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## Pompeo's 'disgraceful' remarks show U.S. frustration, Iran says

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi said on Monday that U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's "disgraceful" and "hypocritical" remarks are manifestations of the U.S. frustration. During an address at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library on Sunday, Pompeo accused Iran of spreading

violence across the Middle East. Qassemi said, "The U.S. secretary of state's disgraceful and hypocritical speech at this gathering was simply a propagandistic tool and showed the U.S. government's frustration after its illegal exit from the JCPOA [the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action] and failure to reach its objectives by taking this unilateral action and consequently isolated itself." →2

## Iran, Russia discuss energy cooperation

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak met Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Zanganeh in Moscow on Monday and discussed energy cooperation between the two countries and through OPEC, Russia's Energy Ministry said. The two ministers also discussed the possibility of Russian oil companies taking part in projects in Iran, the ministry said in a statement, Reuters reported.

Since implementation of the Iran nuclear deal (known as JCPOA) in January 2016, Iran and Russia have signed a number of agreements to cooperate in development of Iran's oilfields. In mid-March, the National Iranian Oil Company and a consortium comprising Russia's Zarubezhneft Company and Iran's Dana Energy Company inked a deal to develop Aban and Paydar-e Gharb oilfields in west of Iran.

## No export for others if Iran banned from oil sale: diplomat

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Iran will not stand idly by and watch others export their oil if it is deprived of crude exports under a U.S. plan, Iran's deputy foreign minister has said. "If Iran cannot export its oil, it will naturally not stand idly by and see others export theirs," Abbas Araqchi said in an interview with Al-Alam news website

which was published on Monday. "If we are not able to export, others will not be either," he added. Pointing to Iran's numerous options for dealing with the U.S. plot to drive the country's oil exports down to zero, Araqchi expressed the hope that Tehran would not have to resort to its options, saying the U.S. allies, →2

**ARTICLE**  
**Hanif Ghaffari**  
Political analyst

## What Republicans are worried about?

The decline in the popularity of the U.S. President over the past few days has attracted a lot of media attention as the NBC news reported. After an eventful and tumultuous month in American politics, majorities of American voters disapprove of President Donald Trump's handling of Russia and immigration at the border, while half approve of his job on the economy, according to a new national NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll.

Trump's overall job-approval rating in the poll stands at 45 percent among registered voters — up 1 point from June — while 52 percent of voters disapprove of his job. That stability in Trump's numbers stands out given the controversies and news over the past month — the separated families at the border, Trump's contentious NATO meetings, his less contentious meeting with Russia's Vladimir Putin — says Republican pollster Bill McInturff, who conducted this survey with Democratic pollsters Peter Hart and Fred Yang. "These numbers don't budge," McInturff said. "The Republican numbers don't budge."

Indeed, the new NBC/WSJ poll finds the president's approval rating among Republican voters at 88 percent — the highest of his presidency — and 29 percent of all voters strongly approve of his job, which is another high for Trump in the poll. "The more Trump gets criticized by the media, the more his base seems to rally behind him," says Yang, the Democratic pollster. By comparison, just 9 percent of Democrats give the president's job performance a thumbs-up, and 44 percent of all voters strongly disapprove of his job.

In the poll — half of which was conducted before and the day of Trump's July 16 news conference in Helsinki with Putin, the other half afterward — just 26 percent approve of the president's handling of the relationship between the United States and Russia. Fifty-one percent disapprove. Not surprisingly, Republicans are more supportive of Trump's handling of Russia (53 percent of them approve) than Democrats (6 percent) and even Independents (14 percent) are. →7

## Sanctions and stirring unrest are Trump's approach toward Iran: Prof. Zonis

**By Payman Yazdani**  
Marvin Zonis, a professor of international political economy at Chicago University, is of the view that US President is a pathological narcissist that tries to press Iran by increasing sanctions and stirring domestic unrest.

Following is the full text of the interview with Zonis on the recent developments in the international arena and possible changes in the world order and regimes created after World War II. ■ Nowadays great gaps and differences are seen among G7 member states while the SCO member states are moving forward unitedly. Some believe that the world order and organizations created after World War II are being undermined, and due to this reason the US is not going to pay the cost of NATO, WTO and free trade treaties like NAFTA. What is your analysis?

A: It is something of an exaggeration to say the US pays the cost of NATO or the WTO or NAFTA, as the richest of the member states and founder of the organizations, especially after the

catastrophe of World War II, the US took the lead role. But member states still do contribute. The US, it needs to be mentioned, protected itself with a veto on virtually all the decisions these organization make. But more important than any other factor is the very peculiar views of President Donald Trump who acts as if US allies are in fact its adversaries while its adversaries are in fact its friends. His attacks on Europe, NATO, the G7, etc., are not widely shared in the US and, in fact, are greeted with horror by the vast majority of the American people. His recent appalling performance with Vladimir Putin, where Trump said he believed the Russian President's denial of Russian interference in the 2016 election rather than all the US intelligence agencies is just but one very important indication of this.

■ While Donald Trump attended the NATO and G7 summits with an aggressive approach toward Washington's allies, he is trying to improve relation with North Korea and Russia with a reconciling approach. Why?

A: It is very difficult to understand Donald Trump. I start with the possibility that he has serious cognitive impairments which prevent his thinking clearly and cogently. (He may, in short, be mentally ill.) He is also a pathological narcissist who believes that only he can solve US foreign problems. His rush to the summit meeting which Kim Jon Un is a consequence — an ill prepared summit with very little substance but lots of positive headlines for the narcissist Trump. With Putin — maybe the President of Russia does have incriminating videos of Trump's when he was in Russia for the beauty pageant he sponsored... It is also the case that he admires authoritarian, tough guys over democratic leaders...

■ International community is experiencing a new area in which while the US is retreating from the old orders and regimes, China is trying to impose its own orders and regimes by reviewing ancient Silk Road project. To what extent the developments in the Middle East especially in Syria are affected by international systems structure which is changing? →7

## Strong quake jolts western Iran, leaves 287 injured

**SOCIETY** TEHRAN — A strong quake measuring 5.9 on the Richter scale which shook the western city of Tazehabad in Kermanshah province on Sunday afternoon left at least 287 injured.

According to a report by the Iranian Seismological Center affiliated with University of Tehran, the 5.9 quake hit Tazehabad city at about 2:37 p.m. local time at the depth of 8 kilometers beneath the earth's surface. The quake has been followed by more than 40 aftershocks so far.



Some of the aftershock measured over 4 in Richter scale.

According to Kermanshah governor general Houshang Bazvand the quakes have caused

damage to about 1,000 houses in the area, IRNA reported.

"About 100 houses are smashed to the ground," Bazvand regretted.

Moreover, landslide as well as power cuts were reported in the quake-stricken areas as well.

On November 12, 2017 a destructive magnitude 7.3 earthquake hit Sarpol-e Zahab. Some 90,000 houses were partly or completely damaged by the tremor in urban and rural areas of the region. Sadly, the quake took over 660 lives and left more than 10,000 injured.



## Freestylers crowned Asian junior champions

**SPORTS** TEHRAN — Iran freestyle team won the title of the 2018 Asian Junior Championships in New Delhi, India on Sunday.

The Iranian team claimed five gold medals and four bronzes in the two-day event. Amirhossein Kavousi (70kg), Sajjad Gholami (79kg), Abbas Ali Foroutan (92kg), Sajjad Azizi (97kg), Amir Nader Yari (125kg) claimed five gold medals. Reza Alijanzadeh (57kg), Amir Hossein Maghsoudi (65kg), Ali Savadkoobi (74kg) and Sajjad Seyedi (86kg) claimed four bronze medals.

Iran finished the team race in first place with 189 points, followed by India (173 points) and Uzbekistan (128 points).

**ARTICLE**  
**Masoud Hossein**  
Head of the Sport Desk of the Tehran Times

## Zlatko Dalic, much too high a price for Iran

Iran would have reached an agreement with Zlatko Dalic, had the federation offered him a position as a replacement of Carlos Queiroz before the start of the 2018 World Cup, but his price has skyrocketed ever since he led his team to the final of the World Cup.

Dalic has recently claimed that he is the second best coach in the world and is worth more than \$5million annually.

With Dalic's stock now high, he has been linked with national teams including Iran, Japan, Uzbekistan and Egypt.

The 51-year-old Croatian coach has already said money is not a driving force for his decision; however, he refused to accept lower pays, as he considers himself the second best in rank.

"Like it or not, I am the second best coach in the world. And this figure of \$5million per year for the second [best] coach in the world is too small," Dalic told the42.ie.

"Look, money is important to everyone, but for me, it's not my number one motive. I have two years left on my contract, and I can stay with the team for that long. But I said that after the tour of the United States [in March] that I made the decision to go."

Croat coaches could be fruitful in instructing the Iranian football teams. Looking at what we've achieved with the Croats shows that they can be good for the Iranian teams.

Zlatko Kranjcar, who is leading Iran U23 football team at the moment, has won Iran league title with Sepahan and Branko Ivankovic led Persepolis to back-to-back titles in two previous seasons. →15

### Notification:

Unfortunately due to a technical mistake by the printing house, six of the eight inside pages, starting from page 5 to 12, were wrongly printed on our Monday issue. Only page 7 and 10 were printed correctly. These six pages had been published on July 5. The correct PDF pages were posted on the Tehran Times website before the print version. The mistake is regretted.

**MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS**



**Strait of Hormuz must be open for all or no one, general warns**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN – The Iranian Army Ground Force chief on Sunday supported President Hassan Rouhani's threat to close the Strait of Hormuz if Iran would not be able to export its oil, saying the strait must be open to all or no one, Mehr reported.

"The president's warning is not a new warning and our nation and the armed forces have been warning about this for years. I would like to repeat that the Strait of Hormuz must either be open for all or closed to everyone," Brigadier General Kiumars Heidari said.

The remarks by the general came a day after President Rouhani said, "One who understands politics even a little bit wouldn't say 'we will stop Iran's oil exports'," warning that the Strait of Hormuz is only one of the straits that Iran has control over.



**Ex-IRGC chief to Trump: You be cautious**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN – In response to U.S. President Donald Trump's threatening tweet against Iran, former Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) commander Mohsen Rezaei hit back soon, warning Trump to be "cautious".

"Mr. Trump has told Mr. Rouhani to be cautious," Mohsen Rezaei tweeted on Monday, hours after Trump warned Iranian President Hassan Rouhani to be cautious or "you will suffer consequences the likes of which few throughout history have ever suffered before."

Rezaei told Trump, "When more than fifty thousand of your forces are under Iran's sword, it's you who need to be cautious but instead you make demented threats."



**Tweets won't get a better deal, Sherman tells Trump**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN – Wendy Sherman, who served as U.S. Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs in the Obama administration, on Monday criticized President Donald Trump's Iran policy, saying "tweets won't get a better deal".

"If past is prologue, Trump will be sending Bolton to Tehran to arrange a Rouhani summit! The JCPOA supported the Iranian people and ensured our security. Tweets won't get a better deal," Sherman tweeted.

It came after Trump's anti-Iran tweet, in which he threatened Iranian President Hassan Rouhani to be cautious or "you will suffer consequences the likes of which few throughout history have ever suffered before."



**'Military relying on domestic technology'**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN – The deputy army chief for coordination affairs said on Monday the Iranian armed forces are relying on internal resources to produce military equipment, stressing no one can economically isolate Iran from the world, Mehr reported.

"The armed forces have established and maintained security so far and will continue to do so and the fact that they rely on themselves in production and supply of all the weapons means they are helping the government and the economy of the country," Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari said in the northwestern city of Tabriz.



**Majlis committee overseeing foreign trade growth: MP**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN – The Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee chief said on Monday that the committee receives quarterly reports on foreign trade from the customs and the Foreign Ministry to oversee its growth.

Heshmatollah Falahatpisheh said according to the sixth development plan, Iranian ambassadors have been tasked with boosting Tehran's economic relations with other countries, Mehr reported.

"According to the sixth development plan, at least \$60 billion in foreign capital should be attracted annually," he said, urging the Foreign Ministry to spare no efforts in that regard.



**Assassins of two Basij forces arrested**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN – Two individuals who were behind the killing of two Basij forces in Zahedan's Corrin rural district were arrested in less than 48 hours, an official from the Southeast Quds Headquarters announced on Sunday.

Qassem Hassanzadeh said the criminals were arrested on Sunday morning by local forces, and that weapons and ammunition were seized from their hideout, Mashregh news reported.

On Thursday, two members of Basij forces, named Alireza Shah-Bakhsh and Parviz Shah-Bakhsh, were killed in clashes with gunmen in the Corrin rural district.

**Rouhani praises Hope faction's supports**

**Pro-reform Hope faction backs Rouhani's strong warning to Trump**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN – President Hassan Rouhani on Monday praised support for his government by the pro-reform Hope parliamentary faction.

Objectives of the government and the Hope faction, which are in line with solving the people's problems and developing the country, are "very close," Rouhani said during a meeting with members of the Hope presiding board, including Mohammad Reza Aref who contested the 2013 presidential elections but withdrew the race two days before the polls.

"Today, the Iranian nation is facing a new situation which requires more cooperation and solidarity among the officials to overcome the problems and meet the society's needs," Rouhani said in an open reference to the return of the sanctions.

He highlighted the importance of keeping hope on future after the U.S. unilateral withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal,



known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Aref, the chairman of the Hope faction, said that more coordination and cooperation

are needed between the government and parliament to resolve the people's problems.

He also supported Rouhani's remarks at

a gathering of Iranian diplomats on Sunday. Rouhani warned U.S. President Donald Trump about his hostile stance against Iran, saying, "Mr. Trump, do not play with the lion's tail, this would only lead to regret."

U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew unilaterally from the JCPOA on May 8 and ordered restoration sanctions against Iran. According to the U.S. Treasury, the first batch of sanctions will be snapped back in August and the second one in November. Trump has asked countries to cut their oil imports from Iran by November.

Under the nuclear agreement Iran agreed to put limits on its nuclear activities and accept tough inspections in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions. Since the deal went into effect in January 2016 the United Nation's International Atomic Energy Agency has issued regular reports each time confirming that Tehran is fully observing its commitments.

**Larijani says 'diplomats are guerrillas in suit'**

**'Our neighbors should not have any misunderstanding about Iran'**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN – Iranian Majlis Speaker Ali Larijani on Sunday likened diplomats to "guerrillas in suit" who can play an effective role in economic sphere.

As Iran is coming under renewed sanctions by the United States, Iran is intensifying its diplomatic efforts with European countries, China, Russia and other nations around the world to lessen the effects of sanctions.

"Diplomatic capacities can be used for the country's progress. Our diplomats and ambassadors, as guerrillas in suit, can play an effective role in this situation," Larijani told an annual gathering of Iranian diplomats.

He called on the diplomats to encourage the Iranian diaspora to make investments in the country.

The senior lawmaker also called on the Foreign Ministry to facilitate visits to the country by the Iranians living abroad.

Commenting on the need to strengthen relations with neighboring countries, he

said diplomats can play an effective role in this regard.

"Our neighbors should not have any misunderstanding about Iran. So, you ambassadors play an important role in this respect... I admit that there have been misunderstandings about Iran, but you should clear these misunderstandings through various ways," he added.

**Judiciary chief calls Rouhani's remarks 'glorious'**

In a separate meeting with the diplomats on the same day, Judiciary Chief Ayatollah Sadeq Amoli Larijani said President Hassan Rouhani's remarks were "glorious".

Addressing the diplomats on Sunday, Rouhani warned his American counterpart, Donald Trump, about his hostile actions against Iran. Rouhani said, "Mr. Trump, do not play with the lion's tail, this would only lead to regret."

Rouhani also said, "The Americans must fully understand that peace with Iran is the



mother of all the peace, and war with Iran would be the mother of all wars."

Amoli Larijani said Rouhani's remarks were not simply propaganda and were based

on the country's capacities.

The top judge also noted that the Iranian people are more united than ever to counter the U.S. pressure.

**Iran launches mass production of new air-to-air missile**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN – In a ceremony on Monday, Iran unveiled the mass production of a medium-range air-to-air missile, dubbed Fakour.

Addressing the ceremony, Defense Minister Amir Hatami said Fakour is a radar-equipped mid-range missile designed and produced by using state-of-the-art technology.

It could be engaged against various aggressive aircraft within its operational range, the minister stated.

He called the missile's mass production an important step in line with boosting the country's defensive power and promoting the country's deterrence capability.

The missile, the minister said, has reached the mass-production stage despite U.S.-led sanctions targeting Iran's missile industry.

"Today, we live in an environment, where we are sur-



rounded by shameless enemies and mischievous people like the current rulers of the United States, and some of its allies, who do not understand anything other than the language of force," the defense chief remarked.

He added that in line with the instructions of the Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran would give a proportionate response to any threat.

Iranian military experts and technicians have in recent years made great headways in manufacturing a broad range of indigenous equipment, making the armed forces self-sufficient in the arms sphere.

Tehran has always assured other nations that its military might poses no threat to regional countries and others, saying that the Islamic Republic's defense doctrine is entirely based on deterrence.

**Pompeo's 'disgraceful' remarks show U.S. frustration, Iran says**

**'The Iranians have never given in to the foreigners' bullying policies'**

➔ He added Pompeo's remarks are a clear example of the U.S. interference in other countries' affairs which are made in line with Washington's "destabilizing" and "destructive" policies in the West Asia region.

Qassemi said that the Iranians will never forget the U.S. behaviors including support for Saddam Hussein during his war against Iran in the 1980s.

"The Iranians have never given in to the foreigners' bullying policies and do not care about the policies of the U.S. president and the minority in the country who seek to wage war

and are not committed to moral and human principles and whose words and behaviors lack any originality and cannot be trusted," the Foreign Ministry spokesman stated.

He added that the Iranians will respond to the U.S. officials' remarks and actions through unity.

"The U.S. secretary of state's remarks, especially the ones he made last night (Iran's local time) show that he has no understanding about Iran's past and present time. He should know that it is in the U.S. people's interest to reach a deep understanding of other countries' societies before judging

**"Pompeo's remarks show that he has no understanding about Iran's past and present time".**



them," he said. Qassemi noted that the Iranian people will foil all the plots.

**No export for others if Iran banned from oil sale: diplomat**

**Tehran sets deadline for Europe's JCPOA package**

➔ the Europeans, Russia, China and India are negotiating to fulfill Iran's demands and prevent the conditions in which Iran would have to take up its options.

His comments came after President Rouhani warned his U.S. counterpart not to "play with the lion's tail" as Donald Trump is pushing to halt Iran's export of oil.

Rouhani also said a war with Iran would be "the mother of wars" and that control over the strategic Strait of Hormuz is only one of Iran's advantages.

During a recent visit to Austria, Rouhani pledged that Tehran will stand firm against the U.S. threat to halt Iranian oil shipments, saying no other country in the region could export oil if Iran is to be deprived of oil exports.

A number of top Iranian military officials supported the idea afterwards, saying Iran has the ability to shut down international oil



shipments in the Strait of Hormuz if necessary.

**EU should present its package by August 6**

Elsewhere in the interview, Araqchi said the European Union has a time limit of two weeks from the date to present its package of "practical proposals" to save the 2015 nuclear deal between Tehran and world powers,

officially known as the JCPOA.

"There is a deadline for the EU to offer its practical proposals and the date is August 6," Araqchi said.

The package addresses various sectors, including oil, gas, and insurance and banking services, the benefits that Iran was supposed to receive from the full implementation of the JCPOA, the diplomat underlined.

The senior diplomat said that the first round of U.S. sanctions would go into effect in August, followed by ones targeting Iran's oil exports in November.

"We are in talks with Europe to hammer out an executive mechanism for fulfilling the European Union's commitments," Araqchi said.

Last week, EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said the 28-nation bloc were doing all they could to save the deal but conceded

Trump's administration could still wreck it. Mogherini said so as she announced that the European Council had endorsed the update to a statute to shield European firms from the effects of the sanctions.

The blocking statute forbids EU firms from complying with U.S. sanctions, allowing them to recover damages from such penalties and nullifying any foreign court rulings against them, she said.

After Trump pulled out of the JCPOA in May, the EU vowed to fight to preserve the deal.

The blocking statute is due to enter force on August 6, when the first set of U.S. sanctions are due. The second set is due November 4, just before U.S. legislative elections.

The move came after the Trump administration rejected an EU call for an exemption of European companies working with Iran from U.S. sanctions.

# Israeli army kills Palestinian teen in Beit Lahm raid

By staff & agencies

Israeli soldiers have shot dead a Palestinian teenager and rounded up at least 11 others during an overnight raid in the occupied West Bank.

Arkan Thar Mizhar, 15, was shot in the chest in Dheishheh refugee camp in Beit Lahm (Bethlehem), in the southern West Bank, the Palestinian health ministry said on Monday. His funeral is due to take place later on Monday.

A security source told Wafa news agency that Israeli forces stormed the camp and conducted house raids. The soldiers fired live ammunition as well as tear gas and stun grenades.

According to Wafa, two young Palestinian men were wounded and another two were arrested.

A medical source at Beit Jala Hospital confirmed that two young men were wounded by live ammunition in the foot, describing their condition as stable.

The Israeli army said its forces had entered the camp and arrested two people suspected of "terror activity".

Soldiers fired live rounds at the protesters, it added. According to Defense for Children International - Palestine, Israeli forces have so far killed at least 30 Palestinian children in 2018 in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, whereas in 2017, 15 children were killed.

■ **Palestinian youth succumbs to Israeli gunfire wounds suffered in Gaza rally**

Elsewhere, a young Palestinian man, who was critically wounded by Israeli army gunfire during an anti-occupation protest along the border between the besieged Gaza Strip and occupied territories, has succumbed to his injuries. Palestinian medical sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said 26-year-old Karam Ibrahim Arafat died of his injuries on Monday morning.

He had been shot and wounded east of Khan Yunis, located about 25 kilometers south of Gaza City, three weeks ago.

Nearly 150 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces since the "Great March of Return" began in the Gaza Strip on March 30.

A total of 14,811 Palestinians have also sustained injuries, of whom 366 are reportedly in critical condition.

The Gaza clashes reached their peak on May 14, on the eve of the 70th anniversary of Nakba Day (Day of Catastrophe), which coincided this year with the United States embassy relocation from Tel Aviv to occupied East al-Quds (Jerusalem).

On June 13, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution, sponsored by Turkey and Algeria, condemning Israel for Palestinian civilian deaths in the Gaza Strip.

■ **Two Palestinian scientists found dead in an apartment in Algeria**

Meantime, two Palestinian scientists have been found dead in an apartment in Algiers, says the Palestinian Embassy in Algeria.

Suliman al-Farra, 34, and Mohammed Albana, both from Khan Yunis in the Gaza Strip, were found dead in an apartment on Sunday.

Based on preliminary findings, the pair either died of gas inhalation or due to electrocution from a short circuit.

Palestinian reports claim the two scientists were assassinated.



in his car by multiple gunshots in front of his house in the town of El Ain, located seven kilometers north of Sfax, Tunisia, on December 15, 2016.

The Ezzeddine Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of the Palestinian Hamas resistance movement, blamed Israel for the killing, noting that Zawari had been a member of the group for 10 years and had been supervising its drone program.

Mahmoud Abdel Rauf al-Mabhouth, a senior Hamas military commander and one of the founders of the Qassam Brigades, was assassinated by Mossad agents at Al Bustan Rotana hotel in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, on January 19, 2010.

■ **Israeli forces routinely kill Palestinian children for sport**

Meantime, an activist said Israeli forces routinely kill Palestinian children for sport in order to terrorize the population in the occupied territories and the besieged Gaza Strip, says an activist.

"Child killing has become so routine" that the Israelis massacre Palestinian kids for sport, Mick Napier with the Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign told Press TV on Monday.

According to the commentator, Palestine is the only place where the Israeli forces are "killing children for sport" to "terrorize" the population.

# Canada: At least two dead, a dozen injured in Toronto shooting

At least two people have been killed and a dozen others wounded, including a young girl, after a gunman opened fire in the Canadian city of Toronto before being dying after an exchange of gunfire with police.

An unidentified man opened fire late on Sunday in the neighborhood known as Greektown.

"Other than the shooter, we have a young lady that is deceased," Toronto police chief Mark Saunders told reporters late on Sunday.

"We are looking at all possible motives... and not closing any doors," he added.

On Monday, Ontario's police watchdog said that a second person had also died. No other details were given on the second victim.

It was not immediately clear whether the suspected shooter killed himself or died of injuries after being shot by police. Reports of gunfire began at 10pm (02:00 GMT Monday), CityNews.com said.

Paramedics, firefighters and police converged on the scene of the shooting in Toronto's east end, which has many popular restaurants, cafes and shops. Witnesses said they heard 25 gunshots, the news website reported.

Police said the gunman had used a handgun. Toronto is grappling with a sharp rise in gun violence this year.

Deaths from gun violence in the city jumped by 53 percent to 26 so far in 2018 from the same period last year, police data last week showed, with the number of shootings rising by 13 percent.

Toronto deployed about 200 police officers from July 20 in response to the recent spate of shootings, which city officials have blamed on gang violence.

(Source: agencies)

# Iraq: Gunmen open fire, enter Erbil governorate building

Gunmen entered the governorate building in Erbil, the seat of the Iraqi semi-autonomous Kurdistan Region (Kurdistan Regional Government/KRG) government in northern Iraq on Monday, and fired from windows at security forces, a deputy governor of the city and Kurdish security officials said.

Two policemen were wounded. Security forces have cleared the streets around the building in the commercial sector of Erbil, capital of Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdistan region.

It was not immediately clear who the attackers were. "At around 7:45 am two gunmen approached the entrance of the governorate and opened fire at the guards. They managed to enter and now they are on the third floor," said the deputy governor, Tahir Abdullah.

"Security forces have surrounded the building and entered the ground floor, preparing to attack the assailants." These types of attacks are rare in Erbil, one of the most stable cities in Iraq, although the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist outfit, which has been

largely defeated in Iraq, has carried out bombings in the city in the past. The terrorist group has targeted Kurdish forces and civilians in recent years.

Kurdish peshmerga fighters, along with Iraqi government forces and a United States-led coalition, waged war against the ISIL terrorists, who had occupied a third of the country. Iraq declared victory over the ISIL terrorist group in December. It has carried out attacks in some parts of Iraq, a close ally of the United States.

(Source: Reuters)

# Most Germans think Europe can look after itself without help from U.S.: poll

A majority of Germans think Europe can defend itself without military support from the United States, a poll has shown.

Only 37 per cent of respondents said they believed Europe depended on the U.S. military help, the Forsa poll showed.

It came less than two weeks after the U.S. President Donald Trump said he could withdraw support for NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) if Europe did not share more of what he called an unfair burden on the U.S. taxpayers funding the alliance.

The survey found no significant difference between eastern and western German regions, the latter of which have stronger ties to the United States.

In the east, 60 per cent thought Europe did not need Washington, and in the west, 55 per cent.

On 12 July, Trump issued his ultimatum to European allies, urging the continent to spend more on defense if it wants to continue to receive American protection.

In a rebuke to the German chancellor,



Angela Merkel, the U.S. president also called Germany a "captive" of Moscow because,

he said, Berlin supported a Baltic Sea gas pipeline from Russia.

About 84 per cent of respondents said Trump's comments about Russia controlling Germany were "completely absurd", according to the poll, which surveyed 1,004 Germans.

Even more - 92 per cent - said they suspected Trump's motive for making the comments was primarily to promote the sale of US liquefied gas in Europe and Germany.

Two thirds said they supported the construction of the Nord Stream 2 Baltic Sea pipeline because it would help provide Germany with a more reliable supply of natural gas.

A previous poll found Germans would welcome the withdrawal of 35,000 American troops stationed in their country.

The YouGov poll for the DPA news agency (Deutsche Presse-Agentur/German Press Agency) found 42 per cent said they supported withdrawal, while 37 per cent wanted the soldiers to stay and 21 per cent were undecided.

(Source: The Independent)

# Philippine Congress chaos stalls Duterte speech, rebel deal



A leadership row has erupted in the Philippine House of Representatives on live TV, delaying President Rodrigo Duterte's delivery of his annual state of the nation address and passage of a crucial autonomy deal with Muslim rebels.

As Duterte arrived on a helicopter in the heavily secured congressional complex on Monday, Representative Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, backed by dozens of allied legislators, took the main seat in the center stage of the House's plenary hall in a sign that she was taking over the post of House Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez.

Arroyo, a former president, tried to speak from the stage during the dramatic standoff but her microphone was turned off. She tried to yell, apparently to explain what was happening, but later stepped away from the stage, waving at the crowd.

Alvarez, along with Senate President Vicente Sotto III, fetched Duterte and led the visibly confused leader to a holding room as the dispute over House leadership unfolded in the chamber, which was packed with diplomats, legislators and other dignitaries for Duterte's speech. Alvarez and Arroyo are both Duterte allies.

The leadership row earlier prevented the House from ratifying the autonomy deal that many hope will settle one of Asia's longest-raging separatist movements.

Earlier on Monday, the Senate unanimously ratified the bill, which aims to establish a new Bangsamoro autonomous region in the country's southern island of Mindanao, but House members adjourned early due to the leadership row.

The government negotiated the pact for more than two decades with the country's largest Muslim rebel group, Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

Duterte had been expected to sign the autonomy bill into law as early as Monday and highlight it in his state of the nation speech as an early legacy of his presidency, which has come under heavy criticism over his human rights record and deadly anti-drug crackdown. Thousands of protesters rallied outside the House, where Duterte was to speak.

"We find it unfortunate that the Bangsamoro Organic Law was not ratified before the adjournment of today's session," presidential spokesman Harry Roque said. "We consider this as a temporary setback."

There was no immediate reaction from the Muslim rebels over the latest difficulty in achieving the Malaysian-brokered peace deal, which seeks to establish an autonomous region for minority Muslims in the south of the largely Roman Catholic nation.

In 2008, a planned signing of a preliminary pact was scuttled when opponents went to the Supreme Court, which declared the agreement unconstitutional.

New fighting erupted when three rebel commanders attacked Christian communities, leaving more than 100 people dead and about 750,000 villagers displaced before a ceasefire ended the violence. Presidential adviser Jesus Dureza said House legislators had no issue with the autonomy bill but that it was accidentally embroiled in the House leadership row, adding that he expected the legislation to be ratified at some point.

■ **More than 120,000 dead**

The proposed deal is the latest significant attempt by the government to negotiate an end to nearly half a century of on-and-off fighting that has left more than 120,000 people dead and displaced about 2 million others.

The two largest Muslim rebel groups in the south have dropped their demands for a separate Muslim state in exchange for autonomy and have renounced terrorism.

Western governments, however, fear that some local groups might be linked to the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group from the Middle East and Southeast Asia.

Aside from the Muslim autonomy pact, Duterte was expected to reaffirm his resolve to fight illegal drugs and introduce a draft constitution that would shift the country to a federal system of governance. The moves, including opening the country's 1987 constitution to amendment, have been opposed by several groups and opposition politicians, who fear they are designed to prolong Duterte's rule and give him dictatorial powers.

Duterte, who took office in 2016, has played down such fears, saying he is ready to step down as early as next year and cut short his six-year term before a new federal government is put in place.

(Source: agencies)

# Al-Shabab claims killing 27 soldiers in southern Somalia

Somalia's al-Shabab armed terrorist group claimed on Monday they have killed at least 27 soldiers in a suicide attack at a military base in the country's south.

Abdiasis Abu Musab, the terrorist group's spokesman, said that the fighters stormed the base in Baar Sanguni village - about 50km from the port city of Kismayo - after the car bomb explosion. "We killed 27 soldiers and took the drugs. Some soldiers fled into the jungles," he claimed.

There was no immediate official comment from the government about the attack.

But a Somali military officer, Majo Mohamud Aden, told Reuters news agency from Kismayo that the military was sending reinforcements to the base following the reports of violence.

"We understand there was an explosion and heavy fighting between al-Shabab, who attacked the base, and the Somali forces. We have no details so far," he said.

Residents of the nearby town of Jamame, 70km away from Kismayo, said they heard the blast, followed by gunfire.

"We heard a huge blast after early morning prayers. Then heavy exchange of gunfire followed. It was in the direction of Baar Sanguni," Osman Abdullahi told Reuters.

At least seven soldiers were wounded after the Baar Sanguni base was attacked by al-Shabab terrorists in June.

(Source: Reuters)

STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	108658.9
IFX	1219.12

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	43,730 rials
EUR	51,326 rials
GBP	57,474 rials
AED	11,908 rials

Source: mehrnews.com

COMMODITIES

WTI	\$68.96/b
Brent	\$73.86/b
OPEC Basket	\$70.91/b
Gold	\$1,229.95 /oz
Silver	\$15.51/oz
Platinum	\$833.45/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

NEWS IN BRIEF



Rome seeking to maintain economic ties with Tehran: envoy

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — Italian Ambassador to Iran Mauro Conciatori said Rome is trying to maintain its positive trade ties with Tehran despite U.S. sanctions, IRNA reported. The official mentioned the two countries' \$5 billion trade turnover during 2017, saying that Italy is Iran's top trade partner among the European countries and Iran's exports to Italy are twice the amount the European nation's exports to Iran. According to Conciatori, Iran only exported €3 billion worth of oil and gas condensate to Italy last year.



Industrial unit establishment permits rises 23% in 2 months

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — As Iran's Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade has announced, 2,861 permits have been issued for establishment of industrial units during the two-month period from March 21 to May 21, which indicates 23 percent growth compared to the same period of time in the past year. Also, the investment for establishment of these units is 282.443 trillion rials (about \$6.47 billion), showing 45.3 percent rise from the figure of the same time span in the preceding year, IRNA reported.



Iran holding 1st expo on aviation components designing, manufacturing

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — Iran's 1st Exhibition on Designing and Manufacturing Aviation Components inaugurated on Monday at Mehrabad International Airport, Fars news agency reported. The two-day exposition seeks implementation of Resistance Economy, which entails a boost in employment and domestic production, under the conditions that Iran expects to experience the impacts of a new round of U.S.-led sanctions against itself within the upcoming months.

Petchem exports at over \$3b in a quarter

**ENERGY** TEHRAN — Iran exported 5.356 million tons of petrochemical products worth more than \$3.158 billion during the three-month period from the beginning of current Iranian calendar year (March 21), IRIB reported citing the data released by National Petrochemical Company (NPC).

The country produced over 13.26 million tons of petrochemicals during the first quarter, NPC data showed.

As reported, 16 production units in Assalouyeh and 20 units in Mahshahr petrochemical zones, both in southwest of Iran, accounted

for 5.868 million tons and 4.599 million tons of the three-month output, respectively, and 20 petrochemical units in other parts of the country accounted for 2.795 million tons of the figure.

Iran exported over 22.41 million tons of petrochemical products worth more than \$12 billion in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20).

Exports from Assalouyeh and Mahshahr petrochemical zones stood at 11.423 million tons worth \$5.977 billion and 6 million tons worth \$3.41 billion, respectively, during the past year.



Iran's export of petrochemical products is anticipated to reach \$14 billion in the current Iranian calendar year, NPC Managing Director Seyed Reza Norouz-Zadeh said in early April. The official also announced that through completing some petrochemical projects in this year, petrochemical production is expected to

hit 47 million tons, of which some 27 million tons will be exported.

NPC managing director further said that 60 petrochemical projects with the nominal capacity of 65.4 million tons are currently underway throughout the country with \$42.8 billion of investment.

Indian refiners worried over U.S. sanctions on Iran

**ENERGY** TEHRAN — Indian refineries are getting worried about the risks that U.S. sanctions on Iran could impose on their profitability, Economic Times reported citing Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd (MRPL).

"The recent developments surrounding Iran and imminent U.S. sanctions and pressure on India to reduce imports from Iran point towards a significant short-term supply risk to the company," MRPL stated in its FY2017-18 annual report.

Of the 15.98 million tons of crude oil MRPL bought dur-

ing fiscal year ended on March 31, 2018, 12.52 million tons came via imports. Iran supplied the largest volume of 4.72 million tons, followed by Saudi Arabia at 4.35 million tons.

"The sanction on Iran, which is an important supplier of crude to the company, is also an immediate threat to profitability. The reduction in supplies of crude from Iran, following sanctions will have an impact on crude prices globally and will affect the company in the short term," the refiner said.

Earlier this month, Iran offered Indian refiners incentives including low-price shipping and an enhanced credit period on oil sales.

Iranian embassy in New Delhi published a statement on July 13 assuring Indian refiners on taking necessary measures for secured oil supplies to India, offering "flexible measures" to boost bilateral trade.

India was one of the few countries that continued to deal with Iran during previous sanctions.

EU may hit back if UK drops food safety checks in no-deal brexit: report

The UK government is considering suspending food safety controls in the event of a no-deal Brexit scenario, according to a report by Food Research Collaboration, a research group specializing in food policy, referencing an unnamed government adviser.

"In recent months, we have learned from a senior government adviser that plans are being prepared to 'suspend food controls' if there are any delays to imports of perishable foods at our borders," the report reads. "We learned too that other policy commentators had been told the same by senior [Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)] personnel. One government adviser even informed us that the plans were being devised 'to avoid parliamentary scrutiny'."

Should the UK Cabinet fail to come up with a Brexit deal — an event which appears likely — the UK, fresh out of the EU, might lift its food safety controls to avoid delays in perishable goods on the border, the report says.

Entitled "Feeding Britain: Food Security After Brexit", the report warns that, despite London's best intentions, the EU might respond with retaliatory measures.

"If the UK were to suspend food safety controls, others might block exports from a country taking such a cavalier approach to public health. It would go completely against all the protestations of commitment to high consumer and health standards. Yet this appears to be what Defra envisages," the report continues.

"Senior industry people have told us in no uncertain terms that this would be folly and must be avoided, not least because it would threaten exports from the UK to the EU," the researchers write in the report.

The researchers say, however, that there have been "several hints" that ministers are inclined to endorse such a proposal.

In case of a no-deal Brexit scenario, when the UK becomes a separate trade entity from the EU, borders would emerge, complete with customs checks. Such checks would impact logistics greatly, the report says.

Even if a check of every single truck takes only four minutes, this would create a massive 20 to 29-mile truck trail at the customs checkpoint. Of course, simply waving them through might seem like

a logical solution, but this also carries additional troubles.

"This is not 'taking back control', it is abandoning it," says Tim Lang of City University and co-author of the report.

"One could argue that this is sensible emergency planning but it is also risky," he added, according to The Irish Times.

"Consumers would rightly wonder who was guaranteeing the safety and quality of the imported food they were buying. Criminals would be alerted to opportunities for food fraud. And the move would send negative signals to the EU at a delicate time in Brexit negotiations," he concluded.

However, Defra has denied allegations that food safety controls might be suspended. (Source: Sputnik)

China says it won't devalue currency to bolster exports

China said on Monday the value of its currency is driven by market forces and that it has no intention to devalue the yuan to help exports, after Washington said it was monitoring the currency's weakness amid the escalating bilateral trade row.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry also said that threats and intimidation on trade would never work on China, after U.S. President Donald Trump said he was ready to impose tariffs on all \$500 billion of goods imported from the country.

At a daily news briefing, ministry spokesman Geng Shuang was asked about comments on Friday by U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, who told Reuters the yuan's weakness would be reviewed as part of the Treasury's semi-annual report on currency manipulation, which is due on Oct. 15.

Mnuchin's comments were the first since the early days of the Trump administration in 2017 that raised the prospect of designating China as a manipulator. (Source: Reuters)

IN THE NAME OF GOD  
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING

**INTERNATIONAL TENDER NO. 97/114-155/10**

*Second Announcement*

**Tender Holder:**  
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING (IRIB)

**Subject of Tender:**  
**Purchasing of one set of Diesel Generator and some Electrical Equipment plus Installation and Commissioning in accordance with the technical specifications and other terms and conditions mentioned in the tender documents.**

**Deadline and How to Receive the Tender Documents:**  
From **24<sup>th</sup> July 2018 (1397/05/02)** by **4 p.m.** on **Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2018 (1397/05/09)** with presentation of introductory letter by company or its representative and the receipt of paying the documents fee.

**Place of Receiving the Tender Documents:**  
Interested participants may refer to purchasing (KALA) Dept., 4<sup>th</sup> Floor of IRIB Administration Complex, Hotel Esteghlal St., Vali-e Asr Ave., Tehran Iran.

**The Fee of the Tender Documents and How to Deposit it:**  
Submission of payment receipt for the amount of **2,000,000 Rials** to account No. 4101029171204273 (IBAN: IR310100004101029171204273) with CENTRAL BANK OF IRAN in the name of IRIB.

**Type and Amount of Guarantee for Participation to Tender:**  
The amount of deposit for participant in tender is **USD 31100** fixed or its equivalent in 2,643,500,000 Rials which should be in the form of Bank Guarantee.

**Time and Place of Delivering Priced Bid:**  
The sealed A, B & C packages/envelopes should be submitted no later than **4 p.m.** on **01<sup>st</sup> Sep. 2018 (1397/06/10)** and at the address mentioned in the 4<sup>th</sup> clause.

**Time and Place of Opening Envelopes:**  
The date of opening envelopes A&B is on **02<sup>nd</sup> Sep. 2018 (1397/06/11)** at **3 p.m.** in the office of Financial Vice President and opening of envelope C will be after technical evaluation.

**For more information, please see:**  
[www.iriboffice.ir/tenders](http://www.iriboffice.ir/tenders) and <http://iets.mporg.ir/> Tel: **00982122167463**

**Purchasing (kala) Dept. of IRIB**

First Announcement

ONE STEP INTERNATIONAL TENDER  
GOVERNMENT TRADING CORPORATION OF IRAN



The Government Trading Corporation of Iran (hereinafter referred to as GTC), affiliated to the Ministry of Agriculture Jahad of the Islamic Republic of Iran, intends to purchase 30,000 M/Ts 10 pct M/L, crude sunflower seed oil (in 3 separate cargoes of 10,000 MTs ±10% with different shipment periods) on the basis of CFR pumped out one of the north Iranian ports (Amirabad, Nowshahr, Freydukenar, or Anzali), through single stage international tender.

All of qualified companies and suppliers that are interested to bid above tender are invited to receive tender documents from **25/07/2018 until 04/08/2018** from the secretary of Trades&Tenders committee located on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of GTC building No. 2, Fatmei Ave (opposite of Water and Wastewater Co.), Tehran, Iran along with an official letter of introduction.

The bid participants are required to submit their stamped and sealed envelopes containing their offers latest at **13:00** (Tehran time) on **04/09/2018** to the secretariat of tenders committee located on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor. Meanwhile the meeting for the opening of the envelopes will be held on **04/09/2018 at 14:00** (Tehran time) with the presence of bidder's representatives in **tenders committee** (2<sup>nd</sup> floor of GTC building No 2, Fatmei Ave (opposite of Water and Wastewater Co.), Tehran, Iran).

Bid bond: the bid bond worth **EUR 121,146 (IRR. 5,957,825,633)** in cash or unconditional bank guarantee with three months validity and extendible for another three months.

Note: participates who wish to bid for more than one cargo are obliged to deposit the above mentioned bid bond for each extra shipment.

# Oil steady after G20 warns of risks to growth

Oil prices stabilized on Monday as worries over production losses were outweighed by concerns that trade disputes would reduce economic growth and hit global energy demand.

Benchmark Brent crude oil was up 15 cents at \$73.22 a barrel by 0750 GMT. U.S. light crude was unchanged at \$68.26.

Finance ministers and central bank governors from the world's 20 biggest economies ended a meeting in Buenos Aires over the weekend calling for more dialogue to prevent trade and geopolitical tensions from hurting growth.

"Downside risks over the short and medium term have increased," the finance leaders said in a statement.

The talks occurred amid escalating rhetoric in a trade dispute between the United States and China, the world's largest economies, which have already slapped tariffs on \$34 billion worth of each other's goods.

U.S. President Donald Trump threatened on Friday to impose tariffs on all \$500 billion of Chinese exports to the United States unless Beijing agreed major changes to its technology transfer, industrial subsidy and



joint venture policies.

Economic and oil demand growth are closely correlated as expanding economies support fuel consumption for trade and travel,

as well as for automobiles.

Worries over the impact of a trade war have balanced concerns over production losses and lack of supply at a time of rising demand.

U.S. energy companies last week cut the number of oil rigs by the most since March following recent declines in oil prices.

Drillers cut five oil rigs in the week to July 20, bringing the count down to 858, Baker Hughes energy services firm said on Friday.

The U.S. rig count, an early indicator of future output, is higher than a year ago, when 764 rigs were active as energy companies have been ramping up production in anticipation of higher prices in 2018 than previous years.

Hedge funds and money managers cut their bullish wagers on U.S. crude for the first time in nearly a month, a further sign of weaker sentiment for the market, the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) said on Friday.

Most of the reduction occurred as money managers reduced their long position, or bets that oil prices would rise.

The market seemed unperturbed after Trump warned Iran not to threaten the United States or face consequences, with oil prices little changed after he sent a tweet - written all in uppercase - directed at Iranian President Hassan Rouhani.

(Source: Reuters)

## Is the oil world in panic mode?

By Dan Dicker

Oil markets have shown tremendous weakness in recent days, losing nearly seven dollars before rallying back a bit on Thursday.

What's causing it? Market analysts have been struggling to find a single reason for it, preferring to cite a cocktail of negative news and rumor to explain the downdraft.

There have been reports of increased Saudi production to Asian customers, which many cite as a breaking of the dam of OPEC production guidelines - a break that would have many in the oil world in full panic mode.

But I don't see these promises as a collapse inside the cartel. The Asian contracts are merely adding stability to the oil markets in front of the threats of renewed U.S. sanctions on Iran. It's been made clear that the Iranians won't stand for any production increases that are over and

above the agreed upon increases at their Vienna meeting last month - and equally clear that the Saudis don't want to put that production agreement in jeopardy either.

Many analysts are pointing to the reopening of Libyan oil ports to explain the quick drop in oil prices.

But I also don't find this explanation very compelling either: Even with these newly cleared impasses, Libyan exports are only marginally increasing, and most experts believe that Libyan production will continue to slide downwards through the rest of 2018. Others have cited the threat of slowing oil demand from China, but these predictions of slowing Chinese growth are as frequent, and usually as wrong, as dandelions growing in an open field.

I am a student of the financial players and their influence into oil prices, and generally look at the movement of speculative money in and

out of the futures markets. But even here there hasn't been a discernible reason for oil's latest drop. According to the COT reports, long positions have actually held fairly steadily through this latest 7 dollar downdraft in oil.

So - WHAT IS IT? Despite the varied answers that are appearing in the media for oil's recent drop, I can find only one convincing reason that oil is recently acting poorly despite being one of the most fundamentally bullish oil markets I have seen in my 35 years trading it: Trump's trade war.

Commodities are different than stocks. They are time-sensitive instruments that regenerate and self-destruct every month. Current September commodity futures contracts don't care where the markets will be in 6 months. They only care about their price prospects on the day they expire - the 28th of August. Because of this, they are far more sensitive to current threats

than stocks and have been responding to the disastrous economic threat of a continuing trade war between the US and China (and our allies).

Corn is down. Soybeans are getting pummeled. Doctor Copper is giving us a nasty prognosis; Industrial metals like Zinc, Tin and Platinum are down anywhere from 15-35 percent.

Oil, for most of the run-up to U.S. tariffs starting in late May, has strongly bucked this general commodity collapse - proving again just how fundamentally strong it is - but even that fundamental strength is no match for the destructive economic force of a global trade war.

It's difficult to know what to say or do about this, if you're an investor in commodity-reliant stocks. Heck, it's tough if you're an investor in anything, as the economic ill-effects of an expanding trade war will reach far beyond the commodity sector at some point.

(Source: oilprice.com)

## Trump's trade war casts a long shadow over LNG shipping boom

The booming market for liquefied natural gas can weather an escalating U.S.-China trade war. But the risks are mounting.

So far, LNG has been left off the growing list of tit-for-tat tariffs. If that changes, prices will rise and deter buyers just when new markets for the fuel are opening up, according to Paul Wogan, the chief executive officer of LNG shipowner Gaslog Ltd.

"My concern would be for higher pricing starting to destroy some of that demand," Wogan said in Rotterdam, where he oversaw the first European loading for new ship GasLog Hong Kong. "That's not happening at the moment but things like tariffs adding to the cost of LNG wouldn't be a good thing."

The impact of duties on LNG, the world's fastest-growing fossil-fuel commodity, would be particularly felt as the U.S. strives to become the world's biggest exporter of the fuel and China drives global demand in its push for cleaner energy sources. The call for LNG ships has been booming, with China imports soaring 57 percent last year on a tonnage-per-mile basis.

But the trade dispute between the world's two biggest economies is only worsening. President Donald Trump said Friday he's "ready to go" with \$500 billion in tariffs on Chinese imports. Earlier this month he imposed charges on \$34 billion of goods, prompting China to slap duties on commodities including U.S. propane and butane.

In Europe, a potential natural gas pipeline project from Russia has been imperiled by possible U.S. sanctions. European Union Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker meets with Trump this week in an effort to tamp down the escalating trade tensions.

Any effect from potential tariffs would be lessened if overall demand for LNG stays high, Wogan said. Trade flows can also be redrawn, with China swapping U.S. cargoes for Australian LNG normally bound for Taiwan, South Korea and Japan.

"If even a 10 percent tariff is introduced, that would probably drive cargo swaps with the other northeast Asian buyers, although such swaps will add cost to delivered Chinese prices," said Trevor Sikorski, the head of natural gas, coal, carbon at Energy Aspects Ltd. in London.

In any case, the northeast Asian market will need U.S. volumes to meet demand, which means total American cargoes into the region should be unchanged, he said.

The trade conflict may also make it harder for proposed U.S. liquefaction projects to sign up Chinese long-term buyers, impeding final investment decisions for new supply projects. It could also weigh on new-order growth at Samsung Heavy Industries Co. Ltd., South Korea's second-largest shipbuilder, according to Bloomberg Intelligence.

GasLog owns 30 tankers for the superchilled fuel including five on order. It's contemplating as many as 20 additional new-builds between now and 2021 depending on customer need and, crucially, the progress of U.S. LNG projects, Wogan said.

"It is a concern, but right now I wouldn't say it's enough of a concern that we stop investing," he said. "But this is certainly what we need to watch." (Source: Bloomberg)

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## NEWS IN BRIEF



### India and nine other Asian countries to outperform U.S. GDP by 2030: report

**INTERNATIONAL** **TEHRAN** — The ten major economies of Asia, including India, are expected to witness robust growth in next two decades, more than the United States, according to a report published in India's state-run news agency.

The growth will amount to over \$28 trillion in real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on aggregate, the PTI report says, quoting a study done by DBS Bank, a global financial services major.

According to the report, the 10 economies where the growth is expected to soar include China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand.

By 2030, the report states, Asia-10 economies will grow so robustly that they will, on aggregate, amount to over USD 28.35 trillion in real GDP (2010 constant dollars) terms, while for the U.S. will amount to USD 22.33 trillion.

"We expect Asia-10 to pull ahead of the US by 2030," the DBS report said, adding that this neither is a sufficient nor a necessary condition to invest in Asia, as investing cannot be based on a single indicator, especially when it comes to a long-term horizon.



### Afghanistan, Pakistan agree to jointly fight terrorism in inaugural APAPPS meeting

**INTERNATIONAL** **TEHRAN** — In a bid to evolve a mechanism to fight terrorism and extremism in the region, the inaugural session of the Afghanistan-Pakistan Action Plan for Peace and Solidarity (APAPPS) was held in Kabul on Sunday, according to a statement issued by Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The 28-member Pakistani delegation, including representatives of foreign and interior ministries, commerce, Federal Board of Revenue, railway, communications, among other ambassadors, was led by Foreign Secretary Tehmina Janjua during the session.

Afghanistan's deputy foreign minister Hekmat Khalil Karzai represented his side, the statement added. The two sides held a wide-ranging discussion on ways to counter terrorism and extremism during the meeting.

The APAPPS action plan provides the forum to the neighboring countries to hold a dialogue on an institutional level, the foreign office statement said, adding that five working groups have been formed under the APAPPS. Other issues such as regional security and the return of Afghan refugees was also discussed.

According to Foreign Office (FO) Spokesperson Dr Mohammad Faisal, the foreign secretary, in her opening remarks to the media, said that their presence in Kabul today with just two days in Pakistan's general elections "shows our commitment to APAPPS".



### Government ban on Islamic channels in Kashmir evokes anger and outrage

**INTERNATIONAL** **TEHRAN** — The government ban on cable channels in Indian controlled Kashmir has drawn widespread anger and outrage in the troubled region, with people questioning the motive behind such a move.

A report published in Kashmir-based daily Greater Kashmir, quoting traders and entrepreneurs, said the government has imposed ban on the transmission of more than 30 "unpermitted" television channels in the Kashmir valley on the pretext of "regulation".

Representatives of various trade and commerce bodies told the newspapers that the ban on popular TV channels from Muslim countries, including Iran, will have an adverse impact on people associated with the cable TV business.

The order to ban the channels was issued by the government on 12 July, 2018, which was sent to heads of cable operators in Srinagar, asking them to stop telecasting and transmitting "unpermitted and banned private satellite channels".

The move has raised eyebrows because, according to some reports, while the Islamic channels have been banned, the ban has not been extended to Hindu religious channels.

Muhammad Yasin Khan, chairman of Kashmir Economic Alliance, told the newspaper that the ban was "aimed at demeaning Islam, which is a religion of peace". "By banning the Islamic channels, the government has sent a wrong signal to the world community...one wonders what kind of threat are posed by these channels that propagate peace and universal brotherhood."



### Security beefed up for July 25 election in Pakistan but violence continues

**INTERNATIONAL** **TEHRAN** — A day before the general election in Pakistan, a suicide bomber killed a candidate in the northwestern town of Dera Ismail Khan, raising serious doubts over security arrangements made for the election.

Pakistan goes to polls on Wednesday to elect a new government. The elections are being held amid a series of terror attacks in different parts of the country. Last week, more than 150 people were killed at an election rally in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which was the second deadliest attack in Pakistan's history.

The attack in Dera Ismail Khan is the latest to target candidates in a bitterly contested election. The responsibility for the attack was claimed by Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

Meanwhile, Pakistani authorities claim that all necessary security arrangements have been put in place for the election. More than 800,000 security personnel - including more than 370,000 army soldiers - will be deployed on election day, Pakistan's Election Commission said this week.

More than 106 million voters will vote for 272 seats in the country's lower house of parliament, as well as for the country's four provincial assemblies. Among the political parties in the race, Imran Khan led Pakistan Tehreek Insaaf (PTI) has got a clear edge.

# Iran becomes India's second biggest oil supplier, ahead of Saudi Arabia

**INTERNATIONAL** **TEHRAN** — Even as the speculation over whether India will cut oil imports from Iran under the U.S. pressure grows, there is some good news for the votaries of stronger India-Iran bilateral ties.

Iran became the second-biggest oil supplier to Indian state refiners between April and June, ahead of Saudi Arabia, India's Oil Ministry said on Monday. The leap to the second slot is mainly because of the steeper discounts offered by Tehran.

India is now the top oil client for Iran after China, having shipped in 5.67 million tonnes or about 457,000 barrels per day (bpd) of oil in the first three months of this fiscal year, India's Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Dharmendra Pradhan told parliament in a written reply.

The minister did not provide numbers from previous years, but according to reports, India imported about 3.46 million tonnes, or about 279,000 bpd, from Iran between April and June last year.

State refiners, accounting for about 60 percent of India's 5 million bpd refining capacity, had decreased imports from Iran last year af-



ter there were reports about Tehran granting development rights for the Farzad B gas field to other parties.

However, for this fiscal year, the refiners

decided to almost double imports from Iran, which offered almost free shipping and extended credit period on oil sales, said the Minister. Iraq continued to be the top oil supplier

to India between April and June, shipping in 7.27 million tonnes of oil, while Saudi Arabia accounted for 5.22 million tonnes, making it the third largest supplier, Pradhan said in his statement.

India has been under pressure to cut the oil imports from Iran following U.S. sanctions on Iran. New Delhi had initially said they do not recognize unilateral sanctions imposed by Washington, and only recognize UN sanctions. However, everyone was taken by surprise when reports emerged that a message had been sent across to refiners to be prepared for drastic cut in oil imports.

However, following the public backlash, Indian government said that it will take a "considered and considerate" view based on 'national interest' on the issue of U.S. sanctions against Iranian oil and find a way to secure its energy needs.

On Tuesday, Indian foreign secretary Vijay Gokhale held discussions with a high-level U.S. delegation on the issue of implementing U.S. sanctions against Tehran. The meeting took place a day after Gokhale held talks with Iran's deputy foreign minister Seyyed Abbas Araghchi.

## Pakistan goes to polls amid fears about violence, manipulation

By Syed Zafar Mehdi

Tomorrow, Pakistan has a tryst with history. Despite heavy odds and pejorative conspiracy theories, the people of Pakistan will exercise their right of franchise to elect a new government. Tight security arrangements have been made for the election, with the deployment of nearly 7.5 million security personnel and 1.6 million electoral officials. There is an electrifying buzz on the streets, as people animatedly discuss which party will have the last laugh and who will be the deposed former premier Nawaz Sharif's successor to the throne of thorns.

Known for their exemplary courage and resilience, Pakistanis are eager to defeat bullets with ballots and replace despair and darkness of yesterday with hope and light of tomorrow. However, not everything is hunky-dory. There are many hurdles and stumbling blocks. The volatile political environment of Pakistan means the election will be bitterly contested and there would be overt and covert attempts to manipulate the result.

Some serious doubts have been expressed by top political parties - including Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) and Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) led by Bilawal Bhutto - about the fairness of the election process and the ability of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and the caretaker government in Islamabad to provide a level playing field to all the parties. They have alleged that the cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek Insaaf (PTI) was being favored by the powerful military establishment. Interestingly, many senior leaders of PML-N and PPP have defected to PTI lately.

The independent Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), in a statement last week said, there were "ample grounds to doubt" the legitimacy of the elections and criticized "blatant, aggressive and unabashed attempts to manipulate the outcome of the upcoming elections."

PML-N, which ruled the country until recently, has been hit badly after the three-time prime minister and the party's lynchpin was sentenced to 10-year jail term in an anti-graft case, along with his daughter and heir apparent Maryam Nawaz. The verdict, which came less than a month before the election, is being seen as a smart ploy by the military establishment, which has great influence in judiciary, to prevent the party from retaining power.

## 'There is no certainty of any party gaining a simple majority in Pakistan election'

By Syed Zafar Mehdi

Mehr Tarar is a Pakistan-based senior journalist, political commentator and author. She was formerly op-ed editor of Daily Times. In her interview with Tehran Times, she spoke about the general election in Pakistan and why it will be bitterly contested.

Following is the text of the interview:

■ Pakistan goes to polls on Wednesday. Serious doubts have been expressed by some political parties about the fairness of these elections, especially in the context of military's interference. Do you think the elections would be free and fair?

A: While it would be absurd to deny that there is no influence of military on the elections in Pakistan, the allegation is greatly exaggerated as far as the perception goes. Allegations of pre-poll rigging and rigging during elections is not a new phenomenon in Pakistan; it is just that the noise has intensified now because the principal accuser is the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), the biggest political party in Pakistan, and the one that finished its five-year term in government in May.

■ The cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan, in the cricketing jargon, is playing on the front foot, and is being tipped as the next Prime Minister of Pakistan. Is it because of his appeal among the country's burgeoning young population or because of the powerful Pakistani military's backing?

A: The jailing of Nawaz Sharif and his daughter Maryam on money-laundering charges has opened a Pandora's Box of systematic flaws in Pakistan's governmental and legal system. While not many people endorse the victimhood narrative of the PML-N, there are many questions about the authenticity of the legal verdict against

them and the uncommon hurry the courts have shown to give a harsh sentence against the three-time prime minister, his daughter, and his son in law.

The entire thing is said to be the work of the judicial-military nexus, which in turn is alleged to be supporting Imran Khan's party to win the elections. That incidentally is also a repudiation of the huge popularity Khan enjoys all over Pakistan, in all sections of society that seem to have had enough of corrupt rulers. Khan despite his flaws is seen as someone who is not corrupt.

■ There have been reports about the clampdown on media and intimidation of civil society by the military establishment in the run up to elections. Why is it so?

A: While the Dawn newspaper, reportedly, have faced some issues regarding its distribution in certain areas, I can't really say the accusation of a clampdown is application to media overall. Pakistan media has always had its invisible red lines, and those still exist; certain topics are either not talked about or are mentioned in an indirect manner. It is not an ideal situation, but those who wish to make a point manage to do so without caring for any "unwritten" restrictions, existing within the realm of freedom of speech that is relative and selective.

■ While the former Pakistani prime minister has been incarcerated in an anti-graft case and disqualified from elections, some members of outlawed organizations have been allowed to contest elections. Are there different rules for different people?

A: It is unfortunate that Pakistan despite its apparent resolve to curb activities of proscribed organisations has never been able to apply a complete ban. Militant orgs go incognito for a while, and remerge under



a different name. Under the guise of working for religion, these organisations seem to get away with many things that a mainstream political party would never be allowed to.

■ The election is being held amidst a series of terror attacks across the country. Even though tight security arrangements have been made to secure elections, is there anxiety among voters?

A: The three recent horrific attacks that have targeted prominent politicians and workers from different parties have reconfirmed that the very real danger of terrorism in Pakistan is still there. It is an audacious and a very horrific way of destroying the process of establishment of peace in a country that is still waging a war against threats within and without. People, nevertheless, even in terror-affected areas are more resolute than ever to not be cowed down; they will go out and vote.

■ Do you see any party winning a simple majority or do you see a hung parliament. And in case it's a hung parliament, as many analysts have predicted, what will happen?

A: While Imran Khan-led PTI is touted to bag a bigger chunk of popular vote than it did in 2013, there appears to be no cer-



fathers and root out corruption by strengthening institutions of governance. While his cozy relationship with the military and Taliban has raised a few eyebrows, he has great following among country's burgeoning young population.

Even celebrities and former cricketers like Wasim Akram and Waqar Younus have backed their 'skipper' with one of the top trending hashtags #BehindYouSkipper. But, what must have given Khan a reason to cheer is a public opinion survey done by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) and Herald magazine that shows PTI in lead, followed by PML-N and PPP.

While according to most pundits, it will be a close fight between PTI and PML-N, the other party in the fray PPP is now a shadow of its past, with support base limited to southern Sindh province. The young party chief Bilawal Bhutto has been campaigning hard across the country but undeniably he lacks the charisma and mass appeal of his late mother Benazir Bhutto.

Meanwhile, the election is being held amidst a series of terror attacks across the country, which has created panic among the voters. Security has been beefed up to protect electoral booths and neutral observers have been appointed to ensure free and fair voting. But, as they say, the last word in Pakistan belongs to the military.

tainty of any party gaining a simple majority. The recent setbacks to PML-N may have dented its vote bank, but it could have an opposite reaction: compel the people to vote for PML-N in defiance of what many see as the unfairness and severity of verdicts against the Sharifs and PML-N. In case of a hung parliament, a coalition government is never off the cards, which in turn is never a good idea in Pakistan where ideological differences between parties are too huge at any given time.

■ Pakistan has recently been placed on the FATF grey list due to 'strategic deficiencies' in its anti-money laundering and terrorism financing regime. What should the next government do to be removed from the list?

A: The new government must ensure that the entire process of banning and ending activities of proscribed organisations actually take place and is not mere lip-service while speaking in defence of Pakistan at FATF or any other international forum like the UN.

■ Imran Khan, during his election campaigning said, if he is voted to power he would ensure Pakistan comes out of the U.S. shadow. Do you see that happening?

A: It may not happen but Imran Khan has been consistent in his stance of labeling as America's war what is seen as the almost two-decade long war that Pakistan has waged on its borders and even within Pakistan against its homegrown militants. Khan is an advocate of having a relationship with the U.S. in which Pakistan despite being a smaller country in terms of its power and resources is based on mutual respect, not on the need to use one as a proxy in a war against another superpower (the former USSR) or a terrorist organisation like the al-Qaeda.

# Saudi-UK media tie-up: Targeting the non-Arabic-speaking Middle East

By Dr. James M. Dorsey

Long satisfied to attempt to dominate pan-Arab media and battle it out with Qatar's state-owned Al Jazeera television network, Saudi Arabia has now set its hegemonic sights on influencing the media landscape of the non-Arabic speaking greater Middle East.

In the wake of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's concentration last year of control of Saudi-owned pan-Arab media in an anti-corruption power and asset grab, Saudi Research and Marketing Group (SRMG) this week announced a tie up with Britain's Independent news website to launch services in Urdu, Turkish, Farsi and Arabic.

The announcement provided no details of the business model or whether and, if so, how the SRMG-owned, independent-branded websites would become commercially viable. That may not be an issue from the Independent's perspective, given that the deal amounts to the British publication licensing its brand and content to a Saudi partner.

The bulk of the content of the new websites is slated to be produced by SRMG journalists in London, Islamabad, Istanbul and New York, with the Independent contributing only translated articles from its English-language website.

The sites, operated out of Riyadh and Dubai, would produce "highest-quality, free-thinking, independent news, insight and analysis on global affairs and local events," the Independent said.

SRMG publishes the English-language Arab News and Arabic-language Ash-Sharq al-Awsat, newspapers operating within the constraints of tight Saudi censorship that do not challenge Saudi policies. SRMG was chaired until he recently was appointed minister of culture by Prince Bader bin Abdullah bin Mohammed bin Farhan Al Saud. An unknown member of the Saudi ruling family, Prince Bader made headlines last year when he paid a record \$450m for a Leonardo da Vinci painting of Jesus Christ, allegedly as a proxy bidder for Prince Mohammed. Sultan Muhammad Abuljadayel, a Saudi banker with no track record in media acquisitions, last year bought a 30 percent stake in the Independent. An executive of NCB Capital, a subsidiary of government-controlled National Commercial Bank, Mr. Abuljadayel said at the time he was investing on his personal account. A cache of Saudi diplomatic cables leaked in 2015 documented a pattern of Saudi chequebook diplomacy that aimed to buy positive coverage of the kingdom by European, Middle Eastern and African media who were encouraged to put "learned" Saudi guests on talk shows and counter "media hostile to the kingdom."

Cables by the late Saudi foreign minister, Prince Saud al Faisal, suggested that Ash-Sharq Al-Awsat, and another Saudi-owned pan-Arab daily, Al Hayat, refrain from criticizing Lebanon and Russia.

Saudi funding ranged from the bailout of financially troubled media to donations, the purchase of thousands of subscriptions, and all-expenses paid trips to the kingdom. It was often driven



by Saudi Arabia's covert public diplomacy war with Iran.

Saudi Arabia's near monopoly on staid pan-Arabic media was broken in 1996 with the launch of Al Jazeera and its free-wheeling, hard hitting reporting and talk shows. Al Jazeera's disruption of conservative, Arab state broadcasting prompted Waleed bin Ibrahim Al Ibrahim, a brother in law of the late King Fahd, to launch Al Arabiya as an anti-dote. The rise of Al Jazeera cemented a realization in the kingdom that it needed to expand from print media into broadcasting. The need for broadcasting was initially driven home six years earlier when Iraq invaded Kuwait. Saudi authorities banned Saudi media from reporting the invasion only to discover on the third day that Saudis were getting their news from foreign media outlets, among which CNN.

The Saudi-Qatari battle for control of the air waves escalated in the run-up to this year's World Cup in Russia. With Al Jazeera and beIN, the network's sports franchise, blocked in the kingdom as part of the 13-month-old Saudi-UAE-led economic and diplomatic boycott of Qatar, Saudi Arabia initially turning a blind eye to beOutQ, a bootlegging operation operating out of the kingdom that used a satellite that is co-owned by the Saudi government.

Threatened by FIFA with punitive action, Saudi Arabia began cracking down on beOutQ and said it welcomed legal action in the kingdom being initiated by the world soccer body. At the same time, Saudi Arabia explored ways to challenge beIN's broadcasting rights.

The choice of languages for the Independent websites suggests that SRMG sees the deal as strengthening its brand while

supporting the kingdom in its battles with Qatar and Iran and quest for regional hegemony.

The launch of a Farsi website targets the kingdom's arch rival Iran. Leaving politics aside, Iranians, confronted with an economic crisis that is being exasperated by harsh US sanctions, are unlikely to subscribe or advertise on the website. The same is true for Saudi businesses in the absence of diplomatic relations and given Saudi backing for the sanctions.

The Independent's Turkish website will have to compete in a heavily populated media landscape that has largely been muzzled by President Recep Tayeb Erdogan. The website's significance lies in the fact that Turkey supports Qatar in the spat that pits the Persian Gulf Arab state against Saudi Arabia and its allies, maintains close ties to Iran, and challenges Saudi regional ambitions in Palestine as well as the Horn of Africa.

In contrast to Turkey, Saudi Arabia enjoys empathy in major segments of Pakistan's population, hosts a sizeable Pakistani community, has strong support among the country's religious scholars as well as ties to influential militants whom the military is seeking to ease into mainstream politics, and funds religious media outlets. At the bottom line, the SRMG-Independent tie-up may be for the kingdom less about business and more about soft power. "A channel is a very economical way to influence people. Bang for your buck, it's much cheaper than guns. It is about controlling the discourse, and for Saudis about being in charge," said Hugh Miles, author of Al-Jazeera: How Arab TV News Challenged the World. Mr. Miles' analysis applies as much to broadcasting as it does to online media.

(Source: modern diplomacy)

## Trump and America's dark underside

TEHRAN (FNA) — German Chancellor Angela Merkel has warned that Europe can no longer rely on the United States to impose order worldwide, and that European nations need to be ready to take matters into their own hands.

The same argument could be made by the rest of the international civil society in these contemporary times. Poll after poll shows the US to be more self-interested than altruistic with President Donald Trump at the White House. Whether on the topic of humanitarian intervention, or fighting terrorism, or promoting democracy, the Trump White House is not very supportive of these policy goals if significant costs are involved.

In the abstract, the US government may express liberal views supportive of universal human rights. But this is the same country with a demonstrable history of ethnic cleansing of Native Americans, slavery and lynching, racist laws to exploit and repress African Americans, periodic isolationism and xenophobia, grinding poverty under a harsh form of capitalism, disastrous regime-change wars, and a host of other defects.

More still, the election of President Trump has both reinforced the dark underside of American society, giving it unprecedented divisive voice on the world stage, and moved to destroy the world order. It is perfectly clear that Trump has never heard of hegemonic stability theory, nor has he entertained the notion that America requires sensitivity to the independence of others as compared to voiding international deals and a selfish



grabbing of whatever there is to grab.

His poorly conceived travel ban affected maybe 90,000 Muslims with no security gains, while it certainly did damage to US foreign policy interests. The same argument could be made about his decision to void the Iran nuclear deal and wage a self-defeating global trade war with Europe, Canada and China.

One outcome after 2016 has to be the death knell of so-called American exceptionalism, or hegemony, or respect. The rhetoric of "making America great again" is being joined by such mean-spirited policies toward European allies, Iran, Syria, Yemen, Muslims, and those of differing opinions of all types.

No doubt with Trump at the White House, the so-called American exceptionalism or global hegemony is disintegrating. The US finds itself struggling with its place in the world. Trump's decision to turn his back on America's allies and the international civil society may well have helped him to capture the votes of most white men and about half of white women. But that's all really.

These are the Americans who are angry that their privileges are not what they used to be, who were frightened by those others - people on the coasts, in the cities, people with brown or black skin who speak languages other than English, people who worship at

mosques or temples. For them, a woman following a black man into power did not represent progress; it represented another attack on their white America.

The new trade war or rhetoric that is posited as a travel ban on Muslims, a proposed Muslim registry and the possible internment of Muslim citizens buttresses Trump's worldview of American exceptionalism. All humanity, not just Americans, need to recognize that the hatred, fear, bigotry and ignorance being propagated by the current leadership in Washington are the same malignant values resuscitated from the dustbin of history, and recently on regional display in Israel - the Jewish state law.

Such values are a sad reminder of a time when demonization of Jews nearly extinguished their civilization in Europe. It is thus an act of irony that it is Palestinians and Muslims - who through their compassion, inspired by the Holy Quran that they used as their moral compass then as they do today - provided sanctuary to the persecuted Jews, yet are being murdered, vilified and propagandized as an existential threat to the "Jewish state and even to the rest of humanity."

In Trump's speech to the United Nations General Assembly on September 19, he excoriated Iran, North Korea, and Venezuela for wide-ranging "evil activities" but did little to persuade the world body that America's racism and endless wars are not a monumental problem; and that Saudi-Israeli allies are not in an on-stage "live" genocide of defenseless civilians in Yemen and Palestine.

## What Republicans are worried about?



1 → "I think he is trying to build relations with Russia so that we do not have a war," said Republican respondent Frank Garrido of Florida when asked to describe his reaction to Trump's meetings with NATO allies and Russia's Putin. "It is better to talk to [Putin] than to not. I think the Democrats are just maniacs."

Independent Deborah Linzy of Arkansas had a counter view, saying, "I think [Trump] was — for lack of a better word — disrespectful to the NATO allies and much too friendly with Putin. I do not consider Russia an ally."

Additionally, the survey finds that only 31 percent of voters back Trump's handling of the treatment of parents and children at the border who entered the United States illegally at the border, and 38 percent approve of his handling of trade with foreign countries. But 44 percent of voters approve of Trump's handling of the situation in North Korea — up from the 34 percent of adults who said this in October 2017. And 50 percent of voters support Trump's handling of the economy, which is up 8 points from October.

The fact is that Republicans in the United States are now worried about the country's 2020 presidential elections. Surveys in this country have shown that Trump's popularity has fallen by about 35%. Even in some surveys, Trump's popularity has dropped to 30% and below. Although the president of the United States claims that the polls are all fake, it is obvious that the popularity of Trump with American citizens has fallen since the time of the presidential elections in 2016. The Republican defeat in the recent state elections in Alabama indicates the same thing. On the other hand, Democrats have already started their efforts to conquer the White House and return to power. People like Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders are listed as possible candidates for the Democratic Party in the 2020 presidential elections. Surveys show that if any of these two Democratic politicians stand against Trump, they can easily defeat him in the competitions. In such a situation, we are witnessing increasing objections to the President's approach and, of course, an aggravated concern by Republican senators over the political situation of their party.

Without a doubt, the Republican contenders' failure to win the 2018 congressional election and the majority of Democratic congressional seats will undoubtedly be the trump and rivalry. The conflict will continue until the presidential elections of 2020. Consequently, the President of the United States and his entourage will be watching this year's congressional elections.

## Sanctions and stirring unrest are Trump's approach toward Iran: Prof. Zonis



1 → A: Under Trump, the US is certainly retreating from globalization — its past foreign policy priorities. In this sense he is cooperating with Russia and China who seek the same goal. For the time being the Chinese Silk Road projects have less to do with Syria than does the foreign policy of President Putin, whose military presence is a powerful factor in all Syrian developments? Then there is Iran, Israel, the US and Turkey — all part of the mix beneath President Assad. We are very far from a stable outcome in Syria and should be prepared for more combat, deaths, and chaos — poor Syria.

■ Some theoreticians including John Mearsheimer believe that one of the most important elements of Trump's foreign policy is to move toward offshore balancing and reduction of troops and increasing of animosity with Iran. Do you agree with this? Will the US decrease the number of its troops in Middle East? If we accept that the mentioned elements are the base for Trump's foreign policy, how will Washington confront with Iran's regional influence?

A: The senior people surrounding President Trump — particularly John Bolton and James Mattis — are confirmed Iran haters. Trump himself hates Iran so the combination of these people suggest very negative things ahead for the US - Iran relationship. The only useful tools the US has for the moment is the imposition of more punishing sanctions. This may be followed by efforts to stir domestic Iranian unrest by focusing on Iran's minorities — not likely to be a very positive approach. Then it appears that President Putin and President Trump agree to allow Israel to attack Iran in Syria. So the result of these is that Iran will pay a very high price for its foreign policy.

■ Reacting to President Trump's remarks calling the EU a foe, Donald Tusk, president of the European Council, asked Trump and Putin not to disturb world order. Do you think that Trump and Putin are going to create a new world order? If your answer is yes, how will the new polarization be in the new order?

A: This is inconceivable to me since Putin is hated by virtually everyone in the US (with the apparent exception of President Trump).

## Hamas vows to foil Trump's deal of century

TEHRAN (FNA) — A senior Hamas official described US President Donald Trump's proposed "Deal of the Century" plan for Palestine as a Zionist plot, promising that the resistance movement will thwart it.

"The main core of this plan is the Sykes-Pico (an agreement of 1916 which led to partition of Turkish-held Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Palestine into various French and British mandates). The Palestinian nation and Gaza resistance will foil it and the Deal of the Century will not succeed under any conditions," Osama Hamdan was quoted as saying by Quds Press news website on Sunday.

He asked all the Islamic Ummah to adopt rapid measures to defuse the attempts to take control of the holy Quds city from the Muslims.

"The Deal of the Century is a Zionist plot to hit a blow to the Islamic Ummah, and Hamas will defuse this plot," Hamdan said.

His remarks came as Iranian Parliament Speaker Ali Larjani warned that implementation of Trump's Deal of the Century plot in the Palestinian territories will create new conflicts and clashes in the region.

"Apparently, the disgraceful Deal of the Century promised

by Mr. Trump has shown its ugly face and this amateur decision will be the start of a series of conflicts in the region," Larjani said, addressing an open session of the Iranian parliament in Tehran on Sunday.

He said that even the US allies have blasted this move, and added, "The Palestinian nation and the regional nations will not allow the impudent Zionists to foment chaos in the region again."

Larjani underlined that the Iranian parliament condemns the "racist" measure, and called on the international bodies, specially the Islamic Inter-Parliamentary Union, to adopt the necessary measures as soon as possible to confront this plot.

Also, last Monday, Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei underlined that the US dreams to implement the 'deal of the century' plot in the Palestinian territories would never come true, stressing that Quds would remain the Palestinians' capital forever.

"Now, the Americans have named their satanic policy on Palestine as the deal of the century and with God's help, this deal of the century will never be materialized and despite the American statesmen's desire, the Palestinian issue will not be forgotten and Quds will remain as the Palestinians' capital,"

Ayatollah Khamenei said, addressing officials of the Hajj and Pilgrimage Organization in Tehran.

He blasted certain Muslim governments for assisting Washington in implementing its plots against the region, and said, "The Islamic Ummah and the Palestinian nation will gain victory against their enemies and will see the day when the fake Zionist regime will be uprooted in the Palestinian territories."

In relevant remarks in September 2015, Ayatollah Khamenei described Israel as a "fake" regime, and said there would not be any Israel in 25 years from now.

"Some of the Zionists have said that given the results of the nuclear negotiations (between Tehran and the world powers), they have been relieved of concerns about Iran for 25 years, but we tell them that basically, you will not see the next 25 years and with God's grace, nothing under the name of the Zionist regime will exist in the region by then," Ayatollah Khamenei said, addressing a large number of Iranians in Tehran.

He added that the heroic spirit and morale of Muslim fighters would not let the Zionists feel comfort and tranquility in the next 25 years.

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# 2% of Iranians suffer heart failure, says electrophysiologist

**HEALTH** TEHRAN — Two per 100 people suffer congestive heart failure in Iran, Iranian electrophysiologist Masoud Eslami has said, IRIB reported on Sunday.

Heart failure, also known as congestive heart failure, occurs when your heart muscle doesn't pump blood as well as it should. Certain conditions, such as narrowed arteries in your heart (coronary artery disease) or high blood pressure, gradually leave your heart too weak or stiff to fill and pump efficiently.

Shortness of breath when you exert yourself or when you lie down, fatigue and weakness, swelling (edema) in your legs, ankles and feet, rapid or irregular heartbeat, reduced ability to exercise, persistent cough or wheezing with white or pink blood-tinged phlegm, increased need to urinate at night, swelling of your abdomen (ascites), very rapid weight gain from fluid retention, lack of appetite and nausea, difficulty concentrating or decreased alertness, sudden, and severe shortness of breath and coughing up pink, foamy mucus are among the symptoms of heart failure.

Deputy head of national committee for non-communicable diseases and deputy health minister for educational affairs Mohammad Baqer Larijani has also said that some one third of Iranians are suffering from high blood pressure, Fars news agency reported on Saturday.

While heart failure can be derived from high blood pressure it seems highly likely for a great deal of Iranians to develop the condition.



**As per the official figures revealed by Ministry of Health between 33 and 39 percent of deaths in Iran are caused by heart diseases and every day on average some 300 Iranians die of heart diseases.**

In a news piece published on July second Maryam Hazrati deputy health minister for nursing has said that some 82 percent of deaths in Iran are linked with the main types of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) including cardiovascular diseases (like heart

attacks and stroke), cancers, chronic respiratory diseases (such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and asthma) and diabetes.

This would make heart diseases one of the leading causes of the death in the country. As per the official figures revealed by Ministry of

Health between 33 and 39 percent of deaths in Iran are caused by heart diseases, Salamata News website reported on October 2017. The report stated that every day on average some 300 Iranians die of heart diseases.

Lifestyle changes such as taking exercise, reducing sodium in diet, managing stress and losing weight can improve your quality of life.

One way to prevent heart failure is to prevent and control conditions that cause heart failure, such as coronary artery disease, high blood pressure, diabetes or obesity.

According to Medline Plus website there are heart disease risk factors that you cannot change. One of factors is age meaning that your risk of heart disease increases as you get older. You gender is another risk factor. Some risk factors may affect heart disease risk differently in women than in men.

Additionally certain groups have higher risks than others. African Americans are more likely than whites to have heart disease, while Hispanic Americans are less likely to have it. Some Asian groups, such as East Asians, have lower rates, but South Asians have higher rates.

An last but not least you have a greater risk if you have a close family member who had heart disease at an early age.

But by controlling your blood pressure, keeping your cholesterol and triglyceride levels under control, staying at a healthy weight, eating a healthy diet, getting regular exercise, not smoking, managing stress, managing diabetes, and making sure that you get enough sleep are the things you can do to lower my risk of heart disease.

## Iran eradicates Hepatitis C in hemophilia patients in 3 provinces

**HEALTH** TEHRAN — Hepatitis C has been eradicated in patients with hemophilia in three provinces of Lorestan, South Khorasan, and Gilan, respectively west, east, and north of the country, head of Iran's Hepatitis Network Moayyed Alavian has said.

In an article titled "hepatitis C viral infection in patients with hemophilia and hemolytic disorders" coauthored by Eric S. Orman, M.D. and Michael W. Fried, M.D. it is asserted that adults with hemophilia have one of the highest prevalence rates of hepatitis C virus (HCV) among all populations at risk for this disease. Similarly, patients with hemolytic disorders requiring chronic transfusions (e.g., sickle cell disease and thalassemia) were at high risk for HCV acquisition before adequate blood donor screening practices were instituted.

"In other provinces hepatitis C rate have decreased by 90 percent and we hope to fully eradicate the disease within next 3 years nationwide," IRNA quoted Alavi as saying on Monday.

Over the past few years some 40 to 50 percent of the patients with hemophilia suffered hepatitis C, however, by diagnosing them and treating them the number have diminished drastically, he explained.

In general there were some 186,000 patients diagnosed

with hepatitis C in the country of whom some 10,000 were treated over the one and half year ago, he highlighted.

According to World Health Organization hepatitis C is a liver disease caused by the hepatitis C virus. The virus can cause both acute and chronic hepatitis, ranging in severity from a mild illness lasting a few weeks to a serious, lifelong illness.

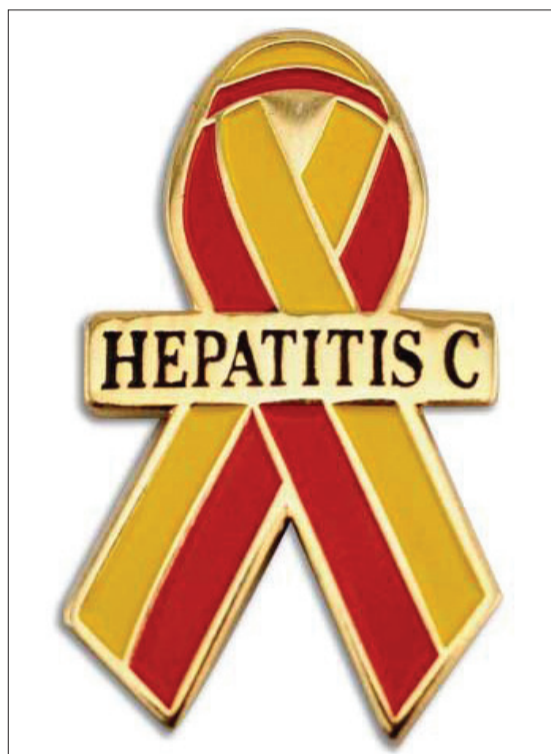
The hepatitis C virus is a blood borne virus and the most common modes of infection are through exposure to small quantities of blood. This may happen through injection drug use, unsafe injection practices, unsafe health care, and the transfusion of untested blood and blood products.

Globally, an estimated 71 million people have chronic hepatitis C infection and a significant number of those who are chronically infected will develop cirrhosis or liver cancer.

Approximately 399 000 people die each year from hepatitis C, mostly from cirrhosis and hepatocellular carcinoma.

Antiviral medicines can cure more than 95 percent of persons with hepatitis C infection, thereby reducing the risk of death from liver cancer and cirrhosis, but access to diagnosis and treatment is low.

There is currently no vaccine for hepatitis C; however research in this area is ongoing.



## Upsurge in sleeping problems due to UK's longest heatwave in 40 years

Britain's longest heatwave since 1976 has led to an upsurge in sleeping problems, with people left tired, irritable and less productive at work after sweaty nights of poor-quality shut-eye.

Record temperatures of up to 32.4C (90.3F) have been stopping many people getting a proper rest as they struggle to get to sleep in rooms that are uncomfortably warm, experts say.

"I'm very aware of people reporting more difficulties sleeping as the temperature increases, both personally and professionally," said Dr Michael Farquhar, a consultant in sleep medicine at the Evelina Children's Hospital in London.

"It's a phenomenon we're becoming used to as we have yet another London summer where bedroom temperatures are regularly sitting at 30C.

"It's a factor commonly cited in our clinics as a reason why children's sleep patterns can worsen over the summer months."

Over the weekend a further spell of unusually hot weather is due to replace the cooler weather of the last few days in many parts of the country, making a renewed spike in sleeplessness likely.

"Between 30% and 50% of the patients I have spoken to recently have talked about having sleep issues related to the heat," said Dr Neil Stanley, an independent sleep expert and former director of sleep research at the University of Surrey.

"People can have their sleep massively impacted. Also at this time of year it doesn't get dark until about 9pm or 10pm but when we go to bed it is still hot and sticky and the sun comes up earlier too, which means our sleep is disturbed."

Stanley and Farquhar blamed the heatwave-induced sleep deprivation on the fact that so few homes in Britain have air



conditioning compared to many European countries that are usually hotter.

"Britain isn't really designed to deal with higher than average temperatures," said Farquhar.

"Unlike warmer climates our homes are designed to keep us warm in winter more than to keep us cool in summer, and air conditioning is relatively rare in private homes. As a result bedroom temperatures rise to uncomfortable levels during sustained heatwaves.

"Temperature is a powerful influencing factor on our sleep. We have a relatively narrow range of temperatures in which we sleep comfortably – 16C to 18C is the usual optimum comfort zone – and either too hot or too cold leads to poorer sleep."

The main problem, he added, is that the unusually high temperatures seen in

all corners of the UK during recent weeks have left people unable to cool their homes down before bedtime.

"When the bedroom temperature is hot it prevents natural cooling," he said, "which makes getting to sleep harder. When it's humid it's even harder as the humidity makes it harder to lose heat from our bodies by sweat evaporation. And when we do get to sleep, the sleep tends to be more fitful and restless, particularly in the early part of sleep, with more periods of wake."

The result, Farquhar said, is that "with less sleep overnight we are more tired the next day, but also more irritable, more short-tempered, less likely to detect sarcasm, slower, more sluggish, with poorer reaction times and impaired judgment. In short, we become less nice people who don't function as well.

"Scaled up to the whole country, a restless night's sleep caused by high overnight temperature can potentially have a big cumulative impact on national productivity and effectiveness."

Prof Helen Stokes-Lampard, chair of the Royal College of GPs, said: "Ideally a bedroom should be between 18C and 24C to enable restful sleep, so it's not surprising that many people struggle during periods of extremely warmer weather, especially in countries like the UK where we're not used to it."

She advised those experiencing poor sleep during the heatwave to install a tall, rotating fan near their bed or sleep under thin cotton sheets in order to get cool enough to recharge their batteries properly overnight.

Eating a light dinner earlier in the evening than usual is a useful way to maximize the chances of a decent sleep, as the body then has fewer calories to burn off overnight, she added.

Having a cool shower or glass of iced water or spraying cool water on your skin just before bedtime can help make it easier to get to sleep, Farquhar said. Putting bedding, especially pillow cases, in the freezer for a while, will produce a cool surface that is easier to sleep on, he added.

He also recommended wearing cotton pyjamas and using cotton bedding, as they help draw sweat away from the body; keeping bedroom curtains shut during the day; leaving windows open and using earplugs to counteract any noise that results; and – perhaps the most difficult suggestion – sleeping alone.

"In the long run, I'd invest in air conditioning," he said. "Hot summers are here to stay, I think."

(Source: The Guardian)

## PERSIAN MEDICINE

By Seyed Mahdi Mirghazanfari

■ Can't sleep?



Iranian traditional medicine (also known as Persian medicine) helps address difficulty sleeping.

Drinking dragonhead herbal tea, also known as badranjboye in Persian, can help respond to sleep problems. The dragonhead is from mint family and has calming effects.

In order to make the tea you can soak some 5 grams of the tea in hot water in a mug with a removable strainer and a lid for 15 minutes and drink it afterwards.

People suffering thyroid disorder should take the tea with caution to avoid possible drug-plant interaction.

Moreover, orange blossom extract can also aid sleep, however, it is weaker than dragonhead tea.

Add 2 grams of dried orange blossoms to hot water in a mug with removable strainers and let it brew for 10 to 15 minutes, remove the lid and drink the tea.

It is best to drink the herbal teas an hour before going to sleep.

■ Is drinking tea bad for you?

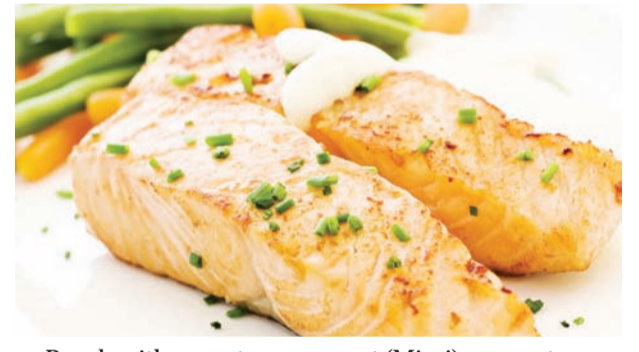


Drinking tea is one of the hard habits to break for many of us. So what are the health benefits and detriments of drinking tea from Iranian traditional medicine point of view?

The tea that is cultivated in Iran has milder color and fragrance compared with foreign brands. Iranian tea is full of antioxidant compounds. The kind of tea that, when brewed, produces a strong color, fragrance and taste has chemicals and more often than not unapproved food additives.

It is better not to drink tea right after a meal. Tea that has a strong color, additives and unhealthy chemicals can cause acid reflux, however, the kind of tea that has a natural fragrance and color and does not contain harmful chemicals can also strengthen your sphincter muscle and relieve acid reflux symptoms.

■ What kind of meat we should eat during summer?



People with warm temperament (Mizaj) are most prone to suffer health conditions sparked by warmth during summer. They are had better to avoid consuming food and drinks which lead to increased warmth and dryness in their bodies.

Spices, such as pepper, ginger cinnamon, saffron, spicy sauces, mustard, and vegetables with pungent and sharp taste such as garlic, onion tarragon, mint, leek, cress and dill should be consumed with caution during summer.

Red meat, especially camel meat, has a warm temperament. Though poultry has much less warmer temperament than red meat quail and partridge are bird meats that should not be consumed much in summer.

It's better to replace red meat with chicken and fish during summer.

Fish has a cold and wet temperament provided that it is not deep fried with salt and spices. Simmering fish sounds a better option for a healthier diet during summer.

■ Sour cherry tea suits you during hot summer days



Drinking sour cherry tea which has cooling characteristics will benefit you in hot summer days. However, people with cold temperament should take it with caution.

Seyed Mahdi Mirghazanfari, MD, holds a PhD degree in medical physiology and is an Iranian-Islamic traditional medicine researcher. He is also an assistant professor in AJA University of Medical Sciences, Tehran.

## New national cities, villages of handicrafts selected



Detail of a wood-carved panel being crafted at a workshop in Abadeh, southcentral Iran

**HERITAGE TEHRAN** — Iran's Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization has recently named 11 new national cities and villages of handicrafts, Mehr reported.

Amongst the selectees are the cities of Zanjan for filigree, Kashan for traditional textile, Iranshahr for needlework, Abadeh for wood carving as well as the village of Fash for crafting indigenous musical instruments.

Two of the cities and one village will ultimately be shortlisted by a CHHTO-affiliated committee of experts for possible inscription by the World Crafts Council.

Iran has currently six cities and one village honored with the prestigious WCC tag.

# Kermanshah historical sites unharmed by quake

**HERITAGE TEHRAN** — A magnitude 5.9 quake that rattled parts of the western province of Kermanshah on Sunday caused no damage to historical sites across the province.

"Fortunately, the earthquake caused no damage to the museums, historical monuments and sites of Kermanshah province," CHTN quoted provincial tourism chief Jalil Balaei as saying on Sunday.

The incident injured nearly 130 people while no fatalities were reported. Iran is crisscrossed by major geological fault lines and has suffered several devastating earthquakes in recent years.

Last November, a powerful earthquake of magnitude 7.3 struck the province on the Iran-Iraq border, killing at least 620 people and injuring thousands, it also inflicted minor damage to several of its historic and heritage sites.

Kermanshah embraces a variety of awe-inspiring historical sites including Bisotun and Taq-e Bostan, both on the UNESCO World Heritage list.



A view of Bisotun, a UNESCO-registered bas-relief in Kermanshah province



## Iran forex exemptions to secure handicraft exports

**HERITAGE TEHRAN** — Iranian exporters of handicrafts are no longer required to exchange their export currencies at the Forex Management Integrated System, locally known as NIMA.

The privilege is gained following constant efforts made by the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization to support the budding trade.

"This exceptions cause a wave of happiness for handicrafts exporters yet secures booming of the non-oil trade... which is deemed as vulnerable," ILNA quoted CHHTO deputy director Pouya Mahmoudian as saying on Sunday.

"In a recent meeting with handcrafted exporters, they voiced that one of their serious concerns is excessive bureaucracy and paper work in the NIMA system," she added. According to data compiled by the CHHTO, Iran exported \$280 million worth of handicrafts during the past Iranian calendar year, ended on March 20.

Germany, Armenia, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Russia, the Netherlands, France, Italy, South Africa and the Persian Gulf littoral states constitute the main importers of Iranian handicrafts.

Back in April, the Central Bank of Iran launched the NIMA system in a bid to counter shortage of foreign currencies as the Trump administration is restoring sanctions against Iran, mainly targeting Tehran's oil revenues.

## Hamedan to host Asia Cooperation Dialogue conference

**TOURISM TEHRAN** — Hamedan will be hosting a tourism summit of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue from August 27 to 29.

The Iranian city has taken on appearance of the "capital of Asian tourism in 2018", which was approved in the second ACD Tourism Ministers Meeting held in Cambodia, June 2017.

The event is expected to provide ample opportunities for promotion of the ancient city which is teemed with natural



and historical sites.

Modern Hamedan largely lies on ancient Ecbatana, which was the capital of Media and subsequently a summer residence of the Achaemenian kings who ruled Persia from 553 to 330 BC.

The Asia Cooperation Dialogue was established as an inter-governmental organization in 2002. Its 34 member states include China, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Pakistan and Turkey.

## Are apps and browser extensions the future of discount travel?

By Brian Roberts

Travel is getting expensive.

Take the cost of airfare, which is expected to go up by 3.5 percent, or hotel prices, which are expected to rise 3.7 percent, all according to a recent Global Travel Forecast Report.

And millennials, now the most cash-strapped generation according to a 2017 Pew Research Center analysis of Census Bureau data, also make up the bulk of all adult travelers.

Which begs the question: what's a young, cash-strapped Millennial to do?

Most turn to their smartphones, apps and browser extensions to help them save, with 44% using tech to help them to find discounts, according to think with Google research.

Given millennials are the top smartphone users, according to a 2016 Nielsen report, this should come as no surprise.

But, what is surprising is the evolution of apps and extensions popping up to serve this Millennial market, and many of them exist to do just one thing really well: help them save money. Take PriceWaiter, a popular browser extension that allows you to "name your price" by letting you negotiate with retailers directly from your browser. According to PriceWaiter: "It helps buyers and sellers engage quickly, efficiently, and privately, anywhere on the web."

People are using PriceWaiter for all kinds of goods (one reader wrote how they saved 35% off a pair of designer sunglasses using the extension). So far, PriceWaiter has helped

shoppers negotiate to save on more than \$40M in goods and services from hundreds of retailers, including many retailers which sell travel-related goods.

In total, consumers have saved more than \$7.5M off what they would have paid.

"Negotiation is as old as trade, and its applications are limitless" said PriceWaiter co-founder and CEO Stephen Culp. "With the advent of e-commerce, negotiation needs an upgrade."

And with an average savings of 12% for buyers using PriceWaiter, and the opportunity for sellers to capture more customers overall, it's a win-win.

The question is now, can travel and airline industry insiders take a page from this playbook and learn how to adopt a win-win

business model, too? While tools like PriceWaiter allow negotiation for indirect travel costs (like travel bags, sunglasses, beachwear, others goods), airlines in particular remain rigid with their pricing.

This may be why travelers continue to find the lack of affordable travel options as one of their biggest frustrations, according to a 2017 NYU Family Travel survey.

Until airlines soften their edges, savvy travelers should do their best to negotiate anywhere else they can. Thankfully, with the advent of new applications and browser extensions like PriceWaiter, consumers can do just that. Saving on travel is saving on travel, whether it's on plane tickets... or the sunglasses you put on once you land.

(Source: forbes.com)

## Heatwave in Greece closes the Acropolis

Greek authorities decided to close the archaeological site of the Acropolis on Sunday, as the temperature on the bare rock climbed up to the 40-degree Celsius.

The site will also be closing early on Monday, the Culture Ministry said, in order to protect staff at the site and visitors from the dangers of heatstroke.

The decision left hundreds of tourists with tickets to view

one of the world's greatest historical monuments scrambling to reschedule their visit and disappointed hundreds more day-visitors to the Greek capital.

(Source: Greek Reporter)

## Tourism and construction have power to lead move to sustainable economies

From infrastructure and communication to food production and transport, tourism and construction play key roles in a circular economy framework that supports sustainable development. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), together with the Sustainable Buildings and Construction Programme of the One Planet Network, addressed this challenge during the United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (9-18 July, New York, USA).

Tourism and construction are part of the overall economic value chain. Best practices in circular economy thinking that can help these large economic sectors shift to sustainable consumption and production (SCP) were at the center of the event "Tourism &

Construction: Circular Economy solutions for SDG12", organized by UNWTO.

Advancing sustainability in the tourism sector and fulfilling its responsibility in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is a task that benefits from new technological advances, continuous innovation and the strengthening of models such as the circular economy. Especially in view of SDG 12 on 'sustainable consumption and production patterns', and considering the need to grow responsibly as a sector overall, tourism has an important role to play in the decoupling of economic development from resource use.

With its vast links to other economic activities and direct interaction between

consumer and producer, tourism can – if managed well – create positive, long-lasting impacts that go well beyond the sector. Adapting circular production and consumption patterns that accelerate sustainability is therefore key to the long-term health and resilience of tourism businesses and destinations.

Against both this background and the review of SDG 12 at the High-Level Political Forum, the event "Tourism & Construction: Circular Economy solutions for SDG12" underscored that embracing circularity implies robust measurement and monitoring of impacts of tourism and construction activities, including energy and water use efficiency, climate change mitigation, waste

management, local sourcing, sustainable land use, biodiversity protection and decent employment, among others.

The 17 SDGs represent a common vision for prosperity, equality, justice and climate action, brought together under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Goal 12 calls for more responsible SCP patterns and practices across sectors, with the One Planet Multi-Partner Trust Fund for SDG 12, inaugurated on 17 July 2018, to support partners' commitments to accelerating this shift. The Fund is a joint effort of the UN Environment Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization, UNWTO, UN-Habitat and the UN Office for Project Services.

(Source: Travel Daily News)

## ROUND THE GLOBE

### Aksum

Situated in the highlands of northern Ethiopia, Aksum symbolizes the wealth and importance of the civilization of the ancient Aksumite kingdom, which lasted from the 1st to the 8th centuries CE.

The kingdom was at the crossroads of the three continents: Africa, Arabia and the Greco-Roman World, and was the most powerful state between the Eastern Roman Empire and Persia.

In command of the ivory trade with Sudan, its fleets controlled the Red Sea trade through the port of Adulis and the inland routes of north eastern Africa.



A view of the UNESCO-registered Aksum in northern Ethiopia

The ruins of the ancient Aksumite Civilization covered a wide area in the Tigray Plateau. The most impressive monuments are the monolithic obelisks, royal tombs and the palace ruins dating to the 6th and 7th centuries CE.

Several stelae survive in the town of Aksum dating between the 3rd and 4th centuries CE. The largest standing obelisk rises to a height of over 23 meters and is exquisitely carved to represent a nine-storey building of the Aksumites. It stands at the entrance of the main stelae area. The largest obelisk of some 33 meters long lies where it fell, perhaps during the process of erection. It is possibly the largest monolithic stela that ancient human beings ever attempted to erect.

The introduction of Christianity in the 4th century CE resulted in the building of churches, such as Saint Mary of Zion, rebuilt in the Gondarian period, in the 17th century CE, which is believed to hold the Ark of the Covenant.

(Source: UNESCO)

# Humans have changed Earth's seasons for the first time, study shows

Poring over four decades of satellite data, climate scientists have concluded for the first time that humans are pushing seasonal temperatures out of balance - shifting what one researcher called the very "march of the seasons themselves."

Ever-mindful of calculable uncertainty and climate deniers, the authors give "odds of roughly 5 in 1 million" of these changes occurring naturally, without human influence.

Like homicide detectives, climate scientists are continually sifting through evidence looking for what they also call "fingerprints".

Over the years, they've teased out the human signal from Earthly noise in annual and decade-spanning temperature records, marine chemistry, rapid Arctic change, and more.

## Uneven pace discovered

What they discovered is an uneven pace of seasonal change in the atmosphere above the Northern and Southern Hemispheres' temperate zones.

While warming is famously global, summers in the troposphere are heating faster than winters, with a few physics would dictate if greenhouse gases were the culprit.

The satellite data and computer models for seasonal temperature change used by the study agree with each other even more closely than they do when gauging average annual temperature.

Ben Santer, an atmospheric scientist at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and the study's lead author, likens the temperature results to a wave washing up on a beach.

For every year in the 38-year satellite



record, the team captured the monthly temperature lows (troughs) and highs (crests).

In the early years, the "waves" came in small. By the end of the data set under study, 2016, the waves crashed ashore with higher

troughs - and much higher crests.

The study also calls attention to a persistent disconnect between findings that attribute warming to humanity and how the same research has been characterized

**Climate models are famously imperfect. The authors indicate where simulated warming has been known to outrun actual temperatures, the focus of much attention in recent years.**

in testimony before the US Congress.

Santer has previously referenced congressional hearings in peer-reviewed journal articles, dedicating a May 2017 article in *Nature Scientific Reports* to fact-checking claims made by then-US Environmental Protection Administrator Scott Pruitt in a written supplement to his confirmation hearings.

"To me when incorrect claims are elevated to the level of formal congressional testimony and are part of the Congressional Record, then it is important to address them," Santer said.

## Carbon dioxide emissions

Santer's newest paper comes during a busy week for climate politics, as several Republicans back a resolution opposing carbon taxes, another Republican congressman preps a long-shot carbon-tax bill, and several research groups led by Columbia University's Center on Global Energy Policy publish studies of new scenarios analyzing U.S. pricing of carbon dioxide emissions.

Climate models are famously imperfect. The authors indicate where simulated warming has been known to outrun actual temperatures, the focus of much attention in recent years.

They walk briefly through several possible explanations and dismiss concern among some scientific critics that models overestimate how fast the world will warm.

The "claim that overestimation of warming is solely due to a large error in climate model sensitivity has been tested elsewhere and is not credible," the authors write.

(Source: *sciencealert.com*)

## Arctic Circle burns as record heat broils northern Europe



An intense heat wave is fueling wildfires across an enormous swath of northern Europe, with at least 11 fires raging within the Arctic Circle, reported *The Guardian*.

Sweden is the worst-hit country, with at least 40 fires burning as of Wednesday, *Time* reported.

Multiple communities have been evacuated, and thousands of people have been directed to stay indoors with their vents and windows closed to avoid harmful smoke inhalation.

"This is definitely the worst year in recent times for forest fires," Mike Peacock, a university researcher and local resident, told *The Guardian*. "Whilst we get them every year, 2018 is shaping up to be excessive," he said.

## Risk of more fires

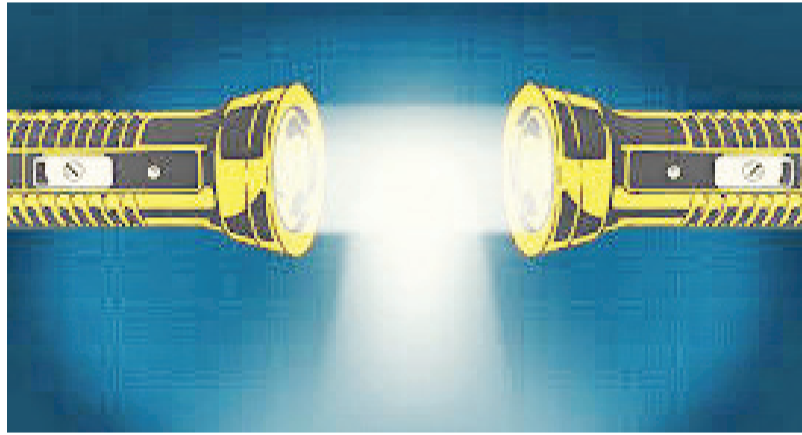
European officials have stated that the risk of more fires continues as long as temperatures stay above 86 degrees Fahrenheit (30 degrees Celsius) — and that such warm weather is in the forecast for the coming days. Several Arctic-area locations have experienced record-high

temperatures this year. Helsinki hit 86 degrees F (30 degrees C) for the first time in eight years, and the northernmost city in Finland, Utsjoki, experienced an all-time record high this summer of 92 degrees F (33.3 degrees C), *The Weather Channel* reported.

Climate scientists have said that the Arctic and other areas that once experienced very little fire activity are becoming more vulnerable to wildfires, *The Guardian* reported.

"What we're seeing with this global heat wave is that these areas of fire susceptibility are now broadening, with the moors [open land] in northwest England and now these Swedish fires a consequence of that," Vincent Gauci, a professor of global climate change ecology at The Open University in the United Kingdom, told *The Guardian*. "When such carbon-dense ecosystems experience aridity and heat and there is a source of ignition — lightning or people — fires will happen," said Gauci. (Source: *Live Science*)

## Physicists demonstrate new method to make single photons



Scientists need individual photons for quantum cryptography and quantum computers. Leiden physicists have now experimentally demonstrated a new production method.

When we talk to each other, we use a wide range of communication tools. We shout or whisper, use a high or low voice and speak slowly or quickly. Light is also a rich source of information. It can vary in color, intensity, polarization and short or long flashes.

Light usually consists of countless particles — photons. But if you use single photons, you gain access to a hidden level of information. Quantum phenomena will occur, such as spin and entanglement, making it possible to communicate in perfect secrecy, or to solve complicated mathematical problems with quantum computers. However, producing individual photons is not trivial. Scientists are looking for ways to do that as easily as possible. The quantum optics group at Leiden University has now experimentally demonstrated a new method. (Source: *phys.org*)

## Creating single photons

Physicists create single photons as follows: A laser shines on a large artificial atom — a quantum dot — inside an optical cavity.

The cavity captures the laser light, which continues to bounce around until it hits the quantum dot. Within the quantum dot an electron gets excited, after which it falls back to its original energy level, emitting a single photon.

Mission accomplished. But, making such a true "single photon turnstile," where the underlying phenomenon is called "photon blockade," is very hard because any residual laser light will spoil the single photons.

Leiden researchers have now provided experimental evidence for a different way to produce single photons. Co-authors Vincenzo Savona and Hugo Flayac from EPFL Lausanne came up with the theory for this. In this method — called unconventional photon blockade—the quantum dot within the cavity is excited by light of a certain polarization. (Source: *phys.org*)

## SpaceX launches communications satellite on 2nd-ever flight of new rocket

The latest version of SpaceX's workhorse Falcon 9 rocket lifted off for the second time ever on July 22, lighting up the skies over Florida's Space Coast in a dazzling pre-dawn launch.

The "Block 5" variant of the two-stage Falcon 9 blasted off from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station at 01:50 A.M. EDT (0550 GMT), successfully delivering to orbit a satellite for the Canadian communications company Telesat.

And the action didn't stop there. Less than 9 minutes after launch, the rocket's first stage came back down to Earth, acing a landing aboard the Space X drone ship "Of Course I Still Love You" a few hundred miles off the Florida coast.



The Block 5 is the newest, most powerful and most reusable version of the Falcon 9. SpaceX CEO Elon Musk has said that Block 5 first stages are designed to fly at least 10 times with just inspections between landing and liftoff, and 100 times or more with some refurbishment involved.

Such extensive reuse is key to Musk's quest to slash the cost of spaceflight, making Mars colonization and other bold exploration efforts economically feasible. To date, SpaceX has successfully landed more than two dozen Falcon 9 first stages and re-flown landed boosters on more than a dozen occasions.

The satellite lofted this morning, called Telstar 19V, is headed for geostationary orbit, about 22,250 miles (35,800 kilometers) above Earth. Telstar 19V, which was built by California-based company SSL, will provide broadband service to customers throughout the Americas and Atlantic Ocean region, according to a Telesat fact sheet. (Source: *space.com*)

## The stuff that helps leeches get their fill of blood

You might think you know leeches: Go for a swim in the wrong shallow lake, and you'll emerge covered in sleek black blood-suckers that have decided you're their next meal.

The slimy creatures manufacture a wide portfolio of substances that help keep blood flowing once they've attached themselves to a host. They don't just latch on to you — they pump out anticoagulants that prevent the wounds they create from clotting too quickly. How else are they going to get their fill?

And once they've sucked your blood — they can consume many times their own body weight in one sitting, or rather, sucking — they're not done. Leeches must also keep the blood from solidifying in their own digestive tract long after they've let go of their host.

"We've had leeches that can live off a single blood meal for a year," said Michael Tessler, a researcher at the American Museum of Natural History who is a co-author of a recent paper on leeches in the *Journal of Parasitology*, which focused on the anticoagulant genes in leeches' salivary organs.

Medicinal leeches, which have minuscule jaws and which doctors may use to keep blood flowing in the treatment of injuries that might otherwise lead to amputation, have been examined like this before. But Dr. Tessler and his colleagues chose eight less-studied types of marine leeches that can feed on creatures like turtles, fish and even sharks.

The researchers collected the leeches' salivary organs and looked to see what genes were active, and compared the sequences to a database of known anticoagulants to make their identifications. In each of the species they looked at, they found an average of 43 different genes for anticoagulant substances at work. They were surprised to find that despite the leeches' differing taste in hosts, they made many of the same anticoagulants. (Source: *The NYT*)

## Despite digital revolution, distance still matters

Even when people have well-connected social networks beyond their home cities and across state lines, they are still most frequently interacting with people who are very geographically near.

That is one of the major outcomes of an expansive, 16-month study of more than 51 million geo-tagged tweets generated by more than 1.7 million Twitter users across the U.S. The study was funded, in part, by the National Science Foundation.

San Diego State University professor Ming-Hsiang Tsou and alumnae Su Yeon Han led the collaborative study, also adopt mapping techniques which allowed for visual analysis of the information.

This type of foundational research is part of a growing body of literature and computational modeling efforts using social media and big data to improve measurements and predictions of human behavior.

"You can Skype and Zoom with anyone. People can buy anything they want from Amazon. It doesn't matter the location," said Tsou, founding director of SDSU's Center for Human Dynamics in the Mobile Age.

With the rise of the Internet and the new era of globalization, some have argued that the world is flat - geography is dead.

"But we disagree with that," Tsou said, noting that even with shipments, regional supply still influences availability and expedience of a delivery. "The concept of distance is not dissolved, but it has shifted. Now it is more about probability: What is the likelihood, because of distance, that your followers will be your friends in real life?"

Collaborating with Keith C. Clarke, a geography professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB), Han and Tsou published their findings in an article, "Revisiting the Death of Geography in the Era of Big Data: The Friction of Distance in Cyberspace and Real Space." (Source: *eurekaalert.org*)

## Chinese-Philippine Investment Board Meets with BIM CEO to Broaden Ties

Chinese-Philippines Consortium Investment Board, headed by Donshia, special envoy of Philippine President and former head of Philippines Parliament and Chen Chairman of Xianglong Petrochemical Group met and held talks with Ali Ashraf Afkhami Chief Executive and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Bank of Industry and Mine (BIM), the Public Relations Dept. of the bank reported.

In this bilateral meeting, the two sides discussed with each other on the ways of broadening ties in the field of accelerating construction operation of the aforementioned petrochemical complex.

For his part, Afkhami CEO of Bank of Industry and Mine pointed to the brilliant history of the bank in inter-

national arena especially effective interaction and cooperation with the Chinese Board in infrastructural projects of the country and said, "it is hoped that this project, like previous projects, will be implemented successfully by either of the contract parties."

Financing electrification project of Tehran-Mashhad-Railway is of the joint projects between the two countries according to the finance contract concluded between Bank of Industry and Mine and Exim Bank of China.

If objectives of this project are materialized, important and positive impacts will be produced in increasing quality of Iranian railway sector, he opined.

Another contract was concluded between Iran and China to finance \$1.8 billion for launching the first Tehran-Qom-Isfahan High-Speed Train.

The Bank of Industry and Mine can play an important role in financing infrastructural projects in the country like power plant, steel, cement, petrochemical and railway using Chinese finance scheme, the Public Relations Dept. of the bank concluded.



## ME Homes to SAIPA Colorful Productions

Chief Executive of SAIPA Auto Manufacturing Company Fariborz Zoroufi said that products of Iran's second-largest car manufacturing company are competitive with the car markets in the Persian Gulf, Central Asia, Afghanistan and Iraq, the Public Relations Dept. of the company reported.

In an interview with our reporter, he said, "export markets have been the first priority of



the company in a way that the management of the company has focused on exporting its quality products to the car markets of neighboring states."

For this purpose, SAIPA concentrated on Iraqi lucrative car market for exporting high-quality car to the neighboring car market, the report added.

Afghanistan is second only lucrative market

for SAIPA Auto Mfg. Company for exporting its quality products to this country.

Talks are under with Afghan officials in order to get the lion's share of Afghan's industrial and building paint market, he maintained.

With the coordination made in this regard, Oman and some other countries will be added to Iran's export target market, CEO of SAIPA Car Making Company ended.

## Ground broken for women-only park in southwestern Tehran

**W O M E N** TEHRAN — Ground was broken for a women-only park with a total area of 11 hectares in the city of Islamshahr, southwestern Tehran, here on Saturday. The park will be equipped with indoor swimming pool, a standard walkway, ping pong tables and a football field, volleyball and basketball courts, said Hooshang Asgarian, head of Islamshahr's Gardens and Green Spaces Organization.



Construction of such centers will certainly help to decrease social vulnerability, said Mohammad Ali Norouzi, Islamshahr's Friday prayer leader. The women-only park creates proper grounds for women's social and cultural activities, said Norouzi. There exists six women-only parks in the city of Tehran.

## RECIPE OF THE WEEK

### Summer squash chicken Alfredo

"This is a recipe I came up with that uses all of my favorite ingredients and is very beautiful served on a platter."

#### Ingredients:



2 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves  
2 tablespoons garlic, minced  
1 (8 ounce) package uncooked rigatoni pasta  
6 slices chicken salami  
1 tablespoon vegetable oil  
1 small zucchini, sliced  
1 small yellow squash, sliced  
1 cup Alfredo sauce  
1/4 cup milk  
6 sun-dried tomatoes, softened and chopped  
3 tablespoons Parmesan cheese  
1/4 cup sliced almonds

**Directions:**  
Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Lightly

grease a baking dish.

Place the chicken in the prepared baking dish, and coat with the garlic. Bake 25 minutes, or until chicken juices run clear. Cool and chop.

Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Place the rigatoni in the pot, cook 10 minutes, until al dente, and drain.

Place chicken salami in a skillet. Cook over medium high heat until evenly brown. Drain, crumble, and set aside.

Heat the oil in a skillet over medium heat, and saute the zucchini and yellow squash until tender and lightly browned.

In a small bowl, mix the Alfredo sauce and milk. Serve chicken over the cooked pasta. Pour Alfredo sauce over the chicken. Top with zucchini and squash. Sprinkle with sun-dried tomatoes, chicken salami, Parmesan cheese, and almonds.

## LEARN ENGLISH

### Sorry I'm Late

Maggie Gao: Okay everyone, shall we begin?  
Bill: Sorry Maggie, but we are missing a few people. Can we hang on a sec?

Maggie Gao: Well, I did say eleven o'clock sharp, and it's now five past so...

James: Hi everyone, I'm so sorry I'm late. It's raining cats and dogs outside and I had to wait ages for a taxi.

Maggie Gao: Okay James, take a seat quickly please. Right, the subject of the meeting is.

Sally: Hi guys. Please excuse me, I was held up in traffic.

Maggie Gao: Right, as I was saying the subject of the m...

Bruno: Hi Maggie. I'm terribly sorry. The traffic is murder out there.

Maggie Gao: Sit down Bruno! Okay now, as you are aware, the topic for this meeting is 'The importance of being punctual'. Who would like to start?

#### Key vocabulary

**hang on a sec:** hold on

**wait ages:** wait for a very long time

**held up:** stuck

**I am terribly sorry:** Very sorry

#### Supplementary vocabulary

**late:** A occurring, coming, or being after the usual or proper time

**absent:** not in a certain place at a given time

**excuse:** to offer an apology for; seek to remove the blame of

**slack:** negligent; careless

(Source: irlanguage.com)



# Divorce more likely when women are financially independent: study

**W O M E N** TEHRAN — A new study proves that women's financial independence, especially in the first years of marriage, negatively affects the stability of families.

One of the important factors that create changes in families is the presence of married women in economic activities, ISNA quoted a research jointly made by Garmsar's branch of the Islamic Azad University and Tehran's branch of Science and Research.

The target group in this study were all married women and men residing in Tehran. The research was conducted based on field study and survey methods.

The researchers deal with the role of women's financial independence in stability of families, explaining that although women are mainly active in lower-paying jobs than their husband, they enjoy an economic independence.

Many of these women consider their income as additional to their husband's income which is considered as a main source of families earning by both husbands and wives.

Social scientists believe that in Iranian families, men are traditionally considered as the breadwinners and owner of financial sources and women receive some money for home expenditures.

Since men and women behave differently when it comes to money, when women gain money the traditional economic balance of families will be affected and men are no longer considered to be the some breadwinner.

#### Does financial resources reduce family stability?

The results of this study show that the



introduction of money and fiscal policies has changed social conditions and affected the foundation of family. The change in the position of women in society and their access to money has also changed the family structure.

Based on the study's results, women have gradually been able to play a more significant role in the economy of family. But women's access to money creates some new challenges between couples, and one of the most important challenges is the change of the key role of the breadwinner in the family.

In other words, women take part in this role, which can lead to some expectations

#### Women's income and its impact on the family

These conditions, especially in the early years of marriage, are more likely to lead to the emergence of the idea of separation, explained Soheyla Alirezanejad, associate professor of sociology, faculty of humanities, Garmsar's Islamic Azad University.

It is noteworthy to explain that financial tension alone does not result in divorce, but if there are other factors [deriving divorce] in the first years of marriage, financial issues can also play an influential role in this regard, she emphasized.

On the other hand, some years later, when the families achieve an economic stability, the idea of separation is greatly fade away and despite the economic problems which still persist the women's desire for separation is diminished.

The decline in women's desire for divorce can be due to different reasons, such as getting older and having good financial conditions, presence of children and even increasing skills of wives in managing family finances alongside husbands.

An increasing number of women are also looking for success in business life.

Although women traditionally had access to financial resources other than what they received from their spouses by receiving gifts from their parents or inheritance, wage labor has provided them with a special source of funding that can influence economic relations within the family.

Pointing out that money as a catalyst has a dual effect on women's desire for separation, Dr. Alirezanejad and her colleague believe that woman's income can affect the traditional role of a man as a breadwinner.

Man's inability to play a role as breadwinner causes a challenge in the family, because women and men involved in the study consider it as men's duty.

The results of this study, which highlight the increasing knowledge and ability of women in family finances, as well involving in the mutual breadwinning in order to increase the stability of families, have been published in the journal of Women in Development and Politics. This publication belongs to the Center for Women's Studies and Research of the University of Tehran.

## Ebtekar calls for promotion of Iranian clothing style

**W O M E N** TEHRAN — One of the important elements in national identity is the ethnic custom and attempts should be made on promotion of Iranian costumes, said Vice President for Women's and Family Affairs, Masoumeh Ebtekar.

National costumes should be introduced to the world, Mehr News Agency quoted the VP speaking at the closing ceremony of ethnic costume festival here on Saturday.

Bright colors existing in the traditional costumes of different tribes convey messages which brings social happiness, she noted.

In some provinces, we also see the presence of women



A group of men and women are standing on a stage wearing traditional costumes

in clothing which has no objection, Ebtekar stated.

Putting emphasis on the importance of holding different festivals on Iranian ethnics, the vice president stressed on conducting such exhibitions and festivals which will further enhance the identity of Iranian women.

The diversity of Iranian ethnicities clothing is unique, not being observed anywhere in the world, noted Ebtekar, adding the roots of Iranian and Islamic identity should not be forgotten.

The garment industry is a capacity that needs to be addressed, she said concluding that, in this case, there is a hope that Iranian women would observe their ethnic clothing.

## Giving birth to more children raises risk of Alzheimer's, study suggests

Women who have five or more children are at far greater risk of developing Alzheimer's disease, new research suggests.

The study involving 3,549 women also found the risk of developing the neurodegenerative disease in later life is halved for women who have had an abortion or miscarriage.

The disease affects women more than men and researchers believe the findings may show a way of halting the condition early, by giving women hormone treatments.

Professor Ki Woong Kim, of the Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences at Seoul National University College of Natural Sciences in Seoul, South Korea, said: "It's possible that the modestly raised levels of oestrogen in the first trimester of pregnancy are within the optimal range for protecting thinking skills."

"Oestrogen levels double by the eighth week of pregnancy before climbing to up

to 40 times the normal peak level.

"If these results are confirmed in other populations, it is possible that these findings could lead to the development of hormone-based preventive strategies for Alzheimer's disease based on the hormonal changes in the first trimester of pregnancy."

Nearly two thirds of people living with dementia are women, but scientists do not understand why they are more affected.

For the study researchers looked at populations of women in Greece and Korea with an average age of 71, who were given a memory and thinking skills test, and asked them to provide information about their pregnancy history.

Of the 716 who had given birth to five or more children 59 developed the disease, 70 percent higher than those with fewer children.

The women who had five children or more also scored an average of 22 points - four fewer than the average of



the other women.

However, of the 2,375 women who had an abortion or miscarriage, only 47

developed the disease - and scored more than 23 points on the tests on average. (Source: Telegraph.co.uk)

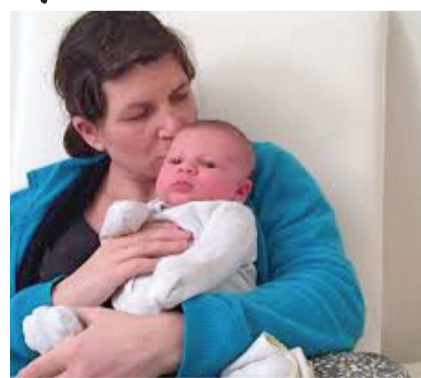
## Do high cholesterol and unhealthy fat lower fertility in women?

Do high cholesterol and unhealthy fat lower fertility in women? A new study found that women with unnecessary fat in their body before pregnancy are more likely to have one or no child at all. The new study reviews the previous research that derived association between lower fertility and heart disease.

The researchers surveyed women with an "unhealthy" levels of fat profile of high LDL ("bad") cholesterol, triglycerides, a high triglyceride to HDL ("good") ratio, and low levels of HDL cholesterol. They found that these women are 20 to 100 percent more likely to be pregnant only once. Factors such as total cholesterol, obesity, and high levels of LDL were also linked to the greater probability of having no children.

"Pre-existing poor lipid and metabolic profiles could represent one of the possible linkages between previously observed fertility and later (cardiovascular disease)," said Aleksandra Pirnat from the University of Bergen, Norway and other researchers.

For the study, the team examined 4,322 women's blood sample, aged 20 and above among which 1677 were childless women, 488 were one-time mothers, and 2,157 had two or more children.



The researchers said, "Our result found, when compared with women who had two or more pregnancies, total cholesterol above the clinically recommended level was associated with greater odds of having no children, irrespective of BMI."

The research was published in the journal BMJ Open.

Previous research found that metabolic irregularities among women with modest weight increases risk of impaired fertility, the researchers worded.

(Source: theofficetalks.com)

**Second Announcement** Permit No. 1397.1821

**NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY**  
**INVITATION FOR PREQUALIFICATION**  
TENDER NO. : 01-31-9646001

National Iranian South Oilfields Company (NISOC) intends to purchase the following goods:

Items	Material Description	Quantity
44	PARTS FOR "G.E.C" GAS TURBINE	1209

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tender are requested to send their "Resume" and "Tendency Letter" via postal services to the following address not later than 14 days after the second announcement. The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 51,783 EURO or 2,565,140,000 RIAL, in favor of NISOC. Iranian vendors shall submit their resume according to Quality Assessment Forms, available at: www.shana.ir and www.nisoc.ir

**FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT**

Bldg. No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex  
Kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran  
Tel. No.: 061 341 23589 Fax No.: 061 3445 7437

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# Syrian army forces find Israeli-made medicine in militant field hospital in Quneitra

By staff & agencies

Syrian government forces have uncovered a considerable amount of Israeli-made medicine and medical supplies in a field hospital belonging to foreign-sponsored Takfiri militants in the country's strategic southwestern province of Quneitra.

Local sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, told Syria's official news agency SANA that army soldiers made the discovery in the town of Naba al-Sakher on Monday as they were conducting a clean-up operation in the area to beef up security and stability and prepare repatriation of local residents.

The sources added that the field hospital had several operating rooms, laboratory equipment and medical supplies in addition to a warehouse, where large quantities of Israeli- and Jordanian-made medicine were being kept.

Takfiri militants in Naba al-Sakher had turned one of the town's schools into a field hospital to treat their wounded comrades.

The development came only a few days after Syrian government forces and fighters from popular defense groups had liberated nearly two dozen towns and villages in Quneitra Province.

## Top militant commanders flee southern Syria to Israel

Meantime, four top militant commanders have fled southern Syria to Israel after hundreds of Western-backed "White Helmets" did the same in the face of the Syrian army's imminent recapture of a strategic province.

According to pan-Arab news and commentary website al-Masdar News, the militants fled the Syrian province of Quneitra with their families and were secured by Israeli military once they got into the occupied Golan Heights.

It named the militant commanders as Moaz Nassar and Abu Rateb of Fursan al-Golan Brigade, Ahmad al-Nahs of Saif al-Sham Brigade, and Alaa al-Halaki of Jaish Ababeel.

The website cited what it called as opposition sources revealing that the commanders had been recruited by the Israeli intelligence and remained in touch with Israeli officers for years.

Quneitra and the neighboring Dara'a province have been used for years to transfer injured militants into the occupied Golan



Heights for treatment.

Israel transported several hundred "civil defense workers" known as White Helmets from southwest Syria to Jordan overnight on Saturday at the request of the United States and European countries.

Military authorities said Israel engaged in the "out of the ordinary" operation due to the "immediate risk" to their lives as Syrian forces closed in on the area.

Members of a Western-backed aid group accused of working with Takfiri militants and staging false flag gas attacks in Syria have reportedly been evacuated to an Israeli military base.

The attack came after Germany's Bild newspaper reported that a convoy of dozens of buses crossed the Syrian border into Israel late Saturday and were escorted to the Jordanian border, carrying White Helmets.

The Jordanian government, which has consistently refused to accept Syrian refugees in recent years, said an exception was made in this case as Britain, Canada and Germany agreed to take the 800 White Helmets and their families.

According to the Bild report, the secret operation began around 9:00 p.m. Saturday, reaching its peak after midnight.

Syrian state TV Al-Ikhbariya reported the Israeli evacuation of the White Helmets, calling it a "scandal" and saying "terrorist

groups" now have "zero options."

According to the Times of Israel newspaper, planning for the evacuation had been in the works for some time but was speeded up after a recent NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) summit in Brussels.

The White Helmets group was founded by former British Army officer James Le Mesurier in 2014. The self-described volunteer rescue group has been repeatedly accused of being the "media arm" for Takfiri groups, and been charged with staging false flag chemical attacks in a bid to prompt a Western military intervention in Syria.

In April, the United States, France and Britain launched missile strikes against multiple targets around Syria, justifying them using "video evidence" of an alleged chemical attack in Douma provided by the White Helmets but subsequent investigations showed the video was fake.

## Syria TV: Israeli warplanes hit military post in Hama Province

Separately, Israeli warplanes have bombed a military post in Syria's central province of Hama, Syrian state television reports.

The brief report did not elaborate on what exactly had been hit in the city of Misaf on Sunday evening, but said only material damage had been inflicted.

"One of our military positions in Masyaf was the target of an Israeli air aggression,"

Syria's official news agency, SANA, said quoting a military source.

The unnamed source added that the strike was an attempt to cover up for the collapse of terrorist organizations in Dara'a and Quneitra.

Meanwhile, the so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which is close to Syria's opposition groups, claimed that the Israeli strike targeted a workshop where surface-to-surface missiles were made.

Masyaf, where a government scientific research center is located, was also hit by another Israeli airstrike in September 2017.

Last week, Syrian state news outlets reported that Israeli rockets had struck a Syrian military position near Nairab airport on the outskirts of the city of Aleppo.

Tel Aviv has recently increased its airstrikes in Syria. Damascus has on multiple occasions denounced the Israeli regime's aggression and also warned about the "dangerous repercussions" of Israeli assaults on its territory.

Tel Aviv is widely believed to have been providing weapons to anti-Damascus militants as well as medical treatment to Takfiri elements wounded in Syria inside the occupied Golan Heights.

Earlier this month, Syrian air defenses repelled an Israeli attack on the country's Quneitra Province.

Back on May 10, Israel conducted what it called its most intensive airstrikes on Syria in decades. According to Russia's Defense Ministry, Israel had used 28 warplanes in its airstrikes and fired 70 missiles. Both Damascus and Moscow said the Syrian army managed to shoot down over half of the missiles.

Tel Aviv, at the time, claimed that its assault was in response to a barrage of 20 rockets fired from Syria at Israeli military outposts in Golan.

Israel stressed that it was not intervening in the ongoing fighting in Syria but on Sunday, an Israeli airstrike hit a military post in the city of Misaf in Hama province.

Syria, which has been gripped by foreign-backed militancy since March 2011, has said that the Israeli regime and its Western and regional allies have been aiding Takfiri terrorist groups.

# Ex-top U.S. diplomat John Kerry tears into Trump for 'kowtowing' to Putin

The United States President Donald Trump's handling of his meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin was the most "disgraceful" instance of "kowtowing" to foreign leaders by an American head of state, says former U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry.



"I found it to be one of the most disgraceful, remarkable moments of kowtowing to a foreign leader by an American president that anyone has ever witnessed," Kerry told CBS News on Sunday.

The former top diplomat criticized the Republican head of state for not challenging Putin on the issue of Russia's alleged meddling in the 2016 U.S. presidential elections.

During a joint press conference after the private meeting in Finland last week, Trump undermined reports by the U.S. intelligence community that Moscow had indeed interfered in the vote through hacking attacks that helped Trump defeat his Democratic rival Hillary Clinton.

The U.S. president also appeared to accept Putin's explanation that the Kremlin had never meddled in the democratic process of the U.S. Trump even said he saw no reason why "would it be" Russia behind the alleged cyber-attacks. He withdrew that statement a day later, claiming that he meant to say "wouldn't."

Kerry said Trump not only "surrendered" himself to Putin but he also showed to the world that the president of the United States was no longer in control.

After a chaotic week that required the White House to do a lot of damage control, President Donald Trump has once again stirred controversy by calling the U.S. allegations against Russia "a big hoax."

"It wasn't just that it was a kind of surrender. It's that it is dangerous. The President stood there and did not defend our country. He stood there and did not defend the truth, he did not defend the facts," Kerry said.

"It's dangerous because it sends a message to President Putin and to the rest of the world that the President of the United States, the leader of the free world, really doesn't have a handle on what he's doing," he added.

Kerry also rejected Trump's explanation that he made a grammatical lapse during the meeting.

Trump has been under fire from both sides of the aisle for his performance in Helsinki. Even his closest Republican allies think he failed to protect American interests in the meeting.

The president, however, insists that the meeting showed how tough he is on Russia. He has even invited Putin for trip to the White House.

(Source: Press TV)

# Nicaraguan protesters call on President Ortega to resign

Hundreds of protesters in Nicaragua hold a march to call for the resignation of President Daniel Ortega, during a second day of protests in defiance of an iron-fisted crackdown on dissent by Ortega that includes a new law threatening them with up to 20 years in prison for "terrorism".

(Source: AFP)

# Bloc willing to build bridges in trade dispute with U.S.: EU

European Union finance chief Pierre Moscovici has said that the bloc is willing to build bridges in the ongoing trade dispute with the US.

"What I stressed several times in my meetings here is that the EU is certainly not the author of major trade imbalances," said Moscovici while addressing reporters during the Group of 20 summit in Buenos Aires.

On Saturday, the U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said he will push China and the EU to agree on a more "balanced" relationship on trade.

"We believe that targeting us is certainly inappropriate ... and that we must act with the U.S. as allies - not foes but allies," added Moscovici.

Moscovici went on to slam the U.S. President Donald Trump for creating the trade tensions with Europe.

"These meetings take place in an international context which is changing... The multilateral system of which the G20 is a central piece is under significant pressure, trade tensions are high and threaten to escalate further. All of this creates uncertainty for the economic outlook," he added.

"We must remain cool-headed," he further noted.

Also on Saturday, France announced that the EU will not be negotiating a free trade agreement with Washington until the U.S. withdraws its steel and aluminum tariffs.

Trump imposed duties of 25 percent on steel imports and 10 percent on aluminum in March.

In retaliation, the EU slapped tariffs on classic American goods, such as tobacco and motorcycles, prompting Trump to suggest hefty levies on European goods, notably cars, could be on the way.

The strained ties between Washington and the EU went into a spiral when the U.S. president called the bloc "a foe" in an interview aired last week.

"I think we have a lot of foes," Trump told CBS News in an interview segment that aired Sunday on "Face the Nation." "I think the European Union is a foe, what they do to us in trade. Now you wouldn't think of the European Union, but they're a foe."

(Source: Press TV)

# UN's top court rules UAE blockade violated Qataris' rights

A provisional ruling by the United Nations' top court has found that measures put in place by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as part of its boycott against Qatar amount to racial discrimination.

In June 2017, the UAE, along with the House of Saud regime, Bahrain and Egypt, imposed a land, air and sea blockade against Qatar and severed ties with it, in one of the worst diplomatic disputes among the Persian Gulf Arab states in decades.

Last month, Qatar filed a case at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), accusing the UAE of violating international laws by expelling thousands of Qataris - many of whom have family or own property in the UAE - and closing UAE airspace and seaports to Qatar.

It alleged the boycott violates the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) - including discrimination on the basis of nationality - a treaty signed by both the UAE and Qatar.

The Saudi regime, Bahrain and Egypt are not signatories

of the CERD convention.

On Monday, judges at the ICJ ruled that Qatari families affected by the UAE's measures must be reunited, imposing a measure before The Hague-based court hears in full the discrimination case.

They also said that students should be given the opportunity to complete their studies in the UAE or to retain records of their studies to be able to continue their education elsewhere.

Finally, they ruled Qataris should be allowed access to judicial services in the UAE.

The ICJ, which is informally known as the World Court, is the UN's venue for resolving legal disputes between states.

On June 5, 2017, the four Arab states cut all diplomatic relations with Qatar, accusing it of supporting "extremism and terrorism" and cozying up to the regional power house Iran.

Qatar has vehemently denied all allegations.

According to Qatar's National Human Rights Committee,



the blockade has affected about 13,000 people.

The committee recorded 4,105 cases of human rights violations in the last year, including 646 family reunification violations.

(Source: agencies)

# British PM opposes possible execution of two British ISIL suspects

The office of British Prime Minister Theresa May has rejected reports in the media that London would not object to possible death penalty sentences in the United States for two Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist outfit suspects of British nationality who had been arrested in Syria in January.

"It's a long-standing position of the government to oppose the death penalty ... as a matter of principle," the spokeswoman told reporters on Monday.

The comments came in an apparent response to reports earlier in the day indicating that Britain's interior minister, Sajid Javid, had dropped London's blanket opposition to the death penalty to allow Alexandra Kotey and El Shafee Elsheikh, two British members of the ISIL Takfiri terrorist group who have been accused of complicity in killing a series of high-profile Western captives, be sent to the United States for prosecution.

May's spokeswoman said that the government would do its best to find the most appropriate country for the prosecution of

the two suspects.

"We are continuing to engage with the U.S. government on this issue and our priority is to make sure that these men face criminal prosecution," said the official, adding, "We want to make sure they face justice in the most appropriate jurisdiction which maximizes the chances of a successful prosecution."

Kotey and Elsheikh have been accused of membership in a faction of ISIL called "Beatles" which was known for its brutal kidnappings, torture and murder of Western hostages in Syria, including U.S. journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff.

A leaked letter published the Daily Telegraph on Monday showed that Javid had nothing against the execution of the two terrorists despite Britain's stance as a supporter of the global abolition of the death penalty.

"I am of the view that there are strong reasons for not requiring a death penalty assurance in this specific case, so no such assurances will be sought," said the letter addressed to the U.S. Attorney General Jeff



Sessions.

Other documents leaked to the newspaper suggested that Britain had approved of plans to send the two suspects to the notorious Guantanamo Bay prison.

Like several other European countries, Britain has seen many of its nationals join

Ramberg said anybody lighting fires or barbecues would face prosecution.

Sweden, where usual summer temperatures are closer to 23 Celsius, is under-equipped to deal with this kind of crisis and has been getting help from Italy, Germany, Norway, Denmark, Poland and France.

There has been practically no rain since the beginning of May in the Nordic country, aside from a paltry 13 millimeters in mid-June.

Denmark, southern Norway and northern Finland are also experiencing a period of extreme heat which, according to weather forecasts, is unlikely to end soon.

(Source: phys.org)

# Sweden faces 'extreme' fire risk in coming days

Sweden is facing an "extreme" risk of more wildfires in coming days because of hot and dry weather, authorities warned on Monday, as dozens of fires raged across the Scandinavian country.

The civil protection agency MSB counted 27 active fires across Sweden on Monday, half the previous day's number.

At least four of the fires had not been brought under control, MSB said, and weather conditions were stacked against firefighters.

Sweden is experiencing an unprecedented drought and soaring temperatures which have reached the highest in a century.

"The risk is extreme" in the southern part of Sweden,



where temperatures were expected to reach 35 Celsius (95 Fahrenheit) in coming days, with no rain likely, MSB head of operations Britta Ramberg told a news conference.

## San Telmo player accused of murdering goalkeeper Facundo Espindola

Argentine football is in mourning after 25-year-old goalkeeper Facundo Espindola was stabbed and killed over the weekend.

He played in River Plate's youth system as well as Almagro for three years. The incident took place during a street fight, which began as he was leaving a bar in Buenos Aires' Hurlingham district, at dawn on Sunday.

Two men have been detained for their part in the murder and one of them is a fellow player, Nahuel Oviedo, who currently plays for San Telmo. The attack took place at around 6.30am local time when Espindola and a group of others, which included Oviedo, began fighting in the street.

After punches were thrown, one of the assailants took out a knife and slashed the throat of the goalkeeper, killing him almost instantly.

Oviedo was arrested along with a friend, of Paraguayan nationality, when they were in a white Peugeot 308 at Villa Tees.

Apparently, the car was covered in blood stains, while the murder weapon was found 15 blocks from the scene of the crime.

The reasons for the fight breaking out are still unknown. Oviedo had just returned to action the previous day in a friendly with San Telmo, following his recovery from torn ligaments.

It isn't the first time that the 28-year-old has had a run in with the authorities and in 2011, he was handed a three-year suspended sentence for his part in a robbery in which he admitted guilt.

Espindola, after stints with River and Lanus at youth level, debuted with Almagro in 2015 and reached the Nacional B level of Argentinian football.

(Source: Marca)

## Liverpool's Loris Karius fires back at critics over 'anger and hate'

Liverpool goalkeeper Loris Karius has fired back at his critics in an emotional Instagram message after another disappointing display against Borussia Dortmund.

The 25-year-old has been widely criticised since his high-profile blunders in the Champions League final against Real Madrid and was again at fault in Sunday's friendly defeat to Borussia Dortmund. Clearly annoyed and upset by the barrage of abuse he has been subjected to since his performance against Real Madrid, the German has now taken to his Instagram account to vent his frustration and critics.

"To those who take joy in seeing other people fail or suffer, I feel for you," an Instagram post from Karius read.

"Whatever it is that is happening in your life to hold this much anger and hate, I pray that it passes and good things come to you."

Former Spain and Real Madrid goalkeeper Iker Casillas also got involved with a passionate defence of the Liverpool man on Twitter. "This attack on Loris Karius, will it ever end? I'm talking about him like so many other goalkeepers.

"Leave the kid alone. He is also a person. As we all are!"

(Source: Goal)

## Jets D Trouba receives \$5.5 million in arbitration

Winnipeg Jets defenseman Jacob Trouba was awarded a one-year, \$5.5 million contract for next season in an arbitration ruling announced Sunday. The Jets have two days to decide whether to pay Trouba the \$5.5 million figure or to turn down the ruling and make him an unrestricted free agent.

Trouba, 24, made his Jets debut at age 19 and has spent the past five seasons with the franchise. He has 129 points (34 goals, 95 assists) in 326 games, including a 24-point campaign (three goals, 21 assists) in 55 games last season.

The arbitration ruling was announced two days after a hearing in Toronto between Trouba's representatives and the team. Trouba is the first player in franchise history to take the Jets to arbitration. Winnipeg reportedly offered Trouba \$4 million for next season, while the blue-liner sought \$7 million.

Winnipeg also has arbitration hearings pending with forwards Brandon Tanev and Marko Dano. The 26-year-old Tanev had 18 points (eight goals, 10 assists) in 61 games last season, while the 23-year-old Dano had two goals and an assist in 23 contests.

(Source: Reuters)

## New Liverpool keeper Alisson desperate to play - Klopp

Liverpool's new goalkeeper Alisson is "desperate" to play for the Merseyside club and could make his debut against Serie A side Napoli in a pre-season match on Aug. 4, manager Jurgen Klopp has said.

Liverpool signed Brazil international Alisson from AS Roma this month, smashing the world record for a goalkeeper in a deal worth up to 72.5 million euros (£65 million).

"He is desperate to play. He could have joined us here in America but it made absolutely no sense," Klopp told a news conference in Charlotte, North Carolina, where they lost a pre-season clash 3-1 against Borussia Dortmund on Sunday. "He had a long year and as Brazil's number one, it was quite an intense year, so I sent him on holiday again... I would say he plays in Dublin (against Napoli)."

Alisson, 25, is expected to replace Loris Karius as first choice goalkeeper with the club's other keeper Simon Mignolet set to drop lower down the pecking order. Klopp defended Germany's Karius, who was blamed for two of Real Madrid's goals when the Spanish side beat Liverpool 3-1 in the Champions league final in May.

"We need a stronger squad and Loris is an outstanding goalkeeper. That is the truth. Nothing else," Klopp added.

"My job is together with Michael Edwards (sporting director) and Mike Gordon (president) to bring the best players who are available for Liverpool - if they fit in. That is what we have tried to do."

Liverpool next face league champions Manchester City in New York on Wednesday before taking on Manchester United in Michigan at the weekend.

(Source: Reuters)

# Ozil departure puts focus on German relations with Turkish community

German soccer player Mesut Ozil's decision to quit the national team due to "racism and disrespect" he faced over his Turkish roots threw a spotlight on Monday on the country's relations with its largest immigrant community.

The most prominent German politician of Turkish origin said it would be difficult for the head of the national soccer association to stay in the role, adding that Ozil's departure would only be welcomed by those who opposed diversity.

Ozil's announcement on social media late on Sunday led national newspapers to clear their front pages for the midfielder, 29, a key member of Germany's World Cup-winning side in 2014 - and also of the side eliminated at the group stage of the 2018 tournament in Russia.

The player, who faced a barrage of criticism for having his photograph taken with Turkey's authoritarian President Tayyip Erdogan in May, was especially piqued by criticism from German Football Association (DFB) head Reinhard Grindel, who he said blamed him for Germany crashing out of this year's tournament.

Cem Ozdemir, the former head of the Greens party and the most prominent politician of Turkish background, said it would be difficult for Grindel to do his job in future given the diverse reality of Germany and its soccer team.

"It will be very hard for Grindel after this," he told Deutschlandfunk radio. "He doesn't reflect the breadth of football in Germany and so it will be hard for German Turks, or indeed German Croats, to feel that the DFB is theirs."

Former DFB President Theo Zwanziger was quoted in German media as saying the DFB had not done enough to solve conflicts ahead of the World Cup.

"Communication mistakes mean something happened that should never happen to migrants: They should never feel like second-class Germans," he said, adding: "Ozil's resignation is a major setback for integration efforts beyond football in our country."

A spokeswoman for Chancellor Angela Merkel said on Monday that the majority of the roughly 3 million people with Turkish roots who live in Germany were well-integrated.

She also said people with migrant backgrounds were welcome in Germany and added that the German chancellor valued Ozil. The row comes amid a political debate in Germany about an influx of 1.6 million migrants since mid-2014 that has seen a rise of the far right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party at the expense of traditional parties.



It also exposed differences of opinion over the country's large and well-established Turkish community.

Just as 2014's victorious German side was celebrated for its diversity, so too was France's World Cup-winning team in 2018 for having numerous key players with African ethnic roots.

■ **Criticism and self-pity** But the mass-selling newspaper Bild accused Ozil of "pure self-pity" and its editor highlighted his decision to post in English, accusing him of trying to maximize his audience.

Ozdemir said that even if Ozil had been naive, however, his departure would be "good news for Erdogan, for the AfD, all those who are against diversity."

Alice Weidel, leader of the AfD, wrote that: "The integration dream doesn't work even with football millionaires," describing Ozil's "tirade" as a "typical example of failed integration".

In Turkey, however, politicians heaped praise on the player

and lashed out at those who had abused him.

"We support from the heart the honorable stance which our brother Mesut Ozil has displayed," Turkish Sports Minister Mehmet Kasapoglu wrote on Twitter on Sunday night.

"What Mesut Ozil went through and how he was treated is unforgivable. There is NO excuse for racism and discrimination," Gulnur Aybet, a senior adviser to President Tayyip Erdogan wrote on her Twitter account.

Erdogan's spokesman Ibrahim Kalin wrote on Twitter on Sunday after Ozil released his statement:

"An extremely accomplished footballer provides a perfectly reasonable explanation for meeting with President Erdogan. But imagine the pressure under which he felt compelled to make this statement. What a pity for those who claim to be tolerant and multiculturalist!"

(Source: Reuters)

## Mourinho not concerned by Man United's slow pre-season



Manchester United have not hit top gear on their pre-season tour of the United States but manager Jose Mourinho has said he is not worried as a majority of his first team players are yet to rejoin the squad following the World Cup.

United drew 1-1 with Club America before a goalless draw against San Jose Earthquakes on Sunday. Mourinho pointed out that his playing XI in both games did not resemble sides he would pick for Premier League matches.

"One more training session. We're not a team. We're a group of players from different teams," Mourinho told the club's website here after the result at the Levi's Stadium.

"Some are first-team, some under-23s, some coming from loans and going on loan, some are younger, under-18s. We don't have a team to play much better than we did but it's one more training session."

Midfielder Nemanja Matijevic has arrived in the United States to join the squad while goalkeeper David De Gea and new signing Fred are set to link up with their team mates next week.

Striker Alexis Sanchez played in the game against San Jose after resolving a visa issue that delayed his trip.

The Chile international is eager to hit the ground running after struggling to make an impact since his transfer from Arsenal in January.

"Good for Alexis," Mourinho added. "The first time he plays after some individual sessions."

"He needed this and he made a good effort, a good physical effort, which is important for him in this moment."

United play AC Milan, Liverpool and Real Madrid in the United States this month before travelling to Germany to take on Bayern Munich in their final pre-season clash on Aug. 5.

Mourinho's side host Leicester City in the opening game of the Premier League season on Aug. 10.

(Source: Mirror)

## Fabregas wants Chelsea to embrace Sarri's new formation



Chelsea's players must quickly adapt to new manager Maurizio Sarri's demands as the Italian looks to reshape the team for the new Premier League season, midfielder Cesc Fabregas said.

The 59-year-old Sarri replaced sacked compatriot Antonio Conte at the helm this month and is known to favour an attacking approach as seen at his former club Napoli.

"He is bringing a different style, a different formation and we just need to grow into it," Fabregas told the club's website.

One of Sarri's first changes has been to ditch Conte's preferred system of three central defenders to deploy four at the back and Fabregas said the team, currently on a pre-season tour of Australia, were adjusting.

"We need time to re-adapt to a back four and to what the boss wants but I believe we're intelligent players and players at the top level who will try to adapt as soon as possible," Fabregas said ahead

of Monday's clash with A-League side Perth Glory.

"The players who are here, together with the youngsters, do a good job trying to get it as fast as we can and hopefully this is a good day to start seeing a few things from what the manager wants from us."

Left back Marcos Alonso looked forward to Sarri leaving his imprint on the team's style as they look to improve on their fifth-placed finish last season.

"He likes to play football, likes to press high, to try to have control of the ball and control of the game," Spaniard Alonso said. "It could be more similar to the Spanish style, but he has Italian aspects as well... he likes to work with the defence a lot, the back-four line, lots of positioning work."

Chelsea begin their campaign in the Community Shield against champions Manchester City on Aug. 5.

(Source: Eurosport)

# Hamilton justifies price tag in chaotic thrill-a-minute rollercoaster ride

Mercedes team chief Toto Wolff denied Monday that the use of team orders in Sunday's spectacular German Grand Prix signalled that Lewis Hamilton would be preferred as the number one driver.

Wolff was adamant that the triumphant Hamilton and his team-mate Valtteri Bottas will remain free to race each other until late in the season when there might be championships decided by such decisions.

"Racing is most important," said Wolff. "We always said if the championship goes into its last third, or last quarter, and there is a big difference between the drivers, then we might make these unpopular calls."

"But it's much too early in the season to do this. We made it in order to bring a one and two home... And we would have done it the other way around."

Bottas attempted to challenge and pass Hamilton for the lead in Sunday's rain-hit race following a Safety Car period after Sebastian Vettel crashed while leading for Ferrari.

The two Mercedes men battled side-by-side before Hamilton emerged in front and Mercedes intervened with a team radio message to 'hold position'.

Wolff said the message did not mean Hamilton, who

declared his German win from 14th on the grid as the greatest of his career, was seen as favoured ahead of Bottas as a clear number one driver.

"No, absolutely not," he said. "If it had been the other way around, with Valtteri in the lead and Lewis second, we would have made the same call. Identical call. It was about bringing it home irrespective of who was in front."

Wolff added it was still raining at the time of the message and the team did not want to take any risks.

He said: "What I said to Valtteri is something that I would also say in the team. I would have done the same thing the other way around."

"This is the transparency we have in the team, that we wouldn't make a difference. It was important to score the double podium, the one and two, in order to recover some of the points which we lost through bad luck."

Hamilton's astonishing victory, hailed as the greatest of his career, lifted him 17 points clear of Vettel in the drivers' championship race after 11 of this year's 21 races. He is 66 ahead of fourth-placed Bottas.

"It is a very difficult call because on the one side you want to optimise the result and that is what you need to do, but

on the other side you need to give both drivers a chance to win the race," said Wolff.

Ferrari had also used team orders when asking Kimi Raikkonen, who finished third, to allow Vettel to pass him for the lead.

Wolff said: "Kimi was unlucky in a few races at the beginning of the season, where the strategy went against him, and I think that Ferrari struggled to come up with the right call there. It's understandable."

Sunday's result meant the leadership in the championship changed again for the sixth time this season as the close 'fight for five' between Hamilton and Vettel remained so hotly-contested.

Hamilton said afterwards that he feared his lead might again be short-lived as the teams head to Budapest for this week's Hungarian Grand Prix, the last one before the European summer break.

"It's usually not our strongest track, but I'm hopeful it's not a power circuit," he said, referring to the dusty, tight and technical Hungaroring where chassis performance is important

(Source: AFP)

# Reza Ghoochannejhad joins Apoel

**S P O R T S** TEHRAN — Former Iran national football team striker Reza Ghoochannejhad has joined Apoel Nicosia.

The 31-year-old has signed a one-year contract with the Cypriot football team.

The details of the contract have not been released.

Ghoochannejhad has joined Apoel as a free-agent player. Gucci scored 27 goals in 67 matches he played for SC Heerenveen.

Ghoochannejhad was a member of Iran national football team in the 2018 World Cup but spent the entire tournament as an unused substitute.

He announced his retirement from international football soon after the World Cup.

Ghoochannejhad represented Iran in the 2014 World Cup and scored Team Melli's only goal against Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Gucci started his playing career in SC Heerenveen in 2005 and has also played in Belgium clubs Sint-Truiden and Standard Liege.

Apoel FC are a professional football club based in Nicosia, Cyprus.

Apoel are the most popular and the most successful football team in Cyprus with an overall tally of 27 national championships, 21 cups, and 13 super cups.



## Iran win Sitting Volleyball World Championships



**S P O R T S** TEHRAN — Paralympic gold medalists Iran defeated their arch-rivals Bosnia and Herzegovina in straight sets in the 2018 men's Sitting Volleyball World Championships at The Hague on Sunday.

Team Melli defeated the Bosnian team 25-18, 25-13, 25-20 at the Luxor Theater and won the gold medal.

The match was a repeat of the Paralympic Games final in Rio de Janeiro two years ago, where the Iranian team beat Bosnia and Herzegovina 3-1.

Both finalists secured qualification for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games. Iran leads the way with 10 medals in total — all won in the men's competition — with seven gold, one silver and two bronze medals.

Iran previously won the editions in 1985, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998 and 2010. This is also the sixth time that they have held the world and Paralympic titles at the same time.

Ukraine claimed the bronze after defeating Brazil in straight sets 28-26, 25-23, 27-25.

## Iran rout S. Korea at Asian U20 Volleyball Championship



**S P O R T S** TEHRAN — Iran defeated South Korea in straight sets (25-22, 25-21, 25-19) at the 2018 Asian Men's U20 Volleyball Championship on Monday.

Behrouz Ateei's men had started the competition with a 3-0 win over reigning champion China on Saturday.

"I am satisfied with the way our players played in these two matches against China and South Korea. We concentrate on winning the title, that's why we are here in Bahrain," Ateei said in the post-match news conference.

The 2018 Asian Men's U20 Volleyball Championship is the 19th edition of the Asian Men's U20 Volleyball Championship, a biennial international volleyball tournament organized by the Asian Volleyball Confederation (AVC) with Bahrain Volleyball Association (BVA).

The tournament is being held in Riffa, Bahrain, from 21 to 28 July 2018.

The top two teams of the tournament will qualify for the 2019 FIVB Volleyball Men's U21 World Championship as the AVC representatives.

## The statistics behind Brighton and Leicester's reported interest in Eredivisie sensation

Reports have emerged linking Brighton and Leicester with Eredivisie star Alireza Jahanbakhsh, while the player's agent has gone one further and confirmed AZ Alkmaar are negotiating his transfer with an unnamed foreign club.

The 24-year-old even fuelled more speculation through his official Instagram account by suggesting he was flying out of Amsterdam for the final time.

Following his performances last season, it's understandable why Premier League clubs are interested. Jahanbakhsh finished the campaign as the top scorer in the Eredivisie (21 goals), at least two more than any other player. Not only did the Iran international weigh in with a remarkable number of goals from the right flank, he also supplied 12 assists. In fact, Jahanbakhsh was directly involved in 45.8% of the goals AZ scored in the league (33/72).

Jahanbakhsh won the WhoScored Man of the Match award in 14 of his 33 league appearances, the only player in the division to reach double figures for the accolade. By comparison, only Lionel Messi (22) picked up the award more times in Europe's top five leagues. Jahanbakhsh's performances over the course of the season garnered a stunning WhoScored rating of 8.20, fractionally less than Ajax's Hakim Ziyech (8.21), who finished the season as the highest WhoScored rated player in the Eredivisie for the second year running.

Iran exceeded beyond expectations at the 2018 World Cup and almost pulled off a remarkable vic-

tory over Euro 2016 winners Portugal to qualify for the knockout stage of the competition. Instead, they finished third with four points from matches against Spain, Portugal and Morocco. Unfortunately, it wasn't a great tournament for Jahanbakhsh, who struggled for form and fitness. He only started two of their three matches and failed to make any positive impression in Russia.

Despite failing to enhance his reputation, there are still suitors for the Iranian winger. Leicester have already made several savvy investments this summer, but Claude Puel still hasn't replaced Riyad Mahrez, who joined Manchester City in a deal worth £60m. The former Premier League champions won the race for sought-after Championship starlet James Maddison, but his best position is behind the striker. The 21-year-old created more goalscoring opportunities than any other player in the Championship last season (124), but that's a huge burden to place on the shoulders of someone so young.

Mahrez played a direct hand in 59 goals in the last three Premier League seasons and his departure has left Puel needing to fill a huge hole. Jahanbakhsh's performances for AZ last season will only encourage Leicester, having created 20 clear-cut chances in the Eredivisie last season — the second most in the league. Not only that, but only one other player completed more through balls than Jahanbakhsh (9), which is particularly important in getting the best out of Jamie Vardy. While he appears

capable of performing the same role as Mahrez, the Foxes should proceed with caution.

Recruiting from Netherlands has often proved problematic in the past. While the likes of Luis Suarez, Robin Van Persie, Ruud van Nistelrooy, Zlatan Ibrahimovic, Ronaldo and Arjen Robben have successfully made the transition from football in Holland to one of Europe's major leagues, there is an even longer list of names that have failed.

Vincent Janssen moved to Tottenham from AZ in a deal worth £17m in 2016 following his stunning goalscoring exploits, but he only managed two league goals in 28 league matches before being farmed out on loan. Middlesbrough made Afonso Alves their club-record signing from Heerenveen in January 2008 but things didn't go entirely to plan and he left in September the following year. More recently, Everton signed Ajax captain Davy Klaassen in a £23.6m deal 12 months ago and he has barely kicked a ball since.

These are the risks involved with signing players with Holland. As Memphis Depay showed during his disappointing stint at Manchester United, sometimes the step up in class comes too soon for some, while others, like Van Persie or Suarez, are capable of taking their game to another level entirely. Only time will tell what category Jahanbakhsh fits in to, but it's hard to ignore someone's potential when they are directly involved in a goal a game. (Source: Who Scored)

## Antonio Valencia limps off injured in friendly

Jose Mourinho is facing his first injury scare of Manchester United's summer tour after Antonio Valencia limped off against San Jose Earthquakes.

Valencia, 32, lasted just seven minutes of United's second pre-season game at Levi's Stadium on Sunday.

The right-back hobbled off with looked like a calf injury and went straight down the tunnel. Matteo Darmian came on his place.

It will be a worry for Mourinho who is already short of players after the World Cup in Russia.

The United boss had already revealed his plan to start the Premier League season with a back four of Valencia, Luke Shaw, Eric Bailly and Chris Smalling.

New signing Diogo Dalot, 19, is out until September with a knee injury while Phil Jones, Ashley Young, Marcos Rojo and Victor Lindelof are on holiday after the World Cup.

Valencia's injury could affect United's



stance on Darmian. Sources have told ESPN FC the club are willing to listen to offers for the Italian and have held talks with Juventus.

Inter Milan and Napoli are also interested but Mourinho will not be keen to lose a full-back if Valencia is ruled out for a significant length of time. (Source: ESPN)

## Parma handed five-point deduction but keep Serie A place

Parma will start next season with a five-point deduction and without Emanuele Calaiò, who has been banned for two years.

The sanction has been imposed by the Italian Football Association's national tribunal for an alleged match manipulation attempt towards the end of last season in Serie B.

WhatsApp messages from Calaiò to several players from Spezia were considered to have been an attempt by the Parma forward to convince the opposition to let them get the win they needed to seal promotion.

An initial commission suggested Parma should be punished with a retrospective points deduction, which would have seen them fall behind Palermo in the final Serie B standings and consequently lose their place in Italy's top flight.

However, the federation's prosecutor, Antonio Mario Scino, on Monday deemed a more lenient punishment -- which had been suggested initially as an alternative -- be imposed, meaning Parma's promotion



is confirmed.

Calaiò, who has also been fined €20,000, is expected to appeal his two-year ban while it is not yet clear whether Parma may also launch an appeal, which could see their risk receiving a more serious sentence.

The Serie A fixtures will be announced on Thursday, July 26. (Source: ESPN)

## Zlatko Dalic, much too high a price for Iran

**1 ->** Late Tomislav Ivic is missed by the Iranian fans for having given his invaluable lessons to Team Melli's players ahead of the 1998 World Cup.

Stanko Pokleповic took over Iran national football team in 1994 in a chaotic career, and made his impact in Azadegan League, leading Persepolis to two successive titles.

Croatian coaches' good performance review could perhaps be a reason for Iranian football officials to consider hiring them for their football teams.

Slaven Bilic, now pundit for British ITV, is without a team since parting company with West Ham United.

He has worked with the Croatia football team as well as Russian and Turkish clubs.

Carlos Queiroz has yet to extend his contract with Iran. It could be a good time for the authorities to reconsider the new options.

## Brighton to break transfer record for Jahanbakhsh

AZ Alkmaar are set to break transfer record after agreeing to sell Alireza Jahanbakhsh to Premier league side Brighton & Hove Albion.

AZ Alkmaar sold Vincent Janssen to Tottenham Hotspur for €22 million two years ago, but that record is now set to be broken.

Algemeen Dagblad is reporting that Jahanbakhsh is on his way to the Premier League after AZ agreed on a fee of around €25 million with Brighton for the winger. The last few details need to be ironed out before it is made official.

Jahanbakhsh was top scorer in the Eredivisie last season with 21 goals, while he also added 12 assists. He has been with the club since joining from NEC Nijmegen in 2015.

Jahanbakhsh has been also linked with a move to Leicester City. (Source: Football-Oranje)

## Iran futsal unchanged in world rankings

**TASNIM** — The Iranian national futsal team remained unchanged in the latest world rankings published on Monday.

Team Melli sits sixth place with 1654 points. Brazil still is the best futsal team in the world with 1935 points. Spain sits second with 1807 points, followed by Portugal (1696), Russia (1686) and Argentina (1667).

Asian teams Japan and Thailand have moved down one place to 16th and 18th with 1358 and 1285 points, respectively in the rankings.

Iran won the title of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Futsal Championship for the 12th time in February and claimed the title in the Asian Indoor Games in September.

## Tokyo focuses on environment two years out from Olympics

**TOKYO (Reuters)** — With two years to go until the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, the Japanese capital is hoping to use the Games as motivation to improve its environmental sustainability.

Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike, who was previously Japan's Minister of the Environment, has made lowering emissions and plastic litter prevention some of her main objectives in charge of the capital.



In May, Koike hosted the Clean City and Clear Sky conference that brought together city mayors and environmental leaders to discuss plans on cleaning up the world's cities.

With Tokyo set to host the Olympics starting July 24, 2020, Koike is hopeful the Games can spur a change and make Japan more sustainable.

"We aim to leverage the Games as an opportunity to showcase our model of a sustainable city to the world and our goal of becoming a global environmental leader," Koike said on Monday at an event to mark the two-year countdown to the Games.

"As one example, the Olympic village will be powered by hydrogen energy following the Games and will contribute to our goal of a smart energy city."

Despite Japan joining the United States in not signing the G7 Ocean Plastics Charter earlier this year, Koike is determined that Tokyo will play a leading role in the battle against plastic pollution.

"Tokyo also announced its intention to further lower its environmental impact by having zero emission vehicles account for 50 percent of all new cars sold by 2030," she said.

"Japan did not sign the ocean plastic charter but the capital, nevertheless, firmly supports this resolution and intends to collaborate with industries, NGOs and others to reduce single-use plastics and prevent marine litter."

The International Olympic Committee has also been strong in its desire for Tokyo 2020 to be the world's first 'tobacco-free' Games.

Last month, Tokyo passed a tough anti-smoking law that will effectively ban smoking in most of the city's bars and restaurants in the run-up to the Games.

Tokyo was set to be the smokiest Olympics in years if no action was taken, anti-smoking activists said.

"Last month, the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly approved a passive smoking prevention ordinance that goes one step further than nationwide regulations," Koike stressed.

"Through measures like this, I hope to pass on to future generations a society in which everyone can live comfortably."

# Lian to perform at London WOMAD

**A R T** TEHRAN — Lian led by its **d e s k** vocalist and neyanban virtuoso Mohsen Sharifian will give a concert featuring the rhythmical Bushehri music of southern Iran during WOMAD, a music festival in London, on July 29, the organizers have announced.

Vocalists Mohammad Bahrani and Okolo Farnarzi are also scheduled to accompany the band, which features Homayun Nasiri and Hamid Akbari on percussion, and Hossein Taban on oud and neyanban.

In a statement published on the WOMAD website, the organizers said, “The troupe [Lian] generates an impressive, layered wall of sound, but their set maintains a strong sense of playfulness, as the performers dabble in dance, solo and improvisation throughout.

“Sharifian’s commitment to playing and advocating for Iranian folk is important and inspiring. His work with the Lian band is going some way to rejuvenating and amplifying this vital musical culture.”

The WOMAD Festival, running in London from July 26 to 29 this year, is held annually during the last weekend of July, offering a global fiesta of music, food, dance and art.



Lian performs a concert at Tehran’s Vahdat Hall on June 21, 2018. (Musicema/Sara Abdollahi)

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## London Markosia to publish Shahnameh story “Jamshid”

**A R T** TEHRAN — The London-based publishing **d e s k** company Markosia plans to publish an English version of the Persian graphic novel “Jamshid” that is based on the King Jamshid story from the Shahnameh, the magnum opus of the Persian epic poet Ferdowsi.



Front cover of the first volume of the Persian graphic novel “Jamshid” published by Hoorakhsh Studio

The Persian version of the 4-volume graphic novel has been produced at Hoorakhsh Studio in Tehran, the animation studio announced on Monday.

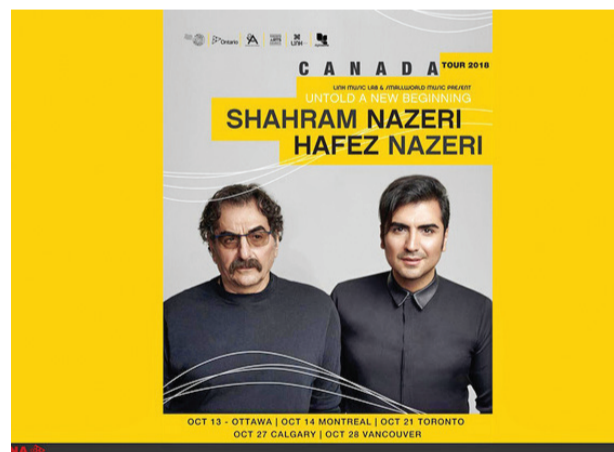
The studio has produced the animated movie “The Last Fiction” based on the graphic novel.

The story follows Zahak’s treacherous rise to the throne in Jamshid in Persia. The young and naive hero Afaridoun must save the kingdom and its people from darkness. But first, he must conquer his own demons in this portrayal of Persian mythology that reveals human nature.

Established in 2005, Markosia has become one of the UK’s leading publishers of graphic novels. The publisher has gained a reputation for producing a diverse range of comic books and graphic novels that cover almost all genres.

## Shahram, Hafez Nazeri to tour Canada in October

**A R T** TEHRAN — The renowned Iranian vocalist **d e s k** Shahram Nazeri and his son, Hafez, will tour Canada during October.



The tour will begin in Ottawa on October 13 and will continue on to Montreal, Toronto and Calgary, and will wrap up in Vancouver on October 28, a public relations team announced on Monday.

A repertoire of songs from the 2014 album “Untold” will be performed during the tour.

Hafez is the composer of the acclaimed album “Untold”, which was recorded in four countries with over 35 Grammy Award -winning artists and has been released by Sony Classical.

## Celebrating music, Britain to have “National Album Day”

**LONDON (Reuters)** — Britain is to have its first ever “National Album Day” this autumn, an event organizers hope music fans will celebrate annually to mark their appreciation of the format.

Music lovers around the country will honor singers, songwriters, producers and sleeve designers on Oct. 13 and various events, organized by industry players and BBC Music, celebrating “all aspects of the UK’s love of the album” will be held in the run-up to the day.

Fans are also being asked to play their favorite album in full that afternoon.

“Streaming may be broadening our ability to access and discover music,” Geoff Taylor, Chief Executive of the British Phonographic Industry, said in a statement. “But the concept of the album as a body of work that expresses a narrative or an artist’s creative vision at a given moment, remains as relevant and inspiring as ever.”

Monday’s announcement comes as the music industry this year marks 70 years since the release of the very first vinyl LP, or long playing record.

Like other countries, Britain already has a “Record Store Day” when independent record shops are celebrated each year with vinyl releases and events and performances.

## Poster exhibit stands up for children’s rights



A poster for the Poster Exhibition of Children’s Rights underway at the Saba Art and Cultural Institute in Tehran

**A R T** TEHRAN — The **d e s k** Saba Art and Cultural Institute in Tehran is playing host to an exhibition of posters on the theme of children’s rights.

A collection of 50 works by 46 students of graphic design from the University of Science and Culture, has been put on view in two galleries of the institute, Saba announced in a press release on Monday.

“Children and War”, “Children and Work”, “Children and Domestic

Violence”, “Children and the Right to Play” and “Children and Education” are among the major topics of the displayed posters.

The exhibit has been organized by the University of Science and Culture in collaboration with Iran’s Society for Protecting Children’s Rights.

Neda Tavallai is the curator of the exhibition, which will be running until July 30 at the institute located near the intersection of Taleqani and Vali-e Asr Ave.

## “Dictator in Love” on Hitler premieres in Tehran



Ghazaleh Jazayeri acts in a scene from “Dictator in Love” by director/writer Asghar Khalili.

**A R T** TEHRAN — “Dictator **d e s k** in Love”, a comedy about Nazi leader Adolf Hitler and his mistress Eva Braun whom he married later, went on stage at The Independent Theater of Tehran on Monday.

“Dictator in Love” has been written by Asghar Khalili who is also the director of the play, a public relations team announced.

The play tells the story of an orchestra, which leaves the Auschwitz concentration camp, to the Führerbunker to perform during the wedding celebration of Hitler and Braun.

Sussan Parvar, Alireza Zamaninasab, Hamidreza Kazempur, Hamed Nezami-

Asl, Mohammad-Hossein Siahpush, Arman Ashtian, Fatemeh Mardani, Arefeh Memarian, Hossein Sepehrnejad, Mojtaba Majidi and Nima Oliai are the members of the cast.

The play will be on stage until August 23. Khalili always brings historical stories to life in his plays. In July 2016, he staged “Mosaddeq’s Night Reports” at Tehran’s Vahdat Hall.

Starring Farhad Aiish, the play was about the efforts made by Mohamed Mosaddeq, Iran’s former prime minister, to nationalize the oil industry in 1951, which were nullified by the CIA coup d’état against the national icon in August 1953.

## Author tells of kidnapping by pirates he’d gone to interview

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — Michael Scott Moore is walking a bit gingerly these days, but it has nothing to do with the 2½ years he spent imprisoned by Somali pirates, the beatings he suffered, his time spent in chains or the lousy food that caused him to lose 40 pounds.

“I got thumped by a wave surfing off Manhattan Beach the other day,” the author of “The Desert and the Sea: 977 days Captive on the Somali Pirate Coast” says with a sheepish grin. “I’ve got a cracked rib.”

Otherwise Moore, freed by his pirate captors in 2014 after his mother raised a \$1.6 million ransom, looks fine. He’s dressed casually in a dark blue shirt and jeans as he sits down in the shade of the century-old art-deco building that houses Los Angeles’ downtown library to talk about his latest book.

“The Desert and the Sea” goes on sale today, and its 49-year-old author is about to embark on a cross-country tour of readings and signings.

The page-turning thriller, published by Harper Collins, takes readers on a relentless journey as Moore reveals the squalid living conditions that nearly killed him, the beatings he endured and the thoughts of suicide he weighed, along with other thoughts of grabbing one of his captor’s machine guns (they were careless about leaving them lying around) and seeing how many of them he could kill before they killed him.

“I don’t know,” he says with a smile when asked how he survived it all.

After several seconds of quiet contemplation, he adds that a combination of giving up any immediate hope of freedom and living in the moment helped. So did maintaining a sense of humor while trapped in a very unfunny situation. Thus, the book contains several darkly comic moments.

Like the one when Moore hid the keys to the chains the pirates kept him in after he tried to escape by leaping from an old fishing vessel and attempting to swim to shore. They never could find them and had to buy a new set, something that delighted their captive.

Or the time one of the friendlier pirates, knowing Moore holds dual U.S.-German citizenship, woke



Michael Scott Moore, author of “The Desert and the Sea: 977 Days Captive on the Somali Pirate Coast,” poses for a portrait at Los Angeles Public Library in Los Angeles June 20. The book will be released today. (AP/Chris Pizzello)

him one morning to say excitedly that Germany, that year’s World Cup winner, defeated Brazil 7-1 in the semifinal game. Moore dismissed the news as “more pirate bull---,” replying that no team scores seven goals in a soccer game. Then he turned on the radio and learned it was true.

Moore first thought of writing a book about modern-day piracy when he came across examples of it in coastal African and southeast Asian nations he visited while seeking out some of the world’s best surfing spots for a 2010 book, “Sweetness and Blood,” documenting how a loose-knit band of hippies, star-struck wanderers and U.S. military personnel helped turn an ancient Hawaiian sport into an international pop-culture phenomenon, has been hailed as arguably the best historical account of modern-day surfing.

His plans to report on piracy weren’t sealed, however, until he covered the trial of 10 pirates captured after abducting a German cargo ship off Somalia in 2010. Their two-year trial, which Moore covered for the publication Spiegel Online, marked the first case of piracy prosecuted in Germany in nearly 400 years.

“I really wanted to write a book that had material that I hadn’t seen. On pirates,” he says now. “And it became an obsession.”

By the time he arrived in Somalia in January 2012, piracy had become a cottage industry for a nation plunged into poverty and lawlessness by years of civil unrest. Young men unable to find other work sailed the high seas in small skiffs looking for people to kidnap and hold for multimillion-dollar ransoms.

Moore says he knew going to Somalia was dangerous, but he thought he’d taken all necessary precautions. A “fixer” with clan connections arranged the trip in which he was accompanied by a large contingent of machine-gun-toting guards.

But a pirate leader Moore interviewed betrayed him, paying off most of his security team. Moore was captured on a dusty desert road by pirates who demanded a \$20 million ransom.

As his mother spent years negotiating the price and raising money from family and friends, Moore’s plight went largely unreported. His employer, Der Spiegel, asked other news organizations to withhold the story, fearing publicity would drive up the price. Almost all, including The Associated Press, complied.

“Honestly, I don’t know if it was better or worse to keep it quiet,” he says now.

Tall and trim with graying hair, Moore says he has fully recovered physically from his ordeal, although it took more than a year. He laughs when he recalls that several Asian fishermen he was held captive with remarked, “Michael, you got fat,” when they saw him during an emotional 2016 reunion.

He still struggles with some emotional scars and takes part in a therapy called Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing, which involves concentrating on what happened to you while focusing the eyes.

“I don’t know if it’s trendy or cutting edge,” he jokes.

“At times, I think he still has very much trouble sleeping, although he says he doesn’t have nightmares,” his 78-year-old mother, Marlis Saunders, says in a phone interview from the Redondo Beach home where her only child grew up and became an avid surfer.

## Opera based on Pink Floyd album “The Wall” makes U.S. debut

**CINCINNATI (AP)** — An opera based on Pink Floyd’s album “The Wall” has made its U.S. debut in Cincinnati.

“Another Brick in the Wall” opened Friday at Music Hall. It premiered in Mon-

treal last year. Pierre Dufour’s production follows a rock singer named Pink, who relives pivotal moments in his life during a stay at a mental health clinic.

The opera includes all of the album’s

lyrics along with some melodic themes. Dufour says he believes the progressive rock album’s story of love and loss makes it a great opera.

“Another Brick” star Nathan Keoughan

has the task of diving into Pink’s “tortured” life. He says he believes many rock fans are attracted to the opera because of its creativity.

The opera will run through July 31.