



Tehran dismisses  
Pompeo's 'ridiculous'  
allegations **2**



Ardebil, a getaway  
from the scorching  
hot days **10**



Iran Olympic  
football team to hold  
camp in Iraq **15**



Bust of Constitutional  
Revolution activist Bibi  
Maryam set up at NLAI **16**

# Netanyahu's fear of battle in southern Syria

See page 7



Reuters

## Velayati says his strategic mission to Moscow not affected by 'itinerant' Netanyahu

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Ali Akbar Velayati, an international adviser to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution who is in Russia for an official visit, has shrugged off the concurrent trip to Russia by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, saying "nobody cares" about the Netanyahu's "baseless and illogical remarks".

"He (Netanyahu) is an itinerant person who travels to somewhere in the world every day," Velayati told reporters upon his arrival in Moscow. "Therefore, his presence or absence in Russia has no effect on our strategic mission," he added.

Velayati asserted that Iran and Russia's ties are "strategic", citing mutual fight against Daesh in Syria. **→2**

## JCPOA meeting shows U.S. is isolated: Iran

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Aragchi has said that the Joint Commission of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action's meeting in Vienna showed that the United States is isolated at the international scene.

The Joint Commission of the JCPOA held first meeting at the foreign minis-

terial level in Vienna on Friday since the U.S. walked out of the agreement. European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini, who chaired the meeting, announced that Iran and the remaining parties to the 2015 nuclear agreement had agreed to continue negotiations, including on economic measures, over how to save the deal. **→2**

## Saudi oppression continues: 2 young men sentenced to death without charges

In its constant targeting of the Shi'as in the eastern Province of Qatif, the Specialized Criminal Court in Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia, has sentenced 2 young men to death and another one to twenty three years in prison.

According to local sources in Qatif, the court did not mention the charges against the three youths.

It is worth mentioning that the Spe-

cialized Criminal Court in Riyadh has sentenced a number of Shia civilians and activists to different terms including long imprisonment periods and death verdicts.

Back in 2015, a criminal court in Saudi Arabia sentenced the Shia clergyman to six months in prison and 50 lashes. Bu Saleh did not appear in the court hearing, and described the ruling as "devoid of any legality". **→13**

## Trump calls Germany 'captive of Russia' at NATO summit

U.S. President Donald Trump has launched an extraordinary tirade against Germany for its support for one of Europe's most contentious energy developments, calling the country "captive of Russians."

Speaking in Brussels, Belgium, on the first leg of his European trip on Wednesday, the U.S. president said the relationship between Germany and Russia is "inappropriate."

He said a flurry of oil and gas deals had given Moscow far too much influence over Europe's largest economy.

Trump particularly singled out the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline project worth \$11 billion which directly connects Germany with Russia.

Critics assert that the pipeline, which is to be laid under the Baltic Sea, will increase the continent's dependence on Russian gas. Also, a number of other EU states have also expressed national security concerns.

Nevertheless, German Chancellor Angela Merkel has previously said Berlin would support the project and insisted it is a private



commercial venture.

"Germany is totally controlled by Russia... They will be getting between 60 and 70 percent of their energy from Russia and a new pipeline, and you tell me if that is appropriate because I think it's not," Trump said, before slamming Berlin's failure to dramatically increase defense spending. Trump was speaking at a press conference in front of NATO representatives ahead of a two-day summit.

The remarks come against the backdrop of increasing tensions between the EU and the U.S. over issues like trade policy and military spending.

Trump has angered the Europeans by imposing tariffs on certain imports from EU countries, a move Europeans have retaliated. Trump has also criticized Europeans for their failure to meet targets for spending on NATO.

"I think it is a very bad thing for NATO and I don't think it should have happened and I think we have to talk to Germany about it. On top of that, Germany is just paying a little bit over 1 percent (on defense) ... And I think that is inappropriate also," Trump said at the press conference.

"I think it is unfair," Trump said. "We can't put up with it."

Trump will meet Merkel later on Wednesday, before sitting down with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Helsinki, Finland, on Monday.

### Merkel recalls own East German youth in riposte to Trump

Chancellor Angela Merkel recalled her own youth in Soviet-dominated East Germany and said Germany was independent in its policy choices in a pointed response to U.S. President Donald Trump saying Berlin was a "totally controlled by Russia". **→13**

## U.S., Saudi funding sectarian divides in Iran

**TEHRAN (MNA)** — News outlets in the Middle East exposed that Saudi Arabia and U.S. are secretly funding war rooms along Iran-Pakistan shared borders to heat up sectarian divides inside Iran.

Saudi Arabia and U.S. are jointly conducting an operation supporting war rooms and command centers along the shared borders of Iran and Pakistan to fund and put into practice plots intended to wedge sectarian divides inside

Iran, reported elnashra.com from al-akhbar newspaper.

These transnational command centers are made up by intelligence elements who have managed to prolong the war in Syria so far. The Pakistani edition of this plot was supposed to start its operation two weeks ago on common borders with Iran.

American, Jordanian, Saudi, Emirati, French and British intelligence officers gather in these

command centers in Jordan and some countries in the region to keep the failed war in Syria alive and find ways to arm terrorist groups.

Saudi Arabia and the United States are planning to flare up racial disputes in border regions and to transfer the conflicts to inside Iran through the establishment of command centers, incitement of the Baluchi people in Pakistan, and operations in Iran in order to drag Iran into a protracted war of attrition.



## ARTICLE

Syed Zafar Mehdi

Journalist  
from New Delhi

## After 17 years of 'wasted effort' in Afghanistan, no lessons learnt by U.S.

After nearly 17 years of war, chaos, mayhem, misery, death and destruction, the United States is seeking peace negotiations with the Taliban in Afghanistan. That the U.S. has miserably lost the plot in the war-ravaged country is no secret, but to come back after 17 long years of fighting and talk about peace parleys not only sounds audacious but plain ludicrous.

The hawks in Washington have finally understood that the longest war in the U.S. history, which is still costing American taxpayers some \$45 billion per year, will not end on the battlefield. And, it took them 17 long years to understand this simple fact, which shows that they haven't learnt their lessons well. They did it in Iraq before and they got away with it. This time, they simply cannot get away. As Noam Chomsky once told me, America owes huge reparations to Afghans for the damage it has caused to their country without achieving anything.

A few days ago, on an unannounced visit to the war-torn country, the U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo sought to do some PR work for his boss, not knowing that the damage done was irreversible. He said the Trump administration was prepared to "support, facilitate and participate" in peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban, making it amply clear that the U.S. war machinery had failed in Afghanistan and was frantically looking for an escape route.

His visit came a few weeks after the Afghan government and the Taliban observed an unprecedented ceasefire to mark the festival of Eid. Pompeo, speaking to the U.S. service members at the highly-fortified Bagram Air Force base, said if there was a ceasefire for a few days, why not a few years. Perhaps he needs some lessons in history. It was his country that sabotaged all chance of peace and stability in the country after 9/11 events.

Anand Gopal, the author of No Good Men Among the Living: America, the Taliban, and the War through Afghan Eyes, in an interview told me that the blame for resurrecting the insurgency in Afghanistan ultimately rests with the U.S. The top Taliban leadership. **→6**



Tehran Times/ Mobin Pevmankar



## ARTICLE

Ebrahim Fallahi

Tehran Times journalist

## U.S. 'zero Iranian oil' plan: A fantasy doomed to failure

U.S. has recently claimed that it wants to wipe all the Iranian oil from the global market to reduce the Islamic country's oil revenues to zero, a plan which seems rather like a 'Trump fantasy' than a well-thought government-level program.

When the U.S. President Donald Trump abandoned Iran's nuclear deal on May 8, he offered a 180-day window to non-U.S. persons to quit activities involving Iran before a new round of sanctions on Iran starts.

Since Trump's announcement the oil market has been through so many ups and downs with the worried traders constantly exposed to a 'war of words' between the involved parties.

These days, the most important issue among the oil traders is estimating the magnitude of the effect of U.S. sanctions on Iranian oil exports. Will the U.S. 'really' succeed in eliminating all the Iranian oil exports?

### 'Zero Iranian oil'

In a nutshell, The United States is aiming to cut all Iran's crude oil exports, starting from November. In doing so, the U.S. expects its allies like Saudi Arabia and other OPEC and non-OPEC members to use their spare capacity to fill the supply gap.

"We are working to minimize disruptions to the global market, but we are confident that there is sufficient global spare oil production capacity," Reuters quoted Brian Hook, the U.S. director of policy planning as saying on July 2.

But to what extent this goal is reachable in reality and how practical this strategy is? There are two main aspects to be considered for a clear understanding of the extent of 'practicality' for this plan. The first aspect concerns the export destinations of the Iranian crude oil, will they all comply with the U.S. imposition, despite their own national interests?

### Case of Iranian oil buyers

Iran is currently exporting oil to several Asian and European countries, with more than 60 percent of the shipments heading to Asian buyers like China, India, Japan and South Korea and the rest going to European countries including Turkey, Italy, Greece, France and Spain. **→4**

## Dozens killed as tanker collides with bus in western Iran

At least 11 were killed after a naphtha tanker collided with a passenger bus in the city of Sanandaj, western province of Kordestan, IRNA news agency reported.

The tanker's brakes reportedly stopped working and it crashed into the passenger bus which had stopped right outside the bus terminal at midnight and resulted in a massive explosion, the report stated.

There is still no exact details on the number of casualties and fatalities. Based on some unofficial reports the death toll has increased to 20 and some 7 are injured.

The explosion was so violent that cars around the bus were affected by it.

Three days of mourning having been declared in Kordestan following the tragedy.



MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



‘Self-proclaimed human rights advocates silent on U.S. sanctions’

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Health Minister Hassan Qazizadeh-Hashemi on Tuesday criticized the self-proclaimed human rights advocates for their silence toward U.S. sanctions moves against Iran which can impede access of Iranian patients to necessary drugs.

“Undoubtedly, the anti-Iran sanctions would harm the elderly and infants while the so-called advocates of human rights are observing and approving them by their silence,” Qazizadeh-Hashemi told reporters, ISNA reported.

He also rejected the idea that the sanctions will not affect Iran’s medical section, saying embargos against Iran’s financial interactions and its oil trade would create problems for the country’s health sector.



‘Boosting security of nuclear plants necessary’

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Chief of Iran’s Civil Defense Organization has highlighted the importance of boosting the security of the country’s nuclear facilities, Mehr reported.

Brigadier General Gholam Reza Jalali made the remarks in a meeting with Abdolkarim Geravand, the governor of Bushehr province, on Wednesday.

Jalali stressed the need for boosting preparation to curb possible nuclear incidents due to the proximity of the Bushehr nuclear power plant to civilian areas.

The two sides also said cooperation is necessary in order to hold nuclear exercises in the current Iranian year with the aim of protecting the nation.



IRGC: U.S. in worst military condition

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said on Wednesday that it’s an “undeniable fact” that the United States is militarily in the worst condition, IRNA reported.

“America’s military powers is not like before, when the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier would go wherever it wanted to,” IRGC spokesman Brigadier General Ramezan Sharif said on Wednesday.

Pointing to the 2016 U.S.–Iran naval incident when the IRGC seized two American patrol boats after they entered Iranian territorial waters, the general said the most qualified American sailors bow before Iranian sailors and apologize for trespassing into Iranian waters when confronted by Iranian warriors.



Tehran dismisses Pompeo’s ‘ridiculous’ allegations

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Iran’s Foreign Ministry on Wednesday rejected as “baseless” and “ridiculous” the recent anti-Iran allegations by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo who has said Tehran is using its embassies to plot terrorist attacks in Europe.

“The embassies of the Islamic Republic of Iran work within the framework of international conventions,” Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi, Mehr reported.

Qassemi further said Pompeo made the remarks while history is filled with evidence of U.S. embassies’ espionage and illegal actions in numerous countries.



Gharib Abadi submits credentials to UNIDO chief

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Kazem Gharib Abadi, Iran’s representative to the Vienna-based international organizations, has submitted his credentials to Li Yong, director general of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

During their meeting, Gharib Abadi said the Islamic Republic has always supported UNIDO and that the two sides have been cooperating in joint projects for years, Fars reported on Wednesday.

Pointing to the expansion of ties between Tehran and UNIDO, the envoy said Iran will continue its support of the international body and aims to boost its cooperation with it.



Tehran security conference slated for early 2019

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — The third Tehran security conference will be held early next year with the motto of regional security in West Asia, prospect of stability, cooperation and collective progress.

According to IRNA, the conference, the first and second editions of which were held in 2017 and 2018, will be held sometime between January 21 to February 19, 2019.

Cooperation and conflicts in West Asia, collective progress, strategies of regional and extraregional players on peace and stability in West Asia, defense diplomacy in the region, the role of Iran in establishing peace and stability will be among the main topics of the conference.

# Parliament assessing impeachment of some ministers: Aref

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Mohammad Reza Aref, chairman of the pro-reform Hope faction in the parliament, said on Wednesday that the parliament is assessing the impeachment of some economic ministers, urging President Rouhani to make changes to his economic team.

“The view of the Hope faction is that the president do some actions to promote the competence of the government’s economic team, however, if under any reasons the president does not see it expedient the Majlis will do its duty and now some impeachments are under study,” Aref told a press conference.

He added, “We need more serious actions in the economic team of the government.”

He said 200 lawmakers have signed a letter urging Rouhani to shake up his economic team, IRNA reported.

He said Rouhani’s efforts to resolve the country’s economic issues is “visible”, adding though the government is “facing numerous problems, we believe that the president is capable of resolving the issues.”



The lawmaker dismissed rumors that his parliamentary faction is seeking to impeach

the president, saying, “We might someday wish to ask question from the president but

## Iran is ‘valuable ally’ of Russia, diplomat says

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Levan Dzhagaryan, the Russian ambassador to Tehran, said on Tuesday that Iran is a “valuable ally” of Russia and that Moscow attaches great importance to Tehran in its foreign policy.

“The remarkable relations between the two countries benefit the region and the international stability and are impediment to the U.S. unilateral behavior,” Dzhagaryan said during a meeting with Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, a senior foreign policy advisor to the Iranian parliament speaker.

Ali Akbar Velayati, a veteran Iranian politician, planned to visit Moscow on Wednesday to hand over messages from Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and President Hassan Rouhani to Russian President Vladimir Putin. The visit took place just five days before Putin and U.S. President Donald Trump meet in Helsinki, Finland.

The visit by Velayati, who is accompanied by number of Foreign Ministry diplomats, is important at this sensitive juncture as Russia is a party to the nuclear agreement

and the two countries back the Syrian government against militants.

Ambassador Dzhagaryan said that Iran-Russia cooperation in helping settle the crisis in Syria can serve as an “important model” for restoring security to the region and countering war-mongering policies.

“Fortunately, the two countries’ officials hold consultations on expanding relations and cooperation,” the ambassador remarked.

For his part, Amir-Abdollahian called Tehran-Moscow ties “friendly” and “growing”.

Commenting on the U.S. pressure on Iran, Amir-Abdollahian said that Washington seeks to exert pressure on Iran to divert the public opinion from its wrong policies and defeats in the West Asia region.

Amir-Abdollahian, who served as Iran’s point man for Arab affairs at the Foreign Ministry until June 2016, said nothing can cause a crack in the Iranians’ will to develop their country and help promote regional and international security and stability.

Trump withdrew the U.S. from the 2015 nuclear deal

## Iranian, Russian figures discuss media cooperation

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Figures from Russia and Iran held their first round of talks on media cooperation in Tehran on Wednesday.

The Russian side was headed by Deputy Minister for Digital Development and Communications Alexey Volin. The Iranian side was also represented by Deputy Culture Minister Mohammad Soltanifar and Culture Ministry director for foreign media Alireza Shiravi.

Soltanifar said media cooperation between the two countries is not as robust as political cooperation. “We are hopeful that through bilateral efforts, we will boost such cooperation,” he said.

Volin, for his part, reported that some 20 topics for boosting media cooperation between Iran and Russia have been mapped out and the sides are refining the platform on which to conduct the cooperation. He said the topics include exchanging news, sharing technical



expertise, and raising the professional level of reporters. Volin added that representatives from Sputniknews and Itar-TASS were present in the meeting and were planning to work with respective partners.

Also, he noted, representatives of two Russian media outlets are planning to open a permanent cooperation office in Iran.

The two countries also agreed to improve sharing of news and knowhow in the field of visual media, the Russian official added.

## JCPOA meeting shows U.S. is isolated: Iran

➔ “Final statement of the meeting was strong in expressing the member states’ determination in preserving the JCPOA which is clearly in contrast with the U.S. determination in dismantling the agreement and includes remarkable points which show Iran’s success in expressing its will,” Araqchi told IRNA in an interview on Tuesday.

He said that a number of strategies in banking and oil sectors were discussed. For example, Araqchi said, they said trade between Iran and its economic partners should be implemented as soon as possible without using dollars.

The deputy foreign minister noted that the statement includes commitment of the JCPOA signatories to the deal, efforts to help Iran enjoy economic benefits and also expansion of nuclear cooperation with Iran.



Araqchi added supporting investment in Iran was also stressed at the meeting.

The nuclear deal, struck in July 2015 between Iran, the European Union, Germany and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, went into effect in January 2016. Under the agreement Iran is obliged to lower its nuclear activities in exchange for termination of sanctions. However, the U.S. walked out of the multilateral agreement.

## Russian, Iranian, Chinese, Pakistani heads of intelligence services discuss Daesh threat

By staff and agency

Sergei Ivanov, the chief of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service’s press bureau, has said that heads of intelligence services of Russia, Iran, China, and Pakistan held a meeting in Islamabad on Tuesday to discuss the measures against the threat of Daesh in Afghanistan.

“The discussions focused on the dangers arising from a buildup of the Islamic State on the Afghan territory,” TASS quoted Ivanov as saying on Tuesday.

“The conference reached understanding of the importance of coordinated steps to prevent the trickling of IS terrorists from Syria and Iraq to Afghanistan where from they would pose risks for neighboring countries,” he said.

The terrorist organization has launched several high-profile attacks in the Afghan capital Kabul and beyond. In December 2017, the group claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing at a Shiite cultural center that killed 41 people. That month, Daesh attackers stormed two different Afghanistan



intelligence service locations in a week. In January 2017, a handful of gunmen claiming to be members of the group held up a Save the Children office in Jalalabad, killing four people in an hours-long siege.

In March 2018, a Daesh suicide bomber detonated explosives near a major Shiite shrine in Kabul, killing dozens

during celebrations of the Persian new year.

According to the Washington Post, it is hard to say how long Daesh has been in Afghanistan but rumors about the group operating in Afghanistan started around 2014.

James Cunningham, who was the U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan at 2014, told Frontline that the group was using Afghanistan and Pakistan as a recruiting ground, trying to find fighters who would travel to Syria and Iraq.

In a commentary in March 2018, the Post said it’s hard to say exactly how many Daesh fighters are in Afghanistan, but it seems their numbers have grown.

Michael Kugelman, a deputy director of the Asia Program at the Wilson Center, has called the group’s resilience “quite worrying.” Its fighters’ strength, he said, lies in their ability to navigate Afghanistan’s challenging terrain with ease, which allows them to evade strikes. The group is also aided by “a steady supply of recruits” from disaffected members of the Pakistani Taliban as well as radicalized Afghans.

## Velayati says his strategic mission to Moscow not affected by ‘itinerant’ Netanyahu

### Velayati calls Iran-Russia ties ‘strategic’

➔ cooperation at the United Nations and also Russia’s support for crafting the 2015 nuclear deal as “other examples of strategic and long-lasting ties”.

“Besides these, mutual relations in the fields of defense, politics, economy, nuclear technology, and security point to a long-term agenda shared by the two countries.”

Velayati is in Moscow to submit messages from Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and President Hassan Rouhani to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi said on Tuesday that the letters are aimed at “emphasizing the importance of expanded relations between Iran and Russia”.

Velayati will likely hold a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday.

On his visit to Russia, Velayati said, “The current situation is very sensitive as the world is under the influence of a

sinning person under the title of the president of America, therefore, such cooperation becomes more and more necessary, which is why I am being honored to carry the messages of the Supreme Leader and the president.”

### ■ Velayati to depart to China after Russia visit

The Foreign Ministry spokesman said Velayati will also pay a visit to China to convey messages from Ayatollah Khamenei and Rouhani to Chinese leaders.

Qassemi said that after the U.S. withdrawal from 2015 nuclear deal, also known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which was a strategic mistake by the U.S. president, Tehran decided to send special envoys to convey the messages of top Iranian leaders to other countries.

“In these messages, our country’s views and stances regarding the United States’ selfish and illegal behavior are explained to other countries,” he said.





# Hudaydah residents in critical condition: UN health agency

The UN health agency has warned about the “critical” conditions of civilians in Yemen’s Hudaydah, which has been subject to a Saudi-led offensive for weeks, saying military operations in the key port city threaten over 70 percent of the population who are in need of relief aid.

The World Health Organization (WHO) said on Tuesday that the health conditions in Hudaydah were some of “the most dire in the country” even before the assault began last month on the Red Sea port, a lifeline for the majority of Yemen’s population.

Hudaydah, the WHO said, had registered the highest incidences of suspected cholera cases - around 14 percent of those reported nationwide - with 209 suspected cases of diphtheria and 252 of measles.

“The intensification of fighting in Hudaydah endangered not only those directly affected but also the 70 percent of the population who depended on vital supplies, including healthcare supplies, that flowed through Hudaydah port,” WHO spokesman Tarik Jasarevic said. “The port constituted a lifeline not only for the city but for all the northern governorates.”

Backed by Saudi-led airstrikes, Emirati forces and militants loyal to Yemen’s former president, Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, launched the Hudaydah offensive on June 13 despite international warnings that it would compound the impoverished nation’s humanitarian crisis.

The Saudi-led coalition, which has been waging a war against Yemen since early 2015, claims that the Houthis are using Hudaydah for weapons delivery, an allegation rejected by the fighters.

The coalition of aggressors has, however, failed to make any major gains in the face of stiff resistance from Houthi fighters and their allied forces.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Jasarevic said that a total of 46 deaths and 328 injured were recorded in Hudaydah between June 13 and July 7.

Despite the decline in fighting, he added, the conditions for civilians remain “critical.”

He also warned that continued fighting “will likely further exacerbate the situation” in the port city, which has already been grappling with one of the highest malnutrition rates in Yemen.



plunging with one of the highest malnutrition rates in Yemen.

Separately, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said Tuesday that 1,316 Yemeni children were killed and maimed last year, 51 percent of them in Saudi airstrikes.

It also estimated that 842 boys had been recruited by various sides to the Yemeni conflict.

■ **Most Yemenis to require aid in 2018: IOM**

Additionally on Tuesday, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) said that half of the Yemeni population is living in areas directly affected by the conflict and that more than two thirds would require humanitarian aid during 2018.

IOM spokesman Joel Millman estimated that almost 90 percent of all internally displaced persons (IDPs) have been displaced for at least one year or more.

“The protracted nature of the displacement is straining IDPs and host communities’ abilities to cope,” he added.

■ **UN peace efforts**

Meanwhile, the UN special envoy for Yemen, Martin Griffiths, met with Hadi on Tuesday in a bid to broker a truce between the ex-Yemeni regime and the Houthi fighters.

Yemen’s Saba news agency reported that Hadi had discussed “the prospect of peace” with the UN envoy.

Griffiths said that they had exchanged views on the possible resumption of political negotiations between Hadi loyalists and the Houthis as well as the issue of “prisoners being released and exchanged.”

Earlier this month, the UN envoy held talks with the Houthis in the Yemeni capital, Sana’a.

■ **Yemeni forces fire missile at Jazan Economic City in Saudi Arabia**

In another development, Yemeni army forces, supported by allied fighters from Popular Committees, have fired a domes-

tically-designed and -developed ballistic missile at a strategic economic target in Saudi Arabia’s southwestern border region of Jizan in retaliation to the Riyadh regime’s devastating military aggression against their impoverished country.

A Yemeni military source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the short-range Badr-1 missile struck Jazan Economic City, located 967 kilometers southwest of the capital Riyadh, with great precision on Tuesday afternoon, Arabic-language al-Masirah television network reported.

Earlier in the day, Yemeni army soldiers and Popular Committees fighters had fired a ballistic missile at the supply depots of Saudi-sponsored militiamen loyal to Yemen’s former president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi in the country’s western coastal province of Hudaydah.

A military source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the short-range missile struck the designated target with great precision.

The source, however, did not provide further information about possible casualties and the extent of damage caused.

Also on Tuesday, Saudi military aircraft bombarded a number of residential areas across Yemen, leaving several civilians dead and injured.

At least five civilians lost their lives and eight others sustained injuries when Saudi warplanes targeted two vehicles as they were traveling along a road in Zabid town of Hudaydah province.

Saudi fighter jets also pounded an area in the Kitaf wa al-Boqe’e district of Yemen’s mountainous northwestern province of Sa’ada, leaving three people dead.

Two civilians were also killed and a woman and a child suffered injuries when Saudi aircraft hit a house in an area of Baqim district in the same Yemeni province.

The Yemeni Ministry of Human Rights announced in a statement on March 25 that the Saudi-led war had left 600,000 civilians dead and injured since March 2015.

The United Nations says a record 22.2 million Yemenis are in need of food aid, including 8.4 million threatened by severe hunger.

(Source: agencies)

## Syria seizes French anti-tank weapons in Dara’a



The Syrian army has reportedly seized two sophisticated French-made anti-tank weapon systems in the southern Province of Dara’a, where it is conducting anti-terror operations.

The arms, seized in Jadal village, were referred to as 112-mm APILAS (Armor-Piercing Infantry Light Arm System), online military magazine Defense Blog reported on Tuesday.

“Local media have released imagery showing two captured APILAS anti-tank weapon systems developed in France by GIAT Industries,” it said.

Currently known as Nexter Systems, GIAT Industries is a French government-owned arms manufacturer.

France is accused of backing anti-Damascus militancy since 2011.

The use of the APILAS anti-tank weapon system had also been spotted in Syria before, the magazine wrote, saying “as early as 2015, a couple of systems of this type were seized from Free Syrian Army (FSA) militants.”

The FSA has been enjoying ample Western support, most notably from the United States. Washington, however, recently told the militants that it would no longer stand behind them in southern Syria right before the government was about to start the counterterrorism push.

So far, over 120,000 of the APILAS launchers have been produced and handed over to such countries in the region as Saudi Arabia and Jordan, said the magazine.

After liberating Dara’a, Damascus hopes to free its neighboring provinces of Quneitra and Suwaida of terrorist presence, too. The three provinces form the Arab country’s southern tip near the border with Jordan.

■ **Syrian govt. forces foil terrorist attack in Latakia**

Meanwhile, Syrian army forces have managed to frustrate an attack by foreign-sponsored Takfiri militants in the country’s western coastal province of Latakia as they are engaged in joint counter-terrorism operations with allied fighters from popular defense groups against the extremists.

“Militant groups attacked the settlement of Attera in the northern part of the province late last night,” an unnamed Syrian military source told the Arabic service of Russia’s Sputnik news agency on Tuesday, adding that the assault was repulsed following a fierce exchange of gunfire.

The source further noted that a large of militants were killed and injured in the failed attack.

Separately, Syrian army soldiers have recovered a large amount of munitions left behind by Takfiri Daesh militants on the outskirts of al-Bukamal city in the country’s eastern province of Dayr al-Zawr and near the border with Iraq.

Syria’s official news agency SANA reported that government forces were conducting a clean-up operation in Dwir town, when they made the discovery.

The report added that the munitions included T-72 and T-62 tank shells, remote-controlled anti-personnel and anti-armor mines, machine guns, rockets and rocket-propelled grenades.

■ **Car bomb attack leaves eight dead in southwestern Syria**

Meanwhile, at least eight people, including government forces and foreign-backed militiamen, have lost their lives when a car bomb explosion ripped through an area in Syria’s southwestern province of Dara’a.

Rami Abdel Rahman, who heads the so-called Britain-based Observatory, said the bomb attack targeted a military position in Zaizun village, which lies in the western countryside of the province. Rahman added that members of the Salafist militant group Khalid ibn al-Walid Army could be behind the act of terror.

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

Russia has been helping Syrian forces in an ongoing battle in the province of Dayr al-Zawr as Daesh struggles to keep its last positions in eastern Syria.

The Russian military assistance, which began in September 2015 at the official request of the Syrian government, has proved effective as the Syrians continue to recapture key areas from Daesh and other terrorist groups across the country with the backing of Russia’s air cover.

On May 21, the General Command of the Syrian Army and Armed Forces announced in a statement that complete security was restored to Damascus and its countryside after al-Hajar al-Aswad district and al-Yarmouk camp had been totally purged of Daesh terrorists.

The development was preceded by flushing the Takfiris out of the towns of Yalda, Babbila and Beit Sahem on the southern outskirts of Damascus.

(Source: agencies)

## A weaker NATO would cost allies more, says French presidency official

French President Emmanuel Macron believes a weakening of the trans-Atlantic alliance will be more costly in the long run for its members, an official in the Elysee Palace said on Wednesday, amid divisions over U.S. calls for European states to contribute more.

Allies of President Donald Trump hope he will agree to step up the West’s deterrence on Russia, while the U.S. leader has repeatedly said the United States pays an outsized contribution to NATO.

(Source: Daily Star)

# Brexit and protests cast shadow over Trump visit to Britain

Britain on Wednesday geared up for the arrival of Donald Trump just hours after the U.S. president waded into the Brexit crisis gripping Prime Minister Theresa May’s government and portrayed the closest U.S. ally in Europe as a country in turmoil.

Trump lands in Britain on Thursday following a NATO meeting in Brussels where he chided Germany and other European nations for failing to contribute enough to defense spending. His trip coincides with a tumultuous week for the British prime minister after two senior ministers resigned in protest at her plans for trade with the European Union after Britain leaves next March.

May appears to have seen off an immediate challenge to her leadership from malcontents within her Conservative Party but Trump’s comments ahead of the trip - that Britain was “in somewhat turmoil” and that it was up to the people if she stayed in power - fanned the sense of political crisis.

Trump also said he might speak to former Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, who quit along with Brexit minister David Davis over May’s plans for a business-friendly Brexit which was only agreed by her cabinet last Friday after two years of wrangling.

As May attempts to unify her party behind her proposals, commentators said Trump meeting Johnson would suggest backing for his view that May’s plans would inhibit Britain’s ability to forge new free trade deals.

Securing a U.S.-UK deal post-Brexit is something both Trump and May’s government have heralded as being a major benefit of leaving the EU.

Trump has long voiced his support for Brexit, saying it was part of a global uprising that ultimately thrust him to power, and he was at his Scottish golf resort the day after Britons voted to leave the EU, saying the outcome was a “great thing.”



On Tuesday, the president described Johnson as a “friend” who had been “very nice to me, very supportive”, even though when Trump suggested in 2015 London had police no-go zones, Johnson, then the capital’s mayor, quipped he feared going to New York because of “the real risk of meeting Donald Trump”.

When asked directly if Trump would meet Johnson, U.S. Ambassador in London Woody Johnson told BBC Radio: “I’m not sure. That’s not on the schedule, but the president makes his own schedule. If the president wants to do something, we’ll make it possible.”

The ambassador added May had shown strong leadership

and that the trip would enhance the special relationship between the United States and Britain.

“We’re extremely confident in the ability of the UK to plow through this issue with Brexit and move on,” he said.

“She was the first foreign dignitary to visit the U.S. when he became president. So I think that symbolizes how he considers the importance of her leadership in this country right now.”

■ **Protests planned**

After he was invited last year, more than 1.86 million people signed a petition saying Trump should not be given a state visit because it could embarrass the queen and thousands of police will also be on duty with large protests expected.

A high metal fence has been erected around the U.S. ambassador’s central London residence where Trump will spend Thursday night and the embassy sent out an alert warning Americans in London to keep a low profile in case protests turned violent.

More than 50,000 people have signed up to demonstrate in London on Friday when protesters intend to fly a large balloon over parliament portraying Trump as an orange, snarling baby although a counter-gathering to welcome him is also planned.

“It’s really kind of irrelevant to what we’re trying to do, and it certainly doesn’t express the opinion of the British people that I’ve met,” Ambassador Johnson said of the balloon.

While the protests are taking place in the British capital, Trump will meet the queen at Windsor Castle where he will be welcomed with a guard of honor before having tea with the 92-year-old monarch.

(Source: Reuters)

# U.S., Mexico vow to reunite separated migrant families quickly

The United States and Mexico on Tuesday vowed to work with Central American nations to reunite migrant families separated at the U.S. border “as quickly as possible” as the Trump administration faced fresh criticism over the practice.

More than 2,300 children were separated from their parents after U.S. President Donald Trump’s government began a “zero tolerance” policy in early May, seeking to prosecute all adults who crossed the U.S.-Mexico border illegally.

Trump stopped separating children from their parents last month following public outrage and court challenges.

U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen met with Mexico’s foreign minister, Luis Videgaray, and ministers from Central America in Guatemala City to discuss the separations and how to beat the criminal gangs profiting from migration.

“We remain very committed to re-unifying the families that have been separated as a result of illegal entry, and we will work with our colleagues here to repatriate as quickly



as possible,” Nielsen told reporters at a news conference.

Videgaray, who repeated his criticism of the policy, calling it “inhumane”, made the same pledge. The ministers also vowed to

do more to crack down on people smugglers preying on migrants.

Guatemalan authorities said that 11 reunited family groups comprising 131 people were flown back to the country in one of two

flights carrying deportees on Tuesday.

A Guatemalan migration official said access to the family groups was restricted. But other deportees still waiting to be reunited with families went to protest their plight outside the hotel where the ministers were meeting in Guatemala City.

Elsa Ortiz, 25, said she had not seen her 8-year-old boy Anthony since the two were detained in Del Rio, Texas, and then separated by border patrol officials in May.

“The days are passing, and I miss him, that’s why I came to ask Donald Trump that he gives me back my little boy soon,” Ortiz said, adding they had gone for a better life. “I think two months are enough punishment for mothers to learn, and for them not to set off again on journeys they shouldn’t set off on.”

The ministerial gathering came as a judge said the U.S. government must rapidly reunite 63 children under the age of five who were separated by immigration officials after crossing the U.S.-Mexico border, or face penalties.

(Source: Reuters)



STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	109505.1
IFX	1225.79

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	43,100 rials
EUR	50,545 rials
GBP	57,154 rials
AED	11,736 rials

Source: mehrnews.com

COMMODITIES

WTI	\$73.71/b
Brent	\$77.24/b
OPEC Basket	\$75.23/b
Gold	\$1,251.15 /oz
Silver	\$15.97/oz
Platinum	\$844.40/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

NEWS IN BRIEF



Exports from northern ports can be tripled

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — The capacity of exports from the ports in north of Iran can be increased by three folds, according to Hadi Haqshenas, the deputy head of Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO).

The official also said that while the loading and unloading capacity of northern ports is 30 million tons, just 5 million tons of capacity is used that 20 percent of it is for exports and 80 percent for imports, IRNA reported on Wednesday.



Sugar production hits record high in Iran

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iran produced 2.015 million tons of sugar in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20), which is the highest record since the establishment of sugar industry in the country, IRIB reported quoting Secretary of Iran's Sugar Factories Syndicate Bahman Danaei as saying.

Danaei also announced that some 15.991 million tons of sugar cane and sugar beet was produced in the past year.

He put the amount of sugar extracted from sugar cane at 872,133 tons and from sugar beet at 1.143 million tons in the previous year.



Iranian, Pakistani customs administrations electronically connected

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Electronic connection was established between the customs administrations of Iran and Pakistan, Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced.

Iran sent its first export cargo to Pakistan on Tuesday through Mirjaveh Customs Terminal in eastern country with e-TIR system, IRNA reported.

E-TIR system allows the two countries to have access to all related information at any time, and view the information of the cargo before delivery which is useful for both sides and decreases the risk of deception, accelerates customs formalities and reduces the costs.

The TIR system not only covers customs transit by road but a combination is possible with other modes of transport (rail, inland waterway, and even maritime transport), as long as at least one part of the total transport is made by road.

U.S. will consider requests for waivers from Iran oil sanctions: Pompeo

The United States will consider requests from some countries to be exempted from sanctions it will put in effect in November to prevent Iran from exporting oil, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Tuesday.

“There will be a handful of countries that come to the United States and ask for relief from that. We'll consider it,” Pompeo said according to the text of an interview in Abu Dhabi with Sky News Arabia released by the U.S. State Department. He did not name any countries. *(Source: Reuters)*

China’s June exports seen solid as trade war with U.S. heats up

China’s exports growth is expected to have cooled only slightly in June, possibly further boosting a trade surplus with the United States in a test for Beijing as it tries to weather a volley of U.S. tariffs on its goods that many fear could harm its economy.

The Trump administration on Tuesday raised the stakes in its trade dispute with China, saying it would slap 10 percent tariffs on an extra \$200 billion worth of Chinese imports, including numerous consumer items. *(Source: Reuters)*

Daily gasoline imports 3.3m liters less than projected

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iran imported 5.7 million liters per day of gasoline during the three-month period from the beginning of current Iranian calendar year (March 21), which was 3.3 million liters less than the planned amount for this period, the managing director of National Iranian Oil Products Distribution Company (NIOPOC) announced.

Mohammadreza Mousavikhah also said: “We are always trying to reduce the amount of gasoline imports to zero”, Shana news agency reported.

The second phase of Iran’s Persian Gulf Star Refinery (PGSR), which was inaugurated by President Hassan Rouhani on June 28, adds 12 million liters of Euro-5 quality gasoline to the country’s total output of the product.

U.S. ‘zero Iranian oil’ plan: A fantasy doomed to failure



**1 →** First of all, as Iran’s top oil importer, China plays a very significant role in the whole situation, the country is in the midst of a trade war with the U.S. and has threatened to increase tariffs on U.S. oil shipment to the Asian country, a move, which according to many energy analysts, could push Chinese refineries further toward Iran for securing their feedstock.

Considering the situation with the U.S., it is safe to say that the country will most certainly oppose the U.S. decision and not only continue taking in the current levels of Iranian crude but also there is chance that under a yuan-rial payment agreement, more Chinese refineries lean toward Iran amid the trade war with the U.S.

Among other Asian customers, Japan has already plead for a waiver to continue imports of Iranian crude. On the other hand, worried about losing the convenience of Iranian crude imports, India is also not happy about the U.S. actions. Indian Energy Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said India sees the U.S. sanctions on Iran as a ‘challenge’ and will take a ‘considered and comprehensive’ view based on ‘national interest’, Hindustan times reported. According to Indian news agencies, India is also considering a rupee-rial payment strategy to withstand the U.S. sanctions.

Overall, considering all the aspects, the most likely outcome would be that Asians, as Iran’s main oil importers, will seek ways to keep Iranian oil flowing.

“Asian buyers could resort to using currencies other than the dollar to pay Iran for their oil purchases. Payments may be routed through either local or foreign banks that don’t have close ties to America,” Goldman wrote in a report on the matter.

Following Trump’s announcement, the EU has vowed to uphold the Iran nuclear accord and since then the three European signatories

namely France, Germany and UK have been trying to find the best solution to persuade Iran for staying in the nuclear accord (known as JCPOA). Iran has also announced that it will remain in the deal provided that the country’s interests are guaranteed.

So considering the support of the deal signatories in place, it seems obvious that European customers of Iranian crude will most likely continue to do so in the future, but of course if they are granted waivers.

Case of supply and demand

So far we discussed how much the U.S. plan for zeroing Iranian crude oil revenues is close to reality considering the position of Iranian oil buyers, now the second and more important aspect to take into account is the global oil market’s supply and demand situation.

With all the OPEC efforts for pushing the prices up, the oil market is already going through a tight state and if U.S. succeeds in removing the whole 2.4 million barrels of Iranian oil from the market, this would, in Reuters words, “leave the global market tighter than at any time since the oil shocks



With the second phase coming into operation, the refinery’s daily output has reached 24 million liters and will reach 36 million liters by the end of current Iranian

calendar year (March 20, 2019) when the third phase goes operational, IRIB quoted Mohammad-Ali Dadvar, the managing director of PGSR, as saying.

amount of spare capacity [if any in reality] compared to what is needed to offset Iranian oil in the market.

The IEA data implies that most of the Iranian oil [which is going to be cut!] is expected to be offset by Saudi oil. That means the Arab nation is required to ramp up its current 10.5 million bpd output to over 12.5 million bpd to completely offset Iranian crude shipments to the market.

It is interesting to note that, as reported by Reuters, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, “Saudi Arabia has not produced more than 10.42 million bpd on an annual basis (2016) or 10.63 million bpd in a single month (July 2016) in the last 20 years.”

Furthermore, the kingdom has already increased output to compensate the losses in Libya, Angola and Venezuela, which means the nation has already used some of its spare capacity.

It should also be noted that maximizing production is not a simple affair which can be quickly achieved, and even if Saudi Arabia hypothetically does so, maintaining that maximum for a long period of time won’t be an easy task for them.

The inevitable increase in domestic consumption in a country which is seeking a separation from an oil-dependent economy in long-term is yet another factor which teases the illusion of “Saudi is going to offset Iranian oil”!

Considering the geopolitical and economic factors which are entangled to shape the current global oil market, the U.S. will most probably have to back down on its “zero tolerance” policy towards Iran.

The supply gap in the oil market would be too large for any country to be able to fill and eliminating Iran exports in this tight market would push prices to unimaginable highs, creating a mess which Trump administration will be the first to cry from.

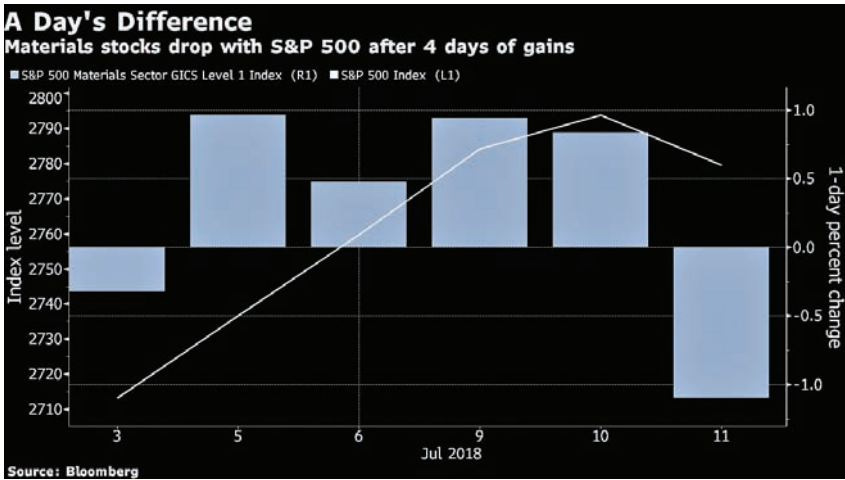
New tariffs roil stocks, metals as dollar climbs: markets wrap

Stocks slumped, the dollar gained and commodities slid as markets reeled from fresh salvos in the escalating trade war between the U.S. and China.

The S&P 500 Index ended the longest rally in a month after the Trump administration said it will slap tariffs on an additional \$200 billion of Chinese products. The Asian nation vowed to retaliate, helping to drive down shares in Europe and Asia. Metals bore the brunt of the reaction in commodities: Copper, nickel and zinc all tumbled.

Trade-sensitive shares in the U.S. led declines, with Caterpillar Inc. and Boeing Co. slumping along with Freeport-McMoRan Inc. and Deere & Co. Emerging-market equities fell almost 1 percent to halt a three-day climb. Crude slipped toward \$73 a barrel in New York.

The dollar pared gains as the euro reversed earlier losses after reports that European Central Bank officials are split on when to raise interest rates next year. Ten-year Treasury



yields were little changed after U.S. wholesale prices rose in the 12 months ended in June by the most in more than six years.

Follow our live blog as China responds to latest tariff threats. “With tariff news moving once again to

Oil falls on trade fears after Trump tariff threat

Oil prices fell on Wednesday after U.S. President Donald Trump threatened to levy new tariffs on China, deepening a trade dispute that could depress energy demand.

The specter of tariffs on a further \$200 billion of Chinese goods sent commodities lower along with stock markets, as tension between the world’s biggest economies intensified.

Benchmark Brent crude was down \$1.50 at \$77.36 a barrel by 0815 GMT, having fallen as low as \$77.21. U.S. light crude was down 60 cents at \$73.51.

“Trade concerns have bitten today,” said Michael McCarthy, chief markets strategist at CMC Markets. “If these tariffs are introduced there will be an impact on global growth and demand.”

The price fall was aided by news Tripoli-based National Oil Corp (NOC) had lifted a force majeure on four Libyan oil ports, saying production and exports from the terminals would “return to normal levels in the next few hours”.

Libyan oil production fell to 527,000

barrels per day (bpd) from a high of 1.28 million bpd in February following the port closures, the NOC said on Monday.

“The lifting of force majeure at all the Libyan ports will certainly come as relief from a supply perspective, but it remains to be seen how quickly exports can return to normal,” said Harry Tchilinguirian, head of oil strategy at BNP Paribas.

Adding to the bearish mood were signs of a possible relaxation of U.S. sanctions on Iranian crude exports.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Tuesday that Washington would consider requests from some countries to be exempt from sanctions due to go into effect in November to prevent Iran from exporting oil.

Washington had previously said countries must halt all imports of Iranian oil from Nov. 4 or face U.S. financial measures, with no exemptions.

The United States pulled out of a multinational deal in May to lift sanctions against Iran.

The prospect of sanctions on oil exports from Iran, the world’s fifth-biggest oil pro-



ducer, has helped push up oil prices in recent weeks with both crude contracts trading near 3-1/2-year highs.

Supply to the U.S. market has also been squeezed by the loss of some Canadian oil production.

U.S. crude inventories fell last week by 6.8 million barrels, according to the American Petroleum Institute, an industry group.

Analysts polled by Reuters forecast on average that crude stocks fell by 4.5 million barrels, ahead of government data at 10:30 a.m. EDT (1430 GMT) on Wednesday.

U.S. crude oil production is expected to average more than 12 million bpd late next year for the first time, the U.S. Energy Information Administration said on Tuesday. *(Source: Reuters)*

*(Source: Bloomberg)*



# HUBLOT



  
**TEHRAN WATCH**  
SINCE 1901  
[WWW.TEHRANWATCH.COM](http://WWW.TEHRANWATCH.COM)

**CLASSIC FUSION  
TITANIUM GREEN**



NEWS IN BRIEF



**Pakistan army to deploy 371,000 troops to ensure secure election**

**INTERNATIONAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — To ensure free and secure upcoming general election, Pakistan army has said that it will deploy about 371,000 troops across the country, while rejecting reports that it was planning to rig the polls in favor of Pakistan Tehreek Insaaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan.

Ahead of the polls on July 25, all major political parties have been campaigning hard to turn around their political fortunes. Cricketer-turned-politician Khan's PTI has emerged as a frontrunner after its main rival Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) received a heavy blow with the conviction of its top leaders Nawaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz.

However, the build-up to the polls has been marred by accusations that the army was seeking a mandate for the PTI and attempting to rig the elections. Army in Pakistan remains the most powerful institution and it is widely believed that no party can climb the ladder of power without its backing.

Pakistan army spokesman Major General Asif Ghafoor told journalists that a total of 371,388 troops would be deployed inside and outside polling stations, three times more than 2013 general election.

Denying any link with the PTI, Ghafoor said the military was not favoring Khan. "We don't have a political party. We don't have a loyalty," he stated.

The country's election commission had asked the armed forces to help conduct the vote in a "free, fair and transparent manner", and the army's role was limited to assistance, Ghafoor said.



**Militant recruitment increasing, 2018 could be worst year for Kashmir: report**

**INTERNATIONAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — The militant groups in Kashmir have stepped up the recruitment of local youths following the end of Ramazan ceasefire, according to a report published by Indian Express. As many as 82 local youths have joined the militant groups this year till June-end, including 27 in June itself.

"The increase in the number of local youths picking the gun last month came after June 16, which was Eid, when the ceasefire ended and the security forces decided to undertake operations," a Srinagar-based security official is quoted saying in the report.

The data has been compiled by Jammu and Kashmir's Multi-Agency Centre (MAC), which shows that April witnessed the highest number of youth joining militant ranks (28) and May was the lowest (14).

According to the data, among the 82 youths, 38 joined the Hizbul Mujahideen, 18 joined the Lashkar-e-Taiba and 19 joined the Jaish-e-Mohammad. In 2018, 12 youths from Anantnag, 21 from Shopian, 16 from Kulgam, 2 from Ganderbal, 1 Budgam, 2 from Srinagar, 20 from Pulwama, 3 from Kupwara, 1 from Bandipora and 4 from Baramulla joined militant organizations.

In 2017, 128 local youths were reported to have joined militancy, up from 84 in 2016, 83 in 2015 and 63 in 2014. Going by the increasing recruitment, security establishment fears that 2018 could be the worst year ever in terms of local recruitment of militants in the valley, the report states.



**Despite no desirable results, UK to almost double its troops in Afghanistan**

**INTERNATIONAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — The UK government is all set to double its troops in war-torn Afghanistan following a request from U.S. President Donald Trump to augment NATO reinforcements in the wake of deteriorating security situation. The decision came a day before the NATO Summit in Belgium.

UK Prime Minister Theresa May announced that her country will send an extra 440 soldiers – bringing the total to around 1,100 – to 'help the Afghan troops' fighting Taliban insurgency. The fresh batch of UK troops would be based in Kabul and will not be in the combat role.

The security situation in Afghanistan has worsened in recent years with the resurrection of Taliban insurgency and emergence of ISIS. Despite the heavy presence of international forces, the violence refuses to abate, taking a heavy toll on ordinary Afghans.

Experts have questioned the wisdom of sending more troops to Afghanistan at a time when the Taliban have made it emphatically clear that they want foreign troops out of the country. "After Trump decided to increase American military presence in Afghanistan, now May has followed the suit, sending 440 more UK troops," said Ahmad Bayat, a Kabul-based analyst. "It will only make the matters worse."

Afghanistan has entered 17th year of war which kicked off in 2001 following the invasion of U.S.-led foreign forces. Despite many efforts, the Taliban have refused to enter peace negotiations.

**German ministry says one of deported Afghans committed suicide**

The German Interior Ministry says one of 69 Afghan refugees it deported last week has committed suicide on the way back home.

The death comes amid rising tensions within the German government about how the country should deal with refugees. German Interior Minister Horst Seehofer has been pressing Chancellor Angela Merkel to change her refugee policy although Merkel insists such a change should come within a united European Union agenda.

Afghan authorities have reportedly criticized Germany for sending such a large group which exceeded the 50 per flight cap agreed before. Rights groups have censured the deportations, saying refugees are being returned to Afghanistan amid a deteriorating security situation in the country as Taliban and other militant groups have intensified attacks on civilians.

(Source : Press Tv)

# India to lose special privileges if it cuts oil imports from Iran, warns Iranian envoy

**INTERNATIONAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — The political and diplomatic tension between New Delhi and Tehran is heating up over reports that India was planning to cut oil imports from Iran under the U.S. pressure. Following the reports, many ambiguous statements have come from Indian authorities, without confirming or denying anything.

Reacting sharply to the reports, Iran's deputy envoy to New Delhi Massoud Rezvanian Rahaghi said India stands to lose many privileges if it betrays Iran and imports oil from countries like Saudi Arabia, Russia, Kuwait, Iraq, the U.S. and other countries to compensate for cuts in Iranian oil.

In reference to the U.S. sanctions on oil import from Iran, the envoy said that Iran has been a 'reliable energy partner for India' and that it has always followed a 'rationale pricing' of oil which ensures the interest of both consumers and suppliers.

"If India were to replace Iran with countries like Saudi Arabia, Russia, Iraq, the U.S. and others for the 10 per cent of its oil demand, then it may have to revert to dollar-denominated imports which mean higher CAD (Current Account Deficit) and deprivation of all other privileges Iran has offered to India," Rahaghi said.

He said the two historic allies should strive to make their relationship more 'sustainable and durable' by setting up banking relations, opening new transaction routes and helping each other's business communities, which he said requires a 'strong political determination'.

Iran is India's third-largest oil supplier after Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Between April 2017 and January 2018, it supplied 18.4 million tonnes of crude oil to Iran, according to the official data.

The envoy criticized India for not fulfilling its commitment to make investments in the expansion of the strategically located Chabahar Port.

"It is unfortunate that Indian investment promises for



expansion of Chabahar port and its connectivity projects have not been accomplished so far. It is expected that India takes immediate necessary measures in this regard if its cooperation and engagement in Chabahar port is of strategic nature," he said, while speaking at a seminar in New Delhi on 'Emerging challenges and opportunities

in the global diplomacy and its impact on bilateral ties with India'.

Lashing out at the U.S., the envoy said it should abandon its policy of resorting to threats or use of force. He also suggested that a regional dialogue forum should be set up in the Persian Gulf and West Asia to resolve regional crises.

## ‘Violence against marginalized communities in India has increased under BJP government’

**TEHRAN** — Kashif ul Huda is the founder and editor of twocircles.net, a non-profit voice for the marginalized people in India. He is considered an expert on issues related to minorities in India.

By: Syed Zafar Mehdi

■ Under the Modi led BJP government in New Delhi, religious minorities especially Muslims have felt increasingly marginalised and hate crimes have also increased. What reasons do you attribute to it?

A. BJP is rooted in the fascist ideology so it is no surprise that we are witnessing increasing violence against Muslims, Dalits, Adivasis, women – all marginalized sections of the Indian society. The violence has seen a sharp rise since Narendra Modi-led BJP government assumed power in 2014. Modi's history and careful cultivation of his public image of a strong man has also given signals to different Hindutva groups and individuals that they can be hateful and violent in their speeches and actions and still get away with it. It all started with the killing of Mohsin Shaikh in Pune just days after Modi's victory and continues to this day.

■ Leaders of extremist Hindu groups in India like RSS and VHP openly threaten Muslims but still no action is taken against them. Recently, a senior union minister was seen felicitating killers of Muslims at a function organized by the ruling party. Do you think they enjoy government's patronage?

A. What I fear is that the Hindutva genie is out of the bottle and even RSS and VHP are not able to control it, let alone the BJP government. It is an example of tail wagging the dog and now BJP MLAs, MPs, and even ministers are seen felicitating killers



and the Prime Minister keeping quiet while India has become a 'lynch land'. If they take action against the killers, BJP is going to lose its base.

■ What are the biggest challenges facing Indian Muslims today?

A. Biggest challenge for Indian Muslims these days is their political marginalization. This is the root cause of their problems that leads to violence against them and denial of basic facilities in areas where they live and discrimination in jobs and services.

■ India has come under severe criticism for bowing to the U.S. pressure and betraying Iran. Do you think India should have an independent foreign policy if it seeks a

bigger role on global stage?

A. India should play a bigger role on the world stage but not merely for its geo-political interest. The world is suffering from climate change, concentration of wealth in fewer hands, and various social challenges. The world needs leaders who have the moral conviction and global vision to lead the world to a peaceful, prosperous and equitable future. India or any other country can and should lead the world out of present chaos but only if they have fixed the issues at home.

■ The scourge of Islamophobia has assumed alarming proportions across the world today. What's fuelling it?

A. The fuel for Islamophobia are the anti-

Islam forces but the reason they get traction is the uncertainty in the rapidly changing world which makes people vulnerable to propaganda and rumors. It suits those in power because then people's attention is shifted towards it rather than issues of economy, climate, and justice.

■ How would you rate Narendra Modi government's performance? Do you think he will be re-elected?

The current NDA government's performance has been very poor. It has failed in delivering on the promises made before the last general election. This government has no vision and plan for India and its unique challenges. All it has done in the last four years is to continue the same disastrous policies of the previous UPA government with added rebranding of some policies and institutions and marketing gimmicks.

This government is especially dangerous because they have actively undermined the institutions that have kept India a democratic nation for long. The result on the ground is visible to all as to how people continue to suffer from violence, unemployment, lack of resources and services.

However, when it comes to voting, BJP has mastered the art of forming governments even when they don't win elections. I fear the same tactic will be applied by the party in the next general election. First, they will whip up communal passions of Hindus by creating an artificial crisis in the name of temple, terrorism, or some other issues. Even after this, if they fail to get enough seats, they have deep pockets filled with corporate and corrupt money to gather enough numbers to form the government again.

## After 17 years of ‘wasted effort’ in Afghanistan, no lessons learnt by U.S.

**1 →** he said, tried to surrender soon after the U.S. invasion, but the U.S. rejected their offer. "America's goal was to wage a war on terror, and the fact that its enemies were trying to switch sides was something that did not mesh easily with the ideology of counterterrorism," he said. That pretty much explains who played the spoilsport. It was not anyone else but the war-mongers sitting in the power corridors of Washington.

Pompeo, like his nard-nosed boss, seems bewildered, which is understandable given the kind of disparagement they have received over the 'failed war' in Afghanistan. He spoke of bringing the Afghan government and the Taliban to the negotiating table, suggesting that the U.S. government had given up, but in the same breath he said Trump's less-than-year-old approach to the conflict in Afghanistan was "working".

If the American strategy in Afghanistan was "working", and if the Taliban now see that "they can't win on the ground militarily", then why take a step back and settle for anything less than a convincing victory? If the America is indeed in a winning position, then backing out should never be an option. The vitriolic truth remains that the Americans have failed in all their goals in Afghanistan. They have been decimated and they have utterly failed to 'win hearts and minds' of Afghans, owing to their monumental follies and dastardly war crimes.

Pompeo quite rightly remarked that the region and the world were tired of the war in Afghanistan and the war-weary Afghans were no longer interested in seeing the whirlpool of death and destruction. But, let's ask him, who started this war in the first place? Who invaded the country? Who resurrected the Taliban insurgency? Who refused the offer of Taliban leaders to surrender? Who destroyed millions



of lives, forced people to abandon their homes and seek asylum abroad? It was the U.S.

So what has the U.S. achieved in Afghanistan in past 17 years? Americans are told by their government that the 'wasted effort' in Afghanistan is to prevent the country from becoming a safe haven for terrorist groups that seek to attack the U.S. That argument holds no water. It's called paranoia.

Pompeo, who was on his first visit to Afghanistan since taking up the new job, perhaps needs a reality check. The security has deteriorated alarmingly, civilian casualties

have jumped alarmingly, the cultivation and smuggling of narcotics has increased, corruption has touched new high, and the fledgling government in Kabul that was formed through a deal brokered by Washington continues to be beset with numerous problems. This is the legacy of America in Afghanistan.

The bottom line, as Stephen M. Walt of Harvard University wrote in an article in Foreign Policy recently, is that the U.S. effort in Afghanistan is a failure under Trump, just as it was a failure under Obama and George W. Bush.



# Israel's fresh aggression on T-4 airport

## Netanyahu's fear of battle in southern Syria

By Farzad Farhadi

**TEHRAN** — Syrian state media said the T-4 military airport was subject to Israeli attack early morning of July 9, 2018. A military source told SANA that the army air defense downed a number of missiles which targeted T-4 airport and hit one of the warplanes, forcing the others to leave the airspace.

Syrian Television "Al-Akhbar" reported that the attack only left material damage. Four to six missiles were fired at T-4 airport, most of which got shot down.

The T-4 airbase is a Syrian Arab Air Force (SyAAF) base located in the Homs Governorate and west of the ancient city of Palmyra, Syria. The airport has 54 hangars for a variety of fighter planes, military helicopters and two runways, one with three kilometers in length.

The airport is located 25 kilometers from Al-Shaer gas field. In November 2014, following ISIS occupation of oil and gas fields in Al-Shaer, Hejar, Jazal and Al-Mehr, the airport was under the terrorist group's siege. In the end, however, ISIS failed to take control of the T-4 airport. The military airport was previously attacked by Zionist jet fighters.

The new Zionist assault was carried out while Tel Aviv-backed terrorist groups in southern Syria. They have forced to surrender by the Syrian army or escape and collapse.

The terrorists formed Jaish-e-Jenoob group, which according to sources is affiliated with the group known as the Syrian Free Army, cannot change the direction of



the war in southern Syria.

This is while, the Syrian army has declared victory over many armed groups such as Jaysh al-Yarmouk, Usood al-Sunna, Ansar al-Fallujah, gained access to their weapons, warehouses and arms. Given the current situation, the armed groups backed by Tel Aviv and Washington are on their last legs in southern Syria.

Expert view

Koma Jaffa, a strategic expert on Syria's affairs, told Sputnik, "The issue is about a

major regional conflict in Syria. If we look at the previous attacks on the T-4 airport, we will see that the current attacks occur from south, in spite of the previous raids that took place from Lebanon, but why the south now? In my opinion, the situation in Syria is quite complex, and Russia is a major actor in the region. Moscow has a big role in Syria in terms of shaping up the situation and international relations. In my opinion, we are faced with a new phase of attacks."

The attack occurred two days before Ne-

tanyahu's third short trip to Moscow.

Israel has eyes on Iran and Hezbollah. Israel's main goal is to keep Iran and Hezbollah away from southern Syria. Tel Aviv has reached a dead-end after the inability to overthrow the Syrian government and break up the resistance axis. Israel is seeking a confirmation from Russia on Syria, but the Syrian government is in a position that cannot guarantee Israel and its allies, and does not allow anyone to impose condition on Damascus.

It is clear that whenever the Syrian army gains ground and dominates new areas, the Zionist regime, which feels growingly frustrated, orders Israeli fighters to carry out attacks against Syria.

When Syrian army seized the Naseeb border crossing with Jordan and raised the national flag for the first time in years, Israel knew it had lost the battle.

The fact that Israeli fighters attack the T-4 airport in Homs province for the third time in less than three months, is a proof of the Zionists failure in Syria.

Zionist attacks on Syria, which took place with the most modern U.S.- made fighter, did not have any effect on Damascus and could not undermine the Syrian government and destroy the morale of the Syrian army.

The Zionist regime attacks continue against Syria out of fear of the Syrian or the resistance forces reaching the Golan Heights. Tel Aviv pretends to be ready for anything in the future.

## President Rouhani's visit to Europe displayed Iran's diplomatic maturity: U.S. researcher

**TEHRAN (Tasnim)** — An independent political researcher from Los Angeles said Iranian President Hassan Rouhani's recent key trip to Europe showed Iran's "sovereignty and independence on the world stage", adding that it further displayed the Islamic Republic's diplomatic maturity.

"...the purpose of the trip for the Iranian delegation was to re-assert Iran's sovereignty and independence on the world stage, as well as to further displayed Iran's diplomatic maturity against the illegal, irrational unilateral withdrawal of the United States from the JCPOA," Pye Ian told the Tasnim news agency.

Pye Ian is an independent economic and geopolitical researcher as well as a strategic planning and business development advisor. His articles and analyses on international affairs, economic trends and cultural topics have been published in various mainstream and alternative press sources. Ian's wider intellectual interests are reflected in his writings on the convergence of foreign affairs, political philosophy, history, global finance and energy policy. He has undergraduate degrees in economics and political science from the University of California and a Master's degree in finance from Cambridge University.

Following is the full text of the interview.

Q: As you know, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, along with FM Zarif, traveled to Austria and Switzerland to strengthen ties with Europe after Washington's pullout from the JCPOA. What is your take on this trip?

A: Aside from the obvious acute goal of trying to salvage the three-year-old JCPOA agreement, which has proven to be very successful in achieving its nonproliferation aims for the wider M.E.N.A., the purpose of the trip for the Iranian delegation was to re-assert Iran's sovereignty and independence on the world stage, as well as to further displayed Iran's diplomatic maturity against the illegal, irrational unilateral withdrawal of the United States from the JCPOA. I.E. Iran held fastidiously to the spirit and letter of the JCPOA since its beginning, whereas the US, out of demonstrable bad faith, left it, despite the remainder of the P5 members of the JCPOA remaining in the accord. The Europe trip was thus partly meant by Iran to remind the world of who have remained «adults in the room», versus who have fallen short of such an expected civil standard, and belligerently so.

Iran naturally wishes to show itself as on the same level of political maturity as said other non-US parties to the JCPOA, all of whom Iran continues to enjoy positive relations with. Related, Iran wishes to preserve past and future potential economic commitments from said non-US European and Eurasian nations, especially considering that unilateral sanctions applied by Washington against Iran remain extra-judicial with regard to international laws and mores.

Lastly, I believe that the trip was meant to send further signals to Iran's closest geopolitical and economic allies out of the P5+1 members - namely, China and Russia - that Iran remains a fair, «above-board» actor on the world stage despite said Washington's latest actions. Such diplomatic moves will thus further integrate and expedite both strategic and economic mandates which the three nations have shared for some time now, whether in the security, energy, continental infrastructure or evolving bilateral and multilateral currency usage arenas.

Q: Since Washington's pullout from the nuclear agreement, the European Union has been making all-out effort to preserve the deal. The EU was expected to deliver a package of proposals to Iran to save the deal. What's your perspective on the package?

A: Knowing that Washington carries over-weight influences both politically and economically with all European nations, Iran might be expecting the «JCPOA preservation package» to mirror certain sentiments and aims of the Americans, especially considering that the Europeans fear Washington's further unilateral punishments, which at this point and pace do not require any viable, sober reasons to be implemented against ANY nation. I sense that Iran will nonetheless aim to meet the proposals put forward in said packet as much as possible, again not only to exhibit further exemplary good faith and transparency with regard to its acute and overall motives and actions, but also to further influence European actors to consider distancing themselves more from said unilateral



bullying by Washington.

I.E. By «playing ball» with this imminent package as much as possible, just as it had cooperated fully with the parameters of the original JCPOA agreement itself. Iran seeks to show that - ironic to the goals of sanctions aimed against Iran - abiding completely by Washington's diktat on any and all matters involving Iran ... is actually bad for business, bad for growth, and bad for economic and geopolitical sustainability for all P5+1 member states, the EU, and certainly other nations on earth. Subtle, discrete, amiable «soft power» is here being displayed shrewdly by Iran while Washington & Tel Aviv continue to alienate themselves further on the world stage vis-a-vis all things involving Iran on the one hand, and regarding lending credibility to any and all international treaties, agreements, pacts and ventures on the other hand.

Q: On Monday, a senior US State Department official reaffirmed the Trump administration's goal of reducing Iran's oil exports to zero by November. The Iranian president says it is not possible to end Iran's oil export. Do you believe so?

A: Yes, because successfully quelling Iran's oil exports - and subsequently, the consumption habits of nations worldwide toward Iranian oil and natural gas resources - is implausible considering the lack of credible spare capacity elsewhere for making up the presumed lost oil supplies resulting from Washington's latest oil sanctions placed on Iran. The Saudis have never had to test their spare capacity to the extent necessary if the over 2.4 million barrels per day of Iranian crude currently servicing global oil markets ... are suddenly cut off. Case in point, the world witnessed \$146/barrel oil a decade ago, and yet Riyadh sat on its hands with regard to exercising its spare capacity in oil production, exporting and reserve usage.

Plus, never mind that oil embargoes and their related ilk have traditionally served as outright acts of war (I.E. The Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor in December 1941 in part due to the US embargoing Tokyo's oil supplies. Yet although said history is meant to serve as a «precedent to incitement», Iran will not «take the bait» and act belligerently on the world stage due to these oil sanctions), the world simply cannot afford the resulting commodity price trajectories of WTI and Brent Crude spiking to north of \$100 and \$115, respectively, due to further supply constraints resulting from bluffed spare capacity and production make-up promises on the parts of the Saudis, Americans, and other key energy producers. Despite claims to the contrary by Washington, America's consumer economy is hurting, with true unemployment being an easily much higher multiple of what the Bureau of Labor Statistics claims that it is, and inflation much higher than what the Consumer Price Index & related metrics pronounce. Subsequent GDP growth rates are lower than advertised, as are household & even corporate savings, with no wage growth among those who «are» employed full time.

Thus, jacking up oil prices will hit consumers' pocket-books hard & immediately, despite the largest transatlantic

bulge-bracket banks, which recycle petrodollars earned through oil receipts, benefiting greatly from oil price spikes, alongside speculators' activities, which are symbiotic with said banks' activities. Naturally, the prices of oil and natural gas are not determined purely by classic economic supply & demand, but by political mandates from such powerful banks & their ultimate very private owners.

Too, higher oil prices going into another worldwide recession ala that of 2007 - 2009 will only further motivate China, which is the world's largest oil consumer, to expedite already existing efforts for its alternative to the staid 45-year-old petrodollar standard, which was spearheaded by the US and Saudis 45 years ago and in large part ALLOWS for said politicized energy price adjustments either up (2008) or certainly down (1976, 1985, 2014) to secure foreign policy aims for Washington. The Russians, Iranians, Venezuelans, Nigerians, Qataris, Turks, «Stan states and other energy producers or key importers will welcome and assist said efforts, whether on behalf of the «petro-yuan» or another Eastern/Southern energy currency standard divorced from Dollar Hegemony.

Q: There are some allegations about the involvement of an Iranian diplomat in the suspected bomb attack on an MKO meeting in Paris. Iranian officials believe that the Mujahedin Khalq Organization (MKO) is behind the «baseless and unfounded» plot against the diplomat designed at the current sensitive and important juncture to damage Iran-Europe relations. What do you think?

A: Considering that the traditional and ongoing terrorist make-up of the MKO/MEK has always involved deception and violence against those they deem as their enemies, and considering that the same characteristics underwrite how neoCONservatives (or «neoCONS») - who overtly support the MEK politically, legally, financially and strategically on multiple continents - think and act internationally and within host nations they infest, it would not shock the discerning mind that there might be hastily designed «false flag» characteristics involved in this latest, bizarre scenario involving this breakaway, traitorous, terrorist cult. In other words, said suspected bomb attack could very well have been staged in order to blame Iranians loyal to Iran, rather than to said MEK/MKO cult.

The MEK/MKO are clearly a lever for anti-Iranian forces who all ultimately seek what they call «regime change» in Tehran. Because said neoCONS have propped up and funded the MEK's leadership in Europe, naturally they all saw the recent diplomatic trips taken by President Rouhani and Minister Zarif to Switzerland and Austria as seemingly perfect opportunities and settings for further framing Iran in the eyes of global opinion. However, Tehran has no need, let alone any medium to long-term track record, for committing such acts of terror against anyone or thing, in Paris or elsewhere. Hence, and as always with said false flag attacks, one must ask with all sobriety - «Cui Bono?» (Def.: who stands, or stood, to gain from a crime, and so might have been responsible for it)?

## Prohibition of nuclear weapons: The world must make history again

**TEHRAN (FNA)** — Last year, July 7, the international civil society adopted a new international law to ban nuclear weapons but to no avail.

Now it's time for atomic-bomb survivors, antinuclear activists, members of the Red Cross, and UN officials and member states to make history again. They should raise awareness about the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and demand the nuclear-armed states sign it. They should exert pressure on the handful of countries to also join the treaty.

As long as the nuclear-armed states refuse to adopt the treaty,

**Now it's time for atomic-bomb survivors, antinuclear activists, members of the Red Cross, and UN officials and member states to make history again.**

there is no other way to outlaw all nuclear weapon-related activities, set out measures for disarmament, address victim assistance and environmental remediation, and acknowledge the disproportionate impact these weapons have had on humanity.

Unfortunately, the nuclear-armed states are still pouring billions of dollars a year into their renewal and expansion. The United States, for instance, has put aside

1 trillion dollars to modernize and expand its nuclear-weapon facilities and missile silos. It is this kind of attitude toward international law, human security, and the survival of the planet that has prevented global nuclear disarmament for more than seven decades. It is this attitude that has facilitated a new arms race in the Middle East.

Nevertheless, one year has passed since the TPNW's adoption. This treaty is yet to eliminate nuclear weapons, and as long as the nuclear-armed states refuse to eliminate their nuclear weapons, the ban, the treaty, and the global antinuclear movement will show no results.

The international civil society, therefore, should actively work with the signatories to promote the TPNW and stop any state funds from being divested to nuclear weapons. Recently, major Belgian banks announced they would exclude all nuclear-weapon producers from investment; Deutsche Bank announced it has expanded its exclusion of «controversial weapon systems» to include nuclear-weapon companies; and Norway and the Neth-



erlands have divested their pension funds.

Activists in cities and towns across the United States are encouraging their cities to comply with the TPNW as well, and to divest state funds from nuclear weapons. In the Middle East, Iran and many other governments have signed and voiced their support for the TPNW, urging all nuclear-armed regimes to join the ban, particularly Israel which has nuclear weapons.

It is up to the global antinuclear movement to make sure that the treaty is front and center on the regional world stage at these dangerous times. While it remains to be seen what might come of the talks in Syria and Yemen, in terms of peace and ceasefire in the region, it is an opportunity to showcase the TPNW as an instrument for both. The world community needs to present a concrete plan for removing nuclear weapons and threats of their use in the region, calling on Israel, as well as the United States, to

**It is up to the global antinuclear movement to make sure that the treaty is front and center on the regional world stage at these dangerous times. While it remains to be seen what might come of the talks in Syria and Yemen, in terms of peace and ceasefire in the region, it is an opportunity to showcase the TPNW as an instrument for both.**

join the nuclear ban. The world community should also call on NATO member states to discuss changing NATO's doctrine away from reliance on nuclear weapons and toward implementing their repeated commitments to nuclear disarmament. The existing security agreements for NATO and other US allies do not prevent these states from joining the nuclear ban. The obstacles are not legal, they are only political.

On balance, nuclear weapons don't provide security. It is in the interests of all nuclear-armed states to reduce and eliminate the perceived value of their nuclear weapons, decrease economic incentives for nuclear-weapon production, and reject nuclear weapons in their collective security doctrines.

The 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons has been successful in raising global awareness and debate. It should now encourage divestment from nuclear-weapon production and disrupt the dominant narrative on nuclear weapons among the nuclear-armed states. They must join the treaty if they want to change the world, and if they are honest about their alleged aspiration for peace and security in the Middle East.



# Pars Diplomatic Real Estate

## Apartment

Apt in Dibaji - Farmanieh  
3<sup>rd</sup> floor, 140 sq.m, luxury furn  
2 master rooms, spj, lobby nice  
balcony with flower box  
nice view, security, **\$2000**  
Ms.Diba: 09128103206

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

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

Apt in Darakeh  
95 sq.m, 1 Bdr., fully furn  
almost new, parking, **\$1500**  
Ms.Diba: 09128103206

Apt in Elahiyeh  
18<sup>th</sup> floor, 140 sq.m, 2 Bdrs.  
almost new, equipped kitchen  
unfurn, balcony, luxury lobby spj  
gym saloon, **\$4000**  
Ms.Diba: 09128103206

Apt in Mirdamad  
148 sq.m, 3 Bdrs., 3 balconies fully  
renovated, parking  
near to subway, **\$2600**  
Ms.Diba: 09128103206

## Villa

Duplex Villa in Fereshteh  
300 sq.m, 4 Bdrs., fully renovated  
green yard, parking  
outdoor swimming pool, **\$5000**  
Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Luxury Villa in the North  
duplex, 1200 sq.m built up  
2000 sq.m land, 5 Bdrs., big  
saloon servant, indoor pool, spj  
renovated, beautiful and green  
garden, semi furn  
**\$18000 negotiable**  
*Suitable for Embassies*  
Ms.Diba: 09128103206

Super Luxury Villa in Farmanieh  
800 Built up in 1200 land duplex  
completely renovated  
7 Bdrs., 2 level, green garden  
outdoor pool, high security  
equipment kitchen  
*Suitable for*  
*Residency of Ambassadors*  
Ms.Diba: 09128103206

Duplex Villa in Velenjak  
1100 sq.m built up, 1300 sq.m  
land, 9 Bdrs., renovated, nice  
garden, semi furn, outdoor pool  
nice garden, 2 big balconies nice  
& cozy place storage servant  
quarter, 2 side entrances, **\$15000**  
*Suitable for*  
*Embassy & Company*  
Ms.Diba: 09128103206



Holder of

ISO 9001:2008

ISO 10004:2012

ISO 10002:2014

From Oxford Cert Universal

**Best Consultation**

**Best Services, Best Result**

Intl. Department Manager "Tina 09128103205"

Tel: 22662452-8, Fax: 22667173

**Hot Line: 28141**

info@parsdiplomatic.com

**www.parsdiplomatic.com**

## Building & Office

Commercial Building in  
Jordan  
2700 sq.m built up, 750 sq.m land  
11 floors, 79 parking, size of each  
unit between 106 sq.m to 220 sq.m  
all offices are open  
**Price negotiable**  
*Ready for Renting*  
Ms.Diba: 0912810

Super Luxury Office  
in Vanak  
1350 sq.m in each floor  
near to finishing, pkg, lobby  
security, near to highway  
*Ready for moving in 2 months*  
Ms.Diba: 09128103206

New Whole Building in Zafaranih  
5<sup>th</sup> floor, each floor one unit  
each unit 150 sq.m with 3 rooms  
parking, lobby  
**Price negotiable**  
*Suitable for*  
*Residency & Embassy*  
Ms.Diba: 09128103206

Whole Building in  
Kamranieh  
10 unit Apt, 60 Bdrs., each apt  
around 210 sq.m, with 3 Bdrs.  
lobby, 37 parking & more, spj, too  
many storage rooms, completely  
renovated, good access to highway  
*Ready for Renting to foreign Com*  
*panies & Residency*  
Ms.Diba: 09128103206

## Ideal Offers

Apt in Qeytarieh  
170 sq.m, 3 Bdrs., beautiful  
& perfect furn, good light, spj  
parking, good access to  
highway & Elahieh, **\$2500**  
Ms.Diba: 09128103206

Apt in Elahieh  
180 sq.m, 3 Bdrs., fully furn  
nice & cozy, spj, **\$2500**  
Ms.Diba: 09128103206

Offer in Velenjak  
apt in a modern garden tower 140  
sq.m, 2 Bdrs., luxury furn perfect  
light & view, spj  
parking, 24/7 security  
lobby man, **\$2500**  
Ms.Diba: 09128103206

Villa / Apt in Elahieh  
2<sup>nd</sup> floor, 300 sq.m, 4 Bdrs  
luxury furn, nice garden, pkg  
**\$4000 negotiable**  
*Suitable for Diplomats*  
Ms.Diba: 09128103206

Apt in Kamranieh  
270 sq.m, 4 Bdrs., luxury furn  
nice balcony, green space view  
swimming pool, **\$3500**  
Ms.Diba: 09128103206

Apt in Jordan  
70 sq.m, 1 Bdr., fully furn parking,  
opposite to  
Mellat-Park, **\$1400**  
Ms.Diba: 09128103206

مالکین محترم

ملک های فروش و اجاره ای خود را (آپارتمان،  
ویلا، مستغلات، اداری و تجاری) به ما بسپارید.

بهترین مشاوره، برترین سرویس، بالاترین رضایت

مالکین محترم املاک مبله و غیرمبله، مسکونی، اداری و تجاری، ویلا و مستغلات  
شما را جهت اجاره به سفارتخانه ها و شرکت های خارجی نیازمندیم.

مالکین محترم

ویلاهای شما را جهت اجاره به منزل سفیر و مدیران  
شرکت های بین المللی در مناطق شمالی تهران  
نیازمندیم.

**PARSIAN Real Estate**

**SHANON**  
Shanon\_zt@yahoo.com  
+989121907875  
Tel : 88745542

**Gheitarieh (\$2700)**  
160sq.m, 2bdrs  
roof garden, F.F

**Niavaran**  
300sq.m, 4bdrs  
S/pool, S, J  
(\$4000)

**Jordan Villa (\$6000)**  
1200sq.m, 5bdrs  
yard, S/p, & F.F

**Velenjak Apt**  
3bdrs, S/p, J  
(\$3000) F.F

**Dibaji bldg**  
4storey, 10bdrs  
(\$15000) F.F

**Don't Waste Your Time**

Visit our website to choose your desired rental Properties

**www.DeltaHOME.ir**

The Most Specialized Website for Foreigners

**HOME**  
Real Estate  
Member of DELTA Real Estate Group  
(021) 88888865

**EMBASSY OF BRAZIL IN TEHRAN**

**Job offer**

Administrative Officer for consular work. Portuguese,  
Persian and English required.

CV to be sent to [administ.teera@itamaraty.gov.br](mailto:administ.teera@itamaraty.gov.br)  
no later than **Mordad, 9<sup>th</sup>, 1397 (July, 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018)**.

Detailed information on the job position available at  
<http://teera.itamaraty.gov.br>.

**Exquisite Building Located in  
the Best Part of Tehran**

**"SAADABAD"**

**1,200 sq.m, Appealing Land in  
4 Separate Apts.**

With a unique indoor swimming  
pool and one floor industrial  
equipped kitchen  
Suitable for Embassy  
Foreign Residency & Companies

Tel: **0912-8574808**

## TASHRIFAT REAL ESTATE

**We give service with a difference... We care!**

✓ **Long & Short term rentals**

✓ **Purchase Properties**

**FURNISHED - UNFURNISHED**  
**Villa-Apartment-Office-Building**



Mr. Shahin  
Nobody does it better

**09121081212**

Since: 1987

با شاهین سریعتر به نتیجه می رسید

مالکین محترم املاک مسکونی و اداری شما را جهت اجاره به خارجی نیازمندیم

Tel: **22723121**

E-mail: [tehranfirstchoice@gmail.com](mailto:tehranfirstchoice@gmail.com)

**SATISFACTION  
GUARANTEED**





Taj Mahal Hotel & Indian Restaurant



Mahi Mahi Gilaki Restaurant

Plot No 29, Sout Sheykh Bahayi Street, Molasadra Blvd, Vanak Sq, Tehran, Iran

[www.Tajmahalhotel.ir](http://www.Tajmahalhotel.ir) [@tajmahal\\_hotel](https://www.instagram.com/tajmahal_hotel) Tel: +98(21)-88035444



## 70 NGOs active in tourism-related fields



Foreign travelers pose for a photo during their visit to the UNESCO-registered Persepolis, in southern Iran.

**TOURISM d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Some 70 non-governmental organizations are currently active in various tourism-related fields across Iran, the deputy minister of sports and youth said on Wednesday.

Such NGOs which are associated with the national youth center can cater for the tourism and hospitality sectors, particularly if being coordinated, Mehr quoted Mohammad Mehdi Tondgouyan as saying.

This measure helps foreign tourists to have access to a network of eco-lodges that are active in all provinces, he added.

The network, when fully developed, could be at the disposal of the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization in order to help domestic and foreign travelers, he explained.

The country has launched extensive plans to bolster its tourism sector. Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, the country is expecting to increase the number of tourism arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million.

## Smuggled relics seized in northern Iran



**HERITAGE d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Iranian authorities have recently confiscated several historical relics from smugglers in the northern city of Behshahr, Mazandaran province.

Nine pieces of potteries and earthenware were recovered in two operations following reports obtained from cultural heritage advocates, ISNA reported on Tuesday.

Experts from the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization have estimated the relics date back to the 1st millennium BC.

## ROUND THE GLOBE

### Defense Line of Amsterdam

The Stelling van Amsterdam (Defense Line of Amsterdam) is a complete ring of fortifications extending more than 135 km around the city of Amsterdam.

Built between 1883 and 1920, the ring consists of an ingenious network of 45 forts, acting in concert with an intricate system of dikes, sluices, canals and inundation polders, and is a major example of a fortification based on the principle of temporary flooding of the land.

Since the 16th century, the people in the Netherlands have used their special knowledge of hydraulic engineering for



defense purposes. The area around the fortifications is divided into polders, each at a different level and surrounded by dikes.

Each polder has its own flooding facilities. The depth of flooding was a critical factor in the Stelling's success; the water had to be too deep to wade and too shallow for boats to sail over. Water levels were maintained by means of inlet sluices and barrage sluices. Forts were built at strategic locations where roads or railroads cut through the defense line (accesses). They were carefully situated at intervals of no more than 3500 m, the spacing being determined by the range of the artillery in the forts. The earlier ones were built of brick, the later of massed concrete.

The land forts have an important place in the development of military engineering worldwide.

(Source: UNESCO)

# Mt. Damavand facing hurdles to gain UNESCO World Heritage status

**HERITAGE d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Iran's cultural heritage body is still keeping an eye on possible inscription of Mount Damavand on the UNESCO World Heritage list though obstacles such as mining operations and land use change are still in place after nearly a decade.

Mining on its foothills has long eclipsed natural landscape of the dormant volcano, and is acting as a hindrance to its recognition by the UN cultural body.

The Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization's first attempts dates back to 2008 when it submitted a dossier on the mount to UNESCO, however, it hasn't gained approval yet.

Shoulder to shoulder with the CHHTO, communities of Damavand aficionados and nature lovers have not given up and pursuing to solve the issues in spite of all difficulties, IRNA reported on Sunday.

In this regard, Mazandaran province's Governor General Mohammad Eslami has recently ordered to form a task-force to explore every avenue to cope with the concerns, the report added.

Moreover, the Department of Environment has been following the matter as well.

In spite of all the effort, mining operations are still going on making further changes to its natural scenery.

"One of the main issues in protecting Mount Damavand is a lack of integrated management," said environmental activist Keikhosro Yazdani earlier this month.

Instead of mining activities the locals must be encouraged to focus on developing jobs in tourism industry, he suggested.

At 5,609 meters high, Damavand is the highest peak in the Middle East and the highest volcano in Asia. It is situated some 70 km northwest of Tehran.

Damavand, a natural habitat of flora such as tulips and poppies, has suffered a serious loss of natural vegetation due to the mining operations; heavy machinery is carving massive holes on its surface.



A view of Mt. Damavand and its natural landscape

Lightweight rocks of the volcanic mountain which are widely used in construction lures profiteers and miners.

The peak of Damavand covers permanently snow (is permanently covered with snow) during the entire year.

The most important thermal springs are Ask and Larijan. The flora and fauna is very rich and include about 2000 plant species. There are numerous endemic species which are important to flora of the world.

## Ardebil, a getaway from the scorching hot days

By Maryam Oarehgozlou

The summer has set in for a few days now and the blazing, baking sun seems to be always shining in the cloudless sky and you could no longer fight back the urge to plan a getaway to places with cool temperature.

For our family, the best destination was the north-western province of Ardebil, which is characterized with cool climate during the hot summer months and lures a lot of tourists, who like us, try to escape the hot weather for a couple of days.

### ■ Heyran route, pretty as picture

We set off on a road trip from Tehran to Ardebil, intending to take Heyran route. The route, connecting Astara, northern Gilan province, to Ardebil, is well-known for its scenic views. However, since you have to pass through Gilan province to get to Astara and Heyran route, it is best to spend a night in picturesque villages in Gilan. That's why despite the hot temperatures we decided to spend a night in a village in Talesh near Siah Daran forest park.

In case you don't want to spend a night in Gilan you can make a pit stop at Gisoom forest park where the jungle meets the Caspian Sea and has perfect tasting fish kebabs in small outdoor, sea view restaurants.

The next morning we headed to Astara to get to Heyran route. Driving along the road you could see the fenced bor-



A view of a paddy field in a village in Talesh near Siah Daran forest park

ders between Iran and Azerbaijan. The road was surrounded with beautiful trees and emerald green paddy fields. Every now and then there were vendors selling corn on the cob kebab and ash-e doogh (a soup usually made with doogh, a yogurt-based beverage, as well as different kind of herbs and chickpea).

Our great ride throughout the road culminated with arriving at Heyran gondola lift. Getting on a cabin we travelled 1,500 meters through a beautiful landscape of the Alborz mountain range. At some point during the ride everything vanished in the thick fog and this meant we have arrived at the next station.

The cold breeze and the small drops of water on your face makes you feel alive again. You can even take a short walk up the hills and plains surrounding the region. The plains are beautifully covered in wild flowers and the everlasting fog gives it greater vibes. There are restaurants, coffee houses, and tea houses which offere traditional foods and drinks in the area as well.

## ‘Oud Lajan has potential to become an attractive tourist destination’

**TOURISM d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Oud Lajan neighborhood in downtown Tehran has a considerable potential to become an attractive tourist destination, Iran's tourism chief has said.

The Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization Director Ali-Asghar Mounesan made the remarks on Tuesday while paying a visit to the neighborhood, which hosts a permanent handicrafts marketplace.

Mounesan was accompanied by his deputies Mohammad Moheb-Khodai, Pouya Mahmoudian, and Mohammad-Hasan Talebian, CHTN reported.

"Organizing various events, festivals and package tours can pave the way for Oud Lajan to be developed into a striking tourist destination in the heart of Tehran."

"Open-air markets on Fridays will also cater to businesses

It was so hard to say goodbye to Heyran and leaving it to get to our main destination, Ardebil.

### ■ Shorabil, a lake within the city

Once we reached Ardebil we decided to visit Shorabil Lake. The lake is located south of the city and offers a dazzling and peaceful atmosphere. There is no need to do anything



A village in Heyran route, connecting Astara

there, you can just sit near the lake, gaze upon the view and inhale the fresh air.

However, facilities have been built around the lake for the leisure, entertainment and comfort of the coming visitors as well. There are several restaurants and coffee shops, indoor and outdoor amusement parks, a couple of international hotels and a zoo in the proximity of the lake.

There are also running track and bike lanes around the lake, so activities such as running, cycling and also sailing on small boats are also available.

This lake, with a surface area of 16 acres, is the largest lake in Iran within a city. Originally the basin was covered with mud and high concentrations of salt and other minerals so that no fish could survive. In 1998, in order to dilute the lake, rivers were linked to it and reduced the amount of salt. Now, lots of salmones are living in Lake Shorabil.

### ■ Fandoqlo forest, a heaven on earth

While dozens of hotels are available in the city of Ardebil to stay in we preferred to camp out in Fandoqlo forest.

Stretching over some 85,000 hectares of land, Fandoqlo (literally meaning filled with hazel trees), is very well-known for its spectacular, stunning sceneries. Dog rose, German chamomile, wild pansy, and wild strawberry are some of the plant species found in this area. It is also a habitat to brown bear, marten, pheasant, partridge, and golden eagle.

Fandoqlo is located 25 kilometers from Ardebil so it is a short drive from the city to the forest. You can either set up a camp in the forest or rent a cottage in case you don't feel like sleeping in a tent.

However, the beautiful sky ornamented with hundreds of stars might tempt you to decide to sleep in a tent. On the first night of our stay in the forest the weather was pleasantly cool, so that we put up a tent and had a cup of tea under the blinking stars.

There are guard dogs and also a security guard at the area so that you can feel pretty safe to sleep in the tent. There are also lots of parking space available for parking your car.

In the morning, we woke up with the horses' happy neigh



CHHTO Director Ali-Asghar Mounesan (R) visits a permanent handicrafts market in Oud Lajan, downtown Tehran, July 10, 2018.

and dogs barking at them. In front of us was a plain surrounded with dense trees and the light wind spreading the fog. Smell of damp, freshly cut grass and the fresh earthy smell filled our lungs and again made it harder to leave the forest for visiting another resort destination.

### ■ Sareyn, the city of lights

For me, Sareyn, a city located in southwest of Ardebil, is a city of lights. The streets are jammed with food carts selling corn on the cob kebab, ash-e doogh, and tea. There are also big restaurants selling kebab and other mouth-watering food stuff. It sounded like the pool of lights would never fade.

The city is well-known for its hot springs and attracts hundreds of tourists especially during summer. The hot springs in Sareyn are near an inactive volcano in mount Sabalan and its water contains sulphur particles which is believed to have therapeutic properties and is good for bone and joint pains.

However, it is not just the hot springs that makes you want to visit this city. Walking down the streets at dusk while the cool breeze gently blows and listening to people's carefree laughter tells you that the trip has paid off.

### ■ Things you may need to know

The massive suspension bridge, inaugurated in 2015 in Meshgin Shahr city, also worth visiting. At 345 meters long, 3 meters wide and 80 meters high, the bridge is said to be



A view of Lake Shorabil

the largest of its kind in the Middle East. However, a word of advice: do not go there at noon. Despite the cool breeze the sun is up and strong.

The UNESCO-registered Sheikh Safi al-Din Khanegah and Shrine Ensemble which is being restored now is also another place to visit in the city of Ardebil.

Restaurants in Ardebil cook the best kebab. Don't forget to taste this palatable dish, too.

If you decided to take the Heyran route to get to the city, it is best to travel back from Khalkhal-Asalem road. A cool mist fills this road too. Driving through the mist you get to the beautiful city of Asalem in the province of Gilan. The enchanting beauty of the road, starting from Khalkhal, located in Ardebil, and ending in Gilan, would be a perfect end to a perfect trip.

### ■ Pack a bag, take a week off and visit Ardebil

Our short 4-day trip was not enough to appreciate other beauties the region is famous for. Next time I would take a week off and travel to Ardebil and most certainly I will stay all seven nights at Fandoqlo forest.

to thrive in the neighborhood," Mounesan added.

The permanent handicrafts marketplace was inaugurated in 2016 with the aim of livening up the once thriving locale, which used to be home to merchants and affluent individuals.

The market has over 100 shops, most of which have been restored to preserve original shape.

Iran exported \$280 million worth of handicrafts during the past Iranian calendar year, which ended on March 20.

Traditional ceramics, pottery vessels, handwoven cloths as well as personal ornamentations with precious and semi-precious gemstones are among Iranian exports to Iraq, Afghanistan and Germany, the U.S., the UK and other countries.

Dozens of Iranian handicrafts have gained the UNESCO Seal of Excellence during the past couple of years.



# Nanoparticles give immune cells a boost against cancers, researchers say

Programming the body's immune system to attack cancer cells has had promising results for treating blood cancers such as lymphoma and leukemia. This tactic has proven more challenging for solid tumors such as breast or lung cancers, but MIT researchers have now devised a novel way to boost the immune response against solid tumors.

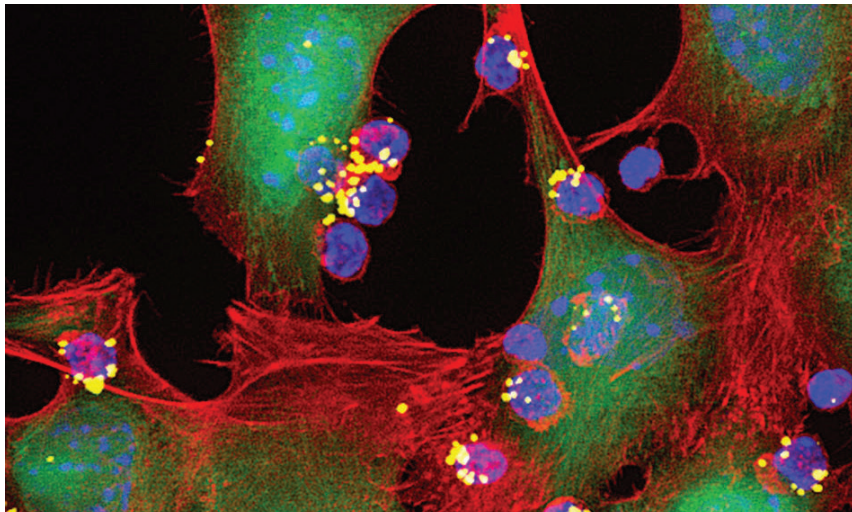
By developing nanoparticle "backpacks" that hold immune-stimulating drugs, and attaching them directly to T cells, the MIT engineers showed in a study of mice that they could enhance those T cells' activity without harmful side effects.

In more than half of the treated animals, tumors disappeared completely.

"We found you could greatly improve the efficacy of the T cell therapy with backpacked drugs that help the donor T cells survive and function more effectively. Even more importantly, we achieved that without any of the toxicity that you see with systemic injection of the drugs," says Darrell Irvine, a professor of biological engineering and of materials science and engineering, a member of MIT's Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research, and the senior author of the study.

## Clinical trials

Irvine is one of the co-founders of a company called Torque Biotherapeutics that plans to begin clinical trials of this approach this



summer. The lead authors of the paper, which appears in the July 9 issue of Nature Biotechnology, are former MIT postdoc Li Tang,

who is now at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (EPFL), and former MIT grad student Yiran Zheng.

**Researchers have tried to boost the response to solid tumors by injecting immune-stimulating drugs called cytokines along with the T cells.**

Researchers have developed two primary ways to create populations of T cells that can attack tumors. One is to remove tumor-specific T cells from a tumor biopsy, grow them in a lab dish, and then return them to the patient. The other is to take circulating T cells from the patient's blood and either genetically modify them so that they target a protein found on the tumor cell's surface, or expose them to tumor proteins in hopes that the T cells will become activated against those proteins.

These methods have shown some success against lymphomas and leukemias, but it has proven difficult to generate a strong immune response against solid tumors. Researchers have tried to boost the response to solid tumors by injecting immune-stimulating drugs called cytokines along with the T cells.

To overcome that, Irvine and his colleagues have been working on techniques to stimulate only the tumor-specific T cells.

For the Nature Biotechnology study, the researchers created a new type of nanoparticle that can carry 100-fold more of the drug and does not release it until after the T cells encounter the tumor. These particles consist of a gel made from molecules of the cytokine IL-15 held together by a cross-linker that is designed to degrade only when the T cell carrying the particles reaches the tumor and becomes activated.

(Source: phys.org)

## Massive freshwater flood caused abrupt climate change 13,000 years ago

Researchers have found traces of an enormous freshwater flood in the Arctic region said to have triggered abrupt climate change thousands of years ago.

In a five-year study that culminated this year, scientists have found that freshwater from a melting glacier coursed through what is now Canada's Mackenzie River.

The freshwater disrupted the North Atlantic's deep-water current system, creating changes in weather patterns that triggered the Younger Dryas, a mini Ice Age that took place in the northern hemisphere following the last glacial period of the Quaternary Ice Age.

Forty-five thousand years ago, the last major glacial period came to an end when the Earth's climate began to shift to a warmer interglacial state. However, a thousand years into the transition, the northern hemisphere returned to glacial conditions in a period called the Younger Dryas.

Named after the Dryas octopetala flower that thrived in the

harsh environments of Europe at the time, the Younger Dryas came after a gradual global warming that took place over 1,000 years. This is according to oceanographer Lloyd Keigwin, lead author of the new study published in the journal Natural Geoscience.

## Sudden influx of water

For years, experts have debated the cause of the Younger Dryas. The popular theory is it was triggered by a sudden influx of fresh water coming from the melting glaciers and ice sheets of North America.

As the fresh water merged with the North Atlantic, it disrupted the deep-water current system called the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation. The AMOC carries heat from the tropics to the North Atlantic, where it is released into the atmosphere.

In 2013, Keigwin's team from WHOI, along with geologists and geophysicists at the University of California San Diego's Scripps Institution of Oceanography and the Oregon

State University, sailed for the Beaufort Sea north of Alaska, Yukon, and the Northwestern Territories onboard the US Coast Guard Cutter Healy.

The goal was to look for proof of a freshwater flood at the place where the Mackenzie River empties into the Arctic Ocean. To accomplish this, the researchers collected cylindrical samples of sediments found on the eastern slopes of the Mackenzie River.

They then analyzed fossil planktons embedded in shells in the sediments, leading them to conclude that an abundance of glacial meltwater gushed through the Mackenzie River into the North Atlantic. The "signature of oxygen isotopes recorded in foraminifera shells preserved in the sediment allowed us to fingerprint the source of the glacial lake discharge down the Mackenzie River 13,000 years ago," says co-principal investigator Neal Driscoll of Scripps Oceanography.

(Source: Tech Times)

## A 30-year-old heart disease drug could help treat type 1 diabetes

Finger pricks and daily insulin injections are currently the leading regimen for those with type 1 diabetes, a condition in which the body's insulin producing cells beta cells are destroyed. And it's not foolproof.

Patients can often face risks over over-correcting their blood sugar levels, which can potentially lead to hypoglycemia — low blood sugar — and coma.

Insulin is responsible for regulating the amount of sugar in the blood, and dysfunctions with it can cause diabetes.

There are two types of diabetes, type 2 diabetes, in which the body becomes insulin resistant and can't effectively use it, and type 1 diabetes, in which the immune system destroys large portions of the beta cells responsible for making insulin in the pancreas.

## Diagnosed diabetes

In 2015, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that over 30 million people in the U.S. had diagnosed diabetes, and about 5 percent of them had type 1 diabetes.

A new study published in Nature Medicine

found that verapamil, a drug used to treat high blood pressure, could also be effective at stabilizing blood sugar levels in patients with type 1 diabetes by improving beta cells survival and function.

Dr. Anath Shalev, an author of the study and a professor of Endocrinology, Diabetes & Metabolism at the University of Alabama-Birmingham, said they found previously that an elevation of a key protein called TXNIP in response to increased calcium ion flow into beta cells was a key factor that was present

in both type 1 and type 2 diabetes.

Verapamil, which blocks calcium channel activity, was also shown to reduce TXNIP levels, stopping the loss of beta cells in patients with type 1 diabetes.

"This is the first indication that we have of something in hand now that acts very differently from any currently available diabetes treatment, and allows us to improve the patient's own insulin producing beta cell function," said Shalev.

(Source: sciencealert.com)

## Congratulation on July 10, 26th Foundation Anniversary of EDBI

Salehabadi Chief Executive of Export Development Fund of Iran (EDBI) congratulated the 26th establishment anniversary of Export Development Bank of Iran (EDBI) to industrious staff, personnel and directors of the bank, industrialists, entrepreneurs and dear customers of the bank, Public Relations Dept. of the bank reported.

As Iran's main Import and Export Bank (EXIMBANK), Export Development Bank of Iran was set up in the beginning of 1990s with the aim of promoting export of nonoil commodities.

Despite restrictions overshadowed banks of the country especially in sanctions period, the bank managed to turn threats into opportunities and took giant strides in the field of promoting export of nonoil commodities.

After the implementation of Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the bank managed to establish brokerage relationship with the other foreign banks, he said, adding, "in



this period, EDBI managed to set up brokerage relationship with about 137 foreign banks from 60 countries in the world."

In post-sanctions period, the bank tried to maintain

its brokerage relationship with other foreign banks, he said, adding, "EDBI has set up 21 branches in European and Asian continents."

Since its establishment, the bank has taken giant strides in supporting and increasing export of nonoil commodities, Salehabadi emphasized.

He put the facilities granted to development projects before the termination of the last Iranian calendar year in 1396 (ended March 20, 2018) at more than 127,000 billion rials, showing a consideration 48 percent growth as compared to a year earlier.

The bank also experienced a considerable 36 percent growth in terms of opening Letters of Credit (L/Cs) which is considered as the other salient achievements of the banks.

In the end, he said that his bank recorded 31 percent growth in terms of foreign exchange guarantees issued in the past year (ended March 20, 2018).

## GOLGOHAR and Chadormalu Mining & Industrial Co.s Ink Water Desalination Contract

GOLGOHAR, Chadormalu Mining & Industrial companies as well as Persian Gulf Water Supply Company and Singapore's HYFLUX Company signed an agreement for the accelerating desalination project and water transfer of the Persian Gulf, Public Relations Dept. of GOLGOHAR Company reported.

For this purpose, CEOs of GOLGOHAR

and Chadormalu mining & industrial companies coupled with Persian Gulf Water Supply Company visited one of the world's largest water desalination sites in Singapore with the production capacity of 318,000 cubic meters/day which will be put into operation by Singaporean Hyflux Company.

Hereunder are the terms of agreement: accelerating construction operation of first



module of water desalination project with the production capacity of 200,000 cubic meter/day for a period of six months, agreeing for the construction operation of 2nd module with Singaporean Hyflux Company with the same production capacity and in cooperation with foreign financing scheme as much as 50 percent, the Public Relations Dept. of the company concluded.

## SABA Steelmaking Development Plan Goes on Stream in Isfahan Prov.

SABA Continuous Rolling and Steelmaking Development Plan as well as a number of development projects were put into operation in Isfahan Province on Tuesday in the presence of First Vice President Es'hagh Jahangiri and Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade Mohammad Shariatmadari as well as CEO of IMIDRO Mehdi Karbasian, the Public Relations Dept. of Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) reported.

SABA steel development plan will be commissioned with the aim of producing hot rolling coil and steel as well as carved and ribbed sheets.

By operating this development phase, production capacity at this industrial and production unit will increase from 750,000 tons to 1.6 million tons.



IMIDRO put the investment rate made for operating this development plan at 146 million euro in the form of foreign exchange and also 2,536 billion rials.

Totally, 220 million euro will be spent for launching

this development plan which will generate employment for 150 job-seeking people directly.

In the same direction, infrastructural projects were put into operation in the fields of Direct Reduction (DR), treatment and distribution of water, development of power substation as well as gas-boosting pressure station, Karbasian opined.

Moreover, rail line was constructed, costing 711 billion rials.

Italian DANIELI Company was the foreign investor of this giant project, so that a consortium including SAFA Foolad Company, TAMKAR Company, MIKASAZEH and SAZEHANDISH companies undertook contracting activities of this giant project, the Public Relations Dept. of IMIDRO concluded.

## Loud rock music can hurt animals, ecosystem, new study says

Man-made noise affects how animals behave and interact with their ecosystem, according to a paper published Tuesday in the journal Evolution and Ecology. Testing what they called the "AC/DC hypothesis," wildlife experts found that music from AC/DC, Guns N' Roses and Lynyrd Skynyrd affected how insects attacked pests and hurt subsequent plant growth, while other music genres had no effect, even when played at the same volume.

To test their theory, the team recruited a host of ladybugs and examined how the music affected their consumption of aphids, a pest that infests soybean plants. In addition to rock, country and folk, the research team lined up sounds typical of urban environments, like a jackhammer and car horn at 95 to 100 decibels, equivalent to the noise produced by a lawn mower.

Willie Nelson had no effect on the ladybugs' pest predation, but when rock music roared, the beetles ate only half the amount of aphids as their counterparts over the same period. The soybean plants that faced the music were 25 percent smaller than their silent counterparts.

Biological disruption, even at the ladybug's level, can affect the entire food web, he said. In a May study, noise disruptions changed how many birds flew through the area, which affected how many seeds were dispersed. That same study found noise pollution doubled the sound energy in protected wildlife areas across the U.S., even in some of the most remote pockets of land.

(Source: Newsweek)

## Why do teeth turn yellow?

While celebrities and models may sport pearly white teeth, the smiles of most people are a tad duller. But this shouldn't be too surprising. Many things can affect the color of your teeth and turn them that dreaded yellow hue, which may make some people feel self-conscious about their appearance and hesitant to smile.

An abnormal tooth color is considered any color other than white or yellowish white, according to the U.S. National Library of Medicine.

Most causes of tooth discoloration fall into two main categories: extrinsic and intrinsic stains. Yellowing can also be caused by a wide array of health factors, from medication use to inadequate brushing.

Extrinsic stains affect the surface of the enamel, which is the hard, outermost layer of teeth. Although tooth enamel can be easily stained, these stains can typically be removed or corrected.

The "No. 1 cause of teeth yellowing is lifestyle," said Dr. Justin Philipp of J. Philipp Dentistry in Chandler, Arizona. "Smoking, drinking coffees and teas, and chewing tobacco are the worst offenders."

The tar and nicotine in tobacco are chemicals that can cause yellowish stains on the surface of teeth, in people who smoke or chew.

As a rule of thumb, any food or drink that can stain clothes can also stain your teeth. So, that's why dark-colored foods and beverages, including red wine, colas, chocolate and dark sauces — such as soy sauce, balsamic vinegar, spaghetti sauce and curries — can discolor teeth. In addition, some fruits and vegetables — such as grapes, blueberries, cherries, beets and pomegranates — have the potential to stain teeth.

Acidic foods and beverages can promote staining by eroding tooth enamel and making it easier for pigments to latch onto the teeth.

(Source: Live Science)

## ESA begins designing mission to return NASA's Mars samples to Earth

NASA is working toward the launch of its still unnamed Mars 2020 rover, which will bristle with scientific instruments. While it's photographing and scanning the Red Planet, the 2020 rover will also collect a few dozen soil samples. It doesn't have any way to get those samples back to Earth, so NASA is working with the European Space Agency (ESA) to make that happen. The ESA has just awarded a \$5.2 million contract for Airbus to create a concept design for a separate sample collection rover.



This hypothetical rover doesn't have a name either — it's currently just referred to as the "fetch rover" because its job is to fetch the sample containers left in the wake of NASA's larger rover. That mission will launch in the early 2020s. This rover will include the necessary drill and container hardware to leave behind more than 30 samples in caches across the planet.

The fetch rover will most likely be a small contraption, and it may look much different from the concept rendering.

Airbus' Ben Boyes says they estimate the current theoretical design would weigh about 130 kilograms (about 287 pounds). It would probably take around 150 days for the fetch rover to collect all the canisters from Mars 2020. The goal is to develop a rover that can handle the containers autonomously after it has been maneuvered into position.

Getting the samples into the fetch rover is just the beginning of returning them to Earth. The robot would need to make its way back to the landing craft it used to reach the surface and load the samples inside. Then, the ESA would need to launch it back into space.

(Source: extremetech.com)



## ‘Benefactors donate \$350m to health sector’

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — Iranian benefactors contributed a total of 15 trillion rials (nearly \$350 million) to the health sector over the past Iranian calendar year (March 2016-March 2017), deputy health minister for social affairs has said. “Some 70,000 philanthropists are active members of over 600 non-governmental organizations in the health sector,” IRNA quoted Mohammad Hadi Ayazi as saying on Wednesday.



Currently, there are a number of healthcare facilities providing charity care in the country, including some 875 health care centers, 400 clinics and 40 hospitals, he stated.

Also, some 40 hospitals are under construction with the help of anonymous donors which will also offer charity care, he said, adding that these centers play an effective role in reducing the treatment costs for underprivileged people.

“Benefactors active in the health sector are involved in developing and constructing state hospitals and charitable centers, improving emergency rooms, supplying medical equipment and medication,” he concluded.

## 11,000 families with disabled members to get houses

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — Some 11,000 Iranian families with two or more members with disabilities will be provided with houses by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2019), the Welfare Organization director has said.

All families with physically challenged members will be given houses by the end of the year, Tasnim quoted Anoushirvan Mohseni-Bandpey as saying.



“Some 11,000 families with two or more members suffering disabilities have been identified in the country,” he stated.

“It is also planned to construct some 20,000 residential units for other people under the Welfare Organization’s coverage”, he concluded.

Majlis [the Iranian parliament] approved both general outlines and details of a bill on rights of persons with disabilities on January 2018. Development of disability-friendly cities, free transportation, health insurance, free education, job creation, housing loans, and less working hours are some of the articles of the law which are hoped to improve such groups’ living conditions in the near future.

## LEARN ENGLISH

### Emergency Room

A: Help! Are you a doctor? My poor little Frankie has stopped breathing! Oh my gosh, Help me! I tried to perform **CPR**, but I just don't know if I could get any air into his lungs! Oh, Frankie!

B: Ellen, get him **hooked up** to a monitor! Someone page Dr. Howser. Get the patient to **hold still**, I can't get a pulse! Okay, he's on the monitor. His **BP** is falling! He's **flat lining**!

A: NOOOOOO! Frankie! Nurse! Do something!

B: Someone get her out of here! Get me the **defibrillator**. Okay, clear! Again! Clear! Come on! dammit! I'm not letting you go! Clear! I've got a **pulse**!

C: Okay, what's happening?

B: The patient is in **acute respiratory failure**; I think we're going to have to **intubate**!

C: Alright! Tubes in! Bag him! Someone give him 10 ccs of adrenaline! Let's go, people move, move!

A: Doctor, oh, thank god! How is he?

B: We managed to **stabilize** Frankie, but he's not **out of the woods** yet; he's still in **critical condition**. We're moving him to **intensive care**.

A: Doctor, just do whatever it takes. I just want my little Frankie to be okay. I couldn't imagine life without my little hamster!

#### ■ Key vocabulary

**CPR**: procedure in which air is blown into another person's lungs though their mouth

**hook up**: connect someone or something to a machine

**hold still**: not move

**BP**: blood pressure

**flat line**: condition where the heart stops working

**defibrillator**: electric machine that shocks the heart and makes it start working again

**pulse**: the number of times your heart beats per minute

**acute respiratory failure**: condition in which a person stops breathing

**intubate**: place a plastic tube in a person's mouth to facilitate breathing

**stabilize**: stop a patient from getting worse

**out of the woods**: out of trouble or danger

**critical condition**: state where a person is very sick or injured, and has a risk of dying

**intensive care**: place in the hospital where very ill patients are treated

#### ■ Supplementary vocabulary

**chest compressions**: act of pushing on someone's chest to restart their heart

resuscitate: make someone who stopped breathing start breathing again

**ER**: Emergency Room; place in the hospital where you bring sick or injured people in an emergency

# Iran’s population to reach 100m in 3 decades: official

**ENVIRONMENT** **TEHRAN** — The population of Iran will exceed 100 million over the next three decades, an official with National Organization for Civil Registration has said.

Mohammad Baqer Abbasi made the remarks on the occasion of World Population Day 2018 with a theme of “Family planning is a human right,” ISNA reported on Wednesday.

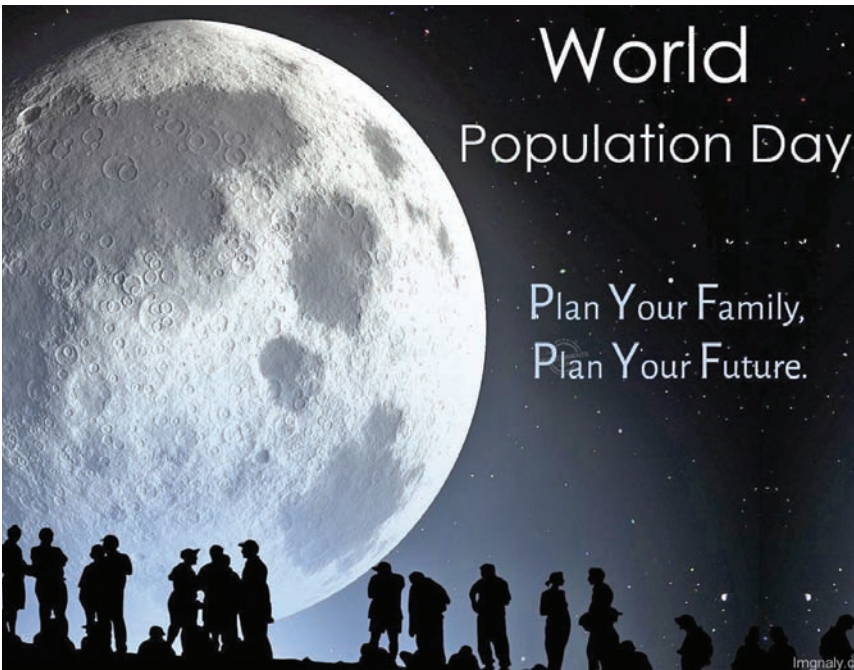
Celebrated on July 11, World Population Day seeks to focus attention on the urgency and importance of population issues, which was established by the then-Governing Council of the United Nations Development Program in 1989. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the 1968 International Conference on Human Rights, where family planning was, for the first time, globally affirmed to be a human right.

Abbasi explained that the issue of Iran’s population in the 21st century has been a public concern, as the population of Iran at the beginning of the century stood at 10 million or below, but the extreme increase made the population reach 80 million at the end of the century.

Fertility rate (the average number of children a mother produces during her fertility period) in (13)90s (2011 and after that) has reached 1.8 which is less than the replacement level, he noted.

“Replacement level fertility” is the total fertility rate—the average number of children born per woman—at which a population replaces itself from one generation to the next, without migration. This rate is roughly 2.1 children per woman for most countries, although it may modestly vary with mortality rates. The rate refers to the total fertility rate that will result in a stable population without it increasing or decreasing.

If the country achieves a demographic dividend by having a working age population (aged 15 to 64) of 70 percent, it could create the economic, social, and cultural motives



needed to have larger families, he stated.

Demographic dividend refers to the growth in an economy that is the resultant effect of a change in the age structure of a country’s population.

#### ■ Over 3 children on average

According to the statistics compiled by the National Organization for Civil Registration, the total fertility rate for Iranian women living in the country was 2.14 in the Iranian calendar year the Iranian calendar year 1395 (March 2016-March 2017), Abbasi

further mentioned.

“In order to make this statistic more accurate, the fertility rate of the married woman should be measured, which indicates a rate of 3.4 in [the Iranian calendar year] 1395,” he said, adding, that means, Iranian married women give birth to more than three children on average”.

He went on to say that “based on a survey conducted by the Statistical Center of Iran, married young couple’s tendency to have children shows a rate of 2.3 on average,

**The fact is that our cities have not yet obtained the core features of an age-friendly city, while age-friendly environment is a serious concern in the world.**

## On the occasion of plastic-free day: Say no to plastic

**ENVIRONMENT** **TEHRAN** — Plastic pollution is a pressing reality and it is adversely affecting wildlife, wildlife habitat, and us.

In Iran, July 12 is being observed by environmental activists annually to raise awareness about plastic pollution which is negatively impacting our lives.

Unfortunately each Iranian is throwing away three plastic bags on average every day, Tehran city councilor Nahid Khodakarami said on Tuesday, Mehr news agency reported.

Parvaneh Tishehzan, assistant professor at Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz has also explained that more than 3.5 tons of plastics is being produced in Iran annually.

“Plastic waste constitute 28 percent of the waste produced in Iran,” IRNA quoted Tishehzan as saying on Tuesday.

As per a report published by United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in October 2016, waste generation per capita in Iran’s urban areas is about 658 grams per day while Iranian waste generation per capita in rural areas is about 220-340 grams per day. Average Iranian waste generation per capita amounts to some 240 kilograms per year.

The report states that in Tehran alone waste generation per capita is estimated at 750-800 grams per day and each Tehrani citizen generates about 270-450 kilograms of waste per years.

And sadly out of 20 million tons of waste being produced annually in Iran



only 3.2 million tons will be recycled and the rest end up in landfills which lead to the production of some 10 million cubic meters of leachates.

#### ■ Together we can beat plastic pollution

According to World Environment website, while plastic has many valua-

**Bring your own shopping bags to the supermarket, pressure food suppliers to use non-plastic packaging, refuse plastic cutlery, and pick up any plastic you see the next time you go for a walk on the beach or forest.**

which is above the replacement level”.

#### ■ Cities are not age-friendly yet

Elsewhere in his remarks, Abbasi noted that “even if fertility rate increases, the number of elderly will not reduce in the coming years, only their proportion to the total population may reduce.”

The fact is that our cities have not yet obtained the core features of an age-friendly city, while age-friendly environment is a serious concern in the world, he added.

It is also important to prepare plans for the elderly financial issues, in other words, citizens must be sure of having a proper life as an elderly, he also said.

An age-friendly city encourages active ageing by optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age. In practical terms, an age-friendly city adapts its structures and services to be accessible to and inclusive of older people with varying needs and capacities.

#### ■ Birth rate decreasing for last two years

According to Index mundi website, currently, average birth rate in Iran is 17.9 per 1000 of a population yearly.

Looking into the figures and numbers pertaining to birth rate, the rate has decreased over the past 2 years. From 2016 to 2018 the rate has declined from 19.8 to 17.9 per 1000 population yearly, Abbasi further noted.

#### ■ 28% of births in first two years of marriage

Iranian woman give birth to their first born at the first two years of marriage, Abbasi stated.

He went on to say that in the Iranian calendar year 1396 (March 2017-March 2018), some 146,000 babies were born a year or less after their parents’ marriage, which constitute 10 percent. While some 18 percent of births occurred up to two years after the date of the marriage.

ble uses, we have become over reliant on single-use or disposable plastic with severe environmental consequences. Around the world, 1 million plastic drinking bottles are purchased every minute. Every year we use up to 5 trillion disposable plastic bags. In total, 50 per cent of the plastic we use is single use.

Nearly one third of the plastic packaging we use escapes collection systems, which means that it finally ends up clogging our city streets and polluting our natural environment. Annually, up to 13 million tons of plastic leak into our oceans, where it smothers coral reefs and threatens vulnerable, precious marine wildlife. The plastic that ends up in the oceans can circle the Earth four times in a single year, and it can persist for up to 1,000 years before it fully disintegrates.

Plastic also makes its way into our water supply and into our bodies. What harm does that cause? Scientists still aren’t sure, but plastics contain a number of chemicals, many of which are toxic or disrupt hormones. Plastics can also serve as a magnet for other pollutants, including dioxins, metals and pesticides.

Bring your own shopping bags to the supermarket, pressure food suppliers to use non-plastic packaging, refuse plastic cutlery, pick up any plastic you see the next time you go for a walk on the beach or forest, bring your own coffee mug to work, and most importantly pressure local authorities to improve how they manage the city’s waste.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ع

## Relief foundation allots \$950m to job creation

Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation has allocated some 40 trillion rials (nearly \$950 million) to job creation for 200,000 individuals in the current Iranian calendar year (March 2018-March 2019), the foundation’s head has said. Last year, the foundation allocated some 24 trillion rials (nearly \$570 million) for job creation for 135,000 people, IRIB quoted Parviz Fattah as saying on Sunday. Boosting job creation is one of the primary objectives of the foundation which will be accomplished by soliciting support from parliament and the banks, Fattah highlighted.

## PREFIX/SUFFIX

### “-dom”

■ **Meaning**: place or state of being

■ **For example**: The teachers are given complete **freedom** in their choice of teaching methods.

## PHRASAL VERB

### Cheer on

■ **Meaning**: support someone by giving them words of encouragement

■ **For example**: Even though Samantha was in the last place, her brother cheered her on through the entire race.

## IDIOM

### See eye to eye

■ **Explanation**: if two people see eye to eye, they agree with each other:

■ **For example**: We didn’t exactly see eye to eye.

اختصاص امسال ۴ هزار میلیارد تومان وام اشتغال توسط کمیته امداد امام خمینی

رئیس کمیته امداد امام خمینی گفت: امسال ۴ هزار میلیارد تومان وام اشتغال برای ۲۰۰ هزار نفر اختصاص می‌یابد.

به گزارش خبرنگار خبرگزاری صدا و سیما؛ سید پرویز فتاح گفت: سال گذشته به ۱۳۵ هزار نفر وام در قالب ۲۴۰۰ میلیارد تومان پرداخت شد.

وی اشتغال را اصلی ترین بخش فعالیت امسال این نهاد خواند و افزود: با همکاری دولت مجلس و بانک ها این امر محقق می شود.



# Hamas rejects so-called Trump's deal of the century

Palestinian Resistance movement Hamas has announced that it will not support Washington's so-called deal of the century and will continue to resist Israel's occupation.

Hamas released a statement on Tuesday in which it said that U.S. President Donald Trump's plan "constitutes a violation of the Palestinian people's legitimate rights."

"All indications show that the deal violates our legitimate rights, mainly the right of return, liberating our land and establishing our independent state with Jerusalem al-Quds as its capital," added the statement.

It also referred to the relocation of the US embassy from Tel Aviv to the al-Quds as a deadly plot, while calling on all Palestinian factions and parties to unite in the face of the Israel-U.S. measures.

"Hamas believes the current circumstance is the best to achieve internal reconciliation and real Palestinian unity," noted the statement.

The so-called deal, a backchannel plan to allegedly reach a peace settlement between Israel and the Palestinians, was proposed by the U.S. administration late last year. Although the plan has not been released, leaks signal it will consist of the same tried and failed ideas.

Palestinians believe that the deal suggests building their own Jerusalem al-Quds from areas surrounding the existing city and forget about the historic place. They also believe that the U.S.-drafted plan calls for keeping borders and security under Israeli control, while it keeps Israeli settlements' final borders to be discussed in later negotiations.

The U.S. embassy relocation took place on May 14, the eve of the 70th anniversary of the Nakba Day (the Day of Catastrophe), sparking deadly clashes in the Gaza Strip.

**■ Israel stops vessel from Gazan humanitarian flotilla**  
Meanwhile, Israeli warships have stopped



a boat from a humanitarian flotilla set off from the Gaza strip to Cyprus to break the regime's 11-year siege on the coastal enclave.

Israel's military said in a statement one boat with eight people on board was prevented from breaching the naval blockade on Tuesday, adding that Israel will continue to enforce the blockade.

"After the boat and the Palestinians on board are searched, the boat will be towed to the Israeli navy base in Ashdod," the statement said.

"The (military) assigned medical personnel to treat Palestinians on board requiring medical assistance," it added.

Earlier, organizers of the flotilla, which set off earlier on Tuesday, said contact with one boat was lost after 10 nautical miles. Israel's blockade restricts Gazan vessels to up to six nautical miles off the coastal sliver.

The status of the remaining boats is still unclear.

On May 29, another flotilla, composed

of a main boat accompanied by smaller boats, set sail from waters off Gaza, carrying Palestinian patients -- mostly those injured during the Tel Aviv regime's military crackdown on weeks-long rallies against Israel's occupation.

The flotilla was swiftly intercepted and seized by Israeli navy forces. The 17 Palestinian activists aboard the vessels were also taken into custody.

Separately, a "Freedom Flotilla Coalition" has dispatched a ship to Gaza, which similarly seeks to break the Israeli siege. It has traveled thousands of miles from Scandinavian ports and was reported to be near Corsica on July 8.

Gaza has been under an Israeli siege since June 2007, which has caused a sharp decline in living standards as well as unprecedented unemployment and poverty. According to the UN, the stringent conditions threaten to render the territory uninhabitable by 2020.

**■ UN: Israel demolished 197 Palestinian structures in occupied West Bank in 2018**

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) says Israeli authorities demolished 197 Palestinian structures in West Bank during the first half of 2018 as the Tel Aviv regime presses ahead with its land expropriation policies in the occupied territories.

The world body, in a statement released on Wednesday, announced that eight homes, 10 livelihood-related structures and four retaining walls or fences were destroyed last month.

It added that Israeli military force and the so-called administrative control department demolished a structure in an area of the southern West Bank city of al-Khalil (Hebron), located 30 kilometers (19 miles) south of Jerusalem al-Quds, in June.

Additionally, a residential apartment was demolished on punitive grounds in Eastern Barta'a town, displacing a family of three.

The OCHA further highlighted that demolitions within the first half of the current year in East Jerusalem al-Quds mark an increase of 12 percent compared to the same period in the preceding year.

The occupied territories have witnessed new tensions ever since U.S. President Donald Trump on December 6, 2017 announced Washington's recognition of Jerusalem al-Quds as Israel's "capital" and said the U.S. would move its embassy to the city.

The dramatic decision triggered demonstrations in the occupied Palestinian territories and elsewhere in the world.

The status of Jerusalem al-Quds is the thorniest issue in the decades-long Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The Palestinians see East Jerusalem al-Quds as the capital of their future state. (Source: agencies)

## ‘U.S. must explain military presence near Russia borders’

Russia's defense minister says the U.S. accuses his country of "aggression," while its own military is advancing closer and closer to Russian borders, calling on Washington to explain why its military bases are edging closer to Russian soil.

"Today, recuperating Russia is being viewed not as an ally but as a threat to the U.S. dominance," Sergei Shoigu said in an interview with Italy's Il Giornale newspaper, which was released on Wednesday.

"I, as president of the Russian Geographical Society, have for a long time wanted to present the U.S. colleagues with a globe so that they would look at it and explain to us, why the 'U.S. adversaries' designated by them are located in the Middle East and East Asia, while all their military bases and groups are nearing Russia's borders," he added.

"We are being accused of some aggressive plans with regard to the West, which, in turn, continues to deploy new forces near our borders," the minister noted.

The NATO military alliance -- led by the U.S. -- has been increasingly beefing up its presence in Eastern Europe and near the Russian border.

Last month, Some 19 countries, mostly from NATO, stationed around 18,000 troops in Poland and three Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

Russia has been wary of NATO's increased build-up near its borders while accusing countries like Poland of opportunism by trying to have a permanent NATO presence on its soil.

Ties between Russia and the West sharply deteriorated after Crimea in 2014 separated from Ukraine and rejoined the Russian Federation following a popular referendum.



Kiev and its Western allies, however, accuse Russia of annexing the Black Sea peninsula.

Shoigu further argued that the Russo-American tensions have been -- contrary to what the U.S. claims -- "artificially fueled" by the American elites, who believe in the superiority of Washington.

Those elites, he said, "believe that the world is divided into the U.S. [part] and the wrong [one]."

The Russian defense chief further described the deployment by the U.S. of missile systems in Europe as a violation of "the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF Treaty)."

Those system's launchers, he said, could be used for firing Tomahawk cruise missiles at the European part of

Russia's territory.

"We have repeatedly and publicly made it clear in all major international fora that it is the United States that is directly violating the INF Treaty, having installed, during the deployment of a missile shield in Europe, its MK-41 vertical launching systems, which might be used for the launch of Tomahawk cruise missiles. The destructive radius of these missiles covers almost all the European part of Russia's territory," he told the paper.

Separately, Shoigu hailed the roles being played by Iran and Turkey in Syria.

"Iran, along with Turkey, has historically been one of the main actors in the region and plays a key role in stabilization of the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic," Shoigu noted.

Shoigu also cast doubt on the sincerity of U.S. military presence in Syria and added, "Affirming its 'noble' objectives and 'good' will, the United States has not allocated a cent to provide real assistance to Syrian civilians devastated by long years of war."

Dozens of civilians continue to be killed by munition and mortars left in Raqqah after massive bombings by the U.S.-led coalition, he noted.

At Damascus' request, the Islamic Republic provides military advisory assistance to the Syrian military in the face of terrorists. Turkey also maintains an intermediary role on behalf of the Syrian opposition in talks with the Syrian government.

Damascus, however, objects to a Turkish military presence in northern Syria, calling it aggression.

(Source: TASS)

## Greece, Russia to expel diplomats in Macedonia tussle

Russia and Greece were poised on Wednesday to expel two of each other's diplomats in a rare dispute that Greek media said had been prompted by the issue of Macedonia, which expects this week to be formally invited to join the NATO alliance.

Athens will expel the two Russian diplomats and ban entry to two others on suspicion that they tried to undermine an accord clinched between Greece and neighboring Macedonia last month, the Greek daily Kathimerini reported, citing diplomatic sources.

That deal - whereby Macedonia will become formally known as the Northern Republic of Macedonia - will unlock a formal invitation from NATO for the tiny ex-Yugoslav republic to join the bloc, a move strongly opposed by Moscow.

Russia's foreign ministry said it would respond in kind to the expulsions, Interfax news agency reported.

Greece and Russia share the Orthodox Christian religion and have traditionally

had warm ties. Greece did not join most other NATO allies in March in withdrawing diplomats from Moscow over the poisoning of a former Russian spy in England. Britain blamed Russia for that incident. Moscow denied involvement.

Greece accused the Russian diplomats of activities inconsistent with their status, including illegal activities against national security, Kathimerini reported, adding that these had included attempts at bribery.

Asked about the report, Greek government spokesman Dimitris Tzanakopoulos told Skai TV: "The Greek government ... cannot tolerate behavior which violates international law and which does not show respect to the Greek state."

"It is our assessment that there has been such behavior, and for that precise reason all necessary measures will be taken," he added, without explicitly confirming the expulsions.

**■ NATO expansion**

The Greek foreign ministry, contacted by Reuters, echoed the spokesman's statement and did not go further.

A member of Russia's upper house of parliament, Andrei Klimov, told RIA news agency that Moscow would expel two Greek diplomats in response to the Greek move, without mentioning Macedonia or giving further detail about the matter.

Moscow has long opposed the eastern expansion of NATO, regarding it as a direct threat to its own security. Many countries that were once in Moscow's orbit have joined NATO and the European Union since the fall of communism in 1989.

Macedonia expects to receive the invitation to join NATO at a two-day summit of the alliance that starts in Brussels on Wednesday, though it will only become a member if it adopts the new name agreed in principle with Greece.

Greece had long argued that Macedo-

nia's name implies a territorial claim over its northern province of the same name, and had previously blocked its neighbor's attempts to join NATO. Macedonia will hold a referendum on the name deal.

Kathimerini said Greek authorities were investigating whether the Russian diplomats had meddled in Greece's internal affairs and quoted diplomatic sources as saying the suspicions were solely focused on those four individuals.

"(This is) an amazing and highly significant development given close ties between Athens and Moscow," said James Ker-Lindsay, senior visiting fellow at the London School of Economics. "It is a clear warning not to abuse friendship. Extraordinary!" he tweeted.

Kathimerini said there was also growing unease in Athens over the increased influence of the Russian Orthodox Church at Mount Athos, an all-male monastic community in northern Greece.

(Source: Reuters)

## China says will hit back after U.S. proposes fresh tariffs on \$200 billion in goods

China accused the United States of bullying and warned it would hit back after the Trump administration raised the stakes in their trade dispute, threatening 10 percent tariffs on \$200 billion of Chinese goods.

China's commerce ministry said on Wednesday it was "shocked" and would complain to the World Trade Organization, but did not immediately say how it would retaliate. In a statement, it called the U.S. actions "completely unacceptable".

The foreign ministry described Washington's threats as "typical bullying" and said China needed to counter-attack to protect its interests.

"This is a fight between unilateralism and multilateralism, protectionism and free trade, might and rules," for-

eign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told a regular briefing on Wednesday.

Beijing has said it would hit back against Washington's escalating tariff measures, including through "qualitative measures," a threat that U.S. businesses in China fear could mean anything from stepped-up inspections to delays in investment approvals and even consumer boycotts.

The Wall Street Journal, citing unnamed Chinese officials, said Beijing was considering steps including holding up licenses for U.S. companies, delaying approvals of mergers involving U.S. firms and stepping up border inspections of American goods.

China could also limit visits to the United States by

Chinese tourists, a business state media said is worth \$115 billion, or shed some of its U.S. Treasury holdings, Iris Pang, Greater China economist at ING in Hong Kong, wrote in a note.

The \$200 billion far exceeds the total value of goods China imports from the United States, which means Beijing may need to think of creative ways to respond to such U.S. measures.

On Tuesday, U.S. officials issued a list of thousands of Chinese imports the Trump administration wants to hit with the new tariffs, including hundreds of food products as well as tobacco, chemicals, coal, steel and aluminum, prompting criticism from some U.S. industry groups.

(Source: AP)

## Trump calls Germany 'captive of Russia' at NATO summit

**1→** Three hours after Trump's startling tirade over German imports of Russian gas and its slowness to increase defense spending, Merkel told reporters on arrival at a NATO summit in Brussels on Wednesday: "I have experienced myself how a part of Germany was controlled by the Soviet Union.

"I am very happy that today we are united in freedom, the Federal Republic of Germany. Because of that we can say that we can make our independent policies and make independent decisions. That is very good, especially for people in eastern Germany."

She also defended Germany's contribution to an alliance which Trump says has placed too much burden on the U.S. taxpayer: "Germany does a lot for NATO," she said.

"Germany is the second largest provider of troops, the largest part of our military capacity is offered to NATO and until today we have a strong engagement towards Afghanistan. In that we also defend the interests of the United States."

(Source: agencies)

## Saudi oppression continues: 2 young men sentenced to death without charges

**1→** Saudi Arabia has lately stepped up politically-motivated arrests, prosecution, and conviction of peaceful dissident writers and human rights campaigners.

Saudi officials have also intensified security measures in the Shia-populated and oil-rich Eastern Province.

Eastern Province has been the scene of peaceful demonstrations since February 2011. Protesters have been demanding reforms, freedom of expression, the release of political prisoners, and an end to economic and religious discrimination against the oil-rich region.

The protests have been met with a heavy-handed crackdown by the regime. Security forces have increased security measures across the province.

Over the past years, Riyadh has also redefined its anti-terrorism laws to also target activism.

In January 2016, Saudi authorities executed Shia cleric Sheikh Nimr Baqir al-Nimr, who was an outspoken critic of the policies of the Riyadh regime. Nimr had been arrested in Qatif in 2012.

(Source: agencies)

## Police question Netanyahu again over telecom corruption case

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been questioned again by police as part of their investigations into a string of corruption allegations, media reports say.

Police interrogated Netanyahu in the prime minister's official residence in Jerusalem al-Quds on Tuesday. A Reuters cameraman saw a police car pulling into the driveway.

The questioning is to be about a corruption case involving Israel's largest telecoms firm.

Netanyahu's two confidants have been detained on suspicion of promoting regulation worth hundreds of millions of dollars to Bezeq Telecom company.

Authorities allege that Netanyahu awarded regulatory favors to Bezeq Telecom in return for favorable coverage of him and his wife on a news site owned by the company.

Netanyahu held the communications portfolio until last year. In two other cases, in which police already recommended in February that Netanyahu be charged with bribery, the final decision regarding whether to prosecute the premier rests with the Israeli attorney general.

Netanyahu's wife, Sara, is also in hot water after being charged with fraud and breach of trust last month over alleged misuse of funds, including allegedly spending nearly \$100,000 in official funds for take-out meals supplied by gourmet restaurants to the prime minister's residence.

So far, partners in Netanyahu's governing coalition have stood by him, saying they are awaiting the attorney general's next moves. However, political pressure could mount on Netanyahu to step down if he is charged.

Netanyahu has repeatedly denied any wrongdoing, dismissing the accusations as a media witch hunt.

(Source: Press TV)

## Militants attack govt. office in Afghan city, at least 10 killed

Armed militants in Afghanistan have attacked an office of the education department in the eastern city of Jalalabad near the Pakistani border.

The attack began with two explosions near the government building on Wednesday morning local time.

Hours later, at least 10 people were confirmed killed and another 10 wounded.

It was not clear how many of the casualties were civilians, terrorists, or security forces, and the figure could rise.

Local reports cited eyewitnesses as saying earlier in the day that up to 50 people had been trapped inside the compound, though officials did not confirm that figure.

"Our first priority is to rescue those people who are stuck inside," Jalalabad police chief Ghulam Sanayi Stanekzai told Tolo News TV, without clarifying how many people had been trapped or taken hostage.

Some local officials said the situation had been brought under control as of 1 p.m. local time. But it was also unclear whether all assailants had been neutralized.

There were no immediate claims of responsibility for the attack. But the area is widely regarded as a stronghold for the Takfiri Daesh terrorist group, and past terror attacks in Nangarhar Province have been claimed by the outfit.

The attack came just a day after 10 people were killed and four more wounded when a bomber detonated his explosives near Jalalabad's 6th police district, local news outlets reported, citing a statement issued by media office of the provincial government.

Local officials said it was not yet clear how many gunmen were involved in the Wednesday morning attack and how many people might have been trapped or held hostage in the building following the attack.

(Source: agencies)



## Magic waited outside LeBron’s house for free agency to start

The Los Angeles Lakers’ president of basketball operations sat in a car for an hour outside LeBron James’ Southern California home on the night of June 30 before the NBA’s free agency period opened.

The meeting started promptly at 9:01 p.m. PT, and the next day, James announced that he was leaving the Cleveland Cavaliers to sign with the Lakers.

Johnson told Spectrum SportsNet on Tuesday of his talk with James. “We had a great time of going back and forth, here we are, two guys, similar. Both from the Midwest. Both grew up poor. Both love to compete. Both love to win, and I think both excel at the highest level. We connected right when I walked in the door. Just two guys that talk free to each other, and talk basketball, and that’s what I love about LeBron.”

James didn’t need to be sold on the Lakers, according to Johnson. “He already knew the team. Almost better than I did,” Johnson said. “He broke the roster down right in front of me. ‘Kuz likes to do this, so and so likes ... oh I can’t wait, this guy is this.’ I was like, man, he knows the entire roster. Loves (coach Luke Walton’s) system. He said Earvin, you know, I just want to come and be able to just play basketball and be me. And you have the type of roster, I think, that I think I can do that.”

In the same Spectrum SportsNet interview, Lakers general manager Rob Pelinka detailed how he learned the franchise-changing news that James was joining the club.

(Source: Reuters)

## Tokyo, Paris agree to join hands on Olympics preparations

The Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024 organizing committees said on Wednesday they had agreed to cooperate on preparations for their respective Summer Games, as Japan gets set to host the Olympics in just over two years and France begins to lay its groundwork.

Organizers said they would explore partnering in areas including the exchange of personnel and information and language services, and actively promote each other’s Games and work closely on the flag hand-over ceremonies.

They will also discuss other areas of potential cooperation to help ensure the success of both Games.

“This is a very important day for us, not only because we won the semi-final of the World Cup,” said Paris 2024 Director General Etienne Thobois, referring to France’s win over Belgium the night before and eliciting laughter at a briefing in Tokyo.

“But also because we can sign this agreement which for us is very important because after the IOC and the IPC, Tokyo 2020 will be our first partner and we are really looking forward (to it).”

Thobois said Paris could learn from Tokyo’s marketing program and noted the selection of the mascots, voted on by school children across Japan, as one way Tokyo has succeeded in generating enthusiasm for the Olympics nationwide.

The International Olympic Committee last year awarded Paris the 2024 Summer Olympics and Los Angeles the 2028 Games, the first time it has awarded two Olympics at the same time.

That decision came following the withdrawal of four of the six cities bidding for the 2024 Olympics, amid concerns about the cost and complexity of organizing the world’s biggest multi-sports event.

(Source: Euronews)

## Serena Williams into Wimbledon semi-finals with win over Camila Giorgi

Serena Williams survived a scare to reach the Wimbledon semi-finals with a comeback victory over hard-hitting Italian Camila Giorgi.

The 23-time Grand Slam champion dropped her first set of the championships but came through 3-6 6-3 6-4.

Giorgi, the world number 52, produced the type of power normally associated with her opponent - but the American then found an extra gear. Williams faces German 13th seed Julia Gorges in Thursday’s semi-finals. Also through to the last four are German 11th seed Angelique Kerber, who beat Russian Daria Kasatkina 6-3 7-5, and Latvian 12th seed Jelena Ostapenko, who overcame Slovak Dominika Cibulkova 7-5 6-4.

Before the match, Giorgi had raised eyebrows when, asked about her impression of Williams over the years, she said: “I don’t follow women’s tennis.”

And she certainly played as if undaunted by the reputation and titles of her opponent. Giorgi’s serve was straight out of the Williams book of power. She delivered three aces to the American’s one in the first set and won 84% of points on her first serve.

It is not often you see Williams scrambling to return a serve or nearly knocked off her feet by the force of a near 120mph delivery - it is more often her dishing that up - but she was given a taste of her own medicine by the fearless Giorgi.

(Source: BBC)

## Sarri closer to becoming Chelsea boss

Maurizio Sarri is in final negotiations with former club Napoli as he edges closer to taking charge at Chelsea, says the Serie A club’s president.

Antonio Conte took charge of Chelsea’s pre-season training at the weekend, despite speculation over his future.

Sarri has held talks with Chelsea, but remains contracted to Napoli, who have replaced him with Carlo Ancelotti.

“We are in the finishing line,” said Aurelio de Laurentiis. “Now it depends on [Sarri] and Chelsea.”

“The Sarri affair is nearly at its conclusion, it all depends on him. My lawyers have submitted papers to his lawyers.”

Italian Sarri, 59, joined Napoli in 2015 and led them to second behind champions Juventus last season.

Conte, 48, has a clause in his contract that guarantees him a pay-off, thought to be £9m, for the final year of his deal.

(Source: BBC)

# Cristiano Ronaldo joining Juventus in €100m deal from Real Madrid



So much has changed in the intervening years. The prestige of Spanish football waxed just as Italian football waned. When the Milan owner, Silvio Berlusconi, shared his “dream” of signing Ronaldo at the start of this decade, the player responded with a politician’s turn of phrase, saying that Serie A was “not the league I like the most”.

Juventus were only just returning to the forefront of the domestic game. Dumped into Serie B in 2006 for their part in the Calciopoli scandal, they took six years to become champions of Italy once more. They have not looked back since, claiming seven consecutive league titles and four straight domestic doubles, as well as reaching the final of the Champions League in two of the past four years.

Such sustained success is no accident. Juventus developed a business plan and followed through, from the construction of Serie A’s first modern, club-owned stadium in 2010 to their rebranding with a new, social media-friendly logo last year.

Above all, though, they have made superlative moves in the transfer market. Year after year Juventus have found value where others missed it. Andrea Pirlo, Sami Khedira and Dani Alves joined on free transfers. Carlos Tevez cost

an initial €9m. Paul Pogba was signed and then flipped back to Manchester United four years later for a roughly €70m profit (once Mino Raiola’s agent’s fees had been deducted).

How does Ronaldo fit into this picture? The total cost of his transfer from Madrid – with taxes and player wages included – is being reported at €340m [£301m]. A €30m annual salary would be more than double what Juventus have been paying their previous highest earner, Gonzalo Higuaín, who might well be sold to help balance the books in a summer when several other additions have already been made.

On the surface that might seem like an impossible indulgence for a club that is expected to report a small loss on its accounts for the past season. The reality might be the exact opposite.

For all their impressive growth in recent years, the concern for Juventus has always been that they would be limited by the simple fact of competing in a league whose international brand continues to lag behind those of La Liga and the Premier League.

Despite reaching the Champions League final in 2017 the club are still ranked only 10th in Deloitte’s Money League,



“Feel the power of dream at 2018 World Cup”

with revenues less than two-thirds the size of Manchester United, Real Madrid or Barcelona.

The signing of Ronaldo is designed to change that. You might even say that Juventus are taking a page out of Madrid’s own play book. There were plenty who scoffed at the Spanish club’s €37m outlay on David Beckham in the summer of 2003. Florentino Pérez knew he was getting a steal for a player who would bring far more than that into his club’s coffers.

Ronaldo had already transformed Juventus’s finances before he even agreed terms. As rumours of his impending arrival increased in recent days, the club’s share price soared. The newspaper Secolo XIX noted on Thursday that the club’s market valuation had risen from €665m to €815m – enough (notionally) to cover the player’s transfer fee. After a dip, those numbers have continued to rise.

And while Ronaldo is older now than Beckham was then, he is also a more impactful player. Ronaldo might be slowing down but he still scored 44 goals last season, including two goals and an assist against Juventus in their own stadium in the quarter-finals of the Champions League.

(Source: Guardian )

## France peaking perfectly as they head to World Cup final



Should France go on to win the World Cup on Sunday, they would have peaked perfectly after starting the tournament in Russia slowly but gaining momentum when it mattered most.

Tournament experience has been key for both the players and coach Didier Deschamps, who has learnt lessons from the last World Cup in Brazil, where they lost to Germany in the quarter-final, and the disappointment of missing out on home soil in the European Championship two years ago.

No more so than on Tuesday as they edged Belgium in the semi-final to put themselves within one game of a second World Cup win, 20 years after their first.

While there were questions asked after a far-from-inspiring start, which included a controversial win over Australia and narrowly beating Peru, France still expectedly secured a knockout round spot early from a first round group where they were heavy favourites. They have looked better in each game.

There were, however, no easy rides in the knockout stages where the French had to show their full capability in beating Ar-

gentina, Uruguay and then Belgium 1-0 in Tuesday’s semi-final at Saint Petersburg.

“We have prepared well, I can brag a little about that,” laughed Deschamps after securing a place in Sunday’s final in Moscow against either Croatia or England.

“The older players all played their role as leaders and the youngsters brought their energy. I have a squad with a good blend. They have co-habited happily together.

“No one complains and they all realise the importance of the competition. When there was an opportunity to be seized, they took it.”

There have been many positive aspects to their game. A lack of panic when they were 2-1 down against Argentina in the last-16 before coming back to win a thriller 4-3, and patience in breaking down stubborn Uruguay in the quarter-finals.

Against Belgium on Tuesday, France were watchful and disciplined.

“We have to give a lot of credit to the way France defended, even having certain attacking players defending very deep and giving us a lot of respect in that way,” said opposing coach Roberto Martinez.

(Source: Star)

## France-Belgium set-piece decider proves it is still a simple game



For all the intricate planning, cagey tactics and chess-like choreography, the simplicity of football was again emphasized as France secured a place in the World Cup final from a basic set-piece.

Antoine Griezmann’s near-post corner was firmly glanced in by Samuel Umtiti as he beat Marouane Fellaini in the air to earn France a 1-0 win over Belgium on Tuesday and a place in Sunday’s final against Croatia or England.

The 51st-minute goal proved the uncomplicated difference in a match where a rich cast of exciting footballers held out the promise of exquisite skills, devastating movement and brilliant finishing.

“We have been strong at defending dead ball situations but today it was unfortunate. We got our (defensive) structures right at that corner but it was just a matter of centimeters,” Belgium coach Roberto Martinez said.

Kylian Mbappe’s run down the right inside the first 15 seconds suggested France planned to run the Belgians ragged but it was a fleeting illusion as France employed exactly the opposite tactics.

They sat back, sometimes dangerously

deep on the edge of their penalty area, and let Belgium have the ball, opting instead for counter-attacking.

Eden Hazard with the ball at his feet on the edge of the area and Kevin de Bruyne dictating play are dangerous prospects and it was risky business for the French, but when they did get a chance to counter, they were frighteningly quick and equally dangerous.

It was like watching two heavyweight boxers eyeing each other out and waiting for the first to blink.

When the breakthrough came it was not from a flowing move or piece of individual skill but rather a standard situation – one that is still proving unusually decisive at the highest level of the game.

As football grows increasingly sophisticated with cutting-edge science and video technology, it was a vivid reminder of how simple a sport it still remains.

The goal gave the French license for a more expansive approach but not at the expense of keeping their defensive shape and they turned the screws on De Bruyne and Hazard by quickly closing them down.

(Source: Reuters)

## Five times VAR made a difference at the World Cup

The following factbox details five times a Video Assistant Referee (VAR) made an impact at the World Cup.

- France 2-1 Australia
- June 16, 2018 / Group C

France’s first game against Australia was the first time VAR was used to award a penalty at the World Cup. Antoine Griezmann was through on goal and inside the penalty area before he went down under contact from Josh Risdon.

Referee Andres Cunha allowed play to continue, but stopped the game after being alerted by the VAR. The referee checked replays on a pitch-side monitor and awarded a penalty from which Griezmann opened France’s account.

- Brazil 2-0 Costa Rica
- June 22, 2018 / Group E

The game was scoreless with 12 minutes remaining and Brazil were pushing for an equaliser when Neymar went to ground under a touch from Giancarlo Gonzalez, leading referee Bjorn Kuipers to award a penalty.

The VAR intervened, and the referee watched the replays and reversed his decision, marking the first time a VAR review had cancelled the award of a penalty at the World Cup.

- Iran 1-1 Portugal



- June 25, 2018 / Group B

Portugal captain Cristiano Ronaldo was fouled in the box and the referee awarded a record 19th penalty at the World Cup before the knockout rounds. Ronaldo missed his spot kick, but the decision eclipsed the previous record tally of 18 penalties awarded at the 2002 World Cup hosted by Japan and South Korea.

VAR was used on two more occasions of note in the same match - when Ronaldo was shown a yellow card for an elbow and to award Iran a penalty for handball in extra time that

allowed the Asian team to level the score.

- Spain 2-2 Morocco
- June 25, 2018 / Group B

At nearly the same time as Iran was scoring their penalty to level with Portugal, Iago Aspas had scored a late goal to draw Spain level with Morocco, but his celebrations were cut short by the linesman’s flag for offside.

Referee Ravshan Irmatov was alerted by the VAR to check the replays and overturned the linesman’s decision and awarded the goal, sending Spain through to the knockout stages as group winners ahead of Portugal.

- Sweden 1-0 Switzerland
- July 3, 2018 / Round of 16

Sweden were 1-0 up and under pressure from Switzerland late in the game when they broke through the Swiss cordon and launched a quick counter-attack.

Martin Olsson was bearing down on the Swiss goal when he was fouled by Michael Lang and the referee awarded a penalty and showed Lang a red card. After consulting the VAR, the referee realised the foul had taken place outside the area and changed his decision, giving the Swedes a free kick instead.



# Iran Olympic football team to hold camp in Iraq

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iran U23 football team will hold a one-week training camp in Iraq in late July as part of preparation for the 2018 Asian Games. Zlatko Kranjcar's team will fly to Iraq on July 23 and play the Iraqi team on July 25 and 27 respectively.

The Iranian football team will return to Tehran on July 29 and will travel to China on Aug. 6 to hold another training camp in the East Asian country.

Iran U23 football team will also play a warm-up match with China on Aug. 9.

Iran will fly straight to Indonesia to participate at the 2018 Asian Games.

The Iranian team have been pitted against DPR Korea, Saudi Arabia and Myanmar in Group F of the 2018 Asian Games.

The U23 tournament, which allows each country to field three overage players, will see 24 teams vying for honors.

The top two teams in each group along with the four best third placed teams will advance to the Round of 16.

Men's football will be contested on August 14 to September 1 in Jakarta and Palembang.

"I think Iran U23 football team have the potential of advancing to the 2020 Olympic Games. The Asian Games is an opportunity for us to strengthen ourselves," Kranjcar's told in an interview with Tasnim news agency.

"We will participate in the Asian Games with the U21 players because we have the time until 2020 Olympic Games to prepare our team with the boys who will become accustomed to our strategy. We want to book a place in the Olympic Games after 44 years," the Croat said.



## Morteza Mehrzad: Sitting volleyball Ones to Watch

The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) has announced the sitting volleyball Ones to Watch ahead of the 2018 Sitting Volleyball World Championships set to take place across the Netherlands, between 15 and 22 July.

The Ones to Watch are those players who have the potential to make it to the headlines at the sport's biggest competition outside the Paralympic Games.

The list includes Paralympic and world champions.

The Ones to Watch for sitting volleyball are:

- **Morteza Mehrzads (IRI)**  
Thanks to his outstanding performances, Iran returned to the top of the men's Paralympic podium in Rio after eight years following a 3-1 victory over defending champions Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- **Cristine Delangelica Lima (BRA)**  
The opposite spiker has been fundamental



in helping Brazil secure their first Paralympic medal at Rio 2016 and in becoming one of the world's strongest women's teams.

■ **Elvira Stinissen (NED)**  
Has been the backbone of the Dutch women's team for a number of years, including at

last year's European Championships where they took bronze.

■ **Hesham Elshwikh (EGY)**  
With Hesham Elshwikh's outstanding leadership, Egypt have repeatedly ended among the top men's teams at major international competitions in recent times.

■ **Kaleo Kanahale (USA)**  
Kanahale was a key part of the women's team that made history on Brazilian soil by claiming their first Paralympic title after defeating China 3-0.

■ **Lijun Zhang (CHN)**  
Has been a key player of the all-conquering Chinese team that dominated the women's sitting volleyball circuit over the last decade.

■ **Mirzet Duran (BIH)**  
Has led the team over the past eight years and is hoping to successfully defend the men's world title from Elblag 2014 in Netherlands.

(Source: Paralympic.org)

## Manchester United return to training before beginning United States tour



Anthony Martial, Matteo Darmian and Daley Blind have returned to training at Manchester United amid doubts over their futures at Old Trafford.

Jose Mourinho and his coaching staff, including Michael Carrick, spent the day at Carrington on Tuesday before the players who have not been involved at the World Cup reported on Wednesday.

That group included Martial, Blind and Darmian, who have all been linked with moves this summer.

New signing Diogo Dalot was also at Carrington on Wednesday, along with Ander Herrera, Juan Mata, Alexis Sanchez, Luke Shaw, Chris Smalling, Eric Bailly, Antonio Valencia, Andreas Pereira, Timothy Fosu-Mensah and Joel Pereira.

Mourinho has around 17 senior players available for the tour of the United States, which will start with a flight to Los Angeles on Sunday.

He took a squad of 28 to the United States last summer, potentially leaving a number of places available for young players this time around.

Sources have told ESPN FC that Angel Gomes, Tahith Chong, James Garner, Ethan Hamilton, Mason Greenwood, Demetri Mitchell, Tyrell Warren, RoShaun Williams and Kieran O'Hara are among those being considered for the trip, which will consist of games against Club America, the San Jose Earthquakes, AC Milan, Liverpool and Real Madrid.

(Source: ESPN)

## Ukraine FA offers job to Croatian coach sacked after win over Russia



The Football Federation of Ukraine (FFU) has offered a job to the member of Croatia's coaching staff sacked for dedicating his country's World Cup victory over Russia to the people of Ukraine.

Ognjen Vukojevic, a coaching assistant and former Croatia international, posted a video on social media in which he and defender Domagoj Vida dedicated the win to Ukraine.

Ukraine has a long-running political conflict with Russia, which centres on the disputed territory of Crimea, and Vukojevic said on the video: "This victory is for Dynamo [Kiev, his former club] and Ukraine."

The FFU has offered Vukojevic employment and said it was willing to pay

the fines imposed on him and Vida by FIFA for the video.

"We hold a clearly expressed position of supporting our friends," FFU president Andrei Paveloko told reporters. "We have offered both legal and financial support for Ognjen and Vida."

"I personally, as well as the FFU management, have made a decision to pay off Ognjen's pending fine and offer him a job with the FFU."

Vida, also a former Dynamo Kiev player, said in a statement following the posting of the video: "It was definitely no political message, but a simple thank you for all the support from Ukraine, where Vukojevic and I spent a number of years."

(Source: Soccer.net)

## Soltani wins silver at IWF Junior World Championships

**TASNIM** — Hossein Soltani of Iran won the silver medal at the 77kg weight category in the 2018 International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) Junior World Championships on Tuesday.

Soltani lifted 149kg in snatch and 177kg in clean and jerk. He won the silver medal for a total of 326kg.

Latvian Ritvars Suharevs claimed the gold medal with a total of 336kg. He lifted 156kg and 180kg in snatch and clean and jerk respectively.

The bronze medal went to Armenian Rafik Harutyunyan with a total of 324kg.

Uzbekistan's capital, Tashkent, is hosting the 2018 Junior World Weightlifting Championships from July 7 to 14.

## Indian FC Goa eye Masoud Shojaei

Iran football team captain Masoud Shojaei has been shortlisted to replace Manuel Lanzarote's in Indian football club Goa.

Shojaei, who has played at three World Cup finals and captained Team Melli against Morocco, has already played under FC Goa coach Sergio Lobera at Las Palmas in 2014.

"Shojaei has offers from two big clubs. He is considering out offer and knows what to expect in India since Sergio knows him from his time in Spain. We've got options. This time around, there are players willing to play in India," said a club official.

Shojaei will leave AEK Athens but has not yet announced which team he wants to join.

He has been also linked with a move to Apollon Smyrnis. (Source: Times of India)

## Mojtaba Jabbari hangs up his boots



**PLDC** — Ex-Esteghlal and Iran national football team midfielder has officially announced his retirement from football at the age of 35. Due to his father's career as an employee for Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (IRR), Jabbari began his club football playing for Rah Ahan. His coach at the club, Reza Ahadi soon moved to Esteghlal youth team, and took Jabbari with himself.

To gain experience, he was loaned out to Aboomoslem. He was part of the team that went to final of the Hazfi Cup.

Jabbari joined Esteghlal in 2005 and played 170 matches for the Blues and scored 32 goals in eight years.

He also made 31 appearances for Iran national football team and scored three goals.

Jabbari returned to Esteghlal after four years in July 2017 from Al Ahli of Qatar but was forced to leave the team after four games in Iran professional league.

## Trabzonspor reach agreement with Hosseini

**PLDC** — Trabzonspor of Turkey have reached an agreement with Esteghlal defender Majid Hosseini.

According to star.com.tr, Hosseini's transfer value is 300,000 euros. Trabzonspor vice president Hayrettin Hacisalihoglu has confirmed the transfer and said they will sign the contract on Thursday. The 22-year-old started his playing career in 2014 in Esteghlal football team and was a member of Iranian football team in the 2018 World Cup.

Hosseini came off the bench in the match against Morocco and was in starting line-up for the matches against Spain and Portugal in Group B of the 2018 World Cup.

He had already been linked with a move to Belgian Pro League, where his former teammates Kaveh Rezaei and Omid Norafkan have already joined R. Charleroi.

Trabzonspor has also shown interest in signing Iranian defender Morteza Pouraliganji.

## Iranian archer collects silver in 2018 Asia Cup

**Press TV** — Iranian archer Esmaeil Ebadi has shown dazzling performances at the 2018 Asia Cup-World Ranking Tournament, Stage III in Chinese Taipei, and managed to snatch a silver medal at the event.

On Tuesday, the 41-year-old Iranian athlete competed in the men's individual compound section at the Taipei Stadium, and defeated an opponent from Vietnam by 147 points to 143 in his first meet. He narrowly defeated a contestant from India 147-146 in the next match, before triumphing over a rival from Hong Kong 145-143 and securing a spot in the finale.

Ebadi, however, lost to a representative from South Korea 144-149 in the title challenge and finished second.

The 2018 Asia Cup-World Ranking Tournament, Stage III kicked off on July 9, and will run through July 12, 2018.

## Belgium will be back for tilt at Euro glory in 2020

**ST PETERSBURG (Reuters)** — Bitter defeat for Belgium in the World Cup semi-final is tempered by the fact that influential squad members will likely still be around in two years' time for the European Championship where they will have another realistic chance at a major title. The country's 'golden generation' had high hopes of a first-ever appearance in a World Cup final but came up short on Tuesday as neighbors France edged them 1-0 at the Saint Petersburg Stadium.

But if there is any consolation, it will be that many will return to try again at the Euro 2020 tournament where, should they qualify comfortably, Belgium will be among the favorites.

"Belgian football has got a wealth of young talent coming through and in my role, I've got an eye on the Euros in 2020," said coach Roberto Martinez, who signed a two-year contract extension to take him through to 2020 just weeks before the World Cup kicked off.

"It's too early to make a sort of assessment of the (Russia) tournament at the moment, we need to focus on that



final game, coming back to St Petersburg and facing the opportunity of fighting for that third place

"Then we'll need to regroup again, as it happens after any tournament, we need to look at the younger generation and try to become stronger from tournament to tournament.

There is the drive and ambition," he added.

Belgium play on Saturday against the loser of Wednesday's semi-final between Croatia and England in the third place playoff.

Players like captain Eden Hazard, Kevin De Bruyne, Romelu Lukaku and goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois are still aged under 28 and will be eager to have another chance.

"The disappointment is massive but we must be realistic. We have had a good tournament, even the match against France was good, and we can be proud despite the fact that we lost," said De Bruyne.

"There was little difference between us and France and, in the end, it was just one corner that proved decisive."

Belgium's best international performances have been European Championship runners-up in 1980 and now two World Cup semi-finals, the first of which was in 1986.

Asked whether being knocked out of the World Cup represented the last chance for a talented group of players who have promised much in recent years, Courtois said: "I don't know. The Euros are only two years away."



INTERNATIONAL DAILY  
www.tehrantimes.com

■ Managing Director: Ali Asgari  
■ Editor-in-Chief: Mohammad Ghaderi

» Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 — 88808895  
editor@tehrantimes.com  
» Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000  
» Advertisements Dept.: Telefax: (+98 21) 43051450  
» Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807  
» Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603  
» www.eshterak.ir Distributor: Padideh Novin Co.  
Tel: 88911433  
» Webmaster: webmaster@tehrantimes.com  
» Printed at: Rooztab - ISSN: 1017-94

No. 18, Bimeh Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran  
P.O. Box: 14155-4843  
Zip Code: 1599814713



## “Pieces of My Grandfather’s Broken Heart” on display at Parisian exhibit

**A R T** **TEHRAN** – “The Pieces of My Grandfather’s Broken Heart”, a series of family photos of Iranian photographer Ali Mobasser, is being shown at the Rencontres de la photography d’Arles underway in Paris.



Ali Mobasser poses beside the contact print of an enlarged, broken up, black and white photograph of his grandfather’s heart at the exhibit “The Pieces of My Grandfather’s Broken Heart” currently underway at the Rencontres de la photography d’Arles in Paris.

Simindokht Dehqani, the director of Ag Gallery in Tehran, is the curator of Mobasser’s showcase, which is underway in the New Discovery Award Exhibition section, the organizers have announced.

11 artists under 45 selected by 10 galleries are participating in this section. The New Discovery Award, which is worth €15,000, was presented to Dutch photographer Paulien Oltheten for her series “La Défense, the Venturing Gaze”.

In a statement published on Mobasser’s exhibit, the Rencontres de la photography d’Arles wrote, “In 2016, while clearing out his family home following his father’s death, Ali Mobasser discovered a box of damaged negatives, and the contact prints revealed photos dating from 1959 to 1975 taken by Ali’s grandfather, Mohsen.

“His grandfather’s love of photography had encouraged him to capture intimate family moments of his family using his Rolleiflex camera during the years before Ali had been born. His grandmother, too ill to be taken abroad, died of cancer, and the rest of his family moved to other countries.

“Ali Mobasser tells their tale by combining large-scale chronological contact prints with an enlarged, broken up, black and white photograph of his grandfather’s heart taken during an open-heart surgery in 1974. ‘The Pieces of My Grandfather’s Broken Heart’ finally releases the love and the painful story of a family it has retained all these years.”

The exhibit that opened on July 2 will be running until September 23, 2018.

## NEWS IN BRIEF



### “Night Work” to go on stage in Canada

**A R T** **TEHRAN** – Iranian actress and director Sahra Fat’hi will stage the play “Night Work” in the three Canadian cities of Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal during September.

Behnush Bakhtiari and Sam Derakhshani will perform the play written by Rasul Kahani, Fat’hi has announced in a recent post published on her Instagram.

The Diyar Art Company, an art and cultural company founded in Toronto by Fat’hi, will produce the play in collaboration with the Phoenix Cultural Centre of Toronto.

## Actor George Clooney injured in scooter accident in Italy

**ROME (Reuters)** — The American actor and director George Clooney was injured in a scooter accident on the Italian island of Sardinia where he is working on a miniseries, Italian media reported on Tuesday.

Clooney, 57, had just left his hotel on a motor scooter when he crashed into a small truck, Italy’s Chi magazine said on its Web site.

He was taken to hospital with a possible injury and later discharged from the emergency room with a slight contusion on his knee, state news agency Ansa said.

Local police are investigating the accident, Ansa said. Clooney is in Sardinia to film a miniseries based on Joseph Heller’s book “Catch 22”, the news agency said.

Clooney achieved fame for his part in the medical drama ER. He has since won an Oscar for his role in the movie “Syriana” in 2006 and for co-producing the film “Argo” in 2012.

# Bust of Constitutional Revolution activist set up at NLAI

**A R T** **TEHRAN** – A bust of Bibi Maryam Bakhtiari, a Loris revolutionary and activist of the Constitutional Revolution, was set at the National Library and Archives of Iran (NLAI) on Tuesday evening.

The bust created by Mehri Vaalaai was installed at the NLAI Women’s Studies Section during a ceremony attended by a number of cultural figures, the NLAI announced on Wednesday.

“In this section, we try to introduce positive female role models for the youth,” explained Hanieh Geraili, an advisor to the NLAI.

“We should introduce those women as role models who not only maintain their households but also engage in various social and political activities,” she added.

The ceremony went on with a speech by Parichehr Soltani Zarasvand, the writer of “Bibi Maryam Bakhtiari, the Paradigm of Freedom”.

Qashqai music vocalist Parvin Bahmani and Bakhtiari music singer Kurosh Asdapur gave performances.

As a military commander, Bibi Maryam played a distinguished role when Bakhtiari tribal forces, with the help of modern arms from the German Empire, successfully captured Tehran in 1909 as part of the revolutionary campaign to force the central government to establish democratic reforms.



Writer Parichehr Soltani Zarasvand (L) and vocalist Parvin Bahmani pose after unveiling a bust of the Constitutional Revolution activist Bibi Maryam Bakhtiari at the National Library and Archives of Iran on July 10, 2018. (NLAI)

## Iranian photographer wins FIAP Gold Medal at Turkish contest



“Opposite” by Iranian photographer Mir Kian Roshan-nia won the FIAP Gold Medal at the 9th Güler Ertan International Photography Contest in Turkey.

**A R T** **TEHRAN** – Iranian photographer Mir Kian Roshan-nia has won the Gold Medal of the International Federation of Photographic Art (FIAP) at The 9th Güler Ertan International Photography Contest in Turkey, the organizers announced last week.

He received the honor in the Open Monochrome category for his photo “Opposite” depicting a girl clad in reverse order.

In this section, another Iranian photographer Amin Zamzam won an honorable mention for his photo “Deep out”.

In the Digital Open Color category, Mehdi Ruhi won an honorable mention for “Fanfare”.

Works by several other photographers from Iran, including Saied Arabzadeh, Javad Hassanpur, Asghar Besharati, Soheil Zandazar, Siavosh Ejlali, Seyyed Mohammad-Javad Sadri and Ehsan Jazini, have been selected to be showcased in an exhibition on July 29.

Winners will be honored during a special ceremony organized by the Photographic Arts Federation of Turkey on July 31.

## Films from Iran competing in intl. festivals



“Like a Good Kid” by Iranian director Arian Vazirdaftari

**A R T** **TEHRAN** – “Kelileh & Demneh” by Alireza Tavakkoli-Bina and “Like a Good Kid” by Arian Vazirdaftari, both from Iran, are competing in two international film festivals.

“Kelileh & Demneh” is competing in “In the Family Circle”, an international film festival that opened in the Russian city of Yaroslavl on Sunday and will be running until July 14, Iran’s Farabi Cinema Foundation announced on Tuesday.

The animation is about Kelileh and Demneh, two young jackals. The story starts in the middle of a rainy night when a horrified owl pays a visit to the king of the

jungle to report on the excessive hunting he has witnessed.

“Like a Good Kid” will be screened at the 11th International Documentary and Short Film Festival of Kerala running in the Indian state from July 20 to 24, the organizers have announced.

The film tells the story of Sara, a 24-year-old girl who is supposed to babysit Matin, a 6-year-old boy, for the day, while his mother is at work. In the morning, Matin tells Sara a story of a fight with his mother from the night before that leads to a series of events throughout the day that will change Matin and Sara for the rest of their lives.

## Tramway to the stars? Studio proposes skyway to Hollywood sign

**LOS ANGELES (Reuters)** — The famed Hollywood sign, worldwide symbol of Los Angeles, could be easier to reach if a proposal for a mile-long aerial tramway up the mountains gets the go-ahead.

Warner Bros movie studio on Tuesday announced details of a proposal to build a tramway from its Burbank film lot up the steep sides of Mount Lee to the sign.

Warner Bros said it would pay for the design, construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed Hollywood Skyway. It declined to comment on a report in the Los Angeles Times that the project would cost about \$100 million.

The 44-foot-high (13.4 m) white Hollywood letters, originally created in 1923 as an advertisement for a real estate development, are a designated historical monument. But there is no easy way to get close to the sign, apart from a rugged hike from nearby Griffith Park, and tourists clog surrounding neighborhoods trying to find ways up to it.

The proposed Hollywood Skyway would take just six minutes.

Warner Bros said in a statement that its proposal would “reduce street



Hikers pass by the Hollywood sign in Hollywood, Los Angeles, California, U.S. October 19, 2017. (Reuters/Lucy Nicholson)

congestion, improve safety, and ease neighborhood frustrations,” adding that it would include an educational visitor center at the top of the skyway, and a parking and transit hub near its Burbank studio.

Warner Bros said the project was in the early stages and that it was seeking feedback from residents, environmental groups and the Los Angeles City Council.

Councilman David Ryu, who represents the area, said the city council would discuss the project and other proposals after the summer recess.

## “Indiana Jones 5” delayed again, until 2021

**LOS ANGELES (Reuters)** — Harrison Ford’s big screen return as adventurer Indiana Jones has been pushed back until 2021, Walt Disney Co announced on Tuesday, two years after the fifth movie in the action franchise was first scheduled to be released.

The film was originally scheduled for release in 2019 but that date was later pushed back to 2020. The new delay follows reports last week in Hollywood industry publications that the script had not been finished and that a new writer was being brought in to polish it. Disney did not immediately return a request for comment on Tuesday on the delay.

The film will reunite Ford with director Stephen Spielberg in the “Indiana Jones” franchise created by filmmaker George Lucas, that has grossed nearly \$2 billion at the world box office with four films and amassed a global fan base. Disney said in 2016 that it was going ahead with a fifth installment.

The delay means Ford will be 79 when he appears as the Fedora-wearing archeologist in theaters. His age has been a running theme in the films since an often-quoted exchange in the first movie,



Photographers are reflected in the glasses of cast member Harrison Ford during a photocall for the film “Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull” by U.S. director Steven Spielberg at the 61st Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, France, May 18, 2008. (Reuters/Eric Gaillard)

“Raiders of the Lost Ark” in 1981.

Karen Allen, playing Jones’s love interest Marion, says “You’re not the man I knew 10 years ago” and Ford responds with a line that has since become famous: “It’s not the years, honey, it’s the mileage.”

Spielberg also has a slate of other projects he is currently working on, including a remake of musical “West Side Story” and religion drama “The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara”.

## Oldest known extract of Homer’s Odyssey discovered in Greece

**ATHENS (Reuters)** — Archaeologists in Greece have discovered what they believe to be the oldest known extract of Homer’s epic poem “The Odyssey”.

A team of Greek and German researchers found it on an engraved clay plaque in Ancient Olympia, the birthplace of the Olympic Games in the Peloponnese peninsula, the Greek culture ministry said on Tuesday.

It holds 13 verses from the Odyssey’s 14th Rhapsody, where its hero, Odysseus, addresses his lifelong friend Eumaeus. Preliminary estimates date the finding to the Roman era, probably before the 3rd century AD.

The date still needed to be confirmed, but the plaque was still “a great archaeological, epigraphic, literary and historical exhibit,” the ministry said.

The Odyssey, 12,109 lines of poetry attributed to the ancient Greek poet Homer, tells the story of Odysseus, king of Ithaca, who wanders for 10 years trying to get home after the fall of Troy.

The Odyssey is the second major poem attributed to Homer after the “Iliad” and scholars date its writing to around 675–725 BCE. It is widely considered to be among the world’s greatest works of literature.