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No more passport stamps for foreign nationals visiting Iran

TEHRAN — Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has issued an order for the waiver of physical stamping on travelers' passports upon entering or leaving the country.

On Sunday, Rouhani ordered Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli to arrange to waive visa-stamping and not

to mark passports of foreign nationals visiting the country, IRNA reported.

The decision is deemed to facilitate travels to the country without fear of possible U.S. penalties as last year Washington announced those travelers who would visit certain countries including Iran would face restrictions to enter the U.S. **→10**

Tehran says will take legal action against U.S. violation of airspace

TEHRAN — Laya Joneidi, the vice president for legal affairs, has denounced the U.S. move to deploy a spy drone into Iranian airspace as a "violation of international law", saying the Islamic Republic will take legal action against Washington for violating Iran's airspace.

Joneidi told reporters on Sunday that Iran will not allow any violation against

its aerial, land or maritime borders.

She also highlighted the necessity of constant vigilance and efforts to avert a war, the Tasnim news agency reported.

In the early hours of June 20, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Aerospace Force shot down a U.S. unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) that intruded into the airspace of Iran. **→3**

The nations of the region cope with the deal of century: al- Wefaq

TEHRAN — Assistant Secretary-General of Bahrain's prominent opposition group, Al-Wefaq, called for cope with the deal of century.

Meanwhile, Al-Wefaq, is to hold a conference in Beirut to voice rejection to US President Donald Trump's so-called Deal of the Century.

The conference which holds the slogan "Sovereignty for Peace and Prosperity",

is to take place just one day before a U.S.-led summit will be held in the Bahraini capital, Manama.

The Manama summit is considered as the economic phase of Trump's 'Deal of the Century'.

Arab and Palestinian politicians, journalists and activists are to attend the Monday conference in Beirut, organizers of the event announced on Saturday. **→13**



ARTICLE

Ebrahim Fallahi
Tehran Times journalist

Oil market shrugs off as tensions rise in Persian Gulf region

Despite what was expected, the oil market doesn't seem to be moved drastically by the recent turbulences in the Persian Gulf region as Iran shot down a high-technology U.S. surveillance drone when it trespassed its borders in the politically sensitive Strait of Hormuz.

Many analysts believe that the reason for this not-too-strong reaction is that the market's nature has changed profoundly in the last few years and now other driving factors seem to play a more significant role in supporting the prices.

It seems that over time the market is more focused on long-term impacts and events, and going through several shorty lived events in the past few years, oil traders have learned not to bet too much on such incidents.

For the time being, two major factors which are being closely monitored by the market are the U.S. production and the global oil demand.

In recent years, the U.S. production has increased drastically so that the country has become the world's top oil producer and one the biggest exporters of the commodity. On the other hand, the global oil demand is easing following a slowdown in the world's economic growth over concerns about the trade war between the United States and China, the world's two largest economies.

Although the international benchmark Brent gained five percent this week, but market analysts seem to believe that the optimism regarding the outcomes of the upcoming meeting of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), and hopes for easing of trade tensions between the United States and China are also contributing to the increases in the oil prices beside the rising tensions between Iran and the U.S.

Of course, the tensions in the region cannot be overlooked in addressing the factors which are affecting the oil market.

Since the oil tankers incidents in the Hormuz trait and the drone shot down, many Oil tanker companies have increased their charter rates due to concerns over the safety of their vessels. **→5**

With Iran, Trump wants to be arsonist and firefighter

TEHRAN — Providing his excellence once again at serving as an arsonist and the leader of the fire brigade at the same time, President Donald Trump, who has been publicly spoiling for a military scrap with Iran, took credit this morning for both ordering a military strike on three of the country's military installations and then canceling the mission 10 minutes before go time. Crisis averted!

This is far from the first time Trump has run this play. As David A. Graham of the Atlantic and others have noted, he delights in conjuring and intensifying crises—a lawless border, a national crime wave, threats of a government shutdown, threats of new tariffs, threats to oust the special counsel, the North Korea situation in which he promised "fire and fury," et al.—and then riding in on a white

golf cart at the last moment to head off the approaching calamity.

Trump's usual shtick is to paper over the problem of his creation and then declare victory, but this week he added a biblical dimension to the drama-making. First, he assumed the persona of the vengeful god, commanding an attack on Iran in retaliation for its shoot-down of a \$200 million Navy surveillance drone. Then he ducked into the wardrobe for a costume change to emerge in the cloak of the Prince of Peace and called off the strike. Why the 180-degree mood change? Because as he told Chuck Todd of NBC News, he learned it would kill 150 Iranians and he didn't think the death toll was "proportionate" to the Iranian action. Or perhaps Trump just enjoys the sensation

of changing his mind. Citing a source close to the president, the New York Times reported Friday that Trump "was pleased with Thursday night's events because he liked the 'command' of approving the strike, but also the decisiveness of calling it off."

Anyone who doesn't want to see war with Iran would shout "halleluiah" to Trump's last-minute stand-down—except, like many of his hasty rationalizations, the Iranian one seems crafted from pick-up sticks and collapses at first touch. It's impossible to believe he didn't know beforehand that taking out Iranian military targets would result in the loss of life. Did he think—until his generals gave him the bloody news—that the installations were drone-operated, too, and that no Iranians would die when the bombs landed? **→2**

Yemeni forces shoot down 3rd Saudi-led spy drone

TEHRAN — Yemeni army forces, supported by allied fighters from Popular Committees, have intercepted and targeted another unmanned aerial vehicle belonging to the Saudi-led military coalition in the skies over Saudi Arabia's southwestern border region of Najran in retaliation for the alliance's atrocious military aggression against their impoverished country.

Yemeni air defense forces and their allies shot down the drone as it was flying in the skies over al-Sadis area of the region, located 844 kilometers (524 miles) south of the Saudi capital Riyadh, on Sunday.

The development came a day after Yemeni air

defense forces and their allies downed a drone as it was on a reconnaissance mission over al-Mazraq area in the Harad district of Yemen's northwestern province of Hajjah, located approximately 130 kilometers northwest of the capital Sana'a.

On Friday, Yemeni army forces and Popular Committees fighters shot down a spy drone of the Saudi-led military coalition in the skies over Yemen's strategic western coastal province of Hudaydah. The unmanned aerial vehicle was struck with a surface-to-air missile over al-Fazah area in the al-Tuhayta district.

The spokesman for Yemeni Armed Forces, Brigadier General Yahya Saree said, said on June 19

that Yemeni army forces, backed by allied fighters from Popular Committees, had launched a string of airstrikes against unmanned aerial vehicles and military targets at Jizan Airport in Saudi Arabia, using a squadron of domestically-manufactured Qasef-2K (Striker-2K) combat drones.

Saree further noted that the attacks led to the suspension of flights at the airport.

"We have sophisticated military hardware that US-built and other air defense systems deployed in Saudi Arabia cannot intercept. Our ballistic missiles, rockets and drone can hit any target all across Saudi Arabia. Our strikes will not be limited to Asir, Najran and Jizan. **→13**

Iranian MPs support IRGC for downing invading U.S. drone

TEHRAN — A large number of Iranian MPs issued a statement on Sunday supporting the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) for its action in shooting down a U.S. drone which violated Iran's airspace.

The statement was signed by 250 lawmakers in the 290-seat parliament.

"This drone's shootdown upset the enemies' psychological equations and no aggressor aircraft will be able to enter Iran's sky anymore," the statement read.

The statement urged the U.S. and its allies to acknowledge Iran's power.

The IRGC shot down an unmanned U.S. surveillance drone on Thursday morning after it breached Iran's airspace. The IRGC brought the drone down by firing a surface-to-air missile at it. **→2**



© Tehran Times / Maryam Kamvab



ARTICLE

Martin Love
Political analyst from North Carolina

Trump has a moment of sanity that begs for continuance

“Cocked and loaded” Donald Trump claimed the U.S. military was, just before, as he alleges, he decided not to attack Iran last week because the lives of an estimated “150 Iranians” were too heavy a cost for the downing of an unmanned drone that was brought down in Iran's territorial waters while on a spy mission. What is one supposed to think? That Trump suddenly has a heart? That he has a brain? Well, maybe a bit of the latter for a moment. It is, in any case, not hard to speculate about what happened:

The two tankers incident off Oman was probably an Israeli false flag, and when that did not “work” then the drone incident was staged. It is likely the drone was just over Iranian territorial waters, or else the Iranian navy would not have retrieved parts of the drone in its own waters. The drone pilots could not have been sure what Iran would do, but Iran did switch on its radars and brought it down, in effect telling the pilots something about Iran's defenses.

But Trump did the right thing, which was nothing. Not launching an attack was probably the high point of his Presidency to date. He deserves credit for that, likely realizing that the only way to destroy Iranian defenses would have to be a prolonged, like in at least a couple weeks, attacks on the entirety of Iran's southwest coast which would, as Iran has warned correctly, turn the Persian Gulf into an inferno and wreck oil production facilities along the entire coast of Saudi Arabia and the U.A.E. That, in turn, might have sparked a revolution in Saudi Arabia, especially by the Shi'a component of the Saudi population, and serious trouble for the UAE. And farther to the west, who knows what?

It is likely the Zionists might have attacked Hezbollah, no pushover, and parts of Israel would also have been severely damaged. One could also speculate wildly about a recurrence of the “Arab Spring” in countries like Egypt, where sullen Egyptians are angry about Morsi's untimely death and where Sisi is hardly popular. Morsi was, it should be noted, the first truly ELECTED Egyptian president! **→7**

Iraq seeks cooperation with Iran to boost air defense

TEHRAN (Press TV) — Iraq has called for enhanced cooperation with neighboring Iran in the area of air defense, days after Tehran successfully thwarted an American spying mission by downing a sophisticated surveillance drone over Iranian territorial waters.

Visiting Deputy Commander of the Iraqi Army Tariq Abbas Ibrahim Abdulhussein made the call during a meeting with Commander of the Iranian Army's Air Defense Force, Brigadier General Alireza Sabahi-Fard, IRNA reported on Sunday, citing the Army's Public Relations Office.

The Iraqi official pointed to the Islamic Republic's advanced capability in designing and manufacturing defensive systems. Baghdad was requesting the cooperation "in the light of the previous instances of observation by Iraqi military delegations of Iran's defensive capabilities," he noted.

Such cooperation, he said, would encompass such areas as production, training, logistical support in various fields, including electronic warfare operations, radar operation, optical surveillance, command and control, radar calculations, and software.

Baghdad's call came after the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) shot down an American RQ-4 Global Hawk, which had violated Iran's airspace from the south, in what has been viewed by observers as a show of Iran's aerial defense capabilities.

Abdulhussein further said, "Enjoying religious commonalities and facing common enemies has aligned the countries."

The Iranian commander, for his part, conveyed Tehran's "complete readiness to meet Iraq's defensive needs in all areas of expertise concerning manufacturing and supporting air defense systems."

Sabahi-Fard said Iran had achieved the capability for manufacturing various pieces of air defense equipment, including tactical and deployable radars, missile and artillery systems, signal intelligence gathering, electronic warfare equipment, and unmanned aerial vehicles.

The two countries, he stated, were part of the unified Muslim Ummah, which could not be segregated from one another based on political and geographical demarcations.

In April, Iran's top military commander said the countries had agreed to cooperate in the area of air defense to fend off the challenges facing their respective air spaces.

Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Baqeri made the announcement to reporters following a meeting in Tehran with his visiting Iraqi counterpart, Lieutenant General Othman al-Ghanimi.

The meeting addressed "the integrated defense of Iran and Iraq's skies, because we might sense threats coming from the direction of [our] western borders," Baqeri noted back then.

Iran in talks with several countries for monetary agreements: Zarif

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Negotiations for monetary agreements are underway with several countries, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Sunday.

"The Foreign Ministry's economic diplomacy department was established last year and despite sanctions, it has had successful performance during the period," he said, ISNA reported.

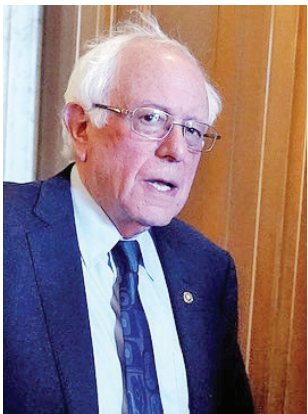
Elaborating on monetary agreements, Zarif said Iran has started talks with Turkey, Russia, China, Azerbaijan, India and several other countries over the issue, and has reached preliminary agreements with some of them.

"The talks are underway, however, the central bank is the main party responsible for the issue, while the Foreign Ministry tries to facilitate the affairs," he explained.

The agreements are intended to evade financial sanctions that the United States has imposed on Iran in violation of international law.

Trump 'helped create the crisis' with Iran, says Sanders

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Senator Bernie Sanders has slammed U.S. President Donald Trump for maladministration of rising tensions between the U.S. and Iran, saying he has "helped create the crisis" with Tehran.



sombody setting fire to a basket full of paper and then putting it out."

"He helped create the crisis, and then he stopped the attacks," the Vermont senator said in the interview that was to be aired on Sunday.

Trump decided not to launch the strike because he said he believed the casualty count of such a strike would be disproportionate to the attack from Iran.

The U.S. president has maintained a hostile policy toward Iran since he took office. He unilaterally pulled out of the Iran nuclear deal and reinstated sanctions on Tehran.

During the interview, Sanders also said that Trump was wrong to think "that a war with Iran is something that might be good for this country."

When Brennan described the strike Trump considered as "limited," Sanders responded sarcastically.

"Oh, just a limited strike. Oh, well, I'm sorry. I just didn't know that it's okay to simply attack another country with bombs," Sanders said. "Just a limited strike? That's an act of warfare."

The shooting down of the U.S. spy drone was the latest incident in a chain of events around the Persian Gulf region which started after Washington upped the ante in its conflict with Iran by deploying additional troops, along with Patriot missiles and manned and unmanned spying aircraft, aircraft carriers, and B-52 bombers to the Middle East over the past few weeks. Iran, in response, called on the U.S. to stop instigating conflict in the region and pull its troops out of the Persian Gulf.

Rouhani: Most intl. problems rooted in U.S. unilateralism

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said on Sunday that most of the problems the world is facing today are rooted in U.S. unilateralism and violation of international law by Washington.

"Most of the regional and international problems have been caused by dictatorship and bullying of certain countries especially the United States whose roots are in violating international law and moving on the path of unilateralism," Rouhani said during a meeting with President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Gabriela Cuevas Barron.

Rouhani said that the U.S. quit the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), in May 2018 and has threatened other countries to violate the resolution 2231 of the UN Security Council which endorsed the JCPOA.

The U.S. sanctions against the Iranian people are "economic terrorism", Rouhani noted.

In remarks last week, Rouhani said since the sanctions target ordinary people they are "crimes against humanity".

■ **'Reducing tensions is a fixed principle'**

In his talks with the IPU chief, Rouhani also said, "Iran's fixed approach is reduc-



ing tension, avoiding military conflicts and promoting international peace."

The remarks by Rouhani were an open reference to rising tensions between Iran and the United States in the region.

Elsewhere, Rouhani said that the IPU

has always had a positive role in bringing parliaments and public opinions closer together in line with coordination on important political and social issues.

"Terrorism, unilateralism and environmental issues are the problems that

Britain's repeated words Kharrazi says Iran serious about nuclear deal decisions

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Kamal Kharrazi, chief of the Strategic Council on Foreign Relations, said on Sunday that Iran is serious about decisions related to the 2015 nuclear deal and will take new steps after the 60-day deadline.

On May 8, Iran announced a partial withdrawal from some aspects of the nuclear 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 protect it from the sanctions' effects. The deadline ends on July 7.

Iran has threatened if a decision is not made by that date it will take the next steps.

"Three European signatories to the JCPOA [the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action] have not taken serious actions. So, Iran will stop implementing some of its obligations based on the text of the JCPOA," he told reporters after a meeting with British Minister of State for the Middle East Andrew Morrison.

Kharrazi said that the Europeans should dedicate more resources to INTEX and facilitate Iran-Europe interaction.

"We should see if Europe just gives promises or takes practical actions in the remaining time," said Kharrazi who served as Iran's foreign minister from 1997 to 2005 under the Khatami administration.

He said that Europeans have not much time to change the current atmosphere.

He noted that the Europeans should maintain their independence despite the U.S. pressure.

He said that Britain has expressed support for keeping the JCPOA, but these are "repeated words".

On January 31, France, Germany and Britain, the three European parties to the JCPOA, announced the

creation of INSTEX, a special purpose vehicle aimed at facilitating legitimate trade between European economic operators and Iran.

On March 20, Iran's central bank governor Abdolnaser Hemmati announced that a mechanism similar to INSTEX has been registered in Iran, officially called the Special Trade and Finance Institute (STFI).

During a joint press conference with Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif in Tehran on June 10, German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas said, "We make efforts to make it possible to have economic cooperation with Iran. A financial mechanism called INSTEX has been devised in this respect."

Maas said that the UK, France and Germany support the JCPOA. However, he said, "The position of our three European countries is that we support the JCPOA and we want to continue our commitments but we cannot expect miracles."

In line with Tehran's decision to scale back its commitments under the nuclear deal in protest to reimposition of sanctions, the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) announced on June 17 that Iran's stockpile of enriched uranium will exceed 300 kilograms by June 27.

After June 27, Kamalvandi said, Iran will speed up its uranium enrichment activities beyond 3.67 percent if the other sides don't take a practical step.

"After surpassing 300 kilogram, we will increase the speed of producing enriched uranium above 3.67 percent," Kamalvandi stated.

Iran has insisted it will reverse its decision if it is shielded from sanctions.

■ **'Britain should avoid hasty conclusions'**

Kharrazi also said that during the meeting with Morrison he protested about accusations British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt leveled against Iran over



attacks on two oil tankers in the Gulf of Oman.

"Such hasty conclusions and remarks will not help reduce tension and expand relations. If the British government seeks to reduce tension, it should avoid such hasty conclusions," Kharrazi remarked.

On June 13, two commercial oil tankers were hit in the Gulf of Oman, prompting the evacuation and rescue of dozens of crew members.

The United States has blamed Iran for the attacks.

Hunt also issued a statement on June 14 blaming Iran and the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps for the attacks. He claimed no other state or non-state actor could have been responsible. The UK official, however, did not present any evidence for his claim.

On June 15, the Iranian Foreign Ministry summoned British Ambassador Robert Macaire over the accusations.

Assistant Foreign Minister for Europe Mahmoud Barimani conveyed Tehran's strong protest to the British government's "unfounded allegations" and "unacceptable" anti-Iran stances.

Iranian MPs support IRGC for downing invading U.S. drone

1 → Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Friday that the U.S. military drone entered the Iranian airspace from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and it was targeted near Kouh-e Mobarak.

Amir Ali Hajizadeh, commander of the aerospace unit of the IRGC, said on Friday that the drone had received warnings for four times before being shot down.

"Those who guided the drone received the warnings but did not care. Given that the drone breached Iran's airspace, the aerospace unit of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps shot it down," Hajizadeh said while exhibiting the drone's wreckage.

The IRGC released GPS coordinates that showed the drone eight miles off Iran's coast, inside the 12 nautical miles from the shore that is Iran's territorial waters.

"Two warnings were issued on 2:05 on Thursday morning and two others were issued on 3:55 and the drone was shot on 4:05. In fact, four warnings were given to this drone but they did not pay attention. Another spy plane was also flying near this drone which carried 35 crew members and we had the right to shoot that down, however, we shot down the



unmanned drone," the general explained.

Iran has submitted a protest letter to the United Nations over the violation of its airspace by the United States.

Majid Takht-e Ravanchi, Iran's ambassador to the UN, wrote a letter on Thursday to UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres and the UN Security Council stating that "Iran con-

With Iran, Trump wants to be arsonist and firefighter

1 → No, the more likely case is that Trump's bluff got called and he lost his nerve. Of course, that's a good thing. It's a much better thing for Trump to lose face this week than the scorching of scores or hundreds or thousands of Americans and Iranians. But the encounter—like many of the other instances in which he bailed—bled from Trump a couple of pints of his presidential power. Presidential threats have a greater chance of making adversaries take notice and change their ways if they're not empty. But by making a practice of making threats and abandoning them, Trump voluntarily

drains his own reservoirs of power by exposing himself as a wild bluffer.

Trump's bluffing didn't end with the on-again-off-again military strike. In a Friday morning tweet, he claimed to have punished Iran with new economic sanctions. But as it turns out, the president was firing blanks at the Iranians. Several hours after the Trump tweet, Washington Post's Damian Paletta reported that "no such sanctions were imposed" against Iran. This wasn't the first time Trump wielded phantom sanctions in a confrontation with an adversary. In March, Paletta writes, Trump tweeted that he was

withdrawing additional sanctions against North Korea when the Treasury Department had not announced any new ones.

Like the "red line" debacle in which President Barack Obama failed to deliver on a threat of military retaliation against Bashar Assad's Syrian regime if it used chemical weapons, Trump's Iranian backdown makes him look like a pitiful, helpless giant to the nation's potential foes. When Trump goes all Dirty Harry, squinting his eyes and grimacing to say, "Make my day" to foreign powers, they have excellent reason to assume he's just acting.

today's world is facing and we need more cooperation among parliaments to address them," he said.

For her part, Cuevas said that Iran plays an important and powerful role in promoting multilateralism and settling conflicts.

She described Iran as a powerful country in the region.

"Today, the world should learn a lesson from Iran's successful experience of interaction and respect dialogue and international agreements," she explained.

Cuevas said that the JCPOA proved that multilateralism and interaction are essential to maintain international peace.

"This agreement has a very powerful content and today the entire world knows that dialogue and interaction are important for achieving peace and stability," she explained.

■ **U.S. helps terrorist groups: Larjani**

Iranian Majlis Speaker Ali Larjani also met separately with Cuevas. During the meeting, Larjani said that U.S. and certain countries in the region help terrorist groups.

Larjani said that the IPU is a democratic institution and should support democratic solutions.

Cuevas said that fight against terrorism should not be politicized, adding Iran has valuable experiences in this respect.

As bad as this week has been for American power, we should be prepared for added fallout from Trump's actions. He could easily learn the wrong lesson from his Iranian retreat and decide that the best way to restore his lost military vigor is to drop a few choice bombs.

(Source: Politico)

Iranian general to U.S.: Act responsibly to save your forces' lives in the region

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Major General Gholam Ali Rashid, commander of Khatam ol-Anbia Central Headquarters, on Sunday advised the U.S. government to “act responsibly” in order to protect the lives of American forces in the region.

“The U.S. government must act responsibly and avoid misconduct in the region in order to protect the lives of the American forces,” Rashid said, according to the Mehr news agency.

The general warned that in the event of a military conflict in the region, no country would be able to handle its scope.

He said the fate of the regional nations is interconnected and peace and war cannot be divided up.

“We are not after war but we will powerfully defend the interests of the noble people of Iran against any threat and aggression,” he asserted.

In order to prevent war, Rashid continued, dialogue per se is not enough but



General Rashid says the fate of the regional nations is interconnected and that peace and war cannot be divided up.

resolution and proper conduct are also needed.

The remarks came days after Iran shot down an American spy drone, which ignored the IRGC's repeated warnings and intruded into the country's airspace.

The IRGC specified the downed intruding aircraft as a sophisticated U.S.-made Global Hawk, saying it was brought down over the southern coastal province of Hormozgan by Iran's indigenous Khordad 3 air defense system.

The Guards, however, spared a second spy plane carrying 35 people, for which U.S. President Donald Trump thanked Iran.

Top political figures in Iran supported the IRGC's move in unison and condemned the United States' unlawful act.

Tehran has also written to the United Nations in condemnation of the drone intrusion, calling on the world body to confront Washington's destabilizing actions.

Trump lauds Iran's decision not to shoot down manned plane

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — U.S. President Donald Trump has lauded Iran's decision not to shoot down a plane carrying 38 people when it shot down an unmanned U.S. spy drone on Thursday morning.

“There was a plane with 38 people yesterday, did you see that?” Trump told reporters on Saturday before leaving the White House for Camp David.

“I think that's a big story. They had it in their sights and they didn't shoot it down. I think they were very wise not to do that. And we appreciate that they didn't do that. I think that was a very wise decision.”

The IRGC announced on Thursday that its air defense force had shot down an intruding American spy drone in the country's southern coastal province of Hormozgan.

“Along with the U.S. drone, there was also an American P-8 plane with 35 people on board,” Amir Ali Hajizadeh, the commander of the Aerospace Division of the IRGC, told reporters on Friday.

“This plane also entered our airspace and we could have targeted it, but we did not because our purpose behind shooting down the American drone was to give a warning to terrorist American forces,” Hajizadeh explained.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Trump hoped that Iran would not build nuclear weapons, despite the fact that the Islamic Republic has repeatedly said it does not intend to acquire nuclear weapons and that the International



Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has on numerous occasions certified the peaceful nature of Tehran's nuclear program.

“They're not going to have a nuclear weapon,” Trump said. “We're not going to have Iran have a nuclear weapon.”

“When they agree to that, they're going to have a wealthy country. They're going to be so happy, and I'm going to be their best friend. I hope that happens.”

Later in the day, Trump took to Twitter to repeat his claims and announce that the U.S. is putting major

additional sanctions on Iran on Monday.

“Iran cannot have Nuclear Weapons! Under the terrible Obama plan, they would have been on their way to Nuclear in a short number of years, and existing verification is not acceptable.”

Mohamed ElBaradei, who headed the International Atomic Energy Agency for 12 years, said in September 2009 that there was no concrete evidence that Tehran has a nuclear weapons program.

“Many people are talking about how Iran's nuclear program is the greatest threat to the world. In many ways, I think the threat has been hyped,” he told the specialist Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists.

“The idea that we'll wake up tomorrow and Iran will have a nuclear weapon is an idea that isn't supported by the facts,” said ElBaradei.

■ Additional sanctions on Iran

Trump also said more sanctions will be introduced against Iran on Monday.

“We are putting major additional Sanctions on Iran on Monday. I look forward to the day that sanctions come off Iran, and they become a productive and prosperous nation again - The sooner the better!” he added.

In another tweet, he pointed to the drone incident, saying, “I never called the strike against Iran ‘BACK,’ as people are incorrectly reporting. I just stopped it from going forward at this time!”

Senior U.S. official: Trump understood military could not predict what Iran's response to a strike might be

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iran shot down an invading American stealth drone on Thursday morning. The Iranian military downed the drone after those who controlled the MQ-4C Triton ignored repeated warnings that the drone had violated the Iranian airspace over the Strait of Hormuz.

The New York Times reported on Friday that President Trump approved military strikes against Iran in retaliation for downing of the surveillance drone, but pulled back from launching them on Thursday night after a day of escalating tensions.

In a report on Saturday, CNN quoted a senior U.S. official who said Trump fully realized that the Pentagon “could not predict for him what the Iranian response to a U.S. strike might be.”

Following is an excerpt of the report posted on the CNN website:

The tension between Donald Trump's bellicose rhetoric and his non-interventionist foreign policy instincts was on full display Thursday afternoon as he huddled in the Situation Room.

Lawmakers in the room watched as the weight of his duties as commander-in-chief bore down on him, lives hanging in the balance.

Trump did not tip his hand on which way he was leaning, focusing instead on “drilling down” on the differing perspectives and arguments leveled by the assembled lawmakers, Senate Foreign Relations Chairman James Risch said. But it was clear, the Idaho Republican said, that Trump is a president who “doesn't want to go to war.”

“I really watched him agonize over this. It comes down to one man,” Risch told a small group of reporters.

“The president was really wrestling with it,” House Armed Services Chairman Adam Smith, a Democrat, said.

Trump's own dilemma was met by a near unanimous national security team who felt the U.S. should retaliate for a downed drone by striking Iranian targets. For the president, though, the answer was far from obvious -- ultimately he pulled the plug on military strikes, minutes before the point of no return.

But a senior U.S. official said throughout the process, Trump was very invested and very serious. He very much understood



that the military could not predict for him what the Iranian response to a U.S. strike might be and it remains a significant administration concern not to start a wider war.

Military officials are pleased Trump didn't order the strike because of this uncertainty.

On Friday, talk had turned to sanctions. “We have additional avenues of sanctions pressure to impose. We have got additional sanctions for sure,” a senior administration official told a small group of reporters Friday. “I would not say that the president is thinking about military options. The primary thing we're thinking about is additional sanctions.”

This official cautioned, however, that the president has not taken military action entirely off the table. “That's an option the president maintains at all times,” said this official, adding “that's really the president's call.”

Trump was still wrestling with how to respond to Iran's downing of a U.S. drone as he addressed reporters in the Oval Office on Thursday.

“You'll find out,” Trump warned, ominously, as reporters peppered Trump with questions in the Oval Office about how he planned to retaliate. “They made a very big mistake.”

But pressed further, Trump explained that he didn't just view that “mistake” as a strategic miscalculation that Iran would

dearly pay for, but perhaps instead as a mistake of a different variety: an inadvertent error.

“I find it hard to believe it was intentional,” Trump said. “I think it could've been somebody that was loose and stupid.”

That cautious mindset would hang over Trump's deliberations throughout the day as he huddled several times with his national security team, weighing a range of options for U.S. retaliatory action. And after shedding those advisers who warned him of the consequences of withdrawing from the Iran nuclear deal -- former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, former Defense Secretary James Mattis and former national security adviser H.R. McMaster, among others -- the president found himself surrounded by a phalanx of Iran hawks.

Chief among them, the president's national security adviser John Bolton led the charge in recommending the president move forward with military strikes, an administration official said. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Vice President Mike Pence also supported moving forward with the strikes.

The recommendation to the president: strike three Iranian military targets -- a set of radars and missile batteries -- in a pre-dawn coordinated attack, according to a U.S. official with direct knowledge of the operation.

A senior administration official said

the president's entire team of top national security advisers believed military strikes were “appropriate response” to Iran's downing of a US drone.

“There was complete unanimity amongst the president's advisers and DOD leadership on an appropriate response to Iran's activities,” the official said. “The president made the final decision.”

Tellingly, the official noted that the unanimity on how to respond to Iran preceded the president's decision to call off the strikes.

■ Wide range of voices

Trump wasn't just hearing from his national security team as he mulled his options. He also spoke with outside advisers and friendly members of Congress who sought to remind him of his pledge to get the U.S. out of endless wars in the Middle East and urged him to show restraint.

But as the president faced decision time, he was once again surrounded by those hand-picked advisers who have encouraged his headline stance on Iran -- from pulling out of the nuclear deal to imposing a series of crippling sanctions against Iran -- and who were now pushing for the U.S. to level serious consequences on Iran for downing a U.S. drone, which the U.S. contends was flying in international airspace.

Trump agreed to move forward with the strikes.

But between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. ET on Thursday, as U.S. military personnel in the region made final preparations for the airstrikes, Trump met once more with his advisers and military officials as the minutes counted down to the time of impact. It was the president's last chance to object to the operation and call it off.

The decision to call off the operation minutes before it was set to take place hit at the heart of Trump's concerns about escalating the conflict with Iran into war, one Trump might compare to the war in Iraq which he has frequently criticized.

Aides said Trump appeared wholly comfortable with his decision on Friday, without much second guessing. Instead, he liked the impression that he's bucked the advice of his team, which he has previously criticized in private for appearing to march him toward war.

Deputy parliament speaker says drone downing was a ‘punch in the U.S. mouth’

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Deputy Majlis Speaker Masoud Pezeshkian says the downing of a highly advanced U.S. drone was a punch in the mouth of the “criminal America”.



The move “proved that Iran will not surrender easily to their (Americans') nonsensical talks,” Pezeshkian, a reformist, said at the beginning of an open session of the parliament on Sunday.

In a statement on Thursday, the IRGC announced that a U.S.-made Global Hawk surveillance drone was brought down by its Air Force near the Koub-e Mobarak region, which sits in the central district of Jask County, after the aircraft violated Iranian airspace.

Pezeshkian also said the Islamic Republic, more than any other government, has been subject to terror and plots of overthrow, especially by the United States and its allies, Mehr reported.

Pointing to claims by the U.S. that Iranians are terrorists, Pezeshkian said the United States has been behind a number of terror attacks in Iran targeting Friday prayer leaders, Iranian youths, officials and judges.

He also referred to the contradictory actions of the Trump administration, saying, “One who wants to negotiate does not impose sanctions. A government that claims [to be ready] for talks, does not tear up previous talks.”

“Such people should never be trusted,” he concluded.

Pezeshkian was making a reference to the Trump administration's withdrawal last year from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The JCPOA, commonly known as the Iran nuclear deal, was struck in 2015 between Iran and six world powers, including the U.S., after years of negotiations.

Leader strongly upholding the Revolution's path: Hassan Khomeini

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Seyed Hassan Khomeini, the grandson of Imam Khomeini, on Sunday hailed Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei for strongly continuing the path of the revolution, the Fars news agency reported.



Pointing to the power of the Islamic Revolution at its early stages, Khomeini said, “Today, thanks to God, the power of the Islamic Republic is much more than those days and the Supreme Leader of the Revolution, Ayatollah Khamenei, has continued the path strongly.”

He further said today the Islamic Republic is capable of standing up to oppression.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the grandson of Imam Khomeini said Iran is a very good example in preserving people's religion, upholding democracy, and involving people in determining the sovereignty of their country.

Zonnour elected chair of key Majlis committee

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — MP Motjaba Zonnour was elected on Sunday as the new chairman of the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, replacing Heshmatollah Falahatpisheh, IRNA reported.

Zonnour ran against Falahatpisheh, who was elected as the chairman of the committee last year. Falahatpisheh had ended 14 years of Alaeddin Boroujerdi's chairmanship.

Initially, MPs Falahatpisheh, Zonnour, Mostafa Kavakebian and Boroujerdi ran for the chairmanship, but Kavakebian and Boroujerdi withdrew their candidacy in favor of Falahatpisheh and Zonnour respectively.

Tehran says will take legal action against U.S. violation of airspace

1 → The IRGC said the “Global Hawk” spy drone had taken off from a U.S. military base in south of the Persian Gulf at 19:44 GMT on Wednesday (00:14 am local time on Thursday), switched off all of its communication systems, and flew towards the port city of Chabahar via the Strait of Hormuz in maximum stealth.

The intruding drone was shot by Iran's homegrown air defense missile system “Khordad-3rd”.

STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	237459.9
IFX	3046.02

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	47,752 rials
GBP	53,477 rials
AED	11,437 rials

Source: cbi.ir

COMMODITIES

Brent	\$64.45/b
WTI	\$57.43/b
OPEC Basket	\$63.95/b
Gold	\$1,400.20/oz
Silver	\$15.40oz
Platinum	\$813.30oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

Govt. puts priority on people's livelihood during sanctions: CBI governor

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — The Central Bank of Iran (CBI) governor said addressing people's livelihood is the government's priority during the sanctions era, IRIB reported. Speaking on the national television on Saturday, Abdolnaser Hemmati mentioned the economic pressures that the unjust U.S. sanctions have imposed on the country, saying "Trump has sought to devalue our currency and cripple the economy with the pressures that are mostly focused on the foreign exchange market which is also directly affected by the country's oil revenues."

The official referred to the exchange rate as a macroeconomic variable, stating that whenever there was an increase in the exchange rate, accompanied by inflation, the result was mirrored in people's livelihood.

"It is worth mentioning that most of this economic pressure is coming to the lower classes of the society, and unfortunately, those who have better financial conditions, get even better as the inflation grows, because the impacts of inflation on the prosperous circle of the society would always be positive," he added.

According to Hemmati, the rises in the exchange rate would cause the greatest damages to the government and then to people, so the government has no role in raising the exchange rate. "We promise to strengthen the value of the national currency, the situation is improving and the recovery can be felt. This situation will also pass. In fact, the central bank is trying to prohibit arbitrage in the foreign exchange market and prevent it from trading in the black market", the official said.

Mentioning ISTEEX, the governor said, "It will be useless unless practical steps are taken for implementation and realization of this mechanism."

"Of course we are not just eyeing Europeans to help us pass through the current situation," he added.

He further mentioned Russia's recent proposal for helping Iran with oil sales and said "Along with the Europeans, Russia has also proposed trade cooperation with Iran, and we are also inclined to trade with them because Russia can supply many of our needs by purchasing our oil."

Last week, the CBI governor said that three plans have been developed aimed to compensate the probable budget deficit resulted from the U.S. sanctions on the country's oil industry. "Trying to use different ways to export more oil, issuing government bonds, and using the reserves of the National Development Fund (NDF) are the plans the government is to implement in order to counter the U.S. sanctions' economic pressure," Hemmati wrote in an Instagram post.

"Even though the central bank is going through a difficult period, I'm very hopeful about overcoming the problems with the mentioned plans in progress," he noted.

In early May, Hemmati had outlined CBI plans for neutralizing or relieving the impact of U.S. sanctions on the country's economy.

Southeast Asian leaders emphasize economic strength in face of U.S.-China tensions

Southeast Asian leaders agreed on Sunday to work together on regional economy and security to strengthen their positions amid growing U.S.-China tensions, as they wrapped up this year's first summit in Bangkok.

As stated by swissinfo.ch, the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) will need its collective economic strength for bargaining power globally, especially amid the trade tensions between the world's top two economies, Thai Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha told a news conference, as chairman of the 34th ASEAN Summit.

Prayuth urged ASEAN nations to complete negotiations this year for the China-initiated Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) pact that includes 16 countries. "This will help ASEAN handle the changes and uncertainty that will happen in the region going forward, particularly the impacts of trade tension between ASEAN's important trade partners."

Negotiations began in 2012 on RCEP, which envisions the creation of a free trade zone encompassing 45% of the world's population and more than a third of its GDP, but does not involve the United States.

Iran, Ghana ink MOU for bolstering co-op between free zones

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iranian Secretary of Free Zones High Council signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Ghana Free Zones Authority (GFZA) on Saturday for expanding economic cooperation, IRIB reported.

The MOU was signed by the Secretary of the Supreme Council of Iran's Free Trade, Industrial and Special Economic Zones Morteza Bank and GFZA Executive Secretary Michael Okyere Baafi in Tehran.

Speaking in the signing ceremony, Bank referred to the Iranian free trade zones' capacities in developing the country's economy, saying "mutual economic cooperation between free trade zones of Iran and Ghana can provide African countries' access to a wide range of products in the region and pave the way for

boosting trade exchanges."

Meanwhile, deputy head of the Supreme Council of Iran's Free Trade, Industrial and Special Economic Zones for production, exports and technology affairs, Akbar Eftekhari, said free zones need sharing production potentials and investment opportunities with other countries.

He added that participating in international exhibitions is one of the ways for showcasing potentials of the country's free zones.

He further suggested creating a joint exchange context between the two countries' free zones since it can prepare electronic trade based on digital currencies.

In the meantime, deputy head of the Supreme Council of Iran's Free Trade, Industrial and Special Economic Zones for cultural, tour-



Secretary of Supreme Council of Iran's Free Trade, Industrial and Special Economic Zones Morteza Bank (R) and GFZA Executive Secretary Michael Okyere Baafi exchanging signed economic cooperation MOU documents in Tehran on Saturday.

ism and industry affairs, Mohammad Reza Rostami, referred to capabilities of Ghana and the African continent in cultural and art fields. Launching Iran-Ghana handicrafts export network can help develop the industry, he said.

Okyere Baafi arrived in Tehran on Friday to hold talks with officials of the Supreme Council of Iran's Free Trade, Industrial and Special Economic Zones and to visit Kish Free Zone in south of Iran.

\$5b allocated to supply basic goods in a quarter

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Governor Abdolnaser Hemmati announced that the government has allocated \$5 billion for importing basic goods during the first quarter of current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21), IRIB reported.

On May 19, Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Farhad Dehpasand said: "We are still using the last year's imports and so far [since the beginning of the current year] over \$3 billion has been allocated for supplying basic goods."

Earlier in March, Head of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) Mehdi Mirashrafi said "Regarding the basic goods, the country is well supplied and even the imports of some commodities like corn and meat have increased."

On Wednesday, IRNA reported that Iran's domestic Forex Management Integrated System (locally known as NIMA) has supplied €4.564 billion for imports of basic goods since the beginning of current Iranian calendar year (March 21).

As reported, the trend of offering foreign currency earned from exports in NIMA has been increasing in the recent weeks following the CBI's announcement of new policies on re-injection of those earnings into the domestic economy via NIMA.

CBI unveiled a directive package on May 20 which provides the country's exporters with guidelines about how they should re-inject their foreign currency incomes into the country's economy.

And following the CBI, the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade issued a directive package on Wednesday which provides the country's exporters with guidelines about how they should re-inject their foreign currency incomes into the country's economy.

Based on the new directive, for the petrochemical sector, the exporters should present



at least 60 percent of their foreign currency incomes into NIMA, and a maximum 10 percent could be injected into the financial system in the form of hard currency and the rest could be used for importing necessary goods.

As for other exporters, at least 50 percent of the total earnings should be presented at the NIMA system and a maximum 20 percent could be distributed in form of hard currency and the rest can be used for imports.

NIMA, which seeks to boost transparency, create competitiveness among exchange shops and a secure environment for traders, is a new chance for importers to supply their required foreign currency without specific problems and for exporters to re-inject their earned foreign currency to domestic forex market. It was inaugurated to allow exporters of non-oil commodities to sell their foreign currency earnings to importers of consumer products.

In mid-November last year, CBI issued the instructions on return details of the hard currency earned by exporters back to the domestic financial system.

The instructions, aimed to lead the export revenues from the non-oil exports back into the country's economy through NIMA, mandate all the exporters of goods and services to guarantee bringing back to the country the foreign currency amount allocated to them by the government at lower prices than the free market.

'Preserving production is priority in steel sector'

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Preserving production is the priority in steel sector of the country, ILNA quoted Iranian Deputy Industry, Mining and Trade Minister for Mining Affairs Jafar Sargini as saying on Saturday.

Referring to the problems created by the sanctions, the official said that under the sanction condition the steel producers prefer to use the foreign currency for continuing their production process; therefore, implementation of development projects comes in the second place.

He although said that Iran's annual steel production is planned to reach 45 million tons by the Iranian calendar year 1400 (March 2021-March 2022).

Referring to the sanctions, Sargini noted, "All those who have imposed sanctions against Iran aim to destroy he country's production capabilities; therefore, the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade prefer that the steel producers focus first on production and in this due development projects with the physical progress of over 70 percent will also help achieve this target."

On June 15, the official had announced that the country's annual crude steel production is planned to reach 30 million tons in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 19, 2020).

The official put Iran's crude steel production at 25 million tons in the past year, Tasnim news agency reported.

Sargini had also announced that Iran will inaugurate steel projects with the capacity of at least 10 million tons during the current Iranian calendar year.

Meanwhile, in a press conference on June 8, the deputy minister said the ministry has taken necessary measures to maintain the country's metal exports



despite the U.S. sanctions.

"We have established a special working group in the ministry which is closely assessing the situation and making necessary arrangements to mitigate the impact of U.S. sanctions," Sargini told the Tehran Times in the press conference.

The official noted that it is expected for the exports from the country's mining sector to, at least, reach the last year's \$8.5 billion by the end of the current Iranian calendar year.

"We won't also have any problems regarding the supply for the domestic consumption in the current year," he added.

Asked about foreign investment in the industry, the official noted that currently near \$1 billion of investment is required for equipping new mines and overhauling some equipment in old ones and over \$400 million is also required in exploration and research sectors.

"We hope that both foreign and domestic investors take the chance to enter this lucrative industry," he added.

Mentioning some of the ministry's incentive programs for encouraging exports, Sargini stated, "In close cooperation with the customs administration, the industry ministry has significantly moderated the base-prices for metals and minerals in order to ensure the exporters."

Inflation rate at 37.6%: statistical center

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — The Statistical Center of Iran announced that the inflation rate in the twelve-month period ended on June 21, which marks the end of the third Iranian calendar month of Khordad, stood at 37.6 percent, IRNA reported.

The inflation rate in the mentioned period shows a 3.4-percent rise from the figure of the twelve-month period ended on the last day of the previous month.

As reported, the average goods and services Consumer Price Index (CPI) stood at 173.3 in urban areas and at 193.3 in the rural regions in Khordad, indicating 0.8 percent and 0.7

percent increase, respectively, compared to the previous month.

In the Iranian calendar year 1395 (ended on March 20, 2017), Iran could manage to experience a single-digit inflation rate after 26 years.

The inflation rate stood at 9.8 percent in that year according to the Statistical Center of Iran and at nine percent according to the Central Bank of Iran (CBI).

But since the last year's calendar month of Khordad (ended on June 22, 2018), when the inflation rate stood at 10.2 percent, as announced by the CBI, the country's experiencing

double-digit inflation rates again.

In early May, Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Governor Abdolnaser Hemmati outlined CBI plans for neutralizing or relieving the impact of U.S. sanctions on the country's economy.

In an Instagram post, the official pointed out some of the approaches that CBI was going to follow in order to counter the U.S. sanctions and to control inflation.

Maintaining and strengthening the relative stability of the foreign exchange market by strengthening and improvement of the performance of domestic Forex Management Integrated System (locally known as NIMA),

setting foreign currency exchange policies to support non-oil and oil exports and providing liquidity and working capital to maintain and boost domestic production and finally establishing a financial mechanism with neighboring countries were some of the plans which CBI head said is going to execute.

Explaining CBI plans for managing inflation, the official noted that previous monetary policies regarding the controls over cash flow would be modified using the new structure of monetary policy and consequently uncertainty over controlling the cash demand was going to decrease.

America's own economic system that's broken

Xi Jinping might possibly agree next weekend on further steps to bring down China's trade imbalance with the U.S., giving Donald Trump a face-saving way of ending his trade war.

According to theguardian.com, the American economic system is focused on maximizing shareholder returns.

But average Americans have seen no significant gains in their incomes for four decades, adjusted for inflation.

China's economic system, by contrast, is focused on maximizing China. And it's achieving that goal. Today it's the world's second-largest economy, home to the world's biggest auto industry and some of the world's most powerful technology companies. Over the last four decades, hundreds of millions of Chinese people have been lifted out of poverty.

At the core of the American system are 500 giant companies headquartered in the U.S. but making, buying and selling things all over the world. Half of their employees are non-American, located outside the U.S. A third of their shareholders are non-American.

These giant corporations have no particular allegiance to America. Their only allegiance and responsibility is to their shareholders.

They'll do whatever is necessary to get their share prices as high as possible – including keeping wages down, fighting unions, reclassifying employees as independent contractors, outsourcing anywhere around world where parts are cheap-



est, shifting their profits around the world wherever taxes are lowest, and paying their top CEOs ludicrous sums.

At the core of China's economy, by contrast, are state-owned companies that borrow from state banks at artificially low rates. These state firms balance the ups and downs of the economy, spending more when private companies are reluctant to do so.

They're also engines of economic growth making the capital-intensive investments China needs to prosper, including investments in leading-edge technologies.

The most powerful economy

China's core planners and state-owned companies will do whatever is necessary both to improve the wellbeing of the Chinese people and become the world's largest and most

powerful economy.

Since 1978, the Chinese economy has grown by an average of more than 9% per year. Growth has slowed recently, and American tariffs could bring it down to 6% or 7%, but that's still faster than almost any other economy in the world, including the U.S.

The American system relies on taxes, subsidies and regulations to coax corporations to act in the interest of the American public. But these levers have proven weak relative to the overriding corporate goal of maximizing shareholder returns.

Last week, for example, Walmart, American's largest employer, announced it would lay off 570 employees despite taking home more than \$2b courtesy of Trump and the Republican corporate tax cuts. Last year, the company closed dozens of Sam's Club stores, leaving thousands of Americans out of work.

At the same time, Walmart has plowed more than \$20b into buying back shares of its own stock, which boosts the pay of Walmart executives and enriches wealthy investors but does nothing for the economy.

It should be noted that Walmart is a global company, not adverse to bribing foreign officials to get its way. On Thursday it agreed to pay \$282m to settle federal allegations of overseas corruption, including channeling more than \$500,000 to an intermediary in Brazil known as a "sorceress" for her ability to make construction permit problems disappear.

Petro-refinery: Iran's new weapon against U.S. sanctions

By Ebrahim Fallahi

Increasing the country's petro-refining capacity has recently become a hot topic among Iran's top research institutions and research centers as a key defense mechanism against the impacts of the U.S. sanctions on the country's oil industry.

As reported by Tasnim news agency on Sunday, following the Parliament Research Center's report last week, a policy research institute called "Analysts Network of Resilient Economists" have sent a letter to the parliament speaker to stress the importance of the subject.

The mentioned think tank has called for ratification and implementation of the plan for improving the country's petro-refining capacity as soon as possible.

"This will result in a two-fold increase in the country's foreign exchange revenues compared to selling crude oil," the letter read.

They argue that in addition to generating more revenue, the conversion of crude oil to oil products will have many other benefits including creating new job opportunities, economic prosperity, and reviving other industries. And most importantly, it will lead to stronger economy which could easily withstand the U.S. pressures.

The research institute underlines the fact that although nearly 62 percent of the world's crude oil is produced in East Asian countries, but only nine percent is being used in those countries and most of it is exported as crude oil.

On the contrary, developing countries like Japan, China and India are among the top consumers of crude oil, tapping on their ever-growing refining capacities.

"Considering the country's vast oil reserves,



Iran should also endeavor to increase its refining capacities in order to provide a platform for exporting more valuable oil products instead of crude oil," the thin-tank said.

Since in the article 44 of the country's Sixth Five-Year National Development Plan (2016-2021) increasing the country's refining capacity by 2.7 million barrels per day has been put on the agenda, the think-tank mentioned this article, saying "It is important to prepare a national plan to achieve this goals and act on it, especially considering the country's current economic conditions [mentioning the U.S. sanctions]."

Elsewhere in the letter, the importance of moving toward construction of petro-refineries instead of refinery complexes has been emphasized and some instances in this regard are mentioned.

"For example, BP, Shell, Total and Exxon Mobil have allocated 24, 39, 74 and 90

percent of their recent projects to this area [petro-refineries] respectively."

According to the think-tank, recent studies indicated that Internal Rate of Return (IRR) of petro-refiners, depending on their configuration, varies from 16 percent to 20 percent, which is 3-4 times more profitable compared to the old refineries and petrochemical complexes.

Considering this letter and the Parliament Research Center's report last week, it seems that Iran is investing a lot of energy and work-force on finding new ways for countering the U.S. sanctions and easing their impact on the country's economy.

Earlier this week, the Research Center of Iran's parliament also said in a report that petro-refineries are two times more profitable than refineries and suggested that National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC)'s new refinery projects be defined as petro-refineries.

The report dubbed "Petro-refineries, their role in competing the oil value chain and the status in Iran's oil industry" stated that constructing petro-refineries is one of the most important ways to alleviate severe economic impacts of price fluctuations and achieve a much higher margin of profit.

Like the policy research institute, the parliament's research center also emphasized the importance of completing the value chain of the oil and gas industry to increase value added and prevent crude oil sales as one of the principles that has been underlined in the country's Sixth National Five-Year Development Plan (2016-2021).

"According to French energy giant Total, by 2020 global demand for oil products will increase by 1.1 percent while the demand for polymers increases by 3.3 percent, so with this in mind, the creation of a hybrid system of refining and petrochemicals (petro-refinery) seems a necessity," the report read.

Along with refining sector, petrochemical industry is also one of the most important pillars of Iran's economy and one of the main suppliers of foreign currency especially euro for the country.

Iran is currently producing near 63 million tons of petrochemical products annually and with several new projects underway, the number is expected to jump over 65 million tons, further cementing the Islamic Republic's stance as a major petrochemical supplier to the world markets.

The country plans to establish a new petrochemical complex in Hormozgan Province adjacent to Persian Gulf waters, which will increase the country's petrochemical output by 15 million tons per year.

Oil market shrugs off as tensions rise in Persian Gulf region

➔ According to New York Times, over the last week, the prices reached about \$28,000 a day for chartering the largest class of tankers. The insurance costs have also risen for shipping in the region have also risen.

However, even considering all the above mentioned impacts of the rising tensions in the region, the surge in the U.S. production can easily counterbalance the worries of any disruption of oil flows from the Persian Gulf region to the world.

U.S. is now one of the major suppliers of crude oil to Europe and even to Asia and higher shipping prices could be named as the only major factor which signifies the disruption of flows from Strait of Hormuz and it would likely do the most



damage to Asian economies.

According to the United States Energy Information Administration, 76 percent of the crude oil that flowed out of

the Persian Gulf through the Strait of Hormuz went to Asian markets like China, India and Japan.

However, we should bear in mind that many analysts and traders are well aware that a full cut-off of oil from the mentioned strait is almost impossible, and all the nations in the region would suffer in such a case.

So maybe the market perceives the recent turbulences only as short-term threats which are very unlikely to have a long-term impact on a market which is already on the verge of a potential oversupply due to the U.S. production and end of cuts from OPEC+ group as well as the global economy slowdown.

Floating wind farms just became a serious business

Scotland's Hywind is a 30 MW wind farm off the Aberdeenshire coast. Since October 2017, the five turbines have been operating as the world's largest testbed for floating wind technology. Now, it's a business.

On June 19, the Danish energy-trading firm Danske Commodities announced it will buy all of Hywind Scotland's power over 20 years, the first agreement of its kind. The contract promises to open the floodgates for floating offshore wind power, an idea previously limited to prototypes and pilots.

Proving out the business case had until now deterred most companies. The "time needed to attain profitability is long, and the sums of money required are large, considering the uncertainty in the eventual market," states the International Renewable Energy Agency. But Hywind Scotland, located 15 miles (24 km) from

shore in 345 ft (105 m) of water, appears to have proven out the case.

Over a stormy three-month period from November 2018 to January 2019, the turbines survived extreme conditions while churning out 65% of their maximum capacity as a North Atlantic hurricane sent swells topping 27 ft.

That production capacity compares to 36.9% for wind turbines in the U.S. (almost all of them on land) and 45.8% for Danish offshore wind over a comparable 12-month period ending in February 2018. Hywind even beat out the average capacity of fossil fuel plants. Over the course of a year, it's capable of generating 135GW hours of clean electricity, sufficient for 20,000 Scottish homes.

Until recently, full-scale floating turbines were mostly blueprints. Oil drilling technology made it a reality. After decades prospecting off-

shore, oil companies knew how to create stable platforms capable of surviving the high seas. Since the 1970s, they've drilled ever deeper in waters as far down as 8,200 ft (2,500 m) off Latin America, the U.S., and Africa.

Offshore winds

Norwegian oil firm Equinor (formerly Statoil) pivoted its drilling expertise into offshore wind. It spent eight years testing a floating turbine prototype off Norway, and is now one of the world's largest offshore wind companies, as well as the primary backer of Hywind.

Hywind's towers rise 833 ft (254 m) high, about three times taller than the Statue of Liberty. Roughly a third of the structure is submerged and ballasted by 5,000 tons of iron. Chains weighing 1,323 tons anchor it to the seafloor. A 1 MW battery nicknamed the "Batwind" system has been hooked up to smooth out power flow.

Equinor is now projecting massive expansion for floating wind—13 GW globally by 2030—as costs decline steeply. Wind power favors going further offshore, which yields faster and more consistent winds. That translates to exponentially more power. A wind turbine's energy generation increases as a cube of the wind speed (twice the wind speed generates eight times more power, for example).

More than 80% of offshore wind potential is located in waters (pdf) deeper than 197 ft (60 m), where it's economically unattractive to build directly on the seabed. Floating turbines fill the gap. Costs for the technology have already fallen by 60% to 70% since Norway's first pilot in 2009. Equinor says it can slice those in half yet again to about the \$50 to \$70 megawatt-hour range by 2030 (the leveled cost of energy)—far cheaper than coal. (Source: qz.com)

Subsidies for coal power three times higher than for renewables in three Western Balkan states

By Denitsa Koseva

Bosnia & Herzegovina, Kosovo and Serbia paid nearly three times more in subsidies to coal-fired power plants in 2015-2017 than to producers of energy from renewable sources, a report from the Energy Community showed.

The three countries have been criticized for years for not investing in renewable energy sources and for their outdated coal-fired plants. Moreover, Bosnia and Serbia plan to build new coal-fired facilities that would fail to meet the latest European standards for air pollution.

According to the Energy Community's calculations, in 2015-2017 Bosnia, Kosovo and Serbia paid €444m in direct subsidies to coal-fired plants and just €147m for the production of energy from renewable sources.

The total sum paid as direct incentives by all Energy Community contracting parties, which also include Montenegro, North Macedonia and Ukraine, stood at €1.2b in 2015-2017. Moreover, the Energy Community calculated that they paid hidden subsidies worth €1.9bn annually.

Coal-fired electricity

In Bosnia, coal-fired electricity generation takes place in five thermal power plants, of which four are majority state-owned, while one is private. The country has supported the coal-fired plants by reprogramming debt and failure to collect tax and social security contribution arrears from coal mines, waiving the applicable fees for exploitation of natural resources for electricity generation to thermal power plants, provision of state loan guarantees to thermal power plants (TPPs), state-owned enterprise (SOE) investments in coal mines, provision of equity, loans and advances for continued production in the mines.

Meanwhile, Bosnia is preparing to build two new coal-fired plants, Tuzla 7 and Banovici. A recent report from Greenpeace showed that, if built, they will cause hundreds of premature deaths not only in the country but also across Europe.



In Kosovo, electricity generation from lignite is dominant, reaching 92.5% of the total installed electricity generation capacity. The country has subsidized coal-fired production in the form of debt write-offs, loans from the budget and provision of state loan guarantees. The government has also provided the state-owned Kosovo Energy Corporation (KEK) a loan to back its regular operations, considering the low level of efficiency of the thermal power plants and low collection rates for the electricity supplied.

In 2015, of Kosovo pardoned interest payments on loans extended to KEK. Moreover, the Kosovo Energy Corporation plans to invest €445m in expansion and modernization of the coal mines, while an investment of €270m is planned for the extension of the useful life and environmental rehabilitation of the Kosova B thermal power plant.

Also in Kosovo, U.S. company ContourGlobal will build the 500 MW Kosova e Re plant, the biggest energy project in the country, following an agreement signed with the government in December 2017. Five environmental groups filed a complaint with the Energy Community in May against the legality of the electricity purchase agreement for the power plant, saying it is not in line with EU rules on state aid as it provides a number of benefits to ContourGlobal.

Coal mines

In Serbia, electricity generation from coal constitutes 54% of total installed capacity and is run by the state-owned Elektroprivreda Srbije (EPS). The electricity generation from coal was supported by direct budget transfers, grants from international financial organizations, reprogramming and failure to collect tax and social security contribution arrears from coal mines, debt write-offs, state loans, loans by state-controlled institutions, state loan guarantees and SOE investment. The government has provided a government loan for the Resavica coal mines, which is not a part of EPS. Part of EPS' debt on the pre-1990 loans from the Russian Federation were also pardoned.

On the other hand, Serbia has engaged in an extensive plan for modernization of its coal-fired plants, aiming to meet the EU pollution standards.

In February, the environmental NGO Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) urged the Western Balkan states to close all existing aging coal-fired power plants and not to build new ones as they are a major source of air pollution to the EU. HEAL's report pointed out that 16 outdated coal-fired plants in the six Western Balkan states are a public health and economic liability for the whole continent, with people in the EU bearing the majority of the health impacts and costs.

The report noted that eight of the ten top polluters in terms of sulphur dioxide (SO₂) emissions in Europe are located in the Western Balkans with the leader being Serbia's Kostolac B with 128,000 tonnes of SO₂ emissions in 2016, followed by Bosnia's Ugljevik.

Serbia and Bosnia hold most of the places in this ranking where the third largest polluter is Serbia's Nikola Tesla A, followed by Bosnian Kakanj and Serbian Kostolac A and Nikola Tesla B. Bosnia's Tuzla coal-fired plant is ranked seventh, while Macedonia's Bitola takes the eighth place. Two power plants in Poland and Bulgaria are also included in the ranking — Belchatow and Maritsa East 2.

(Source: intellinews.com)

The end of Mexico's rigorous energy reform

By Tsvetana Paraskova

Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador has been a vocal critic of the energy reform of his predecessor Enrique Peña Nieto, who opened in 2013 Mexico's oil and gas sector to private investment for the first time in seven decades.

Six months into office, the populist left-wing President López Obrador now blasts the energy reform as a "failure" and vows not to call new bidding rounds for foreign oil companies for oil exploration and production in Mexico unless those companies show results, because currently they are not investing and not producing.

Two weeks into office, López Obrador suspended in December 2018 new oil auctions for three years. Last week, Mexico's energy regulator CNH also canceled an auction to pick foreign partners for Mexican state energy giant Pemex scheduled for October.

López Obrador seeks a greater role for Pemex in reversing the downward trend in Mexican oil production and is criticizing the energy reform and the foreign oil firms for failing to do so, probably ignoring the fact that lead times between awarding contracts to drilling for oil to finding oil—which, by the way, foreign firms did — to start up production are measured in years, not months.

Energy reform

After the 2013 energy reform, Mexico held several successful auctions attracting international majors to its oil industry. Some world-class oil discoveries in shallow waters stoked investor appetite, which López Obrador is now cooling with the three-year auction halt, demands for swift start of production, and a pledge not to hold any new auction until he sees results.

The new president's energy policies are alienating foreign oil majors and are creating an uncertain—to say the least—investment climate in Mexico's oil industry.



Analysts and credit rating agencies doubt that Mexico will succeed reversing its oil production decline by entrusting this effort to the most indebted oil company in the world — state-held Pemex, which the government continues to support with tax rate cuts and tax breaks, but which weighs on the government's finances because of its deteriorating credit profile.

Pemex's crude oil production continues to decline — according to Pemex figures, its production averaged 1.813 million bpd in 2018. This year, between January and April, crude output averaged 1.672 million bpd. To compare, Pemex's crude oil production averaged 2.429 million bpd in 2014, falling to 1.948 million bpd in 2017.

López Obrador and Pemex have grand plans for reversing the decline, with the government coming to the rescue of Pemex, as the oil firm itself said in December. A new strategic plan aims to guarantee the "country's energy security and sovereignty" and targets to raise crude oil production to 2.48 million bpd by the end of this administration's term in office — the end of 2024.

While the government touts 'energy independence' and vows increased Pemex investments in Mexico's oil sector, credit rating agencies Moody's and Fitch warned earlier this month that the state oil firm would see further negative cash flows and decline in production and reserves due to a serious underinvestment in the upstream.

Mexico's ratings

In early June, Fitch Ratings downgraded Pemex's Foreign and Local Currency Issuer Default Ratings (IDRs) to BB+ from BBB-, with a "negative" outlook to reflect the downgrade of Mexico's ratings, which in turn was the result of a "combination of the increased risk to the sovereign's public finances from Pemex's deteriorating credit profile together with ongoing weakness in the macroeconomic outlook, which is exacerbated by external threats from trade tensions, some domestic policy uncertainty and ongoing fiscal constraints."

"Although PEMEX has implemented some cost cutting measure and received moderate tax cuts from Mexico, the company continues to severely underinvest in its upstream business, which could lead to further production and reserves decline. The very high level of transfers from PEMEX to the Mexican government continues to significantly pressure PEMEX's cash flow generation and reinvestment ability and weaken its SCP (stand-alone credit profile)," Fitch said.

On the same day, Moody's changed its outlook on Pemex to "negative" from "stable" to reflect "expectations of ongoing negative free cash flow at PEMEX and declining proved reserves, despite efforts to cut costs and boost capital spending," Pete Speer, Moody's Senior Vice President, said.

"Even with management's plans for costs reductions and efficiency gains, contemplated savings from reduced fuel theft, and support from the government in the form of tax relief and other measures, Moody's still forecasts that PEMEX will generate substantial negative free cash flow in 2019 and 2020 at an oil price assumption of \$55 per barrel for Mexican crude," the agency said.

(Source: oilprice.com)

Cheniere Energy, Inc. stake lowered by Pictet Asset Management Ltd.

Cheniere Energy logo Pictet Asset Management Ltd. lowered its position in Cheniere Energy, Inc. by 99.4% in the 1st quarter, according to its most recent 13F filing with the SEC. The institutional investor owned 80,093 shares of the energy company's stock after selling 12,518,200 shares during the period. Pictet Asset Management Ltd.'s holdings in Cheniere Energy were worth \$5,475,000 as of its most recent SEC filing.

According to mayfieldrecorder.com, several other large investors have also recently made changes to their positions in LNG. Teachers Advisors LLC grew its stake in Cheniere Energy by 5.6% during the third quarter. Teachers Advisors LLC now owns 412,101 shares of the energy company's stock worth \$28,637,000 after buying an additional 21,851 shares during the period. Vanguard Group Inc. grew its stake in Cheniere Energy by 4.8% during the third quarter.

Vanguard Group Inc. now owns 19,315,695 shares of the energy company's stock worth \$1,342,247,000 after buying an additional 890,140 shares during the period. First Manhattan Co. purchased a new stake in Cheniere Energy during the fourth quarter worth approximately \$29,000.

Advisors Asset Management Inc. grew its stake in Cheniere Energy by 51.4% during the fourth quarter. Advisors Asset Management Inc. now owns 40,195 shares of the energy company's stock worth \$2,379,000 after buying an additional 13,652 shares during the period.

China takes moral high ground in face of U.S. power play

GLOBALTIMES — The Sino-US trade dispute is not only a game between representatives of the two countries at the negotiating table, but also a contest between the two sides in the field of international public opinion. In this dispute, which may evolve into a protracted confrontation, China has no choice but to take international justice and law as the criterion. While striving to safeguard its own core interests, China is also committed to international morality.

Over the past year and more, the tactics used by China and the US in the trade war have drawn a sharp contrast, highlighting the new trend of the strategic game between emerging powers and already existing powers in the new era.

China is actively opening to the outside world to reduce trade restrictions, while the US frequently imposes tariffs on other countries. China never threatens other countries, but seeks common interests through negotiations. The US frequently resorts to a maximum pressure approach. China respects the international system and acts in accordance with the principles of justice. The US does not obey rules. China respects the other's concerns about economic interests, while the US only considers its own interests. China has resolutely defended and safeguarded the basic principles of the WTO and put forward a reform plan. The US threatened to withdraw from the WTO to act according to its will.

Uncle Sam, which prides itself on international justice and law, arrogantly put "America First" above international justice and law. Closing the door for selfish gain, Washington is slipping from the moral high ground. China adheres to principles, is calm and rational, pursues fairness and justice, opens the door to common prosperity and cooperation, and presents itself as a responsible major country.

Theodore Roosevelt once said, "If we are to be a really great people, we must strive in good faith to play a great part in the world." The use of unilateralism to force opponents to surrender has caused the biggest blow to the international free trade system since the end of the Cold War. At this time, it has become the common responsibility of the international community to work together to consolidate and improve the existing international economic and trade system so that it is fairer and more reasonable and not hijacked by the US.

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Merkel's late warning

Chancellor of Germany says of Neo-Nazism!

By saeed Sobhani

TEHRAN — The growth of extreme currents in Europe seems to have led to concerns and discontent among people such as German Chancellor Angela Merkel. This is while Berlin should not hide its role in this crisis. This social excitement has now become a "political demand" in the West. The dissatisfaction of European citizens with their governments has caused them to explicitly demand the return to the twentieth century and the time before the formation of United Europe.

Obviously, in this situation, "Crossing the traditional parties" would become a general demand in the West. Under such circumstances, Merkel's and other European leaders' warnings about the return to the twentieth century and the time before the formation of United Europe simply means the inability of the Eurozone authorities in preventing the Right-extremism in the West.

Ultimately, European security and political authorities must respond to the free-riding of nationalist, extremist, anti-Islam and anti-immigration groups. European officials should be responsive to the extreme activity of these extremist groups over the past decades.

Merkel says neo-Nazis must be tackled "without taboos"

As AFP reported, Chancellor Angela Merkel on Saturday said Germany must resist neo-Nazis "without any taboos" following the killing of a local politician by a suspected right-wing extremist. Such violence "must be resisted from the outset and without any taboos," Merkel said during an address to the Protestant Church Congress in the western city of Dortmund. "This is why



the state is called upon (to act) at all levels and the federal government takes this very, very seriously," said Merkel.

Her remarks came days after police arrested an alleged neo-Nazi for shooting dead Kassel city local politician Walter Lübcke -- Merkel's fellow Christian Democrat -- at his home in the western town on June 2. The 45-year-old killer has allegedly blamed his action on his anger at an influx of refugees and migrants to Germany. Several other German politicians believed sympathetic to the migrant cause have been threatened, and that, coupled with the Lübcke shooting, prompted Merkel to speak out. "This is not just a terrible act but also a major challenge for us to examine on all fronts where there are extreme-right tendencies," said Merkel.

Hours before her speech, Foreign Minister Heiko Maas had warned on Twitter that "Germany has a terrorism problem." "We have more

than 12,000 violent rightwing extremists in our country," said Maas, lamenting that 450 of them were able to stay underground "even though they are the subject of an arrest warrant."

Maas, a Social Democrat coalition partner of Merkel, said Germans had to call out extremist behaviour for what it is and said they must "not concede a millimetre to enemies of freedom."

Interior Minister Horst Seehofer meanwhile warned of a "very dangerous development" and said the government would be looking at ways of placing restrictions on the far right. "This killing moves me to do everything possible to reinforce security," Seehofer, a member of the Christian Democrats' conservative partner the Christian Social Union, told the Funke media group in an interview. One mooted restriction is curbing the right to express extremist views online and making them subject to legal action for "inciting hatred."

Seehofer said Berlin would assess how constitutionally it might take even tougher measures and deprive some people of their basic rights. "Ours is the ministry in charge of questions touching on the constitution. We shall seriously examine the possibilities," Seehofer told Funke.

Peter Tauber, a Merkel ally and former CDU general secretary, urged that "enemies of the constitution" should be deprived of certain rights including to express their views publicly and to hold meetings.

Far-right extremism suspected in Merkel ally's murder

Financial Time reported German prosecutors said the man suspected of murdering a regional politician this month was a far-right extremist, in a finding that is likely to heighten concerns over the threat posed by neo-Nazis and other far-right groups in the country. Walter Lübcke, a member of Angela Merkel's Christian Democrats and a prominent supporter of her refugee policy, was found dead at his home in the central city of Kassel on June 2, sparking alarm across the political spectrum. Police said he was apparently killed by a single shot to the head from close range.

On Monday the federal prosecutors office, based in Karlsruhe, said it had taken over the probe into Lübcke's death due to the "special gravity" of the crime. "Based on the current state of the investigation we assume that there is a rightwing extremist background to this crime. This [assumption] is based on the previous life of the accused and on the opinions and views he has voiced in public," a spokesman said.

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In Presence of Energy Minister:

Wastewater Conveyance Operations Start from Wastewater Treatment Plant to EMSCO



Plan for the transfer of wastewater from Mobarakeh Wastewater Treatment Plant to Esfahan's Mobarakeh Steel Company (EMSCO) kicked off in the presence of Minister of Energy Reza Ardakanian.

This giant plan was launched with the investment between Esfahan Water and Wastewater Company and Esfahan's Mobarakeh Steel Company (EMSCO) as joint venture, costing 70 billion tomans.

With its huge investment made in this national plan, Esfahan's Mobarakeh Steel Company took a giant stride in line with boosting public health, preserving environment and reducing water requirements of steel industry from Zayandehroud.

■ EMSCO Accounts for 50% Share of Steel Production in Country

For this purpose, a prestigious ceremony was held in the presence of Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian, deputies and officials of the Ministry of Energy, governor general of Isfahan province and also a number of provincial officials.

For his part, Hamid-Reza Azimian Managing Director of Esfahan's Mobarakeh Steel Company (EMSCO) said, "with its 50% share of 24-million tons of steel production capacity in the country, EMSCO is the second TSE-paneled company and is the sole producer of various types of steel sheets in the country."

EMSCO accounts for 50% steel production share in the country, he said, adding, "of total 24 million tons of steel produced in the country, half of this share is produced by EMSCO."

Many producers use products of EMSCO across the country, he said, adding, "EMSCO's products are forwarded and transported to all parts of the country."

Azimian pointed to the key role of his company in the field of economy and reiterated, "EMSCO pays about 1,500 billion tomans worth of tax annually."

Turning to the activity of EMSCO in the recent three decades, he added, "in this three decades of activity, the company has faced water shortage problem, so that the company has reduced water consumption to the least possible amount since 2001 using water recycling methods, etc."

■ Using Wastewater of Surrounding Cities Reduces Water Requirement of EMSCO to Zayandehroud

Azimian pointed to the ways of saving water in EMSCO and added, "in line with saving water consumption, transfer of wastewater of nine surrounding cities to Mobarakeh and using it has been put atop agenda in cooperation with Isfahan Water and Wastewater Company."

Today, "we are witnessing the inauguration of this important project and certainly, inauguration of this project will play a leading role in reducing water requirements to Zayandehroud."

Elsewhere in his remarks, CEO of EMSCO added, "presently, 50 percent of this giant project has been implemented and it is hoped that this project will be fully put into operation by the yearend."



■ Kouhrang Tunnel 3 Not Have any Problem in Credit Terms

Managing Director of Esfahan's Mobarakeh Steel Company 9EMSCO) pointed to the support of this company from water transfer projects of this province and added, "in line with fulfilling its social responsibilities, the company has undertaken about 480 billion tomans worth of credit for the completion of dam project of Kouhrang Tunnel 3, 64 billion tomans of which has been paid up to the present time."

Kouhrang Tunnel Dam Project 3 has not yet faced any problem in terms of credit, he said, adding, "this project will not have any problem in terms of credit. As soon as the financial report of Isfahan Regional Water Company is submitted, the remaining credit will be paid."

Turning to the payment of about 120 billion tomans worth of credits for water shortage damages in the province, he said, "government expects EMSCO not to stop production, so that industrial management and personnel of the company make their utmost efforts to continue construction operation of this project."

■ EMSCO, One of Very Important Industrial Complexes in Production and Generation of Employment

Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian was the next speaker who appreciated salient measures of Esfahan's Mobarakeh Steel Company (EMSCO) in the field of production and environmental measures and added, "EMSCO is one of the very important industrial and production units in the fields of production and generation of employment in the country."

It is hoped that water required in this industry will be supplied optimally, he added.



Ardakanian seized this opportunity to express his special thanks to the functionaries and engineers for implementation of this important and influential project and added, "it water is used optimally and properly, we can have stable and consecutive life even in various climatic conditions. Water is source of life."

Presently, consumption rate of sanitary and drinking water of the country stands at about 6.5 billion cubic meter annually while the volume of produced wastewater stands at 4.3 billion cubic meters, he added.

■ Efforts Underway to Remove Water Shortage Problem of EMSCO

Elsewhere in his remarks, Energy Minister Ardakanian added, "the Ministry of Energy will make its utmost effort to remove water shortage problem of this industrial and production unit."

Not abandonment of wastewater in nature, not exposing public health to risk and protection of environment have been cited as salient advantages of wastewater treatment in industry, Ardakanian reiterated.

■ Plan on Transfer of Wastewater to EMSCO, Energy Ministry's Important Project

Managing director of Isfahan Water and Wastewater Company Hashem Amini was the next speaker who pointed to the wastewater transfer plan from wastewater treatment plant to EMSCO as important projects of the Energy Ministry and added, "the issue of wastewater of cities at the margin of Zayandehroud has always been a serious sanitary and environmental challenge on the one hand and lack of existence of governmental resources for the implementation of these projects on the other hand."

Accordingly, after necessary follow



ups made and given the strategy of compatibility with water shortage at the Ministry of Energy, the subject of recycling and using wastewaters started in EMSCO.

Amini added, "under a MoU inked with EMSCO, construction operation for treatment and recycling wastewater project started in nine cities within the framework of buyback contract."

Upon the conclusion of this contract, "we managed to terminate projects in the short period," he stressed.

He pointed to the wastewater production volume in Isfahan province and announced, "presently, 172 million cubic meter wastewater is produced in Isfahan which is equal to 5,450 lit./second."

Of this produced wastewater, 16 million cubic meters of water is transferred to Esfahan's Mobarakeh Steel Company (EMSCO), he added.

■ EMSCO Invests 1,200 Billion Rials for Construction of Mobarakeh and Lenjan Sewage Network

With its investment in construction of wastewater and sewage

network in Mobarakeh district, Esfahan's Mobarakeh Steel Company (EMSCO) managed to allocate wastewater of this region to this industrial and production unit within the framework of buyback contract inked with Isfahan Water and Wastewater Company.

In 2013, EMSCO inked a contract with Isfahan Water and Wastewater Company, costing 1,200 billion rials, within the framework of buyback contract, based on which, it was supposed that approx. 500 km sewage network will be launched in the cities of Mobarakeh and Lenjan."

Elsewhere in his remarks, Amini pointed to the construction of sewage network in the cities of Dizicheh, Zibashahr and Talkhouncheh and reiterated, "with the consultations made in 2017 in the presence of the then minister of energy, construction operation of sewage network of these cities, as long as 167 was put atop agenda in the cities of Dizicheh and Zibashahr, costing 559 billion rials."

If this project is put into operation, sewage wastewater will be provided available to EMSCO, he said, adding, "as a matter of fact, sewage wastewater is considered as a water resource and is used in industry."

Governor General of Isfahan Province Abbas Rezaei was the last speaker who said, "to attain sustainable development, there is no other way other than taking advantage of high capacity of private sector."

For his part, Zahra Saeedi representative of people of Mobarakeh in the Parliament said, "projects related to the Energy Ministry have been prioritized in the Parliament and effective steps have been taken in this regard."



The flaw in Tulsi Gabbard's foreign policy

By Dave DeCamp

ANTIWAR —Earlier this month Congresswoman and 2020 presidential hopeful Tulsi Gabbard hosted a town hall in New York City, one of the many Democrats hoping to make a run against President Trump. What sets Gabbard apart from the other Democrats is she decided to make foreign policy her central issue on the campaign trail.

A big proponent of diplomacy, Gabbard is known for her controversial trip to Syria in 2017, where she met with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Her trip to Syria got her negative attention from the mainstream media, and positive attention from the antiwar crowd. She introduced a bill to the floor of Congress called "The Stop Arming Terrorists Act," being one of the only members of Congress to recognize the U.S. arming of violent jihadists in Syria.

Gabbard is an Iraq War veteran, and still a member of the National Guard, holding the rank of Major. She draws upon her experience in Iraq when she talks about ending and preventing more costly regime change wars. Gabbard was quick to speak out about the situation in Venezuela, on Julian Assange and escalating tensions with Iran. The Congresswoman does not wait around to see what her peers say to make sure she doesn't speak out of line, she has her convictions and stick to them.

But there is one major flaw in Gabbard's rhetoric and policy, the way she views the War on Terror. Her most well-known quote on it saying, "when it comes to the war against terrorists, I'm a hawk," which she follows up with, "When it comes to counterproductive wars of regime change, I'm a dove."

One member of the audience at the town hall asked Gabbard about that quote and expressed his concern with it, wondering why she considers the war on terror and regime change wars so different. She answered, "When I say that I'm a hawk on this war on terror against groups like al-Qaeda and ISIS, I believe that we have to be tough and defeat that threat in order to keep the American people safe. That's a fact."

After her vague answer, she went on to talking about her role in trying to end the war in Yemen, quickly going off topic. She has said in many interviews that we need to defeat the threat these terrorist groups pose to the U.S., but has never gone further in detail than naming a few terrorist groups.

Unfortunately, when interviewed by the mainstream media, Gabbard doesn't get much of a chance to get into the details of her foreign policy. She's usually just called an Assad apologist or gets grilled about homophobic statements she made



years ago, which she has apologized for many times. In one interview on Morning Joe she even had to explain to the hosts that US troops in Syria were not fighting Assad's forces.

Back in May, Gabbard was interviewed by the Intercept's Glenn Greenwald. One of the first things discussed in the interview was the recent release of the Mueller report, which Gabbard had this to say, "The Mueller Report made clear that there was no evidence of collusion." This was a refreshing thing to hear a Democratic member of Congress say. Greenwald then went on to press Gabbard about her foreign policy, specifically her views on terrorism and Islam, he asked, "What is your view of Islam and Muslims in general, and the threat that they pose relative to other threats to US security?" Gabbard disagreed with the framing of his question, saying it implied she believes people who practice Islam pose a threat.

"I've been very specific in pointing out the ideology that drives terrorist groups...and how important it is to us to understand that ideology," Greenwald asks what ideology she is talking about, "That most extreme, most intolerant, twisted form of Islam known as Wahhabi Salafist ideology, that basically preaches exclusivism...that if you do not adhere to that ideology, you will be killed, or raped or tortured." It appears Gabbard doesn't believe people who practice Islam are a threat, just those who practice this

specific type.

Greenwald asked the question anybody who's antiwar would ask, "Is what is fueling this violence, in your view based on that 'twisted' form of Islam, or is it driven and fueled by US interference in that region?" With little hesitation Gabbard responded, "It's driven by this ideology." She added, "there is also a link to United States regime change wars that have strengthened these terrorist groups." Her reference to regime change wars does not account for any US intervention in the Middle East before September 11th 2001. And the fact is, as both of Osama bin Laden's fatwas made clear, it was US intervention that drove him to declare war on the US.

Greenwald did mention that bin Laden said his motivation were things like, sanctions on Iraq, US military bases in Saudi Arabia and US aid to Israel, to which Gabbard responded, "Like I said, I think the two are related," although the only intervention Gabbard did bring up before Greenwald pointed these things out, was all post September 11th. Gabbard seems to believe we were attacked on September 11th because these certain types of Muslims don't like our way of life and they think anybody that doesn't practice their strict form of Islam should be killed.

Anybody who has studied the religion of Islam, knows that these terrorist groups contradict even the most extreme forms of the religion. Although religious texts

Earlier this month Congresswoman and 2020 presidential hopeful Tulsi Gabbard hosted a town hall in New York City, one of the many Democrats hoping to make a run against President Trump. What sets Gabbard apart from the other Democrats is she decided to make foreign policy her central issue on the campaign trail.

UN should stop rising civilian deaths in Yemen

TEHRAN (FNA) — Reports from the ground highlight the deepening crisis for Yemen's 26 million civilians, largely forgotten and caught in the cross-chairs of a protracted conflict that has had calamitous consequences for everyone in the Middle East. This is while some 16 million people were already in need of humanitarian assistance before the civil war began in 2015.

The present state of perdition has spread to all parts of the impoverished country as well. Hospitals, schools, airports and markets have all been damaged or destroyed, with reports of serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed by Saudi Arabia and its cohorts.

Whatever the reality, people are still dying and the blockade and long-term neglect of basic services has become a major factor in the crisis. Yemen is facing serious humanitarian crisis and immediate action is needed by the United Nations (UN) and the international civil society to end the bloodcurdling war.

According to new data by the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED), more than 91,000 people have been killed. These appalling numbers are estimates rather than exact counts. They serve as a warning, documenting the anguish Yemenis have endured thus far. War happy parties and war profiteers cynically boast about 'precision' warfare and 'surgical' strikes that distinguish between fighters and civilians. But the reality is that civilians are still routinely targeted where they live, work, study, and seek medical care.

Beyond the deaths and misery, the declaration of a ceasefire in the port city of Hodeidah as part of the UN-backed Stockholm Agreement has to some extent contributed to a partial drop in reported fatalities, but it's not enough. Real-time data suggest there should be pressure on the Saudi-led coalition to stop nationwide concentrated anti-civilian violence, as other fronts like Ad Dali, Hajjah and Taiz continue to experience heavy casualties under the Saudis' lethal air strikes.

Keep in mind as well that a collapse in health



and waste management services due to fighting has led to contamination, health risks, famine and cholera outbreak, posing a serious challenge not only for aid workers and civilians in affected areas but also for those who wish to return. The need for the UN aid agencies to offer medical assistance to these blockaded communities is no more than ever urgent. The shortage of medicine, drinking water contaminated by rotting garbage, devastated sewage systems and water filtration plants continue to exacerbate the cholera epidemic.

The devastation caused by the illegal war has also deprived Yemenis not just of their livelihoods but of the very tools they would need to launch a major reconstruction effort to rebuild the poorest country in the Arab world. The Middle Eastern society is now an economic basket case, rivaling the most desperate countries in the world.

By the standards of international humanitarian law, and before this human tragedy of the first order spirals out of control and becomes a point of no return, the UN Security Council must resolve the protracted conflict irrespective of regional politics and the US-backed Saudi coalition's new ground invasion proposals, airstrikes, clues and suggestions of every sort.

The Security Council should intervene and use the leverage it has to stop the violence and air strikes that pay scant heed to defenseless civilians, including people attending weddings and funerals. Concrete action is needed to re-

verse course and effectively protect millions who rely on UN emergency food aid to survive. The international community should hang its head in shame to say otherwise.

In this case, there is no need for outside powers like the US to overreact and seek to intervene. Their grim role only stands to antagonize the local population, exacerbate the situation and inject a stronger sectarian tone into the conflict, while threatening to push Yemen closer to collapse.

If Iraq and Syria are a guide, the Saudi-led coalition will come out on the losing side. Their guns, drone attacks and airstrikes will not change the situation on the ground. They are risking too much on a pointless gambit, all but assuring that sectarianism, violence and insecurity within the country and beyond continues apace, making sure Yemen remains a failed state and a fertile ground for terrorist groups for many decades to come. In a general sense, the only option has to be a negotiated solution, a position also shared by the UN. The Saudi-backed parties to the conflict should carry out political dialogue, as their fighting produces more bloodshed, more civilian deaths and more refugees.

This is a great test for the conscience of the world. The world has to reject the glorification of this immoral violence before it engulfs the entire region and before many more civilians are killed. The world must force war happy Saudis and American merchants of death to stop making lies sound truthful and murder respectable, accept and implement a nationwide cessation of the savage conflict and the resumption of UN-led ceasefire peace talks.

The time is now to force the Saud-led coalition and factions as well as their western backers into compliance with international humanitarian law and accountability. For the Security Council, this means being more consistent in how it fully addresses protection concerns, civilian lives and livelihoods. Its prompt decisions are needed now and not tomorrow, as they are crucial for statewide peace, security and civilian protection.

Trump has a moment of sanity that begs for continuance

1 → The Neocons warmongers and their supporters in the U.S. are upset Trump did not pull the trigger last week. War alone gives them purpose amid their manifold inadequacies, as journalist Glen Greenwald has opined. And what is even more incredible is that they have chosen to support what is probably the most unpopular (terrorist) organization to Iranians, the MEK, to supplant Iran's current leaders. This alone should tell the world that the U.S. isn't looking for better leadership for Iran's nearly 90 million people, but merely for Iran to be overwhelmed by internal chaos.



Trump may in time do something precipitous because he is under tremendous pressure. As said, it's either the firing of Neocons like John Bolton and Mike Pompeo...or Trump succumbs to their pressure ... and ultimately and foolishly loses any chance he has to win a second term in the White House, too, which is his primary aim. And one must not forget Trump's original, possibly fatal mistake: groveling to the demands of Jewish billionaires in the U.S. who coughed up millions of dollars to support Trump and the GOP, provided he would tear up the JCPOA.

If fact, if Trump had not scuttled U.S. participation in Obama's signature foreign policy achievement on Zionist demand, none of what's happening now would ever have occurred. At bottom, Trump insofar as he attacks Iran militarily, could set off a chain of events that could destroy the U.S. economy and even collapse the world's banking system, leading to an economic depression like no other. And then atop all this is the threat of a war that becomes a world war.

And meanwhile, Israeli military analysts are apparently afraid that a WEAK U.S. attack on Iran could precipitate an Iranian attack on Israeli interests. What could they possibly be hinting at? The necessity of a nuclear attack on Iran? This, of course, is worrisome, but you cannot discount some ultimate Zionist or Israeli depravity. Zionist Sheldon Adelson has already said not long ago that the U.S. ought to nuke some under populated part of Iran as a warning.

The great tragedy is that for 60 years the U.S. has been hostile to Iran and its people, a hostility which at the beginning of it in the 1950s was largely due to the fact that Iran had and still retains an abundance of natural resources. The creation of an independent-minded Islamic Republic 40 years ago, in part the result of previous U.S. hostility, only added to the blind refusal of the U.S. to recognize Iran for what it has been for millennia.

A unique land and culture and people which though many political iterations have stood the test of time that few other countries have ever achieved. It is impossible to imagine the U.S. will ever achieve nearly as much, or give the world so much as Iran has over the millennia. The U.S. "empire" looks to be but a brief, dull flash in the pan given its greed and hubris and militancy this century.

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National Iranian Drilling Company	3,205,139	Tender No.: FP/04-97/053 Indet No.: 08-22-9745138	18,801,640,000
Qualitative evaluation of tenderers			
Method	£ Based on minimum scoring (60 points) made in award criterion reflected in the tenderers pre-qualification forms. 1- Applicants which have more than 4 in process contacts with NIDC are not allowed to participate in this tender. Applicants which have more than 2 in process contacts with NIDC in similar subject (exclusively same subject) are not allowed to participate in another tender		
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The Tehran Times new pocket-sized glossary is now available on the market. The reader-friendly is a rich source of the most common journalistic terminology collected by the daily's retired staff.

It can benefit a wide range of tastes from students to professional journalists. Persian equivalents have been given for all entries, including idioms and expressions. The glossary also includes example sentences for entries the authors thought it would be a bit difficult to learn.

For more information contact:

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Astronomers searching for alien life release biggest set of data in history

Astronomers say they are releasing the biggest set of data ever made public in the search for alien life.

Researchers from Breakthrough Listen – a \$100 million alien-hunting project launched by luminaries including Stephen Hawking – says it has completed the «most comprehensive and sensitive» search for signatures of alien technology ever performed.

And it will release the data from its search for alien life in the hope that others might be able to find information inside of it, its researchers say. The dump comprises one petabyte of radio and optical telescope data.

The Breakthrough Listen team working at the University of California, Berkeley's SETI Research Center say they have been working on a number of techniques that are designed to spot «technosignatures» elsewhere in the universe. Those signals might indicate the use of technology such as transmitters or propulsion devices on other worlds beyond Earth, perhaps built by alien civilizations.



Such technosignatures might be powerful signals that are sent over only a limited range of radio frequencies, or bright lasers shooting through the universe.

Researchers have also developed new algorithms that will allow them to better understanding unexplained astrophysical phenomena, they said.

The astronomers are yet to find anything in that data, despite the intense work. But its release could lead to further breakthroughs, they hope, and will help inform future work as they continue to refine their work.

“This data release is a tremendous milestone for the Breakthrough Listen team,” said Danny Price, the Breakthrough Listen Project Scientist for the Parkes observatory in Australia, in a statement.

“We scoured thousands of hours of observations of nearby stars, across billions of frequency channels. We found no evidence of artificial signals from beyond Earth, but this doesn't mean there isn't intelligent life out there: we may just not have looked in the right place yet, or peered deep enough to detect faint signals.”

The data is being released through a devoted page on the University of California, Berkeley's website. Papers describing the methods for harvesting it have also been uploaded to that page as well as being submitted to astrophysics journals.

(Source: The Independent)

Northern lights’ ‘social networking’ reveals true scale of magnetic storms

Magnetic disturbances caused by phenomena like the northern lights can be tracked by a ‘social network’ of ground-based instruments, according to a new study from the University of Warwick.

The researchers, led by Professor Sandra Chapman from the University's Department of Physics, have for the first time characterized the observations from over 100 ground based magnetometers in terms of a time-varying directed network of connections. They monitored the development of geomagnetic substorms using the same mathematics used to study social networks. The magnetometers ‘befriend’ one another when they see the same signal of a propagating disturbance.



The research, published in the journal Geophysical Research Letters, opens up the opportunity to develop more accurate models of substorms and helps us to understand the impact of space weather on our electrical and communication systems.

The northern lights, or Aurora Borealis, occur when charged particles from our Sun bombard the Earth's magnetic field. This stores up energy like a battery which it then releases, creating large-scale electrical currents in the ionosphere which generate disturbances of magnetic fields on the ground. Small versions of these substorms are common, but occasionally larger storms will occur that can have a larger impact.

Using over 100 magnetometers that form the SuperMAG Initiative led by Dr Jesper Gjerloev, the researchers used the mathematical concepts from network science to monitor the development of substorms in the arctic auroral region. As a substorm develops and the electrical current in the ionosphere grows, individual magnetometers will register a change in the magnetic field. Pairs of magnetometers became linked when their measurements correlated with each other, expanding their network of ‘friends’ and allowing the researchers to monitor how the auroral disturbance from the substorm forms and propagates, and how quickly.

Substorms from the Aurora Borealis create an electrical current in the atmosphere that is echoed at ground level. Localized changes in the Earth's magnetic field can disrupt power lines, electronic and communications systems and technologies such as GPS. They are just one form of space weather that affects our planet on a constant basis.

Professor Sandra Chapman from the University of Warwick Department of Physics said: “When talking about space weather, it is useful to provide a single number or rating that indicates how severe it is. To do this, we need to capture the full behavior of how intense the event is, how widespread spatially, and how rapidly it is changing. Our aim is to use network science to develop useful parameters that do this, encapsulating all the information from 100+ observations.

“SuperMAG is a great example of how essential international co-operation is to solve problems like space weather that are on a planetary scale, using data from stations located in all the countries that about the Arctic Circle.”

(Source: Science Daily)

Plate tectonics may have triggered Cambrian explosion



New research suggests the dramatic increase in biodiversity known as the Cambrian explosion was triggered by a massive shift in global plate tectonics.

The Cambrian explosion began 500 million years ago and lasted just 13 million years. During the period, almost all major animal phyla emerged. For decades, scientists have been working to unravel the mysteries of this extraordinary evolutionary outburst.

Most scientists agree that a sudden rise in oxygen levels on Earth inspired the diversification of animal life. Now, research suggests a shift in tectonic dynamics may explain the increase in oxygen levels.

“One of the great dilemmas originally recognized by Darwin is why complex life, in the form of fossil animals, appeared so abruptly in what is now known as the Cambrian explosion,” Tim Lenton, a professor at the University of Exeter's Global Systems Institute, said in a news release. “Many studies have suggested this was linked to a rise in oxygen levels -- but without a clear cause for such a rise, or any attempt to quantify it.”

Some 550 million years ago, as the supercontinent Gondwana coalesced, the collision of continental and oceanic tectonic plates fueled the formation of a chain of volcanoes stretching thousands of miles long. The uptick in volcanic activity enabled the degassing of carbon dioxide

from ancient sedimentary rocks.

According to the new study, published this week in the journal Nature Communications, as volcanoes released increasing levels of CO2 into the atmosphere, the planet warmed. Higher temperatures accelerated the weathering of continental rocks, leaching phosphorus into Earth's oceans. The nutrient fertilized photosynthesizing microbes, which released growing levels of oxygen.

Scientists designed a sophisticated biogeochemical model to confirm the plausibility of the chain of events. The simulations predicted the rise in oxygen levels as a result of increased volcanic activity. The oxygen increase predicted by the model was sufficient to explain the rise in biodiversity.

“What is particularly compelling about this research is that not only does the model predict a rise in oxygen to levels estimated to be necessary to support the large, mobile, predatory animal life of the Cambrian, but the model predictions also show strong agreement with existing geochemical evidence,” said former Exeter grad student Josh Williams, now working toward his PhD at the University of Edinburgh.

“It is remarkable to think that our oldest animal ancestors -- and therefore all of us -- may owe our existence, in part, to an unusual episode of plate tectonics over half a billion years ago” added Lenton.

(Source: UPI)

Scientists describe “super-weird” whale: first confirmed beluga-narwhal hybrid



A mysterious whale skull came from the first and only known hybrid of a beluga and a narwhal, a new study finds.

An Inuit hunter caught three unusual whales off the coast of western Greenland in the mid-1980s, donating the skull from one of his prey to the Natural History Museum of Denmark in 1990. Only two toothed whale species are found in arctic waters year-round -- the white beluga whale, and the narwhal. The latter is best known for the long tusks sported by its males, and rarely females that resemble unicorn horns. Oddly, the whales the hunter caught had pectoral flippers like those of belugas but a tail shaped like that of a narwhal.

In addition, whereas belugas have up to 40 blunt peg-like teeth in both jaws and narwhals have no teeth in their lower jaws, the skull the hunter donated had pointed teeth on its lower jaw. “The skull just looks super-weird,” said study senior author Eline Lorenzen, an evolutionary biologist at the University of Copenhagen in Denmark.

The scientists compared DNA from the skull's teeth with that from eight live belugas and eight live narwhals from the same area in western Greenland where the skull was found. Their analysis suggested the specimen was 54 percent beluga and 46 percent narwhal.

By investigating the chromosomes

detected in the specimen, the scientists deduced it was male. The DNA of the mitochondria, which are inherited solely from females, suggested the hybrid's mother was a narwhal.

Prior work discovered hybridization is not uncommon between whale species, and researchers have previously spotted belugas among pods of narwhals and vice versa. Moreover, both species are 3.5 to 5.5 meters long, and mate in the spring as the sea ice breaks up and they migrate toward their summering grounds.

Oddly, the hybrid possessed a skull larger than either a beluga's or narwhal's. Gigantism is not unusual in hybrids such as ligers -- hybrids of a male lion and female tiger -- “perhaps because of how genes turn off when two different species hybridize,” Lorenzen said.

As climate change reduces arctic sea ice, belugas and narwhals may come in contact more often, and so more interbreeding might occur, Lorenzen said. The researchers are now examining dozens of beluga and narwhal bones up to 50,000 years in age to find any prior traces of interbreeding. “It would surprise me if the only hybrid between belugas and narwhals happened to end up in a natural history museum,” Lorenzen said. “There must be more.”

(Source: Inside Science)

Scientists discover an ‘unexpectedly simple’ formula behind the nature of water drops

Scientists have discovered an unexpectedly simple formula that governs one of the most seemingly unknowable limits in physics: determining how much of an electric field a water droplet can withstand before it will burst.

This infinitesimal phenomenon has been studied by physicists for decades, but while the overall concept may be easy to imagine, discerning the mathematical relationships that underpin such electrified explosions has been anything but.

Now that it's been figured out, scientists say this one formula could lead to new advancements in everything from space propulsion to mass spectrometry, high-resolution printing, air purification, molecular analysis, and more.

“Before our result, engineers and scientists had to perform computationally intensive simulations to assess the stability of an electrified droplet,” explains mechanical engineering and physics graduate student Justin Beroz from MIT.

“With our equation, one can predict this behavior immediately, with a simple paper-and-pencil calculation.”

It's not something non-physicists spend a lot of time thinking about, but the phenomenon Beroz and his team have characterized in their new paper is something that takes place all the time in the real world, even if it's mostly invisible to people.

It happens when raindrops fall through the sky and are affected by the electric fields generated by storm clouds, or if they're exposed to electric fields from other sources, such as power lines.

When this occurs, the surface tension that holds water molecules together in a contained spherical form can lose its



hold on the H2O, with the electrical field effectively pulling outward on the droplet as charge builds up on its surface.

In recent times, behaviors like this have been leveraged by microfluidics researchers to manipulate and move droplets around with electrical fields, but scientists still had no easy way of calculating the stability limit: the theoretical threshold where droplets of water either remain whole or burst in response to such electrical stresses.

“At some point, if the electric field is strong enough, the droplet can't find a shape that balances the electrical force,” Beroz says, “and at that point, it becomes unstable and bursts.”

Now, it looks like we've finally figured it out.

In experiments, Beroz and his team observed the behavior of water droplets dispensed onto an electrified metal plate, filming the results with a high-speed camera.

By focusing on the exact moment before the electric field

forced the droplet to burst – and observing its critical stable shape in that instant – the researchers discovered the stability limit is governed by a power law that can explain the burst threshold of droplets on a surface (whether stationary or sliding) or free-floating in the air.

According to the researchers, the power law formula they found primarily revolves around the droplet's volume and radius – whereas previous theoretical approaches had looked to droplet height (and radius) to calculate the stability limit.

“For the last 100 years, the convention was to choose height,” Beroz says.

“But as a droplet deforms, its height changes, and therefore the mathematical complexity of the problem is inherent in the height. On the other hand, a droplet's volume remains fixed regardless of how it deforms in the electric field.”

With the new equation, the team says that as long as you know four of five necessary parameters – droplet surface tension, electric field strength, and air electric permittivity, in addition to volume and radius – you can always calculate the fifth parameter, and therefore figure out the stability limit.

It's an achievement that's been a long time coming, and one that could overhaul our theoretical understanding in several areas of science, leading to potential advancements in industrial processes such as electrospinning, electrostatic filtration, and demulsification.

“From a theoretical point of view, it was an unexpectedly simple result given the mathematical complexity of the problem,” Beroz says.

(Source: sciencealert.com)

Earthquake swarms feed molten rock to newly forming volcanoes

An earthquake swarm is what it sounds like: a lot of earthquakes rumbling across a fault system over a short period of time. The phenomenon is helping researchers uncover the link between sinking tectonic plates and volcanoes.

Recently, researchers discovered a pair of earthquake swarms while surveying the Pacific Ocean's Mariana and Izu-Bonin arc systems. When scientists mapped the swarms' seismic signatures in 3D, they discovered a pipeline of sorts linking the sinking tectonic plates and a pair of magma chambers.

The discovery -- described this week in the journal Earth and Planetary Science Letters -- explains how volcanoes receive molten rock from tectonic activity.

The Mariana and Izu-Bonin arc systems are found along the boundary of two tectonic plates, the Philippine Sea Plate and the Pacific Plate. As the Pacific Plate sinks beneath Earth's mantle, it carries water deep beneath the planet's crust. As the water gets deeper and deeper, the heat and pressure causes the water to become superheated. When it tries to escape, rocks fracture and melt, creating a pipeline through which molten rock can rise.

“In fracking used by the petroleum industry, they drill into the Earth up to a few kilometers deep, and then continue to pump liquid down until the pressure grows and the rocks crack, creating a path for the petroleum or natural gas to flow through the rocks and into a pipe back to the surface,” Lloyd White, earth scientist at University of Wollongong in Australia, said in a news release. “In this case, the tectonic plate carries the water down very deep into the Earth, down to around 200 kilometers below the surface. As the plate goes down it gets hotter and the pressure gets higher, driving water out of subducted plate.”

The new research suggests the subducted water causes rock to fracture and melt, creating the magma itself, as well as to create a path through which the molten rock can travel. The activity also generates a series of small earthquakes, or earthquake swarms.

“It is similar to fracking, but at a much grander scale and completely driven by Earth's natural processes, rather than being human induced,” White said.

Researchers estimate the seismic activity is generated either by the fracturing of rock as superheated water escapes, or as the pipeline collapses once the molten rock has migrated through.

“Geologists have always assumed that the water in this system goes upwards, but we've never had a good way of imaging that,” White said. “These examples -- a freak occurrence that we've stumbled on -- show very clearly where the water must be traveling.”

The new research could help scientists identify the volcanoes that are being supplied with large amounts of molten rock, and are therefore at a greater risk of erupting.

(Source: UPI)

No more passport stamps for foreign nationals visiting Iran

1 → Last November, the Islamic Republic started a pilot project in a select of its airports, issuing electronic visas -- without any entry or exit stamps -- for those traveling to the country, in a bid to facilitate tourist inflow and to cope with sanctions recently reimposed by the U.S.



Iran welcomed some 7.8 million foreign nationals last year, which shows a 52.5 percent increase year on year. The ultimate goal of the Islamic Republic is to attract 20 million foreign tourists annually by 2025.

Parthian-era jars unexpectedly found in western Iran

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** — Workers have accidentally discovered two Parthian-era jars in a western Iranian village while digging to lay natural gas pipes. The clay jars were found in Sardasht rural district, Dezful county, Khuzestan province, Mehr reported on Sunday.



Pipelining operations were immediately stopped for a couple of days before being resumed under the supervision of the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization. CHHTO experts are to compile a comprehensive report on the discovery in the near future. The Parthian Empire (247 BC–224 CE), also known as the Arsacid Empire was a major Iranian political and cultural power which at its height stretched from the northern reaches of the Euphrates, in what is now central-eastern Turkey, to eastern Iran.

ROUND THE GLOBE

Los Glaciares National Park

A World Heritage, Los Glaciares National Park is located in the Southwest of Santa Cruz Province in the Argentine part of Patagonia. Comprised of a National Park and a National Reserve it has a total surface area of 600,000 hectares.



Los Glaciares owes its name to the numerous glaciers covering roughly half of the World Heritage property. Many of these glaciers are fed by the massive South Patagonian Ice Field, the most extensive South American relic of the glaciological processes of the Quaternary Period. In addition, there are impressive glaciers independent of the main ice field. The property therefore constitutes a massive freshwater reservoir. The Upsala, Onelli and Perito Moreno Glaciers calve into the icy and milky waters of the huge Lake Argentino, which is partly included in the property. The most striking sight is the famous Perito Moreno Glacier. This large glacier blocks a narrow channel formed by Lake Argentino thereby raising the water level temporarily. This in turn causes regular thunderous ruptures of the glacier tongue into the lake. Los Glaciares National Park is an extensive and fairly well-conserved sample of several types of Andean-Patagonian Forest, Patagonian Steppe and highly specialized high-altitude vegetation. The property provides comprehensive protection for magnificent examples of the large glaciers of Southern Patagonia, as well as related processes. The remoteness, the harsh environmental conditions of the area and the very low level of atmospheric pollution contribute to the integrity of the property, as do the large, contiguous national parks on the Chilean side next to Los Glaciares National Park.

(Source: UNESCO)

Stepping into Fahraj mosque, one of the oldest mosques in Iran

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** —Standing tall in Iran's Yazd province, Jameh Mosque of Fahraj, which dates over 1400 years, is of great significance as one of the oldest extant mosques in Iran. It represents an important evolutionary stage in mosque construction from very modest materials to wooden roofs on arcades, finally to full scale vaulting with permanent materials. Some archeologists believe that the congregational mosque is the oldest surviving Islamic structure in the country, being constructed following the conquest of Persia (637–651) by Muslims that put an end to the mighty Sasanian Empire (224–651). In Islamic countries, Jameh mosque (in Persian Masjed-e Jameh) is referred to as a large center of community worship and a site for Friday prayer services. Fahraj mosque is located in a town of the same name, some thirty kilometers



east of the city of Yazd. Fahraj lies on an old route that connects Yazd to Bafq and it was an important urban settlement in Sassanid times, known by various names such as Mihrpadeen, Mihrreez, Fahrashan or Pahreh. The Jameh Mosque of Fahraj primarily consists of an internal courtyard, vaulted sanctuary and arcades, and a clay minaret which are essentially built of sun-dried, unfired clay tiles and mud bricks. It is largely built of sun-dried, unfired clay tiles and mud bricks. Its modest internal courtyard is lined with clay tiles and contains a now dry central ablution tank. According to masjed.ir, the internal facades are near symmetrical and consist of three arched bays defined by thick piers, partly relieved by vertical niches. The court's roofline is uninterrupted and a decorative cornice emphasizes horizontality that is

challenged by the mosque's minaret and arched silhouette of barrel vaults over the jamaat khana (main prayer hall). The roofing system is made up of five linear vaults oriented east-west, three of which are interrupted by the central courtyard. Two additional vaults orient north-south, and the roof extends to the mosque's northwest corner. The minaret were added to the mosque later as a lighthouse for caravans around 400 years ago. It features a tapering cylinder with an internal spiral staircase. The mosque design's simplicity and lack of ornamentation have denied it the public attention and preservation efforts deserved by a building emblematic of so pivotal a stage in Iranian Islamic architecture and heritage. However, the mosque represents a little documented innovation in Islamic architecture that was soon lost to the dom-

inant four-iwan prototype patronized by the Seljuks in the eleventh century. Its internal courtyard is lined with clay tiles and contains a now dry central ablution tank. The internal facades are near symmetrical and consist of three arched bays defined by thick piers, partly relieved by vertical niches, according to the Islamic Architecture Community. In the surrounding area, there are a crumbling castle, a hammam (bathhouse) and an ab-anbar (water reservoir) with four badgirs (wind tower or ventilation shaft) used to catch breezes and funnel them down into a building to cool it. The central province of Yazd, is referred to as a "don't miss" destination while traversing Iran. Forests of badgirs (wind catchers), mud-brick houses, atmospheric alleyways and more importantly its hospitable people make it a delightful place to visit.



Russian travel embargo worsens; flights from Georgia banned

After banning Russian airlines from flying to Georgia, Moscow is to stop its southern neighbor's airlines from landing at its airports. Relations slumped this week when anti-Russia protests erupted in Tbilisi. Moscow will prevent the passenger flights of Georgian airlines from landing in Russia, the Transport Ministry said on Saturday, citing security concerns. The move, which begins on July 8, follows an outbreak of anti-Russia protests in central Tbilisi this week triggered by a parliamentary address by a Moscow lawmaker. The Kremlin had said the inward ban was to "ensure Russia's national security and protect Russian nationals from criminal and other unlawful activities." Russian President Vladimir Putin had already ordered a temporary ban on passenger flights from Russia to Georgia in the wake of Thursday's rallies. Travel companies have been advised to stop selling holiday packages to Georgia, while Russian tourists already in the country have been told to return home. The bans echo action Russia took in 2006 on flights and imports of Georgian wine and mineral water when tensions between the countries rose previously.



More than 240 people were injured outside Georgia's parliament on Thursday night when police fired tear gas and rubber bullets at angry protesters. Tens of thousands of people had turned out against the decision to allow the Russian delegation into the legislature. Anti-Russian sentiment still runs high more than a decade after the two nations fought a war in which Georgia effectively lost two large chunks of its territory, South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

Moscow has recognized both as independent states and stationed permanent military bases in each, prompting deep anti-Russian sentiment in Georgia. The country is a popular destination for Russian tourists, who are attracted by its dramatic mountain scenery and its wine. Decrying the Kremlin's travel bans, several Russians said the decisions had little to do with safety concerns. "Tourism in Georgia is on the rise, and the decision has shocked the whole industry," Aleksan Mkrtchyan, head of Pink Elephant, a chain of travel agencies, said in a statement. "This ban is silly," Margarita Semyonova, a 19-year-old Russian student, who visited Georgia last year, told the Agence France-Presse news agency. Elena Chekalova, a prominent chef and culinary blogger, questioned on Facebook: "Why are they deciding for us what we cannot eat, where we cannot fly, who we cannot be friends with?" On Saturday evening, about 1,500 demonstrators assembled outside Georgia's parliament once again; the crowd was expected to grow during the evening.

(Source: DW)

This is the tallest mountain that has never been climbed

You've probably known since elementary school that Mount Everest is the tallest mountain in the world. You heard the stories about intrepid explorers, daring rescues like this one, and you've seen the blockbuster movies. But a lesser-known, and surprising, mountaineering fact is the number of mountain peaks out there that are not as tall as Everest, but that have not been climbed, unlike Everest. Determining which of these is the "tallest" can be tricky business, since it can be difficult to determine exactly where the "top" of a mountain is, and because there's no concrete record of mountains where people have and have not reached the top. But most sources consider a mountain in Bhutan, Gangkhar

Puensum or "White Peak of the Three Spiritual Brothers," to be the highest unclimbed peak in the world. This mountain lies on the border of Bhutan and China and reaches 24,836 feet above sea level. For reference, Mount Everest is 29,029 feet above sea level. If Everest is the tallest mountain in the world and thousands of people have climbed it, why is this shorter mountain still unclimbed? It actually doesn't have much to do with the physical conditions. While scarce rescue services in the area are part of the reason, the primary reason has to do with national law. In this area of Bhutan, local customs consider mountains to be sacred places, home to holy spirits. As such, a law in Bhutan, which has been in effect since 1994, prohibits moun-



taineers from climbing higher than 6,000 meters (Gangkhar Puensum is more than 7,500). And, considering the way climbers are ruining Mount Everest, we can't say we blame them. Before the law took effect, a few expeditions did try to climb the mountain but had to turn

back. A Japanese team also tried to climb the mountain post-law, in 1998, hoping that approaching the summit from the Chinese side would allow them a loophole, but officials in Bhutan got wind of it and convinced the Chinese government to revoke the climbers' permit. So, tempting as it may be to dream about being the first to reach the world's highest unclimbed peak, you're better off keeping a Gangkhar Puensum hike off your travel itinerary. Instead, consider planning a trip to one of these other 14 most remote locations in the world. The post This Is the Tallest Mountain That Has Never Been Climbed appeared first on Reader's Digest.

(Source: MSN)

The right way to order room service at a hotel

Room service has a reputation for being overpriced and under-seasoned. Here are a few techniques to make sure your room service meals are worth your money and appetite. Room service is often the last refuge of business travelers, and an overpriced, under-seasoned option for travelers without many options. According to Martyn Nail, the executive chef of Claridge's hotel in London and author of the recently released "Claridge's: The Cookbook," "the food you get isn't necessarily a reflection of who prepared it," he said. "There's an art to ordering room service." He has a few tried and tested ways to make sure every room service meal is a good one. **■ Order course-by-course** If Mr. Nail isn't in a rush, he requests that his meal is delivered in courses because the food tastes fresher and the dining experience feels more special and leisurely. Surprisingly, most hotel kitchens have no problem fulfilling this request. "I don't like the idea of my entree getting cold while I have my starter, and if I'm having ice cream for dessert, it's going to be melted by the time I get to it," he said. **■ Choose the right dishes** Consider how well a dish will travel before you order it. Many hotel kitchens are in the basement while your room might be on a high floor, which means that your

meal could take up to 10 minutes to reach you after it leaves the kitchen, and that's not including any other room service deliveries along the way. While hot items are usually delivered in a hot box, they can still arrive lukewarm. Soups are the exception and tend to stay hot. Also, if you see a soufflé on the menu, don't bother ordering it. Mr. Nail said that it will be a pancake by the time it reaches you. Club sandwiches and Caesar salads, on the other hand, travel especially well. If there's a regional dish or specialty on the menu, however, go for it. Mr. Nail said that these local specialties have been some of his best meals on the road. **■ Go off-menu** Don't be afraid to order off the menu, Mr. Nail said. "Hotel kitchens tend to have a wide variety of ingredients on hand, and if the chefs have time, they are happy to make you what you want," he said. Just be reasonable and ask politely, and you'll have great results. If you're craving a specific dish, such as chicken potpie or meatloaf, ask for it but with a caveat: give advance notice, preferably 12 hours, if you want a labor-intensive dish or something particularly special. **■ Always order through a live person** Pick up the phone and speak to someone to place your



order, even if you have the option to do it electronically through a tablet, app or your in-room television. Mr. Nail said that your order taker is your guide through the menu and can share suggestions such as side dishes to pair with your entree that you may not have thought of. Some of those options may be upsells, but talking to a real person is the only way to hear the daily specials, or ask about options that may not be included in the menu.

(Source: The New York Times)

Plans underway for turning hospitals into bigger networks

HEALTH **TEHRAN** — The health ministry has devised a new scheme for turning hospitals into bigger networks, announced the ministry's director of hospitals management and clinical services development department, adding that details will be finalized by the end of the current [Iranian calendar] month (July 22).

According to Behzad Kalantari, it is not financially justified to pay for administration of some small hospitals, so such small hospitals can become a subsidiary of bigger hospitals; it means that they will no longer have an autonomous chief, team of administration or financing staff; instead, the bigger hospital will manage all the network hospitals.

"In network hospitals everything will be shared; the supplies, the budget and even the physicians will share their services with smaller hospitals. The personnel in subsidiary hospitals will also be paid by the network hospital," ISNA quoted Kalantari as saying on Saturday.

Will all small hospitals become part of a network?

According to Kalantari, there are currently 82 hospitals with less than 32 beds and 265 with less than 100 beds; however, individual decision will be made about each hospital, because the number of beds is not the only thing to take into account. Activities of the hospital, its distance from the network hospital and the



We have made some initial decisions, for example, from the 82 hospitals that have less than 32 beds, 50 of them meet the criteria to go under the supervision of a bigger hospital.

possibility of sharing some services are all need to be taken into account, Kalantari added.

"We have made some initial decisions, for example, from the 82 hospitals that have less than 32 beds, 50 of them meet the criteria to go under the supervision of a bigger hospital," he said.

"In general, there are 1000 hospitals in the country, including private and public ones. 47% of all the hospitals have less than 100 beds and 80% of all hospitals have less than 200 beds. The rest of hospitals have more than 200 beds, but the majority of such big hospitals are government-owned."

"One of the possibilities is that we turn 624 public hospitals into 200 holding networks," he added.

"The network hospital system is going to be only applied to public hospitals; however, the private hospitals can use our final blueprint as well for starting network hospitals; because the main objective of this scheme is saving money and it can be used by everyone," he remarked.

Earlier this month, an official with the health ministry announced that 40 new hospitals will be inaugurated over the current Iranian calendar year (to end March 2020).

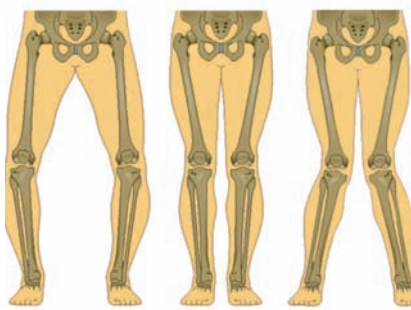
According to Reza Rezaei, the director for budget at the health ministry's department of treatment, these new hospitals will include 5,500 beds. Currently, there are around 100,000 hospital beds in the country.

Researchers design application for diagnosing bow-leggedness

HEALTH **TEHRAN** — Researchers at Kermanshah University of Technology have designed an application for diagnosing bow-leggedness, ISNA reported on Saturday.

Bow-leggedness (also called Genu varum, bandiness, bandy-leg, and tibia vara), is a varus deformity marked by (outward) bowing at the knee, which means that the lower leg is angled inward (medially) in relation to the thigh's axis, giving the limb overall the appearance of an archer's bow.

The new application will help both the



diagnosis and treatment of bow-leggedness.

The idea of designing such application was first proposed by Hossein Par, the head of physical education department at Kermanshah University of Technology. Subsequently, Seyyed Vafa Barkhoda, the member of Computer Engineering Department put forwarded the idea as a subject for master's thesis and a computer engineering student, Mahya Naseri, designed the application under his supervision.

The application is designed in android operating system. By using the cell phone's

camera and picture processing techniques, it can detect the location of the knees, medial condyles and the distance between the knees.

The application can detect the users' problems based on their age and sex. It also gives users instructions and suggest exercises that will help fix the bow legs.

The public relations office of the ministry of science has announced that the application will be hopefully used extensively in schools and by parents, so that this condition will be diagnosed in children as soon as possible.

'Only half of Iranians have good health literacy'

HEALTH **TEHRAN** — Only 50 percent of Iranians have good health literacy, the secretary of the 7th Symposium and the 4th National Self-care and Patient Training Festival announced, Mehr reported on Sunday.

Health literacy implies the achievement of a level of knowledge, personal skills and confidence to take action to improve personal and community health by changing personal lifestyles and living conditions.

Abdolrahman Rostamian said that the health literacy will be improved through development of self-care nationwide.

Social health is rooted in self-care, which is one of the most cost-efficient and beneficial methods to cope with diseases in a society, he explained.

"Statistics show that more activities should be done in order to improve health literacy in the society."

"For example, Iranians do not have enough physical activities and lack healthy diet and unfortunately risky behaviors like smoking are predominant in the society," he lamented.

In February, the health ministry announced that the prevalence of insufficient physical activity is about 57 percent in Iran and some 300,000 Iranians die of noncommunicable diseases annually.

The 7th Symposium and the 4th National Self-care and Patient Training Festival will be held on July 24 to commemorate International Self-Care Day which provides a focus and opportunity to raise the profile of healthy lifestyle

self-care programs around the world.

How can we increase health literacy?

Improving health literacy in populations provides the foundation on which citizens are enabled to play an active role in improving their own health, engage successfully with community action for health, and push governments to meet their responsibilities in addressing health and health equity, according to World Health Organization's website.

The ambition of Agenda 2030 requires a new way of working, bringing together a range of multi-disciplinary stakeholders in a global partnership. Examples of roles for stakeholders in advancing health literacy and the SDGs include:

Government

Develop policies and plans on health literacy promotion, including sustained funding, systematic intervention and surveillance; work across sectors for win-wins and meet obligations to provide people with accurate, up to date information that is unbiased by undue influence from outside the health sector.

Civil society

Work together to bring different expertise, experiences and capacities for community-based communication and health literacy efforts in all kinds of settings throughout the life course.

Media (including social media)

Serve as a critical platform for health literacy messaging, harnessing the idealism and enthusiasm of youth, and meeting an ethical threshold for accuracy to support, rather



than subvert, people's right to health.

Community leaders

Provide risk communication, particularly during times of crisis, as seen recently in the response to Ebola and Zika. WHO's Framework for Country Action across Sectors for Health and Health Equity recognizes the importance of "training leaders in techniques to support and enable an informed community."

Research and academic institutions

Develop and improve methods to measure health literacy, collate and distribute examples of best practice in health literacy intervention development, and provide evidence of what works, in which contexts, and why.

Heart trouble can speed brain decline, study says

The strong link between brain health and heart health is reinforced in a new study. The research showed that as cardiovascular health falters, so too does thinking and memory.

In one of the largest and longest studies of its kind to date, researchers studied a group of nearly 8,000 people in the United Kingdom. The participants were over 49 years of age and their health was tracked from 2002 to 2017.

Everyone in the study had relatively healthy hearts and brains at the beginning of the research. People with a history of stroke, heart attack, angina, dementia or Alzheimer's disease were excluded.

But over 15 years of follow-up, nearly 6% of the participants did go on to suffer a heart attack or angina (chest pain), according to a team led by Wuxiang Xie, a research fellow at the Imperial College School of Public Health in London.

The researchers found that all of these participants also displayed a faster decline in their mental function, concurrent with the heart trouble.

Patients who suffered from angina had a significant decline in tests of "temporal orientation" -- being able to accurately state the current date, day of week and time. Patients who had a heart attack showed a substantial decline in tests of verbal memory (assessed by a word-memory test) and language fluency. They also had the worse cognitive decline overall, the researchers found.

All of that is important, because "even small differences in cognitive function can result in an increased risk of dementia in the long-term," Xie said in a news release from



the American College of Cardiology.

"Because there is no current cure for dementia, early detection and intervention are essential to delay the progression to dementia," Xie said. "Heart attack and angina patients need careful monitoring in the years following a diagnosis."

The connection between declines in memory and thinking and heart disease may be as simple as the brain not getting the amount of oxygen that it used to, the researchers theorized. Tiny "microinfarcts" -- heart-linked damage to small vessels in the brain -- might hamper blood flow and oxygen supply.

Two U.S. experts who reviewed the findings agreed that the heart-brain connection is crucial to health.

"This study further emphasizes that approaching the body holistically is crucial for brain health and to prevent dementia," said Dr. Gayatri Devi. She is a neurologist specializing in memory disorders at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City.

"Brain health is dependent on heart health and health of the entire individual," Devi added.

Dr. Guy Mintz directs cardiovascular health at North Shore University Hospital in Manhasset, N.Y. He called the new study "a wake-up call for physicians to improve the risk factors associated with atherosclerosis [hardening of the arteries] early in life."

Mintz pointed out that "patients can live with heart disease, but patients and their families suffer from decline in brain function. Watching someone become mentally lost in life is tragic and, in some cases associated with atherosclerosis, may be preventable."

Devi stressed that keeping the brain sharp involves fitness of both mind and body.

"It is not enough to do Sudoku or crossword puzzles. It is just as important to take care of the body," she said.

"Proven ways to prevent brain disease, including Alzheimer's dementia and stroke, are to take better care of one's heart and body, by exercising, eating and sleeping well, and refraining from smoking."

The new report was published June 17 in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology.

(Source: WebMD)

How does your brain take out the trash?

In this Spotlight, we introduce the glymphatic system: the brain's dedicated waste clearance system. Now implicated in various conditions, it is high time that we became acquainted.

Many of us are relatively familiar with the lymphatic system; it performs a number of roles, one of which is clearing metabolic waste from the gaps between cells, referred to as the interstitial space.

However, the central nervous system (CNS), which comprises the brain and spinal cord, does not have any true lymphatic vessels.

Because the CNS is highly active, metabolic waste can build up quickly.

The CNS is also very sensitive to fluctuations in its environment, so the body needs to remove cellular garbage somehow, and that's where the glymphatic system comes in.

Before the discovery of this brain-based garbage disposal system, scientists believed that each individual cell handled its own metabolic detritus.

If the cellular system became overloaded or slowed down as we aged, metabolic garbage would build up between the cells. This garbage includes products such as beta-amyloid — the protein associated with Alzheimer's disease.

Astroglia

The term "glymphatic" was coined by Maiken Nedergaard, a Danish neuroscientist who discovered the system. The name is a reference to the glial cells, which are vital to this waste clearance system.

Glial cells get relatively little coverage, compared with neurons, despite being just as numerous in the brain. They were long considered little more than lowly support cells, but are now held in higher regard.

Glia protect, nourish, and insulate neurons. They also play a role in the immune system and, as we now know, the glymphatic system.

In particular, a type of glial cell known as astroglia are important. Receptors, called aquaporin-4 channels, on these cells allow cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) to move into the CNS, setting up a current that shunts fluid through the system.

CSF is a clear fluid that surrounds the CNS, providing it with mechanical and immunological protection, among other things.

The glymphatic system, which runs parallel to arteries, also harnesses the pulsing of blood in circulation to help keep things moving.

As the blood vessels expand rhythmically, they drive the exchange of compounds between the interstitial space and the CSF.

The glymphatic system connects with the lymphatic system of the rest of the body at the dura, a thick membrane of connective tissue that covers the CNS.

The importance of sleep

Following Nedergaard's discovery, she ran a series of experiments on mice to develop a better understanding of how this system worked and when it was most active. In particular, the team focused on sleep and Alzheimer's.

Nedergaard and her team found that the glymphatic system was most busy as the animals slept. They showed that the volume of interstitial space increased by 60% while the mice were sleeping.

This volume increase also boosted the exchange of CSF and interstitial fluid, speeding up the removal of amyloid. They concluded that:

"The restorative function of sleep may be a consequence of the enhanced removal of potentially neurotoxic waste products that accumulate in the awake [CNS]."

This early work inspired a wave of new studies, the most recent of which was published this month. The researchers looked at the impact of high blood pressure on the function of the glymphatic system.

Over time, high blood pressure causes blood vessels to lose their elasticity, becoming increasingly stiff. Because the regular pulsing of arterial walls drives the glymphatic system, this stiffening impedes its function.

Using a mouse model of hypertension, the scientists demonstrated that high blood pressure-induced artery stiffening did interfere with the way that the garbage disposal system worked; it prevented it from efficiently getting rid of large molecules in the brain, such as beta-amyloid.

This finding might help explain why scientists have found links between elevated blood pressure and cognitive decline and dementia.

Parkinson's disease

Parkinson's disease is another condition characterized by the buildup of protein in the brain. In this case, the protein is alpha-synuclein.

This has led some researchers to wonder whether the glymphatic system might be implicated here, too.

In Parkinson's disease, there is disruption in the dopamine pathways of the brain. These pathways play an important role in sleep-wake cycles and circadian rhythms; therefore, people with Parkinson's often experience sleep disturbances.

A review published in Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews proposes that the disrupted sleep patterns could hinder the glymphatic removal of debris, including alpha-synuclein, helping it build up in the brain.

Brain trauma

Chronic traumatic encephalopathy results from repeated blows to the head; it used to be called "punch-drunk" syndrome because it occurs in boxers.

Symptoms can include memory loss, mood changes, confusion, and cognitive decline.

Some researchers believe that disruptions to the glymphatic system caused by brain trauma may increase the risk of developing chronic traumatic encephalopathy.

The authors of the review write that, following a traumatic brain injury, "Difficulties with sleep onset and maintenance are among the most commonly reported symptoms."

As we have seen, this interferes with the glymphatic clearance of proteins from the interstitial space during sleep.

At the same time, these types of injury can cause the relocation of aquaporin-4 channels — those important receptors on astroglia that are vital for glymphatic clearance — into a position that hinders the removal of junk proteins from the interstitial space.

The authors believe that the disruption of this system could "provide one link in the explanatory chain connecting repetitive [traumatic brain injury] with later neurodegeneration."

Diabetes

Beyond a possible role in neurological conditions, some researchers have investigated how disturbances in the glymphatic system may be involved in the cognitive symptoms of diabetes.

Scientists have shown that diabetes can impact a range of cognitive functions, both early in the disease's progression and further down the line.

(Source: medical news today)



Great Pacific garbage patch: giant plastic trap put to sea again

Floating boom is designed to trap 1.8 trillion items of plastic without harming marine life – but broke apart last time.

A floating device designed to catch plastic waste has been re-deployed in a second attempt to clean up a huge island of garbage swirling in the Pacific Ocean between California and Hawaii.

Boyan Slat, creator of the Ocean Cleanup project, announced on Twitter that a 600-metre (2,000-foot) long floating boom



that broke apart late last year was sent back to the Great Pacific garbage patch this week after four months of repair.

A ship towed the U-shaped barrier from San Francisco to the patch in September to trap the plastic. But during the four months at sea, the boom broke apart under constant waves and wind and the boom wasn't retaining the plastic it caught.

"Hopefully nature doesn't have too many surprises in store for us this time," Slat tweeted. "Either way, we're set to learn a lot from this campaign."

Fitted with solar-powered lights, cameras, sensors and satellite antennas, the device intends to communicate its position at all times, allowing a support vessel to fish out the collected plastic every few months and transport it to dry land.

The plastic barrier with a tapered 3-metre deep (10-foot deep) screen is intended to act like a coastline, trapping some of the 1.8tn pieces of plastic that scientists estimate is swirling in the patch while allowing marine life to safely swim beneath it.

During its first run, the organization said marine biologists on board the support vessel did not observe any environmental impact.

Slat has said he hopes one day to deploy 60 of the devices to skim plastic debris off the surface of the ocean.

(Source: The Independent)

The rise of eco-anxiety and how to come to terms with climate change

Plummeting insect numbers. A sixth mass extinction. Thinning of ice sheets. Sea level rise. Wildfires in California. Thawing Arctic permafrost.

The full tragedy of climate change is unravelling before our eyes. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, we have 12 years to stop this catastrophe. Climate action has become part of the zeitgeist, yet global emissions keep inching up and reports of Earth's ecosystems collapsing come thick and fast.

In 1958 scientists first noticed levels of carbon dioxide creeping up. In the 1980s global temperatures began to rise but warnings were ignored and covered up. For most people, the first nail in the coffin came 40 years later with the 2018 IPCC report, which said we faced major environmental catastrophe within our lifetimes, and potentially as soon as 2040.

For many, the news was a bereavement – a calamity we engineered without knowing it. "You're talking about a mix of confusing feelings, including depression, grief, rage, despair, hopelessness, guilt and shame. All of those feelings come with it," says Caroline Hickman, a teaching fellow at the University of Bath and member of the Climate Psychology Alliance.

(Source: The Independent)

WORDS IN THE NEWS

Lennon's murderer stays in jail

(October 4, 2000)
BBC reporter Jane Hughes reported on how John Lennon's murderer, Mark Chapman, was refused '**parole**'. This means he cannot leave prison yet, even after 20 years. Mark Chapman's application for parole '**provoked an outcry**' from John Lennon fans around the world, and '**prompted**' Yoko Ono to write an '**impassioned**' letter to the board calling for her husband's killer to be kept '**behind bars**'. She said for the last 20 years, the memory of his shooting had never left her, and that releasing Chapman would bring back the '**nightmare**', and leave her and Lennon's sons in constant fear for their safety. The parole board said it was '**turning down**' his application because Chapman still appeared to '**relish**' the notoriety his crime had earned him. It said to free him would be to '**downplay**' the seriousness of the murder and to '**undermine**' respect for the law. The decision wasn't a great surprise. It's rare for anyone to be granted parole in New York after their first application, let alone someone who killed one of the world's best known and best loved rock musicians. Chapman will continue to be held '**in isolation**' for his own protection. He's '**eligible**' to reapply for parole in two years' time.

■ **WORDS**
parole: when a prisoner is released from jail before the end of their sentence, usually on condition that they behave well
provoked an outcry: made many people very angry
prompted: if you are prompted to do something, something has made you decide to do it
impassioned: with strong emotion
behind bars: in prison
nightmare: a bad experience can be called a nightmare
turning down: if something is turned down it is not allowed or permitted
relish: if you relish something you enjoy it a lot
notoriety: being well known for doing something bad
to downplay: if you downplay something, you make it seem less important
undermine: to make something less strong or secure is to undermine it
in isolation: in a prison cell by yourself
eligible: allowed to do something

(Source: BBC)

25% of population live in rundown areas, informal settlements

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — There are 1.3 million hectares of rundown areas and informal settlements across Iran which accommodate over 25 percent of the total population of the country, Kaveh Haji Ali-Akbari, head of the renovation of rundown areas organization affiliated to Tehran Municipality has said. Retrofitting rundown areas has been a major concern for officials over the past 15 years, seeking for solutions to remove barriers on the way to rehabilitation, he added.

Over 20 million people are residing in rundown areas around the country, he lamented, Tasnim reported on Saturday.

Old and vulnerable-to-natural-disasters areas in the country's capital are also amounting to some 15,000 hectares, 3,265 hectares of which are rundown areas, he regretted.

Although the capital is in poor condition, only 40 percent of old buildings have been retrofitted, he noted, adding, while rehabilitation of dilapidated areas across Iran constitute 15 percent of the land area.

Due to the complexity of modernizing worn-out buildings, there is a need for boosting coordination and cooper-



ation and taking joint measures by all involved bodies, including the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development; the Ministry of Justice; the Judiciary;

the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor, and Social Welfare; and the Ministry of Interior, he highlighted.

Ali-Akbari had said in November

Relief foundation plans to provide 200,000 jobs for the deprived

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation plans to create 200,000 jobs in order to facilitate income generation for the deprived, as soon as the required budget is provided, Hojjatollah Abdolmaleki, deputy director of the Foundation has said.

He went on to say that some 70,000 job opportunities will open up through entrepreneurs who started their own businesses using the Foundation's loans.

Currently, there are about 400,000 entrepreneurs in the country, he said, adding, only if each of them employ 10 job seekers, the country's unemployment problem will be solved.

"A total budget of 60 trillion rials (nearly \$1.4 billion) is planned to be earmarked for job generation and employment opportunities which can provide some 200,000 jobs by the end of this year (March 2020)," he further noted.

Since the Iranian calendar year of 1374 (March 1995- March 1996), Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation has made great efforts to generate 1.8 million job opportunities for those financially struggling heads of the family, he highlighted.

Pointing out that the Foundation's priority is to eliminate poverty in the society and empower families through job creation and income generation, he



added that 1.4 million job opportunities have been created in 2011-2017.

"According to statistics published by the government, the Foundation accounted for one fifth of total jobs created in the country in the aforementioned period," he noted.

Moreover, last year, the foundation created one third of the country's total job opportunities, he said.

"We try to train individuals under the Foundation's coverage in the fields of production, marketing and sales, in order to achieve vocational skills and become financially independent," he added.

"Last year, we succeeded in supporting over 150,000 business plans and this year it is planned to launch 5,000 others, he concluded.

Buses that suck pollution out of the air to be rolled out in Southampton



If 2,500 buses were fitted with the cleaning filter as much as 588kg of particles could be removed from air each year.

A bus company is bringing a fleet of pollution-busting buses to Southampton that suck in dirty air in a bid to clean up the city.

Go-Ahead Group announced its plans to expand a fleet of buses fitted with air-filters after a 100-day pilot that saw one of the buses travel 9,000 miles while cleaning the air.

The trial, started in September 2018, saw the Bluestar bus extract 65g of particulate matter from the city air – the equivalent of a tennis ball.

Southampton was chosen as the location for the pilot following a 2018 World Health Organization report, which warned that the city was at its limit of unsafe air pollution.

The company planned to now install filters on all five of its Bluestar buses travelling Route 7 – an 11.5-mile path running across the city. Go-Ahead said it hoped to expand to other cities around the UK, including Manchester, Oxford, Brighton & Hove, Newcastle, Norwich, Durham, as well as parts of Sussex and Kent.

Chief executive David Brown said: "We already know that a fully loaded double-decker can take up to 75 cars off the road, reducing congestion and pollution.

"Now we have hard data showing that buses with the fitment of an air filter can actively improve air quality."

The company estimated the expanded fleet within Southampton could remove as much as 1.25kg of particulate matter from the air every year – and if fitted on 2,500 buses as much as 588kg.

(Source: The Independent)

Air pollution responsible for over 4,000 deaths annually in Tehran

ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — Some 4,000 to 5,000 of people residing in the country's capital lose their lives per year due to air pollution, according to statistics published by the ministry of health.

There are numerous vehicular trips per day in Tehran, which are the leading cause of air pollution in the capital, so that the air in Tehran is amongst the most polluted in the world, Tehran City Council member, Arash Milani, said.

According to a report by World Bank published in April 2018, Tehran is ranked 12th among 26 megacities in terms of ambient PM10 levels. After Cairo, Tehran is the most polluted non-Asian megacity. In 2016, the annual ambient level of PM10 was estimated at 77 micrograms per cubic meter. This is almost four times the WHO's recommended threshold of 20 micrograms per cubic meter.

In the metropolis of Tehran alone over 4,000 people die of respiratory problems caused by air pollution annually, Milani lamented, Fars reported on Sunday.

However, the average concentration of major pollutants in Tehran has declined since the last 10 years, he added.

"Of course, this year, clean and

2018 that over 5 percent of properties in the busiest province of the country were extremely old, according to data released in the Iranian calendar year of 1385 (March 2006-March 2007). Once the statistics are revised, a considerable increase will show up, he noted.

"Currently, over 1.2 million people live in rundown areas, amounting to 15 percent of the total population of Tehran," he added.

Moreover, Tehran Mayor Pirouz Hanachi said headquarters for sustainable renovation of rundown areas in the capital city of Tehran has been established.

Structurally unsound buildings would be worst hit in the event of an earthquake or flooding, hence the number of casualties will most definitely increase compared to other neighborhoods. As a building ages, the structure can become weaker. Unstable buildings are dangerous and could collapse during stormy or severe weather conditions.


While the municipality seems to be in charge of rehabilitation of rundown buildings the government should gain the upper hand and make serious attempts to rebuild ramshackle houses and buildings by allotting appropriate budget.



healthy air quality stayed in the capital compared to the recent years. This means that any changes in transportation system, can have a significant impact on air pollution hitting Tehran," he concluded.

According to the Air Quality Control Company, 25 days of excellent and 62 days of healthy air quality have been reported in the capital since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21), while unhealthy air quality for sensitive group hit the capital for 7 days.

Last year in the same period only 8 days of clean air were reported, but 15 days were lightly polluted or unhealthy for sensitive groups.



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First Announcement

Call for public tender (First/Second publish)

One Stages tender

Subject of Tender: P/F KOOMEY AIR ELECTRIC



National Iranian Drilling Company

Tender descriptions:

The Tender holder	Registration No. through national electronic tendering system	Tender No. /Indent No.	Estimated value (Rial/Euro)
National Iranian Drilling Company	3/204/569	Tender No.: FP/98-20/031 Indent No.:08-22-9745037	4, 221 , 040 , 000

Qualitative evaluation of tenderers

Method	Qualification process will be done in plain mode in offers opening session according to presentation of valid practice certificate / legal documents (certificate of corporation/ established announcement up to latest changes) which should be related to tender subject(good,s supply). 1- Applicants which have more than 4 in process contacts with NIDC are not allowed to participate in this tender . 2- Applicants which have more than 2 in process contacts with NIDC in similar subject (exclusively same subject) are not allowed to participate in another tender
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Purchasing & Submitting

Tender Document Distribution by Company	The distribution of the documents will be started one day after the publishing of second advertisement and ended on the following tenth day thereof (closing date)
Distribution Place	Hall No.:113, 1 st floor, Foreign Procurement Dept., National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN 061-34148253
Submitting Method	Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt in the amount of 510,000 Iranian Rials under account number 4001114004020491(Shaba No. IR 520100004001114004020491) in name of "NIDC Incomes Centralized Fund" issued by I.R. of Iran Central Bank Submitting format Request for the purpose of receiving Tender Documents
Closing date	Days after the last time of Purchasing. (closing date 1398/05/12) 35 (13/05/1398) The envelopes will be opened At 10:00. a.m On
Documents Receiving Method	Hall No. 107, 1 st floor, Tender Committee, Operation building, National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN. Tel: +98-61-34148580 +98-61-34148569

Tender Guarantee

Value of guarantee	212,000,000 Rial /4.452 Euro
Type of guarantee	✓--Bank guarantees or guarantees issued by non-bank institutions that obtain activity license from the central bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran. ✓--Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt under account number 4001114006376636 (Shaba No. IR 350100004001114006376636) in name of "NIDC saving account" by the central bank of Islamic Republic of Iran.
Duration of credit & quotation	Tender Guarantee and quotation should be valid for 90 days and extendable maximum for one time in initial validity duration.

(Foreign Procurement Dept.)

More of this & other tenders are accessible by click on: www.nidc.ir http://sapp.ir/nidc_pr

تهران تایمز نوبت اول ۹۸/۴/۳نوبت دوم ۹۸/۴/۴

Kushner's economic plan for Mideast peace faces broad Arab rejection

TEHRAN — Arab politicians and commentators greeted U.S. President Donald Trump's Middle East \$50 billion economic vision with a mixture of derision and exasperation, although some in the Persian Gulf called for it to be given a chance.

In Israel, Tzachi Hanegbi, a cabinet member close to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, described Palestinians' rejection of the "peace to prosperity" plan as tragic.

Set to be presented by Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner at a conference in Bahrain on June 25-26, the blueprint envisions a global investment fund to lift the Palestinian and neighboring Arab economies and is part of broader efforts to revive the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

"We don't need the Bahrain meeting to build our country, we need peace, and the sequence of (the plan) — economic revival followed by peace is unrealistic and an illusion," Palestinian Finance Minister Shukri Bishara said on Sunday.

The lack of a political solution, which Washington has said would be unveiled later, prompted rejection not only from Palestinians but also in Arab countries with which Israel would seek normal relations.

From Sudan to Kuwait, commentators and ordinary citizens denounced Kushner's

proposals in strikingly similar terms: "colossal waste of time," "non-starter," "dead on arrival."

Egyptian liberal and leftist parties slammed the workshop as an attempt to "consecrate and legitimize" occupation of Arab land and said in a joint statement that any Arab participation would be "beyond the limits of normalization" with Israel.

While the precise outline of the political plan has been shrouded in secrecy, officials briefed on it say Kushner has jettisoned the two-state solution - the long-standing world-wide formula that envisages an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza.

■ "Another tragedy"

The PLO has dismissed Kushner's plans as "all abstract promises," insisting that only a political solution will solve the problem. It said they were an attempt to bribe the Palestinians into accepting Israeli occupation.

On Israel Radio, Hanegbi said Washington had tried to create "a little more trust and positivity" by presenting an economic vision but had touched a raw nerve for Palestinians.

"They are still convinced that the whole matter of an economic peace is a conspiracy, aimed only at piling them with funds for projects and other goodies only so that they



will forget their nationalist inspirations. This of course, is simply paranoia, but it's another tragedy for the Palestinians," he said.

Jawad al-Anani, a former senior Jordanian politician, described widespread suspicion after Trump's decisions to move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem and recognize Israel's

annexation of the Golan Heights.

"This is an unbalanced approach: it assumes the Palestinians are the more vulnerable side and they are the ones who can succumb to pressure more easily," he said. "This is a major setback for the whole region."

Syrian air defenses target terrorists' combat drone in Hama

TEHRAN — Syrian air defense systems have intercepted and shot down an unmanned aerial vehicles launched by members of the Jabhat Fateh al-Sham Takfiri terrorist group, formerly known as al-Nusra Front, in the country's western-central province of Hama.

Syria's official news agency SANA reported on Saturday that Syrian army reconnaissance teams were able to detect the aircraft as it was approaching Hama Military Airport, located some 200 kilometers north of the capital Damascus.

The report added that the drone was armed with rockets containing high explosives, and equipped with a Global Positioning System (GPS) tracker.

The Arabic service of Russia's Sputnik news agency, citing an unnamed Syrian military source, reported late on June 4 that Syrian army units had detected a number of aircraft as they were approaching a helipad of a government military site in Jubb Ramlah village, located about 189 kilometers (118 mi) north of Damascus.

The report added that Syrian forces then used anti-aircraft defense systems and targeted the drones as they were flying in the sky. There were no reports of any casualties.



Syrian state TV reported on May 22 that army forces had shot down a drone loaded with bombs near Hama's airport.

The television network added that the drone had been launched by members of the Jabhat Fateh al-Sham Takfiri terrorist group, formerly known as al-Nusra Front, without providing any further details.

Also on Saturday, Syrian government forces struck the strongholds of foreign-sponsored Takfiri militants positioned in the de-escalation zone of the troubled northwestern province of Idlib.

SANA reported that Syrian troops fired a barrage of artillery rounds and missiles at Jabhat Fateh al-Sham Takfiris' fortifications in al-Naqeer village, which lies in the Maarrat al-Nu'man district of Idlib province, leaving scores of the extremists killed and injured in the process.

The militants were apparently heading towards Hobait town on board several sport utility vehicles with roof-mounted machine guns.

Elsewhere in Hama province, Syrian army artillery units targeted Jabhat Fateh al-Sham and Jaysh al-Izza (the Army of Glory) terrorists on the outskirts of Jubbayn village in Mahardah district. Many terrorists were killed and their vehicles destroyed as a result.

According to Syria has been gripped by foreign-backed militancy since March 2011. The Syrian government says the Israeli regime and its Western and regional allies have been aiding Takfiri terrorist groups there.

Protests planned across West Bank against U.S.-sponsored Bahrain meeting: Fatah

TEHRAN — Palestine's ruling Fatah party, led by President Mahmoud Abbas, has announced plans for holding protests across the occupied West Bank against the upcoming U.S.-sponsored Bahrain meeting.

Palestine's official Wafa news agency, citing a Fatah statement, reported on Saturday that in Ramallah, seat of the Palestinian Authority (PA), a demonstration has been planned to be held at Manara

Square at noon on Monday.

It added that "days of escalation against the occupation" have also been planned for Tuesday and Wednesday, when the so-called meeting is expected to be in session.

The report also said that while there is no central event planned, the various Palestinian cities are expected to stage protest rallies expressing Palestinians' opposition to the Bahrain summit, which they regard as part of a U.S.-led conspiracy

against Palestinian struggle for freedom and independence.

The West Bank-based PA and the besieged Gaza Strip-based Hamas resistance movement have already boycotted the economic conference, dubbed as the Peace to Prosperity, scheduled to be held in the Bahraini capital Manama.

According to Press TV, as part of U.S. President Donald Trump's plan, the conference will focus on proposals for the Pal-

estinian economy.

Trump's yet-to-be-released peace plan for the decades-long Israel-Palestine conflict, dubbed as the so-called Deal of the Century, has already been strongly rejected by Palestinians.

They argue that the U.S. actions so far have shown Washington is blatantly biased in favor of Israel and its peace plan will quash their aspirations for statehood in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Ethiopia's Amhara state chief killed amid regional coup attempt

TEHRAN — The president of Ethiopia's Amhara region and his top adviser were killed in an attempted coup in which the country's army chief was also shot dead, the office of Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said.

Spokeswoman Billene Seyoum told journalists a "hit squad" led by Amhara's security chief Asaminew Tsige burst into a meeting in the state offices of Amhara's capital, Bahir Dar, on Saturday and shot regional government President Ambachew Mekonnen and his adviser Ezez Wassie.

The men were "gravely injured in the attack and later died of their wounds," she said.

"Several hours later, in what seems like a coordinated attack, the chief of the staff of the national security forces Seare Mekonnen was killed in his home by his bodyguard in Addis Ababa."

Also shot dead was a retired general who had been visiting him, Billene added.

The bodyguard has been apprehended while Asaminew is still on the loose, sources said.

Al Jazeera's Leah Harding, reporting from Addis Ababa, said Abiy called those responsible "mercenaries".

"The army intelligence general said the coup was meant to create chaos and division in the military. He said the military now has control over the situation ... and he re-

iterated that there are no divisions within the military," Harding reported.

"This is particularly important because the two generals that were killed in Addis Ababa are part of the Tigre ethnic group, and the person who we believe is responsible for the coup plot is part of the Amhara group."

Analysts said the incident showed the seriousness of the political crisis in Ethiopia, where efforts by Abiy to loosen the iron-fisted grip of his predecessors and push through reforms have unleashed a wave of unrest.

"These tragic incidents, unfortunately, demonstrate the depth of Ethiopia's political crisis," said International Crisis Group analyst William Davison.

"It is now critical that actors across the country do not worsen the instability by reacting violently or trying to exploit this unfolding situation for their own political ends," the expert said.

Residents of Bahir Dar said late on Saturday there was gunfire in some neighborhoods and some roads had been closed off.

The US embassy issued alerts about reported gunfire in Addis Ababa and violence around Bahir Dar.

Early on Sunday, Brigadier General Tefera Mamo, the head of special forces in Amhara, told state television that



"most of the people who attempted the coup have been arrested, although there are a few still at large."

Since coming to power last year, Abiy has tried to spearhead political reforms to open up the once isolated, security-obsessed Horn of Africa country of 100 million people.

He has released political prisoners, lifted bans on political parties and prosecuted officials accused of gross human rights abuses, but his government is battling mounting violence.

The nations of the region cope with the deal of century: al-Wefaq

➔1 The Palestinian authority had announced it would boycott the Manama summit. In addition to Palestine, Iraq and Lebanon announced their boycott also.



Meanwhile, countries such as Egypt, Jordan and Morocco have informed Washington of their plans to send representatives to the June 25-26 conference, which seeks to unveil the economic aspects of the U.S. scheme on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Washington has withheld details about its plan, but various leaks have revealed that it seriously compromises Palestinians' rights and grievances.

Arab politicians and commentators greeted U.S. President Donald Trump's Middle East \$50 billion economic vision with a mixture of derision and exasperation, although some in the Persian Gulf called for it to be given a chance.

Merkel's late warning

➔6 A suspect, identified as a 45-year-old German named Stefan E., was arrested on Saturday. According to German media reports, the man arrested is linked to Combat 18, a well-known neo-Nazi group. He has a previous conviction for a 1993 arson attack on a refugee centre. The spokesman said prosecutors would try to identify potential instigators and accomplices, but cautioned that no evidence so far indicated that the suspect was part of a "rightwing extremist terror group".

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Lübcke's death comes less than a year after the surviving member of a neo-Nazi cell received a life sentence for her role in the racially charged murder of 10 people. The killing spree continued for seven years, in part because Germany's internal security service failed to see the neo-Nazi connection, wrongly assuming that the killings were part of criminal feuds within the migrant community.

As regional president for the district of Kassel, Lübcke became known as a staunch defender of Ms Merkel's handling of the 2015-16 refugee crisis, when more than 1m migrants from countries such as Syria and Afghanistan arrived. Lübcke urged people in his district to be welcoming and suggested that Germans who were not ready to help those in distress were free to leave the country themselves — a remark that made him a prominent target for far-right activists and neo-Nazis.

His death prompted a flood of celebratory messages and postings on far-right social media accounts that shocked German politicians and the wider public. Frank-Walter Steinmeier, the federal president, described the reactions as "cynical, tasteless, abhorrent and disgusting in every way".

The murder is expected to be discussed in parliament soon after several senior lawmakers called for a special meeting of the chamber's home affairs committee. Mathias Middelburg, the home affairs spokesman of Ms Merkel's CDU/CSU bloc, described the case as "very serious".

Konstantin von Notz, an MP for the Green party, said: "In the light of the dramatic and alarming developments in the Lübcke case a special meeting of the home affairs committee has become unavoidable."

China takes moral high ground in face of U.S. power play

➔6 It appears that the US is decoupling with China, in fact, the US is decoupling with the world. As the largest developing country and the world's No. 2 economy, China has the responsibility and wisdom to play a bigger role in promoting globalization. The conflict between China and the US tests the level of political governance, the potential of economic development, the unity of the people and the global influence of the two sides. The future depends more on who can be a positive force for world peace and development.

China's economic and trade links with the rest of the world have never been so extensive and deep as they are today. The further development of globalization and the progress of the world political and economic governance system need China's contribution. China is an emerging power. The rise of any big country in history has not been smooth. A great power that can truly stand firm on the world stage may start out lonely, but in the end, becomes more and more cohesive. The trade war has put China through the test that a rising power must endure. It has strengthened our confidence to firmly occupy the international moral high ground.

China's past success lies in its ability to accurately grasp the convergence between China's "potential" and the world's "potential." China's sustainable development in the future depends on how we take advantage of the trend of world development to develop ourselves, and use our own reform and opening-up to promote world development.

Trump delays mass deportation raids, seeks deal with Democrats

TEHRAN — U.S. President Donald Trump said he would postpone mass deportation raids for two weeks as he seeks compromise with Democratic leaders on immigration issues.

The president was under pressure from Democrats to call off the roundup, which

was expected to target families in up to 10 U.S. cities.

U.S. House of Representatives' Speaker Nancy Pelosi, the top Democrat in Congress, asked Trump by phone on Friday night to call off the raids, according to a person familiar with the matter. Pelosi also urged

religious leaders on Saturday to put pressure on Trump, Reuters reported.

The president, a Republican, has made illegal immigration a centerpiece of his administration and is highlighting the issue in his campaign for the 2020 election.

He has railed against an increase in people

crossing the U.S. southern border, many from Central America who are seeking refuge in America under U.S. asylum laws. On Saturday he said the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency was focused on getting the transnational street gang MS-13 out of the United States.

Yemeni forces shoot down 3rd Saudi-led spy drone

➔1 The Saudi enemy must know that we will expand the scope of deterrence in case the military aggression continues," the top Yemeni military official pointed out.

Also on Sunday, Saudi fighter jets launched an airstrike against Al Ali area in the Razih district of Yemen's mountainous northwest-

ern province of Sa'ada. There were no immediate reports of possible casualties and the extent of damage caused.

According to Press TV, Saudi Arabia and a number of its regional allies launched a devastating campaign against Yemen in March 2015, with the goal of bringing the

government of former Yemeni president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi back to power and crushing the Houthi Ansarullah movement.

The US-based Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED), a nonprofit conflict-research organization, estimates that the Saudi-led war has claimed the lives of

over 60,000 Yemenis since January 2016.

The war has also taken a heavy toll on the country's infrastructure, destroying hospitals, schools, and factories. The UN says over 24 million Yemenis are in dire need of humanitarian aid, including 10 million suffering from extreme levels of hunger.

IOC inaugurates new headquarters as 2026 Games vote looms

The International Olympic Committee inaugurated its new headquarters in Lausanne on Sunday, the 125th anniversary of the organisation which is preparing to select the host city for the 2026 Winter Olympics.

Built at a cost of about 130 million euros (\$147.76 million), the modern glass and steel structure has a solar-panelled roof and was constructed in the place of the old headquarters on the shores of Lake Geneva.

“On this very day ... Pierre de Coubertin founded the International Olympic Committee and revived the Olympic Games,” IOC President Thomas Bach said.

“He saw this as a way to promote peace among nations and people,” the German told an audience of IOC members, international federations and representatives of the 206 national Olympic Committees.

“This Olympic House, which we are inaugurating today, is a reflection of this mission and of our values.”

According to the IOC, the new building, designed by Danish architects 3XN and inspired by the shape of a dove with a large central staircase made of five rings, meets stringent environmental and sustainability standards.

It will house all 500 IOC employees under one roof instead of several locations around Lausanne as was the case in the past.

“Of course, we wanted to bring together everyone, the Olympic family and all IOC staff, under one roof,” Bach said.

“At the same time, we want the Olympic House to incorporate the elements of sustainability, credibility and youth. The building reflects these three elements that are so central to our mission.”

After Sunday’s festivities it is back to business on Monday when the IOC will elect the host city for the 2026 Winter Games with Italy’s Milan and Stockholm the only candidates in the race.

Four others — Swiss city Sion, Japan’s Sapporo, Austria’s Graz and 1988 hosts Calgary in Canada — dropped out in mid-race, scared off by the size and cost of the Games.

(Source: Reuters)

Dani Alves to depart PSG, destination unknown

Dani Alves announced he was leaving Paris St-Germain on Sunday, just hours after captaining Brazil to a 5-0 win over Peru in the Copa America and chipping in with a goal.

The flamboyant full back joined the French club in 2017 after spells at Sevilla, Barcelona and Juventus, but he did not say what his next move would be after leaving Paris.

“Another cycle in my life ends today, a victorious cycle, one of learning and experiences,” Alves, 36, wrote on Instagram. “I would like to thank the PSG family for the opportunity we had together to build a page in the club’s history.”

Alves, who replaced club mate Neymar as Brazil captain for the Copa America last month, won two Ligue 1 titles and one French Cup in his two seasons at Parc des Princes.

(Source: Reuters)

Nigeria stage sit-in at WWC over unpaid bonuses

Nigeria players are staging a sit-in protest, refusing to leave their hotel in France until all of their outstanding bonuses are paid, following the team’s elimination from the Women’s World Cup on Saturday.

Players told ESPN they are owed bonuses from two games, against Gambia and Senegal, from as far back as two years ago, amounting to 2 million Nigerian naira (about \$5,600 U.S.), but they have been paid only half of that. They also say they are owed five days of daily allowance while at the World Cup.

“They paid us 1 million [naira] and said that is all. We want them to pay the balance,” one player told ESPN. “Part of that money is from two years ago, the other is from three years ago. And they are also owing us five days’ daily allowance here in France.

“Before the World Cup, we asked them for a meeting so that we could discuss our World Cup bonuses, like they did with the men’s team last year. They ignored the letter and nobody said anything about it until now.”

The players are also demanding their share of the World Cup participation fee from FIFA, even though the tournament’s organisers are not scheduled to pay those until September.

Nigeria Football Federation president Amaju Pinnick told ESPN that all the outstanding allowances have been paid.

“We have paid them everything they are being owed,” he said.

“The only thing outstanding is the participation fee from FIFA, which is not expected to come until after the tournament. But they insist that they want to get paid, as they have spoken to players from Cameroon and France, who told them they have already been paid.”

(Source: ESPN)

Barcelona refuse to pay De Ligt 12 million euros net per year

Barcelona had made it one of their main objectives to try and lure Matthijs de Ligt to the Camp Nou this summer, but ultimately they have been priced out of the deal.

The Ajax captain is now negotiating with Juventus, having also spoken with Paris Saint-Germain, and reports in Italy suggest that a total agreement has been reached between Ajax, the Bianconeri and De Ligt. The Blaugrana, meanwhile, have made their last move in their attempt to sign him.

Barcelona decided that enough was enough when they saw that the overall sum to bring in De Ligt would surpass 200 million euros. The estimated transfer with Ajax would cost 75m euros plus add-ons, and the centre-back would sign a five-year contract. Having asked for 12m euros net per year, it would cost the club 120m euros in that period just for his salary.

Between the transfer fee and his wages, the overall deal would cost more than 200m, and that is forgetting one last expense: Mino Raiola’s 20 percent commission from the transfer fee.

Barcelona stood up and said no. They were not willing to make that expense for a 19-year-old, and it would have completely unbalanced the club’s wage structure.

(Source: Marca)

Over €800M spent on players in LaLiga in just one month

LaLiga clubs are spending big this summer...some through necessity to compensate for a barren season as is the case with Real Madrid, others to readdress last season’s ultimate disappointments as is the case with Barça and Atlético and with the rest of the sides anxious to ensure that their own respective priorities are catered for. The 2019 summer season has already seen LaLiga sides spend 808 million euro in the month of June (with both the Griezmann and Joao Félix deals yet to be confirmed) and is currently on track to create an all time spend record, easily surpassing last season’s record outlay of 887 million euro. The Spanish league leads the way ahead of Germany’s Bundesliga (with 434 million euro spent), Serie A, 352; Premier League, 197 and Ligue 1 in France on 36 million.

Real Madrid once again are the spend-thrifts. After shelling out 146 million euro ahead of the 2018-19 season, the Bernabeu outfit have already parted with 303 million euro bringing in the likes of Eden Hazard who moved from Chelsea for a fee of 100 million euro. The Belgian, along with Jovic (60), Mendy (48) Militao (50) and Rodrygo (45) are the big summer acquisitions for “Los Blancos”



with Madrid now having to look to sell to balance the books.

Barça have spent 75 million euro on De Jong with the Antoine Griezmann deal expected to be confirmed on July 1st with a fee of 120 million euro being paid for his signature. With the Griezmann sale Atleti have acquired Benfica’s Joao Félix (120) with Marcos Llorente also making a move across town for (35 million). Other major LaLiga signings include Betis’ acquisition of Lo Celso (22 million), Dabbur and Diego Carlos moving to Sevilla FC



(30 million total) and Basque side Real Sociedad bagging Portu from Girona for 10 million euro. At present the “big three” constitute 84% of the money spent on players in Spain’s top flight.

■ Europe’s ‘Big 5’

PREMIER LEAGUE. Manchester City are reported to have offered 95M€ to Napoli for Koulibaly but there is a cautious approach in the current Premier League market after years of topping the high spender lists. Raul Jimenez moving to Wolves (38 million), Pablo Fornals’ move

from Villarreal to West Ham and Danny Ings’ Southampton acquisition are the three biggest outlays from English clubs to date in the market.

BUNDESLIGA. Over 400 million euro has been spent in Germany with Lucas Hernández moving from Atlético to Bayern for 80 million euro the highest outlay to date. Bayern are also interested in securing the signature of Manchester City’s Sané with the English side already rejecting a bid of 80 million euro.

SERIE A. If rumours are to be believed, Serie A could soon be set to make a splash with both Paul Pogba and Matthijs de Ligt rumoured to be Turin bound to hook up with new boss Sarri at Juventus. Romalu Lukaku is another big money move set to shake up Serie A with a move from Manchester United to the San Siro due to be confirmed imminently.

LIGUE 1. PSG are normally the club to lead the spending spree in France but with the shadow of UEFA’s financial Fair Play ruling hanging over the French side, the Parisian side have yet to open the cheque book. Exits are all too common in Ligue 1 with Moussa Dembélé (Lyon) and Lille’s Nicholas Pepe also poised to pack their bags for England.

(Source: AS)

Galeone: ‘Allegri betrayed by Juve’

Mentor Giovanni Galeone reveals Max Allegri “feels betrayed by Juventus,” while replacement Maurizio Sarri “is not prepared for some situations.”

In the days after his dismissal, Allegri published an image of his lunch with former Pescara Coach Galeone and new Milan boss Marco Giampaolo, as both see the veteran as a father figure.

“Allegri was really upset and feels betrayed by Juventus. He is particularly let down by President Andrea Agnelli,” Galeone told Il Fatto Quotidiano newspaper.

“He hasn’t got over that yet, but I’ve been advising him to leave Juve for years. I’ve had trouble with Juve since 1958... they are arrogant and act like they own everything. “Juventus would never have called me in, but I

would’ve liked to work at Dino Viola’s Roma or Diego Maradona’s Napoli.”

Sarri was an unexpected replacement for Allegri, coming from Chelsea only a year after his exploits at Napoli.

“He’s a bit chaotic and is not prepared for some situations. When I read some statements of his last year, I considered whether they were opportune.

“This desire to always prove his left-wing credentials too, there’s no need for it. Giampaolo is proper old school Bertinotti and Rifondazione party left-wing, but he never talks about it. In fact, now (right-wing former Prime Minister and Milan owner Silvio) Berlusconi wants to talk to him.

“If we want to talk about a Coach as a guru, then I’d say Gian Piero Gasperini, as he is a genius. Even as a player, he

never got a movement wrong, always played with his butt leaning forward. He gets really angry and has a terrible character, but he’s so talented.

“Gasp was already a Coach on the field and that is fundamental, someone who can really see the game. Allegri was much the same, he was the best.”

Galeone didn’t hold back on the modern selection of players either.

“Between Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo, I’d take Messi any day. Players nowadays do what they want and have an exaggerated power over their contracts, so they don’t stay in their lane. You end up with a situation like Mauro Icardi demanding he speak to the President of Inter.”

(Source: Football Italia)

Retiring Spain star Torres eyes future coaching role



Spanish World Cup winner Fernando Torres said Sunday his body could no longer cope with the physical demands of football after announcing his retirement from the game.

But the 35-year-old, once one of the deadliest marksmen in the world, would not rule out a future in coaching.

The former Atletico Madrid, Liverpool and Chelsea striker finished his career at Japanese club Sagan Tosu after joining the J-League side last year.

“I have a high demand of myself — I always want to be honest and perform at the level I think I should,” said Torres, who scored Spain’s winning goal in the 2008 European championships and played a key role in their 2010 World Cup triumph.

“Knowing my body and listening to my body, I think, especially mentally, that time (when I can’t perform at the top level) is not far and I wanted to end my career in a good way before that happens.

“I always gave everything I had and I still will give in the next two months,” added Torres, whose last game will be against former Spain team mate Andres Iniesta’s Vissel Kobe on August 23.

Torres tweeted his retirement on Friday, saying: “After 18 exciting years, the time has come to put an end to my football career.”

He left Atletico last summer to play

in Japan after returning to his boyhood club in 2015 but has struggled with form and injuries.

Torres, dubbed “El Nino” during his heyday, played 334 times in total for Atletico, scoring 111 goals.

He made 142 appearances for Liverpool, finding the net 81 times in his prime, before joining Chelsea where he scored 45 goals in 172 matches for the London club.

Asked about the future, Torres told a news conference in Tokyo he would continue in an advisory role for Sagan, likely identifying Spanish youth players for the Kyushu club.

He also did not rule out becoming a manager or coach back in Europe.

“I just need time to spend with my family and think about the next step -- I don’t know if it will be coaching or managing,” said Torres, who named his former Liverpool captain Steven Gerrard as the best he had ever played alongside.

“I think I will study both things, and just wait for the call.”

Torres also remains open to the idea of another emotional return to Atletico in the future, after earning his coaching badges.

“When I was a kid, I got a calling to become a football player,” said Torres.

“I’m sure this kind of calling comes too. You don’t have to look for them.”

(Source: AFP)

Clinical, ruthless Brazil please coach Tite



Brazil coach Tite praised his team’s effectiveness as the hosts stormed into the Copa America quarter-finals as Group A winners following Saturday’s 5-0 thrashing of Peru.

Brazil had been jeered by their own fans in their opening two pool matches -- a 3-0 win over Bolivia and 0-0 draw with Venezuela -- but it was all cheers in Sao Paulo as they secured top spot.

“We were creative, precise, clinical and effective,” enthused Tite.

“It was one of the best” matches during his reign in terms of keeping the ball and getting in behind the defence, he added.

And he recognized that it was the Selecao’s fast start that made the difference, taking the lead after just 12 minutes through Casemiro.

“Since we scored in the first half we had to maintain that tempo,” he said. “We kept the same attitude and we were still creating chances in the 47th minute of the second half.”

The game was over as a contest by half time after further goals from Roberto Firmino and Everton.

A Dani Alves strike early in the second half piled more misery on Peru and even after Willian scored in the last minute, Gabriel Jesus won a stoppage time penalty.

Peru goalkeeper Pedro Gallese made amends for giving it away by saving Jesus’s spot-kick.

“We carried on creating chances even at 5-0,” said assistant coach Cleber Xavier.

Captain Alves said Brazil improved in every match during the pool stage.

“We’re improving: from the first to the second, to the third match,” said the Paris Saint-Germain full-back.

The manner of victory also allowed Brazil to get back in the good books of a notoriously demanding public.

They were jeered at half-time against Bolivia in a match they went on to win 3-0. And the boo-boys were back for their goalless stalemate with Venezuela.

“When you manage to score a goal, it calms you down and gives you continuity for the rest of the match,” said Alves.

“And when the goal doesn’t come, it seems to create anxiety.”

For Peru, they now face a tense wait to find out if they will make it into the knock-out stages.

Venezuela leapfrogged them with a 3-1 win over Bolivia and Peru are now hoping to finish as one of the two best third-placed teams.

Jefferson Farfan said “it was one of the toughest” matches of his life, but worse still for goalkeeper Pedro Gallese, whose horror gaffe cost Peru the second goal.

He was also partially at fault for the first and third and gave away the late penalty.

“The whole team spoke with Gallese, he’s calm, he has everyone’s support,” said Farfan.

(Source: Mirror)

Federer crushes Goffin for 10th Halle title

Roger Federer will head to Wimbledon in high spirits after waltzing past Belgium’s David Goffin in straight sets to win a record-extending 10th title at the ATP event in Halle on Sunday.

Federer, 37, beat Goffin 7-6 (7/2), 6-1 to secure his 102nd career singles title and remain unbeaten on grass so far this season. “It’s unbelievable. I never thought when I first played here that I would win 10 titles,” said Federer.

The Swiss star is chasing a ninth Wimbledon crown in London next month as he looks to extend and defend his

record of 20 career majors.

Long-term rival Rafael Nadal moved to within just two titles of Federer’s record with his 12th French Open triumph earlier this month, while world number one Novak Djokovic is just five short with 15 career majors.

Federer endured a rough ride in the early rounds in Halle, battling to hard-fought, three-set victories over Jo-Wilfried Tsonga and Roberto Bautista Agut.

Things got easier in the latter stages as he thrashed Andy Murray’s new doubles partner Pierre-Hugues Herbert in the

semi-finals before dispatching Goffin on Sunday.

Federer held off three break points early in the first set before prevailing in the tiebreaker.

An unsettled looking Goffin then gifted Federer the opening game of the second set with a double fault on break point.

From there, the Swiss never looked back, breaking Goffin twice more on his way to a 10th Halle title.

It is the first time Federer has reached double figures at any individual tournament.

(Source: AFP)

Massimo Carrera shortlisted for Persepolis job

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Italian coach Massimo Carrera has been shortlisted as a candidate to replace Branko Ivankovic in Iranian football giants Persepolis.

Carrera, 55, has been out of a job since being sacked by Russian football club Spartak Moscow in late 2018.

Carrera ended Spartak's 16-year wait for a Russian Premier League title by leading them to glory in 2016-17.

But the Italian was unable to follow up that success and Spartak finished third last season, then failed to reach the UEFA Champions League group stages after losing against PAOK in the third qualifying round.

Krunoslav «Kruno» Jurcic and Alexander Nouri are other contenders for the top job.

Croatian coach Jurcic has most recently coached Emirati football club Baniyas. The 50-year-old trainer has coached Dinamo Zagreb in three spells.

Iranian-German Nouri, who led Bundesliga side Werder Bremen in 2016-17, is also a candidate to take charge of the Reds.

Former Italy goalkeeper Walter Zenga has been also linked with a move to Persepolis.

Persepolis are looking for a replacement for Ivankovic, who left the Iranian giants to lead Al Ahli of Saudi Arabia.

Ivankovic led Persepolis to the Iranian domestic treble last season. Under guidance of the Croat, the Reds experienced their first ever AFC Champions league final as well.

The new season of Iran league will kick off on July 30.



Iran lose to France in 2019 VNL

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran suffered their second defeat at the 2019 Volleyball Nations League on Sunday.

Team Melli lost to France in straight sets (25-18, 26-24, 25-21) in Ardabil's Reza zadeh Hall.

Iran have won 10 matches at the men's 2019 FIVB Volleyball Nations League so far and suffered two losses.

Iran sit top of the table with 30 points, followed by Brazil with 27 points and one game in hands.

Igor Kolakovic's team will travel to Bulgaria to play Bulgaria, Serbia and the U.S. in the week 5.

The competition is being 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.

Feyenoord target loan move for Brighton's Jahanbakhsh: report



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Eredivisie side Feyenoord are interested in signing Iranian player Alireza Jahanbakhsh on loan from Brighton.

Signed for £17m last summer, the winger is Brighton's club-record signing but has badly struggled to live up to that fee.

Jahanbakhsh failed to register a single goal or assist for the Premier League team in nineteen games. He has completed 90 minutes just three times in what had been a difficult season, punctuated by niggling injuries and compounded by conceding a

soft penalty at Arsenal.

Now, Feyenoord, headed by Jaap Stam, want to sign Jahanbakhsh in the summer to strengthen this season, ELFvoetbal.nl reported.

Jahanbakhsh joined Brighton & Hove Albion FC last year after scoring 21 goals and claiming 12 assists in AZ.

Jahanbakhsh was a member of Iran national football team in the 2014 and 2018 World Cup.

He also represented Iran at the 2015 and 2019 AFC Asian Cups.

Iranian-French Bayat becomes RBFA president



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iranian-French Mehdi Bayat has been elected as new president of Royal Belgian Football Association (RBFA) on Saturday.

Bayat, 40, has been named as Gérard Linard's successor after receiving 15 votes at an extraordinary general meeting of KBVB. Gilbert Timmermans and Philippe Godin came second and third, respectively.

Born in Tehran and raised in Cannes, Bayat has been the managing director of Charleroi since September 2012.

"I am a child of Belgian football," Bayat said after taking his new role. "That's what I told the Executive Committee when I applied. I came to Charleroi 17 years ago. I learned the profession here and didn't skip any steps."

"It is important that I have always had a good relationship with everyone. Everyone knows that I have a good sense of diplomacy. Now, my first task is to manage the changes that the federation stands for. I will do my best to support management but I want much more transparency," he added. Belgium sit top of the FIFA ranking.

Afghanistan's Momrak sets eyes on future

There was no title to cap Afghanistan's fairy tale run in the AFC U-20 Futsal Championship 2019, but head coach Abdul Razaq Momrak was a satisfied man nonetheless.

Afghanistan appeared in their first ever AFC final at any level and Momrak said this will be the foundation for the sport's continued development.

Despite their 3-1 loss to Japan in Saturday's final, Afghanistan held their own and the result could well have been different had they converted their dominance into goals.

"Thank you AFC, thank you Islamic Republic of Iran and the city of Tabriz for hosting this tournament," said Momrak during the post-match press conference.

"I want to congratulate Japan for winning the title, and Iran for the third place. Japan was really good, tactically and physically.

"However, I am proud of our players and my colleagues."



Momrak said finishing second was more than commendable, also paying tribute to the travelling Afghanistan fans. "We had a really short training camp, and this (final)

was a mission impossible for Afghanistan, but this is still a big achievement for Afghanistan."

"I want to thank our fans who came here to Tabriz. They supported us everywhere, here in the stadium, our hotel and on social media.

"They motivated us to be champions, and despite the loss, they're still calling us champions for what we've achieved." Futsal is a growing sport in Afghanistan and Momrak was hopeful seeing rapid progress after the exploits of his team.

"We don't have a national league in Afghanistan, but we have got good leagues in different states. We want to improve them, and we are going to start one (national league) in the near future.

"We also want to have a team participating in the AFC Futsal Club Championship."

(Source: the-afc)

Team spirit won us the title, says Japan's Suzuki

Head coach Ryuji Suzuki's normally stern expression was replaced with a smile after Japan clinched the AFC U-20 Futsal Championship title on Saturday.

Suzuki had every reason to be overjoyed as Japan clinched their inaugural AFC U-20 Futsal Championship title in swashbuckling fashion, dethroning 2017 champions Islamic Republic of Iran in the process with a sizzling 8-4 win the semi-finals.

They were always on top in the final against Afghanistan, as goalkeeper Tabuchi Hiroshi's 38th minute effort sealed the 3-1 win after Takahashi Yudai and Osawa Masashi had

scored in the first half.

"I think that all the players did their best from the first minute to the last," said Suzuki.

"I also want to express my appreciation for the immense support the team has received back home."

While goalkeeper Hiroshi was a standout player, Suzuki credited Japan's victory to a collective effort.

"Of course he was one of the best players today, after saving so many shots.

"But the reason he made so many great plays is because all the players supported him as a family, which is our philosophy."

At the end of Japan's campaign, 13 of their 14-men squad had at least one goal to their name, an impressive feat and the major reason why Japan lifted the trophy after their 2017 campaign had ended in the quarter-finals.

Suzuki said every player in the Japan squad shared the same philosophy and their title-winning run in Tabriz would go a long way in helping their careers.

"All the players are MVPs because everyone scored, even Hiroshi. We don't have a star player. We achieved success because of the unity in the team."

(Source: the-afc)



Persepolis close to appointing Ante Cacic as head coach

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Ante Cacic is close to agreeing a deal to become Persepolis of Iran new head coach, the local media reported.

The 65-year-old coach will reportedly meet Persepolis general manager Iraj Arab in Turkey on Monday to finalize the contract.

Cacic was replaced by Zlatko Dalic in Croatia national football team in 2017.

Persepolis are looking for a replacement for Branko Ivankovic, who left the Iranian giants to lead Al Ahli of Saudi Arabia.

Ivankovic led Persepolis to the Iranian domestic treble

last season. Under guidance of the Croat, the Reds experienced their first ever AFC Champions league final as well.

The new season of Iran league will kick off on July 30.



Aghapour bags Top Scorer Award, Masashi clinches MVP Award

Islamic Republic of Iran's Salar Aghapour emerged as the top scorer at the AFC U-20 Futsal Championship IR Iran 2019 with eight goals to his name.

Aghapour opened Iran's 2019 campaign with a goal against Hong Kong, before firing two more goals to complete his hat-trick in their 6-3 win.

In their quarter-final match with Lebanon, Aghapour gave Iran the lead in the eighth minute, and struck an important extra-time goal to ensure the host nation advanced to the semi-finals with a 3-2 win.

Iran were knocked out of contention for a second successive title after their defeat to eventual champions Japan, but he found the back of the net three more times against Indonesia to ensure the young Team Melli finished third at home.

Japan were awarded the Fair Play Award, but it was Osawa Masashi that had more reason to rejoice at the end of the night as he was named the Most Valuable Player of the Tournament.

Masashi's performance was exceptional in Tabriz, where he scored on three different occasions, including the final match against Afghanistan to become Japan's leading goal scorer.

(Source: the-afc)

Asian Games champ Keyhani banned for doping

MONACO (AP) — Asian Games steeplechase champion Hossein Keyhani has been banned for doping.

The Athletics Integrity Unit, which handles doping cases in track and field, says the Iranian runner has been banned four years over a positive test for stamina-booster EPO.

Keyhani is also disqualified from April's Asian track and field championships, where he failed to defend the 3,000-meter steeplechase title he won in 2017, finishing fourth behind Bahraini champion John Kibet Koech.

Keyhani won the Asian Games gold medal in 2018 and the Asian indoor title in the 3,000 the same year.

The AIU also says that Indian distance runner Sanjeevhani Jadav has been provisionally suspended after testing positive for the banned substance probenecid. She won Asian championships bronze in the 5,000 in 2017 and the 10,000 in April.

Iranian woman Abdolvand makes history at skill contest

TASNIM — Iranian basketball player Shadi Abdolvand made history by winning a bronze medal at the skill contest of the 2019 FIBA 3x3 World Cup on Saturday.

Marie-Eve Paget from France won the gold medal in the event and the silver went to Italian Rae Lin D'Alie.

The skills contest is contested by players from the qualified 3x3 national teams of the main tournament. Each team can enter at most a single player for the competition. The contest, which has a time limit of 45 seconds, involves a qualification phase and a knockout round.

The FIBA 3x3 World Cup 2019 is being held in Amsterdam, Netherlands from June 18 to 23.

Iranian students to attend 30th Summer Universiade Napoli

MNA —Iran's student team left Tehran on Sunday for Naples to participate at the 30th Summer Universiade Napoli, slated for 3-14 July 2019 in Italy.

The biennial multisport event will be in its 30th year and will celebrate 60 years since the first games were held in Turin, Italy in 1959. The program will include 18 sports, 170 countries and approximately 8,000 participants.

The Summer Universiade is an international university sports and cultural event that is staged every two years in a different city. These games draw many thousands of student-athletes together to compete, making it one of the largest multi-sport events in the world. The Summer Universiade incorporates educational and cultural aspects, encouraging student-athletes from around the world to combine high sports performance with their intellectual pursuits. The twelve-day Summer Universiade competition program includes fifteen compulsory sports.

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GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Shortage for everyone is lacking a friend,
and friendship is half of wisdom, and grief
causes old age.

Imam Ali (AS)

Tehran center to host Iranian, Afghan writers meeting

A R T **TEHRAN** — A number of Iranian and Afghan children's book writers will come together for a session titled "Sympathy and Compassion" at the Iranian Association of Writers for Children and Youth in Tehran on July 6.

همدلی و همزبانی

نشست نویسندگان ادبیات کودک و نوجوان افغانستان و ایران



شنبه ۱۵ تیر ۹۸

A poster for the meeting of Iranian and Afghan children's writers "Sympathy and Compassion".

Afghan authors Mohammad-Sarvar Rajai, Seyyed Nader Musavi, Seyyed Mahmud Hosseini and Seyyed Morteza Shahtorabi along with a number of Iranian writers will exchange their experiences and ideas on writing during the meeting.

The ways to collaborate on joint writing projects will also be discussed.

"The Notebook of Absence" available at Iranian bookstores

A R T **TEHRAN** — Prominent French writer Frédéric Dard's book "The Notebook of Absence" (le cahier d'absence) has recently been published in Persian by Jahan-e Ketab Publications in Tehran.

Written in 1962, the book is about Yves Geoffroy, a married doctor and father of a teenage boy who falls in love with his 18-year-old pregnant patient.

Now he is facing this dilemma, leaving his family behind and go with his new love of life or staying with them and forget about her.

Translated by Abbas Agahi, "The Notebook of Absence" is Dard's 17th book that is published in Persian.

University of New Mexico gets rare George Orwell collection

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — A longtime advocate and employee of the University of New Mexico University Libraries is donating his collection of rare George Orwell books.

The university announced last week that professor and curator emeritus Russ Davidson has agreed to donate his Orwell book collection, which includes first editions of "Animal Farm" and "1984" in various languages.

Davidson's extensive collection also includes scarce editions of many of Orwell's other books, essays and journalistic writings.

The collection will be part of an Orwell exhibit in Zimmerman Library from September 2019 through spring of 2020.

Davidson worked at University Libraries for 25 years. The British-born Orwell was known for his allegorical novella "Animal Farm" and dystopian novel "1984," both of which tackled totalitarianism. Orwell's "1984" has become a best-seller in the U.S. again during the Trump administration.

Fitilei Uncles member warns of IRIB neglect as BBC Persian launches children's TV program

A R T **TEHRAN** — Mohammad Moslemi a member of the Fitilei Uncles, a popular Iranian troupe that performs for children, has warned about Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting's neglect of children's programs after BBC Persian Television, the BBC's Persian language news channel that is officially viewed as an enemy medium in Iran, announced its plan last week to air a special program for children.

"IRIB is at its worst in the production of children's programs compared to what has been over the past 30 years since I have been working in this field," Moslemi told the Persian service of MNA on Sunday.

He called the IRIB's neglect oppression of children and said, "Our children are exposed to fast foods, drug addiction, labor and many other problems, but no one cares about these issues."

Due to BBC Persian's one-hour program for children, which started on Saturday, Moslemi said, "We see that others are working on our children and they will then make changes in their ideology, costumes and lifestyle, but no one takes the children seriously here, and not even one percent of IRIB's TV series is for children."

He added that IRIB is facing serious financial problems and has asked producers to find sponsors for their programs.

Moslemi's soul mates Hamid Goli and Ali Forutan are other members of the Fitilei Uncles, which played roles "Fitileh, Jomeh Tatileh", an IRIB program that was broadcast on Friday mornings during the 2000s.

Due to various constraints, they split from IRIB in 2011 to produce programs for home video network independently.

Majid Qannad was also a member of the troupe, but he separated from the group in December 2010.

The Fitilei Uncles has regularly been seen at charity events. They have given performances for Afghan children in refugee camps in Iran.



The Fitilei Uncles Ali Forutan (L), Mohammad Moslemi (C) and Hamid Goli pose in an undated photo.

IIDCYA hosts book fair on astronomy



کتابخانه مرجع
کانون پرورش فکری کودکان و نوجوانان
برگزار می کند:

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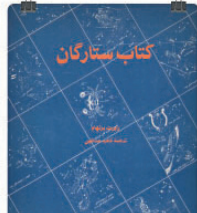
نجوم

تیر ۱۳۹۸

مجمع فرهنگی هنری شهید ملک شامران

کتابخانه مرجع

ساعت کار کتابخانه ۸-۱۶



A poster for "There Is No Distance from Earth to the Sky", an exhibition of astronomy books underway at the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults in Tehran.

C U L T U R E **TEHRAN** — The major library of the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (IIDCYA) is playing host to a book fair on astronomy.

A selection of 63 books in Persian and non-Persian languages as well as two periodicals have been put on view at the fair entitled "There Is No Distance from the Earth to the Sky", the IIDCYA announced in a press release on Sunday.

"Space Encyclopedia" and "Emblas

Universum" by Swedish author Majken Pollack, and "Raoul Taffin cosmonaute" by French author Gérard Moncombe are among the books.

Two highlights of the Persian books selected for the exhibition are Parviz Amini's "Astronomer Shepherd" about Persian scientist Abu Rayhan Biruni (973-1048 CE) and Sanaz Latifian's "Sadra and Position of Stars".

The fair will be open until July 22 at the library located at 24 Khaled Eslamboli St., Beheshti Ave.

"Alienation" from Iran to compete in Armenian pantomime festival

A R T **TEHRAN** — An Iranian troupe is scheduled to stage "The Alienation" in a street performance during the Yengibaryan International Mime Festival in Tsakhkadzor, Armenia, director Ghoncheh Shokuhian told the Persian service of MNA on Sunday.

The play is about two lovers, who try to change each other in order to make their own suitable soulmates. But after a while, there is no more love between them as the things they were passionate

about have already changed.

Negar Mojaddad, Mahyar Varzeghan, Afsun Nabipur and Maryam Sabokru are the main members of the cast of the physical play.

The Yengibaryan International Mime Festival is named after Soviet clown and actor Leonid Georgievich Yengibarov (1935-1972) who developed the art of clownery by introducing lyrical tones into traditional buffoonery and outlandish sequences.

The festival will be held from August 10 to 15.

Pistol that Van Gogh used to shoot himself sells for \$145,000

PARIS (Reuters) — The gun Dutch artist Vincent Van Gogh is believed to have used to commit suicide in France in 1890, shooting himself in the chest after years of mental anguish, sold for 130,000 euros (\$145,700) at auction in Paris on Wednesday.

An anonymous phone bidder took home the Lefauchaux revolver, its casing heavily rusted and the inlay of the curved handle missing, for more than double the highest estimate put on it by experts at auction house Drouot.

"It is a very emblematic piece," said auctioneer Gregoire Veyres. "The fact that it's a gun, it's an object of death. And if Van Gogh is Van Gogh, it's because of his suicide and this gun is part of it."

Van Gogh suffered bouts of psychosis and deep depression throughout his life, with his torment often infusing his art, whether intensely painted self-portraits or other notable works including The Starry Night and Sunflowers.

He is also notorious for having chopped off part of his own left ear with a razor blade during an argument with fellow artist Paul Gauguin.



The gun believed to be used by painter Vincent Van Gogh (1853-1890) to shoot himself on July 27, 1890, in Auvers-sur-Oise is presented by Drouot auction house in Paris, France, June 14, 2019. (Reuters/Charles Platiau)

Van Gogh died at Auvers-sur-Oise near Paris in July 1890, aged just 37, more than two days after shooting himself in the chest in a wheat field where he had previously painted.

After failing to kill himself instantly, he stumbled back to the inn where he was staying and was looked after by the innkeeper, Arthur Ravoux, and his daughter Adeline, who was 13 at the time and recounted the events more than 60 years later.



Director Ghoncheh Shokuhian's troupe performs "The Alienation" during the 37th Fajr International Theater Festival in Tehran in February 2019.