



Iran Daily celebrates its readers on the birth anniversary of Imam Hassan (PBUH), the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the third Shia Imam.

IRAN DAILY



Zarif, Guterres review region's developments

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Spain's Catalonia announces Oct. independence vote



Iran oil exports to West up in May



Experience pays off for Jahanbakhsh

Leader: Such attacks fail to harm nation's will

President: Assaults act of revenge against democracy



FM slams 'repugnant' Trump statement

Iran arrests dozens of Daesh suspects

Thousands pack Tehran's streets to mourn the victims

Political Desk

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said on Friday the deadly terror attacks in Tehran this week "which indicate viciousness and at the same time humiliation of their perpetrators and instigators are too small to make a dent in the will of the Iranian nation".

Such crimes cannot work to harm the Iranian nation's determination, Ayatollah Khamenei said adding that "the definite result of these attacks is nothing other than reinforcing hatred toward the governments of the United States and their agents in the region like Saudi Arabia."

The comments came in a message of condolence to the families of the victims as thousands packed Tehran's streets on

Friday to mourn the victims of the attacks.

"The Iranian nation, united and determined, will march ahead, God Willing," the Leader noted in his message read at the funeral.

At least 17 people were killed and more than 50 injured in Tehran on Wednesday, when gunmen attacked Iran's Parliament and the mausoleum of the founder of the Islamic Republic Ayatollah Rouhollah Khomeini.

The terrorist incidents, Ayatollah Khamenei said, was a "clear indication of the animosity and malicious hostility of the agents of the arrogance with the noble Iranian nation and everything related to the revolution, the Islamic system and its exalted late leader (Imam Khomeini)."

The Daesh terror group claimed responsibility for the attacks.

'Revenge against democracy'

The funeral for those killed began on Friday morning in Tehran with a ceremony in the parliament, with President Hassan Rouhani in attendance.

The president said the terror assaults "were an act of revenge against democracy," adding that "whenever the nation scores a victory, ill-wishers work to deliver a blow to the country and the nation."

Rouhani added that it is not the first time the nation witnesses such acts of terror, stressing that "people will find their own path to national goals and unity, and the nation will undoubtedly emerge victorious."

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Defiant May vows to stay on despite UK election blow

A defiant Prime Minister Theresa May vowed Friday to form a new government to lead Britain out of the EU despite losing her majority in a snap general election and facing calls to resign.

"What the country needs more than ever is certainty," May said after the shock outcome of Thursday's vote, AFP reported.

The Conservative leader had called the election in a bid to extend her majority and strengthen her hand in the looming Brexit negotiations, but her gamble backfired spectacularly.

Although winning the most seats, her center-right party lost its majority in Parliament, meaning it will now rely on support from Northern Ireland's Democratic Unionist Party (DUP).

Sterling plunged against the dollar and the euro on Friday as the election result created even more uncertainty over the whole Brexit process.

But May vowed to "fulfil the promise of Brexit," in a statement outside her Downing Street office after seeking permission from the head of state, Queen Elizabeth II, to form a new government.

"It is clear that only the Conservative and Unionist Party has the legitimacy and ability to provide that," she said.

"This will allow us to come together as a country and channel our energies towards a successful Brexit deal."

The Conservatives and the pro-Brexit DUP are expected to team up on a vote-by-vote basis rather than enter a formal alliance after the result left Britain with a hung Parliament.

EU President Donald Tusk urged Britain not to delay the talks, due to start on June 19, warning that time was running out to reach a divorce deal to end four decades of membership.

'Lost confidence'

Leftist opposition leader, Jeremy Corbyn, whose Labour Party surged from 20 points behind in the opinion polls, told May to quit, saying she had "lost votes, lost support and lost confidence."

With all but one constituency declared, the Conservatives won 318 seats – down from 331 at the 2015 election – while Labour was on 261, up from 229.

May, a 60-year-old vicar's daughter, is now facing questions over her judgement in calling the election three years early and throwing away her party's slim but stable working majority of 17.

In a night that redrew the political landscape once again, the UK Independence Party (UKIP) lost millions of voters, triggering the resignation of leader Paul Nuttall.

The Scottish National Party of First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, which has dominated politics north of the border for a decade and called for a new independence vote after Brexit, lost 21 of the 56 seats it won in 2015.

Sturgeon said the result showed that "the reckless Tory pursuit of a 'hard Brexit' must now be abandoned."

May, who took over after the June 2016 Brexit referendum, began the formal two-year process of leaving the EU on March 29, promising to take Britain out of the single market and cut immigration.

Qatar rejects Saudi-led bloc's 'terror' list as 'baseless'

Qatar on Friday dismissed as "baseless" a terrorism blacklist published by Saudi Arabia and its allies which linked individuals and organizations in Doha to support for militant groups.

The emirate was responding just hours after Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Bahrain published a list of 59 people and entities linked to "terrorism", AFP reported.

"The recent joint statement issued by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt and the UAE regarding a 'terror finance watch list' once again reinforces baseless allegations that hold no foundation in fact," read a statement from Qatar's government.

The statement added that Qatar does not support terrorist groups.

"Our position on countering terrorism is stronger than many of the signatories of the joint statement – a fact that has been conveniently ignored by the authors," it added.

Included on the list were Doha-based Muslim Brotherhood spiritual leader Yusuf al-Qaradawi and Qatari-funded charities.

The list and response adds to the diplomatic and political tensions in the Persian Gulf which have heightened since Saudi Arabia and its allies severed ties with Qatar over its alleged support for extremism.

Qatar won't 'surrender'

Qatar vehemently denied the claims and on Thursday its Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani said his country would not "surrender".

Sheikh Mohammed said calls for a change in Qatari policy from Saudi Arabia and its allies were unacceptable and that no other country could determine its policies.

"No one has the right to intervene in our foreign policy," he said.

The FM also rejected "a military solution as an option" to resolving the crisis, and said Qatar could survive "forever" despite the measures taken against it.

"We are not ready to surrender, and will never be ready to surrender the independence of our foreign policy," he told reporters later, adding: "No one will break us."

Trump dismisses ex-FBI director Comey as 'leaker'

US President Donald Trump called James Comey a "leaker" on Friday, following explosive testimony by the fired FBI director, in which he accused Trump in a US Senate hearing of lying and trying to quash an investigation into former national security adviser Michael Flynn.

The Republican president stopped short of saying that Comey lied under oath at the hearing, which occurred a month after Trump fired him on May 9.

In his public testimony, Comey did not disclose any links between Trump advisers and alleged Russian attempts to meddle in the



"Those were lies, plain and simple," James B. Comey, the former FBI director, told the Senate Intelligence Committee on Thursday, discussing White House explanations for his firing.

"Despite so many false statements and lies, total and complete vindication ... and WOW, Comey is a leaker!" Trump tweeted in his first comments since Comey appeared before the Senate Intelligence Committee on Thursday, Reuters reported.

2016 US presidential election. Russia has denied such interference. The White House has denied collusion with Moscow.

In the highly anticipated hearing, Comey delivered a scathing indictment of his former boss, accusing him of trying to block the

Flynn probe and saying the White House denied him and the Federal Bureau of Investigation in trying to explain his dismissal.

He told the Senate panel he took meticulous notes of each meeting or conversation he had with Trump because "I was honestly concerned that he might lie about the nature of our meeting, and so I thought it really important to document."

Comey said he shared an unclassified memo of their conversation about Flynn because he hoped it would lead to the appointment of a special counsel.

Robert Mueller, a former FBI director, was appointed as special counsel the week after Comey's firing, which set off a political firestorm and raised suspicions among Democrats and others that the White House was trying to blunt the FBI probe.

Comey would not say whether he thought Trump tried to obstruct justice, leaving that determination to Mueller.

"I don't think it's for me to say whether the conversation I had with the president was an effort to obstruct," Comey testified. "I took it as a very disturbing thing, very concerning."

Thursday's hearing brought Washington and other parts of the country to a standstill as Americans sat glued to their screens, harkening to the Watergate congressional hearings that held the nation rapt some four decades earlier.

In his opening statement, Comey solemnly accused the Trump administration of spreading "lies, plain and simple" in the aftermath of his abrupt ouster, declaring that the administration "chose to defame me and, more importantly, the FBI" by claiming the bureau was in disorder.

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Iran urges UN to focus on Riyadh threats against Tehran

In a letter to the UN Security Council, Iran reminded the world body that the recent terror attacks in Tehran came hot on the heels of Saudi Arabia's repeated threats against the Islamic Republic.

At least 17 people were killed and around 50 injured in Tehran on Wednesday, when gunmen attacked Iran's Parliament and the mausoleum of the late founder of the Islamic Republic, Imam Khomeini.

The Daesh terrorist group claimed responsibility for the near-simultaneous assaults, Press TV reported.

The Iranian Intelligence Ministry on Thursday released the names of and other information regarding the five Daesh terrorists involved in the terror attacks. The five had participated in Daesh atrocities in the Iraqi city of Mosul and the Syrian city of Raqqa.

"The terrorist attacks in Tehran took place on the heel of the rejection on May 2, 2017 of any dialogue with Iran by the Saudi defense minister and his threat, emphasizing that 'we will work so that the battle is on their side, inside Iran.'"

"Iran's Ambassador to the United Nations Gholamali Khoshroo wrote in the letter dated Friday, June 9. The remarks marked a high point in the belligerent Saudi Arabian discourse about Iran, Mohammed bin Salman, who is also the Saudi deputy crown prince, accused Iran of seeking to 'control the Muslim world'."

Tehran has consistently rejected Riyadh's accusations of interference in the region, and has responded to the warlike comments by inviting the kingdom to dialogue.

"It is not surprising that the Saudi minister of foreign affairs had threatened Iran a few hours before the attacks, saying, 'Iran must be punished,'" Khoshroo noted.

The Al Saud regime has been under fire for nurturing and exporting the radical ideology of Wahhabism, which serves as a basis for the creeds of Takfiri groups operating across the Middle East.

Many observers say the Saudi rulers use Daesh and Al-Qaeda-linked terrorists as proxies in pursuit of their own objectives in the region, particularly in Syria, where Riyadh has been seeking to facilitate the ouster of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

Meanwhile, Takfiri terror groups have many sympathizers inside Saudi Arabia. There have been reports of fundraising campaigns active in the kingdom in support of Daesh, with the rulers refusing to stop such money donations.

The Iranian diplomat further said he had warned in a letter to the council the last time about "the irresponsible, provocative, and ill-fated policies" of Saudi Arabia in promoting and financing extremist groups and its adventurism in the region, referring most prominently to the kingdom's bombing of Yemen from 2015 to the present.

He also said despite its patronage for the extremist ideology, Riyadh had been rewarded recently by a hefty arms deal with the United States.

Washington named Iran as the target of the agreement, worth USD110 billion, which was signed during US President Donald Trump's visit to the Saudi capital last month.

The Iranian official said the fact that the situation in the region had exacerbated since the agreement was no surprise and cautioned against "such a dangerous approach towards regional security and its grave consequences".



Zarif, Guterres review region's developments

China: Maintaining Persian Gulf peace best for all

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif reviewed the latest regional developments in a meeting with UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres in Kazakh capital Astana on Friday.

Zarif has traveled to Astana to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit and the opening ceremony of Astana Expo 2017. Iran's formal membership of the SCO will also be on the agenda of the summit.

The UN chief condemned the Wednesday terrorist attacks in Tehran and expressed sympathy with the Iranian people and government, IRNA reported.

At least 17 people were killed and more than 50 injured in Tehran on Wednesday, when gunmen attacked Iran's Parliament and the mausoleum of the late Founder of the Islamic Republic Imam Khomeini.

Arabs' rift

Touching upon the recent dispute between some members of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council, the UN secretary general also said negotiation is the sole way for settlement of disputes in the region.

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain and Egypt severed relations with Qatar on Monday, accusing it of supporting terrorists. Doha has denied the charges leveled against it.

He also urged Iran to fully implement the nuclear deal between the country and world powers, underscoring that the world body supports the text and spirit of the historical agreement.

The two sides also discussed the latest regional developments, Syria, Iraq and Yemen in particular. Iran's foreign minister also met his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi on Friday.

Peace and stability

The Chinese minister told Zarif that maintaining peace and stability in the Persian Gulf is best for everyone, after several Arab states cut off ties with Qatar, Reuters reported.

Wang Yi said that peace and stability in the Persian Gulf accords with the common interests of the region and the international community.



"China upholds that the relevant countries should appropriately resolve the disputes between them," the Chinese Foreign Ministry cited Wang as saying on Thursday.

The meeting between Iranian and Chinese foreign minister was held on the sidelines of the two-day SCO summit.

The SCO is a Eurasian political, economic, and military organization founded by China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in 2001 to curb extremism in the region and enhance border security.

It has six observer states, namely Iran, Afghanistan, Belarus, Mongolia, India and Pakistan. On Friday, India and Pakistan became full members of the organization.

Iran, India and Pakistan were admitted as observers at

the 2005 Astana Summit.

On Wednesday, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Morgulov said Iran's membership at the SCO would have a positive impact on cooperation between the organization's member states in the fields of security, economy and humanitarian issues.

China said on Monday it supported Iran's membership. China's Assistant Foreign Minister Li Hualai said Iran has for a long time "proactively participated" in its activities and has made positive contributions to the SCO's development.

"China highly appraises this. China welcomes and supports Iran's wish to become a formal member of the SCO," he told reporters, ahead of the summit in Astana which President Xi Jinping will attend.

The SCO refused to initiate Iran's accession last year despite a request from Russia.

Iran FM slams Trump's remarks on Tehran attacks as 'repugnant'

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif slammed the US president's comments on Tehran terror attacks as "repugnant" after Donald Trump pointed the finger of blame at Iran itself, in a reaction which was met with criticism even at home.

"Repugnant WH (White House) statement & Senate sanctions as Iranians counter terror backed by US clients. Iranian people reject such US claims of friendship," Zarif tweeted on Thursday.

On Wednesday, Trump offered contradictory comments over the twin attacks in Tehran, on the one hand offering solace and, on the other, blaming the victim for the deadly operation claimed by Daesh terrorists, Press TV reported.

The US president pointed the finger at Tehran itself, arguing that the victims are also sponsors.

"We underscore that states that sponsor terrorism risk falling victim to the evil they promote," claimed Trump.

The State Department had initially released a more benign statement on Wednesday, in the wake of the attacks in Iran's Parliament and the mausoleum of the late founder of the Islamic Republic, Imam Khomeini, which left at least 17 people dead and nearly 50 others injured.

"The depravity of terrorism has no place in a peaceful, civilized world," the statement by State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said.

Meanwhile, Richard Haass, who was formerly a senior employee at the US State Department and is now the head of the Council on Foreign Relations, has criticized the White House statement regarding the terrorist attacks in Iran, pointing to a possible schism among the staffers who helped draft it.

"WH statement on Iran terror, which after condolences says Iran deserved it, is result of divided staff drafting w/o smart clear guidance," Haass wrote on his Twitter



page on Wednesday.

He then said that a journalistic investigation of the process behind the drafting of the statement would shed light on the Trump administration's political flaws.

Earlier on Wednesday, and as the attacks were unfolding in the Iranian capital, Haass had said in another tweet — a "Note to POTUS" — that the US had to condemn the attacks in Tehran.

Also criticizing Trump's stance on Tehran attacks was

Democratic Senator Chris Murphy of Connecticut, who expressed surprise at the US president's "sympathy/in-sult statement" in a Twitter post.

The White House's reactions also drew criticism from Washington DC-based non-profit organization, National Iranian American Council, which voiced support for the people of Iran in the wake of terror.

"We underscore that administrations that cannot empathize with human suffering risk losing their humanity, and presidents that cannot genuinely recognize victims of terrorism are incapable of leading the fight against terror," it added.

In his response, Zarif criticized US sanctions against the country and suggested that Iran was facing terrorism from attackers "backed by US clients".

Iranian Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani also slammed Washington for its recent move to impose new sanctions against Tehran, Tasnim News Agency reported.

"At a time when the Iranian nation was facing the terrorist incidents, the US Senate shamelessly approved the bill (to impose new sanctions against Iran)," Larijani said in a speech in Tehran on Friday.

The US Senate lacks affection for humanity, the Iranian Parliament speaker said, referring to the Senate's move to vote to proceed with a bill that would sanction Iran just hours after the Iranian capital suffered the terrorist attacks.

The US move (to impose new sanctions) proves that Iran is facing two Daesh groups, one in the region and one in the international arena, he noted, calling Washington the "international Daesh".

Leader: Such attacks fail to harm nation's will

From Page 1

Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani also slammed the United States and Saudi Arabia, which he called "a tribal state very far from anything like a democracy".

In a speech at the ceremony, Larijani denounced US sanctions against Iran over its ballistic missile program.

The United States "knows that the Revolutionary Guard Corps and its Quds force are the most important re-

gional forces fighting terrorists," he said.

The imposition of such sanctions "demonstrates their alignment with terrorists in the region," said the speaker. A funeral procession also started for the victims after the Friday Prayers in the capital.

Mourners in the crowd chanted "Death to Saudi Arabia" alongside the more customary "Death to America" and slogans against Israel, as they reached out to touch coffins wrapped in flags and covered in flowers.

Iran's Intelligence Ministry said on Thursday five of the attackers were Iranian men who had joined the Daesh (IS) and travelled to their bastions in Iraq and Syria before returning home.

Dozens of Daesh terrorists arrested

On Friday, the ministry said 41 suspects had been arrested around the country in connection with the attacks.

"With the help of security forces

and families of the suspects, 41 people linked to the attacks and to Daesh have been arrested in different provinces," state TV quoted the interior ministry as saying.

According to the statement, the terrorists were detained in the Iranian province of Kermanshah, Kordestan, West Azarbaijan and Tehran.

Plenty of documents and equipment for terrorist operations were also seized, the statement added.

"Lots of documents and weaponry have been seized as well."

UN confirms Daesh killed hundreds of civilians in Mosul

Compiled from Dispatches

Daesh terrorists shot and killed hundreds of residents in the Iraqi city of Mosul in the past two weeks, the United Nations said on Thursday, describing an increasingly desperate drive by the terrorists to prevent civilians from fleeing.

Iraqi forces, backed by airstrikes from a US-led coalition, have made advances into the city, and Daesh has responded in brutal fashion to halt the flight of civilians they want to use as human shields, the UN said, nytimes.com reported.

The deadliest attack came June 1, when at least 163 civilians, including women and children, were killed near a factory as they headed out of the Shifa neighborhood of Mosul, the UN human rights office in Geneva said.

"They were gunned down as they were fleeing," said Ravina Shamdasani, a spokeswoman for the human rights office, which reported that, as of two days ago, the bodies of the victims were still lying in the streets.

The United Nations reported that Daesh terrorists had shot and killed at least 231 civilians in the past two weeks, but Shamdasani said that many other people were missing and that the actual death toll was almost certainly higher.

Also according to the Independent, the UN's human rights office has said that an initial investigation has confirmed that between 50 and 80



Civilians fleeing clashes between Iraqi forces and Daesh terrorists in Mosul in May.

IVOR PRICKETT/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Iraqi civilians were killed in a recent US-led coalition bombing of Mosul, while hundreds more died at the hands of Daesh terrorists.

Strikes on May 31 were reported to have caused civilian deaths, but the death toll was not clear.

About 200,000 civilians were still trapped in desperate conditions in the

Old City of Mosul, targeted by terrorists and suffering heavy casualties from coalition bombing and artillery fire.

Since Iraqi forces opened their campaign to retake western Mosul more than three months ago, Daesh has herded thousands of civilians into locations near the terrorists' positions

to form a human shield.

The mounting toll from Iraqi and coalition airstrikes prompted human rights organizations on Thursday to call on those forces to make greater efforts to avoid civilian casualties, and to halt the use of heavy weapons and munitions in densely populated areas.

NEWS ANALYSIS

For Trump, the 'cloud' just grew that much darker

By Peter Baker

Upset about the investigation into Russian interference in last year's election, President Trump sought relief from James B. Comey, then the FBI director. By Mr. Comey's account, Mr. Trump asked him to help "lift the cloud."

But thanks to Mr. Trump's own actions, the cloud darkened considerably on Thursday and now seems likely to hover over his presidency for months, if not years, to come.

Rather than relieve the pressure, Mr. Trump's decision to fire Mr. Comey has generated an even bigger political and legal threat. In his anger at Mr. Comey for refusing to publicly disclose that the president was not personally under investigation, legal experts said, Mr. Trump may have actually made himself the target of an investigation.

While delivered in calm, deliberate and unemotional terms, Mr. Comey's testimony on Thursday was almost certainly the most damning 'accuse moment' by a senior law enforcement official against a president in a generation. In a Capitol Hill hearing room, the astonishing tableau unfolded of a former FBI director accusing the White House of "lies, plain and simple" and asserting that when the president suggested dropping an investigation into his former national security adviser, "I took it as a direction."

Mr. Comey gave ammunition to the president's side, too, particularly by admitting that he had orchestrated the leak of his account of his most critical meeting with Mr. Trump with the express purpose of spurring the appointment of a special counsel, which he accomplished. The president's defenders said Mr. Comey had proved Mr. Trump was right when he called the former FBI director a "showboat" and a "grandstander," a conclusion Democrats once shared when he was investigating Hillary Clinton last year.

But Mr. Comey also revealed that he had turned over memos of his conversations with Mr. Trump to that newly appointed special counsel, Robert S. Mueller III, suggesting that investigators may now be looking into whether Mr. Trump obstructed justice by dismissing the FBI director.

"This was a devastating day for the Trump White House, and when the history of the Trump presidency is written, this will be seen as a key moment," said Peter H. Wehner, who was White House adviser to President George W. Bush. "My takeaway is James Comey laid out facts and was essentially encouraging Mueller to investigate Trump for obstruction. That's a huge deal."

The White House was left in the awkward position of trying to minimize the damage. Mr. Trump himself remained uncharacteristically silent, while his advisers kept the daily briefing off camera and sent out the buckshot to Sean Spicer, the press secretary. "I can definitively say the president is not a liar," Sarah Huckabee Sanders, the principal deputy press secretary, told reporters. Washington has not seen a spectacle quite like this since the days of Watergate, Iran-contra or President Bill Clinton's impeachment. Whatever the controversies under Mr. Bush and President Barack Obama, neither was ever accused of personal misconduct by a current or former law enforcement official in such a public forum.

Indeed, Mr. Comey highlighted the difference by noting that he had never taken notes of his conversations with either of his predecessors because he trusted their basic integrity, but he did write memos about each of his one-on-one encounters with Mr. Trump because "I was honestly concerned that he might lie about the nature of our meeting."

In any other presidency, the events laid out by Mr. Comey — Mr. Trump asking for "loyalty" from the FBI director who was investigating the president's associates, then asking him to drop an investigation into a former aide and ultimately firing him when he did not — might have spelled the end.

But Mr. Trump has tested the boundaries of normal politics and upended the usual rules. To his supporters, the inquiries are nothing more than the elite news media and political establishment attacking a change agent who threatens their interests.

"This is like an explosive presidency-ending moment," said John Q. Barrett, a law professor at St. John's University in New York and an associate independent counsel during the Iran-contra investigation in Ronald Reagan's presidency. "But we have a different context now."

The articles of impeachment drafted against President Richard M. Nixon and Mr. Clinton both alleged obstruction of justice, in effect making clear that such an action could qualify under the "high crimes and misdemeanors" clause of the Constitution. The "smoking gun" tape that doomed Mr. Nixon in 1974 recorded him ordering his chief of staff to have the CIA block the FBI from investigating the Watergate burglary. Critics said that Mr. Trump's comments to Mr. Comey effectively cut out the middle man.

The House impeached Mr. Clinton in 1998 for lying under oath and obstructing justice to cover up his affair with Monica Lewinsky, a former White House intern, during a sexual harassment lawsuit. The obstruction alleged in Mr. Clinton's case was persuading Ms. Lewinsky to give false testimony, advising her to hide gifts he had given her to avoid any subpoenas and trying to find her a job to keep her happy. After a trial, the Senate acquitted him. As a political matter, both Mr. Nixon and Mr. Clinton faced a House under control of the opposition party, while Mr. Trump has the benefit of a Republican House that would be far less eager to open an impeachment inquiry. And for all of the fireworks on Thursday, the reaction in Congress still broke down largely along partisan lines, with Democrats in attack mode and Republicans either defending Mr. Trump or remaining silent. That may leave the question to Mr. Mueller.

"The polarization seems even worse than during the Lewinsky investigation, which I hadn't thought possible," said Stephen Bates, an associate independent counsel during the investigation into Mr. Clinton. "Everyone gets judged in terms of helping or hurting Trump. Whatever Mueller does, half of the country will call him courageous and half will call him contemptible. We just don't know which half is which."

The defense on Thursday was left to Mr. Trump's personal lawyer, Marc E. Kasowitz, who selectively used Mr. Comey's testimony, disputing the damaging parts while citing the parts he considered helpful. He denied that the president had ever asked Mr. Comey for loyalty or to let go of the investigation into Michael T. Flynn, the former national security adviser. But he cited Mr. Comey's statement that the president himself was not under investigation at the time the FBI director was fired. He also assailed Mr. Comey for leaking details of his conversations with the president to prompt the appointment of a special counsel, although they were not classified. "It is overwhelmingly clear that there have been and continue to be those in government who are actively attempting to undermine this administration with selective and illegal leaks of classified information and privileged communications," he said. "Mr. Comey has now admitted that he is one of these leakers."

Tellingly, the Republicans on the Senate Intelligence Committee paid no heed to the talking points distributed in advance by the Republican National Committee at the behest of the White House. Instead of attacking Mr. Comey's credibility, as the RNC and Donald Trump Jr. did, the Republican senators praised him as a patriot and dedicated public servant. They largely accepted his version of events, while trying to elicit testimony that would cast Mr. Trump's actions in the most innocent light possible.

Mr. Comey cooperated to some extent by trying not to go too far beyond the facts as he presented them, declining, for instance, to say whether he thought Mr. Trump's statements amounted to obstruction of justice.

"In a credibility battle between Trump and Comey, everybody knows Comey is going to win that war," said Adam W. Goldberg, who was an associate special White House counsel under Mr. Clinton during Kenneth W. Starr's investigation.

For Mr. Trump, the battle with Mr. Comey now overshadows much of what he wants to do. Major legislation is stalled. Mr. Kasowitz said the president was "eager to continue moving forward with his agenda, with the business of this country, and with the public cloud removed."

For now, though, the cloud remains.

*Peter Baker is a writer for The New York Times, from which the above analysis was taken.

Spain's Catalonia announces Oct. independence vote

The leader of Spain's Catalonia region, where a separatist movement is in full swing, on Friday announced an independence referendum for October 1 in defiance of Madrid.

People will be asked to vote on the question: "Do you want Catalonia to be an independent state in the form of a republic," Carles Puigdemont said in Barcelona, AFP reported.

If a majority votes "yes," the northeastern region's independence government has said it will immediately start proceedings to separate from Spain.

But the central government in Madrid is firmly against the referendum, which Puigdemont had previously announced would take place without setting a date, and which Spain's Constitutional Court has already ruled is illegal.

As such, Catalan authori-



LLUIS GENEA/AFP

ties face significant challenges to even hold a vote that would force people to break the law, particularly civil servants who will be called on to help organize the poll.

Catalonia, a wealthy, 7.5-million-strong region with its own language and customs, has long demanded greater autonomy.

For years separatist politicians in the region have vainly tried to win approval

from Spain's central government to hold a vote similar to Scotland's 2014 independence referendum from Britain, which resulted in a "no" vote.

And while Catalans are divided on the issue, with 48.5 percent against independence and 44.3 percent in favor according to the latest regional government poll, close to three-quarters support holding a referendum.

UNICEF: More than 40,000 children at risk in Raqqa

The United Nations' children agency warned that the fight for the Daesh terrorist group's stronghold of Raqqa in northern Syria is threatening the lives of more than 40,000 children.

In a statement Friday, it said the violence has resulted in massive displacement in and around the city, with some 80,000 children now internally displaced and living in temporary shelters and camps, AP reported.

US-backed armed groups launched their attack on Raqqa earlier this week and US-led coalition airstrikes have intensified.

"An estimated 40,000 children remain trapped in extremely dangerous conditions in Raqqa. Many are caught in the crossfire," said UNICEF regional director Geert Cappelaere.



DELIL SOULEIMAN/UNICEF

He called on all parties to provide safe passage to those wishing to leave the city.

First polio cases

Also a polio outbreak has been confirmed in an area of Syria partly held by Daesh, the first reemergence of the virus in Syria since 2014, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative and the World Health Organization said on Thursday, Reuters reported.

The virus was confirmed in stools of two people who had started to become paralyzed and those of a healthy child.

The discovery is a fresh blow for hopes of eradicating the disease globally — a goal that was set for the year 2000 when the eradication initiative was launched in 1988, but which has been repeatedly pushed back, with billions of dollars spent on trying to snuff out the last remaining pockets of disease.

Polio invades the nervous system and can cause irreversible paralysis within hours, and spreads rapidly among children. If transmission can be ended, it would be only the second human disease to be eradicated since smallpox was banished in 1980.

Juncker says Europe can no longer 'outsource' protection

Europe has to take care of its defense given the shift in US policy, European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker said Friday, promoting a hefty defense fund announced by Brussels.

"The protection of Europe can no longer be outsourced," Juncker told a defense conference in Prague, AFP reported.

"Over the past decade, it has become crystal clear that our American partners consider that they are shouldering too much of the burden for their wealthy European allies," he said.

On Wednesday, the EU unveiled an unprecedented plan to set up a 5.5-billion-euro (\$6.15-billion) a year fund, following a Franco-German led bid to focus on security and defense to provide a new sense of purpose after last year's Brexit vote shook

Europe.

"We have no other choice than to defend our own interests in the Middle East, in climate change, in our trade agreements by stepping up our efforts on defense and by doing so together," Juncker said.

US President Donald Trump, who follows an "America First" policy, berated his European partners on military spending at a raucous NATO summit in Brussels last month.

Juncker said the EU would not compete with NATO, with which it shares 22 members, adding: "NATO has been and will remain the cornerstone of European security for decades. We are different but we complement each other."

NATO Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller said the alliance welcomed the proposed fund.

SPECIAL NEWS

Domestic Economy Desk

Russia eyeing new Iran rail electrification project

Russia announced readiness to electrify a main railway that connects the Iranian capital Tehran to the northwestern city of Tabriz.

First Vice President of Russian Railways operator Alexander Misharin told reporters in Sochi that he had presented the proposal in a meeting with the Head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (RAI) Saeed Mohammadzadeh.



TASS

"We are discussing the following electrification segments: Tehran-Tabriz — around 600 kilometers," Misharin was quoted as saying by TASS.

Appropriate agreements can be made this year, he added. Russia and Iran signed an agreement worth €1.2 billion in November 2015 to electrify a train line that would connect north-central Iran to the northeastern border with Turkmenistan.

The agreement between Russian Railways and RAI envisages constructing power stations and overhead power lines along the Garmasr-Sari-Gorgan-Inche Barun route in Iran.

The train line, among the first in Iran with a history of 80 years, extends to Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan and links the Central Asia to the Persian Gulf and beyond.

On a related front, other officials from Russian Railways said the company would start the project in 2018, TASS report added.

The project will cover 32 stations and 95 tunnels, seven traction substations, 11 section pillars, six duty posts of the contact station and power supply administration building. According to preliminary estimates, the project will be implemented in 36 months.

Russia will be financing the project as part of its \$5 billion credit line for infrastructure projects in Iran. Russian state lender Vnesheconombank will grant another €2-billion export loan to the Islamic Republic.

Iran offers Qatar use of key southern ports

Iran offered to allow Qatar the use of its southern ports to carry on its vital import activities after the emirate's Arab neighbors united to isolate it.

This was announced by Qatar's Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman al-Thani.

He was quoted by the Financial Times in a report as saying that Iran had offered Doha to use three of its ports in the Persian Gulf. He said this would enable Qatar to import all the goods it needed.

Sheikh Mohammed further expressed regret that the de facto blockade imposed on Qatar by Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain as a "collective punishment".



IRINA

"We have been isolated because we are successful and progressive. We are a platform for peace not terrorism," the Financial Times quoted him as telling reporters.

Qatar imports virtually all its goods, but Sheikh Mohammed said that only 16 percent of food supplies come into Qatar via the countries that have imposed the de facto blockade.

"It's replaceable and has been replaced in one day," he said. "They [Qataris] can survive at the same standard forever," he said.

Meanwhile, Iran's media reported on Thursday that a cargo plane carrying food supplies had flown to Qatar from the Islamic Republic.

The plane — a Boeing 747-200M — took the cargo from Iran's southern city of Shiraz which is less than an hour flight from Qatar. The delivery was reportedly made on Wednesday.

A Boeing 747-200M has a capacity of around 100 tons.

On a related front, Reza Nourani, the head of the National Agricultural Products Federation of Iran, was quoted by the domestic media as saying earlier this week that talks were underway to export food supplies to Qatar from next week.

Nourani said preparations were to the same effect been made to ship the supplies from Iran to Qatar through Bandar Abbas, Bushehr and Lengheh ports.

The official further underlined that Iran was already shipping 40 to 50 containers to the UAE and Kuwait every day.

A certain amount of shipments, he said, could be diverted to Qatar. Nourani further emphasized that ships from Iran could reach Qatar between eight to 12 hours.

Iran oil exports to West up in May

Iran's oil exports to the West surged in May to their highest level since the lifting of sanctions in early 2016 and almost caught up with volumes exported to Asia, a source familiar with Iranian oil exports said.

Iran, which used to be OPEC's second biggest oil exporter, has been raising output since 2016 to regain market share lost to regional rivals including Saudi Arabia and Iraq, Reuters reported.

While many Asian nations continued to purchase oil from Iran during the sanctions, Western nations halted imports, halving Iran's overall exports to as little as one million barrels per day (mbd).

Last month, Iran exported about 1.1 mbd to Europe including Turkey, almost reaching pre-sanction levels and only slightly below the 1.2 mbd supplied to Asia, the source told Reuters.

Iran's exports to Asia last month were the lowest since February 2016, Reuters' calculations showed.

Oil exports to Asia fell as South Korea and Japan stepped up oil condensate purchases and bought less oil, said the source, who asked not to be identified as the information is confidential.

"Iran's condensate parked in floating storage has almost been exhausted because of higher purchases by Japan and South Korea," the source said.

Exports to Asia were also hit by India's decision to cut annual purchases from Iran by a fifth for the fiscal year to March 2018.

After the lifting of sanctions, Tehran added new clients such as Litasco and Lotos and won back customers such as Total, ENI, Tupras, Repsol, Cepsa and Hellenic Petroleum.

OPEC member Iran was allowed a small production increase under a December deal to limit output.

Iran's overall May oil production totaled 3.9 mbd, the source said.

Iran is currently producing about 200,000 bpd of West Karoun grade, which the nation blends with other Iranian heavy grades for export, he said.

India's SEBI to boost cooperation with Iran's SEO

New Delhi has given the go-ahead to the country's Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to enter into two separate memorandums of understanding (MoU) with securities market regulators of the European Union and Iran.

These MoUs are expected to strengthen cooperation between India and the respective countries on matters pertaining to securities market, reported The Hindu.

In the case of the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA), the MoU is likely to establish cooperation arrangements as a precondition for ESMA to recognize Central Counter Parties (CCPs) established in India and supervised by the SEBI, added the report.

This is meant to provide clearing services to clearing members or trading venues established in the European Union and to provide ESMA with adequate tools to monitor the ongoing compliance by the covered CCPs with the recognition conditions.

The MoU with the Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) of Iran is likely to promote further development of economic links and cooperation between the two regulators.

It also aims at creating conditions for an effective development of securities markets in the two countries.

This would eventually contribute to strengthening the information sharing framework between the securities market regulators of the two countries.

The level of trade between Iran and India stands at above \$13 billion.

India, in return, is a key supplier of food products as well as metals and pharmaceuticals to the Islamic Republic.

New Delhi is looking into several investment projects in Iran, including the development of Farzad B gas field. It is also developing Iran's Chabahar Port in the southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchestan.



REUTERS

Iran stops compressor, turbine imports from China

Iran stopped the import of compressor, turbine and pump from China after the implementation of nuclear deal, the chairman of Board of Directors at Society of Iranian Petroleum Industry Equipment Manufacturers, told Trend News Agency.

The nuclear deal between Iran and P5+1 (the US, the UK, France, Russia, China plus Germany) was implemented in January 2016 and sanctions on Iran were removed.

Reza Padidar said that during the sanctions era, Iran had to import low-quality Chinese oil and gas equipment which lacked the needed global standards, but the import of these goods decreased by 60 percent in the post-sanctions era.

According to an official Oil Ministry document seen by Trend in 2016, Iran needs compressors worth more than \$3.6 billion and pumps valued at about \$908 million only for its refineries in 2016-21.

However, Iran recently signed agreements with Germany's Siemens and other Western companies to establish joint ventures to produce progressive electromotor devices and turbines.

Padidar said that currently, about 70 percent of the equipment for oil and gas industry is produced domestically.

Iran becoming self-sufficient in high-tech turbine manufacturing.

Abbas Aliabadi, the CEO of Iranian engineering giant MAPNA Group, said that his company is involved in pro-

gressive projects including the production of hi-tech equipment, such as the turbo-compressors used in transmission pipelines, refineries and processing units, and oil measurement equipment.

MAPNA has also made it one of its top priorities to make better equipment, he said.



AP

"For instance, we have produced MAP2A and MAP2B turbines, which are enhanced versions of MGT70 with higher power output and efficiency," added Aliabadi.

Mapna has signed several contracts with many well-known international companies, either for the supply of equipment, or transfer of technology or to set up a joint venture, including a joint venture between Tuga — MAPNA's subsidiary in charge of engineering and manufacturing steam and gas turbines — and Franco Tosi Meccanica of Italy in December 2015.

In March 2016, MAPNA signed a technology transfer agreement with Siemens in Berlin.

In February 2017, MAPNA Boiler Company signed a technology transfer and licensing agreement with Belgian CMI for manufacturing heat recovery steam generators using F-class and H-class turbines.

Iran plans to raise its nominal power generation capacity from the current 76.8 gigawatts (GW) to 100 GW by 2021, of which thermal power plants would account for about 80 percent of the power generated.

First VP to inaugurate water project in south of Tehran

Domestic Economy Desk

First Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri will inaugurate the first phase of Pishva and Varamin waste water treatment plant today.

Announcing the above, Mohammad Parvareh, the managing director of Water and Waste Water Company of Tehran Province said that the plant will provide services to 68,000 people, IRNA reported.

The official said that 160,000 people will benefit from the plant once the project is completed in 2041.

He put the plant's capacity at 11,000 cubic meters per day and added that on completion, the figure will rise to 26,000 cubic meters per day.

The company plans to raise the number of waste water treatment plants in the coming years.



Water and Waste Water Company of Tehran Province is responsible for supplying fresh water as well as hygienic disposal of sewage in the urban districts of Tehran Province.



Hong Kong, Singapore rivalry hobbling Asia in \$100b fintech race

Asia's competitiveness in fintech is being undermined by the rivalry among the region's financial centers that has created regulatory complexity and uncertainty, a financial lobby group has warned.

Governments across Asia — most notably Hong Kong and Singapore — have launched a raft of initiatives to grab a slice of the \$100 billion invested in fintech globally but the regulatory hotch-potch is making it tough for firms to scale up, the Asia Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association (ASIFMA) said in a report, reported Reuters.

"The regulatory landscape is very fragmented and a lot of the initiatives, though well-intentioned, are not necessarily well thought through," said Mark Austen, CEO of ASIFMA.

The lobby group, which represents global banks and asset managers such as Goldman Sachs and BlackRock, has called on Asian regulators to coordinate better and to adopt a consistent set of best practices for fostering fintech in the region.

"By not cooperating on fintech, Asian financial centers are putting themselves at a real disadvantage relative to the rest of the world. That traditional competitive dynamic and rivalry between the likes of Hong Kong and Singapore may actually in this case be a disadvantage," said Hannah Cassidy, partner at Herbert Smith Freehills in Hong Kong, which contributed to the report.

Investors poured \$19 billion worldwide into fintech — including P2P lenders, distributed ledger technology and crowdfunding platforms — in 2016 alone and thousands of fintech start-ups continue to proliferate, according to a February report by global regulatory body the International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO).

Hong Kong, Singapore, Australia, Japan, South Korea and Malaysia have launched a range of special programs to attract and foster fintech ventures, from incubators and grants, to temporary license waiver schemes, with competition fiercest between rivals Hong Kong and Singapore.

While all these markets operate well-defined licensing and supervisory regimes for traditional financial firms including banks, brokers, insurance companies and funds, regulators are still struggling to establish clear and consistent regimes for fintech firms because they often operate innovative business models.

Cryptocurrency exchanges, for example, are licensed as money changers and regulated by the customs authority in Hong Kong but they are licensed as online shopping malls, akin to clothes retailers, in South Korea. In

Singapore, the central bank has proposed regulating bitcoin exchanges as payment firms.

This makes it very expensive for fintech firms based in places with small domestic markets like Hong Kong, Singapore and Australia to expand into the broader region because they are more or less starting from scratch each time they enter a new country, said Aurelien Menant, CEO of Hong Kong bitcoin exchange Gatecoin.com.

"This is a very important issue for fintech firms in Asia," he said, adding he would welcome tougher standardized rules for alternative currency exchanges across the region.

The lack of regulatory clarity has meant some aspiring fintech firms have struggled to gain licenses in markets like Hong Kong, Reuters reported last year. (here)

"We are open to cooperation with regional and global regulators on fintech," the Hong Kong Securities and Futures Commission (SFC) said in a statement, adding it would be entering into new regulatory cooperation shortly, without elaborating.

The SFC added it has taken a leading role in discussions around fintech within IOSCO and conducts dialogue with other watchdogs through a dedicated fintech liaison officer.

reuters.com

ECB confident of inflation rise despite forecast cuts

The European Central Bank's governing committee is increasingly confident that inflation in the eurozone will reach its target level "in a durable way", despite the bank having cut its medium-term inflation forecasts, the bank's president said.

Speaking in Tallinn after the ECB's regular policy meeting, ECB President Mario Draghi said the committee was unanimous in its decision to tweak its closely-watched forward guidance, but said there was no discussion of when it would make a bigger decision on bringing an end to its asset-purchase program, it.com reported.



rasset.ie

In its latest set of forecasts released today, the ECB said eurozone inflation would average 1.5 percent this year before falling to 1.3 percent next year. However, in response to suggestions that the bank would be unable to ever effectively reach its target of inflation around but slightly below two percent, Draghi insisted that the inflation path "will converge toward our objective in a durable way".

He said "we need to be patient" and "persistent", but said he was confident that slack in the labor market will reduce as the quality of job creation improves, leading to an uptick in wages and inflation.

The ECB president also took a swipe at critics of the slow rate of inflation growth, who had only recently been complaining that inflation was rising too quickly.

He said: "We all remember the serious concerns — if not the outcry — that inflation was going up too much." But in reality "very little has changed".

Japan growth rate revised down

Japan's economy grew slower than initially estimated in the first three months of the year, according to revised figures.

Gross domestic product expanded 0.3 percent in the first quarter, compared to 0.5 percent in last month's preliminary reading, BBC wrote.

The annualized rate of growth was cut to one percent from the initial reading of 2.2 percent.

The data was weaker than expected and was due to an unexpected decline in oil inventories and private consumption.

Business investment increased though, rising by 0.6 percent in the quarter compared with the first estimate of 0.2 percent.



bbc.com

Japan's central bank meets next week and is now expected to keep policy unchanged following the latest data.

However, analysts say the outlook remains positive for the world's third-largest economy and that its recovery is set continue.

"Both retail sales and core household spending recorded strong gains in April, and industrial production finally surpassed the peak reached before 2014's sales tax hike," Marcel Thieliant from Capital Economics said.

"The current [economic] expansion already is the longest in more than a decade," he added.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has been pushing Japanese consumers and companies to spend more in the run-up to the Tokyo Olympics in 2020. Private consumption accounts for about 60 percent of GDP.

Exporters have been helped by a weakening currency, which has made their products more competitive and has boosted the value of profits earned overseas.

House votes to roll back post-2008 financial rules in US

The Republican-led US House has moved closer to fulfilling President Donald Trump's goal of doing "a big number" on Dodd-Frank, the landmark banking law created after the 2008 economic crisis that was designed to prevent future meltdowns.

But the effort will likely require some major changes to bring about Democratic support in the Senate. Such support was missing entirely when the House voted 233-186 for a bill that would undo much of Dodd-Frank. House Republicans recognize the uphill climb, but were happy to chalk up a victory, AP reported.

"Our families, small businesses and communities have been desperate for this change for years," said Rep. Steve Scalise, the House majority whip.

House passage was widely expected. Senators have said they'll spend the next few months trying to find common ground on legislation designed to boost the economy. Potential areas for compromise include changes to how much capital banks must maintain and decreasing the paperwork burden for small lenders.

Democratic Rep. Maxine Waters of California urged senators not to take up the House bill.



snopes.com

"They are setting the stage for Wall Street to run amok and cause another financial crisis," Waters said.

The overhaul bill targets the heart of the Dodd-Frank law's restrictions on banks by offering a trade-off: Banks could qualify for most of the regulatory relief in the bill so long as they meet a strict requirement for building capital to cover unexpected big losses.

Democrats defended the Dodd-Frank law, saying it has meant financial security for millions of people and that undoing it would encourage the kind of risky lending practices that invite future economic shocks.

They also oppose efforts to sharply curtail a consumer protection agency's power to pursue companies that it determines have participated in unfair or

deceptive practices in their financial products and services. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has returned \$29 billion to 12 million consumers who were victims of deceptive marketing, discriminatory lending or other financial wrongdoing.

"All we're doing is spending our time taking away protections for the American people and their futures. Have we learned nothing?" asked Rep. Steny Hoyer, D-Md.

Several Democratic lawmakers insisted they were willing to make some changes to Dodd-Frank, but that the Republican bill went much too far.

"The bottom line is we put an end to the Wild West of Wall Street, and were on a nice, steady playing field," said Rep. Michael Capuano, D-Mass. "We should be able to adjust it, but we should not throw it out."

The bill would repeal a rule that bans banks from engaging in trading for their own profit using federally insured deposits, or forming certain relationships with private equity funds. It would roll back a proposed rule that investment advisers who collect commissions must put their clients' interests ahead of their own.

Airbus predicts \$5.3 trillion jet demand

Airbus raised its 20-year forecast for aircraft demand to 34,170 jetliners and 730 freighters worth \$5.3 trillion while trimming its traffic growth outlook.

The world's second largest planemaker after Boeing also forecast on Friday strong demand for repairs, training and upgrade work as the world's fleet tops 40,000 jets by 2036, according to Reuters.

But in online presentations ahead of a media briefing it trimmed its rolling 20-year forecast for air traffic growth to 4.4 percent a year, from 4.5 percent, as it took a more cautious view on mature markets such as North America.

Airbus raised its 20-year forecast for single-aisle and wide-body twin-engine jets to 24,807 and 8,686 units respectively, but cut its forecast for very large planes

like the A380, whose output has fallen due to weak demand.

The total forecast for 34,899 passenger and freight aircraft was up from 33,070 aircraft predicted a year ago as a further year of strong deliveries was built into forecasts.

Airbus programs chief Didier Evrard listed several 'challenges' for 2017 in the presentation, including raising total deliveries to more than 700 at the same time as introducing new variants.

Chief Executive Tom Enders reaffirmed the same delivery target in separate comments to journalists.

Airbus has given both formal and informal targets for 2017, with its finance director predicting 'over 720 deliveries' alongside the group's first-quarter results.



thefiscaltimes.com

Major Currencies

Currency	To USD	Currency	To USD
Turkish Lira	0.2834	Chinese Yuan	0.1470
Euro	1.1178	UAE Dirham	0.2722
British Pound	1.2730	Kuwaiti Dinar	3.2941
Australian Dollar	0.7535	Iraqi Dinar	0.0008
Japanese 100 Yen	0.0090	Saudi Riyal	0.2665

Major Commodities

Crude Oil	\$45.80	Silver	\$17.305
Gold	\$1275.90	Platinum	\$939.10
Copper	\$2.62	Wheat	\$444.75

Plastic that is dumped in rivers and then ends up in the world's oceans is one of the major sources of marine pollution, a new study said this week, with Asian waterways the main culprits.

3,000-year-old art rocks in northeast to be registered

Cultural Heritage Desk

Ancient region of Kamar Maqbulah is located 3km off Torqabeh to the northwest of Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi Province in the northeast of Iran. The 3,000-year-old site is awaiting registration on the National Heritage List.

There are 15,000 rock arts in Kamar Maqbulah site. Deputy head of Khorasan Razavi Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Department said that Kamar Maqbulah boasts the highest number of art rocks in Iran.



donyayesafar.com

Hassan Asghari further said that currently, cultural heritage enthusiasts cooperate with Cultural Heritage Protection Unit and play a significant role in safeguarding the art rocks.

He added that Cultural Heritage Protection Unit frequents the region.

Also, Binalud Governor's Office and Public Prosecutor's Office have taken effective steps to preserve the art rocks.

There are many organizations such as Natural Resources Organization and Industry, Mine and Commerce Department that can assist in preserving the natural-historical region of Kamar Maqbulah.

He said the dossier for national registration of Kamar Maqbulah has been drawn up.

A region known as 'Kamar Maqbulah' is located 3km from Torqabeh and one kilometer from Daghestan Valley. This pristine region is covered with volcanic rocks and has a very nice landscape that is also pleasant for tourists. Close to this valley there is a natural recreational park that is open to interested people and scientific groups.

Handicraft booths to be set up in the provinces

Cultural Heritage Desk

All the provinces will have handicraft booths to facilitate access to souvenirs by both domestic and foreign tourists, said the director general of Handicrafts' Export Office at Iran's Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization (ICHHTO).



iribnews.ir

Pouya Mahmoudian further said that 16 handicraft booths were inaugurated in women's park during the visit to Zanjan by the Head of ICHHTO Zahra Ahmadipour. Three other booths will also be inaugurated shortly in Kermanshah, west of Iran, she noted.

Mahmoudian said: "Our goal is to set up such booths in tourism regions as well as cultural heritage sites in the first phase and establish them in other cities in the second phase."

The booths should have a common symbol — logo of ICHHTO — to make them more reliable for potential customers, she added.

About 5.2 million people are involved in 250 fields of the handicraft industry such as such as carpet and kilim



kimiastone.com



kojaro.com

weaving, glass making, pottery and traditional ornaments.

Experts say the elegance of handmade goods produced in Iran and the availability of raw materials are among the attractions of the sector.

The appetite of European and US collectors for Iranian handicrafts is yet another factor.

Inlaid work, kilim and carpets constitute the bulk of handicraft exports from Iran.

Iran, China and India are the three top countries in the production and exports of handicrafts.

International organizations believe Iran has the most diverse and highest quality handicrafts in the world.

Currently, China's handicraft production is greater than Iran's, but the diversity and quality are higher in Iran.



kojaro.com

Studies have confirmed that Iran is the birthplace of various handicrafts like carpet, metal works, pottery and ceramics.

Currently, these exquisite Iranian works are displayed in museums and art centers of the world.

Although Iranian handicrafts are on top of the line, suitable schemes are needed to enter new markets and publicize handicrafts worldwide.

In fact, handicraft can serve as a mechanism for promoting Iranian and Islamic culture worldwide.

Isfahan is the capital of Iran's handicraft industry and is home to two-third of Iran's handicraft diversity and one-third of the world's handicrafts.

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Researchers at the University of California San Francisco found in a recent study that older adults with chronic pain are at an increased risk for dementia.

Red onions could beat cancer by destroying tumor cells



all4desktop.com

Eating plenty of red onions could prevent cancer, according to new research. A compound which gives the vegetable its distinctive color destroys tumor cells, say scientists. The discovery may soon lead to an anti-cancer pill based on the humble food's magical properties, express.co.uk reported.

It is known people with the highest consumption of onions have a lower risk of many types of the disease, including ovarian, bowel and breast cancer.

They contain several anti-cancer compounds including quercetin and anthocyanins — which, crucially, give the red variety their color.

Abdulmonem Murayyan of the University of Guelph in Canada, said: "Anthocyanin is instrumental in providing color to fruits and vegetables.

"So it makes sense the red onions, which are darkest in color, would have the most cancer fighting power."

In the first study of its kind Murayyan and Professor Suresh Neethirajan found red onions have the strongest cancer fighting power.

The humble vegetable has been a key ingredient in Mediterranean cooking for thousands of years, which could help explain lower rates of the disease in southern Europe.

Diced in a side salad, sprinkled as a garnish or chopped through a pasta dish, they may just be one of the best raw ingredients you can eat.

Red onions have also been linked with protecting against diabetes and heart disease.

The researchers said all onions contain high concentrations of quercetin — a type of flavonoid.

But the red variety not only has high levels of this but also large amounts of anthocyanin, which boosts the properties of quercetin, said Murayyan.

Along with Professor Neethirajan, he tested five onion types grown in Ontario and discovered the Ruby Ring red came out on top.

In lab experiments reported in Food Research International, colon cancer cells were placed in direct contact with quercetin extracted from the five different onion varieties.

Murayyan said: "We found onions are excellent at killing cancer cells. Onions activate pathways that encourage cancer cells to undergo cell death.

"They promote an unfavorable environment for cancer cells and they disrupt communication between cancer cells, which inhibits growth."

The researchers have also recently found onions are effective at killing breast cancer cells.

Murayyan said: "The next step will be to test the vegetable's cancer-fighting powers in human trials."

The findings follow a previous study by the researchers on a new extraction technique that eliminates the use of chemicals, making the quercetin found in onions more suitable for consumption.

Other extraction methods use solvents that can leave a toxic residue which is then ingested in food.

Professor Neethirajan said: "This new method that we tested to be effective only uses super-heated water in a pressurized container.

"Developing a chemical free extraction method is important because it means we can use onion's cancer-fighting properties in nutraceuticals and in pill form."

The researchers said we can currently include the superfood in salads and on burgers as a preventative measure.

But they expect onion extract will eventually be added to food products such as juice or baked goods and be sold in pill form as a type of natural cancer treatment.

Experts say it is best, where possible, to eat red onions in their raw state as cooking them in any manner can kill off the goodness.

If you are diabetic, you should eat raw red onions as these help increase insulin levels.

In Europe and Asia, red onions and raw garlic are often encouraged amongst diabetics.

Red onions each contain roughly 1.5 grams of fiber, which helps your digestive track move things along.

Flavonoid compounds — the same compounds that give the onions their striking pigmentation — reduce the low-density lipoprotein (LDL), or 'bad' cholesterol in obese people at risk of heart disease.

The compounds also have anti-inflammatory abilities and can be useful in the treatment of arthritis and other such conditions.

Not only do red onions lower cholesterol, they can also fend off heart disease and discourage clot formation. They can also help to maintain blood flow and reduce inflammation to the blood vessels.

Study: Toddlers who drink cow's milk alternatives may be shorter

Young children who drink soy, almond or other milk 'alternatives' may be a bit shorter than kids who drink cow's milk, a new study suggested.

Researchers found that among more than 5,000 Canadian children, a three-year-old who drank three cups of non-cow's milk each day was, typically, a half inch shorter than a child who drank the same amount of cow's milk, UPI wrote.

The study — which was funded by the Canadian government and St. Michael's Hospital Foundation — doesn't prove that parents' milk choices were the culprit.

For one, there could have been differences in the children's overall diets, too, said lead researcher Dr. Jonathon Maguire.

But, he said, the nutritional content in different milk substitutes vary widely. And it's "reasonable to hypothesize" that some shortchange children on protein, fat and other nutrients, said Maguire, a pediatrician at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto.

A pediatric nutrition specialist who wasn't involved in the study agreed.

"With the exception of soy milk, other [non-dairy] products contain almost no protein," said Erin Corrigan, a registered dietitian at Nicklaus Children's Hospital, in Miami.

When it comes to fat, she said, coconut milk has a relatively higher amount. But many cow's milk alternatives contain little fat — which may be fine for an adult, but not for a toddler, Corrigan said.

Plus, she added, the calcium from milk alternatives is generally not as well-absorbed as the calcium in cow's milk.



UPI

No one argued that young children must have cow's milk. But, Maguire said, parents who choose alternative products should be 'savvy' about reading nutrition labels. And they should be sure their child's overall diet has adequate protein, fat and other nutrients, he said.

The study findings are based on more than 5,000 children between the ages of two and six. In all, 13 percent drank non-cow's milk every day, while 92 percent drank cow's milk daily.

Overall, Maguire's team found, there was a correlation between the type of milk kids drank and their height at age three: For each daily cup of non-cow's milk, children were 0.4 centimeters — or 0.15 inches — shorter than the norm for their age, on average.

On the other hand, for each daily cup of cow's milk, kids were 0.2 centimeters (0.08 inches) taller than the norm.

The study did not ask about the specific type of cow's milk alternative, or about overall diet. Those are two important gaps in the research, according to Corrigan.

"We don't know why kids were drinking non-cow's milk," she said. "We don't know whether the family was vegetarian or vegan, for instance."

In at least some cases, a child's overall diet might have been lacking, according to Corrigan.

It's possible for vegetarian diets to be healthy for young children, she said — though vegan diets (which exclude all animal products, including eggs and dairy) are trickier.

Low-dose aspirin may reduce breast cancer risk for diabetic women

Researchers in Taiwan found women with type 2 diabetes who take a low-dose aspirin may reduce the risk of breast cancer.

"Women with type 2 diabetes have an increased risk of breast cancer, and these results suggest that the same low-dose aspirin that many of these women take to prevent cardiovascular disease may also help reduce their risk of breast cancer," Dr. Susan G. Kornstein, editor-in-chief of Journal of Women's Health, executive director of the Virginia Commonwealth University Institute for Women's Health, said, according to UPI.



thespruce.com

The study of nearly 149,000 women with type 2 diabetes over a 14-year period showed an 18 percent reduced breast cancer risk for women who took low-dose aspirin compared to women who did not take low-dose aspirin.

The average age of the women was 63 and 27,378 of the women were taking low-dose aspirin.

Researchers found a cumulative dose of aspirin exceeding 88,900mg reduced the risk of breast cancer by 47 percent, but low to medium doses of between 8,600 to 88,900mg cumulative doses of aspirin did not reduce the risk of breast cancer.

Study: An egg a day may reduce child stunting

Having a child eat an egg everyday may help reduce stunting among children, a study indicated.

According to the result of the six months study done in Ecuador and published in a pediatric journal, babies who consumed an egg daily were nearly half as likely to suffer from stunting, a condition that can impair brain development as well as cause diminutive height and low weight, premiumtimesng.com wrote.

The research was headed by a Lora Iannotti, a child nutrition expert at the Brown School, Washington University in St. Louis, who worked with researchers at the Universidad San Francisco de Quito in Ecuador and others.

It found that eggs in whatever form as part of a child's daily diet seem to be one of the cheapest way to prevent stunting as eggs are a good source of nutrient for growth and development.

Poor nutrition, especially at a child's early age, is a major cause of stunting, along with childhood infections and illnesses.

The first two years of life are critical for growth and development and stunting above this age is largely irreversible.

Iannotti said eggs as part of a child's diet could be a cheap way of preventing stunting.



rosemaryfarm.com

"We hypothesized that introducing eggs early during complementary feeding would improve child nutrition."

Iannotti and her colleagues had set up a field experiment in the rural highlands of Ecuador and gave very young children (aged six to nine months) free eggs to eat to see if this might help.

Only half of the 160 youngsters who took part in the randomized trial were

fed an egg a day for six months — the others were monitored for comparison.

The researchers visited the children's families every week to make sure they were sticking to the study plan and to check for any problems or side effects, including egg allergy.

It was noted that stunting was far less common among the egg treatment group by the end of the study. The prevalence

was 47 percent less than in the non-egg group, even though relatively more of these egg-fed infants were considered short for their age at the start of the study.

Some of the children in the control group did eat eggs, but nowhere near as many as the treatment group.

Iannotti said they were surprised by just how effective this intervention proved to be and what's great is it's very affordable and accessible for populations that are especially vulnerable to hidden hunger or nutritional deficiency.

"Eggs are also great food for young children with small stomachs. It also contains a combination of nutrients, which we think is important," she said.

According to the World Health Organization, 155 million children under the age of five are stunted and most of them live in low and middle-income countries which Nigeria happens to be part of.

Health experts have been looking for ways to tackle the issue by encouraging mothers worldwide to exclusively breastfeed infants for the child's first six months to achieve optimal growth, development and health.

After the first six months, infants should be given nutritious complementary foods and continue breastfeeding up to the age of two years or beyond, they said.

Climate change might help pests resist corn's genetic weapon

Climate change might be great news for pests looking to munch on genetically modified crops, researchers propose.

In particular, researchers analyzed 21 years of data from Maryland cornfields and suggest that rising temperatures might help corn earworms (*Helioverpa zea*) develop resistance faster to a widespread genetically built-in crop protection, sciencenews.org reported.

Some commercial varieties of corn have been engineered with genes for a toxin borrowed from the bacterium *Bacillus thuringiensis*, known as Bt, that kills the earworms when they eat the crop. In areas with a lot of Bt corn acreage, plants defended by the Bt protein Cry1Ab suffered more earworm damage when summers grew warmer, the team reported in *Royal Society Open Science*.



sciencenews.org
In a warmer world, the corn earworm may evolve resistance faster to Bt corn — a crop that has been genetically modified to produce an insect-killing toxin — researchers proposed.

The idea is plausible, said Bruce Tabashnik of the University of Arizona in Tucson. He was not involved with the new research but for years has studied insects developing resistance to Bt.

It's unclear why more damage occurred when temperatures were warmer. Higher temperatures might stress the plants and undermine their defenses. Also, insects depend on their surroundings for body warmth or cooling, so changing temperatures make a huge difference in their lives, says coauthor Dilip Venugopal, an applied ecologist working as a policy fellow at the US Environmental Protection Agency in Washington, DC.

Pests evolving resistance to Bt might do so faster when a warming landscape, for instance, lets them squeeze extra generations into a year and gives earworms a better chance of surviving the winter. Or insects reved up by heat might find it easier to metabolize toxins. The dataset in the new study is unusual in detail and time span, coming from years of cornfield monitoring by coauthor Galen Dively of the University of Maryland in College Park. The link between pest resistance and climate change, however, is based on correlations at this point, cautions Venugopal, and more research is needed to clarify how warming affects the pests.

Astrophysicists identify composition of earth-size planets in TRAPPIST-1 system

A University of Oklahoma post-doctoral astrophysics researcher, Billy Quarles, has identified the possible compositions of the seven planets in the TRAPPIST-1 system.

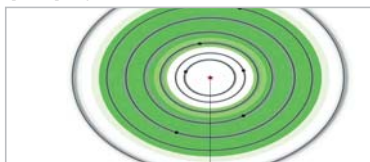
Using thousands of numerical simulations to identify the planets stable for millions of years, Quarles concluded that six of the seven planets are consistent with an Earth-like composition, phys.org wrote.

The exception is TRAPPIST-1f, which has a mass of 25 percent water, suggesting that TRAPPIST-1e may be the best candidate for future habitability studies.

"The goal of exoplanetary astronomy is to find planets that are similar to Earth in composition and potentially habitable," said Quarles. "For thousands of years, astronomers have sought other worlds capable of sustaining life."

Quarles, a researcher in the Homer L. Dodge Department of Physics and Astronomy, OU College of Arts and Sciences, collaborated with scientists, E.V. Quintana, E. Lopez, J.E. Schlieder and T. Barclay at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center on the project.

Numerical simulations for this project were performed using the Pleiades Supercomputer provided by the NASA High-End Computing Program through the Ames Research Center and at the OU Supercomputing Center for Education and Research.



UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA
The lighter green indicates optimistic regions of the habitable zone and the darker green denotes more conservative limits.

TRAPPIST-1 planets are more tightly spaced than in Kepler systems, which allow for transit timing variations with the photometric observations. These variations tell the researchers about the mass of the planets and the radii are measured through the eclipses. Mass and radius measurements can then infer the density.

By comparing the Earth's density (mostly rock) to the TRAPPIST-1 planets, Quarles can determine what the planets are likely composed of and provide insight into whether they are potentially habitable.

TRAPPIST-1f has the tightest constraints with 25 percent of its mass in water, which is rare given its radius. The concern of this planet is that the mass is 70 percent the mass of the Earth, but it is the same size as the Earth.

Because the radius is so large, the pressure turns the water to steam, and it is likely too hot for life as we know it. The search for planets with a composition as close to Earth's as possible is key for finding places that we could identify as being habitable. Quarles said he is continually learning about the planets and will investigate them further in his studies.

TRAPPIST-1 is a nearby ultra-cool dwarf about 40 light-years away from Earth and host to a remarkable planetary system consisting of seven transiting planets.

How the brain recognizes what the eye sees

If you think self-driving cars can't get here soon enough, you're not alone. But programming computers to recognize objects is very technically challenging, especially since scientists don't fully understand how our own brains do it.

Now, Salk Institute researchers have analyzed how neurons in a critical part of the brain, called V2, respond to natural scenes, providing a better understanding of vision processing, medicalxpress.com wrote.

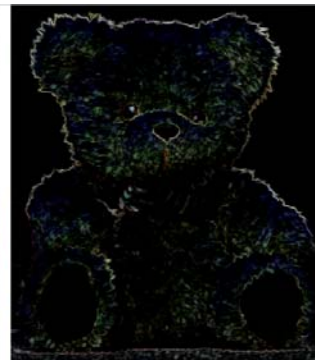
"Understanding how the brain recognizes visual objects is important not only for the sake of vision, but also because it provides a window on how the brain works in general," said Tatyana Sharpee, an associate professor in Salk's Computational Neurobiology Laboratory and senior author of the paper.

"Much of our brain is composed of a repeated computational unit, called a cortical column. In vision especially we can control inputs to the brain with exquisite precision, which makes it possible to quantitatively analyze how signals are transformed in the brain."

Although we often take the ability to see for granted, this ability derives from sets of complex mathematical transformations that we are not yet able to reproduce in a computer, according to Sharpee. In fact, more than a third of our brain is devoted exclusively to the task of parsing visual scenes.

Our visual perception starts in the eye with light and dark pixels. These signals are sent to the back of the brain to an area called V1 where they are transformed to correspond to edges in the visual scenes. Somehow, as a result of several subsequent transformations of this information, we then can recognize faces, cars and other objects and whether they are moving. How precisely this recognition happens is still a mystery, in part because neurons that encode objects respond in complicated ways.

Now, Sharpee and Ryan Roweckamp, a postdoctoral research associate in Sharpee's group, have developed a statistical method that takes these complex responses and describes them in interpretable ways, which could be used to help decode vision for computer-simulated vision. To develop their model, the team used publicly available data showing brain responses of primates watching movies of natural scenes (such as forest landscapes) from the Collaborative Research in Computational Neuroscience (CRCNS) database.



SALK INSTITUTE
The illustration on the right shows how the brain's V1 and V2 areas might use information about edges and textures to represent objects like the teddy bear on the left.

"We applied our new statistical technique in order to figure out what features in the movie were causing V2 neurons to change their responses," said Roweckamp.

"Interestingly, we found that V2 neurons were responding to combinations of edges."

The team revealed that V2 neurons process visual information according to three principles: First, they combine edges that have similar orientations, increasing robustness of perception to small changes in the position of curves that form object boundaries. Second, if a neuron is activated by an edge of a particular orientation and position, then the orientation 90 degrees from that will be suppressive at the same location, a combination termed "cross-orientation suppression".

These cross-oriented edge combinations are assembled in various ways to allow us to detect various visual shapes. The team found that cross-orientation was essential for accurate shape detection.

The third principle is that relevant patterns are repeated in space in ways that can help perceive

textured surfaces of trees or water and boundaries between them, as in impressionist paintings.

The researchers incorporated the three organizing principles into a model they named the Quadratic Convolutional model, which can be applied to other sets of experimental data. Visual processing is likely to be similar to how the brain processes smells, touch or sounds, the researchers say, so the work could elucidate processing of data from these areas as well.

"Models I had worked on before this weren't entirely compatible with the data, or weren't cleanly compatible," said Roweckamp.

"So it was really satisfying when the idea of combining edge recognition with sensitivity to texture started to pay off as a tool to analyze and understand complex visual data."

But the more immediate application might be to improve object-recognition algorithms for self-driving cars or other robotic devices.

"It seems that every time we add elements of computation that are found in the brain to computer-vision algorithms, their performance improves," said Sharpee.

Dogs and wolves have an innate sense of inequity

Humans and primates have a finely tuned sense of inequity. New research suggests dogs and wolves also possess a sense of fairness — or lack thereof.

Previously, researchers have hypothesized dogs gained a sense of inequity through domestication. But the latest study — published in the journal *Current Biology* — shows the sense is equally strong in dogs and wolves, suggesting a sense of fairness is wired in the genes of canines, UPI reported.

In tests, scientists found wolves trained to press a buzzer refused to participate after realizing the action resulted in a treat for their partner but nothing for themselves. The test results were the same for dogs and wolves with the same upbringing.

When researchers tested dogs and wolves without a partner, the canines were more willing to continue their training, continually pressing the buzzer despite not receiving a treat.



thebark.com

"This showed that the fact that they themselves had not received a reward was not the only reason why they stopped to cooperate with the trainer," Friederike Range, a scientist at the Wolf Science

Center of the University of Veterinary Medicine in Vienna, Austria, said.

"They refuse to cooperate because the other one got something, but they themselves did not."

Both the dogs and wolves refused to participate in the experiment even when they received a treat that was smaller than that of their partners.

"This reaction has not been shown in experiments so far. But it confirms even more clearly that wolves and dogs really understand inequity," said researcher Jennifer Essler.

The research also revealed the importance of hierarchy among wolves, as high-ranking wolves were quicker to grow impatient with the experiment.

"High-ranking animals become frustrated more quickly by inequity because they are not used to this situation: not receiving something at all or only of lower quality," said Range.

Wolves, like dogs, are highly social animals and cooperate with one another to survive. Previous research suggests a sense of inequity is essential to effective cooperation.

Scientists design laser to kill weeds

In a quest to become heroes to yard workers everywhere, a team of German researchers are developing a laser gun to kill weeds.

In reality, the new laser system is unlikely to be coming to a yard near you. But it could prove a boon to farmers and the environment, UPI reported.

The system's promising ability relies on robotic software, which is being tested and improved by computer scientists at the Institute of Geodesy and GeoInformation at the University of Bonn in Germany.

Researchers hope a combination of deep learning algorithms and cameras will allow the robot to identify unwanted weeds in a farmer's fields and blast them with a laser.

"The robot shoots the leaves of the unwanted plants with short laser pulses, which causes a weakening in their vitality," researcher Julio Pastrana said.

"It is thus predicted that we will no longer need to use herbicides on our fields and the environment will be protected," said scientist Tim Wigbels.

The laser system could be mounted on autonomous all-terrain rover or configured as a tractor add-on.

As the scientists perfect the technology, they're also working on turning their research into a new start-up business.

"It is now a case of finding investors and further developing the business plan for the startup," said Wigbels.

Rüdiger Wolf, who advises scientists on taking their work to market, believes the technology has legitimate commercial potential.

"The idea combines innovative robots with a current sustainability topic," Wolf said.

"Our aim is to contribute to achieving more sustainable agriculture," Pastrana said.



VOLKER LANNERT/JUNI BONN
Researchers Tim Wigbels (L) and Julio Pastrana test their weed recognition software and leaf-blasting laser system.

The first report on how the Zika virus affected US territories showed that five percent of women with confirmed infections had babies with birth defects, US health officials said.

Climate change most likely to induce food violence



wp.com

While climate change is expected to lead to more violence related to food scarcity, new research suggested that the strength of a country's government plays a vital role in preventing uprisings.

"A capable government is even more important to keeping the peace than good weather," said Bear Braumoeller, coauthor of the study and associate professor of political science at The Ohio State University, science-newsline.com wrote.

While previous studies had examined the impact of climate change-induced weather patterns on violence and the increased danger of violence in weak or failing states, this is the first study to demonstrate that the combination of the two risk factors is even more dangerous than they would be separately.

Braumoeller conducted the study with his former doctoral students Benjamin Jones, now at the University of Mississippi, and Eleonora Mattiacci, now at Amherst College. Their results appear in the *Journal of Peace Research*.

"We've already started to see climate change as an issue that won't just put the coasts under water, but as something that could cause food riots in some parts of the world," Braumoeller said.

Extreme weather such as droughts and floods could hurt agricultural production in some countries, leading to violence there or elsewhere by people who are desperate for food.

"Climate-induced food scarcity is going to become an increasingly big issue and we wanted to understand which countries are most threatened by it," he said.

The researchers estimated the effects of food insecurity and state vulnerability on the occurrence of violent uprisings in Africa for the years 1991 to 2011.

The researchers used a variety of measurements for both food shocks that lead to violence and to gauge the vulnerability of countries.

For the climate-related causes of food shocks, the researchers analyzed rainfall, temperature

and — importantly — the international prices of food, including sudden increases in prices.

"We recognized that countries that imported food could be impacted by climate shocks in other parts of the world that suddenly increased prices, even if they weren't experiencing any significant weather impacts themselves," Braumoeller said.

When examining countries' vulnerabilities, the researchers analyzed a host of factors including a country's dependence on agricultural production, its imports, the strength of its political institutions and its wealth.

"We found that the most vulnerable countries are those that have weak political institutions, are relatively poor and rely more on agriculture," he said.

"Less vulnerable countries can better handle the problems that droughts or food price fluctuations create."

These results suggest ways that the United States and the worldwide community can respond to these challenges.

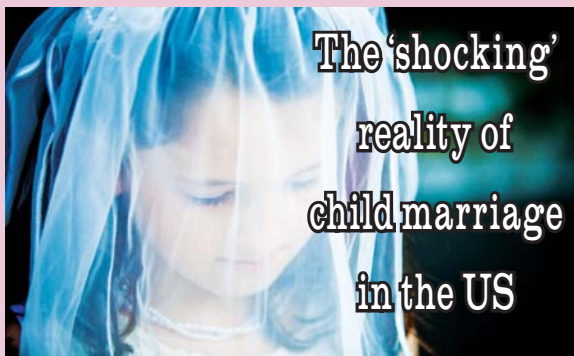
While stories of child marriage are commonly associated with the Global South, lesser known are the cases closer to home: in the United States.

Across the world, child marriage has persisted and the United States is no exception. Across all 50 states in the North American nation, marriage before the age of 18 has remained legal, Ipsnews reported.

"These are old laws that were just never changed because people didn't realize this was happening," said Fraidy Reiss, the executive director of Unchained at Last an organization fighting to end child marriage in the US.

Based on available data, Unchained at Last estimates that over quarter of a million children were married in the US between 2000 and 2010. Data shows girls as young as 12 years old married in states like Alaska, Louisiana, and South Carolina.

The Tahiri Justice Center, which helps protect women and girls from gender-based violence, found that Texas has the second highest rates of child marriages in the nation, as nearly 40,000 children under



aol.com

the age of 18 were married between 2000 and 2014.

The majority of those wedded at a young age are girls, and approximately 77 percent of US children who were wed were married to adult men, often with significant age differences.

"I think it's absolutely shocking," Human Rights Watch's Senior Researcher in the Women's Rights Division

Heather Barr told IPS, noting that child marriage is an issue on every continent with similar consequences.

"The harm that happens to a child that gets married in New York state is not that different from the harm that happens to a child getting married in the Central African Republic," she said.

Child marriage is strongly

linked to high rates of school dropouts and poverty, and those married before the age of 18 are three times more likely to experience domestic violence than those married at 21 or older.

Women and girls married at a young age also often experience physical and mental health problems, including higher rates of maternal mortality and sexually transmitted

infections.

Reiss told IPS how forced marriage takes a toll on the mental health of girls as many turn to suicide. Others just give up and continue with the marriage because of the lack of options.

Though the minimum age is 18, most states allow those younger than 18 to marry with parental or judicial consent. However, both Reiss and Barr told IPS that such ideas of consent are problematic and "ridiculous."

"Child marriages are very often arranged or forced by parents, so in a situation where it is actually the parents who are forcing a child to get married, parental consent is completely meaningless," said Barr.

As for judicial consent, the law does not specify any criteria that a judge is required to consider before approving a marriage.

In 27 states, laws do not specify any age below which a child cannot marry.

"The minimum age for marriage is effectively lowered to zero," said Reiss.

There has been a push in recent years to end child marriage domestically.

Fatherhood factors influence how dads spend time with children

A father's resources, relationships, and parenting beliefs affect how he spends time with his children and financially provides for his family, finds a study led by NYU's Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development.

"We found a range of different characteristics influenced father involvement in unique ways, from caregiving to financial investment. For example, what predicted how often fathers read to their children was not only their level of education, but also their beliefs about gender roles in the family," said Tamarie Macon, assistant professor of applied psychology at NYU Steinhardt and the study's lead author, according to phys.org.

"The bottom line: Both structural circumstances and fathers' personal beliefs matter."

Researchers tend to focus on two primary ways that parents invest in their children: Time and money. What determines how — and how much — a father invests in his children? The current study examined whether and how a father's income and education levels, relationships at home, and views on parenting related to a father's involvement, as measured by time spent with children in a variety of activities as well as financial investment.

Participants for the study were drawn from the Early Head Start Father Involvement with Toddlers Study. A total of 478 ethnically and racially diverse low-income fathers were included.

Researchers visited fathers in their homes when their children were two years old and gathered information on fathers' demographic and personal char-

acteristics, including age, race/ethnicity and resources as measured by income and education levels.

The researchers also asked a series of questions about activities fathers do with their children, the father-mother relationship, and personal parenting beliefs.

Fathers reported how often they spent time with their children in 33 different activities, including play, caregiving activities like preparing meals, cognitive activities like reading stories to a child, and social activities like visiting friends and family.

With regard to their relationships, fathers were asked if they live at home, what their relationship is like with the child's mother, and whether the couple is often in conflict. Prior research shows that the quality of the father-mother



telegraph.co.uk

relationship is associated with a father's involvement with his kids, and conflict between parents can result in decreased involvement.

Finally, fathers were asked about their feelings on whether men should be their family's financial provider, the importance of investing in children to positively influence their development, and beliefs about traditional gender norms.

Yemen cholera cases pass 100,000 amid 'unprecedented' epidemic

The number of suspected cases of cholera resulting from a severe outbreak in Yemen has passed 100,000, the World Health Organization said.

A total of 798 deaths associated with the disease have been recorded in 19 out of 22 provinces since April 27.

The charity Oxfam said the epidemic was killing one person almost every hour, reported BBC.

Yemen's health, water and sanitation systems are collapsing after two years of war waged by Saudi Arabia.

Cholera is an acute diarrheal infection caused by ingestion of food or water contaminated with the bacterium *Vibrio cholera*.

Most of those infected will have no or mild symptoms but, in severe cases, the disease can kill within hours if left untreated.

On Wednesday, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said the epidemic in Yemen was "of an unprecedented scale".

In the past four weeks, it added, the number of deaths had been three times higher than that reported between October 2016 — when Yemen first announced an outbreak — and March 2017.

The authorities in the capital Sanaa, which has recorded the highest number of cases, declared a state of emergency on May 14.

More than half of the country's health facilities are no longer functioning, with almost 300 having been damaged or destroyed in the fighting.

Health and sanitation workers have not been paid for eight months; only 30 percent of required medical supplies are being imported into the country; rubbish collection in the cities is irregular; and more than eight million people lack access to safe drinking water and proper sanitation.



alaraby.co.uk

The OCHA said the risk of the epidemic spreading further was compounded by the rainy season, widespread food insecurity and malnutrition.

The war has left 18.8 million of Yemen's 28 million people needing humanitarian assistance and almost seven million on the brink of famine.

Oxfam's Yemen country director, Sajjad Mohammed Sajid, meanwhile warned that the outbreak was set to be one of the worst in this century if there was not a massive and immediate effort to bring it under control.

"Cholera is simple to treat and prevent but while the fighting continues the task is made doubly difficult. A massive aid effort is needed now," he said.

Fear of crime, general sense of danger drives gun ownership

Studies by the University of Groningen, the Netherlands and the University of Maryland suggested differing motivations behind handgun and shotgun ownership.

The researchers developed a first psychological process model of defensive gun ownership — a two-component model that considers both the antecedents and consequences of owning a gun for protection and self-defense, upi.com reported.

Researchers conducted three studies of 839 men in the United States, divided into 404 gun owners and 435 non-owners, to examine the factors and motivation behind gun ownership.

The first survey compared gun owners with non-owners to examine differences in gun-related beliefs. The two subsequent surveys focused on gun owners solely to test the predictions from the two-component model.

Researchers found the motivation to own a handgun was about fear of crime but also about a more general sense of threat from "the belief that the world is an unpredictable and dangerous place and that society is at the brink of collapse".

The researchers found the layers of threat felt by participants also predicted beliefs that people have the right to shoot and kill in self-defense, and that people should have broad 2nd Amendment rights.

"It is not just concrete, specific threats that change our behavior, but also vague, general ideas about threat," researchers wrote in the study.

"Even if we cannot pinpoint exactly why we feel threatened, the fact that we are threatened at all can lead us to want to own handguns for self-protection and advocate for more expansive rights to carry and use them."

The study also found the threat and belief system applied mainly to handgun ownership, not long gun owners.

"Long guns such as bolt-action rifles, semi-automatic rifles and shotguns, are linked to hunting and not really linked to a sense of threat," Wolfgang Stroebe, a researcher at the University of Groningen, said in a press release.

"Although the gun owners in our sample owned an average of four guns each, we saw no evidence that any of our findings apply to owners of long guns only — that is, those who do not own a handgun."

The surveys were conducted in May and June of 2016, before the Orlando nightclub mass shooting, however, researchers conducted an additional survey a week after the tragedy to determine if the mass shooting influenced beliefs.

"We expected the Orlando mass shooting to move the needle on the belief systems of gun owners, so we were surprised that there was practically no effect," Stroebe said.



Ramadan quotes

Ramadan means most practicing Muslims will fast from dawn to sunset without water or food every day for a month. To help get through the 30 days, six quotes about fasting are shared below, courtesy of Brainy Quote.

1. Fasting is, first and foremost, an exercise for identifying and managing adversity in all its forms. With faith, in full conscience, fasting calls women and men to an extra degree of self-awareness.

Tariq Ramadan, professor of Contemporary Islamic Studies at Oxford University

2. Through prayer, fasting and studying, God will answer.

Monica Johnson, screenwriter

3. Having soon discovered to be great, I must appear so, and therefore studiously avoided mixing in society, and wrapped myself in mystery, devoting my time to fasting and prayer.

Nat Turner, an enslaved African American who led a rebellion of slaves and free blacks in Southampton County, Virginia

4. We observe that in the scriptures, fasting almost always is linked with prayer. Without prayer, fasting is not complete fasting; it's simply

going hungry.

Joseph B. Wirthlin, an American religious leader

5. Periodic fasting can help clear up the mind and strengthen the body and the spirit.

Ezra Taft Benson, religious leader who served as United States Secretary of Agriculture

6. The philosophy of fasting calls upon us to know ourselves, to master ourselves and to discipline ourselves the better to free ourselves. To fast is to identify our dependencies and free ourselves from them.

Tariq Ramadan, professor of Contemporary Islamic Studies at Oxford University

PICTURE OF THE DAY



ALAN RICHARDSON

The McManus Galleries in Dundee are 150 years old this year sharing that birthday with Canada which is also celebrating its 150th anniversary of Confederation. To coincide with the events, a Canadian Walrus is taking center stage to showcase the museum's restoration work as part of the Dundee Preserves exhibition.



Donkey killed after being thrown into tiger enclosure



LIVE LEAK

A live donkey was killed after it was pushed into an enclosure with three tigers at a zoo in China.

Footage caught by a spectator at the park shows the terrified animal clinging on before being pushed into a moat surrounding the big cat compound, according to metro.co.uk.

The creature was then attacked by a trio of predators.

Despite the footage cutting off while the animal is still alive, it is reported that the donkey was killed.

The last clip is of the donkey fighting back against the tigers in the water.

Commenters on the Live Leak spoke out after the video was released – describing the act as ‘animal abuse’.

One person said: ‘I have no

problems if it happens in nature, that’s how nature works, but in this case, it is just animal abuse.’

‘And no, it is not necessary for their health, this is just a bad excuse for the sick show.’

Another said: ‘A donkey dying to tigers in a natural habitat – natural. An alive donkey being thrown into a cage full of tigers – sadistic.’

98-year-old donates \$2m stock to wildlife

Seventy years ago, Russ Gremel decided to buy about \$1,000 worth of stock in Walgreens. By the time Gremel hit his late 90s, the stock was worth more than \$2 million.

The now 98-year-old Chicagoan donated the stock to the Illinois Audubon Society, which used the money to establish a 400-acre wildlife refuge near Dixon, Illinois, reported www.fox-32chicago.com.

This weekend, the Gremel Wildlife Sanctuary was dedicated in his name. ‘It’s incredibly generous,’ Illinois Audubon Society Executive Director Jim Herkert said of the donation.

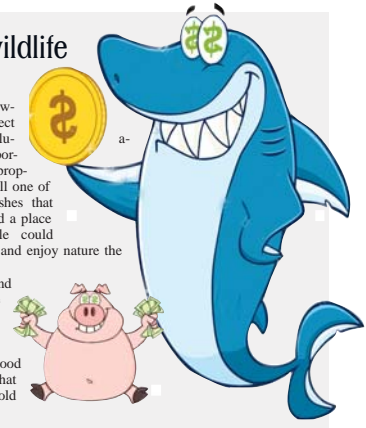


FOX 32 NEWS

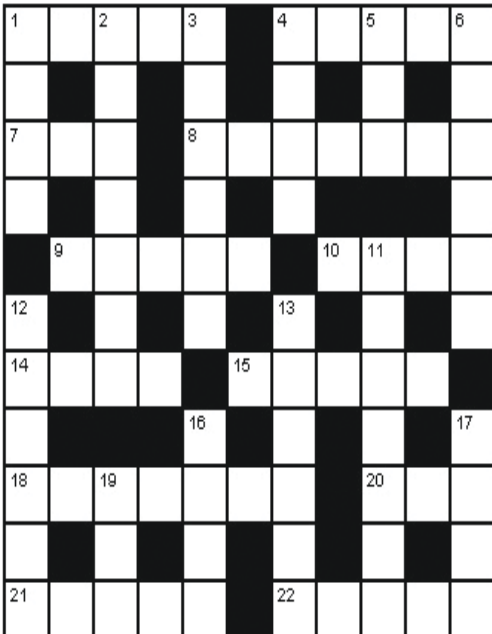
‘It’s allowing us to protect a really valuable and important piece of property and fulfill one of Gremel’s wishes that we could find a place where people could come out and experience and enjoy nature the way he did as a kid.’

Gremel never married and never had kids. He said he wanted to see the money he put to good use before he died.

‘You have to do some good in this world, that’s what money is for,’ Gremel told the Chicago Tribune.



Quick Crossword



ACROSS

1. Banquet (5)
4. Velocity (5)
7. Golfing accessory (3)
8. Wild (7)
9. Fake (5)
10. Long narrative poem (4)
14. Fencing sword (4)
15. Temperamental (5)
18. Large imposing house (7)
20. Peculiar (3)
21. Lukewarm (5)
22. Part of the leg (5)

DOWN

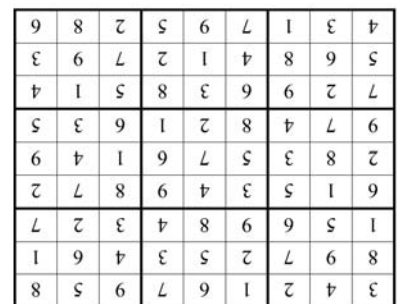
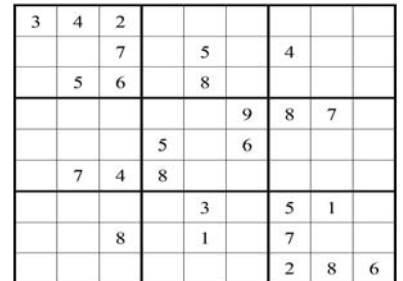
1. Festival (4)
2. Amazing (7)
3. Second sign of the zodiac (6)
4. Location (4)
5. Type of tree (3)
6. Subtract (6)
11. Security device (7)
12. Recluse (6)
13. Part of the eye (6)
16. Discover (4)
17. Not in action (4)
19. Short sleep (3)

Thursday's solution



Sudoku

Sudoku was inspired by the table devised by Iranian mathematician Kluwarzmi. Fill 9x9 grid with digits so that each column, each row and each of the nine 3x3 sub-grids that compose the grid, contains all of the digits from 1 to 9.



Saudi football chiefs apologized after their national team elected not to take part in a minute's silence for victims of the London Bridge attack, prior to the World Cup qualification fixture against Australia.

Experience pays off for Jahanbakhsh

When the Islamic Republic of Iran appeared at the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil, Alireza Jahanbakhsh was just 20 years old, but the midfielder's development for both club and country was well underway.

Jahanbakhsh came off the bench in all three of his side's Group F games but a scoreless draw with Nigeria was followed by a last-gasp 1-0 defeat to Argentina and a 3-1 loss to Bosnia and Herzegovina as Iran - dubbed "Team Melli" - exited at the first hurdle, the-afc.com reported.

The experience, though, proved invaluable for the forward, who has since gone on to become one of the leading lights in a side that is now only a home win against Uzbekistan on Monday away from qualifying for the FIFA World Cup Russia 2018.

"It was unbelievably great, I went to the World Cup and I was the youngest player in the Iran squad," recalled AZ Alkmaar player Jahanbakhsh, who joined Dutch Eredivisie outfit NEC prior to the Brazil tournament when he was just 19-years-old.

Jahanbakhsh on Queiroz

"I was really happy to be there because I could learn a lot and see what the big players did against Argentina. I was looking at their movement and all the things they were doing so I could bring it to my game."

"It was a great experience to play at the World Cup after training for six months with the national team, it couldn't be better than that as it



Alireza Jahanbakhsh (C) scored a brilliant goal as Iran notched up a late 2-0 victory over Qatar in Asia's Group A opener in 2018 World Cup qualification in Azadi Stadium in Tehran, Iran, on September 1, 2016.

was an opportunity to show my skills and potential."

Under the stewardship of long-term coach Carlos Queiroz, Jahanbakhsh is keen to point out the influence the Portuguese has had on a squad that is looking to lead the country to a fifth FIFA World Cup.

"He plays the main role in our team and his experience is unbelievably good," said Jahanbakhsh.

"When you see the results we have got in the last couple of games, of course all the people in Iran are happy with him. The players also have a really good relationship with him and he makes things easy for us."

"These are the things that make him different from other coaches; we are very happy to work for him and hopefully we will keep him for a longer time."

Jahanbakhsh on development

After starting his senior career with Parseh Tehran, Jahanbakhsh was spotted early and signed for NEC in the summer of 2013, a year after leading his country to the last eight of the 2012 AFC U-19 Championship in China, a tournament where he starred alongside Russia-based forward Sardar Azmoun.

Two successful seasons with

NEC followed before, amid reported interest from clubs across Europe, the midfielder opted to stay in the Netherlands and joined AZ Alkmaar. Four years on since making the move to Europe, Jahanbakhsh is integral for both club and country in a career that is undoubtedly on an upward trajectory.

"Holland is a country where you can grow up as a footballer," noted Jahanbakhsh. "The focus they have on the players and the way they work with the players, especially young talented ones, is unbelievably good."

"They have everything to help you achieve your goals, so when

I got the offer from NEC I didn't think, I just moved there and tried to integrate myself into the country and culture."

"Two years ago I moved to AZ Alkmaar. It's such a good club, always in the top four or five in Holland, so for developing as a young player it's great."

"When you have goals and you have people around who help you to achieve your ambitions that makes you really happy."

Jahanbakhsh has played in six of Iran's seven qualifying games to date, scoring the second in a 2-0 victory over Qatar last September, as his country has remained unbeaten and yet to concede.

And while goals have been hard to come by - Team Melli has scored just six in seven games - the threat upfront is undeniable with Persepolis hitman Mehdi Taremi and Kostov's Azmoun, who moved to Europe just a few months before Jahanbakhsh. "I've known him for five or six years, we played together for the under-19s and have always been good friends, close friends," he added.

"We are always chilling together, having fun with the national team. We grew up together as players and in the last few years, we have been in the first team of the national team."

"He's been doing very well; he moved to Russia and has scored important goals for his club, even in the UEFA Champions League."

"We have a really young squad with a combination of experienced players and that is what makes the Iran national team and why we are one of the strongest in Asia."

Mercado makes difference on Sampaoli's debut



Gabriel Mercado scored the sole goal of the game as Argentina edged Brazil 1-0 in a friendly in Melbourne, Australia, on June 9, 2017.

Jorge Sampaoli's Argentina reign began with a win as Gabriel Mercado's goal secured a 1-0 friendly victory over great rival Brazil at Melbourne Cricket Ground in Australia on Friday.

The defender reacted quickly after Nicolas Otamendi's header came back off the upright and tapped home to make the difference shortly before the break, goal.com reported.

Sampaoli fielded an attacking XI in his first game as Argentina boss, including Lionel Messi, Gonzalo Higuain, Paulo Dybala and Angel Di Maria.

Brazil, meanwhile, was without star attacker Neymar, but Tite did name Premier League trio Gabriel Jesus, Willian and Philippe Coutinho in his lineup.

The Selecao was left to rue an astonishing miss in the second half, though, as Jesus struck the post with the goal gaping. Tite tasted his first defeat since replacing Dunga at the helm, bringing an end to a run of nine consecutive victories.

Brazil takes on Australia on June 13 in another friendly, while Argentina meets Singapore before the South American side attempts to revive its stuttering World Cup qualifying campaign against Uruguay in August.

Part 2

Juventus racked up its sixth consecutive Serie A titles this past May. It is very much the same story in Germany and France with Bayern Munich and PSG dominating the domestic leagues.

Things have been slightly different in Spain and England in terms of league and cup winners in recent years (six different teams over the past six years in England and three in Spain). But the dominance of a few clubs means that, at least in Italy and Germany, we pretty much know in August who is going to win the league.

So why do we still care? Why do we still watch? The Guardian asked its writers how the dominance of a few teams is affecting their league and whether there are signs of fans turning off their TVs or not going to the stadiums.

England

There are different ways of being predictable, and following what everyone thought was a refreshing intervention by Leicester City last season, the Premier League's big six clubs have quickly closed ranks to keep the major prizes between themselves. Six is quite a high number of course, and not many thought at the start of the season that Arsenal and Manchester United would be the ones missing out on top four places, or that Pep Guardiola and Manchester City would end empty handed. The same six into four situation will pertain next season too, and anyone who feels English football is always the same old story is advised to pick their 2018 top four in August and see how their guesswork looks nine months later.

England must be doing something right if clubs of the stature of Manchester United cannot always get its own way, and half a dozen potential title candidates is a lot healthier than the situation we used to have when the top four was set in stone and only Arsenal or Chelsea would take it in turns to challenge United's dominance. Yet though this has been a reasonably lively and absorbing contest at the top of the table the big six are not the whole story.

Beneath the top six this season is Everton, seemingly stuck in a permanent no man's land between the achievers and those with relegation concerns, followed by a long gap and then Southampton in eighth place with 46 points. To put that in perspective, 46 points is less than half of what Chelsea accrued and only five points more than Swansea and Crystal Palace managed after seasons haunted by fears of dropping into the Championship. Although

Europe's top leagues more predictable, so why are we watching?



Bayern Munich players raised the Bundesliga trophy for the fifth year in a row after they beat Freiburg 4-1 on the final day of the 2016/17 season at Allianz Arena on May 20, 2017.

entertainment might be sparking in the upper echelon, the league as a whole cannot be considered healthy if two-thirds of it has no real purpose except ensuring survival.

Has the league's TV deal suffered? No. The Premier League's present TV deal is worth a monster £5.136 billion over three years. Money is pouring into English football, and owners are no longer flaky types seeking self-promotion but investors who know how to turn a profit. The English top flight is divided into haves and have-nots, certainly, but remains watchable through being unpredictable at both ends. It is no easy task to pick a winner, and all the clubs near the bottom have the capacity to do what Crystal Palace did at Chelsea or what Hull did to Liverpool. Upsets occur in most leagues, but foreign players in this country frequently express surprise at the amount of fight

in smaller sides which refuse to lie down.

Germany

That Bayern Munich has just sealed a fifth successive Bundesliga title - and by a margin of 15 points despite looking under-par for much of the campaign - is undoubtedly a concern. It is only the second time that German football's behemoth has managed such a run. The truth is, though, that Bayern's dominance is partly a result of competitiveness, with Borussia Dortmund's successive title wins in 2011 and 2012 almost provoking Bayern to become its best-ever.

The other part of the equation is the club adopting a more internationalist strategy. Despite the image of Bayern's approach being to take away its competitors' best players, and

signings such as Robert Lewandowski and Mats Hummels accentuating that feeling, the German champion has been more adventurous in the transfer market in recent years, buoyed by profits from the Champions League and the Allianz Arena, which it now fully owns.

Bayern's dominance does drive international interest to the Bundesliga, and discovering the full picture often keeps people glued. Even if the title race was a non-event this year, there was drama throughout the rest of the table, in terms of the European places and at the bottom. On the season's final day, almost half of the teams still had something to play for. The success of Europe bound Freiburg, and the struggles of giants, such as Hamburg, show it's not always about money correlating to success.

Attendances are reassuringly stable - this season's slight dip should be wiped out in

2017-18 with modest Darmstadt and Ingolstadt relegated and replaced by the better-supported Stuttgart and Hannover.

Has the league's TV deal suffered? In terms of television rights, the Bundesliga has never been healthier, netting €1.16 billion a year after a new four-year deal was thrashed out last summer. Sky, which shows 93 percent of live topflight matches (Eurosport takes care of Friday nights), signed a new pact with the league at €876 million per annum, almost double the previous figure of €486 million.

France

Back in August it looked like the same old Ligue 1. PSG, despite changing its manager and losing Zlatan Ibrahimovic, was going to win a fifth league title in a row and probably a third domestic treble in a row too. Only a few weeks before, this great Paris side was crowned champion with a record 96 points and a 31-point gap on second-placed Lyon. Predictability had hit French football as in the nineties with Marseille and the noughties with Lyon.

Then, Monaco had a freak season where it exceeded all expectations but deserved to win its first league title in 17 years. Nice pushed PSG all the way for second place and for the first time the top three teams finished the campaign with 78 points (or more (87 for PSG and 95 for Monaco).

Marseille has started its American revolution since the takeover of Frank McCourt and will invest up to €200 million in the summer to compete for the title. Lyon, thanks to some investment from China, will also be ready to splash some cash, especially if it loses its two best players Alexandre Lacazette and Corentin Tolisso, which is looking likely.

Bordeaux is going in the right direction under its bright manager, Jocelyn Gourvenne. It will be fascinating to see Lille's progress under Marcelo Bielsa next season, and Sergio Conceicao has worked wonders at Nantes since taking over in December.

Overall, PSG has been the perfect driving force for Ligue 1, with the other historic clubs trying to catch up the Paris side. The Parisians are still the richest and most powerful but Monaco showed this season that winning Ligue 1 is not a given any more.

Has the league's TV deal suffered? A little bit. Ligue 1's TV deal is worth €800 million per year until 2020. The dominance of PSG dented the appeal for the league somewhat but Ligue 1 is hoping to increase this amount as Monaco, Nice, Lyon and Marseille are building strong teams to compete with the Parisian club.

Concluded

Art & Culture

Ancient temple, ball court found in Mexico City

A giant temple to the Aztec god of the wind and a court where the Aztecs played a deadly ball game have been discovered in the heart of Mexico City.

Archaeologists unveiled the rare finds after extensive excavations, giving journalists a tour of the semi-circular temple of Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl and nearby ball court, AFP wrote.



AFP

Records indicate that Spanish conquistador Hernan Cortes first watched the ritual Aztec ball game at the court in 1528, invited by the last Aztec emperor, Montezuma — the man whose empire he went on to conquer.

Historians believe the game involved players to keep a ball in play — as well as ritual human sacrifices.

Archaeologists uncovered 32 sets of human neck bones at the site, which they said were likely the remains of people who were decapitated as part of the ritual.

Only part of the structure remains — a staircase and a portion of the stands. Archaeologists estimate the original court was about 50 meters (165 feet) long.

The temple, meanwhile, is a giant semi-circle perched atop an even larger rectangular base. The whole thing once measured some 34 meters across and four meters high, archaeologists said.

The ancient structures stand in startling contrast with the sprawling megacity that now surrounds them, which was built atop the ruins of the Aztec capital, Tenochtitlan. They are just the latest ancient vestiges to be discovered in the historic city center, at what is known as the Great Temple site.

"The discovery we are looking at is a new chance to immerse ourselves in the splendor of the pre-Hispanic city of Tenochtitlan," Culture Minister Maria Cristina Garcia said.

A hotel formerly stood on the site of the newly discovered ruins until 1985, when it collapsed in a catastrophic earthquake that killed thousands of people.

The hotel's owners then noticed the ancient remains and alerted the National Institute of Anthropology and History. Archaeologists believe the temple celebrated the god of the wind and was built between 1486 and 1502.

Officials said they plan to open the site to the public, although no date has been set.

Director in need of funds auctions off his Palme d'Or

Tunisian director Abdellatif Kechiche, who won the top prize at the 2013 Cannes film festival for 'Blue Is the Warmest Color', is now auctioning it off in order to finance his next film, which has been put on hold after the bank that was backing him suddenly cut off its line of credit.



According to newser.com, Kechiche now needs funds to finish postproduction on 'Mektoub, My Love', per the Hollywood Reporter. In order to raise them, the French production/distribution company behind the sale will also sell off other film memorabilia related to his work, including the oil paintings that were featured in 'Blue Is the Warmest Color'.

THR calls the move a 'drastic' step, but Culture notes that 'Blue Is the Warmest Color' was the subject of quite a bit of controversy at Cannes (having to do with allegations of poor working conditions, anti-feminism and exploitative shooting practices) and Kechiche himself has said he wished it was never released.

"Perhaps he's quite ready to move on," wrote Jordan Cruchiola.

Weather

32 22 Amol	41 29 Jiroft	27 22 Ramsar	37 23 Shahriar	38 20 Shiraz	37 [^] 24 _v 24 Tehran	32 19 Dushanbe	45 29 Mecca	18 10 Saint Petersburg	31 20 Tokyo	23 19 Toronto
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REZA MO'ATTARIAN/theater.ir



Iranian director Amin Ebrahimi is staging the play 'A Song for You' at Tehran's City Theater Hall until June 23, 2017.

'Inversion', 'Breath' win Zurich awards

Art & Culture Desk

Iranian films 'Inversion' by Behnam Behzadi and 'Breath' by Narges Abyar won awards at the Third Iranian Film Festival Zurich, Switzerland, which was held from June 1 to 7.

Behzadi and Abyar won the Best Film Award and the Audience Award for Best Film respectively for their films, ISNA reported.

The iconic Iranian Director Dariush Mehrjoui was also commemorated at the film festival.

'Breath' is about four children whose mother had died a few years ago and whose father decides to join the Iranian volunteers on the warfront following the Iraqi attack on Iran in September 1980.

'Inversion', which is Behzadi's fourth feature film, centers around a woman, Niloufar (acted by Sahar Dolatshahi), who decides to take charge and find ways to better express herself in the smog-teeming metropolis of Tehran.



ISNA



ISNA

The 2017 edition of the Iranian Film Festival was dedicated to films dealing with issues such as immigration, integration, and matters pertaining to women in Iran and around the globe such as honor, solitude, sac-

rice and love.

In addition, the festival presented outstanding films made between 2015 and 2017 about Iran or by Iranian filmmakers about other countries.

Four flicks to represent Iran in Romania

Iranian films will be screened in the 16th Transilvania International Film Festival (TIFF) in Romania.

The films scheduled for screening in the Romanian event are: 'Simulation' by Abed Abest, Mehdi Fard Qaderi's 'Immortality', 'Take

Me Home' and '76 Minutes and 15 Seconds with Abbas Kiarostami' directed by Seifollah Samadian, ISNA reported.

Founded in 2002 by the Romanian Film Promotion, TIFF has grown rapidly to become the country's most important

film-related event. TIFF is the first international feature film festival in Romania, which is held

annually in the historic capital of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca. In 2011, Transilvania IFF

was accredited by the FIAPF, which has placed it among the world's 40 most important festivals.

romfilmdevelopment.org