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Netherlands plans to join INSTEX

TEHRAN — The Dutch government announced that it plans to join the financial mechanism of Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges (INSTEX) to do business with the Islamic Republic of Iran, IRNA reported on Friday.

The Dutch government, in response to the Parliament questions about EU measures to counter the U.S. sanctions against Iran, wrote a letter to the leaders of

the country's legislative body on Wednesday, noting its support of the INSTEX, announced its plan to invest and join this European financial mechanism.

In response to a question about how "The Blocking Statute" function was revived by the EU to counter U.S. sanctions, Dutch foreign and trade ministers emphasized that the union regards the U.S. sanctions "illegal" and is not to officially recognize it. **→4**

Tehran dismisses Trump, Macron's anti-Iran remarks

TEHRAN — Tehran has dismissed the recent remarks made by French President Emmanuel Macron and his American counterpart Donald Trump, saying such remarks are of no help in saving the Iran nuclear deal.

In a statement on Friday, Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said Trump's "contradictory" and "groundless" claims do not deserve a new reaction.

In their meeting in France on Thursday, Trump and Macron called for efforts to

keep Tehran from what they called getting nuclear weapons.

"I don't think we have differences over Iran... I don't think that the president wants to see nuclear weapons and neither do I," Trump told reporters ahead of a meeting with Macron in Caen. Macron also said Paris and Washington shared the same objective on Iran, saying they sought to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon, reduce Iran's ballistic activity, contain Iran's regional activity and establish peace in the region. **→2**

Pelosi tells Dems she wants to see Trump 'in prison'

TEHRAN — Speaker Nancy Pelosi told senior Democrats that she'd like to see President Donald Trump "in prison" as she clashed with House Judiciary Chairman Jerry Nadler in a meeting on Tuesday night over whether to launch impeachment proceedings.

According to Politico, Pelosi met with

Nadler (D-N.Y.) and several other top Democrats who are aggressively pursuing investigations against the president, according to multiple sources. Nadler and other committee leaders have been embroiled in a behind-the-scenes turf battle for weeks over ownership of the Democrats' sprawling investigation into Trump. **→13**

Saudi Arabia steps up ballistic missile program with Chinese aid

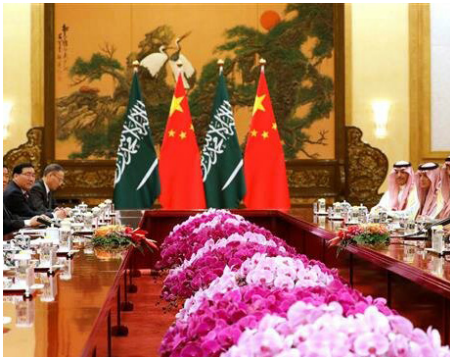
TEHRAN — Saudi Arabia has reportedly stepped up its ballistic missile program with the help of China, with the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump withholding intelligence on the issue.

Citing three sources familiar with the matter, CNN reported on Wednesday that based on classified U.S. intelligence, Riyadh had expanded both its missile infrastructure and technology through recent purchases from Beijing.

The sources said that the Trump administration did not initially disclose its knowledge of the Saudi missile development to key members of Congress.

The move, they added, infuriated Democrats who discovered the matter "outside of regular U.S. government channels and concluded it had been deliberately left out of a series of briefings."

The informed sources also stressed although the Saudis' objective was not clear from the



intelligence, the missile development "could mark another step in potential Saudi efforts to one day deliver a nuclear warhead were it ever to obtain one."

According to Press TV, Saudi Arabia is the U.S.'s top arms buyer, but it is barred from buying ballistic missiles from Washington

under the 1987 Missile Technology Control Regime.

Back in January, The Washington Post published satellite images of a Saudi military base, indicating that Riyadh was testing and possibly manufacturing ballistic missiles.

Jeffrey Lewis, a missile expert at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies in Monterey, California, said the Saudi installations closely resembled a design used by China, though they were smaller.

In March 2018, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman threatened that the kingdom would be quick to develop nuclear weapons if Iran — which Riyadh views as its arch rival in the region — did so.

Many U.S. Congress members are concerned about the provision of nuclear technology to Saudi Arabia, a destabilizing force under the Salman clan, amid Trump's attempts to reach lucrative nuclear deals with the kingdom.

Syrian army finds U.S.-made arms in militant depot in Quneitra

TEHRAN — Syrian government forces have carried out a string of clean-up operations in the country's southwestern province of Quneitra near the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, discovering a substantial amount of munitions, some of them U.S.-built, from a former stronghold of foreign-backed Takfiri terrorists.

An unnamed military source told Syria's official news agency SANA that Syrian soldiers launched the operations on the outskirts of the town of Jubata al-Khashab on Thursday

to clear the area of hidden explosive devices and ordnance left behind by the militants.

According to Press TV, the source added that the weapons were hidden inside two underground tunnels dug by terrorists, which included artillery rounds, rockets, night-vision devices, American BGM-71 TOW anti-tank missiles as well as various types of machine guns.

Separately, Syrian army units targeted and destroyed the rocket launch pads of the terrorist group Jabhat Fateh al-Sham, formerly known

as al-Nusra Front, in Maar Tahroma village of the country's northwestern province of Idlib, killing dozens of the extremists in the process.

Syrian government forces also pounded the positions of the terrorists in al-Lataminah town, located 39 kilometers northwest of Hama, dealing heavy blows to them.

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.



PERSPECTIVE

Mostafa Mousavi Sabet
Head of the Tehran Times
Art & Culture Desk

Festivals Council comes to cope with Iranian films' festoxification

The Cinema Organization of Iran (COI) as the country's highest policy-making body in film industry has a newly established council to supervise Iran's presence at international film events.

In the announcement about the council, COI director Hossein Entezami actually commissioned the members to cope with "the plague of" festoxification, Iranian filmmakers' attitude to make films for screening in international events.

Filmmakers make films at least for two simple reasons: first to express themselves, second to express viewpoints on a topic. Festivals and events alike give them this chance.

Due to their subjects, a large number of the films annually produced in Iran fail to be screened publicly.

Domestic distributors, major movie theaters or cineplexes view the films as non-commercial and, as a result, they are reluctant to allocate a place for the films on their schedules.

This negative attitude pushes the filmmakers to present their movies overseas, so they choose sensitive subjects from within the country for their works in order to convince festival organizers around the world to include them in their galas.

Dozens of Iran's annual film productions are shorts and documentaries, which would either fail to obtain permissions for nationwide screening or at best receive limited screenings at the Art and Experience Cinema, movie theaters that are dedicated to screening art films. This organization only has 14 theaters across the country.

In its methodology to tackle festoxification, the Cinema Organization of Iran intends to push filmmakers to consider issues pleasing to cultural officials rather than topics satisfying to organizers of international events.

The officials feel dissatisfied with the way most directors choose topics for their films. An example is Bahram Tavakkoli, whose films such as "Barefoot in Heaven", "Walking in the Fog" and "Here without Me", with subjects pleasing to international festivals, never received a welcome from the cultural officials. **→16**



ARTICLE

By Yuram Abdullah Weiler
Analyst and journalist

Quds Day message: The occupied West Bank is NOT Israeli heartland

"It's just time the world recognizes that Judea and Samaria are legitimate."
Texas agriculture commissioner and church elder Sid Miller

Another Quds Day has passed. People around the world took to the streets to stand in solidarity with the Palestinian People, and to condemn the ongoing Zionist occupation of the Palestinian homeland. Their message was clear: the Occupied West Bank is not the Israeli heartland.

Established in 1979 by Imam Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic, Quds Day provides an annual opportunity for Muslims and other people of conscience to express their outrage over the more than 70 years of ongoing Israeli injustice to Palestinians. In sharp contrast, U.S. President Donald Trump and his son-in-law, Jared Kushner, seem intent on legitimizing the Zionist land grab of occupied Palestinian territory, which has even been referred to as "the heartland of Israel" in a Texas department of agriculture news release.

The last half-hearted effort against illegal settlements on Palestinian lands occurred during the administration of George H.W. Bush, who withheld loan guarantees from the Israeli entity. "We have a longstanding policy that feels that settlements are counterproductive to peace," Bush insisted. "This is a long-standing policy, and I am determined to see that that policy not be altered." Unfortunately, successive U.S. administrations have not shared even this lukewarm level of political determination, and, of course, under the auspices of the current Washington regime, the number of illegal Israeli settlements has mushroomed.

The U.S. state of Texas seems to be a haven for Christian Zionist supporters of the Israeli Apartheid regime. Governor Greg Abbott of Texas has even gone so far as to proclaim, "Any anti-Israel policy is an anti-Texas policy." Striving to steer the discourse from condemnation and censure to outright approval and overt political support for Israeli policies of illegal settlement expansion, these evangelical extremists believe they have found another "Cyrus" personified in Donald Trump. **→7**



Bachukheh wrestling competition in Bojnord

The Bachukheh traditional wrestling competition was held in Bojnord in Iran's North Khorasan Province on Friday.

Bachukheh is a traditional wrestling sport with its own championship games.

This is one of the most important local wrestling matches in Iran with Greater Khorasan as its birthplace.

The Bachukheh wrestling field is usually covered with red clay.

Tradition local instruments, such as 'Dohal' and 'Naghareh', are also played throughout the games.

Zarif: Mossad fabricating intelligence to blame Iran for Fujairah false flag

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif on Wednesday dismissed as “fabricated” a claim by Israeli spy agency Mossad that Iran had been behind a recent attack on tankers near the Emirati port of al-Fujairah, Press TV reported.



Warning about such false flag attacks in the region, Zarif said, “This time Mossad is fabricating intelligence about Iran’s involvement in sabotage in Fujairah.”

The claim by Mossad came a few days after John Bolton, whom Zarif has classified as part of the B-Team who are trying to drag the United States into a war with Iran, claimed that Iran was “almost certainly” behind the sabotage attack.

“The #B_Team’s boy who cries wolf is crying once again: this time Mossad is fabricating intelligence about Iran’s involvement in sabotage in Fujairah. I’ve warned of “accidents” and false flags—we know what happens when you believe their lies. We’ve been here before, haven’t we?”

Zarif said Mossad was simply peddling an anti-Iranian scenario made up by the B-Team.

In addition to Bolton, the B-Team includes Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

Israeli media have reported over the past days that Mossad had collected material at the site of the alleged sabotage of four oil tankers off the coast of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) last month that incriminated Iran.

The reports quoted unnamed Israeli officials as saying that the attack was “a pretty impressive commando operation” that sought to “damage the vessels without injuring those on board.”

Initially after reports of the Fujairah explosions on May 12, the UAE first denied there had been any incident but later on confirmed that four commercial vessels had been targeted by “sabotage operations” near its territorial waters.

Saudi Arabia announced a day later that two of its vessels had sustained damage in the mysterious attacks.

Israeli reports stated that Mossad had provided its evidence to U.S. intelligence agencies, prompting some American officials pin the attacks on Iran.

Bolton said in late May that the May 12 incident had been caused by Iranian naval mines, without providing any evidence to substantiate his claim.

“I think it is clear these (tanker attacks) were naval mines almost certainly from Iran,” he claimed.

Pompeo repeated the claims last Thursday, telling reporters before leaving for a trip to Europe that Tehran carried out the attacks “to raise the price of crude oil throughout the world.”

Tensions reached a new peak between Iran and the U.S. after Trump administration’s decision after the attacks to send an aircraft carrier as well as B-52 bombers to the Persian Gulf to defend itself against what it called an imminent “threat” from Iran.

Iran has slammed the attacks as “lamentable” and “worrying.” Zarif said in the aftermath of the attacks that he had already warned of such suspicious “accidents” because of Washington’s renewed warmongering policies promoted by Bolton and other U.S. hawks.

Advisor denounces US-KSA-UAE support for killing Sudanese demonstrators

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Hossein Amir Abdollahian, a senior foreign policy advisor to the Iranian parliament speaker, on Thursday condemned the U.S., the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) for supporting the killing of Sudanese demonstrators.

Describing Sudanese as a civilized and cultured nation, Amir Abdollahian also called for establishment of a democratically elected government in Sudan through ballot box.



He also said time has come to an end to partition Sudan.

“US-KSA-UAE intervention & their apparent support for killing civilized & culturally rich Sudanese is condemned. Backing people’s demands & establishing public vote-driven civil government are vital. Time for coercion, fratricide, foreign intervention & #Sudan cession is over,” Amir Abdollahian tweeted.

In the violent dispersal of a sit-in on Monday, at least 108 people were killed and more than 500 wounded, according to the Central Committee of Sudanese Doctors (CCSD), Al Jazeera reported.

A Sudanese military expert says a recent brutal crackdown on pro-democracy protesters in capital Khartoum that killed scores of people was part of a Saudi-Emirati plan and launched at Riyadh’s bidding, according to Press TV.

The plan to storm a protest camp outside Sudan’s Defense Ministry in central Khartoum on June 3 had been discussed during recent visits to Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt by Sudan’s military ruler General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, who chairs the country’s Transitional Military Council (TMC), the expert told the Middle East Eye on condition of anonymity.

“The breaking up of the sit-in was one of the main points on the agenda that was discussed. Unless he got the green light from his regional allies he would not have been able to commit such a crime,” he said.

The African Union (AU) has suspended Sudan’s membership days after the crackdown.

The AU’s Peace and Security Department said in a post on Twitter on Thursday that Sudan’s participation in all AU activities would be suspended with immediate effect – “until the effective establishment of a civilian-led transitional authority,” which it described as the only way to “exit from the current crisis”.

Bahrain, Saudi entering quagmire by betraying Palestine: Leader

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has said that the ruling regimes in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia are setting foot in a quagmire by betraying the Palestinian cause.

Backed by Saudi Arabia, Bahrain is scheduled to host an event on June 25-26 in the capital Manama, which is deemed to follow the so-called “deal of century” over Palestine, a scheme that the U.S. initiated by recognizing al-Quds as the capital of Israel.

The Leader rejected U.S. President Donald Trump’s yet-to-be-unveiled deal on the decades-long Israeli-Palestinian conflict as “a betrayal of the Muslim world.”

“The treachery of some Muslim states such as Saudi Arabia and Bahrain set the stage for such an evil plot,” Ayatollah Khamenei said. “I wish Bahraini and Saudi rulers would [eventually] realize what a quagmire they are stepping in and what damages this will do to their future,” the Leader stated.

Ayatollah Khamenei made the comments during a speech at Imam Khomeini’s Grand Prayer Grounds in Tehran on Wednesday after leading Eid al-Fitr’s prayers, which marked the end of the holy fasting month of Ramadan.

Ayatollah Khamenei denounced the Bahraini regime for agreeing to host the conference, where Washington is set to unveil parts of the plan later this month.

All Palestinian groups — along with the United Nations and several other countries — have boycotted the event.

The Leader said, “The objective of this conference is to materialize America’s wrongful, treacherous and evil scheme for Palestinians — which they (Americans) have called ‘the deal of the century.’ However, this will not happen, and this plot will never get off the ground, by divine grace.”

Ayatollah Khamenei described the Palestinian cause against the Israeli occupation as the “number one issue” on the agenda of the Islamic world, thanking those who have voiced opposition to the so-called “peace” deal and the relevant event in Bahrain.

Elsewhere, Ayatollah Khamenei congratulated the Iranian nation on the occasion of Eid al-Fitr, expressing his gratitude to people for their mass participation in the nationwide rallies marking International Quds Day on the last Friday of Ramadan.

■ ‘Palestine will return to Palestinians’

Later in the day, the Leader received a gathering of Iranian authorities, ambassadors of Muslim countries, and people of various social spectra in a meeting marking Eid al-Fitr.

Addressing the meeting, Ayatollah Khamenei condemned efforts by certain Muslim states to advance the goals of the United States and Israel.



“[On the contrary,] the Islamic Republic has, from the very beginning, laid emphasis on defending the Palestinian people and stood up to global arrogance,” the Leader said, emphasizing Iran’s resolve to “keep up this steadfastness.”

“Contrary to some former Arab rulers, who believed the Jews should be thrown into the sea,” Iran stands by the belief that all residents of Palestine, including the Jews, should have a say in deciding the fate of this land.

The Leader further reaffirmed the Islamic Republic’s proposal for a referendum “within the framework of Palestine’s government system” among the residents of this land, including Muslims, Jews, Christians as well as the Palestinian refugees, who have been displaced from their homeland by the occupiers.

“The Palestinian people’s struggle should continue until that day, the Leader remarked, adding, “Youths will [live to] witness the day when [the land of] Palestine will return to the people of Palestine.”

■ ‘Eid al-Fitr message is unity among Muslim states’

The Leader further specified this year’s Eid al-Fitr message as a show of unity and solidarity among Muslim countries as well as a return to the notion of “the Muslim Ummah.”

The Leader, meanwhile, cautioned the world’s Muslim nations against the enemies’

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plots to sow discord among them and push their countries into chaos and conflict.

As examples of such hostile attempts, Ayatollah Khamenei referred to the situation in Libya — which has been the scene of rivalry between two governments — as well as Yemen, which has been the target of a bloody Saudi-led military campaign for more than four years.

“Why would two groups turn against one another and spill each other’s blood in a Muslim state such as Libya? And why would a country claiming to be Islamic act in line with the enemies’ demands and rain bombs on Yemeni people and their infrastructure?”

■ ‘Iran will not fall for Trump’s politicking’

Delivering a speech at a ceremony commemorating the 30th anniversary of the death of Imam Khomeini on Tuesday, the Leader warned about the U.S. recourse to political approaches aimed at creating the impression that it has abandoned its subversive ways against the Islamic Republic.

Ayatollah Khamenei cited the example of Trump’s recent comments in Japan, where he said he was not pursuing regime change in Iran and that the Islamic Republic “has a chance to be a great country with the same leadership.”

The Leader said the U.S. president was trying to say that “we are prepared to accept you,” but cautioned, “This is political shrewdness.”

Japan FM to tour Iran prior to Abe arrival

By staff and agency

Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Kono will visit Iran prior to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s arrival, the Japan Times reported on Thursday.

According to a Japanese government source, he plans to hold talks with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, the newspaper said.

Reportedly, Abe will visit Tehran on June 12-14.

The visit will be the first by an incumbent Japanese prime minister since 1978.

According to Bloomberg, Abe plans to meet with Iranian President Hassan Rou-

hani on June 12 and Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on June 13, the Mainichi reported.

The visit is aimed at helping encourage dialogue with the U.S. and ease tensions, according to the Mainichi.

During his talks with U.S. President Donald Trump in Tokyo on May 27, Abe reiterated his intention to act as an intermediary between the U.S. and Iran.

At a joint press conference with Trump, Abe said Japan “would like to do whatever it can. Japan and the U.S. should collaborate closely so that tensions surrounding Iran are lessened and do not result in armed conflict.”

Russia says didn’t receive request from Iran to buy S-400 systems

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Russia has not received any requests from Iran to buy S-400 air defense systems, Russia’s deputy prime minister has said.

“No,” Yuri Borisov said when asked by Sputnik whether Moscow had received a relevant request from Iran. “Let them continue spreading [fake news],” Borisov said when asked to comment on the media speculations. “Everything goes as it goes,” the minister commented on cooperation between Russia and Iran.

In late May, Bloomberg claimed in a report that Russia had refused to sell Iran its S-400 air defense



to prepare the grounds for Iran to fully benefit from the multilateral agreement.

“Under the current circumstances, their move to raise issues beyond the

JCPOA will not only fail to help save the JCPOA, but will also pave the way for further distrust among the parties remaining in the 2015 agreement,” the

“Raising issues beyond the JCPOA will not only fail to help save the JCPOA, but will also pave the way for further distrust among the parties remaining in the 2015 agreement,” Iran warns.

“This does not dupe the Islamic Republic’s authorities and the Iranian nation. Americans have to stay away. Wherever the U.S. laid its step, either war, sedition, exploitation, or imperialism has followed,” Ayatollah Khamenei stated.

■ ‘We know how to behave and act’
Ayatollah Khamenei advised Washington to mind its own business and set its own house in order, reminding how the U.S. was grappling with high levels of crime, drug, and police brutality that was unmatched anywhere else in the world.

“We ourselves know (better) how to behave and act,” the Leader noted.

The Leader, however, noted that what the U.S. president had said in terms of Iran’s chances with its sitting leadership was “of course true,” but the condition for the Islamic Republic to make progress was that Washington “stays away” from the country.

■ ‘Trump’s election sign of U.S. decline’

Ayatollah Khamenei further said Trump’s very election in the United States was a sign of America’s decadence.

“Election of a person with the characteristics of Donald Trump, who is the center of debate in the United States itself over his mental, ideological, and behavioral balance, is in and of itself an indication of political decline,” the Leader remarked.

Noting how Washington has invariably been supporting the crimes committed by Israel and the countries behind the ongoing invasion of Yemen, the Leader said, “They back crime. Can moral bankruptcy become any worse?”

■ ‘Iran steadfast on path of attaining deterrent power’

The Leader further hailed Iran’s “doctrine of resistance” against imperialism, as a legacy of Imam Khomeini.

“The goal behind [pursuing] resistance is to reach the point of economic, political, social, and military deterrence,” Ayatollah Khamenei said. “We should reach a point, which would dissuade the enemy from committing aggression against the people of Iran.”

Hailing the country’s high military capability, the Leader said that achievement was the reason the country’s enemies were attempting to deprive Iran of its missile power. “Of course, they will not be able to do this.”

Ayatollah Khamenei further hailed Imam Khomeini as an icon of resistance, whose unparalleled way of standing tall in the face of the enemies had culminated in the country’s current self-reliance.

Had it not been for the resistance put up by Iran, the Leader asserted, the county would have turned into a vassal state like Saudi Arabia, which not only is serving its oil and other resources to Washington, but is also forced to align its political approaches to that of the U.S.



“Japan is concerned about surging tensions surrounding the Middle East,” Abe said during the visit.

systems. According to the agency, Russia explained its decision by saying that such a move would escalate tensions in the region.

Commenting on the report, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said then that he did not have information about the alleged refusal.

The report came as tensions between the U.S. and Iran reached a new level in May, when the U.S. imposed more anti-Iranian sanctions and sent an aircraft carrier strike group, a squadron of B-52 bombers, and Patriot interceptors to the Middle East to grapple with what Washington describes as a threat emanating from Iran.

spokesman said, according to the Foreign Ministry website.

He further said that such moves will steer the U.S. closer to the goal it pursued when leaving the Iran nuclear deal, which was nothing but the deal’s collapse.

On May 8, 2018, U.S. President Donald Trump announced the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA, reached between Iran and six world powers – the U.S., the UK, France, Russia, China and Germany.

Putin, Xi denounce U.S. sanctions on Tehran

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping in a joint statement denounced the unilateral sanctions imposed by the United States against Iran and called upon the JCPOA signatories to adhere to their commitments.

“The sides are pleased to note that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) confirms in its reports that Iran continues to fulfill its obligations under the JCPOA. The sides also condemn the unilateral sanctions by the USA against the Islamic Republic of Iran,” according to the statement.

“The sides call on Iran to refrain from further steps to cease the fulfillment of its obligations under the JCPOA and call on other members of the JCPOA to fulfill their obligations,” it added, TASS reported on Wednesday.

The Russian and Chinese leaders, who held talks at the Kremlin, also stressed the importance of the JCPOA, reaffirming their commitment to sustainable and unequivocal fulfillment of all obligations under the agreement in accordance with the UN Security Council Resolution 2231 and Article 25 of the UN Charter.

In addition to China and Russia, the European Union (EU) has also expressed its opposition to the U.S. unilateral sanctions on Iran, although European countries have not yet taken any practical steps to implement the JCPOA.

German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas plans to visit Iran next week as Iran has



The Russian and Chinese leaders reaffirm commitment to sustainable and unequivocal fulfillment of all obligations under the nuclear agreement in accordance with the UN Security Council Resolution 2231 and Article 25 of the UN Charter.

suspended part of its obligations under the JCPOA in protest to a failure by the European Union to offset U.S. sanctions.

According to Reuters, German Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Adebahr said on Thursday that Maas will explore options for preserving the JCPOA.

She added that the trip had been agreed and coordinated with Britain and France, both of which support the deal they signed with Iran.

Losing its patience with an inaction by the remaining parties to the JCPOA, especially the European sides, to offset sanctions against

its people, Iran decided on May 8 to partially suspend parts of its undertakings under the JCPOA for two months. The decision, adopted by Iran's Supreme National Security Council, stated that if the remaining parties fail to reach an agreement within two months to compensate for sanctions, Tehran will take other steps, including enriching uranium to a higher level.

After months of delays, since the U.S. quit the JCPOA in May 2018, the Europeans finally introduced their special purpose vehicle, known as INSTEX, for trade with Iran. However, they have not yet made it operational.

■ Russia 'in talks with Europeans' to be included in Iran trade mechanism

A Russian diplomat has said that Moscow is in talks with Europeans to be included in the trade mechanism created by the three EU members to ease sanctions pressures on Iran.

The Russian Permanent Representative to the European Union Vladimir Chizov told Interfax news agency that Russia is holding talks with European countries on being included in the INSTEX trade mechanism with Iran.

Chizov acknowledged that the mechanism has not been successful so far. “[We are] holding talks. They are not making it a secret that INSTEX was created and continues to be created with quite serious difficulties” he said and added, “However... they are not giving up plans to set this instrument in motion”.

Emami Kashani urges officials, nation to resist threats

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Ayatollah Mohammad Emami Kashani, a Tehran Friday prayer leader, has called on the Iranian officials and people to resist against the threats against the country by the enemies.

Pointing to remarks by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei concerning resistance, Ayatollah Emami Kashani urged people, officials and rival political factions to show solidarity with the Leader, IRNA reported.

The enemy can never bring the noble nation of the Islamic Iran to its knees, and the Iranian people and government will come out victorious with their patience, he added.

The veteran cleric politician also hailed the Iranian nation for their high turnout in International Quds Day rallies.

Quds is a holy land for Muslims, Christians and Jews, and the followers of these



three divine religions have been coexisting over the past centuries in the Palestinian territories.

The enemies of Palestine and Quds tried over the past year to raid the holy city and recognize it as the capital of aggressors, President Rouhani said earlier while referring to the recognition of the city as capital of the Zionist regime by some states, including the U.S.

Iran condemns terror attack in Egypt's Sinia

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi on Thursday strongly condemned a recent terrorist attack in Egypt's northern Sinai Peninsula, saying such acts of terror aim to divert attention from the Palestinian people's struggle for freedom.

The attack, which occurred on Wednesday, left dead eight policemen in southwest of El-Arish, capital of North Sinai. Five militants were also killed in exchanges of fire that ensued. Daesh (ISIL) terror group claimed responsibility for the attack, which took place as local people celebrated the Islamic festival of Eid al-Fitr.

Moussavi condoled with the Egyptian people and government over the horrific incident, reiterating that condemnation of terrorist activities was a principal stance of the Islamic Republic, Press TV reported. “The goal behind such acts is to preoc-



cupy Muslim and regional countries with peripheral issues and distance them from the Muslim world's first and principal priority, which is supporting the people of Palestine and defending the noble [city of] al-Quds,” he said.

He also highlighted the need for cooperation and solidarity among the countries of the region in their effort to confront terrorism and extremism.

‘Iran not after war but will respond to any aggression decisively’

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — A top advisor to the chief of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) says Iran is not seeking war but will respond to any aggression decisively.

Brigadier General Morteza Ghorbani said Iran enjoys the best military experts, facilities and forces and is fully prepared to defend itself against all threats, IRNA reported on Friday.

He warned that any war against Iran would not stop at the Islamic Republic's borders and it would engulf the entire region.

■ ‘Islamic superpower’

Ghorbani also called on regional states to seek unity in the face of trans-regional hegemonic powers, saying Muslim countries can form an “Islamic superpower”.

“Together, we can establish an Islamic superpower,” he said, advising the regional countries against pursuing the wishes and objectives of the hegemons and the Zionists.

The general underscored the importance of unity among the neighboring countries in hampering the interventions by

trans-regional powers, saying Iran seeks to reduce tensions in the region because it believes no one will benefit from war.

Tensions between Tehran and Washington have risen following the Trump administration's decision to withdraw from the 2015 nuclear agreement that was meant to provide Iran with sanctions relief in exchange for curbs on its nuclear program. The U.S. has also doubled down on its “maximum pressure” campaign, which has seen tougher sanctions on Tehran introduced in recent months.

Heinonen: Iran's nuclear scientists are ‘the best of the best’

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Olli Heinonen, a former deputy chief at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), said on Thursday that Iran's nuclear scientists are “the best of the best”, according to the Times of Israel. Iran's nuclear scientists are exceedingly savvy and they are talented engineers, said Heinonen, who played a key role at the IAEA almost two decades ago.

“They have enormous resources. They went to the best universities in the world.

And when you look at the technicians who work in those facilities, they are very different from those I have seen who work in other manufacturing industries, producing tanks or cars.

They are the best of the best,” explained Heinonen who served as the IAEA deputy director-general for safeguards. Elsewhere in his remarks, he said that there are “strong indications” that Iran is in breach of its obligations under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the official name for the



nuclear 2015 deal.

On May 8, Iran announced it was partially removing limits on its nuclear program in response to the United States' decision the year before to drop out of the nuclear deal and impose heavy economic sanctions on Iran and the countries and groups that do business with it. Last week, the IAEA said Iran was staying within the limitations set by the 2015 nuclear accord, though its stockpiles of low-enriched uranium and heavy water were growing.

Moniz says Trump's approach toward Iran is a ‘strategic mistake’

By staff & agencies

Ernest J. Moniz, a former U.S. energy secretary, has said that U.S. President Donald Trump's administration's approach toward Iran is a “strategic mistake”.

Moniz, who was energy secretary from May 2013 to January 2017 under former President Barack Obama, said at the Ecosperity Conference in Singapore on Thursday that Washington's hardening approach risks provoking Iran not to comply with the 2015 nuclear agreement, according to CNBC.

Moniz said he believed Iran was still adhering to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). But he warned that the nuclear power could change its mind “within a month or so.”

On May 8, Iran announced a partial withdrawal from some aspects of the pact, saying that the country would no longer adhere to some of the limits on its nuclear activities. It also threatened to step up uranium enrichment if an agreement is not made within 60 days to shield it from the sanctions' effects.

Under the JCPOA, Iran agreed to put caps on its nuclear work in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions. However, Trump unilaterally pulled Washington out of the nuclear deal in May 2018 and ordered reimposi-



tion of sanctions against Iran. The first round of sanctions went into force on August 6 and the second round, which targets Iran's oil exports and banks, were snapped back on November 4.

Also, on April 22 the U.S. announced that Washington has decided not to extend waivers allowing major importers to

continue buying oil from Iran. The waivers ended on May 2.

Rob Macaire, the British Ambassador to Tehran, has said the U.S. policy of exerting maximum pressure against Iran will reach nowhere.

In an interview with an Iranian newspaper published on June 2, he expressed regret over Washington's act in quitting the nuclear deal.

President Hassan Rouhani said on June 1 that Iran will not surrender to powers who bully and make excessive demands.

Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif told ABC News in an interview published on June 2 that Iran will not be intimidated by President Trump's “art of the deal pressure” by using economic sanctions to push Iran to negotiate a new nuclear deal.

He said that “there will be consequences” if the U.S. keeps up its economic pressure campaign against Iran's people.

Zarif labeled the new U.S. sanctions as “economic terrorism” that “targets ordinary Iranian people” because even though food and medicine are exempted from the sanctions, the financial transactions associated with them are not.

“If the objective of President Trump is to impose pressure on normal Iranians, on ordinary Iranians, he is certainly achieving that,” Zarif said. “But he will not achieve his policy objectives through pressure on the Iranians.”

Education minister resigns to run for parliament



POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Education Minister Mohammad Bat'haei has resigned from his post in order

to run for parliament in the 2020 elections, Tasnim reported.

Bat'haei's resignation was accepted by President Hassan Rouhani, the administration announced on Thursday.

It also said an acting education minister would be named by the president on Saturday.

Iran will hold parliamentary elections in February 2020.

The parliament had given a vote of confidence to Bat'haei as education minister in August 2017.

Bat'haei was in the initial list of the nominees for cabinet posts that Rouhani had proposed to the parliament days after being sworn in as the president for a second term.

German FM to visit Iran on Monday

By staff & agencies

German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas will visit Iran as part of a three-country Middle East tour next week.

According to Reuters, German Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Adebahr said on Thursday that Maas will visit Jordan, the United Arab Emirates and Tehran during which he will explore options for preserving a fraying nuclear deal with Tehran.

She added that the trip had been agreed and coordinated with Britain and France, both of which support the deal they signed with Iran.

Deutsche Welle reported that Maas will meet with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif on Monday.

On May 8, Iran officially announced that its “strategic patience” has come to an end as the remaining parties to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (the official name for the 2015 nuclear agreement) have failed to compensate for the sanctions against Iran by the Trump administration.

In the first step, Iran announced that it stops selling stockpiles of enriched uranium and heavy water for 60 days. However, Iran warned if a conclusion is not reached in this time period, it will take other measures step by step and will accelerate its uranium enrichment activities.

Under the JCPOA, Iran's stockpile of low enriched uranium is capped at 300kg and heavy water reserve at 130 tons.

Jens Ploetner, the political director at the German Foreign Ministry, held talks with Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Araghchi in Tehran in May. Ploetner said Germany will “remain committed” to the JCPOA.

Ploetner also said, “European countries will keep up their efforts and consultations aimed at meeting Iran's demands and preserving the JCPOA.”

Under the JCPOA, Iran agreed to put caps on its nuclear work in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions. However, U.S. President Donald Trump unilaterally pulled Washington out of the nuclear deal in May 2018 and ordered reimposition of sanctions against Iran. The first round of sanctions went into force on August 6 and the second round, which targets Iran's oil exports and banks, were snapped back on November 4.

Also, on April 22 the U.S. announced that Washington has decided not to extend waivers allowing major importers to continue buying oil from Iran. The waivers ended on May 2.

EU cannot confront U.S. sanctions: ex-envoy



POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Former Iranian Ambassador to Italy Abolfazl Zohrevand has said the Euro-

pean Union is not able to resist and confront the United States' policy of sanctions and pressure against Iran, noting that the EU instead wants to buy time.

“The European Union is not able to resist and confront the U.S. policy of sanctions and pressure and it only wants to buy some time, so we will not see any special happening in our relation with the European Union before the U.S. presidential election in 2020. Europeans just hope the Democrats win the upcoming election,” Mehr on Thursday quoted Zohrevand as saying.

He also said that the EU's ability to make INSTEX operational has weakened compared to the past.

On the results of the European Union parliamentary election, Zohrevand said, “Backing extremist rightists in Europe, Trump and Bolton try to disintegrate the European Union, but the European people through resistance won't let the U.S. dream come true.”

STOCK MARKET	
TEDPIX	226983.4
IFX	2910

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES	
USD	42,000 rials
EUR	46,977 rials
GBP	53,140 rials
AED	11,437 rials

Source: cbi.ir

COMMODITIES	
Brent	\$62.35/b
WTI	\$53.17/b
OPEC Basket	\$68.84/b
Gold	\$1,334.65/oz
Silver	\$14.95oz
Platinum	\$806.10/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

Netherlands plans to join INSTEX

1 → The Blocking Statute allows EU operators to recover damages arising from U.S. extraterritorial sanctions from the persons causing them and nullifies the effect in the EU of any foreign court rulings based on them.

The members of the Dutch cabinet, referring to trading exchange system known as INSTEX, also said that the Netherlands has always expressed its support for the INSTEX and has announced its readiness to become a shareholder.



Dutch government officials added, “Before the Netherlands could become a shareholder in the system, the INSTEX should be well developed as the final decision will be time consuming.”

The Dutch government, while expressing its opposition to the extraterritorial and unilateral effect of the U.S. sanctions that violates international law, emphasized that Amsterdam, follows the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and is to expand volume of trade exchange with Tehran.

Despite the declaration of the U.S. unilateral sanctions, there are still large and small-sized Dutch enterprises active in Iran.

Malaysia forecasted to be world wafer fabrication center

By Marvie Chorawan-Basilan

Singaporean innovative tech startup IGSS Ventures believes that Malaysia has what it takes to become the world’s center for wafer fabrication business ventures. Founder and Group CEO Raj Kumar said the country has the “appeal” that global companies are looking for.

As per en.businesstimes.cn, and according to The Star, Raj noted that the Malaysian semiconductor and wafer fabrication sectors have exemplified effective management of global issues such as intellectual property and engineering that will pay off in the near future.

While Raj strongly believes in the capabilities of the Malaysian wafer fabrication sector, he recommended the implementation of policies that will seek to improve the industry’s overall operations.

Raj also praised Malaysia’s already globally competitive position in semiconductor wafers purity. “In fact, only Singapore and Malaysia currently have wafer fab infrastructure and capabilities in Southeast Asia,” he noted.

Purity is a critical gauging factor among global investors and companies looking to establish production plants in Southeast Asian countries. In the case of Malaysia, it has reached the high standards that international markets demand.

China is still the leading wafer fab in Asia but analysts believe Malaysia can also succeed in this industry through the appropriate implementation of necessary reforms and continuous dedication towards its existing pledge towards quality semiconductor operations.

■ **Helping drive the economy**

The Malaysian government has been hard at work in the goal of reinstating the country as an Asian tiger. For some analysts, becoming a world center for semiconductor and wafer fabrication sectors could help drive the economy to a higher position in the region.

Following the U.S. government’s blacklisting of Chinese tech behemoth Huawei, multiple local outlets reported that Malaysia’s tech stocks went down as the Malaysian market felt the brunt of the blanket ban on one of its largest trading partners.

It was initially thought that the drop in tech stocks would affect semiconductor businesses in the country. However, with renewed interest in Malaysia’s high-quality wafer fab standards, analysts believe the country’s semiconductor segments can overcome beatings brought about by the China-U.S. trade war.

Another challenge that the Malaysian economy and business environment could face is its inclusion in the U.S. Treasury Department’s monitoring list for potential currency manipulation.

While some investors are worried for the Malaysian economy, Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng noted in a speech last week that the country’s inclusion in the list could be a positive sign. He said the inclusion is proof that Malaysia has “a healthy current account surplus.”

Guan Eng further argued that both the account surplus and trade surplus that Malaysia has against the United States are proof of a competitive economy. He said the inclusion does not necessarily mean that the country is manipulating other currencies.

‘Cutting budget dependency on oil revenues, top economic priority’

E C O N O M Y **TEHRAN** — Iranian Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs Farhad Dejpasand said that reducing the current year’s budget dependency on oil exports is the most important economic objective in the country, Mehr news agency reported.

The minister made the remarks in his visit to Amirabad Port in north of the country on Thursday and said, “Ports can play a leading role in this regard due to their maritime and logistic capabilities.”

In late December, President Hassan

Rouhani presented the administration’s draft of the national budget bill for the current Iranian calendar year 1398, which started on March 21, to the Majlis.

The proposed bill amounts to 17.03 quadrillion rials (about \$405 billion at the official rate of 42,000 rials).

Supplying basic goods, treatment and medical equipment; securing livelihood; supporting production and employment; promoting tourism; and preserving water resources and environment are the focal points of the bill.



It estimates the oil income at 1.425 quadrillion rials (about \$34 billion) with 410 trillion rials (about \$9.7 billion) rise year on year.

The Iranian government earns budget from various sources including the revenues and

offering capital assets and divesting financial assets to the private sector.

President Rouhani’s economic strategy is to significantly reduce the government’s dependency on oil and instead collect tax more systematically.

Stock market index rises 27% in 2.5 months

E C O N O M Y **TEHRAN** — Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE)’s main index (TEDPIX) has gained 48,324 points or 27 percent during the 2.5-month period from the beginning of current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2019), IRIB reported.

As reported, some 208.826 billion securities worth 553.421 trillion rials (about \$13.176 billion) were traded through 13.857 million deals at TSE during the mentioned period.

Based on the already released reports and data, Iran’s exchange markets witnessed fruitful performances and results in the past Iranian calendar year 1397 (ended on March 20, 2019).

Applying new financial instruments in



Iranian capital market was another achievements of the exchange markets during the past year, as TSE officially launched “futures” in mid-December 2018 for more risk management and Iran Mercantile Market (IME) launched “option” in early March 2019 in an approach to diversify financing methods for agricultural products.

China’s Bank of Kunlun starts operation in Iran

E C O N O M Y **TEHRAN** — China’s Bank of Kunlun started its activity in Iran, Vice Chairman of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Pedram Soltani announced on Thursday.

In his twitter account, he wrote, “China’s Bank of Kunlun has announced that it will continue its banking transactions with the Islamic Republic of Iran by the end of the current year only using Chinese currency yuan and with full observation of the U.S. sanctions with regard to the goods, real and legal entities, transport companies and banks”, Mehr news agency reported.

China’s Bank of Kunlun is the only Chinese bank that cooperates with the Islamic Republic of Iran, he added.



In mid-April, the director of Bank of Kunlun had announced that the bank would continue cooperation with Iran.

The Chinese bank announced that it would continue cooperation with non-sanctioned Iranian banks for transactions and also payments related to non-sanctioned goods.

European economy worsens as Germany industrial output plunges

By Piotr Skolimowski and Catherine Bosley

German industrial production plunged the most in almost four years in April and the nation’s central bank gave a gloomy assessment of the outlook, suggesting a persistent slump in Europe’s largest economy.

Factories are at the heart of the region’s slowdown, as trade tensions, weaker car sales and cooling global demand weigh on exports. That’s worrying European Central Bank policy makers, who fear the weakness will ripple through to other areas of the euro-area economy, where the services sector has so far had to prop up demand.

ECB President Mario Draghi summed up the fragile situation on Thursday after announcing fresh measures to support growth and pledged to do more if needed:

The “key issue is: how long can the rest of the economy be insulated from a manufacturing sector that keeps on being weak? I think that’s what the governing council had in mind when they said they stand ready.”

Europe’s policy makers have had very little good news to cling to recently. While some confidence measures have edged up, surveys point to only modest growth, and a market measure of inflation expectations has plunged to a record low.

Expansion in Germany and the euro area came in stronger than expected at the start of the year, but the pace is forecast to drop off this quarter. For the full year, economists



see 1.2% growth in the currency bloc, down from 1.9% in 2018 and the weakest performance since 2013.

■ **External risks**

“As highlighted Thursday by the ECB, external risks have intensified. As a large exporter, the German manufacturing sector is very exposed to the risks from Brexit and from U.S. tariffs on cars in particular -- but more generally to the pressure that international trade uncertainty is putting on sentiment.”

As investors continue to see poor prospects for the region, that’s fueled demand for the safety of bonds, pushing yields on German 10-year debt firmly below zero. Many

investors also question what the ECB can do, given interest rates are at a record low and it faces restrictions on how much debt it can buy.

“Markets think things might get worse and therefore they might have to ease further,” John Wraith, an analyst at UBS, said on Bloomberg Television. “There’s this uncomfortable realization that the ECB is running out of road. They can talk a good game, but they can’t really act in a decisive way because they don’t have the ammunition.”

In an interview on Friday, Governing Council member Vitas Vasiliauskas said the euro area’s inflation outlook is “not bad” and policy makers won’t rush into any action.

“Information is very mixed, and I would say an appropriate approach would be just to wait, because everything is changing very speedily,” he said.

Shortly after the German industry report, the Bundesbank issued its latest assessment of the economy, cutting its 2019 prediction to 0.6% from 1.6%. The predictions are largely a catch-up with other forecasters -- the central bank’s previous forecast was in December.

“After a period of boom, the economy in Germany is currently cooling noticeably,” the central bank said. This is due to “industry suffering from sluggish export developments.”

Bundesbank President Jens Weidmann struck a more positive tone, predicting a better second half for the economy. (Source: finance.yahoo.com)

Why a weaker yuan risks inflaming the U.S.-China trade war

By Enda Curran

China’s management of its currency, the yuan, is under fresh scrutiny after recent weakening brought it back into focus in the U.S.-China trade war. The yuan slid closer to 7 to the dollar, a line it hasn’t crossed in more than 10 years, just as the two sides again ratcheted up tariffs with threats of more to come.

Chinese officials say they favor a stable currency, and economists say some weakness is justified. But since a weaker exchange rate makes Chinese goods cheaper, there’s at least some risk the trade war will spiral into a currency war.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin at one point stoked expectations for the “strongest ever” currency agreement to avoid competitive devaluations, even as Chinese officials talked about the need to respect their autonomy.

The Chinese currency doesn’t float freely but is managed using a fairly opaque system in which the central bank, the People’s Bank of China, fixes daily reference rates. Starting in June 2018, when the U.S.-China trade war began to heat up, the yuan went on a slide that took it to its lowest level in more than a year against the dollar.

■ **Betting against yuan**

On August 3 the PBOC made it more expensive for local traders to bet against the yuan, a surprise move that analysts said demonstrated the depreciation had gone far enough for the central bank. On May 20, 2019, the PBOC set the daily reference rate at a level stronger than analysts and traders projected, a sign that Beijing was seeking to slow depreciation again. The currency stabilized as officials stepped up



verbal support.

The trade war. It strengthened after U.S. President Donald Trump called a truce on new tariffs, but began to slide again after talks collapsed in May. Analysts cited souring market sentiment, as China’s economy slows and the U.S. ramps up tariffs. But the decline also hands potential ammunition to trade hawks in Washington.

Warning that the escalating trade war could destabilize the global economy, China’s central bank has vowed to continue with targeted stimulus and keep the currency steady.

It would cushion the blow to China of U.S. tariffs by making Chinese goods more competitive relative to the dollar. But that comes at a cost.

A weaker currency creates incentives for households and companies to move their money out of the country and into stronger currencies. That would force the government to draw on its reserves -- the world’s biggest at more than \$3 trillion -- to buy yuan to prop up its value.

In 2015 an abrupt devaluation spooked global markets and triggered panicky capital outflows. The country burned through about \$1 trillion of reserves to stem that exodus. (Source: Bloomberg)

Acoustics industry contributes £4.6b to UK economy

The UK’s acoustics industry contributes £4.6b to the economy and could help solve the grand challenges set out by the government’s industrial strategy, according to academics.

According to businessleader.co.uk, a new report, based on a study led by experts at the University of Sheffield and Imperial College London and produced by Dr. John Lincoln of Harlin Ltd, is the first to identify the size and importance of the UK’s acoustics industry.

The acoustics industry is powered by 750 companies throughout the country.

The report highlights how the industry, seen by insiders as hidden in the shadows, employs more than 16,000 people, each of whom generates over £65,000 gross value added (GVA). This GVA rises to £73,000 for people working in larger companies.

The industry is mostly driven by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) -- over 98 percent -- with the largest concentration of companies based in the North West, Scotland and South East regions.

According to the report, the industry is also underpinned by a vibrant knowledge base with over 200 active research grants worth in total in excess of £150m, involving nearly 50 universities across the UK.

■ **The automotive industry**

Acoustics is the generation, manipulation, control, transmission and detection of sound and vibration. It plays an essential role in developing some of the most widely-used technologies in everyday life, particularly in markets such as the automotive industry, consumer goods, healthcare, construction and defense.



Kirill Horoshenkov, Director of the UK Acoustics Network and Professor of Acoustics in the University of Sheffield’s Department of Mechanical Engineering, said: “Acoustics is a part of everything. From our smartphones and televisions to our cars, the music we listen to, the buildings we live and work in each day, even the ways in which we produce energy -- it’s a vital part of our everyday lives.

“Even though the acoustics industry enables so many of our most important technologies and makes an essential contribution to the UK’s economy, the industry is hidden from view.

“We hope that this new report highlights the importance of acoustics and showcases how the industry can play an even bigger role in addressing the UK’s most pressing industrial challenges.”

Professor Barry Gibbs, President of the Institute of Acoustics, added: “We became involved in this seminal research because for the first time, we have a way to demonstrate that acoustics is heard above the noise to inform policy, support agencies, researchers, career decisions and wider industry about the scale of acoustics capability available in the UK.”

American political equations are not transparent!

The alarm sounds for Trump

By Saeed Sobhani

TEHRAN — The U.S. political equations are not transparent at all! Recent polls published in the US do not spell the victory or failure of any Democrat and Republican candidate in the upcoming presidential elections. However, some important polls have led to Donald Trump's disappointment. An overview of some surveys and analyzes in the United States shows that Donald Trump is not in a good position in the country. Still, Trump's supporters are also hoping to re-engage in the political and executive equations of the United States. Here are some recent polls in the United States on the upcoming presidential elections:

■ **Trump's favorability flounders in key 2020 battleground states, new polls show**

As Matthew Rozsa wrote, Trump was elected in 2016 by winning the Electoral College despite losing the national popular vote. New survey finds that President Donald Trump — who was elected in 2016 by winning the Electoral College despite losing the national popular vote — is in a critical situation when it comes to polls in key battleground states that could swing the election in 2020. Trump's net approval rating is negative and by double digits in the crucial states of Iowa, Michigan, New Hampshire and Wisconsin, according to a new Morning Consult poll. Specifically, the president has a 42 percent approval rating and a 54 percent disapproval rating in Iowa, for a net approval rating of minus 12 percent; he posts the same figures in Michigan.

Trump also has a 39 percent approval rating and a 58 percent disapproval rating in New Hampshire, for a net approval rating of minus 19 percent; and he has a 42 percent approval rating and a 55 percent disapproval rating in Wisconsin, for a net approval rating of minus 13 percent.

These are not the only crucial states where Trump's approval rating is below water. In Arizona, he has a 45 percent approval rating and a 51 percent disapproval rating, for a net approval rating of minus 6 percent; in North Carolina he has a 46 percent approval rating and a 50 percent disapproval rating, for a net approval rating of minus 4 percent; he has a 46 percent approval rating and a 50 percent disapproval rating in Ohio, for a net approval rating of minus 4 percent; and he has a 45 percent approval rating and a 52 percent disapproval rating in Pennsylvania, for a net approval rating of minus 7 percent.

Another Morning Consult poll, which was released earlier this week, took a look at the Democrats who could replace Trump in the White House if they prevail in the 2020 election. Former Vice President Joe Biden had a substantial lead with 38 percent of registered voters nationwide, followed by Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont with 19 percent, Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts with 10 percent, South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg with 7 percent and Sen. Kamala Harris of California with 7 percent.

A Fox News poll from mid-May suggested that any one of these candidates could present a threat to Trump in a general election. In a face-off with Biden, Trump trails by 11 points



(49 percent to 38 percent); and running against Sanders, Trump loses by 5 points (46 percent to 41 percent). However, Trump falls within the margin for error in face-offs against Warren (she leads by 43 percent to 41 percent), Harris (both candidates are tied at 41 percent) and Buttigieg (Trump leads by 41 percent to 40 percent).

One state which has received considerable attention is Texas, where Trump's approval rating is floundering, even though he won the red state in the 2016 presidential election by nine percentage points. As Philip Bump of the Washington Post wrote:

Then there's this new poll of Texans by Quinnipiac University. It has Trump struggling against a number of the Democrats running for the party's 2020 nomination. He's up only four points on Sen. Kamala D. Harris (D-Calif.) — and that's the race in which he's doing the best. Despite his relative success last year, O'Rourke loses to Trump by three points. Against Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), Trump's only up one. Against former vice president Joe Biden? Trump is losing by four points.

■ **CNN Poll: Rising share expect Trump to win in 2020**

A majority of Americans say they think Donald Trump is going to win a second term, according to a CNN Poll conducted by SSRS, even as the President's reviews on issues other



recent polls show that Trump's popularity in key and sensitive states has declined. . An issue that could mark the failure of the President of the United States in these important states. Recent polls published in the U.S. do not spell the victory or failure of any Democrat and Republican candidate in the upcoming presidential elections.

than the economy remain largely negative.

The new poll finds 54% say their best guess is that Trump will win the 2020 election, 41% feel he will lose. Americans are slightly more apt to say Trump will win now than they were to say Barack Obama would win a second term in May 2011, in a survey conducted just after the death of Osama bin Laden (50% thought Obama would win in that poll). The new numbers on Trump are a reversal from December, when a narrow majority of 51% said they thought Trump would lose his bid for re-election.

The shift over that time comes mostly among those who disapprove of Trump's handling of the presidency. In December, 81% in that group said they thought the President would lose, and now, that's fallen to 67%. At the same time, the share who approve of the President and think he will win has held mostly steady (88% now vs. 85% in December).

The dislike those disapprovers hold for Trump is palpable in the poll. Asked to explain in their own words why they disapprove of Trump, Trump's behavior is a central reason. The most frequently cited responses are lying (13%), racism (11%), incompetence (11%) and not acting presidential (7%). Immigration, named by 7%, is the only specific issue that merits mention by 5% or more.

Those who approve of the way Trump is handling his job as President instead focus on his accomplishments and on issues. About a quarter (26%) cite the economy as the main reason they back him, 12% say it's because he has kept his promises, 9% say that he's getting things done or accomplishing more than other presidents, 8% mention improved unemployment ratings and 5% point to his policies on the border.

The economy remains the bright spot of Trump's presidency in public opinion. Overall, 7 in 10 say the economy is in good shape, about the same as in March, and 52% say they approve of Trump's handling of the economy, down 4 points since April. This poll marks a new high point in the Trump presidency for the share who feel the economy is in "very good" shape, 28% say so, and though that's not significantly larger than the 26% who felt that way in March, it is the best mark since 2000.

Trump's second-best approval rating in the poll comes on an economy-connected measure: helping the middle class. On that score, 44% approve of the President, 49% disapprove. While still negative, that's an improvement compared with the last time CNN surveyed on this question in August of the first year of his presidency, when 39% approved.

Foreign trade earns the President fewer accolades, with 41% saying they approve while 47% disapprove. The poll was in the field when the President threatened new tariffs on imports from Mexico in response to illegal border crossings from that country. While those figures are not significantly different from the President's approval ratings on this topic in December, his approval rating on foreign trade has grown 9 points over that time among a core constituency: Whites who do not have college degrees.

On immigration, Americans also give the President a 41% approval rating, with a higher disapproval rating (54%) than he earns for his trade policies. Turning to foreign policy, the President's reviews are also largely negative. On his handling of North Korea, Americans' opinions have shifted from positive (48% approve to 40% disapprove) to negative (41% approve and 45% disapprove) over the last year. Disapproval outweighs approval for his handling of the situation with Iran, 43% to 32%. And more

disapprove (48%) than approve (42%) of his handling of the role of commander-in-chief.

Still, Americans' perceptions of the threat posed by Iran and North Korea has declined over the last year. In a May 2018 poll, 47% said they considered North Korea a "very serious threat to the United States," now, just 34% feel the same way, the lowest number in CNN polls since 2015. The same 2018 poll found 40% viewed Iran as a very serious threat. That has fallen to 28% in the new poll, the smallest share to say so in CNN polling back to 2000.

In both cases, the declines come chiefly among Republicans. Last May, 50% of Republicans considered North Korea a very serious threat, now just 30% say the same. There have been smaller declines over the same time among independents (down 13 points) and Democrats (down 6 points). Likewise, the share calling Iran a very serious threat has fallen 23 points among Republicans, 3 points among independents and 13 among Democrats.

The share of Republicans who consider Russia a very serious threat has also dipped in the last year, from 28% in 2018 to 20% now. Among independents, it's dipped 5 points, and nearly half of Democrats consider Russia a deeply serious threat (48%), about the same as the 46% who said so last year.

The CNN Poll was conducted by SSRS May 28 through 31 among a random national sample of 1,006 adults reached on landlines or cell-phones by a live interviewer. Results for the full sample have a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3.8 percentage points. It is larger for subgroups.

■ **Trump is really unpopular in the most important 2020 battleground states**

Dylan Scott wrote in Vox that As he seeks a second term in the 2020 election, President Trump should be able to lean on his advantage in the Electoral College — in 2016, as you might remember, he lost the national popular vote but won enough states (and the right states) to secure 270 electors and take the presidency. But new polling of his state-by-state approval ratings suggests the president is unpopular in some of the most important battleground states for 2020, an ill omen if the trends hold until Election Day 2020.

Trump has been unpopular since his first day in office. The question now is whether he's so unpopular that it overrides his advantage as an incumbent and a pretty strong US economy. The new state polls from Morning Consult don't bode well for him. Here are the raw numbers for Trump in the states that are expected to be competitive in the 2020 election:

New Hampshire: 39 percent approval, 58 percent disapproval

Wisconsin: 42 percent approval, 55 percent disapproval

Michigan: 42 percent approval, 54 percent disapproval

Iowa: 42 percent approval, 54 percent disapproval

Arizona: 45 percent approval, 51 percent disapproval

Pennsylvania 45 percent approval, 52 percent disapproval

Ohio: 46 percent approval, 50 percent disapproval

North Carolina: 46 percent approval, 50 percent disapproval

Florida: 48 percent approval, 48 percent disapproval

Indiana: 49 percent approval, 46 percent disapproval

It's a grim picture. Wisconsin and Michigan

were critical Midwestern pieces of Trump's Electoral College puzzle and he is now deeply unpopular in both states. Pennsylvania was maybe his most surprising win in 2016, and now he is seven points underwater. Perhaps Trump can take solace in his even job approval rating in Florida, but that is the only swing state where the president looks as strong as he did on Election Day 2016. Everywhere else, his support has deteriorated.

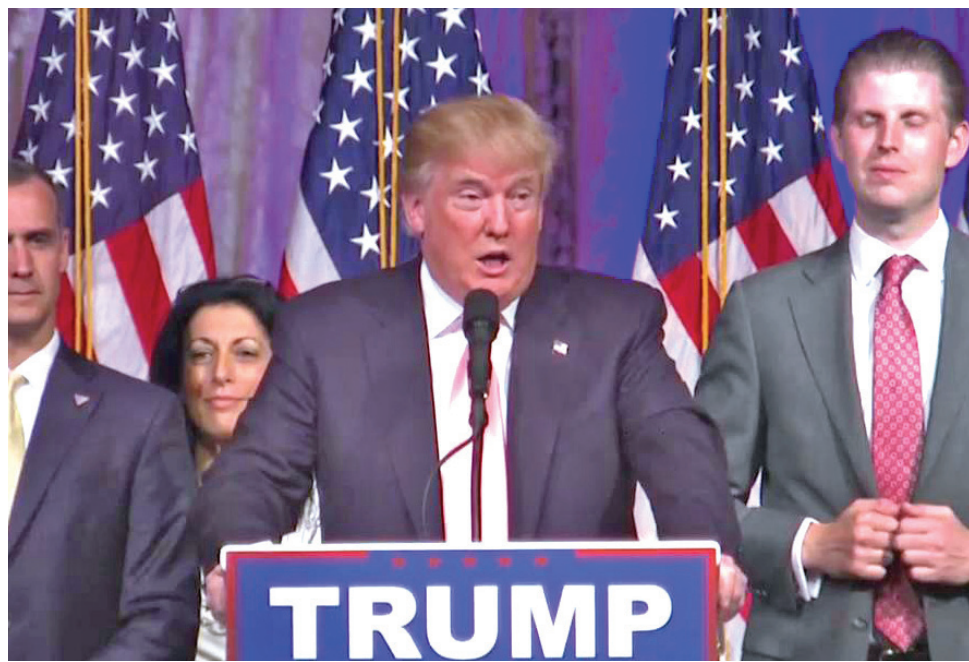
Maybe the most striking finding is in Iowa, where Trump beat Hillary Clinton by nearly 10 points. Iowans disapprove of his job performance by a 12-point margin now, in a farming state that's been hit hard by Trump's trade war. That would suggest the president's cult of personality will not totally inoculate him from the unpopular parts of his policy agenda.

We still have a year and a half to go before the 2020 election. These approval numbers aren't the same as a head-to-head match-up with a specific Democratic candidate (though those have not been very encouraging for Trump either). But they do indicate the unusual weakness of the president heading into his reelection campaign.

Trump's presidential approval rating has been stubbornly low

Head-to-head polling between Trump and any prospective Democratic nominee seems nearly useless at this point. Aside from Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders, many Americans haven't yet formed their opinions on the various Democrats seeking their party's nomination. But presidential approval ratings have always been strongly linked to voting behavior, and everybody knows Trump.

Trump has been consistently unpopular throughout his first two years. At his best, so far, he was seven points more unpopular than popular. A recent uptick has swiftly eroded. And as Vox's Ezra Klein wrote last summer,



opponents of the U.S. president have begun their campaign to defeat Trump. The popularity of Trump in crucial states such as Florida, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin can make this change in the results of the presidential elections of 2020 at his own expense.

this has been in defiance of a relatively solid economy:

"Trump's poll numbers are probably 20 points below where a president would typically be with consumer sentiment as high as it is now," says John Sides, a political scientist at George Washington University who has done work benchmarking presidential approval to economic indicators.

So here, then, is what we can say: Judged on the economy, which is the traditional driver of presidential approval, Donald Trump's poll numbers should be much, much higher than they are now. Far from finding a winning strategy, he seems to have found a losing one despite holding a winning hand. Trump's approval rating is the metric to watch as we endure all the unpredictable twists and turns that will precede the 2020 election. The new numbers from Morning Consult show it isn't just the Democratic states that are down on Trump; the states he would need to win reelection aren't very happy with the president, either.

■ **Polls show some early 2020 warning signs for Trump in key states**

Aaron Blake wrote in Washington Post that The 2020 presidential election is still one year and five months away. Large swaths of Americans don't even know many of the candidates who are bidding to be the Democratic nominee. And we still don't know whether we'll go through a politically arduous impeachment process.

All of that said, there are some real warning signs for President Trump in the first handful of polls of the 2020 race.

My colleague Philip Bump highlighted perhaps the shock poll of the early 2020 campaign on Wednesday. The Quinnipiac survey showed Trump trailing former vice president

Joe Biden in Texas by four points — and holding statistically insignificant leads over the rest of the Democratic field there. Were Texas to actually be competitive, after Trump carried it by nine points in 2016, it would be a major leg up for the Democrats' efforts to win back the White House.

And that wasn't the only bad state poll for Trump that was released Wednesday. In Michigan, a Detroit News/WDIV-TV poll conducted by the Glengariff Group showed Trump trailing both Biden and Bernie Sanders by 12 points in the state he narrowly won in 2016. Three other lesser-known Democrats also led Trump by between three and six points.

Other state polling we've seen at this early juncture haven't been quite so ominous for Trump. A recent Florida Atlantic University poll showed the Florida race basically within margin of error in a state Trump carried by just more than a point — about what you'd expect. Another poll in Arizona showed Biden ahead by four, which as with Texas would be a major upset in a red state. But against other Democrats, Trump was about where he was in 2016, when he won by four points.

Yet the national picture is also somewhat grim for Trump. Of the three high-quality pollsters to test multiple general election matchups so far this year, both Biden and Sanders lead in all three outside the margin of error. Sen. Elizabeth Warren (Mass.) holds statistically insignificant leads in all three, and both Sen. Kamala D. Harris (Calif.) and South Bend, Ind., Mayor Pete Buttigieg are right there with Trump, even though they suffer from poor name ID.

Trump's political stock is about where it was in 2016, when he defeated a Democratic nominee who was about as historically unpopular as he was. Perhaps it should be a surprise that he would struggle against Democrats who haven't been through the wringer yet. But it's

also noteworthy the position he seems to start in when it comes to some key states again unknown opposition, and it doesn't appear to be a position of strength.

■ **How are recent polls interpretable?**

The fact is that we can not say decisively about the victory or failure of the United States President Donald Trump in the upcoming presidential election, but recent polls show that Trump's popularity in key and sensitive states has declined. . An issue that could mark the failure of the President of the United States in these important states.

Recently, the controversial results of polls conducted on Trump's popularity have been published in the United States. Some of these polls were conducted all over the United States, and since they were based on "public votes", their results can't be that much trusted. However, in some polls that were based on the US Electoral College structure, we can make a more accurate estimation of Donald Trump's condition. The popularity of Trump has dropped in recent polls in the United States. Donald Trump's calculations have been incorrect in many cases! This has exacerbated Republican concerns over next year's presidential elections. An overview of the results of recent polls in the United States shows that Trump has a difficult path to re-election.

The fact is that the President of the United States is having a hard time! Undoubtedly, Trump will now take steps to win White's votes and gray votes for the 2020 presidential election. Meanwhile, opponents of the U.S. president have begun their campaign to defeat Trump. The popularity of Trump in crucial states such as Florida, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin can make this change in the results of the presidential elections of 2020 at his own expense.

Quds Day message: The occupied West Bank is NOT Israeli heartland

1 → At a recent gathering of like-minded militant Christians in San Antonio, former U.S. Congresswoman Michelle Bachman speculated that Trump was an agent of God in fulfilling Biblical prophecies.

Demonstrating his unabashed approval, Texas agriculture commissioner Sid Miller has signed an agreement to open trade relations with the Shomron Regional Council, which provides services to 35 illegal settlements in the Occupied West Bank. An Israeli official enthusiastically praised Miller, who also serves as an elder for the Cowboy Church of Erath County in Stephenville, Texas, for understanding that “there is no dispute about this region in the eyes of God.” It appears that Miller does not understand the prohibition against using state funds for personal trips, however, and has been slapped with a \$500 fine by the Texas Ethics Commission.

“I think we have a lot in common with Israel,” said Miller, who was also an adviser to Trump’s 2016 election campaign. Apparently, he views Texas as a mirror image of the Israeli entity, complete with apartheid walls and likewise under constant threat of invasions by the “other.” Mohamad Fattouh, an executive board member of Students for Justice in Palestine at the University of Houston explained, “We put such heavy emphasis on our law enforcement here [in Texas], on ICE, on securing the border, a wall; all things that are mirrored in Israel.”

Growing in strength each year, the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement seeks to impose an economic penalty on the Israeli regime for its intransigent and uncivilized behavior towards Palestinians. As BDS has gathered momentum, Zionists have pushed back aided by right-leaning, evangelical Christian Zionists, such as Robert Jeffress and John Hagee, who view the Israeli entity as a fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. Pastors Jeffress and Hagee, the former being a senior leader of the 13,000-member First Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas and a Fox News contributor, and the latter being the founder of the extreme anti-Palestinian Christians United for Israel, led prayers at the opening of the U.S. embassy in Al Quds in May of 2018.

An indicator of the success of the BDS movement is the draconian legislation being pushed by the Zionist lobby in its strategy to conflate criticism of the Israeli regime with anti-Semitism. Laws have been passed in 27 states, and are pending in 14 others, requiring individuals and companies doing business with the respective states to disavow any and all



activity in, or in support of, boycotts targeting the Israeli entity and Israeli companies. In Texas, speech therapist Bahiyya Amawi, who personally boycotted Israeli products, was forced to sign a pledge that she would not take any action “intended to penalize, inflict economic harm on, or limit commercial relations with Israel.” To her credit, Amawi refused to sign a new contract with the Pflugerville, Texas Independent School District, but lost her livelihood in the process.

Particularly galling are those firms producing goods and services for the benefit of settlers in the Occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem Al Quds. These firms, by profiting from wares produced in Palestinian territories, are complicit in the apartheid policies of the Zionist regime and its illegal occupation. The United Nations Council on Human Rights has identified 206 such companies operating in Occupied Palestinian Territory. While the so-called “blacklist” has yet to be disclosed, the following firms are among those already known to be operating in occupied Palestine: Caterpillar, Hewlett Packard, Motorola, Flir Systems, Honeywell, L3 Communications, Schneider Electric, Siemens, United Technologies, Valero Energy and Volvo, to name a few.

Moreover, the Israeli entity, by being the largest recipient of U.S. foreign military aid, is connected economically to the American arms industry. For example, Lockheed Martin in Texas has produced F-35 warplanes, which were sold to the Israeli Air Force. At a cost of \$5.57 billion USD for 33 of the

advanced jet fighter planes, spare parts and simulators, the Zionist regime will pay for this from the U.S. military assistance money it receives. This satanic economic symbiosis, according to Lockheed Martin, results in the F-35 being “responsible for more than 220,000 direct and indirect U.S. jobs.” And no wonder, for the F-35 contract is distributed over 1,400 suppliers in 45 U.S. states and Puerto Rico.

As a result of this intertwining of U.S. arms makers and the Israeli entity’s interests, U.S. politicians are caught in a sinkhole of moral compromise. For obvious political reasons, they support favorable local policies towards the arms makers because of the high-paying jobs these companies bring to their communities. But then they are forced to vote for military aid for the Israeli entity, since in so doing, these funds eventually return to their communities to stimulate the local economy by providing good-paying jobs with the arms makers. Over time, voting against military aid for the Israeli entity becomes more and more difficult, making public criticism of the Zionist regime and its abysmal human rights record, virtually impossible.

Palestinians in Gaza have been enduring a Zionist siege since 2007 that bans the free movement of persons and goods in and out of the enclave, which amounts to collective punishment and is a crime against humanity under international law. Beginning on March 30, 2018, Palestinians in Gaza began peaceful protests concentrated at five locations along the eastern border fence of the

Israeli entity, which responded with typical blood-curdling violence. Since the onset of these protests, called “The Great March of Return,” 196 Palestinians, including 41 children, 2 women, 8 persons with disabilities, 2 journalists and 3 paramedics, have been killed and 11,427 wounded, including 2,206 children, 344 women, 246 journalists and 653 medical personnel, by Israeli Occupation Forces, whose snipers deliberately target unarmed victims with lethal force in a futile attempt to quell the tens-of-thousands of determined demonstrators.

Against this sanguinary scenario in Gaza, the perpetually self-absorbed occupant of the White House is preparing to roll out his “deal of the century” proposal, the details of which have already been leaked to Israeli news media. First and foremost, Palestinians would have to concede defeat in their 70-plus year struggle for their right to return to their homeland. Second, Arab states would be obliged to engage in land swaps, something which, no doubt, seems reasonable to the former real estate tycoon currently in the Oval Office. Third, Arab countries would be required to grant full citizenship to Palestinian refugees, as well as to absorb the cost of implementing this stillborn solution to this festering 7-decades-old dilemma.

Realistically, we cannot expect a reasonable proposal for resolving this core Middle East issue from a rogue regime whose dealmaker-in-chief and loyal son-in-law have already moved the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Al Quds, gleefully celebrating the grand opening while Israeli Occupation Force snipers were busy gunning down Palestinians in Gaza. According to the Gaza Ministry of Health, 55 were killed and 2,770 were injured while peacefully protesting the embassy opening on Nakba Day. As if that were not enough, the current occupant of the Oval office has brazenly and in defiance of international law recognized Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights, Syrian territory seized by the Zionist regime in 1967.

When asked if he thought Palestinians were capable of governing themselves, Jared Kushner, Trump’s Middle East envoy, arrogantly responded, “That’s one that we’ll have to see. The hope is that they, over time, will become capable of governing.” Rather than doubting the Palestinians, it would appear that the U.S. and the Israeli entity not only lack abilities for governing themselves, but also are demonstrably incapable of coexisting peacefully in the community of the civilized nations of the world.

U.S. economic terrorism, trade wars have consequences



TEHRAN (FNA) — Iran’s Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif couldn’t be more accurate when he described new US sanctions against Iran as “economic terrorism,” warning of “consequences” if the US keeps up its pressure against the Iranian nation.

In his words, “If the United States decides to cause so much pain on the Iranian people by imposing economic warfare, by engaging in economic terrorism against Iran, then there will be consequences. We don’t differentiate between economic war and military war. The US is engaged in war against us, and a war is painful to participants. We have a very clear notion that in a war, nobody wins. In a war, everybody loses, [but] the loss of some will be greater than the loss of others.”

This is not the first time that the US is torching the international order and it won’t be the last.

The US is no longer playing an internationalist role it used to play in trade and finance, security and environment. This new policy has had profound effects on global security and prosperity, while friends and foes bear the consequences.

Courtesy of the Trump administration, the US has torn up many international pacts. It has walked out of the nuclear arms control treaty with Russia, called the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces treaty, even if it risks sparking a new nuclear arms race.

To this end, Trump cares little if in his ruinous trade war with China there are also losers on both sides of the Pacific, or global markets grapple with a tariff war that seems to benefit no one or protectionism in the form of tariffs on Chinese goods is actually hurting the US economy, companies, and consumers. He likewise doesn’t care if the International Monetary Fund is warning that his trade wars and economic terrorism could sink business and financial market sentiment, derail global energy supply chains, and subtract the projected recovery in global growth.

Regrettably, Trump’s one-man foreign policy, executive orders, disruptions, and measures against the rules-based international order are not limited to trade wars and economic terrorism. Under pressure from Washington, Japan and Russia are yet to formally end their World War Two hostilities. Japan refuses to conclude a peace treaty with Russia, which depends on the fate of the islands of the South Kuril Ridge. Tokyo refuses to guarantee that after a deal is reached the islands won’t be populated by US military personnel.

In this hostile environment, if you think that’s all there is to it, you are mistaken. The 11th Ministerial Meeting of the Arctic Council on May 6-7 in Rovaniemi, Finland, was all about “scientific collaboration, cultural matters, and environmental research trade” before the Trump administration pushed it off the cliff.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo showed up and trashed the party by a brash speech plagued with lies and baseless accusations against Russia, China, and Arctic countries. He even threw the kitchen sink at the participants to make sure they didn’t reach a formal Ministerial Declaration at the end of the long-anticipated meeting.

These are just some of the recent examples that discern how the Trump administration is doing everything it can to up tick the international order through diplomatic vandalism. They put in view how the US has become a rogue state and trashed its own leadership and engagement in international affairs. The US government is increasingly playing a confrontational role in the world, making sure countries do not get along with each other on any issue of regional and international concern.

This provocative policy is designed to maintain unipolarity and prolong geopolitical tensions in the Middle East as well. The disorders and distrusts the core axis of this policy has created, or the way regional institutions and treaties have been made obsolete, will only worsen in places like Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan and Yemen.

The official Washington should realize that in this hostile environment, other countries won’t sit on their hands. They will adopt a similar confrontational strategy toward the US and its wasteful agendas in trade, security, and energy. It makes no sense for other countries to conduct their activities in accordance with international law, regional security arrangements, and trade agreements, if the same shared commitment doesn’t exist in Washington.

In response to Trump’s decision to bin the nuclear deal and impose sanctions, Iran has warned to end its compliance with two particular obligations of the 2015 nuclear deal in coming weeks. Russia has slapped economic and financial sanctions on American businesses and officials, and might restart low-yield nuclear tests. China has imposed tariffs on American goods and might cut off rare earth minerals exports to the US as a countermeasure in the escalated trade conflict. Others are also imposing their own tariffs on American goods.

As it turned out, foreign policy changes along with circumstances. In most cases, many countries cannot control the behavior of Washington and its economic terrorism, trade wars, diplomatic shenanigans, and insecurity arrangements and policies, but they can always choose how they respond to them. Many are responding in kind.

Alam Saleh: U.S. military build-up in “Persian Gulf” indicating sanction regime failure

TEHRAN (FNA) — Alam Saleh, Lecturer at Lancaster University, says Washington’s move to strengthen its military presence in the Persian Gulf evidences to the fact that the US sanctions policy has failed to make Iran give in.

In an exclusive interview with FNA, Dr. Saleh said, “Any further military presence by the United States in the region would greatly intensify the current situation... Such military presence and statements from the US contradict Washington’s willingness to start any negotiations with Tehran.”

Dr. Saleh said the US benefits from the tense situation in the Middle East, by selling more arms to its allies, and justifying its presence in the Persian Gulf.

Alam Saleh, PhD, Politics and International Studies, is author and Lecturer in Middle East Politics at Lancaster University. He is also council member of the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies. Dr Saleh has been engaged with policy practitioners and external professional bodies such as the UK Ministry of Defence, NGOs and Think Tanks.

Below is the full text of the interview:

■ Trump describes Iranians as a terrorist nation. What mentality one may have to call terrorist an 80-million nation with over 2.5 millenniums of history?

A: What President Trump is attempting to do, by calling Iranians a terrorist nation, is to securitize Iran and Iranians, to justify his policies and possible future military action against Iran. This purposeful type of speeches aim to prepare American public opinion and to some extend the international community, to buy his claims against Iran.



In other words, since Trump lacks reasons to justify his aggressive acts against Iran, by demonizing Iran/Iranians, he tries to legitimize his policies, enabling himself to take extraordinary aggressive measures through sanctions and/or war. In fact, the concept of terrorism is already well known for the Western public opinion. It is a well securitized concept amongst people. Thus, by repeating such accusations, people in the course of time may agree with his claims and consequently support him taking any further aggressive action against Iran as well.

■ The US is building up its military presence in the Persian Gulf. Will this promote peace and stability in the region, or demote them?

A: President Trump’s decision to strengthen his military presence in the region, indicates the sanction policies failure to force Tehran to concede. Thus, the next stage is to put Iran under a greater pressure through military means. Of course, any further military presence by the United States in the region would greatly intensify the current situation, and would neither help peace or stability, nor increase hopes for diplomatic solutions. Although diplomacy and power complement each other, more room and chance should be given to diplomacy under no military pressures. Such military presence and statements from the US contradict Washington’s willingness to start any negotiations with Tehran. Any kinds of future talks should be conducted with mutual respect, and mutual understanding. This is not what President Trump is offering, nor would Tehran ever accept.

■ The Trump administration bypasses Congress to sell \$8.1 billion in weapons to Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Jordan, to “deter Iranian aggression.” How do you view this?

A: Evidently the United States has always been benefiting from wars and instabilities in the Middle East, not only to sell its weapons, but also to justify its presence in such a strategic region. We are witnessing a classical situation when both sides are accusing the other as a reason for insecurity in the region. By creating such security dilemma in the region, the United States has become the only actor that would not pay for its mistakes; the region will pay. Washington’s priority, particularly under Trump, is its own interests. The US has shown this in Syria, in Iraq, in Yemen Libya, and all other part of the world.

China-Russia relations transcend geopolitics

GLOBAL TIMES — Chinese President Xi Jinping arrived in Russia Wednesday for a state visit. China and Russia agreed to upgrade their relations to a comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a new era. This is a major event in China-Russia relations. During Xi’s trip, the two countries are expected to reach achievements in expanding mutual cooperation.

China-Russia relations have long been a hot topic in Western public opinion. Certain Western media analyzed this visit in the context of the China-US trade war, claiming that Beijing and Moscow intend to join forces against the US.

However, not long ago when US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo met Russian President Vladimir Putin in Sochi, Western media outlets were suggesting a marked improvement in US-Russia relations and the possibility of it driving a wedge between China and Russia.

Such perspectives on China-Russia re-

lations are somewhat biased. The reality is that internal motivations for improving China-Russia relations are increasingly strong, and already far exceed any influences from the external situation.

Objectively, China-Russia ties have gone far beyond the impact of the triangle effect in the conventional sense. In other words, regardless of the state of China-US relations or US-Russia relations, China-Russia relations will continue to grow closer.

The improving strategic partnership between China and Russia has already brought comprehensive benefits to both countries and has become a common strategic asset. China and Russia are two huge neighboring nations. Close cooperation has replaced tensions over defense and is of essential importance to both countries, becoming a strategic benefit shared by both sides.

This relationship also strengthens their respective status on the international stage

and provides basic support for the diplomacy of both countries. These are not short-term diplomatic conditions, but have already been normalized for the two countries.

With growing China-Russia economic cooperation and personnel exchanges, the chances of disputes at the grassroots level are increasing simultaneously. For example, there has been controversy over a Chinese-funded bottling plant near Lake Baikal, China’s agricultural companies renting land in Russia’s Far East, and Russia’s management of Chinese vendors.

However, due to the strong strategic relationship between China and Russia, these disputes were based on specific cases, and did not ignite fierce nationalist sentiment.

China and Russia have a similar strategic understanding of the world, share many common interests and are complementary to each other. Thus there is much room to expand cooperation. In 2018, China-Russia trade volume

surpassed \$100 billion. Crude oil and natural gas pipelines connect the two countries, and the cross-border China-Russia railway bridge across the Heilongjiang River, known as the Amur River in Russia, links them both. These provide new starting points for their expanded cooperation and exchanges.

Redefined soon after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, China-Russia relations today are strong. The two large neighboring countries can resolve border disputes peacefully, consolidate strategic mutual trust, maintain the stable development of bilateral relations and forge a “partnership rather than alliance.” This is praiseworthy in the current world.

Western opinion should not always regard China-Russia relations geopolitically and ignore the most precious thing in their ties. Starting from the two leaders’ firm political will, the stable China-Russia strategic relationship today is deeply rooted in the two countries’ national interests.

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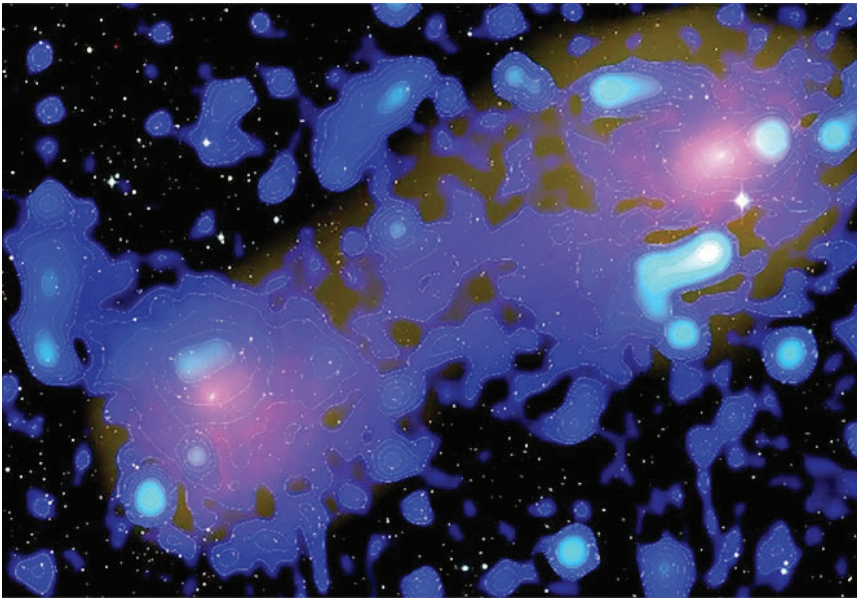
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In a first, magnetic fields have been spotted between two galaxy clusters

For the first time, astronomers have sighted magnetic fields between two galaxy clusters — a find that suggests some of the largest scale structures in the universe are magnetized. The fields run between the galaxy clusters Abell 0399 and Abell 0401, which are beginning to merge about 1 billion light-years from Earth, researchers report in the June 7 Science. Radiation from electrons zipping through the magnetic fields revealed this magnetism inside the gaseous filament that connects the clusters in the cosmic web. The source of those high-speed particles, however, remains a mystery.

“So far, magnetic fields have been measured in [specific] objects, like in clusters, or in galaxies,” says Nabila Aghanim, a cosmologist at the Institute for Space Astrophysics in Orsay, France, not involved in the work. In the cosmic web, filaments stretch between galaxy clusters to form a sort of celestial mesh full of cavernous voids. If magnetic fields also pervade the gaseous thoroughways between galactic hubs, they may have influenced the properties and evolution of gas throughout the cosmos, she says.

Researchers examined the 10-million



light-year gap between Abell 0399 and Abell 0401 using the Low-Frequency Array radio telescope network, or LOFAR, based mainly

in the Netherlands. Observations of the space between these galaxy clusters uncovered a faint band of radiation called synchrotron

emission — a kind of illumination produced by high-speed electrons spiraling around magnetic field lines.

Computer simulations indicate that weak shock waves from the early stages of this galaxy cluster merger can't accelerate normal electrons in the gaseous filament enough to generate the synchrotron emission observed. Instead, the filament must already have contained high-energy electrons that are being reaccelerated by merger shock waves.

“We still don't know where this preexisting population [of electrons] comes from,” says study coauthor Federica Govoni, a radio astronomer at the Cagliari Observatory in Selargius, Italy. “They may have been ejected in the past by [nearby] galaxies or by explosions of supernovae.”

Another lingering question is whether other filaments in the cosmic web are also threaded with magnetic fields. “This is a filament that's kind of modest, in terms of its size,” Aghanim says. She's curious whether magnetic fields could go the distance between cosmic filaments tens of millions of light-years long.

(Source: sciencenews.org)

Impacts of extreme weather on communities influences climate beliefs

New research suggests the impact of extreme weather on a person's neighbors and community has a greater influence on a person's climate change beliefs than individual losses.

“We found that damage at the zip-code level as measured by FEMA was positively associated with stronger climate change beliefs even three or four years after the extreme flooding event our study examined,” Elizabeth A. Albright, an assistant professor of the practice of environmental science and policy methods at Duke University, said in a news release.

Albright and her colleagues sent surveys to a variety of communities impacted by heavy rains and flooding in Colorado. Researchers surveyed individuals that were directly impacted by flooding, as well as those that avoided individual property damages. Surveys were also sent to residents of communities spared from the worst of the flooding.

The questionnaires asked residents about their individual experiences and the effects of flooding on their broader communities, as well as their perception of future flooding risks and beliefs about climate change.

Survey results showed people who perceived flooding as having a broad and significant effect on their community were more likely to be concerned about climate change and the prospects of future floods, even three years after the floods. The findings, published this week in the journal Climatic Change, revealed the experience of individual damages had little impact on a person's long-term beliefs about climate change and the risk of severe flooding.

“These findings speak to the power of collective experiences and suggest that how the impacts from extreme weather are conceptualized, measured and shared matters greatly in terms of influencing individual beliefs,” said Deserae Crow, associate professor of public affairs at the University of Colorado, Denver.

(Source: UPI)



When penguins dive, other birds feast



Cameras taped to penguins' backs have revealed that flying seabirds know to follow their swimming cousins to fishy feasts, a new study finds.

The African penguin (*Spheniscus demersus*), the only penguin native to Africa, dwells on southern African coasts, dining mostly on small fishes such as sardines and anchovies. The penguins frequently dive more than 100 feet deep, working together to corral schools of fish into shallow waters for ease of feeding. Fishermen and scientists have long noted that gulls and other flying seabirds are often attracted to surfacing African penguins.

To learn more about this observed link between the swimming and flying seabirds, researchers stuck cameras onto the backs of African penguins at Stony Point, South Africa, during summers from 2015 to 2018, when the birds were breeding. Each member of a mated pair would alternate between hunting food at sea and guarding their young on land; the scientists would use a sticky but easily removable waterproof tape to secure the cameras to the penguins while they were at their nests, and take them

off after the birds returned from foraging.

The larger the groups of penguins, the sooner flying seabirds arrived to take advantage of prey the penguins herded to the surface. “That tells us that flying seabirds are actively showing interest in penguins as cues for prey,” said study lead author Alistair McInnes, a marine ecologist at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in Port Elizabeth, South Africa.

Similar relationships have been observed between dolphins and diving seabirds called gannets.

“African penguins may be more significant for other seabirds in their communities than previously thought, especially when prey is pretty scarce,” McInnes said. “They may be providing valuable services for other birds, especially endangered species such as Cape cormorants.”

Scientists hope that by researching the African penguin, they will uncover clues to help save the endangered species, whose numbers have dropped by more than 70 percent since 2004, McInnes said.

(Source: Inside Science)

Scientists reveal secrets of dragonfish's “invisible” fangs



The dragonfish, a dweller of the dark ocean depths, would slot nicely into any horror movie, with virtually transparent fangs and bioluminescent barbel that help it thrive in its extreme environment.

The nature of its teeth had been a mystery until Wednesday, when scientists revealed they are made of the same basic material as human teeth but with a different microscopic structure.

The researchers studied the dragonfish species called *Aristostomias scintillans*, which is caught at depths of up to 1,000 meters (3,000 ft) off the Californian coast and can grow to 25 cm (10 in) in length.

It has a black, elongated body, with a long, fleshy filament called a barbel hanging from its lower jaw with a bioluminescent organ called a photophore on the end to lure prey. It also has two rows of photophores along the length of its body. Its long, sharp teeth are big relative to its body size.

Its teeth, like ours, are made up of an outer layer of enamel and an inner layer of dense bony tissue called dentine, but

there are nanoscale crystals in the enamel that prevent any light that exists in the near blackness from reflecting off the tooth surface.

“Thus, the mouth is invisible and the prey is caught more easily,” said materials scientist Marc André Meyers of the University of California, San Diego, who led the research published in the journal Matter.

“Initially, we thought the teeth were made of another, unknown material. However, we discovered that they are made of the same materials as our human teeth: hydroxyapatite and collagen,” he said.

“However, their organization is significantly different from that of other fish and mammals. This was a surprise for us: same building blocks, different scales and hierarchies. Nature is amazing in its ingenuity.”

A small number of other fish such as the anglerfish and hatchetfish have transparent teeth. “These have not been investigated yet, but I suspect they have a similar structure,” Meyers said.

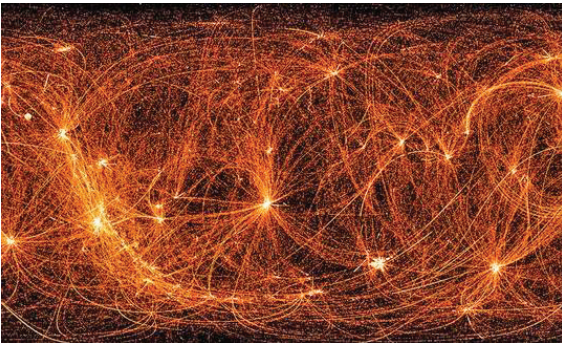
(Source: The Guardian)

Here's what the universe looks like in X-rays

NASA researchers have unveiled a new treasure map of the universe, and — thanks to a neutron-star-hunting telescope aboard the International Space Station — X-ray marks the spot.

The new all-sky map, uploaded May 30 to NASA's website, shows what the cosmos looks like in high-energy X-ray light. X-rays are among the most energetic forms of light in the universe; they're beamed into space by some of the most extreme objects in the cosmos, including powerful supernova explosions, gas-gobbling neutron stars, and supermassive black holes that suck matter into their maws at near-light-speed.

Humans can't see these arcing streams of light careening around the cosmos (our sight is limited to the much weaker, visible light chunk of the electromagnetic spectrum), but NASA's special X-ray observatory aboard the International Space Station can. Known as the Neutron Star Interior Composition Explorer (NICER), the telescope's primary mission is to study pulsars — fast-spinning, ultra-dense



corpses of collapsed stars that pulse with high-energy light as they whirl.

Not only do researchers hope to figure out what, exactly, these stellar corpses are made of, but they also want to use them as waypoints that could help future satellites

navigate on auto-pilot — sort of like a galactic GPS system, as a NASA statement put it.

While searching the full night sky for the nearest pulsars, NICER has also turned up some other powerful sources of X-ray light, including the afterglow of a relatively recent supernova.

“This image reveals the Cygnus Loop, a supernova remnant about 90 light-years across and thought to be 5,000 to 8,000 years old,” Keith Gendreau, NICER's principal investigator at the Goddard Space Flight Center in Maryland, said in the statement. “We're gradually building up a new X-ray image of the whole sky, and it's possible NICER's nighttime sweeps will uncover previously unknown sources.”

Indeed, this map represents only the first 22 months of NICER's orbiting observations (it launched in June 2017), and has likely only scratched the surface of the many stellar mysteries hiding beyond our human sight.

(Source: Live Science)

Circadian clocks: Body parts respond to day and night independently from brain, studies show

Can your liver sense when you're staring at a television screen or cellphone late at night? Apparently so, and when such activity is detected, the organ can throw your circadian rhythms out of whack, leaving you more susceptible to health problems.

That's one of the takeaways from two new studies by University of California, Irvine scientists working in collaboration with the Institute for Research in Biomedicine in Barcelona, Spain.

The studies, published today in the journal Cell, used specially bred mice to analyze the network of internal clocks that regulate metabolism. Although researchers

had suspected that the body's various circadian clocks could operate independently from the central clock in the hypothalamus of the brain, there was previously no way to test the theory, said Paolo Sassone-Corsi, director of UCI's Center for Epigenetics and Metabolism and senior author of one of the studies.

To overcome that obstacle, scientists figured out how to disable the entire circadian system of the mice, then jump-start individual clocks. For the experiments reported in the Cell papers, they activated clocks inside the liver or skin.

“The results were quite surprising,” said Sassone-Corsi, Donald Bren Professor of Biological

Chemistry. “No one realized that the liver or skin could be so directly affected by light.”

For example, despite the shutdown of all other body clocks, including the central brain clock, the liver knew what time it was, responded to light changes as day shifted to night and maintained critical functions, such as preparing to digest food at mealtime and converting glucose to energy.

Somehow, the liver's circadian clock was able to detect light, presumably via signals from other organs. Only when the mice were subjected to constant darkness did the liver's clock stop functioning.

In upcoming studies, UCI and Barcelona

researchers will phase in other internal clocks to see how different organs communicate with each other, Sassone-Corsi said.

“The future implications of our findings are vast,” he noted. “With these mice, we can now begin deciphering the metabolic pathways that control our circadian rhythms, aging processes and general well-being.”

In earlier studies, Sassone-Corsi has examined how circadian clocks can be rewired by such factors as sleep deprivation, diet and exercise. Exposure to computer, television or cellphone light just before bed can also scramble internal clocks.

(Source: Science Daily)

Ways to save money on a road trip

Many people believe that road trips can be less expensive than flying to your destination, especially if you have a family.

While that might be true, there are still ways you might want to save money on a road trip. Saving money on travel means more money to spend on your actual vacation.

Here are some ways to reduce your costs while you're on the road.

■ **Prepare food and snacks ahead of time**
No matter what, food is always going to be an expense you can go overboard with. This holds true for extended trips in the car.

You might decide to visit fast food chains and order off the dollar menu for every meal, or you might opt for a sit-down restaurant to give yourself a rest from the car. If you're traveling with children, you might also have to stop more frequently.



However, you don't necessarily want to spend your food budget on the road trip portion of your journey. Wouldn't you rather dedicate the funds to eating out at your destination?

Instead of filling up on junk or greasy food, pack food and snacks when you leave. Bring a cooler with you (don't forget the ice) and stock it with sandwiches, drinks, and fruit and veggies. This will not only save you money, but it will also save you time since you won't have to stop as much.

■ **Look at alternative lodging**
Traveling without younger kids gives you more flexibility here, but if you can, look into Airbnb if you're going on a longer road trip that will require a night or two of driving.

You'd be surprised at the number of hosts that can accommodate last-minute guests, and homes can be cozier than motels.

Feeling adventurous? If you have room for the equipment, forgo traditional lodging completely and go camping. It will break up the monotony of the drive, you'll save a lot of money, and you'll have a side-trip in addition to your regular trip to look forward to.

At the very least, before you hit the road, estimate where you might stop and check out hotels available in the area. What are the average prices? Having this knowledge means there's less of a chance you'll get ripped off. You don't want to be desperate and tired at 1 AM, willing to take any room, even if it's significantly more than you wanted to pay.

Can you decide where you want to stop and sleep ahead of time? Are you flexible and not very particular about it? Then look into booking hotels "blindly." Many of the prominent booking sites like Priceline offer this option, and you'll usually get a room for much less.

■ **Get the most out of your gas**
While it might sound like an annoyance, going the speed limit, or hovering around 65mph, will ensure your car stays efficient on gas for the duration of your trip. If your car has cruise control, use it to stay on track.

Speeding excessively or taking local roads that require you to stop constantly (or traveling during peak times) will have an impact on your gas tank.

Also, before you leave on your trip, check your tire pressure. You want your tires filled with enough air so your fuel economy doesn't suffer.

Another tip to save money on gas: make sure the stations you stop at don't charge extra for credit cards. Read the "fine print" and have cash on hand just in case.

■ **Get a transponder for tolls**
Are you traveling in an area that's plagued with toll roads, tunnels, or bridges? Then you might want to think about investing in a transponder which you can link to a bank account or credit card so tolls are automatically deducted when you go through them.

These transponders allow you to zip through tolls, but they can offer discounts, too. For example, if you have an EZPass and you're traveling through New York, you'll benefit by paying a few dollars less when crossing bridges.

■ **Avoid getting a ticket**
Check your car over before leaving for your trip to make sure all your lights are working properly. The last thing you need on your trip is getting a ticket for something being amiss, especially if you're driving at night.
Be mindful of turning right on red, as different states have different laws regarding this. Check for cameras before you turn.

The worst is getting a speeding ticket on a road trip. That has the potential to ruin things before they've even started. Stay mindful of your speed, and use cruise control to ensure you're not going over the speed limit.

■ **Scout out parking spots**
One expense people typically forget when traveling to major cities is parking. Unfortunately, this can be anywhere from \$10 to \$30 per day, depending on where you stay.

Scout out parking garages before you get there to see where the best place to park is. Your hotel might not be the cheapest option, even if it is the most convenient. If you're staying in an Airbnb, try booking one that has a free parking spot included.

(Source: tripsavvy.com)

International tourism exports hit \$1.7 trn in 2018: UNWTO

Exports generated by international tourism reached US\$1.7 trillion in 2018, a 4 percent increase in real terms over the previous year, a new report from the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) shows.

For the seventh year in a row, tourism exports grew faster than merchandise exports (+3 percent), reflecting solid demand for international travel in a generally robust economic environment.

Strong growth in outbound travel from many source markets around the world fuelled revenues from international tourism to reach a total U.S.D 1.7 trillion. This accounts for 29 percent of global service exports and 7 percent of overall exports of goods and services. These figures consolidate international tourism among the top five economic sectors in the world, behind chemical manufacturing and the fuel industry but ahead of the food and automotive industries.

"Rather than growing in volume we need to grow in value. We are pleased to see that both emerging and advanced economies around the world are benefiting from rising tourism income," said WTO Secretary-General, Zurab Pololikashvili. "Revenues from international tourism translate into jobs, entrepreneurship and a better situation for people and local economies, while reducing trade deficits in many countries," he added.

Total exports from international tourism



include \$1,448 billion in international tourism receipts (visitor spending in destinations) and \$256 billion in international passenger transport services. Tourism constitutes a key source of foreign exchange and a major tool for export diversification for many destinations.

International tourism receipts increased 4 percent in real terms (adjusting for exchange rate fluctuations and inflation) to reach \$1,448 billion in 2018, about \$100 billion more than the previous year. This is consistent with the 6 percent increase in international tourist

arrivals in 2018.

By regions, Asia and the Pacific led the way with 7 percent growth in international tourism receipts, followed by Europe with a 5 percent increase. The Middle East saw 3 percent growth, while Africa (+1 percent) and the Americas (0 percent) recorded more modest results. Central and Eastern Europe and North-East Asia (both +9 percent) were the subregions with the strongest growth.

Growth in receipts was fuelled by strong demand for international travel in the context of a robust global economy.

Among the world's top ten source markets, France and the Russian Federation both recorded 11 percent growth in outbound spending in 2018, while Australia saw a 10 percent increase.

China, the world's top spender reported \$277 billion in international tourism expenditure in 2018, a 5 percent increase in real terms from a year earlier, while the United States, the second largest, spent 7 percent more, to reach \$144 billion.

International expenditure from the United Kingdom grew 3 percent in 2018, and 4 percent from Italy, while Germany and the Republic of Korea both reported rather flat results. Further down the ranking, Spain enjoyed 12 percent higher spending on international tourism in 2018.

(Source: wam.ae)

Tourist falls 70ft into volcano while trying to get a better look



A man survived a 70ft fall into Kilauea, the U.S. most dangerous volcano, after he reportedly climbed over guardrails to get a better look.

The man, who is in his thirties but was not identified, was visiting the Halemau-mau crater's Steaming Bluff overlook, on Hawaii Island, when he decided to climb over permanent metal railings to get closer to the cliff.

He was seen losing his footing and falling off a 300ft cliff into the volcano's caldera at 6.30pm on Wednesday 1 May, according to Hawaii Volcanoes National Park Service. A caldera is a special kind of volcanic crater that forms when the center of the volcano collapses. The volcano was not erupting.

Rescue personnel found the man seriously injured on a narrow ledge about 70ft down from the cliff edge at about 9pm and completed a high-angle extrication.

The man was airlifted to Hilo Medical Centre for urgent care with support from

a US Department of Defense helicopter.

"Visitors should never cross safety barriers, especially around dangerous and destabilized cliff edges," said the chief ranger, John Broward. "Crossing safety barriers and entering closed areas can result in serious injuries and death."

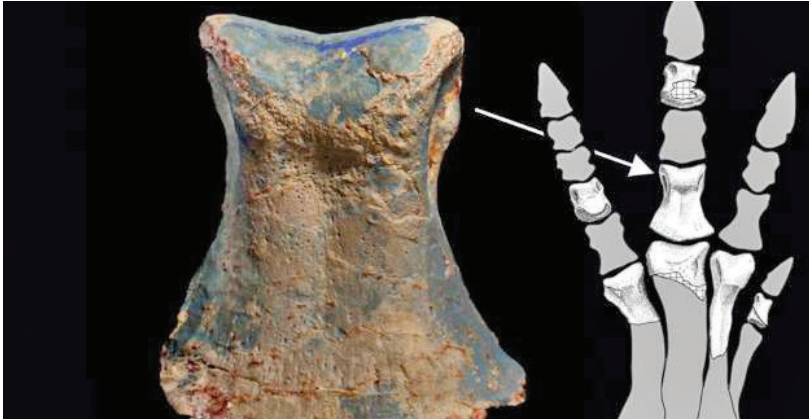
Kilauea is the most active of Hawaii's five volcanoes, and one of the most active in the US. The U.S. Geological Survey classed it as one the country's 18 "very high threat" volcanoes in 2018.

Kilauea has been erupting since the early 1980s. It erupted for three straight months last year, spewing ash about 30,000ft into the sky and destroying Hawaii's largest natural freshwater lake, as well as over 700 homes.

The last fall fatality in the park occurred on 29 October 2017, when a woman was found dead near the Steaming Bluff overlook. Park authorities said it appeared that she had left the trail and gone around several barriers to get to the edge.

(Source: The Independent)

A gem hunter accidentally discovered a new dinosaur species



Gem hunters and paleontologists have a lot in common. Both spend a lot of time sifting through dirt and rock in the hopes of finding things that have been hidden for countless years and every so often their tireless quests overlap.

Bob Foster, an Australian gem hunter, knows this better than most, and he's just now getting credit for a discovery he made some 35 years ago by accident. As The New York Times reports, a strange bone Foster discovered decades ago has just found its place in the fossil record, and the entirely new dinosaur species it belonged to now carries Foster's own name.

Foster was never hunting for bones when he made his unexpected discovery, but his search for opal had let him to ancient animal remains on occasion. He'd found fish bones and shells before, but when he found a square-shaped bone he didn't recognize he decided to bring it to a museum in Sydney.

Unfortunately, the fossils didn't get the attention they deserved, so Foster took them back and donated them to the Australian Opal Center where Dr. Phil Bell from the University of New England in Armidale realized how special the discovery might be. The bones were closely studied in order to determine what species they belonged to, but when no exact match was found it became clear that it was an entirely new species.

Now, over three decades since they were first found, Foster's name is in the history books... well, sort of. The new species that the bones belonged to has been named Fostoria dhimbangunmal in his honor. The dinosaur was a large herbivore that would have roamed Australia some 100 million years ago, and its bones were lying in wait for someone to find. That someone just happened to be Bob Foster.

(Source: msn.com)

Ancient Siberia was home to previously unknown humans, say scientists

It was cold, remote and involved picking fights with woolly mammoths – but it seems ancient Siberia 30,000 years ago was home to a hardy and previously unknown group of humans. Scientists say the discovery could help solve longstanding mysteries about the ancestors of native North Americans.

While it is commonly believed the ancestors of native North Americans arrived from Eurasia via a now submerged land bridge called Beringia, exactly which groups crossed and gave rise to native North American populations has been difficult to unpick.

Now scientists say they might have found some answers to the conundrums.

Writing in the journal Nature, Eske Willerslev and colleagues reveal how they drew on existing data from modern populations as well as analysing ancient DNA from the remains of 34 individuals obtained from sites around north-eastern Siberia, dating from more than 31,000 years ago up to 600 years ago.

The key remains were fragments of two tiny human milk teeth, shed by males, found at a place in Russia called Yana Rhinoceros Horn Site. First excavated in 2001, the site offers the earliest direct evidence of humans in north-eastern Siberia, with finds also including bone items and stone tools. Indirect evidence of human populations in north-eastern Siberia goes back to more than 40,000 years ago.

While it had previously been thought that these remains might be from the ancestors of native North Americans, the DNA data suggests otherwise.

"What we see here is a much more complex story than what we believed was the case," said Willerslev, director of the Lundbeck Foundation Centre for Geogenetics at the University of Copenhagen.



The results reveal these individuals were part of a previously unknown yet widespread group, dubbed the Ancient North Siberians by the team, who were genetically distinct from both Western Eurasians and East Asians. The researchers say they split off from the former 38,000 years ago – in other words, very shortly after Western Eurasians and East Asians themselves became genetically distinct. "They were living as big game hunters of woolly mammoth and woolly rhinoceros," said Willerslev.

But, crucially, this population does not appear to be the direct ancestor of Native Americans.

Instead, analysis of the collection of genomes suggests the population that became the ancestors of native North Americans was the result of liaisons about 20,000 years ago between East Asians, who travelled north, and a group distantly related to the Ancient Northern Siberians. The East Asians also mixed with other descendants of Ancient Northern Siberians to give rise to another group, who the team dub the Ancient Paleo Siberians, who went on to supplant the existing group.

"[Ancestors of] Native Americans are not the first people

in north-eastern Siberia as most people, if not everybody thought," said Willerslev, adding that DNA recovered in north-eastern Siberia from what is believed to be an Ancient Paleo Siberian was crucial to the work. "This is the first evidence we have, real evidence, of something very close genetically to Native Americans," he said.

The team add that one possibility is that the mixing involving the East Asians occurred in southern Beringia – one of the areas that could have offered respite from harshening conditions at the time.

They Ancient Paleo Siberians were themselves supplanted by another band of East Asians heading north about 10,000 years ago that gave rise to a group dubbed the "Neo-Siberians". "The vast majority of the genetic makeup of present day Siberians comes from this last push," said Willerslev. "This is also the reason you don't have any very close connection between contemporary Siberians and Native Americans."

John Hoffercker from the University of Colorado Boulder, who was not involved in the study, welcomed the research, saying a striking feature of the study is that humans were faring well in north-eastern Siberia, even in very difficult conditions, 30,000 years ago – with the genetic data from the teeth suggesting the males belonged to a population of about 500 people.

"That's a pretty healthy population," he said. "We had no idea 30 years ago that we had this robust healthy hunter-gatherer population thriving up in the high Arctic 30,000 years ago – it is amazing."

Hoffercker added the presence of the group suggests it was the ice sheets in North America, not hostile conditions in Beringia, that kept people from reaching the Americas sooner.

(Source: The Guardian)

Health ministry revealed data on cancer amongst Iranians

HEALTH DESK TEHRAN – Iranian health ministry announced highest rate of ten most common cancers in each province according to statistics of the Iranian calendar year 1394 (March 2015- March 2016), deputy health minister Reza Malekzadeh announced.

The report was completed by collecting information from 77 million and 539 thousand individuals in 30 provinces and registered at the population-based cancer registry of the Islamic Republic of Iran, he explained.

The first cancer registration report dated back to the Iranian calendar year 1393 (March 2014- March 2015) and this is the second report released by the health ministry, he said.

A total of 108,798 new cases of cancer was diagnosed during 1394 in Iran out of which 58,092 ones (53.39 percent) were men and 50,706 (46.6 percent) were women, he said.

There were 112,000 cancer patients in previous year, 1393, which included 60,432 (53.9 percent) men and 51,628 women (46.1 percent), he said.

According to the statistics, 149.74 per 100,000 population suffer from cancer, including 156.95 men and 134.43 women per 100,000 population, he announced.

Common cancers amongst Iranians
Breast cancer (32.9 percent), prostate cancer (16.93), nonmelanoma skin cancer (14.6 percent), gastric cancer (13.70 percent) and colorectal cancer (13.31 percent) are the most common cancers in the country, he said.

The statistics revealed the same findings during the Iranian calendar year 1393, he added.

Breast cancer (32.9 percent), colorectal cancer (11.70 percent), nonmelanoma skin cancer (10.85 percent), gastric cancer (8.67 percent) and thyroid cancer (7.31 percent) are the most common cancers in women, he said.

A total of 12,588 women suffered from breast cancer during the Iranian calendar year 1394, he said.

Unfortunately, obesity is prevailing in Iranian women due to unhealthy diet and insufficient physical activity and it is one the main reasons for developing cancer, he lamented.

Health ministry should set up some programs for prevention and early diagnosis of breast cancer due to its high rate amongst Iranian women, he added.

Which provinces, which cancers
The highest rate of cancer in different provinces are announced based on the statistics released in 1393, he said.

Yazd, Zanjan and West Azarbaijan have the highest cancer rates amongst Iranian provinces, Malekzadeh said.

Gastric cancer in Ardabil, Zanjan, Northern Khorasan provinces, prostate cancer in Yazd, Fars and Tehran provinces, colorectal cancer in Semnan, Tehran and Yazd provinces, bladder cancer in Kerman, Yazd and Western Azarbaijan provinces, lung cancer in West Azerbaijan, East Azarbaijan and Kerman provinces, Leukemia in Isfahan,



Yazd and Kermanshah provinces, central nervous system cancer in West Azarbaijan, Yazd and Zanjan provinces, esophageal cancer in Zanjan, Northern Khorasan and Golestan provinces, lymphoma in Yazd, Khuzestan and Kermanshah provinces and throat cancer in Northern Khorasan, Kerman and Southern Khorasan provinces are common cancers in different regions.

Yazd, Khorasan Razavi and Isfahan provinces are the most common regions for cancers amongst women, he announced.

Breast cancer rate in women is high in Tehran, Yazd and Semnan provinces, colorectal cancer in Semnan, Tehran and Yazd provinces, gastric cancer in Ardabil, Zanjan and East and West Azarbaijan provinces, central nervous system cancer in Yazd, Zanjan and West Azarbaijan provinces, esophageal cancer in Zanjan, Northern Khorasan and Golestan provinces, ovarian cancer in Yazd, Tehran and Semnan provinces and cervical cancer in Zanjan, Yazd and Tehran provinces.

The range of cancer is prevailing between ages of 75 to 85 year old in Iran, he announced.

The reasons beyond the statistics
The cancer of the upper gastrointestinal tract is most common disease in northwestern and northeastern Iran due to consumption of opium, drinking hot tea, little consumption of fruit and fresh vegetable as well as poor oral hygiene, Malekzadeh explained.

Besides, lung, colorectal, skin, thyroid, prostate, bladder and cervical cancers are common in central and southern Iran due to unhealthy lifestyle, bad diet, inadequate physical activity and obesity, he said.

Although more epidemiological studies are needed to find the reasons, he added.

The rate of esophageal cancer decreased in Golestan province due to proper access of citizen to drinking water hygiene and the replacement of standard fuel instead of oil in indoor environments, he said.

The number decreased from 100 per 100,000 to 20 per 100,000, he explained.

Cancer, the third cause of death in Iran

After road accidents and cardiovascular

diseases, cancer is the third leading cause of deaths among Iranians during recent years, he said.

However the rate of cancer is less than developed countries or neighboring countries like Turkey, he asserted.

The rate of cancer in Iran is 149.74 per 100,000 population (excluding non-melanoma skin cancer) which is less than global rate, which is 182 in 100,000 population, he said.

As per the data collected by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), an independent population health research center at UW Medicine, part of the University of Washington, some 54,000 Iranians died of cancer in 2016 constituting 14.9 percent of all deaths (360,000).

The IHME data also indicates that age-standardized rate of death caused by cancer per 100,000 people per year in Iran was 104 in 1990 which has decreased to 97 in 2015.

Population-based cancer registry of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Malekzadeh said that Iran is one of the pioneer developing countries, which is equipped with "population-based cancer registry of the Islamic Republic of Iran".

The "population-based cancer registry of the Islamic Republic of Iran" is the first reliable and official data collected on cancer incidence in Iran was included in World Health Organization's "Cancer Incidence in Five Continents (CI5).

CI5 is published approximately every five years by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) and the International Association of Cancer Registries (IACR) and provides comparable high quality statistics on the incidence of cancer from cancer registries around the world. Volume XI contains information from 343 cancer registries in 65 countries for cancers diagnosed from 2008 to 2012.

Cancer registries are valuable research tools in the etiology, diagnosis, and treatment of the disease and collecting data on cancer incidence also plays a significant role in planning screening schemes as well as preventing the disease.

According to the registries in the Iranian calendar year 1393 (March 21, 2014 to March

20, 2015) some 112,000 individuals were diagnosed with cancer.

Global cancer data in 2018

According to a report released by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) of World Health Organization (WHO), the global cancer burden is estimated to have risen to 18.1 million new cases and 9.6 million deaths in 2018. One in five men and one in six women worldwide develop cancer during their lifetime, and one in eight men and one in 11 women die from the disease.

Worldwide, the total number of people who are alive within five years of a cancer diagnosis, called the 5-year prevalence, is estimated to be 43.8 million. The increasing cancer burden is due to several factors, including population growth and ageing as well as the changing prevalence of certain causes of cancer linked to social and economic development. This is particularly true in rapidly growing economies, where a shift is observed from cancers related to poverty and infections to cancers associated with lifestyles more typical of industrialized countries.

Europe accounts for 23.4% of the global cancer cases and 20.3% of the cancer deaths, although it has only 9.0% of the global population. The Americas have 13.3% of the global population and account for 21.0% of incidence and 14.4% of mortality worldwide.

In contrast to other world regions, the proportions of cancer deaths in Asia and in Africa (57.3% and 7.3%, respectively) are higher than the proportions of incident cases (48.4% and 5.8%, respectively), because these regions have a higher frequency of certain cancer types associated with poorer prognosis and higher mortality rates, in addition to limited access to timely diagnosis and treatment in many countries.

Cancers of the lung, female breast, and colorectal are the top three cancer types in terms of incidence, and are ranked within the top five in terms of mortality (first, fifth, and second, respectively). Together, these three cancer types are responsible for one third of the cancer incidence and mortality burden worldwide.

Cancers of the lung and female breast are the leading types worldwide in terms of the number of new cases; for each of these types, approximately 2.1 million diagnoses are estimated in 2018, contributing about 11.6% of the total cancer incidence burden. Colorectal cancer (1.8 million cases, 10.2% of the total) is the third most commonly diagnosed cancer, prostate cancer is the fourth (1.3 million cases, 7.1%), and stomach cancer is the fifth (1.0 million cases, 5.7%).

Between 30–50% of cancers can currently be prevented by avoiding risk factors and implementing existing evidence-based prevention strategies. The cancer burden can also be reduced through early detection of cancer and management of patients who develop cancer. Many cancers have a high chance of cure if diagnosed early and treated adequately.

Skipping breakfast before a morning workout leads to greater weight loss, study shows

Skipping breakfast before exercise might reduce how much we eat during the remainder of the day, according to a small but intriguing new study of fit young men.

The study finds that the choice to eat or omit a meal before an early workout could affect our relationship to food for the rest of the day, in complicated and sometimes unexpected ways.

Weight management is, of course, one of the great public and private health concerns of our time. But the role of exercise in helping people to maintain, lose or, in some instances, add pounds is problematic. Exercise burns calories, but in many past studies, people who begin a new exercise programme do not lose as much weight as would be expected, because they often compensate for the energy used during exercise by eating more later or moving less.



These compensations, usually subtle and unintended, indicate that our brains are receiving internal communiques detailing how much energy we used during that last workout and, in response, sending biological signals that increase hunger or reduce our urge to move. Our helpful brains do not wish us to sustain an energy deficit and starve.

Previous studies show that many aspects of eating and exercise can affect how much people compensate for the calories burnt during exercise, including the type and length of the exercise and the fitness and weight of the exercisers. Skipping or consuming breakfast also can matter. When we eat a meal, our bodies rely on the carbohydrates in those foods as a primary source of energy. Some of those carbohydrates are stored in our bodies, but those internal stores of carbohydrates are small compared to the stores of fat. Some researchers believe that our brains might pay particular attention to any reductions in our carbohydrate levels and rush to replace them.

This is where breakfast comes in. If we skip eating in the morning, we have no calories from a meal available for fuel during exercise and instead will rely on, and reduce, our internal carbohydrate stores, along with some of our fat.

Some researchers have speculated that we might then wind up overcompensating later, eating more calories than we burnt during the workout and undermining our efforts to maintain or lose weight.

But that possibility had not been investigated. So, for the new study, which was published in April in The Journal of Nutrition, scientists from the University of Bath and other institutions decided to look more closely at how breakfast and exercise interact.

They first recruited 12 healthy, active young men and asked them to report to the university's exercise lab on three separate mornings. On one morning, the men ate a hearty, 430-calorie bowl of oatmeal and rested for several hours. Another morning, they swallowed the same porridge before riding a bike moderately for an hour. On a third visit, they skipped the porridge but rode the bike, not eating at all until lunch.

Each time, the men stayed at the lab through lunch, eating as much or little at that meal as they wished. The scientists also handed the men food baskets to take home, asking them to eat only from the basket and return uneaten portions, so the researchers could track their daily calories. They also used respiratory masks and mathematical formulas to estimate their 24-hour energy expenditure.

Then the scientists compared numbers, with some results they had not predicted. Least surprising, the men wound up with an energy surplus when they had breakfasted and then sat, taking in about 490 more calories that day than they burnt.

When they downed porridge and then worked out, though, they maintained their energy balance with fine precision, burning and consuming almost exactly the same number of calories that day.

It was when they had skipped breakfast before exercise that their eating became most interesting. Having presumably depleted most of their bodies' stored carbohydrates during the cycling that day, the men seemed ravenous at lunch, consuming substantially more calories than during either of their other lab visits.

But afterward their eating tailed off and, at the end of the day, they maintained an energy deficit of nearly 400 calories, meaning they had replenished few of the calories they had burnt while riding.

These findings have implications for people hoping to use exercise for weight control, says Javier Gonzalez, a senior lecturer at the University of Bath, who oversaw the new study. They suggest that working out on an empty stomach in the morning might not prompt us to overeat later and might, instead, lead to calorie deficits.

Should that situation continue beyond a single workout and single day, we would probably lose weight, he says.

Still, this study was small, short-term and involved only fit, young men eating oatmeal for breakfast. Whether the results would be comparable for those of us who are older, overweight, out of shape, female or swallow eggs and bacon in the morning remains unknown.

It also does not explain why the men who had skipped breakfast before exercise did not continue to shovel in food all day, but it is likely that the messages from the brain about replacing the lost carbohydrates might have been urgent but also transient.

Gonzalez and his colleagues hope to study those questions in coming trials.

(Source: The Independent)

NGO aspires to give free skin surgery for all inside the country's borders

HEALTH DESK TEHRAN — "Marham NGO is trying to give free medical care to all patients who live inside the country's borders, whether Iranian nationals or immigrants. It doesn't matter if they have identification certificate and medical insurance or not," said the NGO's director.

Marham (literally means 'remedy') is a charity established in 2008 for giving free medical care and surgeries to people who are living with rare skin diseases, such as Epidermolysis bullosa (EB) and other genetic disfigurements.

According to Dr. Abdoljalil Kalantar-Hormozi, a professor at Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences, the charity will make its 25th trip around the country, this time to Neyshabur city, in northeastern Iran, from June 18 to 21, ISNA reported on Wednesday.

The medical team will include 55 doctors, surgeons, plastic surgery specialists, pediatricians, anesthesiologists, rehabilitation specialists, orthopedists, speech therapists, nurses and social workers, said Dr. Kalantar-Hormozi.

"It is expected that 90 free surgeries will be performed over this visit."

"The medical teams make visit to different provinces every three months, and the surgeries that cannot be performed in that particular provinces will be done in Tehran."

According to Kalantar-Hormozi, the charity has done 4,500 free surgeries and 20,000 free medical visits in impoverished areas both in Tehran and other cities.

Marham NGO started with seven volunteers and now has more than 500 member.



First cardio-oncology research center in Asia to open in Tehran

HEALTH DESK TEHRAN — First cardio-oncology research center in Asia will soon start operating in Shahid Rajaei teaching hospital in Tehran, said a member of hospital's academic board.

Cardio-oncology is the intersection of heart conditions in patients who have been treated for cancer. Cardiologists can assess patients for potential risk of developing heart conditions if patients take certain types of cancer drugs, or following radiation treatment to the chest.

A specialized cardio-oncology clinic also opened in this hospital two years ago for the first time in Iran, Dr. Azin Alizadeh-Asl told IRNA on Friday.

All the preparations for opening the center are finished and the license for opening the center will soon be issued, said Dr. Alizadehasl.

According to Alizadeh-Asl, cardio-oncology research center will help the prevention of heart diseases in cancer patients and also develop a better understanding of how to treat such conditions.

Research about the side effects of cancer drugs, chemotherapy and radiotherapy on

cardiovascular system and how to treat such conditions, especially heart failure, are the primary focus of studies in this center.

"Cancer patients who are more at risk of heart diseases need to be registered. By now, we have registered 300 patients with the help of eight medical centers and more patients are to be registered soon," she added.

"We are also planning to start short courses and then fellowships on Cardio-Oncology in Shahid Rajaei Hospital."

"With training residents in this field, we are trying to have the specialized staff so that cardio-oncology research and medical centers can be established in different provinces all over the country," she further explained.

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 on cancer treatment and half of these expenses go to provision of cancer medicines.

Widowed and divorced men more likely to die from heart disease than women, study finds

Widowed and divorced men are at higher risk of dying from serious heart conditions than women in the same situation, according to new research.

Experts found that men whose wives had died were 11 per cent more likely to die from a heart attack than women who had lost their husbands.

Similarly, widowed men were 10 per cent more likely to die from heart failure and 13 per cent more likely to die if they suffered an irregular heartbeat (atrial fibrillation) than women in the same position.

Meanwhile, divorced men with an irregular heartbeat were 14 per cent more likely to die than divorced women, the study found.

Among married people with an irregular heartbeat, men had a 6 per cent higher risk of dying than women.

But single men appeared to be more likely to survive, with single men with heart failure having a 13 per cent reduced risk of death compared with single women.

The study follows previous work which found that being married may improve the chances of surviving a heart attack, especially for women.

(Source: The Independent)

Climate change could make frozen Siberia habitable within decades, scientists reveal

Climate change could make large swathes of Siberia habitable before the end of this century, a new study suggests.

Winter temperatures could rise by as much as 9.1C while mass-melting would see the size of the permafrost drop by a quarter under the most extreme scenario considered feasible by scientists.

This would open up pristine areas of Russia east of the Ural Mountains, paving the way for millions of people to relocate to the region, which stretches from northern Kazakhstan to the Bering Sea.

Modelling for a less extreme rise in atmospheric carbon still resulted in temperature increases of up 3.4C in the winter months.

Under this projection, scientists estimated there would be a five-fold increase in the capacity of the territory to sustain human populations.



Researchers said the speed with which humans could move to Siberia would depend on investments in infrastructure, as the region was currently poorly served.

For their analysis, the team from Russia's Krasnoyarsk Federal Research Centre and the US National Institute of Aerospace looked at two possible scenarios for how concentrations of CO2 may rise in the coming decades. One, termed representative concentration pathway (RCP) 2.6, represented "mild" climate change, while RCP 8.5 represented more extreme changes.

The two trajectories are accepted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change as being at the lower and upper ranges for greenhouse gas emissions: RCP 2.6 assumes global emissions will peak by 2020, with emissions declining substantially thereafter; whereas under the RCP 8.5 scenario, emissions will continue to rise throughout the 21st century.

Dr Elena Parfenova, lead author of the study, which was published in Environmental Research Letters, said: "We found increases in temperature of 3.4C (RCP 2.6) to 9.1C (RCP 8.5) in mid-winter; increases of 1.9C (RCP 2.6) to 5.7C (RCP 8.5) in mid-summer; and increases in precipitation of 60mm (RCP 2.6) to 140 mm (RCP 8.5)."

Under the group's worst case simulations, permafrost coverage in Russia's far east would decrease from the current level of 65 per cent to 40 per cent by the 2080s.

At 13 million square kilometres, Russia's Asian territory accounts for about 77 per cent of the country's total land area, but around just 27 per cent of its population, much of which is concentrated along the forest-steppe in the south.

But Dr Parfenova said this was likely to change: "Asian Russia is currently extremely cold. In a future warmer climate, food security in terms of crop distribution and production capability is likely to become more favourable for people to support settlements."

She added: "However, suitable land development depends on the authorities' social, political and economic policies.

"Vast tracts of Siberia and the far east have poorly developed infrastructure. The speed these developments happen depends on investments in infrastructure and agriculture, which in turn depends on the decisions that should be made soon."

Vladimir Chuprov, of Greenpeace Russia, said there were a number of factors triggered by a warming Siberia that would complicate efforts to increase the human population there.

"Permafrost degrading would mean that at any area with dominating swamps or wetlands, it will be impossible to build infrastructure" in the short term, he told The Independent. He added that "higher temperatures will provoke more insects, which is bad for agriculture".

(Source: The Independent)

WORDS IN THE NEWS

Genetic mapping of the Down's syndrome chromosome

(May 11, 2000)

An international team of scientists have solved the genetic code of the chromosome which causes **Down's syndrome**.

Down's syndrome is one of the most complex of all human genetic disorders, involving problems ranging from **mental retardation** to heart defects and cancer. It's been known for years that sufferers inherit a **surplus copy of Chromosome 21**, but why this leads to so many diseases has been so far a mystery. Now, scientists are hoping that the complete **code** of Chromosome 21 will allow them to **pinpoint** the individual genes responsible for each Downs Syndrome disease and perhaps even design **therapies**.

Chromosome 22 was announced in December; Chromosome 21 is being announced today and the rest will be done **in the next year or so**. And this will bring us to a final gold standard product of the **human genome** fully and publicly available for all to use for **biomedical** research.

Words

Down's syndrome: a human genetic disorder that results in physical abnormalities and limited mental ability in those who suffer with it. A syndrome is a medical condition that has a particular group of symptoms.

genetic disorders: problems or illnesses which are passed down from one generation to the next

mental retardation: caused when the brain develops more slowly than usual

surplus copy of Chromosome 21: A chromosome is a part of a cell containing genes which determine its characteristics. People with Down's syndrome have an extra set of this chromosome

code: the way in which information is stored in chromosomes

pinpoint: if you pinpoint something you discover or explain exactly what it is

therapies: ways of treating the syndrome

in the next year or so: within 1 or 2 years - without being specific

gold standard product: something that others can use that will be of great value as it is so reliable

human genome: the genes that form human beings

biomedical: research into biology and medicine

(Source: BBC)

Action plans to tackle sand and dust storms to be completed by yearend

ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — There are

d e s k some 20 million hectares of sand and dust storm hotspots in the country and some are in a critical condition, so the action plans to fight the storms will be completed by the yearend (March 19, 2020), deputy environment chief Masoud Tajrishi has said.

Internal sand and dust storm hotspots are already identified and action plans to battle the predicament in each province will be prepared by the end of the current year, IRNA news agency quoted Tajrishi as saying on Friday.

In order to draw up the plans Iran's Department of Environment is cooperating with Shahid Beheshti University, University of Tehran and Azad University, he added. "Action plan to fight sand and dust storms in southwestern Khuzestan province is almost prepared and we are now preparing an action plan for the south-eastern province of Sistan-Baluchestan," he highlighted.

Moreover, action plans for dried up wetlands which have turned into hotspots for sand and dust storms are prepared and measures are being taken to fight the phenomenon, he stated.

Tajrishi went on to say that due to the severity of the condition in Sistan-Baluchestan Islamic Revolution Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has allowed withdrawing 115 million euros from the National Development Fund to fight sand and dust storms in the region.

Commenting on external sand and dust storm hotspots Tajrishi explained that the Department of Environment as



well as Iran's Meteorological Organization and three research centers have agreed on studying and identifying these hotspots.

In collaboration with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) we are planning on gathering regional countries to come up with strategies to combat sand and dust storms in other countries as well, he noted.

He also said that raising international funds is on agenda to address sand and dust storms rising from external hotspots.

According to the World Metrological Organization Sand and dust storms usually occur when strong winds lift large amounts

of sand and dust from bare, dry soils into the atmosphere. Over the last decade, scientists have come to realize the impacts on climate, human health, the environment and many socio-economic sectors.

Mitigating the effects of sand and dust storms

According to EcoMENA sand and dust storms cause significant negative impacts on society, economy and environment at local, regional and global scale. There are three key factors responsible for the generation of sand and dust storms – strong wind, lack of vegetation and absence of rainfall. The environmental and health hazards of such

Wildfire contained in protected area in southwestern Iran

ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — Raging wildfire erupted in

d e s k Khaeez protected area in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province, southwestern Iran, was controlled, ISNA news agency reported on Friday.

According to the report the fire broke out in the area on Thursday evening in Khaeez protected area. The stretch, measuring 28,000 hectares, is one the main habitats for wild goats.

Being impassable has made any fire-fighting operation almost impossible and only helicopters could reach the area, the report added.

Some 400 hectares of the area is affected by the wildfire, the report concluded.

Kohgiluyeh governor, Ja'far Nikbakht, told ISNA news agency that fierce wind has made the operations much more difficult.



Nikbakht went on to say that lightening caused the fire and the extent of the loss incurred on the protected area is yet to be estimated.

In early May Hamid Zohrabi, DOE deputy chief for natural environment and biodiversity directorate said that in the current year (started on March 21), above-normal precipitation and increased vegetation covers can dramatically heighten the risks of wildfires, however, due to slower-than-usual temperature rise in many regions in the country it is projected that wildfire season might be delayed.

Ali Abbas Nejad, commander of forest protection unit at Forest Rangelands and Watershed Management Organization (FRWO) also said that the incidence of wildfires have decreased by 130% in the Iranian calendar months of Farvardin (March 21-April 20) compared to the same period last year.

FAO and WHO highlight “Food Safety” as “Everyone’s Business” in Iran

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) jointly celebrated the first World Food Safety Day in Iran to draw attention and inspire action to help prevent, detect and manage foodborne risks, contributing to food security, human health, economic prosperity, agriculture, and sustainable development.

According to a joint press release published by FAO and WHO Representations in the Islamic Republic of Iran, consuming unsafe food containing harmful bacteria, viruses, parasites or chemical substances, causes more than 200 diseases – ranging from diarrhea to cancer.

"As it is reflected in this year's theme 'Food Safety is Everyone's Business.' Today, food is processed in greater volumes and distributed over greater distances, within countries and across borders, than ever

before making inclusive collaboration of all stakeholders in the food supply chain essential to ensure food safety" FAO Representative to Iran, Mr. Gerold Bodeker stated. "Food safety is a critical part of food and nutrition security, which is achieved when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to the food that meets their dietary needs for an active and healthy life" he added.

FAO and WHO in their latest publication asserted that the impact of unsafe food costs low- and middle-income economies around US\$ 95 billion in lost productivity each year. Also, it is estimated that almost 600 million people fall ill after eating contaminated food which results in the death of over 400 000 people every year.

Dr. Christoph Hamelmann, the WHO Representative to Iran by underscoring the burden of 40 percent of the foodborne



disease by children under 5 years of age in the world with 125 000 deaths every year, urged for widespread contributions of all actors in the food supply chain. "We believe good governance and implementing smart regulations within the framework of Codex Alimentarius, would ultimately enable us to achieve food safety for all" he said.

The Codex Alimentarius Commission, managed by FAO and WHO, establishes science-based food standards, guidelines

and codes of practice that ensure food safety and quality by addressing contaminants, hygienic practices, labelling, additives, inspection and certification, nutrition and residues of veterinary drugs and pesticides.

FAO and WHO invite policy makers to promote sustainable agriculture and food systems; support farming practices for sufficient supply of safe food; emphasize the importance of empowering consumers in making healthy food choices; and underline universal shared responsibility to work together on such an issue that affect us all.

On 20 December 2018, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 73/250 proclaiming 7th of June 2019 as the first occasion for the worldwide celebration of World Food Safety Day. Let's join hands to make sure all people have access to safe food.

(Source: FAO)

First Announcement



1398.1429

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY

TENDER NO. : 08-21-9640003

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

Items	Material Description	Quantity
01	TUBING, API GRADE C-95, SEAMLESS NEW "VAM" THREAD, R-3 (MAX. LENGTH:40.5 FT) H2S TRIM (HIGH COLIAPSE, SOUR SERVICE) API 5C T/ISO 11960, PSL:3 MARKING: COLD DIE STAMPED IN ACCORDANCE WITH API 5CT SIZE (OD), WEIGHT (PPF), AS SPECIFIED 4-1/2 IN. 13.5 LB.	9000

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their "intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 2, available at: WWW.nisoc.ir , not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded.

The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 78,991 EURO or 3,794,766,144 RIAL, in favor of NISOC.

Tender Conditions material technical thorough specifications and Qualitative Assessment Forms can be accessed via: WWW.nisoc.ir-material procurement management tab
NO ADVANCE PAYMENT WILL BE PAID

FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT

Bldg. No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex

Kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran

Tel. No.: 061 341 23523 Fax No.: 061 3445 7437

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End of May, Britain's PM steps down as Conservative leader

TEHRAN— British Prime Minister Theresa May steps down as leader of the governing Conservatives on Friday, officially triggering a contest to replace her that could see her party embrace a tougher stance on Brexit.

May announced she would step down last month after failing to deliver Britain's departure from the European Union on time, deepening a political crisis in a divided country struggling to move on from a 2016 referendum on Brexit.

According to Reuters, she will continue to work as prime minister until her party elects a new leader, a crowded race that will be defined by Brexit and competing approaches on how to deliver Britain's biggest policy shift in more than 40 years.

"For the remainder of her time in office, she will be building on the domestic agenda that she has put at the heart of her premiership," her spokeswoman told reporters.

Later on Tuesday, May will exchange letters with the chairs of the influential 1922 Committee of Conservative lawmakers, and will spend the day working in her



home constituency, a haven she retreats to.

May, once a reluctant supporter of EU membership who emerged from the chaos after the 2016 referendum as the "steady"

choice, steps down with her central pledge - to lead Britain out of the bloc and heal the country's divisions - unfulfilled.

Her team has been keen to shape her

legacy beyond the Brexit failure, but she bequeaths to her successor a nation where traditional political divides are being eroded by strong beliefs on whether Britain should leave the EU, and how it should do so.

The contest to replace her has already been heating up for weeks, with candidates arguing over the rights and wrongs of a so-called no-deal Brexit, or leaving the EU without a deal. Official nominations will be received on June 10. The selection process should be completed by the end of July.

Former foreign minister Boris Johnson is the favorite to win. He champions a tougher stance on Brexit, saying Britain should leave with or without a deal by the new deadline of Oct. 31, and is trying to persuade Conservatives that he, a former London mayor, is the only candidate who could win a new national election for the Conservative Party.

Other front runners are playing catch up, with the current foreign minister, Jeremy Hunt, and environment minister Michael Gove taking a more moderate stance on Brexit.

Qatari FM: No end in sight to Persian Gulf crisis

TEHRAN— Qatar's Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani says there is no solution in sight to a political crisis in the Persian Gulf, two years after Saudi Arabia and a number of its allies imposed a diplomatic and trade boycott against Doha.

"There is no solution on the horizon, and the main initiative to resolve the dispute was from Kuwait's Emir (Sabah Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah). The regional structure of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council has been undermined due to the blockade imposed on Qatar," he told Russia's RT Arabic television news network on Thursday on the sidelines of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum.

According to Press TV, al Thani added, "There are a lot of difficulties because of

the pressures and the siege on Qatar. But Doha, through public unity and actions taken by the leadership, has managed to overcome almost all challenges. Nevertheless, there are some social challenges that have directly affected the lives of citizens as some facilities have been dispersed, it is difficult to go to holy places in Saudi Arabia, and the regional security system has been undercut by the siege."

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt cut off diplomatic ties with Qatar on June 5, 2017, after officially accusing it of "sponsoring terrorism."

Qatar's Foreign Ministry later announced that the decision to cut diplomatic ties was unjustified and based on false claims and assumptions.

U.S. will not accept more Turkish F-35 pilots over Russia defenses

TEHRAN— The United States has decided to stop accepting any additional Turkish pilots who planned to come to the United States to train on F-35 fighter jets, U.S. officials say, in a clear sign of the escalating dispute over Ankara's plans to purchase Russian air defenses.

The two NATO allies have sparred publicly for months over Turkey's order for Russia's S-400 air defense system, which Washington says poses a threat to the Lockheed Martin Corp F-35 stealthy fighters, which Turkey also plans to buy, Reuters reported.

The United States says Turkey cannot have both, but has avoided taking steps until now to curtail or halt planned training of Turkish pilots in the program, a reprisal

that could be seen as an embarrassment in Turkey.

The two U.S. officials, who spoke to Reuters this week on condition of anonymity, left open the possibility the decision could be reversed, perhaps if Turkey altered its plans. They said the decision so far only applied to upcoming rounds of Turkish pilots and maintenance crews who would have normally come to the United States.

Four Turkish pilots are currently training at Luke. Two additional Turkish pilots are at the U.S. base working as instructors. Beyond those six Turkish officers, there are an additional 20 Turkish aircraft maintainers at the base undergoing training as well, the U.S. military says.

U.S. hands over Palestinian professor to Israel

TEHRAN— U.S. officials have handed over a former Palestinian presidential candidate and university professor to Israel after keeping him 11 years in prison on charges of racketeering and collecting funds for the Hamas resistance movement.

The Council on International Relations – Palestine, in a statement released on Thursday, denounced American authorities for extraditing Abdelhalim al-Ashqar to Israel, stressing that U.S. officials bear full responsibility for the fate of Ashqar, who is now in the hands of the "criminal" Tel Aviv regime.

According to press TV, the Council noted that the move attests to the U.S. administration's hostility towards the Palestinian nation and stability and peace in the Middle East region as well as its blatant bias in favor of the unjust Israeli regime and its ongoing crimes.

The statement further argued that American authorities had unfairly sentenced Ashqar to 11 years in prison after placing him under house arrest for nearly two years.

He wore an ankle monitor on his right leg in his home in Alexandria, Virginia.

The Council called on the international community and human rights groups around the world to press for the release of Ashqar, stressing the need for the U.S. administration to review its Middle East policies, which run contrary to its claim of being an honest broker in the so-called peace process between the Palestinians and Israelis.

Ashqar was a professor at Howard University, Washington, the United States. Between 1998 and 1999, he was detained for several months by American officials under allegations of fundraising for certain U.S.-based Islamic organizations.

He was discharged from his teaching position at Washington University in August 2004. He was subsequently arrested, charged with racketeering and illegally collecting funds for Hamas, and put under house arrest.

Ashqar nominated himself as an independent presidential candidate in the January 9, 2005, Palestinian election.



He was one of the 10 contenders seeking to succeed Yasser Arafat, who died on November 11, 2004 as head of the Palestinian Authority.

In November 2007, he was sentenced to 135 months in prison.

Torture in Saudi prisons: 'Most oppressive era we have witnessed'

TEHRAN— Days after Saudi Arabia announced it would allow women to drive in September 2017, blogger and activist Eman al-Nafjan wrote an uplifting column on CNN.

Praising the tenacity of women's rights activists such as Loujain al-Hathloul, she said: "Other issues seem conquerable. The biggest issue at the moment is the guardianship system."

Eight months later, al-Nafjan, Loujain al-Hathloul, and other women's rights activists and male allies were arrested.

They became victims of a widespread online and offline smear campaign, accusing them of trying to destabilize the country and incite public opinion, Al Jazeera reported.

Since their arrest, there have been allega-

tions of prisoners being tortured - with reports of lashings and electric shocks while in custody.

Three Saudi Muslim scholars who are linked to the Sahwa, or the Awakening movement, who are reportedly on death row and could be executed in days, are also believed to have suffered in prison.

Salman al-Awdah was hospitalized as a result of solitary confinement, according to Amnesty International, Awad al-Qarni health has also deteriorated, according to activists, while Ali al-Omari has reportedly suffered burns and injuries all over his body as a result of electric shocks during solitary confinement for more than a year.

Adam Coogle, Saudi Arabia researcher

at Human Rights Watch (HRW), told Al Jazeera: "You have serious allegations of torture by investigators. This is something you will frequently hear from other human rights activists as well."

Among these prisoners are al-Haer in Riyadh, Dhahban near Jeddah, and Dammam in the Eastern Province.

Women's rights defenders, protesters from the predominantly Shia Muslim minority Eastern Province, and other dissidents often stand trial at the Specialized Criminal Court, the kingdom's counterterrorism court.

"Most human rights activists and dissidents are in [both] Mabahith-run prisons or general prisons," Yahya Assiri, a Saudi activist who founded the human rights or-

ganization Al Qst, told Al Jazeera.

While general prisons are run by the Ministry of Interior, maximum security prisons are headed by the police agency of the Presidency of the State Security, commonly known as the Mabahith.

Conditions in the general prisons are abysmal and worse than in the maximum security facilities, said Assiri, adding that corporal punishment is common while corruption has fuelled an illicit drug smuggling trade.

"These facilities are far more outdated than maximum security prisons, and cells are often overcrowded," he said.

In its 2018 annual report, Al Qst claimed that authorities forced prisoners to sleep in the toilets.

Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt behind Sudan's bloody crackdown: Expert

TEHRAN— A Sudanese military expert says a recent brutal crackdown on pro-democracy protesters in capital Khartoum that killed scores of people was part of a Saudi-Emirati plan and launched at Riyadh's bidding.

The plan to storm a protest camp outside Sudan's Defense Ministry in central Khartoum on June 3 had been discussed during recent visits to Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt by Sudan's military ruler General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, who chairs the country's Transitional Military Council (TMC), the expert told the Middle East Eye on condition of anonymity.

"The breaking up of the sit-in was one of the main points on the agenda that was discussed. Unless he got the green light from his regional allies he would not have been able to commit such a crime," he said.

According to Press TV, on Monday, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) attacked the camp, prompting clashes with the protesters, who had been camping out there for months to demand that the TMC hand over power to a civilian government. The TMC assumed power in April after the military toppled President Omar al-Bashir in the wake of angry protests against his 30-year rule.



The Central Committee of Sudanese Doctors, which is associated with protest groups, said on Wednesday the death toll from the crackdown had risen to 108, including three children from one family.

Burhan was last week among Arab leaders attending two emergency summits in Saudi holy city of Mecca to address rising tensions in the Persian Gulf.

His visit to Saudi Arabia followed trips to Egypt to meet

President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi on May 25, and to the UAE to meet Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed the following day.

Another senior member of the military council, General Mohamed Hamdan Dagolo, met Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Jeddah on May 23.

Sudan's RSF is led by Dagalo, who is the deputy leader of the TMC and the second most powerful man in Sudan right now. The general is close to Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

Reports say that nearly all of the Sudanese mercenaries fighting in the ranks of a Saudi- and Emirati-led military coalition in the war on Yemen are from the RSF.

The military expert further said the RSF's clampdown raised serious concerns about human rights abuses against civilians as members of the paramilitary forces were not trained how to deal with civilians and lacked the "discipline of professional members of the security forces".

The report added that RSF members had used live ammunition, attacked and beat women, and burnt down tents during the recent raid in Khartoum.

Pelosi tells Dems she wants to see Trump 'in prison'

T → Nadler pressed Pelosi to allow his committee to launch an impeachment inquiry against Trump — the second such request he's made in recent weeks only to be rebuffed by the California Democrat and other senior leaders. Pelosi stood firm, reiterating that she isn't open to the idea of impeaching Trump at this time.

"I don't want to see him impeached, I want to see him in prison," Pelosi said, according to multiple Democratic sources familiar with the meeting. Instead of impeachment, Pelosi still prefers to see Trump defeated at the ballot box and then prosecuted for his alleged crimes, according to the sources.

They said she was expressing solidarity with pro-impeachment Democrats who want to hold the president accountable while disputing the idea that it is now time to take that step. Pelosi has long argued that certain conditions must be met before Democrats begin impeachment — public support and strong bipartisan backing, neither of which have so far materialized.

Other Democrats said Pelosi's comment wasn't that surprising given her previous criticisms of the president, including saying Trump "is engaged in a cover-up," that his staff and family should stage an intervention and that the president's actions "are villainous to the Constitution of the United States."

Ashley Etienne, a Pelosi spokeswoman said Pelosi and the chairmen "had a productive meeting about the state of play with the Mueller report. They agreed to keep all options on the table and continue to move forward with an aggressive hearing and legislative strategy, as early as next week, to address the president's corruption and abuses of power uncovered in the report."

House Intelligence Chairman Adam Schiff (D-Calif.), Oversight Chairman Elijah Cummings (D-Md.), Ways and Means Chairman Richard Neal (D-Mass.) and Foreign Affairs Chairman Eliot Engel (D-N.Y.) were also present for the meeting. Financial Services Chairwoman Maxine Waters (D-Calif.) — a vocal impeachment supporter whose panel is probing Trump's finances — was not in attendance.

Yemeni Kornet missiles hit Saudi armored vehicles

TEHRAN— Yemen's armed forces have released new footage of their latest retaliatory attacks against Saudi-backed mercenaries in the kingdom's border region of Najran.

The footage, which was released on Friday, shows Yemeni troops and fighters from the Houthi Ansarullah movement using Kornet man-portable anti-tank missiles to target Saudi armored vehicles across the southwestern Najran region.

According to Press TV, following the strikes, mercenaries and members of the Saudi National Guard fled the battlefield and Yemeni forces managed to take control of their positions and seize a large amount of ammunition.

The Yemeni troops also set the armored vehicles on fire.

Ansarullah says it has recently captured 20 military sites belonging to Riyadh and its mercenaries in Najran.

On May 24, Yemen's military released footage verifying a retaliatory attack on the Abu Dhabi International Airport last year, which had been denied by the UAE officials.

The UAE is Saudi Arabia's key ally in its war on Yemen.

China vows to 'fight to the end' if U.S. intensifies trade war

TEHRAN— China has vowed to "fight to the end" if the U.S. decides to intensify its trade war amid a renewed threat by the President Donald Trump to impose additional tariffs on Chinese exports.

"If the United States willfully decides to escalate tensions, we'll fight to the end," said the Commerce Ministry's spokesman Gao Feng during a press briefing on Thursday.

Gao said the U.S. use of "ultimate pressure" has led to serious setbacks in bilateral trade talks and that the future direction of the negotiations would rest on Washington., press TV reported.

"China does not want to fight a trade war, but also is not afraid of one," Gao said, stressing that Beijing will "adopt necessary countermeasures and resolutely safeguard the interests of China and its people."

The remarks came after Trump declared on Thursday that he would decide on carrying out his threat to levy tariffs on at least \$300 billion of goods from China after a meeting of the world's largest economies later this month.

"I will make that decision in the next two weeks after the G20. I will be meeting with President Xi and we'll see what happens, we're probably planning it sometime after G20," Trump said while on a visit to France.

The upcoming G20 summit in Japan on June 28-29 will be the first opportunity for Trump and his Chinese counterpart President Xi Jinping to meet since the last G20 summit in Buenos Aires in late 2018. However, a meeting between the two is yet to be arranged.

Yemeni air defenses down yet another U.S.-made Saudi attack drone

TEHRAN— Yemen has successfully targeted an attack drone belonging to Saudi Arabia, as the country continues to develop a deterrence against Riyadh's continued drone raids and surveillance flights over cities and civilian targets.

The Yemeni Army and Popular Committees downed the drone on Thursday afternoon in al-Jabaliyah in the country's west coast. A source in the Air Defense unit told the al-Masirah news network that the drone was a U.S.-made MQ-9 Reaper.

The Saudi air force launched a series of airstrikes on the wreckage of the drone to destroy it before it fell to the hands of the Yemeni fighters, the source added.

According to Press TV, Yemeni forces seem to have developed a sophisticated air defense network to fight off Riyadh's drone raids.

They downed an MQ-1 Predator last month, another U.S.-made drone, using a surface-to-air missile.

The media bureau of Yemen's Houthi Ansarullah movement announced in April that Yemeni air defense forces and their allies had shot down a Chinese-built medium-altitude and long-endurance Wing Loong drone with a surface-to-air missile.

Yemen's air defenses also downed three more Saudi spy drones of unspecified models in various parts of the country.

Australia’s women soccer players to get same base pay as men

Australia’s professional women soccer players will be given the same base pay as men in a one-year extension to a collective bargaining agreement.

Players in Australia’s W-League will have their annual minimum remuneration hiked 33 percent to AS16,344 (\$11,400), with their base hourly rate matching the men’s A-League, Football Federation Australia and the players union said on Friday.

“We’re very proud that we have been able to anchor the minimum conditions for W-League players to those of A-League players,” Professional Footballers Australia CEO John Didulica said in a statement. “It’s a moment in time that the players should be proud of.”

The deal will reduce the gender pay gap in Australian football but male players stand to earn significantly more due to their greater time on the pitch. The W-League’s regular season ran for 14 weeks in 2018/19, just over half the length of the A-League’s 27 rounds.

The announcement comes days after the PFA launched a campaign demanding global governing body FIFA increase prize money at the upcoming women’s World Cup to reduce the glaring gap with the men’s tournament.

Gender pay disparity in football was put in the spotlight in March when the U.S. women’s team sued their national federation for alleged gender discrimination three months before their World Cup title defense.

Australia has become a global leader in championing better pay and conditions for female athletes in recent years, after having largely neglected women’s sport for decades.

Australia’s contracted women cricketers were given the same base hourly pay rate as men in a five-year collective bargaining agreement struck in 2017, although, like women footballers, they have far fewer opportunities to earn.

(Source: Reuters)

Chelsea appeal FIFA transfer ban to CAS

English Premier League side Chelsea have filed an appeal with the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) against a transfer ban imposed by world soccer governing body FIFA, the CAS said on Friday.

The Europa League champions were sanctioned in February for breaching rules regarding the international transfer and registration of players under 18. They were also fined 600,000 Swiss francs (£475,051).

The transfer ban prevents Chelsea from signing players in the close season and in the January transfer window in 2020 and CAS said they had registered the club’s appeal, which could be considered just by written submissions.

“Following the hearing, if one is held... the panel deliberates and then issues its decision in the form of an Arbitral Award,” the CAS statement read.

“It is not possible to say at this time when the Arbitral Award will be issued.”

(Source: Goal)

Africa football boss released in France without charge: prosecutor

The president of the Confederation of African Football (CAF), Ahmad Ahmad, was released without charge in France on Friday, a day after being arrested for questioning, the Marseille public prosecutor said.

Prosecutor Xavier Tarabeux said Ahmad was arrested in Paris on Thursday and questioned as part of a probe into corruption, breach of trust and forgery.

Ahmad was in Paris for the FIFA Congress ahead of the start of the Women’s World Cup. His confederation’s marquee event, the African Cup of Nations, kicks off in Egypt on June 21.

The French investigation concerns CAF’s breach, shortly after its signature in December 2017, of a contract with Puma to supply equipment and clothes to 580 volunteers at the 2018 African Nations Championship, an event for national teams made up of African players with clubs on the continent.

CAF allegedly tore up the contract in favour of a better offer from a small French-based company which supplies Adidas gear, according to documents seen by AFP.

That company is based in La Seyne-sur-Mer, on the Mediterranean coast east of Marseille, a source close to the case said.

Puma “asked for compensation of \$100,000, but CAF did not pay,” Amr Fahmy, a former CAF Secretary General, who is already involved in a separate investigation of Ahmad, told AFP.

In a statement on Thursday, FIFA said that it had “taken note of the alleged events concerning Mr Ahmad Ahmad, who is being questioned by the French authorities in relation to allegations related to his mandate while President of CAF.”

World football’s governing body said it had asked “the French authorities for any information” that might be of interest to its Ethics Commission.

(Source: AFP)

England’s Southgate says fatigue factored in loss

England manager Gareth Southgate was left to rue two shocking defensive errors in extra time which gifted the Netherlands a 3-1 win in the Nations League semifinals on Thursday but he refused to put the blame on his players.

John Stones was caught in possession on the edge of the area which led to the goal that saw the Dutch go 2-1 up and then put Ross Barkley under pressure with a needless short pass that the midfielder misplaced to hand the Netherlands their third goal.

“Fatigue has played a part tonight, and a lack of match sharpness,” said Southgate, who added that his commitment to playing the ball out from the back was not to blame.

“I’m asking them to play a tough game at the back -- if we didn’t play that way we wouldn’t be here,” he told reporters.

(Source: Soccernet)

Nike ‘very concerned’ about rape accusation against Brazilian soccer star Neymar

Nike Inc is “very concerned” about a rape accusation against Brazilian soccer star Neymar, the world’s largest sportswear maker said on Thursday, raising questions about its sponsorship of one of the sport’s most famous players.

Nike issued a statement a day after a woman said in an interview with Brazilian SBT TV that Neymar had raped her in a Paris hotel last month. Neymar denied the allegation in an Instagram post and has said the woman was trying to extort him.

The lawyer for Neymar’s accuser did not respond to questions from Reuters.

“We are very concerned by the recent allegations and will continue to closely monitor the situation,” Nike said when asked about the accusation against Neymar, who plays his club soccer with French champions Paris Saint-Germain.

A press representative for Neymar declined to comment on his sponsorships.

Neymar’s lawyer Maira Fernandes, speaking to journalists in Rio de Janeiro on Thursday, did not address his sponsorship deals. She said her client was innocent of the allegation made against him.

A press representative for Mastercard in Brazil confirmed to Reuters that the company had planned an advertising campaign to coincide with this month’s Copa America tournament but she did not confirm reports in Brazil’s three biggest newspapers that Mas-



tercard had decided to suspend Neymar’s featuring in it.

U.S. press representatives for Mastercard did not reply to requests for comment.

Brazilian airline Gol Linhas Aereas Inteligentes SA, which featured Neymar in the run-up to the 2018 World Cup, said it was a sponsor of the national team but not individual players. A press representative declined to comment on the accusation against Neymar.

McDonald’s Corp and Procter & Gamble Co’s Gillette brand, which both featured Neymar prominently in ad campaigns last year, said they had no current contract with him.

Police report

A police report seen by Reuters showed that a woman had accused Neymar, 27, of raping her at a Paris hotel last month. Sao Paulo police are investigating the accusation. According to the police report, she told inves-

tigators that she met Neymar on Instagram. Neymar suggested they meet in person in Paris and he paid for her flight and her hotel room, the report said.

After media reports on the allegation, Neymar posted a video on Instagram, in which he denied the accusations, said he was a victim of extortion and shared messages he exchanged with the woman, including racy photos he had received.

That led police in Rio de Janeiro to open an investigation into whether Neymar had committed a crime by posting those intimate pictures online.

Neymar’s lawyer Fernandes said that Neymar had already spoken with police investigating the cyber crime, but had not yet arranged a time to go to Sao Paulo to speak with police about the rape accusation, but was committed to doing so.

On Wednesday night the woman, Najila de Souza, gave her first on-camera interview since her accusation became public.

Some of Neymar’s teammates have come out in support of him, but national team coach Tite told journalists on Monday that he did not want to pass judgment on the matter.

The Brazilian Football Confederation said on Thursday that Neymar would be dropped from the Brazil team for the Copa America because of an ankle injury suffered in a friendly match against Qatar.

(Source: Reuters)

Macau take first step towards World Cup dream



In front of a smattering of fans on a Thursday evening heavy with humidity, the amateur footballers of Macau took their first step forward in their unlikely quest for a place at the 2022 World Cup finals in Qatar.

The former Portuguese enclave, represented by a team featuring firemen, teachers and hotel workers, notched up a 1-0 win in the first leg of their meeting with Sri Lanka as the lowest-ranked nations in Asia started their pursuit of a place among the elite in Qatar.

While the game’s leading lights wait until September to start their journey towards 2022, Mongolia and Brunei were the first nations to set off on the road to Qatar as Asia’s lowest ranked teams launched the qualifiers in low-key fashion.

The Mongolians who, like the other countries competing this week have never gone close to securing a spot at a major competition, earned a 2-0 win in Ulaanbaatar to claim a first-leg advantage.

Bangladesh defeated Laos 1-0 and Cambodia earned a 2-0 first-leg lead over Pakistan while Bhutan won 1-0 against Guam at the unique, ornate Changlimithang Stadium in Thimpu.

Malaysia and Timor-Leste meet on Friday with the return games to be played on Tuesday.

At stake is a place in the qualifying draw proper for the World Cup finals when the

minnows of the Asian game face could be pitted against World Cup regulars such as Japan, South Korea, Australia and Iran in the second of four qualifying rounds for one of the continent’s four guaranteed spots at the finals.

For a Macau team who can only dream of joining the elite in Qatar, the Zhuhai Sports Center Stadium - a few miles over the border into China - served as a temporary home for the squad as their regular Estadio Campo Desportivo was closed due to renovation works.

That meant only 901 fans witnessed Macau - better known for the city’s neon-clad casinos and high-stakes gambling industry than for its soccer team - create history as Felipe Duarte, the only semi-professional player in the team, scored the goal that gives the hosts an advantage before the return in Colombo.

“Today we got our first win ever in qualification, so that was our first goal,” said Macau captain Nikki Tarrao.

“Our second goal is to go through this elimination and that’s how our national team works. We can’t aim to go to the group phase, we have to think step by step.

“We’re not even semi-professional in Macau. We’re amateur. There’s still a long way to go before we can have consistency our the national team.”

(Source: Eurosport)

The Warriors investor who pushed Lowry banned from NBA Finals games



Verbal altercations between NBA fans and players aren’t new. But this case is a little different.

In Game 3 of the NBA Finals on Wednesday, Toronto Raptors point guard Kyle Lowry was pushed by a man sitting in the front row at Oracle Arena in Oakland, California.

It turns out the “fan” is Golden State Warriors investor Mark Stevens. He won’t be attending any games for a year and he’ll be writing a check for \$500,000 to cover a fine announced by the team and the league.

On Thursday, the NBA also announced it was banning Stevens from attending any team activities through the end of next season’s playoffs.

Earlier an NBA spokesman said team representatives are held to the highest possible standard.

“The conduct of Golden State Warriors investor Mark Stevens last night was beyond unacceptable and has no place in our league,” the spokesman, Mike Bass, said in a statement.

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“The conduct of Golden State Warriors investor Mark Stevens last night was beyond unacceptable and has no place in our league,” the spokesman, Mike Bass, said in a statement.

“But the support I’ve gotten from fellow players, the league, has been unbelievable. With that being said, I think more should be done. He’s not a good look for the ownership group that they have. And I know Joe Lacob. Those guys are great guys. The ownership that they have that I know, they’re unbelievable guys. But a guy like that, showing his true class, and he shouldn’t be a part of our league. There’s just no place for that.”

Stevens is listed in the Warriors media guide as one of the organization’s executive board members. It’s not immediately known how much of a stake Stevens has in the team.

Earlier Thursday, the NBA Players Association said it will be closely monitoring the Warriors and the league’s investigation into the situation. NBPA executive director Michele Roberts said in a statement.

(Source: CNN)

Barty, Vondrousova shrug off sexism row to reach Roland Garros final

Ashleigh Barty and Marketa Vondrousova set-up a Roland Garros final showdown on Friday, shrugging off a sexism row which had seen their semi-finals shifted away from the tournament’s showpiece court.

Barty reached her first final at the majors, coming back from a set and 0-3 down to defeat 17-year-old Amanda Anisimova 6-7 (4/7), 6-3, 6-3 in a rollercoaster semi-final.

Czech teenager Marketa Vondrousova also made sure of her place in a maiden final at the Slams by edging out Britain’s Johanna Konta 7-5, 7-6 (7/2).

Vondrousova is the first teenager in a Paris final since Ana Ivanovic in 2007. Eighth seed Barty, 23, is the first Australian in a French Open final since Samantha Stosur finished runner-up in 2010.

“That was amazing, both good and bad,” said Barty who will rise to the top three in the rankings next week.

“It was the hardest thing that I ever had to do.

“I am really proud of the way I fought especially in the conditions which were cold and windy.

“Now I can’t wait for the final, it’s incredible.”

Both semi-finals got underway after accusations of sexism were made against French Open organisers who had decided to shift the matches away from the showpiece Court Philippe Chatrier.

The main arena had already been scheduled to stage the men’s semi-finals between Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic against Dominic Thiem.



The WTA said the decision, taken after Wednesday’s play was washed out and prompted by fears of more rain Friday, was “unfair and inappropriate”.

Former world number one Amelie Mauresmo of France said it was a “disgrace”.

Barty, 23, raced into a 4-0 lead with successive breaks as Anisimova, plagued with nerves, managed just one point.

The 17-year-old saved two set points in the sixth game to finally get on the board and retrieved a break for 2-5.

She broke twice again for 6-5 but faltered when she served for the set before securing the tiebreak.

Anisimova then led 3-0 in the second set, with Barty failing to win a point.

However, in a perfect capsule of the unpredictable semi-fi-

nal, played out in front of a half-full Court Suzanne Lenglen, Barty claimed the next six games to level the tie.

The Australian, who once famously took a break from tennis to pursue a cricket career, even recovered from a break at 1-2 down in the decider.

She eventually held her nerve as Anisimova, bidding to become the youngest finalist in Paris since Martina Hingis in 1997, fell apart despite gamely saving five match points.

Over on a damp and windy Court Simonne Mathieu, world number 38 Vondrousova battled past 26th seed Konta who was bidding to become Britain’s first female French Open finalist since Sue Barker won the 1976 title.

Konta looked the stronger player for large periods of the match but a staggering 41 unforced errors proved costly.

The match was played in an atmosphere more associated with first-round ties rather than semi-finals -- in front of a smattering of spectators on the 5,000-capacity arena.

Konta made a quick start as Vondrousova struggled with the wind and her nerves on serve -- the Briton forging 5-3 ahead. But the 28-year-old stuttered with a one-set lead in sight, missing three set points and then being broken when serving for the opener.

Vondrousova took full advantage, reeling off four straight games to make Konta pay.

Konta gathered herself, though, and took total control of the second set with an early break, moving 5-3 in front again.

(Source: AFP)

Iran lose to Brazil at 2019 Volleyball National League

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran suffered their first defeat at the second competition week of the men's 2019 FIVB Volleyball Nations League on Friday.

Team Melli lost to Brazil 3-2 (23-25, 25-16, 21-25, 33-31, 15-10) in Pool 7 at the Musashino Forest Sport Plaza in Tokyo, Japan.

Ricardo Lucarelli Souza led Brazil with 20 points, while Mohammad Mousavi scored 19 points for Iran.

Iran will face Argentina on Saturday and play Japan on Sunday.

Iran had a great start, dropping only one set total in the three games against Italy, China and Germany in Jiangmen last week.

The competition will be held between May and July 2019 and the final round will take place in the Credit Union 1 Arena, Chicago, United States.

This is the first edition of the World League or the Nations League to have the Final Round hosted in North America.

The 16 teams compete in a round-robin format with every core team hosting a pool at least once. The teams are divided into four pools of four teams at each week and compete five weeks long, for 120 matches. The top five teams after the preliminary round join the hosts of the final round to compete in the final round.

The relegation takes into consideration only the four challenger teams. The last ranked challenger team will be excluded from the 2020 Nations League. The winners of the Challenger Cup will qualify for the next edition as a challenger team.

The six qualified teams play in 2 pools of 3 teams in round-robin. The top two teams of each pool qualify for the semifinals. The pool winners play against the runners-up in this round. The semifinals winners advance to compete for the Nations League title. The losers face each other in the third place match.



Iran, Croatia football federations sign MoU



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — The Iranian Football Federation and the Croatian Football Federation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Paris, France.

On the sidelines of the 69th FIFA Congress, Mehdi Taj, president of Iran football, and Davor Suker, head of Croatia federation, signed MoU to enhance their bilateral cooperation.

Iran and Croatia football federations aim to

establish a closer cooperation between themselves and this agreement intends to specify ways of sharing expertise and resources.

The legendary Croatian footballer, who helped the Chequered Ones finish third in the 1998 World Cup had already said the Croatian U-23 football team can travel to Iran to play friendly match with Iran Olympic football team.

Iran had earlier signed a MoU with the Chinese Football Association (CFA) in Paris.

Five-star Iran beat Syria in friendly match



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran national football team defeated Syria 5-0 in a friendly match held at the Azadi Stadium on Thursday.

Alireza Jahanbakhsh opened the scoring for Team Melli in the 30th minute and Mehdi Taremi made it 2-0 seven minutes later.

Taremi was on target two more times in the 57th and 77th minutes.

Allahyar Sayyadmanesh scored Iran's fifth goal just one minute before the final whistle.

He became Iran's national football team's youngest scorer, finding the back of the net at the age of 17 years and 342 days.

It was Marc Wilmots's first match in charge of Iran national football team. Iran are preparing for the 2022 World Cup qualifiers that begin in the second half of this year.

Team Melli will face South Korea on Tuesday at World Cup Stadium in Seoul.

Iran discover fate at Volleyball U21 World Championship

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran's players will be aiming to create more golden memories across the Persian Gulf when they compete at the Bahrain 2019 FIVB Volleyball Men's U21 World Championship.

The tournament will take place in the ISA Sports City Hall in Manama from July 18-27, fivb.org reported.

Two years ago, Iran won the FIVB U19 World Championship in Bahrain and they will be out to match their run to the gold medal 2017 match which culminated in a 3-1 (25-20, 25-23, 21-25, 25-20) victory over Russia.

Iran qualified for the tournament as Asian Volleyball Confederation (AVC) U19 champions and they begin the tournament in Pool C against Russia, Tunisia and the Czech Republic.



Defending U19 champions Poland qualified through the FIVB U21 Volleyball Rankings, along with Italy, China, Canada and Morocco.

Poland beat Cuba 3-0 (25-20, 25-10, 25-19) in the gold medal match, and they will begin their defense in Pool D against Brazil, Italy and Canada.

The hosts have been drawn in Pool A where they will take on 2019 Men's U21 Pan American Cup winners Puerto Rico, Morocco and China.

Men's U21 World Championship in Bahrain - Drawing of lots - Pools

- **Pool A:** Bahrain, China, Morocco, Puerto Rico
- **Pool B:** Cuba, Argentina, Egypt, Korea
- **Pool C:** Russia, Iran, Czech Republic, Tunisia
- **Pool D:** Poland, Brazil, Canada, Italy

Leeds United linked with Morteza Pouraliganji

Leeds United have been dealt a blow in their hunt to sign 37-cap Iranian international Morteza Pouraliganji.

The Whites had previously been linked with a move for the 27-year-old but a statement earlier today from the player's agent claimed that there had been no bid for the Iranian international from the Championship side and that Pouraliganji was content to stay at current club Al-Arabi.

Pouraliganji had previously enjoyed spells in Iran, China, Qatar and Belgium before joining Al-Arabi, for whom he has made just seven appearances to date, and had reportedly attracted attention from Marcelo Bielsa's scouting team at Leeds who are looking at potential centre-back options should one of Liam Cooper or Pontus Jansson leave the club this summer.

Leeds had previously been linked with a

move for Saeid Ezatollahi, a fellow Iranian international and client of Pouraliganji's agent, with the young midfielder's contract with Rostov set to expire this summer.

Ezatollahi impressed on loan with fellow Championship side Reading last season in the handful of appearances he made, but a series of injuries limited his first-team involvement and with Reading under a self-imposed transfer embargo, at least

until sales are made, Leeds remain in pole position to bring the Iranian midfielder in through the doors this summer.

While the potential transfer of Ezatollahi to Leeds is still seemingly alive, it looks like Leeds' interest in Pouraliganji is dead in the water with the 27-year-old defender seemingly set to remain in Qatar with Al-Arabi.

(Source: The Sun)

Patosi to leave Esteghlal after loan concludes

Ayanda Patosi has made his return to Cape Town City after his loan stint with Esteghlal FC in Iran came to an end.

Patosi completed a loan move from City to Esteghlal in January this year, with the club given the option to buy the player permanently.

However, according to Siya sources, despite Patosi's influence on the club's success last season, they have opted against signing the player permanently from City, due to financial reasons.

The 26-year-old had a remarkable six-months with the Iranian outfit, making 17 appearances in all competitions, scoring four goals and creating five assists in the past six months.



The midfielder is currently in South Africa and sources have indicated that Patosi has already met with City chairman, John Comitis regarding his immediate future.

Esteghlal have no coach after parting company with their German coach Winfried Schaefer.

Esteghlal January signings Godwin Mensha and Esmail Gonçalves had already part company with the Iranian football club.

Mensha, who joined Esteghlal from Persepolis, scored one goal for the Blues, while Gonçalves found back of the net three times.

(Source: Soccer Laduma)

Persepolis lift Iran's Hazfi Cup

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Persepolis football team won Iran's Hazfi Cup for the sixth time in Ahvaz's Foolad Arena on Sunday.

Persepolis edged past Iran's Second Division outfit Damash Gilan 1-0, thanks to Ali Alipour's 22nd minute goal from a wonderful free-kick.

Alipour was invited to Iran national football team by Marc Wilmots at the end of the match.



The match was originally scheduled to begin at 9 p.m. local time but was delayed for about two hours because Damash fans had failed to enter the 30,000-capacity stadium after the seats were occupied by Persepolis fans.

Persepolis had beaten Navad Urmia, Sepidrood, Padideh and Sepahan on their way to the final match.

Damash had also defeated Chooka Talesh, Moghavemat Tehran, Machine Sazi and Saipa to book a place in the final match.

Persepolis completed a domestic double since the team had won Iran Professional League in May.

Esteghlal are the most decorated football team in Hazfi Cup, winning the title seven times.

Kubiak suspended for six games following anti-Iranian remarks: report

MNA — According to Polish media outlets, Poland's volleyball federation has suspended Michal Kubiak for the next six games for making offensive remarks about the Iranian volleyball team and people.

However, the ruling is not final yet as the 31-year-old player can appeal against it during the next seven days.

"They always insult us into the field and don't respect us but play innocent. The Iranians think they are great and the best and we are the worst. But I believe that they are fatal, malicious and damned people. For me, this nation doesn't exist, even though they proudly call themselves Persians, not Arabs. Sometimes we have to play with them, but for me, they don't exist," the Poland captain had said in an interview in late May 2019.

Iran Volleyball Federation acting president Afshin Davari said that they are filing a complaint to FIVB against Kubiak for making abusive comments against the Iranian people, Tehran Times reported on May 28.

"FIVB's Ethics Committee should demand Kubiak explanation for his remarks. He has offended the Iranian people and must accept responsibility for what he has said," Davari said.

Alexander Nouri close to Iran's Tractor Sazi

PLDC — Former Werder Bremen coach Alexander Nouri is reportedly a candidate to take charge of Iranian football club Tractor Sazi of Tabriz.

Nouri is without a team after parting company with German club FC Ingolstadt.

The 39-year-old coach, who has started his coaching career at VfB Oldenburg in 2013, has reportedly reached an agreement with the Iranian club.

Tractor Sazi have parted company with Belgian coach Georges Leekens. Tractor Sazi were the favorites to win Iran Professional League for the first time but finally finished in fifth place in the table and it means the team have also missed a place in the next year's AFC Champions League.

Amir Ghafour joins Cucine Lube Civitanova

TASNIM — Iranian opposite Amir Ghafour has joined the Italian and European champion Cucine Lube Civitanova.

The 202cm has joined Lube from another Italian volleyball club Vero Volley Monza.

The 28-year-old volleyball player has joined the Italian giant on a one-year contract for an undisclosed fee.

Ghafour is a member of Iran national volleyball team at the 2019 Volleyball Nations League.

He represented Team Melli in the 2016 Olympic Games.

Hashemian talks about his new coaching job in Iran

The former 96-professional Vahid Hashemian is now the new assistant to Iranian national team coach Marc Wilmots.

The 42-year-old spoke with us at hannover96.de and confirmed media reports from Iran.

"It's an honor for me to be able to work in a top position for my home country," said Hashemian, whose contract in Iran will initially be for one year, but will be extended for another two years to the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

Wilmots had chosen Hashemian from several co-trainer candidates selected by the Iranian Football Association.

"I was very happy," said the former 96-striker (11 goals in 85 games). "Marc Wilmots and I have already had a lot of exchange over the past few days and we get along very well," said Hashemian.

"I am glad that I can pass on my experience to the players in the future – and at the same time learn something from an experienced coach."

(Source: Hannover.de)

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GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

One whose desires are endless, will go wrong
in his deeds and will suffer loss.

Imam Ali (AS)

Festivals Council comes to cope with Iranian films' festoxification

➔ But his two recent films, “The Lost Strait” and “Gholamreza Takhti”, were feel-good stories that were welcomed by officials. Cultural officials and certain people generally live with a belligerent attitude that those films accepted by international festivals give a dark image of Iran, and only such films can gain admission to these events. It is only natural that international festivals are pursuing their own special policies and aims as do Iranian festivals, such as the Fajr International Film Festival and Cinema Verite. The Cinema Organization of Iran needs to show greater tolerance toward filmmakers in order to create a balance in the productions seeking entry to international events. The organization also needs to make a change in its view of filmmakers who are frequent participants in international events. They are not enemies. It also needs to improve infrastructures, one of which can be making arrangements for building more movie theaters. Fourteen theaters countrywide cannot possibly accommodate the great number of filmmakers who produce movies that are categorized as art films.

WHAT'S IN ART GALLERIES

Painting

■ Saye Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Mansur Nosrat-Nezami. The exhibit named “Painting as Faith” will run until June 19 at the gallery located at No. 21, 13th Alley, Sanai St. off Karim Khan Ave.

■ An exhibition of paintings by Reza Razm is underway at Soluk Gallery. The exhibit named “Prometheus Highway” will run until June 18 at the gallery located at No. 1, First Alley, Takhti St. off Fereshteh St.

■ A number of artists, including Atefeh Hosseini, Mitra Mobinzadeh, Jeiran Mahdavi, Shahla Saffarzadegan and Sara Sabuhi, are showcasing their latest paintings in an exhibition at Haft Samar Gallery. The exhibition will be running until June 12 at the gallery that can be found at No. 8, Fifth Alley, Kuh-e Nur St., Motahari Ave.

■ Paintings by Karim Eskandari are currently on view in an exhibition at Negar Gallery. The exhibit will run until June 12 at the gallery located at 33 Delaram Alley, Roshanai St. in the Qeitarieh neighborhood.

■ Over 100 young artists are showcasing their paintings in an exhibition at the Iranian Artists Forum. The exhibit named “Figurative” will run until June 11 at the gallery located on Musavi St., off Taleqani Ave.

Photo

■ Photos by Hesam Darvishpur are on display in an exhibition at Golestan Gallery. The exhibition will run until June 12 at the gallery, which can be found at 42 Kamasai St. in the Darus neighborhood.

Multimedia

■ A selection works in different media, which have previously been showcased at Sheis Gallery is on display in an exhibition at the gallery. The exhibition titled “Museum” will run until June 12 at the gallery located Shirzad Alley, near Daneshju Park.

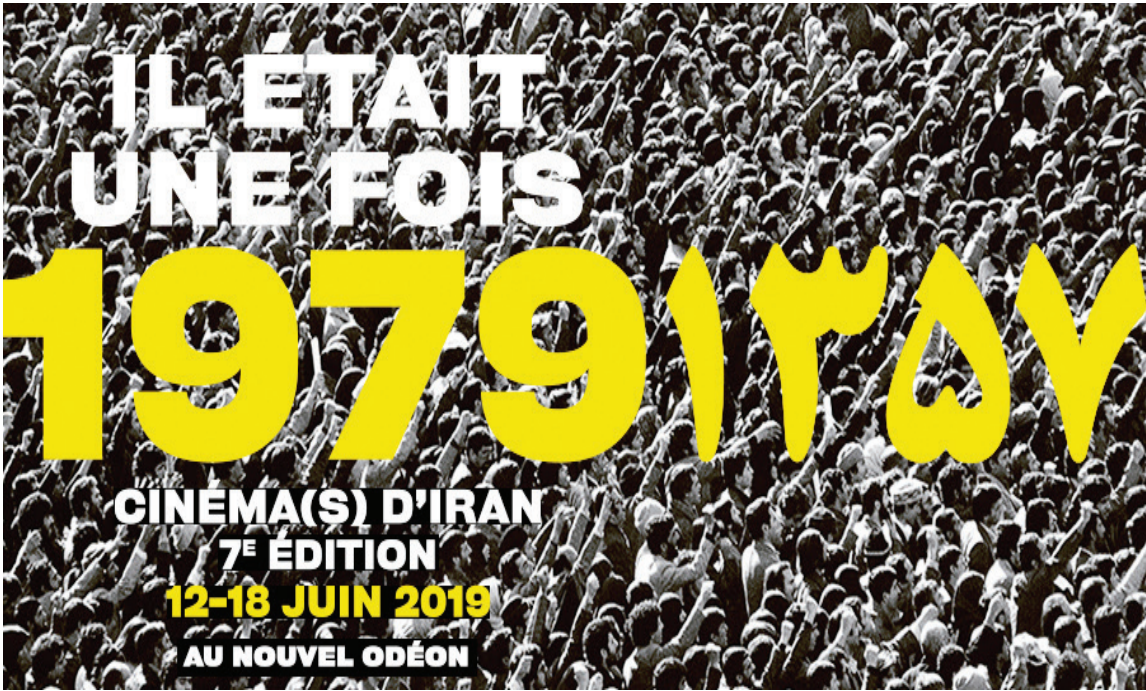
■ An exhibition of sets of installation and photos by Babak Kazemi is underway at AG Gallery. The exhibit named “A Camera as Big as Babak's Studio” runs until July 12 at the gallery located at 3 Pesyan St., off Moqaddas Ardebili St., in the Zafaranieh neighborhood.

Calligraphic paintings

■ A collection of calligraphic paintings by Hassan Hosseinzadeh is on display at the gallery of Ibn Sina Cultural Center. The exhibit titled “The Silkiness of Calligraphy” will run until June 24 at the gallery located at Iran Zamin St., in the Shahrak-e Gharb neighborhood

Parisian festival spotlights Iran's post-revolution cinema

A R T TEHRAN — The seventh edition of the Paris Iranian Film Festival has put its spotlight on Iran's post-revolution cinema, the organizers have announced. A lineup of movies produced over the past 40 years in the country will be reviewed in a program entitled “Once Upon a Time... 1979” during the festival, which will be held from June 12 to 18. A highlight of the program is Hossein Torabi's 1980 documentary “For Freedom”. The film was ranked last on the British Film Institute Southbank's list of Ten Documentaries That Shook the World. Bahram Beizai's 1979 movie “The Ballad of Tara”, Ali Jakan's 1985 drama “The Mare”, Masud Jafari-Jozani's 1985 adventure movie “Cold Roads”, Nasser Taqvai's 1987 drama “Captain Khorshid”, and Saeid Ebrahimifar's 1988 fiction film “Fire and Grenade” will also be screened. The lineup also includes the documentary films “The New Breaths” (1980) by Kianush Ayari and “Iran, a Film Revolution” (2006) by Nader T. Homayun. The organizers also plan to screen a selection of the latest productions from Iranian cinema, including “Sheeple” by Hooman Seyyedi, “The Graveless” by Mostafa Sayyari, “Rona, Azim's Mother” by Jamshid and Navid Mahmudi, “Astigmatism” by Majidreza Mostafavi and “Hat-Trick” by Ramtin Lavafi. Several French institutions are organizing the festival in collaboration with the Iranian Short Film Association and the Iran Film Archives.



A poster for the 7th edition of the Paris Iranian Film Festival.

Two foreign plays enrich Tehran theaters' schedules after Ramadan



A poster for “The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time”, which will be directed by Afsaneh Kamali at Tehran's Neauphle-le-Chateau Hall.

A R T TEHRAN — Two plays by foreign writers will go on stage in Tehran as theaters in the city have announced their new schedules after the end of the holy month Ramadan. Afsaneh Kamali will stage English playwright Simon Stephens' “The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time” at Neauphle-le-Chateau Hall on Sunday. The play is based on the bestseller novel of the same name by Mark Haddon, which tells the story of a 15-year-old amateur detective and mathematical genius, Christopher, who is suffering from autism. Christopher is looking into the mystery surrounding the death of a neighbor's dog, Wellington, while he is facing resistance from many neighbors, mostly from his father. Roya Davati, Farzam Ranjbar, Saba Sorur and Ali Najafi are the main members of the cast for the play, which will be on stage until July 7. Another play is Czech-born British writer Tom Stoppard's “The Real Inspector Hound”, which will be directed by Shahab Bahrami at Mehregan Hall on Sunday. The play follows the story of two theater critics, Moon and Birdboot, as they attend a play in London to write reviews. Saeid Azimi, Shahab Bahrami, Hamed Badiei and Elham Qasemian are the main members of the cast for the play, which will remain on stage for 10 nights.

Iranian troupe to set up “Veronica's Room” in Tehran

A R T TEHRAN — An Iranian troupe is scheduled to perform American writer Ira Levin's play “Veronica's Room” at Tehran's Hafez Hall this Monday. Shahram Zargar is the translator of the play, which will be directed by Mona Ramezani. This chilling mystery thriller by the author of “Rosemary's Baby” explores the thin line between fantasy and reality, madness and murder. Students Susan and Larry find themselves as guests enticed to the Brabissant mansion by its dissolute caretakers, the lonely Mackeys. Struck by Susan's strong

resemblance to Veronica Brabissant, the long-dead daughter of the family for whom they work, the older couple gradually induces her to impersonate Veronica briefly to solace the only living Brabissant, her addled sister who believes Veronica is still alive. Once dressed in Veronica's clothes, Susan finds herself locked in the role and locked in Veronica's room. Or is she Veronica in 1935, pretending to be an imaginary Susan? Ramona Shah Hamid Rahimi, Marzieh Musavi and Sara Mostafavinassab are the main members of the cast for the play.



A poster for “Veronica's Room”, which will be staged in Tehran by Mona Ramezani.

Filmmakers to hold workshops at Iran European film festival



A poster for the European Film Week.

A R T TEHRAN — Ten filmmakers from Europe and Iran will be holding several workshops during a European film festival, which opens today in eight Iranian cities. Dutch director Jean van de Velde, Cypriot producer Marios Piperides and Swiss producer Thierry Spicher are among the cineastes. Fereidun Jeirani, Rasul Sadr-Ameli, Mohammad-Mehdi Asgarpur, Maziar Miri, Mehrdad Oskui, Mani Mirsadeqi and Siavash Jamali, all from Iran, will also hold workshops at the event. The ten-day festival titled “European Film Week” will open today at the Iranian Artists Forum in Tehran by screening “The Dark Valley”, a 2014 Austrian-German

western drama directed by Andreas Prochaska, and “The Silent Army”, Van de Velde's 2008 drama about the hardships of child soldiers in Africa. Movies from Bulgaria, Belgium, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Slovenia, Finland, Denmark and England will also be screened during the festival, which is organized as a collaborative effort between Iran's Art and Experience Cinema and the European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC). Kish Island and the cities of Shiraz, Babol, Isfahan, Kerman, Mashhad and Tabriz will host the festival simultaneously. The festival was also organized in Iran in 2017 and 2018.

HBO show success drives Chernobyl tourism boom

CHERNOBYL, Ukraine (Reuters) — The success of a U.S. television miniseries examining the world's worst nuclear accident at Chernobyl has driven up the number of tourists wanting to see the plant and the ghostly abandoned town that neighbors it for themselves. One Chernobyl tour agency reported a 40% rise in trip bookings since the series, made by HBO, began in May and which has attracted outstanding reviews. English-language tours usually cost around \$100 per person. Last April marked the 33rd anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster in then-Soviet Ukraine, caused by a botched safety test in the fourth reactor of the atomic plant that sent clouds of nuclear material across much of Europe. The HBO miniseries depicts the explosion's aftermath, the vast clean-up operation and the subsequent inquiry. The area around the plant retains the feel of a post-apocalyptic wasteland, where stray dogs roam and vegetation encroaches into windowless, abandoned buildings strewn with rubble. In Pripyat, the ghost town once home to

50,000 people who mainly worked at the plant, an amusement park houses a rusting hulk of a merry-go-round and doggem-car track, and a giant Ferris wheel that never went into operation. The wheel was to open on May 1 — the traditional May Day holiday. Sergiy Ivanchuk, director of SoloEast tours, told Reuters the company saw a 30% increase in tourists going to the area in May 2019 compared with the same month last year. Bookings for June, July and August have risen by approximately 40% since HBO aired the show, he said. Yaroslav Yemelianenko, director of Chernobyl Tour, said he expected a similar increase of 30-40% because of the show. His company offers a special tour of locations depicted in the series, including the bunker where the initial decision by local officials not to evacuate after the explosion was made. Day-trippers board buses in the center of Kiev and are driven 120km (75 miles) to the area, where they can see monuments to the victims and abandoned villages and have lunch in the only restaurant in the town of Chernobyl.

They are then taken to see reactor number four, which since 2017 has been covered by a vast metal dome 105 meters (344 ft) high which envelops the exploded core. The day finishes with a walk around Pripyat. “Many people come here, they ask a lot of questions about the TV show, about all the events. People are getting more and more curious,” said tour guide Viktoria Brozhko, who insists the area is safe for visitors. “During the entire visit to the Chernobyl exclusion zone, you get around two microsieverts, which is equal to the amount of radiation you'd get staying at home for 24 hours,” she said. When Craig Mazin, the creator of the ‘Chernobyl’ miniseries, came to visit before writing the show, he said of his experience: “I'm not a religious man, but that's as religious as I'll ever feel.” “To walk where they walked felt so strange, and also being under that same piece of sky you start to feel a little closer, in a sense, to who they were,” he told an HBO podcast. The disaster and the government's handling of it — the evacuation order only came 36 hours after the accident — highlighted

the shortcomings of the Soviet system with its unaccountable bureaucrats and entrenched culture of secrecy. The accident killed 31 right away and forced tens of thousands to flee. The final death toll of those killed by radiation-related illnesses such as cancer is subject to debate. A Belarusian study estimates the total cancer deaths from the disaster at 115,000, in contrast to the World Health Organization's estimate of 9,000. “You can't really come to Kiev and not take the opportunity to see this unique place,” said Gareth Burrows, a 39-year-old nurse practitioner from southern England. “We only ended up watching the show because we were already coming, but I think you will see an increase in tourism because of the show, it will definitely spark interest.” Thieme Bosman, an 18-year-old student from the Netherlands, worries that the bump in tourist numbers will have a downside. “There are quite a lot of tourists already here and it does kind of take away the experience of being in a completely abandoned town, so I think if more and more tourists come here that will ruin the experience,” he said.