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Behdad Salimi wins gold medal at Asiad



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ICJ begins hearing Iran's complaint against U.S.

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — The International Court of Justice on Monday began hearing a lawsuit brought by Iran against new U.S. sanctions ordered by the Trump administration. Iran last month lodged a complaint with the Hague-based tribunal, reasoning that the sanctions violate the terms of a 1955 friendship treaty between the two countries.

Iran on Monday demanded an ICJ order for the suspension of the renewed U.S. sanctions, and demanded compensation for damages incurred in their wake. Mohsen Mohebbi, Iran's lawyer at The Hague told the court that the new sanctions violated the 1955 U.S.-Iranian Treaty of Amity, Economic Relations and Consular Rights. **->2**

largest wind farm goes on stream in Qazvin

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian inaugurated the country's largest wind farm in the northwestern province of Qazvin on Monday, IRNA reported. As reported, the 61.4-megawatts wind farm was built in a year using the world's latest technology and knowledge and the

cost of implementing the project was €86 million. The farm is comprised of 18 turbines each of which will generate 4.3 megawatts (MW) of electricity. Speaking at the inaugural ceremony, the minister noted that wind farms account for over 45 percent of the country's total 650MW of renewable capacity. **->4**

Asia Cooperation Dialogue meeting opens in Hamedan

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Amid hopes to provide ample opportunities for development of tourism in Hamedan, the conference of Asia Cooperation Dialogue, titled "ACD Tourism Capital, 2018", opened in this ancient city in western Iran on Monday. Teemed with natural and historical sites, Hamedan has taken on appearance of the "capital of Asian tourism in 2018", which was approved in the second ACD

Tourism Ministers Meeting hosted by Cambodia in June 2017. The opening ceremony was attended by Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri, tourism chief Ali-Asghar Mounesan, ACD Secretary General Buntit Limschoon and invitees from Afghanistan, Iraq, Cambodia, Azerbaijan, Japan, Georgia, Vietnam, South Korea, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Spain. **->10**

ARTICLE
Mona Hossaini
 Journalist from Afghanistan

Women's critical role in Afghan peace process

The contemporary history of the South Asian region nearly always had a substantial component of conflict. Some examples include the India-Pakistan conflict over Kashmir that has been ongoing since 1947; the 1971 Bangladesh liberation war; civil war and rise of insurgency and conflict in Nepal; and the ethnic conflict and insurgency in Sri Lanka, among others.

In all these and other conflicts, women have been the most affected in terms of human rights violation, loss of social and political rights, and loss of dignity. There have also been some initiatives to prevent, manage and resolve conflict. Although peace processes have been initiated, women have not truly been part of it and often, their concerns remained neglected or unaddressed.

Meanwhile, Afghanistan has experienced different political changes and conflict and understanding the situation of women in different periods in Afghanistan could provide a comprehensive understanding on the overall status of women.

In the 2001, Taliban regime was ousted, and Afghanistan began moving towards a democratic form of governance. The Bonn conference resulted in the guidelines for peace, security and reconciliation in the country.

One of the key concerns voiced during this conference was on the issue of ensuring human rights. In addition to democratic values, upholding women's rights, too, was identified as a core component of the new government. Therefore, the Afghan government should assure women's participation in political and social spheres.

The Bonn conference laid the foundation of peace initiatives in Afghanistan. Although the Bonn conference was foundation of peace-keeping in Afghanistan, women's participation and role was not mentioned in this initiative. Given how women as part of the society were equally affected by war and conflict, they have a right to be part of the peace process and peace negotiation.

The Bonn conference followed by the 2003 Constitutional Loya Jirga. The Loya Jirga is the traditional grand assembly in Afghanistan and is convened to deliberate and decide on matters related to national interest. **->6**

JCPOA without U.S. has no technological benefit for Iran: Heinonen

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
 By Javad Heirannia

TEHRAN — Olli Heinonen, the former deputy director general for safeguards at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), tells the Tehran Times that civil nuclear cooperation is an important element of the JCPOA.

Heinonen, now a senior advisor on science and non-proliferation at Foundation for Defense of Democracies, also believes that "I can see the remaining JCPOA participants will have substantial difficulties in providing all technologies and equipment agreed."

Following is the text of the interview with Heinonen:

■ Some argue that the European Union laws do not have an effect to protect Iran against the impact of U.S. sanctions. In other words, the law



is a new version of the "Blocking Statute" that the European Union approved in 1996 to protect Cuba against U.S. sanctions. In your opinion, how much this law is effective to protect Iran against sanctions?

A: The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is not a nonproliferation agreement, but

a complicated detailed political understanding crafted with the hope to solve some longstanding nonproliferation problems. As such, it has faced difficulties in weathering the changed political landscape, which has been further complicated by the numerous trade related actions of the U.S. government particularly with its European and Asian partners.

The long anticipated U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA and the unwillingness of the parties until now to visit the well-known nonproliferation deficiencies has thrown the deal and its future implementation into uncharted territory.

European vision for trade is a free market with minimum control by the governments. In such an environment a government and even less the European Commission can force a company to continue trade relations with other partners if it is not in the interest of a company. **->7**

India looking at ways to keep importing oil from Iran

INTERNATIONAL **TEHRAN** — With New Delhi exploring different available options to maintain its bilateral ties with Iran in the face of draconian U.S. sanctions, a London-based international law firm has said that Iran's major energy consumers like India and China have given expressed inclination to find a way to go around the American sanctions and keep importing oil from Iran.

Some of the sanctions took effect earlier this month while other sanctions are expected to take effect from November. India, which shares historic ties with Iran and is one of the largest oil buyers from the Gulf state, has not yet decided whether to cut oil imports from Iran or not, given the tremendous American pressure.

According to a report in Hindustan Times, India is discussing with European Union (EU)

members to find a way out, apart from trying to convince the U.S. that its economic sanctions on Iran following America's withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal will have negative implications for the Indian economy.

"As the US continues to mount pressure on its allies to prescribe to unilateral sanctions on Iran, Iran's major energy customers, including China and India, have indicated their defiance to the US's request," the report quoted a statement from law firm Zaiwalla and Company Managing Partner.

"India currently has a competitive agreement with Iran for oil supplies -- the shipping costs from the Persian Gulf are minimal in comparison to the US, and Iran also offers a longer credit repayment period," the statement said.

Iran has become the third-largest oil supplier

for India, which imports more than 80 per cent of its energy needs. The experts in India have urged the Narendra Modi led government to continue importing oil from Iran and not buckle under the U.S. pressure. They believe stronger ties with Iran is in India's national interest.

"With countries including China and India unwilling to completely cut Iranian oil imports, and with the EU also refusing to endorse the withdrawal from Iran nuclear deal, the US finds itself in a compromising position to negotiate with Iran's customers to reduce oil imports," the statement added.

According to Hindustan Times report, India is likely to take up the issue with U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Defence Secretary James Mattis when they visit India next month on official visits. **->8**

ARTICLE
Chris Cook
 Oil expert

Energising Iran – Introducing the ECO.

There is perhaps no more crucial or contentious subject in Iran than the subject of currency, both domestically, and in international trade.

Modern money takes the form of promises or credit instruments issued by banks. Public credit money is issued (as banknotes and electronically) by Central Banks on behalf of national governments (typically a government Treasury department) and are backed by taxes on the productive capacity of a nation's land, resources, capital and people, which must be paid using public credit money. However - a fact little understood - private banks also create credit money indistinguishable from public money when making bank loans, and in most developed nations the majority of the money supply is based via banks upon the value of productive land and buildings.

Iran's monetary base is relatively weak for cultural reasons: firstly, taxation tends to fall on productive people, rather than productive land, since levies on wealth such as Zakat are distributed by religious rather than public institutions. Private credit secured on land (mortgage loans) is also restricted for cultural reasons compared to many other nations. However, Iran's greatest monetary flaw, and therefore greatest opportunity, is the failure to base currency on Iran's resource wealth generally, and oil & gas specifically.

The following proposal for an Energy Credit Obligation (ECO) has recently been put before Scotland's Parliament and since energy is a universal source of value, is now also proposed to Iran. The ECO will not compete with existing domestic currencies (Scotland uses the UK £ sterling), but is complementary to them, and is typically implementable with minimal change in the law. For service providers it makes commercial sense to share assets, costs & risk wherever possible and to compete only on quality of service.

■ **National Grid to Natural Grid**
 No-one consumes raw energy in physical commodity form such as oil and gas. What we actually use is "Energy-as-a-Service" - dynamic energy delivered over time, such as heat/cooling, power, mobility, electromagnetic radiation & light. **->5**



Women's canoe polo emerge victorious

SPORTS **TEHRAN** — Iran's women's canoe polo team defeated Malaysia 19-0 on Monday in the 2018 Asian Games underway in Indonesia. For the first time, eSports and canoe polo are being contested as demonstration sports.

Medals awarded in these categories will not count towards the final tally, but eSports will receive full inclusion at the Hangzhou Games in 2022.

The Asian Games, attracting more than 10,000 athletes, will run through Sept. 2.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Minister warns of the 'seven-headed dragon' of corruption

POLITICS TEHRAN — Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Javad Azari Jahromi has warned of the dangers of the "seven-headed dragon of corruption", saying E-government is the most important tool to fight corruption.

In an article published on the Iran newspaper on Monday, Azari Jahromi said, "Today, what makes people tired and frustrated more than anything else is hearing the news of the burning flames that come out of the mouth of this seven-headed dragon".

"If you cut one of its heads off, another stronger head grows back," he said, adding that the only way to fight the dragon of corruption is to be equipped with the most recent tricks, plans and tools.



Advisor hails Iraqi role in regional security

POLITICS TEHRAN — A senior foreign policy advisor to the Iranian parliament speaker on Sunday praised Iraq for protecting its independence, unity and territorial integrity in the face of foreign invasion and terrorist groups, highlighting the Arab country's role in stabilizing security in the region.

"Iraq has a major role in stabilizing security in the region," Hossein Amir Abdollahian said in a meeting with a group of newly-elected Iraqi parliamentarians, Tasnim reported.

These are a great achievement for the Iraqi people, government, parliament and religious leadership, the advisor remarked.



Police arrest 195 thugs in Tehran

POLITICS TEHRAN — Tehran Police Chief Hossein Rahimi has said 195 thugs have been arrested in the capital as part of the police's efforts to purge Tehran from vandalism, Fars reported on Monday.

"With God's grace and the cooperation of police officers and intelligence and security forces, in the past 24 hours the third stage of dealing with thugs and molesters was implemented," Rahimi said.

He further said that extortion, rape, destruction of public and private property, armed conflict, the use of hot and cold weapons and causing anxiety among the people were among the charges against the detainees.



IRGC provides dowries for 100 destitute brides

POLITICS TEHRAN — The Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) in Khuzestan Province has provided 100 destitute brides in Dezful with dowries, or jahaziyeh, which include furniture and household appliances.

IRGC Chief in Khuzestan Province Hassan Shahparvar said in a ceremony that helping the destitute and fighting poverty among other things have always been one of the missions of the IRGC, Fars reported on Monday.

He also said that in line with the instructions of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, all of the purchased items of the dowries have been chosen from homemade products.



Tehran, Riyadh might reach deal on Umrah hajj: report

POLITICS TEHRAN — Given the desire of the Saudi side to receive pilgrims of Umrah al-Mufradah from Iran, authorities with Iran's Hajj and Pilgrimage Organization have said that such progress is subject to the acceptance of the conditions of Iran from the Saudi side, Fars reported on Monday.

According to the report, Saudi officials are attempting to meet Iran's conditions in order to receive pilgrims from Iran for Umrah al-Mufradah pilgrimage.

Relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia was strained after hundreds of people, many of them Iranians, died in a stampede at the 2015 hajj rituals.



Erdogan, Putin to visit Tehran on September 7

POLITICS TEHRAN — Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin will travel to Tehran on September 7 to attend a summit on the Syria peace process, a report said.

According to a statement by the Turkish president's office, Erdogan will attend the third summit within the framework of the Astana peace process, Tasnim reported, citing Hürriyet Daily News.

Back in April, the presidents of Iran, Russia and Turkey — the three guarantor states of de-escalation zones in Syria — held a meeting in Ankara to discuss ways for peaceful settlement of the crisis in the Arab country.

ICJ begins hearing Iran's complaint against U.S.

1 -> He added the sanctions are corrosive to the Iranian economy and society, and further complicate the already volatile situation in the region.

President Donald Trump unilaterally pulled the U.S. out of the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran in May and ordered the most restrictive sanctions on the country.

Washington reinstated the first batch of sanctions in early August and will re-impose the second batch in November which will primarily target Iran's oil exports.

The United States' lawyers were scheduled to present their arguments on Tuesday. They were expected to argue that the ICJ

should not have jurisdiction in the dispute. The U.S. lawyers will reportedly claim that the friendship treaty signed before the Islamic Revolution in 1979 is no longer valid and that the sanctions Washington has levied against Tehran, do not violate it anyway.

The oral arguments, essentially a request by Iran for a provisional ruling, will last for four days, with a decision to follow within a month.

The ICJ was set up in 1946 to resolve international disputes. Its rulings are binding but on rare occasions they have been ignored by certain countries, chiefly the United States.



Rouhani to Macron: Transparency, speed needed to save JCPOA

POLITICS TEHRAN — In a phone conversation with French President Emmanuel Macron on Monday, President Hassan Rouhani of Iran said the remaining signatories to the 2015 nuclear deal should take more transparent steps accompanied by higher speed to save the agreement.

In May the U.S. unilaterally withdrew from the nuclear agreement, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and ordered sanctions against Iran.

"Iran has fulfilled its obligations under the JCPOA, and given the U.S. unilateral withdrawal from the deal, it expects other sides to give more speed and transparency to their plans to save the agreement," Rouhani asserted.

He noted that the remaining sides - France, Germany, Britain, the European Union, China and Russia - have heavy responsibility to save the nuclear deal after the U.S. withdrawal.

Rouhani also said, "Iran seeks to preserve the JCPOA, however, it will take other actions if Europe's plans to guarantee financial mechanisms, oil [sale], insurance and transportation fail to be clear."

Macron said that France will make any effort to save the JCPOA and will fulfil its responsibilities in this respect.



He added that Europe is making efforts to find financial mechanisms to preserve the deal.

Under the nuclear agreement, backed by the UN Security Council, Iran agreed to put limits on its nuclear activities in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions.

In a commentary for the Handelsblatt newspaper published on August 21, German Foreign Minister Heiko said "establishing payment channels independent of the U.S." can help Iran remain afloat economically and also helps European companies not to suffer under the sanctions.

According to Deutsche Welle, the German foreign minister also called for alternatives to the existing SWIFT payment transfer system.

Iran, Syria sign new deal for defense cooperation

Iran and Syria have signed an agreement on defense and technical cooperation during a visit by Iranian Defense Minister Amir Hatami who reiterated Tehran's commitment to the Arab country's security.

The document "will define the areas of bilateral presence, participation, and cooperation" in defense ties, said Hatami who signed the document with his Syrian counterpart General Ali Abdullah Ayyoub in Damascus Sunday.

Hatami said Syria has put the era of war behind it and has entered the era of reconstruction, stressing that Tehran hoped to have a productive role in rebuilding the country.

Ayyoub said through cooperation with Iran, "we will realize our national interests, and not allow any party or country to cause damage to the strong and firm relations of the two countries."

The Iranian defense chief arrived in Syria for a two-day visit on Sunday at the head of a delegation comprising senior military officials and parliamentarians.



Hatami met Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, praising the steadfastness of the Syrian people and government forces in their battle against terrorism, expressing confidence that they would achieve ultimate victory down the path.

The Syrian president said Tehran and Damascus had to outline plans to improve long-term cooperation in order to enhance the robustness of their nations in the face of the enemies.

At Damascus' request, Tehran has been providing military advisory support to the Syrian military fighting foreign-backed terrorism and militancy since 2011. The Islamic Republic says it will maintain the role as long as it is required by the Syrian government. (Source: Press TV)

'Replacing U.S. with Britain in redesigning Arak reactor not Iran's decision'

POLITICS TEHRAN — Behrooz Kamalvandi, spokesman for the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), has said that replacing the U.S. with Britain in redesigning the Arak heavy water reactor was not decided by Iran.

"Previously, China and the U.S. were supposed to deal with the technical issues related to the reactor, but Britain accepted the responsibility after the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA [the official name for the 2015 nuclear deal]," he

told the Young Journalists Club in an interview published on Monday.

Ali Akbar Salehi, director of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, said last week that the U.S. has been replaced with Britain in redesigning the Arak reactor.

"With America's unilateral withdrawal from the JCPOA Britain replaced the U.S. in the group tasked with redesigning the Arak heavy water reactor," Press TV quoted Salehi as saying in an interview with the IRIB.

U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew Washington from the nuclear deal on May 8 and ordered restoration of sanctions against Iran.

'Iran has 130 tons of heavy water' Kamalvandi also said that Iran has 130 tons of heavy water in storage and has sold extra amount.

"In spite of current pressure, we sold a good deal of heavy water and have also found suitable markets to sell it," he stated.

MP says U.S. sanctions provide opportunity for closer interaction with outside world

POLITICS TEHRAN — Alaeddin Boroujerdi, an Iranian lawmaker, said on Monday that the U.S. sanctions against Iran provide an opportunity to expand interaction with other countries, particularly China.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran is determined to expand comprehensive relations with China. There are very good capacities to expand rela-

tions in various areas of economy, politics, and culture," he said during a meeting with China's Ambassador to Tehran Pang Sen.

Boroujerdi attached great importance to the role of parliaments in expanding relations. He also said Tehran welcomes Chinese investment in Iranian industrial and economic projects.

For his part, Pang said that China is in-

terested in deepening relations with Iran and increasing investment in the country.

U.S. President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew Washington from the nuclear deal on May 8 and ordered restoration of sanctions against Iran.

The first batch of sanctions was snapped back on Monday, August 6. The second batch will be restored on November 4.

CNBC reported on August 8 that China condemned the measures reinstated against Tehran and urged oil and gas firms to reject calls for them to completely cut off from Iranian crude.

"China's commercial cooperation with Iran is open and transparent, reasonable, fair and lawful, not violating any United Nations Security Council resolutions," China's Foreign Ministry said.

Commander deplores presence of foreign forces in Persian Gulf

POLITICS TEHRAN — Commander of the IRGC Navy said on Monday that there is no place for foreign forces, like the U.S. warships, in the Persian Gulf, warning of the environmental problems that could arise by the presence of nuclear powered foreign warships in the Persian Gulf.

Speaking to reporters in Mashhad, Rear Admiral Alireza Tangsiri said Iranian forces are vigilantly controlling the country's southern waters in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, Tasnim reported.

He underlined that Iran's intelligence service is closely watching the enemy's moves in the Persian Gulf, saying that by dispatching nuclear vessels to the Persian Gulf, the foreigners are causing problems for Iran and other Persian Gulf countries.

The presence of foreign forces in the Persian Gulf disrupts the security of the region, he emphasized. "We have a message for our Muslim neighbors, and have announced several times that we extend the hand of fraternity to you (the neighbors) and believe that the Persian Gulf is our home, so we can ensure the security of the Persian Gulf and there is no need for the presence of foreigners like the U.S. and the countries whose home is not in here," Tangsiri said.

The Navy chief also said Iran has never launched any attack on other countries, and that the enemies have misrepresented the reality in order to deploy forces to the region and sell their weapons.

In remarks in 2016, Ayatollah Khamenei underlined that the security of the Persian Gulf region comes within the purview of the regional countries alone, and dismissed the U.S. claim of seeking security in the region.

First Announcement
SINGLE-STAGE INTERNATIONAL TENDER
GOVERNMENT TRADING CORPORATION OF IRAN

Government Trading Corporation of Iran (hereinafter referred to as GTC), affiliated to the Ministry of Agriculture Jihad of the Islamic Republic of Iran, intends to purchase 120,000 M/Ts 10 pct M/L raw sugar in two lots for shipment of first lot during November 2018 and second lot during December 2018 **on CFR basis, through single stage international tender.**


All qualified companies and suppliers who are interested to bid above tender are invited to receive tender documents from **29/08/2018 till 08/09/2018** from Trades & Tenders Committee located on the 4th floor of GTC building no 2, at No 225 Fatemi Avenue Tehran-Iran along with an official letter of introduction.

The bidders are required to submit stamped and sealed envelopes containing their offers latest by **13:00 on 09/10/2018** to the Tender secretariat located on the 7th floor no.12, DrFatemi square, Tehran, Iran.

The bid's envelope will be opened at **15:30 on 09/10/2018** in the presents of the bidder's representative in GTC's meeting's hall . (2th floor, No 225 Fatemi Avenue Tehran-Iran, Tehran, Iran).

Bid bond: bid bond worth EUR **304,468 (IRR 14,591,003,200)** .
Bid bonds may be deposited either cash or through an unconditional bank guarantee issued in Euros by renowned Iranian bank located in Tehran, 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.

For more information, you may refer to our website **WWW.GTC-PORTAL.COM** or contact us by phone No.00982188957477 (Foreign Trade Department).



U.S. seeking to use fake chemical weapons attack to strike Syria: Russian MoD

The Russian Defense Ministry has warned that the United States may use a fake chemical attack carried out by foreign-sponsored Takfiri militants in Syria's northwestern province of Idlib as a pretext to launch possible airstrikes on Syrian government forces.

"The United States keeps building up the group of cruise missile carriers in the Middle East region, connected with the preparation of a regular provocation with alleged 'use of chemical weapons' in the province of Idlib," Russian Defense Ministry Spokesman Major General Igor Konashenkov told reporters on Monday.

Konashenkov added that the destroyer USS The Sullivans armed with 56 cruise missiles had arrived in the Persian Gulf several days ago, while a U.S. B-1B bomber carrying 24 air-to-surface AGM-158 JASSM cruise missiles has been deployed at al-Udeid airbase in Qatar for this purpose.

Additionally, guided-missile destroyer USS Ross armed with 28 Tomahawk cruise missiles entered the Mediterranean on August 25, and the vessel is capable of hitting any target in Syria. The warning came only a day after Konashenkov said foreign special agents are preparing to commit major provocations in Syria by means of chemical weapons.

"According to the information that the Russian Reconciliation Center for Syria received today from the residents of the Idlib, English-speaking foreign experts have arrived in the Hbit settlement south of Idlib de-escalation zone to stage a 'chemical attack' using chlorine-loaded missiles," the senior Russian military official said on Sunday.

Konashenkov highlighted that militant rocket launchers will strike Kafr Zayta settlement within the next two days.

"The interested trans-regional forces are once again preparing major provocations



in Syria using poisonous substances to severely destabilize the situation and disrupt the steady dynamics of the ongoing peace process," he pointed out.

Meanwhile, the Russian Defense Ministry's press service announced in a statement on Monday that the Admiral Grigorovich and the Admiral Essen, two frigates of the Russian Black Sea Fleet, are heading to the Mediterranean Sea in order to bolster Russia's military presence in the region amid reports that the U.S. is preparing to strike Syria.

The U.S. has warned it would respond to a chemical weapons attack by Syrian

government forces with retaliatory strikes, stressing that the attacks would be stronger than those conducted by American, British and French forces back in April.

Early on April 14, the U.S., Britain and France carried out a string of airstrikes against Syria over a suspected chemical weapons attack against the city of Douma, located about 10 kilometers northeast of the capital Damascus.

Washington and its allies blamed Damascus for the Douma attack, an allegation rejected by the Syrian government.

Pentagon said in a statement that at least

58 missiles had struck Shayrat airbase in the western Syrian city of Homs. An unnamed U.S. official said Tomahawk missiles were used in the strikes.

The United Kingdom's Royal Air Force said four Tornado GR4s fighter jets joined in the operation, while France said it had deployed Mirage and Rafale fighter jets.

Russian General Staff spokesman General Sergei Rudskoy, however, said Syrian air defense systems had intercepted at least 71 cruise missiles fired during the U.S.-led aggression.

(Source: Press TV)

Myanmar generals had 'genocidal intent' against Rohingya, must face justice: UN

Myanmar's military carried out mass killings and gang rapes of Muslim Rohingya with "genocidal intent" and the commander-in-chief and five generals should be prosecuted for orchestrating the gravest crimes under law, UN investigators said on Monday.

The civilian government led by Aung San Suu Kyi has allowed hate speech to thrive, destroyed documents and failed to protect minorities from crimes against humanity and war crimes by the army in Rakhine, Kachin and Shan states, they said in a report.

In doing so, it "contributed to the commission of atrocity crimes", the report said.

A year ago, government troops led a brutal crackdown in Myanmar's Rakhine state in response to attacks by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) on 30 Myanmar police posts and a military base.

Some 700,000 Rohingya fled the crackdown and most are now living in refugee camps in neighboring Bangladesh.

The UN report said the military action, which included the scorching of villages, was "grossly disproportionate to actual security threats".

The United Nations defines genocide as acts meant to destroy a national, ethnic, racial or religious group in whole or in part. Such a designation is rare under international law, but has been used in countries including Bosnia and Sudan and in the ISIL terrorist group campaign against the Yazidi communities in Iraq and Syria.

"The crimes in Rakhine State, and the manner in which they were perpetrated, are similar in nature, gravity and scope to those that have allowed genocidal intent to be established in other contexts," said the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar.

In the final 20-page report, it said: "There is sufficient information to warrant the investigation and prosecution of senior officials in the Tatmadaw (army) chain of command, so that a competent court can determine their liability for genocide in relation to the situation in Rakhine state."

The Myanmar government, which was sent an advance copy of the UN report in line with standard practice, has not commented.

Contacted by phone, Myanmar military spokesman Major General Tun Tun Nyi said he could not immediately comment.

The UN panel, led by former Indonesian attorney-general Marzuki Darusman, named the Myanmar army's commander-in-chief, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, and five other generals who should face justice.

They included Brigadier-General Aung Aung, commander of the 33rd Light Infantry Division, which oversaw operations in the coastal village of Inn Din where 10 Rohingya captive boys and men were killed.

Reuters was unable to contact Min Aung Hlaing or Aung



Aung on Monday.

The massacre was uncovered by two Reuters journalists - Wa Lone, 32, and Kyaw Soe Oo, 28 - who were arrested as a result last December and are being tried on charges of violating the country's Official Secrets Act. The court had been due to deliver its verdict on Monday, but at a brief hearing earlier the proceedings were postponed until Sept. 3.

In April, seven soldiers were sentenced to 10 years in prison with hard labor for participating in the massacre.

The report said Suu Kyi, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, "has not used her de facto position as Head of Government, nor her moral authority, to stem or prevent the unfolding events, or seek alternative avenues to meet a responsibility to protect the civilian population".

Suu Kyi's spokesman, Zaw Htay, could not immediately be reached for comment on Monday.

The top UN human rights official Zeid Ra'ad al-Husseini has called the crackdown against the Rohingya a "textbook example of ethnic cleansing".

Suu Kyi's government has rejected most allegations of atrocities made against the security forces by refugees. It has built transit centers to receive Rohingya returnees to western Rakhine state, but UN aid agencies say that it is not yet safe for them to return.

Call for individual sanctions

The UN Security Council should ensure all perpetrators are held to account, preferably by referring Myanmar to the International Criminal Court (ICC) or by creating an ad hoc tribunal, the investigators said.

The Security Council should "adopt targeted individual sanctions, including travel bans and asset freezes, against those who appear most responsible for serious crimes under international law" and impose an arms embargo on Myanmar, they said.

The four other generals the UN panel said should be prosecuted were named as the army deputy commander-in-chief,

Vice Senior-General Soe Win; the commander of the Bureau of Special Operations-3, Lieutenant-General Aung Kyaw Zaw; the commander of Western Regional Military Command, Major-General Maung Maung Soe; and the commander of 99th Light Infantry Division, Brigadier-General Than Oo.

Reuters was not able to contact those four generals on Monday.

The panel, set up last year, interviewed 875 victims and witnesses in Bangladesh and other countries, and analyzed documents, videos, photographs and satellite images.

Decades of state-sponsored stigmatization against Rohingya had resulted in "institutionalized oppression from birth to death", the report said.

The Rohingya, who regard themselves as native to Rakhine state, are widely considered as interlopers by Myanmar's Buddhist majority and are denied citizenship.

"The Tatmadaw acts with complete impunity and has never been held accountable. Its standard response is to deny, dismiss and obstruct," the UN report said.

The report also criticized Facebook's response to allegations, including by members of the same U.N. panel in March, that the social media giant had been used to incite violence and hatred against the Rohingyas.

"Although improved in recent months, Facebook's response has been slow and ineffective. The extent to which Facebook posts and messages have led to real-world discrimination and violence must be independently and thoroughly examined," it said.

Facebook declined to comment in an emailed statement, saying it had not yet seen the report.

Facebook said in a statement issued 10 days ago following a Reuters investigative report into its failure to combat hate speech against the Rohingya and other Muslims that it had been "too slow" to address the problem in Myanmar and was acting to remedy the situation by hiring more Burmese speakers and investing in technology to identify problematic content.

International courts have a mixed record on prosecutions for genocide. In 2008, a UN court sentenced former army colonel Theoneste Bagosora, accused of masterminding the slaughter of 800,000 people in Rwanda in 1994, to life in prison on charges of genocide and crimes against humanity. His sentence was later cut to 35 years on appeal.

In 2016, former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic was convicted by UN judges of genocide for the 1995 Srebrenica massacre. He is appealing against the conviction.

The ICC issued arrest warrants for Sudan President Omar al-Bashir in 2009 and 2010 over his alleged role in war crimes including genocide in Sudan's breakaway Darfur province in 2003. He remains in office.

(Source: Reuters)

Israeli military can't avoid defeat in spite of advanced weapons: Nasrallah



The secretary general of the Lebanese Hezbollah resistance movement says the Israeli military cannot escape defeat despite its apparent capabilities, stressing that thousands of Israeli troops are now seeking mental health treatment.

Addressing his supporters via a televised speech broadcast from the Lebanese capital city of Beirut on Sunday evening, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah stated that even though Israel has greatly developed its arsenal and acquired state-of-the-art missiles and military hardware, it cannot yet escape defeat in any possible military confrontation.

"The Israeli army is incapable of recruiting a new generation of soldiers as the draftees lack any sense of motivation to fight. According to Israeli media reports, 44,000 Israeli soldiers sought help from psychiatrists last year. Israel cannot change the spirit of the defeat that is with its military personnel," he pointed out.

Nasrallah then praised Lebanese youths for the outstanding courage they demonstrated in battles to purge the country's border regions of Daesh Takfiri terrorists.

"Foreign media outlets are seeking to intimidate our nation by over-counting the number of our martyrs. Those who think they can overawe our people are delusional. We achieved full liberation of our border lands through sustained efforts made by Lebanese army soldiers and resistance fighters," the Hezbollah chief commented.

Nasrallah underlined that the United States has always offered financial support and funneled weapons to Daesh militants, saying, "U.S. forces intervened to stop Lebanese army from launching a military operation against Daesh in Joroud al-Jarajeer area (in western Qalamoun region). On one occasion, U.S. military helicopters even airlifted Daesh commanders from an area in Syria, when the terrorists had been besieged."

The Hezbollah secretary general noted that the U.S. does not care at all about the interests of regional states in the Middle East, emphasizing that Washington never stands by its allies and simply views them as tools in order to attain its own goals.

Nasrallah also warned against a false flag chemical attack in Syria's northern province of Idlib as a pretext for airstrikes against the Damascus government.

"While the West is looking for an excuse to launch a military aggression on Syria, it is turning a blind eye to the crimes being committed against Yemeni children. Nobody knows into what abyss [Saudi Crown Prince] Mohammed bin Salman is plunging Saudi Arabia and its nation," he pointed out.

Turning to Lebanon's internal affairs, Nasrallah stated that the inflammatory rhetoric against Hezbollah has intensified ever since parliamentary elections were held in Lebanon on May 6.

"The goal of the plot against Lebanon is to hold it responsible at all levels for the deteriorating situation in the country. We are modestly the largest party in Lebanon, but we have the least representation in the political arena. We bet on intra-Lebanese dialogue for the formation of the new government as the time is ticking away," he concluded.

(Source: Press TV)

Over 1,200 people killed in South Asia monsoon



More than 1,200 people have been killed across South Asia in monsoon storms so far this year, according to figures collected by AFP as India counts the rising toll from floods that have devastated southern Kerala state.

The monsoon, which lasts from June to September, causes widespread death and destruction across South Asia each year, with the tourist hotspot of Kerala suffering its worst floods in nearly 100 years.

Kerala has reported 445 deaths with more bodies discovered each day as a massive cleanup gets underway. The floods forced more than a million people to seek shelter in temporary relief camps and 15 others were reported missing up to Monday.

Kerala accounted for nearly half of the more than 1,000 deaths reported across India, with over 160 killed in neighboring Karnataka state, more than 200 fatalities in Uttar Pradesh state, and 195 in West Bengal, according to official figures.

The monsoon also battered Nepal, with 87 people killed since June, according to the home ministry, including a woman and eight children swept away by a landslide in a remote village.

But in Sri Lanka, where authorities organized the early evacuation of 750,000 people in threatened areas this year, the death toll from monsoon floods fell to 24 from 224 killed in May and June last year, official figures showed.

In Bangladesh, floods and landslides killed at least 29 people, according to official figures.

In the deadliest monsoon-induced disaster in recent years in South Asia, flooding and landslides killed around 5,800 people in India's northern Uttarakhand state in June 2013.

(Source: AFP)

Russia, Tajikistan deny any air attack in Afghan border clash

Afghanistan officials said on Monday a Tajik or Russian aircraft had bombed a northeastern Afghan border district during a clash between gunmen and Tajik border guards, but officials in both Tajikistan and Russia denied that they had done so.

Cross-border clashes are rare on Afghanistan's border with Tajikistan, compared, for example, with fighting along Afghanistan's eastern border with Pakistan.

The air attack followed a clash between gunmen and Tajik border guards in Durqad district of Takhar province, two Afghan officials said.

Khalil Asir, a spokesman for Takhar provincial police, said eight Taliban were killed and six wounded in the air strike after a clash

in which two Tajik border guards were killed. "It was not clear if it was a Russian or Tajik aircraft," he said.

Jawed Hejri, spokesman for Takhar provincial governor, also said it was not clear where the aircraft came from but he said the six people killed in the clash with Tajik border forces were drug smugglers.

An Afghan defense ministry spokesman declined to make any immediate comment.

A spokesman for Tajik border guards in Dushanbe said Tajikistan had not carried out any bombing and did not confirm the death of two border guards.

However, the official, who declined to be identified, said three Tajik forestry workers had been attacked by intruders from Afghanis-

tan. Two were killed while the third escaped. The official declined to give any more details.

Russia said its military aircraft had not conducted any operations near Afghanistan's border with Tajikistan, the RIA news agency cited the defense ministry as saying.

Much of the porous Afghan-Tajik border is in mountains and difficult for Tajik authorities to police.

Afghan government officials say Russian forces, including aircraft, help Tajikistan with security against the Taliban and other militant groups. At the same time, drugs from Afghanistan are smuggled to the outside world through Tajikistan.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid

said there had been a clash, and an air attack, but it was between drug smugglers and Tajik border guards and the aircraft bombed a forested area used by smugglers.

"Taliban fighters have no permission to clash with neighbor countries," he said.

Lieutenant-Colonel Martin O'Donnell, a spokesman for U.S. forces in Afghanistan, said U.S. forces did not conduct any strikes in the area.

A retired Afghan air force general, Atiqullah Amarkhel, said those responsible for the air attack should be identified.

"Afghanistan has no control over its air space due to a lack of facilities. U.S. forces should follow up the case," he said.

(Source: Reuters)

STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	140309.2
IFX	1578.17

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	48,859 rials
GBP	54,160 rials
AED	11,436 rials

Source: mehrnews.com

COMMODITIES

WTI	\$68.79/b
Brent	\$76.29/b
OPEC Basket	\$73.01/b
Gold	\$1,206.55/oz
Silver	\$14.83/oz
Platinum	\$796.60/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

Iran's largest wind farm goes on stream in Qazvin

Last week, Head of Iran's Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (known as SATBA) said that the capacity of generating electricity from renewable resources in Iran will reach 1100 MW by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2019), IRIB reported.



Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian inaugurating Iran's biggest wind farm in northwestern Qazvin Province on Monday

"With the new 450 MW of under-construction power plants being added to the current capacity, the capacity of renewable power plants this year will reach 1100 MW," Seyyed Mohammad Sadeqzadeh, said.

Renewables, including hydro-power, account for just six percent of energy generation, versus natural gas' 90 percent share.

Overall, in the next five years, Iran is aiming for a 5,000 MW increase in renewable capacity to meet growing domestic demand and expand its presence in the regional electricity market.

Non-oil exports up 13.7% in 5 months yr/yr

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iran exported 46.296 million tons of non-oil products worth \$19.318 billion during the five-month period from March 21 to August 22, with 13.7 percent rise from \$15.45 billion in the same time span of the past year, according to Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

IRICA data showed that gas condensate worth \$2.17 billion, liquefied propane valued

at \$845 million, low-density oils and their byproducts except for gasoline worth \$734 million, methanol valued at \$560 million, and polyethylene film grade worth \$496 million were the major non-oil products exported during the mentioned five-month period, IRNA reported on Monday.

China, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Iraq, Afghanistan, and India were the main export markets of Iranian non-oil goods during the five-month period.

Mining projects worth \$5.5b to become operational by Mar. 2019

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Projects related to mining and related industries worth \$5.5 billion are planned to become operational by the end of current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2019), IRIB reported on Monday citing the data released by the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade.

As reported, Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) and large private companies have put three major mining projects into operation since the beginning of current calendar year and some 28 other projects are planned to become operational by the yearend.

These projects will create 4,330 direct jobs and 43,875 indirect jobs, according to Somayeh Kholousi, the director for planning and strategic supervision in IMIDRO.

She further said that IMIDRO implemented 27 projects in the past year and put the worth of those projects at \$2.9 bil-



lion with creating 4,350 direct and 11,950 indirect jobs.

Iran is one of the top 10 mineral-rich countries where 68 types of minerals have been identified so far, including the world's largest deposits of copper, zinc and iron ore, which are tempting international investors.

The worth of Iran's minerals and mining exports stood at \$9 billion in the past Iranian calendar year, according to Mehdi Karbasian, the head of IMIDRO.

1,856 kilometers of new roads, railroads to be inaugurated

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Kheirollah Khademi, the managing director of Iran's Construction and Development of Transportation Infrastructures Company (CDTIC), announced in a press conference that 1,856 kilometers of new roads and railroads will

be inaugurated by the end of the Government Week (August 29).

As IRIB quoted him as telling reporters on Monday, some 98 kilometers of railroads, 300 kilometers of highways, and 1,460 kilometers of rural roads will be added to domestic

land transportation network by Wednesday.

Khademi, who is also deputy transport minister, informed that these new roads and railroads has been constructed using 17.65 trillion rials (above \$420.2 million) of state-run finance.



Iran imported \$13.693 billion of non-oil products in the mentioned time span, with 9.66 percent fall from the figure of last year. Auto parts worth \$882 million, rice valued at \$863 million, corn as livestock food worth

\$814 million, and soy bean valued at \$595 million were the major imported products and China, UAE, South Korea, India, and Germany were the main exporters of goods to Iran during the five-month period.

Privatization grows 100% in 5 months on year

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Privatization in Iran witnessed 100 percent growth during the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-August 22) compared to the same period of time in the previous year, according to the head of Iran's Privatization Organization (IPO).

As Mir Ali Ashraf Abdollah Pouri-Hosseini told IRIB, 25 trillion rials (about \$595.2 million) of state-owned shares were transferred to the private sector during the mentioned five-month period.

In late May, IPO published the list of the enterprises that their shares are planned to be transferred to the private sector by the end of current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2019).

As previously reported, in its planned budget for 1397, the Iranian government expects to earn some 106 trillion rials (about \$2.5 billion) of income from divesting shares of state-run companies to the private sector.

Implementation of privatization plan aimed at more productivity, investment making, job creation, promotion of trade balance, more competition in domestic economy, and reducing financial and management burden on the government has been under the spotlight in Iran over the past decade.

The law on implementation of the general policies of the Article 44 of Iran's Constitution on privatizing state-owned companies was declared in 2006 in a bid to downsize the government and promote the private sector's role in the national economy.

The government envisioned a large privatization program in the Fifth Five-Year National Development Plan (2010-2015), aiming to privatize about 20 percent of the state-owned firms each year. Under the present interpretation of the Article 44, some state-owned companies have been privatized to reduce their financial burden on the country's budget and also increase their productivity.

First Announcement



IN THE NAME OF GOD
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING

INTERNATIONAL TENDER NO. 97-06/165

Tender Holder:

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING (IRIB)

Subject of Two-Stage Tender:

HD Video Switcher for Project of SD to HD TV Channels 1,2,3 according to the tender documents

Deadline of Receiving Documents:

As of publishing second announcement of advertisement latest by the business hour dated on **Monday September 03, 2018.**

Place of Receiving Documents:

Secretariat of Tenders' Commission, Technical Purchasing (KALA) Dept., Media Technology and Development Deputy Office, Bldg. No. 2, IRIB, Jam-e Jam St., Vali-e Asr Ave., Tehran

Type and Amount of Guarantee for Participating in Tender:

The amount of **USD 67,143** which should be in the form of extendable bank guarantee

Time and Place of Delivering Priced Bid:

The sealed A, B & C packages/envelopes should be submitted within one main envelope marked with tender number no later than **15 p.m.** on **Saturday October 06, 2018** and submitted to the Secretariat of Commission of Tenders.

Time and Place of Opening Envelopes

The date of opening envelopes A&B is at **8:30 a.m.** on **Monday October 08, 2018** in the office of Vice President of IRIB Planning and Financial Resources and opening of envelope C will be after technical evaluation.

It should be noted that bidders should hold license from the authorized bodies.

For more information, please contact the following phone numbers: **0098-21-22166313**

It is obvious that cost of publishing two advertisements shall be borne by the winner of tender.

Public Relations Dept. of IRIB

First Announcement



IN THE NAME OF GOD
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING

INTERNATIONAL TENDER NO. 97-06/164

Tender Holder:

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING (IRIB)

Subject of Two-Stage Tender:

Jam-e-Jam Reserve Studio Equipment (Tehran IRIB Center) according to the tender documents

Deadline of Receiving Documents:

As of publishing second announcement of advertisement latest by the business hour dated on **Monday September 03, 2018.**

Place of Receiving Documents:

Secretariat of Tenders' Commission, Technical Purchasing (KALA) Dept., Media Technology and Development Deputy Office, Bldg. No. 2, IRIB, Jam-e Jam St., Vali-e Asr Ave., Tehran

Type and Amount of Guarantee for Participating in Tender:

The amount of **USD 55,429** which should be in the form of extendable bank guarantee

Time and Place of Delivering Priced Bid:

The sealed A, B & C packages/envelopes should be submitted within one main envelope marked with tender number no later than **15 p.m.** on **Saturday October 06, 2018** and submitted to the Secretariat of Commission of Tenders.

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Public Relations Dept. of IRIB

Oil holds gains as U.S. rigs decline at fastest pace since 2016

Oil held gains above \$68 a barrel on slowing American drilling and investor optimism after a breakthrough in a trade standoff between the U.S. and Mexico.

Futures in New York were little changed, following a 1.3 percent gain on Friday. Working oil rigs in the U.S. declined by the most since May 2016 last week, according to Baker Hughes data released Friday. Meanwhile, America and Mexico are poised to resolve their bilateral differences over the North American Free Trade Agreement as soon as Monday after breakthroughs on issues including automobiles and energy.

Crude has continued to trade below \$70 this month as a trade war between the U.S. and China, coupled with the threat of contagion from the Turkish currency crisis, has weighed on prices. Still, slowing American output growth and pipeline bottlenecks are adding to supply risks as President Donald Trump is set to impose sanctions on oil exports from Iran in early November at a time when stockpiles are shrinking.

"Falling U.S. rig counts and last week's decline in U.S. inventories are supporting oil prices amid a protracted U.S.-China trade war that could dampen global growth and weigh



on oil demand," said Stephen Innes, head of trading for the Asia Pacific region at Oanda Corp. "The markets will continue to get a fillip from U.S. sanctions against Iran."

West Texas Intermediate crude for October delivery traded at \$68.49 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange, down 23 cents, at 10:03 a.m. in London. The contract rose 89 cents to \$68.72 on Friday. Total volume traded was about 53 percent below the 100-day average.

Brent for October settlement traded at \$75.65 a barrel on the London-based ICE Futures Europe exchange, down 17 cents. Prices on Friday added 1.5 percent to \$75.82. The global benchmark crude traded at \$7.16 premium to WTI.

The Joint Technical Committee of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and other producers is scheduled to review oil-production cuts Monday. OPEC and allies are currently restoring output to 100 percent of a target set in late 2016 after a period of cutting supplies excessively.

Working oil rigs in the U.S. dropped by nine to 860 last week, according to Baker Hughes. Bakken operators led the way with a cutback of four in North Dakota. That's after nationwide stockpiles slid more than forecast in the week ended Aug. 17.

Meanwhile, the U.S., Canada and Mexico have been negotiating for a year to overhaul the 24-year-old Nafta at the insistence of Trump. He said Saturday on Twitter that his country could have a "big Trade Agreement" with its southern neighbor soon. Companies operating across North America have worried that some of the U.S. president's demands could hurt the region's economy. (Source: Bloomberg)

China's falling U.S. crude imports may have more to do with money than politics

One of the side effects of President Donald Trump's escalating trade dispute with China is that U.S. exports of crude oil to the world's biggest importer are now viewed through the prism of politics.

However, this ignores that buyers and sellers of crude are generally more motivated by profit margins and getting the right grades of oil to maximize the productivity of their plants.

While it's true they can't disregard politics, and this is especially the case for the state-controlled Chinese majors, it's worth looking at the economics of the U.S.-China crude trade as well.

U.S. crude exports to China appear set to slow dramatically in September, with vessel-tracking data compiled by Thomson Reuters Oil Research and Forecasts showing about 6.12 million barrels, or about 204,000 barrels per day (bpd), scheduled for arrival.

This would be down from around 363,000 bpd in August, and would also be the weakest month since March this year.

The slowdown in China's imports of U.S. crude has coincided with the imposition of tit-for-tat trade tariffs and speculation that Beijing would add crude to its list of U.S. products to be hit with import taxes.

That hasn't happened yet, although it would have been understandable for Chinese refiners to be wary of buying from the United States in recent weeks.

However, the pricing of the various grades of crude oil also offers an explanation as to why China stocked up on U.S. crude in August, and appears to have shied away in September, and probably October as well.

Arbitrage trades

Chinese traders would have been keen to buy West Texas Intermediate (WTI) types of U.S. crude for August delivery, given these cargoes would have been arranged in late May and early June.

The discount of front-month WTI crude oil futures to Brent futures widened to \$11.39 a barrel on June 6, and traded close to level for around a three-week period from late May to mid-June.

This means that Chinese refiners could buy WTI at a substantial discount to Brent in the paper market, which would encourage them to take physical cargoes from the U.S. Gulf.

In the physical market the difference between oil linked to WTI and oil linked to Brent wasn't quite as stark, but was nonetheless in favor of the U.S. grades.

Nigerian Bonny Light, a crude oil similar to, and priced against Brent, was trading at \$81.17 a barrel on May 22.

At the same time, WTI delivered at the Magellan East Houston terminal, as assessed by Argus Media, was at \$76.40, a discount of \$4.77 a barrel.

This level of discount is enough to offset the slightly higher freight cost of shipping to China from the U.S. Gulf as opposed to the west coast of Africa.

However, by the time September cargoes for China would have been arranged, the numbers had moved in the other direction, with Bonny Light trading at \$73.52 a barrel on June 25, putting it at a discount of \$1.47 to WTI Houston.

This would have made buying West African light crudes more attractive than cargoes from the United States.

While the Chinese refiners may have been under some political pressure to cut back on buying U.S. crude, it was probably something they didn't feel the need to push back on, given the profits weren't working anyway.

The current pricing isn't particularly supportive of Chinese buying of U.S. cargoes, with Bonny Light at a slight \$1.11 a barrel premium over WTI Houston.

For refiners prepared to offset physical trades in the paper market, the discount of WTI futures to Brent contracts was at \$7.05 a barrel on Aug. 24, widening from \$4.82 at the end of July.

However, putting the paper and physical pricing together suggests that U.S. crude is currently not a compelling purchase for Chinese refiners, compared to similar grades from other producers, such as those in West Africa.

While the trade spat between Washington and Beijing could worsen to the point where U.S. crude exports to China are rendered completely uncompetitive, in the meantime it probably pays to look at the underlying pricing to help judge the likelihood of whether exports will rise or fall. (Source: Reuters)

Putin voices support for LNG as fuel in Arctic

Russian President Vladimir Putin has spoken out in support of a proposal by Finnish President Sauli Niinistö to use LNG as bunker fuel in the Arctic.

"Perhaps, prohibiting black carbon, soot would be first and easiest step," Finland's President said, noting a transition to LNG as marine fuel instead of heavy fuel oil (HFO), reports PortNews. "President [Sauli Niinistö] has just said about the need to switch to more environmentally friendly fuels in the Arctic, and this is absolutely the right offer," Putin is quoted as saying.

The Clean Arctic Alliance has welcomed the news. Speaking on the Alliance's behalf, Alexey Knizhnikov of WWF Russia said that "the risks of using heavy fuel oil in the Arctic are too high, and we welcome President Putin and President Niinistö's vision and leadership in seeking to move to cleaner fuels for Arctic shipping. We should now expect that the Russian Federation's position on the HFO issue will be adjusted in line with President Putin's statement, and we hope to see these change in place at the IMO's MEPC73 meeting this October in London."

The Alliance says the use and carriage as fuel of HFO by ships in the Arctic poses two threats: that of spills and through the emission of black carbon. HFO is a greater source of pollutants such as sulfur oxides and particulate matter, including black carbon, than alternative fuels such as distillate fuel and LNG. When emitted and deposited on Arctic snow or ice, the climate warming effect of black carbon is believed to be up to five times more than when emitted at the tropics.

(Source: maritime-executive.com)

Energising Iran – Introducing the ECO.

Following the 1973 Oil Shock, when the oil price rose by 400% from \$3 to \$12 per barrel, Denmark (with an economy > 90% reliant on oil) faced an existential threat and implemented a new bipartisan energy strategy in order to achieve energy resilience, security and independence.

The organising principle of Denmark's resilience-focused energy strategy was that for any given use of energy as a service, the Danes would minimise consumption of oil as a commodity. Denmark therefore invested massively in renewable energy such as wind (creating a global leader, Vestas, founded on Scottish technology), in heat & power infrastructure (again building huge expertise and a technology base); a switch in mobility to cycling and efficient public transport; investment in buildings and so on. In other words the Danes put energy cost before financial cost.

What about the economic outcome? Surely this massive infrastructure investment – which broke all the conventional market rules – must have wrecked Denmark's economy? In fact, while Denmark's GDP has more than doubled since 1973, the Danes' energy use declined and carbon fuel use declined significantly, which in turn – as an unintended consequence – reduced Denmark's CO2 emissions.

So Denmark demonstrated in practice that to apply a strategic organising principle of least resource cost leads not only towards national resilience, energy security & independence but also to a transition to a low carbon economy. However: Scotland is not Denmark.

Denmark was able to achieve this transformation firstly because energy utilities were publicly owned, and secondly because Danish local government was well resourced fiscally through land value taxation. Denmark could therefore deploy public capital, directly and indirectly (eg through guarantees of bank loans to Coops) to infrastructure which private investors of debt and equity would have ignored. The Nordic commodity market in energy which has since emerged has discouraged investment further.

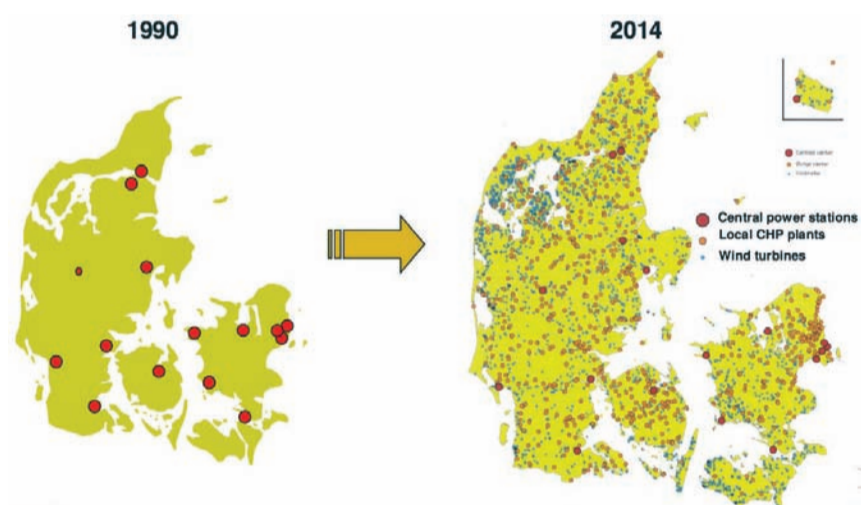
Iran has very different institutions to Denmark, through the distinction between public and well endowed religious institutions and top down implementation of energy policy from Tehran. So Iran needs innovative networked institutions and instruments to mobilise domestic energy resources and access international investment in Iran's transition to a low carbon economy and resolution of a water resource crisis which is becoming an existential threat.

This is where Financial Technology (Fintech) offers new possibilities.

Energy Fintech

The current wave of new data sharing/ authenticating protocols between machines (Blockchains) and financial instruments (Coins such as Bitcoin) have emerged completely outside the existing economy and have created what is clearly a financial bubble, akin to the historic South Sea Bubble and the more recent Internet Bubble.

In the same way that modern online businesses emerged from the Internet bubble, we now see Fintech evolve as this new digital layer is integrated with the real world economy, and



The above image strikingly illustrates how an organising principle transformed Denmark's energy infrastructure from a centralised National Grid, in 1990, to an emerging distributed Natural Grid in 2014.

nothing is more real than energy. This proposal to energise Iran brings to bear innovative legal design of the institutions and instruments which actually pre-date modern economies by millennia.

Energy Credit Obligation (ECO)

An ECO credit instrument is simply a promise issued by an energy producer in exchange for value received from an acceptor. An ECO holder has no right to demand payment in Riyals, dollars or euros, so it is not a debt instrument. There is no right to demand delivery of energy, so an ECO is not a derivative (forward/futures) instrument. The ECO confers no right of ownership such as a rent or dividend, so it is not an equity instrument.

Finally, it is not purely an authenticated receipt or proof of value received or expended without any additional obligation. So an ECO is not a Fintech Coin instrument like Bitcoin or Venezuela's flawed Petro, which confers no actionable legal claim over oil, still less over gasoline or other useful forms of energy.

The obligation of a supplier of energy services who issues an ECO is simply to accept this instrument in payment for his energy supply. So if a customer presents an ECO instead of Riyals or Dollars this will be valid payment for energy supply and an authenticated ECO cannot be repudiated, and Riyals or Dollars claimed instead.

There is nothing new about promises as a means of payment: this instrument pre-dates all others and has been routinely in use for millennia wherever people trust each other. Promises/credits form the unseen foundation of all economies even today.

The question is why should Iranians trust ECO promises? The answer is to innovate for modern use the risk, cost and surplus sharing agreements which pre-date Islam but which remain quietly in use wherever Iranians trust each other.

Local Energy Treasuries

A Local Energy Treasury will not be an organisation – there are enough of these already – it will simply be a local association of people and organisations who agree to create, operate, use and pay for new energy infrastructure. – a

local Natural Grid. The aim of an LET is energy independence and hence energy security and resilience for a locality.

There are three LET member classes: energy service users & producers (who use energy infrastructure); energy investors (who invest in ECOs as Energy Loans); energy service providers (developer/managers). In addition there will be custodian members who have veto rights of governance in the public interest.

Energy service users and investors delegate development & management, but retain veto rights of governance. The ultimate veto, is held by custodians so that energy infrastructure is held in perpetuity in the public interest. I call such an agreement Nondominium since no class of member has dominant rights to impose his will on others, and it is very much based upon Iran's Islamic constitution.

The LET agreement shares costs and surplus, particularly from development of new assets. It also shares risk through a mutual guarantee with transparent and authenticated shared accounting/clearing (Fintech) of acceptances by energy suppliers of ECOs issued by others. There is nothing new about such associative/club agreements: Scottish farmers innovated machinery rings and now compete on quality but collaborate on costs. Ship-owners have clubbed together globally for over 140 years in Protection & Indemnity (P&I) Clubs to cover risks that the insurance middlemen of Lloyds of London will not take. Such agreements are also at the heart of Islamic finance, but have often fallen into disuse but become corrupted.

What is the role of banks in the ECO system? Since banks are not energy suppliers they cannot issue ECOs, but there are two important financial services which banks can provide: firstly, as risk manager members of LETs overseeing transparent ECO issuance and clearing and secondly, in advising and bringing ECO energy investors together with ECO energy loan investments, both for new and completed assets.

Who will invest? Here the vast financial holdings of religious institutions may be used to energise Iran, and with the assistance of suitable tax policies & amnesties, once the ECO system gains public trust and international traction it

can be expected that domestic savings in dollars and euros will also emerge to purchase ECO both for exchange and investment purposes.

Local Energy Treasuries may be networked through membership of Regional Energy Treasuries covering a greater locality: so by way of example the Tabriz Energy Treasury would simply be a member of the East Azerbaijan Energy Treasury and so on to the national Iran Energy Treasury.

Energy Levies and Dividends

The most important aspect of the ECO is its effect on energy subsidy policy. Firstly, energy levies would be made on fossil fuel use at a sufficient level to equalise Iranian and international fuel prices. An energy dividend would then be distributed by Energy Treasury service providers probably via smartphones and local populations would be able to use ECOs in payment for energy and transport utilities, or save and invest their entitlement via Energy Loans.

In this way the inflationary consequences of dividends paid in Riyals are avoided, while Iranian consumers are incentivised to conserve energy use as much as possible.

ECO and International Payments

Iran's ability to export raw energy such as oil, gas and electricity enables Iran to exploit their innovations in the form of financial technology known as Energy Swaps, which Iran originated as the geographic Caspian Oil Swap followed by other category swaps such as Iranian gas for Armenian power.

Iran may simply swap flows of oil, gas and power with other nations, commencing with Caspian nations, Turkey and extending via Greece to Europe, thereby accessing EU goods and services. In exchange for supply (not sale) of oil, gas and electricity Iran may receive ECOs issued by international refiners and generators and which will be accepted by them in payment for the energy services they supply. In this way the ECO will become a generally acceptable form of credit instrument – which is the definition of a currency.

It is expected that energy cooperation between Russia, Iran and Turkey in respect of an ECO clearing system commencing in the Caspian region could revolutionise the regional economy, and rapidly evolve to a Eurasian Energy Clearing Union.

Outcomes

ECO energy credits are independent of location; implementable bottom up, rather than top down; have no nationality; and lead directly to energy independence and an energy economy. Iranian economic decisions made on the basis of least resource cost rather than least cost will lead to the creation of an Iranian Natural Grid.

As energy services markets spread by local implementation, they will extend via the Caspian to a broader international Natural Grid as the energy market evolves from a transactional commodity market.

So in conclusion, Energy Fintech and the ECO offer both a national and international currency to operate alongside existing national currencies. The extension of Fintech into other economic areas such as investment in productive land and people is another subject, to which I shall return.

Europe's unprecedented natural gas rally drives up power

Europe's natural gas prices have risen to their strongest level for this time of year, lifting the cost of electricity for factories and utilities.

Shaking off gloom depressing broader commodity markets, the UK benchmark for gas is nearing levels last seen in December when a key supply line exploded, and seven traders and analysts expect further gains. The move bucks the normal seasonal pattern of weaker prices in the summer when heating demand dwindles and contrasts with slumps in everything from oil to gold, sugar and zinc.

China's energy demand is drawing in cargoes of liquefied natural gas that might otherwise have stayed in Europe, firming the gas market at a time when power generators are demanding the fuel to meet rules from governments to lower pollution from coal. Those trends along with carbon emission prices at a 10-year high is increasing the cost of electricity in Britain to Germany and France. "You have a perfect storm," said Wayne Bryan, a senior European energy and commodity analyst at Alfa Energy Ltd. "I don't see any significant downside in the very near future."

There's no real end in sight for the rally, with a Bloomberg News survey of traders and analysts indicating that the UK front-month contract could reach levels last seen in December, when an explosion at an Austrian gas hub and outages at North Sea facilities crippled supplies and caused the biggest one-day price jump for the contract in eight years.

The market has picked up pace since the summer season started in April. The coldest winter since 2012 lifted demand for heating and drained storage tanks. Then, a heatwave across much of the northern hemisphere along with maintenance on pipelines and facilities feeding northwest Europe further tightened the market. Very little LNG was imported for consumption in the region, with most leaving for higher-demand markets in Asia and South America.

Gas held in European storage tanks fell below 20 percent full for the first time by the end of the winter, and even if levels have since increased, they are still near the lowest ever for the time of year with just five weeks to go before the official heating season starts in October. All that's left traders anticipating the rally in gas prices may have further to run.

"We had quite low stock levels by the end of the winter, and on top of this growth in demand we have to fill our storages for unexpected demand," Thierry Bros, a senior research fellow at the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, said by phone. "It's rebounding in Europe in a big way."

International AG. And unless there is an oversupply or lower demand in the winter, the gas rally is far from over, he said. (Source: Bloomberg)

NEWS IN BRIEF



Pakistan ex-president summoned over money laundering

INTERNATIONAL TEHRAN — Pakistan's Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has summoned former president Asif Ali Zardari and his sister in a Rs 35 billion money laundering and fake bank accounts case.

In July, the country's Supreme Court listed Zardari and his sister Faryal Talpur as beneficiaries in an alleged scam "running into billions of rupees" that led to the arrest of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) co-chairman's close aide and famous banker Hussain Lawai.

The FIA issued notices on Saturday to the former president and his sister to appear at the agency's headquarters in Islamabad. This is the fourth time they have been summoned, Dawn newspaper reported.

The court ordered the suspects to be arrested and presented before it by September 4. On August 18, the Islamabad High Court approved the former president's petition for protective bail in the case.

The FIA is investigating 32 people in relation to money laundering from fictitious 29 accounts, including Zardari and his sister Talpur. Zardari's close aide Lawai was arrested last month in connection with the probe.

With the change of guard in Islamabad, the cases of corruption are likely to open up again. The newly elected Prime Minister Imran Khan has vowed to fight corruption and clean the system.



Tajik aircraft bombs Afghan border after fatal clashes

A Tajik aircraft has bombed a northeastern Afghan border area after two Tajik border guards were killed in cross-border clashes with gunmen, Afghan officials say.

Citing local officials, Afghanistan's Khaama news agency reported on Monday that the air raid had targeted Darqad district in the northeastern Takhar Province of Afghanistan.

Khalil Asir, a spokesman for Takhar provincial police, said it was not clear if the aircraft was Russian or Tajik but that eight Taliban militants were killed and six others wounded.

Jawed Hejri, the spokesman for Takhar provincial governor, said those killed in the clash with Tajik border forces were drug smugglers.

"The identity of the drug smugglers is not known," Hejri added.

The Taliban confirmed the clashes and the bombing, but said it was investigating the incident since "Taliban fighters have no permission to clash with neighbor countries."

The group's spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the aircraft had bombed a forested area used by smugglers.

Tajik authorities have not yet commented on the incident. Cross-border clashes are not common along Afghanistan's border with Tajikistan.

(Source: Press TV)



Death toll in India floods reaches 445

INTERNATIONAL TEHRAN — The death toll from floods and landslides in the southern Indian state of Kerala has risen to 445, according to reports in local media. It has been described as the worst floods in a century to hit this flood-prone state of India.

Around a million people are still packed into temporary relief camps and 15 are reported missing even as the government mounts an operation to clean homes and public places that have been filled with dirt and sand left by the floods.

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan in a tweet said that more than 130,000 flood-hit houses had been cleaned, or nearly a third of those affected.

Authorities are also in the process of restoring electricity connections.

With death toll rising daily, Kerala authorities said "due process will be followed to ascertain if all these deaths are flood related".

Indian government has drawn flak for refusing foreign aid after many countries and global aid agencies had come forward with help for Kerala flood victims. Many Indian aid agencies are currently stationed in Kerala providing relief to the survivors who are putting up in makeshift tents.



Rohingya refugees mark one year in Bangladesh

INTERNATIONAL TEHRAN — Refugees in Bangladesh held demonstrations on Saturday to mark the passing of a year since the outbreak of a conflict in western Myanmar's Rakhine state that drove hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslims from their homes.

Putting up in tents in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazaar, protesters said they were living in worst conditions in the tents but feared to return back to their home country.

The government of Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi has come under sharp criticism for its handling of the situation. Many human rights organizations around the world have demanded that the country be put under sanctions and Kyi be stripped of her Nobel prize.

In a statement ahead of the anniversary, 132 sitting parliamentarians from five other countries in Southeast Asia issued a statement calling for Myanmar officials to face trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC).

The ICC is currently considering whether it has jurisdiction in the crisis. Bangladesh is a member of the court, but Myanmar is not. Last week, a delegation of Bangladesh officials led by Foreign Minister had visited Myanmar to resolve the crisis and facilitate repatriation of Rohingya refugees but reports suggest that the two sides failed to reach an agreement.

India, Pakistan to resume talks on Indus Water Treaty

INTERNATIONAL TEHRAN — With the political transition in Islamabad and the new government in place, Pakistan and India are expected to resume their talks on various aspects of the Indus Waters Treaty in Lahore on Wednesday.

It will be the first bilateral engagement between the two sides since the formation of Imran Khan led PTI government in Pakistan last week. Khan, in his victory speech, had vowed to resolve all outstanding issues with India.

India's Indus Water Commissioner P K Saxena will hold discussions with his Pakistani counterpart Syed Mehr Ali Shah on Wednesday, Dawn quoted a government official as saying.

The last meeting of the Pakistan-India Permanent Indus Commission was held in New Delhi in March during which both the sides had shared details of the water flow and the quantum of water being used under the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty.

In a letter to Khan on the day he was sworn in as Pakistan's 22nd prime minister, Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed India's resolve to build good neighbourly relations between the two countries. Khan also showed willingness to engage with India, and said Islamabad will walk two steps if India takes one step.



On July 30, Modi telephoned Khan to congratulate him on his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party's victory in the general elections and expressed hope that both countries will work to open a new chapter in bilateral ties.

The Pakistani side will reiterate its objections over two water storage and hydropower projects being built by India during the two-

day talks scheduled for August 29-30, media reports said. Pakistan would raise its concerns over 1000MW Pakal Dul and 48MW Lower Kalnai hydroelectric projects on the Chenab River.

The official quoted by Dawn said that the two sides would also finalize the schedule of future meetings of the Permanent Indus

Commission and visits of the teams of the Indus commissioners.

He said that the water commissioners of Pakistan and India were required to meet twice a year and arrange technical visits to projects' sites and critical river head works, but Pakistan had been facing a lot of problems in timely meetings and visits.

The two-day session is also expected to discuss ways and means for timely and smooth sharing of hydrological data on shared rivers.

The 1960 Indus Waters Treaty, brokered by the World Bank and signed by then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Pakistan's president Ayub Khan, administers how the water of the Indus River and its tributaries that flow in both the countries will be utilized.

Under the provisions of the Indus Waters Treaty 1960, waters of the eastern rivers — Sutlej, Beas and Ravi — had been allocated to India and the western rivers — the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab — to Pakistan, except for certain non-consumptive uses for India.

The talks over the long-standing logjam of Kashmir have not been announced yet. According to sources Khan led government is willing to discuss Kashmir but since India will go to polls next year Modi government would be war of opening the Kashmir chapter with Pakistan ahead of elections.

India looking at ways to keep importing oil from Iran

1 → Meanwhile, a report in The Hindu Business Line said that India is working to ensure that its bilateral ties with Iran suffer no structural damage. "India cannot afford to end its trade ties with Iran under any kind of pressure. We are talking to European Union members to find a way out, apart from trying to impress upon the US that blanket economic sanctions will have negative implications for the Indian economy," the report quoted an official saying.

The report said India maintains that the Iranian nuclear issue should be resolved through dialogue and diplomacy.

After the U.S. pulled out of the Iranian nuclear and announced new sanctions on Iran, India had maintained that it did not recognize unilateral sanctions by an individual country but only recognized UN sanctions. But later, media reports stated that India was considering cutting oil imports



from Iran to keep its relations with the U.S. in good tracks. However, the government has not come clear on it publicly. It has maintained that the final decision will be taken keeping in mind the national interests.

The Iran-India relations have improved considerably in recent years with growing energy partnership. In a recent interview, former Indian vice-president Hamid Ansari said India's relationship with Iran has been built carefully by all past governments as Iran for us is not just an energy supplier... For us, Iran is a land power on the other side of Pakistan that provides us with an alternative route to Afghanistan."

Ansari's words have been echoed by many politicians cutting across party lines who believe that stronger India-Iran ties are in the best interests of India and the region.

Women's critical role in Afghan peace process

1 → The Constitutional Loya Jirga was convened to ratify the new Afghan constitution. Although the constitution allows women to become the president, the constitution is also based on Sharia law, which restricts women.

In the 2004, Afghanistan held its first presidential election, and eventually women have begun to take active part in the election (voting, evaluating the process etc.). Women's activities during elections showed that they were undertaking efforts to play an active role in decision making.

As the Article 22, Article 43 and Article 83 of the Afghan constitution guarantees women's rights. The Afghan government has sought to demonstrate its support for women's rights by endorsing different international conventions such as: The Elimination of Violence Against Women In Afghanistan (EVAW) Law; the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); and the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (which addresses women's participation in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace building).

Despite the government's efforts, so far, women's participation remains very low in the decision-making and public spheres. The Afghan government is yet to produce a comprehensive strategy that can solve women's problems at the grassroots level and reduce the number of marginalized and excluded women throughout the country.

This situation suggests that mere commitments are inadequate to protect and boost women's rights if the government itself does not believe in the associated principles and values. The Afghan government assured women's participation under different strategies and plans. The National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA) envisaged a peaceful and progressive country where women have equal role and opportunities.



The National Action Plan (NAP 1325) on women, peace and security is one of the significant achievements of the incumbent government. Afghan President Ashraf Ghani supported this document as one of the Afghan government's budgetary documents for women's empowerment and participation in peace and security processes.

But the challenges for women in the peace process are manifold. In the High Peace Council, the highest peace-making body that seeks to push peace agenda with the Taliban, the numbers of women are lesser than those of men. All HPC members are nominated by the president, and president nominated only elite women in this council. The elite women who never experienced war cannot be the representatives of unheard voices of women

who lived in war and conflict.

Other challenge is the lack of national consensus on the peace process. There is a continuous negative propaganda about the peace process, which makes people, including women, lose hope. Female security and challenges of social norms are also many. Women's participation in the PPCs (Provincial Peace Council) is not the same in all provinces in Afghanistan. In some provinces dominated by extremists, women have limited options due to social barriers, lack of capacity, religious barriers, existence of tribal codes under which women do not have access to their own fundamental rights.

Meanwhile, female members of the PPCs face different types of violence and threats from insurgent groups. Some institutional

challenges are also there. The HPC itself is struggling with different challenges and problems such as a lack of qualified and educated HPC members for solving problems. The HPC members are not professionally trained in this regard, and therefore do not have the capacity to deal with the challenges and solve problems. On the other hand, the female members of the PPC are not yet systematically involved in the reintegration process. Therefore, dominant patriarchal structures at the community level caused women's participation in peace activities and even decision-making processes to remain symbolic.

However, as the prospect of negotiations with the Taliban draws closer, many women fear that they may pay a heavy price for peace. Reconciliation with the Taliban, a group with misogynist policies, has raised serious concerns regarding the possibility of peace.

Besides social norms that limited women's participation in the peace process, women were systematically excluded from major peace decisions.

Women as part of the society can play an active role in the peace process because women do not want their rights to be traded away during negotiation with insurgent groups. Despite the position of Taliban is unclear for this peace negotiation, according to latest news Taliban are changing their intentions for peace process over time.

Therefore, it is the responsibility of government to support and protect the women's participation in the peace process and decision making for aiming a sustainable peace in Afghanistan.

Author is a gender development expert with Afghanistan Justice Organization and has previously worked with many national and international organizations as research and advocacy officer, project manager, social science researcher, trainer, lecturer and author.

Facebook bans Myanmar military chief after UN report

Facebook has removed the account of the Myanmar military's commander-in-chief and a number of other pages tied to the country on the same day that he was singled out in a UN report for war crimes against Rohingya Muslims.

The US-based social media giant said Monday that it is removing certain Myanmar military officials from the social media website and an Instagram account to prevent the spread of "hate and misinformation" after reviewing the content.

"Specifically, we are banning 20 Burmese individuals and organizations from Facebook — including Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, commander-in-chief of the armed forces, and the military's Myawady television network," Facebook said.

"We're removing a total of 18 Facebook accounts, one Instagram account and 52 Facebook Pages, followed by almost 12 million people," Facebook added.



The report came just as the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar released a lengthy report on the crimes of Myanmar's military against the country's minority Rohingya Muslims.

The UN investigators said Myanmar's army chief and five other top generals should stand trial for "genocide" and war crimes against the Rohingya.

The report also lashed out at Myanmar's de facto leader Aung San Suu Kyi for allowing hate speech to thrive.

Last year, Myanmar's armed forces, backed by Buddhist extremists, launched a state-sponsored crackdown campaign against Rohingya Muslims in Rakhine under the pretext of a number of attacks on military posts blamed on the minority group.

The campaign forced some 700,000 Rohingya to flee to neighboring Bangladesh.

(Source: Press TV)

McCain is gone now but he was hawkish to the end

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
By Javad Heirannia

TEHRAN — Senator John McCain was one of the most influential figures in the American political and military structure. Washington's policies on Afghanistan, Iran, Russia and other countries was influenced by McCain's opinions. His influence on the Pentagon was also evident. His continuing violation doctrine in Afghanistan and his hostile views on Russia have restrained Trump from improving relations with Moscow. In the case of Iran, McCain was an advocate of regime change.

The Mehr News Agency has had three talks with McCain over the past years. An outspoken critic of U.S. foreign policy, it had written an analysis about Barack Obama's presidency addressed to Senator McCain. The logic of that analysis was based on several principles, including:

- The United States claims to support liberal democratic values. In the school of liberalism, domestic politics and foreign policy are not separate from one another, and foreign policy is the continuation of domestic politics. Why is foreign policy promoting and expanding its alleged liberal and democratic values beyond its borders contrary to the claims made by Washington itself?

- If the United States claims to support democratic systems, then the kind of security that they look at should prioritize "human security", but the country's approach is to emphasize state security. How is this justified in U.S. foreign policy?

In response to this note, Senator McCain said that he would consider it before making decisions and voting in the Senate, and will work with his colleagues in the Senate.

In his last interview of Mehr News agency in August 2017 the topic was the JCPOA. McCain was a serious opponent of it and, in the shadow of the presidency of Donald Trump, he and his associates were hostile to the JCPOA.

The full text of Mehr's interview with Sen. McCain was before the U.S. withdrawal from JCPOA by Trump:

After extensive negotiations for lifting sanctions on Iran in exchange for limits on its nuclear program, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action known commonly JCPOA was finally signed in July 2015 between Iran and the P5 + 1.

According to the agreement, the number of Iran's centrifuges has declined, uranium enrichment in key facilities is banned, and exploration and development of uranium in Iran are limited.

In July 2017, the Trump Administration confirmed that Iran had implemented commitments under JCPOA and announced that Iran was expected to remain committed to the nuclear deal. At the same time, the Trump Administration punished Iran for a recent missile test, and the U.S. Department of the Treasury imposed fresh sanctions on six Iranian companies linked to the



ballistic missile program.

Also, the Senate augmented not only sanctions against Iran, but also against Russia and North Korea.

McCain said:

I believe that Iran should be held accountable for its actions by imposing new sanctions on its ballistic missile program, imposing sanctions on the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, imposing sanctions on Iranians accused of human rights abuses and intensifying sanctions on Iran for its violations of the arms embargo.

It's time that the United States and the international community held Iran responsible for its dangerous behaviors! And I am very pleased that the bill was approved by a decisive vote of the two parties in the Senate.

U.S. foreign policy against Iran has been plain for nearly forty years, including the following: Imposing limiting measures towards the Islamic Republic of Iran and its influence in the region, strengthening Israel and U.S.'s Arab allies, reducing regional tensions and preventing Iran from having nuclear weapons in the future.

I will work with my colleagues in the congress to pressure Iran to stop supporting terrorism around the world, to reduce all its abusive activities across the region and the release of American prisoners in Iran.

McCain also had a conversation with Mehr News Agency during the nuclear talks in 2015:

Over the course of several years, the U.S. Congress has spoken out on Iran's nuclear program and has been leading the sanction initiative against the country. In the meantime, economic sanctions against Iran have increased the willingness of the country to negotiate. On November 23rd, 2013, the Iranian government agreed to stop its proliferation of nuclear programs for the temporary lifting of

sanctions and enter into intensive negotiations for a nuclear deal that could ultimately lead to a peaceful nuclear program.

Although this agreement has been able to reduce the speed of Iran's nuclear program, I am worried about the serious issues in the proposed agreement, which includes continuing the growth of Iran's centrifuge program with high potential for producing atomic bombs. I also want to know the military dimensions of the program. Moreover, this seems not to provide a long-term solution to Iran's nuclear intentions. If this "comprehensive agreement" expires, Iran may resume its nuclear weapons program.

Worse still, it's not a guarantee that, in the event of any nuclear agreement, Iran will cease to support terrorism and other negative activities that currently threaten our friends and allies in the Middle East and endangers our national security interests.

For these reasons, I support the so-called "S.269" plan to extend sanctions against Iran. The law enforces new sanctions against the country while negotiations are underway to reach a final agreement. In addition, the law allows Congress to monitor any agreement, and if Iran sanctions are to be re-enforced, or its failure to reach a final agreement or refraining it from complying with its commitments and continuing its efforts to build a nuclear bomb. This law was announced on January 27, 2015, and is currently under review at the Banking, Housing, and Urban Planning Committee.

I recently supported the "S.615" project, which included a Congressional review and monitoring of an Iran Nuclear Agreement. The bipartisan resolution requires the president to submit a full text of any agreement with Iran to Congress. It would also stop the government from suspending Congressional sanctions if Congress were to conclude

that the agreement did not provide for our national security interests.

In addition, I am sending a letter to the President in line with the goals of Sen. Lindsey Graham and Robert Menendez, and I set out the fundamental principles that must be taken into account in any comprehensive agreement with Iran over the nuclear program. The conditions include the dismantling of Iranian enrichment facilities, the removal of concerns expressed by the UN Security Council and the approval of focused inspections to ensure that Iran does not seek to develop any nuclear weapons.

The deadline for reaching the comprehensive nuclear agreement was November 24, 2014. This deadline has now been extended to July 1, 2015 for another seven months. My concern is that these long-term talks have not yielded any result in stopping Iran's nuclear goals and have opposed the international community with the wrong security response.

I emphasize that I will continue to work with other colleagues in Congress to continue the pressure on the Iranian government to prevent the consequences of its horrendous activities. I would also press the President to ensure that any nuclear deal with Iran will be completely transparent and accountable to the American people.

In international affairs, McCain was also a serious critic of Donald Trump's foreign policy in some areas. One of these areas was the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement. The Trans-Pacific Partnership is a defunct proposed trade agreement between Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, Vietnam, and United States. Trump pulled out of the deal, and McCain was a critic of this decision.

McCain had an interview with Mehr News Agency in 2016 and explained his views on TPP:

"As you may know, the TPP Treaty is a free trade agreement between the United States and 11 Pacific countries, including Australia, Vietnam, Japan, Singapore and New Zealand. The talks on this important pact ended on the fifth day of October 2015."

I strongly support the reduction of barriers to trade and see this as an opportunity for the American workforce. The global economy continues to sustain itself and we have limited our capacities and potentials if we fence ourselves in and do not have foreign competition. In fact, the "competition" makes us stronger. We can compete and win. Or we can ignore this principle.

Lowering barriers to trade plays an important role in creating better jobs and higher wages. Free trade also helps consumers who are low or middle income to be able to afford more money and can buy more goods. For the reasons I've mentioned, I strongly support the TPP pact and I'm eager to see Congress approve it.

I also support TPP because the treaty goes beyond

a trade treaty. It is in fact a treaty and strategic agreement between the United States and many countries in the Asia-Pacific region that is necessary and complementary to the continued security and welfare of the United States of America. TPP approval sends this message to both our allies and rivals that the United States will remain active as a strong and committed actor in Asia.

The treaty strengthens U.S. security relations with countries such as Japan, Malaysia, Vietnam and Australia, and will provide a balance between China and the United States, if U.S. fails to compete with it, China's supportive policies will dominate.

The TPP Agreement also provides an important opportunity to expand Arizona business relations at an international level worth \$19 billion, stimulating economic growth and employment, and lowering prices for U.S. consumers.

At the moment, Arizona companies that are engaged in international trade with Asia-Pacific countries have a tremendous tariff of 70 percent and face other barriers to trade in exporting some products and services to many countries in the region.

The TPP Treaty will remove these barriers and enable Arizona's businesses to expand its exports to the Asia-Pacific region and motivate new producers to enter and emerge in these emerging markets.

Early estimates suggest that the trade agreement will create 17,000 new jobs for Arizona and will significantly increase foreign direct investment in the state. I am aware that some people are worried about President Obama's request for a TPA (Free Trade Promotion Act) -- also known as the fast-track authority facilitating trade, as a way to facilitate the adoption of TPP and other business agreements.

However, with the introduction of the TPA to President Obama, the Congress will influence the President and will set some parameters for business talks and determine the goals to be taken into consideration in the final agreement.

I believe that TPA was an important rule that enabled the President to negotiate TPP in a transparent and accountable manner.

Now the talks have come to an end, and Congress will fully examine the final treaty to ensure that TPP will provide America's economic priorities in the best possible way.

While there may be months before the final design of the agreement and negotiation on raising the standards of the agreement is done, I am looking forward to a strong TPP agreement to reduce barriers to trade and open new markets and promote U.S.-made exports, and will be able to make American companies more competitive in one of the most important economic and high-growth regions, the Asia-Pacific.

McCain is now dead from brain cancer. His hawkish views had a lot of critics inside and outside the United States.

U.S. seeking 'Regime Change' in Iran by forming IAG: American pundit

TEHRAN (Tasnim) — A former U.S. Senate foreign policy analyst said President Donald Trump's recent move to create an Iran Action Group (IAG) is "another turn of the screw in pursuit of the objective of regime change" in the Islamic Republic.

"The formation of this group can only be regarded as another turn of the screw in pursuit of the objective of regime change," Washington-based political analyst James Jatras said in an interview with the Tasnim News Agency.

James George Jatras is Deputy Director of the American Institute in Ukraine, a privately funded American NGO. Based in Washington, DC, he is a former U.S. diplomat and adviser to the U.S. Senate Republican leadership.

The full text of the interview with Jatras is as follows:

■ As you know, the U.S. government's hostility toward Iran has recently entered a new stage. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has formed a dedicated group to coordinate and run the country's policy towards Iran following President Donald Trump's unilateral withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal with Tehran. Pompeo announced the creation of the Iran Action Group (IAG) at a news conference, naming Brian Hook, the Department of State's director of policy planning, as its head. What do you think about the group and its objectives and do you think that it would be able to reach its goals?

A: The formation of this group can only be regarded as another turn of the screw in pursuit of the objective of regime change. Remember that on July 22, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo delivered a speech from the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, California, in which he clearly sought to evoke the fall of communism, casting the Ayatollahs in the role of Leonid Brezhnev and company. While Iranian "regime change" is not the publicly stated goal of the Trump Administration's policy, it is hard to see how U.S. demands on Tehran don't amount




to exactly that, with Pompeo comparing the Iranian "regime" (a term used dozens of times to imply illegitimacy) to a "mafia." He asserted that Iran's behavior is "at root in the revolutionary nature of the regime itself." What can change its "root" or "nature" without ceasing to be itself? Pompeo demanded not just a total change in policy from Tehran but a different mode of governance amounting to Iran's ceasing to be an independent regional power. The Reagan venue's analogy to the collapse of communism in the USSR and Eastern Europe echoed in the Secretary's heavy emphasis on "a new 24/7 Farsi-language TV channel" spanning "not only television, but radio, digital, and social media format, so that the ordinary Iranians inside of Iran and around the globe can know that America stands with them." Let's also keep in mind reports of a Trump-Netanyahu "strategic work plan" to counter Iran following a December 12, 2017, White House meeting and, before that in June 2017, the appointment of the "Dark Prince," "Ayatollah Mike," the "Undertaker" and convert to (Sunni) Islam Michael D'Andrea to run the CIA's Iran operation. (One Langley insider's simple comment on the D'Andrea appointment: "All I can say is that war with Iran is in the cards.") This is a coordinated, strategic effort using every lever of national power to achieve its objective.

■ The Trump administration recent-


ly threatened to cut Iranian oil exports to zero, saying that countries must stop buying its oil from Nov. 4 or face financial consequences. Washington later softened its threat, saying that it would allow reduced oil flows of Iranian oil, in certain cases. Since oil is a strategic product and countries around the world always demand it, do you think that the U.S. is able to carry out this threat at all?

A: I don't know. Certainly, they will try. Some countries, notably India, will largely succumb to U.S. threats, but Washington will be hesitant to push New Delhi too hard because of other plans with respect to China in the so-called "Indo-Pacific Region." China will, of course, be defiant. Beijing has very little to gain by trying to appease Washington in light of all of the other issues between them, especially on tariffs. On the other hand, certain countries like Japan and South Korea may be discouraged from buying Iranian oil simply by U.S. disapproval, without even the need to threaten sanctions. The real issue is Europe, which generally likes to talk bravely but then submits to whatever the U.S. demands. Total's pullout is indicative of which way things will go. It is also unclear yet whether the U.S. will push SWIFT to bar transactions with Iran or will back off for fear of injuring the global financial system. With regard to world oil supply, the U.S. will try to manage the market in cooperation with the Saudis, though it is hard to predict how successful that will be. If the result is a rise in oil prices some producers will be pleased with that, including in the U.S. and Russia.

■ Trump's threat is part of his walking away from the Iran nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). He also plans to fully reinstate anti-Tehran sanctions from November 4. In the meantime, the EU has vowed to counter Trump's renewed sanctions on Iran, including by means of a new law to shield European companies from punitive measures. →13



N.I.O.C
1397.2453



National Iranian Drilling Company

Call for public tender (First/Second publish)
One -Stages tender
Subject of Tender: CAMESA LOGGING CABLE

The Tender holder	Registration No. through national electronic tendering system	Tender No. /Indent No.	Estimated value (Rial)
National Iranian Drilling Company	3,172,797	Tender No.: FP/09-97/024 Indent No.: 01-23-9646000	9,284,000,000

- Qualitative evaluation of tenderers

Method	<input type="checkbox"/> The evaluation will be made subject to submission of needed certificates in meeting for opening the received tenderer's proposals.
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- Purchasing & Submitting

Tender Document Distribution by Company	The distribution of the documents will be started one day after the publishing of second advertisement and ended on the following tenth day thereof.		
Distribution Place	Hall No.:113, 1 st floor, Foreign Procurement Dept., National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN		
Submitting Method	Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt in the amount of 510,000 Iranian Rials under account number 4001114004020491 (shaba no. IR 520100004001114004020491) in name of "NIDC Incomes Centralized Fund" issued by I.R. of Iran Central Bank. Submitting format Request for the purpose of receiving Tender Documents		
Documents Receiving Method	Closing date	35Days after the last time of Purchasing	
	Address	Hall No. 107, 1 st floor, Tender Committee, Operation building, National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN. Tel: +98-61-34148580 +98-61-34148569	

- Tender Guarantee

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Type of guarantee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank guarantees or guarantees issued by non-bank institutions that obtain activity license from the central bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt under account number 4001114006376636 (shaba no. IR 350100004001114006376636) in name of "NIDC saving account" by the central bank of Islamic Republic of Iran.		
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Cardio boosts metabolism more than strength training, study claims

When it comes to the world of exercise, no debate is as contentious as cardio vs strength training.

While some fitness aficionados will happily endure hour-long slogs on the treadmill, others will turn their noses up at anything cardiovascular, choosing instead to spend their workout time lifting heavy weights and 'getting their pump on'.

As for which form of training is superior, there is no clear winner as this largely depends on your fitness goals and basic preferences.

However, despite claims that strength training burns more calories than its cardio counterpart, a new study has revealed that cardio training may offer more benefits in terms of metabolism.

Researchers at the University of Copenhagen examined the differences between levels of hormone production after a group of participants completed both strength training and weight training programmes to see how they compared.

Published in the Journal of Clinical Investigation Insight, the study involved 10 healthy young men who were divided into two groups, completing either strength or weight training once a week.

Those doing cardio completed their exercise on a bicycle while those doing strength training did a weights-based programme consisting of five exercises, each of which



had to be repeated 10 times, designed to work each of the major muscle groups such as the chest, biceps, triceps and quads.

After completing the workouts, which lasted 60 minutes each, blood samples were taken over a four-hour period to measure participants' levels of lactic acid, bile, blood

sugar and the different levels of hormones in their body.

The analysis revealed that those who had been cycling experienced a significant increase in the production of the hormone FGF21, which offers numerous positive effects on one's metabolism, the process by which our

body converts food into energy.

Boosting one's metabolic rate can be beneficial because the higher your metabolism, the more calories you burn at rest, which can help promote weight loss.

Those who trained on the exercise bike had three times as large an increase in FGF21 production compared to those who did strength training, who experienced no particular changes with regards to production of that particular hormone.

"Of course it is very exciting for us researchers to see how different forms of physical activity actually affect the body differently," comments co-author Christoffer Clemmensen, associate professor from the Novo Nordisk Foundation Center for Basic Metabolic Research.

"We have known about the effects of various forms of training on more well-known hormones like adrenalin and insulin for a long time, but the fact that strength training and cardio exercise affect FGF hormones differently is new to us," he added.

Clemmensen explained that the results could be significant with regards to ongoing research into FGF21's potential to be used as a drug to combat diabetes, obesity and other metabolic disorders.

"The fact that we are able to increase the production ourselves through training is interesting," he concluded.

(Source: The Independent)

Six to eight hours of sleep best for the heart, says study

Six to eight hours of sleep a night is most beneficial for the heart, while more or less than that could increase the risk of coronary artery disease or a stroke, researchers have suggested.

The study, presented at the European Society of Cardiology Congress in Munich, indicates sleep deprivation and excessive hours in bed should be avoided for optimum heart health.

The study's author, Dr Epameinondas Fountas of the Onassis cardiac surgery centre in Athens, said: "Our findings suggest that too much or too little sleep may be bad for the heart."

"More research is needed to clarify exactly why, but we do know that sleep influences biological processes like glucose metabolism, blood pressure, and inflammations - all of which have an impact on cardiovascular disease."



Data from more than a million adults from 11 studies was analysed as part of the research.

Compared with adults who got six to eight hours of sleep a night, "short sleepers" had an 11% greater risk, while "long sleepers" had 33% increased risk over the next nine years.

Fountas added: "Having the odd short night or lie-in is unlikely to be detrimental to health, but evidence is accumulating that prolonged nightly sleep deprivation or excessive sleeping should be avoided."

Emily McGrath, senior cardiac nurse at the British Heart Foundation, said: "When it comes to our heart and circulatory health, this large study suggests that there may be a sweet spot between getting too much and getting too little sleep."

"This research needn't trigger alarm bells for those of us partial to a sleepless night or a weekend lie-in. However, if you regularly struggle with your sleep, it's an important reminder to speak to your GP."

"As well as having a negative impact on your quality of life, a lack of sleep could also be contributing to heart problems further down the line."

(Source: The Guardian)

'Good' cholesterol: How much is too much?

New research challenges the popular belief that high-density lipoprotein cholesterol, also known as the "good" kind, is beneficial to one's health, regardless of its levels.

Physicians typically advise that people maintain high levels of high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol on the basis of the assumption that it prevents heart disease and stroke.

This protective effect is thought to be due to the HDL molecules, which "flush" cholesterol from the blood into the liver and out of the body.

However, little is known about people with very high levels of this type of cholesterol.

In fact, some recent research has suggested that high levels of it may actually raise the risk of premature mortality.

A new study reinforces this idea. It was presented by Dr. Marc Allard-Ratick, of the Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta, GA, at the European Society of Cardiology Congress, held in Munich, Germany.

Time to change how we see HDL cholesterol

Dr. Allard-Ratick and colleagues examined the link between "good" cholesterol levels and the risk of heart attack and cardiovascular death in almost 6,000 individuals aged 63 years, on average.

Most had heart disease; the researchers followed them up over the course of 4 years, grouping them according to their levels of HDL cholesterol, measured in milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL).

During the follow-up period, 13 percent of the participants experienced a heart attack or died from cardiovascular disease.

Participants whose HDL cholesterol levels were 41-60 mg/dL were the least likely to experience a heart attack or die from a cardiovascular event.

However, for people with very low HDL cholesterol levels (less than 41 mg/dL) and those with very high levels (higher than 60 mg/dL), the risk of adverse cardiovascular events and death increased.

Specifically, people with cholesterol levels higher than 60 mg/dL were almost 50 percent more likely to have a heart attack or die from cardiovascular disease than those with levels at 41-60 mg/dL.

Dr. Allard-Ratick comments on these findings. "Our results," he explains, "are important because they contribute to a steadily growing body of evidence that very high HDL cholesterol levels may not be protective, and because unlike much of the other data available at this time, this study was conducted primarily in patients with established heart disease."

"It may be time to change the way we view HDL cholesterol. Traditionally, physicians have told their patients that the higher your 'good' cholesterol, the better. However, the results from this study and others suggest that this may no longer be the case."

He cautions that the reasons for the associations revealed remain unclear; but, he speculates, "one possible explanation is that extremely elevated HDL cholesterol may represent 'dysfunctional HDL' which may promote rather than protect against cardiovascular disease."

(Source: Medical News Today)

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nice cases ready to move in.

Air ticket prices still high: tourism chief



HERITAGE TEHRAN — Iran's tourism chief has said that ticket prices for domestic flights are still steep, warning that it could inflict damage to the tourism industry.

"It is true that prices have been lowered but prices of airline tickets are still high and it does not help the country's tourism industry because it is expensive," Ali-Asghar Mounesan told Mehr on Sunday.

He also reminded that the capped rates are unable to revive the market and further cuts are needed.

Prosperity of air transportation and tourism in general are in tandem, Mounesan remarked.

"If there are not enough passengers, the flights would become unprofitable that ultimately undermines its economic prosperity."

Mounesan, who doubles as vice president, added, "I have given my request to the President [Hassan Rouhani] with a hope of arriving at a decision, which considers interests of the people and passengers yet not to harm the air transport industry."

Iranian airlines on Saturday capped ticket prices for domestic flights in a meeting organized with the Iran Civil Aviation Organization in order to boost demand in the aviation market.

Iran's currency plunged to records low over the past couple of months, dropping past 100,000 rials to the U.S. dollar. The Trump administration is restoring sanctions against the country, mainly targeting Tehran's oil revenues. The devaluation of national currency led domestic airlines' ticket prices go up by 70% to 100%.

First proof of ancient early human hybrid found in Siberian cave

Scientists have found concrete evidence of interbreeding between different species of early humans.

In 2012, a bone fragment from a teenage girl who died some 90,000 years ago was recovered from the Denisova cave in Siberia's Altai Mountains, according to a new study published in Nature.

Analysis of the genome conducted at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology revealed that the girl was a hybrid — her mother was a Neanderthal while her father was Denisovan.

Denisovans are a hominin group distinct from Neanderthals and modern humans. Only a few of their bone fragments have been found, so their appearance and behavior remain a mystery.

Researchers did find that this particular Denisovan had some Neanderthal ancestry, while the mother was genetically closer to Neanderthals in western Europe than to one who had lived in the cave earlier.

Scientists knew from looking at the genetic patterns of ancient humans and homo sapiens that the different groups mated with each other, but the findings mark the first time a first-generation offspring of these pairings has been found.

(Source: The Moscow Times)



ROUND THE GLOBE

Maya site of Copan

Discovered in 1570 by Diego Garc?a de Palacio, the Maya site of Copan is one of the most important sites of the Mayan civilization.

Located in Honduras, the site is functioned as the political, civil and religious center of the Copan Valley. It was also the political center and cultural focus of a larger territory that covered the southeast portion of the Maya area and its periphery.

The first evidence of population in the Copan Valley dates back to 1500 BC, but the first Maya-Cholan immigration from the Guatemalan Highlands is dated around 100 CE. The Maya leader Yax Kuk Mo, coming from the area of Tikal (Petén),



arrived in the Copan Valley in 427 CE, and started a dynasty of 16 rulers that transformed Copan into one of the greatest Maya cities during the Classic Maya Period.

The great period of Copan, paralleling that of other major Mayan cities, occurred during the Classical period, 300 CE-900. Major cultural developments took place with significant achievements in mathematics, astronomy and hieroglyphic writing. The archaeological remains and imposing public squares reveal the three main stages of development, during which evolved the temples, plazas, altar complexes and ball courts that can be seen today, before the city was abandoned in the early 10th century.

The Mayan city of Copan as it exists today is composed of a main complex of ruins with several secondary complexes encircling it. The main complex consists of the Acropolis and important plazas.

(Source: UNESCO)

Asia Cooperation Dialogue meeting opens in Hamedan

I → Iran assumed the chairmanship of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue for the year 2017-2018. It will host the third ACD Summit in autumn. The previous two editions were held in Kuwait and Thailand, respectively.

The ACD was established as an inter-governmental organization in 2002 with aims to promote interdependence among Asian countries and expand the trade and financial market among the member states.

Known in classical times as Ecbatana, Hamadan was one of the ancient world's greatest cities. Little remains from its antiquity, but significant parts of the city center are given over to excavations.

Ali Sadr cave, Ganjnameh inscriptions, Avicenna mausoleum, Hegmataneh Hill, Alaviyan dome, Jameh mosque, and St. Stephanos Gregorian Church are amongst Hamedan's attractions to name a few.

■ ACD says ready to help Iran to develop tourism industry

Addressing the conference, Limschoon said the Asia Cooperation Dialogue is ready to assist Iran with its tourism development program.

"And the ACD can also work in the field of investment," Limschoon stated during a keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the conference.

The ACD will strive to expand investment and partnership in the development of tourism in Iran, Limschoon told the participants.

The ACD chief pointed to the international conference as an opportunity to help Hamedan rise to worldwide fame, saying, "We hope that Hamadan to convey a new image of Iran."



He went on to say that Iran, which is a cradle of human civilization, can be introduced to the world as a new travel destination.

Iran can be introduced to the world as a new destination for tourism by ancient Persian stories and narratives, the ACD secretary general stated.

"Hamedan's beauty and culture are

well-known among the ACD members," he concluded.

Speaking at the conference, Jahangiri also said Iran is determined to bolster its tourism industry.

"We consider the development in this area as a necessity," Jahangiri stated, adding, "We are determined to remove obstacles to the tourism industry."

The vice president said Iran is ready to receive offers from Asian countries to develop its tourism sector.

The vice president went to say that his country is eager to exchange experiences in tourism industry with all countries around the world.

He also said Iran seeks joint ventures on medical tourism and so on.

East Azarbaijan province to hold competition for tourism startups

TOURISM TEHRAN — Iran's East Azarbaijan province will organize a tourism startup competition, which will be held in its capital Tabriz from September 5 to 7.

The objective of the program is to come up with pioneering proposals for implementation of emerging technologies and startups based on new business models.

The organizers hail any tech-based or non-technological, early-stage or more mature startups with innovative ideas capable of revolutionizing travel across the northwestern province.

"The purpose of this event is to explore original ideas form activists and advocates of traveling... We hope it to yield fruits [such as] creating new businesses and consequently, the development of tourism,"

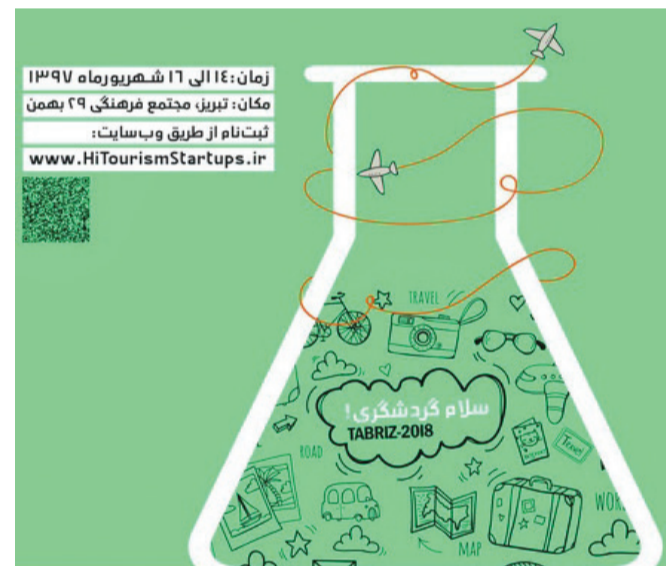
Farshad Rostami, a local tourism official, said.

"The first three winners will be qualified to compete against other selected startups on a national scale," he added, CHTN reported.

Those interested in participating can obtain more information and submit their applications through the program's website at www.hitourismstartups.ir.

The event is organized with provincial tourism department in partnership with Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, the University of Tabriz, Tabriz Municipality and the Academic Center for Education, Culture and Research.

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



A view of Elgoli Park in Tabriz. Its fairground surrounds an artificial lake, in the middle of which stands tall a photogenic palace dating from the Qajar era.

Tabriz to host gastronomy festival

HERITAGE TEHRAN — The Iranian city of Tabriz, which holds the title of 2018 Islamic Tourism Capital, will play host to a gastronomy festival from August 29 to 31.

Organized by the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization, the festival is aimed to cater to tourism, highlight traditional dishes yet demonstrate and discover talents in Persian cuisine, CHTN reported.

Cooking workshops, talent contests and live music performances are amidst side-section programs for

the event scheduled to be held in Elgoli Park from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. local time.

Soaked in history and culture for millennia, Tabriz hosts abundant historical, natural and religious sites, including Jameh Mosque of Tabriz, the Arg of Tabriz and UNESCO-registered Tabriz Historic Bazaar Complex. Back in 2015, the inter-governmental Organization of Islamic Cooperation designated Tabriz as the capital of Islamic tourism for 2018.

Tabriz was also declared a world craft city of carpet weaving by the World Craft in 2016.

A village in India where clean living became a tourist attraction

Hidden in the lush greenery of the East Khasi hills of Meghalaya State along the Indian border with Bangladesh lies the pristine village of Mawlynnong. The rolling green hills and topaz watering holes serve as a backdrop for 500 residents, a number that swells during high season with a couple of hundred tourists daily.

At a time when major Indian cities such as Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata are facing a growing waste crisis, Prime Minister Narendra Modi turned the spotlight on this pristine village as a source of inspiration, highlighting Mawlynnong as a model for the rest of the country in a monthly radio address in 2015. "I was happy to know that in our country there is such a village in the northeast, in Meghalaya, which is passionately carrying forward the mission of cleanliness for years," he said. "It has become the habit of the residents to maintain cleanliness."

It is held forth as an example of what concerted efforts to clean up can yield, and used to bolster the "Clean India Mission" campaign to sanitize the nation by 2019, which is the 150th birthday of Mahatma Gandhi (who advocated community cleanliness and sanitation in India). One of the goals of the Clean India Mission program is to increase the use of toilets in rural India. In Mawlynnong, every household has a toilet.

The village grew in renown after a 2004 article by Discover India Magazine that said that "this must be the cleanest village in India." The article said that broomsticks and bamboo shrubs lined the streets and quoted a resident who said that 14 years ago, the town was plastic-free. The village's tradition of gardening, passed down through generations, also contributed.

Today, Mawlynnong grapples with the blessing and the curse of tourism while trying to maintain the essence of



the village, protecting the core reason people want to visit. Laphrang Khong Thohrem, 62, and other members of the village council and wider community have come together to address the problems that the influx of visitors bring. Their solutions: Streets are swept daily by villagers who pitch in; bamboo dustbins are placed at every street corner; and trash is composted and used to nourish the village's agriculture, in particular production of the betel nut.

"Our grandparents and their grandparents had clean habits at that time; nobody dreamed that the village would become a tourist attraction," said Mr. Thohrem, who is a member of the village council, which regulates the building of new homes. The council has declared that people can't build anything higher than a two-story house, as a way to preserve the village's look. "Otherwise the village

will look ugly and tourists won't want to come here anymore," he said.

Protecting the village's unique feel and community is something that is important to locals. The majority of those who live in Mawlynnong are Khasi people, part of one of the oldest matrilineal tribes in the world. (Children take the name of their mother, and traditionally mothers hand down their property to the youngest daughters.) To buy land here you have to be Khasi (or approved by a Khasi person), and the land rights are protected by the Meghalaya Transfer of Land (Regulation) Act of 1971 (which governs the transfer of land from a tribal person to a nontribal person).

The law makes it very difficult for outside developers to set up resorts, thus controlling density and keeping tourism local and contained by the community. This also fits into a plan that also includes a "homestay lodging model," according to a 2014 New York Times article.

Villagers, who are predominantly Christians, also pitch in for the maintenance of the village and its three churches. One of them, the Church of the Epiphany, is more than 100 years old. Its black and white spire reaches out from a tangle of foliage and flowers.

Gardening is an integral part of the village tradition. When entering the village, visitors see a sign: "Welcome to Mawlynnong (God's own Garden)." The Rev. Lumlang Khongthrem, 48, of the Church of the Epiphany traces the oral history of gardening in the village, where there are beautiful personal gardens at every house, through generations.

Sunita Khongtiang, 30 and the mother of four, has been running a restaurant with her husband, serving dishes like rice, chicken and dal. Their restaurant still has no name but is open seven days a week.

(Source: The New York Times)

Physicists show how gravitational waves could obliterate the Earth in an instant

Scientists have come up with yet another way the Earth could get destroyed by cosmic objects way beyond the planet's reach.

This time, it involves gravitational waves colliding to create a black hole that could lay waste to Earth. Fortunately, this appears to be an unlikely way for the apocalypse to occur.

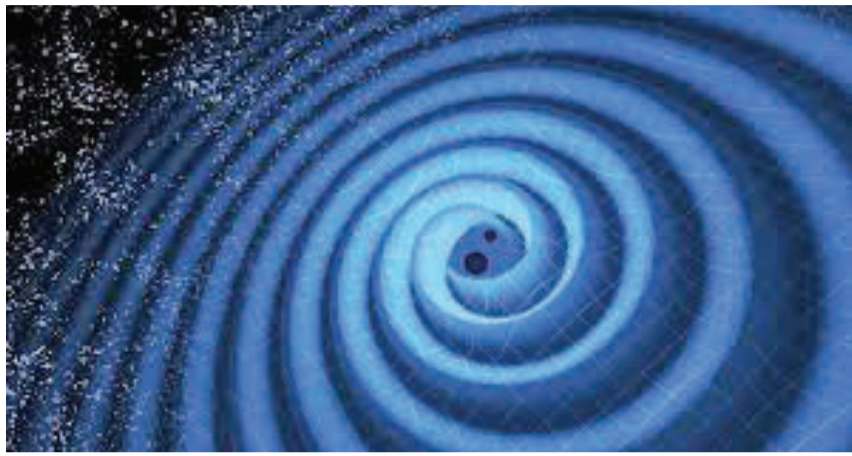
Gravitational waves are ripples in space that are produced in a disturbance or movement in massive cosmic objects.

Most gravitational waves, New Scientist explains, are spherical and move outward the way ripples do in a pond.

However, it can also be plane-fronted and move forward like a tidal wave. This type of gravitational wave is produced when the object or particle is moving at the speed of light.

According to Science Alert, the collision of two plane-fronted gravitational waves would result in a singularity that's the same kind found at the core of a black hole. While this sounds quite ominous, it's not a cause for concern, as the singularity usually just disappears quickly.

However, there is a specific sequence of events that may not be as harmless as what usually happens.



■ **Different type of collision** review website arXiv, reveals how a different New research, published in the pre-peer type of collision involving gravitational waves

According to scientists, the collision of two plane-fronted gravitational waves would result in a singularity that's the same kind found at the core of a black hole.

could spell doom for the planet.

Physicists Frans Pretorius and William E. East calculated the effect of a collision between one point of a spherical gravitational wave and a plane-fronted gravitational wave — and it's not a very comforting hypothetical scenario.

If enough energy is expelled, space-time could actually envelop the singularity and create a black hole around it. This would absorb the powerful energy from the wave.

Science Alert points out that there's nothing in the universe that's known to expel the necessary amount of energy to form a black hole from gravitational waves.

However, if it does happen and it happens close enough to Earth, destruction would be certain for the planet. After all, gravitational waves that are strong enough to create a black hole would definitely obliterate all traces of nearby life.

"You wouldn't want it to be nearby, and if it were it would stretch Earth by thousands of kilometers and everything would be destroyed," astrophysicist Vitor Cardoso, an astrophysicist from the University of Lisbon, says in a New Scientist report by Leah Crane. "As soon as we learned about it, we would die." (Source: natureworldnews.com)

Researchers find way to turn giant 'fatbergs' in city sewers into energy

Scientists have found a way to effectively turn "fatbergs," a congealed fat and grease that turn solid and clog the sewage system, into energy.

According to a team of experts from the University of British Columbia, the same fatty deposits that often stick to garbage and block pipes can still be broken down and repurposed as a source of biofuel.

These gross fatbergs that lurk within sewers are made up of cooking oil, grease, fat, and other similar waste that get dumped from kitchen sinks. They have become a major nuisance: aside from clogging up pipes and blocking sewage systems, experts warned that these congealed mass of discarded waste can become breeding grounds of superbugs that are resistant to antibiotics.

Scientists, however, figured out how to make these slabs of fat into methane, a valuable renewable energy that releases the lower amount of carbon dioxide compared to fossil fuels.

■ Into useful biofuels

In order to turn fatbergs into useful biofuel, the team heated a sample of fat, oil, and grease or FOG to temperatures ranging from 90 to 110 degrees Celsius. They also added hydrogen peroxide to break down the sample.

The scientists discovered that this process can reduce the solids in the FOG to as much as 80 percent. The data was published in Springer in June 2018.

"We can feed on to produce methane gas, which is a valuable, renewable energy source," said research associate Asha Srinivasan. "But if it's too rich in organics, bacteria can't handle it and the process breaks down. By preheating it



to the right temperature, we ensure that the FOG is ready for the final treatment and can make the maximum amount of methane."

The biggest chunk of the infamous congealed fat has been found in London and weighs about 130 tons or as much as 10 double-decker buses. A sample of it is now on display at the Museum of London.

Srinivasan said that the method developed in the study can already be used to dislodge fatbergs.

"Anaerobic digestion systems commonly exist in municipal sewage treatment plant," she told Inverse. "So, it would be advantageous to make use of the existing infrastructure to produce methane."

She added that their findings can also hopefully encourage farmers to load more FOG into biogas digesters, the tanks used to treat farm wastes to produce methane. Now that FOG can be broken down into simpler forms, farmers can recycle more oil waste up to 75 percent of the overall biogas digesters. (Source: Tech Times)

NASA's new lasers to reveal polar ice changes down to the width of a pencil

Ice coverage at the Earth's polar regions provides scientists with a crude but clear window into a changing climate, and they will soon be able to observe its shifts with unprecedented detail. NASA is preparing to launch a new tool into orbit that will bounce lasers off polar ice to finely monitor elevation changes over time, providing new insights into not only the severity of climate change, but how it is directly impacting sea level rise.

NASA already has missions in place to monitor polar ice, its ICESat satellite that has orbited the Earth since 2003, and Operation IceBridge, a research campaign that involves flyovers of polar ice to collect data on the changing landscape.

Its upcoming ICESat-2 mission will step things up in a pretty significant way. At the heart of it is a new instrument called the Advanced Topographic Laser Altimeter System (ATLAS), the most advanced laser altimeter NASA has ever launched.

Every second, it will blast hundreds of trillions of photons at the Earth's surface in six separate beams of green light. By measuring how long it takes them to return to the spacecraft, down to a billionth of a second, ICESAT-2 will be able to measure ice elevation at the poles with unprecedented precision.

For the sake of comparison, if ICESAT-2 were to scan a football field it would take 130 measurements between each end zone, whereas the original ICESat would take just two. It will travel around the Earth from pole to pole along the same path each time, measuring ice heights in the polar regions four times a year.

■ Advancing the research

"ATLAS required us to develop new technologies to get the measurements needed by scientists to advance the re-



search," says Doug McLennan, ICESat-2 project manager at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center. "That meant we had to engineer a satellite instrument that not only will collect incredibly precise data, but also will collect more than 250 times as many height measurements as its predecessor."

Meltwater from the Greenland and Antarctica ice sheets has recently raised global sea levels by more than a millimeter a year, according to NASA data. The precise measurements gathered by ICESAT-2 will help researchers better predict future rates of sea level rise and how those will be influenced by drivers of climate change.

ICESat-2 will also be used to measure the height of floating sea ice, which is shrinking in the Arctic at an alarming rate. And like its predecessor, ICESAT-2 capabilities will also be used to measure the height of land surface features such as forests, which can help researchers determine the amount of carbon stored within, along with risks of wildfire. Other possibilities include snow and river height measurements to help with flood planning. (Source: New Atlas)

Researcher finds nanotubes change the shape of water

Molecular models of nanotube ice produced by engineers at Rice University show how forces inside a carbon nanotube at left and a boron nitride nanotube at right pressure water molecules into taking on the shape of a square tube. The phenomenon is dependent upon the diameter of the nanotube.

First, according to Rice University engineers, get a nanotube hole. Then insert water. If the nanotube is just the right width, the water molecules will align into a square rod.



Rouzbeh Shahsavari

Rice materials scientist Rouzbeh Shahsavari and his team used molecular models to demonstrate their theory that weak van der Waals forces between the inner surface of the nanotube and the water molecules are strong enough to snap the oxygen and hydrogen atoms into place.

Shahsavari referred to the contents as two-dimensional "ice," because the molecules freeze regardless of the temperature. He said the research provides valuable insight on ways to leverage atomic interactions between nanotubes and water molecules to fabricate nanochannels and energy-storing nanocapacitors. Shahsavari and his colleagues built molecular models of carbon and boron nitride nanotubes with adjustable widths. They discovered boron nitride is best at constraining the shape of water when the nanotubes are 10.5 angstroms wide. (One angstrom is one hundred-millionth of a centimeter.)

The researchers already knew that hydrogen atoms in tightly confined water take on interesting structural properties. Recent experiments by other labs showed strong evidence for the formation of nanotube ice and prompted the researchers to build density functional theory models to analyze the forces responsible. (Source: Science Daily)

Glowing NASA map shows huge dust clouds swirling across Earth

We live our whole lives wandering from one cloud of dust to the next. The air is full of the stuff: salt wafting in from the sea, black carbon soot from wildfires and all sorts of dusty emissions from heavy industry.

Usually, all that aerosolized gunk is invisible to us — but not to NASA's satellites and ground sensors. In a stunning new illustration, shown above, NASA's Earth Observatory reveals the invisible, tiny particles swirling around us.

NASA combined data from multiple sensors on satellites such as the Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer (MODIS) sensors on Aqua and Terra, as well as ground-based sensors, to create a colorized image of the aerosol plumes.

This colorful NASA map of the Earth is map of smoke, dust and other aerosols across the planet. NASA created the visualization using data from satellites orbiting the Earth and ground-based sensors, then added false colors to denote types of aerosols displayed.

NASA created the visualization using data from satellites orbiting the Earth and ground-based sensors, then added false colors to denote types of aerosols displayed. Western North America and south-central Africa reveal signatures of another sort of aerosol: the smoke from wildfires, which are often set by humans — either intentionally, as part of annual agricultural cycles in Africa, or through carelessness as in North America.

This colorful NASA map of the Earth is map of smoke, dust and other aerosols across the planet. NASA created the visualization using data from satellites orbiting the Earth and ground-based sensors, then added false colors to denote types of aerosols displayed. (Source: space.com)

Scientists find the secret why these weird 'moss balls' only float during the day

Every morning, they rise to the surface of the water; every evening, they sink back down to the lakebed. Now scientists have finally figured out how these green spheres - called marimo algae - perform their dance every single day.

You may have seen pictures of marimo. It's bizarrely adorable - like little fuzzy balls of green moss. In fact, one of its common names is "moss ball", although technically it's not a moss at all.

Instead, it's an aquatic green algae named *Aegagropilum linnaei*. This species usually floats around as threads or filaments; like other types of algae, it is carried around by water, or coats rocks, thriving in low light conditions.

However, in some locations around the world - notably shallow lakes of Japan and Iceland, where it is a protected species - it will tangle into clumps that sink to the lakebed, where the movement of the water rolls the algae filaments into balls.

This is all pretty straightforward, but the floating at dawn and sinking at dusk behavior had scientists baffled. Biologists from the University of Bristol thought it might have something to do with photosynthesis, so they decided to put their hypothesis to the test.

When these algae balls photosynthesize, they produce tiny bubbles of oxygen, which become trapped in their fine filaments. So, the researchers thought the bubbles must be what makes the balls float.

To test this idea, they grew some marimo in a laboratory, and coated them in a chemical that inhibits photosynthesis. Sure enough, these marimo did not produce any bubbles - and remained motionless at the bottom of their containers, compared to the untreated control group, which floated normally. (Source: sciencealert.com)

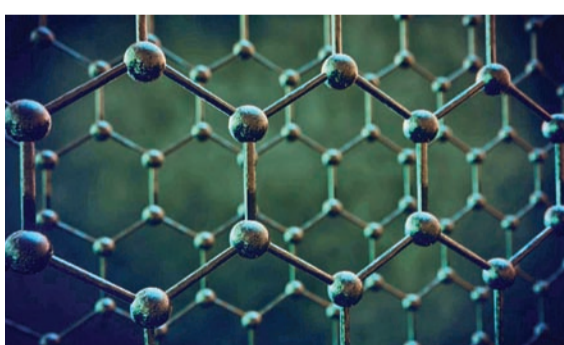
Natural human enzyme can biodegrade graphene, team says

Degradation of pristine graphene occurs in the human body when interacting with a naturally occurring enzyme found in the lung, announced Graphene Flagship partners; the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), University of Strasbourg, Karolinska Institute and University of Castilla - La Mancha (UCLM).

Graphene-based products, including flexible biomedical electronic devices, are being designed for interface with the human body within the Graphene Flagship. If graphene is to be used for such biomedical applications, it should be biodegradable and thus be expelled from the body.

To test how graphene behaves within the body, Alberto Bianco and his team at Graphene Flagship partner CNRS conducted several tests to determine whether and how graphene was broken down with the addition of a common human enzyme. The enzyme, myeloperoxidase (MPO), is a peroxide enzyme released by neutrophils, cells found in the lungs that are responsible for the elimination of foreign bodies or bacteria that enter the body.

If a foreign body or bacteria is detected inside of the body, neutrophils surround it and secrete MPO, thereby destroying the threat. Previous work by Graphene Flagship partners found MPO to biodegrade graphene oxide. However the structure of non-functionalized graphene was thought to be more degradation resistant. To test



this, Bianco and his team looked at the effects of MPO, *ex vivo*, on two graphene forms: single- and few-layer.

■ Presence of hydrogen peroxide

Bianco says, "We used two forms of graphene—single- and few-layer, prepared by two different methods in water. They were then taken and put in contact with myeloperoxidase in the presence of hydrogen peroxide. This peroxidase was able to degrade and oxidize them. This was not really expected, because we thought that non-functionalized graphene was more resistant than graphene oxide."

Rajendra Kurapati, first author on the study, from Graphene Flagship partner CNRS, said, "The results emphasize that highly dispersible graphene could be degraded in the body by the action of neutrophils. This would open the new avenue for developing graphene-based materials."

In-vivo testing is the next stage. Bengt Fadeel, professor at Graphene Flagship partner Karolinska Institute, says, "Understanding whether graphene is biodegradable or not is important for biomedical and other applications of this material. The fact that cells of the immune system are capable of handling graphene is very promising."

Prof. Maurizio Prato, leader of Work Package 4, said, "The enzymatic degradation of graphene is a very important topic, because in principle, graphene dispersed in the atmosphere could produce some harm. Instead, if there are microorganisms able to degrade graphene and related materials, the persistence of these materials in our environment will be strongly decreased. These types of studies are needed. What is also needed is to investigate the nature of degradation products. Once graphene is digested by enzymes, it could produce harmful derivatives. We need to know the structure of these derivatives and study their impact on health and environment." (Source: phys.org)

EDBI Becomes Member of Iranian Banks Association in Europe

Export Development Bank of Iran (EDBI) became member of Iranian Banks' Club in Europe, the Public Relations Dept. of the bank reported.

With receiving a Plaque of Honor from the management of Iranian Banks' Club in Europe, Export Development Bank of Iran joined the group of banks of this club.

Association of Iranian Banks in Europe

is headquartered in Frankfurt, Germany which has been established in Autumn 2017 as an independent institution with the aim of strengthening economic and banking relationship as well as facilitating trade between Iran and Europe.

Exchanging information with the banking and supervisory organization as well as with concerned authorities in Europe, develop-

ing and broadening structural relationship between Iranian banks in Europe as well as other Iranian and European banks, disseminating information with regard to the markets, using potential trade and business opportunities of Iran with trade, business, banking and industrial associations across Europe, identifying needs and expectations of customers in order to promote level of

membership as well as supporting professional training of Iranian bankers are of the other objectives behind setting up this Club.

Presently, except Central Bank of Iran (CBI) and Monetary and Banking Research Center, several public and private banks and also a semi-public bank are members of the Association, the Public Relations Dept. of the bank concluded.

Diet has bigger impact on emotional well-being in women than in men

Women may need a more nutrient-rich diet to support a positive emotional well-being, according to new research from Binghamton University, State University at New York.

Mounting evidence suggests that anatomical and functional differences in men's and women's brain dictate susceptibility to mental disease.

However, little is known about the role of dietary patterns in gender-specific psychological wellbeing. A team of researchers led by Lina Begdache, assistant professor of health and wellness studies at Binghamton University, conducted an anonymous survey of 563 participants (48 percent men and 52 percent women) through social media to investigate this issue.

Begdache and her team found that men are more likely to experience mental well-being until nutritional deficiencies arise. Women, however, are less likely to experience mental well-being until a balanced diet and a healthy lifestyle are followed.

According to Begdache, these results may explain reports from previous studies that show that women are at a greater risk for mental distress when compared to men, and emphasize the role of a nutrient-dense diet in mental wellbeing.

"The biggest takeaway is that women may need a larger spectrum of nutrients to support mood, compared to men," said Begdache. "These findings may explain the reason why women are twice more likely to be diagnosed with anxiety and depression and suffer from longer episodes, compared to men. Today's diet is high in energy but poor in key nutrients that support brain anatomy and functionality."

Evidence suggests that our ancestors' diet, which was a high-energy-nutrient-dense diet, contributed significantly to brain volumes and cognitive evolution of mankind, said Begdache. (Source: medicalxpress.com)

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Phoenician's key lime pie

"When I moved from Lebanon to Florida spring of 1999, I brought with me my love for cooking and search for new recipes. The famous key lime pie was new to me. It was a friend's best dessert, and he used to buy it from Costco every time we go for shopping. I tasted the pie at several places, but they were missing that wow flavor. I kept playing with the recipe, and the right flavor is found. I live now in North Bay, Ontario, and we only get the Key Limes twice a year, so sometimes I substitute with fresh lime juice. I hope you all enjoy!!"

Ingredients:



- 2/3 cup toasted slivered almonds
- 1 cup graham cracker crumbs
- 1/4 cup white sugar
- 1 pinch salt
- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 4 egg yolks
- 1 (14 ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
- 1/2 cup key lime juice
- 3/4 cup cold heavy cream
- 1/2 teaspoon grated lime zest

Directions:

Preheat an oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Pulse the almonds in a food processor until finely ground. Combine the almonds with the graham cracker crumbs, sugar, and salt. Pour in the melted butter and mix until evenly moistened. Press into a 9-inch pie plate.

Bake the crust in the preheated oven until golden brown, 10 to 13 minutes.

While the crust is baking, beat the egg yolks in a bowl with the condensed milk, cream, and lime zest. Whisk in the lime juice a little at a time to thicken the custard. Pour the custard into the pie crust and return to the oven.

Bake in the oven for 15 minutes to help the custard begin to set. Cool to room temperature on a wire rack before covering loosely with plastic wrap and refrigerating overnight.

LEARN ENGLISH

Groundbreaking Research

A: We've been over this a thousand times. The data is **irrefutable!** Look, we've done **extensive research**, built studies, and read the literature, and there is conclusive evidence to support my theory!
B: Horowitz, I beg to differ. Even in your most recent study, the **investigative approach** was **flawed!** You know as well as I do that the collection of data was not systematic, and there is a large margin of error. To draw a **definitive conclusion** based on that data would be misleading.

A: That is **preposterous!**

B: You are trying to **single-handedly** solve one of the world's greatest mysteries, and yet you are **oblivious** to the fact that you are wrong!

A: I am not wrong! The chicken came first!

B: No! The egg came first!

Key vocabulary

irrefutable: correct; not able to be proved wrong

extensive research: very full and complete study to find information

investigative approach: way of looking for information

flawed: having errors or mistake

definitive conclusion: a final judgment that is not able to be changed

preposterous: crazy, foolish, or silly

single-handedly: do something on your own, without help

oblivious to: unaware or don't know

Supplementary vocabulary

associated with: linked or connected with

circumstantial evidence: a collection of facts that implies or suggests something to be true, but does not prove it

indicate: show something to be true

a compelling case: an argument that is capable of making people believe that point of view

determine: find out if something is true

Women's culinary, an attempt for entrepreneurship

By Naghme Mizanian

TEHRAN — The idea came up from a road trip Matin took with a group of Spaniards around Iran.

"It was then that I realized how limited we are in our choice of food in restaurants and how the menus kept repeating the same few dishes over and over again.

"Most of the people on that tour came to the conclusion that Iranian cuisine has little to offer with not much variety. I obviously knew that it wasn't true but proving it would only be possible if we were to get invited to an Iranian home," said Matin Lashkari, the co-founder of persianfoodtours.com in an interview with the Tehran Times.

Two Iranian women entrepreneurs, Matin Lashkari and Shirin Tahanan, created food tours in Tehran in 2015, inviting many tourists interested in cooking mainly from Europe.

Having worked in the tourism industry, 28-year-old Matin comes from a graphic design background. She is a freelance travel writer and also works for a travel company. She is also the guide for culinary walks and bazaars.

Shirin, 34, is master of fine arts and mother of two. Her love and passion for cooking has brought her knowledge of arts to the table instead of the canvas. She runs regular cooking courses at her own kitchen. She is Persian Food Tours' cooking instructor and recipe developer.

Together they've used their strong entrepreneurial spirit to turn their experience and love of cooking into a thriving business. Persian Food Tours combine guided walking tours of Tehran's Tajrish bazaar with cooking classes.

"At Persian Food Tours we offer half-day food adventures, making it perfect to add to even the tightest schedules in Tehran. We're here to promote Iran's culinary culture, share the secrets of a Persian kitchen and enrich your trip to Iran with one tasty memory," she stated.



Not afraid to challenge conventions, Matin and Shirin are accustomed to acting as pioneer forces and bravely paving their own paths against the grain. In doing so, they've inspired numerous women throughout Iran to follow in their footsteps and go for what they want to do.

"Apart from myself and Shirin, there are five other girls who work with us on the project," Matin said.

Majority of food tourists are from Germany and Switzerland but there are also a bunch of Australians and Kiwis, explained Matin, emphasizing that surprisingly they are mostly women.

"A little search on google will bring them straight to our website. We're also mentioned by a few guide books such as the Lonely Planet and Bradt, have 5 star rating

on Trip Advisor and I also promote our food tours on my personal English travel blog Travestyle.com," Matin explained.

"We've had a few people who made a short weekend trip to take the food tour but apart from that people choose our tours as a supplement to their trip to Iran," Matin said, adding, "They normally stay around 2 weeks and visit Tehran, Esfahan, Shiraz and Yazd."

Matin further went on to explain that "we're currently only in Tehran but we've been building up our team in Esfahan and we'll soon be launching our food tours there. Hopefully will also have a branch in Shiraz by the end of the year."

Due to Iran's geographical location and the many invasions and conquests of the mighty Persian Empire, today's Persian

cuisine is enriched with tastes and flavors of Azerbaijani, Kurdish, Caucasian, Turkish, Indian, Greek and Arabic gastronomy.

"We have fixed recipes for every season which include a starter, main dish, side dish, dessert and a traditional cold drink. We've tried to set up our menus based on food that is most consumed in Iranian homes every season. We've always found tourists to be happy with our choices but they occasionally request to learn certain dishes. We've learned that Tahchin and Tahdig are a favorite to many," Matin stated.

"Iranian women are some of the most assertive women I've seen. Despite the limitations, they've come a long way. There's a lot more of them working and some of them own very successful businesses," Matin concluded.

National plan on family and virtual world to be launched

TEHRAN — "The national plan on family and virtual world" will be implemented in order to increase the knowledge of women about virtual world and networks, says Susan Radfar who acts as advisor on women and family affairs at the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology.

The plan is going to be implemented in line with another plan on the role of information and communications technology in empowering women by Oct. 22 in 30 provinces, IRNA quoted Radfar as saying.

According to the statistics released by the Communication and Information Technology Ministry, currently 72 percent of women are using cellular phone and 48 percent of internet users are women.

The plans will be brought into effect to empower women in information technology and raise awareness about virtual world in three cities and three villages in each province.

Both plans were implemented last year (March 2017- March 2018) in provincial capitals and 65 other

regions of the country by the provincial departments of the ministry, she added.

Currently about 30 percent of employees at the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology in the country are women which is effective in empowering women in the field of communication and information technology, the official stated.

Women take more advantage from virtual world, Radfar said, adding that the virtual world creates job opportunities for women in trade management, entrepreneurship and startups.

Breastfeeding may help protect mothers against stroke

Breastfeeding is not only good for babies, there is growing evidence it may also reduce the risk for stroke in post-menopausal women who reported breastfeeding at least one child, according to new research in Journal of the American Heart Association, the Open Access Journal of the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association.

Stroke is the fourth leading cause of death among women aged 65 and older, and is the third leading cause of death among Hispanic and black women aged 65 and older, according to the study.

"Some studies have reported that breastfeeding may reduce the rates of breast cancer, ovarian cancer and risk of developing Type 2 diabetes in mothers. Recent findings point to the benefits of breastfeeding on heart disease and other specific cardiovascular risk factors," said Lisette T. Jacobson, Ph.D., M.P.A., M.A., lead author of the study and assistant professor in the department of preventive medicine and public health at the University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita.

This is among the first studies to examine breastfeeding and a possible relationship to stroke risk for mothers, as well as how such a relationship might vary by ethnicity.

Researchers analyzed data on 80,191 participants in the Women's Health Initiative observational study, a large ongoing national study that has tracked the medical events and health habits of post-menopausal women who were recruited between 1993 and 1998. All women in this analysis had delivered one or more children and 58 percent reported ever having breastfed. Among these women, 22 percent breastfed for one-six months, 22 percent for seven-12 months and 27 percent for 13 or more months. At the time of recruitment, the average age was 63.7 years and the follow-up period was 12.6 years.

After adjusting for non-modifiable stroke risk factors (such as age and family history), researchers found stroke risk among women who breastfed their babies was on average:

23 percent lower in all women, 48 percent lower in black women, 32 percent lower in Hispanic women, 21 percent lower in white women, and 19 percent lower in women who had breastfed for up to six months. A longer reported length of breastfeeding was associated with a greater reduction in risk.

"If you are pregnant, please consider breastfeeding as part of your birthing plan and continue to breastfeed for at least six months to receive the optimal benefits for you and your infant," Jacobson said.

"Our study did not address whether racial/ethnic differences in breastfeeding contribute to disparities in stroke risk. Additional research should consider the degree to which breastfeeding might alter racial/ethnic differences in stroke risk," Jacobson said.

Because the study was observational, it couldn't establish a cause-and-effect relationship between breastfeeding and lower stroke risk, meaning that it is possible some other characteristic that distinguishes between women who breastfeed and those

who don't is the factor changing the stroke risk. However, because the Women's Health Initiative is large, researchers were able to adjust for many characteristics, and the effects of breastfeeding remained strong, Jacobson said.

"Breastfeeding is only one of many factors that could potentially protect against stroke. Others include getting adequate exercise, choosing healthy foods, not smoking and seeking treatment if needed to keep your blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar in the normal range," Jacobson said.

The study was also limited by the relatively small number of strokes that occurred during the follow-up period (just 3.4 percent of the women experienced a stroke during the study period and 1.6 percent reported having had a stroke prior to the study) and by the Women's Health Initiative's exclusion of women who had already had severe strokes at the time of recruitment.

(Source: Journal of the American Heart Association Report)

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Wildfire incurs loss of \$13,000 per ha to forests nationwide

Forest wildfire brings heavy economic burden amounting to 560 million rials (about \$13,000) per hectare for the country, the commander of the forest protection unit of the Forests, Range, and Watershed Management Organization has said.

"Wildfire sweeping rangelands brings a total cost of 170 million rials (nearly \$4,000) per hectare," ISNA quoted Qasem Sabz'ali as saying on Sunday.

۵۶۰ میلیون ریال، خسارت آتش سوزی هر هکتار جنگل

فرمانده یگان حفاظت سازمان جنگل‌ها، مراتع و آبخیزداری گفت: خسارت به مناطق جنگلی در صورت آتش سوزی در هر هکتار از ۵۶ میلیون تومان است.

سرهنگ قاسم سبزی‌علی در گفت و گو با ایسنا افزود: خسارت به اراضی مرتعی در صورت آتش سوزی در هر هکتار حدود ۱۷ میلیون تومان می باشد.

PREFIX/SUFFIX

"afro-"

■ **Meaning:** Africa

■ **For example:** The vast majority of languages in all the African language groups exhibit tone, except for the Afroasian group.

PHRASAL VERB

Keep off

■ **Meaning:** not to talk about something

■ **For example:** She kept off the subject of her parent's divorce.

IDIOM

Catch red handed

■ **Explanation:** to caught someone while doing something wrong or illegal

■ **For example:** The police arrived as the burglar was leaving the house. He was caught red handed.

EU's security must no longer depend on U.S.: Macron

French President Emmanuel Macron Monday called for Europe to stop relying on the United States for its military defense as he pushed for fresh EU integration in the face of rising nationalism around the continent.

Relaunching his diplomatic agenda after the summer break, the 40-year-old president said he would put forward new proposals in the coming months for the EU to boost defense cooperation, as well as talks with Russia on their security relationship — an issue of concern for countries on Europe's eastern edge.

"Europe can no longer rely on the United States for its security. It is up to us to guarantee European security," Macron told an audience of some 250 diplomats, lawmakers and international relations experts.

His comments follow U.S. President Donald Trump repeatedly distancing himself from the NATO military alliance, which groups the United States with most of Europe and has underpinned European security since World War II.

Macron's comments are likely to find support in EU powerhouse Germany after Foreign Minister Heiko Maas made a similar call for boosted military cooperation last week.

Writing in the Handelsblatt newspaper, Maas called for Europe to "take an equal share of the responsibility" and "form a counterweight" to Washington as Europe-U.S. relations cool.

France and Germany have both backed the idea of a small joint European response



force over the last year, and have announced plans to develop a fighter jet together.

Macron came to power last year vowing to overhaul the EU and has pushed for deep political reforms — including a separate budget for the eurozone — which have so far met with lukewarm support.

His agenda has been hit in particular by the rise of a new euroskeptic and nationalist government in Italy, as well as resistance from rightwing leaders in Poland and Hungary.

He admitted that "France seems sometimes to be on a solitary path." But Macron lashed out at the rising tide

of nationalism and called for countries to heal divisions which have widened over how to tackle the ongoing influx of migrants in particular.

"France wants a Europe which protects, even as extremism has grown stronger and nationalism has awoken," he said.

"Divisions between north and south over economics, between east and west on migration, too often fracture our European Union," he added, urging a "humanist" approach to the changes brought by globalization.

As for the solution, he insisted his approach would be to "give up nothing of the

ambitions set out a year ago" when he came to office, which would mean creating a more integrated European Union with greater strategic autonomy.

"Do China and the United States think of Europe as a power with similar independence to their own? It is not the case," he said.

He also took a swipe at ruling populists in Hungary and Italy, drily noting that their anti-EU rhetoric seemed to vanish when it came to accepting economic development aid from the EU.

"There is a clear approach of European opportunism while claiming to be nationalist," he said, calling out Hungary's Viktor Orban by name.

He did, however, acknowledge that a lack of European solidarity had played a role in prompting bitter disputes in recent months with Italy over migration.

"But does that excuse xenophobic comments?" he added in what appeared to be a veiled jab at Italy's far-right League.

"I don't think so, and I think these xenophobes bring no solutions to the problem they complain of."

In a typically expansive overview of his foreign policy, Macron called for Europe to build "strategic partnerships" with neighbors Turkey and Russia despite their differences.

Britain will also be in line for a "strategic partnership" after its departure from the EU scheduled next year — but Macron warned that Brexit must not come at the cost of the unity of the rest of the EU.

(Source: Reuters)

Canada holds firm in human rights dispute with Saudi Arabia

Canadian Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland refused to give ground in a dispute with Saudi Arabia Monday, saying her country would "always stand up for human rights around the world."

While she did not cite the kingdom by name, Freeland told a gathering of German diplomats in Berlin that "Canada will always stand up for human rights around the world, very much including women's rights."

That would hold true "even when we are told to mind our own business, or that matters such as these should only be discussed in private, between leaders, behind closed doors. And even when speaking up brings con-

sequences," she added.

Ottawa and Riyadh are at loggerheads over Canadian criticism of Saudi Arabia's human rights record.

Earlier this month the Saudi government expelled Canada's ambassador, recalled its own envoy and froze all new trade and investments after the North American nation denounced a crackdown on rights activists there.

"We count on and hope for Germany's support" in defending human rights, Freeland added.

(Source: AP)



Iraqi president convenes new parliament for Sept. 3

Iraq's new parliament will convene on Sept. 3, according to a decree issued Monday by President Fuad Masum, preparing the way for lawmakers to elect a new government to start rebuilding the country after a three-year war with Daesh (ISIL).

Iraqis voted in May in their first parliamentary election since the defeat of Daesh's self-declared caliphate, but a contentious recount process delayed the announcement of final results until earlier this month.

Uncertainty over the make-up of the new

government has raised tensions at a time when public impatience is growing over poor basic services, high unemployment and the slow pace of rebuilding after the war with Daesh.

"The president has held several substantive talks with all political groups, urging them to finalize their political agreements in order to meet constitutional provisions," Masum's office said in a statement.

The Federal Supreme Court ratified the election results on Aug. 19 and Masum had 15 days to call the new parliament into session,



the first step in a 90-day process outlined in the constitution that will eventually lead to a new government.

Lawmakers will elect a parliamentary speaker and two deputies in their first session. They will later elect a new president and task the leader of the largest bloc to form a government as prime minister.

The recount delayed the process by three months yet showed little had changed from the initial results, with populist Shiite religious scholar Moqtada al-Sadr retaining his lead.

(Source: Daily Star)

Police search for motive in deadly shooting at Florida video game tournament

Police are searching for a motive in the third mass shooting in Florida in two years, with the latest at a video game tournament where a gunman killed two and wounded many others in Jacksonville before he killed himself on Sunday.

Witnesses told local media that the gunman, identified by police as David Katz, 24, of Baltimore, was a disgruntled gamer who was angry he lost the tournament.

Jacksonville police identified the suspect in today's mass shooting at the Jacksonville Landing as 24-year-old David Katz, from Baltimore. Katz took his own life after shooting, killing 2 and wounding 9 others, police said.

It was not clear if he knew his victims. While police have not identified them, family members told Jacksonville CBS television station WJAX that the two people killed were Eli Clayton and Taylor Robertson, both video game contestants.

The Miami Herald also identified the victims as Robertson, 27, of Ballard, W. Va., and Clayton, 22, of Woodland Hills, Calif.

Robertson, a husband and father, was the winner of the tournament last year and Katz won it the year before, the Herald reported, citing family and friends posting on the internet.

There was some confusion around the number of injured. The Jacksonville Sheriff's office said that 11 other people were wounded by gunfire, while Jacksonville Sheriff Mike Williams said the gunman shot nine others. At least two others were hurt while fleeing the scene of the shooting.

■ Killer shot himself

Police said Katz killed himself and his body was found near the bodies at The Landing, a popular riverside shopping and restaurant spot in Jacksonville.



Jacksonville Sheriff Mike Williams declined on Sunday to comment on possible reasons for the attack. Police and FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) agents swarmed Katz's upscale townhouse in South Baltimore late Sunday, said multiple media accounts, including the Baltimore Sun. Police also seized Katz's vehicle parked near the tournament site.

Investigators were looking into an online video that appeared to capture the scene right before the shooting began, Williams said. A red dot that appears to be a laser pointer is visible on the chest of a player seconds before the first of about a dozen gunshots rings out.

The shooting took place during a regional qualifier for the Madden 19 online game tournament at the GLHF Game Bar inside a pizza restaurant, according to the venue's website.

The winners of the contest moved on to the video game finals in Las Vegas and compete for \$165,000 U.S.

■ Debate over U.S. gun laws

The latest rampage occurred amid a debate over the United States gun laws that was given fresh impetus by the massacre in February of 17 people at a high school in Parkland, Fla. Two years ago, a gunman killed 49 people at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando.

These Columbine survivors are parents — and they're reaching out to the Parkland teens

U.S. President Donald Trump has been briefed and is monitoring the situation in Jacksonville, the White House said.

The bar was live streaming a football video game competition when the gunfire started, according to video shared on social media.

In the video, players can be seen reacting to the shots and cries can be heard before the footage cuts off.

The sheriff's office said many people were transported to hospital, and its deputies found many others hiding in locked areas at The Landing.

A spokesperson for Jacksonville's Memorial Hospital said it was treating three victims, all of whom were in stable condition. The conditions of other patients was not available early Monday.

Reacting to news of the shooting during the tournament involving its game, Madden 19 maker Electronic Arts Inc. said it was working with authorities to gather facts.

"The tragic situation that occurred Sunday in Jacksonville was a senseless act of violence that we strongly condemn," a company spokesperson said to Reuters late on Sunday. "Our most heartfelt sympathies go out to the families of the victims whose lives were taken today and those who were injured."

(Source: AP)

Arab MPs in Israel push UN resolution on 'apartheid' law

Arab lawmakers at the Israeli parliament are working with the Palestinian Authority to push for a UN resolution condemning Israel over its controversial "Jewish state" law, a report says.

Several Arab members of the Knesset from the Joint List, Palestinian Ambassador to the UN Riyad Mansour, and other senior Palestinian officials are trying to persuade the UN to pass a resolution that likens the "nation-state" law to apartheid laws.

Arab lawmakers, including Aida Touma-Sliman and Yousef Jabareen, met recently with senior UN officials, including UN Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Rosemary DiCarlo, to discuss the legislation.

Israeli Ambassador Danny Danon cried foul, writing to Knesset speaker Yuli Edelstein in which he slammed Arab lawmakers for the initiative and accused them of "causing great damage" to Israel.

"Over the past two years we have wit-

nessed a close partnership between the MKs and Palestinian representatives in the UN working with the goal of inciting against and defaming" Israel and its military on the UN stage, Danon wrote.

The new law adopted by the Knesset in July declares Israel exclusively for Jews, in what has been denounced as an "apartheid" and "racist" measure by many activists and political leaders around the world.

The legislation defines occupied Jerusalem al-Quds as the "capital" of Israel, down-

grades the status of the Arabic language and encourages expansion of Israeli settlements.

Arabs make up roughly a fifth of Israel's population of close to nine million. They have long complained of inequality and discrimination in their former homeland where they are treated as second-class citizens.

The law triggered protest rallies by Israeli Arabs and Druze. Several countries have also denounced the legislation.

(Source: agencies)

Yemeni forces launch drone, missile strikes against Saudi mercs in Bayda, Jizan

Yemeni army soldiers, backed by allied fighters from Popular Committees, have reportedly launched an airstrike against a position of Saudi-sponsored militiamen loyal to Yemen's former president, Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, in the country's central province of al-Bayda.

A Yemeni military source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Yemeni soldiers and their allies attacked Saudi mercenaries in the al-Jaribat area of the al-Bayda district after they had carried out aerial reconnaissance by an unmanned aerial vehicle.

Later in the day, Yemeni troopers and Popular Committees fighters fired a domestically-designed and -manufactured Zelzal-1 (Earthquake-1) ballistic missile at the gatherings of Saudi soldiers in Na'shaw military base of the kingdom's southwestern border region of Jizan.

There were no immediate reports about possible casualties or the extent of damage caused.

On Sunday evening, Yemeni soldiers and their allies launched another Zelzal-1 missile at Hisn al-Hammad military base in Saudi Arabia's southwestern region of Najran, leaving a number of Saudi troopers killed and injured and their military vehicles destroyed. Yemeni snipers, supported by allied fighters from Popular Committees, also fatally shot three Saudi soldiers at al-Shabakah military base in the same Saudi border region.

A further Zelzal-1 missile targeted Saudi forces stated at Hamiyah base in Jizan.

Separately, Saudi fighter jets carried out three airstrikes against an area in the Harf Sufyan district of the northwestern Yemeni province of Amran. No reports of casualties were quickly available though.

A civilian also sustained critical gunshot wounds when Saudi border guards fired shots at al-Raqou area in the Monabbih district of Yemen's mountainous northwestern province of Sa'ada.

Saudi Arabia and a number of its regional allies launched a devastating military campaign against Yemen in March 2015, with the aim of bringing the government of Hadi back to power and crushing the country's popular Houthi Ansarullah movement.

(Source: Press TV)

JCOA without U.S. doesn't technological benefit Iran: Heinonen

It is now important that the European Union provides credible assurances to Iran indicating what it really can deliver and not try build an unrealistic picture. So for example, civil nuclear cooperation is an important element of the JCOA. I can see the remaining JCOA participants will have substantial difficulties in providing all technologies and equipment agreed. Nuclear trade is global trade, and there is no one who can alone provide all necessary services, which often has direct or indirect U.S. tie.

Previously, in 1996, without the Europe support, America put sanction on Cuba, and Europe did not accept these sanctions. Nowadays Is Europe still able to resist U.S. sanctions against Iran?

A: The Blocking Statute was established to make trade possible with Cuba noting that as a trading partner Cuba is less important. Even with the fact that the U.S. had in that instance not employed draconian measures in enforcing the sanctions regime, European companies were not overly willing to push hard for business dealings with Cuba.

In Europe, economic companies have the right to choose and freedom, and the EU also does not want to restrict this freedom. Does the EU can push the companies to work with Iran? How the EU can force the companies to cooperate with Iran?

A: Though EU-3 and the Commission continue to advocate trade with Iran, companies, particularly those with global operations make their calculations based on their long-term interests. Though much of the focus is now on companies closing their operations in Iran, which will have tremendous impact on the lives of ordinary Iranians, there will continue to be additional constraints that will surface if the deficiencies of the nuclear deal and related elements are not addressed.

The way out is to address, among others, the ballistic missile program, verify the dismantlement of Iran's nuclear weapons effort and agree on scope of a reasonable nuclear program without unnecessary uranium enrichment activities. It is simply not wise, in my view, to continue to pour Iranian funds to nuclear efforts without real economical or security benefit.

U.S. seeking 'Regime Change' in Iran by forming IAG: American pundit

German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas recently said Europe should set up payment systems independent of the U.S. if it wants to save the JCOA. What do you think about the EU's role in reducing Washington's pressures against Tehran and saving the deal?

A: Anyone betting his money on Europeans' courage should get his head examined. The U.S. treats them with contempt because that's what they deserve.

This is broader than just Iran. For example, Washington is also threatening Europe with secondary sanctions on companies participating in Nord Stream 2 (NS2). Initially, as is their habit, the Germans put on a brave face. But now this week we see Merkel off to Azerbaijan to discuss the development of a southern pipeline to deliver gas to Europe from the Caspian as an alternative to NS2. Let's remember that Russia is supposedly prepared to use its Financial Communications Transfer System (SPFS) based on blockchain technology to protect itself, especially when new, extremely harsh financial sanctions are set to kick in in November, close to the time full anti-Iran sanctions go into effect. With the knowledge that they are the number one target for U.S. financial sanctions, the Russians have had time to work on protective alternatives, including local currency arrangements that bypass the dollar — and Moscow still doesn't know how well it will work when the time comes.

The Europeans, even if they had the will, can't just pull a SWIFT alternative out of a hat. It would take time, resources, and determination, which they are unlikely to expand once the U.S. seriously starts to threaten them. Finally, it is well known that U.S. intelligence has strong influence over many European politicians (including compromising material on them), as well as control of media and think tanks. In short, their ability to behave independently is small.

Genoa fans silent for first 43 minutes in tribute to bridge disaster victims

Genoa fans watched the first 43 minutes of their home match with Empoli in silence as a tribute to the 43 people killed when a motorway bridge collapsed in the Italian city earlier in August.

It was the club's first game since a 200-metre section of the Morandi bridge suddenly fell on 14 August. Fans had asked for "a deafening silence of 43 minutes, one for each child, worker, student, father or mother who are no longer with us today".

Genoa won Sunday's Serie A match 2-1. There were occasional muted cheers when Genoa attacked, but even when they scored twice in the first 20 minutes there was almost no celebration in the stands.

In the 43rd minute, applause broke out as the names of the victims were displayed on a screen, and the crowd then cheered as usual for the rest of the game. Genoa and city rivals Sampdoria had both postponed their first matches of the season on 19 August following the disaster. Banners carrying messages of solidarity were held by supporters around Italy's top flight over the weekend, including at Udinese, where Sampdoria began their league campaign with a 1-0 defeat on Sunday.

(Source: BBC)

Aguero risks wrath of Guardiola as he smokes shisha pipe with model pal

Sergio Aguero could be in hot water with his Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola after a video emerged of him smoking shisha with model Lola Magnin. The clip was posted by Magnin on Instagram on Sunday and shows the Argentina striker smoking and laughing with the 18-year-old. It clearly shows the 30-year-old striker inhaling from a tube before blowing smoke out into the camera lens, alongside his friend. Aguero had been rumored to be dating the model, claims he has denied. "I'm not going out with anyone. I know her, but that's all," he has previously said.

"She is here with friends and yes, I know her but there's no romance. I know her and that's it. There's no mystery".

The City star's performance against Huddersfield last weekend had sparked a nationwide debate last week over who the best foreign player to grace the Premier League had been, with Alan Shearer stating the case for the Argentinean.

However, after seeing the latest video, a source told the Sun: "It doesn't look good. He is supposed to be an elite sportsman — one of the world's best — and a role model at the end of the day. It doesn't send out a good message to young fans."

The City forward is not the first Premier League player to be caught using a shisha pipe in his spare time.

Raheem Sterling and Jordan Ibe were both filmed taking it back in 2015, while Jack Wilshere has also been photoed using it.

Aguero was part of the Manchester City side that was held 1-1 by Wolves on Saturday lunchtime, and he took part in an open training session with Guardiola and his team-mates on Sunday afternoon. Last week, he invited a 10-year-old cancer-stricken fan to his house, gifting him a pair of signed boots.

(Source: Daily Mail)

Mesut Ozil discussed Arsenal role with Unai Emery before becoming ill

Arsenal boss Unai Emery has said he spoke with Mesut Ozil about his role in the team before he came down with an illness.

Ozil missed Saturday's win over West Ham at the Emirates, and Emery said his absence was due to an illness.

Emery denied claims that he had a bust-up with the playmaker on the training ground last week, but later confirmed that the two had discussed Ozil's performances on Thursday.

"I spoke with him about things tactically for this match and the last match. And he said to me he was sick," Emery said.

"Friday, after my conversation on Thursday, he continued to stay off sick. We spoke with the doctor and decided it was better for him to stay at home."

Ozil still attended the game and spent time in the dressing room with the rest of the squad before the game.

The German, who is Arsenal's highest-paid player after being awarded a new deal worth in excess of £300,000 a week in January, was taken off midway through the second half the previous week in the 3-2 loss at Chelsea. Emery said that substitution was made to improve Arsenal's pressing game, raising questions as to whether Ozil can function well in the more demanding system deployed by the new head coach. Ozil was granted more attacking freedom by Arsene Wenger in a No. 10 role but was often criticised for his defensive workrate under the Frenchman.

Asked if he had discussed a different role for Ozil on Thursday, Emery replied: "Maybe."

(Source: SoccerNet)

Juventus to build second stadium?

Juventus are reportedly keen to build a second stadium with 5-6,000 seats, to host the B team and the women's team.

The Bianconeri are one of the few clubs in Italy to own their own stadium, with the state-of-the-art Juventus Stadium - now Allianz Stadium - opening its doors in 2011.

The land around the stadium has been redeveloped since, with a museum, a medical facility and the new Continassa headquarters all built around the stadium.

Now Tuttosport is reporting that Juve are keen to continue developing, with plans to build a new 5-6,000-seater stadium adjacent to the Allianz Stadium.

The land that has been identified is currently home to the Palatorino, a former indoor sports arena which has fallen into disrepair since being closed in 2011.

The area is adjacent to the Continassa development, but is currently owned by the local council, with whom an agreement would have to be struck.

(Source: Football Italia)

Gunman kills two at Madden tournament, then kills self



A gamer at a "Madden NFL 19" qualifying tournament opened fire at a restaurant in a Florida mall on Sunday, killing two people and sending 11 others to hospitals, authorities said.

Jacksonville Sheriff Mike Williams identified the shooter as 24-year-old David Katz of Baltimore. Williams said Katz died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound and that he used one handgun in the shooting at Chicago Pizza, which is located at The Jacksonville Landing.

Williams said that nine victims -- seven with gunshot wounds, two hurt fleeing the scene -- were transported to a hospital and two others with gunshot wounds drove themselves to a hospital. All were in stable condition, he said.

The Madden NFL 19 Classic qualifying tournament was taking place in the GLHF Game Bar, which is located inside Chicago Pizza. Williams said the Jacksonville Sheriff's Department received 911 calls at 1:34 p.m. ET and was on the scene at 1:36.

The tournament was being live-streamed on Twitch and a video of the event surfaced, with gunshots heard in the background. The sheriff's office said it had obtained that video.

Drini Gjoka, one of the professional gamers at the tournament, tweeted that he had been shot in the thumb.

Another gamer, Tim Anselimo, was shot multiple times, according to his mother.

"He was shot three times, once on the nipple, once on his hand and somewhere else," Sujeil Lopez told the New York Times.

Anselimo is a member of Bucks Gaming, the Milwaukee Bucks' NBA 2K League team.

"Our thoughts are with Tim and his family after this horrific situation," Cayle Drabinsky, Bucks director of business operations and co-managing director of Bucks Gaming, said in

a statement. "We are in close contact with his mother and continue to monitor his health."

EA Sports, which produces "Madden NFL 19," expressed condolences for the victims and also condemned the shooting in a statement on Twitter.

The NFL said in a statement the league was "shocked and deeply saddened by the horrific tragedy today in Jacksonville. Our hearts go out to all those affected. We are grateful for the first responders immediately on the

scene. We support our partners at EA Sports and will continue to monitor developments with local law enforcement."

Jaguars owner Shad Khan said in a statement that it was "impossible to comprehend" the news of the shooting:

"I'm heartbroken for the families and friends of the victims and can only express my deepest condolences as we try to understand why and how this can happen, not only here, but anywhere. What I can say is I know

today what lifelong Jacksonville residents have known forever -- we are resilient, compassionate and remarkably supportive of our neighbors and friends, particularly in the most trying occasions. This tragedy will ask the best of all of us, but I know we will respond."

The Jacksonville Landing, in the heart of the city's downtown, hosts concerts and other entertainment, and it has a busy food court and a host of bars and restaurants.

(Source: ESPN)

Mohamed Salah hits out at Egyptian FA over image use



Mohamed Salah has revived a months-long dispute with soccer authorities in his native Egypt, accusing them of ignoring his complaints about their unauthorized use of his image.

The dispute over image rights and lingering tensions over his treatment during the World Cup have cast doubt on whether Salah, the top scorer in the Premier League last season, will continue playing on the national team.

"It's normal that a football federation seeks to solve the problems of its players so they can feel comfortable. But in fact, what I see is exactly the opposite," the Liverpool winger tweeted on Sunday.

It is not normal that my messages and my lawyer's messages are ignored. I do not know why all this (is happening)? Do you not have time to respond to us?!" he added.

Egypt's football association said in a statement it would discuss Salah's demands Monday.

Ramy Abbas, Salah's agent, said he and his client have asked for guarantees regarding the 26-year-old's "wellbeing" while on the national team and assurances that his image rights won't be violated again. "Enough is enough," Abbas tweeted.

Salah's tweet was widely shared in Egypt, where he is seen as a national hero.

Egyptian business tycoon Naguib Sawiris called for the resignation of the football association's board members.

"Treating an Egyptian figure like Mohammed Salah who raised his country's name in an unprecedented way should not have been like that... Resign and relieve us after the abject failure," Sawiris tweeted Monday.

The dispute first surfaced in April when the Egyptian national team prominently featured Salah's image on its plane, which was provided by official team sponsor WE. Salah has a sponsorship deal with a rival telecommunications firm, Vodafone.

At the time, Youth and Sports Minister Khaled Abdel-Aziz announced that all of Salah's demands would be met following an emergency meeting of the football association's board. Farag Amer, head of parliament's Youth and Sports committee, said President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi had ordered that the dispute be quickly resolved.

Salah is due to be back in international action under new coach Javier Aguirre in September, with Egypt facing Niger in a 2019 Africa Cup of Nations qualifier.

But his participation could be in doubt.

(Source: Daily Mail)

Bundesliga bosses criticize VAR as 'stupid' and 'shambles'



Coaches and executives of Bundesliga clubs continued to express their frustration with the video assistant referee (VAR) system during the opening weekend, with Hoffenheim coach Julian Nagelsmann calling it "a stupid period of video watching."

Even after the technology worked well at the World Cup, several games were overshadowed by what Schalke sporting director Christian Heidel called a "shambles," starting with contentious decisions in defending champions Bayern Munich's 3-1 win over Hoffenheim on Friday.

Franck Ribery earned a penalty at 1-1 when he fell as he tried to get past a tackle from Havard Nordtveit, then Robert Lewandowski was ordered to take it again when Arjen Robben encroached in the area.

Nagelsmann was particularly critical of the VAR, who was watching in Cologne, for not intervening on the initial penalty decision.

"Why the buildup to the penalty was not checked is a mystery to me," Nagelsmann told reporters after the game.

Bayern coach Niko Kovac agreed that the decision to award the penalty was not "crystal clear" and said he would not have awarded it.

The issues continued on Saturday, which was punctuated by the sight of referees

consulting pitch-side monitors and talking on their headsets to the VAR.

Referee Patrick Ittrich initially sent off Wolfsburg striker Wout Weghorst before allowing him to continue in a 2-1 win against 10-man Schalke. Weghorst was shown a red card after barging into Guido Burgstaller, but the referee changed it to a yellow after it was reviewed.

Ittrich had already sent off Schalke defender Matija Nastasic after an intervention from the VAR, leading to complaints from the visiting team.

"I felt sorry for the referee today," Heidel said. "Cologne introduced the confusion. The referee would probably have done a wonderful job if the VAR hadn't intervened."

Hertha Berlin was awarded a penalty in a 1-0 win over promoted Nurnberg despite an apparent foul from Vedad Ibisevic.

There were also issues in Augsburg's victory over Fortuna Duesseldorf and Borussia Moenchengladbach's triumph over Bayer Leverkusen.

It's not always clear why the VAR is intervening, leaving referees on the pitch in the firing line -- something Bayern chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge does not think is fair.

"They're being left high and dry," he said.

(Source: SoccerNet)

Sebastian Vettel wins Belgian GP after avoiding huge opening corner crash

Sebastian Vettel cut Lewis Hamilton's lead at the top of the Driver Standings to 17 points after a faultless performance at an action-packed Belgian Grand Prix.

But the race at Spa will be remembered for the scary and spectacular opening-corner crash which brought the safety car out and forced five drivers to retire.

Nico Hulkenberg's brakes locked up on the approach to the first turn, causing him to slam into the back of Fernando Alonso and send the Spaniard's car flying over the top of Charles Leclerc's Sauber.

It meant the first four laps of the Belgian Grand Prix were led by the safety car and the trio involved in the crash were all forced to retire along with Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen, whose car was irreparably damaged in the smash.

Red Bull's Daniel Ricciardo was also involved and rejoined the race a lap down after extensive repairs were made to his rear wing. But the Aussie, who announced last week he would be leaving to join Renault at the end of the season, was eventually forced to retire.

Fernando Alonso, who recently announced he would be retiring from the sport, Hulkenberg and Leclerc all walked away from the incident but were taken for a medical examination as a precaution.



It was a case of deja vu for Alonso, who was involved in a near-identical incident at this track in 2012.

With the carnage on the track behind them, Vettel and Hamilton kept their cool to vie for first place and some stunning driving from the German saw him take the lead inside four corners and it was one he never looked like relinquishing.

"I had a great start, I'm not sure Lewis saw me," Vettel told reporters after the race. "He pushed me quite far to the left,

I knew my chance would be up the hill and I timed it well.

"It was better this year, we had less wing but timing is crucial. With the safety car it was the other way around (Hamilton hunting Vettel) but after that it was a very smooth race -- Lewis pushed very hard."

Verstappen eager to please

Though Hamilton showed all of his skill and class in tricky conditions on Saturday to take pole ahead of championship rival Vettel, the story in qualifying came from Force India.

Drivers Esteban Ocon and Sergio Perez took third and fourth respectively -- the team's best position for several years -- after their gamble to stay on the slicks paid off as the heavy rain subsided.

It was a huge change in fortunes from the last race weekend in Hungary, during which Force India went into administration and had to be saved by a consortium fronted by Lawrence Stroll, the father of Williams driver Lance.

But Max Verstappen, who is always given a rock star's at Spa welcome by thousands of compatriots who make the short journey from the neighboring Netherlands, was desperate to impress the vast swathes of orange shirts in the stands.

(Source: CNN)



Hossein Keyhani wins gold in 3000m steeplechase event

By Masoud Hossein

TEHRAN — Hossein Keyhani claimed Iran's 17th gold medal in the 2018 Asian Games on Monday.

Keyhani seized the gold in the steeplechase event with a time of 8:22.79. Yaser Bagharab of Qatar (8:28.21) and Kazuya Shiojiri of Japan (8:29.42) won the silver and bronze respectively.

Iranian athletes had previously won 16 gold medals in the Games. Freestyle wrestlers Hassan Yazdani (86kg), Alireza Karimi (97kg) and Parviz Hadi (125kg) had also snatched three gold medals.

Greco-Roman wrestlers Mohammadali Gerai and Hossein Nouri won two gold medals in the 77kg and 87kg.

Taekwondo practitioner Saeid Rajabi also claimed a gold medal in the 80kg. Mirhashem Hosseini also won a gold medal in the 63kg.

Erfan Ahangarian bagged a gold medal in wushu after defeating Wang Xuetao from China 2-1 in the final match of the Men's Sanda -60kg.

Another wushu practitioner Mohsen Mohammadseifi claimed his third successive gold medal in the Asian Games after beating his Chinese rival Shi Zhanwei 2-0.

Climber Reza Alipour also gained Iran's third gold medal on Day 5. Women's and men's kabaddi teams won two gold medals in the Games.

Weightlifter Sohrab Moradi won gold in the men's 94kg class. Karate practitioner Sajad Ganjzadeh and Bahman Asgari claimed two gold medals in the men's +84kg and -75kg respectively.

Weightlifter Behdad Salimi won the gold medal with a total of 461kg in the men's 105kg.

The 18th Asian Games stage 465 events out of 40 sports, among which 330 events from 32 sports will feature in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

The Games, attracting more than 10,000 athletes, will run through Sept. 2.



Behdad Salimi wins Iran 16th gold medal at Asiad

SPORTS TEHRAN — Iranian superheavyweight Behdad Salimi claimed a gold medal in the 2018 Asian Games on Monday.

Salimi hoisted the 208kg in the snatch and completed a clean and jerk of 253kg.

The 2012 Olympic champion won the gold medal with a total of 461kg in the men's 105kg.

The silver medal went to his compatriot Saeid Alihosseini

with 456kg (208kg in snatch and 248kg in clean and jerk). Uzbekistan's Rustam Djangabaev snatched the bronze medal with a total of 455kg.

The 18th Asian Games stage 465 events out of 40 sports, among which 330 events from 32 sports will feature in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

The Games, attracting more than 10,000 athletes, will run through Sept. 2.

Salimi happy to bid farewell to weightlifting with gold

SPORTS TEHRAN — Iranian super heavyweight weightlifter Behdad Salimi is so happy to announce his retirement from the sport with a gold medal.

On Monday, Salimi bade farewell to

weightlifting after winning a gold medal in the 2018 Asian Games underway in Indonesia.

Salimi hoisted the 208kg in the snatch and completed a clean and jerk of 253kg.

The 2012 Olympic champion won the gold

medal with a total of 461kg in the men's 105kg.

Salimi had already snatched two gold medals in the 2010 Asian Games (Guangzhou) and 2014 Asian Games (Incheon).

"I am very happy to end my career with a gold medal. I wanted to make room for the

young weightlifters," Salimi said.

"I fought so hard to win this medal and thank God for winning the gold," the 28-year-old weightlifter, who has also won two gold medals in the 2010 and 2011 world Championships, said.

Asian Games: Iran basketball into semis



SPORTS TEHRAN — Iran national basketball team advanced to the 2018 Asian Games semifinals after beating Japan on Monday.

Team Melli defeated Japan 93-67 at the GBK Basket Hall in Jakarta, Indonesia. Hamed Haddadi led Iran with 22 points while Naoya Kumagai was Japan's topscorer with 14 points.

Iran will face South Korea in the semi-final on Thursday after their 91-82 victory over the Philippines, who had

25 points from Cleveland Cavaliers point guard Jordan Clarkson.

Iran have a chance of getting revenge on the Korean team after they lost to them in the 2014 Asian Games final contest.

The 18th Asian Games stage 465 events out of 40 sports, among which 330 events from 32 sports will feature in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

The Games, attracting more than 10,000 athletes, will run through Sept. 2.

Asian Games Day 9: Bahman Asgari takes gold



SPORTS TEHRAN — Karate practitioner Bahman Asgari took Iran's 15th gold medal in the 2018 Asian Games on Monday.

Asgari beat Raef Adel Alturkestani from Saudi Arabia 5-0 in the men's -75kg final contest at the JCC - Plenary Hall in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Bronze medal was jointly won by Hsu Weichun from Chinese Taipei and Jordanian Bashar Alnajjar.

Karate practitioner Sajad Ganjzadeh had already claimed a gold medal in the

men's +84kg final contest.

Ganjzadeh beat Vietnam's Minh Phung Nguyen 5-2 in the men's +84kg final contest.

Bronze medal was won by Tareq Ali Hamed from Saudi Arabia and Daniyar Yuldashev from Kazakhstan.

The 18th Asian Games stage 465 events out of 40 sports, among which 330 events from 32 sports will feature in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

The Games, attracting more than 10,000 athletes, will run through Sept. 2.

Pegah Zangeneh wins karate bronze medal

TASNIM — Pegah Zangeneh from Iran claimed a bronze medal in karate sport of the 2018 Asian Games.

The Iranian athlete took a bronze medal in the women's -68kg at the JCC - Plenary Hall in Jakarta, Indonesia after beating Vietnamese Thi Ngoan Nguyen 10-0.

Kayo Someya from Japan also won the bronze medal, defeating Jou Chao from Chinese Taipei 3-1.

Gold medal went to Kazakhstan's Guzaliya Gafurova who defeated Tang Lingling 2-0 in the final match.

The 2018 Asian Games, officially known as the 18th Asian Games and also known as Jakarta Palembang 2018, is a pan-Asian multi-sport event. The event is underway from 18 August to 2 September in the Indonesian cities of Jakarta and Palembang.



Iran takes bronze in compound archery mixed team

IRNA — Iran won bronze medal in compound archery's mixed team event at the 18th Asian Games on Monday.

Fereshteh Ghorbani and Nima Mahboubi

defeated Singapore 155-152 and claimed the bronze medal.

Gold Medal went to Chinese Taipei who edged past South Korea 151-150 in the final contest.

The 2018 Asian Games, officially known as the 18th Asian Games and also known as Jakarta Palembang 2018, is a pan-Asian multi-sport event. The event is underway

from 18 August to 2 September in the Indonesian cities of Jakarta and Palembang.

The athletes compete in 465 events across 40 sports and 67 disciplines.

ACL Quarter-final 1st Leg: Persepolis to face Al Duhail of Qatar

Persepolis football team of Iran have a difficult task against Qatar's Al Duhail in the AFC Champions League (ACL) quarter-final first leg.

The match will be held in Doha's Khalifa International Stadium on Tuesday.

Al Duhail are aiming to add to their eight-match AFC Champions League winning streak when they host last year's semi-finalists Persepolis.



Al Duhail and Persepolis both topped their groups and meet for the first time in their history after defeating UAE pair Al Ain and Al Jazira, respectively, in the Round of 16.

When 2015 AFC Champions League quarter-finalists Lekhwiya took over 2016 semi-finalists El Jaish, a new powerhouse was born. Al Duhail took the Continent by storm, winning all their games in the competition so far.

After easing to the top of Group B and qualifying to the Round of 16 with two games to spare, Al Duhail made light work of 2016 finalists Al Ain, putting eight goals past them across the two legs.

An unstoppable attacking force, Al Duhail have bagged 21 goals in the competition so far, six more than the next best West Asian side, Al Sadd. Only Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors scored more across the competition with 26.

Persepolis secured the Group C top spot with the meanest defense across the competition, conceding only three goals in the group stage, the-afc.com wrote.

Then came the Round of 16 and Persepolis conceded four goals in just two games against Al Jazira. A 3-2 defeat in Abu Dhabi followed by 2-1 home win in Tehran meant Branko Ivankovic's men barely scrapped through to the quarter-final thanks to a late Jalal Hosseini strike.

Combining power and pace, Ali Alipour emerged as the side's main forward in 2017-18 season following the departure of Mehdi Taremi to Al Gharafa. He made an instant impact, firing his side to the Iran Pro League title and winning the top goal scorer award in the process.

Alipour has become even more important to his side's attacking play now after both Vahid Amiri and Farshad Ahmadzadeh moved abroad over the summer. The 23-year-old took 14 shots on target, twice as many as the next best Persepolis player and scored four goals this campaign.

(Source: the-afc)

Al Duhail have no weak points: Branko Ivankovic

SPORTS TEHRAN — Iran's Persepolis coach Branko Ivankovic could not spot a weak point in Qatar's Al Duhail football team.

The Iranian giants will meet the Qatari powerhouse on Tuesday at the Khalifa International Stadium in the AFC Champions League (ACL) quarter-final first leg.

"In this stage of the AFC Champions League, there is no a weak team. All teams are strong. We know Al Duhail very well and have met them in the past," Ivankovic said in the pre-match news conference.

"Al Duhail have new good players but we will do our best to get a good result against them. We've analyzed Al Duhail to find their weak points but I have to say they have no weak points," the Croat added.

"We have not been permitted to sign new player in two transfer windows but I believe in my players. I think we can get a result with our current players," the Persepolis coach stated.

"We know that Persepolis will face a strong team but will fight until the final whistle for our goals," Ivankovic concluded.

Iran futsal learn fate at Summer Youth Olympic Games

Asia's representatives will face some of the world's best when futsal makes its debut at the Buenos Aires Summer Youth Olympic Games in October.

The draw for the men's U-18 tournament saw Islamic Republic of Iran, Asia's top futsal nation, being drawn in Group B alongside Solomon Islands, Costa Rica, Russia and South American powerhouse Brazil.

Iraq, Asia's second representatives, were drawn in Group A with hosts Argentina, Egypt, Panama and Slovakia.

For the women's draw, Thailand are in Group A with Trinidad & Tobago, Spain, Bolivia and Tonga while Japan will have Chile, Portugal, Dominican Republic and Cameroon for company in Group B.

The two competitions will kick off on October 7, with the women's final on October 17 and men's a day later.

- **Men**
- Group A
Argentina, Egypt, Panama, Iraq, Slovakia
- Group B
IR Iran, Solomon Islands, Costa Rica, Russia, Brazil
- **Women**
- Group A
Trinidad & Tobago, Thailand, Spain, Bolivia, Tonga
- Group B
Chile, Portugal, Dominican Republic, Cameroon, Japan

(Source: the-afc)

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Tehran Theater Festival to kick off today

A R T TEHRAN — The 23rd edition of the Tehran Theater Festival will open at the Tehran Theater Complex today. Troupes from Tehran Province will be performing 13 plays during the event, the organizers announced on Monday.



A poster for the 23rd Tehran Theater Festival

A panel composed of actors Farhad Aslani and Jaleh Sameti and director Kurosh Narimani will judge the plays. "My Lovely Family" by Mohammad Rafiei, "Patient" by Mohammad Yazdi, "A Respected Family" by Adel Aziznejad and "One Night in a Train Station" by Saeid Tajik are among the plays. "Mr. and Mrs. Arghavan" by Peyman Daneshmand and "Happy-Ever Passengers" by Ali Khodsiani will also go on stage at the festival, which will run until September 1. Each performance will be followed by a review session by critics Milad Nikabadi and Habib Danesh.

Netflix poaches Disney film exec Tendo Nagenda

NEW YORK (Hollywood Reporter) — After eight years with Walt Disney Pictures, rising film executive Tendo Nagenda is jumping to Netflix.

The move is a big get for the digital streaming giant, which is trying to take its movie production arm up to a level where it can compete against studios for popular popcorn and tentpole fare.



Tendo Nagenda (Emma McIntyre/Getty Images for THR)

At Disney, Nagenda worked on a range of movies, from the modestly-budgeted, such as "Queen of Katwe", to "A Wrinkle in Time". While those struggled to find audiences, he also was working on major tentpoles such as the upcoming live-action versions of "Dumbo" and "Mulan". He joined Disney in 2010 and is currently exec vp production, a title he has held for two years. The move is an eye-popper for Disney observers. Nagenda was seen as a rising star at the studio; he was in the middle of a four-year contract and also was being mentored by senior Disney executives. But sources say that Nagenda sought assurances that he would move into the role of president of production when current president Sean Bailey moved up. Those assurances never came. Nagenda is one of the most high-profile black film executives and Netflix, like most Hollywood companies, is said to be looking to increase the racial diversity of its executives. While the streamer has made headlines for signing prominent black showrunners Shonda Rhimes and Kenya Barris to massive talent deals.

Star-studded tribute marks 100 years since Bernstein's birth

LENOX, Mass. (AP) — Leonard Bernstein (BURN'-stine) has got a musical tribute that's off the charts on the 100th anniversary of the maestro's birth.

The Boston Symphony Orchestra joined by musicians from the New York Philharmonic, Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, and other groups when it took the stage Saturday evening at its summer home at Tanglewood in Massachusetts. Performers include Yo-Yo Ma.

The concert capped a year of tributes to the Massachusetts-born conductor and composer to mark the centennial of his birth. Bernstein died in 1990 at age 72 in New York City.

Gov. Charlie Baker has proclaimed the day Leonard Bernstein Day.

Bernstein wrote the score to "West Side Story" and won a slew of Grammys, including a lifetime achievement award in 1985.

Iranian director to stage musical based on "Corpse Bride"

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian director Morteza Deski Esmail-Kashi plans to stage a musical based on "Corpse Bride", the 2005 animated fantasy hit by Tim Burton and Mike Johnson, during spring or summer 2019.

"All musicals ever performed in Iran have been based on classical stories, but my musical is a modern fantasy, which will be performed with jazz music," he told the Persian service of MNA on Monday.

A cast composed of 11 leading actors and numerous actor-singers will be hired for the project, in which actor Navid Mohammadzadeh will collaborate as a producer. "Corpse Bride" starring Johnny Depp and Helena



A scene from "Corpse Bride" by Tim Burton and Mike Johnson

Bonham Carter is about a shy groom who practices his wedding vows in the inadvertent presence of a deceased young woman as she rises from the grave assuming he has married her.

Isfahan children's film festival announces jury

A R T TEHRAN — The 31st International Film Festival for Children and Youth, which will take place in the central Iranian city of Isfahan from August 30 to September 5, has announced the jury for the official competition.

Russian film critic Alena Sycheva, French filmmaker Gilles Lemounaud who is also the artistic director of Festimaj school film festival, German animator Julia Ocker and Georgian director Ketevan Janelidze are the members of the jury, the organizers announced on Monday.

Iranian animators Omid Khoshnazar and Ali Nuri Oskui are also on the panel.

Fifteen films from 14 countries will be screened in the official competition of the event.

Among the film are "The Witch Hunter" by Serbian director Rasko Miljkovic, "The Seen and Unseen" by Kamila Andini from Indonesia, "Home" by Kim Jong-woo from South Korea and "Alone" by David Moreau



A combination photo shows the jury of 31st International Film Festival for Children and Youth.

from France. The festival plans to honor a number of filmmakers with lifetime achievement awards this year.

The Dalvand animator brothers Kianush, Farzad, Kurosh and Dariush who are famous for movies such as "The Last Messenger" and "Rustam and Sohrab" are among the filmmakers.

Feryal Behzad, the director of acclaimed films such as "Kakoli", "The Valley of Butterflies" and "The Invisible Man", will also receive lifetime achievement award.

The organizers also plan to pay tribute to Nasser Cheshmazar, a prominent Iranian composer who died earlier in May. He collaborated as a composer in over 20 films, including "Hamun" by Dariush Mehrjui, "The Stories of Majid" by Kiumars Purahmad and "Ceasefire" by Tahmineh Milani.

A retrospective of the Japanese director and writer Hayao Miyazaki will also be organized during the event.

London gallery to display photos by Iranian filmmakers



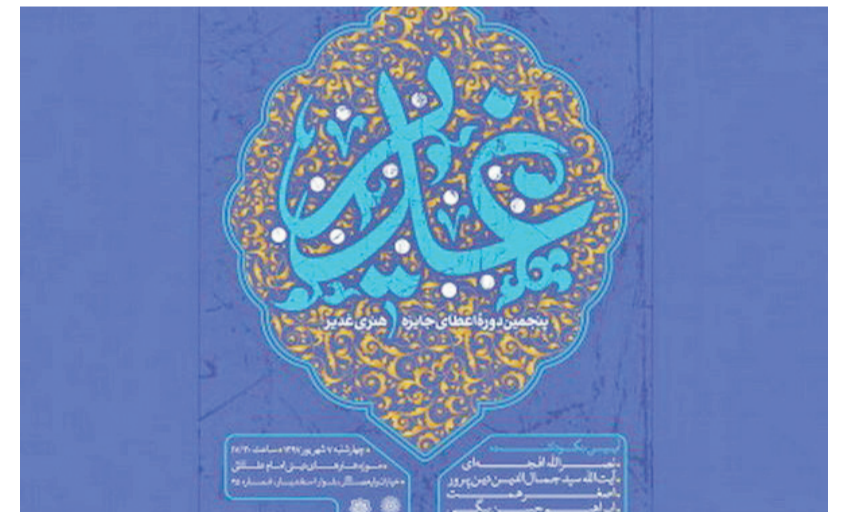
A photo from Abbas Kiarostami's series "Four Seasons"

A R T TEHRAN — The London branch of CAMA — Contemporary and Modern Art Gallery, will be hosting an exhibition of photos by a number of prestigious Iranian filmmakers during September.

The exhibit, which is scheduled to open on September 7, will showcase photos by Abbas Kiarostami, Kamran Shirdel, Majid Barzegar, Nasser Taqvai, Seifollah Samadian, Mahmud Kalari, Hamid Jebelli and Jafar Panahi, the director of Tehran's CAMA, Mona Khosheqbal, said in a press

conference on Sunday. The exhibition is a sequel to "Passing through Time", a showcase that Tehran's CAMA organized earlier in June and July. Two to four photos from each filmmaker have been selected to be put on display at the exhibition. Khosheqbal said that the exhibit aims to show other sides of the artists. Photos by Shirdel from the early days of the Islamic Revolution in 1979 will be displayed for the first time at the exhibition that will run until October 23.

Ghadir Artistic Awards to honor five cultural figures



A R T TEHRAN — The Fifth Ghadir Artistic Awards will be presented to the honorees during a ceremony at the Imam Ali (AS) Religious Arts Museum on Wednesday.

The awards are presented to those artists whose works are created on Imam Ali (AS), the first Imam of the Shia, and the awards ceremony is organized every year on the anniversary of Eid al-Ghadir, the day on which Imam Ali (AS) was appointed as successor to the Prophet Muhammad (S).

This year's honorees include calligrapher

Nasrollah Afjei, director of the Nahj-ul-Balaghah Foundation Seyyed Jama'eddin Dinparvar and actor Asghar Hemmat.

Also included are writer Ebrahim Hassanbeigi and singer Hesameddin Seraj.

Scholar Seyyed Jafar Shahidi, researcher Morteza Asgari, poet Seyyed Ali Musavi Garmarudi, filmmaker Davud Mirbaqeri, calligrapher Hamid Ajami and actor Dariush Arjmand were the previous recipients of the awards.

The museum will also be hosting an exhibition of works by various artists on Imam Ali (AS).

"Crazy Rich Asians" has exceptionally strong second weekend, "Happytime Murders" flops

LOS ANGELES (Variety.com) — "Crazy Rich Asians" had a crazy good second weekend at the box office.

Warner Bros. acclaimed romantic comedy generated another \$25 million in 3,526 locations, meaning it made almost as much during its second outing as it did its first weekend. Jon M. Chu's movie, which has been lauded as the first studio film in over 25 years with a predominately Asian-American cast, dropped just 6 percent — marking one of the best holds in recent history for a wide release in any genre. Saturday's numbers dropped an unprecedented 0 percent. In two weeks, its domestic total sits at \$76.8 million.

"Every now and then, all the stars align, and this is what happened here," Jeff Goldstein, Warner Bros.' head of domestic distribution, said. "The word of mouth has just spread."

"Crazy Rich Asians" easily fended off Melissa McCarthy's "The Happytime Murders". The black comedy opened in third place with a lackluster \$10 million in 3,256 locations. That's easily the lowest start of McCarthy's solo career. The STX movie, which carries a \$40 million production budget, was panned by critics. It carries a bleak 22 percent average on review aggregation site Rotten Tomatoes. It doesn't get much brighter for this weekend's new



Cast member Ken Jeong poses at the premiere for "Crazy Rich Asians" in Los Angeles, California, U.S., August 7, 2018. (Reuters/Mario Anzuoni)

wide releases. Global Road Entertainment's "A.X.L." launched with a dismal \$2.9 million in 1,710 venues — disastrous news for the beleaguered company. Earlier this week, Global Road's lenders took control of the film division after the company failed to raise

enough money to pay for future productions.

Warner Bros.' "The Meg" hit a major milestone this weekend as it crossed \$100 million at the domestic box office. The shark thriller stayed at No. 2, picking up \$13 million in 4,031 locations in its third outing. Globally, it has amassed over \$400 million.

Meanwhile, Tom Cruise's latest mission continues to be a profitable one. "Mission: Impossible - Fallout" landed in fourth place with \$8.1 million on 3,052 screens for a domestic tally of \$194 million. It generated \$13 million overseas, bringing its worldwide come to \$538 million.

Rounding out the top five is Disney's "Christopher Robin", which picked up \$6.4 million in its fourth frame. That brings its North American total to \$77.7 million and worldwide come to \$112 million.

In limited release, Bleecker Street's "Papillon" launched with just \$1.1 million in 544 locations. Charlie Hunnam and Rami Malek star in the remake of the 1973 film with Steven McQueen and Dustin Hoffman.

Sony's "Searching" opened in nine theaters with \$360,000 for a per-screen-average of \$40,000. The Sundance title features John Cho and Michelle La.

A surprisingly strong August brings popcorn season up 13.6 percent, while the year-to-date box office is up a healthy 9.4 percent, according to comScore.