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Assad: Syrian Army crushing terrorists



President Bashar al-Assad said Syrian forces, backed by allied fighters from popular defense groups, are crushing foreign-backed Takfiri terrorists across the country, and clearing areas of militants.

"Our army is making territorial gains every day, week after week, crushing terrorists and clearing lands occupied by them," Assad said during a press conference at the Foreign Ministry in the capital Damascus on Sunday, Press TV reported.

He added that valiant fighters from the Syrian army and allied forces made a positive role model in the history of wars.

"We, in cooperation with friends, will continue to squash terrorists wherever they are. We will continue national reconciliation, which has proved its effectiveness, will enhance communication with others and explore economic opportunities... The direct political, economic, and military support of our allies has helped us to make more gains than to suffer losses. These friends are our actual partners," Assad pointed out.

The Syrian leader added that Syria had been a target throughout history, noting that the Syrian nation had been forced to pay a heavy price in the ongoing foreign-backed terrorism plaguing the country.

"We have managed to foil the Western project. West is like a chameleon due to its behavior to fit different situations. The psychological war against the Damascus government has failed to discourage us from fighting terrorism or even frighten us... We have fought terror since day one, and we will continue to fight it until there is no terrorism in Syria..." Assad stressed.

He added that his Turkish counterpart, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, was playing the role of a political beggar after his support for Takfiri terrorist groups in Syria came to light.

Assad highlighted that there was no chance for a plan to partition Syria as long as government forces and their allies are fighting terrorism, adding that the main goal of de-escalation zones was to stop bloodshed, deliver humanitarian aid, evacuate terrorists, and bring life back to normal.

Parliament OKs Rouhani's ministers, except one



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Political Desk

Iran's Parliament on Sunday approved 16 cabinet picks nominated by recently reelected President Hassan Rouhani, except his suggested minister of energy.

Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani said 16 of 17 proposed ministers got the thumbs up, among them Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and Oil Minister Began Zanganeh who respectively received 236 and 230 votes out of 288 members of parliament who voted. The legislative chamber has 290 seats.

Zarif was Iran's lead negotiator in the landmark 2015 nuclear deal. Zanganeh had been credited with the boost in Iran's crude output and with a multi-billion-dollar deal

with France's Total to develop South Pars, the world's largest gas field.

Rouhani told legislators on Sunday that the primary Zarif's goals should be to stand by the nuclear deal and attract foreign investment and technology.

"The most important job of our foreign minister is first to stand behind the JCPOA, and not to allow the US and other enemies to succeed," Rouhani told parliament, using the technical name for the deal with six world powers that eased sanctions in exchange for curbs to Iran's nuclear program.

"Standing up for the JCPOA means standing up for Iran's enemies," he said before the parliament's vote on his cabinet selections.

"The second responsibility of the foreign

ministry... is to get involved in economic activities. It should help attract foreign investment and technology," Rouhani said.

Rouhani added that Iran needs some \$200 billion in foreign investment in its oil and gas sector alone to improve them. Oil and gas are the main sources of foreign revenue for Iran. The country's crude export income reached more than \$21 billion in 2016, up from some \$12 billion before the nuclear deal.

The most votes went to General Amir Hatami for Defense Minister, with 261. His appointment marks first time Iran has had a defense minister who has no ties to the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) and is an army commander in nearly 25 years.

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Iran, Switzerland agree on further nuclear safety cooperation



Iranian and Swiss nuclear regulatory authorities agreed to enhance cooperation during a meeting in Switzerland.

The nuclear agreement was reached in a Sunday meeting between Director of Swiss Federal Nuclear Safety Inspectorate (ENSI) Hans Wanner and the Head of Iran's Center for Nuclear Safety System Hojjatollah Salehi, IRNA reported.

The meeting followed an agreement signed in 2016 between the two countries aimed at preparing the ground for further nuclear safety cooperation.

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Iraq starts offensive to take back Tal Afar from Daesh

Iraqi security forces launched an offensive to take back the city of Tal Afar on Sunday, their next objective in the military campaign to defeat Daesh terrorists, Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi said.



"You either surrender, or die," Abadi said in a televised speech announcing the offensive, addressing the terrorists, Reuters reported.

A longtime stronghold of terrorists, Tal Afar, 50 miles (80 km) west of Mosul, was cut off from the rest of Daesh-held territory in June. It is surrounded by Iraqi government troops and Shia volunteers in the south, and Kurdish Peshmerga fighters in the north.

Hours before Abadi's announcement, the Iraqi air force dropped leaflets over the city telling the population to take precautions. "Prepare yourself, the battle is imminent and the victory is coming. God willing," the leaflets read.

About 2,000 Daesh terrorists remain in the city, according to Iraqi military commanders.

They are expected to put up a tough fight, even though intelligence from inside the city indicates they have been exhausted by months of combat, aerial bombardments, and by the lack of fresh supplies.

"Intelligence gathered shows clearly that the remaining fighters are mainly foreign and Arab nationals with their families and that means they will fight until the last breath," Colonel Kareem al-Lami, from the Iraqi army's 9th Division, said. Daesh's self-proclaimed "caliphate" in effect collapsed last month, when Iraqi forces completed the takeover of the terrorists' capital in Iraq, Mosul, after a nine-month campaign. But parts of Iraq and Syria remain under Daesh control, including Tal Afar, a city with a pre-war population of about 200,000.

The main forces taking part in the offensive are the Iraqi Army, air force, Federal Police, and the elite Counter-Terrorism Service (CTS), who began encircling the city on Sunday. The Shia Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF), supported spiritually by Iran, confirmed they are also taking part in the battle.

Preserving the lives of civilians during the campaign remains a priority, Iraqi military spokesman Brigadier General Yahya Rasool told al-Iraqiya TV on Sunday.

Waves of civilians have fled the city and surrounding villages under cover of darkness over the past weeks, although several thousand are estimated to remain, threatened with death by the terrorists who have held a tight grip there since 2014.

Thousands join anti-racism march in Boston

Thousands of anti-racism demonstrators flooded the streets of the US city of Boston Saturday, dwarfing a gathering of white nationalists in the city and triggering scuffles with police but avoiding the serious violence that marred a similar event a week earlier in Virginia.

A so-called "free speech" rally by far-right groups had been scheduled to run until 2 pm (1800 GMT), but a half-hour before that police escorted its participants — whose numbers appeared to be in the dozens — to safety past the throng of anti-racism protesters, AFP reported.

Aerial photos showed the latter group filling one of Boston's main streets for several blocks, in a huge outpouring of anti-racist sentiment in this strongly Democratic northeastern city.

While Boston saw no repeat of the violence that erupted last weekend in Charlottesville, Virginia, isolated scuffles between police and protesters prompted President Donald Trump to weigh in, with a tweet intoning against the "many anti-police agitators in Boston."

Boston Police Commissioner William Evans estimated that around 40,000 people turned out for the marches.

The police chief said there were a total of 27 arrests, mostly for assault and battery against the police and disorderly conduct.

Saturday's demonstration was held at

a time of anguished national debate over racial relations, which was fanned when Trump defended some participants in last week's white nationalist and neo-Nazi rally in Virginia as "very fine people."

As protesters began departing central Boston without major incident, the president followed up on his first tweet with a



REUTERS

more positive tone.

"I want to applaud the many protesters in Boston who are speaking out against bigotry and hate," he wrote on Twitter.

"Our country will soon come together as one!"

'Racists out!'

Thousands of counter-protesters had convened in two groups before the main

rally, chanting "No Nazis, no KKK, no fascists in the USA!" One man held a sign that read, "Stop pretending your racism is patriotism," and a woman's sign said, "Muslims welcome, racists out!"

"It's time to do something," said Katie Zipp, who traveled from Malden, north of Boston, for the counter-demonstrations, organized by an amalgam of mostly left-leaning groups.

"We are out here to add an extra body to add to the numbers of those who resist."

Some local restaurants promised to donate their proceeds from Saturday's business to left-leaning groups, and others refused to serve the white nationalists, with one posting a sign that said, "Hope you Nazis packed a lunch."

Authorities in Boston had protectively ordered a strict ban on weapons in the rally area, and ordered garbage trucks and concrete barriers tracked around the venue to prevent vehicles from entering.

Crowds booted or harassed "free speech" demonstrators as they walked to or from the venue, while Boston police tweeted that rocks had been thrown at its officers.

A young woman was killed last weekend when an avowed white supremacist rammed his car into a group of counter-protesters in Charlottesville — and President Trump's muted response to the violence has plunged his embattled administration deeper into disarray.

Iranian Christian MP slams US report on religious freedom

An Iranian Assyrian Christian lawmaker denounced an annual report by the US government on religious freedom in Iran for its falsification of facts, saying religious minorities in Iran are treated with much more respect than those in the US.

The representative of the Assyrian Christians in the Parliament Yonathan Betkolia dismissed US Department of State's report on religious freedom in Iran as totally untrue, Tasnim News Agency reported.

"Religious minorities in Iran enjoy all necessary freedoms," he said, adding that non-Muslim citizens are treated with great respect in Iran.

Christians and other religious minorities in Iran can freely perform their rites without any restriction, the lawmaker went on to say.

Religious minorities, including Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians have representatives in the Iranian Parliament.

On Wednesday, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi dismissed the US report on religious freedom as "unrealistic, baseless, and biased," saying the report pursues certain political objectives.



MEHR NEWS AGENCY

Qassemi said the report contained "subjective and groundless interpretations," warning such interpretations about religions and religious beliefs could lead to the escalation of inter-religious conflicts all to no avail.

He also criticized the report for portraying a "distorted" image of the situation of religious freedom in Iran.

"This report has once again presented a distorted politicized image using unsubstantiated claims about religious freedom in the Islamic Republic of Iran," Qassemi said.

The State Department's International Religious Freedom Report for 2016 has accused Iran of not respecting the rights of religious minorities, alleging that the Islamic Republic has restricted religious freedom in the country.

Qassemi said the US only seeks the "political exploitation of religious diversity in the world," adding that Washington seemed to lack a realistic understanding of the internal situation of countries, especially their demographic and religious conditions.

He stressed that the Iranian nation freely practiced their religions within the framework of law that supports religious freedom.



Rouhani appoints vice president for economy, chief of staff



Mahmoud Vaezi

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani in separate decrees on Sunday appointed a new vice president for economic affairs and also appointed a new chief of staff.

Rouhani named Mohammad Nahavandian as vice president for economic affairs based on Article 124 of the Iranian Constitution and given his commitment and past record, Press TV reported.

The president wished Nahavandian success in serving the Islamic establishment

and the noble Iranian nation in accordance with the principles of law obedience, moderation and the new administration's code of ethics.

Born in 1954, Nahavandian served as the chief of staff of President Rouhani during his first term in office.

Meanwhile, in another decree, Rouhani appointed Mahmoud Vaezi as his new chief of staff to promote the administration's priorities in view of his valuable experience.



Mohammad Nahavandian

Vaezi previously served as the minister of information and communication technology. Born in 1952, Vaezi obtained his B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees in Electrical Engineering from Sacramento State University and San Jose State University and was a PhD student in telecommunications engineering at Louisiana State University, which he left unfinished. He holds M.A. and PhD in International Relations from universities of Tehran and Warsaw, respectively.

All but one of Rouhani's proposed min-

isters, the nominee for the ministry of energy, Habibullah Bitaraf, won the Iranian parliament's vote of confidence on Sunday. The president has not presented his nominee for the post of the minister of science, research and technology.

Rouhani won reelection back in May. He took the oath of office earlier this month after being formally endorsed as the Iranian chief executive by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

Turkish PM: Tehran, Moscow, Ankara working on lasting truce in Syria

Turkey, Russia and Iran are cooperating to establish lasting truce in Syria, Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim said on Sunday.



"We work together to ensure the cease-fire in Syria. We have a goal to make a lasting truce out of the temporary cease-fire," he said, commenting on the recent and forthcoming visits by the high-ranking Russian and Iranian military to Ankara, TASS reported.

Last week, Iranian Chief of the Armed Forces General Staff Mohammad Hossein Baqeri paid a visit to the Turkish capital city for talks with his Turkish counterpart, Hulusi Akar, and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The talks focused on issues of ensuring security at the border and anti-terror efforts. The sides agreed to exchange intelligence data.

Turkey, Iran and Russia are brokers in the Kazakhstan peace talks on Syria. At the latest round of talks in May, the three countries announced plans to establish "de-escalation zones" throughout the Arab country.

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The defense minister is tasked with producing weapons for both the army and the IRGC.

Rouhani's nominee for energy minister, Habibollah Bitaraf, was not approved. During a review, lawmakers criticized him for lacking a plan to fight the longstanding drought and water crisis in the country, where many towns and cities suffer from shortage.

Also approved was Mohammad Javad Azari Jahromi, 36, to minister of telecommunications and information technology. Jahromi received 152 votes, the least of any of the other ministers, after some lawmakers cited his lack of experience and background in intelligence.

Rouhani on Sunday defended Jahromi, saying he will be able to protect the freedom of people who use the internet since he is familiar with se-

curity threats.

The remaining ministers who were approved Sunday are either already cabinet ministers or are their deputies as well as ranking officials in the current cabinet.

Rouhani's cabinet has 18 ministerial posts but Rouhani did not present a candidate for the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, which is in charge of higher education.

Under the law, the president can manage ministries which have no head for up to three months with a caretaker.

Rouhani, a political moderate, began his second term earlier this month after winning a resounding victory over a conservative challenger in May, vowing to continue his outreach to the world and improve civil liberties at home.

Parliament OKs Rouhani's...

Iran, Switzerland agree on further...

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Last year, Iran and Switzerland signed the agreement in the Austrian capital, Vienna, foreseeing bilateral cooperation in the area of nuclear safety. It was signed following Iran's nuclear deal with the P5+1 group.

In July 2015, Iran and the P5+1 group, namely Russia, China, France, Britain, the US and Germany, signed a landmark nuclear deal, called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The deal, which came into force in January, envisaged Tehran scaling back its nuclear program in return for the

lifting of all anti-Iran nuclear-related sanctions.

Switzerland has assumed the presidency of the Western European Nuclear Regulators Association (WENRA).

Int'l conference on Iran

Switzerland is also to host an international conference on Iran in the coming days, Fars News Agency reported on Sunday.

Iran's private sector will send a delegation to the European country on September 27 to participate in the three-day International Conference of Iran.

The conference will examine the economic situation in

Iran 20 months after the implementation of JCPOA and the lifting of sanctions against Tehran.

Swiss Ambassador to Tehran Giulio Haas had earlier voiced his country's willingness to broaden economic and trade relations with Iran on April.

The Swiss envoy said that the volume of investment by Swiss businessmen in Iran has doubled in recent years.

"During the past four years, the number of Swiss tourists, who have visited Iran, has increased from 5,000 to 15,000," he said, adding, "The two countries enjoy cordial relations in the fields of tourism industry."

Iranian families to visit Saudi Arabia to identify Hajj crush victims

Eleven relatives of the Iranian victims of the 2015 Hajj crush in Saudi Arabia are to travel to the kingdom to identify their loved ones.

Seyyed Ali Qazi Askar, the representative of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei in Hajj and pilgrimage affairs, made the remarks on Saturday.

The human crush in Mina, near the Saudi holy city of Mecca, in September 2015

killed thousands of pilgrims, including hundreds of Iranians. The incident cast doubt on the kingdom's efficiency in hosting the rituals, Press TV reported.

Unofficial sources put the death toll at almost 7,000 people. Iran said about 465 of its nationals lost their lives in the incident.

Riyadh cut its ties with Tehran in early 2016 after protests were held in front of its Iran-based diplomatic missions against the kingdom's earlier execution of leading Sau-

di Shia cleric Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr.

As a result, the families of the victims were unable to visit Saudi Arabia to identify their loved ones as Iran decided to keep its pilgrims at home because of the kingdom's refusal to guarantee their safety.

In January, however, Iran decided to send pilgrims to Saudi Arabia after Riyadh accepted the Islamic Republic's conditions. Qazi Askar said the relatives of the Ira-

nian victims were to arrive in the kingdom in the coming days as he urged Riyadh to cooperate on the identification process, including DNA tests.

By Saturday night, he said, 55,500 Iranian pilgrims would have been accommodated in Mecca, and 7,500 others in Medina, another holy Saudi city, adding that flights continued to take pilgrims from the Islamic Republic to airports in Medina, and the Saudi port city of Jeddah.

Police: Spain terror cell had 120 gas canisters

A 12-strong terror cell that carried out two attacks in Spain last week had collected 120 gas canisters and was planning to use them in vehicle attacks, Spanish police said.

Canisters were found at a house said to be used by the cell that blew up in the town of Alcanar on Wednesday night.

Police are still hunting for the driver of the van that hit dozens of people on Barcelona's Las Ramblas, killing 13, BBC reported.

On Sunday, a mass was held in Barcelona to mourn the victims. In addition to the 13 killed on Thursday afternoon on Las Ramblas, a woman died in a second vehicle attack early on Friday in the town of Cambrils. Five suspected attackers were shot dead by police in the second attack.

Catalan Police Chief Josep Lluís Trapero gave an update on the investigation.

He said the cell was still believed to consist of 12 men and had been planning attacks for more than six months. One person remained at large, four were under arrest and there were two sets of human remains to be identified, he added.

The person at large was the driver of the van, Trapero said, adding that police knew his identity but would not reveal it.

But police have confirmed they are hunting Moroccan-born Younes Abouyaqoub, 22, who Spanish media say was the driver.

The two sets of remains to be identified may refer to victims of the house explosion at Alcanar.

Spanish media have speculated the two may be Youssef Aalaa, the brother



Police say the wrecked house in Alcanar is a focal point of the investigation.

of one of the suspected attackers killed at Cambrils, and Abdelbaki Es Satty from the town of Ripoll, north of Barcelona, where a number of the suspects are from.

"We're starting to see clearly that [the Alcanar house] was the place where they were preparing explosives for one or more attacks in the city of Barcelona," Trapero said.

He added: "We are not in a position

to say what caused the radicalization of these people."

Trapero said police could not rule out that the suspect still at large had crossed the French border, although he had "no specific information on this".

It is now known that three vehicles were rented under the credit card of Younes Abouyaqoub.

One was used in the Las Ramblas attack, another was found after the attack

in the town of Vic and a third in Ripoll.

Trapero said the cell had planned to fill all three with explosive material to carry out attacks.

On Sunday, King Felipe and Queen Letizia attended Barcelona's Sagrada Família to mourn those killed in the attacks.

Some reports in Spanish media said the cell had intended to target the iconic, Gaudi-designed church with explosives.

North Korea 'nuclear war' warning ahead of US-South Korea drills



A picture shows North Korean leader Kim Jong-un (2nd L) inspecting the Command of the Strategic Force of the Korean People's Army (KPA).

North Korea warned Sunday that forthcoming military exercises between the US and South Korea constituted "reckless behavior driving the situation into the uncontrollable phase of a nuclear war."

The rogue state warned it had the Pacific island of Guam, Hawaii and the US mainland in its crosshairs for a "merciless strike" they would be unable to dodge, according to a statement in Rodong Sinmun, North Korea's official state newspaper, as cited by CNN.

The warning comes a day ahead of the start of the joint US and South Korean Ulchi-Freedom Guardian military exercises, amid escalating tensions between the countries, newsweek.com reported.

Trump this week praised North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, after he did not follow through on a threat to fire missiles in waters off Guam, a US territory with a large naval base located 2,200 miles northeast of North Korea.

North Korean media said Kim would wait to see the US response before deciding whether to give the order to fire. US officials have pledged the military exercises will go ahead this week as planned.

"The Ulchi-Freedom Guardian joint military exercises will be like pouring gasoline on fire and worsen the state of the peninsula," said the statement in Rodong Sinmun.

The state responded last year to US-South Korea military exercises with a nuclear test.

President Donald Trump warned North Korea that any attacks would be met by "fire and fury" from the US, after Pyongyang announced it had developed an ICBM capable of striking the US mainland.

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Defense Secretary James Mattis said last week that though diplomatic means remain the preferred route to deal with the crisis, military options remain on the table.

"In close collaboration with our allies, there are strong military consequences if the DPRK initiates hostilities," said Mattis.

Bangladesh border guards block Myanmar Rohingya refugees

Bangladeshi coastguards refused to allow in scores of Rohingya Muslim refugees fleeing violence in Myanmar's western state of Rakhine, where the government continues with a deadly push against members of the minority.

Coast guard spokesman Sheikh Fakhr Uddin said that the deported refugees included women and children who had reported harsh treatment by Myanmar's security forces and Buddhist vigilante groups, Press TV reported.

"We found two injured among 18 men, along with nine women and four children. But we had to send them back," Fakhr Uddin said, adding that the boat transporting the Rohingya refugees on the Naf river, on the border between Bangladesh and Myanmar, had 31 people on board when it was sent back.

Since a renewed crackdown began against Muslims in Rakhine months ago, the Rohingya have increasingly tried to enter the bordering Cox's Bazar, a district in southeastern Bangladesh where nearly 400,000 refugees are living in squalid camps and makeshift settlements.

Bangladesh has always regretted the increase in arrivals, saying the country is no longer capable of hosting the refugees.

The coast guard's decision to send back the refugee boat comes after at least 500 Rohingya fled their villages in Rakhine and crossed the border into Cox's Bazar. It also comes after reports said Myanmar had sent reinforcement to Rakhine, a move which has sparked fresh concerns about more anti-Rohingya violence in the area.

"We have beefed up our patrol on the Naf as (Myanmar) army is gathering in the bordering villages, which may prompt them (Rohingya) to try coming to Bangladesh," Fakhr Uddin said.



wordpress.com

The United Nations has yet to designate Myanmar's crackdown on Muslims as ethnic cleansing, which the UN says could have been an issue since the arrival of more than 70,000 Rohingya villagers into Bangladesh last October. UN Special Rapporteur Yanghee Lee said recently that he was worried about reports that a Myanmar army battalion had flown into Rakhine to help the local security apparatus, adding that it could trigger more violence and further complicate the situation.

Rohingya Muslims, a community of more than a million people, have been denied citizenship and access to basic rights as the Buddhist-majority country views them as intruders from neighboring Bangladesh. The Rohingya reject claims about their origins and say their ancestors have lived in the area for decades.

OPINION

This is us

By Sofia Sears

2017 is blood-washed sidewalks, tear gas streets, the furious glare of flashing phones. 2017 is not peace. 2017 is familiar territory, unsurprising, but somehow regrettable, even when we knew what would happen. 2017 is not justice. 2017 is hypocrisy bleeding out of politicians' mouths, contradiction embedded in their "condemnation" of a hatred they helped ignite and normalize. 2017 is not equality. 2017 is trembling, bitten lips, clammy shaky hands joined together to form a circle in the battlefield of what America is and what we know lives under the surface. 2017 is not fairness. 2017 is black bodies flung and slammed and spit on, torn apart on the concrete, citizens not at home in their cities, in their towns, in their country. 2017 is not what it should be, but it is what it is. To deny the progress we have made is certainly, undoubtedly, a great disservice to those who have so tenaciously fought for equality in this country. But, equally, to deny the horror is to deny history itself. So let's be graphic here for a moment, if that is what it takes. Let us be brutal in our descriptions, our words, our pleas, as they are brutal in their violence, their hatred, their undying, unyielding, unwarranted and logically baseless spite.

If you are a white person living in America right now, please do not get defensive. Do not resort to that kind of personal offendedness. I am half-white, and I am well-aware that even though I hate it, even though I wish it weren't so, even though I try my very best to dismantle the structures of it as best I can, we are still unwitting beneficiaries of white supremacy. We cannot flee from that truth, however uncomfortable it may be. We can afford to be uncomfortable when people of color are being murdered for existing, I think. I sound angry, because I am. Try to understand. There's many sides to this that you don't know. Empathize.

I cannot empathize with the men and women that stood on the University of Virginia's campus with Nazi flags and KKK chants and bloodthirsty, senseless, passionate hatred. I cannot see the other side of this, because there isn't one. This cannot be excused anymore. These people are not victims of multiculturalism; they are not complacent or uneducated. These people are aware of what they are doing and yet they do it anyways, proudly, gleefully. Look, empathy and compassion are important. They are what makes us connected, good to one another, makes us able to fight for justice where we see it being compromised. And the First Amendment is important. It is a fundamental pillar in the maintenance and exercise of American democracy. But empathy and compassion are very hard to give to those who don't give us it back. The First Amendment does not protect or justify violence. No one is "oppressing" your right to your opinion when your "opinion" kills human beings, stains lives, and considers some people less than fully people.

What the white supremacist terrorists — yes, they are terrorists, and that is what I will call them — in Virginia are actually "protesting" is beyond my own comprehension. To be a white male! The privilege, the entitlement to violence, to terror, to destruction. No rights have been historically, systematically torn away from them. This country did not institutionally enslave their ancestors. They have not been endlessly lynched, segregated, dehumanized, and legally disadvantaged. Protest is meant to have a purpose, to actually be against something actively compromising your individual liberties and human rights. The thing is, what they perceive as a threat to their "liberty" is actually just a threat to their privilege. We cannot afford an ideology respect when it kills people for existing as they are. There are opinions that deserve consideration, but white supremacy's "merits" don't exist and never will. We can't pretend that this is just a normal exercise of free speech. It's not.

And, of course, to the president: to "condemn" the situation in Charlottesville via Twitter, with no calling out any of the organizations or people causing it, that "situation" is not enough. You are responsible, in a grave way, for allowing this kind of toxic "belief system of whiteness," to paraphrase Ta-Nehisi Coates, to thrive, expand, and perpetuate itself. You incited this, made any non-white, non-male person in America the enemy, the one to blame for adversity and all hardships. You helped make this violence erupt. So do not play innocent now. We all remember. We won't forget. The same message goes for the rest of the GOP who have helped Trump at every turn of the way, most particularly Paul Ryan. If backbone and morality could've become before partisanship, before winning, before undoing our first black president's legacy, think about what you could've achieved, what this country would look like now.

You complied with the president. You fought for him, defended him, pretended that you were somehow more innocent, more decent, than him. That is an insult to American citizens, to think that we wouldn't notice the supreme contradiction in that behavior.

So what do we do now? If you are a white person, again, you need to reckon with this fact: you benefit from white supremacy. So what are you going to do about that? You need to get up, even if you've never been interested in politics or activism before, because you are an American, and if you really believe in that concept, you will agree that nothing is more important or urgent than fighting for every American to truly be free in this country. You will wake up. You will go to — or host! — a rally, a vigil, a symbolic action of solidarity with the brave students who stood up to those hundreds of torch-wielding white supremacists in Charlottesville, a symbol of solidarity with all people of color in this country — you will donate as much as you are able to ensuring that victims of the violence have their medical expenses covered, fed loved and respected; you will call your representatives, pester them relentlessly until they acknowledge and adequately address this hatred, and emphasize that it is not okay; you will donate to and support the NAACP of Virginia, aid the next steps and where we go from here. You will, most importantly, not do nothing. You will not rest or be silent. You will do something.

I know that the hashtag #ThisIsNotUs was well-intentioned. But this is us, this is us. Racism is literally the undercurrent, the blood, the clogged artery, of America. We are built on it, created on it. It is us, and failing to see that, to reckon with the inscrutable fact, is the biggest challenge to dismantling it. That we have a president who is seemingly physically incapable of genuinely admitting that yes, Nazis and white supremacists are bad, is not a surprise. It should not be. It is the darkest, most visible manifestation of a culmination of racial resentment and hatred boiling under the surface of this country. That we dare to embrace multiculturalism is a threat to these people, to those that want to thwart and destruct the very idea of equality. It scares them. When they say they want to take their country back, I wonder, from who, exactly? Europeans came here and caused the genocide of millions of Native Americans, so this country doesn't belong to white people. It's been stolen by them, through genocide, through enslavement, exploitation, oppression. We don't want America to be that way anymore, but we must realize the past if we are to cure it short.

2017 can be resistance. 2017 can be love. But only if we make it so.

The opinion first appeared on highschool.latimes.com.

SPECIAL NEWS

Domestic Economy Desk

Afghan president stresses importance of joining Iran's rail network

Afghan President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani underlined that Afghanistan's Herat Province can become a hub for regional transit via Khaf-Herat and China-Haritan Railways.

According to Fars News Agency, the Afghan president, who was speaking during a visit to Herat Province, noted, "One million tons of cement will be imported to Afghanistan from Iran via Khaf-Herat railroad in the initial stage."



IRNA

He pointed to the railway network from the Eastern region of Khaf in Iran to western Herat of Afghanistan as well as the China railway to Hairtan port located in the North of the landlocked country, and said, "The region will witness economic boom."

Iran and Afghanistan enjoy lots of historical and cultural commonalities. The two countries have high-level political and economic ties.

Afghanistan has been main export destination for Iranian commodities and products for several years.

In relevant remarks in mid-May, a senior Afghan official declared that Tehran and Kabul have doubled their trade over a three-year period.

"Trade exchanges between Iran and Afghanistan reached \$2 billion in the year to March 21, 2017," spokesman for Afghan Ministry of Commerce and Industries Musaffer Qoqandi said.

He reiterated that there has been a considerable boost in Tehran-Kabul economic relations over past three years, especially after the nuclear deal between Tehran and major world powers.

"This shows a twofold rise in trade exchanges between the two neighboring nations," Qoqandi added.

He reiterated that Iran and Afghanistan have also expanded relations in other areas in the past three years, and said, "Construction of Khaf-Herat railway project is an example."

Iran's housing sector emerges out of recession: Official

The housing sector is emerging from a long recession and major improvements in the situation are expected, according to a housing official.

Every recession should be followed by a natural period of prosperity, which, although delayed, is currently witnessed in the housing sector of Iran, Iraj Rahbar, chairman of the Housing Association of Tehran told Trend News Agency.

Total numbers of deals associated with the housing sectors of Iran and Tehran, for the month ending on July 22, stood at 49,805 and 16,156 respectively, indicating a respective drop of 6.8 percent and 6.3 percent compared to the figures for the previous month, said the head of Tehran Association of Realtors, Hesam Oqbaei.

The number of the housing deals associated with rentals in the first month of summer (started July 22) have also declined, both in Tehran and nationwide.



ISNA

In the month to July 22, the number of the rental associated housing deals in the capital had reached 19,316, which indicate a drop of 9.1 percent and 18 percent compared with the month before and the same period of last year respectively.

The number of the rental housing deals nationwide in the mentioned period stood at 68,146, down by 5.4 percent compared with the figure for the previous month.

Rahbar noted that, rise in rental prices in the past few years was so substantial that even an increase in the number of the deals to be signed in the next few months, would not lead to another hike in rents.

He also pointed to the growing market in the housing industry's tourist accommodation sector, noting that foreign tourists are rushing to Iran following renewed diplomatic ties with the world, which brought about the need for new hotels and huge investments in this sector.

Iran has seen a growing wave of incoming tourists, ever since its government struck the deal with world powers in 2015 to reintegrate Iranian and global markets.

OPEC chief hails Zanganeh reappointment

Secretary General of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Mohammad Sanusi Barkindo, in a letter congratulated Iran's Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh on his reappointment.

According to Shana, he wrote in his letter, "On behalf of all of the staff at the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, please permit me, Your Excellency, to wish you ever success in this role over the coming years."

The letter continued, "I have no doubt that the constructive relationship that exists between the Islamic Republic of Iran and OPEC will continue to flourish during your tenure. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you for the personal support that you have given to me since my appointment as secretary general."

President Hassan Rouhani came in full support of Zanganeh in his speech in the Parliament to defend his cabinet picks.

He underlined that the world was already looking up to the veteran Iranian minister who has served in various positions in almost all administrations after Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Zanganeh is specifically credited at home for what many see as his success in raising Iran's oil and gas production capacity.



GETTY IMAGES

He also specifically drew cheers from the lawmakers for strengthening Iran's ranking in OPEC.

"Currently you are the longest serving minister in OPEC and, therefore,

the most experienced, your reappointment is a vote for continuity, stability and further productive collaboration between OPEC and non-OPEC," Shana further quoted Barkindo as telling

Zanganeh in his letter. "I am delighted that OPEC will continue to benefit from your vast reservoir of knowledge and rich fountain of wisdom for many years to come."

Over 142,000 tons of gold minerals extracted from Zarshuran

Domestic Economy Desk

Over 142,000 tons of gold minerals were extracted from Zarshuran mine, the Middle East's biggest gold deposit, in the northwestern province of West Azerbaijan, during March 21-July 22.

According to Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), the mine is expected to yield 40,000 tons of minerals during the four-month period, imidro.gov.ir reported.

The report added that 360,000 tons of the extracted gold minerals have been deposited in the complex as feedstock for a 12-month period to produce gold ingots.

According to the second phase of development plan of Zarshuran gold complex, the production capacity of the plant will increase to two million tons, the report said.

Production from Zarshuran near the city of Takab, West Azerbaijan, began in November 2014 with the inauguration of a facility to process three metric tons of gold on top of 2.5 tons of silver and one ton of mercury per year.

Iran's Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade has identified up to 15 mines so far, capable of yielding 320 metric tons of processed gold.

The provinces of West and East Azerbaijan, as well as Isfahan and Khorasan Razavi hold the country's biggest gold reserves.

Iran boosts crude exports to East Asia

Iran exported two million barrels of crude oil recovered from South Pars Oilfield to East Asian countries in four shipments, Oil Ministry said.

The shipment was made possible following the dispatch by National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) of a floating production, storage and offloading (FPSO) unit over the layer, Shana reported.

South Pars is not only the largest gas field in the world, but it also has oil layers that have not been recovered since the 11th government assumed office in 2013.

expressed optimism that Iran's crude oil export to Russia will begin by late September or late October 2017.

Amirhossein Zamani-Nia, the deputy oil minister for international affairs and trading said that Tehran and Moscow will conclude a crude oil sales contract to Russia within the next 2 or 3 months.

He said Iran will receive cash from Russia in euros, adding 50 percent of the amount will be paid in cash and the rest will be used to finance import of goods from Russia to Iran.

The official described the deal as a very important contract,



IRNA

Qatar was recovering oil from South Pars Oilfield for several years, but Iran had missed the opportunity because of lack of technical equipment sanctioned by the US and its allies.

According to the Oil Ministry official news website, Deputy Managing Director of the National Iranian Oil Company for Engineering and Development Affairs Gholamreza Manouchehri announced in March that oil recovery from South Pars had kicked off.

South Pars, a supergiant gas field Iran shares with Qatar in Persian Gulf waters, is estimated to contain over 14 billion barrels of oil in its oil layer.

Meanwhile, on Sunday a senior Iranian oil sector official

adding the agreement has the potential to enhance Iran-Russia ties in all sectors.

Energy Minister Alexander Novak said recently Russia is negotiating daily purchases of 100,000 barrels of crude oil from Iran.

The two countries are currently discussing the terms of a potential agreement, Novak said, adding he expected the deal to be reached within weeks.

Russia's state trading enterprise Promsiriimport has been authorized by the government to carry out the purchase, he said on the sidelines of an economic forum in the Black Sea resort of Sochi.

Iran to host 2nd int'l aluminum expo in September

The Second Iran International Aluminum Expo will be held in Markazi Province in central Iran in late September.

The exhibition center of Markazi Province will host the event from September 18 to 22.

According to ISNA, three other exhibitions will also be held concurrently with the aluminum expo in the province.

Major provincial companies and industrial units as well as organizations such as the Iranian Aluminum Company (IRALCO), Lajzar Company, Lajzar Hydraulic Company, Shazand



Petrochemical Company, Shazand Power Plant, Markazi Province Electric Distribution Company, Markazi Province Regional Water Company, Markazi Province Rural Water and Wastewater Company and Machine Sazi Arak will take part in the event.

In addition, delegations from Russia, China, Italy, Serbia and Slovenia as well as the ambassadors of these countries to Iran will attend the fair.

The exhibition will be held in cooperation with Markazi Province Governorship and Iran Trade Promotion Organization.

UK rail fare rise 'will force key workers to quit city jobs'

Plans to hit rail commuters with the biggest fare rises in five years will force many key workers, including nurses and teaching assistants, to quit their jobs, the biggest public-sector union Unison warned on Saturday.

Anger at the 3.6-percent increase to regulated fares, including commuter fares and season tickets, spilled over last week after it was revealed that the rises would come into effect in January, the Guardian wrote.

Transport groups protested at the growing cost of what many passengers regard as worsening services, while the industry claimed the rises were necessary to fund investment.

Annual rises are based on retail prices index (RPI) figures for July, released by the Office for National Statistics.

Now there is mounting concern that public-sector workers, many of whom cannot afford to live in the large cities where they work because of the cost of buying and renting, will find they cannot pay the cost of commuting to their jobs either.

Unison's head of health, Sara Gorton, said that housing costs, caps on public-sector pay and commuter fares have left many in a near-impossible position. "Wage freezes have penalized public-sector employees who are struggling to keep up with rising costs, including housing. Increased rail fares will only make their situation worse," she said.

"The concern is that staff including nurses, cleaners and teaching assistants will be driven away from jobs in some cities. Some are already telling us they're planning to quit. The situation in rural areas isn't much better. Public transport often isn't available and workers are priced out by people moving in."

With the NHS already facing a recruitment crisis for nurses, ministers are under intense pressure to drop the one percent cap on their pay increases, due to continue until 2020, as staff shortages bite.

There were also renewed calls this weekend to help part-time workers who commute to work. Stephen Joseph, chief executive at Campaign for Better Transport, said his organization was being contacted by an increasing number of people who worked part-time – many of them working mothers – who could not understand why



Regulated fares are to rise by 3.6 percent in January, in the biggest increase in five years. LAUREN HURLEY/PA

there were no season tickets tailored to their needs. "We get bombarded with stories from people who work part-time but find it's increasingly unaffordable to use the trains to commute to work," Joseph said. "The current outdated structure of rail fares penalizes them – they have to either buy a full-time season ticket or expensive peak day fares. Successive transport ministers have promised change; it was even in the Conservative 2015 election manifesto, but nothing seems to be happening."

"We think the latest high rises will tip some people over the edge into either not working, changing jobs or moving house. The government needs to get a grip on this and introduce the flexible tickets for part-time workers they have kept promising."

Louise Shevlane, a mother of two from Rainham, Kent, who works three days a week for a charity in

London, said working mothers were finding the economics of such jobs ever more testing. Travelling from Rainham to Cannon Street station in London costs her just under £400 a month, the same as it does for a five-day-a-week commuter.

"I have got so many friends in the same situation. I love my job but I think many people who earn less than I do will probably give up working because it simply is not worth it. It seems crazy that there is no season-ticket system for part-time workers. It is a problem that hits working mothers particularly, as so many work part-time."

Rail unions staged protests last week at stations across the country, including ones in London, Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol and Glasgow. The RMT union claims rail fares have risen by about 32 percent in eight years, while average weekly earnings have increased by 16 percent.

Workers walkout
Bank of England (BoE) workers are considering another strike after their demands for a pay raise were not met following a walkout earlier this month.

India's Infosys approves up to \$2b buyback of shares

India's second-biggest IT firm Infosys said on Saturday it will buy back shares worth up to 130 billion rupees (\$2 billion), a day after Vishal Sikka resigned as chief executive after a long-running feud with the company's founders.



THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

The board of Bengaluru-headquartered Infosys approved the repurchase of 113 million shares at 1,150 rupees apiece, the company said in a stock exchange filing, returning cash to investors at a substantial premium to Friday's closing price of 923.25 rupees, Reuters reported.

It is also at a premium of 17.9 percent to closing price on Thursday, the day the company informed the exchanges about the board meeting to consider a buyback.

The announcement of the company's first-ever buyback could offer at least some respite to Infosys shareholders on Monday after the value of their holdings fell nearly 10 percent on Friday following Sikka's surprise exit.

Arun Kejriwal, founder of Kejrival Research and Investment Services, said, "If the overall market sentiment is good, you could see a four-five percent recovery looking at this price."

A senior official at state-run Life Insurance Corp (LIC), which owns a seven-percent stake in Infosys, said they were closely monitoring the situation at the company and were looking to meet with the management before deciding to participate in the buyback.

Friday's sell-off prompted three US law firms specializing in class action lawsuits to announce that they are probing potential securities claims on behalf of Infosys investors that have suffered losses.

In a statement late on Friday, New York-based Rosen Law Firm called on aggrieved shareholders to come forward and said that it was investigating whether "Infosys may have issued materially misleading business information to the investing public."

The other two firms investigating claims are Goldberg Law and Pomerant LLP, which said they were probing whether Infosys or any of its officers, or directors engaged in securities fraud or other unlawful business practices, in light of the allegations of governance lapses made by founder executives against the board of the company.

Qatar to tell banks to seek overseas funding

Qatar is telling its banks to tap international investors to raise financing, instead of mainly relying on government funding, people familiar with the matter said, as the impact of the ongoing Saudi-led boycott puts pressure on liquidity.

The central bank is holding regular meetings with lenders to gauge how the standoff is affecting liquidity, and is encouraging banks to borrow internationally through bonds and loans to avoid further depletion of foreign reserves and credit rating downgrades, said the people, asking not to be identified because the matter is private. Banks have been told they should ask for government funding as a last resort, they said, Bloomberg reported.

Some banks and government-related entities are planning fundraising deals to help with tightening liquidity, the people said.

Most borrowers plan to target investors in Asia to fill the gap left by Persian Gulf lenders, they said. Qatar Islamic Bank SAQ recently raised financing in Yen and



BLOOMBERG

Australian dollars through private placements, one of the people said. The central bank couldn't immediately comment.

Qatari lenders are under pressure after Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt cut diplomatic relations and closed transport routes in June,

accusing the nation of funding terrorism, a charge it denies.

Foreign deposits dropped the most in two years in June and may fall further as some Persian Gulf lenders refuse to roll over holdings, people with knowledge of the matter said.

Fundraising plans

Qatar National Bank QPSC, the country's largest, held early discussions with international lenders about a private placement, bond sale or loan, while Commercial Bank QSC sent a request for proposals for a dollar loan for at least \$500 million, people familiar with the matter said this month.

Doha Bank QSC is also seeking to raise funds via a private placement of dollar bonds, other people said.

Qatari banks are also finding it harder to obtain short-term funding as international banks are asking them to pledge assets outside of Qatar instead of domestic ones to reduce the risk linked to the loans, the people said.

Qatar Investment Authority, the country's sovereign wealth fund, placed billions of dollars of cash with Qatari lenders shortly after the standoff started as some banks in Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain started withdrawing funds from the country.

South Korea names new BoK deputy governor

South Korean President Moon Jae-in appointed an incumbent assistant deputy governor of the Bank of Korea as the new vice chief of the central bank.



YONHAP

Yoon Myun-shik, who entered the central bank in 1983 and served in various posts, was chosen to succeed Jang Byung-wha as BOK deputy governor, according to the bank. The position has been vacant for two months since Jang retired. Yonhap News Agency wrote.

Following the latest appointment, the country's monetary policy committee, which was held with six members out of seven seats last month, will be attended by all seven members this month.

Canadian business owners anxious over NAFTA renegotiations

Canadian business owners are hoping US negotiators in North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) will be receptive to maintaining, if not improving, the current flow of goods and workers across the border.

The United States opened the 23-year-old NAFTA renegotiations with a declaration that it wants major changes to the agreement that shifts the balance of trade.

Raymond Yu, a senior media professional told Xinhua ensuring the current flow of products and skilled personnel is a very realistic prospect in the NAFTA talks and is important to the economies of Canada and the US.

He said the two countries have a very deeply connected supply chain, and employees flowing from one facility on one side of the border to another is very important to make sure that things run quickly and smoothly.

Andy Soong, an Ottawa businessman said that there is a risk the US will want to change the rules of origin and content requirements, affecting tariffs and the bottom line.

He said the current trade agreement is working well for Canada. "Of course, Canadian business people, especially in auto industry, have some great concerns

about it, there's no question."

Although the Canadian dairy industry was excluded from the original NAFTA deal in 1994, its supply management system for dairy has long been a point of contention with the United States.

US President Donald Trump has vowed to push Can-



XINHUA/LI HAITAO
An Ontario milk cow is seen at Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto, Canada, on Aug. 18, 2017.

ada for greater access to its markets for American dairy products in the NAFTA talks.

David Hans, a dairy farmer in Ontario said that there is a lot of inaccuracy in the perception of unfairness on Canada's part.

He voiced his wish that Canadian dairy industry would remain out of NAFTA and that US producers turn their focus on their domestic policies to control their problems with overproduction.

The US dairy industry is reportedly unhappy that Canadian producers get profits from price controls, and then could sell skimmed-off higher protein components for cheese-making at lower market prices, squeezing Americans out of a growing market.

Hans is also anxious that the renegotiations may affect the price. Before NAFTA talks, Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister Freeland vowed to defend supply management on Canadian farms in the NAFTA negotiations.

Canada's dairy, egg and poultry industries are governed by a supply-management system that dates back to the 1970s. It has three parts: fixed prices, production quotas and tariffs to protect Canadian producers from foreign competition.

Major Currencies

Currency	To USD	Currency	To USD
Turkish Lira	0.2841	Chinese Yuan	0.1499
Euro	1.1762	UAE Dirham	0.2722
British Pound	1.2873	Kuwaiti Dinar	3.3066
Australian Dollar	0.7931	Iraqi Dinar	0.0008
Japanese 100 Yen	0.0091	Saudi Riyal	0.2666

Major Commodities

Crude Oil	\$48.73	Silver	\$16.95
Gold	\$1290.30	Platinum	\$981.90
Copper	\$2.93	Wheat	\$417.50

Climate change and habitat conversion to agriculture are working together to homogenize nature. In other words, the more things change, the more they are the same.

Using radio to confront climate change in Peru

Indigenous communities in the Central Peruvian Amazon marched in the sweltering jungle city of Pucallpa in June to condemn widespread deforestation in their communities and to commemorate Amazonian victims of environmental conflict. In the remote village of Pahoyan, Antonio Rojas Shuna got word of the protest quickly and in his native language, but not on TV or the Internet.

Radio is the bridge between the city and indigenous communities, aljazeera.com reported.

"Our Shipibo brothers inform us of what's going on with our territory and the environment," said Rojas Shuna, 53, as he repaired the foundation of his flood-damaged home.

In the age of instant access to digital information, radio is redefining its purpose in isolated villages in the Peruvian Amazon, where Spanish is a second language and signs of climate change are everywhere.

In Pucallpa and other cities in this region, a growing number of indigenous activists are reclaiming radio to reach communities reeling from environmental issues and to revive their endangered languages.

Limber Maynas Mahya, chief of Pahoyan, an ethnic Shipibo-Konibo village located 15 hours by boat from Pucallpa along the Ucayali River, said, "The indigenous press send messages and speak to us through their programs and we listen. We feel indigenous."

His village is struggling to find ways to adapt to deforestation. 36-year-old Mahya told Al Jazeera.

Severe flooding has caused Pahoyan to seek higher ground three times in recent years. This February, the village road became a river.

The community medical center was inundated and waterborne illnesses spread. Without help from the regional government, Shipibo language radio programs in Pucallpa allowed the community to broadcast their struggle and appeal to the outside world for help.

Moises Cardenas Sanchez, host of the environmental program Prensa Libre Intercultural, one of nearly a dozen Shipibo-language radio programs in Pucallpa, said, "Radio is the bridge between the city and indigenous communities."

Environmental NGO Global Witness labels Peru as the fourth deadliest country on the planet to be an environmental activist, with at least 57 murdered since 2002.



Iran to launch museum in Persepolis ancient site

The newly discovered gateway to the city of Parsesh in the Persepolis, located in Iran's Fars Province near Shiraz, will be turned into a museum, the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism (RICHT) said.

The site will soon be turned into a museum, allowing all tourists to come and visit the historical site, the institute quoted Head of the

Archeological Exploration Team Alireza Askari as saying.

According to Askari, Iran Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization intends to promote tourism in the area by launching such a museum site, IRNA reported.

"The city of Parsesh in Persepolis is an expanded area of the debris of the ancient monuments around the

Persepolis, which was a city in the Achaemenid era," he said.

The city is composed of several sections, the main part of which was the Imperial Citadel with the same modern royal seat of the Persepolis, Askari added.

According to the archeologist, the gateway is a unique venue with the same size of the gateway of Babylon during the rule of Cyrus.

The unique and common style of the two gateways of the Parsesh and Babylon in the Achaemenid era is indicative of the cultural link between Parsesh and Babylon, the head of the archeological exploration team said.

Babylon, the most important city of ancient Mesopotamia, is located in south of modern Iraq and during three millennia, especially during the Achaemenid era, it was the most important religious city in Mesopotamia, Askari added.

The chronology of the new gateway of the old section and the initial texture of the city of Parsesh in the Persepolis indicate that the gateway was built as a reminder of the conquest of Babylon by the Cyrus of the Achaemenid in Parsesh, he said.

Iran attends Bulgarian World Folk 2017

Iran participated in VII World Championship of Folklore 'World Folk 2017' in Bulgaria.

World Folk 2017 is now underway with the attendance of 20 world countries, 100 local and traditional groups and will run until August 27, IRNA reported.

Iranian artists took part in the event for the fourth consecutive year.

The winner will be granted gold medal, diploma of honor and €1,000.

A special feature of the 'World Folk' is that all performances are recorded with professional audio and television equipment and the best of them are repeatedly broadcast by 20 cable televisions in Bulgaria by satellite televisions 'Travel TV', 'Rodina TV'

and 'Heroes TV' with coverage across Europe, as well as by the Web Television 'EuroFolkTV' at tv.eurofolk.com.

The main goal of 'World Folk 2017' is to protect and popularize the traditional folk arts through enormous possibilities of mass media.

The festival is under the patronage of UNESCO.



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و مدیران شرکت‌های بین المللی
در مناطق شمالی تهران نیازمندیم

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مالکین محترم املاک مبله و غیرمبله، مسکونی، اداری و تجاری، ویلا
و مستغلات شما را جهت اجاره به سفار تخانه‌ها و شرکت‌های خارجی نیازمندیم

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ساختمان دربست در مناطق شمال تهران
جهت اجاره به یک سفار تخانه
و کمپانی‌های خارجی نیازمندیم

A report released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows more than 85 percent of adolescent contact lens wearers report habits that increase eye infection risk.

Mitral valve replacement without open-heart surgery

By Sadeq Dehqan & Katayoon Dashti

Mitral valve will be replaced without open-heart surgery for the first time in Iran, announced scientific secretary of 19th International Congress of Latest Developments in Heart and Blood Vessels.

Dr. Mohammad Eslami told the Iran Daily that the heart surgery, which is currently conducted in several advanced countries, will be conducted by an American-based Iranian physician in Tehran in coming weeks.

Aortic valve replacement via angiography has been done since years ago, but mitral valve replacement is a new procedure in the world, he said.

He said 19th International Congress of Latest Developments in Heart and Blood Vessels would be held in Tehran during September 12-15 with attendance of domestic and foreign specialists.

The latest developments and achievements regarding cardiovascular diseases are discussed during the gathering which is held annually, he added.

New methods for treatment of heart failures and using new heart batteries will be discussed in upcoming congress, he added.

New diagnosis methods for cardiovascular diseases and new medical imaging methods such as MRI, CT angiography and ecocardiography, which are effective in diagnosing cardiovascular diseases, will be discussed in four-day event, he said.

On new results regarding impacts of blood fat and blood pressure in



Scientific Secretary of 19th International Congress of Latest Developments in Heart and Blood Vessels Dr. Mohammad Eslami (L), talks to the Iran Daily reporter.

occurrence of cardiovascular diseases, he said the majority of strokes are resulted by uncontrolled blood pressure and heart rhythm irregularity which cause blood clot and bleeding in brain.

Over 60 percent of people above the age of 60 suffer blood pressure, half of whom are unaware of their problem and the rest don't undergo effective treatment, he said.

He also said 25 to 30 percent of

strokes caused by blood clot are resulted by heart rhythm irregularity. Eslami continued that one can prevent stroke through taking new medicines or implanting devices inside the heart.

He said age is a factor in occurrence of disease, adding that as person ages, the risk of heart disease and its side effects will rise.

The side effects of heart diseases are higher in women compared to

men, because the heart diseases are usually diagnosed later in women, he said.

He added that there is a misconception among physicians that women are less affected by cardiovascular diseases. Therefore, when a woman refers a physician with symptoms such as breathlessness and pain in thorax, the physician attribute the symptoms to mental tensions, he added.

Diarrhea, vomiting warning: Why you should never drink cloudy water



express.co.uk

Diarrhea and vomiting are symptoms of gastrointestinal illnesses, linked by a new study to drinking cloudy water.

Research has linked drinking cloudy water to gastrointestinal illnesses, express.co.uk reported.

A study by Drexel University found an association between water turbidity — the term for cloudiness or opacity — and acute gastrointestinal illness (AGI).

Gastrointestinal illness refers to diseases involving the gastrointestinal tract.

This includes the esophagus, stomach, small intestine, large intestine and rectum, and the related organs of digestion, the liver, gallbladder, and pancreas.

Anneclaire De Roos, associate professor in the Dornsife School of Public Health, said, "More than 10 studies found a link between water turbidity and AGI incidence."

"These results suggest that exposures through drinking water caused a low but detectable number of AGI cases in the regions and time periods studied."

It is thought AGI is caused by waterborne pathogens like norovirus, Giardia, or Cryptosporidium.

They carry symptoms including diarrhea and vomiting. Cloudiness in water is caused by material floating in it.

As such, it is thought undissolved particles may provide some protection for harmful pathogens against disinfectants and give germs a place to hide.

Additionally, cloudiness could indicate a contaminated water source.

Further research is needed to test the links under specific conditions, but they suggest water utilities could better monitor their data with the findings.

Other symptoms of gastrointestinal illness include loss of appetite, abdominal pains and cramps, blood in your stools and fever.

Another condition connected to water is Legionnaire's disease, caused by Legionella bacteria.

It can trigger symptoms including mild headaches, muscle pain, high temperature, chills, tiredness and confusion and potentially prove fatal.

You can avoid it by not drinking water that has been sitting for days and running taps for a while when you return home from holiday.

Babies born to obese mothers at 'higher risk of asthma'

Babies born to obese mothers are 30 percent more likely to have chest problems associated with asthma in later life, new research showed.

A study of 2,799 women, carried out by Professor Keith Godfrey and colleagues at the University of Southampton, discovered mothers to be with a body mass index of 30 or more were more likely to have babies diagnosed with wheezing, prolonged coughs and chest infections in their first year of life, express.co.uk wrote.

The research, carried out in

collaboration with University College London and Great Ormond Street Hospital, is thought to provide strong evidence of a correlation between maternal weight and asthma.

Lead author Dr. Katherine Pike, a lung expert at the hospital in Bloomsbury, London, said, "This is some of the clearest evidence of a link between the mother's weight and asthma in their offspring and we cannot ignore it."

"The trajectory of the development of asthma is established in the womb and certainly in the early years of life

and all women need support to assist them in becoming as healthy as possible before they become pregnant."

The research, published in the journal Pediatric Pulmonology, estimated one in five pregnant women is obese — which means almost 40,000 babies are at risk of asthma like symptoms.

The research was echoed by a previous study, published last month, which showed women who eat too much sugar during pregnancy double their chance of their child going on to develop symptoms of asthma.

NOTICE OF SUPPLEMENTARY TENDER DOCUMENTS

FOLLOWING THE ANNOUNCEMENT DATED AUG. 07, 2017 IN IRAN DAILY NEWSPAPER NO 5698 THE TENDER NO: 54/10336 FOR THE SUPPLY OF 1000 MTS OF FRESH FROZEN BEEF, HEREBY, THE FOLLOWING TEXT IS ADDED TO ARTICLE 7 OF TENDER CONDITIONS:

IN ADDITION TO CASH DEPOSIT, TENDERER MAY PROVIDE A VALID & UNCONDITIONAL BANK GUARANTEE EQUIVALENT TO THE AMOUNT OF CASH DEPOSIT, ISSUED BY IRANIAN BANKS OR FOREIGN BANKS APPROVED BY THE CENTRAL BANK OF IRI WITH A MONTH PERIOD OF VALIDITY & CAN BE RENEWED FOR AN ANOTHER MONTH.

ADDRESS: NO. 33, EASTERN BRAZIL ST., VANAK SQUARE, TEHRAN, IRAN.

TELEPHONE: (+98-21) 88772654-5

Heartburn drugs don't raise Alzheimer's risk

Widely used heartburn drugs called proton pump inhibitors do not appear to increase Alzheimer's disease risk, according to a new study.

Prilosec, Nexium and Prevacid are commonly used proton pump inhibitors, according to UPI.

Two previous studies reported a higher risk of dementia among people who took the drugs, which are commonly used by older adults.

Proton pump inhibitors work by reducing the production of stomach acid.

But this new study found that use of the drugs was not associated with an increased risk of Alzheimer's, even among those who took a higher dose or used the drugs for more than three years. The findings are from an analysis of data from Finland on nearly 71,000 Alzheimer's disease patients and nearly 283,000 people without the disease.

The study showed people need not avoid the drugs due to fears about developing Alzheimer's, said the University of Eastern Finland researchers led by Heidi Taipale, a postdoctoral researcher.

But long-term use should be carefully considered, because it has been linked with decreased calcium and vitamin B₁₂ absorption and with serious intestinal infections, the study authors said in a university news release.

The 1st Invitation for Prequalification of EPC+F Contractors for Shiraz Metro Line 2

Shiraz Municipality (Shiraz Urban Railway Organization) intends to award a project based on Act No. 1068618 dated 02/03/2017 of Iran Planning and Management Org. with the following specifications to the companies qualified by Iran Planning and Management Org. observing Item C of Article 12 of tendering law approved by Parliament of Islamic Republic of Iran in 2004 as well as the executive regulation of the aforesaid item (Act No. H335607/84136 dated 8/10/2006 of the Board of Ministers) and the addendum No. H37194T/22225 dated 7/5/2007.

1- Client - Name & Address:
Shiraz Municipality - Shiraz Urban Railway Organization, Dehbozorgi Shahidan Bridge, Shahid Avini St., Khabarnegar St., Shiraz, Iran. Post Code: 71936-89711 Tel.: 071-36292111-15. Fax: 071-36272092

2- Client's Consultant for Tender Procedure, Name & Address:
Mahab Ghods - Rahsaz Tarh, J.V. No.17, Takharestan Alley, Vahid Dastgerdy St., Tehran, Iran. Post Code: 19187-81185

3- Tender Subject:
Engineering, Procurement, Construction, Commissioning and Trial Operation of Shiraz Metro Line 2 via Foreign Financing under EPC+F contract with partnership of Iranian and international contractors so that minimum 65 percent of the work to be accomplished through the Iranian internal capacities. The project includes a subway line with the approximate length of 15km and 13 stations consisting of tunnels, stations, parking and depot area, pavement, track-laying, specific equipment, etc. By and large, all activities required for the construction, operation and financing of Shiraz Metro Line 2 (except for the rolling stock procurement) are included in the contractors responsibilities.

4- Minimum Estimated Required Financing about \$550 million

5- Location: Fars Province - Shiraz

6- Construction Duration: 36 months

7- Qualification Certificate of the Contractor and Consultant:
Constitution of Iranian (to possess Grade I certificate of

design and construction for rolling stock transportation with credible name record in SAJAR) and qualified foreign contractors

Or constitution of contractors and consultants partnership group under the following (1) and (2) conditions:

(1) Constitution of Iranian (to possess Grade I certificate of construction for rolling stock transportation with credible name record in SAJAR) and qualified foreign contractors

(2) Consultant possessing Grade I certificate of consultancy services for rolling stock transportation or introduce a qualified foreign consultant

8- Date, Deadline, Price and the Place to Receive the Qualification Documents:
The qualified companies may deposit 1,000,000 Rials in bank account no. 67879278/68 - SHEBA No. IR71012000000006787927868 - Mellat Bank - Vahid Dastgerdy Branch - in the name of Mahab Ghods Consulting Engineering Co. within official hours since 26/08/2017 till 30/08/2017 to purchase; receive the documents from the contract office of the aforesaid clients consultant. The qualification documents would only be submitted to the representatives having a credible letter of introduction from contractor company with authorized stamp and signature, mentioning the subject of tender.

9- Date, Deadline and the Place to Submit the Qualification Documents:
Having received and studied the qualification documents, the contractors shall complete, stamp, sign and envelop the documents and submit them to the secretariat of the Clients Consultant and get a receipt until 14/10/2017, 4:00 p.m.

Imagine a tire that could heal after being punctured or a rubber band that never snapped. Researchers have developed a new type of rubber that is as tough as natural rubber but can also self-heal.

NASA reveals secret plan to drill a hole into a supervolcano

Scientists are working on strategies to prevent a supervolcano erupting which could have devastating effects on the world's climate.

NASA researchers believe that drilling into the base of one of the most dangerous supervolcanoes in the world, which is underneath Yellowstone National Park, could be the solution, independent.co.uk reported.



Tourists view the Morning Glory hot spring in the Upper Geyser Basin of Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming, on May 14, 2016. independent.co.uk

High-pressure water jets would be pumped in to cool it down, releasing heat from the magma chamber and preventing it exploding. Brian Wilcox of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) at the California Institute of Technology, said, "However, drilling into a supervolcano has many potential dangers.

"If you drill into the top of the magma chamber and try and cool it from there, this would be very risky.

"This could make the cap over the magma chamber more brittle and prone to fracture. And you might trigger the release of harmful volatile gases in the magma at the top of the chamber which would otherwise not be released.

"I believe the supervolcano threat is substantially greater than the asteroid or comet threat."

A supervolcano eruption could cause long-term effects to the planet, including worldwide starvation and the release of massive amounts of Sulphur dioxide into the atmosphere.

The UN estimated that global food reserves would last just 74 days.

The biggest fear for volcanologists is wind-blown ash.

Larry Mastin, a volcanologist in The United States Geological Survey (USGS), said, "People who live upwind from eruptions need to be concerned about the big ones.

"Large eruptions give rise to umbrella clouds that push ash upwind and potentially over half the continent."

Major eruptions happen on average every 100,000 years.

The most recent supervolcanic eruption on the planet occurred 27,000 years ago at Taupo located at the midpoint of New Zealand's north island.

The US Geological Survey's website states that Yellowstone will be eruption-free for centuries.

Wilcox said, "However, Yellowstone explodes approximately on a 600,000 year cycle and it is about 600,000 years since it last exploded."

NASA's plan is to drill around 10km into Yellowstone and pump in water which would be slowly extracted.

The cost of the project is in the region of £2.69 billion. In future, a geothermal plant could be built, generating electric power.

Japan launches satellite for advanced GPS operation

Japan launched an H-2A rocket carrying a geo-positioning satellite into orbit after a week-long delay, the government said.



reuters.com

The launch of Japan's third geo-positioning satellite is part of its plan to build a version of the US global positioning system (GPS) to offer location information used for autopiloting and possible national security purposes, according to reuters.com.

The government postponed the launch a week ago because of a technical glitch.

Masaji Matsuyama, minister in charge of space policy, said, "With the success of the third satellite, we have made another step closer for having signals from four satellites in the future."

The government plans to launch a fourth satellite by the end of the year to start offering highly precise position information by next April.

Japan plans to boost the number of its geo-positioning satellites to seven by 2023, making its system independently operational even if the US GPS becomes unavailable for some reason, a government official said previously.

The satellite was manufactured by Mitsubishi Electric Corp and was blasted into orbit by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd.

Memories of fear could be permanently erased

The eternal sunshine of a spotless mind has come one step closer, said researchers working on methods to erase memories of fear.

The latest study, carried out in mice, unpicks why certain sounds can stir alarming memories and reveals a new approach to wiping such memories from the brain, theguardian.com wrote.

The researchers said the findings could be used to either weaken or strengthen particular memories while leaving others unchanged.

That, they said, could potentially be used to help those with cognitive decline or post-traumatic stress disorder by removing fearful memories while retaining useful ones, such as the sound of a dog's bark.

Jun-Hyeong Cho, coauthor of the research from the University of California, Riverside, said, "We can use same approach to selectively manipulate only the pathological fear memory while preserving all other adaptive fear memories which are necessary for our daily lives."

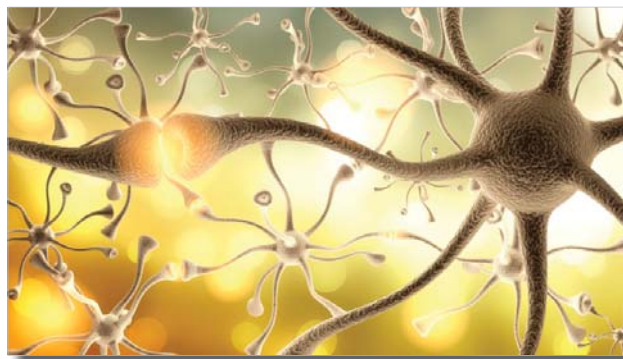
The research is the latest in a string of studies looking at ways to erase unpleasant memories, with previous work by scientists exploring techniques ranging from brain scans and AI to the use of drugs.

Published in the journal *Neuron* by Cho and his colleague Woong Bin Kim, the research revealed how the team used genetically modified mice to examine the pathways between the area of the brain involved in processing a particular sound and the area involved in emotional memories, known as the amygdala.

Cho said, "These mice are special in that we can label or tag specific pathways that convey certain signals to the amygdala, so that we can identify which pathways are really modified as the mice learn to fear a particular sound."

"It is like a bundle of phone lines. Each phone line conveys certain auditory information to the amygdala."

In the first part of the experiment the



michaelmullanblog.com

team played both a high pitched and low-pitched tone to mice.

But, when the high-pitched sound was played, the mice froze in fear, no such response was seen when the alternative, low-pitched, tone was played.

The team then looked to see if there were differences between the high-pitch and low-pitch tone pathways in the brains of the mice, revealing that, among the mice exposed electric shocks, the connections within the 'high-pitched' pathway had become stronger, while the other pathway remained unchanged.

The team found that when mice were subsequently repeatedly exposed to high-pitched sounds without the shocks they lost their fear — a process known as fear extinction.

Cho added, "Fear extinction is the psychological basis of exposure therapy used in [treating] post-traumatic

stress disorder.

"After exposure therapy, for example two weeks, the fear relapses or recurs spontaneously."

The new research offers an explanation: Even after fear extinction, the team found the neural pathway for the high-pitched tone remained strengthened in the mice.

"Fear extinction is not an eraser of fear memory. It just hides the fear memory transiently."

But the team discovered that using a technique called optogenetics, it was possible to truly erase the unpleasant memories.

This technique involved the researchers using a virus to introduce genes into particular neurons in the brains of the mice that were involved in the 'high-pitch' pathways.

Once inside the cells, the genes result in the production of proteins which respond to light, allowing researchers to control the activity of the neurons.

Taking mice with the fearful memories, the team exposed the neurons involved in the 'high-pitch' pathway to

low-frequency light — an approach which weakens the connections between the neurons.

The upshot was that the mice no longer appeared fearful when they heard the high-pitched tone.

Cho added, "It permanently erases the fear memory. We no longer see the relapse of fear."

Peter Giese, professor of neurobiology of mental health at King's College London, said that it was too soon to think of using the research to help those with psychopathologies, saying it would be unethical to use optogenetic techniques on people.

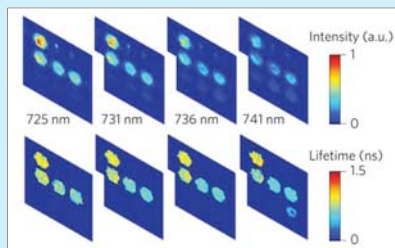
"Exactly how this can be applied to humans is a little bit unclear to me."

Nevertheless, Giese said the study was a big advance, not only in improving understanding of fear extinction, but also highlighting the importance of the strengthening of connections between neurons in forming memories.

What's more, he said, it reveals a way to reverse the process.

"This is a true erasure of the memory."

New bioimaging technique is fast, economical



A new method quickly, economically and accurately tracks multiple in vivo interactions. phys.org

A new approach to optical imaging makes it possible to quickly and economically monitor multiple molecular interactions in a large area of living tissue — such as an organ or a small animal; technology that could have applications in medical diagnosis, guided surgery, or pre-clinical drug testing.

The method, which is detailed in *Nature Photonics*, is capable of simultaneously tracking 16 colors of spatially linked information over an area spanning several centimeters and can capture interactions that occur in mere billions of a second, phys.org reported.

Xavier Intes, a professor of biomedical engineering at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, said, "We have developed a smart way to acquire a massive amount of information in a short period of time.

"Our approach is faster and less expensive than existing technology without any compromise in the precision of the data we acquire."

As its name implies, optical imaging uses light to investigate a target.

In biomedical applications, optical imaging has many advantages over techniques such as MRI and PET, which use magnetism and positron emissions to acquire images inside of living tissue.

The method the Intes lab developed makes use of advanced optical imaging techniques — fluorescence lifetime imaging

paired with foster resonance energy transfer—to reveal the molecular state of tissues.

In fluorescence lifetime imaging (FLIM), molecules of interest are tagged with fluorescent 'reporter' molecules which, when excited by a beam of light, emit a light signal with a certain color over time that is indicative of their immediate environment.

Reporter molecules can be tuned to offer information on environmental factors such as viscosity, pH, or the presence of oxygen.

FLIM is ideal for the thick tissues of a body because it

relies on time information, rather than light intensity, which degrades significantly as it travels through tissue.

Researchers also used Foster Resonance Energy Transfer (FRET), which determines close proximity between two similarly tagged molecules — such as a drug and its target — based on an energy transfer that occurs only when the tagged molecules are delivered into the diseased cells for maximal therapeutically efficacy.

However, while the FLIM-FRET method generates a signal rich in information, collecting that signal quickly and

economically is problematic.

Current methods rely on expensive cameras, which can image only one reporter at a time and scanning the subject can take hours as the camera collects information from its full field of vision.

To overcome this obstacle, the researchers dispensed with cameras and instead used a single-pixel detection method combined with a mathematical sampling technique (based on a Hadamard transform) that allowed them to collect sufficient relevant information in 10 minutes to construct a precise image.

The New Polytechnic is transformative in the global impact of research, in its innovative pedagogy and in the lives of students at Rensselaer.

India recorded the highest number of tuberculosis-related deaths among children below the age of 15 in the world in 2015, according to a study published in the scientific journal *The Lancet*.



Millions of people urgently in need of food aid in Ethiopia

independent.co.uk

Millions of people in Ethiopia require 'immediate life-saving intervention' after a severe drought and major flash floods have devastated livestock and crops, the United Nations warned.

At least 7.8 million people have been receiving emergency food aid since April, up from 5.6 million at the start of the year, but a further 700,000 people in the country's Somali region did not receive supplies 'due to resource constraints' and they are now feared to be on the brink of starvation, independent.co.uk wrote.

In July, there were 376,000 severely malnourished children under five and 3.6 million moderately malnourished children and women who were either pregnant or breastfeeding a child.

Oxfam warned that the international community — currently preoccupied with other issues such as Isis, Donald Trump and North Korea — must act urgently to prevent the crisis from turning into a 'catastrophe'.

In a report, written with the Ethiopian government, the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) warned of "deepening levels of malnutrition and critical water shortages in the drought-affected areas".

Some 228 districts, more than half the country, are

now classed as 'hotspot priority one' areas where people will die without help.

"The number of districts requiring immediate life-saving intervention increased to levels not seen since the height of the El Niño drought impacts in 2016," the report said, referring to the natural weather system that increased the world's average temperature last year, exacerbating the situation in Ethiopia.

"The 19 percent increase in priority one districts is largely due to the deepening drought conditions, which continue to deplete water and pasture sources, significantly impacting livestock body condition and milk production.

"Milk is the main source of food and income for the majority of households in the drought-affected areas."

About two million animals have died in the Somali region alone, according to the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

But, as some areas suffer from drought, others are experiencing severe flooding.

"In Oromia region, four incidents of flash floods were reported in Adama, Arsi and East Shewa zones in the second week of July, destroying more than 50 houses and more than 800 hectares of fruit and vegetable crops,"

the report said.

"In Afar region, a flooding incident on 20 July has affected 204 households and damaged one school and health center in Megale (district)."

The report warned a total of more than 1.5 million people were expected to be affected by flooding this summer with 500,000 likely to be forced to leave their homes.

There is also an ongoing outbreak of acute watery diarrhea in six regions.

So far the international community has committed \$382 million towards an appeal for \$948 million of aid sought in January this year.

"All humanitarian partners, including donors and recipient agencies, are encouraged to inform OCHA Ethiopia of cash and in-kind contributions," the report said.

Abdoul Karim Bah, the FAO's deputy representative in Ethiopia, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation that it was "crucial" to provide aid between now and October when the rains are due to come.

"If we don't act now, hunger and malnutrition will only get worse among (herding) communities," he said.

Stanford psychologist: Internet culture isn't as toxic as it feels

The Internet feels like a worse place lately. In March, the Pew Research Center cited hate memes, manipulative bots spewing fake news, and media reports declaring the end of Internet innocence as evidence that the social web isn't "a space where disparate views, ideas and conversations [can] constructively converge."

Meanwhile, the risks of going online are widely discussed: It can cause depression, or create a 'toxic mirror'. It can even make us question our deepest principles, qz.com wrote.

Initial excitement over the global village and its possibilities has turned into widespread dismay about the turn civilization's taking.

Blaming the Internet for society's ills may feel like a reasonable leap. It's typical of humans to worry that new tools will ruin the world they know, according to sociologist Frank Furedi.

He noted in a 2014 essay for *Aspen Review* that Plato worried reading and writing would destroy memory, just as we now worry that the Internet will destroy children's ability to learn.

Michal Kosinski, a social psychologist and data scientist at Stanford University focusing on personality change



killacodes.com

research, remained optimistic, however. The Internet only reflects who we already are, he said.

Kosinski's pioneering approach to digital psychometrics — assessing personality algorithmically using online data — gives him a unique insight into our online lives. His programs analyze data for what it said about us, like assessing Twitter users' music preferences for personality clues.

Kosinski is surprisingly optimistic for someone whose spent his career looking at social media from a psychological perspective. The data scientist coordinates the myPersonality project,

an international research endeavor to create psycho-demographic profiles of millions of Facebook users.

He is perhaps most well-known for his creation ApplyMagicSauce.com, a predictive engine for free online personality analysis.

In 2012, Kosinski showed that private traits and attributes are predictable based on responses to social media posts — they reveal who we are.

"Computer analysis of personality is much more sophisticated than human analysis because it's taking tens of thousands of statistical data points and noting dependencies that are invisible to

humans," he said.

That understanding can, of course, be used to manipulate. His algorithmic predictions have proven influential in targeted marketing, and his work reportedly inspired similar technology used in private campaigns designed to push voters to choose Brexit and elect Donald Trump.

Kosinski didn't endorse that use of his work, but it did give him cause to consider the dangers of Big Data. Still, he said he doesn't fear a hyperreal post-privacy future because he believes the Internet is making life better, not worse. "We're more equal than ever before," Kosinski said.

"There's a connection between elites and non-elites that was impossible before global society's migration online."

Our first human societies were small villages, where people had intimate relationships and strict social codes.

Over time, villages grew into cities with more-distant connections and communications, and leaders became estranged from their communities as a result.

Now, he said, the Internet functions as a very big village — but unlike our initial tiny enclaves, we now have access to global culture and communities.

Promotion 'makes women much less satisfied with new job'

It is time to pay closer attention to the experiences that women have when they are in positions of authority.

Being promoted to management roles makes women less satisfied with their job, according to research.

Analysis of a survey of 13,000 UK employees, the first long-term study to track a large group of promoted staff, found that even in workplaces that offered greater flexibility, better pay and promotion opportunities, women were less satisfied with their jobs after they had accepted a higher management post, theguardian.com reported.



theguardian.com

Dr. Daniela Lup of Middlesex University, who carried out the study, said that, by contrast, men's job satisfaction rose when they were promoted into management.

"Results indicate that promotions to management are accompanied by an increase in job satisfaction for men but not for women," Lup claimed in an article published in the journal *Work, Employment and Society*, run by the British Sociological Association.

Lup said her study showed that this gender gap was not always down to overt discriminatory factors.

Rather it reflected subtle forms of discrimination that arise from widespread beliefs, held by both men and women, that women are less able managers. This stereotype, when held by the staff of women managers, will diminish their authority in front of subordinates, Lup claimed.

"Given that managers' performance and, implicitly, their job satisfaction depends on the quality of their interaction with subordinates, if some perceive women as less competent managers, they are less likely to accept women's authority and less likely to support their manager," Lup said.

Lup said that if the glass ceiling is to be shattered, organizations should not only focus on removing overt barriers that prevent women from climbing the managerial ladder, but also pay closer attention to the experiences that women have when they are in positions of authority.

Aboriginal women empowering schoolgirls in central Australia

Sitting under the shade of a gum tree in a dry river bed in central Australia, senior Aboriginal women are working to empower a group of schoolgirls in the fight against domestic violence.

Central Australia has one of the highest rates of domestic violence in the nation, yet many students said they had not been exposed to awareness or prevention programs, abc.net.au reported.

But that changed for a group of girls from Yirra College, an Indigenous boarding school in Alice Springs, who spent four days at a cultural and leadership camp learning about connection to country, language, and developing resilience.



abc.net.au

Yirra College student Crystella Campbell said the inaugural camp had given her skills and confidence.

"I've developed team work, we've shared skills and knowledge about our family, history, language and culture," she said.

"This camp is important to me because we are young role models, the younger ones can look up to us and we can share the knowledge and experience with them."

The camp was held at Timouth Well, about 200 kilometers northwest of Alice Springs.

Yirra Girls Academy coordinator Beverly Angeles said it was important to educate the girls about domestic violence in a culturally appropriate way and in a place removed from the distractions of town and communities.

The girls were looking at cultural and country connections, including language, kinship and skin groups, she said.

"I think most of the girls have seen (domestic violence) firsthand, so this is more about supporting each other, coming together and strengthening each other and basically saying, 'no, we've had enough, no more,'" Angeles said.

"It's about empowering our women, getting them to speak up and speak out, because there's safety and strength in numbers."

Learning and engaging with elders was a major aspect of the camp, with the students hearing stories from the Tangentyere Women's Family Safety Group about domestic and family violence and how they can rise above violence at home or in their communities.

Efforts to stop exploitation of parents by schools

India's opposition parties have questioned the Delhi government's recent announcement of taking over the management of over 400 private schools in the national capital if they do not comply with the government's order to refund 'overcharged' fees to students.

The ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has maintained that the party has been trying to stop schools from exploiting parents, sundayguardianlive.com wrote.

The Delhi BJP has criticized the Delhi government and AAP. Harish Khurana, BJP spokesperson, told *The Sunday Guardian*: "Rather than getting into such confrontation with school managements, the AAP should sit with both school managements and parents to arrive at an amicable solution."

However, senior leader of the AAP and MLA Somnath Bharti told *The Sunday Guardian*, "We are not



sundayguardianlive.com

interfering with school managements. What we are seeking to achieve is to stop the exploitation of parents at the hands of big private schools. The Delhi government's or-

der is not being implemented randomly, but on the recommendation of the Justice Anil Dey Singh Committee."

Khurana said, "On what basis is AAP saying that private schools are charging more? Have they done a survey on this? I do not think that the people of Delhi will accept such a decision, when the government is not even being able to get its act together in their own government schools."

Haron Yusuf, senior Congress leader and former Cabinet Minister in the Sheila Dikshit government, termed the AAP government's move as a 'populist' measure. Yusuf told *The Sunday Guardian*, "The Delhi government should stop resorting to such populist announcements and conduct an inquiry if they think schools are resorting to unfair practices. The Delhi Education Act has provisions for schools to be penalized if they do anything unfair."

Death by camera clicks: Misery of SeaWorld killer whales

A thousand tourists hold their breath as a giant killer whale leaps skyward, the Sun gleaming off its smooth back.
 As if auditioning for a Disney movie, the two-and-a-half-ton leviathan performs an elegant backflip before landing with a thunderous splash, dailymail.co.uk reported.



GETTY IMAGES

SeaWorld in San Diego, California, is packed with visitors, many of them British, all drawn by the undisputed star attractions: 10 huge killer whales performing two shows daily.
 Who would not be moved by such a magnificent spectacle of nature?
 And yet who would not be disturbed by the accounts now emerging of how these intelligent creatures are imprisoned away from public view, ridden with disease, and separated from their family members in what one former SeaWorld trainer last night described as a "house of horrors?"
 It is once the sun-burnt crowds have drifted away that SeaWorld's killer whales, or orcas, are herded off to backstage pools where, with little room to dive, they swim listlessly in circles, often banging their heads against the concrete sides in boredom or frustration.
 Or worse, as death of disease-ravaged Kasatka made clear: "Euthanized" after falling incurably sick in her artificial environment, she is the third SeaWorld killer whale to die this year alone.



And this, in the outspoken words of Kasatka's former trainer, is "a disgrace to humanity."
 John Hargrove, a SeaWorld expert turned whistleblower, is in tears as he describes the orca's fate to The Mail.
 "What continues to go on in parks like SeaWorld is an abomination," he said.
 "They claim captive orcas help educate people, and for years I bought into it. But

"inaccurate and misleading".
 Yet it has helped drive a growing international movement to ban the captivity of whales and dolphins, and Hargrove, for one, is unshakeable in his convictions.
 "In the wild, these magnificent creatures live to 80, 100 years old," he continued.
 "I have to speak out because if it stops just one person paying to go to a park where orcas are tortured to perform circus tricks, then Kasatka's death won't have been in vain."

Kasatka lived in misery, in barbaric and horrific conditions, and died in agony. She lived out her days in a house of horrors — and I was complicit in selling the lie to the public."
 Hargrove has already played a central part in Blackfish, an award-winning documentary which gained near cult status after its release in 2013, and caused SeaWorld's shares and attendance figures to plummet.
 Viewers were shaken by one horrific scene in which Kasatka is shown dragging trainer Ken Peters to the bottom of a tank in 2006, nearly drowning him.
 While crowds marvel at the apparently tame nature of the orcas at SeaWorld, the creatures can turn on their handlers.

In 2006, Kasatka took the feet of trainer Ken Peters in her jaws and took him to the bottom of the pool before releasing him. He suffered a broken foot and puncture wounds.
 Then in 2010, trainer Dawn Brancheau, right, had her spinal cord severed in a fatal attack by an orca called Tilikum. SeaWorld lambasted the film, calling it

While capturing wild orcas has been banned by many Western countries, including the US, Russia and China continue to hunt and trap them.
 Globally, 50 million people visit marine parks with captive orcas.
 Thanks to films such as Blackfish, SeaWorld and other aquatic parks have been forced to change — although the message that "cuddly" cetaceans are not pets is yet to reach the wider public, as shown by the needless death of a baby dolphin in Spain last week.
 New legislation in California means mothers and calves can no longer be separated and captive breeding has ended.
 SeaWorld, which also has parks in Orlando, Florida, and San Antonio, Texas, owns 21 orcas and attracts 10 million visitors each year, including thousands from the UK.
 They pay up to £75 to watch the killer whales pirouette to music and "beach" themselves on the concrete sides of the pool.
 In January, an orca called Tilikum, notorious for killing his female trainer, died after a long battle with a lung infection.
 Then last month, Kyara, a three-month-old orca that was born under the park's now-defunct breeding programme, died from pneumonia.
 Now it has been announced that Kasatka, too, was put down last Tuesday. At 41, she was half the age she might have lived to in the ocean.

The farmer and his sons



A father, being on the point of death, wished to be sure that his sons would give the same attention to his farm as he himself had given it.
 He called them to his bedside and said, "My sons, there is a great treasure hid in one of my vineyards."
 The sons, after his death, took their spades and mattocks and carefully dug over every portion of their land. They found no treasure, but the vines repaid their labor by an extraordinary and superabundant crop.

Real wealth lies in hard work.

10 rules everyone needs to follow on the Tube

Let's face it, nobody really likes traveling on the Tube — especially not in rush hour.
 Which is why there are a number of often unspoken rules in place, and thankfully most of us follow them, metro.co.uk wrote.

For example, keep your music down, don't eat smelly food, and try not to stick your bag in someone's lap.
 But then there are those who don't follow the rules — either because they don't know them, or because they have decided to rebel (please stop).
 So we're here to provide a friendly reminder.
 Here are some guidelines for seamless Tube riding that we think should be observed.



MIKE KEMP/IN PICTURES VIA GETTY IMAGES
 Keep your music down, don't eat smelly food, and try not to stick your bag in someone's lap.

- 1. Stand on the right**
 Please, please, please stand on the right.
 There is nothing more annoying than having someone stood on the left hand side when you're in a rush.
 So if not for yourself, do it for all of us stressed out commuters, and stick to the right if you're planning on standing still.
- 2. Don't stop walking**
 Why do people stop walking in the middle of the station?
 There are literally hundreds of people walking through busy Tube stations every minute, and we're sorry to say this, but it is not the time to check your phone.
 If you really do need to answer that text, please step to one side, please.
- 3. Sit with your friends**
 You're on the Tube and two friends get on at the next station

— sitting in the seats either side of you, having a lovely, loud conversation.
 You ask them if they would like to trade seats and sit together (so kind), and they say no. No. And then carry on with their chat.
 Please people, say yes. Do us all a favor and sit within whispering distance.
 Nobody likes being spoken

to sit and get lunch somewhere, and the only option is a quick sandwich on the Tube. We get it, and it's cool.
 But you know what's not cool? Crumbs.
7. Wait your turn
 If the train doors have opened, please let people get off before you get on.
 It's not a race and it saves all of the groans and uncomfortable comments.

8. Position your luggage correctly
 If you have a massive suitcase, don't drag it down to a seat, stand in an area that actually has room, please.
 There is nothing worse than trying to get off a Tube train and practically having to do the Limbo to do so.

9. Turn your

music down
 If the whole carriage can hear your music through your headphones, you've got the volume up too high.
 Turn it down.
 And while we're talking about noise — please put your phone keyboard on silent.
 How people still have their keyboard clicking sound on it beyond us.
10. Get your Oyster card out
 Come on, get it out.
 It's just the worst feeling when you're power walking behind someone and you see them reach for their bag just as they get to the gate.
 Please, everyone, get your Oyster Card, pass or even contactless card ready before you get to the gates.
 Don't make everyone stand still behind you while you root around looking for it.

Themed Crossword

- ACROSS**
1. Large American feline (6)
 5. Freshwater carnivorous mammal (5)
 8. Snake-like fish (3)
 9. Edible marine crustacean (7)
 10. Lepidopterous insects (5)
 11. Adult insect after metamorphosis (5)
 12. Sweet liquid attractive to bees (6)
 13. Carnivorous marine predators (6)
 17. Large group of insects (5)
 18. Dromedary (5)
 20. Large anthropoid ape (7)
 21. Star sign represented by a lion (3)
 22. Low animal sound (5)
 23. Bloodsucking African fly (6)
- DOWN**
2. Young nocturnal bird (5)
 3. Aquatic birds (5)
 4. Leopard mammal (6)
 5. African flightless bird (7)
 6. Massive odd-toed ungulate, in short (5)
 7. Animal or insect pests (6)
 13. Butterfly, Red ___ (7)
 15. Large food and game fish (6)
 16. Nocturnal wildcat of Central America and South America (6)
 17. Insect bite (5)
 18. Large long-necked wading bird (5)
 19. Hybrid offspring of male donkeys and female horses (5)

Yesterday's solution

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N A I R O B I P I S A
A C S U A
S E U P H R A T E S N
S L A A A H D
A L A M O E M A I N E
U N L P S
I D A H O P A R M A
K A G E A
E S S E N A M M A N
N I O M P K
Y E D I N B U R G H A
A N I A U G U S T A
O A H U I A U G U S T A
    
```

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.

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

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

Indonesia's president expressed concern on Sunday after Malaysia's Southeast Asian Games organizers mistakenly published the Indonesian flag upside-down in a commemorative magazine, prompting anger amongst fans.



GETTY IMAGES

Barca to increase Coutinho offer to £130m

Barcelona is preparing to increase the offer for Philippe Coutinho to £130 million in the hope that Liverpool will finally agree to sell the Brazilian. Liverpool flatly turned down a third bid of £119 million on Friday but it has since emerged that only £80 million was guaranteed, the Sunday Express reported.

The rest of the money would have been made up in add-ons, including a payment if Coutinho wins World Player of the Year award. And even then Barca wanted to spread payments over five years. Liverpool has so far dug in, insisting that Coutinho is not for sale – but the Reds are believed to value the

playmaker at around £140 million. Coutinho has made no secret of his desire to move to the Nou Camp but only signed a new five-year contract this year. He handed in a transfer request earlier this month shortly after Liverpool declared he was not for sale. The Catalan giant was left stunned by Neymar's decision to leave the club in a £200 million deal for Paris Saint-Germain. Barca will need to offer a much bigger down payment to tempt them into doing business.

Iranians claim four bronzes in Summer Universiade

Sports Desk

Iranian athletes grabbed four bronze medals at the 2017 Summer Universiade in Taipei City, Chinese Taipei.

On Sunday, Iran's Mohammad Fotoohi suffered a defeat at the semifinal of the men's individual saber of the fencing competitions to settle for the third spot.

Fotoohi's compatriot, Mohammad Rahbari, also representing Iran in the individual saber contests, clinched the bronze medal after he was beaten by his Hungarian opponent at the semis.

Elsewhere in Taekwondo competitions, Mahdi Jamali claimed the bronze in men's individual freestyle poomsae claiming 75.8 pts as athletes from South Korea and USA took the gold and silver, respectively.

Fateme Hesham was Iran's other bronze winner at the taekwondo games as she finished third in women's individual freestyle poomsae. Also on the first day of the competitions, Iran's volleyball team started its campaign in style as the Asian side eased past



UNIVERSIADE TAIPEI 2017 臺北世大運 For You · For Youth

Cyprus in straight sets (25-18, 25-14, 25-12). Iran will face the UAE in its second fixture later today. More than 7500 athletes represent 144 countries at the 29th edition of the Summer Universiade in Taipei City which will continue until August 30.

Buffon 'sorts out problems' for Juventus, says Allegri

Gianluigi Buffon's ability to "sort out" problems for Juventus remains as important as ever, according to Juventus manager Massimiliano Allegri.

Allegri hailed the influence of Gianluigi Buffon after the goalkeeper's first-half penalty save set the platform for Saturday's season-opening win over Cagliari, FourFourTwo reported.

Mario Mandzukic, Paulo Dybala and Gonzalo Higuain all got on the scoresheet as the champion began its latest title defense in emphatic fashion.

It might have been different had Buffon not palmed away Diego Farias' spot-kick, the first penalty awarded by the video assistant referee (VAR) in Serie A history following a foul by Alex Sandro.

Allegri conceded the new system will take a period of adjustment but is relieved he can still call on his 39-year-old skipper to deal with any scenario.

"We'll have to get used to waiting for the decision," Allegri said of VAR after the match.

"In this case it was a penalty against us but fortunately we have the best guy around in goal – he sorts out all sorts of problems for us.

"We defended well out there, especially after the penalty. Before then we let them in a few times, including the move that led to the penalty itself.

"All things considered we performed well at both ends of the pitch."

Juve is bidding for a seventh straight Serie A title but is expected to face fresh challenges from the likes of AC Milan, Napoli and Roma.

Italian champion's task will be made easier if star attacker Dybala, who has inherited the Bianconeri's famous No.10 shirt, can repeat his goalscoring feats of the past two seasons.

"It's not easy to follow in the footsteps of so many fantastic players who have worn the shirt before me and I'm not going to get carried away after today," the 23-year-old said.

"I need to keep going as I am." Juve's next assignment is a trip to Genoa, who finished 16th last season.



MARCO BERTORELLO/AGF

Juventus goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon saves a penalty kick during the Italian Serie A opener against Cagliari in Juventus Stadium in Turin, Italy, on August 19, 2017.

Arsenal stunned by Stoke



CARL REICINE/REUTERS

Jese Rodriguez celebrates scoring the winner against Arsenal on his debut for Stoke City in bet365 Stadium on August 19, 2017.

"We were quite good last year on corners and I believe overall that, with a bit of work, we can get that out of our system," admitted Arsene Wenger after Arsenal's opening day Premier League victory over Leicester.

The 4-3 comeback provided a glimpse of what most Gooners have become accustomed to over the years; excitement in attack, fear in defense and a continuous sense that their team is about to concede when the opposition is in Arsenal's half, goal.com reported.

Saturday evening's game against Stoke conjured up more of the same as far as Arsenal was concerned, with Wenger's side dominant in possession yet unable to finish the chances it created before being caught out defensively.

Danny Welbeck was wasteful in front of goal and Alexandre Lacazette was unlucky to have a second-half goal ruled out for offside, but it is Stoke's Jese Rodriguez who comes away with the headlines after finishing neatly past Petr Cech shortly after the break to hand Stoke a 1-0 win.

The questionable decision to play Hector Bellerin at left wing-back almost paid off as his deft touches and superb linkup play contributed to a swarm of first-half attacks.

Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain put in an equally good shift at right wing-back, but it is evident that Wenger still doesn't know what his best starting XI is.

But, whether it's Nacho Monreal alongside Rob Holding or Per Mertesacker, and indecision over who should start at wing-back, these are the issues which should have been resolved

in preseason. Arsenal has had ample time to bring in top-quality additions this summer and the arrivals of Lacazette and Sead Kolasinac have certainly made a difference – but the Gunners need more.

The pursuit of Thomas Lemar has died down due to Monaco's reluctance to sell yet there is belief that Wenger will make a final attempt to land his man before the transfer window closes at the end of the month.

"We have 33 players at the moment and that's too many. I'm not thinking about buying players tonight," said Wenger after the game.

His comments suggest Arsenal is now finished in the window which will almost certainly ignite the fury of fans who believe Arsenal is still one or two players short from competing.

There can be no question what Arsenal needs right now more than any new signing, and that is the club's Chilean talisman Alexis Sanchez.

He's expected to be fully fit for the Gunners' trip to Liverpool next week and the infectious work ethic and ability to create something out of nothing makes him the ideal man to fire up Arsenal's attack when the going gets tough away from home.

Arsenal had no trouble in scoring four against a shoddy Leicester defense, but when faced with the man-mountains of Kurt Zouma and Ryan Shawcross, it was another story completely.

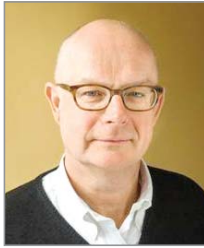
New signings and the return of Alexis are imperative if Arsenal does not want a repeat of last season's fifth-place finish.

Art & Culture

J. Thompson, award-winning Broadway producer, dies at 62

Stuart J. Thompson, a Tony Award-winning producer and manager of Broadway shows who brought a contemplative, low-key style to an industry known for its razzmatazz, and helped mount hits like 'The Book of Mormon', died on Thursday at his home in Manhattan. He was 62.

The cause was complications of esophageal cancer, a spokesman, Chris Boneau, said in an email, nytimes.com reported.



MARC BRYAN-BROWN/nytimes.com

Thompson was a respected leader in the theater community, not only as a producer but also as a general manager of more than 70 Broadway, Off Broadway and national touring productions.

In an industry filled with larger-than-life figures who reveled in the spotlight, he preferred to stay behind the scenes, but his sharp intellect, good taste and dedication made him an influential force, his admirers said.

The actress Patti LuPone, a friend of Thompson's who worked with him on productions of 'Moster Class' and 'The Old Neighborhood', said he was a gentleman.

"That's who he was in life and who he was in his profession," she said in an interview on Saturday. "Stuart Thompson was the most dignified, generous man in the business. He elevated me."

His productions were nominated for 20 Tony Awards and won six. Among the winners were his stagings of Yasmina Reza's 'God of Carnage' — named best play in 2009, and of Arthur Miller's 'Death of a Salesman', starring Philip Seymour Hoffman, named best revival of a play in 2012.

Thompson produced the three longest-running plays on Broadway of the last 25 years: Charles Busch's 'The Tale of the Allergist's Wife', David Auburn's 'Proof' and Simon Stephens' 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time'.

He was also a producer of the repertory productions of 'Waiting for Godot' and 'No Man's Land' at the Cort Theater in New York.

In 2010, the Commercial Theater Institute honored him with its annual award for outstanding achievement in commercial theater producing.

Comedian, civil rights activist Dick Gregory dies at 84

Dick Gregory, a comedian who lambasted racism and played a prominent role in the 1960s civil rights movement after becoming one of the first black comics to perform for white audiences, died on Saturday at age 84, his son said.

"It is with enormous sadness that the Gregory family confirms that their father, comedic legend and civil rights activist Mr. Dick Gregory departed this earth tonight in Washington, DC," his son, Christian, wrote on Instagram, Reuters reported.

Gregory, who lived in Washington, checked into Sibley Memorial Hospital a week ago after falling ill, said his longtime publicist Steve Jaffe. He died at the facility of heart failure, Jaffe said.

Gregory's success as a comedian in the early 1960s helped pave the way for other black comics, such as Richard Pryor, to gain greater fame by reaching a mainstream audience.

Born in St. Louis, Missouri, Gregory grew up in poverty. He was working for the US Postal Service and performing in front of largely black audiences for low pay.

At the time, stand-up comedy was largely segregated. In the early 1960s, Gregory recorded a number of comedy albums and appeared on television talk shows, becoming one of the highest paid black entertainers.

Gregory's stand-up comedy tackled racism, often with quips that took his audience by surprise. "Segregation is not all bad," he once joked. "Have you ever heard of a collision where the people in the back of the bus got hurt?"

If his comedy routine was at times disarming, his civil rights activism left no doubt where he stood.

Gregory was arrested several times for taking part in demonstrations in the 1960s, befriending the late Martin Luther King Jr. as he used his fame to help push for desegregation.

The comedian also protested the Vietnam War, took part in hunger strikes and ran for US president in 1968 as a write-in candidate for the obscure Peace and Freedom Party.

In the early 1970s, Gregory left stand-up comedy to spend more time on political activism and in the 1980s turned his focus to promoting healthy eating and became a diet food entrepreneur. He returned to stand-up in the 1990s.

This month, he was in the middle of a comedy tour when he fell ill, Jaffe said.

Weather



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'Mashti Esmail' to compete in fEXiff 2002-2022

Art & Culture Desk

Iranian documentary 'Mashti Esmail' will take part in the competition section of the 15th Experimental International Film Festival (fEXiff 2002-2022) to be held in Sydney, Australia, on September 23-24, 2017.

Directed by Mehdi Zamanpour Kiasari, the documentary is about an old man who despite losing his eyesight at the age of forty due to a genetic disorder is not only leading a normal life independently, but engages in activities that even ordinary people fail to perform, Mehr News Agency reported.

In 2002, Cinewest curators created an international film festival with the intention of lasting only for 20 years.

This length of time allowed the curators to select works that are subject to no restrictions, rules and regulations such as duration, date of production, and/or the country it represents to challenge already rigid structures practiced by mainstream film festivals from around the globe.

The curators acknowledged the difficulties in hosting screen events without funding and that is why they estimated until 2022, to be able to host as many editions as possible with no financial support.

In late September 2017, the festival will present its 15th and last edition, despite lack of funds, with un-



conditional support from filmmakers and in-kind support from Sydney Olympic Park Authority. This year, the filmfest will be a part of Sydney Fringe Festival to represent Western Sydney. Over 50 short and feature length films from 30 countries will be screened at fEXiff 2017.



TASNIM NEWS AGENCY



MEHDI BOLOURIAN/FARS NEWS AGENCY

Managing Director of Iran Cultural & Press Institute Mohammad Taqi Roghaniha (2nd R) smiles as secretary of the ICPI's Photography Desk, Abolfazl Nesaei (R) receives Iran Press Photographer of the Year Award.

Iran, Azerbaijan discuss expansion of theater cooperation



IRNA

Iran and Azerbaijan discussed ways to promote bilateral cooperation in theatrical sector in the Azeri capital of Baku.

In the meeting between the head of the Theater Association of the western Iranian province of Kermanshah, Mohammadreza Dorand, and Ali Qesmat Lalayov, the head of Azerbaijan Musical Theater on Saturday, the two sides also focused on developing mutual cultural ties, performing joint artworks and exchanging visits by Iranian and Azeri directors and artists between the two countries, Azerbaijan State News Agency AZERTAC reported.

The meeting took place during a visit by Dorand and his accompanying delegation to Azerbaijan Musical Theater.

Speaking in the meeting, Lalayov described ties between the two countries as 'important'.

He pointed to the Azerbaijan cultural festivals held in Iran in June and said such events are essential in developing ties in the fields of art and culture between the two sides.

In the same meeting, Dorand invited Lalayov to serve on the panel of jury of a theater festival to be held in Kermanshah Province.