



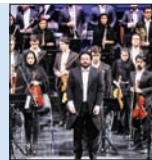
Foreign Ministry dismisses claim Germany holding Iranian assets **2**



‘No one can dictate to Syria but Syrians’: Syrian MP **7**



Child worker feted by iconic soccer star Jahanbakhsh **15**



AISO to celebrate 63rd anniversary of Austrian Cultural Forum **16**

Iran Greco-Roman team wins 2018 Cadet World Championship



See page 15

Mohammad Nosrati waves Iran's flag after winning a gold medal at the 92kg weight class at the 2018 Cadet World Championships in Zagreb, Croatia Sunday night.

Top Bahraini cleric Sheikh Qassim flown to Britain in critical condition

Bahrain's prominent Shia cleric Sheikh Isa Qassim has been flown to Britain for medical treatment, marking an end to more than a year of house arrest.

His medical team issued a statement on Monday, confirming his transfer abroad in order to avoid further complications in his health.

"Ayatollah Sheikh Isa Qassim left Bahrain for England Monday morning, July 9, 2018. This measure has been taken on the basis of medical reports and consensus of his doctors who emphasized the need for his immediate transfer to a specialized hospital to prevent a further deterioration," the statement said. **→13**

Alireza Faghani lauds Asian referees at World Cup

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran's Alireza Faghani says the Asian referees have done well so far at the 2018 World Cup in Russia.

Faghani has taken charge of a number of high-profile games in Asia and is up there among the best in the world.

In his impressive career, the 40-year-old has officiated finals of the 2014 AFC Champions League, 2015 AFC Asian Cup,

2015 FIFA Club World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Football Tournament.

Faghani started his career in 1994 and became a FIFA referee in 2008. By 2009 he became an elite referee and went on to build his career by officiating in the AFC Cup, AFC Champions League and two years later, participated in the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil as a support referee. **→15**

Italian, Chinese firms to build solar farms in Iran

E C O N O M Y **TEHRAN** — Italy's Denikon and Chinese Sinosteel Corporation signed a memorandum of understanding in Iran's central province of Yazd on Sunday for cooperation in various solar projects in Iran, IRNA reported.

As reported, numerous Iranian officials along with representatives of the Chinese and Italian companies attended the signing ceremony.

The MOU covered various fields of cooperation including construction of 500-1000 megawatts (MW) capacity

of solar farms in Yazd, construction of 20,000 small-scale 5-kilowatt solar plants for houses and finally establishing a solar panel manufacturing unit in the region.

Sinosteel Corporation is a central enterprise under the administration of the State-Owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission. The company has invested over \$2.5 billion in Iran so far.

Denikon operates as companies' consultant for the development of projects in the field of renewable energies, among other fields.

The difficulty of being a Muslim in BJP-ruled India today

By Syed Zafar Mehdi

TEHRAN — When the ruling party organizes an event to felicitate a group of criminals convicted in a lynching case and a senior union minister goes to meet and garland them, you should understand that something is terribly wrong.

The eight Hindu men, convicted by a lower court in eastern Indian state of Jharkhand of lynching to death a Muslim man named Alimuddin Ansari on June 29 last year, were granted bail by a higher court this week. Ansari was lynched on the suspicion that he was transporting beef in his vehicle, which was set ablaze by the group. Instead of condemning their release, Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP), which is ruling the country presently, decided to felicitate the convicts.

While BJP workers are shamelessly celebrating

the bail of convicted Hindu men, Ansari's family and friends are crestfallen. His wife Maryam Khatun has vowed to move the apex court against the bail order.

Due to the rabid communalization of politics in India, hate crimes against religious minorities have sharply and alarmingly increased in recent years, making it difficult to be a Muslim or a Christian in the largest democracy today.

According to India Spend, a data-driven, public-interest news website, no incidents of hate crime were reported in the country in 2010 and 2011, but since 2012, a total of 29 people have been killed in hate violence, 25 of them Muslims. Most of these incidents have occurred over the last four years since the Narendra Modi-led BJP government assumed power in May 2014.

Vigilante mobs, mostly belonging to radical

Hindu outfits, who identify themselves as 'Gaw Rakshaks' (cow protectors), have been going on rampage in different parts of India, lynching people who are seen eating or carrying beef. While half of the attacks since 2012 were on Muslims, nearly 86 percent people killed were Muslims, according to India Spend data. So, if the victim turns out to be a Muslim, there is more likelihood of him getting killed.

Earlier, the attacks were mostly reported from north India, but the current spate of hate crimes, including lynching, suggest that the targeted community is not safe anywhere anymore. They are attacked inside homes, in markets, in trains, at workplaces, which has created a fear psychosis among Muslims in India, who consider themselves increasingly vulnerable to hate attacks. And that is exactly what the radical Hindu groups in India want. **→6**

One Belt, One Road, Silk Road's new challenges, opportunities

By Somayeh Mokhtari

TEHRAN — China's One Belt One Road (OBOR) project was proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013

The ambitious plan spans 60-plus countries with \$21 trillion in gross domestic product that includes two thirds of the world's population and one third of the world's GDP.

Through land and sea, the project connects China to Africa and Europe through railways, roads, pipelines, ports and other infrastructures, as well as to Central and West Asia through the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean.

Many analysts predict the initiative provides extensive economic growth and security goals for China, giving the country more influence over the states on the Silk Road route. This project involves the flow of energy from Central Asia to

China and the possibility of more independency for China from the U.S.

In addition, the OBOR project will develop the western provinces of China, turning the Xinjiang province into a financial center and Fujian province into a logistics and transportation hub for their natural potential, population and technology.

The World Bank has examined opportunities and challenges of the Chinese plan for the countries on the path to "the project of the century", and below is their findings.

First, the OBOR initiative boosts global development and welfare. The population density of countries on the road, comprising two thirds of the world population, is high, however, they live below the poverty line (the poverty line is \$1.90 a day). For example, in Kenya 23%, Uzbekistan and Djibouti 23%, and Laos 21% of their population live below the poverty line.

Thus, the success of the project can overall improve infrastructure, transportation, finance, banking and welfare of these countries.

Second, the project helps improve global trade and exchanges. Although the contribution of Silk Road countries in global exports has almost doubled in the past two decades, few countries, including China, are responsible for exports. Inadequate infrastructure, poor policies and deep economic and cultural gaps in countries such as Afghanistan, Nepal, Tajikistan and Laos have hampered their integration into the global economy.

Third, it improves the time of shipping goods from East Asia to Europe. Transshipment from China to Central Europe takes 30 days mainly by sea, however, the new route offers a less time of transportation. **→7**



EDITORIAL

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France dangerous game over the Nuclear Deal

On the eve of the negotiations between Iran and the members of the P4+1 in Vienna on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the French Foreign Minister determined the fate of "European JCPOA" once and for all! In an interview with RTL radio on the "Europe's package of proposals to Iran" for saving the nuclear deal, Jean Yves Le Drian stated:

"Iran must stop permanently threatening to break their commitments to the nuclear deal so that Europe can find the solutions so that Iran can have the necessary economic compensations.

France has also said that Europe would likely not be able to create an economic compensation package for Iran prior to November. Le Drian said France was working to create a plan to mitigate the effects of the United States' sanctions, which will be reapplied in August, and toughened in November.

"For the start August it seems a bit short, but we are trying to do it by November," he emphasized.

At the first glance, Le Drian's words seem to be simple and obvious. Some optimistic analysts may even agree with the French FM for more time being needed to come up with an economic compensation package. But the fact is that Le Drian is sending signals of entering a complicated and dangerous game! There are some points to be taken into consideration in this regard:

1) Undoubtedly, if the European troika and other EU member states wanted to consider their economic capacities for saving the JCPOA, they had to do so immediately after the withdrawal of Trump from the nuclear deal. However, today, as almost two months has passed since the official withdrawal of the White House from the JCPOA, European authorities are still talking about their "obligations" towards the nuclear deal, and refuse to offer any guarantees in this regard. The European officials, quite deliberately, are refusing to draw up the basic and minimal mechanisms to enforce their commitment to the JCPOA. The reality is that, at the current moment, Europe has no intention and incentive to announce its full and detailed package. **→7**



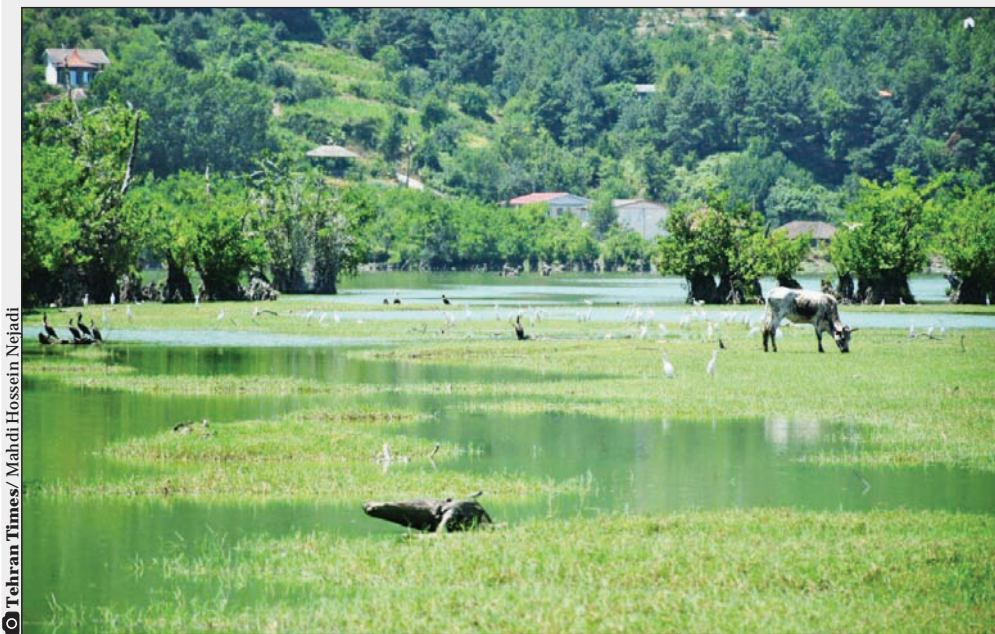
ARTICLE

Martin Love
Political analyst from
North Carolina

Iran is not alone at all in these difficult times

Iran has been "Iran" for a long time. Yes, I have read Herodotus and other historians about ancient Iran, and other historians in periods since. So while full condemnation of whatever forces are keeping Iran in the 21st century from reaching its full potential economically or as a society or both is perfectly justified, one ought not to worry about Iran longer term. Iran will be Iran with a clear Iranian identity a lot longer than the United States will remain an intact nation, and in fact, even now, there are people in parts of the U.S. that would like to become independent of Washington. And so would many countries in Asia and Latin America be pleased to witness the diminution of U.S. economic and military power which, particularly during and since the Vietnam War has wreaked such havoc and carnage across the globe.

It is anyway difficult to pinpoint exactly when the U.S. began to stumble badly as a generally beneficial actor on the world stage. We know, for example, that the U.S. played a key role in the defeat of Nazi Germany and imperialistic Japan and their allies during World War 2, and this was all to the good, despite the unnecessary use of two atomic bombs dropped on Japan. After the war the U.S. helped rebuild Europe, and eventually Japan, too, but not with unselfish motivations. During the Cold War with Russia that country was eventually obliged to withdraw from Eastern Europe. Communism was more or less defeated while Russia had to hunker down deeply and repair itself to reemerge, as it has to some degree, as a world "power" under Vladimir Putin. But the handwriting was on the wall as early as 1953 with the U.S. and British plot that brought down democratically elected Iran's Mossadegh, and reinstalled the Shah. Until the Revolution in 1979, Iran was a firm "ally" of the U.S., and in general the "alliance" of almost ANY country with the U.S. was thereafter based on one thing alone: not any kind of give and take of competing interests, but complete subservience to U.S. economic and military power or else any country balking as such subservience would be branded an enemy ripe for sanctions, economic warfare and even war itself. So it has been for my lifetime so far, but where, really do things stand now? **→7**



Tehran Times/ Mahdi Hossein Najadi

A peek into Estil Lagoon

Photo depicts a view of Estil Lagoon in Astara, northern Iranian province of Gilan, July 8, 2018.

Covering some 138 hectares, the south Caspian Sea retreat is a tourist destination for domestic holidaymakers, yet it draws nature lovers and birdwatchers.

The region embraces a variety of freshwater lakes, wetlands, and lagoons, many of which play host to migratory pelicans, flamingos, ducks, swans, coots amongst other species.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Zarif condoles
demise of
Vatican diplomat

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif on Monday offered his condolences over the demise of Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, a top Vatican diplomat and expert in interfaith relations who on July 5 died at the age of 75.

In a message to Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, the Vatican's secretary for relations with states, Zarif expressed deep sorrow over the passing away of Cardinal Tauran, who was also the president of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID).

"This cultivated person (Tauran), who was one of the scientific and religious figures of 'the Holy See', endeavored to create a solidarity between all the followers of monotheistic religions and interfaith dialogue....," he said, Tasnim reported.



Cabinet studies
Foreign Ministry
report on European
economic package

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — The Iranian cabinet on Sunday discussed a report by the Foreign Ministry on the economic commitments made by European countries to salvage the 2015 nuclear deal, officially called the JCPOA.

At the meeting, chaired by President Hassan Rouhani, the cabinet also tasked each one of the executive bodies to follow the commitments of European countries, the Foreign Ministry website reported.

In a meeting in Vienna on Friday, foreign ministers of the countries signatory to the nuclear deal agreed to continue talks on the economic package. The meeting was chaired by EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini. It was the first meeting of the JCPOA foreign ministers since the U.S. left the multilateral agreement.



EC set to amend
city council
law regarding
minorities

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — The head of Councils and Domestic Affairs Committee of Majlis (parliament) said on Sunday that in the next meeting of the Expediency Council a bill to amend the law on city councils will be discussed, a move that would legalize the presence of religious minorities in councils.

The bill was set to be discussed in the last meeting of the Expediency Council but it was postponed because of other issues that were raised, said Mohammad Javad Kolivand, IRNA reported.

It comes almost a year after the Guardian Council suspended Sepanta Niknam, a Zoroastrian, after his re-election as council member in Yazd. The issue has been a matter of controversy ever since.



MP urges
Foreign Ministry
to expel 2 Dutch
diplomats

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — A top lawmaker has urged the Foreign Ministry to react to the Dutch expulsion of two Iranian diplomats by doing the same thing to Dutch diplomats in Iran.

"The Foreign Ministry should expel two Dutch diplomats residing in Tehran in a reciprocal measure," said Alaeddin Boroujerdi on Monday, Mehr reported.

Boroujerdi further said that it is a well-known principle in international relations to show similar reaction in retaliation for such moves. "They should expect to have a similar reaction from the Islamic Republic of Iran."



Tehran condoles
Canada over heat
wave deaths

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi on Monday extended sympathies to the Canadian nation over the recent heat wave-linked death tolls.

Qassemi called on all countries to give special attention to climate change and its consequences and fulfil their commitments to counter this phenomenon, Mehr reported.

Condemning U.S. withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement, the spokesman said it is necessary that big industrial countries stick to their environmental commitments.

Industrial states have a major share in producing greenhouse gases and hence in global warming and other phenomena like drought and sand and dust storms, he stated.



Iran has proven
its honesty: Iraqi
defense minister

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Iraqi Defense Minister Irfan Al-Hayali has said the Islamic Republic of Iran has proven its "sincerity" and "honesty" under all conditions, especially during crises, IRNA reported on Monday.

Al-Hayali made the remarks at the Iran-Iraq defense and security coordination meeting held at Tehran's embassy in Baghdad, where Iranian ambassador to Iraq Iraj Masjedi and military attaché General Mostafa Moradian were present.

"Iran has backed the Iraqi people and government in all crises," he said, adding that his country trusts Tehran's good will and "this has laid the ground for promotion of ties in all fields."

Regional states able to settle disputes
through consultation: Larijani

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Iranian Majlis Speaker Ali Larijani said on Sunday that there is no need for interference of foreigners in the affairs of countries in the Middle East.

"Extra-regional powers should not be permitted to interfere and trouble governments and people with their plots," he said during a meeting with Ali Bin Hamad Bin Ali Al-Sulaiti, the Qatari ambassador to Tehran.

Larijani said that regional crises can be settled through consultation.

He described the Saudi-led siege of Qatar as a "wrong action".

For his part, the ambassador praised Iran's timely help when Qatar was blockaded.

In June 2017 Saudi Arabia and the UAE launched a land, sea and air blockade of Qatar under the pretext of Doha's support for terrorism.



Qatari Ambassador to Tehran Ali Bin Hamad Bin Ali Al-Sulaiti (left) shaking hands with Ali Larijani, Iran's parliament speaker.

Following the decision, Egypt, Bahrain and Maldives also severed ties with Qatar and banned their airspace to the country.

The blockade left Qatar only with a sea and air corridor with Iran. This happened immediately after Donald Trump's visit to Riyadh.

To stop boycotting Qatar, the Arab countries issued 13 demands including curbing relations with Iran.

Writing an article in New York Times on June 5, Qatari Foreign Minister Mohammed Bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani said that the act of blockading Qatar is pursuing "petty grievances and selfish ambitions".

"Today, Qatar is stronger than it was a year ago. Within 24 hours of the imposition of the blockade, we quickly established new sources and alternate, more sustainable supply routes for basic goods, like food and medicine," he wrote

EU's big three agree to establish dollarless trade with Iran: Lavrov

Major European countries party to the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran — France, Germany and the UK - have agreed to maintain trade with Tehran independent from dollar, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on Monday.

European companies are under increasing pressure from the U.S. to cut business ties with Iran. Since the majority of transactions are currently conducted using dollar, firms working in Iran face potential U.S. penalties.

According to Lavrov, the decision particularly concerns small and medium-sized companies. He explained that the participants in the Iran deal have agreed to work out measures to protect the countries' businesses from U.S. sanctions.

"Everyone agrees that this [U.S. sanctions — Ed.] is an absolutely illegal and unacceptable policy, but, of course,



this can hardly be changed and there will be enough struggle in trade, economic and political spheres," the minister said, according to RT.

Last week, EU lawmakers gave approval for the European Investment Bank (EIB) to do business in Iran in an attempt to save the 2015 nuclear deal.

"We are granting the EIB the capacity to invest in Iran if suitable projects are found," said Siegfried Muresan, a lawmaker from the center-right European People's Party.

"The Iran deal is good for Europe's security," he told Reuters, referring to the accord signed by world powers in 2015.

The U.S. withdrew from the deal on May 8. U.S. sanctions will snap back in two parts, with a first round returning in August, and with the harshest sanctions returning in early November.

Iran will resist U.S. intimidation: Princeton researcher

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Hossein Mousavian, a Princeton University researcher, has said that Iran will resist the U.S. policy of intimidation and intervention.

"Iran has been and will be hurt by economic sanctions, but has not been killed so far and will resist against America's policy of intimidation and intervention," he said in a speech at a meeting of the Group of 78 in Canada.

He said contrary to claims by Washington and its client states in the region it is not Iran which is source of regional instability.

It is the U.S. and its allies' "strategic mistakes" which had destabilized the region, said Mousavian who was Iran's former nuclear negotiator and ambassador to Germany.

He proposed seven ways to establish peace and stability in the region:

First: joint collaboration of regional powers involving Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt and Iraq.

Second: cooperation of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council.

Third: joint meeting of the five members of the UNSC and the five regional powers to agree on common principles for the resolution of regional conflicts.

Fourth: common principles on resolution of crises: the will of the majority to form a government with participation of majority and minority through comprehensive and free elections supervised by the UN.

Fifth: creation of a common security system and regional cooperation with inclusion of Iran, the six Arab countries bordering the Persian Gulf and Iraq to provide security and peace.

Sixth: use of force against export of terrorism to countries to overthrow their ruling system like the one happened to Syria. U.S.-Iran tension started when the U.S. entered regime change project in Iran.

Seventh: no use of terrorism as a tool to send weapons and militarize the Middle East

by the United States. For example, during his meeting with the Emir of Qatar, Donald Trump said, "Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Qatar supported terrorism, they have promised to stop their support and buy our guns." This is a disaster of international community.

■ **Iran pursuing 'pragmatic' and 'realistic' policies**

Mousavian went on to say that compared to other countries in the West Asia region, Iran is following a more "pragmatic" and "realistic" approach and its policies are "defensive" and "not offensive".

Commenting on the human rights' situation in Iran, he said that three facts should be considered:

The first is that the human rights situation in Iran is far better than the United States' regional allies. Iran holds elections and has a constitution, while some of the Western allies in the region do not even have constitution.

Second, Iran does not live in a region neighboring Switzerland and Austria, rather



it is at the heart of a region wrestling with the worst kinds of terrorism, sectarian war and regional wars.

Third, the Islamic Republic of Iran has faced a variety of military conflicts, such as war, economic warfare, political warfare, information and cyber warfare.

"Is such a situation can it be expected to have a perfect human rights situation?" Mousavian asked.

Official: Syria-Iraq security intertwined with Iran's

‘If Iran had not fought Daesh in Iraq and Syria they were now close to our borders’

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — A senior cleric has underlined the importance of Iran's advisory presence in Iraq and Syria, saying such presence is in line with the Islamic republic's efforts to defend itself against enemies.

"If we were not present in Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon today, the disfigured Daesh (ISIL) militants, who cannot be called humans, would come to our borders and inflict the same suffering on us that they did to the Syrian people," said Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati, the secretary of the Guardian Council, on Sunday.

"It is because of our presence in Syria and Iraq that our lives, properties and honor are safe today," Tasnim quoted

Jannati as saying.

He added that Iran has responded to oppressed people's request for help all over the world, but the situation in Iraq and Syria is different because the two countries' security is intertwined with Iran's.

Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, the parliament speaker's special adviser on international affairs, also voiced the necessity of Iran's presence in Syria, saying Iranian military advisers will continue their presence in Syria to defeat foreign-sponsored militancy.

In a meeting with Palestinian Ambassador to Tehran Salah al-Zawawi on Saturday, Amir-Abdollahian said Syrians would not allow the Zionist regime in their homeland

following the collapse of the Daesh terrorist group.

"The Zionist regime tries to gain dominance over Syria after Daesh, but resistance forces and military advisers from the Islamic Republic of Iran will continue their presence alongside Syria to counter terrorism," he said, according to Press TV.

The senior advisor also said Tehran will keep up its "decisive support" for the resistance and will not give in to Israeli threats against the security of regional countries.

In recent years, Iran has been offering military advisory support to Syria at the request of the Damascus government, enabling its army to speed up its gains on various fronts against terror outfits.

Iran calls Dutch expulsion of embassy staff ‘unconstructive’

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman

Bahram Qassemi said on Saturday that expulsion of two Iranian diplomats from the Netherlands is "unconstructive" and "unfriendly", threatening Iran keeps the right to retaliate in kind.

Qassemi said the Dutch ambassador was summoned to the Foreign Ministry to

announce Iran's "official protest" to this "unfriendly move".

The Dutch intelligence service AIVD said on Friday that the Netherlands expelled two Iranian embassy staff without providing further information.

According to Reuters, a European government official and a Western intelligence source said the expulsions occurred up to

two months ago. Dutch state broadcaster NOS said the expulsions were on June 7.

The move seems to be related to the Mujahedin Khalq Organization (MKO), a group that was removed from the list of terrorist groups by the European Union in January 2009.

Qassemi said, "The Islamic Republic of Iran seeks to expand relations with all countries

based on mutual respect while attaching importance to its principled position in fighting terrorism as a victim of the phenomenon."

He described the action by the Netherlands as "illogical" which "lacks legal credibility".

Qassemi said the Dutch government should explain about its move to shelter the criminal members of the MKO as a notorious anti-Iran terrorist group.

Foreign Ministry dismisses claim Germany holding Iranian assets

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi has rejected as baseless a claim that Germany has blocked parts of the Islamic Republic's assets.

Qassemi said economic relations between Iran and Germany are developing within a normal mechanism.

"During the Friday talks in Vienna between the foreign ministers of Iran and other parties to the JCPOA (the 2015 nuclear agreement), the German and Iranian delegations discussed ways to develop better mechanisms for further expansion of economic and banking relations between the two sides," he said in an interview with Fars News Agency on Saturday.

The spokesman said the claim that Iranian assets have been frozen in Germany is part of a "psychological war" launched against the Islamic Republic in recent days.

"Unfortunately a psychological war by some extra-regional states and anti-Iran groups has been waged over the past days and weeks as Iran and other parties to the JCPOA have engaged in talks over the future of the 2015 agreement," the



Foreign Ministry official stated.

Qassemi said the war is aimed at undermining ties between Iran and the European states and called for vigilance against such dirty tactics.

Meanwhile the Bild newspaper, citing unnamed government officials, said on Monday that German authorities are considering a request by Iran to withdraw 300 million euros from bank accounts held in Germany and transfer the cash to Iran.

Tehran is seeking to withdraw the funds from the Europaeisch-Iranische Handelsbank AG (eihbank) because it is worried that it could run out of cash when fresh U.S. sanctions against its financial sector take effect, Bild said.

Iran told the German Financial Supervisory Authority (BaFin) it needed the cash from the accounts "to pass on to Iranian citizens that require cash while travelling abroad, given their inability to access recognised credit cards," Bild said.

BaFin was now reviewing the request, which had been briefed to senior officials in the chancellery, foreign ministry and finance ministry, the newspaper reported.

No comment was immediately available from BaFin, the foreign ministry or the finance ministry. The Bundesbank declined to comment. A spokeswoman for eihbank declined to comment, citing bank secrecy laws.

Foreign ministers from the five remaining signatory countries to the nuclear deal -- Britain, France, Germany, China and Russia -- offered a package of economic measures to Iran on Friday but Tehran said they did not go far enough.

British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson resigns

Defiant May digs in on Brexit stance after blow of Davis resignation

British Foreign Secretary Alexander Boris de Pfeffel Johnson, best known as Boris Johnson, resigned on Monday, following former-Brexit minister David Davis out of the cabinet just days after Prime Minister Theresa May secured a hard-won agreement from senior ministers on an European Union exit strategy.

"This afternoon, the Prime Minister accepted the resignation of Boris Johnson as Foreign Secretary. His replacement will be announced shortly. The Prime Minister thanks Boris for his work," an emailed statement from May's office said.

Theresa May pledged on Monday to pursue a newly agreed strategy to quit the European Union, in a challenge to those who may want to follow her former Brexit minister and quit in protest at what he called her "dangerous" plans.

The late-night departure of David Davis has raised the stakes for May, who hailed the hard-won agreement with her deeply divided cabinet of ministers on Friday to keep the closest possible trading ties with the EU.

But her spokesman signaled on Monday she would not back down over the "business friendly" agreement, saying May would now focus on moving the Brexit negotiations forward - a step EU officials and businesses have long called for.

Davis, who campaigned for Brexit in Britain's 2016 referendum, said he had resigned because the cabinet deal had given "too much away, too easily" to EU negotiators, who, he feared, would simply ask for more.

Sterling rose, as traders bet Davis's resignation would not imperil May and instead focused on the newly-announced deal that markets believe makes a "soft Brexit" more likely. Many euro sceptics have expressed anger over the agreed negotiating stance, calling it a betrayal of her promise for a clean break with the bloc that has raised the prospect that some could try to unseat her.

But by appointing Brexit campaigner Dominic Raab as Davis's replacement, May might hope to quell some of that anger.

"The PM said in her letter to the secretary of state that she didn't agree with his characterization of the position. An agreement was reached by the cabinet on Friday and now we are moving forward to negotiate that plan," the spokesman told reporters.



"As the prime minister said ... we have set out our position and it is now the EU's turn to move and that she wants the EU to get serious in these negotiations."

Davis's resignation may also further disrupt Brexit talks, with less than nine months before Britain leaves and just over three before the EU says it wants a deal that will mark Britain's biggest foreign and trade policy shift in decades.

But much of the day-to-day negotiation falls to May's office. The prime minister's Europe adviser, Oliver Robbins, has mostly led the talks in Brussels, with the Brexit minister taking a more coordinating role at home.

Guy Verhofstadt, the European Parliament's chief Brexit coordinator, said he had enjoyed working with Davis and that he hoped Britain would unite "around a position to conclude a broad Association Agreement with the EU".

■ Reluctant conscript

Davis said he had left because he feared the EU would "take what we have offered already and then demand some more. That has been their practice throughout the last year and I fear, in fact, if anything, this is just the start."

"It seems to me we are giving too much

away, too easily, and that is a dangerous strategy at this time," he told BBC radio.

Denying that he wanted to unseat the prime minister, he said he would now "argue for being as firm as possible."

In a letter to May, Davis said he was not willing to be "a reluctant conscript" to her negotiating stance.

In a move that unnerved Conservative Party euro sceptics, Steve Baker, a minister who worked for Davis, also quit, saying in his letter to May: "I cannot support this policy with the sincerity and resolve which will be necessary."

For many Brexit campaigners, Baker's government role gave them faith in the process.

After the hours-long meeting at Chequers, May seemed to have persuaded the most vocal Brexit campaigners in the cabinet, including Davis, to back her plan to press for "a free trade area for goods" with the EU and maintain close trade ties.

It won the backing of one other prominent Brexit campaigner. Michael Gove, May's environment minister, said on Sunday that while the agreed negotiating stance was not perfect, he believed it delivered on handing back control to Britain.

But Davis had expressed his unease over a

compromise plan right up until the eve of the meeting, writing a letter to May describing her proposal to ease trade and give Britain more freedom to set tariffs as "unworkable".

Other Brexit-supporting Conservative MPs have criticized the Chequers deal, saying May's plans offered Brexit in name only.

Their complaints raise a question mark over whether May can win backing in parliament for her plans if any deal with the EU is agreed later this year, and some suggest several of them could try to trigger a leadership contest against her.

She will face them at a meeting of the party later on Monday. The government is trying to convince lawmakers to back the agreed stance, inviting them, including those from the opposition Labour Party, for briefings on the plan. Jacob Rees-Mogg, the leader of a Conservative group of Brexit supporters, said Davis' resignation proved that their concerns were well-founded and signaled that he would not vote for May's plan if it came to a vote in parliament.

He told Reuters. "If the Brexit Secretary could not support them (the Chequers conclusions) they cannot genuinely be delivering Brexit."

(Source: Reuters)

Pompeo calls for N. Korea to replicate Vietnam's 'miracle'

Undeterred by a blistering rebuke of his efforts to forge a denuclearization deal with North Korea, the United States Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Sunday appealed for North Korea's leadership to follow Vietnam's path in overcoming past hostilities with the United States. Pompeo called on North Korean leader Kim Jong Un to replicate Vietnam's "miracle" of economic growth by improving ties with the U.S., vowing that America keeps its promises with former foes.

Speaking to members of the U.S.-Vietnamese business community in Hanoi, Pompeo said Vietnam's experience since the normalization of relations with the U.S. in 1995 should be proof for North Korea that prosperity and partnership with the U.S. is possible after decades of conflict and mistrust. "We know it is a real possibility because we see how Vietnam has traveled this remarkable path," Pompeo said.

"In light of the once-unimaginable prosperity and partnership we have with Vietnam today, I have a message for Chairman Kim Jong Un: President Trump believes your country can replicate this path," he said, repeating the U.S. President Donald Trump's pledge to help improve North Korea's economy and provide it with security assurances in return for Kim giving up nuclear weapons.

"It's yours if you'll you seize the moment. This miracle can be yours. It can be your miracle in North Korea as well," Pompeo said.

The comments came after Pompeo had earlier on Sunday in Tokyo brushed aside North Korea's accusation that the U.S. was making "gangster-like" denuclearization demands of the North. He maintained that his third visit to North Korea on Friday and Saturday had produced results. But he also vowed that sanctions would remain until Pyongyang follows through on Kim's pledge to get rid of his atomic weapons.

Pompeo downplayed a harshly critical North Korean statement issued after the talks in which the country's Foreign Ministry bashed hopes for a quick deal and attacked the U.S. for making unreasonable and extortionate demands aimed at forcing it to abandon nuclear weapons. The statement was sure to fuel growing skepticism in the U.S. and elsewhere over how serious Kim is about giving up his nuclear arsenal.

"If those requests were gangster-like, the world is a gangster," Pompeo said, noting that numerous United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions have demanded that the North rid itself of nuclear weapons and end its ballistic missile program. "People are going to make certain comments after meetings. If I paid attention to the press, I'd go nuts and I refuse to do that."

After meeting with his Japanese and South Korean counterparts in Tokyo, Pompeo said his two days of talks in Pyongyang had been productive and conducted in good



faith. But following the stinging commentary from the North, he allowed that much work remains.

He added that his two days of talks with senior North Korean officials had "made progress" and included a "detailed and substantive discussion about the next steps towards a fully verified and complete denuclearization."

Those include the formation of a working group to determine exactly how North Korea's denuclearization will be verified and a Thursday meeting with Pentagon officials to discuss the return of remains of U.S. soldiers killed during the Korean War.

Despite what he described as progress, Pompeo said the results so far did not warrant any easing of sanctions, which he had said would be enforced "with vigor" until North Korea follows through with its denuclearization.

After Trump's historic summit with Kim in Singapore last month, the president declared the North was no longer a threat and would hand over the remains of the U.S. soldiers. Yet three weeks later, the two sides were still divided on all the issues, including exactly what denuclearization means and how it might be verified. The promised remains have yet to be delivered.

And just a few hours after Pompeo arrived in Tokyo from Pyongyang on Saturday, the North blasted the new talks,

saying they had been "regrettable."

In a statement carried by the North's official Korean Central News Agency, the Foreign Ministry said that the outcome of Pompeo's talks with senior official Kim Yong Chol was "very concerning" because it has led to a "dangerous phase that might rattle our willingness for denuclearization that had been firm."

"We had expected that the U.S. side would offer constructive measures that would help build trust based on the spirit of the leaders' summit ... we were also thinking about providing reciprocal measures," it said. "However, the attitude and stance the United States showed in the first high-level meeting [between the countries] was no doubt regrettable. Our expectations and hopes were so naive it could be called foolish."

It said the North had raised the issue of formally ending the Korean War, which concluded with an armistice and not a peace treaty, but the U.S. came up with a variety of "conditions and excuses" to delay a declaration. It downplayed the significance of the U.S. suspending its military exercises with South Korea, something trumpeted by Trump after the summit as a success, by saying it made a larger concession by blowing up the tunnels at a nuclear test site.

(Source: AP)

Israeli regime bans Palestinian television channel affiliated to Hamas

The Israeli regime has imposed bans on the broadcast of a Palestinian television channel affiliated to the Islamic resistance movement, Hamas, and said it cannot be put on air inside the occupied territories.

Israeli minister of military affairs Avigdor Lieberman said on Monday that the television

network can operate neither in al-Quds (Jerusalem) nor in other parts of the Palestinian lands, and that the measure is in accordance with Israel's so-called anti-terrorism law.

Lieberman did not give a reason for the ban. Israeli authorities have on occasions accused al-Quds television channel of being

a "propaganda tool" for Hamas.

Following the ban, investigative reporter Anas Mousa Eghbari was arrested in front of his house in Umm al-Fahm city, located 20 kilometers (12 miles) northwest of Jenin.

Three members of Bashir Bermedia production company and the company's director

Ayad al-Nael were also summoned to court.

The Union of Palestinian Journalists slammed the measure as an "awful and heinous crime which reflects the (Israelis') barbaric, criminal, terrorist mentality towards Palestinian media."

(Source: Press TV)

Ethiopia, Eritrea sign 'declaration of peace and friendship'



The leaders of Ethiopia and Eritrea signed a "joint declaration of peace and friendship", Eritrea's information minister said, a day after a landmark summit marked a start to normalization of ties between the longtime foes.

"The Agreement, which specifies five pillars, was signed this morning at State House by President Isaias Afwerki and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed," Minister Yemane Gebremeskel wrote on Twitter on Monday alongside a photo of the two men seated at a table in front of their nations' flags.

The first of the five pillars stated that the war that existed between the two countries has ended.

Other pillars declared that a new era of peace and friendship has been ushered and that both countries will work to promote close cooperation in political, economic, social, cultural and security areas. In addition, transport, trade and telecommunication ties will be resumed and diplomatic ties and activities renewed. Finally, previously made border decisions will be implemented and both countries will work together to guarantee regional peace, development and cooperation.

On Sunday, a meeting between the two countries' leaders in Asmara ended decades of diplomatic and armed strife.

The announcement capped weeks of whirlwind change, driven by new Abiy, who was welcomed for face-to-face talks in the Eritrean capital by Afwerki.

"We agreed that the airlines will start operating, the ports will be accessible, people can move between the two countries and the embassies will be opened," Abiy said at an official dinner. "We will demolish the wall and, with love, build a bridge between the two countries," Abiy continued.

The sudden rapprochement ends a years-long cold war that hurt both countries. The Horn of Africa nations remained at loggerheads since Ethiopia rejected a United Nations ruling and refused to cede to Eritrea land along the countries' border following a 1998-2000 war that killed 80,000 people.

There was no sign of that animosity on Sunday. Abiy stepped from an Ethiopian Airlines plane at the airport in Asmara to be greeted by Isaias. The two men embraced before they walked down a red carpet.

Out in the streets, chanting crowds cheered on the leaders' convoy, waving the twinned flags of Ethiopia and Eritrea and spreading flowers and popcorn in a typical Eritrean tradition.

With Abiy's comments later in the day, the meeting appeared to have achieved its touted aim of seizing "a spectacular opportunity to decidedly move forward peace for the good of our people," as Abiy's chief of staff, Fitsum Arega, put it earlier.

(Source: agencies)

17 Boko Haram terrorists get jail terms in Niger



A court in Niger has sentenced 17 members of the Boko Haram terrorists to between two and seven years in jail, a senior state prosecutor said on Monday.

"Of 42 suspects on trial, 17 got between two and seven years in prison and 21 others were released" at the end of a six-day trial in the southeastern Diffa region, Chaibou Samna, prosecutor at the high court in Niamey, told AFP. The trial of the four other suspected members of the militant movement, which originated in Nigeria and has launched bloody attacks in neighboring countries, was postponed until mid-October, Samna said.

The men held for trial included Niger nationals and Malians as well as Nigerians, accused of "criminal association connected with a terrorist enterprise", another judicial source said.

Some were "captured during fighting" or during security checks carried out under a state of emergency imposed on the Diffa region, across the border from Nigeria, according to a source in the security forces.

The first trials of Boko Haram suspects in Niger were held in the capital Niamey in March 2017. Some were convicted and jailed for up to nine years, while others were acquitted for lack of evidence. The trials were moved this year to Diffa, which has endured many Boko Haram attacks since February 2015. Arrested men were transferred in from Niamey and the two southwestern towns of Kollo and Koutoukale.

Boko Haram has no rear bases in Diffa, but youths from the territory were lured to join the militants from 2015, when the movement offered them up to 300,000 CFA francs (almost 460 euros/\$540) per month.

Since December 2016, 200 Niger nationals have left Boko Haram and turned themselves into authorities in Diffa.

They are interned in a camp where they undergo rehabilitation before being allowed to return to their families under an amnesty.

(Source: AFP)

STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	110851.4
IFX	1239.99

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,930rials
EUR	50,463 rials
GBP	57,610 rials
AED	11,690 rials

Source: mehrnews.com

COMMODITIES

WTI	\$73.61/b
Brent	\$77.63/b
OPEC Basket	\$75.21/b
Gold	\$1,265.45 /oz
Silver	\$16.22/oz
Platinum	\$858.65/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

NEWS IN BRIEF



Jan. - May trade between Iran, U.S. reaches \$78.8m

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Trade between Iran and U.S. from January to May 2018 reached \$78.8 million increasing 20 percent from \$65.3 million in the same time span in the preceding year, according to the latest report of American Statistical Association (ASA). U.S. exports to Iran in this period increased by 60 percent reaching \$50.2 million from \$31.2 million in the same time of 2017, Tasnim news agency reported on Monday. American imports of Iranian goods declined 16 percent to \$28.6 million from its previous level of \$34.1 million in the same period in 2017.



Tehran hosting intl. pool, sauna, kitchen, bath industries expo

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — The 16th International Exhibition of Kitchen, Bath, Sauna, Pool Industries and Equipment is due to kick off today at Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds, IRIB reported. Covering four main categories of kitchen, pool, sauna and bath, the four-day event aims to increase the efficiency of Iranian factories and production units, expand the industry's export markets, identify problems, barriers and weaknesses in the industry, and also to create a healthy competitive environment for domestic producers to improve their production quality.

India says demand will be deciding factor for purchasing Iran's oil

Indian minister for petroleum and natural gas said that his country's crude oil demand, not global pressures, will decide on whether its domestic refiners will continue to buy the fuel from Iran.



Talking to BusinessLine, Dharmendra Pradhan said, "There is no contradiction in our thinking on any issues. We will first ensure that our energy demands are met. Priority will be given to national interest." Iran is the third largest crude oil supplier to India after Iraq and Saudi Arabia. The global energy market is looking at how New Delhi will deal with the U.S. President Donald Trump's threat to impose economic sanctions on Iran.

"We will first look at our national interest. India's energy basket has multiple sources now. Our focus will be to see that our requirement is not affected, and to ensure this, we will do what we have to do. But, we will also keep a watch on global geo-politics," Pradhan said. (Source: thehindubusinessline.com)

Chinese refiner halts U.S. oil purchases, could use Iran oil as a substitute

An executive from China's Dongming Petrochemical Group, an independent refiner from Shandong province, said his refinery had already cancelled U.S. crude orders. "We expect the Chinese government to impose tariffs on (U.S.) crude," the executive said, declining to be named as he was not authorized to speak to media. "We will switch to either Middle East or West African supplies," he said. JTD Energy's Driscoll said China may even replace American oil with crude from Iran. "They (Chinese importers) are not going to be intimidated, or swayed by U.S. sanctions," he said. (Source: Japan Today)

Car manufacturing up 9.4% in a quarter on year

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Car manufacturing in Iran rose 9.4 percent during the three-month period from the beginning of current Iranian calendar year (March 21) compared to the same time span in the past year, IRIB reported. Iranian carmakers manufactured 336,699 vehicles during the first quarter of this year, while the figure was 307,666 in the same period of time in the preceding year. Passenger cars output stood at 317,810 in the three-month period of this year, rising from 290,887 passenger cars manufactured

in the first quarter of last year. Iranian carmakers manufactured over 1,535 vehicles during the past Iranian calendar year 1396 (ended on March 20), with 13.7 percent rise from the figure of its preceding year, Industry Ministry has announced. According to the ministry's data, car manufacturing in Iran stood at over 1.35 million in the calendar year 1395. As reported, 1,442 million passenger cars were manufactured in the past year, with 14.9 percent growth from 1.255 million



cars in its previous year. Some 1,381 minibuses and middle buses were manufactured in 1396, indicating 52.6 percent increase from 905 minibuses and middle buses manufactured in 1395. Also, 1,782 buses were manufactured in the last year, with 53.9 percent rise from 1,158 buses manufactured in the year before.

Iran-Turkey trade exceeds \$4.5b in 5 months

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — The value of trade between Iran and its neighbor Turkey has reached \$4.575 billion during the first five months of 2018, registering a three percent rise compared to the same period last year. The figure stood at \$4.445 billion during the first five months of 2017, Tasnim reported on Monday citing data from the Turkish Statistical Institute. According to the report, Turkey's exports to Iran fell 11 percent during January-May 2018 compared to 2017 five-month period to settle at \$1.14 billion. The country exported \$1.286 billion worth of goods to



Iran during the same time span in the previous year. Meanwhile, Iran's exports to Turkey reached \$3.435 billion in the mentioned period, nine percent more than last year's \$3.159 billion. Iran has been the 19th export destination and the seventh source of Turkish imports in the first five months of 2018. Earlier in October 2017, Iranian First Vice-President Es'haq Jahangiri and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced that the two country have it on agenda to increase the bilateral trade to \$30 billion in near future.

Oil steadies as drilling increases in tight market

Oil prices steadied on Monday as an increase in U.S. drilling, likely to lead to higher shale production, balanced evidence of tightening supply. Benchmark Brent was up 40 cents at \$77.51 a barrel by 0850 GMT. U.S. crude was down 30 cents at \$73.50. "Uncertainties abound when it comes to the oil balance for the remainder of the year," said Stephen Brennock, analyst at London brokerage PVM Oil Associates. "Competing supply-side developments ensure that the oil price roller-coaster remains in full swing." U.S. energy companies last week increased the number of rigs drilling for oil by five to 863, up 100 year-on-year, General Electric Co's Baker Hughes energy services firm said in its closely followed report late on Friday.

The U.S. rig count, an early indicator of future output, is much higher than a year ago as energy companies have ramped up production in response to higher prices. Extra output is needed because oil demand has been rising fast this year and supply from several parts of the world, including Venezuela and Libya, has been falling. This has tightened the market, especially in the United States. Crude oil inventories at Cushing, Oklahoma, the delivery point for U.S. crude futures, have fallen to their lowest in 3-1/2 years, data showed last week. "Cushing is clearly screaming out for crude," said Virendra Chauhan, oil analyst at Energy Aspects in Singapore. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting



Countries and other countries agreed in June to a modest increase in output to dampen oil prices, which recently hit 3-1/2 year highs. A rise in supply will reverse some of the output cuts that OPEC and other major pro-

ducers put in place in early 2017 to end several years of glut. The tightness at Cushing and the potential increase in the Persian Gulf exports "both have implications for how quickly the prompt overhang in the market can clear, and thus provide some direction for prices", Chauhan said. Concerns that oil prices will be weighed down by a trade conflict between the United States and China have faded to some extent, analysts said. The United States and China exchanged the first salvos in what could become a protracted trade war on Friday, slapping tariffs on \$34 billion worth of each other's goods and giving no sign of willingness to start talks aimed at a reaching a truce. (Source: The Mainichi)

BOJ maintains assessments for regional economies amid modest growth

The Bank of Japan maintained its assessments for all of the country's nine regional economies on Monday, signaling continued growth albeit at a modest pace. In its quarterly Sakura Report, the central bank said the economy in the Kanto-Koshinetsu area, which includes Tokyo, has been "expanding moderately." It said the same of the Kinki region including Osaka, but added that the effects of a major earthquake last month have been observed in some industries. The report, named after its cherry blossom-colored cover, is released every three months following a meeting of the BOJ's regional branch managers. It is the Japanese equivalent of the U.S. Federal Reserve's Beige Book. BOJ Governor Haruhiko Kuroda said at the meeting that the country's economy is expected to continue on its current track, maintaining his optimism despite a recent downswing in business sentiment and stubbornly stagnant prices. "Japan's economy is moderately expanding as a positive cyclical mechanism operates from income to spending," he said. While such comments suggest Kuroda is in no hurry to take further monetary easing measures at an interest rate review later this month, he reiterated his commitment to maintaining ultra-easy monetary policy until inflation reaches the central bank's 2 percent target, even as its peers in the United States and Europe move toward normalization. "Looking forward, the pace (of price gains)



is expected to gain momentum toward 2 percent as the macro output gap improves and inflation expectations rise...We will continue 'quantitative and qualitative easing with yield curve control' until our 2 percent price stability target can be sustained in a stable manner." His comments came after the BOJ's Tankan survey showed confidence among large manufacturers in the country fell for two consecutive quarters through June as rising raw material costs, a deepening labor crunch, and intensifying trade disputes involving the United States weighed on sentiment. Upon taking the central bank's helm in 2013, Kuroda introduced an unprecedented money-printing program aimed at lifting the world's third-largest economy out of a decade and a half of deflationary doldrums. After shifting its focus from monetary base expansion to interest rates in 2016, the BOJ now maintains a short-term policy rate of minus 0.1 percent and guides long-term interest rates to around zero percent. (Source: The Mainichi)

The Bank of England is on course for an August rate hike

Bank of England policy makers are adjusting to an upheaval at the statistics office at the very point when they need as much clarity as possible to help decide whether to raise interest rates next month. The UK is this week shaking up the way it reports growth, publishing monthly updates and delaying its usual quarterly figures. The new process comes after most policy makers said they were waiting to see how the economy evolved before hiking rates again -- a move investors and economists now expect to come in August. While the new system means that BOE officials won't have an estimate for second quarter growth when they next meet, Governor Mark Carney said last week that he's "serene" about the change. That may be in part because the BOE has previously questioned the accuracy of Office for National Statistics estimates, relying instead on its own analysis. Investors are currently pricing in about an 80 percent probability of a rate hike on Aug. 2. Asked last week whether the BOE would have enough information to make a decision next month, Carney said "the short answer is yes." But while the BOE may feel it has a handle on the data, the unpredictability of politics is another factor. Prime Minister Theresa May has been plunged into a major crisis after Brexit Secretary David Davis resigned late on Sunday. Sterling was up 0.3 percent to \$1.3321 as of 7:35 a.m. London time. The ONS will start producing monthly esti-



mates from July 10, based on data for services, production and construction. Economists surveyed by Bloomberg expect it to show the economy expanded 0.2 percent in the three months through May from the previous period. Crucially for the UK, the monthly data for services -- the largest part of the economy -- will be brought forward by two weeks. Quarterly GDP estimates, meanwhile, will be pushed back by 15 days, with the first release on Aug. 10, after the BOE's next policy announcement. That's to improve quality, the ONS says, and could help reduce the possibility of revisions. Among Group-of-Seven nations, Canada also reports GDP on a monthly basis, although their reading for May isn't due until July 31. Numbers for the current quarter are being closely watched after policy makers and statisticians differed on the economy's strength in the first three months of the year, when storms and snow battered the UK. Growth was first estimated at 0.1 percent, a figure the BOE said it expected to be revised higher, and it's since been pushed up to 0.2 percent. (Source: Bloomberg)

U.S. jobs, economy to be hurt by trade war

U.S. experts have voiced deep concerns over the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump's trade war against China, a war that they say violates WTO rules and will hurt U.S. jobs and the nation's economy. Trump fired the first shot on Friday by imposing punitive tariffs on \$34 billion in imports from China. China quickly retaliated by levying tariffs on the same amount. Gary Hufbauer, a nonresident senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics and deputy assistant secretary for international trade and investment policy at the U.S. Treasury from 1977 to 1979, said "bully" is the correct description of what Trump has been doing to China, Canada, Mexico and other U.S. trade partners. Before levying tariffs on China, the Trump administration had imposed new tariffs on steel and aluminum in the name of national security, triggering retaliation from U.S. trade partners as well as their complaints filed with the World Trade Organization. On Friday, China also lodged a WTO complaint against the latest U.S. tariffs. "Unfortunately, at the moment there is no effective domestic backlash to the destruction that Trump is wreaking on the international economic order," said Hufbauer, adding that most people in the U.S. and many lawmakers are not familiar with WTO rules. Trump has repeatedly accused the WTO of treating the U.S. unfairly and has reportedly threatened to withdraw from the international trade body.



Wayne Morrison, a trade and finance specialist at the Congressional Research Service, said there is great concern among U.S. trade experts that Trump's unilateral action will undermine the global trading system that the U.S. helped build. Henry Levine, a senior adviser at the Albright Stonebridge Group and a former deputy assistant secretary of commerce for Asia in the administration of former U.S. president George W. Bush, said Trump's decision to go forward with tariffs on Chinese goods reflects two of his deeply held beliefs: that trade is a zero-sum game and that other countries have been taking advantage of the U.S. for decades with their trade surplus. "You can see these two perspectives not only in the tariffs

imposed on Chinese goods, but also in tariffs imposed on products from U.S. friends and allies," he said. Economists and trade experts have disagreed with Trump's interpretation of the cause and benefit of the trade imbalance. They believe that the U.S. trade deficit is caused primarily by its fiscal policy, the low saving rate and the role of the U.S. dollar as a global reserve currency. "Trump is ignoring the pleas of the business community. He seems to be betting that his get-tough approach against China will make his political base happy, even though these policies will hurt many of them in the long run," Morrison said. "A trade war would be very costly to both economies and the global economy as a whole," he added. A study led by Mary Lovely at the Peterson Institute showed Trump's latest tariffs on China will hit non-Chinese supply chains even harder. Many of Chinese exports to the U.S. come from foreign companies operating in China. Edward Alden, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, said the only way for the Trump administration to change course is as a result of domestic political pressure. "My hope is that then there will be a period of reflection in which all the countries involved will find a way to come back to the negotiating table," he said. "I still believe there is time to prevent this trade war from further escalation, but we are in a dangerous period," Alden said. (Source: China Daily)



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Hormozgan Steel Co. Closes Fiscal Year Successfully by Paying 16 Rls. DPS

The Ordinary Annual General Assembly meeting of Hormozgan Steel Company was held for the fiscal year closing on March 20, 2018.

■ Hormozgan Steel Co. Gains Significant Profitability

The Ordinary Annual General Assembly of Hormozgan Steel Company for the fiscal year closing on March 20, 2018 was held in Hormoz Hotel of Bandar Abbas on Wednesday on July 4 in the presence of 98 percent of its shareholders, members of the Board of Directors of the company, representative of stock market.

After submitting a report on the performance of the company by the CEO of the company, financial statement of the company was approved.

Also, 16 rials dividend per share (DPS) was distributed among shareholders. In the end, widely circulated Persian dailies including "Gostaresh Sanat" and "Donya-e-Eqtasad" Persian dailies were selected as widely circulated papers for publishing the upcoming advertisements of the company.

■ Status of Hormozgan Steel Co. in Country's Industry

In the beginning of this annual general assembly meeting, CEO Hormozgan Steel Company Farzad Arzani expounded a comprehensive report on the activity of this company for the fiscal year closing on March 20, 2018. In the beginning, he pointed to the cumulative loss sustained by the company over the past years and said, "the company has been faced with 352 billion tomans worth of cumulative loss, so that the company managed to gain 440 billion tomans worth of profit before the termination of the past Iranian calendar year in 1396 (ended March 20, 2018)."

He pointed to the status and role of industry of the country and added, "as one of the leading producers of steel in the country, Hormozgan Steel Company accounted for 8.16 percent crude steel share in the country in the past year (ended March 20, 2018)."

By producing 1,525,540 tons of sponge iron, 1,437,325 tons of slab in the past Iranian calendar year in 1396 (ended March 20, 2018), the company managed to attain considerable 19 and 24 percent growth in terms of production of sponge iron and slab production respectively as compared to a year earlier, he maintained.

In addition, the company managed to register a considerable 23 percent growth in terms of domestic sales and export as compared to a year earlier.



■ Salient Achievements of Hormozgan Steel Company

He also pointed to the salient achievements of the company gained in the past year in 1396 (ended March 20, 2018) and added, "hereunder are the salient credits and certificates gained by the company: winning two-star commitment certificates from European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM), receiving Quality Management System certificate according to ISO 9001:2015 standard, winning guidance certificate for training according to ISO 10015:1999 certificate and winning appreciation letter and golden trophy as exemplary provincial exporter for the 3rd consecutive year."

Elsewhere in his remarks, he also pointed to a part of achievements in the operation field in the past year in 1396 (ended March 20, 2018) and said, "the company has gained salient and important achievements in the operation sector, the most important of which includes as follows: attaining to the annual sponge iron production record as much as 1,525,540 tons, reducing water consumption from 3.41 cubic meters/tons in 1395 (ended March 20, 2017) to 3.12 cubic meter/ton in 1396 (ended March 20, 2018), reducing power consumption volume from 1,060 kW/hour in 1395 (ended March 20, 2017) to 1,025 kW/hour in past year (ended March 20, 2018), reducing gas consumption from 11.9 gigajoule/ton in 1395 (ended March

20, 2017) to 10.7 gigajoule/ton in past year in 1396 (ended March 20, 2018), attaining to the annual steel slab production record as much as 1,437,325 tons in past year (ended March 20, 2018) and materialization of 106 percent objective of the company in the production of steel slab, reducing consumption of refractory from 8.48 kg/tons smelt in 1395 (ended March 20, 2017) to 7.66 kg/ton smelt in 1396 (ended March 20, 2018), installing and commissioning 2nd compressor of Oxygen Unit in line with continuation of industrial gas production, etc.

■ Production Growth at Hormozgan Steel Company

With regard to the production growth of the company, Arzani put the production volume of end product of the company in the past year in 1396 (ended March 20, 2018) at more than 1,437,325 tons, showing a considerable 24 percent increase as compared to a year earlier.

He pointed to the salient achievements in the field of sales and said, "being selected among top 100 steel production companies in the country, attaining 68 percent growth in sales of slab in domestic market, gaining a considerable 10 percent growth in terms of selling slab product at the global markets as compared to a year earlier, attaining 23 percent sales growth of slab at domestic markets, etc. are considered as salient achievements of the company in terms of sales sector."

■ Social, Environmental, Safety and Health Performances

CEO of the company pointed to the social and sanitary performance of his company and said, "participating in Golrizan (charity activities) Festival, releasing prisoners of unintentional crimes and cooperating with Hormozgan Province Blood Money Headquarters, organizing public sports competitions, helping sports and cultural clubs across Bandar Abbas, helping to develop green area in Bandar Abbas, distribution of packed sanitary foods to the needy families in cooperation with the provincial Relief Committee, etc. have been cited as social responsibilities of the company."

Arzani also pointed to the safety measures taken by his company as follows: implementation of Risk Management System in the field of operation, modulation of Green Card Partnership System, setting up a committee to promote safety of operation unit and contractors, holding relevant expert-level meeting, promoting capability and potential of firefighting cadet through organizing specialized training courses, revising and completing specialized safety instructions and updating HSE (Health, Safety and Environment) Plan of contractors.

He referred to the environmental measures taken by the company in the past Iranian calendar year in 1396 (ended March 20, 2018) as follows: installing and commissioning Instant Monitoring System (electrostatic precipitator), transferring relevant information as online to the Department of Environment (DoE), using the treated water of sanitary wastewater for irrigation of green area since 2017, removal of sanitary and industrial wastewater contradictions caused by the improper performance of industrial wastewater treatment houses, management of wastes produced, reducing environmental aftereffects, etc.

■ Development Plans

He pointed to the development plans of Hormozgan Steel Company and said, "the company took giant steps in the past Iranian calendar year in 1396 (ended March 20, 2018) in line with developing its expansion projects such as conclusion of a contract with SMS-IRITEC Consortium for developing 3 million tons of steel in Hormozgan Steel Company, increasing production capacity of steel from current 1.5 million tons to 1.8 million tons along with the construction of new steel manufacturing unit with the production capacity of 1.2 million tons

including a furnace, two slag pot furnaces, one die casting production line, construction of Oxygen Unit, construction of Desalination unit, construction of Lime Unit and also construction of Power Substation.

■ Objectives and Programs in Current Year

To conclude his remarks, Arzani pointed to the goals and programs taken by the company in current year in 1397 (started March 21, 2018) and said, "income growth through sales increase of products focusing on products with more value added and income growth with concentrating on the export, promotion of productivity through management of costs and cost price, gaining customers' satisfaction through presenting products with fair and reasonable price, development of interactions in the trade and business fields, development of portfolio of company, promotion of safety and health of staff, promotion of environmental performance and also effective communications with society, designing and developing new products, development of production capacities, reduction of time and cost deviations of executive projects, getting lion's share of steel at domestic and foreign markets, on-time delivery of products, optimization of major consumptions and promotion of technical, production and logistics infrastructures, development of indigenizing system and supporting domestic qualitative productions, promotion of infrastructures in the financial field, setting up financial reporting system based on International Financing Reporting Standards (IFRS), etc.

■ Chairman of the Board of Directors of Hormozgan Steel Production

Taking Advantage of All Capacities and Potentials of Company, Most Important Factor behind Profitability

On the sidelines of the Annual Ordinary General Assembly of Hormozgan Steel Company, Amir-Hossein Naderi Chairman of the Board of Directors of the company said, "taking advantage of available capacities and capabilities in the past year (ended March 20, 2018) was one of the main reason behind profitability of the company."

Moreover, the company managed to reduce final cost of its products significantly, Naderi maintained.

Given the global prices of steel, it seems that the company will attain more profit in the current Iranian calendar year in 1397 (started March 21, 2018), he opined.

By: A. Saiedi

NEWS IN BRIEF



Deposed Pakistan PM Nawaz Sharif to return to Pakistan on July 13

INTERNATIONAL **TEHRAN**— The deposed Pakistani Prime Minister, who was handed 10 years rigorous jail term by an accountability court in Pakistan last week in Panama Papers scandal, is expected to return to Pakistan on July 15 to face the charges.

Sharif's daughter Maryam Nawaz, who also faces 7 years jail term in the same case, said in a Twitter post that they will return to Lahore, their hometown and political stronghold. Sharif and his children have been in London since June attending to Sharif's ailing wife who is undergoing treatment for cancer.

After the verdict was announced last week, Sharif had said he would return to Pakistan to "face prison". Referring to the court sentence, he said he was being punished for turning the course of Pakistan's 70-year history.

"I promise that I will continue this struggle until Pakistanis are free of the chains that they are kept in for saying the truth," Nawaz said. "I will continue my struggle till the people of Pakistan are freed from the slavery imposed on them by some generals and judges," he added.



Afghan Sikhs seek asylum in India after recent deadly attack in Jalalabad

INTERNATIONAL **TEHRAN**— Fearing for their lives after the deadly bombing that killed 15 members of the Sikh community in Afghanistan's eastern city of Jalalabad last week, many Afghan Sikh families have sought asylum in neighboring India, according to privy sources.

Many Sikh families in Jalalabad have already started paper work to leave the country, which is being seen increasingly dangerous for religious and ethnic minorities, especially with the advent of ISIS.

The population of Sikhs in Afghanistan has slowly dwindled from 250,000 in 1990s to just about 3,000 today. Most of the Afghan Sikh families have already migrated to India, which is home to largest number of Sikhs in the world.

The Sikh community in Afghanistan faces prejudice and threat from terrorist groups like Afghan Taliban and ISIS. According to reports, following the Jalalabad bombing, some Sikhs had sought shelter in Indian Consulate in the city, fearing more attacks.

Meanwhile there have been passionate calls from some prominent Afghans, urging the members of Sikh community not to leave the country. "I am not certain if the community can tolerate more pain, but we don't want them to forget that they represent a legacy that stretches back a thousand years in Afghan history," wrote Saad Mohseni in an article published in Tribune newspaper.



India has taken a quantum jump in wrong direction, says top economist

INTERNATIONAL **TEHRAN**— Despite being hailed as a fastest growing economy, India has taken a "quantum jump in a wrong direction" since 2014, and because of the backward movement, it is now the second worst in the region, the world-renowned economist Amartya Sen said.

"Things have gone pretty badly wrong...it (India) has taken a quantum jump in the wrong direction since 2014," Sen said at the launch of the Hindi edition of his book 'A Uncertain Glory: India and its Contradiction', which he has co-authored with development economist Jean Dreze.

Twenty years ago, of the six countries – India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Nepal – India was the second best after Sri Lanka, remarked Sen. "Now, it is the second worst. Pakistan has managed to shield us from being the worst," he said.

The government deflected attention from the issues related to inequalities and caste system, said the Nobel Laureate. Sen has been a strong critic of Modi-led BJP government's economic policies. He has also denounced the government's move of 'demonetization'.

Taking a dig at the Modi government, he said that during the freedom movement it was difficult to see that a political battle could be won by playing up the Hindu identity, but that has changed now. "It is not a battle of one identity against the other, or Mr. Modi versus Mr. Rahul Gandhi, it is an issue of what India is," he said.



Violence in Kashmir has seen a drastic increase in last two years

INTERNATIONAL **TEHRAN**— The violence in Indian controlled Kashmir has seen an alarming increase in past two years, since the killing of top militant commander Burhan Wani, according to official data. Wani's killing on July 8 2016 had triggered widespread street protests and prolonged spell of unrest in the disputed region.

The number of civilian casualties, which had almost doubled in the year following Wani's killing, continues to remain high, according to the data. In the two years since Wani's killing, 380 rebel fighters, including a large number of locals, have been killed in gunfights with security forces in Kashmir. The killing of 213 armed fighters in 2017 was the highest casualty toll among rebel fighters in a decade.

The attacks on security forces have also marked a drastic increase, as per the data. The number of casualties suffered by security forces over the past two years jumped to more than 170.

The two years since Wani's killing in an encounter, the recruitment of rebel fighters has also increased. In the first half of 2018, south Kashmir continued to lead with recruitment of rebel fighters, while the recruitment drive has also kicked off in Budgam and Ganderbal lately.

According to the data, the participation of civilians in pro-militant demonstrations has also seen an increase in last two years, compounding the woes of local government.

Stung by backlash, India says it will take 'considerate view' on oil imports from Iran

INTERNATIONAL **TEHRAN**— Stung by public backlash and criticism over its decision to cut oil imports from Iran, Indian government has said that it will take a "considered and considerate" view based on 'national interest' on the issue of U.S. sanctions against Iranian oil and find a way to secure its energy needs.

India's Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan in an interview with a leading Indian daily said India sees U.S. sanctions on Iran as a "challenge" given its close ties with both the countries. His comments came a week before the scheduled visit of a U.S. delegation to India to discuss the issue.

"We have a special strategic relationship with U.S. We have a historic, cultural and civilizational relationship with Iran," said Pradhan in the interview. "Iran is also a factor in India-Afghanistan because of its geographic proximity. Our economic interests are tied to both. The government will take a comprehensive view."

On the question of how the Indian government will deal with the fallout of the sanctions, the minister said, "Let us wait and watch. The government has a considered view. National interest is paramount and



'Zaria massacre was orchestrated in Israel, bankrolled by Saudi, executed by Nigerian government'

By Syed Zafar Mehdi

TEHRAN— Ibrahim Musa is the President of Media Forum of the Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN). In this interview with Tehran Times, he talks about the illegal incarceration of IMN leader Sheikh Ibraheem Zakzaky and brutal clampdown on the movement by the Mohammad Buhari government.

■ The trial of Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN) leader Sheikh Ibraheem Zakzaky and three others by the Kaduna state government has been widely described as 'mockery of justice'. What is the present status of the case?

A. The case filed by the Kaduna state government is coming up for hearing again on Wednesday (July 11) at the Kaduna High Court. In the previous hearing last month, the case was adjourned because of the absence of trial judge due to bad health. So we surely don't know whether the court will really sit and hear the trumped up charges against Sheikh and three others on Wednesday.

■ How is the health condition of Sheikh? Does anyone of you have access to him?

A. The latest news we received from his family is that his health has deteriorated further. Sheikh suffered a mild stroke in January, and he even made mention of it while talking to some journalists in Abuja – Nigerian capital. However, after being shifted to Kaduna from Abuja, his condition has gone from bad to worse. Now, there is no direct contact between him and his close family members. Even the occasional visits by his family members have been banned. We are really concerned about his health and we don't know what he is going through in the illegal detention.

■ Sheikh's house was torched and razed to ground on the night of December 12 2015, he was brutally assaulted and arrested on bogus charges, which was followed by the deadly Zaria massacre. Do you believe the script was written in Riyadh and executed by the Kaduna government?

A. We have said this many times that the brutal military crackdown on the Islamic Movement was planned and orchestrated outside Nigeria. We felt vindicated when the crown prince of Saudi Arabia bragged in an interview with Time magazine that they have successfully decimated Iran's influence in Africa by over 90 percent. It was a clear admission of Saudi Arabia's complicity in the military crackdown on IMN. Survivors of the attack have narrated harrowing stories of how soldiers shooting at them were rejoicing that there were no more Shias left in the country. It is now an open secret that the script of Zaria massacre was written in Israel, bankrolled by Saudi Arabia and executed by Buhari's administration.

■ Despite such a monumental struggle against a powerful state backed by the U.S., Israel and Arab monarchies, you took recourse to the legal route to



demand your fundamental rights. Do you have faith in country's judiciary?

A. Yes we have complete faith in our country's judiciary. We won a historic judgment at a federal high court in Abuja in 2016. The court ordered release of our respected leader and ordered damages from the federal government. However, the main obstacle in getting justice in our case is the Buhari's administration, which has left no stone unturned in denying us justice.

■ So Sheikh had been declared free after winning a landmark judgment from the Abuja High Court, but the federal government ignored court orders. Can you tell us more about what actually happened?

A. The historic judgment was delivered by Justice Kolawole in our favor. The case took over a year to complete, and we were patient enough to see it through. The judge was clear when he said that there is no law in Nigeria that allows the continued detention of our leader Sheikh Zakzaky. He even said that since our leader's home had been razed down, a new one should be built for him in any town of his preference. It is really unfortunate that the federal government refused to obey the courts orders.

■ Free Zakzaky movement has gained momentum across the world but still the government in Nigeria remains unfazed. What are your most important demands from the Nigerian government?

A. The fact that the federal government has refused to accede to our demand is a pointer to our earlier disposition that the attempt to exterminate the movement is not the doing of Buhari's government alone. They wait for

we will align our decision on that."

India is Iran's second largest buyer of crude oil and Iran's share in India's import volumes stands at 10.4 percent in the current financial year. Among Iran's three biggest buyers of oil – China, India, and Turkey – only India seems to have buckled under the U.S. pressure, with reports suggesting that the country was mulling to substantially cut its oil imports from Iran.

Modi-led BJP government in New Delhi has come under blistering criticism at home over this 'ill-advised' decision. A senior Communist Party of India (CPIM) leader Sitaram Yechury took to Twitter to blast the government for kneeling before the U.S. "India had stated only sanctions by the UN would be acceptable not by individual countries. What is India's foreign policy under Modi about? Following U.S. diktats, and betraying India's interests," he asked, bluntly.

Tehran Times carried an article 'Is U.S. President officially in charge of India's foreign policy now?' last week, which triggered an intense debate in India's intelligentsia circles, with many experts questioning the wisdom behind India's decision to betray Iran under the U.S. pressure.

their paymasters to instruct them on the way to proceed. Our most important demand is the unconditional and immediate release of our leader, and hundreds of those who are in detention since the December 2015 Zaria massacre. Secondly, all the perpetrators of this dastardly crime must be brought to book, and the mass graves dug by the military in collaboration with the state government be handed over to us for proper investigation and possible identification of the victims.

■ As you pointed out, since the December 2015 carnage, hundreds of IMN members have been languishing in jails. How is their condition? Have they been subjected to custodial torture as reported?

A. As of now, there are over 300 members of the Islamic Movement languishing behind bars, majority of them were arrested during the military crackdown in December 2005, and many were arrested during our peaceful protests to demand the release of our leader. Most of them did suffer gunshot wounds and torture at the hands of security forces. And typical of most Nigerian detention centers, no medical aid is made available to them. The detainees have suffered torture mostly at the hands of military and police's secret agents. The accounts given by the survivors, reported in the media, are absolutely horrifying.

■ How has been the role of Nigerian media in highlighting atrocities unleashed by the Kaduna government against Shias in general and IMN members in particular?

A. The media in Nigeria has given ample coverage to our struggle, and many publications have often written editorials in our favor. The press is not expected to side with the oppressor. Though, there are paid elements that carry out smear campaign against us in the media at the behest of the government.

■ What are the main charges slapped by the Kaduna government against Sheikh and his wife?

A. In the eight bogus charges filed at the Kaduna High Court, Sheikh and three others were alleged to have abetted the commission of culpable homicide punishable with death by members of the Islamic Movement in December 2015. Other charges were those of abetting unlawful assembly, wrongful restraint, and disturbance of public peace, voluntarily causing grievous hurt without provocation and inciting disturbances. Further, they were also accused of promotion of unlawful assembly. We believe all these charges were drafted to serve as an excuse to the continued illegal detention of Sheikh.

■ Do you see any hope of justice being delivered in the near future?

A. The way this case has been instituted, the way it is being presented in the court, we are not very optimistic. Also, the case is coming up in Kaduna state, whose government is deeply involved in the Zaria massacre. But, our team of lawyers is doing everything they can possibly do to get justice.

The difficulty of being a Muslim in BJP-ruled India today

1 → After a video of a Hindu man slapping a Muslim man more than 25 times, asking him to chant Hindu religious mantra 'Jai Shri Ram', a BJP parliamentarian Vinay Katiyar told media persons in New Delhi that Muslims had no business being in India and should go to Pakistan or Bangladesh. He was parroting the same line that has been said by many BJP leaders in the past.

It is the same message these venom-spewing, hate-filled Hindutva goons sought to communicate when they abducted a young Muslim man Mohammad Bhatta Sheikh in northern Indian state of Rajasthan on December 3, 2017, hacked him with a pickaxe and burned him alive. Or when 15-year-old Junaid was ambushed by a group of Hindu men on a Haryana-bound train on June 22, 2017, derided for eating beef, slapped, kicked and stabbed to death.

India's former vice president Hamid Ansari, commenting on Junaid's murder, admitted that a "feeling of unease and a sense of insecurity" was creeping among Muslims in India.

In another chilling case of hate crime,



8-year-old Muslim girl Asifa Bano from Jammu & Kashmir was brutally raped and murdered inside a temple in January this year. It drew tremendous anger and outrage across the world but that did not deter the BJP politicians from defending the accused and rallying in their support.

Although the Indian Penal Code (IPC) has provisions that criminalize the promotion of enmity between groups on grounds of religion, race and place of birth, but there is poor implementation of such provisions, especially when law enforcement agencies are complicit in it.

However, after the brutal killing of Mohammad Akhlaq in 2015, a Muslim resident of northern state of Uttar Pradesh, who was killed in his home by a Hindu mob 'for eating beef', media coverage has significantly increased. Human rights groups have also started documented hate crimes resulting from what many call 'Hindutva terrorism'. Amnesty International runs a website 'Halt the Hate' to track hate related crimes in India. According to the website, there was an alarming rise in hate crimes – including assault, rape and murder – against people from marginalized groups, especially Dalits and Muslims, in 2017.

"BJP's campaign for cow protection appears to have emboldened vigilante groups, who seem to be operating in some cases with the tacit approval of state authorities. BJP leaders have ignored, or worse, even justified the attacks at times," said Aakar Patel, head of Amnesty International India.

So, it eventually boils down to the political will, which is clearly missing. That makes it difficult to be a minority, to be a Muslim, in the BJP-ruled India today.

No major international development occurred after Trump, Un meeting: Dr. Cyr

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

By Payman Yazdani

TEHRAN — Commenting on talks between the leaders of the U.S. and North Korea, Dr. Arthur I. Cyr believes that the Summit meetings are most successful and important when used to confirm consequential agreements, negotiated in detail in advance.

U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un met face-to-face on June 12 in Singapore for their highly anticipated summit. After hours of talks, the U.S. president said he was heading toward «a signing» with Kim, but there was no immediate indication of what sort of agreement would be signed.

The summit began with the two men briefly shaking hands and taking a photo side-by-side, then moving to another room, where they sat and made brief statements for the press. Many expected the meeting of the two leaders as a breakthrough for the relation of the two states and the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

On July 7, the officials of the countries met again in Pyongyang. In comments to reporters before leaving Pyongyang, Pompeo said his conversations with senior North Korean official Kim Yong Chol had been “productive,” conducted “in good faith” and that “a great deal of progress” had been made in some areas.



High-level talks between the United States and North Korea appeared to hit a snag on Saturday as Pyongyang said a visit by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo had been “regrettable” and accused Washington of making “gangster-like” demands to pressure the country into abandoning its nuclear weapons.

To shed more light on the issue, we reached out to Dr. Arthur I. Cyr, director of the A.W. Clausen Center for World Business at Carthage.

Commenting on the significance and possible success of the meeting Cyr said, “The Summit meetings are most successful and important when used to confirm consequential agreements, negotiated in detail in advance. The best examples are President Richard Nixon’s two meetings in 1972, with the leaders of China to begin formal communication and diplomatic recognition, and the Soviet Union to sign the SALT strategic arms treaties.”

“Summits can also serve the purpose of recognizing great changes in international

relations, or hopes for progress. The 1989 meeting between President George H.W. Bush and Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev after the fall of the Berlin Wall is in this category. The leaders at that time expressed good spirits and declared the Cold War had ended. The recent meeting between the U.S. President and leader of North Korea is in this category roughly. However, there were no detailed formal agreements, and no major international development had occurred.” He added, “If North Korea continues to dismantle nuclear weapon capabilities, and takes other peaceful steps, then the recent summit will be important.”

Referring to possible effects of the potential improvement of relation between the U.S. and North Korea on Pyongyang’s relation with China and Russia, Dr. Cyr said, “So far, there is no significance for U.S. relations with China, Russia or other major powers. The U.S.-South Korea military alliance is exceptionally strong. South Korea, for example, maintained about 50,000 troops in South Vietnam during the long U.S. war there, only because of fraternal commitment. Cancelling a single military exercise is of no consequence in this context.”

The meetings between the leaders of the two Koreas are extremely important. Before, Pyongyang tried hard to work only with the U.S. and deny the existence of the government in Seoul.

France dangerous game over the Nuclear Deal



1 → Although part of U.S. secondary sanctions against Iran is scheduled to be implemented in August, but this is of no importance to the European troika! The French authorities’ focus and emphasis on «November» has also been well targeted. The U.S. Congress elections will be held in November, and the results could lead to the loss of the majority Republicans in Congress (House of Representatives and Senate), and thereby, Donald Trump’s domestic and international maneuverability may decrease. However, the opposite can also come true. That is, the Republicans possible victory in Congress could lead to more pressures on Europe by the United States’ controversial President between 2018 and 2020. French and European officials are now trying to continue their game until November to see what will eventually happen, and then act accordingly.

2) Over the recent months, Democrats in the United States held negotiations with the U.S. European allies. They have promised Europeans that in case of their victory in the U.S. midterm elections, the White House’s confrontation with the United Europe would considerably decrease. However, the French authorities, on the one hand, aren’t sure of the Democrats’ victory in the U.S. midterm elections, and on the other hand, they are not convinced of the implementation of their commitments to «restrain Trump.» The European troika believes that if the case of the «European JCPOA» was closed before November, and then the Congress would remain in the hands of the Republicans, they would lose one of their main levers in dealing with the White House. This bitter truth reflects the illegal encountering of the United Europe with the JCPOA on the one hand, and on the other hand, it indicates Europe’s inclination for continued security and economic dependence on the United States. Obviously, in such a situation, counting on the «European JCPOA» would be considered a terrible mistake.

3) In August 2017, the French pledged Donald Trump and Netanyahu to pursue their four demands, namely the inspection of Iran’s military sites by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), removal of the so-called Sunset clauses (in order to permanently restrict Iran’s nuclear activities), and to limit Iran’s missile capabilities and regional activities. In this equation, French President Emmanuel Macron played a pioneering role in identifying himself as Washington and Tel Aviv’s most useful ally in the European Union. After the United States unilaterally pulled out of the nuclear deal, Macron was disturbed with President Trump. However, he still has his eyes fixed on the other side of the Atlantic.

In 2017, the French began the process of «limiting Iran’s regional power» but failed to do so. This year again, they’re trying to manage the process of «prolonging talks with Iran over European JCPOA.» Le Drian’s recent words shows that Europe has no intention of confronting the Trump government (at least until November). The Elysee Palace plans to finalize its plans and actions in the run-up to the November elections, based on the valid polls conducted in the United States.

Finally, the French Foreign Minister’s statements unveil the Europe’s hideous and entirely political game towards the JCPOA. Obviously, our country’s diplomacy apparatus and foreign policy system shouldn’t act passively about the continuation of this process by the European authorities. Undoubtedly, Emmanuel Macron and other officials in the Elysees Palace can’t hide their policies and measures from the Iranian nation, just like they couldn’t hide their direct play on Trump’s ground from tens of millions of Iranians.

Iran is not alone at all in these difficult times

1 → Even while the U.S. is at the apex of its military power with its vast spending, the foundations, particularly the economic foundations to sustain power, are slowing rotting away. When former President Richard Nixon took the U.S. fully off the gold standard in 1971, he opened the door to an ungoverned spending spree with “money” conjured from thin air the likes of which the world had never seen before. Current debts are unsustainable, and unfunded liabilities ahead in the U.S. may top \$200 trillion. Deficit spending under Trump, and the recent tax cuts, suggest deficits above \$1 trillion every year for the next decade at least. This will likely trigger a monetary crisis where the dollar is deeply devalues and loses its “exorbitant privilege” as the world reserve currency. The two core government programs, aside from the military spending, benefitting Americans have long been Social Security and Medicare. They are also a big hit to the U.S. financial situation, and current estimates say both Medicare and Social Security will be bankrupt or insolvent within the next 15 years. Take either away from Americans and political upheaval, even some sort of revolution, is likely.

In fact, what we see now in the U.S. with the erosion of civil liberties, surveillance of citizens, the rejection of Constitutional mandates and more, is little more than the efforts by the “elites” to forestall a political upheaval or revolution by the bewildered U.S. masses who are sinking deeper into relative poverty, just as many other countries, including Iran, suffer economically because of U.S. power. Meanwhile, in the Middle East, both Saudi Arabia and Israel, the prime allies of the U.S. in the region, are increasingly on shaky ground both economically and morally. But what does this mean for Iran?

Iran is in for a rough(er) patch going forward, for a while, and so are many other countries both in the Middle East and elsewhere such as Latin America and Asia. Iranians ought not to feel alone in this difficult time of transitions. So are U.S. citizens facing hard times ahead, and Iranians should not condemn Americans generally, I daresay. Many in the U.S. feel powerless and afraid, too, because of Washington’s and Wall Street’s insane policies to control and maintain the narrative, along with its corrupt allies like Saudi Arabia and Israel. Fortitude



They are also a big hit to the U.S. financial situation, and current estimates say both Medicare and Social Security will be bankrupt or insolvent within the next 15 years.

and unity must be paramount, particularly in Iran. But this means that Iran’s “elites” must also be willing to accede to the wishes of Iranian citizens generally, and use this difficult period to self-reflect and shore up internal support not with batons and bullets, but with a genuine willingness to vanquish corruption and above all listen attentively to all Iranians. If Iran’s leaders can do this

successfully, and foster internal unity and support, then in time, the current difficulties will abate and Iran, as a vital part of a rising Eurasia under Chinese and even Russian leadership, will find itself in much better shape than it currently is as a resource and culturally rich country that deserves far better than what an imperial U.S. has been meting out for decades since World War 2.

‘No one can dictate to Syria but Syrians’: Syrian MP

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

By Mohammad Fatemi Zadeh

TEHRAN — In recent days, we have witnessed Israeli military strike on parts of Syria, as the regime has threatened to occupy the Syrian province of Quneitra. However, Syrian authorities reacted to the attacks.

In the political arena, news has come out about the future meeting of Russian and American presidents over Syria.

To explore more on that issue, one of the Mehr news agency reporters sat with Nidal Hamidi, a representative of the Syrian parliament.

Following is the full text of the interview:
■ What is the Zionists’ objective of the recent strikes on Syria particularly in Quneitra?

A: The Zionist regime is an enemy and has eyes for Syria and the region. This regime, as Global Freemasonry has portrayed it craves to lead the region, but only in his dream.

The Israeli spell was broken in the war against Lebanon in 2006 by Lebanese Hezbollah. The Zionists are certain that Syria is not easy bait, because it has a strong army with its allies and partners in the region and world.

We are positive that Russia, Iran and other friends won’t betray us. As we stood by Iran during the eight-year war (Iran-Iraq War, 1980–88), Tehran will do the same for us, because simply we share common enemy and objectives.

A few months ago, the U.S.-led coalition



bombed Syria, though the Syrian air defenses retaliated. The usurper got the message that they cannot reap the benefit by counting on militia and armed groups.

■ What is the plan for the Syrian political and economic future, especially in the reconstruction of the country after the defeat of ISIS terrorist group?

A: Syrian political future is drawn up by its nation political leaders who have nothing to conceal from its people. Ever since the war broke out, Syrian authorities have stressed that they are moving in two political and military spheres. Obviously, everyone is after his own country’s interests, and the Syrian army monitors the Golan and the occupied

territories.

In the economic segment, no country can stand against Syria. We are moving in the interests of the Syrians. The political leadership is concerned with the reconstruction of the country and the government is taking action in that direction too. Each free-of-terrorist province will be ready for reconstruction.

■ What is the security situation in southern Syria, and what are the Arab and Western countries roles in this region?

A: The security situation is very good, thanks to the presence of the courageous Syrian army in the south and elsewhere in the country. Americans and the West have stopped supporting the armed forces in these

areas, or so they say. The United States and the West are certain that the Syrian army will not give terrorists access to the land.

We have a wise leader and brave army forces, and the will of the Syrians is invincible. We have honest allies, as well.

■ Trump and Putin are scheduled to hold their first official summit in coming days. It has been said that the Syria issues will be discussed during the meeting. Is it right?

A: What Trump and Putin are negotiating about is primarily about Syria, and I do not know the details. But nobody can dictate something unlawful to the Syrian leader.

Iranian companies participate in Syrian economy and Iran has military advisers in Damascus. Each country benefits from other country’s experts. For example, the Saudis have gotten help from American experts.

■ Recently, Lebanon’s Hezbollah has called for the return of Syrian refugees from Lebanon to Syria. What is the reason behind that?

A: What Lebanese Hezbollah has said is no different from the official source in the Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, because the Syrian Foreign Ministry has called on all Syrians abroad to return to their homeland. Because the Syrian lands are completely liberated from the hands of the terrorists and the Syrians must return to the country to build the new Syria. Syrians are the one to build their country based on their own experience and institutions of the country.

One Belt, One Road, Silk Road’s new challenges, opportunities

1 → In business, the delay of goods shipment per day reduces trade at least by one percent. Improving the rail network and other transport infrastructure in partnership with the region will lead to further trade, investment and economic growth of the countries on the path.

There are challenges with all opportunities, and that does not exclude the OBOR project.

The first problem is political barriers and impenetrable borders of some of the states on the road. Transit delays, customs procedures and restrictions, and limitation of direct investment in these countries require political reform and cooperation among countries.

Economic indicators demonstrate that it takes 50 days to pass through a country in Central Asia, while this time in the Group of Seven (G7) countries is round 10 days.

The potential risk of environmental degradation and the loss of bioavailability is a further concern for the implementation of this plan. Prior to carrying out any infrastructure projects and transportation, environmental hazards should be identified and carefully addressed to minimize damage to the natural environment and habitats.

And last but not least, the large-scale infrastructure project is quite costly and requires some of the states to get a loan proportion to their participation, and that can in turn lead to many debts that could endanger the stability of these countries.

Thus, the Chinese initiative that involves the two continents of Asia and Europe, calls for addressing challenges and opportunities of the new Silk Road Plan not only for China but also for many third-world countries on this path.

Pars Diplomatic Real Estate

Apartment

Apt in Fereshteh
13th floor 300 sq.m, 4 Bdrs. unfurn
balcony, nice view
3 parking places, equipped
kitchen, lobby, lobby man
\$3300
Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Apt in Shahrak e Qarb
145 sq.m, 2 Bdrs., fully furn
parking, **\$2300**
Ms.Diba: 09128103206

Apt in Zafaranih
1st floor, 282 sq.m, 4 Bdrs.
fully furn, 2 balconies, spj
2 parking places, renovated
\$6000
Ms.Diba: 09128103206

New Duplex Apt in Elahieh
6th floor, 160 sq.m, 3 Bdrs.
unfurn, equipped kitchen
spj, lobby, pkg, **\$3800**
Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Apt in Kamranih
nice tower, 220 sq.m, 3 Bdrs.
equipped kitchen, spj
nice balcony, gym saloon, nice
garden, diplomatic tower
\$4500
Ms.Diba: 09128103206

Apt in Jordan
70 sq.m, 1 Bdr., fully furn, nice &
cozy, parking, **\$1400**
Ms.Diba: 09128103206

Villa

Villa in Zafaranih
Duplex, 564 sq.m, 6 Bdrs. fully
furn, spj, yard, pkg, renovated
\$5500
Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Villa in Valiasr-Park way
triplex villa, 500 sq.m built up 600
sq.m land, 5 Bdrs., modern
renovated, barbeque, garden
servant quarter, luxury furn
outdoor pool, cozy & beautiful
\$12000
Ms.Diba: 09128103206

Super Luxury Villa
in Aqdasieh
3000 sq.m land, 2600 sq.m built
up, duplex, 14 Bdrs., parking
renovated, pool, gym saloon
servant quarter
Suitable for
Residency of Ambassadors
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Culinary festival warmly welcomed in Semnan



HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** — The first gastronomy festival in Semnan province was enthusiastically welcomed by the public, secretary of the festival has said.

“People of Semnan hailed the gastronomy festival, yet requested both in person and by leaving comments on social media for holding a similar event,” ISNA quoted Hamidreza Doustmohammadi as saying on Saturday.

“Its public cooking competition was extended to a second day. Moreover, attendance of over 50 professional chefs was a highlight of the event.”

The festival was held from July 4 to 6 under the auspices of the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization. It also included cuisine-associated workshops, crafts exhibits and other side-section programs.

Mongolia, China, Russia discuss ways to develop cross-border tourism

ULAN BATOR (Xinhua) — The third tourism ministerial meeting of Mongolia, China, and Russia was held here on Monday, with the aim to deepen trilateral exchanges in the tourism sector.

Over 150 Mongolian representatives, a 61-member Chinese delegation, and a 17-member Russian delegation participated in the meeting.

The three sides discussed ways to develop cross-border tourism, increase the number of tourists, jointly develop tourism products, improve the quality of services for tourists and simplify visa policies to facilitate tourism, Mongolia’s Ministry of Environment and Tourism said in a statement on Monday.

Also, they agreed to exchange relevant statistical data on tourism industry and share their experiences on how to attract tourists.

In addition, they agreed to study the issue of establishing tourist information centers in major cities and promote the development of the Silk Road tourism brand.

Initiated by China, the first ministerial meeting was held in China’s Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region in 2016, and the second in Russia’s Buryatia last year.

According to official data released by the Mongolian Environment and Tourism Ministry, a total of 144,000 Chinese tourists visited Mongolia in 2017, up 8 percent from the previous year. The number of tourists from Mongolia to China reached 345,000 in 2017.

Mongolia has been striving to develop its tourism sector in a bid to diversify its mining-dependent economy. The landlocked country has declared 2018 as a tourism year. It has set a goal of hosting 1 million foreign tourists and earning 1 billion U.S. dollars in 2020.

ROUND THE GLOBE

Pre-Hispanic city of Teotihuacan

Teotihuacan and its valley bear unique testimony to the pre-urban structures of ancient Mexico.

Human occupation of the valley of Teotihuacan began before the Christian era, but it was only between the 1st and the 7th centuries CE that the settlement developed into one of the largest ancient cities in the Americas, with at least 25,000 inhabitants.

The city’s urban plan integrated natural elements of the

A view of the Avenue of the Dead and the Pyramid of the Sun, from the Pyramid of the Moon in Teotihuacan, Mexico

Teotihuacan Valley, such as the San Juan River, whose course was altered to cross the Avenue of the Dead.

This north-south oriented main reference axis of the city is lined with monumental buildings and complexes, from which the Pyramids of the Sun and the Moon, as well as the Great Compound with the Temple of Quetzalcoatl (also known as Temple of the Plumed Serpent) stand out.

One characteristic of the city’s civil and religious architecture is the “talud-tablero”, which became a distinctive feature of this culture.

Furthermore, a considerable number of buildings were decorated with wall paintings where elements of worldview and the environment of that time were materialized. The city is considered a model of urbanization and large-scale planning, which greatly influenced the conceptions of contemporary and subsequent cultures. The city was razed by fire and subsequently abandoned during the 7th century.

(Source: UNESCO)

Escape the summer heat: natural destinations around Tehran

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** — The summertime has always been synonymous with relaxation and adventurous trips and in this regard Tehran does not disappoint.

While in the bustling metropolis, you don’t have to wait until fall or winter to enjoy colder temperatures; just skip the heat for many lush gardens and atmospheric villages in the surroundings.

On the northeast side, lie the townships and villages of Damavand, Fasham, Oushan, Ahar, Meygoun, Cheshmeh A’la and Garm-abdareh to name a few. Most of them are themed with natural beauties, fresh air, abundant fruit gardens, recreational centers, and restaurants.

Shahandasht waterfall is another eastward destination which is located off the Haraz road that connects Tehran to the Caspian Sea in the north. The 50-meter waterfall is adjacent to Malek-Bahman stronghold which date from the Sassanid era (224 CE to 651).

The list also includes Tangeh Vashi, a popular mountainous resort famous for having a cool stream and a Qajar-era (1789–1925) bas-relief.

Riverside Kan and Sulqan rural districts are amidst westward destinations. There are also colorful valleys across the popular Chalous road which has hectic rows of restaurants and coffee shops.

Darband and Darakeh, scenic villages on the northern Tehran, are maybe the most assessable destinations.

At 1700m elevation, Darakeh embraces many riverside restaurants. It’s possible to hike towards the Tochal cable car and beyond. Tehran’s Tajrish Sq. is a gateway to the



People walk along a rocky route that goes to Darband, an atmospheric resort in northern Tehran.

rocky village of Darband where people hike upward trails that are full of atmosphere, traditional teahouses and restaurants. And last but not least, Tehran inspires its visitors with abundant art galleries, public parks, heritage museums and historical places.

Iran’s tourism project wins COMCEC prize

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** — The Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC), which is affiliated with the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation, has awarded a \$97,000 prize to Iran for its project titled “Inclusion of Local Communities in Sustainable Muslim Friendly Tourism,” CHTN reported on Sunday.

The scheme will be initially implemented as a pilot project in Iran, Turkey and Kyrgyzstan, then it would be carried out in other Islamic countries and finally it will find its way to other countries under the auspices of UNESCO, the report said.

“Creating jobs, [rebuilding] rural economy, and establishing synergy are amongst strategic objectives of this project.”

The COMCEC Project Funding supports the top projects that are proposed by the member countries in order to get

Organizations, Education Schools etc.

COMCEC

means

Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation

recognition.

For the research projects, the payments are made in two

installments; the first will be paid after the first draft of the research study is approved by the COMCEC and the second will be paid after the approval of the research report, according to its website.

Realization of policy recommendations adopted by the COMCEC ministerial sessions, and enhancing solidarity and multilateral cooperation among member states are amongst objects that the Ankara-based Office follows.

Back in January, Iran allocated 24 trillion rials (some \$600 million) to empowering rural areas and small towns in arenas of handicraft-associated jobs, ecotourism and hospitality industry.

Due to having a very diverse natural setting, Iran offers many to experience for the nature-loving travelers who may live with a nomad or rural family or enjoy an independent stay to learn about rustic routines, traditional art and culture.

Russian archaeologists discover ancient Greek musical instruments near Crimea

Researchers from the Institute of Archeology at the Russian Academy of Sciences have unearthed the remains of ancient Greek musical instruments - a harp and a lyre - on the Taman Peninsula in southern Russia, the Academy said in a statement.

“Until recently, we had known of

only one partially preserved ancient Greek harp found in the Piraeus necropolis in Athens and the tuning pegs of a harp uncovered from a necropolis in Taranto, southern Italy,” the statement says, citing expedition leader Roman Mimokhod. “The harp found in the Piraeus necropolis dates back to the late fifth century BC and the tuning

pegs from Taranto were discovered in a tomb dating back to the third or second centuries BC. Compared to these previous discoveries, the harp unearthed in Taman is one of the most ancient and well-preserved as far as ancient Greek musical instruments are concerned,” the researcher added.

Russian researchers made this

discovery while examining an ancient necropolis located near the Volna settlement. Archaeologists say that a Greek polis existed there from the second quarter of the sixth century BC to the fourth century AD, which belonged to the Bosporan Kingdom, spanning both sides of the Kerch Strait.

The Institute of Archeology’s Sochi expedition has been going on in the area for the third year in a row. Researchers have examined more than 600 tombs and unearthed unique artefacts that prove close links between ancient Greek and local cultures.

(Source: TASS)

Virgin Galactic wants to launch space tourism flights



Italian Space Agency as a science platform for high-frequency space research, Virgin Galactic said in a release.

Virgin Group founder Richard Branson said he believes the collaboration will pro-

vide “a real impetus as we strive to open space for the benefit of life on Earth ... together, we will help to expand opportunities for science, industry, and the millions of people who dream of experiencing space for themselves.”

Virgin Galactic recently completed the second successful rocket-powered test flight of its latest SpaceShipTwo plane called VSS Unity, the two-crew, six-passenger aircraft that will take space tourists on their thrilling trips to a point 62 miles above Earth.

Depending on how the trials progress, Virgin Galactic could launch its first commercial service for tourists from its existing

Spaceport America in New Mexico. The company’s CEO, George Whitesides, even teased the idea of “high speed, intercontinental travel” between the American and Italian spaceports at some point in the future.

Virgin Galactic recently said it believes it can begin offering suborbital space trips in the next 12 months. Around 700 people have already booked a seat with the company, with each ticket costing \$250,000. Virgin Galactic said the growing list of customers means anyone buying a ticket today will probably have to wait until at least 2021 before they can climb aboard the aircraft.

(Source: Digital Trends)

England’s staying home: travel industry misery as holiday prices tumble

England’s progress in the World Cup and the long, hot summer are turning into a disaster for the travel industry. In a desperate bid to get passengers on board, airlines and holiday companies are slashing prices for departures in the coming week.

After defeating Sweden in the World Cup quarter-final, England are guaranteed to be playing in Moscow on Wednesday and again in Russia next weekend.

The Independent tracked prices throughout the business day for travel firms on Saturday. At one point, TUI – the UK’s biggest holiday company – was selling a week’s package holiday from Manchester to Marmaris in Turkey for £117.

The deal, on Tuesday 10 July, included flights with 15kg of luggage, transfers between Dalaman airport and the resort, and self-catering accommodation.

An off-peak return train ticket from Manchester to Torquay on the same dates costs £144.

The departure to Turkey sold out during the afternoon, but other sub-£200 holidays are available – a remarkable

price for high-season travel.

From Norwich on Monday, another TUI holiday to Gran Canaria is available for £199. Thomas Cook is selling a week on the Greek island of Zante, departing from Birmingham on Thursday, for £222.

More upmarket holidays are also widely available at attractive prices. Jet2holidays has a week at the Hotel Dalmacija in the Croatian resort of Makarska for £475, including breakfast.

Jamie Rollo, a leisure analyst for Morgan Stanley, told investors in a market update: “We spoke to a number of UK tour operators this week, and the consensus was that overseas holiday bookings have weakened in the last few weeks.

“This was put down to a combination of the weather, following the longest heatwave since 1976 and June the driest month on record, and the World Cup.”

Budget airline fares are also tumbling. On the day of England’s semi-final in Moscow, Wednesday 11 July, TUI has an early-morning departure from Gatwick to Palma de Mallorca for £49, including a return flight a week later.

For travelers who prefer the mountains in summer, Ryanair is offering return flights from Stansted to Grenoble on the same dates for £37.

One airline actually profiting from England’s progress in the World Cup is British Airways, which is commanding the highest-ever fares on its three daily links between Heathrow and Moscow’s Domodedovo airport.

Shortly after the final whistle in the England v Sweden quarter-final in Samara, BA told The Independent that it had deployed larger Boeing 777 aircraft on five of its key round-trips to the Russian capital.

Fares fell from the previous level of £1,049, but only to £932 return. England are now guaranteed to be playing in Russia next weekend, either in the final on Sunday in Moscow or the third-place play-off in St Petersburg on Saturday.

British Airways serves both destinations from Heathrow. Cheaper deals are available on connecting flights, such as LOT Polish Airlines via Warsaw.

(Source: Independent)

‘Mosaic’ HIV vaccine shows promise in first human trial

An experimental HIV vaccine showed promise of protecting healthy adults from contracting the deadly virus that killed millions of people in the past years. The drug showed it could boost the immune responses against HIV. A vaccine created from various HIV strains, called the “mosaic” vaccine, shows potential to protect people against the many types of virus that cause AIDS.

The vaccine improved the immune responses against HIV during a clinical trial involving nearly 40 healthy adults. With this positive result, the experts involved in the experiment are now moving to the next phase of human trials involving 2,600 women in southern Africa who are at risk of contracting HIV.

The mixture of HIV strains in the “mosaic” vaccine is delivered using a nonreplicating common-cold virus. To date, the “mosaic” is one among the only five experimental HIV vaccines that have proceeded to efficacy human trials.

For the experiment, the researchers recruited 393 healthy adults aged 18 to 50 years old from 12 clinics in East Africa, South Africa, Thailand, and the United States. “Healthy” means that they were not infected by HIV.



These participants were divided into two groups: first, those who were injected one of seven vaccine combinations or a placebo, and second, those who were injected with four vaccinations over the course of 48 weeks. The volunteers were also injected with the common-cold virus to boost their immune

system once at the start of the trial and again 12 weeks later into the study.

■ The mosaic vaccine

The result of the study, published in The Lancet on July 6, showed that “mosaic” vaccine was able to trigger anti-HIV immune responses in healthy individuals. At this level,

the vaccine proved to be capable of protecting the participants from the deadly virus.

Some of the volunteers reported some side effects but the researchers said they were tolerable. Five participants experienced one of the following: diarrhea, postural dizziness, and back pain.

At this point, however, the researchers clarified that the positive results were not guaranteed yet that an HIV treatment is at hand.

As of June 2018, data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said there were an estimated 38,500 new HIV infections in 2015 in the United States. At the end of 2015, there were an estimated 1,122,900 adults and adolescents who were living with HIV. Among people aged 13 to 24 with HIV, an estimated 51 percent were not aware that they have the disease.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organization and UNAIDS estimated that there were about 36.7 million people who were living with HIV worldwide at the end of 2016. In that same year, some 1.8 million people were newly infected while 1 million had already died because of HIV-related complications. (Source: Tech Times)

Spiders can fly thousands of miles by harnessing Earth’s electric fields

Spiders can float for thousands of miles using their silk, but there’s more to it than just using their intricate web like a parachute.

In a process called ballooning, arachnids go airborne by climbing to a relatively high point, raising their abdomen, producing silk, and floating away for miles and miles.

An easy explanation is that the wind simply carried the “balloon” away, but as the Atlantic notes, this makes little sense since spiders only take to the air during gentle winds. It’s unlikely these light breezes can provide ample lift and acceleration for adult spiders, especially over great distances.

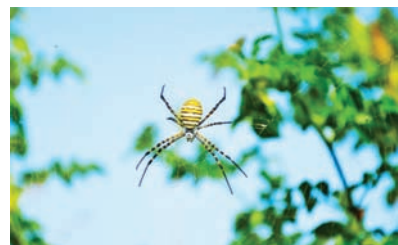
Now, new research provides a clue to the answer: it turns out the Earth’s electric field is closely intertwined with the arachnid’s ability to fly.

■ Spider ballooning

“We don’t yet know whether electric fields are required to allow spider ballooning,” Erica Morley from the University of Bristol explains in a statement. “We do, however, know that they are sufficient.”

Earth’s electrical circuit is ever present, caused by the thunderstorms occurring throughout the world every day. On a sunny, clear day, the charge or atmospheric potential gradient can be around 100 volts per meter above the ground. During thunderstorms or when there are charged clouds, this can shoot up to 10 kilovolts per meter.

To see whether spiders respond to this electrically charged field, Morley and colleague Daniel Robert took spiders from the Erigone genus to the laboratory where there’s no other stimuli that can spur its flight such as air movement. Then the team turned the electric fields on and off in order to see the



spiders’ reaction to it.

They found that spiders respond to the APG-like electric fields by ballooning. In particular, the tiny sensory hairs on the spiders’ exoskeleton called trichobothria move in response to the electricity in the air. Morley and Robert suggest these allow the spiders to actually detect the electric field.

Once the spiders are in the air, turning the electric field on and off drove them to float up and down, respectively.

■ Animals exhibiting abilities

These new findings can help scientists more accurately predict ballooning behavior in spiders as well as other animals who exhibit the ability such as caterpillars and spider mites.

Aside from the electric circuit of the Earth, the fibers that spiders spin are also a significant part of being able to fly.

A study published in PLOS Biology last June explains that contrary to the belief that adult spiders only use a few thick fibers for ballooning, they actually produce two different kinds: a few strands of thick one and dozens of a far thinner fiber. This unique combination is enough to carry a heavy spider over miles and miles. (Source: natureworldnews.com)

Stress in early childhood could make the brain’s DNA remap itself

A 2018 study has discovered that when mice pups are neglected by their mother, it appears to trigger ‘jumping’ genes in their brain cells. This hints at similar processes in humans that could help explain the development of certain neurological disorders.

The ability for certain genes to copy themselves and migrate from one section to another is far from unknown. In fact, we’ve been studying them for more than half a century.

These sections of code – called transposons – can produce a mosaic of neighboring cells that technically have slightly different genetic maps, even though they belong to the same individual.

“We are taught that our DNA is something stable and unchanging which makes us who we are, but in reality it’s much more dynamic,” explained geneticist Fred “Rusty” Gage from the Salk Institute in California.

■ Genes capable of copying themselves

“It turns out there are genes in your cells that are capable of copying themselves and moving around, which means that, in some ways, your DNA does change.”

The fact this happens in brain cells as they grow and divide is also well established. Sequences called long interspersed nuclear elements (LINEs) were seen changing positions in dividing hippocampus cells taken from rats more than a decade ago.

In recent years, a significant amount of attention has been devoted to understanding how external ‘epigenetic’ changes to our DNA can be the result of environmental conditions.

Some have even been considered as contributing factors behind the development



of neurological conditions such as autism spectrum disorder.

But the effect of the environment on the transposons hasn’t been so scrutinized, possibly because we assume the genes we inherit simply don’t change their code all that easily.

“While we’ve known for a while that cells can acquire changes to their DNA, it’s been speculated that maybe it’s not a random process,” said the study’s first author Tracy Bedrosian.

“Maybe there are factors in the brain or in the environment that cause changes to happen more or less frequently.”

So together with two other researchers, Bedrosian and Gage investigated how a sequence called a LINE-1 retrotransposon copied and relocated itself in the dividing hippocampus cells of mice pups.

■ The pups’ environment

Specifically, they paid close attention to whether the pups’ environment made much of a difference to this gene-jumping process.

Rather than create a hostile environment for a sample of the young mice, the researchers watched how mothers raised their offspring over a period of two weeks. (Source: sciencealert.com)

IRANOL Oil Co. to Introduce High-Quality Lubricants to Consumer Market

IRANOL Oil Company’s new oils and lubricants with the highest quality will hit the consumer market in very near future, the Public Relations Dept. of the company reported.

For his part, Eng. Isa Es’haghi CEO of IRANOL Oil Company said that high-quality lubricants and engine oils, observing requirements of international formulation standards, will hit the consumer market in the very near future.

Speaking in a ceremony to honor unflinching and industrious activities of servicemen and technicians of the company in Gilan Province, he said, “in line with increasing quality and completing its portfolio, IRANOL Oil Company will introduce four of its new products to the consumer market in the year named after ‘Supporting Iranian Products’ as instructed by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution in the beginning of the current year in 1397 (started March



21, 2018).”

The four new lubricants of the company have been licensed by Germany’s MERCEDES-BENZ and also French

Renault Company, he maintained.

Of total four lubricants, three of which have been licensed by other companies while one of which has been produced between IRANOL Oil Company and PETRONAS Company within the framework of joint venture project (JV), Es’haghi opined.

With the coordination made in this regard, the company managed to break the production and sales record in a way that the company got the lion’s share of oil production in the market, he reiterated.

Eng. Kazemi Marketing, Sales and Export Manager of the company expounded on the activities and performance of the company and placed special emphasis on supplying new products in order to increase quality of products and completion of portfolio.

Ayandeh Bank’s 1st VTM Launched in Kish Island

Concurrent with the Annual Kish Summer Festival, the first Virtual Teller Machine (VTM) of Ayandeh Bank was launched in Kish Island International Airport, the Public Relations Dept. of the bank reported.

The bank launched VTM in Kish Island with the aim of expansion and development of electronic branches and in line with accelerating development and progress trend in e-banking system coupled with

gaining customers’ satisfaction.

Virtual Teller Machine (VTM) is new and advanced generation of teller devices. Moreover, offering all ATM services to customers, VTM enjoys the capability of fulfilling a major portion of banking services of the branches and physical booths such as opening various kinds of banking accounts, requesting for the issuance and receiving deposit and issuing checkbook

electronically.

Authenticating, submitting and delivering required identification documents, registering fingerprint and signature of customer for any type of banking operations are of the salient characteristics of VTM device.

Requesting password for Internet and Telephone Bank, transferring internal fund (from deposit), transferring interbank

money (SATNA and PAYA), Internet Bank, issuing cash card, etc. have been cited as the other salient advantages of the VTM.

Of the other specifications of VTM, it should be referred to offering consultation services to customers through video conference, requesting issuance of checkbook, paying installments of facilities, announcing the balance of account, receiving and paying cash fund, etc.

Moallem Insurance Co. to see off Iranian cyclists to Konya

In order to commemorate the Persian culture and honor the 800th birthday anniversary of Molana, known Iranian poet and philosopher, Moallem Insurance Company will convoy Iranian cyclists to Turkey’s Konya, the Public Relations Dept. of the company reported.

It is supposed that statue of this worldly renowned poet will be submitted by Iranian cyclist team, represented by Moallem Insurance Company, to mayor of Konya in Turkey.

It is hoped that always-known champion of Iranian cyclists will reinstate the name of Moallem Insurance Company

and hoist the everlasting flag of Iran in this magnificent and prestigious event.

It should be noted that a grand commemoration ceremony is held every year for the great Iranian poet and philosopher Molana for a period of seven days. This prestigious ceremony is held on Dec. every year in a way that a large number of tourists reach themselves to Konya in Turkey in order to observe and endear the name and memory of this distinguished and outstanding Iranian poet, the Public Relations Dept. of the company ended.



Ex-smokers relapse because they crave lost identity, research says

We all know smoking is highly physically and psychologically addictive. Now, research into why smokers relapse has shown that as well as nicotine, ex-smokers crave their old social identities.

Around three quarters of attempts to quit fail within four weeks, the researchers based in the UK noted. They believe former smokers are vulnerable to relapse because lighting up becomes tied in with who they are, often at a young age. Smoking again recaptures what they perceive as their lost social identity as a “smoker.”

To investigate the potential psychological and social factors of ex-smokers reverting back to their former ways, researchers at the University of East Anglia interviewed 43 people who had quit and relapsed.

The individuals detailed their history of smoking, their attempts at quitting, and why past and recent efforts had failed.

The authors concluded that well as physical addiction, smoking causes emotional, behavioral and social dependencies, too. The study was published in the Journal of Substance Use.

Dr. Caitlin Notley, study author and senior lecturer in mental health and fellow of the U.K. Society for the Study of Addiction, explained the study indicates relapse is associated with a range of emotional triggers.

Notley acknowledged the study was a small-scale qualitative study, and the new theory requires further testing. However, she told Newsweek the findings are still significant as they offer new insight into a behavior that is not rational in terms of an individual’s health.

“Understanding the process of relapse may help to inform evidence-based relapse prevention interventions to support people to stay smoke-free long term,” said Notley. “At present in the UK there are no recommended approaches to relapse prevention support due to a lack of underpinning evidence. This study is the first step in providing the necessary evidence.” (Source: Newsweek)

Will dust prevent us living on the Moon?

If astronauts are ever going to return to the Moon, they must come to terms with the hazards of the lunar environment. To combat a major threat to astronaut health and technology, ESA is conducting a major study of moon dust to determine how dangerous it is and how to counter its effects on humans and machines.

Even before Neil Armstrong set foot on the Sea of Tranquility, scientists and engineers were concerned about the hazards of lunar dust. While rockets like the Saturn V were being tested for the first voyages to the Moon, there was a very real concern that moon dust would present an insurmountable barrier to lunar exploration.

The problem was that no one had a firm idea about what the surface of the Moon was like. Perhaps it was as firm as the great lava flats in Hawaii or Iceland. Or maybe the so-called seas and craters were filled with fine dust hundreds of meters deep in which any spaceship would vanish like a sash weight dropped in the ocean.



But what the Apollo astronauts found was unexpected and equally worrying. Instead of seas of liquid-like dust, they discovered that billions of years of micrometeorite impacts had coated the lunar surface with a fine layer of silicate dust that had a number of disturbing qualities.

For one thing, it was as dry as it’s possible to be, and bombardment by solar and cosmic radiation had left the particles with a static electric charge. This made the dust stick to the astronauts’ spacesuits as a grayish, black powder that was almost impossible to shift and ended up contaminating both the interior of the Lunar Module and the orbiting Command Module when they returned, making them smell like burned gunpowder.

Worse, the dryness and radiation made the dust chemically active and the particles were so abrasive that they took their toll on the spacesuits, sample containers, and other equipment. As for the astronauts, all 12 of the moon walkers came down with “lunar hay fever” with symptoms like sneezing and nasal congestion that took days to subside after returning to Earth. (Source: New Atlas)

Scientists achieve success in nitrogen metallization

A Chinese research team announced it has successfully metallized nitrogen at extreme conditions. This exciting result was published in Nature Communications on July 6.

The team, working at the Institute of Solid State Physics at the Hefei Institutes of Physical Science (CASHIPS), developed its own pulsed-laser heating system and ultra-fast optical detection technology to conduct the experiment.

Nitrogen represents about 78 percent of air by volume. Normally, it maintains in a pretty stable molecular gas state without any color or odor. But nitrogen was expected to present quite different properties with exposure to extreme conditions.

For instance, it is believed to turn into a metal in the core of our Earth, and is considered to be one of the most energetic materials in existence.

For years, scientists have been struggling to synthesize a series of materials with extremely high energy based on nitrogen, especially polymeric and metallic nitrogen.

Moreover, it is especially relevant to explore metallic nitrogen at extremely high pressures and temperatures given the challenges of reliable achievement of another equally important material, metallic hydrogen, which is predicted to be a room-temperature superconductor.

In fact, many attempts were made via a variety of methods in previous studies, such as static pressure research with diamond anvil cell and dynamic pressure studies with a gas gun.

The previous results contributed some specific sights into the “hologram” of pressure-temperature-state corresponding information of nitrogen but limited.

JIANG Shuqing, the first author of the paper as well as a scientist working with CASHIPS, said the team scanned the hologram of the properties of nitrogen at a pretty wide range of extreme conditions from 0 to 170 GPa and up to about 8000 K, using the team’s self-developed experimental system. (Source: eurekaalert.org)

Girls’ Day, a time for boosting self-identity and national happiness

W O M E N d e s k **TEHRAN** — In order to boost self-identity and national happiness among girls, the presidential department for women’s and family affairs in cooperation with some other organizations and ministries is going to hold different programs.

The programs are scheduled to commemorate the dignity of Iranian girls by marking the National Girls’ Day, July 15, Mehr reported.



One of the programs is the festival of Iranian girls which will be held on July 15-17 in Tehran’s Book Garden, said Hadi Bahrami, secretary of the festival, adding that the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, the women-only Al-Zahra University, the Department of Technical and Vocational Education in Tehran, the Welfare Organization, the Ministry of Education, Tehran Municipality and the University of Tehran cooperate in holding the festival.

Different workshops for children and young adults are to be held on the sidelines of the festival and the issues concerning girls’ vulnerabilities are to be studied, Bahrami explained.

Another festival-exhibition on Iranian clothing is to be held in the city of Karaj, Alborz Province, said Mohammad Reza Bourang, the executive secretary of the exhibition.

The ten-day exhibition will be opened on July 12, and about 1,500 exemplary girls will be honored at the festival, he added.

The event will be opened in the presence of the vice president for women’s and family affairs Masoumeh Ebtekar, a number of provincial officials and parliament member, he added.

Bourang concluded by saying that the event aims to support traditional clothing of different tribes.

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Peach-nectarine muffins

“These are simple, delicious muffins ... a must try. Enjoy right out of the oven or let cool.”

Ingredients:



- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
 - 3/4 cup white sugar
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt
 - 2 teaspoons baking powder
 - 1/3 cup vegetable oil
 - 1 egg
 - 1/3 cup milk
 - 1 large ripe peach - peeled, pitted and diced
 - 1 very ripe nectarine, pitted and diced
 - 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- **Directions:**
Preheat oven to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C). Grease 8 muffin cups or line with paper muffin liners.

In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar, salt and baking powder. Add vegetable oil, egg and milk; mix well. Fold in diced peach and nectarine. Fill each muffin tin to the top with muffin mix. Sprinkle a little brown sugar onto the top of each uncooked muffin.

Bake in preheated oven for 18 to 20 minutes. Check muffins regularly after 15 minutes of baking. Serve warm or cool.

LEARN ENGLISH

Planning For The Worst

A: Well, right, let’s move to our next **order of business**, as many of you are aware, in recent weeks there has been a lot of media coverage surrounding this **bird flu** issue. And it’s come to my attention that our company lacks any sort of bird flu.

B: Basically, we need to come up with a clear plan; we need to outline specific actions that our company can take to maintain **critical** business functions in case a **pandemic** strike.

A: So, what I’d like to do is: first appoint someone to look after drafting our plan; Ralph, I’d like you to **head up** this project.

C: Sure, no problem. What issues do you want me to consider?

B: Well, let’s see, there are a few points we need to be thinking about... first, I’ll need you to analyze our numbers and figure out what kind of financial impact an **outbreak** might have.

A: You’ll also need to think about how we can avoid any of our employees getting infected; think of ways to reduce employee-customer contact, perhaps some IT solutions that will allow our people to work from home.

C: I guess you’ll need me to **forecast** employee absences as well, right? And I’ll think about the impact this will have on our clients. Hey, what about vaccines? Should we be thinking about getting vaccines for our employees?

A: Exactly right. So, I’ll leave this to you, and we’ll review the draft plan in two weeks. Okay, so, anyone want to order some KFC for lunch?

■ **Key vocabulary**
order of business: an issue that must be discussed
bird flu: flu originated from birds that carry virus; avian influenza
critical: extremely important
pandemic: a situation where a disease is spread out very quickly; epidemic
head up: lead and be responsible for
outbreak: a sudden start of disease affecting many people
forecast: predict what is going to happen based on available information

■ **Supplementary vocabulary**
contingency plan: a plan that prepares for a situation where things can go wrong
backup plan: a plan made in case events go badly
transmit disease: pass disease from one individual to another

Iran to mark hijab and dignity week

W O M E N d e s k **TEHRAN** — Hijab and dignity is one of the important issues and one of the principles of Islam, said Minou Aslani, head of the Women’s Basij Organization, speaking in a press conference held on the occasion of hijab and dignity week, beginning today.

Iranians have always considered hijab as a factor for strengthening the foundation of the families, Aslani said, adding that pious women, based on religious teachings, believe that not observing hijab will create corruption in the society.

Secular culture of West do not consider the identity of women and has a look on physical aspect of women, she noted.

The enemies of Iran make effort to humiliate the issue of hijab and introduce it as ban for women’s empowerment,



while the Islamic Republic of Iran has proved that a woman observing Islamic dress code, can gain the highest scientific and social achievements, Aslani explained.

July 12th marks the day when some people were martyred while protesting against Reza Shah Pahlavi (ruler of Iran from 1925 to 1941) who forced women to remove their hijab in Goharshad Aqa Mosque in Mashhad. The incident happened on July 12, 1935.

The world marks Hijab Day on February 1st. World Hijab Day is an annual event founded by Bangladeshi-American activist Nazma Khan in 2013. Its stated purpose is to encourage women of all religions and backgrounds to wear and experience the hijab. Event organizers describe it as an opportunity for non-Muslim women to experience the hijab.

Family communication could prevent social vulnerabilities: VP

W O M E N d e s k **TEHRAN** — The low rate of communication between family members is one of the problems the society is facing which should be addressed to prevent social vulnerabilities, said Vice President for Women’s and Family Affairs, Masoumeh Ebtekar, on Wednesday.

Speaking at a congress on family and intergenerational communications, held in Semnan Province, Ebtekar put the emphasis on considering inter-family problems which may lead to social troubles.

Today, the decrease of communication between family members and communication disorders is one of the great challenges of the country, which requires cooperation of cultural organizations to be dealt with, Mehr news agency quoted Ebtekar as saying.

Currently, the rate of family communication in Iranian families stands at 20 minutes per day, while the previous records show about 120 minutes of family communication, she regretted.

Many children express anxiety and worry in today’s families which roots from communication problems existing between generations, the female VP noted.

Although, there exists many economic and social problems in the society which affect family life, the parents should create a safe home for the children to



prevent delinquent behaviors in the future, Ebtekar explained.

According to a study made at Virginia State University, family communication refers to the way verbal and non-verbal information is exchanged between family members. Communication involves the ability to pay attention to what others are thinking and feeling. In other words, an important part of communication is not just talking, but listening to what others have to say.

Communication within the family is extremely im-

portant because it enables members to express their needs, wants, and concerns to each other. Open and honest communication creates an atmosphere that allows family members to express their differences as well as love and admiration for one another. It is through communication that family members are able to resolve the unavoidable problems that arise in all families.

Just as effective communication is almost always found in strong, healthy families, poor communication is usually found in unhealthy family relationships. Marriage and family therapists often report that poor communication is a common complaint of families who are having difficulties. Poor communication is unclear and indirect. It can lead to numerous family problems, including excessive family conflict, ineffective problem solving, lack of intimacy, and weak emotional bonding.

Researchers have discovered a strong link between communication patterns and satisfaction with family relationships. In fact, one researcher discovered that the more positively couples rated their communication, the more satisfied they were with their relationship five and a half years later.

Poor communication is also associated with an increased risk of divorce and marital separation and more behavioral problems in children.

Women who work too many hours may be hurting their health

New research published this week in the journal BMJ Open Diabetes Research and Care suggests another diabetes risk factor for women: overworking.

Scientists examined data from 7,065 Canadians who were tracked over a span of 12 years and found that women who worked an average of 45 hours or more had a 63-percent higher risk of developing diabetes compared to those working 35-40 hours per week.

The findings aren’t surprising to Becky Wood of Dallas, who said juggling a career while being a single mom had health consequences she didn’t expect.

She developed diabetes by the time she was 40 and the single mother of two believes working 60 hours a week as an interior designer may have been part of the reason.

“I think the stress, the food choices, the hours of not sleeping enough. The focus, as a single mom, is being able to cover all the bases, make sure everyone is okay, making sure you have everything you need to keep the home running, food on the table,” said Wood.



New research suggest women who work too much have an increased risk for developing diabetes.

“Women tend to be the ultimate scarifiers, sacrificing themselves for others,” said her doctor, Dr. Donna Casey, Internist at Texas Health Dallas.

She said Wood’s poor food choices, lack of sleep and little to no exercise played a role in her diabetes and that she sees many women in her office in a similar health situation.

The good news, she said, is diabetes can be managed and reversed. “Losing weight and changing your diet has immediate results. It’s shocking how we see how quickly people can change things around,” said Dr. Casey.

Wood has made all the right changes, most importantly, working fewer hours.

She said she feels energized and optimistic that her story may resonate with other busy, working women.

“Sometimes, I think, financially, if I slow down, that’s not a good thing, but in reality, in the long run, it’s better to take care of your health when you realize it early on because you will pay the price if you don’t,” said Wood. (Source: nbcsfw.com)

Me and my hijab: Montreal Muslim women speak for themselves

Muslim women in Quebec are sadly injured to being maligned, marginalized and misrepresented. And as provincial party leaders prepare to head out on the campaign trail in preparation for the October election, they are bracing to once again become lightning rods.

For more than a decade now, Quebec has been locked in a struggle over the reasonable accommodation of minorities — a debate is that is frequently anything but, and tends to intensify come election time.

Muslim women, particularly those who wear the hijab as a visible marker of their faith, have born the brunt of the sometimes ugly identity politics that tend to arise as a result. Whether it’s the Parti Québécois’s Charter of Values, which would have prevented everyone from doctors to bureaucrats from wearing headscarves, turbans or kippahs, or the Liberal government’s Bill 62, which restricts anyone with a covered face from giving or receiving public services, these laws seem aimed at dictating what Muslim women wear in the name of secularism and equality.

But missing from the debate are Muslim women. They are often discussed, but not as often invited into the discussion. Talk to them, however, and they are eager to speak for themselves. Get to know Muslim women and they will defy the one-dimensional stereotypes perpetuated about them. Give them a say and they will dispel the myths that they are helpless victims of a paternalistic religion or that their faith is incompatible with feminism and equality.

Studies demonstrate that Muslim women are among the most highly educated minority groups in Canada, with 56 percent possessing post-secondary degrees in 2011. Not all wear the veil. A 2016 Environics poll of Canadian Muslims found 48 percent of female respondents (and of that, 60 percent of those age 18 to 34) wear the hijab, while just two percent wear the niqab, or full face veil. Of those who wear any head-covering at all, another study shows it is overwhelmingly a matter of choice and conviction. The Environics poll also indicates that those who are veiled are more likely to be singled out for discrimination or insults.

The Montreal Gazette recently spoke to a teacher, a journalist, a candidate for the provincial election, an activist and an aspiring police officer — all Muslim women who wear the hijab proudly and have much to



say and contribute.

Nadia Naqvi, a Grade 9 science teacher at Beaconsfield High School, is a natural authority figure who is bubbling with energy. She strives to be a role model for students in her classroom and has also given talks about hate and Islamophobia since the shooting at a Quebec City mosque in 2017, where six worshippers were killed and scores injured.

Fariha Naqvi-Mohamed, her cousin, launched her journalism career with an impassioned open letter to then-premier Pauline Marois at the height of the Charter of Values debate that ended up going viral. She loves poutine and hockey. She is a diversity marketing specialist, writes a blog called CanadianMomEh, and now has a column in the Montreal Gazette.

Aziza Dini is the first hijab-wearing Muslim woman to officially launch a bid to seek provincial office — something that wasn’t even possible until Elections Quebec changed an arcane rule that required candidates to show their heads, shoulders and necks in campaign photos. Dini will run for the Quebec Green Party, which was instrumental in pushing for an update to the regulations. She will face off against Health Minister Gaétan Barrette in La Pinière riding.

Razia Hamidi is an activist and community organizer who has often served as a spokesperson on Muslim issues.

Sondos Lamrhari, 18, is a student in police sciences at Collège Ahuntsic. Her goal to be a police officer became front-page news and a hot-button topic of debate in the National Assembly in April.

It happened shortly after Montreal Mayor Valérie Plante weighed in on the question of whether officers

should be allowed to incorporate religious symbols into their uniforms. Plante said she was favorable, but would let the Montreal Police determine its own policy. The force said the issue was purely theoretical, since there’d never been a request. So a reporter from Le Journal the Montréal called around to all the police tech programs in Quebec to see if there were any students with religious garb coming up through the ranks. She eventually found out about Lamrhari, who agreed to give her an interview.

Reaction to news of Lamrhari and her goal was swift, furious — and predictable. Poll-topping Coalition Avenir Québec leader François Legault even vowed to meet Lamrhari face-to-face to tell her why he would never allow her to wear her hijab as a police officer if he becomes Quebec’s next premier.

The bright, articulate, athletic student didn’t set out to be a barrier breaker, she said recently. When she enrolled in her police tech program a year ago, she figured she was a rarity and would end up being a pioneer of sorts. She only realized from that news report that she might end up being a first.

Whether she intended to become a trail-blazer or not, Lamrhari may inevitably become a test case for the province’s willingness to accommodate her career ambitions and identity.

Quebec’s police academy in Nicolet is in the process of determining its policy on training future officers who wear religious insignia, which will affect Lamrhari’s application after she finishes her college program in three years. But Lamrhari’s fate may also become a barometer of Quebec’s tolerance — if whichever party wins the next election decides to toughen restrictions on religious dress.

Lamrhari said she remains committed to pursuing her path, even if she finds her way barred.

“I can only respond by saying that if it comes to that, it will be too bad,” she said. “It’s my identity to wear the hijab. And it’s my dream to be a police officer. Those are things that aren’t ever going to change.”

Lamrhari and other Muslim women are ready to challenge prejudices and a status quo that underestimates what they have to offer — if we just, as Naqvi-Mohamed said, pass them the mic.

(Source: Montreal Gazette)

Erdogan sworn in as Turkey's first executive president

Recep Tayyip Erdogan was sworn in under Turkey's new presidential system on Monday. Erdogan, the Justice and Development Party (AKP/Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi) and the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP/Nationalist Action Party/Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi) candidate, won the June 24 presidential election with 52.5 percent of the vote.

Erdogan on Monday took the oath of office as Turkey's first executive president. He is expected to announce his cabinet later in the day.

Erdogan was elected on June 24 in a vote marking Turkey's transition to an executive presidential system of government, doing away with the prime minister's post, among other changes.

Erdogan won an absolute majority in the presidential election with 52.59 percent of the vote, according to Turkey's Supreme Election Council (YSK/Yüksek Seçim Kurulu).

■ Paying homage to Atatürk

Presidential aide Ibrahim Kalin said Erdogan would visit the mausoleum of Turkey's founder, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, following the swearing-in ceremony.



He said the presidential inauguration ceremony would be held on Monday at 6.00pm local time (1500 GMT) at the presidential complex in the capital Ankara.

Twenty-two heads of state and 28 prime ministers and speakers of parliament and scheduled to attend the ceremony.

■ 10,000 people invited

Together with the officers and guests of the ceremony, some 10,000 people are expected to take part. Turkish citizens from all walks of life, including teachers, firefighters, village heads, tradesmen, miners and dentists have been invited. Leaders of religious commu-

nities will also attend the event.

Following his visit to Atatürk's mausoleum, the president will enter the presidential complex with a cavalry escort accompanied by an Ottoman-style military band. His entry to the presidential complex will be greeted with a 101-gun salute.

Guests will be given ceremonial 1 Turkish lira coins minted for the occasion. Some of these coins will also be placed on the market. A special stamp will be printed to commemorate Erdogan's inauguration.

Political and religious representatives from the Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia will also attend the ceremony.

The president will also host a dinner in honor of attending heads of states, and selected guests.

■ Erdogan's cabinet

Erdogan told his AK Party group meeting at parliament that he will unveil his cabinet under the new presidential system of governance system at 9.00pm (1600 GMT). Erdogan has also said he intends to include in the cabinet, ministers who are unaffiliated with any political party.

(Source: RT)

Claim of Russia's involvement in second case of poisoning in Britain is 'absurd': Moscow

Russia has strongly rejected the idea that Moscow could have been behind a poisoning incident in which, according to British authorities, a woman has so far lost her life after coming into contact with a highly lethal nerve agent in southern England that is reportedly the same chemical substance that put a former Russian double spy and her daughter in the hospital in the same region some four months ago.

On last Wednesday, Britain's counter-terrorism police said that they had found two British citizens, a couple identified as Dawn Sturgess and Charlie Rowley, in Amesbury, claiming that they had been came into contact with Novichok, a chemical weapon purportedly developed under a secret Soviet program on July 1.

On Sunday, British police announced that Sturgess, a 44-year-old mother of three, died in the hospital following an unexplained exposure to the chemical agent.

This is the second such incident being occurred in southern England. Back on March 4, British authorities announced that former double agent Sergei Skripal, 66,

and his 33-year-old daughter, Yulia, had been hospitalized since they had been found unconscious on a bench outside a shopping center in the city of Salisbury, near Amesbury.

Days later, they also announced that both victims had been exposed to Novichok, accusing Moscow of carrying out the attack yet declining the Kremlin's request for a sample of the chemical agent.

The Kremlin has vehemently rejected any involvement, saying the substance could have originated from the countries studying Novichok, including Britain itself, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Sweden. Moscow has already described the whole bunch of claims as a "circus show" hosted by the British authorities.

"We don't have any information about anyone mentioning Russia in connection with this second incident or Russia being somehow associated with it," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said in a statement on Monday, denouncing such allegations against Moscow as "quite absurd."

He also said that Russia regretted the death of a Briton as he also noted that Moscow was "deeply worried by the

continuing presence of these poisonous substances on British territory." This posed "a danger not only for the British, but for other Europeans," Peskov added.

The other victim, Rowley, 45, still remains hospitalized in critical condition, and the death of Sturgess is now being probed as a murder.

British Prime Minister Theresa May said on Sunday that she was "appalled and shocked" by the death woman's death, and a spokesman for May announced that Britain's Interior Minister Sajid Javid would chair a meeting of the government's emergency committee on Monday.

Russia says Britain shows no interest in a joint investigation into the nerve agent use.

On last Wednesday, British counter-terrorism police said that they were looking for possible links between the new incident and the Skripal case, which sent ties between Moscow and London to their lowest in years. London fired several Russian diplomats over claims that Moscow was behind the attack.

(Source: agencies)

Rescuers bring eighth person out of Thai cave on second day of rescue

Rescue workers in Thailand brought out four people on Monday from a flooded cave where 12 boys and their soccer coach were trapped for more than two weeks, apparently taking the total number rescued to eight.

A Reuters witness near the Tham Luang cave in the northern province of Chiang Rai saw medical personnel carrying four people out of the cave to waiting ambulances over the course of the day.

The rescue operation was launched on Sunday and four boys were brought out that day. They were in good condition in hospital, officials said.

A fifth boy was brought out earlier on Monday, a navy official said, and three more were seen being brought out over subsequent hours.

Reuters could not confirm the identity of the three people brought out in the evening and the chief of the rescue mission, Narongsak Osothanakorn, declined to comment, saying a news conference would be held later on Monday.

The "Wild Boars" soccer team and their coach got trapped on June 23 when they set out to explore the vast cave complex after soccer practice, when a rainy season downpour flooded the tunnels.

British divers found the 13, huddled on a muddy bank in a partly flooded chamber several kilometers inside the complex, on Monday last week.

The dangerous bid to rescue the boys - aged between 11 and 16 - got going again hours earlier on Monday after a break to replenish oxygen supplies and make other preparations deep inside the cave complex.

Authorities have said the mission could take three or four days to complete. It is a race against the clock with heavy rain expected in coming days, which would again dangerously flood the tunnels with fast flowing, and rising, water.

The rescue team went into the cave to resume the operation at 11 a.m. (0400 GMT), Narongsak told a news conference earlier, adding he expected good news.

Thirteen foreign divers and five members of Thailand's elite navy SEAL unit make up the main team guiding the boys to safety through narrow, submerged passageways that claimed the life of a former Thai navy diver on Friday.

Narongsak said that the "same multinational team" that went into the cave on Sunday to retrieve the first four boys was deployed on Monday.

He did not say how many boys the team hoped to bring out on Monday.

On Sunday, divers held the first four boys close to bring them out, and each had to wear an oxygen mask to enable normal breathing, authorities said.

Narongsak said rescuers had to tighten a guide rope as part of their preparations for the second phase of the rescue on Monday.

Interior Minister Anupong Paojinda told reporters the four boys rescued on Sunday were in good health in hospital but did not give details. There was no word on the condition of any of the people brought out on Monday.

Authorities have not confirmed the identity of the first four boys rescued. Some of the boys' parents told Reuters they had not been told who had been rescued and that



they were not allowed to visit the hospital.

Narongsak said the first four rescued boys had not been identified out of respect for the families whose sons were still trapped, adding that the boys were being kept away from their parents due to fear of infection.

"The four children are well at Chiang Rai Prachanukroh hospital. But they still need to be kept away from their parents and others due to fear about infection," he said.

Medical teams previously said concerns included hypothermia and an airborne lung infection known as "cave disease", which is caused by bat and bird droppings.

At least nine ambulances loaded with stretchers and blue oxygen tanks waited by the mouth of the cave on Monday. Soldiers, medics, engineers and volunteers in

yellow shirts milled around but the mood was relaxed.

The cave complex is off-limits during the rainy season, which usually runs from May to October, when downpours can quickly flood it.

Relatives said the boys had been inside the labyrinthine complex during the dry season.

The fate of the boys and their coach has gripped Thailand and drawn international media attention.

The president of soccer's governing body, FIFA (Federation Internationale de Football Association), has invited the boys to the World Cup final in Moscow on Sunday if they make it out in time.

(Source: Reuters)

plaints compared to 2015, when nearly 35,000 rape cases were reported, according to National Crime Records Bureau data.

The number of rapes reported each year in Delhi has more than tripled over the past five years, registering an increase of 277 percent from 572 in 2011 to 2,155 in 2016, according to data released by the Delhi Police.

Senior Supreme Court lawyer, Vrinda Grover, said that she was "not at all convinced that it [the verdict] will be a deterrent this time around".

"The death sentence had been confirmed by the Supreme Court sometime back and this was a review petition. What has happened between the confirmation of death sentence and now - there is no diminution of sexual violence against women," Grover said.

"There is absolutely no link between death sentence and deterrence of crime. Hanging a few men will not change the manner in which women are affected by sexual violence in their daily lives. We will be distracted by this death sentence while this enables the state to abdicate its responsibility to protect women."

(Source: Al Jazeera)

India's Supreme Court upholds death sentence in Delhi rape case

India's Supreme Court has upheld the death sentence in the 2012 New Delhi bus gang-rape case, a crime that sparked widespread protests leading to stronger anti-rape laws.

The country's top court upheld its own judgment on the death sentence given against four men who had fatally gang raped a 23-year-old physiotherapy student, known as Nirbhaya, on a moving bus in New Delhi.

"There is no material to review our order," said the three-judge bench led by Chief Justice Dipak Misra, on the review petition filed by three of the four convicts - Mukesh, Pawan Gupta and Vinay Sharma - who had been handed the death penalty.

Badrinath Singh, the victim's father, said his daughter has "finally got justice".

"... It took the court one year to review the petitions. However, I am happy that my daughter has finally got justice," Singh told reporters.

Of the six people arrested for this crime, one committed suicide in prison in 2013, while a juvenile defendant was sentenced to three years in a reform facility and released in 2015.

The brutal crime had sparked widespread protests and



drew international attention over violence against women in India.

A fast-track court had convicted four defendants to death less than a year after the brutal gang rape and murder of the paramedic student. It was later upheld by the high court.

In 2016, police in India registered 38,947 rape com-

Top Bahraini cleric Sheikh Qassim flown to Britain in critical condition

➔ The cleric, under house arrest since May 2017, was earlier taken to Bahrain International Airport by ambulance, local reports say.

Bahrain Foreign Minister Khalid Al Khalifah wrote on Twitter on July 6 that King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa had allowed Sheikh Isa Qassim to travel to the United Kingdom for medical care.

The online newspaper Rai al-Youm had quoted informed medical sources in London as saying that the top cleric is suffering from cancer, adding that the disease is in an early stage.

Sheikh Qassim was taken to a private hospital in critical condition late last year, and underwent surgery in February.

The news comes as the House of Khalifah regime seeks to silence the opposition and put its leaders in jail, send them into exile or revoke their citizenship.

On May 21 last year, a Bahraini court convicted Sheikh Qassim of illegal collection of funds and money laundering, and sentenced him to one year in jail suspended for three years. It also ordered him to pay \$265,266 in fines in a ruling which sparked widespread demonstrations across the kingdom.

Bahraini authorities stripped the cleric of his citizenship on June 20, 2016. They later dissolved the Islamic Enlightenment Institution founded by Sheikh Qassim as well as the opposition al-Risala Islamic Association.

Anti-regime protesters have held demonstrations in Bahrain regularly since February 2011.

They are demanding that the House of Khalifah relinquish power and allow a just system representing all Bahrainis to be established.

Manama has gone to great lengths to clamp down on any sign of dissent. On March 14, 2011, troops from the House of Saud regime and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) were deployed to assist Bahrain in its crackdown.

Scores of people have lost their lives and hundreds of others sustained injuries or got arrested as a result of the crackdown.

(Source: Press TV)

Russia: 90 Syrian villages, towns join government truce

Russia says the number of villages and towns that have joined a Moscow-brokered truce with the Syrian government in south-western Syria has risen to 90.

The Center for Reconciliation in Syria also said on Monday that the Russian military planned to evacuate up to 1,000 people from the country's southwest, RIA news agency reported.

They would exit via a humanitarian corridor near the city of Dara'a and be transferred to Syria's northern Idlib Province, it added.

Russia has been lending aerial support to an ongoing push by Syria to liberate Dara'a Province and its neighboring provinces of Quneitra and Suwaida, which form Syria's southern tip.

The evacuation comes after Jordan refused to let in those who have been displaced by the operation.

Meanwhile, the official Syrian news agency SANA said life was returning to normal in Dara'a city, with people "feeling safer after years of being subjected to shelling and sniper attacks carried out by the terrorists."

SANA also said that the army had confronted an Israeli aerial aggression targeting the T-4 airbase in the countryside of the western city of Homs.

The army "downed a number of missiles which targeted T-4 airport and hit one of the attacking warplanes, forcing the others to leave the airspace," it reported.

Israel has repeatedly targeted the positions of the army and its allies inside Syria using the Lebanese airspace.

The regime also provides medical treatment to Takfiri terrorists fleeing into the occupied Syrian territory of the Golan Heights.

(Source: Press TV)

Spanish, Catalan leaders meet to breach gap over secession

The new heads of Spain's central and Catalonia's regional governments held talks on Monday for the first time since yearnings for independence in the northeastern region led to an unprecedented political crisis last year.



Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez welcomed Catalan President Quim Torra in the Moncloa Palace, the seat of the national government in Madrid.

Torra has proposed a legal referendum on Catalonia's independence as the only way out of the political deadlock, and is expected to seek Sanchez's authorization to hold it.

"Until we can vote, and vote in a referendum that is legal, binding and has been recognized by both parties as valid, then it is possible that we will never find a solution," he told The Associated Press during an interview last month.

But Sanchez's government has said self-determination is not allowed under Spain's 1978 constitution.

Still, the central government has "great expectations" on the meeting, Cabinet spokeswoman and Education Minister Isabel Celaa said last week.

"We are bringing strength, hope and firmness to the meeting, and we expect reciprocity," said Celaa, who is also the new socialist government's Education Minister.

Sanchez is expected to offer to unblock regional legislation on social issues and to promise infrastructure and other investments unrealized by the previous conservative administration.

Torra's predecessor, Carles Puigdemont, skipped the court summons and fled to Brussels. He's now living in Hamburg, Germany, where he's fighting extradition to Spain.

Polls and recent elections show that the 7.5 million residents of the wealthy region are roughly split down the middle over the question of independence.

(Source: AP)

Spain appoint ex-Barcelona manager Luis Enrique

Luis Enrique has been appointed as the new manager of Spain. The former Barcelona boss will lead La Roja into a new era after the hugely disappointing World Cup campaign. Enrique has signed a two-year contract and will be tasked with steadying the ship following a shambolic few weeks. On the eve of the World Cup, Julen Lopetegui was sensationally sacked by Spanish Football Federation president Luis Rubiales. Lopetegui had taken the Real Madrid job without informing his employers, a betrayal that left Rubiales and the Spanish FA seething. Fernando Hierro was made interim boss for the tournament and despite flashes of their usual passing brilliance, the results were poor. Draws against Portugal and Iran in between a narrow victory over Iran were followed by elimination at the hands of Russia in the last 16. Enrique will be expected to revive Spanish fortunes and knows a large number of the squad well, having worked with the Barcelona contingent between 2014-17. The 48-year-old won two La Liga titles and the Champions League with the Catalan side before stepping down last year. As a player he won 62 caps for the Spanish national side, played at three World Cups as well as winning Olympic gold in 1992. A formal unveiling of Enrique is likely to happen next week and Rubiales said: ‘We have not spoken to anybody else - only Luis Enrique.’

(Source: Daily Mail)

Van Dijk ready to spur Liverpool to silverware

Liverpool defender Virgil van Dijk is confident the team can step up another level in the upcoming campaign as the Premier League side looks to end their trophy drought after coming close in recent seasons. The Merseyside outfit’s most recent triumph was a League Cup win in 2012 and despite showing improvement under Juergen Klopp, the German manager has seen them lose three finals since he joined the club in 2015. “We’re going to work our socks off and do everything possible to make it happen this season. We were very close to silverware but obviously not close enough,” Netherlands international Van Dijk told Liverpool’s website. “I can improve in any aspect of the game. At the moment, it’s getting back to full fitness, making sure I’m getting better and stronger than I was before. I will work every day and do everything possible and no doubt it will happen.” The 27-year-old made 22 appearances for Liverpool after he joined them in January, helping the club finish fourth in the league and reach the Champions League final, which they lost 3-1 to Real Madrid in May. Van Dijk missed Liverpool’s first pre-season friendly on Saturday, when Klopp’s men recorded a crushing 7-0 win over non-league Chester, but is expected to take part in several fixtures leading up to next month’s Premier League kick-off.

(Source: Goal)

Barcelona’s Paulinho rejoins Guangzhou Evergrande on loan

Brazil midfielder Paulinho has left Barcelona to rejoin his former club Guangzhou Evergrande, the Chinese club have announced. The 29-year-old will return on loan after just one season in Spain, with no transfer fee announced. Paulinho played 34 games and scored nine goals as Barcelona won La Liga last term, and started all five of Brazil’s World Cup games in Russia. He made 63 league appearances for Guangzhou Evergrande from 2015-2017. Barcelona confirmed the deal on their website, adding that Guangzhou have an option to sign the former Tottenham man on a permanent deal. A mainstay of Brazil boss Tite’s side in Russia, Paulinho scored once in the 2-0 group-stage win over Serbia and played 73 minutes of their 2-1 quarter-final defeat by Belgium before being replaced by goalscorer Renato Augusto. He joined Tottenham for £17m from Corinthians in 2013, before moving to China in 2015.

(Source: BBC)

Hamilton backtracks while Ferrari boss attacks Mercedes

While Lewis Hamilton backtracked on his criticism of Ferrari’s Kimi Raikkonen on Monday, the Italian team’s chief Maurizio Arrivabene launched a scathing attack on the Mercedes team. Hamilton said he had accepted the Finn’s apology for driving into him in Sunday’s British Grand Prix and learned from his own ‘dumb’ reaction to the incident. As Arrivabene raged at Mercedes’ ungentlemanly behaviour and post-race suggestions of deliberate underhand tactics, Hamilton said Sunday’s collision was “a racing incident and nothing more.” The collision on the opening lap was the second in three races in which a Ferrari had hit a Mercedes, which led to several at Mercedes to question the Italian team’s tactics. “Kimi said sorry and I accept it and we move on,” Hamilton wrote on Instagram. “It was a racing incident and nothing more. Sometimes we say dumb shit and we learn from it.” Hamilton started the race from pole position, but after a bad start and the collision with Raikkonen fell to 19th, and last, before recovering to finish second behind title rival Sebastian Vettel of Ferrari. In France, two weeks earlier, Vettel drove into Valtteri Bottas of Mercedes on the opening lap. In both cases, the stewards penalised the Ferrari drivers for the incidents. On Sunday, Mercedes team chief Toto Wolff said: “In James Allison’s words ‘do you think it is deliberate or incompetence?’ so this leaves us with a judgement.” Arrivabene was livid as he responded on Monday.

(Source: AFP)

Belgium and France face off in mouth-watering semi-final



Roberto Martinez’s swashbuckling Belgium side head into Tuesday’s semi-final with familiar foes France as the World Cup’s leading scorers, but their old rivals have evolved as the tournament has progressed and will also be full of confidence. Belgium have scored 14 goals in five matches and were hugely impressive in their 2-1 quarter-final victory over Brazil, with Romelu Lukaku, Eden Hazard and Kevin de Bruyne combining to devastating effect to oust the five-times world champions. In contrast, France sleep-walked through the group stages, eking out wins over Australia and Peru before a stultifying 0-0 draw with Denmark. Their early struggles had ‘Les Bleus’ being written off in some quarters, but all that changed when they faced Argentina in the last 16 in what must be a leading contender for the most exciting match of the tournament. Didier Deschamps tweaked his formation, effectively freeing up Kylian Mbappe on the right to run at the Argentine defence, and what followed was a wonderful display of attacking football that France won 4-3. The victory boosted France’s morale, and they followed

it up with a workman-like 2-0 win over Uruguay that was impressive because of how well they managed to control the game against tricky opponents. Belgium faced a heart-stopping moment of uncertainty in the first knockout round against Japan, when Martinez’s decision to rest players in their final group match against England almost backfired spectacularly. Belgium’s returning first team players made a sluggish start against the Samurai Blue and suddenly found themselves trailing by two goals with time ebbing away. Stung into action, Martinez sent on Marouane Fellaini and Nacer Chadli in the 65th minute, and both were heavily involved as Belgium pulled off a late comeback, with Chadli securing victory with practically the last kick of the game. Against Brazil in the quarters, Martinez showed tactical adventure, as he pushed target man Lukaku to the wing to allow De Bruyne to operate as a ‘false nine’. The strategy worked, and De Bruyne scored his first goal in Russia. Tuesday’s clash in St Petersburg has all the makings of a classic, with fans and viewers likely to be treated to the

Croatia can deal with Harry Kane after ‘stopping Messi’ - Zlatko Dalic



Croatia coach Zlatko Dalic has said his side have already “managed to stop Messi” and so can cope with England’s Harry Kane in Wednesday’s semi-final. The teams meet in Moscow to compete for a place in the 15 July final after Dalic’s side overcame hosts Russia on Saturday. Dalic identified top-scorer Kane and Raheem Sterling as threats in a team with “no glaring weaknesses”. “But we believe in our strengths,” he said. “We don’t fear England.” “He [Kane] is top scorer - he’s not easy to stop. But we have top centre-backs. We managed to stop Messi and [Christian] Eriksen so hopefully we can stop Kane.” Having not scored in an England shirt for nearly three years, Manchester City forward Sterling has been criticised by some supporters and pundits. However, ex-England and Manchester United pair David Beckham and Gary Neville have voiced their support for the 23-year-old and Dalic also rates him highly. The 51-year-old coach, who has only been in charge of the national side since October, was asked about England’s strengths and

weaknesses and said: “I wouldn’t say there are any glaring weaknesses - they are in the semi-finals, that says it all. “They showed from the games I’ve seen so far that they play direct football and they are very fast. “They are really good at set-pieces and their tall players are dangerous at corners. “I think Raheem Sterling is an important player because he is really fast and his combination with Harry Kane is really dangerous.” He went on to further praise Sterling’s “pace and power” and said his coaches would be analysing Gareth Southgate’s team closely over the next two days. “They dealt with Sweden relatively easily so we know they are going to be a difficult opponent and we respect them,” he continued. “But we believe in our strengths too. We don’t fear England or anybody else.” Croatia’s shoot-out victory over Russia was their second straight win on penalties at the World Cup, after they beat Denmark in the same fashion in their last-16 tie.

(Source: BBC)

PSG reportedly launch €270M offer for Barcelona star Philippe Coutinho



Paris Saint-Germain have reportedly made a €270 million (£238.5 million) offer to a representative of Barcelona star Philippe Coutinho in the hopes that his signing will convince Neymar to stay at the club. The French giants are yet to contact Barca directly, but Mundo Deportivo (h/t Sport Witness’ Naveen Ullal) reported one of Coutinho’s agents has been alerted to the prospect of a potential new world-record deal. Not content with luring one Brazilian megastar from the Camp Nou, PSG are said to have revived their interest in Coutinho, whom they were closely linked with prior to his switch to Catalonia from Liverpool in January. The 26-year-old is only six months into a five-and-a-half-year contract at the Camp Nou, leaving Barca in no rush to sell, and his form for club and country has only made him a more valuable piece of Ernesto Valverde’s puzzle. According to the report, Neymar’s uncertain status in Paris has caused concern with his employers, who feel signing childhood friend Coutinho would be one way to convince him his future lies at the Parc des Princes.

However, it concludes by saying Barca’s newest midfield gem wants to stay with the Blaugrana, which is of little wonder given the immediate success he enjoyed in La Liga following his winter switch. Only Lionel Messi averaged more dribbles per game (5.1) than Coutinho at Barcelona last term (2.6), per WhoScored. com, as the Brazilian scored eight goals and recorded five assists in 18 La Liga appearances. That form carried on to the international stage, and Coutinho looked like one of the best players at the 2018 FIFA World Cup prior to their 2-1 quarter-final defeat to Belgium on Friday. The Daily Mirror’s Martin Domin wrote that PSG’s interest remains despite the club already being under investigation by UEFA for a possible breach of financial fair play laws. The transfers of Neymar and Kylian Mbappe combined have cost the club more than £350 million over the past year. The deal would present Barca with the opportunity to turn a swift profit on Coutinho, who cost them £142 million in January.

(Source: Bleacher Report)

From caviar to veal tongue, fans get true taste of Russia



ordered Kiev chicken, a fillet that is either fried or baked. Indeed, food from nearby countries - particularly spicier Georgian cuisine - has been particularly popular with fans looking for a little more piquancy in their plates. Caviar bars and vodka cocktails have also been prized. ■ “We miss chili!” Still, some fans from countries like India and Mexico, renowned for their succulent spicy fare, have not been impressed. “The flavours here are quite salty. And of course we miss chili,” said Ricardo Garcia, a 32 year-old programmer decked out in the green Mexican football jersey. “We brought hot sauce with us from Mexico but we forgot

it in our last hostel and now were suffering a little. We found some ketchup with chili in a supermarket and that helps a little, but it’s not the same.” His pal Heriberto Gonzalez, however, was far more upbeat. “There are some soups that any Mexican mothers could prepare! Borscht, for example, because they use the potato in a very similar way. Of course, there’s a little bitter Russian flavour to it,” said Gonzalez, a 37 year-old who works in marketing. “But if I wanted Mexican food, I would have stayed in Mexico!” Some fans, however, have found temporary refuge in their own cuisine - like Egyptian physics student Ahmed Nasr, who was queuing for a shawarma. But he said local waiters and chefs had also prodded him - via Google Translate - to try local fares including Russian lamb and buckwheat. “I was at a buffet and the staff encouraged me to try Russian food. I liked it. I did not even know what they ate in Russia,” said Nasr, 31, who lives in Canada. “In Canada we have Chinese, Indian, Middle Eastern food, but I’ve never seen Russian. Maybe I will look for a Russian restaurant - hopefully I can find one!” he laughed, adding that in any case he planned to return to Russia as a tourist.

(Source: Eurosport)

Child worker feted by iconic soccer star Jahanbakhsh

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — There is no Make-A-Wish desk Foundation here, but his dream came true, when he met with his football star.

Matin's photos emerged, dressed in a white shirt with AZ Alkmaar and Iran star Alireza Jahanbakhsh's name etched in pen on the back. He gained online fame when one of the shots went viral.

The young boy met his football hero, Alireza Jahanbakhsh, in Khavarshahr, on the outskirts of Tehran.

Matin, a child of 5 who works at a brick kiln had said he wanted to meet Jahanbakhsh badly, and the Iran international winger used his social media to find him.

Jahanbakhsh went to Khavarshahr to meet Matin and his friends Younes, Pouria, Danial, Jaber, Benjamin, and Ali. The Eredivisie top scorer presented them all with balls and shirts and also signed an autograph for Matin which read: "To dear Matin. I wish you the best of luck in your future."

It is safe to say that the gift is one of the most precious presents Matin has ever received.

Jahanbakhsh encouraged the children to play football and then they played together a bit.

Jahanbakhsh also asked the children about their favorite footballer, "Messi or Ronaldo?" Of course, the answer was Messi who enjoys more popularity in Iran.

The Iranian football star said his farewell to the children, but he fulfilled his promise by finding Matin and giving him his shirt. All power to Jahanbakhsh.



Alireza Faghani lauds Asian referees at World Cup

1 → The 2016 AFC Referee of the Year built on the experience and officiated in the 2017 FIFA Confederations Cup semi-final and was also tasked with the 2018 FIFA World Cup Qualifiers Asian play-off match between Syria and Australia.

The 2018 edition is Faghani's second stint in the World Cup. His last appearance was in Brazil 2014 where he was the fourth official for seven matches, including the opening match between hosts Brazil and Croatia.

Faghani has officiated three matches, namely Germany and Mexico, Serbia and Brazil as well as Argentina and France so far and was fourth official of Uruguay and France match.

In an exclusive interview with Tehran Times, Faghani reveals they have still a chance of officiating in the final match.

Bright Future Ahead of Asian Referees
"The all referees have done well in the 2018 World Cup so far as well as the Asian referees. I think the Asian refer-



ees have a bright future ahead of them. The AFC Project Future Referees Batch is a unique elite development program who helps the continent's young referees. The Asian referees will also participate at the AFC Referee Academy which will focus on the AFC's objective of increasing the number of AFC referees at world-class level and extending development support to the AFC Member Associations."

Still Hopeful of Officiating in Final Match
"As I've already said, my dream is to officiate at the 2018 FIFA World Cup final match. It's still not clear who will whistle the final match. We see an all European last four but there is no reason a European referee to officiate the final match. We have still a chance of officiating in the final. I believe that the all referees have done well so far despite the Video Assistant Referees (VAR). The 2019 AFC Asian Cup will be held in the UAE in January and the Asian referees are preparing for the competition."

Team Melli's defensive-minded style needs to change in Asia



Iran national football team needs to change its defensive-minded style a little in AFC Asian Cup 2019.

With Carlos Queiroz in charge, Iran will be the team to beat in the UAE. This is a team that pushed Portugal and Spain all the way in Russia. Four points are often enough at the World Cup, but unfortunately not for Iran in Russia, ESPN wrote.

Sardar Azmoun presents a problem heading into the tournament. The 23-year-old is one of the top strikers in Asia, but after Russia, Azmoun announced his retirement from the national team because the abuse he received on

social media affected the health of his mother. All sensible Iran fans will hope the decision is reversed.

Team Melli's defensive-minded style might have (almost) worked at the World Cup, but that needs to change a little in Asia when Iraq, Vietnam and Yemen are not going to dominate Iran to the same extent.

Fortunately, Queiroz's team showed in qualification that defeating Asian teams is not a major hurdle for them. At the moment, with Queiroz in place and the tournament taking place next door, Iran are surely favorites.

(Source: the-afc)

Beiranvand's stunning save among top Asian moments



Alireza Beiranvand's stunning save against Cristiano Ronaldo has been mentioned among the memorable moments of the 2018 FIFA World Cup.

The five Asian teams concluded their participation at the 2018 FIFA World Cup with the highest points tally in the continent's history, and there were some memorable moments along the way.

Iran goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand was one of the heart-warming stories to come out of Russia 2018 as international media took note of his unorthodox path to the top, from sleeping rough on the streets of Tehran as he pursued his dream of becoming a professional footballer, to making an impact at the World

Cup, the-afc.com reported.

Team Melli went into its final group match needing a win against Portugal to advance to the next round, and with the European champion leading 1-0 after 53 minutes, it had a golden chance to double it as Cristiano Ronaldo was awarded a penalty and stepped up to take it himself.

Up against arguably the best player in the world, Beiranvand remained composed and dived to his left to make a stunning save. The Persepolis man clutched to the ball second time after showing strong hands to parry it away, allowing his teammates to go on and grab a late equalizer.

(Source: the-afc)

Iran Greco-Roman team wins 2018 Cadet World Championship

The 2018 Cadet World Championships wrapped up on Sunday night in Zagreb, Croatia, with five wrestlers crowned Greco World champions and Iran awarded the top team prize in the Greco-Roman discipline.

Iran won the team race, putting up 130 points with four finalists and two Greco World champions. Russia took second with 108 points, and rounding out the top five was Turkey in third with 91 points, Georgia in fourth with 89 points and Uzbekistan in fifth with 83 points.

Iran also won the freestyle team title earlier this week.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani praised the performance of Iranian wrestlers who won titles of both freestyle and Greco-Roman at 2018 Cadet World Championships.

Appreciating wrestlers' and coaches' great efforts, Rouhani congratulated this victory to the Iran's nation, young wrestlers and coaches and managers of the national wrestling team.

■ Team standings

1. Iran - 130
2. Russia - 108
3. Turkey - 91
4. Georgia - 89
5. Uzbekistan - 83
6. Azerbaijan - 79
7. Kazakhstan - 62
8. India - 57
9. Armenia - 55
10. Ukraine - 48

■ Finals results

- **45 kg**
GOLD - Ilias IANDAROV (RUS)
SILVER - Hennadii ZAVERTAILO (UKR)
BRONZE - Edmond NAZARYAN (BUL)



- BRONZE – Gurban GURBANOV (AZE)
- **48 kg**
GOLD - Abror ATABAEV (UZB)
SILVER - Sajjad ABBASPOURRAGANI (IRI)
BRONZE - Arshad ARSHAD (IND)
- BRONZE – Iskhar KURBAYEV (KAZ)
- **51 kg**
GOLD - Lazizkhon UZBEKOV (UZB)
SILVER - Laishram MEITEI (IND)
BRONZE - Hasrat JAFAROV (AZE)
- BRONZE – Merrey MAULITKANOV (KAZ)
- **55 kg**
GOLD - Amirhossein KHOUNSARI (IRI)
SILVER - Giorgi PERTAIA (GEO)
BRONZE - Amirbek SULTONOV (UZB)

- BRONZE – Din KOSHKAR (KAZ)
- **60 kg**
GOLD - Serhat KIRIK (TUR)
SILVER - Shahin BADAGHI MOFRAD (IRI)
BRONZE - Adam HAJIZADA (AZE)
- BRONZE – Gagik SNJOYAN (FRA)
- **65 kg**
GOLD - Muslim IMADAIEV (RUS)
SILVER - Shant KHACHATRYAN (ARM)
BRONZE - Samuel BELLSCHIEDT (GER)
BRONZE – Hossein GHASEMI (IRI)
- **71 kg**
GOLD - Alexandrin GUTU (MDA)
SILVER - Shu YAMADA (JPN)
BRONZE - Veisal EYUBOV (KAZ)
BRONZE – Giorgi SHPETISHVILI (GEO)
- **80 kg**
GOLD - Karen KHACHATRYAN (ARM)
SILVER - Giorgi TSOPURASHVILI (GEO)
BRONZE - Mohammad NAGHOUSI (IRI)
BRONZE – Turpan BISULTANOV (DEN)
- **92 kg**
GOLD - Mohammad NOSRATI (IRI)
SILVER - Aleksei MILESHIN (RUS)
BRONZE - Jacob KAMINSKI (USA)
BRONZE – Osman AYAYDIN (TUR)
- **110 kg**
GOLD - Muhammet BAKIR (TUR)
SILVER - Sarkhan MAMMADOV (AZE)
BRONZE - Tomasz WAWRZYNCZYK (POL)
BRONZE – Mikita KAVALSKI (BLR)

(Source: UWW)

Kimia Alizadeh to carry Iran's flag at Asian Games

TASNIM — Taekwondo athlete Kimia Alizadeh has been named as Iran's flag-bearer at the opening ceremony of the 2018 Asian Games.

Discus thrower Ehsan Hadadi and shooter Elaheh Ahmadi were also candidates to carry Iran's flag at the Games.

Alizadeh won a bronze medal in the taekwondo 57kg weight class at the 2016 Summer Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro by defeating Swedish athlete Nikita Glasnovic.



This made her the first Iranian woman to win a medal at the Olympic Games.

She also won a gold medal in the women's 63kg class at the Nanjing 2014 Youth Olympic Games.

Alizadeh beat London 2012 and Rio de Janeiro 2016 gold medalist Jade Jones at the 2015 World Championship to win a bronze medal. She also won a silver medal two years later at the 2017 World Taekwondo Championships.

The 2018 Asian Games will be held in Indonesia from August 14 to September 1.

Morteza Pouraliganji on Trabzonspor's radar

PLDC — Iranian international defender Morteza Pouraliganji has been linked with a move to Turkish football club Trabzonspor, cnnturk reported.

The 26-year-old defender, who currently plays at Qatar's Al Sadd, represented Team Melli in Group B of the 2018 World Cup against Morocco, Spain and Portugal.

Pouraliganji was invited to Iran national football team in 2015 and has made 30 appearances for Team Melli and scored two goals.

Also, spor.haber7.com has reported that Trabzonspor is going to sign Esteghlal defender Majid Hosseini.

Hosseini also played for Iran national football team in the 2018 World Cup.

Omid Ebrahimi to Join Qatar's Al Ahli

PLDC — Iran and Esteghlal defensive midfielder Omid Ebrahimi will participate at Al Ahli's medical examination on Tuesday.

The 31-year-old midfielder represented Team Melli in Group B matches of the 2018 World Cup against Morocco, Spain and Portugal.

Ebrahimi did well in Russia, helping team Melli gains four points.

Now, he intends to continue his football in Qatari club Al Ahli.

His absence could be seen as a major blow to Esteghlal who wants to bring an end to five-year title drought in Iran Professional League (IPL).

Furthermore, Esteghlal defender Majid Hosseini will likely join Turkish club Trabzonspor.

Caykur Rizespor eyes Iran goalkeeper Beiranvand

TASNIM — Turkish football team Caykur Rizespor sent an official offer to sign Iran and Persepolis goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand.

The Turkish media reported that the offer will cost €450,000.

Beiranvand, whose contract with Persepolis runs until 2021, has been linked with several clubs following good performance in the 2018 World Cup.

He blocked a penalty kick from Cristiano Ronaldo to deny Portugal a 2-0 lead in Group B.

Beiranvand played a key role in Persepolis helping the Reds win Iran Professional League back-to-back titles.

Persepolis General Manager Hamid Reza Garshasbi has said Beiranvand will not leave the team.

Five Iranian taekwondokas to compete in 2018 Wuxi Grand Slam

MNA — The Iranian taekwondo body has released the names of athletes who will compete in the 2018 Taekwondo Grand Slam that will be held in Wuxi, China at the end of this month.

According to the Public Relations Department of the Islamic Republic of Iran Taekwondo Federation, the second Taekwondo Grand Slam championships will start on July 27 in Wuxi, China, with participation of 16 men teams, 8 women teams, and 8 more other teams comprised of both sexes.

As the champion of the first edition of the team competitions, Iran will be present alongside Russia, Korea, Ivory Coast, Brazil, Australia, Azerbaijan, the United Kingdom, China, Taiwan, Mexico, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Spain, Germany and the United States.

The names of the Iranian taekwondokas that have been released by the Iranian Taekwondo Federation are as follows: Seyyed Hossein Ehsani, Mehdi Jalali, Ramin Hossein-Gholizadeh, Pouria Erfanian and Erfan Nazemi.

The competition will be attended by the most professional competitors and the first to third teams will receive 80, 48, and 28 points, respectively. The event sets new rules that could be introduced for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

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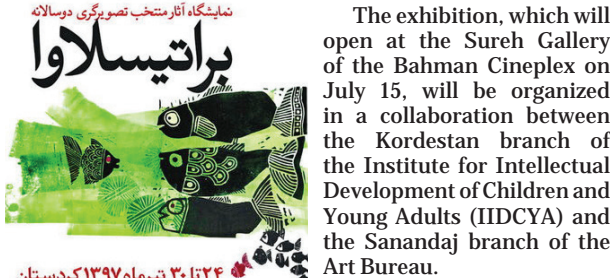
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Sanandaj gallery to showcase illustrations from Bratislava biennial

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — A selection of works from the various editions of the Biennale of Illustrations Bratislava (BIB) will be showcased in an exhibition in Sanandaj, Kordestan Province.



The exhibition, which will open at the Sureh Gallery of the Bahman Cineplex on July 15, will be organized in a collaboration between the Kordestan branch of the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (IIDCYA) and the Sanandaj branch of the Art Bureau.

Alireza Golduzian, the winner of BIB Grand Prix in 2005, will also hold a workshop at the gallery on July 16. The exhibit will be running for one week. The first edition of the Slovakian biennial was held in 1967.

Culture minister, Japanese ambassador meet in Tehran

C U L T U R E d e s k **TEHRAN** — The Iranian Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Abbas Salehi, and Japanese Ambassador Hiroyasu Kobayashi meet in Tehran, the ministry announced in a press release published on Sunday.



Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Abbas Salehi (3rd L), Japanese Ambassador Hiroyasu Kobayashi (4th L), and their colleagues pose after a meeting in Tehran in July 2018.

The expansion of cultural relations between Iran and Japan was discussed at the meeting. Salehi called the Tehran International Book Fair (TIBF) a good opportunity for the two nations to get to know more about their cultures and civilizations. China and Japan will be TIBF special guest countries in 2019 and 2020 respectively. Salehi said that the cultural relations can add more to the historical ties between the two countries. The ambassador also on his part said that his country is eager to attend the Tehran International Book Fair as a guest country. He said that he is happy that he has been working in Iran as an ambassador. He also said that the two countries are progressing their bi-lateral relations, adding that Iran's culture ministry has a wide variety of activities and its guides are required for the expansion of relations between the two countries.

“The English Patient” voted best Man Booker Prize winner

L O N D O N (AP) — Michael Ondaatje's “The English Patient” was named the greatest-ever winner of the Man Booker Prize at an event Sunday celebrating five decades of the prestigious literary award. The Canadian writer's tale of love and conflict during World War II was awarded the Golden Man Booker Prize for fiction after winning a public vote. “The English Patient” won the Booker in 1992 and was made into a 1996 movie starring Ralph Fiennes and Juliette Binoche that won nine Academy Awards. It beat four other novels in an online poll that drew 9,000 votes in all. Organizers didn't give a breakdown of votes for the books, each of which represented one of five decades. A panel of judges selected five books from among the 51 winners of the Booker, a prize that has boosted the careers of writers such as Ian McEwan, Arundhati Roy and Kazuo Ishiguro. The 1970s finalist was “In a Free State” by Trinidad-born V.S. Naipaul, while “Moon Tiger” by British writer Penelope Lively was the 1980s contender. Hilary Mantel's Tudor saga “Wolf Hall” and George Saunders' U.S. Civil War symphony “Lincoln in the Bardo” were the finalists from the 2000s and 2010s. Ondaatje said he did not believe “for a second” that his book was the best. He paid tribute to the late “The English Patient” film director, Anthony Minghella, “who I suspect had something to do with the result of this vote.”

AISO to celebrate 63rd anniversary of Austrian Cultural Forum

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — The Austro-Iranian Symphony Orchestra (AISO) plans to celebrate the 63rd anniversary of the Austrian Cultural Forum by performing two concerts in Tehran. Austrian musician Peter Sommerer will conduct the orchestra during the performances, which will be held at Vahdat Hall on July 12 and 13, the orchestra announced on Sunday. Pieces by the Austrian composers Joseph Haydn, Franz Schubert, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, and Johann Strauss will be performed during the concerts. The orchestra will also perform compositions by the Iranian musicians Nader Mashayekhi and Peyman Yazdani. Established in 1955, the Austrian Cultural Forum is a cultural exchange platform in Tehran offering courses of the German language and a variety of cultural activities. It also functions as a bridge between Iranian and Austrian scientists and artists.



Conductor Maziar Yunesi and the Austro-Iranian Symphony Orchestra acknowledge the audience after a performance held at Tehran's Vahdat Hall on July 3, 2017 to honor the veteran Iranian sculptor Parviz Tanavoli. (Honaronline/Mojtaba Arabzadeh)

Istanbul exhibit displays works by Iranian, Turkish artists



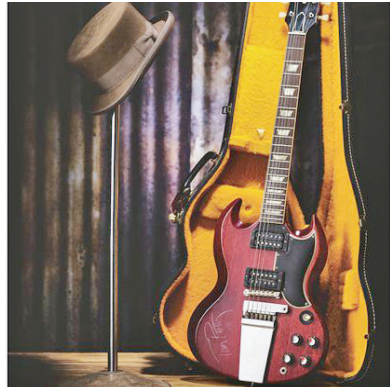
“Water Play” by Hamid Asadi whose works were on show at “Immortality”

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — “Immortality”, a joint exhibition displaying works by 11 Iranian and 11 Turkish artists, were held at a gallery of Istanbul's Adahan Hotel last week. Organized by Tehran's CAMA – Contemporary and Modern Art Gallery and the Turkish online gallery Blue Rhino Art, the exhibition was curated by the Istanbul-based Iranian artist Tima Jam. “This exhibition tells the story of continuous rejuvenation, reincarnation and lasting existence of nature,” Jam told the Anadolu Agency in an interview published last week. “It also reflects the continuous cycle of pieces, which are stable and

unchangeable,” she added. She also said that the exhibition was organized to express cultural unity and solidarity between Iran and Turkey. “The exhibition presents works by Turkish and Iranian artists and I have witnessed the production process of these works, visiting all artists in their workshops,” Jam said. Afshin Hosseinzadeh, Alireza Chamak, Ali Motamedian, Dariush Hosseini, Fatemeh Divandari, Hamid Asadi, and Reza Hosseini were among the Iranian participating artists. The Turkish artists included Baris Saribas, Cengiz Yatagan, Dilara Matarci, Erhan Özisikli, Ferhat Salman, Gökhan Deniz and Gökrem Usta. The exhibition ran until July 8.

Vintage Tom Petty Guitar used on Dylan tour going to auction

L O S A N G E L E S (AP) — A 1965 Gibson SG electric guitar owned by Tom Petty will be auctioned, along with one the late rocker's top hats. Heritage Auctions announced Monday that the auction will occur on July 21. It says the guitar was played by Petty during his 1986 tour with Bob Dylan. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of the guitar will benefit two Southern California charities, The Midnight Mission that helps the homeless and the Tazzy Animal Rescue Fund. The guitar and top hat are being sold by Petty's friend, Norm Harris, who runs a rare guitar shop. Heritage says Harris sold the guitar to Petty. The rocker returned it to Harris years later after his friend gave him another rare instrument. Petty died in October at 66.



This image released by Heritage Auctions shows a top hat and a 1965 Gibson SG electric guitar owned by Tom Petty. The items will be put up for auction on July 21. (Heritage Auctions via AP)

Polanski's wife says ‘Non merci!’ to Oscars' academy invite

P A R I S (Reuters) — Actress Emmanuelle Seigner on Sunday rejected an invitation to join the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, in a column in which she slammed the “hypocrisy” of a group that expelled her husband Roman Polanski two months ago. Seigner, from France, is one of 928 artists and executives which the Academy, best known for giving the Oscars movie awards, last month invited to become members. The Academy expelled Oscar-winning Polanski in May for violating a conduct code it had adopted following hundreds of accusations of sexual harassment or assault in the entertainment industry. “How can I ignore the fact that a few weeks ago the Academy expelled my husband, Roman Polanski, in an attempt to appease the zeitgeist – the very same Academy which in 2002 awarded him an Oscar for The Pianist! A curious case of amnesia!” Seigner said in the column published in France's Le Journal du Dimanche. “The Academy probably thinks I am enough of a spineless, social climbing actress that I would forget that I have been married for the past 29 years to one of the world's greatest directors,” she said, denouncing what she called “insufferable



Film director Roman Polanski and Emmanuelle Seigner arrive at the Madeleine Church to attend a ceremony during a 'popular tribute' to late French singer and actor Johnny Hallyday in Paris, France, December 9, 2017. (Reuters/Charles Platiau)

hypocrisy.” Polanski, 84, who won the best director Oscar in 2003 for “The Pianist”, had in 1977 admitted to having unlawful sex with a 13-year-old girl in Los Angeles. Polanski and television star Bill Cosby, who had been members since 1969 and 1996 respectively, were the first known members expelled for violating the Academy's new code of conduct. The entertainment industry is grappling with misconduct allegations that have led to dozens of politicians, businessmen and entertainers stepping down or being dropped from creative projects, sparking the #MeToo social movement and the Time's Up campaign against workplace harassment and equal pay. Seigner, 52, well known in France for movies that included Polanski's “Based on a True Story” and “Venus in Fur” movies, said she felt offended by the offer to join the Academy. “As for the members of the Academy, I have only one thing to say to them: this is one woman you won't have,” she wrote in the piece, made available to Reuters in English but with a French headline: “Non merci!”

“Si” concerts postponed due to poor social condition



Vocalist Homayun Shajarian (L) and composer and instrumentalist Sohrab Purnazeri acknowledge the audience after a Si performance in the courtyard of Tehran's Sadabad Cultural-Historical Complex on August 9, 2017. (Mehr/Mohammad Moheimani)

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — The “Si” concerts were postponed due to the unfavorable social condition in Iran, the public relations team has announced. The musical drama is postponed indefinitely “until our honorable people feel less concern about their livelihood,” the team wrote in a statement published on Sunday. A large group of musicians, including vocalist Homayun Shajarian and composer and instrumentalist Sohrab Purnazeri, and thespians such Mehdi Pakdel, and Sahar Dowlatshahi, was planned to perform in the musical drama at Tehran's Royal Hall in the near future.

“Si” literally meaning ‘thirty’ in Persian, was staged during open-air performances in the courtyard of Tehran's Sadabad Cultural-Historical Complex for several weeks in August 2017. The stories of “Zal and Rudabeh”, “Rustam and Esfaniyar” and “Rustam and Sohrab” from Persian poet Ferdowsi's epic masterpiece Shahnameh were staged during the performances, which were warmly received by concertgoers. The project gets its title from the Shahnameh verse reading, “I toiled much over thirty years, by the Persian language I remade Iran” that it refers to the fact that Ferdowsi spent 30 years writing the Shahnameh over a millennium ago.

Mick Jagger quips about Polish courts overhaul at Warsaw concert

W A R S A W (Reuters) — The Rolling Stones' Mick Jagger took a swipe at the Polish government's judicial overhaul at a concert in Warsaw on Sunday, adding his voice to a chorus of critics who say the changes go against democratic standards. The concert took place as new laws force into early retirement the head of Poland's Supreme Court, Malgorzata Gersdorf, who is 65. This is the latest in many changes to the judiciary enacted since 2016, which the ruling nationalists say are needed to rid Poland of its lingering communist legacy. The European Union, rights groups, international bodies and the domestic opposition decry these moves as putting courts and judges under more political control. “I am too old to be a judge,” Jagger, who is 74, said in Polish to the audience gathered at Warsaw's national soccer stadium. “But I am young enough to sing.”



Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones performs during a concert of their “No Filter” European tour at the Orange Velodrome stadium in Marseille, France, June 26, 2018. (Reuters/Jean-Paul Pelissier)