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Russia defends slashing US diplomats by 755

Moscow on Monday justified its decision to purge US diplomatic personnel in the country, as the Kremlin appeared to give up on hopes of improving ties anytime soon under Donald Trump.

President Vladimir Putin announced Sunday that the US will have to slash its diplomatic staff in Russia by 755 after Moscow struck back against new sanctions passed by the US Congress.

The move represents one of the biggest single reductions of US personnel by Moscow, with Putin warning he could retaliate further even if he plans to hold off for now, AFP wrote.

"We have waited long enough, hoping that the situation would perhaps change for the better," the Kremlin spokesman said.

"But it seems that even if the situation is changing, it's not for any time soon."

Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov on Monday insisted that any hopes of mending Russia-US ties rest on "curbing the worsening political schizophrenia" in Washington, but admitted the two sides appeared "far away" from any improvement.

But he did insist Russia remained keen on "continuing cooperation in the areas that correspond to our interests", suggesting Moscow remains open to working together on Syria after agreeing a ceasefire with the US in the south of the war-torn country. The US State Department earlier called Moscow's move "regrettable and uncalled for" and said it was "assessing the impact of such a limitation and how to respond."

US Vice President Mike Pence while on a visit to Estonia on Monday said: "We hope for better days, for better relations with Russia."

He stressed that "recent diplomatic action taken by Moscow will not deter the commitment of the United States of America to our security, the security of our allies."

The US Senate on Thursday overwhelmingly approved a bill to toughen sanctions on Russia for allegedly meddling in the 2016 US presidential election and its "intervention" in Ukraine.

The White House said Trump intends to sign off on the legislation despite complaining earlier it would cut off the president's room for diplomatic maneuvering.

Russia's foreign ministry on Friday struck preemptively by ordering Washington to reduce its diplomatic presence to 455 by September 1 to match the size of Russia's mission in the US.

It also froze two embassy compounds - a Moscow summer house and a storage facility in the city - from August 1.

Germany slams US anti-Iran sanctions

Iran-Germany chamber of commerce to be launched



Iran, Russia sign €2.5b contract on wagon manufacturing

Domestic Economy Desk

Iran's Industrial Development and Renovation Organization (IDRO) signed an agreement with Russian Transmashholding Company on Sunday to set up a joint venture for manufacturing wagons for railroads.

The signing ceremony was attended by Iran's Industry, Mine and Trade Minister Mohammadreza Nematzadeh.

The contract was in line with the policies stipulated in Iran's Sixth Five-Year Economic Development Plan (2017-22) to develop the railroad sector in Iranian metropolises.

According to the deal, the Russian side will provide 80 percent of the €2.5-billion agreement for manufacturing passenger wagons, including the metro wagons, Trend News Agency reported.

IDRO and Transmashholding finalized an MoU in March 2017 to boost

cooperation in production of railroad cars with Russian financing. This cooperation involves the production of cargo and passenger wagons.

Speaking at the same ceremony, Mansour Moazzemi, the head of IDRO's Board of Directors, said the groundwork for signing the contract was laid during the visit by Iranian President Hassan Rouhani to Russia.

He added Transmashholding is the largest locomotive and rail equipment manufacturing company in Russia.

"Alstom France holds 33 percent of the shares in the Russian company," He said as per the contract, the two sides will set up a joint company, adding 20 percent of the investment in the project will be made by IDRO and the rest by the Russian firm.

Iran possesses about 24,000 cargo and 2,000 passenger wagons, as well as 100 locomotives which are currently in use.

Iran plans to expand its railway grid from the current 11,000km to 25,000km within the next five years, which explains the need for more equipment, including the wagons.

Moazzemi noted that upon the initiation of the cooperation, IDRO and Transmashholding will purchase an Iranian train production company, called Wagon Pars, to manufacture products required by Iran's railroad industry products.

He added that subsequently, the two sides will raise their investment in proportion with the size of the future projects.

"The company's management will be rotational."

He added as stipulated in Iran's Sixth Plan and stressed by the incumbent government, development of railroad industries are among the top priorities of the Rouhani administration.

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German Economy Minister Brigitte Zypries said on Monday that Berlin considers the US new sanctions on Iran a breach of international laws.

In a meeting with Iran's Minister of Roads and Urban Development Abbas Akhoundi in Berlin, Zypries said Germany condemns the new sanctions, which affect German and European companies, IRNA reported.

On Thursday, the US Senate voted nearly unanimously to impose new sanctions on Iran, Russia and North Korea.

The Senate backed the measure.

The bill will now be sent to the White House for the US president to sign into law or veto.

Expressing hope that Iran-Germany trade ties be expanded, Zypries reassured that Europe would be committed to its obligations under a nuclear agreement reached between Iran and world powers.

Iran and the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council - the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia - plus Germany signed the JCPOA on July 14, 2015 and started implementing it on January 16, 2016. Under the agreement, limits were put on Iran's nuclear activities in exchange for, among other things, the removal of all nuclear-related bans against the Islamic Republic.

Zypries voiced interest in signing an agreement between Iran and Germany's Siemens. Zypries said that German firms are not able to compete with Chinese companies in costs, but in terms of quality, they are incomparable.

Stressing that there is a good ground that German railway companies' representatives in their visit to Tehran due in November discuss the issue of financing the projects, she urged the launch of an Iran-Germany chamber of commerce to accelerate the process of reaching agreements.

Zypries also reassured that his Ministry would fully support German companies' activities in Iran.

Iran's Minister of Roads and Urban Development, heading a delegation, is visiting Berlin since July 27 to talk with German officials.

Venezuela's Maduro hails vote win, opposition vows protests

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro claimed victory on Monday in an election for an assembly to rewrite the constitution, but the opposition cried fraud and vowed to keep protesting.

Ten people were killed in a wave of bloodshed that swept Venezuela Sunday as Maduro defied an opposition boycott and international condemnation - including the threat of new US sanctions - to hold elections for a powerful new "Constituent Assembly."

Protesters attacked polling stations and barricaded streets around the country, drawing a bloody response from security forces, who opened fire with live ammunition in some cases, AFP reported.

Despite the boycott and the unrest, the head of the National Electoral Council, Tibisay Lucena - one of 13 Maduro allies already slapped with sanctions by US President Donald Trump's administration - said there had been "extraordinary turnout" of more than eight million voters, 41.5 percent of the electorate.

Dressed in bright red, his fist clenched and face beaming, Maduro hailed it as a win in a speech to hundreds of cheering supporters in central



Caracas.

"It is the biggest vote the revolution has ever scored in its 18-year history," he said, referring to the year his late mentor, Hugo Chavez, came to power. "What the hell do we care what Trump says?"

The socialist president is gambling his four-year rule on the 545-member

assembly, which will be empowered to dissolve the opposition-controlled congress and rewrite the constitution.

In his speech, he encouraged the assembly to scrap opposition lawmakers' immunity from prosecution as one of its first acts.

There was international condemnation of the vote, led by Washington.

The constituent assembly aims to "undermine the Venezuelan people's right to self-determination," US State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said in a statement, threatening further "strong and swift" sanctions on Maduro's government.

The election was also condemned by the European Union, Canada and

Latin American powers including Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Mexico.

The EU condemned what it said was excessive use of force by state troops in Venezuela and said it was unlikely to recognize results of the election.

Senior opposition leader Henrique Capriles called on Venezuelans to continue defying the deeply unpopular Maduro with new protests against the election and the "massacre" he said accompanied it.

"We do not recognize this fraudulent process," he said, calling for nationwide marches and a mass protest in Caracas Wednesday, the day the new assembly is due to be installed.

Maduro has banned protests over the vote, threatening prison terms of up to 10 years. Prosecutors said 10 people were killed in violence around the vote, bringing the death toll in four months of protests to more than 120 people.

Those killed included a candidate for the new assembly, a regional opposition leader, two teenage protesters and a soldier in the western state of Tachira, which saw some of the worst violence.

Araqchi: Iran's foreign trade rises following JCPOA implementation

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi said despite US attempts against Iran and moves to undermine the 2015 nuclear deal between Tehran and world powers, trade transactions with Iran have grown since the deal came into force.

Speaking on the sidelines of a ceremony to sign a cooperation agreement between the Industrial Development and Renovation Organization of Iran (IDRO) and a Russian company operating in rail transport markets, Iranian deputy foreign minister for legal and international affairs hailed the agreement as a "major commercial contract".



IRNA

"We are very pleased that another major commercial contract of Iran, namely the investment (deal) between the IDRO and the Russian side, has been signed," he said.

Araqchi further pointed to the positive impacts of the nuclear deal on the country's foreign trade and said a year and a half after the agreement implementation, a rising trend is seen in Iran's foreign trade.

These partnerships have taken place despite all the attempts made by the US to disturb Iran's atmosphere, he noted.

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani said on Sunday if Iran manages to boost close economic cooperation with world countries, US officials would not be able to use sanctions as a weapon.

Both the US House of Representatives and Senate overwhelmingly voted earlier this week to impose new sanctions on Iran over its ballistic missile program, with President Donald Trump set to sign the bill into legislation.

On Sunday, Araqchi stressed the importance of adopting an appropriate measure in response to the "hostile and malicious" US moves given their adverse effect on the implementation of the landmark nuclear agreement which was signed between Iran and the P5+1 group of countries in July 2015.

Zarif to attend OIC meeting in Istanbul today

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif will be in Istanbul today to attend an extraordinary meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to discuss the latest developments in Beit-ul-Moqaddas, Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi said on Monday.

The meeting will discuss ways to support Palestinians living in Beit-ul-Moqaddas, and how to preserve Islamic holy sites in Beit-ul-Moqaddas following recent measures by Israel in the city, an OIC statement said.

On July 14, Israel imposed security restrictions on Al-Aqsa Mosque following the death of two Israeli police officers and three Arab Israelis in an attack, IRNA reported. Several Palestinians lost their lives during protests which erupted in Palestine following Tel Aviv restrictions on the holy site.



Political Desk

An Iranian vice president said on Monday the issue of dust storms was proposed as a global problem at the United Nations through efforts made by the Islamic Republic.

Massoumeh Ebtekar added that these efforts have pushed researchers and scientists across the world to place plans on the agenda to tackle the problem of sand and dust storms, IRNA wrote.

She described dust storms as an "expanding phenomenon" saying they have also affected parts of Africa and China.

Ebtekar, who is also the head of the Department of Environment (DoE), blamed Turkey's dam building projects for triggering increasing desertification in the Middle East.

As part of its Southeastern Anatolia Project known as GAP, Turkey has built over 20 dams on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, which also run across Syria, Iraq and Iran.

The project has reportedly reduced water flow in the rivers' basin by 34 percent and caused 94 percent of the Mesopotamia to dry up, kicking up dust storms in Syria and Iraq which head to Iran and cripple life in its southwestern and western provinces.

Ebtekar said the project has worsened the problem of dust storms in the region.

She also criticized Saudi Arabia for refusing to fulfill its "responsibilities" in tackling dust storms in the kingdom saying Riyadh has no plans in this regard.

Iran says dust storms originate in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Jordan and Syria,



and has urged their authorities to address the problem.

The DoE chief said Iran and Iraq were ready to launch an environmental plan four years ago to settle the issue of dust storms. She, however, said the invasion of the Arab nation by the Daesh terror group spoiled the plan.

Ebtekar noted that Iraq has prepared readiness to put the plan into effect following the army's major advances

against Daesh terrorists in recent months.

The vice president said — according to the plan — Iran will share its anti-desertification experiences with Iraqi experts to tackle dust storms.

Iran's capital of Tehran hosted a conference dubbed International Conference on Combating Sand and Dust Storms on July 3-5 to discuss the problem of dust storms.

Representatives of dozens of countries attended the conference which was co-hosted by the United Nations (UN) and the Iranian Department of Environment.

On the sidelines of the three-day conference, Director of the United Nations Environment Program Erik Solheim highlighted Iran's role as one of the pioneers in combating dust and sand storms in the Middle East.

Iranian court rejects appeal by attackers of Saudi missions



REUTERS

Ten people sentenced to jail for attacking the Saudi Arabian Embassy in the Iranian capital Tehran have had their appeals against their convictions rejected.

The Court of First Instance had examined the accusations leveled against 19 people in the case which has been lodged by Tehran Prosecutor's Office last year. One person was also tried in absentia, Press TV reported.

Five of those tried were sentenced to six months in prison, while five others were handed down three-month sentences, said Mostafa Sha'bani, who represents them.

He said the Appellate Court had on Saturday said it had upheld the verdicts during its review of the case, which it carried out last month.

Sha'bani said it was not yet clear whether his clients would seek to take the case to the Supreme Court.

The lawyer said four other suspects are

clergymen, whose case has been examined by the country's Special Clerical Court.

By lodging the case, the Prosecutor's Office had sought to sue the suspected attackers for disturbing public order, and causing destruction to diplomatic property.

The suspects, however, had the complaint against them about destructive behavior thrown out as such cases have to be lodged with courts by a realtor, namely a legal or natural person with direct interest in the case.

Attackers held violent protests in front of the embassy as well as Saudi Arabia's diplomatic mission in Mashhad in early 2016 against the kingdom's earlier execution of its leading Shia cleric, Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr. Tehran has condemned the attacks, calling its perpetrators rogue elements.

Riyadh reacted to the violence by rupturing its diplomatic ties with Tehran, which it has not restored to date.

Iran FM meets South Africa's Deputy FM in Tehran

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and visiting South Africa's Deputy Foreign Minister Nomandla Mfeketo discussed ways to expand mutual cooperation in a meeting in Tehran on Monday.

Zarif expressed hope that joint Tehran-

Pretoria economic commission meetings will be held in an appropriate time. The meetings are aimed at strengthening mutual ties, IRNA reported.

Mfeketo underlined South Africa's firm determination to expand relations with Iran.

Qatari officials to attend Rouhani's swearing-in ceremony

A high-ranking delegation from Qatar is going to attend the swearing-in ceremony for Iran's President Hassan Rouhani, Qatari Prime Minister Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani announced.

In a meeting with Chairman of the Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission Alaeddin Boroujerdi in Doha on Sunday, the prime minister of Qatar said a top delegation from his country will take part in the Iranian president's swearing-in ceremony, Tasnim News Agency reported.



The swearing-in ceremony for President Rouhani will be held in the parliament on August 5. Rouhani garnered more than 23 million votes in May 19 presidential election.

Boroujerdi also noted that Qatar is grateful for Iran's supports at the time of Saudi sanctions against Doha, saying his country would never forget such Iranian help.

The Iranian lawmaker slammed the "cruel" sanctions against Qatar, expressing the confidence that the Doha government would weather the current tough situation.

On behalf of the Iranian officials, Boroujerdi invited the prime minister and Emir of Qatar Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani to visit Iran for President Rouhani's swearing-in ceremony.

The Iranian MP arrived in Doha on Sunday after a visit to Oman.

Iran has ramped up diplomatic and parliamentary contacts with the regional countries in recent weeks, after Saudi Arabia and a number of others boycotted Qatar in early June.

In Muscat, the Iranian parliamentarian held meeting with Chairman of Consultative Assembly of Oman Khalid al-Mawali.

The two sides conferred on the latest developments in the region, bilateral issues, and ways to expand parliamentary cooperation between Iran and Oman.

Turkey says detains more than 1,000 in latest anti-terror raids

Turkish authorities detained 1,098 people over the last week for suspected links to militant groups or last year's failed coup attempt, the interior ministry said on Monday.

In a statement, the ministry said 831 of those were detained for suspected ties to the US-based political figure Fethullah Gulen, whom Ankara blames for orchestrating an attempted coup in July. Gulen denies any involvement, Reuters reported.

It said another 213 of those were suspected of links to the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which has carried out a three-decade insurgency against the government and is considered a terrorist organization by the United States, Turkey and Europe.

Forty-six people were detained over alleged links to the Daesh terrorist group, while 8 more were held for suspected ties to "leftist terrorist groups", the ministry said.

Following the July 15 coup, Turkey has arrested some 50,000 people and sacked or suspended more than 150,000 in the military, civil service and private sector as part of a sweeping crackdown that has worried rights groups and some Western nations.

The Turkish government, however, has said the purges were justified by the gravity of the threats it was facing. The Dutch news.nl reported.

Detention for insulting president

Also Trouw newspaper said on Monday that a Dutch Turkish national has been arrested in Turkey for allegedly insulting President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

The paper said the man is thought to be the first Dutch citizen to be arrested on po-



AFP

litical grounds during the summer holidays but that the arrest confirms the fears of many Dutch-Turks that they could be summarily arrested if they return to Turkey during the break.

The man, his wife and children were picked up on their arrival in Istanbul. His wife and children were released but the man was held in custody for several days.

Among the complaints against him: he criticized the political situation in Turkey on social media and has described Erdoğan as a thief and a traitor.

Dutch news.nl quoted Trouw as saying that the man was also questioned about links to the Gülen movement.

The man, who has not been identified, has been told he cannot leave Turkey until

his trial. Trouw said some 10 Dutch Turkish nationals have been told not to leave Turkey pending court appearances.

Last week it emerged that the Netherlands has begun extraditing people charged with drugs offences and serious crimes to face trial in Turkey after the Turkish authorities gave guarantees they would be well treated and would be given a fair trial.

Qatar denies Arab states' air corridor claim

Qatar denied Saudi media reports that Arab states would allow Qatari planes to use air corridors in emergencies, saying they were spreading "false information".

Qatar's Transport and Communications Ministry and its aviation authority denied claims that Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Bahrain had taken such a decision, the state news agency QNA reported.

Saudi state news agency SPA on Sunday cited a statement from the Saudi aviation authority (GACA) as saying they had already agreed on emergency air corridors, which were identified under ICAO supervision, and that they would be open from August 1.

"Nine corridors have been identified including one in international airspace over the Mediterranean Sea that will be monitored by the Egyptian authorities," SPA said. Qatar called on the countries to not leak "false information" ahead of the ICAO meeting in Montreal.



NASEEM ZEITOUN/REUTERS

Qatar Airways aircrafts are seen at Hamad International Airport in Doha

ICAO was not immediately available for comment.

ICAO's 36-state governing council could act to settle the row presented by Qatar, but such interventions are rare and time-consuming because the UN agency usually negotiates disputes through consensus, Reuters reported.

Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the UAE, and Bahrain broke diplomatic relations with Qatar in early June largely over their allegations that it supports "terrorist" groups - a charge Qatar strongly rejects.

Trump insists there's no chaos at White House



SUSAN WALSH/AP

The US President Donald Trump insisted Monday there is no chaos at the White House, even as his new chief of staff is entering a West Wing battered by crisis.

Retired Gen. John Kelly, previously the Homeland Security secretary, took over Monday from the ousted Reince Priebus, bringing his military experience to an administration weighed down by a stalled legislative agenda, a cabal of infighting West Wing aides and a stack of investigations, AP reported.

While Trump is looking for a reset, he pushed back against criticism of his administration on Twitter Monday. He said: "Highest Stock Market EVER, best economic numbers in years, unemployment lowest in 17 years, wages raising, border secure, S.C.: No WH chaos!" Kelly's success in a chaotic White House will depend on how much authority he is granted and whether Trump's dueling aides will put aside their rivalries to work together. Also unclear is whether a new chief of staff will have any influence over the president's social media historians.

Former Trump campaign manager Cory Lewandowski, who was ousted from the campaign in June 2016, said on NBC's "Meet the Press" that he expected Kelly would "restore order to the staff" but also stressed that Trump was unlikely to change his style.

"I say you have to let Trump be Trump. That is what has made him successful over the last 30 years. That is what the American people voted for," Lewandowski said. "And anybody who thinks they're going to change Donald Trump doesn't know Donald Trump."

Kelly's start follows a tumultuous week, marked by a profane tirade from the new communications director, Trump's continued attacks on his attorney general and the failed effort by Senate Republicans to overhaul the nation's health care law.

to provide for the migrants' basic needs "exposed them to inhuman and degrading treatment, dealing a serious and clearly illegal blow to a basic right," AFP reported.

The council noted that migrants, "who find themselves in a state of destitution and exhaustion, have no access to running water, showers or toilets and cannot therefore wash themselves or their clothes."

The situation had caused some to develop skin diseases such as scabies and impetigo or infected wounds, "as well as serious psychological troubles," the council found.

The court upheld a June 26 order by a court in the northern city of Lille for the state to supply the migrants with running water, toilets and showers.

The Lille court also demanded that those migrants who decide to seek asylum in France be offered a place in a reception center wherever there was space avail-

able. Several hundred migrants are camped out in and around Calais - the main Launchpad for attempts to smuggle across the Channel to Britain by truck.

The Interior Ministry and the city of Calais had appealed against the Lille court's ruling in June, saying the provision of services would lead to the proliferation of new "jungles", as the sprawling makeshift camp demolished last year in Calais was known.

The case was taken by a group of migrants and NGOs, who complained that the state was violating the migrants' basic rights.

France's new centrist government has taken a tough line on Calais, with Interior Minister Gerard Collomb saying he does not want the city to become an "abscess".

Last week, President Emmanuel Macron softened his tone somewhat, saying he aimed to find shelter for all those living on the street by the end of the year.

Four dead as attack on Embassy in Kabul ends

A Daesh attack on the Iraqi Embassy in Kabul has ended with a suicide bomber blowing himself up outside the gates and security forces killing three terrorists.

Monday's assault set off a four-hour gunfight that ended only after Afghan security forces had killed all the attackers, AAP reported.

There were conflicting reports of casualties as the attack unfolded, with a witness at the scene saying he saw bodies of at least two policemen lying on the road outside the embassy soon after the attack began.

Daesh said its members had killed seven guards but the terrorist group often exaggerates its claims on the number of casualties inflicted.



SHAH MARAJ/AP

Afghan security forces stand guard at the site of a suicide blast near Iraq's Embassy in Kabul on July 31, 2017.

Interior Ministry spokesman Najib Danish said only one policeman was wounded and that there were no fatalities among the security forces or civilians.

Danish told The Associated Press that all the embassy staffers were safe but that the building had suffered extensive damage with windows broken and several rooms badly burned.

In Baghdad, the Foreign Ministry spokesman Ahmad Jamal condemned the assault as a "terrorist attack".

The attack began with a big explosion that rocked central Kabul shortly before noon, followed by gunfire that lasted for several hours, and two or three more subsequent large explosions.

Police quickly cordoned off the area, barring reporters from coming too close to the scene.

The Afghan Interior Ministry said a suicide bomber first started the attack, blowing himself up at the embassy gate, after which three attackers stormed inside.

Earlier, Afghan officials who spoke on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to talk to the media, had said a car bomb started the assault. Later on, it became clear the suicide bomber was on foot and not driving a car.

The ministry statement said Afghan security forces quickly deployed to the scene, rescuing all the embassy diplomats and employees and taking them to safety.

May's spokesman: Free movement with EU will end in March 2019

Free movement of people between Britain and the European Union will end in March 2019 when Britain leaves the bloc, Prime Minister Theresa May's spokesman said on Monday.

Last week British Finance Minister Philip Hammond said there should be no immediate change to immigration rules when Britain leaves the bloc.



REUTERS

"Free movement will end in March 2019," May's spokesman told reporters, adding that the government had already set out some details including proposals on EU citizens rights post-Brexit, Reuters reported.

"Other elements of the post-Brexit immigration system will be brought forward in due course, it would be wrong to speculate on what these might look like or to suggest that free movement will continue as it is now."

After members of May's top team have appeared to contradict each other in recent days over the government's Brexit plans, the spokesman also said the government position on Brexit remains as set out by the prime minister in January.

Details of a post-Brexit implementation period were a matter for negotiations, he added, but Britain is not seeking an "off-the-shelf" solution. The Financial Times reported last week that Hammond hoped for an "off-the-shelf" transition deal.

French government ordered to supply water for Calais migrants

France's highest administrative court on Monday rejected the government's appeal against an order to provide water and sanitation facilities for hundreds of migrants sleeping rough in the northern port of Calais.

In a written decision seen by AFP, the Council of State said the state's failure

REPORT

OPEC, non-OPEC meeting to shore up oil output cut compliance

Faltering compliance with oil output cuts has moved the OPEC/non-OPEC producer coalition to call a meeting of technical experts next week in Abu Dhabi to discuss ways to firm up member commitments to uphold their quotas.

The meeting, to be held August 7-8, follows pledges by the coalition's monitoring committee to demand better compliance from flagging members, Platts reported.

"Although conformity with the production agreement remains strong at the aggregate level, some countries continue to lag, which is a concern we must address head on," Saudi Energy Minister Khalid al-Falih said at a meeting of the monitoring committee in St. Petersburg last week.



Iraq, for example, averaged 69,000 bpd above its quota from January through June, according to data from the S&P Global Platts OPEC survey — one of six secondary sources used by the coalition to monitor OPEC production. That is the largest amount by which any member of the bloc is exceeding its target.

Iraqi Minister Jabbar al-Luabi will be meeting with Falih in the coming days, as he met Iran's Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh, according to the Iraqi Oil Ministry.

"Our friends had some viewpoints and gave some explanations," Zanganeh was quoted as saying by Iran's Shana news service. "They had justifications for their actions. We will continue talks with them."

Luabi has insisted for months that the deal concerns exports, not production, contrary to the text of the agreement on OPEC's website, and as the deal was being negotiated last fall, he complained that OPEC's secondary sources were not accurately reflecting Iraq's production levels.

Other countries have likewise complained about secondary sources, but in almost every case, secondary source production estimates have been lower than what OPEC members have directly reported to the secretariat.

For example, of the nine OPEC members that submitted June production figures to OPEC, six were estimated by secondary sources to have equal or lower production.

Of the remaining three, the secondary source estimates for Qatar and Angola were only 10,000 bpd above their directly submitted figures, while Nigeria's was 70,000 bpd above, though Nigeria is exempt from the deal.

Overall, the monitoring committee pegged June compliance among the OPEC/non-OPEC producer coalition at 98 percent.

The International Energy Agency, an OPEC secondary source, had compliance among the 12 OPEC members with quotas under the deal at 78 percent in June and 92 percent for all of 2017.

Platts sees compliance much higher, with June coming in at 103 percent and overall 2017 at 116 percent.

No matter the secondary source, however, Saudi Arabia's over-compliance is what enables the entire coalition to achieve high compliance levels.

The kingdom has cut 107,000 bpd more than its required level, according to Platts data, and Falih said in St. Petersburg that Saudi crude exports would be held to a six-year low in August.

In a press release distributed by OPEC, the monitoring committee said the meeting will be co-chaired by technical representatives from Kuwait and Russia and also attended by officials from Saudi Arabia.

Venezuela, Algeria and Oman, the other members of the OPEC/non-OPEC monitoring committee will not be attending.

"This is a technical meeting being held to better understand the difficulties and obstacles faced by some OPEC and non-OPEC participating countries and to assess how conformity levels can be improved with the goal of achieving a faster rebalanced global oil market, for the benefit of producers and consumers alike," the committee said.

The production cut deal, which went into force January 1, calls on OPEC and 10 major non-OPEC producers to cut a combined 1.8 mbd.

The coalition on May 25 agreed to extend the deal past its June expiry through March 2018.

Malaysia to sign FTAs with Iran, HK by yearend

Malaysia is expected to sign free trade agreements (FTAs) with Hong Kong and Iran by yearend, said Second Minister for International Trade and Industry Datuk Seri Ong Ka Chuan.

He said to date Malaysia has signed 13 FTAs with its ASEAN and dialogue partners, Bernama reported.

"We need to speed up the signing of the FTAs as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership is also progressing."

"Not only that, the FTA between Malaysia and European Union (EU) is also advancing," he told reporters after an Engagement Session at Universiti Putra Malaysia on Monday.

However, there was a concern on the palm oil sector as the EU has adopted a discriminatory policy towards palm oil, he said.

The EU is Malaysia's biggest palm oil market and in 2016, palm oil export stood at RM10 billion (\$2.3 billion).

The FTA between Malaysia and EU countries is expected to boost total trade by 20-30 percent from the current 10 percent.

The EU is Malaysia's third-largest trading partner with total trade in January this year increasing 9.7 percent to RM12.9 billion (\$3 billion) from the same month a year ago.



IRNA

Envoy: Russia mulling tourist visa waiver for Iranians soon

Russia's Ambassador to Iran Levon Dzagharyan in meeting with Head of Iran Chamber of Cooperative Bahman Abdollahi declared that in the near future, tourist visas would no longer be required for Iranian nationals visiting Russia.

Iran's envoy has said that his country is currently mulling the removal of visa requirements for Iranian nationals.

The Russian envoy said that cooperatives are very active in Russia and Iran may meet some of their needs from these firms.



IRNA

"The aim of this meeting was getting acquainted with similar organizations in Russia and expansion of trade ties between the two countries as well as lifting the visa barrier," Abdollahi said following a meeting with the Russian ambassador. Fars News agency reported.

The Iranian official said that the Rus-

Iran was pleased to learn about the capabilities of Chamber of Cooperatives, and said, "I will try to create direct connection between Iran's Chamber of Cooperatives and its similar organizations in Russia."

Iran will host International Cooperatives Alliance (ICA) conference next year.

Iran, Russia sign €2.5b contract on wagon manufacturing

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"In the year to mid-March 2016, Iran's Economic Council approved a bill to produce 2,000 subway wagons. The implementation of the project has been entrusted to IDRO."

The Interior Ministry has announced that Iran requires 8,000-10,000 wagons in addition to the need for urban wagons, he said.

Moazzemi added it has also been stipulated in the agreement that the Russian company will purchase a locomotive manufacturing plant in Iran, an issue which was finalized today.

He noted that this is an opportunity for Russia to improve its relations with Iran as its close friend and strategic partner by fostering collaborations in developing the Middle Eastern state's railroad

sector, hoping that the partnership would mark the beginning of an expanded cooperation between the two countries.

By signing this agreement, Iran intends to maximize domestic production and use of Iranian experts' capabilities, IDRO chief said.

Transmashholding was established in 2002. The company is involved in designing, engineering, manufacturing and selling wagons as well as providing after-sales services in this sector. It is carrying out activities in 12 countries.

The Russian firm manufactures diesel-locomotive shunters, main-line and electric industrial locomotives, passenger and freight cars, electric train cars, locomotive and marine diesels, car castings and other products. The company has provided railcars to Warsaw Metro and Baku Metro, among others.

Exports to Pakistan via railroad up 126%

Domestic Economy Desk

Exports from Zahedan in the southeastern Iranian province of Sistan-Baluchestan to Quetta in the Pakistani province of Baluchistan via railroad during March 21-July 22, 2017, witnessed a 126-percent growth compared to the figure for the same period last year.

Majid Arjooni, director general of Iran's South East Railway Company, further said that in this duration, Iran exported 10,603 tons of goods via Zahedan-Quetta railroad to Pakistan, IRNA reported.

The figure for the same time-span last year was 4,692 tons, he said.

Zahedan railroad to Sarakhs border in the eastern Iranian province of Khorasan Razavi in the first four months of the year to mid-March 2018, at 3,439 tons, indicating a 29-percent increase year-on-year.

"The figure stood at 2,663 tons in the first four months of the year to mid-March 2017."

He listed Iran's main exports to Pakistan via this railroad were cement, bitumen, sulfur, red clay and foots oil — also known as residual oil.

Foots oil is a byproduct produced during the manufacturing process of paraffin wax and contains a large amount of oil and fatty acid.

Arjooni said a major part of Pakistani exports to Iran via the



IRNA

Arjooni added Pakistan's overseas sales to Iran via the same railroad amounted to 6,003 tons in the same four-month period this year. During mid-March-mid-July, 2016, this figure stood at 5,727 tons.

In the same 124-day period in 2017, he said, goods transited via Mirjaveh border checkpoint in Sistan-Baluchestan Province reached 3,128 tons — up 60 percent compared to last year's figure which was 1,955 tons.

Arjooni put goods transited via

same railroad were rice and sesame, adding the transited goods comprised mainly raw sulfur.

He put the railroad's tonnage in the same period this year at 26,062 tons, noting this figure was 24,248 tons in the same period a year ago.

Sistan-Baluchestan railroad is the continuation of India railroad which was constructed in the South Asian country in less than two years during 1918-19 with a length of 600 kilometers. It connects Zahedan to Quetta.

Japanese industrial output up

Japan's factory output rebounded in June from a decline in May as production of cars and industrial chemicals increased, suggesting economic expansion may be on a more stable footing.



HSBC profits up in first half of 2017

amazonaws.com

HSBC said profits were up in the first half of the year in what it called an "excellent" result after a turbulent 2016.

The Asia-focused giant has been on a recovery drive over the past two years to streamline the business and slash costs, and has laid off tens of thousands of staff, AFP wrote.

Reported pre-tax profit for the six months to June rose five percent to \$10.2 billion compared with \$9.7 billion for the same period last year.

HSBC also announced a share buyback of up to \$2 billion, expected to be completed in the second half of the year.

Shares were up 2.77 percent at HK\$78.55 (\$10.06) in early afternoon trading in Hong Kong on Monday.

The half-year results showed operating expenses dropped 12 percent to \$16.4 billion, partly stemming from a sell-off of its Brazil operations.

Chairman Douglas Flint described the performance as "extremely pleasing".

Flint said there were still uncertainties due to increasing geopolitical tensions and "ambiguous predictions" around Britain's future relationship with the European Union post-Brexit, but described HSBC's performance as resilient.

Analysts said the results had outstripped predictions. Dickie Wong of Hong Kong-based Kingston Securities said, "HSBC's earnings are definitely better than market expectations."

He described the firm as in "very good shape" after wide-ranging restructuring programs following the global financial crisis in 2008.

Net profit for the first half of the year rose 10 percent to \$6.99 billion from \$6.36 billion for the same period in 2016.

Pre-tax profits for the second quarter rose \$1.7 billion to \$5.3 billion year on year, beating Bloomberg analysts' estimates, which had averaged out at a \$4.6 billion forecast.

HSBC announced the appointment of a new chairman

in March as part of a management overhaul that will also see it choose a new chief executive to replace Stuart Gulliver, following a massive drop in 2016 profits.

British businessman Mark Tucker, currently group chief executive and president of insurance group ALA, will take over from Flint in October.

Gulliver has said he will step down in 2018. Gulliver and Flint were grilled by British lawmakers in 2015 and apologized for "unacceptable" failings at HSBC's Swiss division following allegations the unit helped rich clients hide billions of dollars from the taxman.

HSBC was one of six major US and European banks that were fined a total of \$4.2 billion by global regulators in a November 2014 crackdown for attempted manipulation of the foreign exchange market.

It was also fined \$1.92 billion by US prosecutors in 2012 to settle allegations that it failed to enforce anti-money laundering rules exposing it to exploitation by drug cartels and terrorist organizations.

Main Indices of TSE

Index	Value	Change	Percent
Total Index	81533.5	2522.5	3.11
Industry Index	70390.9	2306.2	3.29
Free Float Index	89741.1	3826	4.27
First Market Index	57203.9	2388.7	4.21
Second Market Index	177312.3	2030.5	1.14

Overall Index details on 20170731

First	81635.0	Change end of year(%)	919.04%
High	81596.8	Historical highest	89500.6 (20140105)
Low	81502.5	Historical lowest	100 (1369/1/6)
Close	81533.5	Base Value	100 (1369/1/6)
Change	2522.5		

Industry Index details on 20170731

First	70322.5	Change end of year(%)	1034.32%
Max Value	70443.2	Historical highest	75181.9 (20140105)
Max Value	69718.1	Historical lowest	1226.8 (1377/8/25)
Closing	70390.9	Base Value	
Closing	2306.2		

Free Float Index details on 20170731

First	89703.4	Change end of year(%)	
Max Value	89665	Historical highest	105040 (20140105)
Max Value	89154.9	Historical lowest	
Closing	89741.1	Base Value	
Closing	3826		

Main Board Index details on 20170731

First	57167.1	Change end of year(%)	787.77%
Max Value	57260.3	Historical highest	67441.4 (20140105)
Max Value	56380.7	Historical lowest	
Closing	57203.9	Base Value	4740.4 (1381/6/2)
Closing	2388.7		

Secondary Index details on 20170731

First	178120.6	Change end of year(%)	1317.58%
Max Value	177685.0	Historical highest	181353 (20170522)
Max Value	177894	Historical lowest	
Closing	177312.3	Base Value	4740.4 (1381/6/2)
Closing	2030.5		

Major Currencies

Currency	To USD	Currency	To USD
Turkish Lira	0.2830	Chinese Yuan	0.1486
Euro	1.1735	UAE Dirham	0.2722
British Pound	1.3114	Kuwaiti Dinar	3.3058
Australian Dollar	0.7972	Iraqi Dinar	0.0008
Japanese 100 Yen	0.0090	Saudi Riyal	0.2666

Major Commodities

Crude Oil	\$49.70	Silver	\$16.71
Gold	\$1272.90	Platinum	\$939.50
Copper	\$2.90	Wheat	\$481.50

China factory growth cools slightly

Growth in China's manufacturing sector slowed marginally in July, reinforcing expectations the world's second-largest economy will cool in coming months as borrowing costs rise and regulators clamp down on riskier types of financing.

The official Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) released on Monday stood at 51.4 in July, down from the previous month's 51.7 but still well above the 50-point mark that separates growth from contraction on a monthly basis, Reuters reported.

Analysts surveyed by Reuters had forecast the reading would come in at 51.6, little changed from June.

China posted stronger-than-expected economic growth of 6.9 percent in the first half, fueled by a year-long construction boom, resurgent exports and robust retail sales.

The sub-index for the construction sector rose to 62.5 in July from 61.4 in June, the PMI survey by the National Bureau of Statistics showed.

The construction sector remains robust as the government strengthened investment in infrastructure projects, the statistics bureau said.

But new factory orders eased to 52.8

marginally to 51.1 in July from 51.2 a month earlier, suggesting stable domestic demand.

Julian Evans-Pritchard, a Singapore-based China economist at Capital Economics, said, "The breakdown suggests weaker foreign demand is partly to blame — the new export orders fell by a larger margin than overall new orders."

The sub-index for imports slipped



cnbc.com

Greek debt crisis: 'People can't see any light at the end of any tunnel'

Panagiotis Mourtidou pondered the words with a gravity unusual for the jovial volunteer: "The worst is clearly behind us."

According to The Guardian, even now, several days after the Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras saw fit to use the phrase, she still feels somewhat bewildered. "Politicians clearly have no idea of the reality on the ground," she said. "If they did, they wouldn't make such pronouncements because, really, it couldn't be worse."

It is four years since The Guardian met Mourtidou packing food boxes at the Solidarity Club which she and other concerned citizens were running out of the local branch of Tsipras's then radical Syriza party.

At the time, the leftist was an ardent fan of the only political force she truly believed could pull Greece from the depths of financial collapse.

Tsipras's promise to stamp out austerity, his raised fist and fiery rhetoric appealed to her sense of justice. In the summer of 2013 — almost 18 months before assuming power — he was "our big hope, the big promise of better days".

But the politician's volte-face, his enactment of some of the most grueling budget cuts and tax rises since Greece's great economic crisis began, has driven a wedge through any optimism she may have had.

Today, the Solidarity Club operates not out of the party's local premises but a former grocery store up the road. Mourtidou now finds herself struggling with sentiments that veer between disappointment and rage.

"Tell me, how anyone can survive on a basic wage of €690 (€438) and still pay all the taxes they have passed?" she asked, stacking rice, pasta and pulses destined for the needy she encounters daily.

BoK to keep monetary easing policy to support growth



cnbc.com

South Korea's central bank on Monday renewed its stance to maintain the current monetary easing policy to support growth for Asia's fourth-largest economy.

The Bank of Korea (BoK) said in a report submitted to the National Assembly that it will maintain its stance of monetary policy accommodation, noting the inflationary pressures on the demand side are not expected to be high, though the solid trend of domestic economic growth could affect prices, Yonhap reported.

The latest assessment came more than two weeks after the BoK kept the all-time low rate of 1.25 percent, extending its wait-and-see approach for the 13th consecutive month.

The BoK said in the report that it will closely monitor

the monetary policies of major economies, conditions related to trade with major countries, the trend of increase in household debt, and geopolitical risks.

South Korea's household debt reached a record high of 1,359.7 trillion won (\$1,214 billion) at the end of the first quarter, according to data compiled by the BoK. South Korea has recently tightened lending rules on homes in some designated speculative areas to curb real estate speculation.

The BoK also renewed its stance that it may take a monetary tightening approach if the economy shows signs of a robust recovery, a comment widely seen as signaling a rate hike by the central bank over the long haul.

Swapping cars for bikes, not diesel for electric

The government's air quality plan may make our air more breathable in the long run but it fails to tackle some of the biggest issues facing cities and towns in the UK, and more people on bikes are a huge part of the answer.

At the heart of the plan is a move to ban all new diesel and petrol vans and cars from 2040, alongside a range of measures to support the electric car market and retrofit existing vehicles. It remains to be seen if the plan will be an effective measure to improve air quality, but it is almost guaranteed that this will be another missed opportunity to think about how we move about and live in cities and towns, reported The Guardian.

Focusing on switching from diesel and petrol vehicles to electric will most likely result in people simply changing the type of heavy box that they drive around our towns and cities in.

This should improve air quality as emissions reduce over the long term, but it will do nothing to solve congestion on our streets, and it is a missed opportunity to improve public health.



MARCIN ROGOZINSKI/ALAMY

There is no clearer and bigger opportunity to help reduce air pollution than encouraging more people to ride bikes.

In 2015, only two percent of trips in England were made by bicycle despite the average length of each trip being only seven miles. Switching from cars to bikes would not only reduce air pollution but solve many of the biggest issues facing our cities and towns.

Congestion is getting worse in cities across the UK at a cost to the economy of £11 billion a year. While a 3.5 meter-wide single lane can transport 2,000 people an hour in cars, the same lane can be used to transport 14,000 people on bicycles — and this doesn't even take into account the space saved on parking. With limited space in cities and rising populations, transport planning has to focus on the most efficient way of getting around.

FAO has developed new guidelines aimed at helping countries develop strong National Forest Monitoring Systems, which are key to measure progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

To fulfill their pledges under the Paris Climate Agreement and Agenda 2030, countries are expected to collect more detailed forestry data. This not only includes information on the size and growth or decline of their forests, but also key aspects of sustainable forest management, such as the role of forests in the conservation of biodiversity, reducing impacts of climate change and provision of other ecosystem services, according to fao.org.

In addition, forest information on socio-economic aspects including forests' contribution to livelihoods and poverty reduction, have become critical for national planning.

Paving the way towards SDGs

The Voluntary Guidelines on National Forest Monitoring aim to support countries in collecting, compiling and analyzing data on forest resources to enable them to adopt evidence-based policies and practices, which will help them to achieve sustainable management of forest resources in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Eva Muller, director of FAO's Forestry Policies and Resources Division, said, "The demand for reliable, up-to-date and more



JOAN MANUEL BALIELLAS/FAO

FAO introduces new guidelines on monitoring forest resources

diverse forestry data and stronger analytical capacities at a national level has grown considerably in recent years.

"Understanding forest resources and how they change is key to address climate change and make progress towards the Sustainable

Development Goals."

She added, "These guidelines, which draw on experiences and lessons learned from FAO member countries and FAO national forest monitoring projects provide good practices, and a framework and tools for planning and

implementing multi-purpose national forest monitoring."

Information gap

Forests are complex systems and their monitoring draws upon a variety of data and information

To fulfil their pledges under the Paris Climate Agreement and Agenda 2030, countries are expected to collect more detailed forestry data

sources. It is common for forest inventories to collect data on more than 100 variables.

In 2010, only 45 countries worldwide were able to assess changes in forest area and characteristics through consecutive systematic national forest inventories, suggesting a serious gap in information. Moreover, it is likely that the data collected is incomplete.

The guidelines aim to fill this gap offering principles and methodology on how to collect more and better data on trends and outlook in the forestry sector and on related issues such as the demand for food, energy and wood fiber as well as employment and rural development issues. This information will also help policymakers boost the contribution of forests to sustainable energy and food security.

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جهت اجاره به یک سفارتخانه
و کمپانی‌های خارجی نیازمندیم

Spinach benefits

Spinach and kale are favorites of those looking to stay physically fit, but they also could keep consumers cognitively fit, according to a new study.

Cigarette, alcohol consumption raises risk of laryngeal cancer

Exclusive



Otolaryngologist Navid Ahmadi Rouzbahani (R) talking to Iran Daily's Sadeq Dehqan.

IRAN DAILY

By Sadeq Dehqan

Cigarette consumption coupled with the use of alcohol increases the risk of laryngeal cancer by 80 times, warned an Iranian otolaryngologist.

Navid Ahmadi Rouzbahani, secretary of the Third Seminar for Head and Neck Tumors, which is scheduled to be held in Tehran next month, told Iran Daily, "Smoking cigarettes raises the risk of laryngeal cancer by 40 times. Such a risk doubles if

smoking is concurrent with drinking alcoholic beverages."

He said laryngeal and thyroid tumors are among the most common polyps which develop around the head and neck.

The specialist, however, said laryngeal cancers are not as prevalent as other types of cancers.

The symptoms of laryngeal cancer include persistent hoarseness or voice change, a nagging sore throat or cough, pain or difficulty in swallowing, unexplained earache, a lump

in the neck or throat which makes breathing difficult.

Ahmadi Rouzbahani said all factors that lead to the development of tumors above the neck are tied to smoking and appear more in people over the age of 40.

He noted that the smoke exhaled from cigarette paper and their cellulose contributes to contracting cancer.

The otolaryngologist said uncontrolled carbohydrates in the human body are also responsible for developing cancer in the head or neck.

Ahmadi Rouzbahani said tumors which are diagnosed in the early stages in the head or neck can be treated by radiotherapy. He added that specialists might have to remove organs such as tongue and larynx in the advanced stages of such cancers.

He said specialists will discuss the latest advancements in treating head and neck cancers in the Third Seminar for Head and Neck Tumors which will be held in Tehran on August 10-11, 2017.

Mental health staff recruitment plan for England

Thousands more mental health workers are to be recruited by the National Health Service (NHS) in England.

The plans involve increasing the number of trained nurses, therapists and other mental health professionals, according to bbc.com.

Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt said, "It was time to end the historic imbalance between mental and physical health services."

"The plans offer little hope to those already in the sector, promising only jam tomorrow, when what is needed is action today."

The government said an extra £1 billion already promised for mental health services in England will fund the scheme.

Ministers in England have previously acknowledged that the treatment offered to patients with mental health problems suffers in comparison with those with physical ailments.

In 2016, the government committed £1.3 billion to transform mental health services in England, with a pledge to treat an extra one million patients by 2020-21.

Crisis care

These plans set out how some of that money will be spent — mostly on recruiting staff, with the main focus being on child and adolescent mental health services, therapists delivering talking therapies for adults and nurses working in crisis care.

The plans also include improving staff training, encouraging those who have left the profession to return and addressing a high dropout rate among trainees.

However, data published showed that even before this latest recruitment drive, many thousands of nursing posts remain unfilled.

The current plans include:

- 2,000 more nurses, consultants and therapist posts in child and adolescent mental health services.
- 2,900 additional therapists and health professionals supporting adult talking therapies.
- 4,800 additional posts for nurses and therapists working in crisis care settings.
- More mental health support for women around the time they give birth and early intervention teams working with people at risk of psychosis.

Hunt said, "We want people with mental health conditions to receive better treatment, and part of that means having the right NHS staff."

"We know we need to do much more to attract, retain and support the mental health workforce of the future — today is the first step to address this historic imbalance in workforce planning."

"The measures were ambitious and amounted to one of the biggest expansions of mental health services in Europe."

However, Labour's shadow minister for mental health, Barbara Keeley, said the government was promising only jam tomorrow, when what is needed is action today.

"The workforce plan provides no real answers on how these new posts will be funded or how recruitment issues will be overcome."

"And it offers little hope to those working in the sector faced with mounting workloads, low pay and poor morale."

Claire Murdoch, national mental health director at NHS England, said that the plan was not just about numbers.

"It's about having a motivated and skilled workforce in place to deliver the work we need to do."

Lack of detail

Professor Wendy Burn, president of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, said that 570 extra consultants had been promised in the plans.

"You would expect to see a consultant if you had cancer and the same applies for mental health."

"The biggest challenge to creating robust mental health services is the workforce. I am very supportive of this strategy which starts to tackle that problem."

But Janet Davies, chief executive and general secretary of the Royal College of Nursing, said that the government's plans did not add up.

"There is already a dangerous lack of workforce planning and accountability and this report is unable to provide detail on how the ambitions will be met."

"It is clear the government will need to work hard just to get back to the number of specialist staff working in mental health services in 2010."

"Under this government, there are 5,000 fewer mental health nurses and that goes some way to explaining why patients are being failed."

Persistent heartburn could be a warning sign of three cancers

Heartburn can cause an unpleasant taste in the mouth, a sore throat and a chronic cough — but also pain in the chest.

It can also be a warning sign of three different types of cancer, express.co.uk reported.

The condition is caused by stomach acid, which contains strong digestive acids to break down food, "leaking out" of the stomach and traveling up toward the esophagus.

However heartburn can be a sign of three types of cancer.

The condition could be linked to stomach cancer, esophageal cancer, or even pancreatic cancer.

Public Health England advised people should go to their doctor if they have persistent heartburn or difficulty swallowing food for three weeks or more.

Pancreatic cancer

Pancreatic cancer is one of

the most deadly cancers in the UK — with the lowest percentage of people surviving for five years or more.

In the early stages of cancer, a tumor in the pancreas doesn't usually cause any symptoms, which can make it difficult to diagnose.

The pancreas is a large gland that is part of the digestive system.

Some people in the early stages of the disease can experience abdominal pain, changes to bowel habits, nausea and vomiting, jaundice, diabetes and back pain.

Losing a lot of weight for no particular reason can be a symptom of pancreatic cancer.

This is because the pancreas plays an important role in digesting food. Pancreatic cancer can affect this, meaning that food is not properly digested, which can cause weight loss.



express.co.uk

However, symptoms of the disease could also be mistaken for heartburn.

Dianne Dobson, pancreatic cancer specialist nurse at Pancreatic Cancer UK previously, said, "Indigestion or heartburn — also known as dyspepsia — can sometimes be a symptom of pancreatic cancer."

Stomach cancer

Stomach cancer affects

thousands of people every year — experts believe up to 7,000 people receive a diagnosis of the disease every year in the UK.

The disease is more common among men and those who are over the age of 55.

The early symptoms of stomach cancer are similar to the symptoms of some common stomach conditions.

These can include heartburn or indigestion which is persistent.

Esophageal cancer

Esophageal cancer starts in esophagus, also known as the gullet.

While it doesn't cause symptoms at first, the disease can cause, among others, difficulty swallowing and heartburn.

Esophageal cancer is more common among men than women and usually affects people in their 60s and 70s.

The disease can also be caused by persistent acid reflux.

A survey by Public Health England in 2015 revealed 59 percent of respondents did not know that heartburn could be a sign of cancer with just 15 percent saying they were certain that it is a symptom.

Early diagnosis of esophageal or stomach cancer — also known as esophago-gastric cancers — is crucial and means treatment is more likely to be successful.

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RAW MATERIAL AND ENERGY PURCHASING	12/08/2017	FOR SUPPLY OF 3,400 TONS OF RICE HUSK ASH	48442063	Public	2

For further information and receiving the bidding documents, the suppliers may refer www.msc.ir purchase and suppliers link and select the desired tender through the SRM system according to the guideline.

Public Relations Dept. Mobarakeh Steel Company

Four conditions are because of inflammation

Immune systems are designed to protect us, but sometimes the inflammation they trigger to fight off foreign substances goes wrong — and we're left with asthma, rheumatoid arthritis and a number of other conditions.

Inflammation is the body's attempt to protect itself by removing harmful substances as part of the body's immune response, express.co.uk wrote.

It releases chemicals from the body's white blood cells into the blood or affected tissues.

The process is essential for our infections, wounds and damaged tissue to heal.

However, if the inflammation

becomes chronic — lasting for several months or years — it can cause problems.

Indeed, it can trigger a number of well-known diseases and conditions.

Asthma: It's a condition where breathing becomes difficult, causing shortness of breath and chest tightness. Inflammation of the air passages results in a temporary narrowing of the airways that carry oxygen to the lungs.

Rheumatoid arthritis: The condition's symptoms are caused by inflammation, triggering redness, swelling,

warmth and pain.

It's initially triggered by a substance that gets into the joints that the body is trying to kill off.

Sinusitis: It's an inflammation and swelling of the tissue lining of the sinuses.

Normally they are filled with air, but if they become blocked with fluid, germs can trigger an infection.

Tuberculosis: It's an infectious bacterial disease that tends to affect the lungs. Research has found inflammation to be behind its growth.

Scientists find sunscreen potential in Antarctic plants

Scientists in Chile have discovered molecules in two species of Antarctic flowers that protect the plants from solar radiation and could potentially be used in products such as sunscreen for humans and protection for vulnerable crops.



Doctor Gustavo Zuniga holds up an Antarctic plant that has molecules that filter the solar radiation and could be used to prevent human DNA damage in Santiago, Chile, July 25, 2017. reuters.com

Researchers at the University of Santiago investigating the properties of Antarctic plants grown under controlled conditions found that *Colobanthus quitensis* (pearwort) and *Deschampsia antarctica* (hair grass) could tolerate high levels of ultraviolet radiation, reuters.com wrote.

According to the British Antarctic Survey, these are the only two flowering plants found in the icy polar region, growing around its more temperate edges. But climate change and melting ice are increasing their range, the Chilean researchers said.

Project leader Gustavo Zuniga said, "The scientists have identified a group of molecules in the flowers, particularly *Colobanthus* that acts as a solar filter and prevents radiation damage."

"The university is seeking commercial partners to develop spin-off products from the research."

"It could be used in the not too distant future. For example, for a crop that doesn't tolerate increasing levels of radiation, that genetic information could be used to make the crop respond better."

"Natural sunscreens or creams could also be developed incorporating the molecules to protect human skin from damage from ultraviolet radiation."

Coral gardening a boon to Caribbean reefs

Coral gardening works, according to new research out of the University of Miami.

In a survey of coral restoration efforts, scientists found laboratory-raised coral fragments benefit native coral species when they're used to repopulate struggling reefs, UPI reported.

As well, the corals from which the fragments are removed don't suffer as the corals.

Lead study author Stephanie Schopmeyer, a biologist and coral expert at Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, said, "Our study showed that current restoration methods are very effective."

"Healthy coral reefs are essential to our everyday life and successful coral restoration has been proven as a recovery tool for lost coastal resources."



The latest research suggested coral restoration efforts are having positive effects on Caribbean coral. UPI

In order to develop better benchmarks for coral restoration efforts, Schopmeyer and her colleagues analyzed the health of more than 1,000 Caribbean staghorn coral, *Acropora cervicornis*, and colonies.

The survey samples comprised 120 coral genotypes spread across six distinct geographical regions.

Analysis of coral restoration sites in Florida and Puerto Rico showed lab-raised coral behave like wild coral two years after being planted.

The research also confirmed donor corals don't suffer as a result of restoration efforts.

Researchers shared the findings of their survey in the journal *Coral Reefs*.

Coauthor Diego Lirman, a professor of marine biology and ecology at Rosenstiel, said, "Coral reefs are declining at an alarming rate and coral restoration programs are now considered an essential component to coral conservation and management plan."

"Our findings provide the necessary scientific benchmarks to evaluate restoration progress moving forward."

Corals serve as vital habitat for a range of species and serve as the anchor for rich and complex marine food chains.

They are essential to marine ecosystems and a boon to humans, as they shelter many of the fish that feed commercial fish species.

Corals reefs also provide valuable protection from hurricanes to coastal regions.

Amirkabir University of Technology ranks third in RoboCup2017

Amirkabir University of Technology humanoid team stood third in RoboCup2017 in Nagoya, Japan.

The Iranian team defeated Germany to clinch the third spot in the Humanoid Teen-Size League, IRNA wrote.

The 21st round of RoboCup kicked off on July 27 in Japan with the participation of over 200 teams from 45 countries.

Iranian team also ranked third in 2017 RoboCup technical competitions.

Some 1,200 robots from 40 countries took part in the event.

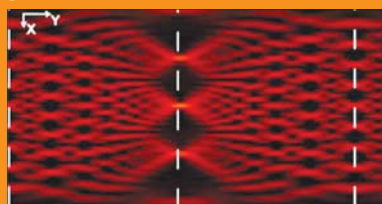
The most important robotic teams in the world, namely Germany, the US, Japan, Portugal, the Netherlands, Mexico, China, South Korea, England, Brazil, Turkey and Iran participated in the event.

The international RoboCup community fosters the development of intelligent robots by defining and executing competitions that are used by scientists and students from all over the world to test and demonstrate their robots in attractive and realistic scenarios.



japankyo.com

Optical lens can transfer digital information without loss



This optical field pattern resulting from the Talbot effect and the self-focusing property can be used to encode thirty-six bits of digital data. phys.org

must be larger than the basic units that make up the lens.

To address this challenge, the researchers started with a Maxwell's fish-eye lens, which dates back to the 1850s, as the basis for the conformal lens.

They explained that trying to realize a lens with the desired properties using conventional transformation optics is very challenging, in part due to its demands on a three-dimensional medium.

On the other hand, conformal transformation optics places demands on a two-dimensional medium, which eases the fabrication requirements.

Liu said, "Although transformation optics can be used to design many novel optical devices, it is usually very difficult to use in practical systems, especially in

the visible regime.

"In our work, we have established a feasible experiment platform to obtain conformal transformation optical devices."

After constructing the conformal lens, the researchers demonstrated that the lens exhibits both self-focusing, which is a property of geometric optics, and the Talbot effect, which is a property of wave optics. In this way, the device connects the two distinct realms of geometry optics and wave optics.

Most interesting for potential applications is that the conformal Talbot effect displayed here is very different from the ordinary Talbot effect in other media due to the additional self-focusing property.

One of the biggest differences is that,

unlike the ordinary Talbot effect which experiences boundary diffraction, the conformal Talbot effect does not.

As a result of its lack of diffraction, the conformal Talbot effect can be used to transfer encoded optical patterns over long distances with a very small amount of distortion.

The researchers expect that this ability could lead to a highly efficient method of transferring digital information in future high-speed optical communication systems with no information loss.

Liu added, "We can send a stream of optical digits '0' and '1' by parallel communication, which is much faster than the serial communication used in regular optical waveguides or optical fibers."

"The conformal Talbot effect can help reduce transmission errors because of its non-diffractive properties and good self-focusing of the field patterns."

In the future, the researchers plan to explore various potential applications of conformal transformation optics, such as designing novel integrated photonic chips that can transport and process information in micro-optical circuits.

These 'conformal photonic chips' may one day be used in future quantum computers.

Chen said, "We hope conformal transformation optics can be used in quantum simulators and quantum computers in the future."

"We also plan to mimic the quantum effects in the curved space of general relativity using conformal transformation optics, such as the horizon of a black hole and Hawking radiation."

Potential ingredient for alien life found on Titan



Saturn's moon Titan is frigid and lacks water, but it appears to hold one building block for a proposed alternative form of life. sciencenews.org

A molecule that could help build otherworldly life is present on Saturn's moon Titan, researchers have discovered.

Vinyl cyanide, a compound predicted to form membrane-like structures, is created in Titan's upper atmosphere, sciencenews.org reported.

There's enough vinyl cyanide (C₂H₃CN) in the moon's liquid methane seas to make about 10 million cell-like balls per cubic centimeter of ocean, researchers calculate.

On Earth, about a million bacteria are found in a cubic centimeter of ocean water near shore.

Jonathan Lunine, a planetary scientist at Cornell University who was not involved in the new study, said, "It's very positive news for putative-Titan-life studies."

Titan has no water, usually considered a prerequisite for life. Instead of water, freezing-cold Titan has liquid methane.

There's even a methane cycle that mimics Earth's water cycle. But Titan is so cold — usually about -178°C — that the smallest unit of life on Earth, the cell, would shatter in the moon's subzero seas.

In 2015, Lunine and Cornell colleagues James Stevenson and Paulette Clancy proposed a way life might exist in methane.

Computer simulations predicted that vinyl cyanide (also called acrylonitrile or propenenitrile) could make flexible bubbles called azotosomes that would be stable in liquid methane.

Those bubbles might act much as cell membranes do on Earth, sheltering genetic material and concentrating biochemical reactions needed for life.

When the Cornell researchers suggested the presence of azotosomes on Titan, carbon, hydrogen and nitrogen had already been detected in abundance in the

moon's atmosphere.

But no one knew whether those atoms joined to make vinyl cyanide there. The Saturn probe Cassini had detected a molecule of the right mass to be vinyl cyanide, but couldn't definitively identify the molecule's chemical makeup.

But evidence for the chemical compound was buried in archived data from a large radio telescope, Maureen Palmer of Catholic University of America in Washington and colleagues discovered. Palmer, an astrochemistry and

astrobiochemistry researcher, combed data collected by the Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array, or ALMA, in Chile between February 22 and May 27, 2014.

Palmer added, "Astronomers point ALMA at Titan to calibrate the telescope because the moon has known brightness levels."

The team used that calibration data to detect the signature of vinyl cyanide at specific wavelengths of light and calculate its abundance.

Ralph Lorenz, a planetary scientist at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Lab in Laurel, Maryland, added, "This is a pretty secure detection."

Lunine said, "Even with confirmation of vinyl cyanide, researchers can't say that azotosomes form on Titan. That's probably not something telescopes can determine."

A probe would need to sample Titan's seas to detect the structures. Lorenz said, "And even detecting azotosomes would not mean there's life on Titan. The moon's extreme cold may hamper metabolism."

"What's more, no one knows whether liquid methane can take the place of water for supporting life. I say Titan does not have life."

Lost children, legacy of battle for Iraq's Mosul

Thousands of children have been separated from their parents in the nine-month battle for Mosul and the preceding years of Daesh terrorist group's rule in northern Iraq — some found wandering alone and afraid among the rubble, others joining the refugee exodus from the pulverized city.

In some cases their parents have been killed. Families have been split up as they fled street fighting, air strikes or Daesh terrorist group's repression. Many are traumatized from the horrors they have endured, Reuters reported.

Protecting the youngsters and reuniting them with their families is an urgent task for humanitarian organizations.

Mariyamipalai Mariyasevnam, a child protection specialist with UNICEF (the United Nations Children's Fund), said, "These children are extremely vulnerable. Most have gone through a very painful

history."

Nine-year-old Meriam had left her family one day last October to visit her grandmother in west Mosul, then under the rule of Daesh terrorist group. The government offensive to recapture the city began, so she stayed there.

Her father Hassan told Reuters he had been a policeman but quit when the Daesh terrorist group seized Mosul in 2014, fearing he would be targeted. He, his second wife, along with Meriam and her three half-siblings moved from dwelling to dwelling.

"We were living in many different places, moving around. Meriam stayed with her grandmother but when the bridges were shut down, I could not cross the river to see her," he said, speaking in the abandoned, half-built house in east Mosul where the family is now squatting.

They eventually fled to the Hassan

Sham displaced persons camp but Meriam was trapped in the west.

After government forces retook the neighborhood in June, she and her grandmother made it to the Khazer camp. Her father asked UNICEF for help and they managed to track down his daughter. They were reunited in Hassan Sham later that month.

"I was hearing bombing and killing every day. I did not believe they would find her," he said.

Life is still hard for the family. They left the camp to return to the city with their few possessions, but the house owner wants to evict them. Hassan makes ends meet by finding day jobs. But at least they are together, he said, cuddling his daughter as he spoke.

Meriam, a bright-eyed girl with a shy smile, said she would like to go to school. "I have never been to school. I would

like to have books, a backpack, and to learn letters. That is my dream," she said.

UNICEF said children in shock had been found in debris or hidden in tunnels in Mosul.

Some had lost their families while fleeing to safety but sometimes parents had been forced to abandon children or give them away. Many children were forced to fight or carry out violent acts, it said in a statement. They were also vulnerable to sexual exploitation.

UNICEF's Mariyasevnam, speaking to Reuters in Erbil, said the number of children coming out of Mosul had increased in the past few months as the battle reached its climax.

He explained the distinction between separated children, who are split from their legal guardians but are with friends or relatives, and unaccompanied children, who are alone and without care or guardians.

Whether you're writing an email or a novel, it's vital these days to understand the craft of telling a story and telling it well. For kids, writing well helps not only at school but with many off-the-page skills, from confidence to creative problem-solving.

What children may not understand is that writing can also be fun. Educators say there are many things parents can do at home to get kids excited about writing. santafenewmexican.com wrote.

Use what they love

Show your children there's more to writing than book reports and research papers. Those are important, yes, but the first step to helping kids enjoy writing is giving them freedom to write about what they love.

Marjolaine Whittlesey, a teaching artist associate at The Telling Room, a Maine-based nonprofit writing center, said, "Every child, even the most reluctant writer, has something they're excited and passionate about, and there's a way in."

Youth-oriented creative writing centers around the US use similar techniques. Tim Whitaker, founder and executive director of Mighty Writers, in Philadelphia, said his group listens to what kids are interested in — from superheroes to girl power to basketball — "and we

build our writing topics around that."

Begin Visually

Help kids learn to create new worlds out of pictures — ones they draw themselves or ones they find. Amy Rosenbluth, co-founder and executive director of Lake Erie Ink, an Ohio-based youth writing center, said her organization's comic-making

Share peers' writings

Kids may feel more motivated to write when they're exposed to work by their peers, said Caroline Patterson, executive director of the Missoula Writing Collaborative in Montana.

"Several times we've had students who hear work by kids their own age and go, 'Well, I could do that,'" she said.

when the child is trying to be funny, being moved when there is something emotional, these are very sensitive moments. These are high stakes moments when a child is sharing their writing. Don't take them lightly, don't laugh in a condescending way even if it feels a little bit off — hold all that in."

That helps kids feel heard and excited about their work, which will lead to more writing.

Demonstrate that the pen has power

Brian Townsend, a Chicago-based fifth-grade writing teacher in the Kipp Charter Schools network, tries to show his students how they can use writing to make a difference. He shares motivational speeches and inspirational songs to demonstrate how good writing can communicate powerful messages.

He even had his students write letters to their senators about a bill that would affect the food served in their cafeteria.

He wanted to remind them of the real purpose behind writing: to effect change.

Jaya Mukherjee, a program manager at a youth literacy center in Chicago, Open Books, said parents can use writing prompts that might be more effective than starting with a direct question.

Ask young writers, for example, to list 10 things they would save from their home if it were on fire, and then have them pick one item from their list and write about why they chose it. That approach might remove the daunting feeling of staring at a blank page.

Several experts said sitting down to write beside your child can be a powerful technique. As Whittlesey said, "By doing it alongside them, I think we're demonstrating that we're excited about writing too and that it's accessible to everyone."

Ways parents can get kids excited about writing



santafenewmexican.com

campers are among its most popular.

"When you're writing a comic, you're learning all the elements of writing a short story, or really writing anything," she explained.

"We teach them storyboarding. They start out with character development, then setting, conflict, all the same elements, but you get to draw your character first before you add the words."

Many youth writing organizations, like New York City-based Writopia, publish student work online that parents can share with their kids.

Avoid criticism

Rebecca Wallace-Segall, executive director of Writopia, said, "Be an ally to your writer — celebrate and love whatever they're writing."

"Parents should be 'laughing

Rosenbluth, of Lake Erie Ink, urges parents not to focus on spelling and grammar when their children are working on creative writing.

"Spelling and writing don't have a lot in common," she said. "Writing is thinking. It's creating."

This doesn't mean you can't go back and work on the mechanics later, she stressed, but they shouldn't be the starting point.

Myanmar swine flu

Three more people died of seasonal influenza A/H1N1-2009, also known as swine flu, in Myanmar's Yangon, bringing the death toll since the influenza broke out days ago to 10.

Close roads so children can play in the street like their parents did

Roads should be closed regularly to allow children to play in the street as they did a generation ago, health experts have said, after a study showed pilot schemes increased youngsters' activity fivefold.

More than 500 communities in Britain have already signed up to the 'Playing Out' initiative, which works with local councils to temporarily pedestrianize roads for an hour or two each week to allow children to play safely near their homes, according to telegraph.co.uk.

A new analysis of the simple scheme by the University of Bristol found that residents reported a greater sense of a community, overall happiness, and said their areas were more friendly and safer. One woman claimed the project had even helped her combat post-natal depression.

Children's activity levels also soared by between three and fivefold on the road closure days, and parents said skills such as cycling and road safety awareness had also improved.

As more children started to get to know each other, the study authors found that a 'calling for you' culture developed where youngsters began drop in on each other to see if their new friends wanted to play outdoors.

Youngsters interviewed said that were it not for the scheme they would usually be sitting inside, watching TV, playing video games, or eating pizza.

"This resident-led intervention shows the potential for meaningful increases in physical activity as well as social benefits to both children and the communities in which they live."

"It is relatively low cost, scalable and potentially sustainable — this is why it makes sense for public health."

Although NHS guidelines suggest that, from the age of five, children need 60 minutes of physical activity a day while only 21 percent of boys and 16 percent of girls achieve that.

Each extra hour of activity daily is associated with 0.5 lower Body Mass Index, but declining exercise levels means that one in three youngsters in Britain is now overweight or obese.

The 'Playing Out' movement was founded in 2011 by Alice Ferguson, a mother who wanted her own children to be able to play in the street, as she had done as a child.

The Bristol study found children using the scheme were outdoors for at least 70 percent of the time that the roads were closed.

Ferguson said: "We never expected it to take off like this and to have so many amazing outcomes for whole street communities."

"This growing movement is really starting to challenge the idea that 'playing out' is a thing of the past."

"Children today need the chance to be outside, active, making friends and being part of their communities just as much as we did a generation ago."



tendencias21.net

UK's RCGP warn profession could reach 'breaking point'

A UK government pledge to increase GP numbers by 5,000 within three years is falling short amid fears the profession 'could reach breaking point', the Royal College of GPs (RCGP) warned.

The RCGP's annual report on plans to improve GP services in England raises concern that many doctors are yet to observe significant changes in GP numbers under the recruitment drive, with GP numbers having fallen since September 2016, theguardian.com wrote.

A survey of GPs for the report found that 39 percent think they are unlikely to be working in the profession in England in five years' time.

The professional body for family doctors in the UK said the findings sparked fears the profession 'could reach breaking point' unless progress on the shake-up was accelerated.

Professor Helen Stokes-Lampard, chair of the RCGP, said: "It takes at least three years in specialty training for new doctors to enter the workforce as independent consultant GPs, so while it's fantastic that more foundation doctors are choosing general practice this year, if more people are leaving the profession than entering it, we're fighting a losing battle."

"Above all else we need to see efforts stepped up to keep hard-working, experienced GPs in the profession, and the best way to do this is to tackle workload pressures and improve the conditions under which all GPs and our teams are working."

"The college stands by the GP Forward View — we continue to think that it is the lifeline general practice needs to get our profession where it needs to be. But things are moving too slowly."

"We know we're only one year into a five-year plan, but GPs are desperate — they really, truly want to deliver the best possible care for patients, but the pressures they are under are unbearable."

The GP Forward View, the government's five-year plan to improve GP services in England, was announced by Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt in 2014, and formed a key part of the Conservative party's manifesto for the 2015 election.

Dr. Richard Vautrey, the British Medical Association's GP committee chair, said: "Despite the GP workforce shrinking again last year, the government has continued to promise 5,000 extra GPs to patients. It is time to admit that this pledge is now unachievable."

"In order to create a stable GP workforce, the government must expand the number of GPs entering the profession, and urgently address the underlying issues, particularly the unsafe workload pressure, behind the recruitment and retention crisis in general practice."



theguardian.com

Call to drop legal fees in domestic violence cases



irishexaminer.com

FLAC, the network of Free Legal Advice Centers in Ireland, called on the Legal Aid Board to drop legal fees for victims of domestic violence ahead of the launch today of its 2016 annual report which shows that 25,710 people received legal advice from volunteer lawyers at its nationwide network of advice clinics or through its helpline.

FLAC Chief Executive Ellis Barry said civil legal aid fees should be automatically waived for victims of domestic violence when seeking safety, protection, or barring orders,

according to irishexaminer.com.

Last March, a UN committee recommended that Ireland end the requirement for victims of domestic violence to make financial contributions for civil legal aid when seeking court protection.

"The UN has now followed this on July 14 with a general comment urging states to ensure access to 'financial aid and free or low-cost high-quality legal aid'," said Barry.

"The Law Society of Ireland has also echoed our call to drop these charges."

"We are hopeful the minister and the

Legal Aid Board will heed these calls and remove this financial barrier for victims seeking crucial legal protections."

She said the numbers seeking advice last year demonstrated an acute need for legal advice and aid.

She also welcomed the announcement of the Legal Aid Board to defer its decision to restrict referrals to the district court family law private practitioners to priority matters — domestic violence and enforcement of maintenance, but not access, custody or guardianship.

Hand of 'plane crash victim from 51 years ago' found

Frozen body parts thought to belong to passengers killed in a plane crash more than 50 years ago have been found in the French Alps.

Daniel Roche, who combs the Bosson Glacier on Mont Blanc looking for human remains, found a perfectly preserved hand among the body parts on Thursday, metro.co.uk reported.

Despite searching for years, he said he had 'never found any significant human remains before' — but this time he had found the hand and the upper part of a leg.

The remains are thought to belong to passengers of one of two Air India planes to have crashed in the area.

The first flight crashed in the mountain in 1950, killing 48 people.

The second aircraft, also an Air India Boeing 707, crashed



A hand was found almost perfectly preserved in the ice.

near Mont Blanc summit in January 1966 while flying from Mumbai to New York. All 117 people on board were killed.

Roche said the remains he had found were likely to be from

a female passenger on the 1966 flight, as he had also discovered one of the plane's four jet engines.

He contacted the local emergency services in the Chamonix valley, who flew the remains

down the mountain in a helicopter, so that they could be examined by experts.

Stephane Bozon, from the local gendarmerie, said, "These remains are probably not from the same person. They are probably from passengers, but between the two aircraft it's difficult to say."

It comes after the frozen remains of a couple — Marcelin Dumoulin and his wife Francine — were found perfectly preserved in the Diablerets massif in the Swiss Alps two weeks ago.



Roche also found debris from the aircraft that had crashed in 1966.

Flip-flops can cause serious health problems

The hard skin has been buffed off, the toenails trimmed — and maybe even treated to a lick of nail polish.

After being in hibernation over the winter months, the UK has been tentatively getting its feet out over the summer, often in flip-flops, mirror, co.uk reported.

Flip-flops are easy and comfortable to wear but there's concern about us putting our health at risk by wearing them.

The main issue seems to be the lack of support flip-flops provide.

Specifically, there's no support for the arches and heels. We also have a habit of tensing our toes when we wear them to

keep them on.

Camilla Long works at the Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center in North Carolina, shared some of the issues patients come to her with as a result of wearing flip-flops to Mail Online.

These are shin splints, Achilles tendon issues and pain in the back.

Wearing flip-flops can also cause us to alter how we walk, which in turn leads to more back pain.

Then there's plantar fasciitis, which is an extremely unpleasant condition where the ligament that supports your arch gets strained, tears, swells up and causes a lot of pain.



There's also no specific cure for it.

Achilles tendon issues are also painful and difficult to treat. Flip-flops can cause problems for the Achilles tendon because they don't bend where the balls of our feet are, causing the foot to strain.

It's important to not run or walk long distances in flip-flops as our feet need a lot of support to do either — and they should never be worn to drive.

The lion in a farmyard



A lion entered a farmyard. The farmer, wishing to catch him, shut the gate. When the lion found that he could not escape, he flew upon the sheep and killed them, and then attacked the oxen.

The farmer, beginning to be alarmed for his own safety, opened the gate and released the lion. On his departure the farmer grievously lamented the destruction of his sheep and oxen, but his wife, who

had been a spectator to all that took place, said, "On my word, you are rightly served, for how could you for a moment think of shutting up a lion along with you in your farmyard when you know that you shake in your shoes if you only hear his roar at a distance?"

Sometimes it is harmful to be over courageous.

Philippine cockatoo born in UK

This tiny chick may be spectacularly hideous, but it's also rather special.

The critically endangered Philippine cockatoo hatched last week, weighing a tiny 0.207 lbs., at Bristol Zoo.

It is the first time one of the unfortunate-looking creatures has been born in the UK, daily-mail.co.uk wrote.

At the moment the chick, which has yet to be named, has a face only its mother could love.

But one day it will grow into a beautiful white bird, with bright orange and yellow tail feathers on its underside.

The bird is on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's red list.

Their population has drastically fallen due to widespread loss of its lowland habitats and trapping for the cage bird trade.

The chick's family are being kept under close surveillance



This tiny chick has a face only a mother could love.

dens' team leader of birds, Trevor Franks, said during his 10 years at the facility he had only

because the parents have never reared any young before.

The parents were brought to Bristol Zoo in 2004 and have since divided their time between there and the Wild Place Project at nearby Cribbs Causeway.

Bristol Zoo Garaging

As their name suggests, the birds originate from the Philippines, where they were common until 1950.

They have since gone into a rapid decline and it is now estimated that the population stands at between just 560 and 1,150.

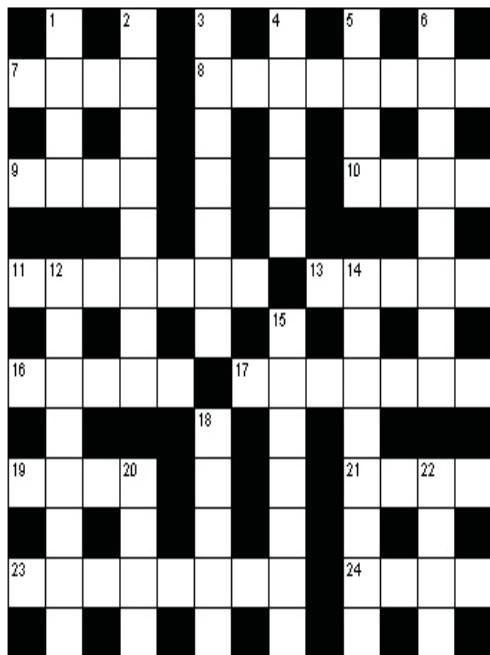


PICTURE OF THE DAY



Traditionally dressed Samurai compete in the Kacchu Keiba horse race during the Soma Nomaol Festival in Fukushima, Japan.

Themed Crossword



ACROSS

- Caprine animal (4)
- Five-toed pachyderm (8)
- Slender gull with forked tail (4)
- Small brown bird (4)
- African flightless bird (7)
- Wading bird (5)
- Supernatural woodland creature (5)
- Small songbirds (7)
- Large edible fish (4)
- Rodents (4)
- Egg-laying mammal (8)
- Type of whale (4)

DOWN

- Emblem of peace (4)
- Venomous aquatic creature (8)
- Showy fowl (7)
- African equine (5)
- Breed of dog with bushy tail (4)
- Graceful ruminant (8)
- Aquatic birds (8)
- Edible snail (8)
- Female wild feline (7)
- Large aquatic rodent (5)
- Colony insects (4)
- Small parasite (4)

Yesterday's solution



Sudoku

Sudoku was inspired by the table devised by Iranian mathematician Khwarazmi. 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.

			4					
	2		8	5		4		
6			1	3			5	
7	9			5		2	8	
	3						6	
8	4		2			5	1	
4			2		6			3
	6		4		8		9	
			7					

9	1	4	6	7	5	2	8	3
2	6	5	8	3	4	7	9	1
3	7	8	9	1	2	6	5	4
1	5	6	7	2	3	9	4	8
4	9	7	1	8	6	5	3	2
8	2	3	4	5	9	1	6	7
5	8	7	3	6	1	4	7	9
7	4	1	5	9	8	3	2	6
6	3	9	2	4	7	8	1	5

MVP Hassanzadeh: Award belongs to my teammates



Ali-Asghar Hassanzadeh was named MVP at the 2016 AFC Futsal Championship in Uzbekistan after helping Iran to win an 11th title.

Despite falling short at the final hurdle against Bluewave Chonburi on Sunday, there was cheer for Sanaye' Giti Pasand's Ali-Asghar Hassanzadeh after he was named the Most Valuable Player (MVP) of the 2017 AFC Futsal Club Championship in Vietnam.

The two-time and reigning AFC Futsal Player of the Year ignited the competition with a host of dazzling displays, leading his side into the final.

After receiving his MVP, Hassanzadeh was quick to acknowledge the contribution of his teammates, the-afc.com reported.

"Yes, it is nice to win this award but today I am very sad because we lost. It is heartbreaking for us, especially after giving everything out there," said a dejected Hassanzadeh.

"But this is not about me; this award belongs to every single member of my team. They are the

ones who helped to raise my game. Don't get me wrong, I am pleased to win this award, but ultimately this belongs to them.

"I should also thank my family for making many sacrifices and always supporting my career," he added.

Hassanzadeh's impact on the competition was palpable, opening his account in Giti Pasand's first game, effectively clinching the Iranian champion place in the competition's last eight.

The 29-year-old, who was also named MVP at the 2016 AFC Futsal Championship in Uzbekistan after helping Iran win an 11th title, made all the difference again in Giti Pasand's second group victory against Shriker Osaka, snatching a crucial winner in the dying seconds of the match.

Emerging quickly as the master of the late show, Hassanzadeh demonstrated his knack for late goals in the semifinals against Al Rayyan, securing his side's place in the final with another 40th minute strike.

But perhaps his most significant contribution was the telepathic partnership forged with Ahmad Esmacilpour.

The deadly duo were arguably the heart, soul and mind of Giti Pasand's engine, most evidently during the final when the pair orchestrated the Iranians' second-half comeback against Bluewave Chonburi in the final.

Defeat though has not dampened Hassanzadeh's spirits, as the Iranian has set his sights on clinching the ultimate prize.

"I am not finished. You can be sure to expect more from me. I still want to win and compete in the world's best competitions.

"Of course, I want to come back here and win again like we did in 2013. But ultimately, my ambition is to do well for the Islamic Republic of Iran and hopefully win the next FIFA Futsal World Cup."

Dressel equals Phelps' record for golds

The 20-year-old University of Florida student, Caeleb Dressel, won his seventh gold medal at the World Aquatics Championships in Budapest, Hungary on Sunday – tying him with Michael Phelps for most golds at the meet.

Three of those were in individual races, four were in relays, the NPR reported.

A day before, Dressel set a record of his own by winning three gold medals in a single night.

the benefit of the mixed relays," the AP quoted Dressel as saying on Sunday. Mixed relays, with men and women on the same team, are a new event for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

Dressel represents a new era in American swimming. Phelps retired after the 2016 Olympics; Ryan Lochte, 32, was barred from the event for his antics in Rio.

After his big night on Saturday, Dressel was asked about the inevitable comparison to Phelps.



Caeleb Dressel set a record of his own by winning three gold medals in a single night at the World Aquatics Championships in Budapest, Hungary, on July 29, 2017.

In the span of two hours on Saturday, Dressel won the 50-meter freestyle, the 100-meter butterfly, and was part of a victorious mixed 4x100 free relay team. He was named the top male swimmer of the meet.

"Man, that was a lot of fun," he said.

"Phelps' feat still stands supreme since five of his seven golds were in individual events, and he didn't have

sons to Phelps.

"I don't know if I welcome them," he said, according to The Washington Post. "But I know they're going to come. I don't think it puts any pressure on me. I just want to keep doing my thing at this meet and for the future."

Phelps offered his congratulations on Saturday. "This kid is on fire!!" Phelps posted on Instagram.

King Bolt eyes final hurrah in London



Usain Bolt has won six Olympic golds and also 11 world titles since he first picked up double gold at the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

best now."

World and Olympic 400m champion Van Niekerk, who

will attempt an audacious 200-400m double in London, added, "Usain has been a massive inspiration.

Sprint superstar Usain Bolt will seek a final golden hurrah when he takes to the track at the IAAF World Championships in London this week.

Bolt has dominated sprinting since taking double individual gold at the Beijing Olympics in 2008, going on to win a further six Olympic golds and also picking up 11 world titles, AFP reported.

World records of 9.58 and 19.19sec in the 100 and 200m when winning in the 2009 Berlin worlds were followed by the towering Jamaican winning consecutive world golds in the 100, 200 and 4x100m relay in 2011, 2013 and 2015, with the exception of a false start in the 100m in Daegu in 2011.

The 30-year-old scored triple gold at both the 2012 and 2016 Olympics in London and Rio, his sole hiccup being stripped of his 2008 Olympic relay gold after teammate Nesta Carter failed a drugs test.

It is a staggering tally for a track athlete who has admitted he wants to go out on a high as athletics seeks to turn a new page.

"My main aim is just to win (in London). I just want to retire on a winning note," Bolt said recently in Monaco, where he won the 100m in 9.95sec, dipping under the 10sec barrier after two sluggish outings in Kingston and Ostrava.

Bolt has opted not to defend his 200m world title, meaning he will not race against South Africa's Wayde van Niekerk, the athlete Bolt has tipped to take over as the next track and field superstar.

"That's one of the most disappointing things in my career now," he said. "He came along at this late stage and I didn't get to compete against him, because I think he's one of the

"But I've still got quite a long way to go before I even get close to the heights that Usain has reached."

One of the standout moments of the 2012 Olympics at the same stadium in east London was 'Super Saturday', when Britain won three gold medals in the space of an hour to set the packed stadium alight.

Something special

Whether any athlete can come close to matching Bolt's dominance and charisma is a different matter.

"You would have to have someone who is dominating, no one is doing that," said Michael Johnson, former Olympic champion in the 200m and 400m.

"You would have to have someone who has something special he has in terms of personality," the American told Reuters.

"In track and field, after I left, it wasn't like somebody just stepped in. It was eight years before Bolt came along.

Johnson is one of those who feel the sport needs to work harder at promoting itself rather than waiting for a "new Bolt" to burst on the scene.

"I don't think the sport should depend on that," he said.

"If the federations don't want to have to promote the sport itself, want to just ride the coattails of a great athlete, yeah it's going to be hard.

"It's a great sport right here in front of all of us, if we would just promote that, but that takes some work. It's not that easy."



Cristiano Ronaldo has been accused of evading €14.7 million in tax since 2010.

Ronaldo appears in court on tax charges

Cristiano Ronaldo arrived at a Spanish court amid allegations he evaded millions in tax.

Prosecutors accuse Ronaldo, reported to be the world's highest paid athlete, of evading

€4.7 million (\$17.3 million; £13.1 million) in tax since 2010, BBC reported.

The Real Madrid star has previously denied the allegation, saying his "conscience is clear".

Ronaldo, 32, is the latest in a string of footballers to be pursued by the Spanish tax authorities.

Argentina's Lionel Messi,

who plays for Barcelona, was handed a 21-month prison sentence after being found guilty of the same charge last year.

Earlier this month, the court ruled he could pay €52,000 in place of jail time.

However, Messi was only accused of evading €1.1 million in tax, €10.6 million less than Ronaldo.

Ronaldo arrived to give evidence at a court in the Madrid suburb of Pozuelo de Alarcón on Monday.

According to prosecutors, Ronaldo allegedly took "advantage of a company struc-

ture created in 2010 to hide income generated in Spain from his image rights from tax authorities" which was a "voluntary and conscious breach of his fiscal obligations in Spain".

Ronaldo's management have also denied the allegations.

But if the case is sent to trial and he is found guilty, the Portuguese forward could face a fine of "at least €28 million" and a prison sentence of three-and-a-half years, the Gestha union of experts at Spain's Inland Revenue said.

'The Descendants' to compete in three int'l festivals

Iranian drama film 'The Descendants', directed by Yasser Talebi and produced by Mitra Rouhi-Manesh, will be featured in three international film festivals.

'The Descendants' is about a relationship: Jacob's family worries about Farrokh, the son of the family. Farrokh left Iran to continue his studies abroad, but he has not been in touch with them for a long time. Jacob travels to Sweden to look for his son, Mehr News Agency reported.



MEHR NEWS AGENCY

Talebi's movie will go on screen at Nišville Movie Summit in Serbia, Salento International Film Festival in Italy and Rivne International Film Festival Dream City in the Ukraine in August and September.

'The Descendants', which has experienced over 50 international screenings, has so far received a number of international awards, including the best feature film award at the 14th Accolade Global Film Competition Award in the US and the best picture award at the Third Ammar Popular Film Festival in Iran.

Bilbao Fine Arts Museum exhibits masterpieces from Alicia Koplowitz collection

Over the past few decades, the Alicia Koplowitz — Grupo Omega Capital Collection has become one of the most important art collections in Europe. Despite this, it has remained largely unknown with the exception of the recent display of around 50 works at the Musée Jacquemart-André in Paris.

The exhibition at the Bilbao Fine Arts Museum in Spain is an artistic event of the first order as for the first time it will introduce the visiting public to an extensive selection of works from this collection, based on an exceptional roll-call of great masters within the history of art. On display are a total of 90 paintings and drawings dating from the 16th to the 21st centuries, in addition to sculptures from classical antiquity to the present day, artdaily.com reported.

In its entirety the selection of works reveals a distinctive approach to collecting marked by a quest for beauty that has led to a focus on both the past and present and which encompasses both painting and sculpture.

These concerns are expressed through a particular presence of works from the 18th to the 20th centuries and through the desire to achieve an international scope, for which reason the collection includes both Spanish and international artists. These characteristics can be considered exceptional in the context of a private Spanish collection.

As Professor Francisco Calvo Serraller observed in his essay in the exhibition's accompanying catalogue, the works on display offer a survey of the history of Western art, starting with classical antiquity and concluding in the present day, which is not structured around its principal periods or masters but rather through a selection guided by this collector's own taste.

The itinerary, which spreads across the museum's BBK room and the first floor of the building, is divided into nine sections: 'The persistence of the classical ideal', 'The century of the Enlightenment', 'The private and public realms', 'Paris at the turn of the century', 'New directions in interwar art', 'Material, gesture and paint', 'Figurations', 'Informalist and abstract trends' and 'Epilogue'.



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A new award for 'Retouch' in US



ISNA

Iranian film 'Retouch' won the Best Short Film award at the Traverse City Film Festival 2017 in the US.

Directed by Kaveh Mazaheri, the flick which participated in the competition section of the American festival, won the best short film award in this festival, ISNA reported.

Produced by the Iranian Young Cinema Society, the short movie 'Retouch' is about a young woman whose husband is trapped under a halter during a workout, but she refuses to save him and, consequently, he dies.

The film depicts a poignant portrait of a woman who has to face the choice of life and death, freedom and captivity in the world where no rights exist.

The film, which had earlier won the Best Short Film Awards at the Krakow International Film Festival in Poland and the Tribeca Film Festival in the United States, was twice invited to Oscars 2018. However, with the Best Short Film Award at Palm Springs International Film Festival in the US, it acquired this invitation for the third time — the first for an Iranian short to obtain the permission of the Academy of the Oscars by three international festivals.

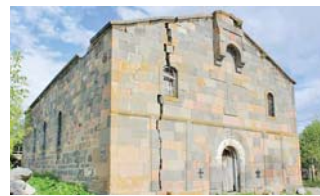
'Retouch' also won the Audience Award at the 25th Curtas Vila do Conde in Portugal.

The Traverse City Film Festival is an annual event held at the end of July in Traverse City, Michigan. The festival was created as an annual event in 2005 to help save one of America's few indigenous art forms — the cinema. The event was co-founded by Michael Moore, the Oscar-winning film director, well known for his anti-establishment films and documentaries such as Fahrenheit 9/11, Bowling for Columbine, and Roger & Me, along with author Doug Stanton and photographer John Robert Williams.

The 13th Traverse City Film Festival was held from July 25 to 30.

Armenian church in Georgia granted cultural heritage status

The National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia granted a status of cultural heritage monument to the Armenian St. Stepanos (Surb Stepanos) Church in Akhalkalaki, Georgia.

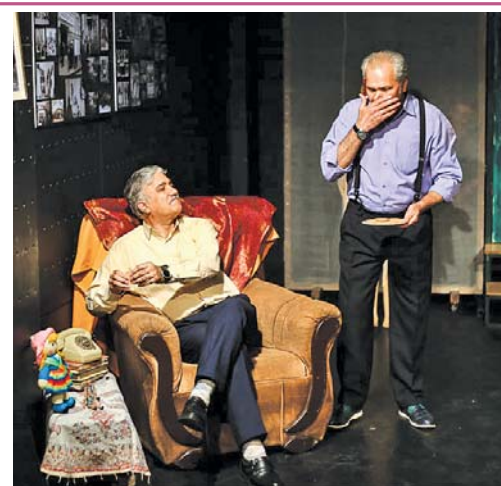


jnews.ge

According to jnews.ge, the world heritage status was granted to the church upon the order of Nikoloz Antidze, director of National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia, on June 30, 2017.

St. Stepanos Church is located northeast of Korkhi village of Georgia's Akhalkalaki district. The church dates back to the late 19th century.

The southwestern corner of the church features an Armenian construction inscription with a pointed date, with two other inscriptions made around the baptismal cross.



Iranian play 'Alef Enters', directed by Berkeh Foroutan, went on stage in Tehran. SAEED RABEI/iranonline.ir



Jeanne Moreau, star of French film classics, dies at 89

Jeanne Moreau, the actor best known for her performance in French New Wave classic 'Jules et Jim', died aged 89 at her home in Paris, her agent has said.

A director, screenwriter and singer as well as a stage and screen actor, Moreau came to prominence with a series of roles in films considered part of the French New Wave, including 'Lift to the Scaffold' and 'Jules et Jim'. She also appeared in a number of Hollywood films, such as 'The Last Tycoon' and Orson Welles' adaptation of Franz Kafka's 'The Trial'.

In a statement on Twitter, the French president, Emmanuel Macron, paid tribute to Moreau, saying that the actor "embodied cinema" and was a free spirit who "always rebelled against the established order".

According to theguardian.com Moreau was born in Paris in 1928. In a 2001 interview with the Guardian, Moreau credited her mother's heritage with influencing her own somewhat detached personality. "People in France could see I was different from the usual actresses of that time. Maybe that's why I attracted so many Anglo-Saxon directors like Orson Welles and Tony Richardson. In French, one says 'Ma langue maternelle est le français [my mother tongue is French]'. But I say: 'Ma langue maternelle est l'anglais.' My femi-

nine side is English," she said.

Moreau began her acting career on stage, and became a leading figure in the Comédie-Française. In the 1950s she moved to film, and achieved national recognition with starring roles in two Louis Malle movies: The film noir 'Lift to the Scaffold' and the drama 'Les Amants' (The Lovers). The films proved controversial, with 'Les Amants' becoming the subject of an obscenity case in the US supreme court, yet both are now considered landmark works. In 1960, Moreau best actress prize at Cannes for 'Seven Days... Seven Nights'.

But it was 'Jules et Jim' that made Moreau an international name. Directed by François Truffaut, the stylish 1962 film was set during the First World War. 'Jules et Jim' has proved hugely influential, becoming synonymous with the French New Wave movement and regularly appearing on best-of lists. Moreau almost appeared in another landmark 1960s role — Mrs Robinson in 'The Graduate', but turned down the part. Her career continued into her later years. In 1992, she won the César award for best actress for her performance in 'The Old Lady Who Walked in the Sea'. She also directed two films of her own: 'Lumière' (1976) and 'L'Adolescente' (1979).

Weather

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