

U.S. is playing a very 'dangerous game' in region **2**

Trump knows nothing about Iranian history **2**

Xavi handed Persepolis No. 6 jersey **15**

Photos to bring Iran's recent flood into spotlight at Cannes **16**

Leader warns of Persian language decay



Development projects worth \$1b inaugurated

TEHRAN — Iranian President Hassan Rouhani launched and inaugurated some development, service, and infrastructure projects worth 44.65 trillion rials (about \$1.063 billion) in West Azarbaijan Province.

Eight water projects worth 36 trillion rials (about \$857 million) were the major projects launched or inaugurated during

the one-day trip of the president to the northwestern province, IRNA reported.

These development projects open a new chapter for the border province while creating direct jobs for 117,000 people and indirect jobs for 40,000 persons, as announced by Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian who accompanied the president during his trip. **->4**

Iran writes to UN on alarming security situation in Persian Gulf

TEHRAN — Majid Takht Ravanchi, Iran's permanent representative to the United Nations, has warned about the recent "alarming security situation" in the Persian Gulf region.

"There are indications that certain circles from outside of this region--through fabrications, disinformation, fake intelligence and fake news, relying on the support of their allies in the Middle East as

well as dispatching naval forces to the region--are pursuing their illegitimate interests by sowing further division and creating more mistrust between regional countries in the Persian Gulf, as well as fomenting insecurity and escalating the already high tension in this volatile region," Takht Ravanchi wrote in a letter in a letter to UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres. **->2**

Yemeni drone targets arms depot at Najran airport

TEHRAN — Yemeni armed forces, led by the Houthi Ansarullah movement, have launched a drone strike on an arms depot at an airport in Saudi Arabia's southern Najran region in retaliation for the kingdom's bloody military aggression against the impoverished country.

The Houthi-run al-Masirah TV

channel has reported that the attack was carried out by a Qasef-2K combat drone on Tuesday, causing a fire at the airport.

Also on Monday, the air defenses of the Yemeni army and the popular committees shot down a hostile Saudi spy drone in the Hais district of the western Hudaydah Province. **->13**

ARTICLE
Masoud Hossein
Head of the Sport Desk of the TehranTimes

Consistency is the key to success

It's not hard to believe that Persepolis won Iran Professional League for the third successive season. But what's the secret behind a successful project: consistency.

Branko Ivankovic took charge of the Iranian popular football team in April 2015 and dominated the Iranian league for four years.

The Reds became runners-up on goal difference in Branko's first season and won the title for three years in a row.

Persepolis arch-rivals Esteghlal, Sepahan, Tractor Sazi and Zob Ahan changed their coaches for many times in the last three years. It takes time adopting new team for a newly-appointed coach, while Ivankovic and Persepolis have become too familiar over the past years.

"When clubs sack their manager they have no evidence it works. When a manager is consistent in his position the club does better and I strongly believe in that," former Manchester United coach Sir Alex Ferguson has written in his autobiography.

Consistency is the key to success, especially for the European coaches who face "cultural difference" in Iran. Ivankovic was familiar with local issues, since the Croat had worked as Iran national football team head coach in the first decade of the present century.

Branko Ivankovic improved mentality of Persepolis players and it's the secret of his success in the Iranian popular football team. To change the lifestyle and mentality of a player with a different culture takes time and it's one of the secrets of Branko's success in Persepolis.

In my opinion, Esteghlal could have won the title in the coming years had they kept their German coach Winfried Schaefer at the club. Now, they must give time to their new head coach since every newly-appointed coach needs time to know his team and it's time-consuming.

Carlos Queiroz is a clear example of how consistency can help a coach to be successful in a team.

The Portuguese tactician spent eight years as Iran coach, becoming the first coach of the Iranian national football team to lead the nation to consecutive World Cup.

Persepolis, now, are hungry to win more trophies with a coach who knows what is his long-term plan in the team.

A war with Iran would be the mother of all quagmires: Washington Post

In an article in the Washington Post on Tuesday, Max Boot, a historian and columnist, says if the United States wages a war against Iran, it "will be the mother of all quagmires".

Boot, who is now Jeane J. Kirkpatrick Senior Fellow in National Security Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, says a conflict with Iran "would make the Iraq War -- which I now deeply regret supporting -- seem like a 'cakewalk' by comparison."

Following is an excerpt of the article: During last week's war scare with Iran -- as the administration leaked discussions to deploy 120,000 troops to fight Iran, and leaked intelligence claiming that Iran was placing missiles on small boats to attack U.S. warships -- it sounded to a lot of people like Iraq

redux. President Trump temporarily ratcheted down tensions before raising them again with a Sunday tweet: "If Iran wants to fight, that will be the official end of Iran. Never threaten the United States again!"

Trump's supporters sound just as pugnacious. Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) warned that "Attack= decisive response," and Sen. Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) said that "if Iran struck out militarily against the United States or against our allies in the region, then I would certainly expect a devastating response against Iran." John Bolton, the national security adviser, didn't comment in public -- he prefers to spin his plots in secret -- but he hasn't disavowed his 2015 New York Times op-ed: "To Stop Iran's Bomb, Bomb Iran."

This tough-guy bluster is disconnected from reality. I've spent the past week studying Iranian capabilities, and I don't see any military option that would qualify as decisive or low-cost. Instead, what I see is the mother of all quagmires: a conflict that would make the Iraq War -- which I now deeply regret supporting -- seem like a "cakewalk" by comparison.

The United States could, of course, bomb Iran -- though it wouldn't be as low-risk as bombing Iraq in 2003. Iran has the most advanced air-defense network that U.S. aircraft have ever faced -- the Russian-made S-300. The U.S. Air Force and Navy could no doubt prevail, but it would not be easy and could result in greater loss of pilots and aircraft than we have become accustomed to. **->2**

Russia says new Ukraine president's rhetoric not helpful

TEHRAN — Russia says the rhetoric of Ukraine's new president, Volodymyr Zelensky, to call for more American sanctions on Moscow will not help Kiev end a persisting war in Ukraine's industrial east.

As Press TV reported, Zelensky, a 41-year-old former comedian, was inaugurated on Monday as Ukraine's 41st president, launching a fresh era for a country that has been wracked by economic difficulties and a four-year-old deadly war in two mainly Russian-speaking regions in its east.

The armed confrontation began when a wave of protests in Ukraine overthrew a democratically-elected pro-Russia government and replaced it with a pro-West administration. The majority of the people in the east, mainly ethnic Russians,



refused to endorse the new administration that took over at the time, and turned the two regions of Donetsk and Lugansk -- collectively known as the Donbass -- into self-proclaimed republics.

The war has so far claimed some 13,000 lives. Kiev and its Western allies accuse Moscow of having a hand in the crisis. Moscow, however, denies the allegations.

Furthermore, relations between Moscow and the West have deteriorated since 2014, when Crimea, a peninsula on the northern coast of the Black Sea, joined Russia following a referendum, in which more than 90 percent of participants voted in favor of unification. Crimea's population is also largely ethnically Russian. The West brands the reunification as the annexation of Ukrainian land by Russia. The US and the European Union (EU) have since imposed several rounds of harsh sanctions on Russia over the conflict in the east and the Crimean issue.



Iran's sports museum opens in Tehran

TEHRAN — Iran's sports museum was inaugurated in National Olympic Committee headquarters in Tehran on Monday.

First Vice-President Eshaq Jahangiri, Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs, Masoud Soltanifar, President of the National Olympic Committee (NOC) Reza Salehi Amiri and the country's well-known Olympic and Paralympic athletes attended the inauguration.

The museum displays Iranian athletes' medals, jerseys, statues and sporting memorabilia. The museum is free to the public.

ARTICLE
Ebrahim Fallahi
Tehran Times journalist

Iran electricity issue: should we expect blackouts again?

In the past decade, constant temperature rising and significant decrease of rainfalls across Iran has put the country in a hard situation regarding electricity supply during peak consumption periods, so in the past few years power outages have been imposed in big cities to balance the power generation and consumption in such timespans.

Last year, the volume of water behind the country's dams went so down that electricity output from hydropower plants fell to a decade low. The situation was worsened by a jump in electricity consumption due to a heat-wave that blanketed the country during summer and consequently led to a huge gap between actual power generation and consumption.

The energy ministry, being unable to control the situation through consumption management programs, was left with no choice but to once again order periodic blackouts in major cities in order to reduce the skyrocketing consumption. But, these frequent power outages caused a lot of damage to households, producers and manufacturers and people become querulous to the last degree.

This year, however, the situation has changed drastically and heavy precipitations in spring almost completely filled the country's dams and it is expected that hydropower plants will go on full potential and compensate last year's shortages.

However, on the verge of the new hot season, suddenly a huge jump in electricity consumption was reported by the energy ministry so that the consumption in the peak hours of Sunday April 19, exceeded 43500 MW while the figure stood at 38243 MW the same day last year, according to the ministry data.

Consequently, the possibility of changing office hours of the state bodies and non-governmental public institutes has also surfaced in many news bulletins and therefore questions like "haven't the rainfalls solved the country's electricity shortage problem?" or "Should we expect power outages again?!" are once again raised. **->5**

No negotiation in current situation, Rouhani says

POLITICAL TEHRAN — President Hassan Rouhani said on Monday that he generally supports negotiation and diplomacy, but under the current situation there will be no negotiation with the United States.



“During my last year’s visit to the United Nations, five well-known leaders of the world mediated to hold talks with the U.S. president [Donald Trump]. A year before that, the U.S. Department of State requested to hold talks for eight times. However, the current situation is not right for talks. Today, it is right to resist,” he said during a meeting with religious figures and clerics in Tehran.

He added that the people and officials are united in the view that it is essential to stand against the U.S. pressure campaign.

Kamal Kharrazi, chief of the Strategic Council on Foreign Relations, said on May 12 that U.S. President Donald Trump’s act in quitting the landmark 2015 nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), “has left no room for trust and negotiation”.

During a meeting with authorities on May 14, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said, “Negotiating is poisonous as long as the U.S. continues with the same course of action; besides, negotiating with the current government of the United States is all the more poisonous.”

Speaking in the same meeting, Rouhani said the Iranians can overcome problems through unity and solidarity.

“We can counter problems through unity, coordination and better management,” he said.

Ebrahim Raeisi, the Judiciary chief, said on May 13 that Iran can achieve victory over the U.S. economic and political pressure through resistance, suggesting that Iran will not surrender or hold negotiation with the Trump administration.

Hossein Sheikholeslam, an expert on international affairs who served as deputy foreign minister and ambassador for years, has said that internal integrity is a deterrent element to counter the U.S. hostile actions.

“Military, economic and cultural power and also internal integrity are deterrent elements against the U.S. hostile actions. Words and logic do not work for the U.S.,” he told ISNA in an interview published on Sunday.

He ruled out negotiations with Washington and noted that the U.S. administration cannot be trusted.

UN voices concern about rising tensions between U.S., Iran

POLITICAL TEHRAN — The United Nations has expressed concern about the increasingly confrontational rhetoric between the United States and Iran and called for calm.

Amid rising tensions between Washington and Tehran, U.S. President Donald Trump tweeted early on May 20, “If Iran wants to fight, that will be the official end of Iran.”



Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif dismissed Trump’s “genocidal taunts” and warned the U.S. president not to threaten Iran.

“We are concerned about the rising rhetoric,” said UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric, according to AP.

“We would ask all parties to lower the rhetoric and lower the threshold of action as well,” Dujarric said.

Dujarric’s remarks came amid concerns about a potential military conflict between the United States and Iran.

Washington has ordered a beefing up of U.S. military assets in the Middle East and Persian Gulf, claiming “imminent threats” from Iran and ordered the evacuation of personnel from the U.S. embassy in neighboring Iraq.

Tehran has dismissed the U.S. allegations, and accused Washington of an unacceptable escalation of tensions.

Both sides have said they do not want a war.

In a separate tweet on May 20, Trump said if Tehran wants to negotiate, it will have to take the first step, AFP reported.

“Iran will call us if and when they are ever ready. In the meantime, their economy continues to collapse -- very sad for the Iranian people!” Trump tweeted.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani was quoted by local media as saying on May 20 that he favored talks and diplomacy but not under current conditions.

“Today’s situation is not suitable for talks and our choice is resistance only,” Iran’s IRNA news agency quoted Rouhani as saying. Later on May 20, Trump told reporters: “With Iran, we’ll see what happens, but they’ve been very hostile.”

“I think Iran would be making a very big mistake if they did anything. If they do something, it will be met with great force but we have no indication that they will,” Trump said.

“We’ll have no choice,” he added.

Relations between Iran and the United States plummeted a year ago when Trump pulled out of the 2015 nuclear deal which curbed Iran’s nuclear program in exchange for relief from crippling sanctions.

Since then, Washington has stepped up its rhetoric and reimposed sanctions, while the Western European parties to the accord said they remained committed to it, but failing to make sure of Iran’s interests in the deal.

In announcing the U.S. pullout from the nuclear agreement between Iran and world powers, Trump claimed the terms were not tough and did not address Iran’s missile program or Tehran’s rising power in the region.

Iran denies it supports insurgent activity, including in Yemen, and has said its nuclear program is strictly for civilian energy purposes.

Earlier this month, Iran said it was suspending several commitments under the nuclear pact, and threatened to step up uranium enrichment if European countries did not act to protect it from the effects of the U.S. sanctions.

Iran writes to UN on alarming security situation in Persian Gulf

I → Following is full text of his letter published by IRNA on Tuesday:

I am writing to you with regard to the recent alarming security situation in the broader Persian Gulf region. There are indications that certain circles from outside of this region—through fabrications, disinformation, fake intelligence and fake news, relying on the support of their allies in the Middle East as well as dispatching naval forces to the region—are pursuing their illegitimate interests by sowing further division and creating more mistrust between regional countries in the Persian Gulf, as well as fomenting insecurity and escalating the already high tension in this volatile region. If unchecked, the current situation might—sooner or later—go beyond the perimeter of control and thereby lead to another unnecessary regional crisis.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has repeatedly warned about the mischievous intentions of such circles, and the wide-ranging regional and international ramifications of their objectives. In turn, Iran has always rejected and continues to reject conflict and war. Iran will never choose war as an option or strategy in pursuing its foreign policy. It should, however, be obvious that if war is imposed on us, Iran will vigorously exercise its inherent right to self-defense in order to defend its nation and to secure its interests.

In light of the above and at a time when the region is in turmoil with no bright prospect in sight, the international community in general, and the United Nations in particular, cannot and must not remain indifferent with regard to addressing the root causes of the current state of affairs. If the issues are not thoroughly addressed, the eruption of any possible conflict will soon cross over from the regional level and will definitely have serious

“A regional conflict will definitely have serious and extensive implications on international peace and security.”



and extensive implications on international peace and security.

Inaction—a lose-lose approach—is not an option and can lead to a disaster that must be avoided. The only solution is in fact the

adoption of a win-win approach through active engagement. Accordingly, in view of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the current complex security environment in the region can be eased and ultimately addressed ex-

“In view of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the current complex security environment in the region can be eased and ultimately addressed exclusively through constructive engagement and dialogue between the littoral States of the Persian Gulf.”

clusively through constructive engagement and dialogue between the littoral States of the Persian Gulf.

Such a regional dialogue should be based on mutual respect as well as generally recognized principles and shared objectives, notably respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all states; inviolability of international boundaries; non-interference in internal affairs; peaceful settlement of disputes; impermissibility of threat or use of force; and the promotion of peace, stability, progress and prosperity in the region.

As has been stated by H.E. Mr. Mohammad Javad Zarif, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the establishment of a collective forum for dialogue in the Persian Gulf region to facilitate engagement is long overdue. By promoting understanding, regional dialogue can lead to agreement on a broad spectrum of issues, including confidence- and security-building measures; combating terrorism and violent extremism; and ensuring freedom of navigation and the free flow of energy. It eventually can include more formal non-aggression and security cooperation arrangements.

In this context, and recalling that paragraph 8 of Security Council resolution 598 (1987) has entrusted the Secretary-General to examine “measures to enhance the security and stability of the region”; your Excellency, by operationalizing this paragraph, could furnish the necessary international umbrella for launching such a regional dialogue.

It would be highly appreciated if you could have the present letter issued as a document of the Security Council.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.”

Zarif says U.S. is playing a very ‘dangerous game’ in region

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has said that the U.S. is playing a “very very dangerous game” by increasing its military presence in the region.

“Iran is not interested in escalation. We have said very clearly that we will not be the party to begin escalation, but we will defend ourselves. Having all these military assets in a small waterway (Persian Gulf) is prone to accident, particularly when you have people who are interested in accidents. We believe that the U.S. is playing a very very dangerous game,” he told CNN in an interview aired on Tuesday.

The chief diplomat said all will suffer if a war breaks out between Iran and the United States.

“There will be painful consequences for everybody. There is an escalation against Iran. That’s for sure. The U.S. is engaged in an economic warfare against Iran. It has to stop.



Economic war means targeting the Iranian people. That has to stop. The U.S. does not have the legal position, does not have the moral position, does not have the political position and does not have the international position to impose economic war on Iran.”

Tension has been increasing in the Persian Gulf and the wider Middle East region since the U.S. has made military threats against Iran and dispatched aircraft carrier to the regional waters and deployed Patriot missiles in certain regional countries.

Prime minister: Iraq to send delegations to Iran and U.S. to calm tensions

POLITICAL TEHRAN — The Iraqi Prime Minister, Adel Abdul Mahdi, told a press conference on Tuesday that his country will soon send delegations to Iran and the United States to calm down the tension between Tehran and Washington.

“In future hours delegations will be sent to a number of countries including Iran and the United States to help calm down the situation and reduce tension,” the prime minister said, the Persian service of IRNA reported.

Abdul Mahdi added, “Both Americans and Iranians have told us that they do not seek war.”

The prime minister said currently there are contacts at the highest level and that Baghdad’s views are very close to those of the European Union to resolve the crises in the region.

“We are transferring messages be-



tween Tehran and Washington and work for reducing tensions between the two sides,” IRNA quoted the prime minister as saying.

He added certain countries and non-Iraqi groups see their interests in inflaming the situation.

He also said there were no Iraqi groups that wanted to push towards a war between Iran and the U.S. He made the remarks two days after a rocket fired in Baghdad landed close to the U.S. embassy.

Trump knows nothing about Iranian history: Jahangiri

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Vice President Es’haq Jahangiri said on Tuesday that U.S. President Donald Trump’s military threats against Iran shows that he knows nothing about the Iranian history.

“The U.S. officials should review Iran’s history to know this country’s status during the history and become aware that it is not in their interests to start a war,” he said while inaugurating the Museum of Sport.

Like other Iranian military and political officials, the vice president also said the U.S. sanctions pressures and military deployments to the region are part of a “psychological warfare” against Iran.

He also attached great importance to unity in the face of threats.

In a tweet on Sunday, Trump said, “If Iran wants to fight, that will be the official end of Iran. Never threaten the United States again!”

Responding a day later, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif warned Trump “never threaten and Iranian” and advised him to “try respect and it works”.



Bringing examples from history, Zarif said the B-Team and Trump want to achieve something that Alexander the Great and Genghis Khan (the founder and first Great Khan of the Mongol Empire) “failed to do”.

Responding via Twitter, Zarif also said, “Iranians have stood tall for millennia while aggressors all gone.”

The B-Team includes Trump’s National Security Advisor John Bolton, Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel (known as bibi),

A war with Iran would be the mother of all quagmires: Washington Post

I → Eventually, after Iran’s air defenses have been neutralized, the United States would be able to pound Iran’s military and economic infrastructure. But to what end? In 2012, a group of former diplomats and generals estimated that U.S. airstrikes would set back Iran’s nuclear program “for up to four years.” The nuclear deal did far better: It imposed limits on Iran’s nuclear program for 15 years and resulted in the elimination of 97 percent of Iran’s fissile material. If the U.S. goal is to stop Iran’s nuclear program, it would reenter the nuclear deal rather than bomb Iran.

But the Trump administration has laid out a more ambitious agenda. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo demanded that Iran stop its missile development, stop threatening U.S. allies, and stop its support for resistance groups across the region. It is difficult to see how bombing alone could compel Iranian compliance. The United States bombed North Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos for years, dropping three times more bombs than all countries did during World War II, and still lost the Vietnam War. Air attacks

are usually decisive only when combined with ground attacks.

Unfortunately, the United States lacks a realistic ground option in Iran, which is much bigger than Iraq in both area and population. (Iran has 83 million people and 617,000 square miles; Iraq in 2003 had about 30 million people and about 170,000 square miles.) Counterinsurgency math—premised on 20 troops per 1,000 inhabitants—suggests that the United States and its allies needed some 600,000 troops in Iraq. (There were never more than 180,000.) By that math, to control Iran, you would need more than 1.6 million troops. That’s more than double the active-duty end-strength (656,403) of the U.S. Army and Marine Corps combined,

and few if any U.S. allies would help. You could probably topple the Iranian government with a lot fewer troops. But if you leave immediately afterward, as Bolton favored doing in Iraq, the result could be either Libya-style chaos or the emergence of a new anti-American regime.

Even if you don’t put a single U.S. boot on the ground and stick simply to airstrikes, the war would not be an antiseptic, push-button exercise for the United States. A 2011 report from the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments outlined how Iran could hit back with “asymmetric” tactics.

Iran could employ a combination of anti-ship cruise missiles, drones, submarines, small boats and mines to “swarm” U.S. naval ships

in the confined waters of the Persian Gulf. It could target U.S. bases in the region with its arsenal of some 2,000 missiles. It could cripple U.S. computer networks with cyberattacks. It could employ Hezbollah and other groups to stage attacks abroad. It could send local militias armed with missiles and car bombs to attack the 19,000 U.S. troops in Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan. It could tell the Houthis in Yemen to unleash a missile barrage against Saudi Arabia and it could order Hezbollah to fire 150,000 rockets and missiles at Israel.

In response, the United States would do... what? Fire a few more cruise missiles, drop a few more bombs? It’s hard to imagine that even Trump would unleash a nuclear holocaust to literally “end” Iran.

“Tell me how this ends,” Army Gen. David H. Petraeus said during the 2003 invasion of Iraq. The George W. Bush administration had no clue. Likewise, the Iran hawks today, in and out of the Trump administration, have no idea how a war with that country would end. Better, in that case, not to risk starting one.

The United States bombed North Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos for years, dropping three times more bombs than all countries did during World War II, and still lost the Vietnam War.

Advisor: we will not allow a war to take place in the region

POLITICAL TEHRAN – Hesamoddin d e s k Ashna, a senior cultural advisor to the president, has said the Rouhani administration's strategy in dealing with U.S. conspiracies is to prevent war and also try to foil the sanctions.

In an interview with Tasnim published on Tuesday, Ashna said the administration is adopting a double-edged strategy to counter the United States' hostile measures.

"Firstly, we will not allow a war to take place in the region, and secondly, we will not tolerate remaining under sanctions."

"Our response to the United States is no to war and no to sanctions," the adviser recounted.

He added that Washington seeks to raise the specter of war in order to force Tehran to cave in to the pressure of sanctions and agree to hold talks.

Ashna says "strengthening internal unity" is the sole option for advancing a policy that aims to prevent the U.S. from threatening Iran with a war and also to



foil the sanctions.

The comments came a week after Lead-

er of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei ruled out the possibility of war

between the United States and Iran despite heightened tensions between the two sides.

The Leader said any confrontation between the U.S. and Iran would not be "a military one," and that "there was not going to be any war."

"The Iranian nation's definite option will be resistance in the face of the U.S., and in this confrontation, the U.S. would be forced into a retreat," Ayatollah Khamenei said. "Neither we nor they, who know war will not be in their interest, are after war."

Ayatollah Khamenei further explained that the confrontation between the two sides is "a clash of wills," asserting that Iran would be the ultimate victor of this battle.

The Leader also ruled out any negotiation with the U.S. as long as Washington sticks with its hostile approach against the Islamic Republic, saying Washington would be attempting to undermine Iran's "points of strength," such as its defensive power or its strategic regional influence, in any such interaction.

Qatar says seeking to ease tension between Iran, U.S.



TEHRAN (MNA) – Qatari State Minister for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi said on Monday that his country is making efforts to ease the tension between Iran and the United States.

In a press statement, he highlighted that Qatar supports peace and every effort which leads to the establishment of stability in the region, RT reported.

Al-Muraikhi said he is sure that Iran does not want war and destabilization in the region.

Also on Monday, Oman's Minister of Foreign Affairs Yusuf bin Alawi paid a visit to Tehran and held talks with his Iranian counterpart Mohammad Javad Zarif. The meeting is believed to be part of efforts to mediate between Tehran and Washington.

Tensions have raised between Tehran and Washington after the Trump administration ramped up pressure on Iran. Withdrawing from the 2015 nuclear deal (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) in May 2018, re-imposing tough sanctions which were lifted under the deal, designating an Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) as a foreign terrorist organization and deploying naval fleet and bombers in the Middle East are among tension-building measures of the United States.

Meanwhile, Iran announced earlier this month that it is reducing some of its commitments under JCPOA, urging other signatories of the deal to uphold their obligations and secure Iran's economic interests. Tehran stressed that it is not interested in war with U.S. but will strongly defend the country in the face of threats.

Diplomat says Netanyahu seeking to turn Bahrain into an Israeli island



POLITICAL TEHRAN – Hossein d e s k Amir Abdollahian, a senior foreign policy advisor to the parliament speaker, said on Tuesday that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is seeking to turn Bahrain into an Israeli island.

In a post on his Twitter account, Amir Abdollahian said Donald Trump's Zionist son-in-law, Jared Kushner, has announced the unveiling of the "deal of the century" in Bahrain.

"Netanyahu is seeking to turn Bahrain into an Israeli island and Riyadh wants Bahrain to pay the heavy price of the 'deal of the century'," added Amir Abdollahian who served as Iran's deputy foreign minister for Arab and African affairs and also Tehran's ambassador in certain Arab states.

Amir Abdollahian further said that the al-Khalifa regime in Bahrain is committing

crimes against the Bahraini people and betraying the Palestinian nation.

On Sunday, the U.S. announced that it will co-host an economic "workshop" with Bahrain to encourage investment in the occupied Palestinian territories "that could be made possible by a peace agreement".

"Peace to Prosperity will facilitate discussions on an ambitious, achievable vision and framework for a prosperous future for the Palestinian people and the region," the White House said in a statement.

U.S. President Donald Trump has repeatedly touted his plan for peace between Palestinians and Israelis as the "deal of the century".

But Palestinian officials have rebuked the U.S. effort, which they believe will be heavily biased in favor of Israel. The peace plan has been put together without participation from the Palestinians.

Policy of 'maximum pressure' on Iran has failed: MP



POLITICAL TEHRAN – Morteza d e s k Saffari Natanzi, a member of the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, says the Americans have failed to get what they wanted through the policy of "maximum pressure" on Iran.

"Today, they are faced with questions from the public about this policy," Saffari Natanzi said, ISNA reported on Tuesday.

"One year after Trump's withdrawal from Barjam (the Persian name for the international nuclear deal), not only the policy of pressure on Iran has failed to bear fruit, but also they failed to bring Iran to the negotiating table to get concessions," he explained.

The MP maintained that the Americans can neither move forward nor go back, adding that the U.S. is looking for a way to interact with Iran.

However, he continued, in the eyes of the Islamic Republic they are not "trustworthy" for talks.

Also on Tuesday, another member of the parliamentary committee said lack of coordination is easily noticeable in the Trump administration "because Trump is not the only decision-maker and this has confused him."

Speaking with ISNA, Mohammad Javad Jamali said Trump is an inexperienced person, who has surrounded himself with hardliners such as John Bolton.

"Trump is a person who sees all diplomatic affairs, statecraft and international relations based on money," Jamali said. "Hence, Saudi, Emirati and Bahraini money is tempting for him because he wants to boost the U.S. economy with that money, create jobs and finally win the next elections."

Iran's medical academy writes letter to UN on U.S. sanctions

POLITICAL TEHRAN – The head of Iran's Academy of d e s k Medical Sciences has written a letter to the United Nations complaining about the "unjust sanctions" of the U.S. against the Iranian nation, urging the international body to take action against such an inhumane act.

In his letter addressed to UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, Alireza Marandi said, "I have written to your Excellency on previous occasions with regard to the unjust sanctions of the regime of the United States of America against our people in Iran."

The sanctions have led to many obstacles in providing all kinds of medicine and equipment needed for the medical treatment of the Iranian population, he explained, according to Tasnim news agency.

"Unfortunately, we are now facing further illegal and inhumane obstructions by the United States in its indiscriminate blocking of international aid to Iranians affect-

ed by the recent floods, which have devastated large areas throughout the country."

Marandi also criticized international human rights organizations for remaining "consistently silent" in the face of the crimes committed by the United States.

Last year, President Donald Trump unilaterally pulled the United States out of the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and unleashed the "toughest ever" economic sanctions against Tehran.

Officially, the measures exempt humanitarian goods, such as medicine and medicinal instruments but in reality they have had negative impacts on Iran's health sector and restricted the country's access to medical and health services.

Iranian officials have also blasted the U.S. administration for hampering shipments of relief supplies to the areas devastated by unprecedented floods caused by heavy spring rains.



Bolivian president censures U.S. for belligerent anti-Iran rhetoric



TEHRAN (YJC) - Bolivian President Evo Morales has censured the United States for its aggressive rhetoric against Iran, saying Washington's recent military buildup in the region is an attempt to boost its military industry.

"We condemn U.S. threatening Iran with war and destruction and its attempt to deploy troops in the Middle East. Imperialism always seeks to keep the military industry at work," Morales tweeted on Monday amid heightened tensions between Tehran and Washington.

His remarks followed an earlier tweet by U.S. President Donald Trump, who warned that a fight with the United States would be "the official end of Iran."

Trump posted his threatening tweet after Sunday's rocket attack on the Green Zone in the Iraqi capital, Baghdad, where administrative buildings and foreign missions, including the U.S. embassy, are located.

No one has claimed responsibility for the attack, which came in the wake of back-to-back sudden decisions taken by the U.S. recently, including the withdrawal of its "non-emergency" staff from Iraq.

Although the apparent Katyusha attack hurt no one and its target was not specified, Trump was quick to point the finger at Iran.

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif was quick to respond to Trump's latest hostile rhetoric, warning the U.S. president to avoid threatening Iranians and advising him to try respect as the only reasonable way to approach the Iranian nation.

Tensions mounted between Tehran and Washington in May 2018, when Trump pulled his country out of the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and re-imposed harsh sanctions against the Islamic Republic in defiance of global criticism.

Trump and his hawkish advisers such as National Security Advisor John Bolton and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo have since been stepping up pressure campaign against Iranians.

The tensions saw a sharp rise on the first anniversary of Washington's exit from the deal as the U.S. moved to ratchet up pressure on Iran by tightening its oil sanctions and sending military reinforcements, including an aircraft carrier strike group, a squadron of B-52 bombers, and a battery of patriot missiles, to the Persian Gulf region.

Advisor says if Trump wants to talk to Iran he should show respect

POLITICAL TEHRAN – Hossein d e s k Amir Abdollahian, a senior foreign policy advisor to the parliament speaker, has said U.S. President Donald Trump is a "crazy president" whose threats against Tehran aren't going to work.

If the U.S. president wants to talk, he'll not only have to show some respect, but come up with a consistent message, Amir Abdollahian told CNN in an exclusive interview Monday.

Trump is "crazy" and his administration is "confused", he said, pointing to the U.S. leader's ongoing campaign to strangle Iran's economy on the one hand and his requests for Iran to talk on the other.

"In his mind, Trump thinks he has a gun to Iran's head with sanctions and he is trying to shut down our economy," Amir Abdollahian said. "This is all in his imagination. Now he wants us to call him? This is a crazy president!"



He also pointed to warmongers within the Trump administration, naming national security adviser John Bolton, and saying, "Within the White House there is a lot of conflicting opinions."

"Also, Trump is not quite balanced and stable in his decision making, so we are dealing with a confused White House. Iran receives various signals which show that no one knows who owns the White House."

Border coordination has improved with Pakistan, Turkey: Iranian border commander

POLITICAL TEHRAN – The commander of Iran's d e s k border police said on Monday that coordination with the border guards of Pakistan and Turkey has improved due to the expansion of relations with the two neighboring countries.

Iran is the third country, after China and Russia, in terms of the number of neighbors in the world, with a total of 8,755

kilometers of common border with its neighbors, Brigadier General Qassem Rezaei said, IRNA reported.

Rezaei added, "Given the characteristics of countering the arrogant power (an indirect reference to the U.S.), no country is facing peripheral threats as much as the Islamic Republic of Iran."

One of the main problems that Iran was facing over the

past years was on the borders with Pakistan, he said, stating since the security situation in Pakistan's Baluchistan region was in a bad shape terrorists and criminals used this weak point to infiltrate into the region.

The commander added that Iran has no concerns over common maritime and land borders with the neighboring countries despite the threats close to the borders.

STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	215091.8
IFX	2644.44

Sources: tse.ir, ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	46,897 rials
GBP	53,466 rials
AED	11,437 rials

Source: cbi.ir

COMMODITIES

Brent	\$72.41/b
WTI	\$63.66/b
OPEC Basket	\$72.57/b
Gold	\$1,276.10/oz
Silver	\$14.46/oz
Platinum	\$817.95/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

Development projects worth \$1b inaugurated

As reported, the water projects supply drinking water for over 400,000 persons.

Silveh Dam and irrigation-drainage canals, Karam-Abad Dam and water transferring pipeline and three pumping stations, Sardasht Dam and Power plant, and Boylapush Dam were some of the water projects that President Rouhani launched or put into operation in person or through video conference in the province.



Such projects play some significant role in sustainable development of the border provinces and promoting the living condition of their people, while preserving the environment.

Singapore's economy slows to decade low as trade war bites

Singapore's annual economic growth slipped to the lowest in nearly a decade in the first quarter as manufacturing contracted in the wake of a protracted U.S.-China trade war, prompting a downgrade to the Southeast Asian country's full-year growth forecast.

According to reuters.com, gross domestic product (GDP) expanded 1.2 percent year-on-year in the three months ending March 31, final official data showed on Tuesday, down slightly from the 1.3 percent seen in the government's advance estimate and the fourth quarter's revised 1.3 percent pace.

The result, which was below the 1.5 percent growth forecast, marked the slowest annual expansion for any quarter since April-June 2009, when GDP shrank 1.7 percent from a year earlier, government data shows.

As broad economic momentum cooled, policymakers downgraded their 2019 growth forecast to 1.5-2.5 percent from 1.5-3.5 percent previously.

U.S.-China trade tensions

"Uncertainty from the trade tensions (between the United States and China) have already affected the sectors Singapore has relied on in the last two years," Jeff Ng, head of Asia research at Continuum Economics, told Reuters.

Singapore, like many of its trade-reliant counterparts in the region, has been hit hard by the trade war which has disrupted global supply chains in a blow to business investment and corporate profits.

Gabriel Lim, the permanent secretary for trade and industry, told a news briefing that slowing China growth and the trade dispute between Washington and Beijing were expected to weigh on Singapore's output, while slack global demand for electronics was already hitting its manufacturing sector.

"Against this challenging external economic backdrop, key outward-oriented sectors in the Singapore economy are expected to slow this year," Lim said.

"In particular, the electronics and precision engineering clusters ... are expected to face strong headwinds on account of a sharper-than-expected downturn in the global electronics cycle, as well as uncertainties arising from the ongoing trade conflicts."

The construction sector grew for the first time in 10 quarters on an annual basis, led by private and government sector work.

On the flip side, manufacturers bore the brunt of weakening global demand - it was the worst performing sector in the city state on a quarter-on-quarter basis, contracting 7.1 percent in the first quarter.

The deteriorating global conditions forced Singapore to also downgrade its 2019 forecast for non-oil domestic exports to a contraction of 2.0-zero percent as shipments in the first quarter shrank 6.4 percent on an annualized basis.

A central bank official said its monetary policy stance, which was kept unchanged last month after two rounds of tightening, remained appropriate.

Some economists are already betting that the central bank will be forced to make it easier to borrow money when it next meets for its semi-annual policy review in October.

'All necessary measures taken to launch organized forex market'

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iranian finance and economic affairs minister announced that all necessary measures have been taken for launching an organized forex market, IRNA reported.

Answering to the questions of the reporters on the sidelines of the 85th meeting between the ministry and Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mine and Agriculture (ICCIMA) as the representative of the country's private sector, Farhad Dejpasand said the ministry have done

all legal actions to this end and just the affairs related to the company (which is to be set up for such market) are being performed.

On May 10, the minister had said that an organized forex market will be launched in the country in the coming week.

Dejpasand said the mentioned market is due to set the real foreign currency exchange rates.

Establishment of this market has been approved by the Money and Credit



Council (MCC), the highest banking policy-making body of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), on January 8 as the CBI aims to explore the real volume of demand and supply in the foreign currency market through a new mechanism.

Regarding this market, a CBI official said on May 5 that the new mechanism aims to organize the transactions in the foreign currency exchange market between the exchange shops, Mehr news agency reported.

Iran, Russia discuss holding 15th Joint Economic Committee meeting

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian and his Russian counterpart Alexander Novak discussed issues pertaining to the two countries' 15th Joint Economic Committee meeting over phone, IRIB reported on Tuesday.

The officials who are going to co-chair the upcoming Iran-Russia Joint Economic Committee meeting, also discussed the second Iran-North Caucasus trade conference and the two countries' ongoing joint projects.

The construction of Garmar-Ince Bouron Railway and construction of four thermal power plants in Hormozgan province in southern Iran were also among the issues which were discussed in the two ministers' phone conversation.

The officials also emphasized the need to accelerate the ongoing joint projects, and in this regard they agreed that in the 15th Iran-Russia Joint Economic Committee meeting, the two sides set up 10 specialized working groups and three working committees to follow up on the progress of such projects.

It was also agreed for the two countries' businessmen and entrepreneurs to hold B2B talks on the sidelines of the upcoming event in order to explore avenues of mutual cooperation.

The 15th Iran-Russia Joint Economic Committee meeting, the second Iran-North Caucasus trade conference, and the third provincial co-operation working group of the two countries are due to be held during June 16-18, in Tehran and Isfahan.

TCCIMA seeking expansion of trade with Czech companies

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) submitted a list of Iranian small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to the Czech Republic officials in a bid to further increase trade flow between the two countries, TCCIMA Head Masoud Khansari announced.

As reported by Fars news agency, in a meeting with new Iranian Ambassador to the Czech Republic Akbar Aminian in Tehran, Khansari said TCCIMA is seeking cooperation with Czech SMEs to explore avenues on how to further increase volume of trade exchange that stood at \$89 million in 2018.

The TCCIMA's head also called for improvement of trade cooperation either between Iran and Czech Republic or through a third country to help remove the existing financial obstacles that were created following the U.S.' withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal and the re-imposition of sanctions against Iran last year.

He underlined that money transfer problems between Iran and the European countries have left vital impact on their bilateral trade cooperation which started in 2016 mainly after clinching the nuclear deal by the United Nations Security Council leading to removal of sanctions.

IRICA to clear basic goods in less than 1 hour: official

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Deputy Director of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) said following a directive by President Hassan Rouhani, IRICA is providing new facilities for importers of basic goods which makes them able to clear their commodities in less than an hour, IRNA reported.

"For basic goods such as meat, system formalities and clearance procedures will be carried out in less than an hour and importers can transport their goods soon after," Mehrdad Jamal Orounqi said.

Also on Tuesday, the head of IRICA said his organization has selected 120 major manufacturing companies under the Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) framework to provide them with special facilities like non-stop and duty-free clearance.

"These 120 companies, some of which are knowledge-



based, can clear their goods using a non-stop green customs path," Mehdi Mir-Ashrafi said, Mehr news agency reported.

According to the official, one of the problems that most of the producers are facing is the lack of liquidity, in this regard IRICA has agreed to help the producers by letting them to clear their goods by paying the duties partially.

"This means an amount of the imported goods equal to the customs clearance duties are kept, and the rest will be cleared without any payment and further added value, which means they are cleared duty free," he added.

The Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) plan provides selected Iranian companies with 18 different forms of facilities which cover a wide range of customs related procedures and processes.

Chabahar exemption from sanctions really contributory for Afghan, Indian economies?

By Behrooz Aghaei

Despite what it appears at first glance, the U.S. is not going to help the people of Afghanistan through what is called "Chabahar Port's exemption from sanctions", but it in fact increases the transit costs of their commodities by imposing sanctions on Iran and consequently putting further restrictions on Afghan merchants.

Analyses reveal that imposing sanctions on Iran as the most secured and less expensive access route for Afghanistan, implies imposing sanctions on Afghanistan as well.

As far as the India is concerned, the significant point is that the India's commodities to be transit to Afghanistan are not extensive and voluminous enough to rationalize marine and road transportation expenses and to create a significant growth in India's balance of trade. Bearing in mind the trade volume of Afghanistan, Russia and CIS countries which altogether are more than 16 million tons and the insignificant share of Afghanistan, it could be concluded that without making possible the transportation of all India's merchandise to above mentioned countries through Chabahar Port, the so called exemption

of this port does not make any noticeable change in India's trade.

Therefore, Chabahar Port's exemption will only be a competitive advantage for India, if all Indian merchandise toward Afghanistan, Russia and CIS countries could be transported through Chabahar Port without any restriction in banking and insurance transactions.

The noteworthy point about Afghanistan is that the exemption of Chabahar Port will only be fruitful, if there is no any prohibition on entering and leaving Chabahar Port for vessels carrying Afghanistan's merchandise; as well as commercial



transactions of cargo owners, merchants and shipping lines, particularly banking transactions are done without limitation.

Bundesbank expects German economy to stagnate in Q2

Germany's economy is likely to stagnate in the current quarter as the nation's large manufacturing sector wrestles with a downdraft in global demand, the German central bank said.

According to Dow Jones, the downbeat assessment of Europe's largest economy contrasts with relatively solid first-quarter growth data published last week, which showed a 0.4 percent expansion in the three months through March, driven by vibrant private consumption and a booming construction sector.

The Bundesbank warned Monday, however, that the first-quarter rebound was due mainly to one-off factors that are likely to lapse or even reverse. They include government stimulus measures, a temporary recovery in car purchases and brisk construction activity as a result of favorable weather conditions, the central bank wrote in its monthly report.

"German economic output in the second quarter of 2019 is not very likely to exceed the level reached in the first quarter, which had been boosted by a number of one-off effects," the report

said. "Downturn forces continue to be prevalent in industry, and they may even intensify somewhat."

Germany's export-focused economy unexpectedly emerged alongside Italy as one of Europe's economic laggards in recent months, despite a strong domestic economy that boasts the lowest unemployment rate in at least three decades.

Economists blame the country's strong reliance on exports, especially to China, which has made it particularly vulnerable to the global trade tensions unleashed by the Trump administration. Policy makers in Berlin say they fear the White House could soon slap punitive import tariffs on German cars, as President Trump has repeatedly threatened, which would deal a further blow to the country's flagship export.

Still, even if the downturn in German industry is likely to continue, more domestically-oriented sectors are likely to grow, bolstered by the robust labor market and low interest rates, according to the Bundesbank.

Thailand GDP growth slows to 4-year low

Thailand's economy grew at its slowest pace in more than four years in the first quarter of the year, as weak export demand and ongoing political uncertainty weighed on the country's growth.

According to ft.com, gross domestic product (GDP) expanded by 2.8 percent year on year in the three months to March 2019, according to the National Economic and Social Development Council. That was short of a Reuters poll predicting a 3 percent rise. The performance was below the revised 3.6 percent growth recorded in the final quarter of 2018.

The disappointing reading prompted a downward revision of the council's 2019 growth forecast to between 3.3 and 3.8 percent from 3.5 and 4.5 percent earlier.

Southeast Asia's second-largest economy has been buffeted by slowing demand for exports, including from its large electronics and automobile sectors, amid regional economic weakness and persistent U.S.-China trade friction. The country is also facing political

uncertainty after final results from the disputed election that were announced on May 9 without a clear winner. While opposition parties received the largest share of seats in the lower house, analysts say the new constitution is likely to narrowly favor a pro-military government. Political wrangling continues, with anti-junta leaders from the opposition Pheu Thai saying as recently as last week that they had not given up hope of forming a government.

The "economy continues to face multiple headwinds, ranging from weak external demand, an inventory overhang, sluggish tourist arrivals, unfavorable weather, high household debt, public investment delays, and political uncertainty," analysts at ANZ bank had said ahead of the release.

Economists at ING said slowing GDP growth "combined with heightened trade tension will make it increasingly hard for the Bank of Thailand to sustain its hawkish rhetoric going forward," raising the possibility of an interest rate cut this year.

Offering oil at IRENEX to continue: Zanganeh

E N E R G Y TEHRAN — Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) will continue the process of offering crude oil at Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX), IRIB reported.

The minister said: "Offering oil at IRENEX has been somehow successful and it is hoped that by removing the barriers we can expand the offering process."

He said offering crude oil and also gas condensate at IRENEX will continue as before and the Oil Ministry should offer specified amounts of the products each month.

The least amount of offering crude oil is 35,000-barrel and some good facilities have been set for the buyers, Zanganeh said.

NIOC offered light crude oil at IRENEX first on October 28, 2018 just few days before new U.S. sanctions on Iran's petroleum sector took effect (November 4). In the first round, NIOC could sell some 280,000 barrels of crude oil at \$74.85 per barrel. With the daily supply amount of one million barrels, the market wrapped up by selling eight 35,000-barrel cargos of oil on the day.

Then after eight rounds of offering light crude oil at IRENEX, NIOC sold 70,000 barrels of heavy crude oil at this exchange market for the first time on April 30.

Like offering light oil, one billion barrels of heavy oil was offered at IRENEX with 35,000



barrels as the least amount of sales.

Now, offering heavy crude oil at IRENEX can open a new chapter for the exports of Iranian oil as this type of crude is of high significance both technically and commercially, because it accounts for a huge amount of production in the refineries and many refineries throughout the world specially in the South Asian region are willing to use

this type which has of course lower price compared to the light oil.

Since the U.S.'s withdrew from Iran's nuclear pact in May 2018, vowing to drive Iran's oil exports down to zero, the Islamic Republic has been taking various measures to counter U.S. actions and to keep its oil exports levels as high as possible.

One of the main strategies that Iran chose

to execute to help its oil exports afloat has been trying new ways to diversify the mechanism of oil sales, one of which is offering oil at the country's stock market.

Sales of crude oil, both light and heavy types, at the IRENEX is being strongly supported by the Iranian government and NIOC is facilitating the condition for the buyers more in each round of the offering.

In this due, Export Guarantee Fund of Iran (EGFI) is going to issue bank guarantees for the customers who purchase the oil offered at IRENEX, managing director of the fund announced last month.

"We are in talks with the oil ministry in this regard," Afrouz Bahrami said.

She noted that EGFI has received some requests for issuing bank guarantees from oil customers interested in purchasing the oil offered at IRENEX.

According to the official, EGFI covers the commercial and political risks of exports, including both non-oil and oil exports and since the oil which is offered at the IRENEX is also considered as part of the country's oil exports, therefore it is possible for EGFI to issue banking guarantees for such cargoes.

Such supports and also offered incentives encourage the applicants of crude oil at the energy exchange and also pave the way for the country's oil exports under the sanctions.

Over \$10m allocated for water, wastewater study projects in Tehran

E N E R G Y TEHRAN — Iranian energy ministry has allocated 432 billion rials (about \$10.07 million) for conducting water and wastewater study projects in the capital city of Tehran, IRIB reported citing the portal of energy ministry.

According to Siamak Tavana, the director of Tehran Water and Wastewater Company (Persian acronym: ABFA) office of research and technical studies, currently in all the cities and populated centers of Tehran province first phase studies are underway and the research will be constantly updated in line with continuous urban development.



Carrying out studies for supplying drinking and sanitation water for the cities and population centers of Tehran province which has been provisioned in the Sixth Five-Year National Development Plan (2016-2021) is considered to be ABFA's most important project in the capital.

Issues like population estimation, forecasting the development of urban areas, determining the water requirement, the amount of water supply sources and estimation of the amount of water supply deficit are among the factors that should be considered in carrying out water, wastewater studies in any big city.

Oil rises on escalating U.S.-Iran tensions; trade war concerns weigh

E N E R G Y Oil prices edged up on Tuesday on escalating tensions between the United States and Iran and on signs that producer club OPEC will continue withholding supply this year. However, gains were checked by concerns that a prolonged Sino-U.S. trade war could lead to a global economic slowdown.

Reuters reported Brent crude futures, the international benchmark for oil prices, were at \$72.03 per barrel at 0118 GMT, up 6 cents, or 0.1 percent, from their last close. U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures were up by 12 cents, or 0.2 percent, at \$63.22 per barrel.

Prices were driven up by rising tensions between the United States and Iran. Read also Reuters: Oil surges after OPEC indicates it will maintain output cuts U.S. President Donald Trump on Monday threatened Iran with "great force" if it attacked U.S. interests in the Middle East. This came after a rocket attack in Iraq's capital Baghdad, which Washington suspects to have

been organized by militia with ties to Iran.

Iran said on Tuesday that it would resist U.S. pressure, declining further talks under current circumstances. ANZ bank said the rising tension in the Middle East meant a "risk premium is reflected in the price" of crude oil.

The tension comes amid an already tight market as the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Russia and other non-OPEC producers have been withholding supply since the start of the year to prop up prices.

A meeting has been scheduled for June 25-26 to discuss the policy, but the cartel is now considering moving the event to July 3-4, according to OPEC sources on Monday, with its de-facto leader Saudi Arabia signaling a willingness to continue withholding output.

Price gains were constrained by pressure on financial markets, which have been dragged down this week by worries that the United States and China are digging in for a long, costly trade



war, which could result in a broad global slowdown.

Singapore, seen as a bellwether for the health of the global economy, on Tuesday posted its lowest quarterly growth in nearly a decade of 1.2 percent year-on-year.

Iran electricity issue: should we expect blackouts again?

1 → To answer such questions, first we need to answer some important questions, that is, how much electricity the country's hydropower plants can really generate?, and how the wheatear is going to be in the upcoming months?, and how much the country's total power generation capacity has increased since last year?

■ Rainfalls and hydropower generation

As I mentioned, the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21) kicked off with great amount of rainfalls across the country. According to Iran's energy ministry's head of dams operation office, up to date, over 40.9 billion cubic meters of water is stored behind the country's dams.

The inflow of water into the country's 178 major dams stood at 71.6 billion cubic meters since the beginning of the current year, which is 277 percent more than last year's same period, according to Vahid Asgarinejad.

The data provided by the energy ministry also shows that, on average, 82 percent of the total capacity of Iran's dams is currently full.

Considering the above figures and their comparison to last year's data, we can be quite optimistic about the performance of the country's hydropower plants this year.

But how much electricity do these power plants generate? Would that be enough to compensate for the jump in the consumption patterns during the hot season?

According to the Head of Iran's Thermal Power Plants Holding Company, Abdolrasoul Pishahang, hydroelectric power plants account for 19 percent of the country's total nominal



power generation capacity.

Iran's current nominal power generation capacity stands at about 81,000 megawatts (MW), so the share of hydropower plants stands at nearly 15,000 MW. However, this figure is not in fact the actual production and it is, as mentioned, just nominal.

According to the Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian, actual electricity output from hydropower plants was 8,000 MW last summer.

Considering the "more than satisfactory" rainfalls, according to the Iranian Energy Ministry's spokesman Mahmoud Haqifam, the country's hydropower plants are expected to generate 4500 MW to 5000 MW more electricity this year.

■ Gap between generation and consumption

According to a report by Tasnim news

agency, last year just before the beginning of the hot season, Iran's actual power generation stood at 52,400 MW while the peak consumption reached higher than 57,000 MW.

As we can see, there was a nearly 5,000MW gap between production and consumption which was compensated by imposing blackouts.

In December 2018, Haqifam told Tasnim that the ministry managed to reduce the consumption by about 5000 MW by cutting the power in the peak consumption hours.

So far we can conclude that in order to avoid power outages, the energy ministry should manage to add 5000 mw of new capacity or reduce the consumption by that amount.

But, this is just one side of the picture.

Based on the energy ministry's annual data, every year the electricity consumption in the country increases by about 4 to 5 percent. This year too, the ministry has predicted a 5 percent increase in the energy consumption across the country. This means, alongside the mentioned 5000 MW shortage, we should also account for yet another 4000 MW (5% of 81,000MW).

Therefore, in order to avoid blackouts during the summer, the energy ministry should take into account a 9000MW gap in their calculations.

■ What to expect?

Even if the country's hydropower plants generate 5000 MW more electricity this year as said by Haqifam, there would still be a 4000MW shortage to cover.

It should also be noted that Iran has increased its electricity generation capacity by only 500 megawatts (MW) since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year and even considering the increase in comparison to the last year's H1 generation capacity which was 79,325 MW, still the 1175 MW of newly added capacity cannot make a big difference.

Going through all these numbers and mathematics, we can fairly conclude that even this year's blissful rainfalls would not be able to fully compensate the unbalance between the country's electricity generation and the demand during the peak period.

So it all comes to the consumers to make it their mission to manage their consumption during the summer's peak period and prevent going through excruciating hours of heat and disconnection.

China to build multi-billion-dollar offshore wind farm near east coast

China will build an offshore wind power project with an investment of 160 billion yuan (about 23.5 billion U.S. dollars) in waters off eastern Jiangsu Province, according to the provincial government of Jiangsu.

According to xinhuanet.com, on Sunday, the Jiangsu government and China Huaneng Group signed an agreement on the project with a planned installed capacity of over 10 million kilowatts.

The two sides will also cooperate to build an industrial base on the development, manufacturing, construction, and maintenance of offshore wind farms, according to the agreement.

The "project reflected China's strengthened efforts to build a system of clean, safe and high-efficient energy," said Shu Yinbiao, chairman of Huaneng.

The new wind-power project will help meet Jiangsu's increasing demand for energy, as the province is accelerating its pace of industrial restructuring, according to the Jiangsu government.

Wind has become China's third-largest power source after coal and hydro.

According to the Global Wind Energy Council, China ranked third in terms of the total installed capacity of offshore wind turbines, accounting for 11 percent of the world's total as of the end of 2016, after Britain and

Argentina readies to join LNG exporters club with maiden cargo

Argentina is about to export its first liquefied natural gas (LNG) cargo from a new floating facility, marking a milestone for its energy sector boosted by rising gas production from its large Vaca Muerta shale region.

According to reuters.com, state energy firm YPF is believed to be offering a partial LNG cargo from FLNG Tango, the liquefaction vessel off Bahia Blanco, two LNG trading sources said on Monday. One source said the cargo was on a free-on-board (FOB) basis for prompt loading.

FLNG Tango, owned by Belgian shipping company Exmar, arrived in Bahia Blanca in February.

Argentina will become the 21st country to export LNG. It has long bought LNG, alongside buying pipeline gas from neighboring coun-

tries and producing its own, to boost supplies especially during winter.

But rising output from Vaca Muerta, one of the world's largest reserves of shale oil and gas, helped it reduce LNG imports by over 20 percent last year to 2.6 million tons, according to industry group GIIGNL.

The new exports do not mean Argentina will cease importing LNG; energy firm Integracion Energetica Argentina (IEASA), formerly known as ENARSA, has issued buy tenders for LNG cargoes for delivery throughout May to September.

The country needs billions of dollars in investment into the construction of pipelines, storage terminals and other energy infrastructure to fully benefit from its shale resources.

Is digitalizing a diverse portfolio the booster of renewable dominance?

There is no doubt that renewables are the largest opportunity in business history. However, growth comes with pain, and a young industry like renewables isn't what one would call stable. Industry investors have been employing diversification in energy type, OEMs and different markets as a safety net against turbulence, but is it enough? And, is it efficient? The key to leverage the benefits of a diverse portfolio seems to be digitalization.

Solar Power World reported, at first glance, the renewable investment landscape seems like it's all flowers and rainbows — with a pot of gold at the end of it. Solar and wind power are currently the cheapest ways to generate electricity and are bound to get even cheaper, with \$7.4 trillion projected investments within the next two decades.

Last and definitely not least, the breaking trend of the next decade, batteries are projected to disrupt the entire industry by creating new business models and completely changing the face of the grid.

That very driving force that's made investment in renewables appealing — the falling upfront cost — is also inducing a great amount of turbulence. National and regional policies are affecting renewable energy investments, pushing major players to explore different energy types and emerging markets.

Manufacturers are constantly popping up, increasingly being acquired, merged or forced out of business, presenting new market challenges. So what, if any, levers do you have to shield your assets and find your footing in the quicksand that is the renewable energy industry?

■ Diversification a new tactic

Diversification is a known tactic among investors generally to minimize risk. A diverse renewable energy portfolio — across energy types, geographies and manufacturers — is an obvious strategy that can effectively absorb the shocks of the energy market. But doing so presents a host of other challenges that stem from managing diverse, distributed generation.

Overview of investment performance is rigid and time-consuming; engaging the right stakeholders slows down executive decisions; growth, the ultimate goal of diversification, becomes a beast of a task because of scattered data. Nevertheless, all these loose threads can be trimmed down by employing a simple strategy — one that the renewable industry has long been beckoning for [9, 10]; digitalization and data monitoring turn those issues into an opportunity, and trace sharply the outlines of diverse investments.

Enforcing software for diverse portfolio data management allows owners and investors to centralize and harmonize data from a broad spectrum of manufacturers, energy types and geographies. In turn, investors experience 3 critical benefits, which add a layer of protection against market volatility, complementary to portfolio diversification.

As an investor, regardless of how you choose to operate your renewable energy assets, having an overview of and direct access to your data, gives you full independence. Data management software gives you a holistic view of different OEMs and energy types and direct access to your portfolio at anytime. This way, you can eliminate multiple layers of scheduled third-party reporting.

Collaboration and information flow among the stakeholders is instant, painless and takes place in a single platform, as opposed to streaks of email conversations spanning weeks, and spreadsheets. Moreover, you have instant track record proof of any investment at any portfolio level.

Specifically for a diverse portfolio, centralizing data from different energy types and OEMs can make a world of difference in terms of efficiency and ultimately decision making. The big picture is now more important than ever, and owning it — precompiled and in the cloud — is all a savvy investor would require to make informed and actionable decisions.

Every investment has an element of risk and, as for renewables, volatility is a routine. However, diverse portfolio data security can be safeguarded from turbulence in the OEM department, when provided with a second layer of an independent connection.



U.S. Trump recklessly going to much risky extremes in game of war against Iran



TEHRAN (FNA)— Although political Tehran and Washington say they don't want war, President Donald Trump is using his National Security Advisor John Bolton to still push for a war-like situation against Iran based on miscalculations.

Bolton has been doing that since the U.S. invaded Iraq and has reportedly asked the Pentagon regime to plan for a military strike. Together with Fakestream media in the U.S., Trump, Pompeo and Bolton repeat claims about the manufactured Iranian nuclear threat, relying on Israel with well known records for manipulating and faking intelligence.

To no one's surprise, Bolton was part of the apparatus of building the false case for the disastrous 2003 U.S. war against Iraq. He recently said, "Once upon a time, we knew how to do clandestine regime change. We need to reacquire that capability."

Apparently, the current war scare with Iran is mainly the work of Bolton, but American fakestream media, Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu and Saudi Arabia's Mohammed bin Salman, as well as Mike Pompeo and the UAE are equally ramping up an alleged Iranian nuclear threat. But still the main actor here is Donald Trump, who is trying to use them as a tool for producing the suspension impact on Iran.

This is while numerous reports by the International Atomic Energy Agency acknowledge that despite Washington's unilateral withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal there is no evidence that Iran is working on nuclear weapons, at whatever pace.

Call this scare tactic or anything else, but the U.S. plans, even at a very preliminary stage, show how dangerous the war with Iran is. Iran's default option for 40 years has been defense and the U.S. insistence to claim otherwise so that the administration could drum up a war with Iran is frankly mind-boggling that surely warrants more than friction.

Indeed, it is the growth of the military-industrial complex and not Iran that poses an existential threat to humanity. What needs to be done is bring it under control because in the current administration in Washington, lying and faking is routine rather than exceptional. Whether the world community is headed for a turning point toward bringing liars to justice will become clear when the current escalation and military buildup in the Persian Gulf is behind us. Otherwise, the whole world, specially energy consumers will be forced to pay a high price since the U.S. is taking increasingly risky moves.

What needs to be done with the warmongers in Washington and Pentagon is an act of truth-telling, of exposing the realities about which the international civil society has been misled in order to avert yet another unnecessary, deadly conflict. The United Nations and the Security Council should take action to harness the U.S. futile game. The White House is pushing the situation to the edge to make its threat of military action more credible, but the chances for Tehran's submission is absolute zero no matter what the price.

It is almost unnecessary to remind the world community that igniting a war with Iran will be a colossal catastrophe and a costly mistake, given that catastrophe and costly mistakes have been the invariable outcome of America's past misadventures in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Libya. Any intelligent person knows that. When the potential regional and global effects are calculated, no one would profit from worst-case scenarios - yet we can still expect no alarmist reports from corporate media.

We've been here before. Seventeen years ago President Bush used the infamous term "Axis of Evil," to describe Iran, Iraq and North Korea. He claimed that Iraq wanted to attack Israel with a nuclear weapon and trigger World War III. And mainstream media sat and watched.

The international civil society must make the recent escalation and military buildup in the Persian Gulf an urgent issue. They must tell Trump and his officials and regional lackeys that under no circumstances do they have the right to jeopardize global security and stability for the sake of their sick game against Iran.

The same could be said about the European Union. After tepidly standing by while Trump clamped sanctions on Iran, it has said or done almost nothing about the recent U.S. escalation. If the Europeans are ever to be a buffer against Washington's new adventurism, it ought to be now. Otherwise, they will be also in the receiving end in the form of higher energy prices and a fresh refugee crisis of biblical proportions.

Nevertheless, considering the danger posed and the array of American, Saudi and UAE enemies lined up against it, Iran has been remarkably calm and poised in the face of such provocations. It has not lashed out or carried out attacks against Israeli, U.S. or Saudi targets. But it is prepared to defend itself. This follows a generally pragmatic course in its regional relations for 40 years. The world community should help Iran keep it that way.

Iran's assessments are still the same, neither does Tehran want to launch a first strike nor is the U.S. willing to risk a battle, but this does not mean that it would sit idly to watch the U.S. army continue their highly dangerous moves to change the calculations in Iran. American officials are adamant to understand that war is no toy to play with. They may not set the stage for a game of war against Iran and remain in control to the end. Eventually one of these false-flag operations like what happened in Baghdad last night may easily go wrong. Some time in future the U.S. army or its allies may go very wrong in their calculations to try to push the situation even further to the edge, while in fact they cross the redline and trigger unwanted war by mistake. They should know that they can't play with fire and go away unharmed.

Surprising survey in Iowa Biden has no easy win!

By Saeed Sobhani

TEHRAN — The state of Iowa is the first state in which the Democratic primaries are held. Recent polls in the state suggest that people like former U.S. Vice President Joe Biden and Democratic Senator Bernie Sanders have no easy way to win this small and decisive state!

As Independent reported, Joe Biden may be leading national polls among Democratic voters, but a new poll shows his dominance doesn't necessarily extend to Iowa. Mr Biden is matched by Bernie Sanders in the state, a sharp drop from his 11 point lead in a separate poll last month. Both candidates can claim 24 per cent support in the state, which will vote first in the nominating process next year.

Mr Biden and Mr Sanders are followed in the new poll by several candidates with significant showings, including Pete Buttigieg (14 per cent), Elizabeth Warren (12 per cent), and Kamala Harris (10 per cent). Reading into the polls just a bit more, Mr Biden has more to worry about than just Mr Sanders, too. Ms Warren stands out as the most liked candidate in the race, with a favourability rating at 78 per cent — the top in the race. She is followed by Mr Sanders, who is the next closest with 71 per cent. "Good news for Elizabeth Warren: her favourability exceeds that of any other candidate in the race and her name recognition is near universal," said principal pollster Jane Loria in a news release.

She In some states, we see a large spread between the front-runners and the so-called second-tier in the excitement barometer, but in Iowa the candidates are all pretty tightly clustered. When we ask respondents to identify the five candidates they're most excited about, 54% say Warren, followed by Biden (53%), then Harris (53%), Sanders (49%), and Buttigieg (46%).

The terrain looks much better for Mr Biden when looking at the other states that follow close after Iowa, however. In New Hampshire, Mr Biden beats Mr Sanders 36 per cent to



18 per cent. In South Carolina, meanwhile, Mr Biden recently got 46 per cent support compared to Mr Sanders' 15 per cent. But, any fragility in Iowa could have real consequences for Mr Biden's third presidential race. The state has an outsized influence on the presidential nominating process, and a loss there would show potentially significant vulnerabilities for the former vice president. The Iowa Starting Line/Change Research Poll was released on Monday, and the Iowa caucuses will be held in January.

Of course, some other polls show the relatively comfortable Biden or Sanders win in Iowa. As The Hill reported, Former Vice President Joe Biden and Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) are tied atop the field of Democratic presidential hopefuls in Iowa, according to a new poll, suggesting that the crucial first-in-the-nation caucus state is still in play for both men.

An Iowa Starting Line/Change Research poll released on Monday shows Biden and

Sanders each receiving 24 per cent support among likely Democratic caucusgoers in Iowa. They're trailed by South Bend, Ind., Mayor Pete Buttigieg, who received 14 per cent of the vote, Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), who came in fourth with 12 per cent, and Sen. Kamala Harris (D-Calif.) who also had double figures at 10 per cent support.

The tie between Biden and Sanders in the Hawkeye State differs from most recent national polling results that have shown the former vice president trouncing his competition, often by double digits. A Fox News survey released last week, for instance, showed Biden with an 18-point lead over Sanders, the poll's second-place finisher. And a recent left-leaning poll of South Carolina voters, an important Democratic primary state, showed Biden leading Sanders by more than 30 points.

The Iowa poll, however, shows a much closer race between Biden and Sanders for the all-important opening caucus. The for-

mer vice president has double the support of Sanders among voters 65 and older — 30 per cent to 15 per cent, according to the Iowa Starting Line/Change Research poll. But Sanders carries a significant lead over Biden among voters between the ages of 18 and 31 — 41 per cent compared to Biden's 9 per cent.

Meanwhile, Biden outperforms Sanders among female voters, according to the poll, taking 26 per cent support compared to Sanders's 19 per cent. Sanders, however, has more backing from male voters, 29 per cent of whom say they plan to support the Vermont senator in 2020. Biden has 21 per cent support among men.

To be sure, the Iowa caucuses are still nine months away, and caucusgoers in the state are often wary to commit too early to any particular candidate.

Still, Sanders performed well there in 2016, coming in a close second to Hillary Clinton in the caucuses that year. The Iowa Starting Line/Change Research poll released Monday found that 45 per cent of those who caucused for Sanders in 2016 still say that the Vermont senator is their first choice in 2020. The poll surveyed 615 likely Democratic caucusgoers in Iowa from May 15-19. It was a margin of error of 3.9 percentage points. There is no doubt that in the near future there are other polls in Iowa and other U.S. states that could conflict with the recent poll! An issue that should not lead to surprise audiences.

The victory or the defeat of any Democratic candidate in the Iowa State Election can also affect the votes of other states in the United States. This is what Biden and Sanders are both concerned about. Although former vice president of the United States is now trying to identify himself as a victor of the Democratic primaries in the United States now, referring to U.S. polls, Biden knows well that his defeat in the Iowa elections could It will also affect the results of public polls in the United States.

Trump is in a trade war he can't win

By George Koo

Asiatimes — Anyone with a decent education and a dollop of sophistication knows that nobody wins in a trade war. Specifically, there is no way U.S. President Donald Trump can win the war he initiated with China. He thinks tariffs levied on imports from China are "free" money going into the U.S. Treasury. Even his closest advisers know that's delusional thinking.

Tariffs are paid by the importer, and to the best of his or her ability is passed on to the ultimate buyer. In the case of daily-use items, it's the consumer that adsorbs the increased cost. The exporter of consumer goods from China also loses because at the higher effective price, less is sold. In the same way, tariffs imposed by China on imports from the U.S. limit the amount American exporters can sell to China. For instance, China was going to be a huge market for natural gas from Texas. With the added tariff, liquefied natural gas from the U.S. was priced out of the market. In theory, tariffs imposed on goods from China would be more painful to China because China sells much more to the U.S. than vice versa.

However, two-way trade is not zero-sum. China is not as dependent on buying from the U.S. as the U.S. is on buying from China. China can buy from alternative sources, for example lobsters from Canada instead of from Maine, soybeans from Brazil instead of Iowa, wine from France instead of California. On the other hand, goods imported from China usually have the lowest prices. By slapping import duties on these goods, the net effect is to raise costs for the American consumer, and the cost of living goes up.

Furthermore, around half of the imports from China are made by American companies in China. Thus American companies will be paying tariffs for importing their own products. So much for Trump's free money. In any event, both parties to the tariff war will feel the pain. It will simply be a matter of which party can withstand the pain better. So far Wall Street has not reacted strongly to the prospect of increasing tariffs, but it's only a matter of time.

Of course, there are more imports from China that Trump has yet to impose tariffs on, but the administration has already indicated that it has much more than trade in mind. Trump wants to stop China in every which way. The Trump team seem to think they can impose their will and insist that China needs to desist from stealing American intellectual property (IP) and codify that agreement in writing.

No nation would dignify such an insulting request with a response. Did the U.S. pledge in writing not to steal industrial technology from England, or Japan from the U.S., or South Korea from Japan? In Silicon Valley, companies infringe on and steal from each other. It's up to the owner to safeguard and protect its IP from theft and go after the offender mano a mano. It has never been a matter of one nation accusing another. Yet in the heated trade negotiations, the American side accuses China of practicing IP theft as a matter of national sponsorship. The presumption is that Chinese companies steal according to a national policy.

Overlooked in all this is that soon, if not already the case, China will own IP that American companies will wish to pilfer. High-speed mobile communications readily come to mind. It's hard to know if anyone is looking to steal Huawei's advance fifth-generation (5G) telecommunication technology, but the Trump approach is to suppress and deny Huawei market access. Trump may be able to deter American companies from buying Huawei, but it's not working elsewhere.

Other than vigorously badmouthing Huawei, American emissaries such as Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, national security adviser John Bolton et al can't offer any

hard evidence that Huawei equipment represents a security risk. They simply insist that others should not buy from Huawei because the White House says so. What's obvious is that Huawei offers technological advances here and now that no others can. Washington can't even put a finger on which aspects of the Huawei package are based on stolen IP.

The rest of the world is ignoring Washington and buying Huawei because of its superior technology at an irresistibly low price. Soon the telecommunications world will be divided into the haves with Huawei technology and the pitiful few countries with slow Internet speeds clinging to Uncle Sam's trousers.

The same situation is evolving geopolitically. Pompeo has been visiting national capitals warning the leaders to stay away from China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Why? Because he accuses China of practicing predatory financing when China offers to finance infrastructures for Third World countries. Yet at the just concluded Belt and Road Forum in Beijing last month, attended by 37 heads of state and with about 130 countries represented, the reaction couldn't be more positive, a clear refutation of what Trump's China team has been saying.

These countries love the idea that China is willing to help them build crucial infrastructure projects. Infrastructure, they know, is necessary for economic growth. Infrastructure as part of China's trade corridor from Asia to Europe means member states sitting on the corridor will get rich from global trade. Along with the 130-plus countries with shared economic interests with China, there is also the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. The AIIB was independently established to finance infrastructure projects in Asia.

The AIIB has 70 members, with 27 more waiting in line to join. Apart from some participants in the BRI, major shareholders include every major European country. Only conspicuous by their absence are Japan and the U.S. — not taking part in the AIIB was former U.S. president Barack Obama's missed opportunity. While the U.S. rings the world with military bases and asserts its leadership by projecting its might, China promotes economic collaboration with countries around the world.

The two strategic paths need not converge leading to conflict, but if conflict does break out, countries standing by the U.S. would be doing so based on fear and intimidation. Those standing by China are bound by common economic interests. As the world turns, increasing numbers will quit the former for the latter. Russia has become an important partner to China because of intertwined and complementary economic interests. The two countries are also key players in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, established more than two decades ago. The SCO also includes Central Asia countries, Pakistan and India, and is soon to include Iran.

Aside from economic and cultural cooperation, the alliance also holds joint military exercises to combat terrorism and ensure stability. In the event of U.S. military intervention, the SCO will stand with China. The organization represents half of the world's population and 80% of the Euro-Asia landmass.

While it has been said in Washington circles that Bolton and Pompeo hanker for effecting regime change in Iran, Trump is not totally without common sense. Even though waging a proxy war on Iran with American lives would please his client states, Israel and Saudi Arabia, as well his super-wealthy support base as home, he knows Iran is no mere Iraq. Furthermore, as reported in Asia Times, Russia and China are on the same page in their foreign policy and stand firmly behind Iran. That should be enough to give any of the hot-blooded hawks in the White House pause. Even pundit Pat Buchanan thinks war on Iran would be the end

of Trump presidency.

Besides Iran, Russia's and China's positions on Cuba, North Korea, Syria, Afghanistan and Venezuela are very different from United States', and in some cases even diametrically opposed to Washington. If Pompeo and Bolton believe they can dictate terms to these hotspots without the support of China or Russia, they are hallucinating.

Thus if Iran is unlikely to trigger a calamitous war, Trump can turn his full attention to resolving the China challenge, a dilemma sitting at the fork of the road. He can back off as he has in the past and seek a non-zero-sum approach that would enable both sides to win. Or he can double down and impose tariffs on \$300 billion worth of Chinese imports currently entering the U.S. duty-free. If Trump decides to raise the stakes of the trade war, China will not be able to retaliate in kind, since China imports much less than the U.S. imports from China. But the Chinese have other ways to raise the stakes.

China can stop exporting rare-earth minerals and compounds to the U.S. Rare earths are essential to a host of industries including electronics and defense. Without access to rare earths, American industries would grind to a halt, and it would take years to develop alternative supplies from known deposits within the U.S. China can also greatly diminish its support for the U.S. national debt by buying fewer Treasury bills. China currently holds around \$1 trillion of American IOUs. If China were to stop buying or even divesting some of the Treasuries it already holds, it would shake the confidence in the dollar and create instability in the U.S. financial market.

China has become the largest and most profitable market for U.S. automakers. Profits earned from China often make up the major part of a company's total earnings. Another retaliation in the trade war would be to close the market to American companies. Another strike with surgical precision is for the Macau government to suggest to the media that the renewal of gaming licenses for the three American operators is in doubt. Las Vegas Sands (LVS) is the largest of the three, and a little over 60% of its revenue and profit come from Macau.

Sheldon Adelson is the majority owner of LVS and a heavy financial contributor to Trump's presidency. Any hint that LVS is in trouble in Macau would be a direct hit to Adelson's net worth and sure to put a crimp on his enthusiasm for Trump's China policy.

From the inception of this trade war, Trump and his team have asserted that the war "is easy to win." What I have listed above are just some of the tools China can use to ensure a lose-lose outcome. Any of the retaliatory moves would destabilize the global economy and severely erode Trump's core supporters. The outcome would be a classic lose-lose, and it is debatable who would lose more. As a senior official at the State Department recently declared, the war between the U.S. and China is between "civilizations." Knowing that China is coming from a different culture and background, the Trump administration should know better.

Up to now Trump's China team has been projecting American values and thinking on to the Chinese. Just because "we lie, we cheat, we steal," doesn't mean China will act the same way. Unlike the U.S., China does not interfere with the internal affairs of other states, does not wish to dominate and occupy someone else's territory, and does impose its way of government on anyone else. If the U.S. could stop waging an unwinnable trade war and stop demanding that China must be more like the U.S., it would be possible for the two sides to come to an understanding. They can reach an amicable win-win resolution wherein each party can feel that it has won.

Different polls in France

French president is losing anyway!

By Ali Azimi

TEHRAN—In recent days, various polls have been published in France. Polls, on the one hand, reflect the growing popularity of the country's president, on the other, reflecting the superiority of the French National Front in the European Parliamentary elections. This contradiction and controversy, in itself, reflects the confusion of the French community. It will have devastating effects on French politicians and parties. Here are two different surveys and reports on the political situation in France:

As The Express reported, The eurosceptic Rassemblement national (RN) party topped the list in France with 24 percent of the vote, just ahead of M Macron's République en Marche (REM), a poll published on Saturday found. M Macron's REM party would obtain just 22 percent of the vote, the Harris Interactive poll of 1,031 people conducted on May 17-18 for RTL radio, television channel TF1 and newspaper Le Figaro showed. In a separate poll, published on May 11, 23.5 percent of the people polled said they would vote for the RN's "Prenez le pouvoir" (Take Power) EU list, against 22.5 percent for the REM's "Renaissance" list, according to Harris pollsters. The two new polls show a surge in support for Mme Le Pen's RN party – which was 3.5 percent behind REM on May 3.

The centre-right Les Républicains party and the far-left La France Insoumise (France Unbowed) are expected to come in third and fourth place respectively, with about 12.5 percent and 10 percent of the vote.

A separate survey by Ifo Fiducial published last week confirmed the rightward shift that has swept Europe. The poll of 2,765 people, conducted on May 13-16 for Paris Match, news channel CNews and Sud Radio, showed the RN winning the French vote with 24 percent, against the REM's 23 percent. Ifo's deputy chief Frédéric Dabi told Paris Match: "The Rassemblement national has never been stronger."

Polls suggest eurosceptic parties like the RN are on course to win a third of seats in the EU parliament and could join forces to build a pan-European power base. Mme Le Pen's surge comes as fellow eurosceptic group the Brexit Party remains at the top of the polls



In recent days, various polls have been published in France. Polls, on the one hand, reflect the growing popularity of the country's president, on the other, reflecting the superiority of the French National Front in the European Parliamentary elections.

in the UK, ahead of both Labour and the Conservatives, capitalising on the current discontent over Brexit. It is expected to garner up to 30 percent of the British vote, while Labour is expected to garner 21 percent and the Conservatives some 12 percent, according to a Survation poll of 1,303 people conducted on May 8-9.

If the voter surveys prove accurate, the Conservatives would fall to their lowest vote share in a national election since they formed in 1834. The Liberal Democrats, Greens and Change UK, who all call for a second referendum, collectively have 28 percent of the public's vote. Widely framed as a contest between far-right populists who want to take back power from Brussels and liberal progressives pushing for a more ambitious bloc, the vote is expected to shape the future of the EU.

If the vote gives Mme Le Pen the biggest number of French seats in the European Parliament as expected, it will erode M Macron's authority among Europeans as he pushes for closer EU integration.

The EU election will also be the young centrist's first national test since he became president two years ago on a promise to transform France, a pledge which is yet to bear fruit. More than 400 million Europeans will be called on to vote on May 23-26 to set the stage as Brussels debates its uncertain post-Brexit future and faces a rising populist tide. The 751-member legislature will play a key role in the weeks and months after the vote in assigning key leadership roles on the EU Commission and EU Council. Voting takes place in the UK on Thursday, May 23 and in France on Sunday, May 26, with the Europe-wide results expected on

Sunday evening.

But as Bloomberg reported, French President Emmanuel Macron's approval rating rose to 30% in May, his best score since last summer in the monthly Ifo opinion survey published by Le Journal du Dimanche. The level of support for Macron rose by 1 percentage point from April, but about two out of three of those surveyed are not satisfied with his performance as president, according to the survey published in the daily newspaper Sunday. Two years after his 2017 election, Macron is getting more support than Francois Hollande at the same time of his mandate. Satisfaction for Macron has been recovering in the Ifo poll after a hitting a 23% low in December.

Ifo interviewed 1,946 French people aged 18 or more from May 10 to May 18. According to the Ifo survey, the approval rating for Prime Minister Edouard Philippe also rose by 1 percentage point in May. The poll doesn't compare Macron and his prime minister with any rival politicians.

There is no doubt that the French president is in a bad position. If he succeeds in the European parliamentary elections, traditional French parties like the Republican Party and Socialist Party will share with him in the future. If Macron is defeated in the European parliamentary elections, there will be no way to revive his lost political position. Protesters condemn Macron of closing his eyes on the rising cost of living in France. During the recent rallies, four people have died and dozens were wounded. The protests raised at a time when some analysts were speaking of Macron's role in leading Europe! Not long ago, there were talks of Macron becoming Europe's new Angela Merkel, and that he's slowly assuming her role as Europe's leading figure.

In the face of recent protests, Macron had no way but to withdraw from his order to increase fuel taxes. It also seems that he should take more appeasing actions to satisfy the demonstrators. Under such circumstances, other reforms that were to be implemented by Macron's government in near future now look much less likely to happen. Finally, the French president is a great loser in the European political scene, even if his party can win in the European parliamentary elections!

Stephen Lendman: Trump, Pentagon commanders oppose war on Iran

TEHRAN (FNA) — US columnist Stephen Lendman described the Trump administration as the most extremist in US history, reiterating that his top military brass stand strongly opposed to any kind of war against Iran.

"As irrationally hostile as Trump is toward the Islamic Republic, I believe he's reluctant to go this far. Pentagon commanders oppose war on Iran and Venezuela," Lendman told FNA in an exclusive interview.

Stephen Lendman was born in 1934 in Boston, MA. In 1956, he received a BA from Harvard University. Two years of US Army service followed, then an MBA from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania in 1960. After working seven years as a marketing research analyst, he joined the Lendman Group family business in 1967. He remained there until retiring at year end 1999.

Writing on major world and national issues began in summer 2005. In early 2007, radio hosting followed. Lendman now hosts the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network three times weekly. Lendman is a 2008 Project Censored winner and 2011 Mexican Journalists Club international journalism award recipient. Lendman lives in Chicago. His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."

What follows is FNA's interview author and writer Stephen Lendman.

■ Some believe that war with Iran is not President Trump's choice or priority. What is your opinion?

A: I've written several times on whether the Trump regime will or won't go to war on Iran.

US war plans were drawn on Iran and updated at least since the Bush/Cheney era, never implemented, likely earlier.

The Trump regime is the most extremist in US history. I rule nothing out with the likes of Pompeo and Bolton in charge of DJT's geopolitical agenda.

At the same time, I think they'll continue what I call war by other means, targeting Iran's economy by sanctions and other hostile actions — short of military intervention.

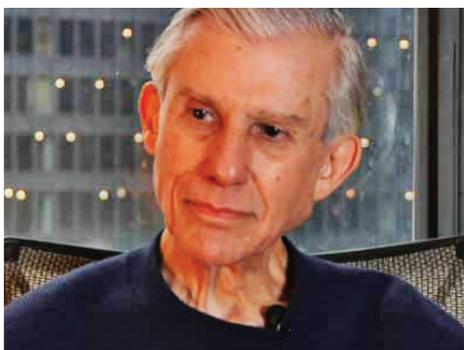
As irrationally hostile as Trump is toward the Islamic Republic, I believe he's reluctant to go this far. Pentagon commanders oppose war on Iran and Venezuela.

Both nations can hit back hard if attacked. In Venezuela's case, millions of its citizens are mobilized to defend the nation if attacked by a foreign power. Along with the country's military, they're prepared to wage protracted guerrilla war to preserve and defend the Bolivarian Republic.

In Iran's case, its military can strike Israeli cities, military facilities and nuclear sites if attacked by the US or the Jewish state. It can also inflict considerable damage to regional Pentagon forces.

US war on Iran would be hugely destabilizing. If Russia intervenes as it did in Syria to combat US-supported terrorists, aiding Iran to protect its regional interests, a strong possibility, global war could follow — what neither Washington nor Moscow want.

My bottom line is that while US war on Iran is possible, I doubt the Trump regime will go this far, especially knowing



Trump is also beholden to Netanyahu and the Israeli lobby. Netanyahu and other Israeli hardliners want war on Iran, wanting the US to do their fighting. I've said they should be careful about what they wish for. Israeli targets will be ferociously attacked if the US goes to war with Iran. Hezbollah could get involved, knowing it's next if Iran is attacked. Its thousands of missiles can hit all targets in Israel and some US regional ones.

how adversely the global economy will be affected if Iranian forces block the Strait of Hormuz in response to war or the US blocking its oil exports.

■ There are also some arguments President Trump's priority is trade war, and they make mention of the recent trade wars against EU, China and others in support of their reasoning. What is your take on that?

A: Trump is a creature of dark forces controlling him. He was co-opted straightaway in office by US monied interests, mainly Wall Street, Big Oil, and the nation's military, industrial, security complex.

The same is true for all US presidents, the lesson of Jack Kennedy not forgotten — killed by the CIA for wanting all US forces out of Southeast Asia, rapprochement with Soviet Russia, nuclear disarmament, Palestinian rights respected, along with opposing other policies long followed by US

governments.

Trump will do what dark forces in the US demand of him. I believe they don't want war on Iran or Venezuela. The world community strongly opposes aggression against both countries.

If the US attacks them militarily, it'll likely be a coalition of one with at most minor support from allies, other than Israel, the Saudis and UAE against Iran.

I know of no Latin American country willing to join a US war against Venezuela.

US economic and trade issues with China are not over the trade deficit, a minor issue. They're all about wanting China's aim to become an economic, industrial, and technological powerhouse undermined — wanting US corporate interests to have a leg up on Chinese and other foreign competition.

■ Given the priority of trade war, it is believed, at least by a good number of politicians and media in the US, that President Trump's foreign policy toward Iran stops short of what is desired by John Bolton and his warmongering strategy. What do you think?

A: According to one or more unnamed sources, Trump may replace Bolton. He's more hostile to Iran than anyone else in Washington, pushing for war, but Pompeo is a close second, wanting the Iranian government toppled.

The will to go to war against Iran in Washington is weak at best, why I doubt it will happen.

■ It is also speculated that if Trump fails in his engagement strategy toward Iran by the start of the presidential campaign, he might fire those who pursue the most hawkish policies against Tehran, like John Bolton, in a blame game. What is your assessment?

A: Trump is also beholden to Netanyahu and the Israeli lobby. Netanyahu and other Israeli hardliners want war on Iran, wanting the US to do their fighting.

I've said they should be careful about what they wish for. Israeli targets will be ferociously attacked if the US goes to war with Iran.

Hezbollah could get involved, knowing it's next if Iran is attacked. Its thousands of missiles can hit all targets in Israel and some US regional ones.

■ Trade war with China, North Korea negotiations, Venezuela and Iran are the main issues in President Trump's foreign policy. How much are these issues to affect the result of the next presidential elections in the US?

A: The 2020 US presidential election is months away. Lots can happen between now and then.

The US and world economy are shaky. If things turn sour domestically and in Europe, adversely affecting US allies, Trump fearing his reelection chances would be harmed, it's possible he might launch a war to distract attention from domestic economic trouble.

It's been done before and could happen again. While I doubt the US will attack Iran or Venezuela militarily, if it comes I believe a false flag will launch it.

It's a longstanding US tradition since the mid-19th century, 9/11 the mother of them all.

Modi reelection will further enhance China-India trust

By SABENA SIDDIQUI

Global Times— Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi appeared poised to win reelection, according to the exit polls released after India's general elections ended on Sunday. Modi's reelection will further stabilize and improve China-India relations. During Modi's term of office, India's relations with China show the trend of steady development. The meeting between President Xi Jinping and Modi in 2018 opened a new chapter for the two countries' bilateral ties and laid the foundation for future relations. Some of Modi's actions triggered controversy in China. Modi invited the so-called president of the "Tibetan government-in-exile" Lobsang Sangay to his swearing-in ceremony in 2014. Modi has also visited the region on the east section of the China-India border - the so-called "Arunachal Pradesh" in India - three times since 2014.

These acts were mostly to drum up support for his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). In recent years, nationalism and the trend of returning to Hinduism have increased in India, somewhat containing Modi's policies toward China. But generally speaking, Modi's policies have been sound.

Modi separated political conflicts from economic cooperation, a wise move that brings reciprocal results to both countries. Modi knows that tense relations with China are not in line with India's interests. India joined the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank although the US and Japan strongly opposed. According to the Financial Times in 2018, India emerged as the bank's biggest beneficiary. India has stuck to its policy of non-alignment and did not adjust its policies toward China according to Washington's strategy for Beijing. These are all positive diplomatic achievements of the Modi administration.

And these policies will continue if Modi is successfully re-elected. The China-US trade war provides more chances for China-India cooperation and China will turn to India when it is looking for a substitute for imports. India also has more opportunities to enter the Chinese medicine and software markets. Beijing and New Delhi should further seize the opportunity to expand their trade and economic cooperation.

China is also putting efforts into promoting relations with India. China imported more Indian products to further reduce the trade deficit. This brought effective results: Statistics for 2018 showed that the India-China trade deficit fell significantly by \$10 billion. India's dispute with Pakistan is an important factor that influences China-India relations. China always encourages the two countries to build mutual trust through cooperation in trade, economies, anti-terrorism and other areas. As Pakistan and India are both members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, they will have more cooperation within the framework.

India needs to avoid labeling China as its strategic rival or regarding counterbalancing China's influence as a priority. Or else it will fall into Washington's strategic trap. India's great power status in the region was not built by counterbalancing China, but by mutual cooperation. Modi's reelection benefits the continuity of his policies toward China and the two countries' mutual trust. India is China's important neighbor and the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative has created beneficial results in South Asia. We hope New Delhi can join in the progress and work together with Beijing for the development of India and the region.

World is failing children in Yemen

TEHRAN (FNA) — According to the head of the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the time is now for the international community to take action to end four years of fighting which has left at least 7,300 children killed or seriously injured.

Henrietta Fore says, "These are verified numbers. Fifteen million children are asking for help. Imagine the pain endured by the families of the children who never made it home. In any conflict, children suffer first."

This is while despite the fragile peace process around 360,000 children suffer severe acute malnutrition, and half of them under-five – or 2.5 million – have stunted growth, an irreversible condition. More than two million are out of school. In short, the UN says the systems that every child and family needs are failing.

Also, too many children are dying as a result of explosive weapons and Saudi airstrikes. The devastating toll that the armed conflict has had on children psychologically and physically should provide enough urge among the international community to further resources and political commitment to protect them. And protecting them would only come if the US-backed, Saudi-led war on Yemen is immediately brought to an end.

International law makes clear that everyone has a responsibility to make sure children are protected in this protracted war. Yet the war, the blockade and explosive weapons continue to kill, maim and terrorize millions of children. To make things worse, the Saudis and their allies are not doing anything to stop their airstrikes and abide by this important moral principle to protect children.

The UN in numerous reports has called on the Saudi-led coalition to adhere to the humanitarian laws and norms and human rights provisions that are there to protect Yemeni children. Some Western government which support Saudi Arabia militarily and with weapons have also been underestimating the harm done to children by their logistical support for airstrikes and bombings in densely populated urban areas. And attacks that cause disproportionate civilian harm are illegal under international law.

In fact, children are seven times more likely to die from blast injuries than adults involved in the fighting. The same is happening in Afghanistan. In that war-torn country, explosive weapons are also the cause of death in 84 percent of child conflict fatalities compared to 56 percent of civilian adult deaths. In the besieged city of Gaza, all reported child fatalities by Israeli airstrikes and shelling are the result of explosive weapons as well.

Just earlier this week, Saudi-led coalition airstrikes in Yemen's capital Sana'a killed several children. Children are also 50 percent more likely to be victims of a blast injury after airstrikes are over as they are finally able to go outside and play again. Not only do such experiences leave an emotional scar, but also injured children are more likely than adults to suffer more complex internal damage.

The bottom line is that the Saudis and their allies need to stop treating Yemeni children as though they are adults in miniature. Evidence on airstrikes and blast injuries shows children are the main victims of this unjustified war. This should be reflected in how the US-backed, Saudi-led airstrikes and bombings could be stopped – and how UN agencies responsible for investigating their war crimes could review the evidence in the international court of law.

Pars Diplomatic Real Estate

Apartment

Apt in Zafaranih
4th floor, 112 sq.m, 2 Bdrs. furn, 2
bath rooms, parking
\$1500

Ms.Sara: 09128103207

Duplex Apt in Fereshteh
320 sq.m, 4 Bdrs., unfurn
huge terrace, good light
renovated, parking
Price: negotiable

Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Apt in Elahieh
2th floor, 140 sq.m, 2 Bdrs
fully furn, elevator, gathering
room, storage, parking
Price: negotiable

Ms.Sara: 09128103207

Apt in Jordan
90 sq.m, 2 Bdrs., fully furn
equipped kitchen, house keeper,
storage, parking
\$1200

Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Apt in Mahmoodieh
brand new, 11th floor, furn
400 sq.m, 3Bdrs. with one suite
nice view, spj, gym, roof top
\$7000

Ms.Sara: 09128103207

Apt in Velenjak
2th floor, 200 sq.m, 2 Bdrs. fully
furn clean furn
elevator, storage, parking
\$1600

Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Villa

Villa in North Kamranieh
duplex, 750 sq.m land, 500 sq.m
built up, unfurn, servant quarter,
renovated

2 parking spots
Ms.Sara: 09128103207

Villa in Darband
duplex, 2000 sq.m land
400 sq.m built up, 4 Bdrs. unfurn,
outdoor swimming
3 balconies, garden

Renovated, 4 parking spots
Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Duplex Villa in Pasdaran
550 sq.m land, 630 sq.m built up, 4
Bdrs., unfurn, outdoor swimming
pool, renovated parking, **\$4000**

Ms.Sara: 09128103207

Villa in Elahieh
duplex, 3000 sq.m land
furn/unfurn, 500 sq.m built up
Beautiful garden, parking
Ms.Sara: 09128103207

Nice Office in Mirdamad
3rd floor, 90 sq.m, 1 Bdr
storage, parking, **\$700**

Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Whole Building
in South Kamranieh
20 apts, 216 sq.m to 204 sq.m
70 Bdrs. totally, spj, gym
industrial kitchen, restaurant
driver's room, security system
20 parking spots
Mr.Shayan: 09128440156



Holder of

ISO 9001:2008

ISO 10004:2012

ISO 10002:2014

From Oxford Cert Universal

**Best Consultation
Best Services, Best Result**

Intl. Department Manager "Tina 09128103205"

Tel: 22662452-8, Fax: 22667173

Hot Line: 28141

info@parsdiplomatic.com

www.parsdiplomatic.com

Building & Office

Whole Building in Farmanieh
3 floors, 760 sq.m land, each apt
320 sq.m with, 3 Bdrs., unfurn
elevator, 6 parking spots, **\$6000**

Ms.Sara: 09128103207

Office in Valiasr
administrative office license
3 units, 102 sq.m, elevator
lots of parking, near
Niayesh highway

Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Whole Building
in Argentina Square
brand new, 6 floors, 6 apts
each floor 250 sq.m, 2 Bdrs.
elevator, parking, **\$10000**

Ms.Sara: 09128103207

Whole Building in Zafaranih
brand new, 6 floors, each apt
360 sq.m with 4 Bdrs., unfurn
equipped kitchen, spj, roof top
elevator 27 parking spots, **\$20000**

Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Whole Building in Darous
2 floors, 700 sq.m land
one apt 330 sq.m with 4 Bdrs.
another duplex apt 300 sq.m with
5 Bdrs., furn, equipped kitchen
renovated, huge terrace, mountain
view, parking, **\$5000**

Ms.Sara: 09128103207

Office in Saadat Abad
administrative office license
2 units, 110 sq.m, parking
Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Ideal Offers

Apt in Qeytarih
3rd floor, 150 sq.m, 3 Bdrs.
furn, equipped kitchen, terrace
renovated, storage, parking
\$1300

Ms.Sara: 09128103207

Apt in Valiasr _ Park Way
brand new, 2th floor, 110 sq.m
2 Bdrs., furn, equipped kitchen
parking
\$1200

Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Apt in Elahieh
180 sq.m, 3 Bdrs., fully furn
equipped kitchen, spj
elevator, parking
\$1600

Ms.Sara: 09128103207

Apt in Tajrish
almost new, 5th floor, 144 sq.m
3 Bdrs., furn, roof top
lobby, parking
\$2000

Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

Apt in North Shirazi
7th floor, 120 sq.m, 2 Bdrs.
furn, balcony, parking
\$1000

Ms.Sara: 09128103207

Apt in South Dibaji
almost new, 4th floor, 150 sq.m 3
Bdrs., furn, balcony, sauna
swimming pool, storage parking,
\$1300

Mr.Shayan: 09128440156

مالکین محترم

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

بهترین مشاوره، برترین سرویس، بالاترین رضایت

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

مالکین محترم

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

SHANON
Shanon_tari@yahoo.com
+989121907875
Tel : 88510081

Farmanieh Apts (\$1600) 2bdrs (\$2000) 3bdrs with S/p, F.F	Jordan 2bdrs, F.F (\$1100)	Zafaranih Villa (\$8000) 2000sq.m, 5bdrs, S/p green garden, S/q balcony, & F.F
Velenjak (\$1800) 3bdrs, S/p, S, & J	Elahieh Apts (\$1400) 2bdrs (\$2400) 3bdrs	Jordan bldg (\$5000) 5sorey, 20bdrs, pkgs

A development company in outskirt of Tehran needs a project manager for residential/commercial complex with the following qualifications:
Education: Master's degree in Civil Engineering or MBA or Architecture & Planning
Experience: **Min. 10 years**
Age: **35**
Fluent in **English**
Knowledge of finance, economic development
Experience: in Gov't. agencies & municipalities, responsible in logistics of zero to hundred in management, work under stress
Knowledge of related computer files, Excel, AutoCAD, etc.

Qualified and interested parties please contact email address:

mmonfaredio@gmail.com.
with resume & further information.

VIP GROUP

Professional Housing Agency

Going above and beyond to find your next home.

It's a true pleasure to introduce ourselves as one of the oldest and best agencies in Tehran. We were honored to find demanded property for embassies and foreign countries for more than 15 years. Best prices and strong contracts are guaranteed. The best advertisement is a great reputation.

WhatsApp/call : Shayan +98 912 285 0 415
Kia +98 912 357 17 76
Email: sh_vipgroup@yahoo.com

Don't Waste Your Time
Visit our website to choose your desired rental Properties
www.DeltaHOME.ir
The Most Specialized Website for Foreigners
HOME
Real Estate
Member of DELTA Real Estate Group
(021) 88888865

WHOLE BUILDING AVAILABLE
In GANDHI St.
Fully Furnished
0912-5794453

maharaja
Indian Restaurant
FIRST INDIAN RESTAURANT IN IRAN
PRIVATE PARKING LOT
Jahan Hotel (Exelsior) - Rahimzade Alley - Taleqani
Crossroads - Valiasr St. Tell: **66476855**

Advertising Dept:
times1979@gmail.com

TEHRANTIMES +9821 430 51 450
Iran's Leading International Daily
www.tehrantimes.com

The Tehran Times new pocket-sized glossary is now available on the market. The reader-friendly is a rich source of the most common journalistic terminology collected by the daily's retired staff. It can benefit a wide range of tastes from students to professional journalists. Persian equivalents have been given for all entries, including idioms and expressions. The glossary also includes example sentences for entries the authors thought it would be a bit difficult to learn.

For more information contact:
Tel: 021 - 430 51 450
times1979@gmail.com

Ancient lunar collision explains the moon's two faces

The moon has two faces -- the smoother, Earth-facing side and the rougher side, the dark side of the moon, which is marred by thousands of craters. Now, scientists know why the moon's hemispheres are so different.

According to a new study, an ancient collision between a dwarf planet and the moon left half the lunar surface permanently scarred.

Scientists have previously suggested Earth hosted two moons that merged billions of years ago. Planetary scientists have also previously floated the possibility of a collision between a dwarf planet and the moon.

If the moon did crash into a dwarf planet during the solar system's earliest days, the structure of the moon's crust should reveal the signature of such a collision.

Researchers were able to locate such a signature using surveys of the moon's gravitational field.

"The detailed gravity data obtained by GRAIL has given new insight into the structure of the lunar crust underneath the surface," Meng Hua Zhu, a researcher at the Space Science Institute at Macau University of Sci-



ence and Technology, said in a news release. Scientists ran dozens of simulations of various impact scenarios to see which type of collision produced crustal structures

similar to those found on the moon today.

Models showed a collision between the moon and an object slightly smaller than the dwarf planet Ceres offers the best explanation for the moon's two faces. Interestingly, simulations suggest the dwarf planet collided with the moon's near side. The impact threw up massive amounts of debris, which settled on the far side of the moon.

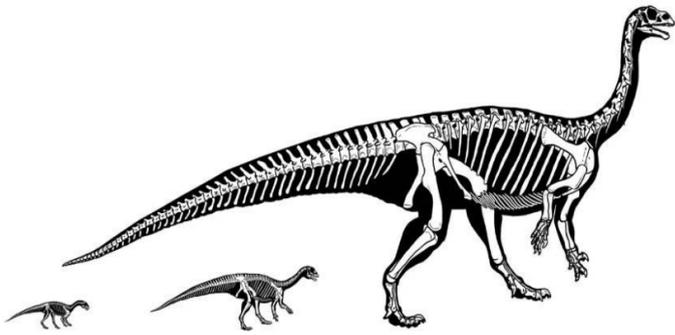
Such a large deposition event, scientists argue, explains why the far side of the moon's crust is significantly thicker than the near side's. It also accounts for the Earth-facing hemisphere's shortage of craters.

The new impact scenario could also help explain differences in the isotopes of potassium, phosphorus and rare-earth elements like tungsten-182 between the surfaces of Earth and the moon.

Researchers detailed the results of the lunar impact simulations this week in the Journal of Geophysical Research: Planets. The findings could help planetary scientists explain structural dichotomies on other.

(Source: UPI)

This early sauropod went from walking on four legs to two as it grew



Most long-necked sauropods lumbered on four legs all their lives to support their titanic bulk. But an early relative of such behemoths as Brachiosaurus made the unusual transition from walking on four legs to two as it grew, a new study shows.

Diminutive at hatching, *Mussaurus patagonicus* (which means "mouse lizard") began life walking on all fours. But by the time the 200-million-year-old plant eater reached its 6-meter-long adult size, it roamed what's now Argentina on two legs.

The changing length of *M. patagonicus*'s arm bones relative to its body and its inward facing-palms as an adult had hinted at the transition. But for the first time, computer simulations based on a rich fossil record show how a shift in the creature's center of gravity as it grew enabled a change to bipedal walking, researchers report May 20 in *Scientific Reports*.

Researchers took CT scans of fossil bones from six individual *M. patagonicus* -- covering different stages of the species' development, from 60-gram hatchlings the size of baby chickens to 1.5 metric ton adults the size of rhinoceroses. The researchers added virtual flesh to digitized bones to create 3-D models that allowed them to estimate both the weight and center of gravity of *M. patagonicus* at many different stages of its life.

Reconstructions of the hatchlings showed that the creature's center of mass was so far forward that the dinosaurs could move around only by walking on

all four legs, says Andrew Cuff, a paleontologist of the Structure and Motion Laboratory of the Royal Veterinary College in Hatfield, England.

As the dinos grew, their center of mass moved back toward their hips, allowing them to walk upright on two legs, Cuff and colleagues found. The transition "is incredibly rare," he says. "We have struggled to find any other animals aside from humans that go through that transition.... Finding it in the fossil record is pretty exceptional."

The results suggest these adult dinosaurs turned bipedal because their tail muscles became bulkier and heavier as they grew, moving their center of gravity backward, says Stephen Poropat, a paleontologist at Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne, Australia, who was not involved in the research. "It is not the changing proportions of *Mussaurus*'s front legs that is necessitating this change from walking on four legs to walking on two legs as an adult," he says.

As later long-necked dinos bulked up in size, going to two legs may no longer have been an option. Massive sauropods instead probably started on four legs like *M. patagonicus* and stayed that way, developing trunklike front legs to bear their weight. "What we gain from this [study] is that there may be a size limit of how big you can get being a biped in this group," Cuff says.

(Source: sciencenews.org)

Kilogram to be based on physical absolute instead of single, physical object



The kilogram is no longer defined by a physical object. Instead, from here on out, the unit of measurement will be based on fundamental constants, atomic properties and physical absolutes.

Scientists around the world will be able to reproduce the mass constant.

Until now, a kilogram unit was based on the mass of a cylinder made of platinum-iridium alloy. Housed in Paris, the cylinder has been the standard-bearer for the base unit of mass for 130 years.

Of course, physical objects change. Each time the cylinder was hauled out of storage to calibrate an instrument, the object shed a handful of atoms. Over the last 130 years, the cylinder lost 50 micrograms.

The abandonment of the physical kilogram was made official on May 20, 2019, which is World Metrology Day, a celebration of the Meter Convention held in 1875, where scientific leaders agreed upon the International System of Units.

With the official change in the definition of the kilogram, as well as changes to the definitions for the base units of charge, temperature, and mole, all international units are now defined by physical constants. Other common units, like the meter, made the switch years ago.

"The [International System of Units] is now based on a set of definitions each linked to the laws of physics and have the advantage of being able to embrace further improvements in measurement science and technology to meet the needs of future

users for many years to come," scientists at the Meter Convention announced in a news release.

From now on, the definition of a kilogram will be based on the Planck constant, which is based on the energy of a photon to its frequency. A single kilogram is equal to 6.62607015 times 10^{34} kilograms times square meters per second.

Nobel laureate Wolfgang Ketterle, a professor of physics at MIT, explained the change during a lecture on Monday, commemorating World Metrology Day.

"Conceptually, the explanation is that 1 kg is now the mass of a defined number of photons, 1.4755214×10^{40} , at the frequency of the cesium atomic clock," according to Ketterle.

The change doesn't mean scientists will now have to count photons. As Ketterle explained, there is a multi-step process for using physics and math to precisely define a kilogram.

"If you win a million dollars, and it is paid in pennies, you don't want to count pennies. You will first exchange the pennies into dollar bills, and then the dollar bills into 100 dollar bills, and then you count them," Ketterle told MIT News.

"In metrology, something analogous is done by comparing the atomic clock frequency of the cesium atoms to a much higher atomic frequency. Then you use this frequency to measure the mass of the electron or of a single atom, and only then you start counting," he said.

(Source: UPI)

Bad moods could be contagious among ravens

Here's a downer: Pessimism seems contagious among ravens. But positivity? Not so much.

When ravens saw fellow birds' responses to a disliked food, but not the food itself, their interest in their own food options waned, researchers report May 20 in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. The study suggests that the birds pick up on and even share negative emotions, the researchers say.

Ravens are "very good problem solvers ... but this paper's really highlighting their social intelligence as well," says Andrew Gallup, a psychologist at SUNY Polytechnic Institute in Utica, N.Y., who was not involved in the study. The work paints a richer picture of how the birds' brains work, he says.

Known for their smarts, ravens act in ways that suggest a capacity for empathy, such as by appearing to console a distressed comrade. Thomas Bugnyar, a cognitive ethologist at the University of Vienna, and his colleagues wanted to look into one building block of empathy -- whether animals share emotions. To be able to feel for others, an animal needs to be able to feel like others, he says.

But sizing up an animal's mood is tricky. Scientists generally rely on behavioral or physiological cues to clue into a creature's emotional state. More challenging is assessing how one animal's mood might influence another's: Similar actions appearing to stem from kindred emotions may just be mimicry.

To tune into the moods of ravens, the researchers set up experiments to watch whether the birds reacted positively or negatively to a neutral stimulus. This so-called cognitive bias test, used on a wide variety of animals from bees to pigs,



"is basically ... asking how you would judge a glass -- if it's half full or half empty," Bugnyar says.

Eight ravens, tested in pairs, were first given a choice between a box containing a cheese treat and an empty box. Once the birds learned the location of each option, they were given a third box in a new spot that hadn't been used in the training. Whether a bird acted as if the box was a trick or a treat indicated a cognitive bias, interpreted as pessimism or optimism.

Next, one bird in a pair was offered both unappealing raw carrots and tastier dried dog food before one was taken away. Birds left with the treat moved their heads and bodies as they studied it, while those getting the carrots

appeared crankier, spending less time attending to the offering and sometimes kicking or scratching elsewhere. The other bird in the pair watched these reactions from a separate compartment, without being able to see the researcher or which food the bird received.

Both birds then performed the cognitive bias test again. This time, observer birds that had seen their partner appearing perky showed on average the same level of interest in their own ambiguous box as they had previously. But those that had seen their partner reacting negatively typically took more than twice as long to approach the ambiguous box. This dip in the observer birds' interest was somehow influenced by seeing their partner's apparent disappointment, the researchers say.

Each bird was tested four times, half of the time with the undesired food and the other half with the treat.

It's interesting that while the negative responses seemed contagious, the positive ones did not, Gallup says. This may be because negative reactions are easier to provoke or observe, or because animals tune in more to negative information in their environment, the authors say.

The ravens study marks one of the first times the cognitive bias test has been used to examine emotions and social behavior, says coauthor Jessie Adriaense, a comparative psychologist at the University of Vienna. "Emotions are extremely important drivers of our behavior, but how they actually drive animals ... is still an open question," she says. To truly understand what motivates behavior in animals, scientists need to delve deeper into their emotions, she says.

(Source: sciencenews.org)

Training a neural network to study dark matter

As cosmologists and astrophysicists delve deeper into the darkest recesses of the universe, their need for increasingly powerful observational and computational tools has expanded exponentially. From facilities such as the Dark Energy Spectroscopic Instrument to supercomputers like Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory's Cori system at the National Energy Research Scientific Computing (NERSC) facility, they are on a quest to collect, simulate, and analyze increasing amounts of data that can help explain the nature of things we can't see, as well as those we can.

Toward this end, gravitational lensing is one of the most promising tools scientists have to extract this information by giving them the ability to probe both the geometry of the universe and the growth of cosmic structure. Gravitational lensing distorts images of distant galaxies in a way that is determined by the amount of matter in the line of sight in a certain direction, and it provides a way of looking at a two-dimensional map of dark matter, according to Deborah Bard, Group Lead for the Data Science Engagement Group in Berkeley Lab's National Energy Research Scientific Computing Center (NERSC).

"Gravitational lensing is one of the best ways we have to study dark matter, which is important because it tells us a lot about the structure of the universe," she said. "The majority of matter in the universe is dark matter, which we can't see directly, so we have to use indirect methods to study how it is distributed."

But as experimental and theoretical datasets grow, along with the simulations needed to image and analyze this data, a new challenge has emerged: these simulations are increasingly -- even prohibitively -- computationally expensive. So computational cosmologists often resort to computationally cheaper surrogate models, which emulate expensive simulations. More recently, however, "advances in deep generative models based on neural networks opened the possibility of constructing more robust and less hand-engineered surrogate models for many types of simulators, including those in cosmology," said Mustafa Mustafa, a machine learning engineer at NERSC and lead author on a new study that describes one such approach developed by a collaboration involving Berkeley Lab, Google Research, and the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

A variety of deep generative models are being investigated for science applications, but the Berkeley Lab-led team is taking a unique tack: generative adversarial networks (GANs). In a paper published May 6, 2019 in *Computational Astrophysics and Cosmology*, they discuss their new deep learning network, dubbed CosmoGAN, and its ability to create high-fidelity, weak gravitational lensing convergence maps.

"A convergence map is effectively a 2D map of the gravitational lensing that we see in the sky along the line of sight," said Bard, a co-author on the *Computational Astrophysics and Cosmology* paper. "If you have a peak in a convergence map that corresponds to a peak in a large amount of matter along the line of sight, that means there is a huge amount of dark matter in that direction."

■ The Advantages of GANs

Why opt for GANs instead of other types of generative models? Performance and precision, according to Mustafa.

"From a deep learning perspective, there are other ways to learn how to generate convergence maps from images, but when we started this project GANs seemed to produce very high-resolution images compared to competing methods, while still being computationally and neural network size efficient," he said.

"We were looking for two things: to be accurate and to be fast," added co-author Zaria Lukic, a research scientist in the Computational Cosmology Center at Berkeley Lab. "GANs offer hope of being nearly as accurate compared to full physics simulations."

The research team is particularly interested in constructing a surrogate model that would reduce the computational cost of running these simulations. In the *Computational Astrophysics and Cosmology* paper, they outline a number of advantages of GANs in the study of large physics simulations.

"GANs are known to be very unstable during training, especially when you reach the very end of the training and the images start to look nice -- that's when the updates to the network can be really chaotic," Mustafa said. "But because we have the summary statistics that we use in cosmology, we were able to evaluate the GANs at every step of the training, which helped us determine the generator we thought was the best. This procedure is not usually used in training GANs."

Using the CosmoGAN generator network, the team has been able to produce convergence maps that are described by -- with high statistical confidence -- the same summary statistics as the fully simulated maps. This very high level of agreement between convergence maps that are statistically indistinguishable from maps produced by physics-based generative models offers an important step toward building emulators out of deep neural networks.

"The huge advantage here was that the problem we were tackling was a physics problem that had associated metrics," Bard said. "But with our approach, there are actual metrics that allow you to quantify how accurate your GAN is. To me that is what is really exciting about this -- how these kinds of physics problems can influence machine learning methods."

Ultimately such approaches could transform science that currently relies on detailed physics simulations that require billions of compute hours and occupy petabytes of disk space -- but there is considerable work still to be done. Cosmology data (and scientific data in general) can require very high-resolution measurements, such as full-sky telescope images.

"The 2D images considered for this project are valuable, but the actual physics simulations are 3D and can be time-varying? and irregular, producing a rich, web-like structure of features," said Wahid Bhmiji, a big data architect in the Data and Analytics Services group at NERSC and a co-author on the *Computational Astrophysics and Cosmology* paper. "In addition, the approach needs to be extended to explore new virtual universes rather than ones that have already been simulated -- ultimately building a controllable CosmoGAN."

"The idea of doing controllable GANs is essentially the Holy Grail of the whole problem that we are working on: to be able to truly emulate the physical simulators we need to build surrogate models based on controllable GANs," Mustafa added. "Right now we are trying to understand how to stabilize the training dynamics, given all the advances in the field that have happened in the last couple of years. Stabilizing the training is extremely important to actually be able to do what we want to do next."

(Source: Science Daily)

Lonely Planet: Shetland named in list of top European destinations

Shetland has been named as one of the top 10 destinations in Europe.

It is the only UK place to feature - at number six - in the new Lonely Planet list for international travellers this summer, which is headed by the High Tatra mountains in Slovakia.

The guide praises Shetland's wildlife-spotting opportunities and its natural beauty.



It also highlights the annual Up Helly Aa fire festival as one of the reasons to visit Shetland.

Lonely Planet's vice president of experience Tom Hall said: "Nature rules this stirring setting, which features towering cliffs, rolling hills, sky-blue lochs and spectacular birdlife."

"Travelers will be captivated by the island's rugged beauty and welcoming locals."

It said visitors to Shetland would be rewarded with "awesome coastal trails, wicked wildlife watching, and fabled fish and chip shops".

The entry adds: "Spot otters and orcas from craggy headlands, then ease into the evening at one of Lerwick's local pubs. That is until the Viking-inspired Up Helly Aa festival bursts into fiery life each January."

Steven Coutts, leader of Shetland Islands Council, said: "Shetland has long been known as a welcoming destination for travelers, and it's great to have made Lonely Planet - and Europe's - top 10 this year."

"Those of us who live here know how fantastic the islands are, with stunning scenery and incredible wildlife on our doorstep."

■ Viking fire festival lights up Lerwick

VisitScotland chief executive Malcolm Roughead added: "Shetland's appearance as the only UK destination in Lonely Planet's prestigious Best in Europe 2019 is testament to the islands' strong pull for visitors."

"It boasts breathtaking scenery, unparalleled opportunities to see amazing wildlife and birds, a stunning coastline, delicious local food and drink, unique culture and heritage and an incredible historical and archaeological story to tell."

(Source: BBC)



ROUND THE GLOBE

Early Christian Monuments of Ravenna

The serial property Early Christian Monuments of Ravenna in north-east Italy consists of eight monuments, namely the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, the Neonian Baptistery, the Basilica of Sant'Apollinare Nuovo, the Arian Baptistery, the Archiepiscopal Chapel, the Mausoleum of Theodoric, the Church of San Vitale and the Basilica of Sant'Apollinare in Classe, built between the 5th and 6th centuries CE.



These religious monuments, decorated with precious marble, stuccos and mosaics, reflect the major historical, political and religious events that took place in Ravenna, which became the capital of the Western Roman Empire in 402 CE, and remained prominent first Ostrogothic and then Byzantine capital in Italy through the fifth and sixth centuries.

The Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, small but lavishly decorated in the inside with inspiring mosaics against a dark blue background, reflects the Western Roman architectural tradition.

The Neonian Baptistery, ornate with its inlaid marble, stuccos and multi-colored mosaics in the cupola, is the finest and most complete surviving example of an Early Christian baptistery.

The Basilica of Sant'Apollinare Nuovo was also built during the reign of Theodoric as a Palatine chapel, with mosaics in traditional Roman style that also show a strong Byzantine influence.

Lastly, five kilometres from Ravenna we find the Basilica of Sant'Apollinare in Classe, an imposing building with its impressive forms, cylindrical bell tower, spacious interiors and rich marbles and mosaics.

The Early Christian buildings of Ravenna are unique testimonies of the artistic contacts and developments in a highly significant period of the cultural development in Europe.

(Source: UNESCO)

Rare discovery in Burnt City: Caged monkey dead in captivity

HERITAGE TEHRAN — A team of archaeologists has discovered the remains of a prehistoric monkey in Burnt City, southeast Iran, saying the animal was held in captivity in a cage when it died.

Based on surveys and scientific studies on the monkey's skeleton, the animal was dead in captivity in a cage and it was buried by its owner like a child within a beautiful container, IRNA quoted senior archaeologist Seyyed Mansour Seyyed Sajjadi as saying on Monday.

The skeleton was found two years ago in a tomb in the UNESCO-registered Burnt City, Seyyed Sajjadi said.

Talking on the importance of the discovery, the archaeologist cited two reasons: "First, this type of monkey is not originally lived in the Iranian Plateau and based on [our] studies, such an animal was found [in a region] from northern India to the borders of China and Central Asia, so the monkey was one of the imported goods to the Burnt City."

"Since the Burnt City had lots of commercial relations with the eastern

territories of Iran such as northern India and central Asia, and there is a lot of information in this regard, we found that the monkey came from there."

"The other issue is that in the ancient world, monkeys were essentially regarded as luxury and aristocratic belongings. And they were imported to be presented to people of certain social classes such as elites, merchants, governors and religious authorities," he explained.

Known as Shahr-e Sukhteh in Persian, the Burnt City is situated in Sistan-Baluchestan province that was once a junction of Bronze-Age trade routes crossing the Iranian plateau.

Founded around 3200 BC, the Burnt City was populated during four main periods up to 1800 BC. Previous rounds of excavations showed that its residents had great skills in weaving, creating fine arts such as decorative objects, stone carving, and pottery painting.

Shahr-e Sukhteh is associated with four rounds of civilization, all burnt down by catastrophic sets of fire.



A view of the Burnt City, a UNESCO-registered archaeological site in southeast Iran.

25 million visited Iran's heritage museums in calendar year

HERITAGE TEHRAN — Some 25 million people paid visits to heritage museums and historical sites across Iran during the past Iranian calendar year (ended March 20).

Some 25 million people toured museums and other heritage sites (which have entry fees and are affiliated with the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization) during the past year (1397), IRNA quoted Mohammadreza Kargar, the director of CHHTO museums and historical properties, as saying on Monday.

"There are many historical relics that are owned by private collectors and entities and the government cannot act in order to preserve them in the museums;



therefore, we made efforts that this [cultural] heritage to be conserved and showcased in [their] private museums."

For the time being, 129 private museums, which are dedicated to cultural heritage, are open to the public across the country, the official said.

According to data compiled by the CHHTO, over 8.5 million visited Iran's heritage museums and historical sites during the past New Year (Noruz) holidays (ended on April 2), which shows a 10 percent growth year on year.

Last September, Kargar said that some three million historical objects are being kept in the CHHTO-affiliated museums, adding there are 600 museums in Iran.

UNESCO includes Kailash Mansarovar in tentative list of world heritage sites

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) has included Kailash Mansarovar in its tentative list of world heritage sites.

This year in April, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) along with Ministry of Environment and Forests sent a proposal to UNESCO to list Kailash Mansarovar into its world Heritage sites.

In the proposal, Kailash Mansarovar was categorized under both as a natural as well as a cultural heritage.

Kailash Mansarovar, popularly known as Mount Kailash, is the highest peak in Kailash range located in Lake Mansarovar in the remote south-western portion of the Tibet Autonomous Region of China and adjacent districts in the far-western region of Nepal. The Kailash Mansarovar is expanded across an area of 6,836 sq km



within India, the area is flanked in the east by Nepal and bordered by China on the north. The Indian site is part of the larger landscape of 31,000 sq km.

Both China and Nepal have proposed the landscape as a world heritage site to UNESCO.

If Kailash Mansarovar officially becomes the part of UNESCO world heritage sites permanently, the north-Indian state, Uttarakhand, a major transit point of the annual Kailash Mansarovar pilgrimage, will be benefited. This is because, as communities living along the pilgrimage route will be incorporated in the plan to develop sustainable tourism for the site.

The Indian portion of the landscape in the State of Uttarakhand comprises four major watersheds viz. the Panar-Saryu, the Saryu-Ramganga, the Gori-Kali and the Dhauri-Kali.

At present, UNESCO's list includes as many as 845 cultural Heritage sites across the world, out of which 29 are from India. (Source: Business Today)

How to check the safety of a charter airline



The fatal crash of a flight in Costa Rica has prompted questions about how to assess the reliability of charter services. Here's how to investigate.

Meryl Block Weissman was returning to New York from Costa Rica on New Year's Eve when she heard that 10 American tourists and two pilots had been killed in the crash of a Nature Air charter flight at the Pacific coast town of Punta Islita. Just days earlier, she, her extended family and others on a group tour were scheduled to fly the same airline.

But Nature Air made a last-minute change and "instead of three, two-engine planes the group would be put on four, single-engine Cessna planes," Ms. Block Weissman said. Concerned about the unexpected switch, their tour guide canceled their plans to fly and had them travel by bus and boat instead.

Ms. Block Weissman said that she was "disappointed not to see the rain forest from the air," but when she learned about the tragedy days later, she wondered if there was anything she could do to judge the safety of a foreign air charter.

"We want the people in the back seat to know there is a resource to get information," said Art Dawley, the chief executive of Wyvern, which assesses air charter services for corporate flight departments, frequent users of private aviation and more recently, ordinary travelers who do not usually take charters like Ms. Block Weissman.

For \$49, Wyvern provides a report that includes the charter company's insurance information, maintenance and pilot reports and an audit of the company's safety systems (if available) so travelers can know "the airline has done everything it can to be sure it has managed risk

to the industry standard," Mr. Dawley said.

Cincinnati-based Arg/us, which also audits the safety practices of participating air charter companies, gives travelers access to similar information through an online query called TripCheq. The fee is \$150.

But many people are booked on charters through cruise lines or tour operators and they may take the safety of the airline for granted, said Brian Alexander, an aviation attorney.

"People believe air operators are totally checked out and connected to and insured by the cruise ships or tour people," he said, but that is not always the case. Mr. Alexander said that travelers on charters they have not booked themselves should always ask the cruise line, "What have you done to assure yourself this is a safe and experienced operation?"

Air travel has never been safer than it was in the year just past with just two fatal accidents among commercial airlines worldwide. Still, risk varies by region. The Middle East and North Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and the Commonwealth of Independent States in Eurasia have the highest accident rates; between 2.8 and 5.8 accidents per million flights. That's three to five times the rate in North Asia and North America, according to statistics compiled by the International Air Transport Association.

Many factors contribute to the disparity including how pilots, mechanics, ground personnel and air traffic controllers are hired and trained, how airplanes are maintained and the state of the runways, radar, weather forecasting and communication systems. Governmental oversight is critical, safety specialists said.

As a former air accident investigator and the author of two books on the subject, I am often told by people that they assume regulation is the same around the world, but that is not the case.

"Oversight can be anywhere from pretty good in the U.S. and Europe while in many other places it's a crapshoot," Mr. Alexander said.

Travelers need to keep safety in perspective. A government not controlling hazards in aviation is probably equally lax on other modes of public transport. Statistically speaking, long distance commercial aviation is safer than driving or any other form of transportation, according to the I.A.T.A.

Here, some ideas for checking out air charter services.

Inspect the facility Aviation requires attention to detail and an aversion to hazards. Consider it a warning if you arrive at the airport and the appearance of the company, the airplane or the flight crew doesn't seem professional. Michele Markarian, the director of strategic accounts for the website Air Charter Guide and an experienced traveler, once walked away from a flight she had booked because the airplane didn't look up to snuff.

Allow extra time Travelers may be tempted to set aside their worries if rushing to the next destination. Having extra time to find an alternative will alleviate the pressure of getting on a plane you don't feel comfortable about.

Check references Call the company and ask for references. Trip Advisor also has an airline review page, and a Twitter search using a hashtag with the airline name can also be illuminating. Already there? Frank Craven of Air Charter Guide recommends asking locals for their opinion by saying, "I'm about to fly with ABC, what's their reputation?" They might tell you, "My drunk uncle is one of the pilots." So asking for information is good.

What does the United States government think? The Federal Aviation Administration's online International Aviation Safety Assessment contains a list of countries that meet international aviation safety and oversight standards. The list is comprehensive but only includes countries whose airlines are permitted to fly to the United States.

See the paperwork There are three documents that all charter airlines ought to be able to show you, according to Wyvern's Mr. Dawley: its air operations certificate, its insurance certificate and the pilots' qualifications — all should be available at the airline office.

Network protection Any domestic or regional carrier, including those that offer charter flights that are associated with an airline alliance like Oneworld or Star Alliance, will have to pass a safety audit; if it has an intercarrier ticketing arrangement, the major carrier, is responsible for auditing their operations, according to John Darbo, a retired safety manager for a United States airline who is now a private safety consultant. Recently, I.A.T.A. started a review process for small planes. The few companies participating can be found online.

Google it Aviation's thriving online community makes it possible to find out nearly everything you want to know about airplanes. The Air Charter Guide offers information about planes, pilots, operators and a glossary of terms. (Source: The New York Times)

Six million Iranians hold organ donation cards: MP

HEALTH TEHRAN — Six million Iranians hold organ donation cards, said Ali Nobakht, member of the health committee of the parliament (Majlis), adding although the number has increased over the past years, but there is still more work to be done.

Thanks to infrastructure provided, today 70 percent of Iranians can register for organ donation cards, he added, ISNA reported on Monday.

He made the remarks during an event held on the occasion of the National Day of Organ Donation, which was celebrated on May 20 at the Shahid Beheshti University.

According to statistics, about 90 percent of the families of brain death patients who own the cards agree with organ donation, while it is a hard procedure when the patient do not own the card, he said.

■ **Each brain death patient saves six lives**

Meanwhile, Ali Akbar Velayati, the head of Masih Daneshvari Hospital, a center for tuberculosis and lung diseases, said during the event that each brain death patient saves six lives but unfortunately people do not know much about this fact.

Lung transplantation, heart transplantation, simultaneous heart-lung and heart-kidney transplantation for the first time in Iran, transplantation of an artificial biologic trachea, and construction of bio artificial liver are some of the achievements of the hospital.

Unfortunately, each 2 to 5 hours, one Iranian, who is on the list of organ transplantation and is suffering from advanced cardiovascular tuberculosis disease, kidney failure or liver disease, lose his or her life, he lamented.

With disagreement of family members of a brain death patient, the life chance of one to six other Iranians is lost, he added.



A total of 1706 organ donations have been done during the past Iranian calendar year 1397 (ended on March 20, 2019), he announced.

One third of transplantation operations were done at Masih Daneshvari Hospital, however, the transmission of organs to other parts of the country is done as soon as possible, he added.

About 1000 lung transplantations and 250 heart transplant surgeries have been done at the hospital, he announced.

■ **'Organ donation rate grows 60-fold in 18 years'**

In early February, the transplantation and treatment of diseases department at the Ministry of Health announced that organ donation rate has increased by 60 times over the past 18 years.

Although, Iran ranks 26 in organ donation in the world, it can claim better ranks

given some plans being implemented in this regard, he highlighted, adding, we will achieve better results certainly by the next year (March 2019-March 2020), as many barriers have been removed last year.

In the past, kidneys were mostly removed from a healthy donor and surgically placed in an individual with kidney failure, while currently some 57 percent of kidney donor transplants in the country are among brain-dead donors.

Nationally, over 8,600 people are on the transplant waiting list for kidney, which is hoped to face a decline as soon as possible.

If Iran move ahead with the current trend, it will achieve 45 percent increase by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 2025-March 2026).

■ **Automated database of organ transplantation**

In mid-February head of the trans-

plantation and treatment of diseases department at the Ministry of Health Mehdi Shadnoosh said that the first stage of establishing an automated database of organ transplantation would begin on March 1st. The second stage of this project will begin in May and the aim is for the whole system of organ donation to be automated in time, he added.

The database will include all the information about the people who are awaiting an organ donation; then the system will automatically rank them based on their needs and whenever a new organ is found the top ten on the waiting list will be introduced, he further explained.

■ **Organ donation, how and why?**

Organ transplantation is one of the great advances in modern medicine, but unfortunately, the need for organ donors is much greater than the number of people who actually donate.

According to the figures revealed by International Registry in Organ Donation and Transplantation (IRODaT) Spain leads the world in organ donation.

Figures published for 2017 reveal that 2,183 people in Spain became organ donors last year after they died. That's 46.9 per million people in the population (pmp) — a standard way of measuring the rate of donation in a country. The Independent reported in July 2018.

According to the data published on IRODaT by the end of 2017 Iran's per million population of actual deceased organ donors was 11.43. In 1996 Iran's per million population of actual deceased organ donors was 0.1, which compared to the current pmp shows a great increase.

Some 5,000 people die of brain death annually in Iran, out of 3,000 brain deaths reported last year being qualified to be organ donors, only 926 donated their organs.

'About 120,000 cases of cancer diagnosed in Iran last year'

HEALTH TEHRAN — Some 115,000 to 120,000 new cases of cancer were diagnosed in Iran during the past Iranian calendar year 1397 (ended on March 20, 2019), the president of the Iranian Society of Radiation and Oncology announced, Mehr reported on Monday.

Mohammad Reza Qavam Nasiri said that 60,000 Iranians suffering from cancer lost their lives during the past year.

The number of deaths can be reduced by equipping specialized medical centers and also giving enough information to people for early diagnosis, he said.

The new treatments like immunotherapy can increase the number of survivors, he explained.

■ **Cancer in Iran and the world**

In January, the Iranian Pediatric Hematology and Oncology Society announced that there is an estimated 900,000 cancer cases in Iran and gastric, breast, lung and brain cancers are

the most commons in the country.

According to the report, annually, around 30 trillion rials (about \$700 million) is spent in the health sector for cancer treatment and half of these expenses go to provision of cancer medicines.

The prevalence of cancer in the country is now below world average but it might increase in future, so all people should participate in fighting the disease.

According to World Health Organization (WHO), cancer is the second leading cause of death globally, and is responsible for an estimated 9.6 million deaths in 2018. Globally, about 1 in 6 deaths is due to cancer.

Approximately 70% of deaths from cancer occur in low- and middle-income countries.

Around one third of deaths from cancer are due to the five leading behavioral and dietary risks: high body mass



index, low fruit and vegetable intake, lack of physical activity, tobacco use, and alcohol use.

What does depression feel like?

Depression is a serious mental illness that can interfere with a person's life. It can cause long-lasting and severe feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and a loss of interest in activities.

It can also cause physical symptoms of pain, appetite changes, and sleep problems.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that nearly 10 percent of adults aged 40 to 59 years had depression between 2009 and 2012. However, despite its prevalence, depression isn't always easy to identify.

Symptoms and causes of depression can vary widely from person to person. Gender may also play an important role in why a person is affected by depression, and what it feels like to them.

■ **How depression feels**

It can be hard to explain how depression feels to someone who has not experienced it.

One of the common misunderstandings about depression is that it's similar to feeling sad or down.

Although many people with depression feel sadness, it feels much more severe than emotions that come and go in response to life events.

The symptoms of depression can last for months or years and can make it difficult or impossible to carry on with daily life.

It can disrupt careers, relationships, and daily tasks such as self-care and housework.

Doctors will usually look for symptoms that have lasted at least 2 weeks as possible signs of depression.

■ **Depression may feel like:**

There's no pleasure or joy in life. A person with depression may not enjoy things they once loved and may feel like nothing can make them happy.

Concentration or focus becomes harder. Making any kind of decisions, reading, or watching television can seem taxing with depression because people can't think clearly or follow what's happening.

Everything feels hopeless, and there's no way to feel better. Depression may make a person feel that there's no way ever to feel



good again.

Self-esteem is often absent. People with depression may feel like they are worthless or a failure at everything. They may dwell on negative events and experiences and be unable to see positive qualities in themselves.

Sleeping may be problematic. Falling asleep at night or staying asleep all night can feel nearly impossible for some people with depression. A person may wake up early and not be able to go back to sleep. Others may sleep excessively, but still wake up feeling tired or unrefreshed, despite the extra hours of sleep.

Energy levels are low to nonexistent. Some people feel like they can't get out of bed, or feel exhausted all the time even when getting enough sleep. They may feel that they are too tired to do simple daily tasks.

Food may not seem appetizing. Some people with depression feel like they don't want to eat anything, and have to force themselves to eat. This can result in weight loss.

Food may be used as a comfort or coping tool. Although some people with depression don't want to eat, others can overeat and crave unhealthy or comfort foods. This can lead to weight gain.

Aches and pains may be present. Some people experience headaches, nausea, body aches, and other pains with depression.

Many people mistakenly believe that being

depressed is a choice, or that they need to have a positive attitude. Friends and loved ones often get frustrated or don't understand why a person can't "snap out of it." They may even say that the person has nothing to be depressed about.

Depression is a real mental illness. Those who have depression cannot simply decide to stop feeling depressed. Unlike typical sadness or worry, depression feels all-consuming and hopeless.

■ **Common causes and risk factors**
Depression can be caused by a number of factors. Though a single cause cannot always be found, experts recognize the following as possible causes:

- Genetics: Depression and other mood disorders can run in families, though family history alone does not mean a person will get depression.

- Life events: Major life changes and stressful events may trigger depression. These events include divorce, the death of a loved one, job loss, or financial problems.

- Hormonal changes: Depression and low mood are often associated with menopause, pregnancy, and premenstrual disorders.

- Certain illnesses: Anxiety, long-term pain, diabetes, and heart disease may make someone more likely to develop depression. Depression is a symptoms of bipolar disorder.

- Drug and alcohol abuse: In some cases, drug and alcohol abuse may cause depression. Other times, depression may cause a person to start abusing drugs or alcohol.

- Some medications: Certain prescription medicines may increase the risk of depression. These include some high blood pressure medications, steroids, and some cancer drugs.

One study of twin brothers and sisters published in The American Journal of Psychiatry found that personality and relationships with others were more likely to play a role in the onset of depression.

In particular, the study stated that marital problems, the relationship with parents, and lack of social support were more likely to cause depression in women than in men.

Neuroticism, or being in a negative emotional state, was also a primary cause of depression in the women studied.

A study in the Journal of Affective Disorders also found that women's symptoms of depression were different. The women studied were more likely to have panic and anxiety disorders in addition to their depression.

Other studies have indicated that women may be more likely to gain weight and have excessive sleepiness than men.

Women's hormone changes may also play a role in how and when depression affects them.

■ **When to see a doctor**

Those who are experiencing symptoms of depression should seek medical assistance. Depression can worsen without treatment and affect a person's quality of life.

A family doctor or mental health professional will discuss treatment options to help the person manage their depression and carry on with daily life.

In severe cases, depression can lead to thoughts of suicide or physically harming oneself.

Any suicidal thoughts or statements about "not wanting to live" should be taken seriously. In times of crisis, a person should seek help from a hospital emergency department.

(Source: medicalnewstoday.com)

Our biodiversity, Our food, our health: On Intl. Day for Biological Diversity

HEALTH No matter where you live, chances are you have access to a greater variety of food than your parents or your grandparents once did. But even as the offerings become more diverse, the global diet as a whole - what people actually eat - is becoming more homogenized, and this is a dangerous thing, convention of biological diversity website reported.

This year's celebrations of the International Day for Biological Diversity, on May 22, focus on biodiversity as the foundation for our food and health and a key catalyst to transforming food systems and improving human health.



The theme aims to leverage knowledge and spread awareness of the dependency of our food systems, nutrition, and health on biodiversity and healthy ecosystems. The theme also celebrates the diversity provided by our natural systems for human existence and well-being on Earth, while contributing to other Sustainable Development Goals, including climate change mitigation and adaptation, ecosystems restoration, cleaner water and zero hunger, among others.

In the last 100 years, more than 90 percent of crop varieties have disappeared from farmers' fields. Half of the breeds of many domestic animals have been lost, and all of the world's 17 main fishing grounds are now being fished at or above their sustainable limits. Locally-varied food production systems are under threat, including related indigenous, traditional and local knowledge.

With this decline, agro-biodiversity is disappearing, and also essential knowledge of traditional medicine and local foods. The loss of diverse diets is directly linked to diseases or health risk factors, such as diabetes, obesity and malnutrition, and has a direct impact on the availability of traditional medicines.

Decisions from the UN Biodiversity Conference (CBD COP 14), along with reports on biodiversity and health, provide recommendations. In addition, the EAT-Lancet Commission recently published findings on the health nutrition-food systems-biodiversity nexus, that describe what constitutes a healthy diet from a sustainable food systems perspective, and which actions can support and speed up food systems transformation, in benefit of biodiversity. Building from such work, individuals can mobilize and catalyze action around their concerns on health, nutrition, and food systems, together with awareness raising on how to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity for our well-being.

They are central to our common agenda for sustainable development. This focus on the nexus of biodiversity, food systems and health provides an opportunity to generate discussions on ways to support the post-2020 process for a global biodiversity framework and to help "bend the curve of biodiversity loss by 2030".

In this regard, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity together with a range of partners, including the WHO, FAO, UNICEF, UNESCO, as well as other entities like EAT Foundation and the Food and Land Use Coalition (FOLU) are working together to identify transformative actions, through global food systems, to advance progress in support of biodiversity, climate, health and other related Sustainable Development Goals.

■ **What is biodiversity for food and agriculture (BFA)?**

According to the FAO, biodiversity is the variety of life at genetic, species and ecosystem levels. Biodiversity for food and agriculture (BFA) is, in turn, the subset of biodiversity that contributes in one way or another to agriculture and food production. It includes the domesticated plants and animals that are part of crop, livestock, forest or aquaculture systems, harvested forest and aquatic species, the wild relatives of domesticated species, and other wild species harvested for food and other products.

It also encompasses what is known as "associated biodiversity", the vast range of organisms that live in and around food and agricultural production systems, sustaining them and contributing to their output.

Biodiversity for food and agriculture is indispensable to food security and sustainable development. It supplies many vital ecosystem services, such as creating and maintaining healthy soils, pollinating plants, controlling pests and providing habitat for wildlife, including for fish and other species that are vital to food production and agricultural livelihoods.

Biodiversity makes production systems and livelihoods more resilient to shocks and stresses, including those caused by climate change. It is a key resource in efforts to increase food production while limiting negative impacts on the environment. It makes a variety of contributions to the livelihoods of many people, often reducing the need for food and agricultural producers to rely on costly or environmentally harmful external inputs.

Biodiversity at genetic, species and ecosystem levels helps address the challenges posed by diverse and changing environmental conditions and socio-economic circumstances. Diversifying production systems, for example by using multiple species, breeds or varieties, integrating the use of crop, livestock, forest and aquatic biodiversity, or promoting habitat diversity in the local landscape or seascape, helps to promote resilience, improve livelihoods and support food security and nutrition.

Many key components of biodiversity for food and agriculture at genetic, species and ecosystem levels are in decline. The proportion of livestock breeds at risk of extinction is increasing. Overall, the diversity of crops present in farmers' fields has declined and threats to crop diversity are increasing.

Children aged 10 and below account for 13% of road fatalities

SOCIETY TEHRAN — Some 13 percent of all casualties of road traffic accidents in the country are children aged 10 or younger, Traffic Police Chief Seyed Kamal Hadianfar has said.

Nearly 1.25 million people die in road crashes each year, while Iran holds a share of 17,000 people annually, he lamented.



An additional 350,000 are injured or disabled annually; while each day some 46 people lose their lives in car crashes in the country, 7 of them are children. So, 13 percent of all road traffic deaths occur among children aged 10 or below, he regretted.

Referring to a bill on mandating the use of car seats for children under the age of 10 proposed by the traffic police, he explained that it is now brought before the Majlis [the Iranian Parliament] for the final approval. If the bill is approved, all children should necessarily use car seats for increased road safety, otherwise, in the case of any violations, the drivers would be fined.

Cars flipped onto their roof in 43 percent of accidents happened during the Iranian New Year holiday (March 21- April 5), causing serious injuries especially for children, he noted.

Using a child safety seat in the cars will definitely reduce the number of road crash casualties, he said, adding that current official punishment fine is not sufficient and must increase, which is on agenda for traffic police.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Hadianfar said that currently, there are 13 million children who are called police assistant, who contributed to reduce traffic related accidents by 18 percent last year.

Traffic police planned to reduce road crashes by 12 percent this year, and 33 responsible devices will join hands in this regard, he concluded.

According to World Health Organization, children account for 21 percent of all road traffic injury related deaths worldwide. Globally, road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death in 10-19 year olds.

The WHO 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes that road safety is a prerequisite to ensuring healthy lives, promoting well-being and making cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

The Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020, officially proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in March 2010, seeks to save millions of lives by building road safety management capacity; improving the safety of road infrastructure; further developing the safety of vehicles; enhancing the behavior of road users; and improving post-crash response.

WORDS IN THE NEWS

What does this millennium hold?

(January 6, 2000)
William Horsley has looked at predictions for the new millennium and discovering what the future may hold.....

The turn of the millennium has **impelled** some scientists to predict a fantastic future. Professor Stephen Hawking of Cambridge University says that in the twenty-first century mankind will probably **succeed in sending** a manned flight to Mars, and that in the coming millennium **genetic engineering will succeed in making** human beings more intelligent, with larger brains, so they can **meet challenges** like space travel. One Japanese company is already taking **advance bookings** for visits to a space resort that's meant to orbit the earth.

«Other scientists **predict** that the average human **life span** will grow to 130 years, and that **microchips implanted** in people's bodies will **enable** them to control machines or even communicate with other people **without using words** at all. Scientists at the British Meteorological Office say that if **global warming** continues at its **present rate**, in another one thousand years the Earth will be eleven degrees warmer, **so much of it** will be uninhabitable. Kofi Annan, the United Nations Security-General, **marked** the new millennium with these sober words: 'More than ever before in human history we share a **common destiny**. We can master it only if we face it together.'»

WORDS
turn of the millennium: the end of the previous 1000 years and the beginning of the next 1000 years
impelled: when you feel forced to do something; formal language succeed in sending: manage to convey people: note the structure - succeed is followed by in and then by the -ing form of the verb
genetic engineering: changing the structure of a living organisms; altering genes

succeed in making: manage to cause people to become
meet challenges: face up to a problem, usually with a successful outcome

advance bookings: reservations made before - in advance of - the date of travel

predict: if you predict an event, you say that it will happen
life span: the period of time during which someone is alive
microchips: small pieces of silicon inside a computer, on which electronic circuits are printed

implanted: to put something inside a person's body by means of an operation

enable: if someone enables you to do something, they make it possible for you to do it

without using words: note that without is followed by the -ing form of the verb to use

global warming: the problem of the temperature increase in the Earth's atmosphere

present rate: the speed at which something is happening now
so (that) much of it: «so» here is a conjunction: it introduces the result of something we have been hearing about

marked: drew attention to the millennium
common destiny: the things that will happen to everybody

(Source: BBC)

World's intelligent hunters in a race for survival in Iran

ENVIRONMENT TEHRAN — Foxes, the intelligent hunters who avoid humans, having a limited range in Iran, are endangered due to human encroachment on their habitats and the lack of safety, said Jalil Imani, a biodiversity and ecosystems management expert.

There are more than 20 species of foxes who eat almost anything, including small mammals, birds, reptiles, insects, worms and fruit. The common fox is considered by some as pest species, being an opportunistic hunter of game birds, ground-nesting birds and small mammals, often killing animals' surplus to its needs.

Foxes in Iran are often seen in farmlands in search of rodents. They are also likely to feed on melons, scavenge in refuse dumps, or track hares and other small mammals, especially when there is snow on the ground. Foxes in Iran are trapped, shot, and hunted almost everywhere they occur, and yet they still manage to thrive.

Four fox species inhabiting in Iran, including Blanford's, Corsac, Rüppell's and common foxes, Imani said, lamenting, according to the Red List of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), all four aforesaid species of foxes in the world are defined as least concern, however in Iran, their condition is different.

"Blanford's fox is assigned endangered by the Department of Environment, any hunting or trade of which is considered illegal," he noted, adding, while Corsac fox has been listed as extinct before sighting some in northeastern part of the country, which switched to critically endangered.

Rüppell's fox is also placed in the IUCN's least concern category, while being vulnerable in Iran which requires protection, he said.

"Fortunately, common fox is in better condition and is not listed as endangered yet," he added.

So far, no measures have been taken to estimate fox population in the country, he said, adding, so there are no accurate statistics on the number of foxes in the country.



Foxes feed on small animals like rats, but farmers turning pastures into agricultural land over the past few years are using pesticides to protect their product, which kill foxes' prey, and in some case the foxes themselves by the poisonous baits.

"The results of genetic tests showed that genetic variation of the foxes is desirable. There are two major genetic groups in the country that are in some ways compatible with the global groups."

Imani went on to say that the Rüppell's fox found mainly in Yazd, Kerman, somewhat Sistan-Baluchestan and Isfahan provinces, have proper genetic diversity, so there is still hope for the preservation of the sub species.

Blanford's and Corsac foxes while offering insufficient information for a proper assessment, can be conserved to some extent, he said, noting, for precise determination scientific analysis and researches must be conducted in this regard.

One of the most important threats to fox

species are habitat fragmentation, as well as the use of pesticides eradicating their prey, road construction, rabies and stray dogs, although the conflict with humans is the leading cause for their heading toward extinction.

"Foxes feed on small animals like rats, but farmers turning pastures into agricultural land over the past few years are using pesticides to protect their product, which kill foxes' prey, and in some case the foxes themselves by the poisonous baits."

"On the other hand, road accidents took lives of many of the smart species, for example, there is a road in northern island of Qeshm, in which one to two foxes are killed per day due to road crashes.

"Unfortunately, another threat posed

to the foxes is hunting for the fur trade, or some people keep their pelt for prosperity beliefs and superstitions.

"Foxes are primarily nocturnal hunters who prefer to search for food at a time when there is little chance of being spotted by humans, therefore, they are no threat to humans and there is no need to persecute the precious species," Imani regretted.

■ Corsac fox's habitat no longer safe

An official with the Golestan DOE, Mahmood Shakiba, said in October 2018 that living conditions for rare corsac fox in the country is so improper that spotting a few nests of the species is a pleasure.

In the Iranian calendar year 1395 (March 2016-March 2017), some 14 Corsac nests have been found in Turkmen Sahara in Golestan province, of which only four nests have been active and last year the nests have no longer been active, he added.

All Corsac habitats have been destructed turning into agricultural land, animal husbandry, manufacturing workshops or factories, so that the animal has no place to live, he regretted.

■ What happens when species go extinct?

As the species is at the top of the food chain, it plays an important role in conservation of the country's ecosystem as well as protecting other species.

When an ecosystem loses key species such as common fox, it triggers what ecologists call a trophic cascade—a butterfly effect that spirals down the food chain. A well-documented case study for this phenomenon is the gray wolf, once among the world's most widely distributed mammals. Prior to their extirpation, North American gray wolves were a key predator of deer, elk, moose, bison and caribou, as well as numerous smaller mammals. Following the wolves' disappearance, the abundance of deer skyrocketed, with some populations climbing to six times their historical size.

Disappearance of foxes also have potential of disrupting the balance. For example, common fox's function as an apex predator control the abundance of their prey and thus help to maintain a balance of nature.

Global sea levels may rise more than two meters by 2100

Global sea levels could rise by more than two meters by the end of this century if emissions continue in a "business as usual" scenario, a United Nations body has warned.

The international team of researchers said this would have "catastrophic" consequences for the whole world, forcing 187 million people off their land.

Parts of London, Los Angeles, New York and Rio de Janeiro could be submerged, leaving 1.79 million km² of land lost globally, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report.

"The results were worse than we anticipated", lead researcher Jonathan Bamber, from the University of Bristol told The Independent.

If emissions continue to grow unchecked in the "business as usual" scenario, global temperatures could increase by 5°C by 2100, the report states.

"Five degrees warming by 2100 is a pretty awful scenario, you just don't want to think about the consequences of that for the whole planet. It would mean that we as a species and many parts of the Earth's systems would be under serious threat", Prof Bamber said.

The findings suggest coastal communities should not rule out the possibility of 21st century sea level rise in excess of two meters when developing adaptation strategies.

"We're closer to business as usual than what we would hope," Prof Bamber added.

Scientists found that if nations reach emissions targets set by the Paris climate agreement, temperatures would rise by around 2°C by the end of the century, causing 26cm sea level rise. Traditional methods for predicting rising sea levels from the melting ice sheets in Greenland and the Antarctic are based on numerical modelling.

Such projections remain challenging due to uncertainty about how the Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets are responding to climate change.

A team of international scientists used a technique called structured expert judgment to ask 22 ice sheet experts to estimate plausible ranges for future sea level rises.

(Source: The Independent)

Over 19,000 twins born in Iran last year

SOCIETY TEHRAN — Across the country, there were 1,366,509 registered births last year (March 2018-March 2019), of which about 19,911 have been twin births, the National Organization for Civil Registration spokesman has announced.

Some 646 triplet births and 21 higher order multiple births happened in the country last year, IRNA quoted Seifollah Aboutorabi as saying on Tuesday.

"Moreover, two set of quintuplets were born in provinces of Isfahan and Markazi last year," he added.



He went on to say that of some 1,366,509 registered births, 704,054 were baby boys and 662,455 were girls.

About 106 boys were born for every 100 girls, for a ratio of 106.3 percent, he concluded.

When it comes to having twins, not all regions are created equal. Central Africa snags the record for the highest twin birthrate, while Asia and Latin America have much lower rates of twinning, according to a new international study and global twins database reported in 2011.

Scientists have created twin's databases for 76 developing countries, the most comprehensive yet for the developing world, which includes data on approximately 2.5 million births by nearly 1.4 million women collected between 1987 and 2010.

Of the developing nations studied, 13.6 twins per 1,000 births were born on average. This is comparable with intermediate rates seen in the United States, Australia and many European countries of nine to 16 per 1,000 births.

A key factor linked with fraternal twinning is a mother's age, the number of twin pregnancies rises substantially with maternal age and then decreases after age 38. The number of pregnancies a woman had before a twin pregnancy also appears to play a role, as might details such as smoking, contraceptive use and even a woman's height, the taller, the greater chances seem to be of giving birth to fraternal twins. In addition, there is a substantial hereditary component to fraternal twinning that apparently runs through the female line.

Second Announcement

Call for public tender (First/Second publish)

One -Stages (semi compressed) tender

Subject of Tender: Parts For Caterpillar Equipment

* Tender descriptions:

The Tender holder	Registration No. through national electronic tendering system	Tender No. /Indent No.	Estimated value (Rial)
National Iranian Drilling Company	3,201,223	Tender No. :FP09-98/003 Indent No.:01-27-9747003	14,799,075,150

* Qualitative evaluation of tenderers

Method	
	R Based on minimum scoring (60 Points) made in award criterion reflected in the tenderers pre-qualification forms.
	1- Applicants who have more than 4 in process contracts with NIDC are not allowed to participate in this tender. Applicants which have more than 2 in process contracts with NIDC in similar subject (exclusively same subject) are not allowed to participate in another tender

* Purchasing & Submitting

Tender Document Distribution by Company	Distribution Place	Submitting Method
	Hall No.:113, 1 st floor, Foreign Procurement Dept., National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN – Tel.: 061 34148601	Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt in the amount of 510,000 Iranian Rials under account number 4001114004020491 (Shaba No. IR 520100004001114004020491) in name of "NIDC Incomes Centralized Fund" issued by I.R. of Iran Central Bank. Avoid any payment other than the bank method (in person) and also provide a deposit. Submitting format Request for the purpose of receiving Tender Documents.
Documents Receiving Method	Closing date	Address
	Days after the last time of Purchasing 14	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

Value of guarantee	Type of guarantee	Duration of credit & quotation
740,000,000 Rial/ 15,550 Euro	✓ Bank guarantees or guarantees issued by non-bank institutions that obtain activity license from the central bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran. ✓ Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt under account number 4001114006376636 (Shaba No. IR 350100004001114006376636) in name of "NIDC saving account" by the central bank of Islamic Republic of Iran.	Tender Guarantee and quotation should be valid for 90 days and extendable maximum for one time in initial validity duration.

(Foreign Procurement Dept.)
More of this & other tenders are accessible by click on: www.nidc.ir http://sapp.ir/nidc_pr
تهران تایمز نوبت اول ۹۸/۳۱ نوبت دوم ۹۸/۳۱

Yemeni drone targets arms depot at Najran airport

1→ The Saudi-led coalition has claimed that a civilian facility in Najran was targeted with an explosives-laden drone in Tuesday's strike.

In a statement carried by the state-run Saudi Press Agency (SPA), coalition spokesman Colonel Turki al-Maliki said the Houthis were posing "a real threat to regional and international security by targeting civilian objects and civilian facilities."

He did not, however, give further details of the drone attack, which came a week after Yemeni drones targeted the East-West pipeline in the heart of Saudi Arabia, forcing the state oil giant Aramco to temporarily halt pumping oil on the vital pipeline.

According to Press TV, the Houthi movement, which both runs Yemen's state affairs and defends the country against the Saudi-led aggression launched in March 2015, said the drone attacks were in response to the regime's crimes against the Yemeni nation.

On Sunday, Ansarullah warned that the strikes targeting the oil pipeline were the start of operations against 300 vital targets



in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

■ Yemeni forces dismiss Saudi claim about targeting Mecca
Meanwhile, the spokesman for the Yemeni

armed forces has categorically dismissed allegations spread in Saudi media about the firing of a Yemeni ballistic missile toward the holy city of Mecca.
"The Saudi regime is trying, through

these allegations, to rally support for its brutal aggression against our great Yemeni people," Brigadier General Yahya Sare'e said in a posting on Facebook on Monday.

Saudi-owned al-Arabiya TV reported that Saudi air defenses shot down a ballistic missile over the city of Taif, 65 kilometers east of Mecca, in the early hours of Monday. Another missile was launched at the port city of Jeddah, on the other side of Mecca. The first one had been directed toward Mecca, it said, without giving evidence.

The Yemeni official, however, stressed that by leveling such claims, the Saudi regime is trying by to rally support for his brutal aggression on its southern neighbor.

"The Saudi regime is again trying to exploit the religious status of Mecca to cover up its crimes against the Yemeni people," Sare'e said, adding, "We will not hesitate to announce our military operations and we do not need to wait for incorrect judgments about our goals and the timing of our operations."

5,000 Daesh terrorists amassed in Afghanistan: Russia

TEHRAN— Russia's top intelligence official has warned that thousands of militants belonging to a Daesh affiliate and with battle experience in Syria have converged in areas in northern Afghanistan bordering post-Soviet Central Asian republics.

Alexander Bortnikov, the director of Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB), said on Tuesday that a local affiliate of the Daesh terrorist group had managed to gather as many as 5,000 militants in the area, according to RT.

Addressing the chiefs of intelligence services from ex-Soviet republics in Tajikistan's capital of Dushanbe, Bortnikov said, "Especially worrying is re-deployment of terrorist groups into northern provinces of Afghanistan."

The Russian official said terrorist cells were currently infiltrating into Afghanistan's northern neighbors in an attempt to establish ties with organized crime. He said the ter-

rorists were trying to slip through posing as refugees. Daesh has been militarily defeated in Syria and Iraq, the two Arab countries where the terrorist group overtook pieces of land starting in 2014. But the group has not been disbanded altogether.

The remarks by Bortnikov came a day after authorities in the Central Asian country of Tajikistan announced that a prison riot started by convicted Daesh terrorists left 32 inmates and prison guards dead.

According to Press TV, the FSB director cautioned last month that Daesh terrorists were returning to their native countries and establishing terrorist cells.

Many of the foreign terrorists fighting alongside Daesh in Syria and Iraq have been killed in anti-terror operations by the militaries of the two countries. But those who survived have long been known to pose serious threats to their native countries upon return.

Israeli settler runs over, kills Palestinian man in occupied West Bank

TEHRAN— An Israeli settler has run over and killed a Palestinian man in the northwestern part of the occupied West Bank.

Palestinian media say that the 45-year-old victim, identified as Abdul Hafiz Barham, was struck east of Qalqilya on Tuesday.

According to witnesses, the Palestinian man was taken to a hospital in Nablus, where he succumbed to his injuries.

Last month, a Palestinian female teacher also died in a run-over attack by an Israeli near the city of Bethlehem.

There have been a series of "hit-and-run" incidents targeting Palestinians in different parts of the West Bank over the past years, with most of them going uninvestigated by Israeli authorities.

■ Palestinian succumbs to Israeli-inflicted wounds
Meanwhile, a Palestinian man in

Gaza has died weeks after being critically injured during clashes between Israeli troops and Palestinian protesters participating in an anti-occupation rally along the border fence between the besieged strip and the Israeli-occupied territory.

Palestinian Ma'an News Agency reported that Mohammad Abdul-Javad succumbed to his wounds on Tuesday.

He was shot in the leg by Israeli forces during a "Great March of Return" protest rally east of Rafah City on April 24.

Tensions have been running high near the fence separating Gaza from the occupied territories ever since protest rallies began in the Gaza Strip on March 30 last year, Press TV reported.

More than 260 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces in those protests. Over 26,000 Palestinians have also sustained injuries.

In hometown, Macron battles disillusion and apathy ahead of EU election

TEHRAN— In Emmanuel Macron's hometown of Amiens, it's hard to find enthusiasm for either the French president or the European Union, less than a week before European parliament elections.

Blue-collar workers on its outskirts are tempted by protest votes, while a disillusioned, conservative middle-class in its pretty center is contemplating other right-leaning candidates or not even voting at all, spelling bad news for the president in his battle against the far-right, Reuters reported.

"We've been abandoned," Antonio Abrunhosa, 49, a former welder, told Reuters on the deserted parking lot of the former Whirlpool tumble-dryer factory.

It was at the plant in the 2017 presidential election campaign that Macron tried to convince workers angered about the plant's relocation to Poland that far-right leader Marine Le Pen's protectionist, Eurosceptic views were misguided. Two years on, only a fraction of the former workers have

been taken on by the plant's new owner, and resentment at both the European Union and Macron is building.

Abrunhosa, a unionist who was born in Portugal, says the European project was a good thing, but that competition with low-paid eastern European workers was killing what's left of France's industrial heritage.

"That's what Europe has become. Even the dumbest of idiots can understand it's better to hire in Poland than here. It's going haywire," said Abrunhosa, whose job application was declined by the new buyer because he was "too qualified".

With five days to go before French voters elect their representatives for the 751-seat European parliament, the election is becoming both a referendum on Macron's first two years in power and a vote of confidence in the EU.

A fervent Europhile, Macron is hoping to convince the French he can reform the EU into a bloc that better protects



its workers, its borders and the environment, though he has had to dilute his ambition on matters such as euro zone reform.

Erdogan calls on Muslim countries to unite and confront Israel

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has called on Muslim leaders to unite and confront Israel, days after scores of Palestinians were killed by Israeli snipers as they marked 70 years of Israeli occupation.

Speaking at an extraordinary summit of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on Friday, Erdogan said Israel should be held accountable over the killings which drew widespread international condemnation and triggered a wave of protests from Asia, through the Middle East, to North Africa.

"To take action for Palestinians massacred by Israeli bandits is to show the whole world that humanity is not dead," Erdogan told the group of Muslim leaders gathered in Turkey's largest city, Istanbul.

The Turkish president described Israel's killing of Palestinians as "huggerly, atrocity and state terror," and said the U.S.' recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital would inevitably haunt it.

■ 'Collective punishment'
On Monday, as the United States went ahead with the controversial relocation of its embassy to Jerusalem, 62 Palestinians,

including five children, were killed and more than 2,700 wounded as the Israeli army fired live ammunition and tear gas at protesters who had assembled hundreds of metres from a 1949 armistice line between Gaza and Israel.

The protesters in the besieged enclave had gathered for Nakba Day - a commemoration of the events of 1948 when Zionist paramilitaries ethnically cleansed Palestinian cities and towns. About 750,000 people were forcibly expelled from historical Palestine.

Several heads of state attended the Istanbul summit, but Saudi Arabia, the host of the 57-member OIC, sent only a senior foreign ministry official. Bahrain, Egypt and the UAE also sent lower-level ministers.

Speaking at the conference, Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani said the Palestinian cause had "become a symbol for oppressed peoples everywhere" and condemned Israel for the "brutal massacre" of peaceful demonstrators.

"Who among us does not know the declared siege forced on the Gaza Strip and the collective punishment against its pop-

ulation?" the emir said.

"The Gaza Strip has been transformed into a large concentration camp for millions of people who are deprived of their most basic rights to travel, education, work and medical treatment.

"When their sons take arms they are called terrorists, and when they stage peaceful demonstrations, they are called extremists, and are shot dead with live ammunition."

■ 'U.S. part of the problem'

For his part, Palestinian Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah said the U.S. had become "part of the problem and not the solution" and called the relocation of the embassy "an act of aggression against the Islamic nation, against Muslims and Christians".

Jordan's King Abdullah II urged the adoption of urgent measures to back "the resistance of Palestinians", while Iranian President Hassan Rouhani called for economic and political measures against the U.S. and Israel.

Late on Friday, the OIC issued a final communique calling on the United Nations

to launch an international investigation into the killings in Gaza, the creation of an international protection force for Palestinians, and for the OIC to place economic restrictions on any countries, companies or individuals who recognize Israel's annexation of Jerusalem.

■ Thousands protest in solidarity with Palestine

Earlier in the day, Erdogan told a raucous crowd of more than 10,000 people in Istanbul's Yenikapi fairground that the Muslim world had to unite and "pull themselves back together".

"Muslims are way too busy fighting and disagreeing with themselves, and shy away when confronted by their enemies," he told the audience.

"Since 1947, Israel has been free to do what it likes in this region. They do whatever they feel like. But this reality can be undone ... if we unite."

Earlier this week, Turkey recalled its envoys to Israel and the U.S. following the killings of Palestinians and the relocation of Washington's embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

Russia repels missile attack by militants on its main airbase in Syria's Latakia

TEHRAN— The Russian Defense Ministry says its surface-to-air missile systems have managed to foil an attack by militants from the Jabhat Fateh al-Sham terrorist group, formerly known as al-Nusra Front, on its main air base in Syria's western coastal province of Latakia.

The ministry announced in a statement on Monday that militants positioned in the de-escalation zone of Syria's northwestern province of Idlib had fired six missiles at the strategic Hmeimim airbase at around 8 p.m. (1700 GMT) the previous day.

The statement added that Russian air defense systems destroyed all the projectiles before they could strike the site.

The Russian Defense Ministry further noted that multiple launch pads from where Jabhat Fateh al-Sham terrorists had fired the missiles at the airbase, were detected and destroyed.

The development came only two days after Syrian air defense systems thwarted a drone and missile attack on Hmeimim airbase.

Syria's state-run television network reported at the time that foreign-sponsored militants positioned in Qardahah village, which overlooks the coastal town of Latakia, as well as Jablah district had fired the projectiles at the base.

Russia has been helping Syrian forces in ongoing battles across the conflict-plagued Arab country.

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

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

UK Labor lawmakers unlikely to back May's Brexit deal

TEHRAN— Lawmakers from Britain's opposition Labor Party are unlikely to be persuaded to back Prime Minister Theresa May's Brexit deal when she puts it to a vote in parliament next month, the party's finance chief John McDonnell said Tuesday.

McDonnell told reporters he would wait to see the details of May's offer, but that what had been reported to be included so far "doesn't inspire confidence, and I don't think that many of our members will be inspired by it either."

McDonnell said that regardless of what May offers on Brexit there was an overriding problem with the longer-term stability of May's Conservative Party., Reuters reported.

He also said he couldn't see Labor abstaining in the vote.

Austria's Kurz wrangles with far right and risk of parliamentary axe

TEHRAN— Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz sought on Tuesday to oust the far-right interior minister who he says is compromised by the scandal that wrecked their coalition, while trying to avoid a chain reaction in which lawmakers could sack him too.



Kurz pulled the plug on his 17-month-old coalition with the far-right Freedom Party (FPÖ) over the weekend, after FPÖ leader Heinz-Christian Strache was caught in a video sting discussing fixing state contracts and how to circumvent party financing laws. A snap election is expected in September, after either parliament or the president dissolves parliament., Reuters reported.

Strache, whose party has been one of the most successful nationalist and anti-immigration movements in Europe, securing more than a quarter of the vote and taking the interior, foreign and defense ministries, denies doing anything illegal. It remains unclear who was behind the recording, made in 2017.

Kurz, the 32-year-old leader of the conservative People's Party (ÖVP), has pledged a thorough investigation into any wrongdoing, and said on Monday he would ask President Alexander Van der Bellen to sack the FPÖ's interior minister, Herbert Kickl, because as FPÖ chairman in 2017 he was responsible for party finances.

Doing that, however, risks setting off a chain reaction that could force Kurz and what is effectively his caretaker government from office ahead of time, damaging the young conservative star's image as he seeks to isolate himself from the scandal and project himself as a strong leader.

New FPÖ leader Norbert Hofer, however, has said he will await ongoing talks involving all parliamentary parties and Van der Bellen.

The FPÖ accuses Kurz of playing power politics and has said it will pull its ministers out of the lame-duck government if Kickl is forced out. Kurz has said they would be replaced by technocrats or experts rather than politicians.

Police file New Zealand's first terrorism charge over mosque shootings

TEHRAN— New Zealand police have charged the man accused of murder in shootings at two Christchurch mosques in March with engaging in a terrorist act, the first time such a charge had been brought in the country's history, they said on Tuesday.

In an attack broadcast live on Facebook, a lone gunman armed with semi-automatic weapons targeted Muslims attending Friday prayers on March 15, killing 51 worshippers

and wounding dozens of people.

Tuesday's charge under terrorism suppression legislation was filed against Brenton Tarrant, police said.

"The charge will allege that a terrorist act was carried out in Christchurch," Commissioner of Police Mike Bush said in a statement.

The charge was the first under New Zealand's terrorism suppression legislation, introduced in 2002, after the Sept.

11, 2001, attacks in the United States, Reuters reported.

An additional charge of murder and two more charges of attempted murder have also been filed against Tarrant, so that the suspected white supremacist faces a total of 51 charges of murder and 40 of attempted murder.

Tarrant's lawyer did not immediately respond to a request from Reuters for comment.

Record London Marathon entries pass 450,000

LONDON (Reuters) — More than 450,000 runners have entered the ballot for next year's London Marathon, breaking the event's own world record for registrations, organizers said on Tuesday.

The final total of 457,861 applicants from Britain and overseas represents a 10.5% increase on last year's 414,168 bidding for a place in the world's most popular marathon.

More than 56% of British entries were from people who have never run a marathon, and the majority of those are women.

"One of our goals is to inspire people to take up sport and it's fantastic that more than 210,000 people from the UK have been inspired to apply to run a marathon for the first time in 2020," event director Hugh Brasher said in a statement.

"At the first London Marathon back in 1981, fewer than 300 of the 6,300 finishers were women.

"More than 179,000 women from the UK have applied to run in 2020 and, for the third successive year, there are more female than male first-time marathon runners from the UK."

The 40th London marathon will take place on April 26, 2020.

Murray plays down his chances of playing singles at Wimbledon

Former world number one Andy Murray has all but ruled out playing singles at Wimbledon this year and said he will focus on doubles when he makes his comeback from hip-resurfacing surgery.

The Scot has not played since his first-round exit from the Australian Open in January, but said last month he was finally pain-free after the operation and planning to return to the ATP tour.

Murray, who will get a wildcard for the Queen's Club Championships in June if fit, told the Times that playing singles would be a step too far given the state of his rehabilitation.

"It's not enough time," the 32-year-old said. "I'd say there's very little chance I'd play singles during the grass (season). Potentially doubles, but I'm not trying to get ready for singles. I've only just started moving now."

Murray has started training since the procedure and hopes to emulate doubles veteran Bob Bryan, who successfully returned to competitive tennis after a similar operation.

Bryan, who cut his season short in 2018 to have surgery and returned to the tour this year, was the one who advised Murray that surgery could improve his quality of life when the Scot was thinking of quitting tennis.

"I don't have pain," Murray added. "I just need to see how good the hip can get really. I know from seeing what Bob Bryan has done that for doubles it will be absolutely fine. I'll need to see from there how it would work singles-wise."

(Source: Mirror)

IOC sees scope for more Tokyo 2020 games budget cuts



Tokyo 2020 can make further reductions to its budget, a top Olympic official said Tuesday, despite some sports associations voicing concerns that cost-cutting could harm the running of the Games.

"We appreciate your continued efforts to reduce the operational (budget) and other budgets," said John Coates, chairman of the IOC's coordination committee, at the start of a three-day visit to Tokyo.

He noted that \$2.2 billion had been saved from the construction and infrastructure budget and \$2 billion from the operational budget but insisted: "We think there are still more savings to be obtained."

Coates singled out the "overlay" budget for further cuts, which means money for temporary facilities such as pre-fabricated tents, seating and security fencing.

He said this had already been reduced from \$2.1 billion to around \$1.3 billion and added: "I think that together we can help you save some more money there."

"We want to be diligent... We do not want the taxpayers of Tokyo and Japan to be meeting any of these operational costs and I'm confident that will be the case," said Coates.

In December, Tokyo 2020 organisers unveiled the latest version of their budget, which stood at 1.35 trillion yen (\$12.1 billion), unchanged from the previous budget released in 2017.

Organisers have admitted that measures to tackle the expected hot weather during the Tokyo summer -- such as water sprinklers and special heat-absorbing paint on roads -- have driven up the bill.

Measures like this have offset other savings the organisers have been trying to make.

However, the Tokyo 2020 organisers are also being squeezed in the other direction, with some sports federations fretting that budget cuts could impact the hosting of the Games.

(Source: France 24)

Angry at being dubbed a hustler, Maradona dismisses new film

Diego Maradona greeted a new film about his life with scorn on Monday, telling people not to see it when it is released next month.

Posters for the two-hour documentary about the controversial Argentine forward say 'Diego Maradona: Rebel. Hero. Hustler. God,' with the World Cup winner upset at the use of "hustler".

"I played football and I made money running after a ball. I didn't hustle anyone," he told Univision in an interview.

"If they are putting that there to get people to go and see it then I think they are going about it the wrong way."

"I don't like the title, and if I don't like the title I am not going to like the film. Don't go and see it."

Director Asif Kapadia, who made the award-winning documentaries "Amy" and "Senna", had earlier said Maradona had not seen the film and admitted he was interested how the player would react to viewing the finished article.

"We are dealing with archive from way back, there will be lots of images that he himself hasn't seen of himself, of his family, of his kids," Kapadia told Reuters in an interview.

"So I think it's going to be quite emotional for him."

Maradona, who is now coaching in Mexico, missed the film's premier at Cannes on



Sunday.

Initial reviews were mixed with critics saying the film, which draws on Maradona's personal stock of video, showed colourful scenes but pulled its punches.

"No matter how many newsreels it shows us or how arresting they are, all that grainy reality can't add up to revealing what's inside the man at its centre," said Variety.

The film is due for general release on June 14.

Shoulder surgery

Argentine football legend Diego Maradona will travel to Buenos Aires for surgery on his left shoulder, his agent and friend Matias Morla said on Monday.

The 58-year-old was due to fly from Mexico, where he is currently coaching the nation's

second division side Dorados, to Argentina's capital on Tuesday, Morla told Argentina's Clarin newspaper.

He said the surgery was "scheduled" but provided no further details of the injury. Once recovered, the 1986 World Cup winner will return to Mexico to continue working as head coach of the Culiacan-based club, Morla added.

Dorados have narrowly missed promotion to Mexico's top division in each of the past two seasons under Maradona, who took charge of the club last September.

Last week Maradona told local media that he asked Dorados officials for a two-year contract extension with a larger budget to strengthen his squad.

Widely regarded as one of football's greatest ever players, Maradona has suffered a series of health problems since ending his playing career in 1997.

In 2004, he was hospitalized with severe heart and respiratory problems related to a long battle with drug addiction. He has also undergone two gastric bypass operations to control his weight and received treatment for alcohol abuse.

In January, the former Boca Juniors, Barcelona and Napoli forward had surgery to stem bleeding in his stomach.

(Staff & Agency)

Golden State faces 10-day wait for Finals opener



The Golden State Warriors have gotten used to going to the NBA Finals, and their win in Portland on Monday night clinched their fifth consecutive trip. They've also gotten used to waiting for those finals to begin, with long layoffs after the Western Conference finals having become their norm.

By the time Game 1 of the NBA Finals arrives in either Milwaukee or Toronto on May 30, it'll be a 10-day gap -- nine full off days -- between games for the Warriors. That matches the length of the break that the Warriors handled in 2017, and this marks the third time in this five-year run of Finals trips that they've had at least a week off.

"Happy to get a little rest before we have to play again," Warriors coach Steve Kerr said.

The Warriors clinched the series in Portland without Kevin Durant, DeMarcus Cousins and Andre Iguodala -- all sidelined by injuries. There's no way of knowing yet if Durant and Cousins will be back in time for the Finals, either. Plenty of other Warriors are dealing with bumps and bruises as well.

Accruing rust is always a major concern during these days without games, but the Warriors surely feel the obvious advantage -- rest -- outweighs any drawbacks right now, especially after they were stretched to seven games by Houston last year in the

conference finals and had only two days off before the NBA Finals.

"We definitely want to get our guys healthy," Warriors forward Draymond Green said. "We need to get Andre back healthy, DeMarcus and Kevin. We need those guys going into the Finals. That's our hope, that we can get all three of those guys back moving forward."

Down by 17 with less than two minutes to play in the third quarter, the easiest thing for the Warriors would have been to let off the gas and try to clinch the series at Oracle Arena on Wednesday night.

They turned a 95-78 deficit into a 119-117 overtime win -- outscoring the Blazers 41-22 in the final 19 minutes of the game.

"We could have said Game 5 was our game," Warriors star Stephen Curry said. "But we saw how long that break was going to be and we wanted to take advantage of it."

It's a long break, for certain. But it's not a record-setting one.

The longest gap between the conference finals and NBA Finals came in 1982, when the Los Angeles Lakers sat around for 12 days before beginning their series against the Philadelphia 76ers.

"The players are bored and just want to play," then-Lakers coach Pat Riley said on the eve of that series. "It's been so long since we played, I just hope we remember how."

(Source: ESPN)

Judge in Man City's UEFA case could have conflict of interest



One of the judges on the five-man panel tasked with determining whether Manchester City should be banned from the Champions League over a potential breach of financial fair play rules might have to recuse himself from deliberations.

According to an entry on the website of the law firm of Charles Flint, QC, the barrister is a director of the Dubai Financial Services Authority (DFSA).

The DFSA regulates financial services in the Dubai International Financial Centre, a special economic zone set up by the government of the United Arab Emirates. The owner of Manchester City, via the Abu Dhabi United Group, is Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, a member of the Emirati royal family and deputy prime minister of the UAE.

This could present a perceived conflict of interest. According to the procedural rules of the UEFA Club Financial Control Body (CFCB), any member would be expected to "disclose any circumstance which might give rise to a conflict of interest" as members of the CFCB "may not take part in consideration of a case if there is any justifiable doubt as to his impartiality."

Flint could willingly recuse himself or he could be asked to step aside by the other members of the adjudicatory chamber.

Manchester City were referred by the CFCB's chief investigator only Thursday, and sources tell ESPN FC that the adjudicatory

chamber has yet to meet. The body, led by Jose Narciso da Cunha Rodrigues, a judge at the European Court of Justice, has a total of five members, and at least three must be present to deliberate.

Given that they must attend in person -- video conferencing is not allowed -- and given that these are independent arbitrators with busy professional lives, finding a suitable date when at least three can attend might take some time -- particularly if, as is possible, Flint ends up recusing himself (or is recused). That could delay any final decision in this complex case. AC Milan, for example, were referred to the adjudicatory chamber some five weeks ago and have yet to receive an answer.

Manchester City insist they have "irrefutable evidence" that they did not breach regulations and are "entirely confident of a positive outcome." But it is looking entirely likely that they will not receive a definitive answer for some time. Particularly since, if the adjudicatory chamber finds them guilty, they can still appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne, Switzerland.

(Source: Soccermet)

Arsenal's Mkhitarjan to miss Europa League final over safety fears

Arsenal's Armenian midfielder Henrikh Mkhitarjan will miss the Europa League final against Chelsea in Baku amid fears over his safety.

Mkhitarjan's well-being was a concern for Arsenal due to the tense political dispute between Armenia and final hosts Azerbaijan.

The Premier League club have decided against Mkhitarjan travelling with the rest of Unai Emery's squad for next Wednesday's game.

"We are very disappointed to announce that Henrikh Mkhitarjan will not be travelling with the squad for our UEFA Europa League final against Chelsea," an Arsenal statement announced on Tuesday.

"We have thoroughly explored all the options for Micki to be part of the squad but after discussing this with Micki and his family we have collectively agreed he will not be in our travelling party."

Azerbaijan's ambassador to the UK, Tahir Taghizadeh, had insisted Mkhitarjan would be free from any threat of violence, but it was reported the star didn't believe he would be safe on the pitch.

"Having considered all the current options, we had to take the tough decision for me not to travel with the squad to the UEL Final against Chelsea," Mkhitarjan tweeted.

"It's the kind of game that doesn't come along very often for us players and I must admit, it hurts me a lot to miss it."



I will be cheering my teammates on! Let's bring it home."

UEFA, European football's governing body, insisted they had done all they could to ensure Mkhitarjan's safety in Baku.

"Working alongside Arsenal FC, UEFA sought and received assurances regarding the player's safety in Azerbaijan from the highest authorities in the country," a UEFA statement read.

"As a result of these guarantees, a comprehensive security plan was developed and given to the club."

"While the club acknowledges the efforts that UEFA and

the Azeri government have gone to in this matter, we respect the personal decision not to travel with the player."

Mkhitarjan had featured in 11 games during the Europa League campaign and his absence will be a big blow as Arsenal look for the victory they need to qualify for next season's Champions League.

"We have written to UEFA expressing our deep concerns about this situation," the Arsenal statement added.

"We're also very sad that a player will miss out on a major European final in circumstances such as this, as it is something that comes along very rarely in a footballer's career."

"Micki has been a key player in our run to the final so this is a big loss for us from a team perspective."

Armenia captain Mkhitarjan skipped the Gunners' Europa League fixture against Qarabag in October because of tensions caused by a dispute over the Nagorno Karabakh region.

Azerbaijan and Armenia have feuded over Nagorno Karabakh since Armenian separatists seized the territory in a war that claimed about 30,000 lives in the early 1990s.

A ceasefire was agreed in 1994 but the two countries remain locked in a bitter dispute with frequent exchanges of fire, and tensions are such that Mkhitarjan also did not travel to Azerbaijan with former club Borussia Dortmund for a Europa League match against Galata FK in 2015.

(Source: AFP)

Xavi handed Persepolis No. 6 jersey

S P O R T S TEHRAN — Iran's Persepolis football club handed No. 6 jersey to Xavi Hernandez.

The Spaniard brought an end to his 22-year career which saw him win 32 titles, the last of which was the 2018-19 Qatar Stars League.

Ahead of the match against Al Sadd in Group D of the 2019 AFC Champions League, the Iranian team's officials handed the jersey to the player.

The 39-year-old won eight La Liga titles and four UEFA Champions League trophies while at Barcelona.

The 2010 World Cup-winner will replace Manuel Jesualdo Ferreira as Al Sadd next year head coach and is excited to see "what the future holds".

Of the 11,000 spectators present, mostly wearing the red of Persepolis, several home fans brandished banners reading "Adios Xavi" to show their appreciation of the player who with Andres Iniesta formed the backbone of one of Barcelona's greatest ever sides.

Xavi was also honored by the Persepolis management who presented him with a jersey featuring the number six he has worn in his career.

"The idea is to start as a coach in Qatar, to test myself and get some experience," Xavi told Spain's Efe agency in Tehran just hours before facing Persepolis.

"I think football has bid farewell to one of the best players in the world ... it was beautiful to work with a player with Xavi's caliber," Al Sadd's current head coach Jesualdo Ferreira said after the match.

Ferreira has predicted Xavi "will be a great manager".

Fellow Al Sadd midfielder Gabi also paid tribute to his captain and fellow Spaniard, calling him a "role model".

The midfielder - who scored 13 goals in 133 appearances for Spain - left Barcelona in 2015 and joined Al Sadd on a three-year contract.

He will continue his work with Generation Amazing, a Qatari program created "to ensure the 2022 World Cup leaves a human and social legacy".



Persepolis end AFC Champions League on high note



S P O R T S TEHRAN — Persepolis football team of Iran ended their 2019 AFC Champions League Group D campaign on a high as the Iranian champions defeated Qatar's Al Sadd SC 2-0 on Monday.

Having already secured their place in the round of 16, Al Sadd needed a point to ensure they end the group stage at the top spot, while Persepolis had already been eliminated and sat bottom of the group with four points.

In the 16th minute, Mehdi Torabi collected Ahmad Noorollahi's pass 30 yards from goal and unleashed a thunderous drive into the top corner of Saad Al Sheeb's net to put the hosts in front.

After the restart, Al Sadd looked to take the game to their opponents in an effort to find an equalizer, and they came as close as possible in the 64th minute when the 2018 AFC Player of the Year Abdelkarim Hassan beat Alireza Beiranvand from 35 yards out, but watched his powerful effort ricochet off the bottom of the upright.

Torabi then turned provider for Persepolis in the 67th minute, breaking free down the left flank and finding Ali Alipour with a perfectly weighted pass. Alipour rode off the initial tackle of Tarek Salman before drilling a low effort through the legs of Al Sheeb to make it 2-0, the-afc.com reported.

ACL 2019: Iran's Esteghlal beat UAE's Al Ain



S P O R T S TEHRAN — Iran's Esteghlal football team came from behind to earn a 2-1 win against UAE's Al Ain at Hazza bin Zayed Stadium on Matchday Six of the 2019 AFC Champions League Group C on Monday.

With the first clear-cut chance of the game, Al Ain took the lead through Marcus Berg 13 minutes in. The Swedish international striker brought the ball over the halfway line before supplying it to Bandar Al Ahabbi wide on the right.

Esteghlal equalized eight minutes later through Mohammad Daneshgar. The defender outmuscled his marker inside the box and powered home a header from Vorya Ghafouri's out-swinging corner-kick,

the-afc.com reported.

Just as the first half drew to a close, Esteghlal turned the tables on their hosts through Morteza Tabrizi. Full-back Milad Zakipour advanced down the left and crossed low for Ayanda Patosi who cushioned the ball for Tabrizi to drill low into the bottom corner of Khaled Eisa's net, sending his side into the dressing room in the lead.

The result means Al Ain went an entire AFC Champions League campaign without a single win for the first time in their history as they finished bottom of the group with two points. Esteghlal, meanwhile, climbed up to eight points but stayed third, one point behind Al Duhail.

United still hoping to extend Mata stay

Manchester United have not given up hope of extending Juan Mata's stay at Old Trafford, sources have told ESPN FC.

Spain midfielder Mata is out of contract on June 30 and has a number of offers from clubs in England, Italy and Spain.

He also has an offer on the table from United, and manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer has not conceded defeat in his attempts to convince the 31-year-old to stay although agreement has yet to be reached.

United have lost Ander Herrera on a free transfer after they were unable to agree a new contract, with the midfielder set to sign for Paris Saint-Germain when his deal expires at the end of the month.

Club captain Antonio Valencia will also leave after United decided against triggering a one-year option in his contract.

If Mata, who is currently on holiday, decides to stay, he is likely to find increased competition for a place in the team next season.

Sources have told ESPN FC that United are nearing an agreement for Swansea winger Daniel James, who has also been courted by Everton and Newcastle and is likely to cost around £15 million. Solskjaer has ordered his squad to return to Carrington for the start of preseason training on July 1 - seven days before they are due to fly to Australia for the start of their preseason tour.

The manager has told the club he wants the bulk of summer transfer business completed before United fly to Perth on July 7 as he begins preparations for the new season.

United have scheduled five friendlies in Australia, Singapore, China and Cardiff.

They are also set to announce plans for a sixth game against Kristiansund in Oslo at the end of July after Manchester City's FA Cup victory over Watford on Saturday confirmed their place in the group phase of the Europa League.

Had Watford won, Solskjaer's side would have faced a Europa League qualifier on July 25.

(Source: ESPN)

Formula One legend Niki Lauda dies at 70

Racing driver Niki Lauda, three-time Formula One champion, has passed away surrounded by family. His death has triggered an outpouring of praise for a man whose comeback from a horrific crash inspired F1 fans worldwide.

Austrian-born Niki Lauda, one of the greatest Formula One (F1) drivers of all time, has died at the age of 70, his family announced on Tuesday.

"His unique successes as a sportsman and entrepreneur are and remain unforgettable. His tireless drive, his straightforwardness and his courage remain an example and standard for us all," a family statement read.

"Away from the public gaze he was a loving and caring husband, father and grandfather. We will miss him very much."

Lauda struggled with health problems ever since his 1976 crash. The racing driver crashed his Ferrari car at Germany's Nürburgring Nordschleife race and remained trapped in the cockpit for 55 seconds, suffering burns

and inhaling toxic fumes.

As well as his distinctive facial scarring, Lauda's crash caused a number of long-term health issues, prompting two kidney transplants in 1997 and 2005. Last summer, Lauda developed a lung infection and was then forced to undergo an emergency lung transplant. He was hospitalized again in January this year with the flu.

"It had been clear for some time that we would not be able to bring him back onto the 'race track'," said Walter Klepetko, the doctor who performed the lung transplant last year. "There was no cause of death. It was a long process, and the patient departed at the end."

Outpouring of praise

The world of motorsport paid tribute to Niki Lauda. His former teams, McLaren and Ferrari, sent condolences to the Lauda family. "Today is a sad day for F1. The big Ferrari family learns with deep sadness the news



of the death of their friend Niki Lauda," the racing car giant said on Twitter.

"Your passion, your fighting spirit, to never give up, your belief that you always meet twice in life, and even your patience with us youngsters," wrote F1 world champion Nico Rosberg.

Formula One driver for McLaren, Carlos Sainz described Lauda as "one of the last proper heroes of our sport, a true gentleman, and a great human."

The legend of Lauda

The Austrian-born Lauda first snatched the F1 drivers' title with Ferrari in 1975. After surviving the Nürburgring crash, he managed to recover and get back into the competition in just 42 days, finishing second behind UK's James Hunt. The Austrian won the championship again for Ferrari in 1977 and retired at the end of the 1979 season. However, he came back to the paddock in 1984, joining McLaren, and in 1985 became the sole driver ever to win an F1 title after having returned from retirement.

A movie starring Daniel Brühl as Lauda and Chris Hemsworth as James Hunt premiered in cinemas in 2013.

After his definitive retirement in 1985, Lauda made money as an entrepreneur, founding his own airline but later selling most of it to Ryanair. He also worked as a TV commentator and served as the non-executive chairman for the Mercedes F1 team, of which he was a shareholder.

(Source: Deutsche Welle)

2019-20 Iran Professional League season to start on Aug. 1

TASNIM — The start of the Iran Professional League's 2019/20 season will take place on August 1.

The 2019/20 fixtures will be released later. The summer 2019 transfer window will also open on June 6.

Persepolis will start the campaign to win the title for the fourth time in a row.

The Iran Professional League is the highest division of professional football in Iran. The league was also known as the Persian Gulf Cup from 2006.

It is the top-level football league in Iran since its foundation in 2 November 2001.

ACL: Zob Ahan, Al Nassr match postponed

A match between Zob Ahan of Iran and Saudi Arabia's Al Nassr on Matchday Six of the 2019 AFC Champions League Group A has been postponed.

The Asian Football Confederation has re-scheduled the match for geo-political concerns.

The match was supposed to be held at Karbala Sports City in Iraq on Tuesday.

"AFC takes the safety of the players and match officials as well as fans as top priority in the Continent's competitions. In the light of this principle, AFC has no doubt that all stakeholders of this match support the decision by AFC administration," said Shin Man Gil, Executive Director AFC Competitions Division.

AFC shall advise on the next steps in duo course regarding new match date, venue and other arrangement, he added.

(Source: the-afc)

Afshin Ghotbi parts ways with Foolad

IRNA — Afshin Ghotbi parted company with Foolad Khuzestan football team after about five months.

Under coaching of Ex-Persepolis and Iran coach, Foolad finished in eighth place in Iran Professional League.

According to his agent, Ghotbi has received several offers from the Iranian football teams.

Ghotbi started his coaching career in UCLA Bruins in 1984 and was assistant coach of the U.S. and South Korea national football teams from 1997 to 2002.

In 2007, Ghotbi took charge of Persepolis and helped the team win title after six years.

He was named as Iran national football team coach in 2009 and headed Team Melli in 2011 AFC Asian Cup in Qatar.

Ghotbi has also coached Shimizu S-Pulse, Buriram United and Shijiazhuang Ever Bright.

Pioneering female soccer referee Yamashita hoping to inspire

TOKYO (Reuters) — Japanese referee Yoshimi Yamashita is hoping her trailblazing work as part of the first all-female trio to officiate a men's match in Asian continental competition last week will encourage girls to feel they can do anything in the game. A

long with Makoto Bozono and Naomi Teshirogi, Yamashita made history last Wednesday when she took charge of the clash between Yangon United and Naga World in the AFC Cup, the club tournament for Asia's "developing" football nations.

Yamashita, who will be back officiating women's matches next month when she and her assistants head to France for the World Cup, is clearly still coming to terms with her role as a breaker of glass ceilings.

"I do not feel as if I am the pioneer, but when I see the game objectively, I understand that it would be an opportunity to be one," Yamashita told Reuters in Tokyo on Tuesday.

"I think I need to be conscious of (being a role model). If I could make one (girl) want to be on the pitch, play football or become a referee, I would be happy. So, I feel that I need to be conscious of that responsibility."

Yamashita joined the likes of Stephanie Frappart and Bibiana Steinhaus, who have officiated top flight men's games in France and Germany respectively, as pioneers in refereeing.

The 33-year-old started playing soccer when she was four and said she partially took up the whistle because of the greater opportunities refereeing presented for women.

"There is no difference between male and female referees," said Yamashita, who also works as a gym instructor five days a week.

"It is certain that there are more opportunities for me; opportunities I would not have as a player, but I can as a referee."

Yamashita wants to use her position to encourage girls to become involved in all facets of the game.

"It is so important for them to know soccer is not all about playing," she said.

"Coaches can be seen as they tend to coach on the pitch, but I think it is important for them to learn more about administration side of the business and refereeing."

The Women's World Cup will be Yamashita's first, but she did officiate at an under-17 World Cup and the final of the 2017 Algarve Cup invitational tournament.



INTERNATIONAL DAILY
www.tehrantimes.com

Managing Director: Ali Asgari
Editor-in-Chief: Mohammad Ghaderi

Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 — 88808895
editor@tehrantimes.com
Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000
Advertisements Dept.: Telefax: (+98 21) 43051450
Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807
Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603
www.eshterak.ir Distributor: Padideh Novin Co.
Tel: 88911433
Webmaster: webmaster@tehrantimes.com
Printed at: Hamshahri No. 3(Rooztab) - ISSN: 1017-94

Tehrantimes79 Tehrantimesdaily

No. 18, Bimeh Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran
P.O. Box: 14155-4843
Zip Code: 1599814713



GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Losing friends leads to loneliness and exile.
Imam Ali (AS)

Photos to bring Iran's recent flood into spotlight at Cannes

A R T TEHRAN — An exhibition of photos of Iran's recent flood under the title "Everywhere for Everyone" will open at the Cannes Film Market today.

A collection of photos depicting people and the Iranian Red Crescent in the flood-stricken regions helping victims of the devastation that occurred in the provinces of Golestan, Lorestan and Khuzestan will be showcased at the pavilion of Iran's Farabi Cinema Foundation for the last two days of the market, a public relations team for the exhibit announced in a press release published on Tuesday.



A poster for "Everywhere for Everyone".

The exhibit also intends to show how U.S. sanctions have prevented the Iranian Red Crescent from obtaining any foreign financial aid to assist victims of flooding.

The collection will later go on view at the Iranian Cultural Center in Paris during a weeklong exhibition, which will open on May 24.

The photos are taken by 28 photographers, including Ahmad Balbasi, Reza Ahmadvand, Amir-Ali Razaqi, Mohsen Rezai, Fereshteh Eslahi and Hassan Ghaffari.

The photos have been selected by Babak Borzuyeh and Heidar Rezai. Borzuyeh is due to hold a one-day workshop on the opening day.

The project has been launched by the Farabi Cinema Foundation and Iranian Cultural Center in Paris in collaboration with the Iranian Red Crescent.

Tehran exhibit celebrates liberation anniversary of Khorramshahr

A R T TEHRAN — Tehran's Palestine Museum of Contemporary Art is celebrating the 38th anniversary of the liberation of Khorramshahr by organizing a painting exhibition, which opened on Tuesday.

The exhibition named "Where Are the Modest Men" is displaying over 40 paintings by a group of young artists who attended workshops organized by the Revolution and Sacred Defense Visual Arts Association.

The exhibition is being held in collaboration with the Revolution and Sacred Defense Visual Arts Association.

The exhibit will run until May 25 at the museum located at 74 Mozaffar St., Taleqani Ave., Felestin Sq.

Khorramshahr was captured by Iraqis on October 26, 1980 during the early months of the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war and it was liberated on May 24, 1982.

NEWS IN BRIEF



New director of Iran's Music Office appointed

A R T TEHRAN — Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Seyyed Abbas Salehi appointed Mohammad Allahyari Fumani the new director of the Music Office on Monday.

Allahyari replaces Ali Torabi, who resigned from the position on Sunday.

Allahyari was the director of the Office for Education and Development of Cultural and Artistic Activities at the Culture Ministry since 2018.

Leader warns of Persian language decay

CULTURE TEHRAN — Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has warned poets and literati of the decay of the Persian language.

Speaking during his annual meeting with poets and literati on Monday night, the Leader said, "I am very concerned about the Persian language, because in general, the Persian language has fallen into decay."

He criticized Persian media and Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) for disregard of the standard language, using "faceless language" and foreign terms and words, and addressed the cultural officials and literati, "Don't let the Persian language fall into decay and ruin."

He called the lyrics of theme songs from IRIB films and series nonsense and "really shallow," and noted, "Over the centuries, great poets have maintained the eloquent Persian language and have successfully transferred it to us. Therefore we should have the greatest respect for it and should not let a certain artless poet spoil it."

"It is important for the nation to maintain its identity," he noted and added, "A nation that loses its identity will be wiped out by the aliens."

Ayatollah Khamenei viewed the current state of Iran's revolutionary poetry as promising and added, "The current state of the revolutionary poetry has made significant progress in contents, innovation and eloquence of terms."

He denounced those people who categorize poetry into "artistic poetry" and "committed poetry" and said, "Works of the Persian poetry icons such as Hafez, Sadi, Ferdowsi and Rumi are full of morals, teachings, commitment, knowledge, mysticism, spirituality and pure Islam. Therefore an attitude that creates a divide between the aesthetics aspect and the commitment of poetry is clearly wrong, and is rooted in ignorance or lack of knowledge."

He asked the poets to regard in their poetry the splendor of the Iranian people's rush to help their fellows in the flood-hit regions.

"This will turn your poetry into the identity flag of the country," the Leader noted.



Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei glances at a book by Tehran-based Afghan writer Mohammad-Sarvar Rajai (C) during his annual meeting with poets and literati on May 20, 2019.

Poets and literary figures from India and Afghanistan attended the meeting that is organized annually on the holy month of Ramadan. The poets and writers presented the Leader with their latest books.

"When the Moon Was Full" director, stars named NLAI goodwill ambassadors



"When the Moon Was Full" director Narges Abyar (R) is presented with a painting by NLAI director Ashraf Borujerdi (L) after being selected as a goodwill ambassador for NLAI national art archives.

A R T TEHRAN — Director d e s k Narges Abyar, and Hutan Shakiba, Elnaz Shakerdoost and Fereshteh Sadr-Orafai, the stars of her acclaimed movie "When the Moon Was Full", were selected as goodwill ambassadors for the National Library and Archives of Iran (NLAI).

They attended a screening of the movie at the NLAI where they were informed by their mission to the national art archives project by NLAI director Ashraf Borujerdi.

The national art archives is a new project launched by the library to help preserve the national memory of Iran in different fields of theater, music, poetry and cinema.

Abyar and the stars are the first ambassadors for the national art archives of the library.

"When the Moon Was Full" won

a Crystal Simorgh in six categories, including best film and best director at the 37th Fajr Film Festival in February.

The film is about Abdul-Hamid Rigi, the younger brother of Abdul-Malik Rigi, the founder and leader of the Jundallah terrorist group in southeastern Iran, who marries Faezeh Mansuri, a woman from Tehran. He forces Faezeh to leave her homeland along with her brother to live in Pakistan where they find themselves involved in Jundallah terrorist activities.

Elnaz Shakerdoost was crowned best actress for the portrayal of Faezeh, and Hutan Shakiba won the award for best actor for playing the role of Abdul-Hamid Rigi.

The movie also brought Fereshteh Sadr-Orafai the award for best supporting actress for her portrayal of the mother of the Rigi brothers.

Malick's tale of conscientious objector divides Cannes critics

CANNES, France (Reuters) — A World War Two drama by U.S. director Terrence Malick is proving one of the Cannes film festival's most divisive premieres yet, with some critics hailing a cinema master at the top of his game and one calling it "a big swing and a miss".

"A Hidden Life", about an Austrian man who refuses to fight for Nazi Germany, is a contender for the top Palme d'Or award, which Malick already won with "The Tree of Life" in 2011.

Set against a brooding Alpine backdrop, before it evolves into a prison drama, the film earned near-universal acclaim for its evocative camerawork, with lush landscapes and intimate family moments vividly brought to life.

"He gave us so much freedom during the whole shooting. Also he chooses angles and lenses that were so wide so you can actually have the whole stage for you," actor August Diehl, who plays the protagonist, told a news conference on Monday.

But Malick - known for his resistance to public appearances of any kind, and absent from the red carpet at the Sun-



72nd Cannes Film Festival - News conference for the film "A Hidden Life" in competition - Cannes, France, May 20, 2019. Cast members August Diehl and Valerie Pachner pose. (Reuters/Jean-Paul Pelissier)

day premiere as well as the press event - split critics down the middle on most other fronts.

Based on real events, the movie tells the story of unsung hero Franz Jagerstatter, who risks prison by refusing to be drafted to fight for Adolf Hitler.

His decision leaves Franziska, the wife he adores, fending for the family and tending to their farm, as neighbors in their village turn hostile.

Iranian companies offer productions at Cannes Film Market



A view of the Cannes Film Market - Marché du Film.

A R T TEHRAN — A number of Iranian companies are offering their latest products at the Cannes Film Market - Marché du Film, Iran's Farabi Cinema Foundation announced on Tuesday.

Eli Image, Al Film Pro, Persia Film Distribution, Irimage, Farabi Cinema Foundation, Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (IIDCYA) and several other companies are taking part in the market, which will run until May 25.

Representatives of the Fajr International Film Festival and Isfahan International Film Festival for Children and Youth are also attending the event.

Moreover, Iranian officials discussed ways to expand Iran's presence in the Cannes Film Festival and market during meetings with the executive director of the Cannes Film Market, Jerome Paillard,

and the head of sales and operations of the market, Maud Amson.

A lineup of Iranian films, including "Once Upon a Time a Woman" by Jalil Akbari-Sehat, "A House for You" by Mehdi Bakhshi-Moqaddam, "Forest of Silence" by Soheil Abdollahi and "Dilag" by Abbas Rafiei are on display at the market.

"Main Idea" by Azita Mugui, "The 40th Day" by Hamid Kuhpai, "Captain 22" by Arman Qolipour Dashtaki, "Lopeto" by Abbas Askari, "The Last Fish" by Masud Saemini and "Cinema Donkey" by Shahed Ahmadi are also among the latest Iranian movies on display at the event.

The Marché du Film is the business counterpart of the Cannes Film Festival, and is the largest film market in the world. It was created in 1959 and has been held annually since then, simultaneously with the major international film event.

Angry at being dubbed a hustler, Maradona dismisses new film

BUENOS AIRES (Reuters) — Diego Maradona greeted a new film about his life with scorn on Monday, telling people not to see it when it is released next month.

Posters for the two-hour documentary about the controversial Argentine forward say "Diego Maradona: Rebel. Hero. Hustler. God." with the World Cup winner upset at the use of "hustler".

"I played football and I made money running after a ball. I didn't hustle anyone," he told Univision in an interview.

"If they are putting that there to get people to go and see it then I think they are going about it the wrong way."

"I don't like the title, and if I don't like the title I am not going to like the film. Don't go and see it."

Director Asif Kapadia, who made the award-winning documentaries "Amy" and "Senna", had earlier said Maradona had not seen the film and admitted he was interested how the player would react to viewing the finished article.

"We are dealing with archive from way back, there will be lots of images that he himself hasn't seen of himself, of his fam-



Dorados coach Diego Armando Maradona before the match of the Atletico San Luis v Dorados in Alfonso Lastras Stadium, San Luis Potosi, Mexico May 5, 2019. (Reuters/Henry Romero)

ily, of his kids," Kapadia told Reuters in an interview.

"So I think it's going to be quite emotional for him."

Maradona, who is now coaching in Mexico, missed the film's premier at Cannes on Sunday.

Initial reviews were mixed with critics saying the film, which draws on Maradona's personal stock of video, showed colorful scenes but pulled its punches.