



Talks began after Obama accepted Iran's right to nuclear enrichment **2**



MP calls on Foreign Ministry to summon French ambassador **2**



We want to beat Al Duhail for our fans: Ivankovic **15**



Play on Persian poet Sadi to go on stage in Vancouver **16**



March in Basra to deplore attack on Iran consulate

See page 13

Turkey proposes setting up joint bank with Iran

ECONOMY **d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Turkey has proposed establishing a joint bank with Iran for facilitating trade between the two countries, IRNA reported citing an article published in the Turkish newspaper "Dünya".

"Establishing a joint bank through which the two sides could conduct bilateral trade and businesses without the need for U.S. dollar would be the final

step for developing economic relations," the Turkish Representative Chairman of Iran-Turkey Business Council, Ümit Kiler said on Saturday.

In his article, Kiler touched upon the remarks of the governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) regarding the elimination of U.S. dollar from trade between the two countries, writing "on the sidelines of the trilateral meeting among Iran, Turkey and Russia." **→4**

Neighbors prioritized for exporting knowledge-based ICT products

TECHNOLOGY **d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Four neighboring countries of Iraq, Afghanistan, Oman and Turkey were given priority for knowledge-based product marketing of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) products and services, the Secretary General of the Information Technology Organization of Iran (ITO) announced, Mehr reported on Saturday.

Mehdi Faqih said that Iran plans to boost the ICT market in those countries during the presence at the [Persian] Gulf Information Technology Exhibition (GITEX) in Dubai.

Iranian knowledge-based companies will attend the GITEX, which will be held from October 16 to 18 at the Dubai World Trade Center. **→10**

Syrian military downs Israeli missiles fired at Damascus airport

Syrian military has announced that its missile defense system successfully intercepted and downed Israeli missiles fired at an airport in the capital Damascus.

The official SANA agency said late Saturday that the military had thwarted an "Israeli aggression," adding that a number of "enemy missiles" fired at the Damascus International Airport had been dismantled.

"Our air defense systems thwarted an Israeli missile aggression," a military

source told the agency, after reports said several explosions had been heard near the airport.

An Israeli military spokeswoman would not comment on the report by SANA.

"We don't comment on foreign reports," said the Israeli official, without elaborating.

Israel has become increasingly involved in the war in Syria with attacks on the country's military and civilian infrastructures over the past few months. **→13**



ARTICLE
By Mahmood Khaghani
Oil expert

EU, Iran clearing the way for business and trade

The news that Germany, France & UK are actively considering a "Clearing House" to facilitate Iran's global commerce is probably the most important development in financial & energy markets for many years.

According to weekly Der Spiegel and business daily Handelsblatt reports quoted by international news media on 15 September 2018, the three countries could set up a "Special Purpose Vehicle" (SPV) -- a firm resembling a "clearing house" that would cut their Iranian business partners out of the financial loop while still allowing business and trade as usual. Italy is reportedly also interested in participating.

AFP has quoted an official from the German economy and finance ministries as saying that the scheme is one of several options that EU capitals are discussing with the European Commission to create "independent payment channels" for doing business and trade with Iran.

European Commission spokeswoman Maja Kocijancic has said that Brussels wants "to make sure the effects of the sanctions are minimized for companies that want to do legitimate business with and in Iran and they can still have access to necessary finance," adding that "currently the work is ongoing". While Berlin, London and Paris are driving the scheme, Der Spiegel reported that if it is implemented it would be open to other EU member states.

For example, Iran could ship oil to Spanish, Greek or any other EU countries' firms, accumulating € credits that could be used to pay for EU goods and services exported to Iran. That is to say without any need for U.S. dollar involvement.

■ **Developing a Persian Gulf benchmark**

Throughout my career at the National Iranian Oil Company & Petroleum Ministry, I studied energy and financial markets and developed innovative policies with the encouragement of my senior managers. One of the most important was the 2001 proposal to develop a Persian Gulf oil benchmark price which was not under the control of Wall Street & major international oil companies (IOCs). **→4**

UN welcomes election of Iraqi parliament speaker and deputies

The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Mr. Ján Kubiš, welcomes the election by the Council of Representatives (CoR) of its Speaker and two deputies. He congratulates the elected officials, Speaker Mohammed al-Halbousi and deputies Hassan al-Kaabi and Basheer al-Haddad. The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) looks forward to working with the new parliamentary leadership and the CoR and is ready to offer any required assistance.

The Special representative appreciates the perseverance of the interim Speaker who chaired the session and applauds the sense of responsibility that motivated the candidates to compete for the leadership positions in the CoR. While taking note of the results of the votes and congratulating the elected officials, Mr. Kubiš expresses his deep disappointment that none

of the eminently qualified women made it to the CoR Speakership, and urges the MPs and political leaders to be true to their pledges and elect women to other leadership positions in the CoR and to ministerial and other senior positions in the future government.

The Special Representative urges the political forces and blocs to expeditiously proceed, in adherence to the constitutional timelines, with the process of electing the President of the Republic then the Prime Minister, to be followed by the formation of a pro-reform, non-sectarian patriotic national government that will be based on partnership cooperation of diverse components and groups of Iraq, away from the sectarian quotas and corruption. Only such a government can regain the confidence of the people, swiftly act to fulfill their demands for improved public services, jobs, economic

development and reform, protect the interests of Iraq, and ensure full respect for its sovereignty and independence.

Lawmakers must next elect a new president and task the leader of the largest bloc to form a government as prime minister.

The country's main political alliances led by Muqtada Sadr's Sairoon bloc and the Fatah Alliance led by commander Hadi al-Amiri are expected to cooperate to form a new government.

Incumbent Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi has also announced that he is not seeking to serve a second term in office.

Millions of Iraqis voted on May 12 in their first parliamentary election since the defeat of the Daesh Takfiri terrorist group, but a contentious recount process delayed the announcement of final results until last month. **→13**

Currency slump gives rise to visits from neighbors, sanctions wane visits from EU

By Marjohn Sheikhi

TEHRAN (MNA) — The fall in Iran's national currency value has attracted a new wave of visitors from neighboring countries, particularly Iraq. According to recent figures, the arrival of foreign tourists to Iran has had a 45% increase in a five-month period compared to last year.

According to head of tourism development and planning office at Iran's Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization (ICH-HTO), the arrival of foreign tourists to Iran has experienced a 45 percent increase in a five-month period from March 20 to August 22, with the figure standing at 3,140,003 visitors.

Mohammad Sabet-Eghlidi said the figures have been obtained from the immigration police, adding that the number of foreign tourists' arrival in Iran in the same period last year stood at 2,159,882.

Iraq is in the lead with 1.263 million number of tourists having visited Iran in the five-month period, followed by Azerbaijan with 619,570 tourists, Afghanistan with about 400,000 tourists and Turkey with 330,000 tourists, all showing a significant growth compared to the same period last year.

As the number of tourists' arrival from neighboring countries increase, visits from European countries have witnessed a significant drop. Ac-

cording to Sabet-Eghlidi, the visit of European tourists to Iran from March to August has declined by 22 percent.

The major drop has occurred in the German market. In the five-month period last year, nearly 31,000 German tourists visited Iran, while the number has dropped to 21,000 this year, showing a 32% decrease.

Following the Germans are French tourists, whose number of arrivals this year stands at 16,000, while the number stood at 21,000 in the five-month period in 2017. The number of tourists from the Netherlands visiting Iran dropped from 12,000 to 9,000 this year, showing a 25 percent decrease. **→7**



© Tehran Times/ Mahdi Hossein Nejadi

Rescue drill, oil spill response exercise in Astara port

Series of rescue and relief drills as well as oil spill response exercises were performed in Astara port, northern Gilan province.

Over the drill, rescue and relief teams along with staff trained in preventing oil discharge into the sea and the Islamic Republic of Iran Navy divers assessed their skills in saving the injured and transferring them to the land, searching for lost bodies, fighting fire, and oil spill control and prevention.

Intensification of disputes in the White House

By Saeed Sobhani

TEHRAN — Disputes between U.S. President Donald Trump and Secretary of Defense James Mattis have increased. Many media sources in the U.S. are reporting the probable dismissal of Trump's Secretary of Defense in the coming days. Meanwhile, after the presence of people such as John Bolton and Mike Pompeo at the White House, Mattis' power in the U.S. Department of Defense actually dropped.

As CNBC reported, The relationship between President Donald Trump and Secretary of Defense James Mattis may have "sour" to the point of no return. The New York Times reported on Saturday — but the White House denied the former general is on the outs with his boss.

In its report, The Times cited more than a dozen administration and congressional officials saying that national security aides such as Mattis have effectively been iced out by Trump ahead of the 2018 congressional midterm elections. Trump is reportedly souring on Mattis based on policy differences on a number of fronts, and appears resentful of unflattering comparisons between the two men, the publication reported.

In addition, the president is reportedly looking to replace the four star general with someone "who would be more vocally supportive than Mr. Mattis, who is vehemently protective of the American military against perceptions it could be used for political purposes," the Times reported. Sarah Huckabee Sanders, the White House's top spokeswoman, told CNBC in an email that the report was "completely untrue."

The reported fray in the relationship comes after the president and Mattis seemed to have an unbreakable bond, and shared burger dinners at the White House early in the general's tenure. The president, who publicly referred to his top security adviser as "Mad Dog," could be influenced by the latest political book to rock Washington. "Fear," the latest book by author and famed political journalist Bob Woodward, attributed several quotes to Mattis that were highly critical of Trump.

In one instance, Woodward reports that Mattis told a group of confidants "Secretaries of defense don't always get to choose the president they work for," and that Trump acted like he had an understanding of "a fifth or sixth grader."

Mattis, however, has rebuked Woodward's book calling it "fiction" and a "product of someone's rich imagination." **→7**

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Twitter has blocked Iranian accounts, Zarif protests

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Sunday that Twitter has blocked the accounts of “real Iranians” but overlooks the “regime change” propaganda against the Islamic Republic.

“Twitter has shuttered accounts of real Iranians, incl TV presenters & students, for supposedly being part of an ‘influence op,’” Zarif tweeted, addressing Jack Patrick Dorsey, the co-founder and CEO of Twitter.

“How about looking at actual bots in Tirana used to prop up ‘regime change’ propaganda spewed out of DC?” he added.



Some governors will be replaced: Rahmani Fazli

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli said on Sunday that a number of governors will be replaced in line with the plan to ban employment of the retirees.

“According to the plan, a number of governors must be replaced, which is a very important thing to do,” Rahmani Fazli said, ISNA reported.

“The employment status and the emphasis the president has put on this issue has been reviewed at the presence of caretaker labor minister,” he stated, adding that the government is determined to resolve the issue.



Iranian nuclear chief departs for Vienna

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Heading a delegation, Iran’s nuclear chief on Sunday left Tehran for Vienna, Austria, to attend the 62nd General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Ali Akbar Salehi, vice president and head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, is expected to meet with his counterparts from other countries and discuss bilateral ties as well, IRNA reported.

The IAEA General Conference is set for September 17-21 at the Vienna International Centre (VIC) in Vienna, where high-ranking officials and representatives from IAEA member states will discuss a range of issues, according to the IAEA website.



Members of pyramid scheme company arrested

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — The Intelligence Ministry issued a statement on Saturday saying members of a pyramid scheme company have been arrested for trying to illegally transfer foreign currency out of the country.

Forces with the Intelligence Ministry have arrested 18 leaders and active members of an illegal pyramid scheme company titled as “Financial” in Fars and Hormozgan provinces, the statement read, according to Mehr.

It added that the individuals were trying to illegally transfer currency out of the country and that the case will be handed over to judicial authorities.

It also called on the people to report such cases to the Intelligence Ministry.



Rabiei, Hajizadeh top nominees for gov’t spokesman: source

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Former Labor Minister Ali Rabiei and Cabinet Secretary Mohsen Hajizadeh are the top nominees for government spokesman, ISNA on Sunday quoted an informed source as saying.

The source further said the government will soon name the new government spokesman.

Rabiei was ousted as labor minister on August 9, when he failed to secure the parliament’s vote of confidence following an impeachment over his management of the ministry and unemployment rate.

Hajizadeh has served as the secretary of the cabinet since 2013, when he was named for the post by Vice President Es’haq Jahangiri.

Mohammad Baqer Nobakht resigned as government spokesman on July 31.



Efforts underway to free 18 Iranian fishermen kidnapped by Somalis

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — A lawmaker has said that efforts are ongoing for the freedom of 18 fishermen from Chabahar, who are detained by thieves and terrorists in Somalia.

“Of the 18 fishermen detained by the Somalis, 4 are detained by different pirate groups and 14 are detained by Al-Shabab terrorist group,” Abdolqafur Iranejad said, ICANA reported on Sunday.

He added that 4 fishermen had been freed so far, thanking the intelligence and foreign ministries for their efforts in freeing the fishermen.

Iran started talks with U.S. after Obama accepted right to uranium enrichment: Amir Abdollahian

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Hossein Amir Abdollahian, a senior foreign policy advisor to the parliament speaker, has said Iran began talks with the United States in 2011 after then U.S. President Barack Obama accepted Iran’s right to enrich uranium and through a mediation by Oman.

However, at that time President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad did not approve of talks with Americans by current nuclear chief Ali Akbar Salehi, who was foreign minister from 2011-2013, Hossein Amir Abdollahian said in an interview with Tasnim published on Sunday.

“Dr. Salehi made great efforts and took risks for the start of the talks... Mr. Ahmadinejad believed that the issue was complicated and should not have been followed by foreign minister,” he stated.

Amir Abdollahian said Ahmadinejad was not against negotiations with the United States but opposed the “level of Iranian negotiator”.



Ahmadinejad was of the opinion that this issue entails “complicated coordination” at the top level, said Amir Abdollahian who was deputy foreign

minister for Arab and African affairs at the time.

“This was his belief that if Dr. Salehi entered” the talks with Americans “he would face many problems but Dr. Salehi, while respected Dr. Ahmadinejad, tried to pursue his own messages and expert views.”

He said Salehi entered the nuclear talks with Americans through a mediation effort by Oman. The mediator was an Omani national named Salem Abdulsalam, Amir Abdollahian said.

Salem, a senior advisor to the Sultan of Oman, played a “key” role in mediation between Iran and the U.S. and made a visit to Iran in 2011, two years before Hassan Rouhani was elected president, Amir Abdollahian stated.

Amir Abdollahian went to say that as Salehi has stated in his book and also confirmed in interviews by Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, nuclear negotiations with the United States started before Rouhani’s presidency.

MP calls on Foreign Ministry to summon French ambassador

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Iranian lawmaker Mohammad Dehqan, who is a member to Iran-France parliamentary friendship group, has called on the Iranian Foreign Ministry to summon French ambassador to Tehran.

Francois Senemaud, the French ambassador to Tehran, should be summoned and give guarantees for security of Iran’s embassy in Paris, Dehqan said.

He noted that according to the international diplomatic conventions, the French government is responsible for protecting the Iranian embassy and diplomats.

Iran’s embassy in Paris came under attack on Friday by Iraq-based anti-Iran Komola loyalists.

The incident occurred after the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps fired missiles at the headquarters of the Komola commanders in the Iraqi Kurdistan region on September 8.

Dehqan said, “France introduces itself as a free country, but has turned into a (safe) haven for terrorist groups such as Mujahedin-e Khalq Organization and Komola.”



He noted that French government’s double standards have provided the ground for the terrorist organizations to be in France and hatch plots against the Islamic Republic. “The U.S. and France supported Daesh and terrorist

groups. So, the defeats of Daesh and al-Nusra, in spite of the U.S. and European countries’ supports, have disgraced France,” the MP remarked.

He added, “It seems that France sought to take revenge from the Islamic Republic for its defeats in Iraq and Syria and because of that it cooperated with the Komola terrorist group and kept silence about the group’s terrorist actions.”

On Saturday, Iran criticized failure by the French police to act swiftly to protect Iran’s diplomatic grounds.

“Unfortunately, the French police forces were not present when assailants affiliated to a terrorist group attacked the embassy. The issues of attack and the police force’s slow reaction are under investigation,” Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi complained on Saturday.

Police were slow to make it to the location following a call from the Iranian embassy reporting assailants had attacked the diplomatic ground, burning Iran’s flag and throwing stones at the building and causing damage.

Austria: Six men, Iranian included, attempt suicide in face of deportation



POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Six men who were scheduled to be deported from Austria were brought to local hospitals in critical condition late on Friday night after apparently setting fire to their cells in a Vienna detention center.

According to local media, a suicide note signed by the entire group was found by investigators.

At around 10:30 pm local time, the fire alarm went off at the facility in the Hernalser district of Vienna. When guards rushed to the scene, one of the men was found motionless by the cell door, but the smoke was too thick to try and rescue the others. About 40 inmates had to be evacuated, and 14 of them were treated for smoke inhalation, as were a few police officers on the scene, according to Deutsche Welle.

After emergency workers put out the fire, they were able to rescue the

other five men.

Austrian daily Heute reported that it appeared as though the five Afghans and one Iranian, all between the ages of 19 and 33, had set the mattresses in their cells on fire. A note indicated that they would rather die in Austria than be deported to their homelands.

The detention facility in Hernalser is reportedly well-known for desperate migrants resorting to dangerous means to avoid deportation. It has been the site of several hunger strikes, as well as previous attempts at self-immolation.

Austria has recently introduced a series of strict immigration controls, including barring refugees from apprenticeship schemes.

The Iranian embassy in Vienna issued a statement on Sunday expressing grief over the horrible incident and said it will follow the issue in talks with Austrian authorities.

Iran not on brink of war: Army commander



Commander of the Army Ground Force Kiomars Heidari on Sunday rejected the possibility of war on the Islamic Republic, saying the country is facing no military threat.

In a speech in the western city of Hamedan, Brigadier General Heidari praised Iran’s defense power and said the country’s military might is at the highest level.

“We announce to the people that there is no danger threatening our country and that we are not on the brink of any war,” he said, adding, “However, it does not mean that we should neglect to maintain our preparedness...”

The commander further emphasized that the Iranian Armed Forces have reached such a level of deterrence given their defensive capabilities that the enemies have now resorted to options other than military ones.

This level of deterrence is the outcome of the Armed Forces’ presence, resistance, and especially self-sufficiency, Brigadier General Heidari went on to say.

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

Iranian officials have repeatedly underscored that the country will not hesitate to strengthen its military capabilities, including its missile power, which are entirely meant for defense, and that Iran’s defense capabilities will be never subject to negotiations.

Back in February 2018, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei called for efforts to maintain and boost Iran’s defense capabilities, hitting back at the enemies for disputing the country’s missile program.

“Without a moment of hesitation, the country must move to acquire whatever is necessary for defense, even if the whole world is opposed to it,” Ayatollah Khamenei said on February 18.

(Source: Tasnim)

Ex-diplomat says Tehran, Riyadh face two choices: Preserve status quo or seek co-op

POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Seyed Hossein Mousavian, a Princeton University researcher and former Iranian ambassador, has scrutinized what he has described “two choices” Tehran and Riyadh may be faced based on their regional conflicting strategies.

The first is to preserve the status quo of confrontation which triggers a real risk of a disastrous war while the other is to pursue avenues of cooperation. Mousavian said in an address to the 3rd West Asia Conference in New Delhi on September 5-6.

Mousavian primarily referred to regional strategies the two rivals follow as a prerequisite for his analysis:

“Saudi Arabia’s regional strategy can be encapsulated into five points of endeavoring to keep American military, security, political, and economic dominance over the region; allying with Israel to gain the support of the powerful international Zionist movement; confronting Iran and its regional allies on all moves and instigate a U.S. war with Iran; pressuring Palestinians into accepting Israeli demands, effectively eliminating the issue of Palestine and marking official recognition of Israel by the Arab

world; and dominating smaller Persian Gulf states and muster an Arab coalition in the form of an “Arab NATO” or other means to isolate and confront Iran.”

He also summarized Iran’s strategies within five points in what follows:

“Resisting U.S. hegemony in the Persian Gulf and improve its relations with other global powers; resisting Israeli occupation and support Palestinians and resistance groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah; all-out confrontation with takfiri terrorist groups, whose root ideology is Wahhabi Salafism, such as al-Qaeda, Jabhat al-Nusra, ISIS, etc; acting as a counterbalance to Saudi efforts to impose hegemony over the smaller Arab Persian Gulf sheikhdoms; and confronting Israel’s strategic aim to disintegrate four Islamic countries—Iraq, Syria, Turkey, and Iran—by supporting Kurdish separatist aspirations.”

Given such conflicting strategies, the former diplomat explained his perspective on prospects of Iran-Saudi Arabia relations:

“The first choice maintains unstable regional status quo that will continue to deteriorate, any prospect of

eliminating terrorist groups in the vein of ISIS will be diminished, sectarianism will increase, and there will be a real risk of a disastrous war that will not only engulf regional powers, but also global powers—especially the United States and Russia.”

He added: “The other option is for Saudi Arabia and Iran to pursue avenues of cooperation. To do this, Riyadh and Tehran must first gain substantive and sincere understanding of each other’s security threats and concerns, and then explore mutually acceptable paths to alleviating them.”

Elsewhere in his remarks, Mousavian underlined that the security concerns of both countries should be taken into consideration, saying, “Riyadh and Tehran [should] openly and without preconditions enter into bilateral dialogue and put all of their security concerns and aims on the negotiations table.”

“Over time, a gradual process that begins with simply holding regular meetings wherein all countries can communicate their security grievances can result in more institutionalized cooperative relationships.”

Typhoon lashes south China after killing 36 in Philippines

Typhoon Mangkhut barreled into southern China Sunday after lashing the northern Philippines with strong winds and heavy rain that left at least 36 people dead and dozens more feared buried in a landslide.

Ahead of the massive typhoon, nearly half a million people had been evacuated from seven cities in China's Guangdong province, the gambling enclave of Macau closed casinos for the first time and the Hong Kong Observatory warned people to stay away from the Victoria Harbour landmark, where storm surges battered the sandbag-reinforced waterfront.

Mangkhut made landfall in the city of Taishan in Guangdong province at 5 p.m. local time, packing wind speeds of 162 kilometers per hour. State television broadcaster CGTN reported that surging waves flooded a seaside hotel in the city of Shenzhen.

Authorities in southern China had issued a red alert, the most severe warning, as the national meteorological center said the densely populated region would face a "severe test caused by wind and rain" and urged officials to prepare for possible disasters.

On Sunday morning, the typhoon packed sustained winds of 155 kilometers per hour and gusts of up to 190 kph. The Hong Kong Observatory said although Mangkhut had weakened slightly, its extensive, intense rainbands were bringing heavy downfall and frequent squalls.

Hundreds of flights were canceled. All high-speed and some normal rail services in Guangdong and Hainan provinces were also halted, the China Railway Guangzhou Group Co. said.

In Hong Kong, a video posted online by residents showed the top corner of an old building break and fall off while in another video, a tall building swayed as strong winds blew. The storm also broke windows, felled trees, tore bamboo scaffolding off buildings under construction and flooded areas with sometimes waist-high waters, according to the South China Morning Post.

The paper said the heavy rains brought storm surges of 3 meters around Hong Kong.

Hong Kong Security Minister John Lee Ka-chiu urged residents to prepare for the worst.

"Because Mangkhut will bring winds and rains of extraordinary speeds, scope and severity, our preparation and response efforts will be greater than in the past," Lee said. "Each department must have a sense of crisis, make a comprehensive assessment and plan,



and prepare for the worst."

Hong Kong's Cathay Pacific said all of its flights would be canceled between 2:30 a.m. Sunday and 4 a.m. Monday. The city of Shenzhen also canceled all flights between Sunday and early Monday morning. Hainan Airlines canceled 234 flights in the cities of Haikou, Sanya, Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Zhuhai scheduled this weekend.

In Macau, next door to Hong Kong, casinos were ordered to close from 11 p.m. Saturday, the first time such action was taken in the city, the South China Morning Post reported. Macau suffered catastrophic flooding during Typhoon Hato last year, leading to accusations of corruption and incompetence at its meteorological office.

In Macau's inner harbor district Sunday, the water level reached 1.5 meters and was expected to rise further. The district was one of the most affected by floods from Typhoon Hato, which left 10 people dead.

In Fujian province and other parts of southern China, tens of thousands of fishing boats returned to port and construction

work came to a stop.

In the northern Philippines, at least 40 people, mostly gold miners, are feared to have been trapped in a landslide in a mountain town that was pummeled by the typhoon before it blew out of the country late Saturday.

Police Superintendent Pelita Tacio told The Associated Press by phone that dozens of rescuers, including army troops and police, have dug out at least seven bodies from the huge mound of mud and rocks in the far-flung town of Itogon in Benguet province.

A part of the mountainside collapsed on the miners' bunkhouses Saturday at the height of the typhoon's onslaught, Tacio said, adding that rescuers were scrambling to pull out the body of another victim pinned by rocks and mud before she left the area Sunday.

At least 36 people, including the eight miners retrieved in Itogon, have died in typhoon-related incidents in the Philippines, mostly from landslides and collapsed houses.

Mangkhut made landfall Saturday on the northeastern tip of Luzon island in the Philippines with sustained winds of 205

kilometers and gusts of 255 kph.

The Philippines, which was battered by the typhoon on Saturday, appeared to have been spared the high number of casualties many had feared. In 2013, Typhoon Haiyan left more than 7,300 people dead or missing, flattened villages and displaced more than 5 million in the central Philippines. A massive evacuation ahead of Mangkhut helped lessen potential casualties, with about 87,000 people evacuating from high-risk areas, officials said.

Philippine National Police Director General Oscar Albayalde told The Associated Press that 20 people had died in the Cordillera mountain region, four in nearby Nueva Vizcaya province and another outside of the two regions. Three more deaths were reported in northeastern Cagayan province, where the typhoon made landfall.

The typhoon struck at the start of the rice and corn harvesting season in the Philippines' northern breadbasket, prompting farmers to scramble to save what they could of their crops, Cagayan Gov. Manuel Mamba said.

(Source: AP)

Turkey's S-400 purchase from Russia matter of 'national decision': NATO chief

Secretary General of the U.S.-led North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Jens Stoltenberg has described as a matter of "national decision" Turkey's plan to purchase the advanced Russian-built S-400 air defense missile system, regardless of strong opposition and warnings from the United States.

"It is a challenge and is well-known that there is a disagreement between Turkey and especially [the] United States on this issue," Stoltenberg said at the conservative Heritage Foundation think tank in Washington D.C.

He added that for NATO the most important thing is that "different systems can work together."

Business and financial television news network CNBC, citing an unnamed informed source, reported last week that Turkey has begun building a site for the S-400 missile system.

The report, however, gave no indication about where the site is located in Turkey.

A number of NATO member states have criticized Turkey for its planned purchase of the S-400 missile defense systems from Russia, stating that the move could jeopardize Ankara's acquisition of F-35 fighter jets.

On July 15, the top American Air Force general in Europe warned that the Turkish government's plan to purchase Russian S-400 systems would give the advanced air defense shield deep insight into the US radar-evading F-35 fighter jets.

"Anything that an S-400 can do that affords it the ability



to better understand a capability like the F-35 is certainly not to the advantage of the coalition," said General Tod Wolters, who is also the NATO Allied Air Commander.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has emphasized that Ankara would utilize sophisticated S-400 anti-aircraft missile systems if necessary.

"We will not just buy the S-400s and place them in a storehouse. We will use them if need be. These are defense systems. What are we going to do with them if not use these defense systems? Are we going to depend on the United States again? We have been demanding them for years, but

the answer given to us has been: The [US] Congress is not allowing. We are tired of this," he said in remarks broadcast live by private Turkish-language TGRT Haber television news network on June 12.

The S-400 system, whose full name is the Triumf Mobile Multiple Anti-Aircraft Missile System (AAMS), is an advanced Russian missile system designed to detect, track, and destroy planes, drones, or missiles as far as 402 kilometers away. It has previously been sold only to China and India.

Turkey is striving to boost its air defense, particularly after Washington decided in 2015 to withdraw its Patriot surface-to-air missile system from Turkey's border with Syria, a move that weakened Turkey's air defense.

Before gravitating towards Russia, the Turkish military reportedly walked out of a \$3.4 billion contract for a similar Chinese system. The withdrawal took place under purported pressure from Washington.

Ankara's ties with its Western allies in NATO have been strained over a range of issues.

Erdogan has been critical of Washington for supporting Kurdish groups in Syria that he says are responsible for terror attacks inside Turkey.

The Turkish leader has also slammed American officials for rejecting his requests to hand over Fethullah Gulen, a powerful opposition figure living in the U.S., whom Ankara accuses of having masterminded the July 2016 coup attempt.

(Source: agencies)

London mayor calls for second referendum on Brexit

London mayor Sadiq Khan has called for another referendum on Britain's European Union membership, saying the prime minister's handling of Brexit negotiations had become "mired in confusion and deadlock" and was leading the country down a damaging path.

Britain is due to leave the European Union on March 29. But with Prime Minister Theresa May's Brexit plans still not accepted, some lawmakers, as well as union and business leaders are increasingly arguing for people to have a final say on any deal struck with Brussels.

May has repeatedly ruled out holding a second referendum following the vote two years ago to leave the EU. She says members of parliament will get to vote on whether to accept any final deal.

But with time running out for London and Brussels to thrash out a Brexit deal, the British government is preparing plans for a



no-deal Brexit.

Finance Minister Philip Hammond told senior ministers last week that Brexit could have to be delayed beyond March 29 in order

to pass new laws, The Sun newspaper said Saturday.

The idea was immediately rejected by May, the report said.

Khan, a senior member of Britain's opposition Labor Party, said Britain was now facing either a bad deal or a no-deal Brexit, both of which were "incredibly risky" for Britain.

Writing in Sunday's Observer newspaper, Khan blamed the government's handling of the negotiations and said the threat to living standards, the economy and jobs was too great for voters not to have a say.

"The government's abject failure – and the huge risk we face of a bad deal or a no-deal Brexit – means that giving people a fresh say is now the right – and only – approach left for our country," he said.

Khan's support for a second referendum, which supporters call a "people's vote", will put more pressure on Labor leader Jeremy Corbyn to change his opposition to the idea.

Labor is due to start its four-day annual party conference in a week's time.

(Source: Daily Star)

Syrians vote in first local polls since 2011

Syrians in government-controlled areas cast their ballots Sunday in the first local elections

More than 40,000 candidates are vying for 18,478 seats across all provinces, Syria's official SANA news agency reported.

"Voting centers opened for citizens to cast their ballots to elect their representatives in the local administrative councils," the report said.

State television broadcast footage of voters in the cities of Damascus, Tartus and Latakia taking part in the elections.

The local councils operate at the municipal level, and newly elected representatives are expected to have more responsibilities as regards the country's reconstruction process.

The elections are being held at a time when Syrian army troops and allied fighters control some two-thirds of the country following the recent advances in southern areas and Damascus suburbs.

The Syrian army is now preparing for the liberation of Idlib Province, the last major terrorist bastion in the Arab country.

Syria has the backing of Russia, Iran and Lebanon's Hezbollah resistance movement in its bid to rid the strategic province, bordering Turkey, of terrorists.

Idlib hosts several militant groups backed by Turkey and other foreign parties – especially Western states, Israel and their regional allies.

(Source: SANA)

China tells Taiwan to halt all mainland spying, sabotage activities

China on Sunday accused Taiwan's spy agencies of stepping up efforts to steal intelligence with the aim of "infiltration" and "sabotage", and warned the island against further damaging already strained cross-strait ties.

The relevant agencies in Taiwan must end such activities immediately, the official Xinhua news agency said, citing An Fengshan, a spokesman of China's policy-making Taiwan Affairs Office.

On Saturday, state television kicked off the first in a series of programs detailing cases in which Chinese students studying in Taiwan are said to be targeted by domestic spies who lure them with money, love and friendship.

The allegations come as China ramps up efforts to encourage Taiwanese to settle in China permanently, with new identity cards and other inducements.

Taiwan has warned its people to be careful of the risks involved living in an autocratic country with internet censorship and other drawbacks.

China and Taiwan frequently trade accusations of spying.

In 2017, a Chinese student studying in Taiwan was sentenced to prison for collecting sensitive information through contacts in Taiwan schools and government departments, and for trying to build a spy network on the island.

(Source: Reuters)

French army in Deir ez-Zor? Photo shown by media raises questions about France's role in Syrian war



A French army vehicle spotted in a photo taken in Deir ez-Zor province has led to questions about the extent of Paris's involvement in the Syrian conflict. The image was reportedly shared by the U.S. military on social media.

The vehicle in question is a wheeled armored personnel carrier equipped with a turret, which resembles the French army's Aravis infantry mobility vehicle. It can be seen in the background of the photo, which purportedly shows U.S. troops lending support to Syrian armed groups fighting ISIL in the eastern province.

France 24 journalist Wassim Nasr was the first to draw attention to the picture. He said it was released by the U.S. Special Ops Joint Task Force in Iraq and Syria on Wednesday, before being promptly removed – possibly at the request of French authorities.

France is part of the U.S.-led coalition in Syria, and has been actively participating in the aerial campaign in the region. Notably, it was involved in a joint airstrike with the U.S. and the UK in April following an alleged chemical attack on Douma, a then rebel-held suburb of Damascus.

The French government, however, has never said that it has troops on the ground in Deir ez-Zor.

But, the military vehicle in the photo has to be French, according to Nasr. "We know for sure that it is a French vehicle because of its mark – it is an Aravis," he said, adding that "only the French Army and the Saudi Army" have such vehicles, and that the Saudis are not known to be present in Deir ez-Zor.

He also said that similar vehicles have been seen in Syria on "numerous occasions", in the territories controlled by U.S.-backed militants, such as Manbij. The journalist said that the picture was taken in August of this year.

While France 24 reported on the issue, neither the French Army nor the U.S. military have commented so far.

The U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis, however, told Congress in late April that France had sent special forces to Syria, and "reinforced" Washington in its fight against Islamic State, but didn't go into further details. Deir ez-Zor province is one of the few remaining areas of the country where ISIL still maintains a presence.

(Source: RT)

STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	155710.2
IFX	1794.79

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	48,845 rials
GBP	54,887 rials
AED	11,437 rials

Source: isna.ir

COMMODITIES

WTI	\$ 68.99/b
Brent	\$78.09/b
OPEC Basket	\$76.46/b
Gold	\$1,194.95/oz
Silver	\$14.11/oz
Platinum	\$799.80/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

NEWS IN BRIEF



Medical herbs to fetch Iran \$1.5b annually: official

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** – Iran is expected to export \$1.5 billion worth of medical herbs each year by March 2021, ISNA reported quoting an official with the Ministry of Agriculture.

Hossein Zeynali, the ministry’s medical plants project manager, said exports of medical herbs stood at \$450 million last [Iranian calendar] year (which ended on March 20).

“Some \$150 million worth of such commodities were also imported into the country last year,” the official noted.

Turkey proposes setting up joint bank with Iran

1 → Abdul-Nasser Hemmati, the head of CBI, also stressed the importance of using national currencies in trade and eliminating the dollar.”

“In this line, an economic delegation comprising Turkish businessmen and managers of different economic sectors will travel to Iran in the next month to explore new ways of trade between the two countries and develop a roadmap for trade in the new post-sanctions era,” Kiler added.

Annual trade between Iran and Turkey currently stands at \$11 billion, and the two countries have set a target of \$30 billion for bilateral trade.

Only economist to call Russia rate hike was also in for surprise

The sole economist to correctly predict the Russian central bank’s first interest-rate increase since 2014 felt a jolt at seeing the outlook that accompanied Friday’s decision.

For Region Investment Co.’s Valery Vaisberg, whose forecast was the only one on target in a Bloomberg survey of 42 analysts, the upswing in inflation assumed by policy makers is, “of course, pessimistic.”



After a selloff in the ruble over recent weeks, the Bank of Russia now sees price growth surging past its goal of 4 percent, reaching 5 percent to 5.5 percent by the end of 2019 from 3.1 percent last month. That’s an upward adjustment of one percentage point in the path for inflation it laid out earlier.

“I didn’t expect a serious change in the central bank’s forecasts,” said Vaisberg, head of research at Region, an investment company in Moscow that manages 479 billion rubles (\$7 billion) in assets. “Now it’s clear that we are really shifting to a tightening cycle.”

Huge spike

The surprise pivot to rate increases was one part of a response by Governor Elvira Nabiullina to threats of U.S. sanctions that are stalking the market and putting pressure on the ruble.

Besides lifting the benchmark to 7.5 percent from 7.25 percent on Friday, the central bank also announced it’s extending a pause in foreign-currency purchases for reserves until the end of December. In August, it initially suspended the program – conducted on behalf of the Finance Ministry under the so-called budget rule – until the end of this month.

Risks abound

Speaking after the decision, Nabiullina explained the central bank’s rationale as driven by the need to rein in risks of faster price growth and inflation expectations caused by ruble volatility. Similarly, the central bank will refrain from purchases of foreign currency on the market to avoid adding to instability, she said.

A decline of about 9 percent so far this year in the nominal effective exchange rate will contribute nearly one percentage point to annual inflation, according to Nabiullina. A value-added tax increase will also boost price growth by one percentage point in 2019, the central bank estimates.

(Source: Bloomberg)

Exports of steel products up 5%

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran **d e s k** exported over 3.107 million tons of steel products during the five-month period from March 21 to July 21, an increase of five percent from the same time span last year.

Meanwhile, the country’s nine major steel companies exported 483,510 tons of steel products during the mentioned period, down 24 percent from last year’s figure, IRNA reported.

The value of the country’s minerals and mining industry exports stood at \$3.763

billion in the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21).

Iran exported over \$10.7 billion worth of minerals and mining products last year, accounting for 22 percent of the country’s total exports.

Based on the country’s Sixth Five-Year National Development Plan (2016-2021), the steel industry’s annual exports should reach 15 million tons.

Iran is currently the world’s 13th biggest steel producer and the country also plans to rise to the seventh place by 2021.



U.S.-China trade friction could be ugly until after election



expected to lose control of the House of Representatives but maintain the Senate, though that looks slightly less certain than it had.

“I don’t see the Trump stuff as new. It’s Mnuchin, and the Treasury does not negotiate trade...Is there really a doubt that he’s going to put the tariffs on before the election? The question is will he put them on before the meeting,” said Marc Chandler, head of fixed income strategy at Brown Brothers Harriman, noting there is a G-20 meeting at the end of November.

“That’s the first and best opportunity for an agreement,” Chandler said. “I think Trump hopes to have some success but Canada’s still balking. Nothing’s really changed.”

EU, Iran clearing the way for business and trade

gas Balancing Point futures market that launched in 1995. He originated the 2001 proposal letter dated 25 June 2001 and sent to the Dr. Nourbakhsh and he architected the 2004 Kish Island Oil Bourse Energy Fintech proposal.

When I asked Mr. Cook how Iran should respond to the aforementioned EU/UK initiative reported to be under development, he was kind enough to respond in detail.

Energy for peace

“The first point I would like to make is that Iran should cease to react to competing initiatives from other nations or groups of nations, and should instead take the lead by making constructive and pro-active proposals. In other words, Iran should build upon a track record of innovative energy diplomacy by proposing “Energy for Peace”, which described Iran’s proactive and collaborative initiative to supply natural gas to Armenia and the Autonomous Republic of Nakhchivan.”

Having been personally involved in implementing the Nakhchivan initiative based on energy cooperation, I asked Mr. Cook to explain further.

He said: “In my view, the last thing that is needed is an opaque oil market financial middleman the aim of which is to replace the dollar with the euro. This would certainly help the euro by supporting its value with Iranian oil, in the same way that the U.S. dollar is currently propped up by U.S. shale reserves and Saudi oil. However, even in the medium term this policy would be unsustainable, even if it were consistent with Iran’s resource sovereignty under the Islamic constitution, which it probably is not. It would also be an invitation to corrupt practices in Iran and EU countries.”

It is no secret that one of the principal aims of the EU and the European Central Bank which underpins the EU as a political project, is for the Euro to become a global reserve currency, and that a Petro Euro is a prime goal. So I asked Mr. Cook what he had in mind for Iran to deliver Energy for Peace.

Energy as a service

He answered: “It has been clear for some time that the energy market is evolving from a capital intensive commodity market to a smart services market based upon what I think of as intellectual capital. What I mean by this is that people do not use oil and gas; they use energy as a service delivered to them by utilities, such as heat or cooling, power for transport,

lighting and even water.”

He added: “It is self-evident that Iranians – like anyone else - would find a credit or token which can be used to pay for such essential energy services to be acceptable as a means of exchange or currency. This concept of an energy services instrument – which I have named the “Energy Credit Obligation” (ECO) - has already been proposed to the Scottish Parliament, and I will be presenting the ECO this week at a major conference in Moscow, following a visit I made earlier this year as a Senior Research Fellow at University College London to brief a Russian Deputy Energy Minister on Energy Fintech.”

I asked Mr. Cook how the ECO – which clearly has no nationality - could be implemented in Iran and beyond.

Energy treasuries

He responded: “In the same way Germany, France & the UK are discussing a new institution outside the existing channels, there is no reason why Iran’s Central Bank, Petroleum and Energy Ministries should not likewise create new institutions. My proposal is for a network of “Energy Treasury” consortia to be created at the local level at which energy services are of course delivered. Such a decentralised & local initiative will naturally require the participation of local authorities under the supervision of central authorities, with implementation by the private sector, and with research and development through a Resilience Network of academic institutions.”

He then added: “Local Energy Treasuries” (LETs) would be responsible for accountancy, transparency and risk management in respect of ECO issuance. LETs would then be members of regional energy treasuries, and so on to an Iranian National Energy Treasury, responsible for regional and national strategic issues.”

This seems to me a completely sensible domestic approach to energy policy which could quite possibly attract and mobilise the enormous amount of ‘dark money’ sitting in gold, dollars and Euros throughout Iran into investment via Energy Loans in energy infrastructure which offers an energy return.

However, at this point I returned to the question of how Iran could access and pay for international goods and services urgently required.

He confidently said: “Iran could propose to the EU that in addition to conventional (but difficult, due to U.S. intimidation)

Financial markets have been skittish about trade threats, said Gary Hufbauer, senior fellow at Peterson Institute for International Economics. “They risk triggering a shock prior to the November election.” Hufbauer said for that reason, the administration could wait until after the election to move on its next round of tariffs.

The tariffs on \$200 billion in Chinese imports have been ready to go after a comment period ended last week. Trump also threatened even more tariffs, on another \$267 billion in goods. Last week, a number of companies, including Apple and Intel, complained that tariffs would hurt business and result in higher prices.

“I think that I’m not expecting any big breakthroughs. I think what the administration is looking for is some immediate concessions,” said Hufbauer. He said the Chinese could make concessions by ending tariffs on key agricultural products, like soybeans and pork, and end the requirement for technology companies to form joint ventures if they want to operate in China.

“That would be a fast deliverable. They decided they would start a charm offensive with U.S. companies, be nice to them instead of beating up on them. An extension of that could be to relax compulsory joint venture arrangements,” he said.

The last meeting between U.S. and Chinese officials was last month and was led by David Malpass, the Treasury undersecretary for international affairs.

(Source: CNBC)

sale of oil to European refiners in exchange for Euros, Iran could also supply oil under swap arrangements. In return for oil supplied, Iran would receive from European refiners “Energy Credit Obligation” (ECO) credits returnable in payment for products such as Euro 5 gasoline. Such energy swaps, if mutually assured within an “Energy Clearing Union” guarantee framework would give Iran the choice of either taking delivery of such gasoline, or of using ECOs in exchange for European goods and services.”

I reminded Mr. Cook we had discussed this in the Greek context at the Delphi Economic Forum earlier this year, as well as writing articles also published by Tehran Times, but it was possible certain business groups in Iran resisted the concept because they were reluctant to introduce more transparency. He agreed that was a possibility, and said: “Indeed so. But please consider the fact that if Hellenic Petroleum, which is a major regional supplier of oil products, were to enter into oil for product swap with Iran, then Hellenic’s “Energy Credit Obligation” -ECO would probably be acceptable to businesses throughout the region eager to supply goods and services to Iran. I could also imagine this would work well with the Saras refinery in Sardinia which is well placed to supply product throughout the Mediterranean.”

He added: “In summary, my suggestion to Iran would be to propose (in addition to the conventional SPV reported to be under consideration) - an Energy Clearing Union agreement between the EU, the UK (even after Brexit) and Iran. In the same way that Italy, Greece, Spain and others could later be added to the SPV, so Russia, Turkey and Caspian littoral nations as well as Central Asian countries could be added as members of an extended Energy Clearing Union”

To conclude, in my view, Mr. Cook’s “Energy Credit Obligation” (ECO) proposal potentially offers Iran the opportunity to be pro-active and take the lead through an international initiative based upon energy diplomacy. In this way Iran could introduce an Energy First doctrine based upon energy economics, rather than the current choice between U.S. First and EU First, and between Dollar or Euro economics.

I believe the “Energy Credit Obligation” (ECO) proposal enables global energy security and resilience and represents energy for peace: it represents nothing less than an Energy Revolution.

Greece to ease capital controls ‘very soon,’ fin. min. says

Greece plans to further loosen capital controls soon and is on track to lift all restrictions imposed three years ago, its finance minister said Saturday.

“We will have new easing (of capital controls) very soon,” Euclid Tsakalotos was quoted as saying in an interview with Naftemporiki newspaper, without specifying when.

“With this new easing we will complete the second pillar (of regulations) concerning cash withdrawals and the opening of bank accounts, and we will enter the final phase for the full lifting of capital controls, the third and final pillar... concerning restrictions on moving capital abroad,” he said.

Greece imposed capital controls to stem a flight of

cash from its banks in July 2015, when, at the height of its debt crisis, it faced bankruptcy and a euro exit.

Last month it emerged from its final of three international bailouts and almost nine years of austerity. It remains heavily indebted and under fiscal monitoring by the European Union and International Monetary Fund.

(Source: Reuters)



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The real danger facing the European Union



Manfred Weber, Chairman of the European People Party group (EPP), is pictured at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France, on September 11, 2018.

By Andrea Mammone

American sociologist, historian and civil rights activist WEB Du Bois once suggested, “always human beings will live and progress to greater, broader, and fuller life.” Such hopes are unfortunately fading away on both sides of the Atlantic. The election of Donald Trump as president destabilized the institutional system and social bonds in the U.S., and the European continent is certainly not experiencing a golden age either.

Exclusionary nationalisms, narrow patriotism, chauvinism, and incidents of ethnicity-based violence are on the rise in a number of EU member states. And as demonstrated once again in Sweden last Sunday, anti-immigration far-right parties are making considerable gains in most European countries.

Ahead of the May 2019 European Parliament election, confidence levels of euro-elites appear to be running low. Earlier this month, EU Budget Commissioner Günther Oettinger, who is a member of the leading Europe’s People Party (EPP) in the European Parliament, suggested that the European project is under threat. As well as outside opponents such as Russia and China, he said, “some within Europe want to weaken it or even destroy it - Poland, Hungary, Romania, the government of Italy.”

The general mood may be low, however, the EU establishment recently took action to prove that it is not sitting idly by as these right-wing governments attack the foundations of the European project.

On Wednesday, the European Parliament voted to launch punitive action against Hungary for breaching the bloc’s core values. The move may bring unprecedented political sanctions against Budapest and even strip the Hungarian government, led by populist Prime Minister Viktor Orban, of its EU voting rights.

Chairman of the center-right EPP Group in the European Parliament, Manfred Weber, was one of the prominent MEPs who voted for the motion. “I will vote in favor of Article 7,” Weber said on Tuesday, referring to the procedure that can lead to a member country losing its voting rights inside the EU. “I think we had enough dialogue.”

-----The next president of the EU commission?
On September 5, only days before taking a strict stance against Orban, Weber, of the Bavarian Christian Social Union (CSU), had announced his candidacy in the EEP for becoming the next president of the European Commission.

In his candidacy announcement, he had argued that “the EU is challenged from the outside and attacked from the inside by radicals, nationalists and anti-Europeans”, and claimed his tenure will represent “a new beginning and a new chapter for Europe. This is urgently necessary because we cannot go on the way it currently is.”

Weber is probably right in seeing Europe at “a turning point”. And as a leading candidate for the next president of the EU Commission, on the surface he appears more than ready to counter nationalist, anti-European threats - after all, he voted in favor of the motion against the Hungarian government (And harshly criticized the Polish government in July for jeopardizing the independence of the judiciary).

However, his commitment to fighting the populist tendencies of the European far right is only skin deep.

Only a couple of days before voting for Hungary to be punished for breaching the bloc’s core values, Weber had advocated that the EPP “have to work with everyone ... to find out a common vision.” This fundamentally meant getting closer to Orban and Matteo Salvini’s nationalist vision and using the “identity question” as a mobilizing flag in the party’s electoral campaign.

In late August, Weber visited one of the migrant’s routes in Europe on the Turkish border and praised fellow EPP politician Boyko Borissov, Bulgaria’s prime minister, for his handling of migration.

“Bulgaria is showing that it is possible to protect the EU external land borders, and also to efficiently control arrivals by sea. This has the full support of the EPP Group,” he tweeted.

Borissov’s government has been criticized for its treatment of migrants, and independent watchdogs are concerned about the freedom of media in the country.

Weber’s support for Borissov’s immigration policies and his earlier statements on “finding a common vision” with the likes of Orban and Salvini demonstrates that he has a very narrow understanding of core EU values and the European identity. Weber, who is likely to take the helm of the European Commission in a year’s time, may appear to be against Orban’s “anti-European” rhetoric, but it is hard to claim that he has a problem with many of his illiberal, anti-immigration policies.

After all, Weber’s CSU has been troubling German Chancellor Angela Merkel on her migration policies for a very long time and is quite tough in defending the Christian roots of the European continent. Moreover, in June a leaked draft on the future EPP priorities suggested using drones to patrol the EU borders, having “the systematic right ... to build fences”, and, preserving “the European way of life”.

As Weber put it, “[the] European Elections 2019 will decide the future of the EU”. However, Germany and its government’s pro-immigration stance is not about to take over the union, as some British tabloids claim these days. The most serious danger the union is currently facing is the watering down of the process of European integration and the placement of some illiberal, nationalist and anti-immigration policies at the center of the next EU Commission, by the likes of Weber.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

The slow, dangerous implosion of Saudi Crown Prince MBS

By Madawi Al-Rasheed

Contrary to the speculation that the Saudi regime would face mass protests during the 2011 Arab uprisings, the regime survived by increasing repression against a wide range of critics, including women activists, Islamists and fellow royals.

Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman (MBS) now stands alone at the top of the hierarchy, but he has lost many constituencies that allow him to rule without resorting to direct force. This situation is unsustainable and even dangerous. There’s been a serious erosion of regime legitimacy, and this is leading to a slow implosion from within.

One of the first measures that MBS introduced when he became crown prince in 2016 was to undermine the state ideology, namely Wahhabism, that in the past provided the rationale for Al-Saud’s rule over diverse regions and populations across Arabia. He distanced himself from this religious tradition and cut its grip on the population by ignoring its most radical and unacceptable Fatwa. He then put its most critical advocates in prison.

Consequently, he precipitated a vacuum in the national narrative that only outright repression can fill. He detained all sorts of Islamists, from the radicals to the moderates, because he feared a backlash that would threaten his newly introduced so-called reforms. While not all those detained object to lifting the ban on driving and introducing cinemas, he feared their more profound criticism that undermines his rule, namely ignoring and even negating the relevance of the Wahhabi tradition to the survival of the Saudi realm. He now rules without the old state ideology and is compelled to use force to punish dissidents from within its ranks and file.

Second, MBS wanted to gain a new legitimacy on the basis of groundbreaking new economic reforms. From Saudization programs to privatization of government assets and services, he promised a new economic utopia in which young Saudis find jobs, develop as eclectic entrepreneurs, and amass wealth in the post-oil era.

He was initially successful in fueling the imagination of the Saudi youth cohort with the promise of prosperity and grandiose hypermodern projects. Alas, he faced real challenges and was forced to go back on most of his economic reforms. The most famous setback revolved around the plan to IPO 5 percent of Aramco, the main oil pump that keeps the regime and many countries around the globe running. MBS found himself in



With the sudden appointment of MBS as crown prince, and exclusion of more able cousins of his own generation, the old royal consensus was shattered — perhaps forever.

need of cash and the borrowing frenzy from outside sources began. The colossal figure is now amounting to \$12.5 billion in government bonds. Young people soon found out that unemployment rather than the promise of a comfortable and secure job awaited them upon graduation. Foreign labour is slowly leaving the country, but both visas to import more immigrants and the number of the jobless youth are increasing. There are economic structural hurdles that could not be overcome as quickly as MBS came to power.

With the sudden appointment of MBS as crown prince, and exclusion of more able cousins of his own generation, the old royal consensus was shattered — perhaps forever. MBS had to act quickly to consolidate his grip on power and the state’s policing agencies, lest a dormant threat was awakened to challenge his rule.

The November 2017 Ritz Carlton drama, when he detained over a dozen of powerful and imminent princes such as Mitab bin Abdullah and Walid bin Talal, is still casting its omen on royal affairs. According to

some rumors, the detentions were preventive measures against a possible coup plotted by the detainees. There is no confirmation of this story, but the anti-corruption narrative that was propagated by official sources as reasons for the detentions is accepted with a pinch of salt.

MBS created more enemies among his own kin that will haunt him for a long time. It is not clear how he can heal the deep rift without further repression.

Finally, as the domestic front is yet to be secured, MBS thought that an aggressive foreign policy and a promise to evict Iran from many Arab countries would crown him as the new desert warrior. Legitimacy on the basis of a swift military victory in Yemen promised great popularity, especially among the youth. The restoration of Saudi pride built on a newly imagined Saudi nationalism was good on television screens. But the reality on the ground was totally different as Houthi missiles began to reach the outskirts of Riyadh.

MBS’s bombardment of Yemen proved to

be an impossible war to win, at least militarily. He is stuck in the Yemeni hornet nest with no victory or an exit strategy. With mounting international pressure following serious Yemeni casualties and a humanitarian crisis, MBS can only count on the U.S. and Britain, the main backers of this treacherous war. Without them, he will not be able to continue this war, according to former U.S. CIA official Bruce Riedel.

The Saudi army has never fought a war on its own, let alone win one. In the 1980s, Saudi Arabia fought Iran with Saddam Hussein’s army; in 1990 it fought Saddam Hussein and evicted him from Kuwait with an American army. Unless one thinks that the Yemen War has become a training camp for an inexperienced Saudi Army, there is no rationale to continue airstrikes with no obvious victory on the horizon.

With repression, don’t expect a Saudi revolution soon. What we may see is a slow and gradual erosion of regime legitimacy that may last for a long time — before a serious implosion.

(Source: Newsweek)

A creeping coup?



U.S. administration insiders are not providing a ‘steady state’ but are chipping away at the foundations of the American state.

pected enemy troops might be there, I would be required by the Uniform Code of Military Justice to disobey that order. Members of the president’s staff likewise have the same moral obligation. But we are equally obligated to obey the legal orders of the president whether we like them or not.

On a practical level, it is not hard to understand that if senior officials in the administration were free to refuse or alter orders of the president on which they felt they “knew better,” America would have chaos. But the biggest danger is that such open acts of defiance undermine the office of the president itself, and represents a creeping coup. Its human nature—once a man believes he knows better than the president and feels free to act on it, he won’t stop. It’s not hard to imagine how things could get worse.

For example, consider what might happen in the genuine possibility that Russian warplanes or ground troops inadvertently fire on and kill American soldiers in Syria (CNN reported on Friday that Russia had warned Washington of this very danger). Trump would face two choices. Either he could order escalation that could bring the United States into open war with Russia that could go nuclear, or he could choose to ratchet down tensions and seek a diplomatic solution, preventing war. But what if hawkish elements in his administration had different views?

What if some of his advisors—as may well be the case—feel that the “only” way to preserve American freedom would be to show strength by retaliating militarily against Russia?

Bolstered by the creeping power they had taken in opposition to the president’s wishes on lesser policy matters, they may “box him in” by secretly ordering tactical units in the Middle East to “send a message” and attack some Russian units. The result could be that the United States gets plunged into a war started not by the elected leader of America—who would have chosen to prevent war—but on a small number of men who believed they knew better.

Because they disagreed with Trump’s policy choices, many will cheer on the acts of obstruction described in Woodward’s book or those of this secret author in the New York Times . But they will stop cheering the moment some unelected official changes a Trump policy they liked. Or in the next administration when their favored candidate wins and a new set of officials who believe they “know better” subvert that president.

This behavior is to be condemned in the strongest terms and recognized for what it is, a creeping coup and stopped immediately. If people don’t agree with the president, they can take the legal and ethical moves of publicly resigning and airing their opinions. They can advocate for and support candidates to be president in Trump’s place. What they cannot do, however, is subvert America’s system of government and take matters into their own hands. The United States’ form of government may not survive if Americans don’t immediately put a stop to this.

(Source: The National Interest)

Intensification of disputes in the White House

➔ Also Los Angeles Times reported, When Defense Secretary James N. Mattis declared last month that he had "no plans" to cancel future joint military exercises with South Korean forces, it brought him a very public rebuke from President Trump.

"There is no reason at this time to be spending large amounts of money on joint U.S.-South Korea war games," Trump fired back the next day in a tweet he labeled "Statement from the White House." He underscored that only "the President" could restart the exercises he had abruptly suspended after his June summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

The dispute highlighted Mattis' precarious standing with Trump. The president once revealed in the 68-year-old retired Marine general's reputation as a battle-hardened warrior — calling him "Mad Dog," to Mattis' distress — but recently appears to have wearied of him. Current and former Pentagon officials who have observed the relationship firsthand cite growing signs of discord that raise questions about how much longer Mattis, long seen as a steady force in the Trump Cabinet, will remain at the Pentagon.

More than specific policy disagreements, the growing estrangement stems from Trump's belief that Mattis is secretly dismissive of him and constantly trying to outmaneuver him, officials say. "He thinks Mattis isn't loyal in the way Trump wants all his people to be loyal — publicly, unquestioningly and completely," said a national security official who has observed the relationship and spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive topic.



On the other side, associates say Mattis' frustration at Trump's often impetuous style and penchant for blindsiding the Pentagon with major policy announcements could eventually prompt him to quit. Once-frequent phone calls between the two after Trump took office last year have dwindled to occasional conversations. Policy clashes that once unfolded in private are increasingly surfacing publicly, often because Trump seems determined to send a message to Mattis that he is in charge. They have been at odds over Trump's demand to bar transgender recruits from the military, his call to create a new armed service called the "space force," his verbal attacks on NATO allies, his suggestions

that he may cut U.S. troop levels in Europe and Asia, and the timetable for removing U.S. troops from Syria.

National security advisor John R. Bolton's hard-line approach to Iran and other issues meshes better with Trump's disruptive instincts than Mattis' often more strategic approach, according to the officials. Asked Wednesday at the Pentagon to describe his relationship with Trump, Mattis replied, "No problem. It's been the same all along."

Pressed on whether he intended to serve out the rest of Trump's first term, Mattis replied, "This is not a day I'm going to go further into politics," and shortly thereafter ended the questions. "Secretary Mattis is laser-focused on doing

his job — ensuring the U.S. military remains the most lethal force on the planet," Pentagon Press Secretary Dana W. White said Friday. "There is no daylight between the secretary and president when it comes to supporting our service members and their mission."

Journalist Bob Woodward wrote in a book released Tuesday that Mattis had told associates that Trump had "a fifth- or sixth-grader" understanding of the challenge on the Korean peninsula, and that Mattis once disregarded a presidential directive to assassinate Syrian President Bashar Assad. Mattis described the account as "fiction." In a rare public defense of Trump, he said in a statement that the "contemptuous words about the President attributed to me in Woodward's book were never uttered by me or in my presence."

Trump responded that he was "very happy" with Mattis, and called his condemnation of the book "the nicest quote about me I think I've ever had."

But in private, Trump has started referring to Mattis as "Moderate Dog," a mocking reference to the nickname that Mattis disdains and to his attempts to rein in White House ideas, according to Politico. Mattis was never a seamless fit with Trump.

Ultimately, the resignation of the United States Secretary of Defense or his removal from power will create a new crisis at the White House. Right now, many Republicans are demanding the backing of James Mattis in the U.S. Department of Defense. This could lead to profound disagreements between Donald Trump and the Republicans.

Currency slump gives rise to visits from neighbors, sanctions wane visits from EU



➔ The drop in the number of visits from European countries could be attributed to visitor's concerns over U.S. sanctions. As a way to tackle this hindrance and easing entry rules, Ali Asghar Mounesan, the Iranian vice president and head of ICHTO announced in August that passports of foreign tourists visiting Iran will not have to be stamped. He said the move is in line with easing of "tourists' concerns about visiting Iran because of U.S. sanctions."

Still, the overall figures show a 4.23 percent positive growth in the number of visitors in 2016 as compared with the figures in 2015, rising from 4,901,084 tourists to 5,113,524.

As already discussed, figures point to massive changes in the number of visitors from neighboring countries. The number of Iraqi tourists in the five-month period from March to August 2018 was equal to the total number of Iraqi visitors to Iran in 2017. The considerable rise in the numbers has been attributed to the

currency fluctuations in Iran, which has made the country a cheap place to visit.

Last year, 1,356,185 Iraqi tourists traveled to Iran, which shows a 3.1 percent drop compared to 1,398,201 tourists visiting the country in 2016.

According to World Tourism Organization reports, each tourist spends an average of \$1340 in southwestern Asia, which includes Iran, among whom some tourists, for instance the Germans, are more spendthrift than others. The French, on the other hand, are more thrifty with their money while visiting another country.

What is more interesting, and is in contrast with general assumptions and global reports, is that Iraqi tourists visiting Iran have become increasingly more spendthrift than the Chinese.

The head of tourism development said that currency fluctuations have turned Iran into a cheap country to visit, but words have not yet gotten out to attract more tourists from around the world.

Hans Ucko: Silence replaces the right to peace in the contemporary world

TEHRAN — The Islamic World Peace Forum (IWPF) take a Virtual Roundtable about 21 September 2018 International Day of Peace by scholar Dr. Hans Ucko.

Flowing is the text of this interview:

■ Given the slogan of the UN General Assembly this year in line with the International Day of Peace (September 21, 2018), which is The Day's theme for 2018, is "The Right to Peace - on the 70th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights" at practical measures do you propose to materialize this slogan?

A: We live today in a world, where we are almost at a complete loss what to do. The world is in the throes of political leaders, who are very far from activating peace. Narcissism, individualism, going it alone dominates the set-up of political leaders. Media plays into the hands of these political leaders and silence is more heard that any real action for the "right to peace". We must begin at a completely different end. We must begin by seeking alliances between people, men and women, boys and girls, young and old, of different countries, religions and cultures and see to how we together could in our different contexts demonstrate that counter-culture that is now needed.

■ Given the recent developments in the world and in the region (Daesh, Saudi's attacks in Yemen, war crimes of Zionist in region, Syria and insecurity and instability in the Middle East) what are the international requirements for creating a world full of peace and security?



A: It is easy to paint the world in us against them, white against black, Muslim against Christian, etc. We must begin by being self-critical, open to see where that which we may hold onto also has its flaws, also carries the weight of having denigrated people, having misused the power we have and having put ourselves in the place of God. We must begin working how to unravel the sins of our fathers or earlier generations. We should dare to face the reality that Daesh, Saudi Arabia or the establishment of the State of Israel cannot be dissociated from a British and U.S. self-serving policy to keep the control of the world in their hands and to maintain their empires. But

we must also have the courage to see that our own context is also a prisoner of its own power.

■ In the light of the objectives and measures of Islamic World Peace Forum in the field of establishing just peace in the world, what measures do you propose for promoting just peace discourse in the world?

A: There needs to be a serious long term conversation within Muslim communities how to change the perception of Islam in the world. There needs to be a self-critical reflection on where the followers of Islam or its religious leaders have misused their power and contributed to the caricature of Islam that is today being used by the enemies of Islam. Muslim communities need to rediscover their own heritage, which is one of realising the inner meaning of the Takbir, Allahu Akbar, one which has brought forth so many philosophers, poets, singers, dreamers, who still continue to mark people all over the world, not least in secular societies.

■ Do you think that international organizations and international human rights defender and responsible for establishing peace in the world have not yet been able to act in their true responsibility for peace in the world?

A: I think so because so many of these bodies are fixated with their own agendas that they fail to see where they have real allies. I hope the above is helpful and would appreciate it if you would let me how it will be published and also provide me with a link to where it will be published.

International Tender (Revised)

No.: 97.T/854

Security Printing and Minting Organization (SPMO) of Central Bank of I.R. of Iran intends to purchase machinery mentioned table below along with their spare and wear parts for three years, as well as installation at the site through a public tender from eligible companies, according to the specifications and conditions stated in the tender documents.

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- 2- The bidders are requested to submit their company profile, articles of association, turn over including list of supplied goods, client list, etc. for the last 3 years.
- 3- It should be noted that the priority for bidders is given to the domestic participants in equal conditions.

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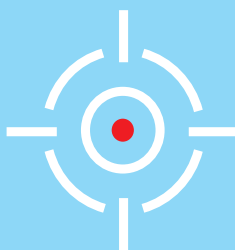
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call for public tender (First/Second publish)

Two- Stages (semi compressed) tender Subject of Tender:

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Tender descriptions:

The Tender holder	Registration No. through national electronic tendering system	Tender No. /Indent No.	Estimated value (Rial/Euro)
National Iranian Drilling Company	3,174,646	Tender No.: FP/11-97/020 Indent No.: 01-22-9746000	5,640,000,000

• Qualitative evaluation of tenderers

Method	<input type="checkbox"/> Based on minimum scoring (60) made in award criterion reflected in the tenderers pre-qualification forms.
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• Purchasing & Submitting

Tender Document Distribution by Company	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 in name of "NIDC Incomes Centralized Fund" issued by I.R. of Iran Central Bank (Shaba No. IR 52010004001114004020491). Submitting format Request for the purpose of receiving Tender Documents
Documents Receiving Method	Closing date	Days after the last time of Purchasing 14
	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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(Foreign Procurement Dept.)
More of this & other tenders are accessible by click on:
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Welfare Organization to cover genetic testing costs

HEALTH **TEHRAN** — The cost of genetic testing for families having a child with birth defects or couples at risk, will be fully covered by the Welfare Organization, Fatemeh Abbasi an official with the Organization has said.

Genetic testing costs about 50 million rials (nearly \$1,200), which is completely paid by the Organization, she stated, ISNA reported on Sunday.

During the first five months of the year (March 22- August 22), over 600 abortion permits have been issued for the prevention of severe birth defects, she added.

She went on to say that last year, some 7,100 people aged 15-25 have undergone genetic screening, and some 1,248 pregnancies diagnosed with genetic disorders, have been terminated.

“With regard to the fact that some 25 to 30 thousand children are being born with congenital disabilities in the country annually we decided to make genetic counselling a mandatory requirement for couples before officiating their marriage.”

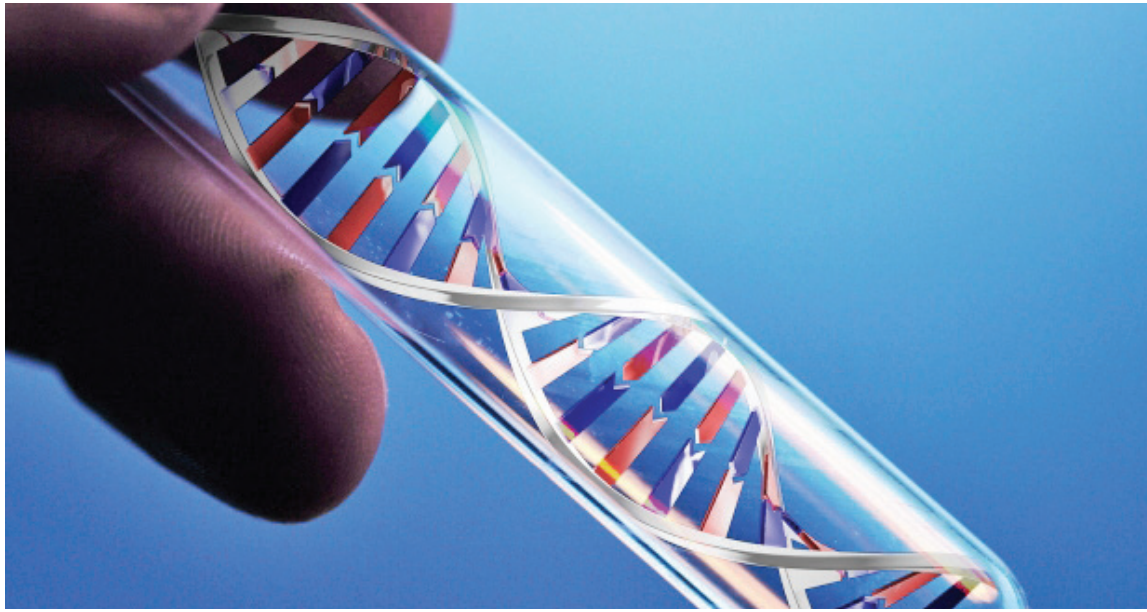
Pointing to premarital genetic counselling being obligatory for all couples since last year, she noted that last year, premarital genetic screening was conducted for 111,000 couples (one-sixth of all marriages recorded).

Families having children born with congenital disabilities and couples suspected to having children with genetic disorders in future pregnancies, can undergo genetic testing completely free of charge, Abbasi concluded.

In an exclusive interview with the Tehran Times Iran’s Welfare Organization director Anoushirvan Mosheni-Bandpey said that all couples are required to obtain a permission before officiating their marriage by filling out questionnaires designed and administered by professional healthcare providers and in case the couples are at risk they will be referred to genetic counselling services to take tests to assess any potential risks for future pregnancies if need be.

With regard to the fact that some 25 to 30 thousand children are being born with congenital disabilities in the country annually we decided to make genetic counselling a mandatory requirement for couples before officiating their marriage, he said, adding that as giving birth to children with birth defects could prove costly both for parents and health care sector we try to encourage couples to take the tests and in case they cannot afford the tests the welfare organization will cover the costs.

Genetic counselling is the process through which knowledge about the genetic aspects of illnesses is shared by trained professionals with those who are at an increased risk or either having a heritable disorder or of passing it on to their unborn offspring. A genetic counsellor provides information on the inheritance of illnesses and their recurrence risks,



All couples are required to obtain a permission before officiating their marriage by filling out questionnaires designed and administered by professional healthcare providers and in case the couples are at risk they will be referred to genetic counselling services to take tests to assess any potential risks for future pregnancies if need be.

World Health Organization explains.

■ **What are the benefits of genetic counseling?**

According to Pomona Valley Health Centers genetic counseling benefits couples in many ways, including:

■ **Increased understanding**

Genetic screening tests can help calculate the likelihood that the fetus might be born with Down syndrome, cystic fibrosis, Tay-Sachs disease or sickle cell anemia. Genetic counselors will effectively communicate this information and help couples understand any potential benefits of preventative measures to individuals and their family members.

■ **Better peace of mind**

For parents-to-be who are aware of a family history of a particular disease or condition, it can be cathartic to learn that they do not carry the gene.

■ **Early intervention**

In some cases, genetic testing can uncover a hidden gene mutation that puts you at risk of developing a deadly disease. Counselors help you understand the cause of this condition and what you can do to prevent it from developing and/or spreading.

■ **Appropriate testing**

A genetic counselor can help couples determine what tests are most appropriate for your pregnancy. It can be especially important if any standard prenatal screening test yields an abnormal result.

■ **Decision-making**

Counselors can also help you understand testing options, diagnosis and the underlying causes of the genetic disorders, as well as guide you through any decision-making regarding genetic testing or family planning.

Three daily servings of dairy may keep your heart healthy

A large observational study recently published in the journal The Lancet examines the link between the consumption of whole-fat dairy and cardiovascular health.

Dairy products may benefit cardiovascular health, says new research. The United States Department of Agriculture and American Heart Association (AHA) both recommend that adults do not exceed three servings of low-fat dairy per day.

The high content of saturated fat found in dairy products, they warn, may raise the levels of “bad” cholesterol, which poses a threat to cardiovascular health.

However, new research is challenging these guidelines.

For instance, a recent study has suggested that the fatty acids found in whole-fat dairy may have a protective role against heart disease and stroke. Now, a large-scale observational study has reviewed the dietary habits of over 130,000 people in 21 countries across five continents and found that whole-fat dairy correlates with a lower risk of mortality and cardiovascular disease.

Dr. Mahshid Dehghan — from McMaster University in Ontario, Canada — is the lead author of the new research.

■ **Whole-fat dairy lowers mortality risk**

Dr. Dehghan and colleagues used food questionnaires to collect self-reported data on the eating habits of 136,384 people over a follow-up period of 9.1 years. The people surveyed were aged between 35 and 70, and the dairy products they consumed were milk, yogurt, and cheese.

For the purposes of the study, a portion of dairy comprised either a glass of milk of 244 grams, a cup of yogurt of 244 grams, a 15-gram slice of cheese, or a 5-gram teaspoon of butter.

Based on these intakes, the team divided the volunteers into four groups: those who consumed no dairy, those whose intake did not exceed one serving per day, those who consumed one to two servings daily, and the “high-intake” group, who consumed over two daily servings — or 3.2 servings, on average — every day.

The study revealed that people in the high-intake group were less likely to die from any cause, less likely to die of cardiovascular disease, and less likely to have a stroke or develop major heart disease.

Also, within the group that regularly consumed full-fat dairy only, the researchers found that the more whole-fat dairy was consumed, the lower the risk of mortality and cardiovascular issues.

“Our findings support that consumption of dairy products might be beneficial for mortality and cardiovascular disease, especially in low-income and middle-income countries where dairy consumption is much lower than in North America or Europe.”

Although this is an observational study that cannot confirm causality, the results suggest that some saturated fats in whole-fat dairy could benefit cardiovascular health, as do some vitamins and calcium. Does this mean that the current dietary guidelines should be changed?

Previous research that found similar results suggested that the guidelines do need revising. However, a linked commentary written by Jimmy Chun Yu Louie, at the University of Hong Kong, and Anna M. Rangan, from the University of Sydney in Australia, explains why that may not be such a good idea yet.

(Source: Medical News Today)

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Zaferaniyeh-Yekta, Apartment-villa French-style 3Bdrs,fully furn 360 sq.m.sp, €5000
Valiasre-Bagheferdos 3 Bdrs,fully furn,brand new,5th fl., 150 sq.m ,indoor spj,\$1900
Mirdamad-Naft 3 Bdrs,fully furn,5th fl.,200 sq.m, \$ 2000 Close to Paladium Shopping center 3Bdrs,180 sq.m,fully furn,lobby,sp,garden,\$2000

VILLA

Elahiyeh Triplex-800 sq.m built up,1000 sq.m land,Semi-furn,7 Bdrs,spj,\$9000
Zaferaniyeh Duplex, 4 Bdrs,unfurn,350 sq.m,spj,\$8000
Niavaran 2000 sq.m land,green garden,500 sq.m built up area,indoor spj,4Bdrs,fully furn,triplex,\$15000
Darous 1000 sq.m land,400 sq.m built up area, flat.4 Bdrs,spj.\$7000
Jordan 850 sq.m land,500 sq.m built up,5 Bdrs,spj,furn/ unfurn,duplex,\$7000



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Vozara 250 sq.m,all facilities 8th fl.,,\$4000
Mirdamad-Naft 120 sq.m,6th fl., \$1700
vanak shariati pasdaran shahrak gharb saadatabad 4000-3000-5000-4000-1000 sq.m,full,reasonable price

FOR: EMBASSY/COMPANY

Jordan, 4-storey building,1000 sq.m, all facilities,\$10000
Zaferaniyeh Triplex villa,800 sq.m,built up,1000 sq.m land,12 rooms,\$8500
Niavaran Triplex villa,2000 sq.m land,600 sq.m built up ,spj,all facilities,\$15000
Darous Duplex villa,600 sq.m built up,1000 sq.m land ,all facilities,\$8000
Other areas: Farmaniyeh Aghdasiyeh Shahrak Gharb Shariati-Pasdaran Valiasre Tajrish Jordan Vanak Arjantin Zafar... nice cases ready to move in.

Iran supplies 70 percent of internet services in Iraq, minister says

TECHNOLOGY **TEHRAN** — Iran’s Minister of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Mohammad-Javad Azari Jahromi said that Iran supplies nearly 70 percent of Iraq’s internet services, Fars News Agency reported. The northwestern border city Piranshahr is the main hub to transit internet to Iraq, Azari Jahromi said during his trip to Western Azarbaijan Province. He talked about the government achievements in internet coverage in the province. Now all 42 cities of the Western Azarbaijan Province have 3G and 4G internet coverage. A total of 28 percent of the villages of the province benefit from full internet and communication coverage, he said. Only four percent of villages have no communication and internet coverage in this region, he announced.

SOCIALLY SAFE

Protecting your passwords safely

Your passwords are the most common way to prove your identity when using websites, email accounts and your computer itself (via User Accounts). The use of strong passwords is therefore essential in order to protect your security and identity. The best security in the world is useless if a malicious person has a legitimate user name and password.



■ **The Risk of Using Weak Passwords and not Having a Separate Password for Your email Account**
People impersonating you to commit fraud and other crimes, including:

- Accessing your bank account
- Purchasing items online with your money
- Impersonating you on social networking and dating sites
- Sending emails in your name
- Accessing the private information held on your computer
- Choosing the Best Passwords

■ **Do:**

- Always use a password.
- Use a strong, separate password for your email account.
- To create a strong password, simply choose three random words. Numbers, symbols and combinations of upper and lower case can be used if you feel you need to create a stronger password, or the account you are creating a password for requires more than just letters.
- Choose a password with at least eight characters (more if you can, as longer passwords are harder for criminals to guess or break), a combination of upper and lower case letters, numbers and keyboard symbols such as @ # \$ % ^ & * () _ +.
- A line of a song that other people would not associate with you.
- Someone else’s mother’s maiden name (not your own mother’s maiden name).
- Pick a phrase known to you, for example “Tramps like us, baby we were born to run” and take the first character from each word to get ‘tlu,bwwbtr’

■ **Don’t:**

Use the following as passwords:

- Your username, actual name or business name.
- Family members’ or pets’ names.
- Your or family birthdays.
- Favorite football or F1 team or other words easy to work out with a little background knowledge.
- The word ‘password’.
- Numerical sequences.
- A single commonplace dictionary word, which could be cracked by common hacking programs.

****When choosing numerical passcodes or PINs, do not use ascending or descending numbers (for example 4321 or 12345), duplicated numbers (such as 1111) or easily recognisable keypad patterns (such as 14789 or 2580).

■ **Looking After Your Passwords**

- Never disclose your passwords to anyone else. If you think that someone else knows your password, change it immediately.
- Don’t enter your password when others can see what you are typing.
- The routine changing of passwords is not recommended, unless the accounts to which they apply have been hacked, in which case they should be changed immediately. This also applies if another account or website for which you use the same login details have been hacked.
- Use a different password for every website. If you have only one password, a criminal simply has to break it to gain access to everything.
- Don’t recycle passwords (for example password2, password3).
- If you must write passwords down in order to remember them, encrypt them in a way that is familiar to you but makes them indecipherable by others.
- An alternative to writing down passwords is to use an online password vault or safe. Seek recommendations, and ensure the one you choose is secure and reputable.

Do not send your password by email. No reputable firm will ask you to do this.

- The fact that you should use different passwords for each of your accounts can make them very difficult to remember. Consider using one of the many password vaults available on the internet, but read reviews and get recommendations.

(Source: getsafeonline.org)

TECHNOLOGY **TEHRAN** — The 19th International Exhibition of Telecommunications, Information Technology, known as Telecom Innovation 2018, will be held from October 3 to 6 at the Tehran International Permanent Fairground. The exhibition, which will be held on the Innovative Communications and Information Technology (CIT), is supported by the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Ministry, the Communications Regulatory Authority, the Telecommunications Infrastructure Company (TIC) and the Telecommunications Company of Iran (TCI). Telecom Innovation 2018 manifests the key role of telecom and IT technologies as the drivers of innovation influence business processes and everyday life and the way ICT opens new fields for growth in just about every industry. The exhibition showcases a broad picture of the whole telecom market in Iran, with stands from equipment and infrastructure vendors, satellite operators, wholesale carriers, VAS solutions suppliers, OSS/BSS vendors and more. Over four days, the market’s most dynamic companies across the telecoms ecosystem will be attending the event. The exhibition covers mobile communications, communication and internet services, navigation, networks, information technology, peripherals and components, storage systems and equipment, services, card technologies, office automation - equipment, accessories and system software. Telecom Innovation 2018 is expected audience of about 40,000 trade visitors and more than 300 exhibitors, the exhibition website announced.



Neighbors prioritized for exporting knowledge-based ICT products

➔ Iran should support knowledge-based companies in international events in order to provide market for their products in other countries, he said. In this way, Iran can increase non-oil exports, Faqihi explained. The Iranian participants will offer their services and products at Iran official pavilion at the event, the head of Iran union for software producers and exporters Mohammadreza Talaee said in a press release in late August. Iran’s union for software producers and exporters will hold the pavilion for the fourth time at the GITEX, he explained.



Between 30 and 50 percent of expenses of the participants up to 200 million rials (about \$4,700) are provided by the union, he added. Four technology enterprises as well as ten knowledge-based companies supported by the vice presidency for science and technology, five digital cultural centers with the support of Information Technology and Digital Media Development Center of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance will attend the event. A conference on business and investment opportunity in Iran will be held on the sideline of the GITEX 2018, he said.

New blockchain ledger will let you sell personal healthcare data

IBM and a start-up have launched a blockchain-based app that lets patients eventually sell anonymized data to pharmaceutical companies, researchers and others while retaining greater control over privacy. Most people don’t know it but there is a multi-billion dollar industry that collects healthcare information, strips it of basic personal identifiers such as name, address and Social Security Number, and then sells it off to researchers, drug developers, marketers and others. Medical informatics companies, such as Iqvia (IMS Health), Optum, and Symphony Health reap the profits of selling the healthcare data while the people from whom it’s collected have no control over how it’s used. Nor do they get any compensation for it. Startup Hu-manity.co has partnered with IBM to develop an electronic ledger that gives consumers the cryptographic key to grant to their personal data, even allowing patients or others to control the specific purpose for which it’s used, while also allowing them to eventually profit from it. The new Global Consent Ledger will initially begin with healthcare data from U.S. residents and provide a digital data trail stored on the IBM Blockchain Platform, which uses the Hyperledger Fabric specification.

New Jersey-based Hu-manity.co expects its consent ledger to act as the broker for all kinds of consumer information, from geolocation data garnered from streaming services to credit reports and even browser history, according to Richie Etwaru, CEO and co-founder of Hu-manity.co. “We’re not the dealer of the data but the broker,” Etwaru said. “We’re a title company for your digital identity. We’re not in business of building a big data lake or collecting data.” The #My31 Android App, which will allow users to sign up to have their anonymized healthcare data shared, went live today and is available in the Google Play Store. An iOS app is currently being reviewed by the Apple review team and is expected to launch at a later date, according to Hu-manity.co. Once a user has signed up for the app, there’s a short on-boarding process that sets up the blockchain user with their private key and a “title” for their data. Users are also connected to a point system, similar to a retail store’s rewards card, where each time they authorize use of their data they receive points that can be redeemed for products, such as clothing in an online store. Eventually, Etwaru said, he hopes to be able to reward users with money — as much as \$100 to \$200 a year depending on

the amount and type of data being leased. “When enough people get involved in the movement, we’ll start to negotiate with the healthcare industry on price,” Etwaru said. Hu-manity’s stated — and somewhat lofty — goal is to establish personal data as having the same rights as other forms of property, real or intellectual, and to eventually allow owners to be involved in fair market negotiation for its use. That would allow it to be leased, donated or passed on as part of an estate. Hu-manity’s title of ownership for personal data also includes a blockchain-protected hash key. “And, if it’s stolen, it’s a completely different type of offense,” Etwaru said. “Right now, data’s in this weird state. When it’s stolen, you can’t go to the police station and report someone stole your medical data like someone stole your car.” “Our vision is to bring people and the enterprise together in a place where data can be respected as property,” Etwaru added. The #My31 App got its name from personal data ownership being pitched as a 31st human right by Hu-manity.co. In 1948, the United Nations listed 30 basic human rights as part of its Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was created to provide a global understanding of how individuals

should be treated. Better quality data, and compensation for the owner The upside of creating a blockchain-based ledger through which all kinds of personal data can be sold is that it allows consumers to profit and businesses buying it to get higher quality information, Etwaru said. “I was chief digital officer of an \$8 billion company up until six months ago. And we sold about \$4 billion a year of healthcare data, which was ‘de-identified,’” said Etwaru, referring to his executive position with Iqvia. “They’re [selling] some terrible quality data. They’re also really nervous about re-identification.” In other words, personal medical information is being sold — and in the process of making that transaction legal it is stripped of 18 types of information; doing so meets HIPAA de-identification requirements, but significantly reduces the data’s value for legitimate research. “And there is evidence that bad actors can still surreptitiously re-identify it,” said Dan Karlin, Hu-manity.co’s chief transformation officer. Karlin is formerly the head of clinical, informatics and regulatory strategy at Pfizer Pharmaceuticals. (Source: computerworld.com)

A beginner’s guide to blockchain-Part One



The blockchain is an undeniably ingenious invention — the brainchild of a person or group of people known by the pseudonym, Satoshi Nakamoto. But since then, it has evolved into something greater, and the main question every single person is asking is: What is blockchain? By allowing digital information to be distributed but not copied, blockchain technology created the backbone of a new type of internet. Originally devised for the digital currency, Bitcoin, the tech community is now finding other potential uses for the technology. Bitcoin has been called “digital gold,” and for a good reason. To date, the total value of the currency is close to \$12 billion U.S. And blockchains can make other types of digital value. Like the internet (or your car), you don’t need to

know how the blockchain works to use it. ■ A distributed database Picture a spreadsheet that is duplicated thousands of times across a network of computers. Then imagine that this network is designed to regularly update this spreadsheet and you have a basic understanding of the blockchain. Information held on a blockchain exists as a shared — and continually reconciled — database. This is a way of using the network that has obvious benefits. The blockchain database isn’t stored in any single location, meaning the records it keeps are truly public and easily verifiable. No centralized version of this information exists for a hacker to corrupt. Hosted by millions of computers simultaneously, its data is accessible to anyone on the internet. (Source: blockgeeks.com)

Angel investment structures for startups



Early investments in tech startups are influenced by the convention of investments that might happen down the line. Those later investments (i.e., VC rounds) occur through the sale of preferred stock. VCs generally exercise a high level of process in their investments to assess whether the company is in good order, whether the investment optimizes tax treatment, and other issues that can impact the value of the investment. Angel investments defer to these later potential rounds for two reasons: (1) they can reduce the costs of the present transaction by deferring some of the process and negotiation to a later stage when VCs are involved; and (2) engaging in an investment that ignores the structure and process of later investments could significantly reduce the appeal of the later investments, which would not benefit anyone involved.

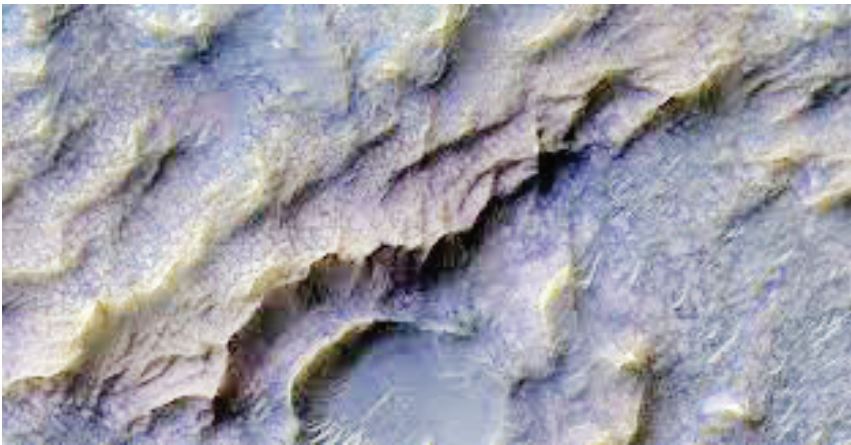
■ **Convertible notes** Convertible notes are loans that have a contractual conversion mechanism that is triggered by a future investment (i.e., the VC round). Upon such a conversion, the principal amount of the note plus any accrued and unpaid interest is converted to the securities sold in that round, at a predefined discounted price. The note typically has a conversion option in the event of the sale of the company or the loan becoming due, if either of those things happens prior to the conversion triggered by the financing. ■ **Convertible securities** Convertible securities (or convertible equity) are similar to convertible notes, except that the amount provided to the company is not categorized (at least by design of the instrument) as debt. Presently, these are mostly only used by accelerators. (Source: calstartuplawfirm.com)

Was this huge river delta on Mars the place where its oceans finally disappeared?

For some time, scientists have known that Mars was once a much warmer and wetter environment than it is today. However, between 4.2 and 3.7 billion years ago, its atmosphere was slowly stripped away, which turned the surface into the cold and desiccated place we know today. Even after multiple missions have confirmed the presence of ancient lake beds and rivers, there are still unanswered questions about how much water Mars once had.

One of the most important unanswered questions is whether or not large seas or an ocean ever existed in the northern lowlands. According to a new study by an international team of scientists, the Hypanis Valles ancient river system is actually the remains of a river delta. The presence of this geological feature is an indication that this river system once emptied into an ancient Martian sea in Mars' northern hemisphere.

■ The sedimentary architecture
For the sake of their study, which recently appeared in the journal *Earth and Planetary Science Letters* under the title "The Hypanis Valles delta: The last highstand of a sea on early Mars?" – the international team consulted data from the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter (MRO) and the 2001 Mars Odyssey probe to investigate the morphology, sedimentary architecture, and depositional environment



of the Hypanis Valles region.

This delta is what separates the southern highlands from the northern lowlands, where an ancient ocean is once believed to have existed – a theory which has remained

unproven. Based on data from the MRO's High Resolution Imaging Science Experiment (HiRISE) instrument and the 2001 Odyssey's Thermal Emission Imaging System (THEMIS), the team found compelling evi-

The presence of this geological feature is an indication that this river system once emptied into an ancient Martian sea in Mars' northern hemisphere.

dence that a large body of water once covered the northern third of Mars.

As Joel Davis – a postdoctoral researcher in the Planetary Surface Group at the Natural History Museum and a co-author of the paper – explained in a recent NHM press release:

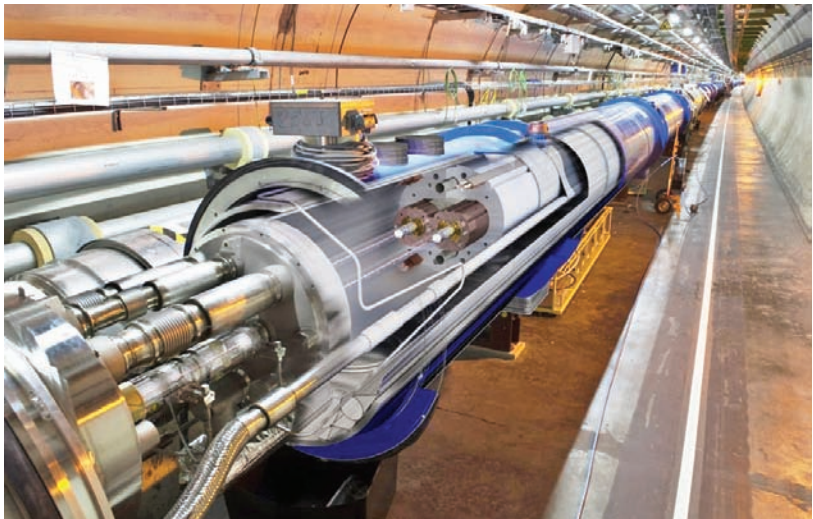
■ Earth-like water cycle
A "Martian ocean means that Mars probably had a very Earth-like water cycle, with rivers, lakes, and now oceans, all of which probably interacted as part of a planet-wide system. We think this Earth-like hydrological cycle was active about 3.7 billion years ago, and started to shut down sometime after that. Our study is not definitive proof for an ocean, but these geological features are very hard to explain without one."

Determining whether or not Mars had standing bodies of water in the past has been no easy challenge, mainly because Mars lacks the kinds of apparent indications of lakes and oceans on its surface (like fine-grained sand deposits or clear shorelines). As a result, scientists have had to look for other means of identifying where water flowed and sand was deposited, which is where sedimentary fans come into play.

Artist rendition of how the "lake" at Gale Crater on Mars may have looked millions of years ago.

(Source: universetoday.com)

Large Hadron Collider: 10 years of pushing the frontiers of physics



On September 10, 2008, CERN's Large Hadron Collider (LHC) fired up for the very first time. In the decade since, the world's largest and most powerful particle accelerator has been responsible for some of the most important breakthroughs in scientific history, most notably the discovery of the Higgs boson in 2013. New Atlas is celebrating the 10-year anniversary with a look back at the LHC's achievements and, with a massive new upgrade in the works, what physics puzzles it could help piece together in the future.

Not only is the Large Hadron Collider the world's largest particle accelerator, it's the world's largest machine, full-stop. That's thanks to a 27-km-long (16.7-mi) ring of pipes that house the particle beams, along with thousands of powerful magnets and an advanced cooling system of liquid helium.

The ring is made up of two separate tubes, with high-energy particle beams circling in opposite directions. Superconducting electromagnets accelerate the particles almost to the speed of light, and for those to work they need to be kept extremely cold: -271.3° C (-456.3° F) to be exact, which is colder than outer space. That's where the liquid helium comes in, chosen because it's the only known element to remain in a liquid form at such low temperatures.

■ Steering particles around curves
Over 1,232 dipole magnets – each 15 m (49 ft) long – help bend the beams to steer the particles around curves. Another 392 quadrupole magnets – a mere 5 to 7 m (16.4 to 23 ft) long – focus the particles into narrower beams.

Once those particles are whizzing around at incredible speeds, it's time for the main show. At four locations around the accelerator ring, the beams can be directed to cross paths. Just before they do, yet more magnets focus the beams into even finer points to increase the chances of head-on collisions between particles from the two beams.

When those particles collide, they produce a shower of other particles, including particularly exotic ones that are normally hard to come by here on Earth or at this point in time. To watch the results of these collisions, particle detectors are set up at each of these four spots, identifying the short-lived new particles by measuring their path, their energy loss, their velocity and mass.

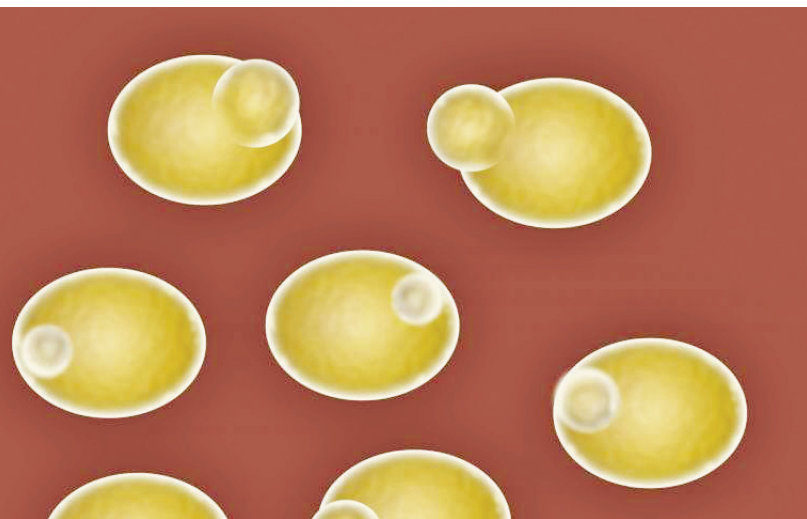
For instance, our current understanding of the Standard Model of particle physics says that quarks and leptons are the smallest components of matter. But we've thought this before – after all, the word "atom" comes from a Greek word that means indivisible.

And yet it was discovered in the early 20th century that atoms are made up of even smaller elementary particles. In the 60s, these were again found to be composed of quarks and leptons.

Other puzzles the collider could help us decipher include why there's so little antimatter in the universe, whether there are extra dimensions tucked away on tiny scales, and the identity of the mysterious dark matter, which seems to make up some 80 percent of all matter.

(Source: New Atlas)

Research in yeast leads to serendipitous finding about a central nervous system disorder



Studying the fundamental aspects of biology can sometimes lead to unexpected findings that directly relate to human disease. In one of the latest examples of scientific serendipity, researchers from the Salk Institute found that an important quality control mechanism in baker's yeast is closely connected to hypomyelinating leukodystrophy, a debilitating disease found in children.

The findings, reported September 7, 2018, in the journal *eLife*, could indicate a therapeutic approach for this rare disease, as well as for multiple sclerosis and other neurodegenerative diseases.

"It's a total coincidence that we made this discovery," says Salk American Cancer Society Professor Tony Hunter, the paper's senior author. "We wouldn't have guessed that this yeast protein would play a role in human disease in this way."

In the face of genetic damage -- from cancer or other diseases -- cells mobilize molecular processes that act as repair crews. For the past decade or so, one focus of Hunter's lab has been the study of certain proteins that regulate these repair procedures through a process called sumoylation. SUMO addition to proteins, or sumoylation, acts as a quality-control mechanism to signal to a cell that the protein should be cleared out.

In the current study, Salk Research Associate Zheng Wang, the paper's first author, set up a genetic screening test in yeast to determine which proteins relied on sumoylation to function properly. He identified several subunits of a protein complex called RNA polymerase III -- which

plays an important role in copying DNA into RNA -- among those that were affected.

■ Reducing sumoylation
The team found that when Pol III was mutated the cells stop growing, because the mutant Pol III cannot make enough transfer RNAs (small RNAs that are needed for cells to synthesize proteins). However, that defect could be rescued by reducing sumoylation in the yeast cells.

At the same time the research with Pol III was going on Hunter's lab, other groups studying hypomyelinating leukodystrophy -- a neurodegenerative disease characterized by the loss of the protective insulation around nerve cells (myelin) -- discovered that the condition was caused by mutations in Pol III.

Although Pol III was known to be important for the regulation of cell growth, this was the first time a specific disease had been connected with defects in Pol III.

Due to the loss of myelin insulation around nerves, people with hypomyelinating leukodystrophy have delayed development, intellectual disabilities and impaired movement. There is currently no therapy available.

However, the Hunter lab's new findings suggest that one way to limit the effects of these mutations may be to partially inhibit sumoylation, which would in turn block the effects of the mutated Pol III.

The research still has a long way to go: sumoylation is important for many other functions as well, so inhibiting it in all cells would not be a useful approach.

(Source: eurekalert.org)

Magnetic waves create chaos in star-forming clouds, researchers say

New research by Stella Offner, assistant professor of astronomy at The University of Texas at Austin, finds that magnetic waves are an important factor driving the process of star formation within the enormous clouds that birth stars.

Her research sheds light on the processes that are responsible for setting the properties of stars, which in turn affects the formation of planets orbiting them, and, ultimately, life on those planets. The research is published in the current issue of the journal *Nature Astronomy*.

Offner used a supercomputer to make models of the multitude of processes happening inside a cloud where stars are forming, in an effort to sort out which processes lead to which effects.

"These clouds are violent places," Offner said. "It's an extreme environment with all kinds of different physics happening at once," including gravity and turbulence as well as radiation and winds from forming stars (called stellar feedback). The fundamental question,



Offner said, is: "Why are the motions in these clouds so violent?"

Some astronomers attribute the observed motions to gravitational collapse, while others attribute it to turbulence and stellar feedback.

Offner wanted to test these theories and

study how stars shape their birth environment, but it's virtually impossible to use telescope observations of these clouds to separate the influence of the various processes, she said.

■ Cloud magnetic field
Her models showed that stellar winds in-

teracting with the cloud magnetic field generated energy and influenced gas at far greater distances across the cloud than previously thought: These local magnetic fields caused action at a distance.

"Think of the magnetic fields like rubber bands that stretch across the cloud," Offner said. The "winds push the field -- it's like rubber bands being plucked. The waves outrun the wind and cause distant motions."

This research has implications for the tug-of-war between feedback -- that is, the effect that the newly formed star has on its environment -- and gravity on the scale of solar systems up to entire galaxies, Offner said.

As for the next step, Offner says she plans to study this process on larger scales, both in time and space. Her current study focused on one area within star-forming clouds; she said future studies will study the effects of magnetic fields and feedback on scales larger than a single cloud.

(Source: phys.org)

Stunning Hubble snapshot showcases ancient and far-off galaxies

The Hubble Space Telescope has taken a photograph of some of the earliest and most distant galaxies in the universe.

As part of the mission called Beyond Ultra-Deep Frontier Fields And Legacy Observations or BUFFALO, Hubble pointed its lenses toward a massive galaxy cluster named Abell 370 located 5 billion light-years away from Earth. The photograph also revealed numerous other galaxies that lie far beyond Abell 370.

To take the amazing shot, Hubble used the galaxy clusters as "natural telescopes" that amplified the distant galaxies and supernovas. Because these galaxies are so far away and their lights were so faint, it was difficult to photograph and observe them without a boost.

The cosmological trick called gravitational lensing allowed Hubble to see across the Universe. It works by distributing matter, in this case, a cluster of galaxies, between the observer and a distant source, bending and manipulating the light coming from distant background galaxies that otherwise could not be detected even with the telescope's sensitive vision.

The feature dubbed as "the Dragon" is the best demonstration of gravitational lensing. Just below the center of the cluster is an extended feature that is made up of several duplicated images of a spiral galaxy forming an arc.

This is not the first time that Hubble used gravitational lensing to look at distant objects in the universe. Back in 2012, the telescope also photographed a distant galaxy 10 billion light-years away from Earth using the cosmic zoom lens created by a cluster of closer galaxies located 5 billion light-years away.

"Driven by the Frontier Fields observations, BUFFALO will be able to detect the most distant galaxies approximately ten times more efficiently than its progenitor program," said the team behind BUFFALO.

(Source: Tech Times)

Intuitive tool might finally be the key to increasing your productivity: study

Despite your meticulously-written to-do lists, regular progress report e-mails, and daily stand-ups with your team, there might still be a few bits and pieces of crucial details that often get lost in the tracks.

And sometimes, those are just the things that may make or break a certain project. While technology now affords us a plethora of platforms for communication, when it comes to collaboration, less will always be more.

In fact, science shows that the less distractions we have, and the more we can focus just on one single thing, the more productive we can be.

A better solution would be to have everything housed together in one place so no detail is left behind, and everyone can focus on doing their own parts of the project to the best of their ability.

It's simple enough so as not to overwhelm you, but not so oversimplified that it lacks the features you need to foster progress. As matter of fact, it's the complete opposite.

The platform allows you to break down each project into stages or tasks, and assign a person to a corresponding task, promoting accountability within the team.

Everything is highly visual so you can easily keep track of each other's progress, but every part is easily adjustable in case things don't turn out as planned.

You can also add labels to customize your workflow in a way that makes sense for the team, as well as communicate within the same platform to eliminate the need for unnecessary meetings.

(Source: sciencealert.com)

Scientists discover new neurons in the inner ear

Researchers at Karolinska Institutet in Sweden have identified four types of neurons in the peripheral auditory system, three of which are new to science. The analysis of these cells can lead to new therapies for various kinds of hearing disorders, such as tinnitus and age-related hearing loss. The study is published in *Nature Communications*.



When sound reaches the inner ear, it is converted into electrical signals that are relayed to the brain via the ear's nerve cells in cochlea. Previously, most of these cells were considered to be of two types: type 1 and type 2 neurons, type 1 transmitting most of the auditory information. A new study by scientists at Karolinska Institutet shows that the type 1 cells actually comprise three very different cell types, which tallies with earlier research showing variations in the electrical properties and sonic response of type 1 cells.

"We now know that there are three different routes into the central auditory system, instead of just one," says Francois Lallemend, research group leader at the Department of Neuroscience, Karolinska Institutet, who led the study.

The team conducted their study on mice using the relatively new technique of single-cell RNA sequencing. The result is a catalogue of the genes expressed in the nerve cells, which can give scientists a solid foundation for better understanding the auditory system as well as for devising new therapies and drugs.

"Our study can open the way for the development of genetic tools that can be used for new treatments for different kinds of hearing disorders, such as tinnitus," says Dr. Lallemend. "Our mapping can also give rise to different ways of influencing the function of individual nerve cells in the body."

(Source: Science Daily)

Asiatic cheetahs spotted for 3rd time this year in central Iran

ENVIRONMENT d e s k **TEHRAN** — Two Asiatic cheetahs have been spotted at the Behabad county located in Yazd province, for the third time since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21), the provincial department of environment chief has said.

Behabad county is known as the best habitat for the rare and precious specie of Asiatic cheetahs, IRNA quoted Nayereh Pourmollaei as saying on Sunday.



First Asiatic cheetah in Yazd province was spotted in the Iranian calendar year of 1354 (March 1975- March 1976) in Mehriz city, she said.

So far, in addition to the cheetahs, over 800 plant species, 190 bird species, 60 wild mammals and over 40 reptile species have been identified in protected areas of Yazd province, she concluded.

Asiatic cheetah, the fastest land animal in the world, are now only inhabiting eastern and east central Iran, not in any other parts of the world, which has been listed as critically endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List since 1996.

Currently the Asiatic cheetah mainly inhabits the desert areas around Dasht-e Kavir in the eastern and central east of Iran, including parts of the Kerman, Khorasan, Semnan, Yazd, Tehran, and Markazi provinces. Most live in five protected areas, Kavir National Park, Touran National Park, Bafq Protected Area, Dar-e Anjir Wildlife Refuge, and Naybandan Wildlife Reserve.

In August Majid Kharrazian-Moqaddam, director of aquatic wildlife and biodiversity office at the Department of Environment said that cheetahs' habitats in Iran are stretching over 12 million hectares of land area and over the past 16 years only experts collaborating with Conservation of Asiatic Cheetah Project (CACP) have actually strived to count the species using trap cameras and other technical methods

He went on to say that they have counted 48 cheetahs, but the number is not exact and has certainly changed given that some must have died and some have reproduced over the past years.

Over the past 16 years some 42 Asiatic cheetah have been killed in the country, he regretted, adding that 28 of the cheetahs died in road crashes and 14 other were either killed in conflicts with guard dogs or due to other unknown reasons.

Kharrazian-Moqaddam explained road kill constitute 70 percent of cheetahs' fatalities and that's why guard dogs and being struck and killed by motor vehicles are the main threats to this precious species population, IRNA news agency reported on Friday.

For one Abbasabad-Mayami road, linking north-central Semnan province to Mashhad, northeastern province of Khorasan Razavi, in one of the deadliest roads for Asiatic cheetahs as 8 cheetahs have been killed in this area over the past 10 years, he lamented.

LEARN ENGLISH

Protest!

A: This is Action 5 News reporter Sarah O'Connell reporting live from Washington, D. C. where a **protest** has **broken out**. Thousands of angry citizens are protesting against the proposed **bailout** of the auto manufacturing industry! Sir, sir.

B: Yeah, yeah, we are here because we feel this is an **injustice!** The financial irresponsibility of big business has to stop! We're here to show the government that we don't like the way that they're spending our tax.

A: Sir, but what exactly is making everyone so angry?
B: It's an absolute **outrage**, Sarah, the US government wants to give twenty-five billion dollars of taxpayers' money to the auto industry. These are companies that have been **mismanaged** and are now nearly bankrupt.

A: I see. But, many supporters of the bailout argue that it could help save the jobs of millions of hardworking Americans.
B: That may be true, and I for one don't want to see anyone lose their job, but how can these CEOs ask for a bailout when they're making millions of dollars? And then they **have the nerve** to fly to Washington in private jets!

A: Good point. This is Sarah O'Connell reporting live from Washington D. C., back to you, Tom.

■ **Key vocabulary**
protest: an event where people gather together to show disapproval of something
break out: start suddenly
bailout: the act of saving a company form money problem
injustice: an unfair situation
outrage: something that is morally wrong
mismanage: manage badly
have the nerve: dare to
■ **Supplementary vocabulary**
placard: sign people hold at protests, usually a piece of cardboard on a stick
rally: public meeting in support or opposition of something
demonstration: event where people gather together to show that they support or oppose something
demonstrator: people who go to a demonstration or protest
opponent: a person who opposes something or someone
proponent: person who supports someone or something



Hamoun dryness, a tragedy for southwestern Iran

ENVIRONMENT d e s k **TEHRAN** — Hamoun wetland dryness, caused by long-term drought and low precipitation, is the major reason behind problems in southwestern province of Sistan-Baluchestan, Zia-al-din Shoeai, former head of national working group for combatting sand and dust storms has said.

Moreover, the problems are partly rooted in Afghanistan's government indifference to the matter, Shoeai said, adding that unfortunately restoration of Hamoun wetland, as transboundary body of water, has not been a priority for Afghanistan.

■ **Iran Afghanistan water dispute**
The Hamouns are transboundary wetlands on the Iran-Afghan border made up of three lakes: Hamoun-e Helmand, which is entirely in Iran, Hamoun-e Sabari on the border, and Hamoun-e Puzak, almost entirely inside Afghanistan. The three lakes are linked and fed by water from the Helmand River which starts in the Hindu Kush Mountains in Afghanistan.

According to the Atlantic Council (an American think tank in the field of international affairs) disputes over water between Iran and Afghanistan date to the 19th century when Afghanistan was a British protectorate. Frederick Goldsmith, a British officer, drew the Iran-Afghan border along the main branch of the Helmand River.

In 1950, Iran and Afghanistan created the Helmand River Delta Commission with the task of measuring and dividing river flow between the two countries. In 1951, the Helmand River Delta Commission presented its report, recommending that Iran's share of the Helmand waters amount to twenty-two cubic meters per second. Iran, however, rejected the report, asking for a larger share.

In 1973, the then Iranian prime minister, Amir Abbas Hoveida, and his Afghan counterpart Mohammad Musa Shafiq signed an accord that accepted the flow of water into Iran at twenty-two cubic meters per second with an option for Iran to purchase an additional four cubic meters per second in normal water years.

In return, Iran agreed to allow the ports of Bandar Abbas and Chabahar to be available to Afghanistan without pre-conditions. However, this agreement was neither ratified nor fully implemented due to the political developments in both countries including a 1973 coup in Afghanistan, the 1979 Iranian revolution, the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan that same year, and finally the rise of the Taliban in 1995.

■ **Hamoun in decline, sand dust storms on the rise**
In the last two decades, once fertile wetlands have drastically dried up. The Taliban government closed the sluices to the Kajaki dam on the Helmand until 2002, which aggravated the impact of the worst drought the region has experienced in many decades, brought about partially by climate change and warming temperatures.

The Hamoun wetlands, which once supported broad



plant and animal diversity and was the main source of the region's economic viability, have nearly dried up due to climate change, dam construction and other poor water management practices. This has led to large population migrations and high unemployment rate.

Serious public health challenges have exacerbated the situation. Sand and dust storms are on the rise as the barren and exposed lake bed has become a hotspot for them and the so-called 120-days wind -- a source of cool air and power for windmills in the past -- are now lasting 160 days and have become the source of pollution and diseases.

According to Shoeai once Hamoun wetland was measured at 5,660 square kilometers. Some 3,820 square kilometers of the wetland was located in Iran and the rest was in Afghanistan, he noted.

Hamoun's life depended on Helmand River which travels for 1,100 kilometers to flow into Hamoun, he added.

Currently Hamoun wetland, which is suffering dryness, needs some 10 billion cubic meters of water to be restored, and regarding the high evaporation rate in the area every year several billion cubic meters of water should enter the wetland to compensate for the annual 5,000 millimeters evaporation, he explained.

Construction of numerous dams in Afghanistan has clearly lowered water flow to Hamoun wetland and coupled with limited rainfalls and drought spells actually the wetland's

condition has deteriorated.

Shoeai went on to say that Kajaki dam water is mainly used for agricultural practices in Afghanistan and there remains no water to flow into Hamoun.

For the time being Afghanistan and Iran have agreed on less than 900 million cubic meters share of water for Hamoun wetland in Iran, and the amount is not enough to restore or protect the wetland, he regretted, stating that the sum is inevitably used to provide the citizens with drinking water.

■ **Foreign Ministry ineffective policy**
Shoeai further explained that since water management of Hamoun is not being handled by one government water shortage has become a challenge in the area.

He also deemed Iran's Foreign Ministry's policy in claiming Hamoun water right ineffective saying that the ministry had better seeking advice from a team of experts in water issues.

Fortunately last year Iran succeeded in encouraging Afghanistan to negotiate on the water right of Hamoun and that's a win for Iran, he highlighted.

Both countries should accept the fact that Hamoun is an international wetland and saving this wetland must become a priority, but the problem is that each country has always looked after their own interest, he lamented.

Further negotiations would definitely convince both sides that economic gains from restoration of the wetland would outweigh agricultural benefits, he concluded.

Road traffic deaths drop by 2.5% in last month of summer



SOCIETY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Traffic police chief Taqi Mehri has announced that road casualties have decreased by 2.5 percent over the past 23 days of the Iranian calendar month of Shahrivar (August 23-September 22, 2017) in the country compared to the same period last year.

The last month of summer is the deadliest, as the most traffic-related deaths occur in this period more than during any other month of the year, Mehri regretted.

To prevent car crashes in the aforesaid period some 1,000 vehicles and 5,000 forces are tasked with helping Traffic Police in this preiod, he added.

Referring to the leading causes of road

crashes, he noted that 39 percent of the traffic accidents occurred due to reckless and drowsy driving, and some 35 percent due to driving an unsafe speed and overtaking.

He mentioned that despite 2.5 percent drop in road casualties since the past 23 days compared to the same period last year, the number of trips have increased by 15 percent during the aforesaid period.

Mehri went on to say that 47 percent of crashes have happened between 16 and 24 o'clock and 63 percent of accidents resulted in deaths have occurred in 30 km from the cities.

Car rollover also contributed to some 37 percent of the road crashes taking lives of travelers, he also regretted.

ENGLISH IN USE

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A ← → چ

Dried up wetlands major cause of SDSs in Tehran

The drought-ridden wetlands around Tehran province are the major hotspots giving rise to sand and dust storms (SDSs) in the capital, deputy environment chief Masoud Tajrishi has said.

Some wetlands around provinces of Tehran and Qom have been dried due to drainage or lack of rainfall which resulted in total disappearance of plant species and severe soil erosion, Tajrishi said, YJC reported on Sunday.

PREFIX/SUFFIX

“-penia”

■ **Meaning:** deficiency
■ **or example:** Is **osteopenia** a problem requiring treatment?

PHRASAL VERB

Land somebody with something

■ **Meaning:** to give someone something unpleasant to do, because no one else wants to do it
■ **For example:** Maria's been landed with all the tidying up as usual.

IDIOM

Change the face of

■ **Explanation:** to change something completely or in a major way
■ **For example:** Social networks have changed the face of modern communication.

خشکی تالاب‌های اطراف تهران عمده‌ترین دلیل گرد و غبار

معاون محیط زیست انسانی سازمان حفاظت محیط زیست گفت: تالاب‌های آب شیرین خشک شده عمده‌ترین کانون‌های گرد و غبار در اطراف استان تهران هستند. مسعود تجربیshi افزود: تالاب‌هایی در اطراف تهران و قم وجود دارند که یا خشک شده‌اند و یا دارای آب بودند که بعد از زهکشی کاملاً خشک شدند و امسال نیز به دلیل کمبود بارش پوشش گیاهی آن‌ها از بین رفته است.

Armed Israeli settler shoots Palestinian in ‘stabbing’ attack

An armed Israeli settler has shot and wounded a Palestinian, who had allegedly staged a “stabbing” attack against another Israeli.

The incident happened near a shopping mall south of the occupied holy city of Jerusalem al-Quds on Sunday.

The Palestinian was identified as 17-year-old Khalil Yusef Ali Jabarin from the village of Yatta near the city of al-Khalil (Hebron) in the occupied West Bank.

“The attacker is in moderate condition after being shot and neutralized by a civilian who was in the mall,” The Jerusalem Post reported.

The daily alleged that Jabarin had inflicted “critical” injury on a 40-year-old Israeli.

■ **Gaza protester dies from Israeli gunfire wounds**

A Palestinian teenage boy has died more than a month after being shot by Israeli military forces during clashes between a group of Palestinian protesters and Israeli forces in the southern part of the besieged Gaza Strip.

The spokesman for the Gaza Ministry of Health, Ashraf al-Qidra, said in a statement that 16-year-old Suhaib Abed al-Salam Abu Kashef passed away late on Saturday at the European Hospital in Gaza City.

He had been shot and wounded during “The Great March of Return” protests east of the city of Khan Yunis, located about 25 kilometers south of Gaza City, on August 3.

More than 180 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces ever since anti-occupation protest rallies began in the Gaza Strip on March 30. Nearly 20,000 Palestinians have also sustained injuries.

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

On June 13, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution, sponsored by Turkey and Algeria, condemning Israel for



Palestinian civilian deaths in the Gaza Strip.

The resolution, which had been put forward on behalf of Arab and Muslim countries, garnered a strong majority of 120 votes in the 193-member assembly, with 8 votes against and 45 abstentions.

The resolution called on UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres to make proposals within 60 days “on ways and means for ensuring the safety, protection, and well-being of the Palestinian civilian population under Israeli occupation,” including “recommendations regarding an international protection mechanism.”

It also called for “immediate steps towards ending the closure and the restrictions imposed by Israel on movement and access into and out of the Gaza Strip.”

■ **‘Israel demolition of West Bank village against intl. law’**

The United Nations has expressed its deep concern at the intention of Israeli authorities to demolish the Bedouin village of Khan al-Ahmar, east of Jerusalem al-Quds,

stressing that such measures are in violation of the international law.

UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Nikolay Mladenov made the remarks in a statement on Sunday, urging Tel Aviv to stop displacing “a community of 181 people, over half of which are children.”

Earlier this month, the Israeli High Court approved plans for the demolition of Khan al-Ahmar village and evacuation of its residents. It could be razed within the coming days. Israeli officials allege that Palestinian structures there have been built without the relevant building permits and pose a threat to residents because of their proximity to a highway.

Critics, on the other hand, maintain that building permits are nearly impossible to obtain for Palestinians in Israeli-controlled areas of the West Bank and the demolition is meant to clear the way for new settlements.

Mladenov called on Israeli authorities not to proceed with the demolition and to “cease

efforts to relocate Palestinian communities in the occupied West Bank.”

He concluded that “such actions are contrary to international law and could undermine the chances for the establishment of a viable, contiguous Palestinian state.”

The Ramallah-based Palestinian Authority has also submitted a new complaint over the Israeli “war crime” against Khan al-Ahmar village at the International Criminal Court (ICC).

The controversial decision to demolish the village, which will leave more than 35 Palestinian families displaced, also drew condemnations from abroad.

On Friday, the European Parliament passed a resolution, warning that Israel’s decision to destroy Khan al-Ahmar village would constitute a grave violation of international law and threaten peace efforts with the Palestinians.

The institution, in a 320 to 277 vote on Thursday, passed a resolution against Israel that called for monetary compensation for financial losses should Khan al-Ahmar be demolished.

About 600,000 Israelis live in over 230 settlements built illegally since the 1967 occupation of the Palestinian lands.

Emboldened by US President Donald Trump’s all-out support, Israel has in recent months stepped up its settlement construction activities in the occupied territories in defiance of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334.

The resolution, approved in December 2016, states that Israel’s establishment of “settlements in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, has no legal validity and constitutes a flagrant violation under international law and a major obstacle to the achievement of the two-state solution and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace.”

(Source: agencies)

Starving Yemenis eat leaves to survive amid war: report

Many Yemeni families reportedly have nothing to eat but leaves as a humanitarian crisis caused by the House of Saud regime’s deadly bombing campaign on the impoverished state reaches a critical stage.

The Associated Press reported that people in the Aslam district of Yemen’s northwestern Hajjah Province rely on leaves from the local vine, known as Halas in Arabic or Arabian Wax Leaf in English, due to worsening hunger.

Mothers, the report said, pick the leaves, then wash and boil them into a sour, acidic green paste to stave off starvation.

According to local health figures, Aslam recorded one of Hajjah’s highest jumps in the number of malnourished children, from 384 cases being treated in January, an additional 1,319 more came in over the next six months.

Additionally, Aslam’s main health center has no pediatricians, electricity, oxygen cylinders and fuel for generators, the report said.

At least 20 children are known to have died of starvation this year in Hajjah.

Walid al-Shamshan, head of the Health Ministry’s nutrition section in Hajjah, said the province had seen 17,000 cases of severe acute malnutrition in the first six months of 2018, higher than in any full year on record.

“Deaths happen in remote villages where people can’t

reach the health units,” Shamshan said. “It’s a steady deterioration and it’s scary.”

According to UNICEF (United Nations Children’s Fund), 1.8 million children are acutely malnourished in Yemen.

The humanitarian crisis in Yemen has worsened “dramatically” since UN-sponsored peace talks collapsed and fighting resumed in the port city of Hudaydah.

■ **Ansarullah ‘sign memorandum’ with UN to transport wounded abroad**

Elsewhere, Yemen’s Ansarullah (Houthi) rebels say they have signed a memorandum of understanding with the United Nations to airlift critically ill patients abroad for treatment.

The Ansarullah -run Saba news agency reported on Saturday that the memorandum, signed between Foreign Minister Hisham Sharaf Abdullah and the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Yemen, Lise Grande, would include transporting critically ill Yemenis abroad from Tuesday 18 September, for a period of six months.

“The memorandum of understanding is the first step to alleviate the suffering of patients in need of treatment abroad,” said Abdullah.

“The move does not in any way mean we are delaying our demand to reopen Sana’a International Airport for commercial and civil flights. The air bridge covers only a

limited number of cases, but it is necessary in light of the continued siege and aggression.”

Fighting has intensified in the war-ravaged country after UN-sponsored peace talks collapsed before they could officially start.

The talks, which would have been the first in nearly two years, were scheduled to take place in the Swiss city of Geneva on September 6 but the Ansarullah delegation failed to leave Sana’a.

There was also no immediate reaction from the UN.

The House of Saud regime and its allies launched a brutal war, code-named Operation Decisive Storm, against Yemen in March 2015 in an attempt to reinstall former president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, a staunch ally of Riyadh, and crush the Ansarullah.

The Western-backed offensive initially consisted of a bombing campaign, but was later coupled with a naval blockade and the deployment of ground forces into Yemen.

The blockade on Yemen has smothered humanitarian deliveries of food and medicine to the import-dependent country.

An estimated 8.4 million Yemenis are on the verge of starvation while almost 18 million lack access to good, nutritious food.

(Source: agencies)

Dutch Catholic Church accused of covering up child abuse

High-ranking members of the Dutch Catholic Church have been accused of taking part or actively covering up child abuse between 1945 and 2010.

More than half of Dutch bishops, cardinals and auxiliary bishops knew about the abuse allegations, an investigation by Dutch newspaper NRC showed.

Four of them were accused of having sexually abused children.

According to the report, high-ranking clergy moved priests who had been accused of abuse to other parishes where they could start anew.

Sometimes, clergy members were moved more than once to cover up their abuse.

They also kept quiet about allegations and destroyed the files of accused members of the clergy.

According to organizations dealing with victims of abuse, these practices led to many more victims over the years.

The Netherlands is not the only country where abuse scandals have rocked the Catholic Church.

In recent years, institutionalized cover-ups of child abuse have popped up in the United States, Australia, Ireland and Germany.

Last month, the U.S. state of Pennsylvania released a report detailing the abuse of more than 1,000 children over a period of decades.

More than 300 clergy members were implicated in the report.

In May, Chile’s 34 bishops were summoned to Rome by the pope after Vatican investigators produced a 2,300-page report alleging that senior Church officials in Chile had failed to act on abuse claims and in some cases hid them.

Pope Francis has accepted the resignations of five of those bishops.

In Australia, a former archbishop was recently convicted of failing to disclose abuse by a priest to the police after being told about it by two of the survivors in the 1970s.

He was spared jail time when he was ordered to serve his one-year sentence at home due to a range of health issues.

In July, Pope Francis accepted the resignation of 88-year-old U.S. Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, ordering him to lead a lifetime of prayer and penance amid allegations that McCarrick had for years sexually abused boys and young adult seminarians.

Pope Francis came under scrutiny himself

for his actions in the McCarrick case.

A senior Vatican official wrote a statement in which he called on Pope Francis to resign, accusing the pontiff of failing to act sooner on the sexual abuse allegations.

During a visit to Ireland in August, Pope Francis told tens of thousands of people gathered in Dublin: “None of us can fail to be moved by the stories of young people who suffered abuse, were robbed of their innocence and left scarred.”

Francis also met privately with eight victims of clerical, religious and institutional abuse, saying he would seek greater commitment to eliminate the “scourge.”

■ **Pope Francis expels Chilean priest under probe**

Meantime, Pope Francis has removed a Chilean priest under investigation in a case involving the sexual abuse of children.

The Archdiocese of Santiago said the Pope had decided to defrock Reverend Cristian Precht, local daily El Mercurio reported on Saturday.

Precht was a former head of the Church’s Vicariate of Solidarity human rights group, which in the 1980s challenged ex-dictator Augusto Pinochet to end the practice of

torture in Chile.

The Chilean religious leader has since been accused of sexual abuse as part of an investigation into allegations against members of the Marist Brothers religious community.

Precht has previously denied the charges. The Catholic Church worldwide is reeling from crises involving the sexual abuse of minors, deeply damaging confidence in the Holy See.

Cases of child sexual abuse by Catholic priests have led to many investigations, trials, and convictions.

There have been numerous allegations of attempts by Church authorities to cover up abuse.

Pope Francis has formerly expressed “shame and sorrow” over the matter.

Addressing an event in Ireland, attended by some victims of such sexual abuses, the pontiff admitted that the Church had failed to address the “crimes.”

Pope Francis has said he has a zero tolerance policy toward the sexual abuse of minors in the Church, but he has also been accused of ignoring warnings on the matter.

(Source: agencies)

Over 2,500 anti-regime activists being held in Saudi detention centers: group

The House of Saud regime authorities are reportedly keeping more than 2,500 anti-regime activists behind bars as part of a widening crackdown led by the Saudi regime Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) against Muslim preachers, members of the press and intellectuals in the oil-rich kingdom.

The rights group Prisoners of Conscience, which is an independent non-governmental organization advocating human rights in Saudi Arabia, announced in a post on its

official Twitter page that at least 2,613 people, among them prominent lawyers, judges, academicians and scholars, are currently languishing in jails and detention centers across the country. The group added that journalist Khalid al-Alamaki is being held in prison since September 27 last year on unknown charges. The House of Saud regime officials have also intensified security measures in the Shia-populated and oil-rich Eastern Province.

Eastern Province has been the scene of peaceful demonstra-

tions since February 2011. Protesters have been demanding reforms, freedom of expression, release of political prisoners, and an end to economic and religious discrimination against the oil-rich region. The protests have been met with a heavy-handed crackdown by the regime, with regime forces increasing security measures across the province.

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

(Source: Press TV)

Iraqis march in Basra to deplore attack on Iran consulate

Iraqis from different walks of life have staged a march in the southern city of Basra to condemn a recent attack on Iran’s consulate in the city.

Trampling on U.S. and Israeli flags, the Iraqi demonstrators chanted slogans in support of Iran and praised the country’s help to the Iraqi military and volunteer forces in the fight against terrorism.

The demonstrators accused Washington of increasingly interfering in the domestic affairs of Iraq and trying to stoke unrest in the Arab country.

The march came a few days after a group of people ransacked Iran’s consulate in Basra and set the diplomatic post on fire. The Friday attack drew wide condemnation from Iraqi government officials while some blamed it on certain foreign governments who have been seeking to stoke division in Iraq.

Iran has been a major ally of the Iraqi government in its fight against Daesh since the Takfiri terrorist group ran over parts of the country four years ago. Relying on Tehran’s assistance, the Iraqi military and allied Popular Mobilization Units (PMU) have managed to retake many areas from the grip of militants, especially in west and north of Iraq.

The U.S. and some countries in the Middle East, including Saudi Arabia, have been wary of Iran’s increasing clout in Iraq as they have mounted pressure on Baghdad to seek the dismantling of the PMU forces because of their links to Iran. The Iraqi government has resisted those pressures.

Iraqi officials blamed the U.S. for recent unrest in Basra, with senior lawmaker Intisar Hassan al-Musawi saying Friday that the presence of the American consulate in the oil-rich city was a threat to Iraq’s security.

“The U.S. consulate in Basra poses a threat to the security and sovereignty of the country,” said Musawi, adding that the Americans in Basra and “some civil society organizations” were behind the recent ransacking of government offices and Iran’s consulate in the city.

(Source: Press TV)

Syrian military downs Israeli missiles fired at Damascus airport

➔ The Tel Aviv regime has launched the attacks as Syria has managed to recapture many areas across the country from the grip of militants.

However, many of those attacks have failed as Syrian defense system has managed to shoot down missiles fired by the Israelis.

The attack on Damascus airport on Saturday came just a fortnight after Syrian authorities rejected reports about a missile attack by Israel on the facility.

Syria repeatedly claims that Israel has backed terrorist groups since the war broke out in the Arab country in March 2011.

Reports have indicated that militants have been transferred from Syria to the occupied Palestinian territories to receive treatment and training from the Israelis.

(Source: Press TV)

UN welcomes election of Speaker and deputies of the Iraqi parliament

➔ The Iraqi politics has long been vulnerable to the differences lying along the country’s major ethnic and sectarian fault lines.

Any new government has to move quickly to address the country’s chronic woes, including the poor quality of basic services as well as political and economic mismanagement. It would also have to face the mammoth task of rebuilding the country following three years of struggle against Daesh.

(Source: agencies)

Flightpath of U.S. high-altitude drone near Crimea revealed by tracking website

A U.S. military high-altitude Global Hawk drone has reportedly been spotted flying an hours-long spy mission over eastern Ukraine and off the shore of Crimea along with another American surveillance plane.

The RQ-4 Global Hawk cruised over war-torn eastern Ukraine before coming within 40km of the Crimean coast. PlaneRadar website, which tracks military flights worldwide, reported the mission in a series of tweets on Saturday.

It is understood that the unmanned aircraft took off at around 9:00am GMT from a U.S. Navy installation at NATO Base Sigonella in Sicily, Italy.

After traversing skies over the east of Ukraine, the Global Hawk headed for the Black Sea, where it was joined by a P-8 Poseidon spy plane.

Built by Northrop Grumman, the RQ-4 Global Hawk is used to gather high-resolution imagery over target areas. It is said to be able to survey as much as 100,000 square kilometers of terrain a day, which is an area roughly the size of South Korea or Iceland.

The P-8 Poseidon, developed by Boeing, is an anti-submarine warfare plane deployed for shipping interdiction and early warning missions. Its weapons systems include torpedoes, depth charges, Harpoon anti-ship missiles, and others munitions.

This is not the first time that U.S. spy drones were detected near the Russian coast. Last year, Russian armed forces reported that U.S. and NATO air patrols have become increasingly common in international airspace near Russia’s territory. In many cases, Russian fighters have been scrambled to intercept suspicious planes.

On certain occasions, this led to dangerous mid-flight encounters. In January of this year, a Russian Su-27 Flanker jet forced an American Lockheed EP-3 surveillance plane to abort its mission over the Black Sea.

While the Pentagon called the Russian pilot’s maneuvers “unsafe,” Moscow hit back, saying there was no emergency situation in the skies.

(Source: RT)

Zlatan Ibrahimovic scores to reach 500 goals for club and country

LA Galaxy star Zlatan Ibrahimovic scored the 500th goal of his career for club and country on Saturday night in fittingly out-landish fashion.

The outspoken Swedish striker whipped in the goal with a roundhouse kick on the volley from Jonathan dos Santos' pass in the 43rd minute to reach the milestone.

Toronto had jumped out to a 3-0 first-half lead at BMO Field before Ibrahimovic's goal fueled a furious Galaxy rally that saw a tie game by the 58th minute. Toronto answered with two more goals to win 5-3.

"Obviously it's not good to lose ... but I'm happy for Toronto because they'll be remembered as my 500th victim," Ibrahimovic told TSN after the game.

Despite the loss, Ibrahimovic acknowledged the accomplishment on Twitter with his

Ibrahimovic, 36, left Manchester United to join the Galaxy at the start of the 2018 season and now has 17 goals in 22 appearances for LA.

Over his illustrious club career, he also has scored for Paris Saint-Germain (156 goals), Inter Milan (66), AC Milan (56), Ajax (48), Manchester United (29), Juventus (26), Barcelona (22), and Malmo (18).

He added an additional 62 goals for the Swedish national team.

(Source: ESPN)

Real surrender perfect start after heated draw in Bilbao

Real Madrid's perfect start to the La Liga season came to a halt on Saturday as they drew 1-1 in an ill-tempered game at Athletic Bilbao and fell two points behind champions Barcelona at the top of the standings.

Iker Muniain gave Athletic a deserved lead in the 32nd minute by bundling the ball home after Real failed to get back in time to defend a counterattack.

The home side had a slew of chances during an entertaining, end-to-end first half, while Real were twice denied by Athletic's impressive 21-year-old goalkeeper Unai Simon.

The visitors finally beat the youngster when Isco nodded home a cross from Gareth Bale in the 63rd minute as the visitors improved after bringing on midfield anchor Casemiro at the start of the second half.

Simon made two more outstanding saves to thwart Marco Asensio and Sergio Ramos although Athletic continued to counter, Inaki Williams smashing wide and the Basques being denied a penalty when the ball struck Casemiro on the arm while the Brazilian was on the floor.

The decision enraged Athletic supporters in a hostile atmosphere at San Mames, which was mirrored on the pitch as referee Jose Luis Gonzalez Gonzalez handed out eight yellow cards, six to Athletic players.

Real are second in the La Liga standings with 10 points after four games. Champions Barcelona, on 12, came from behind to win 2-1 at Real Sociedad earlier on Saturday.

(Source: Goal)

Players rescue ambulance in Brazil league match

Players from Flamengo and Vasco da Gama came to the rescue of an ambulance on Saturday after the vehicle, which was transporting an injured player to hospital, refused to start.

Vasco's Bruno Silva needed medical attention after being knocked out in the second half but after being loaded into the ambulance the vehicle was unable to leave the pitch.

With both sets of fans in the 54,000 crowd at Brasilia's Mane Garrincha stadium howling in derision, players from both sides had to push-start the ambulance to bring it back to life.

"That's a first," Flamengo defender Rever told Sportv.

"What a lamentable scene. I thought the driver was kidding but he said he had turned the engine off and asked for our help. We managed to push it a little bit and it kick started."

In the match itself, Vasco took the lead through Andres Rios in the 27th minute with a goal that looked offside before Flamengo equalized just after the hour mark when Luiz Gustavo scored a spectacular diving header — into his own net.

Flamengo midfielder Diego was sent off 13 minutes into the second half. Vasco also finished with 10 men as they had used all three substitutes before Silva was injured.

Vasco are fourth bottom of the table while Flamengo are four points adrift of leaders Internacional, who go to Chapecoense on Monday.

(Source: Reuters)

France beat Spain 3-0 to secure place in final

Defending champions France secured their place in the Davis Cup final as they took an unassailable 3-0 lead over Spain in the semi-final in Lille.

Julien Benneteau and Nicholas Mahut beat Marcel Granollers and Feliciano Lopez 6-0 6-4 7-6 (9-7) to wrap up the best-of-five tie.

Benneteau retired from playing after the US Open but returned to help France reach their ninth final.

They will face either Croatia or United States in the final in November.

Croatia lead the tie 2-1 after America's Mike Bryan and Ryan Harrison beat Ivan Dodig and Mate Pavic 7-5 7-6 (8-6) 1-6 6-7 (5-7) 7-6 (7-5) in the doubles.

Benneteau and Mahut are unbeaten in Davis Cup rubbers, and took just 18 minutes to clinch the opening set.

Despite trailing 4-1 in the third set, they fought back to force a tie-break before Benneteau produced a backhand service return to ensure victory.

Benneteau, 36, will take charge of France's team for the Fed Cup - the women's equivalent of the Davis Cup - from 2019.

(Source: BBC)

Eliud Kipchoge smashes world marathon record by 78 seconds in Berlin

At his training camp in Kenya, where Eliud Kipchoge takes his turn to clean out the toilets and draw water from the nearby well, his fellow athletes call him "the boss man". And on a pleasant autumn day in Berlin the 33-year-old lived up to that billing - and more - as he proved beyond doubt that he is the greatest long distance runner in history by obliterating the marathon world record.

Kipchoge's time of 2 hours 01 minute and 39 seconds was staggering enough, given it took one minute and 18 seconds off the previous world record, set four years ago by Dennis Kimetto. But what more it more impressive still was the fact that Kipchoge had to run the last 17 kilometres (10.5 miles) alone after his pacemakers dropped out early.

"I lack words to describe this day," admitted Kipchoge afterwards, briefly dumbstruck by what he had achieved. But he had done most of his talking already, on the streets of the German capital, setting off with just three pacemakers for company, and going through halfway in 61 minutes and six seconds before - incredibly - speeding up to run the second half in 60:33. Most mortals would have slumped after crossing the line. Instead the remarkable Kenyan retained just enough energy to jump into the arms of his coach and mentor, Patrick Sang.

A few minutes later Gladys Cherono won the women's race in Berlin in a course record of 2:18:11, making her the fourth fastest woman in history behind Paula Radcliffe, Mary Keitany and Tirunesh Dibaba. Yet given Kipchoge's achievement it went almost unnoticed.

He passed the five kilometre mark in 14:24 and 10km in 29:21. But shortly after 15 kilometres, which he reached in 43:38, two of the three pacemakers were unable to continue and withdrew from the race.



The final pacemaker, Josphat Boit, led Kipchoge through the half-way point in 1:01:06 before dropping out at 25 kilometres, which was covered in 1:12:24.

Most observers feared that had left Kipchoge's hopes of a world record in the balance. Instead it transpired that the pacemakers were holding him back.

The Kenyan sped up to pass the 35-kilometre checkpoint just a shade outside 1:41:00, suggesting a finishing time inside 2:02 was possible. By 40 kilometres, reached in 1:55:32, a world record was a certainty. The only question was how far inside Kimetto's record he would get.

The answer, 78 seconds, was the single largest jump on the marathon world record since Derek Clayton improved the mark by two minutes and 23 seconds in 1967.

"It was hard," Kipchoge later admitted. "I was prepared to run my own race early so I wasn't surprised to be alone. I have trained so well for this race and have full trust in the programs of my coach. I am just so incredibly happy to have finally run the world record as I never stopped having belief in myself."

This was a triumph 15 years in the making. The Kenyan first advertised his talents by winning the 2003 world championships

over 5,000m as an 18-year-old, and also won Olympic silver and bronze medals on the track before moving to the marathon in 2012. On the roads he has been almost unstoppable, winning 10 of 11 races over 26.2 miles, including Olympic gold in Rio de Janeiro and three London marathon titles.

Last year he also attempted an audacious yet controversial attempt to shatter the two-hour barrier for the marathon, running 2:00:25 on the Monza F1 track with the help of a phalanx of 30 elite pacers, which was against the official rules of the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF).

(Source: Guardian)

Russia must turn over lab database to be compliant, WADA says



The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) emphasised on Saturday that Russian officials will have to submit a copy of the former Moscow laboratory database and raw data if the country's anti-doping agency RUSADA is to be reinstated later this month.

WADA's compliance review committee (CRC) recommended on Friday that RUSADA, which has been suspended since 2015 over alleged state-backed doping, should be reinstated when WADA's executive committee meets on Sept. 20 provided certain criteria is met - otherwise Russia will again be declared non-compliant.

The announcement drew concern about the transparency of the committee's decision.

WADA responded on Saturday by releasing correspondence between Russian and WADA officials over RUSADA's reinstatement.

WADA also attempted to address what it termed "speculation and misinformation that is circulating" about documents obtained by the BBC that suggested the chairman of the review committee has doubts Moscow will give full access to its laboratories.

"There is nothing new or concerning in the latest leaked document of an exchange

between WADA and the Russian Ministry of Sport. The way in which WADA approached the Ministry was recommended by the Agency's independent CRC at its June meeting and its content is entirely in line with the RUSADA Roadmap to Compliance first established in January 2017," WADA said.

"The proposals made in the leaked letter are grounded in pragmatism and are nuanced interpretations of the roadmap in order to bring matters to a conclusion and to not allow the significant progress that the Russian Anti-Doping Agency (RUSADA) has made over the last two years, under WADA's supervision, to be undone."

Russia has repeatedly denied state involvement in doping.

But Russia's refusal to acknowledge the alleged systemic doping and its failure to allow access to Moscow's suspended anti-doping laboratory have been roadblocks to its return.

WADA said on Friday the committee had reviewed a letter from the Russian sports ministry it said had "sufficiently acknowledged the issues identified in Russia," thus fulfilling the first of two remaining criteria for its reinstatement.

(Source: Reuters)

Barcelona's Lionel Messi: I need to improve from the penalty spot



Lionel Messi acknowledged that his disappointing record from the penalty spot is something he must continue to work on.

Messi, 31, missed four of the eight penalties he took last season for club and country, including one against Iceland for Argentina at the World Cup.

In total, he has missed 24 penalties during his career, and he even handed spot-kick duties to Luis Suarez in Barcelona's win over Huesca before the international break despite being one goal away from a hat trick. "I would like to be more effective from the penalty spot," Messi told Catalunya Radio. "But it's difficult to work on penalties. It's not the same taking them in training as it is in a game. You can have an idea in your head or something you have worked on, but it's more difficult than it seems."

"The goalkeeper has a lot to do with it, too. If they guess right, they save it. But it's obvious that I'd like to get better at taking penalties."

However, while Messi has struggled from 12 yards in recent years, other areas of his game have improved.

Dropping into a deeper role, he created 12 goals -- more than anyone else in La Liga last season -- and has scored seven goals from direct free kicks in 2018, more than

any other player in the league.

"I'm most proud of how my final pass has improved," he said. "In the last year, I think I have developed a lot when it's come to setting up chances, whether they've ended up in goals or not. In that sense, I have grown a lot."

"I've also improved at taking free kicks a lot, even with my right foot. I am always trying to learn and improve every day."

Messi, who has played as a winger and a false nine in the past, said he is happiest in the position he is now in -- starting on the right but dropping deeper to get on the ball.

"It's normal that your game evolves," he said. "When I made my debut I was 17. I played in a different position and in a different way back then. Football has changed since, as has my way of playing and moving around the pitch."

"I like where I play now the most. Teams sit deep and put a lot of people in the middle, so it's easier getting the ball a little deeper and coming inside from further out. Moving to the wing means that a lot of the time, the full-back doesn't know what they're meant to do. In the middle, it's harder to get the ball, because there are fewer spaces and a lot of bodies."

(Source: Soccer.net)

Floyd Mayweather says rematch with Manny Pacquiao coming this year

Floyd Mayweather Jr. says a rematch of his much-hyped 2015 fight with Manny Pacquiao will take place this year.

Mayweather posted on Instagram Saturday, saying, "I'm coming back to fight Manny Pacquiao this year another 9 figure pay day on the way."

Mayweather made about \$220 million from his May 2015 fight with Pacquiao and at the time posted a photo of a \$100 million check -- his guaranteed purse from the bout.

Saturday's Instagram posting includes a video of Mayweather and Pacquiao talking to each other at a music festival in Tokyo, although it is difficult to hear what the men are saying.

In another angle of the interaction, Pacquiao tells Mayweather, "I have the belt," to which Mayweather responds, "I'm going to take it from you like I did before."

Mayweather included no details about the potential matchup in the post, but in videos obtained by ESPN from a Pacquiao adviser, Mayweather says he is targeting December for a comeback.



"We gonna take the belt. We gonna get the payday. And I don't want no shoulder excuses," Mayweather said.

Mayweather (50-0, 27 KOs) earned a unanimous decision win over Pacquiao in their first fight. Pacquiao said he was hampered by a right shoulder injury while landing

only 81 punches in that bout. The massively hyped fight delivered a record 4.6 million pay-per-view buys but was largely panned by most boxing fans.

The 41-year-old Mayweather has two wins since facing Pacquiao: against Andre Berto in 2015 and his August 2017 knockout of Conor McGregor in the UFC star's boxing debut. Mayweather said after the McGregor bout that "this was my last fight."

Pacquiao (60-7-2), 39, last fought in July, defeating Lucas Matthysse to win a secondary welterweight title. The Filipino fighter called out Mayweather after the win.

There are no promotional barriers between the two men, because Mayweather promotes himself and Pacquiao is a boxing free agent.

The Westgate Las Vegas SuperBook has posted odds on the potential matchup, with Mayweather listed as a minus-220 favorite and Pacquiao at plus-180. The fight must take place by Dec. 31, 2019, for these bets to count.

(Source: ESPN)

We want to beat Al Duhail for our fans: Branko Ivankovic

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Branko Ivankovic praised his team's fans, saying Persepolis players feel the enthusiasm with their fans against Al Duhail.

Persepolis will host the Qatari giants in Tehran's 80,000-seater Azadi Stadium in the second leg of the 2018 AFC Champions League quarter-finals on Monday.

The Reds lost to Al Duhail 1-0 two weeks ago in Doha.

Almoez Ali's header was the difference as Al Duhail secured a record-equaling ninth win in a row in this year's Asian Champions League.

"We lost to Al Duhail 1-0 in the first half and now we will host them in the second half in our home. We know how strong they are but Persepolis are not weaker than Al Duhail," Ivankovic said in the pre-match news conference.

leg," the Croat added.

Persepolis key midfielder Siamak Nemati will be missing the vital match due to suspension.

"Unfortunately, Nemati is absent and Mahini (Hossein) and Resan (Bashar) have sustained injuries last week but they will play on tomorrow. They will not think about their injuries in the match against Al Duhail.

"Karim Boudiaf has returned from an injury and they have been boosted by return of their captain. Al Duhail strengthened their team in the summer and they are going to win the AFC Champions League title," the Croat added.

Ivankovic called on the Persepolis's fans to get behind their team against Al Duhail.

"Our fans have always supported us and have been patient with our players. They have always shown loyalty to their team and will do everything we can to make them happy. They are our 12th man. We want them to support us in this match because we can feel the enthusiasm with our fans. I also want them to respect our opponent and show sportsmanship," the former Iran national team coach concluded.



Iran start AVC Cup for Women on high note



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran earned a remarkable 3-2 (23-25, 25-17, 19-25, 25-23, 15-6) victory over Kazakhstan in the opening match of the Asian Volleyball Confederation (AVC) Cup for Women on Sunday.

In the match held at the 5,000-seater Chartchai Hall in Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand, Maedeh Borhani scored a match-high 29 points for Iran from 21 attacks, 3 blocks and 5 aces, while Mahsa Kaddkhoda and Mahsa Saberi added 18 and 16 points respectively.

Anastasia Rostovchshikova led Kazakhstan with 18 points.

"We played with our belief that we can

beat Kazakhstan. Our team can improve technically and tactically match by match. In the first set, we played unstably and without confidence. I urged them to play more confidently and our game was improving. We played much better in the following sets," Iran head coach Javad Mehregan commented after the match.

"The most important thing in my idea is mental conditions. We have to believe that we can win. In terms of the result in this match, I'm happy with it since my team have won. We came here to learn each other," he added.

Iran have been scheduled to face the Philippines and Australia in Pool C on Monday and Tuesday respectively.

Al Duhail not afraid of anything: Nabil Maaloul



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Al Duhail coach Nabil Maaloul says they have come to Tehran to fight for win and they are not afraid of anything.

Al Duhail, who have defeated Persepolis 1-0 in the first leg of the AFC Champions League quarter-finals in Doha two weeks ago, will play the Iranian popular team in Tehran's 80,000-seater Azadi Stadium on Monday.

"It will be a great match for Persepolis for sure and they are ready for that. We came here mentally prepared. We think positively about the match and are not afraid of anything," Maaloul said in the

pre-match news conference.

"Al Duhail have so many experienced players. We are here to play attacking football. This is our philosophy. Al Duhail are not here to lose," the Tunisian coach added.

"We don't feel pressure against Persepolis and we are not here to lose. All teams qualified for this round are strong. We have already played Persepolis at the Azadi Stadium and are familiar with the atmosphere," Maaloul stated.

Following nine consecutive victories in the AFC Champions League, Al Duhail are on par with Ulsan Hyundai and one step away from writing history.

Quarter-final 2nd leg – Preview: Al Sadd v Esteghlal

Doha: Al Sadd host Esteghlal at the Jassam bin Hamad Stadium on Monday in the second leg of the 2018 AFC Champions League quarter-finals, with the hosts carrying over a 3-1 advantage from the first encounter.

Esteghlal's hopes of reaching the semi-final for the first time since 2013 took a significant hit at the end of August, as they fell to a 3-1 home defeat against a Baghdad Bounedjah-inspired Al Sadd.

The 2011 AFC Champions League winners scored three times in 15 minutes in the second half of the first leg at the Azadi Stadium, to come back from a 1-0 deficit that had held until the hour mark.

■ Al Sadd

Having been knocked out in the Champions League play-off round two years in a row, Al Sadd burst back on to the scene in this edition of the tournament, finishing in second place behind Persepolis in Group C

to qualify for the Round of 16.

There, they faced Saudi Arabia's Al Ahli in a thrilling contest, and ended up winning 4-3 on aggregate thanks to a 70th minute strike from star striker Baghdad Bounedjah in the second leg.

Al Sadd are enjoying the start of their domestic 2018/19 season, with Spanish midfielder Gabi arriving to link up with compatriot Xavi in the middle of the park. The duo showed a combination of creativity and grit as the Qatari side enjoyed a comfortable victory in the first leg.

The attacking midfield pairing of Hassan Al Haydos and Akram Afif are developing telepathic understanding at both club and country level and continue to be key to Al Sadd creating scoring opportunities.

Bounedjah's two goals at Azadi Stadium were just a continuation of his blistering form in the Champions League this season,

a campaign that has seen him rack up an astounding 11 goals so far. The current record for goals in an AFC Champions League season is 13, held by Muriqui (2013) and Adriano (2016).

The Oran native will have his sights set on smashing that record, and a home fixture against an Esteghlal side obligated to attack could be a perfect opportunity to aid him in such an endeavour. Bounedjah averages just over two shots on target per match, which highlights the 26-year-old's ruthlessness in front of goal.

■ Esteghlal

The IR Iran outfit's defeat in the first leg was the first time in the AFC Champions League this season that Esteghlal had conceded more than one goal at home, with Winfried Schafer's men paying dearly for a drop in concentration over just a quarter hour period in the second half.

Esteghlal had taken the lead under fortuitous circumstances, when Al Sadd goalkeeper failed to control a simple backpass and watched in agony as it rolled slowly over the line. The two-time Asian champions will need to improve drastically on Monday, if they hope to fight back from a difficult position against a confident Al Sadd side.

After Mame Baba Thiam's departure to Ajman, Esteghlal were in the market for a striker to keep the goals flowing, and it will be up to Morteza Tabrizi to hit the ground running after his summer arrival from Zobahan.

The 27-year-old is proven in the competition, having already registered four goals in eight appearances in Zobahan colors in the current campaign, and it will be down to whether Schafer can get the best out of his new striker.

(Source: the-afc)



After losing several key players who pursued European careers, such as Farshad Ahmadzadeh and Vahid Amiri, Ivankovic is eager to prove his team is still amongst the best in the continent by taking them to a second consecutive AFC Champions League semi-final.

Having struggled to break into the first team in his first season at Persepolis, Bashar Resan was one of the main benefactors of the departure of Ahmadzadeh, taking an

increasingly more important role in midfield.

Equally competent in defence and attack, the former Air Force Club midfielder averages a key pass every 37 minutes and a defensive action every 49 minutes.

■ Al Duhail

The reigning Qatar Stars League champions have been a sight to behold in the ACL Champions League this season, winning all nine of their matches in the tournament so far. The latest was their 1-0 victory over Persepolis in Doha in the reverse leg.

The tie is far from over though, and Nabil Maaloul will be sure to drive that message home to his players. Al Duhail have averaged an impressive 2.5 goals per match on the road; and an away goal in Tehran could be just what they need to reach the last four.

With Youssef Msakni still sidelined due to a cruciate ligament injury, Brazilian-Belgian Edmilson joined in the summer from Standard Liege.

The 24-year-old winger marked his AFC Champions League debut by setting up Ali's headed goal, and he will be expected to play a key role behind striker Youssef El Arabia alongside Ali and Korea Republic playmaker Nam Tae-hee.

(Source: the-afc)

Iran's Rahman shortlisted for the 'Best Asian Powerlifter'

World Para Powerlifting has revealed the shortlist for the 'Best Asian Powerlifter' following the Asia-Oceania Open Championships in Kitakyushu, Japan.

The public can now vote for their winner on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

The powerlifter with the most combined votes across all social media pages will be the winner. Siamand Rahman may not have gone for the world record this time, but is always special to watch him compete. Rahman comfortably won the men's over 107kg with a 285kg lift.

Lingling Guo (China), Rasool Mohsin (Iraq), and Tan Yujiao (China) are also nominees to win the award.

The public has until 12:00 (CEST) on Friday (21 September) to vote for the powerlifter they want to be the 'Best of the Asia-Oceania Open Championships.'

(Source: Paralympic.org)



Footballer Majid Gholamnejad laid to rest

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Former Iran national football team midfielder Majid Gholamnejad, who passed away on Friday at the age of 35 after suffering a heart attack, was laid to rest on Sunday.

Gholamnejad was buried in his homeland Rasht, northern of Iran.

He started his playing career at Iranian top-flight football team Saipa in 2004.

Gholamnejad also played in Pas Hamedan and Esteghlal.

He was called up to the Iran national football team in 2008 by Ali Daei and debuted for Team Melli against Bahrain, coming off as a substitute in the 61st minute.

Gholamnejad made 17 appearances for Iran national football team and scored one goal against Singapore.

He is survived by his wife and his little son Amir Sam.

Iran edge Japan at Asian Youth Handball Championship

TASNIM — Iran started the 2018 Asian Men's Youth Handball Championship with a win over Japan on Sunday.

The Iranian team defeated Japan 29-28 at the Princess Sumaya Hall in Amman, Jordan in Group D.

Iran will face Qatar and the United Arab Emirates on Monday and Tuesday respectively.

The Asian Men's Youth Handball Championship is the 8th edition of the championship scheduled to be held from 16 to 26 September.

It is the third time in history that championship will be organized in Jordan by the Jordan Handball Federation.

The competition also acts as the qualification tournament for the 2019 Men's Youth World Handball Championship.

Top four teams from the championship will directly qualify for the Youth World Championship to be held in Republic of Macedonia.

'Playmakers' unite to play key role for UAE 2019

Community ambassadors of all nationalities from across Asia came together at Zayed Sports City Stadium for a rousing evening of speeches, workshops and celebration, in the lead up to the AFC Asian Cup UAE 2019.

Over 60 ambassadors or "Playmakers" representing 19 of the 24 competing nations were welcomed by HE Aref Al Awani, with the LOC Tournament Director challenging the group to deliver the best AFC Asian Cup in history, during the welcome event in the Royal Box of the 43,000-seat stadium, which will stage the highly-anticipated opener on January 5, 2019 as well as the final match on February 1, 2019.

Addressing the group, His Excellency Aref Al Awani said: "Just as a football team needs players working in harmony, for us to succeed, the AFC Asian Cup UAE 2019 needs to be a tournament for every single football fan, from every country and culture across the continent. The Playmakers Programme reflects our ambition to partner with the real super-fans, community influencers and football lovers who will infuse the tournament with their enthusiasm. I have no doubt that they will inspire others to do the same."

Breaking off into small groups during the evening, the Playmakers worked together to brainstorm grassroots initiatives that would appeal and speak directly to their own communities. The evening culminated with a group photo on the pitch of Zayed Sports City, which was lit up for the occasion.

Asian Football Confederation (AFC) General Secretary, Dato' Windsor John said: "This is the biggest ever AFC Asian Cup so it is a fantastic opportunity to showcase the sheer scope and scale of Asian football and the Playmakers is the perfect programme to bring everyone together."

"Having so many enthusiastic community ambassadors working together exemplifies the unifying power of football and the significant difference it holds to unite communities, not just in the UAE, but all across the continent."

The diverse group of Playmakers at the welcome event included a Vice-President of a major company, an airline pilot, a nurse, several former professional footballers, coaches and more, all with a love for football and the desire to bring their nations together for the AFC Asian Cup UAE 2019. As the tournament approaches, the Playmakers will be organising community events, posting on social media and ensuring that tickets are readily available to football fans from their respective nations.

(Source: the-afc)

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Shanghai filmfest CEO
Fu Wenxia visits Iran

A R T **TEHRAN** – Shanghai International Film Festival (SIFF) Managing Director Fu Wenxia and a number her colleagues are visiting Iran.



Cinema Organization of Iran director Mohammad-Mehdi Heidarian (L), SIFF Managing Director Fu Wenxia (C) and an unidentified person are seen in a meeting in Tehran. (Cinema Organization of Iran)

They have held a meeting with Cinema Organization of Iran director Mohammad-Mehdi Heidarian, the organization announced on Sunday.

Heidarian asked the organizers of the festival to admit more films from Iran and also to dedicate special sections to Iranian cinema.

He also said that Iran will do the same in regard to Chinese cinema at its international film events.

He also pointed to the Chinese government’s Belt and Road Initiative or the Silk Road Economic Belt and said that his organization is ready to cooperate on the cultural aspects of the route.

For her part, Fu said that the Shanghai festival is eager to boost its ties with Iranian filmmakers.

NEWS IN BRIEF



Iranian artist
Siamak Azmi to
hang works at
Istanbul gallery

A R T **TEHRAN** – Iranian artist Siamak Azmi who is renowned for his paintings of dolls plans to showcase his latest collection in an exhibit at the 7 Art Gallery in Istanbul.

The exhibition will open on Thursday and will run until October 2, Azmi announced on Sunday.

“Game of Thrones” star
Maisie Williams joins cast of
“gen:Lock” streaming series

LONDON (Deadline) – Maisie Williams, best known for her role as face changing assassin Arya Stark in “Game of Thrones”, will voice “Cammie MacCloud”, a mischievous Scottish hacker, in the “gen:Lock” anime series.

The casting was announced at RTX London, an annual UK-based fandom convention for the Rooster Teeth entertainment company, producers of “gen:Lock”. Gray G. Haddock, the “gen:Lock” creator and show runner, revealed Williams’s role and set the release of a third teaser for the show, a streaming series expected to premiere in January 2019 on Rooster Teeth.

The series is available for iOS, Android, Xbox One, Apple TV, and at RoosterTeeth.com, with memberships starting at \$4.99 a month.

In “gen:Lock”, Earth’s last free society is on the losing side of a global war, and recruits a diverse team of young pilots to control the next generation of giant, weaponized robot bodies known as mecha. The recruits find, however, that their newfound abilities come at no small cost.

“Working with Maisie is as fun as it gets,” said Haddock. “Her energy and the sense of humor she brings to Cammie is an absolute delight. I’m running out of superlatives to describe how perfect this cast works for the characters, but Maisie truly sounds exactly like how Cammie does in my head — she’s brilliant.”

“gen:Lock”’s voice cast is led by Michael B. Jordan (Black Panther, Creed) who voices the main character, Julian Chase, and also includes Dakota Fanning (The Alienist, Twilight Saga) voicing expert mech pilot and Chase’s love interest, Miranda Worth, Koichi Yamadera (Cowboy Bebop, Ghost in the Shell) voicing Kazu Iida, one of the new recruits transferring from Japan’s military forces, to fight alongside Chase in the “gen:Lock” program, and Tennant voicing Dr. Rufus Weller aka Doc, a lead scientist with the Experimental Science Unit (ESU) and the inventor of the “gen:Lock” technology.

“gen:Lock” is the second anime-style series and third 3D animated series from Rooster Teeth Animation. Rooster Teeth is responsible for some of the biggest online series in history, such as the award-winning and longest-running web series, “Red vs. Blue”. They also produce the animated series “RWBY”, the first Western anime series to be distributed in Japan. The company was founded in 2003, and is a subsidiary of Otter Media, a WarnerMedia company.

Play on Persian
poet Sadi to
go on stage in
Vancouver

A R T **TEHRAN** – A play on Persian poet Sadi (C. 1213-1291), famous worldwide for his masterpieces Bustan (The Orchard) and Gulistan (The Rose Garden), will go on stage the Centennial Theatre in North Vancouver, Canada on September 22.

Ali-Naqi Razzaqi is the writer of the play “Sadi - A Traveler From the Town of Love”, which will be performed by the Blue Light Theater Group, a public relations team announced on Sunday.

The play will star Ali Omrani and a cast of nine other actors, including Majid Tafreshi, Mahbubeh Mojtahed, and Elnaz Rezaei,

“The troupe intends to attract the attention of Iranian expatriates in Canada to our native cultural backgrounds and art heritage,” director Zhubin Ghaziani said.

“It will be really inspiring if watching the play pushes them to refer to Sadi’s Bustan and Gulistan following their departure from the theater,” he added.

“The hardship of living in a new country causes Iranian expatriates to distance themselves from their native culture and art,” he lamented.

Katayun Feiz will use Persian paintings by Farah Osuli to design the set of the play, which will be produced by Parvin Sarabadi.



“Isolation” director wins award
at Salento festival



Director Morteza-Ali Abbas-Mirzai (Cinema Press/Amir-Hossein Ghazanfari).

A R T **TEHRAN** – Morteza-Ali Abbas-Mirzai has been selected as best director for his drama “Isolation” at the 15th Salento International Film Festival in the Italian town of Tricase.

He received the award on the closing day of the event, the organizers announced last Sunday.

Abbas-Mirzai co-wrote the movie with Ahmad Rafizadeh. It is about Parviz who leaves prison for three days to hold a funeral for his wife, who died tragically in a car accident. He also wants to learn whether his wife has committed suicide.

Yeganeh Rajabi from Iran also was

crowned best actress for the portrayal of an Afghan woman in “Golnesa” by Sattar Chamanigol while Andrew Pifko won the award for best actor for his role in “Daddy Issue” by Amara Cash from the U.S.

“Temporary Difficulty” by Russian director Michael Raskhodnikov won the best film award.

“Éphémère, the Inevitable Beauty” by Simone Marcelli from Italy was picked as best documentary, and “Two Balloons” by Italian director Mark C. Smith won the award for best animated film.

The best short film award went to “Magic Alps” co-directed by Andrea Brusa and Marco Scotuzzi from Italy.

Sydney’s Defqon 1 music festival: Authorities call for ban after two ‘drugs deaths’

SYDNEY (BBC) – Australian state authorities have vowed to shut down a dance music festival after two people died from a suspected drugs overdose.

New South Wales police said 700 sought medical help for drug-related issues at Sydney’s Defqon. 1 and three people are in a critical condition.

State premier Gladys Berejicklian called

the annual event unsafe and said it should not take place again.

Organizers Q-Dance Australia said they are cooperating with the authorities.

The two dead have not been named but they were both in their 20s and died in hospital after collapsing, according to police.

“I’m absolutely aghast at what has occurred...” Berejicklian said in a statement.

Peter Donat, “The X-Files”
actor, dies at 90

LOS ANGELES (Variety) – Peter Donat, who played Agent Fox Mulder’s father on “The X-Files” and acted in two Francis Ford Coppola films, died Monday at his home in Point Reyes, Calif. He was 90.

His wife, Maria, told the New York Times the cause was complications of diabetes.

Donat, perhaps most recognizable for his recurring “X-Files” role, was also a frequent stage actor, playing Cyrano de Bergerac, Prospero, Shylock, King Lear and Hadrian VII over the years.

He also guest starred on TV series like “The F.B.I.”, “Hawaii Five-O”, “Mannix”, “McMillan & Wife”, “Hill Street Blues” and “Murder, She Wrote”.

Francis Ford Coppola cast Donat as a lawyer in “The Godfather Part II” after he was considered for the role of Tom Hagen in “The Godfather”, a part that eventually went to Robert Duvall. Donat also played Otto Kerner in Coppola’s “Tucker: The Man and His Dream” in 1980.

The Canadian-born actor originated



from Kentville, Nova Scotia, and was drawn to acting by the career of his uncle, “Goodbye, Mr. Chips” Robert Donat. His career began on stage, and he nabbed a few television roles before making his Broadway debut in 1957 in “The First Gentleman”.

In addition to his wife, Donat is survived by his sons, Caleb, Christopher and Lucas; two stepdaughters, Barbara Park Shapiro and Marina Park Sutton; a stepson, Malcolm Park; 11 grandchildren; and his brother, Richard, who is also an actor.

Iranian films honored at Kazan
Muslim cinema festival



Ali-Mohammad Radmanesh acts in a scene from “Golnesa”.

A R T **TEHRAN** – Iranian films “Golnesa” and “Saad’s Olive Tree” have won awards at the 14th Kazan International Festival of Muslim Cinema.

Sattar Chamanigol received the award for best director for his drama “Golnesa” and Mohammad Fakuri was named best director of photography for his collaboration on the film during the closing ceremony of the festival, the organizers announced last Tuesday.

The film tells the story of Golmammad and Golnesa, a young Afghan refugee couple who work in a traditional brick making kiln in Iran. Following the events happening to them, their lives undergo changes.

“Saad’s Olive Tree” directed by Ahmad Zayeri was picked as best short film at the festival.

“Saad’s Olive Tree” is about a Syrian child who lost his sight in a mortar explosion. The child imprisons himself at home while his mother and the neighbors try to give him some hope.

The festival grand prix for the best film went to “Tender Indifference of the World”, a co-production between Kazakhstan and France directed by Adilhan Yerzhanov.

The film also brought Kuandyk Dusenbayev the award for best actor.

“Halef” written by Murat Düzgünoglu from Turkey won the best screenplay award.

“This is an unsafe event and I’ll be doing everything I can to make sure it never happens again.”

Police said 10 people have been charged with drug offenses, including two teenagers who allegedly carried 120 tablets to the event.

The Defqon 1 festival, held at the Sydney International Regatta Centre, plays mostly hardcore techno, house and trance music.

There have been two other deaths at the festival in recent years. The event has been running since 2009.

“We do everything we possibly can to make these events safe. What we can’t do is be in people’s heads, be in people’s decision-making processes when they decide to take illicit drugs,” said Assistant Police Commissioner Allan Sicard.

K-pop label faces fan, investor
fury after firing dating artists

SEOUL (Reuters) — A South Korean record label’s move to dump two K-pop artists who had declared their romantic relationship has sparked a major fan backlash on social media and knocked its share price lower.

Cube Entertainment Inc announced in a statement on Thursday that it had fired female singer Hyun Ah, 26, from the group Triple H, and E’Dawn, 24, from the 10-member boy band Pentagon, citing broken trust in the artists.

“After a few discussions and thought, we decided to expel the two as we thought it is impossible to rebuild faith with both Hyun Ah and E’Dawn,” it said in a statement on Thursday. It did not elaborate on its reasons and did not explicitly refer to the relationship between the two.

Several South Korean performers have complained in recent years about rules their record labels place on their personal lives, including restrictions

on alcohol, dating and plastic surgery.

While Cube later partially reversed its decision with its chief executive, Shin Dae-nam, on Thursday saying the decision was still under consideration, the damage was already done.

Its shares have fallen 10.6 percent since market open on Thursday while fans took their outrage to social media.

“Can’t wait till your stocks drop faster than my internet speed,” a user named jypentertainme.nt wrote on Cube’s Instagram profile.

The couple went public on social media last month declaring they had been in a relationship for two years, following media speculation and a previous denial by Cube.

A Cube spokesperson referred Reuters queries to CEO Shin’s comments. Neither Hyun Ah nor E’Dawn, whose real names are Kim Hyun-ah and Kim Hyo-jong, respectively, could be reached for comment.

didn’t respond to its request for a comment.

Heavey says he took the photo in Montana in 2010 and registered his copyright that year. It shows a supercell storm cloud.

His lawsuit asks for unspecified damages and legal costs.

Montana photographer sues Netflix over copyright law

GREAT FALLS, Mont. (AP) – A Montana photographer is suing Netflix, alleging the company violated copyright law by using one of his photos without permission to create storm images for the series “Stranger Things” and the movie “How It Ends”.

The Great Falls Tribune reported Friday Sean R. Heavey of Glasgow filed suit in U.S. District Court in Great Falls.

A Netflix attorney has told Heavey in a letter that its images are different from the photo and that the company didn’t violate his copyright. The newspaper says the company