensable as it is ingenious. Used in combination with a badgir (an Iranian wind-catcher), the water in the qanat cools warm incoming air, which enters it through a shaft, before being released into a basement and expelled through the openings at the top of the badgir. In houses in Yazd, for instance, this ancient method of air conditioning is still widely used, and is an inseparable aspect of engineering and architecture.

#### ‘We must cultivate our garden’

But the qanats weren’t only for physical sustenance; they also served a spiritual purpose. Despite their harsh environs, through this feat in engineering the ancient Persians were able to construct the renowned, Unesco-listed Persian garden.

Heavenly to behold and enjoy – in stark contrast to the parched surroundings – these lush oases, often arranged in four sections as a chahar bagh (literally ‘four gardens’) – are replete with trees, flowers, fountains and waterways, all meticulously arranged in harmony and symmetry to reflect the Zoroastrian adoration of nature and the elements. It’s not surprising that descriptions of paradise in the Abrahamic faiths have their origins in the Persian garden, which the Persians called pari-daïda (denoting a walled garden), from which the word ‘paradise’ derives.

According to Iranian Studies scholar Touraj Daryaei, the ancient Persian gardens “held every sort of plant and flower, irrigated by running water, a most precious commodity for the inhabitants of the plateau.” The Bagh-e Shazdeh (Prince’s Garden) near Kerman in central Iran is a dazzling example: seen from above, it beggars belief that such a wonderland

of greenery and gushing springs could exist surrounded by nothing but parched earth and rugged mountains. But gardens – which are, by and large, open to the public – can be seen all around the country.

When in my native Tehran, I can often be caught sipping on traditional Iranian chai, savouring the picturesque scenery, oblivious to the hustle and bustle on the outside streets, at the Bagh-e Khoshnevisan (Calligraphers’ Garden), Bagh-e Muzeh (Museum Garden) and Bagh-e Ferdows (Paradise Garden), all of which are in the north of the city. I mainly visit to escape the stifling summertime smog, and to enjoy the sound of fountains and singing birds amid leafy plane trees, shrubbery and flowerbeds, all of which evoke the florid poetry of Hafez and Sa’di.

However, the best examples outside Iran perhaps belong to Mughal-era India and Pakistan. Just as the Mughals considered Persian the apex of refinement when it came to language, so too did they the Persian garden where horticulture and landscape architecture were concerned. Using the chahar bagh as a template, the gardens of the Taj Mahal and Humayun’s Tomb, for example, were naturally called chahar baghs by the Mughals, and still are today.

#### A steady flow

Although technological innovations have reduced the reliance of Iranians on the qanat, the aqueducts are still prominent and widespread throughout the country. With tens of thousands of qanats in Iran today boasting a total



The qanat was an ingenious way to source water in the middle of the Iranian desert

distance comparable to that between the Earth and the moon, the ingenuity of the ancient Persians has more than stood the test of time. In accordance with the ancient Iranian/Zoroastrian reverence for nature and the elements, it is incomparable as a sustainable and environmentally friendly method of not only fresh water extraction, but air conditioning and refrigeration. As well, in rural contexts, it allows for the equitable distribution of water, and through the necessity of its ongoing maintenance brings about social collaboration.

Despite Cyrus the Great’s world renown as a wise, just and compassionate leader, one can’t help but wonder what the empire he founded – the basis of modern-day Iran, barring politics – would have been without the aid of the qanat. What would the Persian army and people have done without access to fresh water? What would Persepolis – and the innumerable cities in the vast dominion of the Empire – have looked like, devoid of the pleasure gardens that forever changed the face of horticulture and landscape architecture?

For a people who, according to scholar of religion Bruce Lincoln, “... meant to conquer the entire known world in the name of establishing Paradise on Earth”, as Daryaei reports him to have posited, doing so from Iran’s often ruthless climate without the wonder of engineering that is the qanat might have been little more than a pipe dream.

# Scientists might have just discovered a 'new type of depression'

It's called the monoamine hypothesis, and while it's improved the lives of millions who experience depression, for countless others it's been no help at all.

That's because the hypothesis, which dates back to the 1950s, is the precursor for nearly all antidepressants – based on the observation that a deficiency of monoamine neurotransmitters (including serotonin) triggers depression, spurring the development of treatments such as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs).

"Thirty percent of people on these drugs do not experience an effect," explain neuroscientists Yumiko Saito and Yuki Kobayashi from Hiroshima University in Japan.

"We need another explanation for what could cause depression."

In a new study with mice, Saito and Kobayashi may have found just that.

**■ The emotional responses**

In previous research analyzing cells in vitro, Saito discovered that a protein expressed in the brain called RGS8 helps control the hormone receptor MCHRI, which is involved with sleep, appetite, and emotional responses.

The research showed that RGS8 inactivates MCHRI – hypothetically mitigating depression symptoms – but as for how this might affect depression in living animals, nobody knew.

To try and get closer to an answer, in this new study the team ran experiments with two



sets of mice: one group consisting of normal animals, and the other of mice genetically engineered to express higher levels of RGS8.

The mice were subjected to a forced swimming test, in which animals are placed into a

tank of warm water they can't get out of, and constantly monitored as they swim around for a while before going immobile or "giving up", which is considered a characteristic similar to depression.

**The research showed that RGS8 inactivates MCHRI – hypothetically mitigating depression symptoms – but as for how this might affect depression in living animals, nobody knew**

In the tests, the RGS8-boosted mice recorded shorter immobility times – suggesting they were swimming more, and therefore less depressed. When these mice were given an antidepressant drug (desipramine) that acts on monoamines, their immobility time was even further reduced.

When normal mice were given a drug called SNAP94847 that stops MCHRI from working, it reduced their immobility time in the swimming tank – but when the RGS8-boosted mice took the same thing, it seemed to have no effect on their levels of negative mood.

**■ Longer neuronal cilia**

When the researchers examined the euthanized animals' brains under microscope, they found that the RGS8-boosted mice demonstrated longer neuronal cilia (in which MCHRI is localized) than regular mice did, in a region of the hippocampus called CA1.

"These findings suggest that the increased RGS8 protein level in the CA1 region is a possible causative factor for elongation of ciliary MCHRI," the team writes in its paper.

It's early days, and there's a lot more work to be done before we'll know if these results can be safely replicated in humans, but the researchers suspect this protein could be a promising candidate for a new generation of antidepressant drugs – one which might be able to help the millions of people for whom monoamine-based drugs currently don't work.

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

## Researchers searching for meteorites that splashed down into the Pacific Ocean



On March 7, 2018, NASA planetary scientist Marc Fries watched on a weather radar as meteorites plunged into the Pacific Ocean.

Four months later, on July 2, Fries and a group of marine researchers plan to pull these meteorites – chunks of primordial space rocks – out of the sea. No one has ever retrieved a meteorite from the ocean before, he said. But the effort is well worth it.

The meteorite fall – one of the largest Fries has observed on weather radar going back to the '90s – involved space rocks that didn't break, crack, and burn apart in the atmosphere as much as meteorites usually do. But understanding exactly what they are – and where they came from – means visiting the sea floor, where the heavy space rocks invariably sank.

**■ Probing the ocean depths**

Fortunately for NASA, an exploration vessel called the Nautilus, operated by the Ocean Exploration Trust, happens to be probing the ocean depths around this very area this summer, off the Washington coast. On Friday, Fries headed out to meet scientists aboard the Nautilus.

The Nautilus is equipped with deep sea robots, known as remote operated vehicles (ROVs) that are designed to scour the ocean floor with cameras and other equipment.

The ROVs will be outfitted with "magnetic wands" which will scan the floor for magnetic objects, as some 90 percent of meteorites are iron-rich, and magnetic. Sonar-like instruments on the ship, called

backscatter, will bounce signals off the sea floor to try and spot any hard objects down there. The harder the material, the stronger the signal sent back to scientists above.

**■ Recently crashed space rocks**

But in the end, Fries says that the less technologically advanced technique of just looking at the seafloor through the ROV's cameras may lead researchers to these recently crashed space rocks.

The "best tools are eyes," said Fries. "We're going to look for rocks that don't belong there."

What they find could give scientists, and NASA, a better idea of the type of meteorites that will inevitably continue to bombard our planet – many small, but some big.

"It was a meteor strike – the most powerful since the Tunguska event of 1908," Bill Cooke of NASA's Meteoroid Environment Office, said after the event. In 1908, a large meteor burned up in Earth's atmosphere before colliding into Siberia, "releasing energy equivalent to about 185 Hiroshima bombs," according to NASA.

Fries and Raineault seem confident they'll find something in the ocean – even though this feat has never been accomplished before. On the weather radar, Fries picked up a meteorite as large as 10 pounds and 12 centimeters across. However, he notes there could be larger chunks of rock, as weather radars aren't designed to pick up big metallic objects – they're made to track smaller particles in the atmosphere.

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

## Maintaining healthy eyesight may protect against mental decline in old age



Findings of a new study, which involved more than 2,500 adults in the United States, have found a link between worsening vision and declining cognitive function.

In the new study, which was published in the journal JAMA Ophthalmology on June 28, D. Diane Zheng, from the University of Miami, and colleagues analyzed the health data of the participants whose age ranged from 65 to 84 years old.

The researchers found an association between the rate of vision loss and declining mental function. The cognitive function nonetheless did not have a strong effect on vision.

Zheng said that the study is the first one to show that eyesight is a dominant factor in the link between loss of vision and mental function. However, the findings did not prove that vision loss causes mental decline.

**■ Mental decline in old age**

Vision loss and mental decline commonly occur among aging Americans and the findings suggest that preventing or treating eye problems may help ward off mental decline in old age.

"Worsening vision in older adults may be adversely associated with future cognitive functioning. Maintaining good vision may be an important interventional strategy for mitigating age-related cognitive declines," the researchers wrote in their study.

Two theories may help explain the link between visual impairment and cognitive function in old age. The first one proposes that visual impairment can limit the activities that maintain well-being, which can lessen brain stimulation.

The second theory hypothesizes that both the decline in visual acuity and cognition have a common cause such as inflammation or the degeneration of the central nervous function.

Good eye health begins with the food that a person eats. Nutrients such as lutein, zinc, omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin C, and Vitamin E may help ward off age-related vision problems such as cataract and macular degeneration.

**■ A healthy lifestyle**

A healthy lifestyle is also crucial. Smoking can damage the optic nerves. Studies have likewise shown that people who exercise regularly were less likely to develop serious eye diseases.

Wearing the right pair of sunglasses can protect the eyes from UV rays of the sun that can raise the risk of eye conditions. For those who use hazardous materials on the job or at home must consider using safety glasses or protective goggles.

Getting regular eye exam is also helpful as this can help detect eye diseases early, particularly those that do not have symptoms.

(Source: [Tech Times](#))

## New telescope to scan the skies for asteroids on collision course with Earth

Around sunrise on Feb. 15, 2013, an extremely bright and otherworldly object was seen streaking through the skies over Russia before it exploded about 97,000 feet above the Earth's surface. The resulting blast damaged thousands of buildings and injured almost 1,500 people in Chelyabinsk and the surrounding areas. While this sounds like the first scene of a science fiction movie, this invader wasn't an alien spaceship attacking humanity, but a 20-meter-wide asteroid that had collided with the Earth.

What is worrisome is that no one had any idea this 20-meter asteroid existed until it entered the Earth's atmosphere that morning.

As an astronomer, I study objects in the sky that change in brightness over short time scales – observations that I use to detect planets around other stars. A large part of my research is understanding how we can better design and run telescopes to monitor an ever-changing sky. That's important because the same telescopes I'm using to explore other star systems are also being designed to help my colleagues discover objects in our own Solar System, like asteroids on a collision course with Earth.



**■ Orbiting the sun**

A meteor is any chunk of matter that enters the Earth's atmosphere. Before the Chelyabinsk meteor met its demise on Earth, it was orbiting our sun as an asteroid. These rocky objects are normally thought to be restricted to the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter. However, there are many asteroids throughout the solar system. Some, like the Che-

lyabinsk meteor, are known as near-Earth objects (NEOs).

The Chelyabinsk meteor likely came from a group of NEOs called Apollo asteroids, named after the asteroid 1862 Apollo. There are more than 1,600 known Apollo asteroids logged in the JPL Small-Body Database that have orbits that may cross the Earth's path, and are large enough (over 140 meters), that they're considered potentially hazardous asteroids (PHAs) because a collision with Earth would devastate the region hit.

The scars of these past collisions are prominent on the moon, but the Earth also bears the marks of such impacts. Chicxulub crater on Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula was created by the Chicxulub asteroid that drove the dinosaurs to extinction. The Barringer Crater in Arizona is just 50,000 years old. The question is not if a dangerously large asteroid will collide with the Earth, but when?

To reach this goal, an international team of hundreds of scientists, including myself, is completing construction of the Large Synoptic Survey Telescope (LSST) in Chile, which will be an essential tool for alerting us of PHAs.

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

## A new cloaking approach could make objects invisible from every direction

Researchers from Montreal's National Institute of Scientific Research (INRS) just published a study in Optica detailing a new approach to invisibility cloaking. Their device, called a spectral invisibility cloak, is the first to manipulate the color (or frequency) of the light waves that interact with an object, rendering it invisible.

"Our work represents a breakthrough in the quest for invisibility cloaking," study author José Azaña said in a news release.

There's something called the electromagnetic spectrum. It contains all the different frequencies of electromagnetic radiation, a certain kind of energy. X-rays, gamma rays, and radar all fall somewhere on this spectrum.

While you can't see an X-ray, your eyes can see one small range of frequencies on the electromagnetic spectrum. We call this visible light. As mentioned, it's a range separated into what we perceive as colors, with violet at one end and red at the other. Some light sources contain more than one specific frequency. We call these broadband sources, and sunlight is one example.

When we "see" something, what we're really seeing is the interaction of these light frequencies and the object. When sunlight shines on a blue car, the car reflects the blue light frequency while all the other color frequencies simply pass through the object. Our eyes detect the reflected blue light, letting us see the blue car.

The INRS researchers' cloaking device takes advantage of this interaction. They describe an object that reflects only green light. To make this object seem "invisible" to the human eye, they use a specially designed filter to temporarily shift the green frequencies in the broadband spectrum shining on the object to blue. Then, they use another filter to shift those frequencies back to green on the other side of the object.

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

## Lemurs can smell weakness in each other: new study

Some people watch the competition carefully for the slightest signs of weakness. Lemurs, on the other hand, just give them a sniff.

These primates from Madagascar can tell that a fellow lemur is weaker just by the natural scents they leave behind, finds a study on ring-tailed lemurs led by Duke University researchers. Males act more aggressively toward scents that smell "off."

"Our study shows that physical injury from peers dampens an animal's scent signature, and in a way that its counterparts can detect," said Duke professor of evolutionary anthropology Christine Drea.

Body odor is a big deal for ring-tailed lemurs. Males and females have potent scent glands on their genitals that secrete a foul-smelling substance. When they smear these smelly secretions on twigs and branches in their territory, they leave behind a signal made up of 200 to 300 different chemicals that tells other lemurs who was there and whether they are ready to mate.

The odor is "quite pungent and musky," said Rachel Harris, who conducted the research as a postdoctoral associate in evolutionary anthropology at Duke. "It's not something you'd want to get a big whiff of!"

The team used cotton swabs to collect scent secretions from ring-tailed lemurs at the Duke Lemur Center in Durham, North Carolina. Between 2007 and 2016, researchers swabbed 23 individuals while the animals were receiving veterinary treatment for wounds or other injuries, usually the same day they were hurt or shortly afterward.

In the wild and in captivity, lemurs fight to determine who's in charge or who gets to mate, chasing and lunging at each other and biting, swatting or pulling out tufts of fur. Such scuffles are normal behaviors for lemurs and can leave them with cuts, bite marks and other wounds.

(Source: [eurekalert.org](#))

## Gene discovery unlocks mysteries to our immunity

Australia's national science agency CSIRO has identified a new gene that plays a critical role in regulating the body's immune response to infection and disease.

The discovery could lead to the development of new treatments for influenza, arthritis and even cancer.



The gene, called C6orf106 or "C6", controls the production of proteins involved in infectious diseases, cancer and diabetes. The gene has existed for 500 million years, but its potential is only now understood.

"Our immune system produces proteins called cytokines that help fortify the immune system and work to prevent viruses and other pathogens from replicating and causing disease," CSIRO researcher Dr. Cameron Stewart said.

"C6 regulates this process by switching off the production of certain cytokines to stop our immune response from spiraling out of control."

The "cytokines regulated by C6 are implicated in a variety of diseases including cancer, diabetes and inflammatory disorders such as rheumatoid arthritis."

The discovery helps improve our understanding of our immune system, and it is hoped that this understanding will enable scientists to develop new, more targeted therapies.

Dr. Rebecca Ambrose was part of the CSIRO team that discovered the gene, and co-authored the recent paper announcing the discovery in the Journal of Biological Chemistry.

"Even though the human genome was first fully sequenced in 2003, there are still thousands of genes that we know very little about," Dr. Rebecca Ambrose, a former CSIRO researcher, now based at the Hudson Institute of Medical Research said.

"It's exciting to consider that C6 has existed for more than 500 million years, preserved and passed down from simple organisms all the way to humans. But only now are we gaining insights into its importance."

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

## Mangaluru College bans hijab: Facing protests, institute says students bound to follow dress code

Facing protests by a section of students for not allowing them to wear Hijab (head scarf) in a classroom, the St Agnes college management here on Friday said that students are bound to follow the dress code prescribed.



A group of students and Campus Front of India had protested outside the college on 25 June against the 'denial of right' to wear head scarfs. Speaking to reporters here, college principal Sr Jaswina denied reports that some students had been suspended after the protest.

She said all the students who took part in the protest over wearing of the hijab had been attending college regularly since then. They had been asked to give an explanation in writing in the presence of their parents within three days, she added.

As per the dress code, no attire other than the uniform prescribed by the college would be allowed in the college premises during working hours, she said. She said admissions of the students were made only on the basis of these regulations and other requirements to ensure discipline and "friendly atmosphere" in the campus.

To a question, she said there could be "outside interference" in the protest, as the students who took part in the protest later came to the office and apologized, saying there were dragged into the issue.

(Source: www.firstpost.com)

## RECIPE OF THE WEEK

### Peach pie the old fashioned way

"This is a simple, quick, old fashioned, baked, two crust peach pie made with fresh peaches and simple ingredients. It's great during summer peach season."

#### Ingredients:



- 1 (15 ounce) package pastry for a 9 inch double crust pie
- 1 egg, beaten
- 5 cups sliced peeled peaches
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons butter

#### Directions:

Preheat the oven to 450 degrees F (220 degrees C). Line the bottom and sides of a 9 inch pie plate with one of

the pie crusts. Brush with some of the beaten egg to keep the dough from becoming soggy later.

Place the sliced peaches in a large bowl, and sprinkle with lemon juice. Mix gently. In a separate bowl, mix together the flour, sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt. Pour over the peaches, and mix gently. Pour into the pie crust, and dot with butter. Cover with the other pie crust, and fold the edges under. Flute the edges to seal or press the edges with the tines of a fork dipped in egg. Brush the remaining egg over the top crust. Cut several slits in the top crust to vent steam.

Bake for 10 minutes in the preheated oven, then reduce the heat to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C) and bake for an additional 30 to 35 minutes, until the crust is brown and the juice begins to bubble through the vents. If the edges brown too fast, cover them with strips of aluminum foil about half-way through baking. Cool before serving. This tastes better warm than hot.

#### Tip:

Aluminum foil helps keep food moist, ensures it cooks evenly, keeps leftovers fresh, and makes clean-up easy.

## LEARN ENGLISH

### The Office - Cut It Out

Ed: Hey, Mary, can you **cut that out**?  
 Mary: Cut what out I'm not doing anything.  
 Ed: The tapping of your pen on your desk. It's driving me crazy.  
 Mary: Fine! By the way would you mind not **slurping** your coffee every time you have a cup!  
 Ed: I don't slurp my coffee. And plus, how can you hear it when you're shouting into your phone all the time?  
 Mary: **You've got to be kidding me!** You're complaining about me talking on the phone when you go out for a cigarette break ten times a day to **shoot the breeze**?  
 Ed: Look, we have a lot of **accumulated** anger from working in these conditions, and it's probably okay to **let off steam** once in a while but, it's probably not a good idea to **keep it up** I'm willing to **forgive and forget** and if you are.  
 Mary: Fine. Let's **call a truce**. I'll try to more **considerate** and to keep the noise down  
 Ed: Yeah, I'll try to do the same.

#### Key vocabulary

- cut that out:** tell sb to stop
- slurp:** eat or drink (something) noisily
- You've got to be kidding me:** you must be making jokes with me
- shoot the breeze:** chat
- accumulated:** gathered
- let off steam:** to release excess energy, emotion etc.
- keep up:** carry on
- forgive and forget:** stop feeling anger and decide to let it go
- call a truce:** stop fighting
- considerate:** thinking about the feelings of other people

(Source: irlanguage.com)

# Sometimes no law can help women subjected to domestic violence

By Naghme Mizanian

She feels like a crumpled up piece of paper that her husband has rolled up and thrown off into the corner. The same hand that was caressing her face the day before, has given a slap in her face today. Their kids were watching the scene with tearful eyes. They were begging their father not to hit their mother in the head.

She is struggling to understand why he is acting this way. She reflects on the reasons. Why couldn't he express his opposition in words? Why he used his physical power against my verbal power? If I was a physically powerful man would he be showing the same reaction as he did to the 'weak gender'?

She is a lawyer herself. She knows all laws and regulations. She knows that she should refer to a medical examiner and ask for blood money. But she is not in need of money. She can afford to earn a living on her own; she can even support the whole family. Which money can reimburse her broken heart?

She knows all the rules regarding filing for divorce; but is divorce a remedy? Is it a punishment for her husband? Which punishment can compensate for her lost self-esteem? What will happen to her husband after the divorce? A new marriage? Yes, he is an educated person, a university professor with good income. Easily, he can marry a second wife.

What will happen to her after the divorce? Another marriage? No, she is not interested to begin a new life with another person. Who will be that other man? A same man, physically stronger than herself? She should choose to take care of the children alone. What is the children's fault to be raised in a single parent family?

Kids are so sensitive and observant. They pick up everything. And they model whatever we do. If her son sees his father treating his mother poorly, he is likely to believe that's an acceptable way to treat women. And if her daughter sees her father disrespecting her mother, she's more likely to believe this is an allowable way for men to treat her.

She has learnt her manner from her mother, a self-sacrificing woman. She has never observed her parents' arguments. Her mother has never voiced opposition to her father. She has never asked for her rights. Now, she, herself, is copying her mothers' manner but being more aware of her rights and being more engaged in economic activities, she wants to receive more of her rights and that is a change in their life which her husband also has not experienced before.

Her husband is not a bad man. A gen-



tleman, being kind and gentle most of the time. Off course, when everything is in accordance with his will. When he meets with opposition coming from his family he doesn't know how he should argue about it. He has not learnt the skill of conversation. Also, he has not learnt the skill of considering some rights for his wife. However, after the quarrel he becomes regretful. But he never promises not to repeat his actions. Maybe, this is his final weapon to control his wife.

No law can help her. She doesn't want to sue her husband. She wants to live in a happy family. Even if she has bad times, she wants to pretend that there exists no problem in their marital life. All relatives, friends, neighbors and colleagues talk about them as the happiest family. "Off course, they are right; except for some violence that happens once in a year," she reflects. "However, he sometimes put some restrictions on me. No matter! All husbands have some bad habits that wives should cope with them," she goes on thinking.

Domestic violence damages her whole personality. She will paralyze physically and mentally for a while. Once it happens she becomes shocked about what happened to her from her husband's side; from her dearest person, the person who has been her supporter all her life.

What is the remedy? No law can help her. Can psychologists help them? If she was more self-esteemed or self-confident to express her wishes directly, would it not happen to her? What if her husband has

learnt anger control techniques?

Not always the law and regulations can prevent domestic violence. It is the inner nature of the people, both women and men that can help. Moreover, and most importantly are the principles that people are bound to obey and the rights that men and women consider for each other that determine the behavior of genders toward each other.

Domestic violence — also known as domestic abuse, intimate partner violence or abuse — may start when one partner feels the need to control and dominate the other.

Abusers may feel this need to control their partner because of low self-esteem, extreme jealousy, difficulties in regulating anger and other strong emotions, or when they feel inferior to the other partner in education and socioeconomic background.

Some people with very traditional beliefs may think they have the right to control their partner, and that women aren't equal to men. Others may have an undiagnosed personality disorder or psychological disorder. Still others may have learned this behavior from growing up in a household where domestic violence was accepted as a normal part of being raised in their family.

A partner's domination may take the form of emotional, physical or sexual abuse. Studies suggest that violent behavior often is caused by an interaction of situational and individual factors. That means that abusers learn violent behavior from their family, people in their community and

other cultural influences as they grow up. They may have seen violence often or they may have been victims themselves. Some abusers acknowledge growing up having been abused as a child.

Children who witness or are the victims of violence may learn to believe that violence is a reasonable way to resolve conflict between people. Boys who learn that women are not to be valued or respected and who see violence directed against women are more likely to abuse women when they grow up. Girls who witness domestic violence in their families of origin are more likely to be victimized by their own husbands. Although women are most often the victim of domestic violence, the gender roles can and are reversed sometimes.

Alcohol and drugs may contribute to violent behavior. A drunk or high person will be less likely to control his or her violent impulses toward their partner, so keeping such drinking or drug use episodes to a minimum may be valuable for a person living in a domestic violence situation.

No cause of domestic violence, however, justifies the actions of the abuser, nor should it be used as a rationale for their behavior. These possible causes are only to better understand why an abuser believes it is acceptable to abuse their partner physically, sexually, psychologically or emotionally. Ultimately an abuser needs to get help for their unhealthy and destructive behavior, or find themselves living a solitary and lonely life.

## A good start for Iranian women's presence at stadiums

**W O M E N** TEHRAN — The presence of women at Tehran's Azadi stadium for a screening of Iran's World Cup match against Spain on June 20 was a good start for other legitimate freedoms, Mohammad Mehdi Tondgooyan, deputy minister of sports and youth affairs, has said.

Women's presence at stadiums would help promoting legitimate freedom in other cultural, artistic fields, the deputy minister noted stressing on creating more freedom and social happiness.

No organization expressed opposition for women's presence at Azadi Stadium, watching the televised World Cup 2018 games, Mehr quoted Tondgooyan as saying.

The issue was raised at Iran's social council [headed by the Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli] and none



of the organizations opposed the decision, he noted.

Watching sports events is one of the least important legitimate rights of people in any society which create sympathy and unity among a nation, Tondgooyan stated.

Watching Iran-Spain game with all members of the family was a positive event which created a mental recreation for the society, he added.

Women were already allowed to watch volleyball and basketball events, he added.

Tondgooyan noted that presence of women at stadiums is the first step and grounds should be paved for women's presence in all fields considering their dignity.

Iran's female football supporters made history in Tehran — for the first time in 37 years they were able to attend a sporting event in the city's Azadi stadium.

## Giving birth in water appears safe for mother and infant

Giving birth in water, also known as immersion labor and delivery or waterbirth, appears safe for mother and baby, at least when it takes place in a hospital.

Increasing numbers of women choose to labor and give birth in water, particularly in midwifery-led settings, so it is important to understand the benefits and possible risks for women and their newborns.

Dr. Elizabeth R. Cluett from University of Southampton in the UK and colleagues evaluated the effects of water immersion during labor and/or birth using information from 15 studies involving a total of 3,663 women.

Immersion had no meaningful effect on rates of spontaneous vaginal delivery, vaginal delivery with the help of forceps or other devices, or cesarean section, the authors reported in the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews.

Women who went through the first stage of labor with immersion were slightly less likely than women without immersion to need an epidural.

There was not enough information to determine whether waterbirth affected the rates of moderate to severe tears in the perineum, the area between the vagina and the anus, or the amount of blood loss during labor and delivery.

There was no evidence that immersion increased unwanted effects to the baby or woman, regardless of the stage of labor when



immersion took place.

There are several caveats to these findings. All the studies took place in hospital labor and delivery units, and none of the studies took place in midwifery-led care settings. Most studies did not indicate whether it was the first time a woman had given birth or it was a later pregnancy. And there was a lack of information about how selective the studies were on which women they included.

For all these reasons, the researchers suggest that "further research is needed particularly for waterbirth and its use in birth settings outside hospital labor wards before we can be more certain of these effects. Research is also needed about women's and caregivers' experiences of

labor and birth in water."

Dr. Thomas G. Poder from CIUSSS de l'Estrie-CHUS, Sherbrooke, Quebec, Canada, who has also reviewed the advantages and disadvantages of waterbirth, told Reuters Health by email, "(The current study) missed some important points, that is, maternal relaxation and satisfaction (and) promotion of a model of obstetric care more focused on the needs of mothers, particularly the empowerment of women to realize their full potential."

"Waterbirth is safe if properly managed," he said. "So, this should be a choice offered to mothers."

Dr. Megan Cooper, researcher and lecturer in midwifery and nursing at University of South Australia in Adelaide recently sur-

veyed midwives regarding their waterbirth experiences and last year analyzed Australian policies and guidelines for water immersion during labor and birth. She told Reuters Health by email, "Water immersion for labor and birth is a safe option for women who are at low risk of complications. As both a method of pain relief and an alternate mode of birth, water immersion is associated with positive outcomes that extend beyond the physical. Not only does water immersion support women to achieve a physiological and non-medicalized labor and birth, but women commonly have a more positive birth experience."

"There is increasing demand for options of care that can offer women alternatives to pharmacological analgesia and improved chances of having a normal physiological birth," she said. "We have an ever increasing evidence base that demonstrates that water immersion provides such an alternative without any increased risk to the woman or baby. Despite this, there remains a lack of support for this option in some settings, possibly due to the fear of adverse events that for the most part, are documented as possible or theoretical."

"The research is continually demonstrating that there is no additional risk to the woman or baby, so we should seek to offer this option to women who request it." Dr. Cooper said. (Source: Reuters Health)

# British jets bombed Syrian forces in Tanf: Sunday Times

## Israel beefs up tank and artillery deployment in Syria

➔ According to the Times, Britain dropped the bomb last month because they thought Syrian troops were trying to approach the al-Tanf base where anti-government Maghawir al-Thowra militants are trained and commanded.

The U.S. has set up the heavily-fortified base in the al-Tanf desert where the Syrian, Iraqi and Jordanian borders meet.

The U.S. and its allies have marked a 34-mile (54-kilometer) zone in the area and warned Syrian forces against approaching it inside their own territory.

According to a Russian military expert at the country's foreign ministry, the Pentagon is training dozens of Takfiri terrorists at 19 military camps inside Syria.

Last month, Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU/Hashd al-Sha'abi) fighters came under an airstrike near the area, with the group saying fragments from missiles showed it was a U.S. attack.

As the fighters vowed revenge, Washington said it suspected Israel was behind the air raid but both the Syrian government and Iraqi officials said the U.S. aircraft had carried out the strike.

The paramilitary group has said it lost 22 fighters following the night raid on June 17 on the Syrian village of al-Hari in Dayr al-Zawr province.

PMU fighters operate in the area at the request of the Syrian government to counter the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorists and keep them away from Iraqi borders.

The United States has in the past attacked government forces and their allies inside Syria on several occasions.

In April, the U.S., France, and Britain launched coordinated attacks on Syrian targets, using more than 100 cruise missiles.

Syrian leaders have said the U.S. and its allies are trying to destroy the country and prolong the foreign instigated armed conflict there.

Last month, Syria's state news agency SANA said the U.S. had airlifted two high-ranking commanders of the ISIL terrorist group in the Twaimin area to an American base in al-Shaddadi in the Hasakah province.

The so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), which is generally sympathetic to militants, has made similar claims in the past and reported on the U.S. airlifts of ISIL terrorists.

The U.S. and its allies have been bombing what they call ISIL positions inside Syria since September 2014 without any authorization from the Damascus government or a United Nations mandate.

Damascus says the U.S. and its Western and regional allies are aiding Takfiri terrorist groups, while Israel carries out sporadic strikes against Syrian government forces.



**Militants hand over heavy weapons in southwestern Syria**

Meantime, terrorist groups in Syria's southwestern town of Dara'a have begun handing in the weapons to government forces.

According to Hezbollah military media unit on Sunday, militants in Bosra al-Sham have agreed to settle with the government and have begun to hand over their heavy weapons in preparation for the army's entry.

Earlier in the day, Foreign-sponsored Takfiri militants re-launched peace talks with the Russian military in a bid to reach a ceasefire in southwestern Syria as government troops and allied fighters from popular defense groups are making territorial gains there.

Elsewhere, the Syrian army has expanded its military operation in the south and made significant gains against militants with the liberation of dozens of towns and villages in Dara'a.

Syrian forces also carried out attacks on militant supply lines in the eastern and southeastern sectors of Dara'a city.

A series of concentrated artillery strikes against militant routes and supply lines in al-Jumrok al-Qadim in the southeastern part of Dara'a city and in the direction of al-Naima town east of the city were successfully carried by government forces.

During the attacks a number of terrorist hideouts were destroyed and heavy losses were inflicted on their ranks.

Syria's southwest is strategically sensitive because of its proximity to the frontiers with both Jordan and the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights.

The recapture of Dara'a is highly important because it borders the occupied Golan Heights which Israel has used to treat wounded militants for years.

Also on Tuesday, Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced that civilians fleeing the war in Syria will not be

allowed entry into Israel.

"Regarding southern Syria, we will continue to defend our borders," he said.

"We will extend humanitarian assistance to the extent of our abilities. We will not allow entry into our territory," he added.

**Israel beefs up tank and artillery deployment in Syria**

The developments follow as Israel beefed up its tank and artillery deployment on the Golan Heights frontier with Syria on Sunday, cautioning Damascus' forces to keep a distance as they sweep rebel-held areas over the border.

Backed by Russia, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad launched an offensive last month to regain the southwestern Dara'a region, driving thousands of refugees toward neighboring Jordan and Israel.

Israel's military deployed tank and artillery reinforcements to the Golan on Sunday, a statement said, "in light of developments on the Syrian Golan Heights".

In its statement the military said Israel was holding to its non-intervention policy.

Israel says it is neutral in the seven-year foreign sponsored war but has carried out scores of air strikes in Syria on what it claims were Lebanese Hezbollah guerrillas or in response to what it said were attacks directed against its own forces in the Golan.

Addressing the Israeli cabinet, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel had apprised Russia and the United States of its position on the developments in the Golan, alluding to a separation of forces agreement with Syria after the 1973 Middle East war that created a buffer zone patrolled by the UN Disengagement and Observer Force (UNDOF).

"We will continue protecting our borders, we will provide humanitarian aid to the full extent possible, we will not allow entry into our territory and we will demand strict adherence to the 1974 disengagement deals

with the Syrian army," he said.

Israel seized much of the Golan from Syria in the 1967 war and annexed the strategic plateau, a move not recognized abroad.

Citing the Syrian instability, Israel has sought U.S. endorsement for its claim of sovereignty over the Golan. A senior Netanyahu cabinet minister said in May the Trump administration could soon oblige. Washington has not commented on the matter.

A report in March on UNDOF activities said Syria's armed forces maintained positions in the Golan which violated the accord, as did Israel's deployment to the area of 155 mm artillery, Iron Dome anti-missile systems and related equipment.

Syria has been gripped by foreign-backed militancy since March 2011. The Syrian government says the Israeli regime and its Western and regional allies are aiding Takfiri terrorist groups that are wreaking havoc in the country.

**Jordan to hold talks with Russia over Syria's Dara'a province**

Elsewhere, Jordan is set to hold talks with Russia this week over the situation in southern Syria and alleviating the humanitarian situation there, Jordan's foreign minister said.

Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi said on Monday he will meet his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov in Moscow later in the week to discuss developments in Dara'a province, near Jordan's border.

On Sunday, rebels in the strategically located town of Bosra al-Sham in Syria's southern Dara'a province surrendered to forces loyal to President Bashar al-Assad.

Talks leading up to the agreement - which stipulates the opposition handing over heavy weaponry to the government - were mediated by neighboring Jordan.

Renewed fighting along Jordan's northern border has prompted a new wave of refugees headed towards its territory.

"Jordan already has 1.3 million Syrians. Our country has reached its maximum capacity. Jordan has been shouldering this responsibility, and I must say, we've been doing so alone," Safadi said on Thursday.

The opposition's chief negotiator in wider UN peace talks, Nasr al-Hariri, last week accused the U.S. of complicity in al-Assad's southwest offensive, saying the U.S. silence could only be explained by "a malicious deal".

Bolstered by a string of victories across southern Syria, al-Assad's chief backer Russia has been reluctant to yield to the opposition's demands.

Diplomatic sources say that wider negotiations were difficult, with Russia insisting on sweeping surrender terms and rebels seeking an agreement that would make Jordan a guarantor of the safety of Dara'a province's 800,000 civilians.

## Chaos in Merkel's coalition after Seehofer dangles resignation

German Chancellor Angela Merkel will make a last-ditch effort to end a migration row with her conservative allies by holding more talks with her interior minister, whose offer to resign cast doubt over whether her fragile government can survive.

Horst Seehofer offered to quit his ministerial post and the chairmanship of the Bavarian Christian Social Union (CSU) at a marathon party meeting on Sunday to discuss whether immigration proposals Merkel brought back from Brussels last week were acceptable.

But he was then persuaded by party colleagues to have one more meeting with Merkel on Monday to try to resolve the long-standing row and said he would make his final decision within three days.

Merkel's Christian Democrats (CDU) relies on the CSU to maintain power through a coalition, also including the Social Democrats (SPD), formed three months ago after an election in September.

Germany's political crisis is the latest sign of a growing divide across the EU between those who want to maintain open borders and those who want to restrict the number of migrants entering the bloc.

The ructions in Berlin were putting pressure on the euro early on Monday while Germany's top share index opened more than one percent lower.

## Saudi regime, UAE use Bahrain as 'trial balloons' for warmer ties with Israel: report

The House of Saud regime and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are using Bahrain as "trial balloons" for warmer ties with Israel, the Haaretz daily reports.

An Israeli delegation traveled to Bahrain for a UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) event in Manama last month, with the paper describing the visit as "not trivial" because it could signal a shift with regard to the tiny Persian Gulf state's treatment of Israel.

"Arab countries that don't officially recognize Israel have insisted over the years on not granting entry to Israelis, even when hosting major international events," the Israeli newspaper wrote.

It quoted experts in Washington as saying that even though official relations between

Bahrain and Israel aren't "around the corner," ties are indeed getting warmer.

Bahrain's Foreign Minister Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa surprised the world in May when he supported Israel's attack on dozens of military targets in Syria.

He tweeted that Tel Aviv had a right to "defend itself" as he signed up to the Israeli version of a chain of events that cited the raid a response to an alleged Iranian rocket attack against military bases in the occupied Golan Heights.

"It makes a lot of sense for Bahrain and Israel to increase their cooperation," Haaretz quoted Jonathan Schanzer from Washington-based think tank the Foundation for Defense of Democracies as saying.

Schanzer visited Bahrain last year as the

country's rulers "are testing the waters and the trend is very clear" for a possible normalization with Israel.

Bahrain is a bellwether for other Persian Gulf Arab states, such as the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, which also view Israel as a potential partner against the Islamic Republic of Iran, Haaretz said, citing Schanzer.

"It seems sometimes like Saudi Arabia and the UAE are using Bahrain - which is allied with them but is smaller and less influential - to do 'trial balloons' regarding foreign policy. It's true with regard to the three countries' rivalry with their neighbor Qatar, and also with regard to Israel," he said.

Manama's overtures to Tel Aviv have been met with strong public scrutiny, with the

people in the Persian Gulf kingdom holding numerous protest rallies against normalization of ties with Tel Aviv.

In May 2017, Manama witnessed the first visit of an Israeli official at the 67th congress of football's world governing body FIFA. That visit prompted the hashtag "#Bahrain\_refuses\_normalization" to go viral.

The kingdom became the only Persian Gulf state in 2016 to publicly mourn the death of former Israeli president Shimon Peres. Also that year, Manama officials raised eyebrows by hosting and participating in an Israeli celebration in Manama, where Bahraini dignitaries and traders danced next to rabbis.

(Source: Press TV)

## EU gives stark warning to U.S. over auto tariffs

The European Union warned Monday that up to \$294 billion worth of U.S. exports would face counter-measures if President Donald Trump went through with his threat to slap duties on auto imports.

Trump has singled out the Europeans as a problem as great to the U.S. on trade as China and laid out threats to fight the EU with a 20 percent duty on EU auto imports, a particular source of his scorn.

Trump's threat was the latest salvo in an escalating trade war that saw the EU slap duties on U.S.-made jeans and Harley Davidson motorcycles in a tit-for-tat response to US tariffs on European steel and aluminum exports.

In a letter to U.S. authorities, the European Commission, which handles trade policy for the bloc's 28 members, painted a stark picture of what the US economy would face if Trump followed through on his threat.

"Economic analysis confirms that an increased tariff on these products will be harmful first and foremost for the U.S. economy," the letter said.

The commission said "up to \$294 billion of U.S. exports ... could be subject to countermeasures across sectors of the U.S. economy", which was equivalent to a staggering 19 percent of total U.S. exports in 2017.

The commission also underlined that European car companies were important contributors to the U.S. economy and "well established" there.

"In 2017, U.S.-based EU companies produced close to 2.9 million automobiles, which accounted for 26 percent of total U.S. production," it said.

These companies support 120,000 direct and indirect U.S. jobs in plants across the country, the EU said, pointing to sites in South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi and Tennessee - southern U.S. states known for their unwavering support for Trump.

(Source: AFP)

## AU summit overshadowed by 'security failings' in Sahel after attacks

African leaders gathered in the Mauritanian capital Monday for the final day of a summit overshadowed by security issues after rebels hammered two fragile Sahel states in successive attacks.

French President Emmanuel Macron, making an exceptional appearance at an African Union (AU) summit, was expected to discuss hurdles facing a five-nation French-backed anti-terror unit, the "G5 Sahel" force.

As the summit focusing on free trade, funding and corruption opened on Sunday, a bomb aimed at French soldiers in Mali's troubled north killed four civilians and injured over 20 people, including four soldiers.

In Niger, Boko Haram insurgents targeted a military position in the southeast of the country, killing 10 soldiers - a reminder of the peril that Nigeria's notorious rebels pose to neighboring countries.

On Friday, a suicide bombing hit the Mali headquarters of the G5 Sahel, fuelling concerns about its ability to tackle rebel groups roaming the region.

It was the first attack on the headquarters of the five-nation force, which was set up with French backing in 2017 to fight insurgents and criminal groups in the vast and unstable Sahel region.

In total, four separate attacks killed 15 people in Mali in three days, as the vulnerable West African nation prepares to go to the polls on July 29. The G5 Sahel leaders - from Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger - met Sunday to prepare for talks with Macron.

"These attacks should strengthen our determination to fight terrorism to ensure our populations' security," Niger's president, Mahamadou Issoufou, told AFP on the sidelines of the summit.

Mauritanian President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz, hosting the gathering of more than 40 heads of state and government, said Friday's bombing "hit (at) the heart" of security in the Sahel and lashed out at a lack of international help.

The Al-Qaeda-linked Support Group, the main extremist alliance in the Sahel, claimed the attack in a telephone call to the Mauritanian news agency Al-Akhbar.

"It was a message sent by the terrorists at this precise moment when we are getting organized to stabilize and secure our region," Aziz told France 24 television.

"If the headquarters was attacked, it is because there are so many failings we need to fix if we want to bring stability to the Sahel."

The G5 aims to have a total of 5,000 troops from the five nations but has faced funding problems and lack of equipment.

It is intended to operate alongside France's 4,000 troops in the troubled "tri-border" area where Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso meet, and alongside the UN's 12,000-strong MINUSMA peacekeeping operation in Mali.

Aziz said the G5 was a "sovereign initiative" of Sahel states that face not only security problems but drought, poverty, unemployment and trafficking.

The string of attacks in the vast Sahel region hijacked an AU summit meant to focus on free trade, funding, corruption as well as the continent's other security crises.

Rwandan President Paul Kagame, who holds the presidency of the 55-nation AU, will make a call to promote free trade.

Currently, African countries only conduct about 16 percent of their business with each other, the smallest amount of intra-regional trade compared to Latin America, Asia, North America and Europe.

(Source: AFP)

## MKO and gathering of zealots

➔ Those MKO members who had succeeded to flee from Camp Ashraf in Iraq have cited horrific stories about the group.

One may not expect persons like Maryam Rajavi and other MKO ringleaders to repent their past and apologize to the Iranians because they have brainwashed and ruined the lives of hundreds of thousands of Iranian youth through their extreme political and religious dispositions. However, it is shocking to see that some figures like Giuliani and Newt Gingrich, a former House speaker and a close Trump ally, attend MKO conferences. It is noteworthy that John Bolton, who now acts as national security advisor to Trump, also attended the group's meeting last year.

When one sees such moves he asks himself: How can these figures, no matter how much hawkish they may be, attend the meetings of the MKO which its history is rife with terrorism and treason?

No matter how much Giuliani, Bolton, Gingrich, Harper and other hawks hate the Islamic republic system but attending the gatherings of such an extreme group is disgraceful and self-inflicting otherwise we conclude that these persons are as stupid, bigoted, dangerous, and extreme as the MKO ringleaders.

## Froome cleared by UCI in doping case

Four-time Tour de France winner Chris Froome was cleared by cycling's world governing body on Monday of any wrongdoing after he tested positive for excessive levels of the asthma drug Salbutamol.

Froome, 33, had tested positive for excessive levels of Salbutamol following a urine sample at last September's Vuelta a Espana. "On 28 June 2018, World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) informed the UCI that it would accept, based on the specific facts of the case, that Mr Froome's sample results do not constitute an Adverse Analytical Finding," the International Cycling Union (UCI) said in a statement.

"In light of WADA's unparalleled access to information and authorship of the salbutamol regime, the UCI has decided, based on WADA's position, to close the proceedings against Mr Froome."

The Briton had always denied any wrongdoing and welcomed the news, which means he will be cleared to race in this year's Tour de France which begins on Saturday.

"I am very pleased that the UCI has exonerated me. While this decision is obviously a big deal for me and the team, it's also an important moment for cycling," Froome said in a statement.

"I understand the history of this great sport — good and bad. I have always taken my leadership position very seriously and I always do things the right way. I meant it when I said that I would never dishonour a winner's jersey and that my results would stand the test of time.

"I have never doubted that this case would be dismissed for the simple reason that I have known throughout I did nothing wrong... I appreciate more than anyone else the frustration at how long the case has taken to resolve and the uncertainty this has caused. I am glad it's finally over."

The Team Sky rider, who won the Giro d'Italia in May while the investigation was ongoing, will be aiming to win a record-equalling fifth Tour when the race gets underway in Noirmoutier.

"We have always had total confidence in Chris and his integrity. We knew that he had followed the right medical guidance in managing his asthma at the Vuelta and were sure that he would be exonerated in the end, which he has been," Team Sky's team principal Dave Brailsford said.

(Source: Reuters)

## Salah signs new long-term deal with Liverpool

Liverpool forward Mohamed Salah has signed a new long-term contract with the club, the Premier League side said on Monday.

Salah had a remarkable first season with Liverpool, scoring 44 goals in all competitions and helping the club reach the Champions League final. He was named the PFA Players' Player of the Year and Football Writers' Association's Footballer of the Year.

"I think this news can be seen for what it is; rewarding a person who performed and contributed greatly for the team and the club last season," manager Jurgen Klopp told the club's website.

"It demonstrates two things very clearly also - his belief in Liverpool and our belief in him."

"Mo reflects where we are as a team, I think. Last season was special with many special moments - but we want more."

The 26-year-old netted 32 times in the Premier League, breaking the record for the most goals scored in a 38-game season, and helped the Merseyside club to a fourth-place finish.

(Source: Star)

## LeBron James to join Lakers for \$154 million over 4 years

Basketball superstar LeBron James has signed a four-year, \$154 million deal to join the Los Angeles Lakers, his agency, Klutch Sports Group, announced Sunday night.

James did not pick up his option Friday with the Cleveland Cavaliers, the team he led to its fourth straight NBA finals this year, only to be swept by the Golden State Warriors in four games.

Some had expected the move to Los Angeles, where the Ohio native owns two homes. The announcement came on the first day of free agency.

James, 33, is a four-time NBA Most Valuable Player and arguably the league's most dominant player.

He joined the league in 2003 as the first overall draft pick by Cleveland.

But he shocked fans in 2010 by going to Miami, where he won his first championship with the Heat in 2012.

Two years later, it was back to the Cavs. And in June 2016, they beat the Golden State Warriors 93-89 in a deciding Game 7 to win the NBA Championship. His performance earned him unanimous MVP honors.

The victory was the first major sports championship for a Cleveland team since 1964.

The Lakers haven't made the playoffs in five years.

(Source: CNN)

## France get Sidibe boost ahead of Uruguay clash

France are expected to be at full strength when they take on Uruguay in their World Cup quarter-final on Friday after assistant coach Guy Stephan described Djibril Sidibe's injury as a minor scare.

Full back Sidibe limped out of Sunday's training session with an ankle injury a day after France beat Argentina 4-3 in the last 16.

"It's nothing serious. I can't say he'll train with the others today and his ankle is bruised but it's nothing big," Stephan told a news conference on Monday.

He added that full back Lucas Hernandez was nursing a minor muscle problem.

Another full back, Benjamin Mendy, had suffered a thigh muscle problem but "he will resume his activity today", said Stephan.

(Source: Goal)

# Spain back to dark ages after World Cup debacle



"Feel the power of dream at 2018 World Cup"

Spain arrived at the World Cup convinced they were ready to rule world football again but Sunday's defeat to Russia in the last 16 has set the 2010 champions back a decade and brought an end to a glorious generation.

The idea that Spain, boasting a squad bursting with winners at club and international level, could be sent home by the lowest-ranked team in the tournament would have sounded preposterous just a month ago, but as the minutes ticked by at the Luzhniki stadium it seemed ever more likely.

Despite making an astounding 1,107 total passes, Spain could not break the 1-1 deadlock and their fate was sealed when Russia goalkeeper Igor Akinfeev booted away Iago Aspas's spotkick to cap a 4-3 shootout win for the hosts.

Perennial underachievers on the international stage, Spain rid themselves of that tag during a glorious cycle between 2008 and 2012 when they won back-to-back European Championships and a first World Cup.

But to the national media, this latest fiasco was all too familiar. "Spain step back 10 years" said newspaper El Pais, while Marca declared, "Spain return to the past".

Where Spain go from here is far from clear.

They are without a coach and are soon set to be without many of the players that have been part of the furniture for so long. Andres Iniesta confirmed his international retirement immediately after the game and Gerard Pique is set to join him.

Sergio Ramos and David Silva will be 34 by Euro 2020. "The end of a generation", said the cover of newspaper AS.

The decision to dispense with long-time coach Julen Lopetegui days before the World Cup after he failed to tell the federation about his move to Real Madrid after the tournament was inevitably brought up.

While the decision, taken by federation president Luis Rubiales, had the backing of large sections of the media and influential former players like Xavi Hernandez it unsettled

the players who had worked with Lopetegui for two years.

Koke, who also missed in the shootout, said it had been hard to lose him.

"We lost our leader," said the midfielder after the game.

Interim manager Fernando Hierro's lack of coaching experience was there for all to see when he flapped on the sidelines, throwing out Dani Carvajal and Andres Iniesta after he had dropped them from the starting line-up.

Hierro seemed unsuited to his sudden transformation from director of football to head coach.

"I arrived wearing a suit, I'll leave wearing a tracksuit," the former Real Madrid defender said two weeks ago.

He did not expect to be leaving Russia so soon but given the turmoil that enveloped Spain's campaign with the sacking of the man that got them there, no one could really have been surprised by their early exit.

(Source: Guardian)

## Doping doctor linked to Brazil football exposed



A team of investigative journalists from Germany have revealed that they received doping substances from a celebrity doctor in Brazil associated with some of South America's most famous footballers.

The team from German public broadcaster ARD showed evidence of the meeting with Dr. Mohammed Barakat in a documentary aired on Sunday evening.

The film shows Barakat prescribing banned substance Anastazol to an undercover journalist pretending to be an athlete during their first meeting. Barakat also puts him in contact with a drug dealer who offers the journalist multiple banned steroids, including nandrolone, testosterone and oxandrolone.

"Hormones are the elixir of life," Barakat tells the journalist. "You're going to take flight and your condition will improve dramatically."

■ **Links to football stars**

During the documentary, a top athlete speaking on the condition of anonymity says Barakat works with anyone willing to pay for his treatment. "I know that he has worked with a lot of people in the footballing world," he says.

Barakat is famous in Brazil and has more

than a million followers on Instagram. He has published photos on the social media platform of himself aside multiple footballing stars, including former Brazil national players Kaka, Rivaldo and Nilmar.

The ARD team could not verify whether Barakat had treated those players, but Barakat acknowledged that he gave Paolo Guerrero, a former Bayern Munich player who most recently captained the Peruvian national team at the World Cup, an unspecified treatment in 2013.

■ **'Breakfast, lunch, dinner'**

Brazilian football is no stranger to doping. The country most recently registered the highest number of football-related doping incidents worldwide, according to the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).

Barakat is being investigated by Brazil's medical council over previous doping allegations. He has also been filmed prescribing banned substances before. A Brazilian investigative journalist gave ARD a 2013 undercover recording showing Barakat prescribing him growth hormones.

(Source: DW)

## Boateng rejects calls to retire as Joachim Low backed



Jerome Boateng has no plans to quit international football despite coming in for criticism following Germany's shock group-stage exit at the World Cup.

Boateng, 29, was one of nine players from the squad that lifted the World Cup four years ago who made it to Russia but were dumped out after losing to both Mexico and South Korea.

No player has so far announced his retirement from international football to make way for new blood.

"It was never an issue for me," Boateng, who was sent off in the win over Sweden and missed the loss to South Korea, told Die Welt when asked about international retirement. "I am a leader. And as such I am ready to tackle the reboot."

Sami Khedira, 31, another 2014 World Cup winner to disappoint in Russia, said that he will take his time to weigh up his options and does not want to rush his decision.

Mesut Ozil, 29, has been subject to racist insults following his controversial

photo with Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan in mid-May. He has also been targeted for his body language on the pitch, with parts of the German public making him the scapegoat.

Having remained quiet throughout the tournament, Ozil published a short statement on social media on Friday, and he admitted Germany "weren't good enough." Before ending with hashtag #SayNoToRacism, he added: "I'll need some time to get over it."

Niklas Sule, 22, condemned German media in a post on Instagram, saying they were never interested in backing the team.

"All of us were world champions in 2014," he wrote, addressing the Germany supporters. "And this is also means that we all were eliminated in 2018. Your criticism is appropriate and justified. And it's not about media, who try to write everything down anyway. It's about the real fans who are there in success and failure."

(Source: ESPN)

## Russia will need more firepower against Croatia in last eight

Hosts Russia have exceeded expectations after advancing to the World Cup quarter-finals with a win on penalties over Spain but they will need more firepower if they are to give Croatia a run for their money on Saturday.

The Russians played with five at the back and just a lone striker in Artem Dzyuba and it worked against Spain, who managed just one chance in the entire 90 minutes on Sunday.

Having played more than 1,000 passes but never got to threaten the Russians in the box, the Spaniards made it look easy for the hosts, who are the lowest-ranked team in the tournament.

But it will not be the same against Croatia, with the Balkan nation also needing penalties to advance over Denmark on Sunday but already having shown flashes of their stellar attacking game when they beat Argentina, Nigeria and Iceland to top their group.

With players such as world-class midfielder Luca Modric and a string of top-level forwards including Mario Mandzukic, Ante Rebic, Andrej Kramaric and Ivan Perisic, Croatia will challenge Russia's backline far more than Spain's lacklustre Diego Costa did in the entire game.

Zlatko Dalic's team scored at least two goals in each of their three group matches, including firing three past



hapless Argentina, to stake a claim as one of the dark horses in this tournament.

Their attacks will also come in all shapes and sizes, whether they are quick breaks, long crosses for Mandzukic, so dominant in aerial battles, or individual displays of skills and powerful shots from in or around the box.

They will certainly not be as one-sided as Spain's attacking options. The Russians breathed a collective sigh of relief after clinching a last eight spot and triggering wild celebrations across the vast country but coach Stanislav Cherchesov attempted to keep his players grounded.

The only other time they have faced an attacking team in this tournament — Uruguay — Russia went down 3-0 without putting up any real resistance.

"I had to persuade them this was the only way (against Spain) as they don't like this system," said the coach, whose side also had one shot on target in two hours of football.

Cherchesov knows his players stuck to his plan of sitting back and soaking up the Spanish attempts to break through with their once-feared tiki-taka passing game but against Croatia his team will need to also score and just Dzyuba may not be enough.

Russia will be without midfielder Yuri Zhirkov who is out with a leg injury but Cherchesov is confident his team has not yet peaked.

"We have been working after each game and we have some time now to check who is ready to do what (against Croatia). We look who is fit, less fit. On the fitness level we can show more here."

As for his reserved celebrations which were limited to a brief raising of the hands on the final whistle, Cherchesov said: "This is the beginning and I have to save my emotions for the later."

(Source: Mirror)

# Carlos Queiroz on Egypt's radar: Report

**S P O R T S** TEHRAN — The Egyptian Football Association (EFA) is reportedly going to hire Iran current coach Carlos Queiroz.

According to Youm7.com, EFA president Hany Abo Rid is reviewing the options to find a new coach for the Pharaohs.

Hector Cuper has left his role after failing to pick up a point in the World Cup group stage. Cuper's team finished bottom of Group A and was the first in the tournament to be eliminated.

The North African nation lost to Uruguay, Russia and then Saudi Arabia.

Contrary to the Argentine coach, Iran earned four points under Queiroz in tough Group B.

Team Melli edged past Morocco 1-0, lost to Spain 1-0 and drew 1-1 with Ronaldo-spirited Portugal.

Queiroz has yet to agree to extend his stay as Team Melli coach despite claims by the president of the country's football federation that the Portuguese would lead the team at January's Asian Cup finals.

The ex-Real Madrid coach has been also linked with a move to South Africa and Algeria.

Morocco coach Herve Renard and Australia coach Bert van Marwijk are also on EFA's radar.



## On Azmoun-Ghoochannejhad retirement from national duty

By Mohammad Ali Haqshenas

**MNA** — Two Iran national football team strikers Reza Ghoochannejhad and Sardar Azmoun quit national duty just after coming home from 2018 Russia World Cup.

Qualifying for 2018 World Cup as the second team, Iran had raised hopes for gaining unprecedented results in the history of their presence in World Cups; and they did.

Despite being in a very rough group besides giant Spain and Portugal and African champion Morocco, Team Melli gained four points but lost the chance to advance to the Round of 16.

Just like the games in the qualifying round, Iran proved its strong defensive line and just conceded two goals in its three matches.

Many experts and most of the public praised Iran's defensive performance at the World Cup, however, when the focus is on defending, strikers have the least chance to become stars and they face a rather heavy emotional pressure.

When Iran was eliminated from World Cup, defenders and goalkeeper became heroes and some fierce criticisms centered on Iran's attacking line.

**■ The case of Ghoochannejhad**  
Seemed desperate, Reza Ghoochannejhad, posted a message on his Instagram account after arrival to Iran and announced that he is retiring from national duty.

"To wear Iran jersey was a dream which came true for me but I think it's time to bid farewell to Team Melli. I would also like to thank all my coaches and teammates for helping me grow as a player in the previous six years and wish them all the best," he wrote, Tehran Times reported.



The Heerenveen striker remained an unused substitute in all three World Cup matches and didn't find the chance to prove his readiness, despite Iran's need to score to advance to the knockout stage for the first time.

Nicknamed 'Gucci', he has served six years in Team Melli scoring 16 goals in his 44 caps. His most dramatic and influential goal was that against South Korea in 2012 which led to Iran's qualifying to 2014 Brazil World Cup.

Who knows, maybe his experience and mentality could solve Iran's lack of scoring. The 30-year-old striker has decided to

quite national duty and focus on his family and newborn son, Doran, and his club competitions.

**■ The emotional decision of Sardar**  
23-year-old Sardar Azmoun also dropped a retirement bombshell after coming home. The news went viral in minutes, and made it the hottest topic among Iranian football fans.

Azmoun, also called 'Iranian Messi', played in three matches but couldn't score a goal despite all hopes that were built on him.

Sardar feels insulted by comments from national team supporters and believes they have resulted in his mother becoming ill again.

"Unfortunately, with all the interest I have, and contrary to my heart's desire, I decided to say goodbye to the national team of my country ... It's definitely the most painful decision for a young 23-year-old who has come here with a lot of hardship and misery," he wrote, adding, "My mother had overcome a serious illness and I was happy. Unfortunately because of the unkindness of some people, and the insults that me and my team-mates in no way deserved, her illness has become severe. This has put me in a difficult position where I must pick one or the other - and as a result I pick my mother," Goal reported.

Also, many people believe that he is far from retirement period and Team Melli needs strikers like Sardar.

"I hope that I could again score goals for the Islamic Republic of Iran," said Sardar on June 28 while addressing the people of his hometown Gonbad; a comment which shows he has changed his mind.

What is obvious here is that his decision is based on emotions to the point that Carlos Queiroz hasn't commented on him, implying that he will probably be back.

**■ Blame on players or Iran's style?**

The fact is that Queiroz has built a spectacular team which is focusing on defense and counter attacks. This style was most apparent when the team was playing against big names like Argentina, Spain and Portugal.

In this style, strikers are also extensively participating in defense and have the lowest chance to shine in attacks. This puts an extra physical and emotional pressure on strikers.

Team Melli needs improved strikers, no doubt, but the attacking line shouldn't be harshly criticized when the team is concentrating on defense.

## Queiroz yet to agree to Iran contract extension

**ROSTOV-ON-DON, Russia (Reuters)** — Carlos Queiroz has yet to agree to extend his stay as Iran coach despite claims by the president of the country's football federation that the Portuguese would lead the team at January's Asian Cup finals.

Iran Football Federation president Mehdi Taj was quoted following the team's return to Tehran as saying Queiroz would remain at the helm following their elimination from the World Cup finals through to the continental championship in the United Arab Emirates.

But a source close to Queiroz denied an agreement has been reached between the two parties and that the former Real Madrid head coach is considering other options.

"There was a new approach from the IR Iran Football Federation, but the agreement is far from done due to the basic conditions that would be necessary for the federation to put in place towards the Asian Cup," the source told Reuters.

"In the present scenario, Carlos Queiroz's contract with IR Iran Federation finishes at the end of July.

"Apart from Iran, Carlos has other proposals and options



that are open."

Queiroz stated before the World Cup that he would end his seven-year stint as Iran coach upon the completion of the country's involvement in Russia 2018.

The 65-year-old was appointed in April 2011 and steered the team to back-to-back qualifications for the World Cup for the first time in Iran's history.

Their performance in Russia, where they defeated Morocco and drew with European champions Portugal only to miss narrowly out on a place in the second round, was the nation's best in five appearances at the finals.

But his relationship with the national association has often been strained, with Queiroz voicing his intention to stand down from the role on a number of occasions.

The former Manchester United assistant coach is hugely popular in Iran with both fans and players, several of whom have called for him to be given the four-year contract through to Qatar 2022 that he desires.

"The contract will be discussed later but yes, Queiroz will remain in charge until the AFC Asian Cup UAE 2019," Taj was quoted as saying following the team's return to Tehran.

"The (World Cup) results say that we are on the right track. The 7,000 fans who welcomed the team at 4am at the airport showed us their priority is the national team.

"We have had a good football year, and the Asian Cup is ahead of us. Based on my negotiations with Queiroz, and the current atmosphere, we can win the Asian Cup."

## World Cup 2018: Brazil's two goals knock out Mexico

Brazil strengthened their claim on the title of World Cup tournament favorite Monday by advancing to the quarterfinals with a 2-0 victory over Mexico.

Neymar broke the deadlock in the 51st minute of the game at Samara Arena, sliding toward goal and tapping in after Willian sprinted down the left and fired in a low cross.

The goal made Brazil the World Cup all-time scoring leader with 227 goals, surpassing Germany with 226.

Neymar assisted on the second goal, firing an 88th-minute shot at Mexican goalkeeper Guillermo Ochoa that flew into the path of attacker Firmino, who tapped the ball in.

So many favorites have been eliminated already from the World Cup — Germany, Argentina and Portugal among them — that Brazil, trying to make amends for its disappointing 2014 tournament, now has a strong shot at leaving Russia with a sixth title.

(Source: SI)



## Iran overpower Kazakhstan and make it to second round

**S P O R T S** TEHRAN — Iran defeated Kazakhstan 88-56 in FIBA Basketball World Cup 2019 Asian Qualifiers and advanced to the second round of the Asian Qualifiers.

The match was held in Tehran's Azadi Stadium in Group D. The next phase will consist of 12 teams in two groups.

The top three teams in each group along with the better placed fourth team will qualify for the FIBA Basketball World Cup. The second round begins in September 2018.

## Masoud Shojaei linked with Apollon Smyrnis

**PLDC** — AEK Athens midfielder Masoud Shojaei has been reportedly linked with a move to Apollon Smyrnis.

Shojaei will leave AEK Athens and Apollon Smyrnis is one of the Greek teams has shown interest in signing the Iranian international midfielder.

Shojaei is the only Iranian player who represented his country in three World Cups.

He played 68 minutes in the match against Morocco and was an unused substitute in two matches against Spain and Portugal.

Apollon Smyrnis Football Club or in its full name Gymnasticos Syllogos Apollon Smyrnis is a Greek football club based in the city of Athens, that plays in the Super League.

It was founded in Smyrna in 1891 and is one of the oldest sports clubs in Greece.

Apollon has departments in football, basketball, volleyball, water polo and other sports.

## Khodadad Azizi named Sepidrood Rasht coach

**TASNIM** — Ex-Iranian forward Khodadad Azizi has been named as new head coach of Sepidrood Rasht football team on Sunday.

The 47-year-old coach replaced Ali Karimi in the Rasht based football team.

Under coaching of Karimi, newcomer Sepidrood finished in 13th place in Iran Professional League, 34 points behind holder Persepolis.

Azizi started his coaching career in Aboomoslem in 2006.

He has also coached Payam Khorasan, Esteghlal Ahvaz, Shahrdari Tabriz and Siah-jamegan.

Mohammad Reza Mahdavi and Mohammad Reza Mirhosseini have been named as Azizi's assistants.

The new season of Iran Professional League will start on July 26.



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## Magno Batista da Silva Joins Paykan

**TASNIM** — Magno Batista da Silva joined Iranian top-flight football club Paykan.

The 32-year-old defensive midfielder has joined Paykan on a one-year contract for an undisclosed fee.

Magno Batista came off the bench in a warm-up match against Pars Jonoubi on Sunday.

The Brazilian player started his playing career at Brazilian club Centro Sportivo Alagoano and has also played at Atlético Juventus, Grêmio Barueri, Santo André and Novo Hamburgo.

Magno Batista joined Damash Gilan in 2011 and has also played in Iranian clubs Naft Tehran, Gostaresh Foolad and Sanat Naft.

## Iran, Iraq U-20 futsal teams to play scrimmage in late August

**Press TV** — The head of futsal technical committee at the Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) says the Iran men's under-20 national futsal team is scheduled to play a friendly fixture against Iraq late next month.

Abbas Torabian said the FFIRI and the governing body of football in Iraq (Iraq Football Association) have reached an agreement for the exhibition game on August 26 in the Iraqi holy shrine city of Najaf, located about 160 kilometers (100 miles) south of the capital Baghdad.

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## Surgeon pleads guilty to minor charge for Kiarostami death

**A R T** TEHRAN — Surgeon Ahmad Mir pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor charge for the death of the celebrated Iranian auteur Abbas Kiarostami based on a verdict announced by the Iran Medical Council (IMC) on Monday.



Iranian auteur Abbas Kiarostami in an undated photo

Based on the verdict, Mir has been sentenced to a written reprimand, which will be included in his professional file and also be published in the IMC periodical.

Accordingly, he is also prohibited from being in charge of or establishing a medical center for a period of three years.

In mid-March 2016, Kiarostami was hospitalized for a severe gastrointestinal disease at Tehran's Jam Hospital and underwent several operations. Although he didn't recover fully, he left the hospital in late April.

Due to complications resulting from the operations, he was admitted again to Arad Hospital in Tehran, but on June 27, he decided to leave the hospital and continue further medical treatment at a Paris hospital where he died shortly after.

After Kiarostami's death, his family filed a lawsuit accusing his medical team in Iran of negligence, but a Tehran court found the medical team innocent of the allegations.

Subsequently, the IMC agreed to do a professional investigation into Kiarostami's case and they reached their verdict as a result of which the other members of the medical team pled not guilty to the charges in the case.

## Iranian cultural festival opens in Algeria

**A R T** TEHRAN — An Iranian cultural festival opened at Ilm Center in the Algerian city of Blida on Saturday, Iran's Islamic Culture and Relations Organization announced on Monday.

The festival includes film screening programs, exhibitions of Persian handicrafts and live performances of Iranian folk music.

Exhibitions of Persian cuisine, workshops on Persian calligraphy, and sessions on Iranian historical and tourist attractions will also be organized during the festival, which will be running until July 14.

## Peter Firmin, artist behind "Bagpuss", other UK shows, dies

**LONDON (AP)** — Peter Firmin, the co-creator of the classic British children's TV programs "Clangers", "Bagpuss", and "The Basil Brush Show," has died. He was 89.

Firmin's spokesman told Britain's Press Association that the puppet maker and artist died Sunday at his home in Kent in southeast England after a short illness.

The official Bagpuss Twitter feed posted the news with a photo honoring Firmin.

Firmin's distinctly crafted characters, puppets that came to life through stop-motion animation, captivated generations of children.

He created the fox Basil Brush with Ivan Owen and worked with long-time business partner Oliver Postgate on "Bagpuss", "The Clangers", "Ivor the Engine", "Noggin the Nog" and "Pogles Wood".

Floella Benjamin, who hosted children's TV shows during the 1970s and serves in Britain's House of Lords, said Firmin strove "to create magic to stimulate kids' minds through his creative vision."

"Bagpuss" was voted the most popular BBC children's program ever made in a 1999 poll. Firmin was awarded a lifetime achievement award by the British Academy of Film and Television Arts in 2014.

He is survived by his wife, Joan, six daughters who often collaborated with him, and grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

# "Giovanna's Father" opens Italian festival in Tehran

**A R T** TEHRAN — An Italian film festival opened at the Iranian Artists Forum in Tehran on Sunday by screening director Pupi Avati's 2008 drama "Giovanna's Father".

Starring Silvio Orlando and Alba Rohrwacher, "Giovanna's Father" is about a high-school art teacher who is overprotective of his mentally unstable daughter.

A lineup of 6 films are due to be screened during the festival running until July 6, the Forum announced in a press release published on Monday.

"The Demons of St. Petersburg", the 2008 drama by Giuliano Montaldo was screened on Monday.

The lineup also includes "A Second Childhood" by Avati, "The Feast" by Mimmo Calopresti and "The Arrival of Wang" by Antonio and Marco Manetti.

Also included is "Italy in a Day", a 2014 Italian-British documentary by Gabriele Salvatores.

The event is a part of Italy's cultural project, "Italy, Cultures, the Mediterranean".

The Italian film experts Noemi Marchica and Vito Picchinenna are scheduled to hold workshops on the sidelines of the event on Wednesday and Friday.



Silvio Orlando (L) and Alba Rohrwacher act in a scene from Italian director Pupi Avati's drama "Giovanna's Father".

## "Foruzan" picked as best short at Armenia Fresco festival



Iranian director Mir Abbas Khosravinejad poses after accepting the award for best short film for "Foruzan" at the Fresco International Festival of Modern Art and Spiritual Films in Yerevan, Armenia on July 1, 2018.

**A R T** TEHRAN — The Iranian drama "Foruzan" won the award for best short film at the Fresco International Festival of Modern Art and Spiritual Films in Armenia on Sunday, director Mir Abbas Khosravinejad announced on his Facebook page.

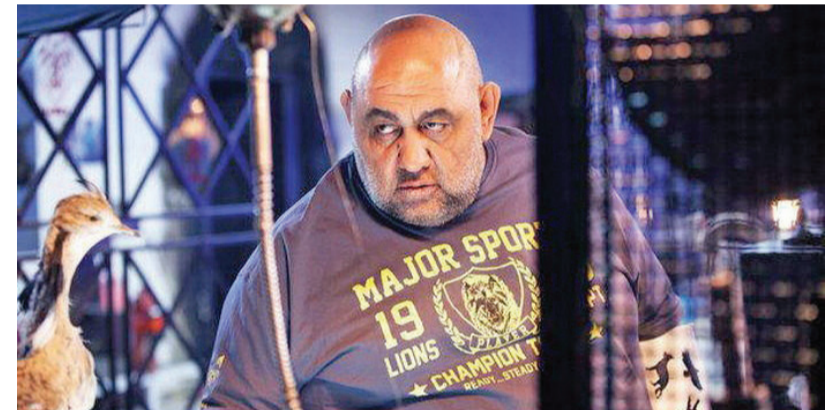
The acclaimed movie is about a widow with two children living in a village in

central Iran. She tries to protect her herd from robbery in the night.

A number of Iranian films, including "Kupal" by Kazem Mollai and "Are You Volleyball?" by Mohammad Bakhshi, were also screened in various sections of the festival that took place in the Armenian capital of Yerevan from June 22 to July 1.

"Foruzan" was named best drama at the Astoria NY Film Festival in June.

## "Kupal" cinematographer Majid Gorjian named best at Nigerian festival



A scene from "Kupal" by Kazem Mollai

**A R T** TEHRAN — Majid Gorjian has won the award for best cinematographer at the 3rd Realtime International Film Festival in Nigeria for his collaboration on Iranian director Kazem Mollai's acclaimed drama "Kupal", the organizers announced on Sunday.

Starring Levon Haftvan, who died of a heart attack in March 2018, the film has won numerous international awards.

"Kupal" tells the story of a hunter and a taxidermist called "Dr. Ahmad Kupal". On the last day of the year, just moments before the arrival of the New Year, he faces an unexpected challenge.

"The Forbidden" by Nampala Claire from Hong Kong was named best film, while Marco Santi from Italy was picked as best director for "Professor D" at the event, which took place in the Nigerian city of Lagos from June 24 to July 1.

## Belarus selects "Crystal Swan" as its Academy Awards entry

**LOS ANGELES (Variety)** — East European nation Belarus has selected Darya Zhuk's debut feature "Crystal Swan" as its submission for the Oscars' foreign-language film category, the first country to do so for the 91st Academy Awards race. It is the first time Belarus has entered a film in the Oscars contest for 22 years. The film, about a young female DJ, has its world premiere at the Karlovy Vary Film Festival Saturday.

Set in 1996, the movie centers on Velya, a young woman living in Minsk, who loves House Music and dreams of moving to Chicago to work as a professional DJ. Getting a visa proves tough though, and her quest to provide a phoney verification for the faked documents she needs for the visa application leads to a trip to a grim back-water town, where the locals are hostile toward this non-conformist free-spirit.

"I wanted to make something about my generation of Belarusians," Zhuk told Variety. "I feel like in the 1990s we all had this dream of going places and it was an important time for us." Zhuk, who came to the U.S. when she was 16 and later studied Economics at Harvard University, said she shares "an emotional overlap with [Velya] and the way she relates to the world." She added that "deep down I also wanted to be a DJ," and she did



"Crystal Swan" (Courtesy of Loco Films)

DJ in New York for a couple of years. Velya's love of House Music "connects to the idea of freedom," Zhuk said.

On one level the film, which opens Karlovy Vary's East of the West competition section, is a fish out of water tale, as Velya struggles to assert her individuality in the face of the crushing conformity of her native country, the product of decades of Soviet collectivist dogma. "She is such an individualist American character stuck in this post-Soviet world," Zhuk said. "She is like: 'I can do it, I have a dream.' It's going to work out my way." She is challenged every step of the way by people who are not getting with her program. It reflects how we treat off-beat people."

## Choreographer Gillian Lynne of "Cats" fame dies at age 92

**LONDON (AP)** — Choreographer Gillian Lynne, who worked closely for many years with composer Andrew Lloyd Webber on some of his most famous works, has died in London. She was 92.

Her husband, the actor Peter Land, said on Twitter that she died Sunday evening at the Princess Grace Hospital. He said she "leaves behind a huge legacy and is adored by many." Land said he was "heartbroken" at the loss of the woman who had been his friend and his love for 40 years.

Lynne's many credits included the phenomenally successful "Cats" and "Phantom of the Opera."

Last month, Lloyd Webber renamed his New London Theatre as The Gillian Lynne Theatre, making it the first in London's theater district named after a woman.

After hearing of her death, he tweeted: "Three generations of the British musical owe so much to you."

Lynne's career began with dancing as a leading soloist with Sadler's Wells Ballet in 1944, and continued for decades as she moved into directing and choreography. She directed many productions in London's West End and on Broadway in New York. She worked on TV specials for per-



In this April 27, 2015 file photo choreographer Gillian Lynne arrives to deliver her speech during a press presentation to promote the musical Cats, in Paris, France. (AP Photo/Christophe Ena)

formers from a variety of musical genres, including Ray Charles, Perry Como and Petula Clark.

She told the BBC that her longevity was due to her love for her job.

Lynne also said she had no musical talent of her own, and had stopped taking piano lessons when she was a girl because a mean piano teacher smacked her for playing poorly.

Lynne received many honors for her decades of theatrical work and was made a dame in 2014.

## "Jurassic World 2" takes No. 1 again



This image released by Universal Pictures shows a scene from the upcoming "Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom". (Universal Pictures via AP)

The dinosaurs didn't gobble up all the attention this weekend, however. "Incredibles

2", now in its third weekend in theaters, took second place with \$45.5 million, bringing its domestic total to \$439.7 million.

North American audiences came out in larger than expected numbers for both the action thriller "Sicario: Day of the Soldado" and "Uncle Drew".

The "Sicario" sequel starring Josh Brolin and Benicio Del Toro earned \$19 million to take third place. The film, distributed by Sony Pictures, cost a reported \$35 to \$40 million to produce.

Landing in fourth place was the basketball comedy "Uncle Drew", which features NBA All-Stars Kyrie Irving and Shaquille O'Neal. With a production price tag under \$20 million, the film

exceeded expectations grossing \$15.5 million and got audience stamp of approval with an A CinemaScore.

The ad and marketing campaign included spots during the NBA playoffs and finals, a Wheaties box featuring Irving as Uncle Drew, and an Uncle Drew capsule collection from Nike.

Lionsgate, which distributed the movie, knew the film had built-in marketability because of the celebrity of the stars, but was also pleased to discover that the film in early screenings appealed to non-basketball fans too.

"That was the surprise, that wow, we have a picture that really plays to a general audience," said David Spitz, Lionsgate's president of domestic distribution. "It has a really sweet message."