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An international hashtag to condemn Saudi violence

#I_Speak_For_Buthaina



See page 13

Leader: Conflicts must not divert attention from Palestine

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has said that conflicts such as war in Syria should not divert attention from defending the rights of the Palestinians. The heads of Islamic states as well as political, religious and cultural elites in the world of Islam shoulder heavy responsibility to defend Palestine, the Leader said in a message to Hajj pilgrims.

Following is the full text of Ayatollah Khamenei's message posted on the leader's site:

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

All praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, and peace and greetings be upon our Master, Muhammad, the last of the Prophets, upon his infallible Household, and upon his chosen companions. →2

UN reconfirms Iran's nuclear compliance

By staff and agency

A UN atomic watchdog report said on Thursday that Iran has remained within key limits on its nuclear activities based on the 2015 nuclear deal, internationally recognized as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Iran's stock of low-enriched uranium as of Aug. 21 was 88.4 kg (194.89 pounds), well below a 202.8-kg limit, and the level of enrichment did not exceed a 3.67 percent cap, according to the confidential International Atomic Energy Agency report sent to IAEA member states and seen by Reuters. →2

U.S. re-launches heliborne operation to take ISIL commanders away

Field resources indicate the re-launch of heliborne operation by the U.S. Army in eastern Syria carrying senior ISIL commanders on board.

The U.S. army carried out a heliborne operation in the ISIL-controlled regions in Al-Madina Souq, located on the outskirts of Deir Ezzor, at 17:00 on Thursday, taking away senior ISIL commanders. The next Takfiri destination from East of Syria, is towards one of the countries of Central Asia.

Meanwhile, two days ago, ISIL troops had been targeted by American bombers after evacuating the Syrian border with Lebanon on their way to the city of Abu Kamal. The United States claimed the strike was a warning to prevent the transfer of 150 disarmed ISIL militants to the east of Deir Ezzor.

The U.S. army has conducted a growing number of similar heliborne operations to help senior ISIL leaders in Eastern Syria this year. (Source: MNA)

ARTICLE

By M.A.Saki
Deputy editor-in-chief

IAEA report: Another disgrace for Trump

On Thursday the United Nations nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, released another quarterly report confirming for the seventh time that Iran is committed to limits on its nuclear program under the July 2105 nuclear agreement.

The new report comes as Donald Trump and his die-hard fanatics are desperately seeking to invent new pretexts to claim that Iran is not compliant to the multilateral agreement, which also includes the European Union, Germany, France, Britain, Russia and China.

In July Trump told the Wall Street Journal he "would be surprised if they (Iranians) were in compliance". Now Trump must not be surprised but ashamed that the IAEA has released its new findings of Iran's compliance to the nuclear agreement, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Now what Trump has to say when under law he must notify Congress in October, after 90 days, of Iran's handling of to the deal!

Failing to produce the least evidence that Iran is non-committal to the pact, Trump and his aides are resorting to irrational demands and hilarious remarks to justify a pretext to abrogate the deal.

For instance, Trump's UN Ambassador Nikki Haley's trip to Vienna last week to press the IAEA to inspect Iran's sensitive military sites is a clear example that the U.S. is trying to present a falsified view of the JCPOA which its every word has been drafted carefully and everything is clearly specified.

It is far from mind that Haley does not know that mechanism has been devised for every question that may arise in the process of the implementation of the deal. She is following the footsteps of John Bolton, a neo-con who represented the U.S. in the UN under George W. Bush. →13

Lebanon fully liberated from Daesh terrorists: Hezbollah leader

The secretary general of the Lebanese Hezbollah resistance movement has praised the victories recently achieved by the movement's fighters and army soldiers in the fight against ISIL (Daesh) terrorists, stressing Lebanon's soil has been fully liberated from the extremist elements.

"We wanted the conclusion of this battle to come at the hands of the Lebanese Army and this is what happened, and the so-called caliphate of Daesh was defeated," Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah said in an address in Beirut on Thursday.

Addressing his followers via a televised speech, Nasrallah described the gains against the terrorists as the second liberation after the withdrawal of Israeli military forces from southern Lebanon and Western Bekaa region in 2000.

He stated that Lebanese army soldiers have made gains against terrorists, underlying that Hezbollah resistance fighters have driven members of the foreign-sponsored and Takfiri Jabhat Fateh al-Sham terrorist group from Juroud Arsaf region, located 124 kilometers northeast of Beirut.

The Hezbollah leader pointed out that the United States had threatened to cut its assistance to the Lebanese army in case it did not put an end to its campaign against terrorists on the border with Syria.

Nasrallah then called upon Lebanese authorities to devise a plan aimed at the liberation of Sheba'a Farms from Daesh Takfiris, hailing Syrian army soldiers for helping their Lebanese counterparts liberate the strategic

and mountainous region of Qalamoun.

Nasrallah stated that he had a meeting in person with President Bashar al-Assad in the Syrian capital city of Damascus, and convinced him to agree to a deal between Hezbollah and Daesh, which allowed the transfer of Takfiri terrorists from Qalamoun to eastern Syria.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the Hezbollah chief offered his sincere felicitations to the Iraqi nation and government on the liberation of the city of Tal Afar and the northern province of Nineveh from Daesh terrorists.

Earlier on Thursday, Iraq's Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi said the city of Tal Afar and the entire Nineveh province had been purged of the Daesh Takfiri terrorist group. →13

Hurricane Harvey damage costs could reach \$75 billion, research firm says

Hurricane Harvey is "almost certain" to be at least the third worst storm in U.S. history when it comes to damage costs, according to Enki Research.

The firm's current estimate ranges from \$48 billion to \$75 billion, with an average of \$57 billion. But those numbers are subject to change with each passing day.

"The computer models we normally use to do estimates for hurricanes don't really work that well for this kind of a storm," Chuck Watson, the director of research and development at Enki Research, said in an interview with "Power Lunch."

"This is more like a big, broad flooding low-pressure type thing and it's over such a large area that a lot of the normal assumptions that you build into the system start to break down."

There is also uncertainty due to the human factor, such as decisions on whether to do controlled releases from some of the reservoirs, he explained.

Harvey, now a tropical storm, bore down on eastern Texas and Louisiana on Wednesday, bringing the catastrophic downpours that paralyzed Houston.

The storm first came ashore on Friday near Corpus Christi, Texas. It was the most

powerful hurricane to hit Texas in more than 50 years, killing at least 17 people and forcing 30,000 people to flee to emergency shelters.

JPMorgan predicts the eventual insured losses from Harvey could be as much as \$10 billion to \$20 billion.

However, Watson pointed out that he's currently estimating about 20 percent of the damage will be covered by insurance.

"It's going to be a huge hit to the flood insurance program, but we're currently thinking as much as 70 or 75 percent of the losses and impact from this storm will not be insured," he said.

(Source: CNBC)

ARTICLE

By Stephen O'Brien
UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs

Stepping up our response in Yemen is a moral imperative

Four-month-old Saleh is fighting for his life as he battles severe acute malnutrition in a hospital in Al Hudaydah. As conflict rages around the country, his mother Nora, aged 22, cannot procure enough food or clean water to keep her six children healthy.

In Yemen today, a triple threat of conflict, cholera and the risk of famine is destroying the lives of 21 million people. Yemen is now home to not only the world's largest hunger crisis but also its worst cholera outbreak, which is affecting more than 500,000 people.

The crisis in Yemen is man-made. It is propelled by a conflict whose tactics involve imposing suffering on civilians and destroying life-sustaining institutions. Cholera has now reached almost every governorate of the country and has already killed 2,000 people, at least 40 per cent of them children. The crippled health system is now on its knees as it battles the outbreak, with clinics and hospitals facing shortages in staff, medicine and equipment.

In this conflict, as in so many others, it is civilians who bear the brunt of the violence. Since March 2015, the UN Human Rights Office has documented 13,829 civilian casualties, including 5,110 killed and 8,719 injured. The overall number is probably much higher. Millions of people have seen their homes, schools, market-places and entire towns destroyed by bombs and shelling, forcing families to flee for their lives towards an uncertain future. Half of the Yemen's hospitals and health clinics are destroyed or closed.

Yemen's economy is being decimated through unwarranted restrictions on the flow of commercial and humanitarian goods into the country. Infrastructure that is vital for the transport of goods, has been damaged. Seventy per cent of businesses have stopped functioning. →13



Muslims offer Eid al-Adha prayers

Muslims around the world celebrated the Eid al-Adha holiday on Friday, one of the holiest celebrations of the Islamic calendar. Palestinians flocked to al-Aqsa mosque for prayers. Muslims mark the holiday by slaughtering animals such as sheep and goats. The meat is shared among family and friends and also donated to the poor.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Hajj aimed at awakening Muslim world: cleric

POLITICS TEHRAN — The interim leader of the d e s k Tehran Friday prayer has urged the Islamic ummah to stand up for their rights, saying the purpose of the Hajj ritual was to awaken the Muslim world. "The hegemonic powers have Muslims' blood on their hands and are seeking to divide Muslims and waste their energy," Ayatollah Mohammed Emami-Kashani said on Friday while addressing Eid al-Adha prayers in the capital Tehran. It is the duty of the Islamic ummah to push their governments to resolve these issues, he added.



Iran sympathizes with Americans affected by Hurricane Harvey

POLITICS TEHRAN — In a message released d e s k on Thursday, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi offered sympathy to the bereaved families of victims of Hurricane Harvey, a fierce tropical storm that hit southern U.S. Qassemi also expressed regret at the losses and damages caused by the tropical storm. Since August 25, when the storm began, heavy rains from Hurricane Harvey have claimed the lives of dozens of people and sent more than 32,000 to shelters south of the country.



Government seeking guidance from grand ayatollahs: Vaezi

POLITICS TEHRAN — The government's d e s k relations with top religious scholars does not end with formal meetings, said Mahmood Vaezi, the presidential chief of staff. Vaezi made the remarks on Thursday after two days of meetings with the country's top grand ayatollahs. He noted that the Rouhani administration is seeking to improve its plans, policies and activities from the guidance it receives from ayatollahs. "This government belongs to the clergy and we aim to make it a source of pride for Islam and the clergy," he added.



All factions unanimous to return to calm atmosphere: reformist MP

POLITICS TEHRAN — All Iranian political d e s k factions have acknowledged the need to go back to a calm political atmosphere, a reformist lawmaker said on Friday. "Today, all groups and factions have come to the conclusion that going back to a calm political atmosphere is a must," said Alireza Rahimi, a member of the presiding board of the Hope parliamentary faction. Hailing Iran's political peace and tranquility in recent months, Rahimi said every year the country is taking one more step toward more freedom and democracy.



Pakistani FM to visit Iran over new U.S. strategy

POLITICS TEHRAN — Pakistani Foreign d e s k Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif will visit Iran, China, Russia and Turkey for consultations on the new American policy for Afghanistan and South Asia, IRNA reported. Last week, in announcing his new strategy for the war in Afghanistan, U.S. President Donald Trump rebuked Pakistan, describing it as a "safe haven" for terrorist organizations such as the Taliban. The Iranian Foreign Ministry denounced Trump's comments, saying terrorism is the outcome of Washington's wrong and irrational policies over the years in the region.



Assyrian lawmaker congratulates Leader on Eid al-Adha

POLITICS TEHRAN — An Assyrian member of d e s k the Iran Parliament has congratulated Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on the occasion of Eid al-Adha (Feast of Sacrifice), an important festival on the Islamic calendar. In a message on Wednesday, Yonathan Betkolia felicitated the Leader and the Iranian Muslims, and wished prosperity and success for the Iranian nation. Eid al-Adha is the second of two Muslim holidays celebrated worldwide each year. It honors the willingness of Ibrahim (Abraham) to sacrifice his son Ismael, as an act of obedience to God's command.

Rouhani discusses regional issues with Turkish, Qatari rulers

POLITICS TEHRAN — Iranian d e s k President Hassan Rouhani held phone conversations with Qatari Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Thursday and discussed expansion of relations as well as regional stability and security.

In his talks with the Qatari emir, Rouhani highlighted the necessity of increasing consultations, boosting cooperation and expanding ties.

Rouhani said Iran considers the Saudi-led blockade of Qatar as unfair, noting it will make more "tension among regional states".

Rouhani went on to say that Iran "makes all efforts to cooperate with the Qatari people and government and help regional stability".

On June 5, Saudi Arabia along with the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt cut ties with Qatar and closed their air, land and sea routes to the country for its relations with the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas.

For his part, Sheikh Tamim praised Iran's efforts to help the blockaded Qatar.

He also described prospect of Tehran-Doha cooperation as "bright" and "promising".



Qatar is ready to expand relations with Iran in various spheres, the emir added.

Iran and Turkey have been selling foods and other commodities to Qatar since the tiny state came under sanctions by the mentioned countries.

Iran determined to expand ties with Turkey

In his phone talks with Erdogan, Rouhani also said that his new government is determined to expand ties with the friendly and neighboring

country of Turkey. Bilateral relations between Iran and Turkey is witnessing "fundamental developments due the two countries officials' determination and efforts" to strengthen ties and also the "establishment of the supreme council of Iran-Turkey cooperation".

He also noted that the two countries should expand cooperation in line with helping regional stability and security.

"Iran and Turkey, as two major regional powers, should make more efforts in line with helping establish stability and security in the region," the Iranian president suggested.

Rouhani also said that a disintegration of regional countries is not at the interest of the people in the region, an indirect reference to the planned independence referendum in the Iraq Kurdistan.

For his part, Erdogan said that Iran-Turkey ties will definitely expand during the new administration of President Rouhani.

Turkey is determined to expand political and economic ties with Iran, Erdogan added.

U.S. officials' rhetoric has not affected IAEA reports: Iran

POLITICS TEHRAN — Reza d e s k Najafi, Iran's ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency, has said U.S. officials' rhetoric has not affected the way and mechanism that the IAEA provide reports on Iran's loyalty to the 2015 nuclear deal.

"The U.S. officials' rhetoric and media commotion and also the U.S. ambassador to United Nations' visit to Vienna have not affected process of the Agency verification," Najafi said in a statement released on Thursday.

Nikki Haley, the U.S. ambassador to the UN, visited the IAEA headquarters in Vienna to press for access to Iran's military sites, a demand which must only be approved by the Joint Commission of the nuclear agreement and backed by credible evidence.

"Iran and all the member states to the Agency expect it to continue its professional and impartial job," He added.

The statement by the ambassador came just after the IAEA released a report on Thursday reconfirming that Iran remains committed to limits on its nuclear program.

The UN-endorsed nuclear agreement, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, put limits on Iran's nuclear activities in exchange for termination of



economic and financial sanctions.

In his statement Najafi said the IAEA reported once again that Iran's nuclear activities are within the framework of the nuclear agreement which went into force in January 2016.

The report was the third since the January inauguration of U.S. President Donald Trump who has assigned a team of close aides to find a pretext that Iran is non-committal in order to pull the U.S. out of the multilateral agreement.

According to the IAEA, the number of enrichment centrifuges also remained as agreed, while Iran's store of heavy water, a reactor coolant, was 111.0 tons after it exported 19.1 tons to an unnamed country.

UN reconfirms Iran's nuclear compliance



1 → The report was the third since the January inauguration of U.S. President Donald Trump, who has called the nuclear agreement "the worst deal ever negotiated" and voiced suspicions Tehran is not fully complying with its terms.

Iran's stock of so-called heavy water, a moderator used in a type of reactor that can produce plutonium, stood at 111 tons, below a 130-ton limit agreed by the parties to the deal, said the report.

In June, shortly after the IAEA's last report on Iran said its heavy water stock stood at 128.2 tons as of mid-May, Tehran said it would ship 20 tons abroad,

officials told Reuters at the time. Thursday's report confirmed this has happened.

The 2015 accord between Iran and the 5+1 group (the U.S., Britain, France, China, Russia and Germany) lifted international sanctions against Iran in return for Tehran limiting its nuclear energy program.

The Trump administration has been pushing the IAEA to check military sites in Iran, not just declared nuclear installations, to verify it is not breaching the deal. But for this to happen, UN inspectors must believe such checks are necessary and so far they do not, officials say.

Leader: Conflicts must not divert attention from Palestine

1 → I thank God Almighty for bestowing, this year as well as previous years, the blessing of performing the Hajj on an abundant number of believers from throughout the world, so that they can benefit from this refreshing and blessed spring, and so that they can be in the vicinity of God Almighty's House engaging in worship, supplication, remembrance of God and seeking closeness to God on days and nights whose precious and auspicious hours can touch hearts and purify and ornament souls like a miraculous medicine.

The Hajj is a mystifying act of worship, a holy dwelling, a position full of divine blessings and an embodiment of God Almighty's signs and symbols. The Hajj can help pious, humble and wise believers achieve spiritual accomplishments. It can make them become lofty and enlightened individuals. In can make them become insightful and courageous elements who are prepared to take action and make endeavors.

Both spiritual and political, as well as individual and social aspects are completely outstanding and visible in this unique religious obligation, and today the Muslim community is in dire need of both of these aspects.

On the one hand, the magic of materialism is busy beguiling [people] and causing annihilation by using advanced instruments, and on the other hand, the policies of hegemonic powers are instigating sedition and fueling the fire of discord among Muslims and turning Islamic countries into a hell of insecurity and disagreement.

The Hajj can be a cure for both of these grave maladies that the Islamic community is suffering from. In can purge hearts of impurities and illuminate them

with piety and understanding, it can open eyes to the bitter realities of the world of Islam, it can strengthen people's determination to confront those realities, it can make steps firm and it can prepare hands and minds.

Today, the world of Islam is beset by insecurity: moral, spiritual and political insecurity. The key reason behind this is our negligence and the brutal onslaught by the enemies. We Muslims have not fulfilled our religious and rational duties in the face of the onslaught by the vicious enemy. We forgot to be both tough on disbelievers and compassionate with one another.

The result of this is that the Zionist enemy (that is, the Israeli regime) is provoking sedition in the heart of the world of Islam's geography while we Muslims, by ignoring our definite duty of saving Palestine, are busy with domestic wars in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Libya and Bahrain and with confronting terrorism in Afghanistan, Pakistan and the like.

The heads of Islamic states as well as political, religious and cultural elites in the world of Islam shoulder heavy responsibilities: the responsibility of creating unity and preventing everyone from

Today, the world of Islam is beset by insecurity: moral, spiritual and political insecurity. The key reason behind this is our negligence and the brutal onslaught by the enemies

getting engaged in ethnic and religious conflicts, the responsibility of informing nations of the enemy's methods and the treachery of the global hegemony and Zionism, the responsibility of equipping everyone in order to counter the enemy in the various arenas of hard and soft wars, the responsibility of immediately stopping catastrophic incidents in Islamic countries, a bitter example of which, today, is the developments in Yemen which are a source of sorrow and protest across the world, the responsibility of offering unflinching support for oppressed Muslim minorities such as those in Myanmar and other places, and most importantly, the responsibility of defending Palestine and offering unconditional cooperation with, and assistance to a people that has been fighting for its usurped country for nearly 70 years.

These are important responsibilities which fall on our shoulders, and which nations should demand from their governments. The elite should also try to achieve them with firm determination and pure intentions. These tasks are the definitive manifestations of helping God's religion, which will definitely be followed by divine assistance as promised by God.

These are parts of the lessons of the Hajj and I hope we can understand and act upon them.

I ask God to accept your Hajj. I would like to commemorate the martyrs of Mina and Masjid al-Haram and I ask God, the Beneficent, the Generous, to elevate their status.

Greetings and Allah's mercy be upon you.
Seyyed Ali Khamenei
August 29, 2017

UN nuclear watchdog sees no need to check Iran military sites

POLITICS The U.S. is pushing UN d e s k nuclear inspectors to check military sites in Iran, but for this to happen, inspectors must believe such checks are necessary and so far they do not, officials say.

"We're not going to visit a military site like Parchin just to send a political signal,"

Reuters quoted an IAEA official as saying, mentioning a military site often cited by opponents of the deal including Iran's arch-adversary Israel and many U.S. Republicans.

Last week, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley visited the International Atomic Energy Agency, which is scrutinizing compliance with the 2015 agreement,

as part of a review of the pact by the administration of President Donald Trump.

The IAEA has the authority to request access to facilities in Iran, including military ones, if there are new and credible indications of banned nuclear activities there, according to officials from the agency and signatories to the deal.

But they said Washington has not provided such indications to back up its pressure on the IAEA to make such a request.

IAEA Director-General Yukiyu Amano frequently describes his Vienna-based agency as a technical rather than a political one, underscoring the need for its work to be based on facts alone.

U.S. orders closure of Russian consulate, annexes

Lavrov to Tillerson on consulate closure: We regret escalation of tension not initiated by Russia

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has expressed regret over the "escalation of tensions" after the U.S. State Department ordered Russia to close several diplomatic offices in the U.S. within 48 hours.

Moscow will carefully study the new measures the U.S. announced and will inform Washington of its reaction, Lavrov said.

Russia's new ambassador to the U.S., Anatoly Antonov, added that it's necessary to look into the situation "calmly and professionally."

Washington's move signals that "the U.S. [has] announced the hot phase of the diplomatic war" between the two countries, Chairman of the Duma's Foreign Relations Committee said.

Despite the "extreme unfairness" of the action, Moscow should not respond "symmetrically," Leonid Slutsky said. He added that "all efforts should be made to preserve a decent level of diplomatic relations with the U.S., as a necessary component of global stability."

This is the latest in a series of tit-for-tat moves by Moscow and Washington.

On August 23, the U.S. embassy in Russia suspended all "nonimmigrant visa operations" in Russia, saying they will be resumed only in the main embassy building in Moscow on September 1.

"NIV [non-immigrant visa] interviews at the U.S. Consulates in St. Petersburg, Yekaterinburg, and Vladivostok are suspended until further notice," the embassy said in a statement.

"The first impression is that the American authors of these decisions made one more attempt to draw disfavor from Russian citizens toward the actions of the Russian authorities," Lavrov said earlier in August.

Moscow later stated it would take no action in response



to the U.S. Embassy's announcement on the processing of nonimmigrant visas, which Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova described as "the horror that the Americans have created."

Earlier this summer, Russia ordered the U.S. mission to cut its personnel in Russia by 755 people and bring it in line with Russia's diplomatic staff in the U.S. which is 455 people.

Moscow's move was in retaliation to the U.S. Congress' approval of new sanctions against Russia which President Donald Trump signed into law.

Last year, the Obama administration expelled 35 Russian diplomats and seized two Russian compounds in New York and Maryland citing alleged Russian meddling in the 2016 U.S. election.

Moscow has consistently denied allegations of its involvement in the U.S. election.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said at the time he would not retaliate and would wait for the Trump administration to settle in, hoping for better relations between the two countries. (Source: RT)

Israel boosts settlers' powers, 'formalizing apartheid'

Israel has increased the powers of illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank city of al-Khalil (Hebron) by giving them the formal authority to manage their own "municipal" affairs.

The Israeli army said in a statement issued late Thursday that it had signed an order to allow a council to provide services to the 1,000 settlers in the occupied city. The council already existed but had no legal standing.

Israeli minister of military affairs Avigdor Lieberman confirmed that he had ordered the change in the settler council's status.

"I am determined to continue to promote settlement so that it will bloom and thrive," the hawkish Israeli minister said.

About 800 settlers are living under the Israeli army protection in several heav-



ily-fortified compounds in the heart of al-Khalil.

Settlement expansion in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem al-Quds is

illegal under international law. However, about 600,000 Israelis live in over 230 illegal settlements built since the 1967 occupation of the Palestinian territories.

Formalizing apartheid

Anti-settlement Peace Now organization, which monitors settlement activities in the West Bank, said that through granting official status to the Hebron settlers, the Israeli regime "is formalizing the apartheid system in the city."

"This step... is another illustration of the policy of compensating the most extreme settlers for their illegal actions," it said.

The Israeli group revealed back in July that Tel Aviv had advanced plans for constructing 7,721 settler units since January, almost triple the figure for all of last year, which amounted to 2,699 units.

It said the plans were at various stages of the approval process, and the units were located in a number of settlements across the occupied West Bank.

(Source: al Alam)

Texas city loses water, 44 dead

A flood-hit southeast Texas city lost its drinking water supply and police and soldiers rescued thousands still stranded after powerful storm Harvey killed 44 people and displaced more than a million on the Gulf Coast.

Some 779,000 Texans have been told to leave their homes and another 980,000 fled voluntarily amid dangers of new flooding from swollen rivers and reservoirs, according to Department of Homeland Security acting secretary Elaine Duke.

The city of Beaumont, about 80 miles (130 km) east of Houston, had its water supplies cut off and was threatened by a rising river that forced the evacuation of its hospital and residents in neighboring Orange County.

There were explosions at a chemical plant about 25 miles (40 km) east of Houston after it was engulfed by floodwater.

The loss of water and health risks from flooding were among hazards emerging in the aftermath of Harvey, which roared ashore late last Friday as the most powerful hurricane to hit Texas in half a century. It has since been downgraded to a tropical depression as it heads inland, leaving devastation across more than 300 miles (480 km) in the southeast corner of the state. Jessica Richard, 24, said she waited out the storm in her home in Port Arthur, about 85 miles (135 km) east of Houston, until Thursday morning when water on her street rose to waist-high. She was picked up by a passing truck.

Richard said her nephew had been trapped with several family members overnight in a flooded apartment. "He said there were snakes in the water and spiders crawling up the walls. But they got out," she said.

At least 44 people were dead or feared dead in six counties including and around Houston, officials said. Another



19 remained missing.

House-by-house search

In the U.S. energy hub of Houston, firefighters conducted a house-by-house search to rescue stranded survivors and recover bodies as some residents began to return to their homes to assess the damage.

Seventy percent of Harris County, which encompasses Houston, was covered with 18 inches (45 cm) or more of water, county officials said.

In Beaumont, doctors and nurses evacuated some 190 people from a hospital that halted operations after the storm knocked out water service in the city of almost 120,000 people.

Orange County ordered remaining residents to evacuate from low-lying areas after a forecast that the Neches River would crest on Friday, threatening homes.

U.S. Vice President Mike Pence visited Texas on Thursday, touring the coastal city of Rockport, where Harvey slammed ashore six days ago.

"The American people are with you. We are here today, we will be here tomorrow and we will be here every day until this city and this state and this region rebuild bigger and better than ever before,"

Pence said outside a damaged church.

Gasoline futures soared more than 13 percent on Thursday as almost a quarter of U.S. refining capacity had been knocked offline, raising fears of fuel shortages.

About 189,000 homes and businesses remained without power and nearly 100,000 homes suffered flood damage, utilities and state officials said.

Costly disaster

Moody's Analytics estimated the economic cost from Harvey for southeastern Texas at \$51 billion to \$75 billion, ranking it among the costliest storms in American history.

The event has drawn comparisons with Hurricane Katrina, which killed more than 1,800 people in New Orleans in 2005. Then-President George W. Bush's administration was criticized for its haphazard initial response to that storm, and Donald Trump's administration was taking care to be seen as responding quickly to its first major natural disaster.

Trump was to return to the region on Saturday.

Early Thursday, explosions could be heard at a chemical plant in Crosby, Texas, owned by Arkema SA. Refrigeration

systems failed in a truck storing volatile chemicals, which ignited as they warmed, sending smoke plumes 40-feet (12-meters) into the air, according to company and public safety officials.

Public safety officials insisted there was no risk to the public outside a 1.5-mile (2.4-km) safety perimeter, but more fires were expected at the facility, underscoring worries of possible damage at other petrochemical plants and oil refineries that dot the region.

As signs of normal life returned to Houston, the nation's fourth most populous city, there were also concerns about health risks from bacteria and pollutants in floodwater.

The Houston Astros baseball team, forced to play away from the city due to the floods, will return and play at its home field on Saturday. It has invited shelter residents to attend its double header against the New York Mets, Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner said on his Twitter feed.

Residents began a massive cleanup, dragging water-logged furniture to the curb, hunting for supplies and repair estimates. The city began limited trash pickup and bus services. Hospitals that had struggled to stay open earlier in the week were phasing in clinical operations.

"We are blessed that the rain has stopped," said Brenda Stardig of the Houston City Council.

Many in Houston were shocked at what they found when they returned home.

Anita Williams, 52, was lined up at a shelter at Houston's George R. Brown Convention Center to register for aid from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Williams went back to her home on Wednesday to survey the damage to her one-story house.

"It's not my house anymore," Williams said. "My deep freezer was in my living room." (Source: Reuters)

Putin warns North Korea situation on verge of 'large-scale conflict'

Russian President Vladimir Putin warned on Friday that the tense standoff between North Korea and the United States was on the verge of large-scale conflict and said it was a mistake to try to pressure Pyongyang over its nuclear missile program.

Putin, who is due to attend a summit of the BRICS nations in China next week, wrote in an article published on the Kremlin's web site ahead of his trip that he favored negotiations with North Korea instead.

"It is essential to resolve the region's problems through direct dialogue involving all sides without advancing any preconditions (for such talks)," Putin wrote.

"Provocations, pressure, and bellicose and offensive rhetoric is the road to nowhere."

The situation on the Korean Peninsula had deteriorated so much that it was now "balanced on the verge of a large-scale conflict," said the Russian leader.

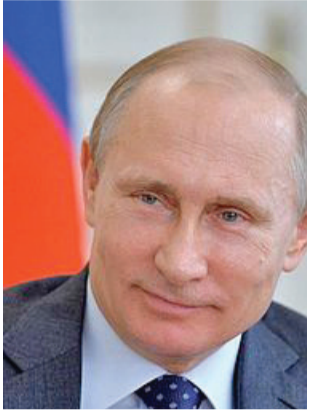
North Korea has been working to develop a nuclear-tipped missile capable of hitting the United States and has recently threatened to land missiles near the U.S. Pacific territory of Guam.

On Monday, Pyongyang, which sees joint war games between the United States and South Korea as preparations for invasion, raised the stakes in its stand-off with the United States and its allies by firing an intermediate-range missile over Japan.

"In Russia's opinion the calculation that it is possible to halt North Korea's nuclear missile programs exclusively by putting pressure on Pyongyang is erroneous and futile," Putin wrote.

A road map formulated by Moscow and Beijing, which would involve North Korea stopping work on its missile program in exchange for the United States and South Korea halting large-scale war games, was a way to gradually reduce tensions, wrote Putin.

(Source: Reuters)



Dozens of fleeing Rohingya die after boats capsize

Three boats carrying ethnic Rohingya Muslims fleeing violence in Myanmar have capsized in Bangladesh, killing at least 26 people, according to officials.

The bodies of 15 women and 11 children were recovered in Cox's Bazar after the vessels, which carried an unknown number of Rohingya, sank in the Naf River, Bangladesh border guard commander Lieutenant Colonel SM Ariful Islam said on Thursday.

He added that it was unclear whether anyone was still missing, according to The Associated Press news agency.

The top official in Cox's Bazar, Mohammad Ali Hossain, said the bodies would be buried because no one had claimed them.

Officials in Bangladesh say growing numbers of Rohingya Muslims are trying to cross the Naf river that divides the two countries in rickety boats ill-equipped for the rough waters as they become increasingly desperate to escape the worst outbreak of violence in the restive Rakhine state in years.



One survivor told AFP news agency that the small, overcrowded boat he was travelling on had been tipped over by huge waves where the Naf river opens out into the sea.

"Nobody knew how to navigate the sea waters. When huge waves tilted the boat, we panicked," Shah Karim said.

Residents and activists have accused soldiers of shooting indiscriminately at unarmed Rohingya men, women and children and carrying out arson attacks.

However, authorities in Myanmar say close to 100 people have been killed since Friday when armed men, reportedly from the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), launched a pre-dawn raid on police outposts in the restive region.

Myanmar authorities say Rohingya "extremist terrorists" have been setting the fires during fighting with government troops, while Rohingya have blamed soldiers who have been accused of carrying out extrajudicial killings.

Thousands flee into Bangladesh

Around 27,400 Rohingya Muslims have crossed into Bangladesh from Myanmar since Friday, three UN sources said, according to Reuters news agency.

The violence comes amid reports of Buddhist vigilantes burning Rohingya villages in Myanmar, Reuters said.

Hundreds of people have been stranded in a no man's land at the countries' border, the International Organization for Migration said.

Satellite imagery analysed by U.S.-based Human Rights Watch indicated that many homes in northern Rakhine state were set ablaze.

Most of Myanmar's estimated one million Rohingya Muslims live in northern Rakhine state.

They face severe persecution in the Buddhist-majority country, which refuses to recognise them as a legitimate native ethnic minority, leaving them without citizenship and basic rights.

Long-standing tension between the Rohingya Muslims and ethnic Rakhine Buddhists erupted in bloody rioting in 2012. That set off a surge of anti-Muslim feeling throughout the country.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

NEWS IN BRIEF



Loading, unloading at Iranian ports up 3% in a month

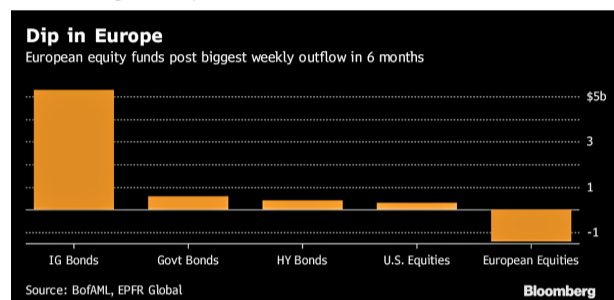
ECONOMY TEHRAN — Loading and unloading of goods at ports of Iran rose three percent in the fifth Iranian calendar month Mordad (July 23-August 22) from its previous month, according to the Ports and Maritime Organization of Iran (PMO).

The PMO announced that more than 13,022 million tons of goods were loaded and unloaded at Iranian ports during the fifth month, Tasnim news agency reported on Friday.

Last October, PMO Managing Director Mohammad Saeednejad said that the organization has it on the agenda to increase the current 209 million-ton capacity of the country's trade ports to 217 million tons.

European equity funds post biggest outflow in 6 months

European equity funds suffered their biggest outflows in 26 weeks as a continuing rally in the euro heightened investor concerns over the region's exporters.



Investors pulled \$1.4 billion from the region's stock funds, Bank of America Merrill Lynch said in a research report, citing EPFR Global data. That was the second consecutive week of outflows.

U.S. stock funds saw \$300 million of inflows, the first in 11 weeks. While this ended the longest streak of outflows since 2004, a net \$30 billion has still been withdrawn since the run began in June.

Europe's reversal in flows is more evidence that investors are worried a resurgent euro will damp a long-awaited earnings revival in the region. The currency rose above \$1.20 for the first time in more than two years on Aug. 29, a level that fund managers and strategists had called the "pain threshold."

Europe's funds are still sitting on inflows of about \$31 billion this year, according to the report, which covered the week to Aug. 30.

Across the regions measured, a series of outflows from high-yield bond funds ended, with about \$400 million of inflows recorded. Overall inflows to bond funds in the week reached \$8.1 billion. (Source: Bloomberg)

Canada's economy surges 4.5% on consumer spending

Canada's economy unexpectedly accelerated at a 4.5 percent pace in the second quarter -- tops among Group of Seven countries -- led by the biggest binge in household spending since before the 2008-2009 global recession.

Annualized growth was the fastest in six years and topped the 3.7 percent average forecast from economists. The expansion surpassed the 3.7 percent first quarter growth rate, which was left unchanged Thursday by Statistics Canada.

The surge in growth should help cement the chances the Bank of Canada will continue raising interest rates this year -- possibly as soon as next week -- as the nation's economy nears full capacity in what is turning out to be the strongest growth spurt in more than a decade. The central bank forecast in July spare capacity would be eliminated by the end of this year, based on a second-quarter growth forecast of 3 percent.

"The hits just keep coming for the Canadian economy," Doug Porter, chief economist at Bank of Montreal, said in a note to investors. "Even the naysayers will struggle mightily to find fault in this rock-solid report."

Canada's dollar reversed declines after the report, rising 0.5 percent to C\$1.2551 versus its U.S. counterpart at 10 a.m. Toronto time. The loonie traded at 79.67 U.S. cents, and was the top gainer among Group of 10 currencies. Two-year government bond yields jumped four basis points to 1.28 percent. (Source: Bloomberg)

The world's growth optimism hasn't translated to Australia

The global growth optimism spurred by improved momentum in the U.S., Europe and China is being at the very least garbled in efforts to translate it to the land Down Under.

The only thing rising in August across Aussie assets has been government bond yields -- whose advance slowed -- as the data pulse at home reinforced the divide between ebullient businesses and downbeat consumers. Construction and capital expenditure jumped, but home prices, mortgages and retail sales sagged and wages stagnated.

With the Reserve Bank of Australia meeting next week eagerly awaited for clues on how soon rate increases will be on the table, the lack of clarity on the economy's prospects may make Governor Philip Lowe's statement harder for investors to parse. Even as Treasurer Scott Morrison said he expects Australia's economic growth will accelerate, he spared a thought for the nation's embattled consumers and said the government would seek to empower them. (Source: Bloomberg)

Iran's August oil output up 100,000 bpd

ENERGY TEHRAN — Iranian crude oil production increased by 100,000 barrels per day (bpd) in August from its previous month.

According to the latest data released by Reuters, exempted from the OPEC, non-OPEC curbs, Iran has increased its crude output to 3.79 million bpd in August from 3.78 million

bpd in July.

The output from the 13 OPEC members originally part of the deal fell by 170,000 bpd in August from July. Supply from the 11 members with production targets under the original accord declined by 60,000 bpd.

In an effort to prop up prices, the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries started reducing output



by about 1.2 million bpd on January 1 in its first supply cut since 2008.

Nigeria and Libya were also exempted from the curbs.

The August data indicates that compared with the levels from which they agreed to cut, in most cases

their October 2016 production; the 11 members have reduced output by 1.038 million bpd of the pledged 1.164 million bpd.

That equates to 89 percent compliance, up from 84 percent in July. The figures for July were not revised.

TEDPIX adds 731 points in a week

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE)'s main index (TEDPIX) gained 731 points to 83,272 during the five dealing days (Saturday-Wednesday) of the past Iranian week ended on Friday, Tasnim news agency reported.

Some 4,535 billion securities worth 13.22 trillion rials (about \$349.7 million) were traded through 260,000 deals in TSE, indicating 33 percent and 6.2 percent fall, respectively, in the number and value of traded securities, while 10 percent rise in the number of deals.



The first market's index rose 746 points to 58,641 and second market's index added 324 points to 79,918, showing 1.289 percent and 0.18 percent growth, respectively, in the mentioned week.

Croatian banks keen on expanding ties with Iran

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Croatian National Bank (HNB) Boris Vujcic in a meeting with Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Valiollah Seif in Tehran expressed the tendency of his country's banks for developing ties with Iran, the official website of CBI reported.

Vujcic said that HNB has commenced negotiations with Croatian banks on boosting their cooperation with their Iranian counterparts and the talks have been fruitful.

Seif, for his part, referred to the



wide range of political relations between the two countries and called for expansion of their banking ties.

"I hope that development of banking bonds will lead in expansion of trade and commercial ties between the two sides," he said.

Electricity generation capacity rises 610 MW in Iran

ENERGY TEHRAN — The nominal electricity generation capacity has increased 610 megawatts (MW) to 77,038 MW in Iran since the beginning of current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2017), Tasnim news agency reported on Friday.

Iran's nominal electricity generation capacity will reach 80,000 MW by summer 2018, according to Iranian Deputy Energy Minister Houshang Falahatian.

The country increased its electricity generation capacity by 2.199 gigawatts (GW), boosting it to 76.302 GW, in the past Iranian calendar year, according to a report by Iran Power Grid Management Company released in late March.



Gas-fueled power plants accounted for 75.5 percent of the increased generation capacity, equaling 1.66 GW.

Combined cycled power plants, hydroelectric power plants, distributed generation power plants, and renewable energy power plants also accounted for 14.6 percent, 3.4 percent, 5.7 percent, and 0.9 percent of the total rise in the country's electricity generation capacity, respectively.

Private sector accounts for generating 60 percent of electricity in Iran, the previous Energy Minister Hamid Chitchian announced in Late July.

U.S. job growth likely slowed in August; wages seen tepid

WASHINGTON (Reuters) — U.S. job growth likely slowed in August after two straight months of robust gains, but the pace of increase should be more than sufficient for the Federal Reserve to announce a plan to start trimming its massive bond portfolio.

According to a Reuters survey of economists, the Labor Department's closely watched employment report on Friday will probably show that nonfarm payrolls increased by 180,000 jobs last month.

That would be close to the 184,000 monthly average employment gains for this year and far more than what is needed to keep up with growth in the work-age population.

While the job gains would clear the path for the U.S. central bank to outline a plan to start shrinking its \$4.2 trillion portfolio of Treasury bonds and mortgage-backed securities at its Sept. 19-20 policy meeting, tepid wage growth could leave a December interest rate increase in doubt.

Average hourly earnings are forecast

rising 0.2 percent after advancing 0.3 percent in June, likely keeping the year-on-year gain in wages at 2.5 percent for a fifth consecutive month.

Sluggish wage growth would come on the heels of a report on Thursday showing the Fed's preferred inflation measure, the personal consumption expenditures price index excluding food and energy, increased 1.4 percent in the 12 months to July - the smallest rise in just over 1-1/2 years.

"The job market is in very good shape, but wage growth is very disappointing and that's likely to continue for over the next several months," said Ryan Sweet, senior economist at Moody's Analytics in West Chester, Pennsylvania. "Whether or not the Fed moves in December will be contingent on inflation."

U.S. financial markets are pricing in a roughly 36 percent probability of a rate hike at the Fed's December meeting according to CME Group's FedWatch program. The Fed has increased borrowing costs twice this year.

India is said to plan setting new gold bourse rules in Nov.

India plans to finalize trading specifications for the country's new spot gold exchange in November amid a push to improve transparency in the world's second-biggest bullion market, people familiar with the matter said.

A panel of finance ministry and trade ministry officials, as well as industry groups including refiners, jewelry associations and export and import firms, plan to have a final meeting in November in New Delhi, said the people, who asked not to be identified because the information is private. They'll decide on things such as contract sizes and delivery rules, the people said.

D.S. Malik, a spokesman for the finance ministry, didn't answer calls seeking comment.

The new exchange is one of the measures that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government plans to use to help overhaul a fragmented jewelry industry, boost transparency and streamline bullion trading. In May, the World Gold Council said that it's working

with the government to create a local spot-gold exchange that may start up as soon as next year. Spot gold hasn't traded on an Indian bourse since authorities halted trading on the National Spot Exchange Ltd. in 2013.

A draft of guidelines for the bourse has been sent to about 30 industry stakeholders and the panel will have some meetings before rules are finalized in November, one person said. Discussions will also center on accrediting several refiners for good delivery along the lines of standards set by the London Bullion Market Association, as well as a code of conduct to ensure responsible trading on the exchange, the person said.

In India, gold currently trades on exchanges only as futures. The country's jewelers buy the metal from importing agencies nominated by the Reserve Bank of India, including banks, some trading houses and large jewelers, or from dealers who purchase it from those banks.

(Source: Bloomberg)

Six global banks are joining forces to create digital currency

Six of the world's biggest banks have joined a project to create a new form of digital cash that they hope to launch next year for clearing and settling financial transactions over blockchain, the technology underpinning bitcoin.

Barclays, Credit Suisse, Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, HSBC, MUFG and State Street have teamed up to work on the "utility settlement coin" which was created by Switzerland's UBS to make financial markets more efficient.

The move comes as the project shifts into a new phase of development, in which its members aim to deepen discussions with central banks and to work on tightening up its data privacy and cyber security protections.

Hyder Jaffrey, head of strategic investment and fintech innovation at UBS, said: "We have been in discussions with central banks and regulators and we will continue that over the next 12 months with the aim of a limited 'go live' at the back end of 2018."

Blockchain technology is a complex set of algorithms



that allows so-called cryptocurrencies — including bitcoin — to be traded and verified electronically over a network of computers without a central ledger.

Having initially been sceptical about it because of worries over fraud, banks are now exploring how they can exploit the technology to speed up back-office settlement systems and free billions in capital tied up supporting trades on global markets.

"The distributed ledger is one of the most innovative technologies out there," said Lee Braine from the chief technology office of Barclays' investment bank. "From reducing risk to improving capital efficiency in financial markets we see several benefits of this project."

The utility settlement coin, based on a product developed by Clearmatics Technologies, aims to let financial groups pay each other or to buy securities, such as bonds and equities, without waiting for traditional money transfers to be completed.

Instead they would use digital coins that are directly convertible into cash at central banks, cutting the time, cost and capital required in post-trade settlement and clearing.

The coins, each convertible into different currencies, would be stored using blockchain, or distributed ledger technology, allowing them to be swapped quickly for the financial securities being traded. Existing members of the project are Deutsche Bank, Banco Santander, BNY Mellon and NEX.

(Source: The Financial Times)

As oil prices weather storm, OPEC looks for long-term boost from Harvey

For veteran OPEC officials, Hurricane Harvey's impact on global oil markets is one of the strangest things they have seen.

The storm has led to some of the biggest disruptions to U.S. energy infrastructure; yet it has failed to boost crude prices.

In contrast with previous major hurricanes such as Katrina in 2005, Harvey has actually seen oil prices edge down as traders have focused more on the hit to demand from damaged U.S. refineries than the blow to supply from knocked-out production.

That is deeply frustrating for OPEC countries currently restricting oil supplies in an attempt to push prices higher.

"It seems no event will move the oil price up much," said one OPEC delegate, surprised by the lack of impact from Harvey.

Another was also bemused after oil prices fell this week, defying to a steep drop in Libyan production due to unrest.

"It is all really strange. The sentiment of the market has changed a lot in the last 10 years," he said.

Whether the market continues to frustrate its would-be masters, remains to be seen, however, with analysts divided whether demand from U.S. refineries will recover more quickly than U.S. production.

■ 'OPEC must be raging'

OPEC long ignored the U.S. shale revolution that helped the world's largest oil consumer sharply raise output and become a major exporter of both crude and products in recent years.

When it finally recognized the threat, OPEC embarked on a pump war with the United States aimed at hitting the high-cost U.S. industry with lower oil prices.

In the past two years, however, OPEC has restrained production to prop up prices, because the pain of cheaper barrels was putting too much stress on most members' finances.

The move has revived growth in the U.S. oil industry, with production and exports hitting new highs - until Harvey.

Unlike hurricanes Katrina or Gustav, when strong winds mainly caused damage to oil production, Harvey has also severely disrupted the U.S. refining industry and products pipelines, causing a spike in products prices.

Olivier Jacob from consultancy Petromatrix said U.S.



gasoline prices were trading at levels normally equivalent to oil prices of around \$84 per barrel, whereas Brent and WTI crude futures are actually at \$51 and \$46 per barrel respectively.

"OPEC must be raging, they're not getting any of this (gain)," Jakob said.

■ 'Global molecules'

The jury is still out, however, whether this will continue, or whether Harvey will ultimately help OPEC's efforts to rebalance the oil market by hitting supply more than demand.

OPEC and several non-OPEC producers led by Russia have cut a combined 1.8 million barrels per day (bpd) from their output since the start of the year in the hope of bringing global oil and products stocks down to around 2.7-2.8 billion barrels from the current record-high of over 3 billion.

U.S. stocks have declined steeply in the past few weeks.

Investment bank Goldman Sachs, one of the most active banks in commodities trading, said it believed the market rebalancing would be slowed by Harvey as it would cut demand by 0.7 million bpd in the next

month and have an overall bearish impact.

ING said U.S. crude prices were set to fall as production hit by the hurricane would return quicker than demand from refineries, which remain shut due to record flooding.

But another crucial factor to bear in mind is U.S. exports.

When Katrina hit the U.S. Gulf in August 2005, the United States was exporting 1.3 million bpd of petroleum.

Today, it normally exports 5-6 million bpd of crude and products. According to Petromatrix's Jakob, Harvey will help OPEC and its target of reducing stocks in the rest of the world should the current disruption to exports be prolonged.

"Ultimately, at OPEC they should care about global molecules (of oil) and in that sense Harvey is bullish even if it is bearish U.S. crude in the near-term," said Amrita Sen from Energy Aspects.

She said that given the spike in products prices, refineries in Europe and Asia would run at top capacity, ultimately supporting crude prices across the globe.

(Source: Reuters)

Russia's Gazprom Neft & LukOil team up to develop Iranian oil fields

Russian oil companies Gazprom Neft and Lukoil have filed plans to develop oil fields in Iran, the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) said in two separate statements this week.

Lukoil, together with Indonesia's state firm Pertamina, are proposing to develop the Mansouri oil field in south-western Iran, NIOC said on Wednesday.

Back in February this year, Pertamina was proposing to develop two oil fields in Ab Teymour and Mansouri, which the Indonesian company had estimated at containing 1.5 billion barrels of oil reserves.

Gazprom Neft, for its part, has filed plans to develop two oil fields in Iran--Changouleh and Cheshmeh Khosh.

NIOC will review the Russian company's plan and will decide if the proposal will go through, based on NIOC's terms and conditions, the Iranian company said.

Earlier this week, top Gazprom Neft officials visited Tehran and met with Amir Hossein Zamaninia, Iran's deputy petroleum minister for international affairs and trading.

"Iran and Russia have signed a cooperation roadmap based on which workshops will be held in the two countries on enhanced oil recovery and maximization of oil production from oilfields,"



the news service of Iran's oil ministry says.

Earlier this month, Russia's Zarubezhneft, Turkish energy company Unit International, and Iran's non-governmental firm Ghadir Investment Company pledged to invest a combined US\$7 billion to drill at three oil fields and one natural gas field in Iran.

At the beginning of this year, NIOC issued a list of 29 companies that had qualified for bidding in oil and gas tenders, of whom only one is a U.S. player, Schlumberger. Russia's Gazprom and Lukoil were among those that qualified, alongside China's Sinopec, CNPC, CNOOC, and CNPW, as well as the state-owned oil companies of Indonesia and Malaysia--Pertamina and Petronas--plus Japan's INPEX Corporation, Itochu, Mitsui, and Mitsubishi, and Japan Petroleum Corporation.

(Source: oilprice.com)

Petronas, Aramco keen on \$1.8 billion Daewoo E&C controlling stake: Maeil

Oil firms Petronas and Aramco are among potential suitors for a controlling stake in Daewoo Engineering & Construction Co, a deal that could fetch around 2 trillion won (\$1.78 billion), South Korea's Maeil Business Newspaper said on Friday.

The 50.75 percent Daewoo E&C stake is being put up for sale by state-owned Korea Development Bank (KDB), which in July said BoA Merrill Lynch and Mirae Asset Daewoo Securities have been appointed as its advisers on the deal. The stake was valued at 1.48 trillion won as of Thursday's closing price.

Malaysian oil company Petrolim Nasional Bhd (Petronas) is considering acquiring the KDB stake, Maeil reported, citing unnamed investment banking sources and a source with knowledge of Petronas.

Saudi Arabian oil giant Aramco is also interested in buying the stake, the paper said. An unidentified Chinese construction firm and an unnamed U.S. builder also expressed initial interest, it said, adding that United Arab Emirates' ADIC (Abu Dhabi Investment Council) may also be interested.

Petronas, Aramco and ADIC were not immediately available for comment. Daewoo E&C declined to comment.

A KDB spokesman also declined to



comment on the report, but added that the notice to officially kick off the stake sale is expected to come by end-September. KDB said last year it would put up for sale stakes in its non-core units.

Daewoo E&C, South Korea's No.3 construction firm, posted a 140 percent jump in first-half operating profit to 467 billion won, and KDB has said it is expected to achieve positive earnings this year.

Its shares surged as much as 11 percent on Friday after the news of the potential stake buyers, and were trading up 5 percent at 0540 GMT.

For Petronas, an acquisition of the Daewoo E&C stake would be its biggest deal since 2012 when it bought Canadian firm Progress Energy for \$5.87 billion.

(Source: Reuters)

Asian refiners ramp up output to fill supply gaps left by Harvey

Refiners across Asia are cranking up output to send fuel to the United States, where fallout from Hurricane Harvey has left around a quarter of the nation's refineries shut down.

The storm, which hit Texas a week ago as a hurricane and moved on to Louisiana, has caused historic floods and forced the closure of about a quarter of U.S. refining capacity, equal to about 4.5 million barrels per day (bpd) in output.

The resulting supply crunch has caused prices to spike - in gasoline, diesel, jet fuel and other fuels - and not just in the United States.

Attracted by soaring refining margins, known as crack spreads in the industry, Asian fuel makers from Singapore to South Korea have ramped up operating rates to sell as many cargoes as possible to the United States.

"With crack spreads blowing out, the U.S. is going to need products ... so Asian and other refiners are going to have to ramp up runs," said Tony Nunan, oil risk manager at Mitsubishi Corp (8058.T) in Tokyo.

Most refiners in Asia have a policy of not commenting on operations, but refinery sources across the region said their plants were maximizing runs to reap profits from higher fuel prices and to sell to the United States.

"Everybody is looking for cargoes. It's a good money-making opportunity, so we will sell whatever we have after leaving sufficient supplies to meet domestic de-



mand," said an official at Taiwan's CPC Corp.

Singapore refinery margins DUB-SIN-REF, a benchmark for Asia, have jumped by around a third since Harvey made landfall last Friday to \$10.60 a barrel, the highest since January 2016 and the highest for this time of year in a decade.

Sources at Singapore Refining Company (SRC) said they were sending spare cargoes to the United States, and a source from a Thai refiner said its plant is maximizing output in response to the jump in refining margins.

"It's a great opportunity to sell fuel that has sat in storage during the last few years of oversupply," one trader with another refinery in Singapore said.

In China, where the fuel export market is tightly reg-

ulated, state oil refiners are seeking extra oil-product export quotas for the fourth quarter to profit from the higher margins and to offload a domestic surplus.

Analysts say fuel prices will remain elevated for some time as damaged U.S. refineries are repaired and fuel shipments cross from Europe and Asia to the United States.

U.S. bank Goldman Sachs said this week that many U.S. refineries could take months to repair flood damage and become operational again.

"The price (for fuels) will continue to be supported until flows are reinstated or imports from Europe and elsewhere pick up," said Ole Hansen, head of commodity strategy at Denmark's Saxo Bank.

Even refiners without the capacity to send cargoes to the United States are reaping benefits from the supply crunch caused by Harvey.

"We were running at maximum capacity even before the Hurricane, so we don't really have much room to boost our capacity ... but we expect our profitability to improve," said a source at SK Innovation, parent company of South Korea's top refiner SK Energy.

Shares prices for several major Asian refiners, such as SK Innovation and fellow South Korean S-Oil Corp, have climbed to six-year highs this week as higher margins boosted profit potential. Thailand's Thai Oil climbed to its highest in nearly 10 years, while Taiwan's Formosa Petrochemical also rallied.

(Source: Reuters)

Zambia props Iran's oil expertise

Zambia's president Lungu says Zambia is eager to learn about how Iran has successfully exploited oil resources for the benefit of its citizens.

He says Zambia admires Iran's significant economic progress and its position as one of the world's largest holders of oil and gas reserves.

The President was speaking at State House yesterday when he received letters of credence from nine diplomats-designate to Zambia.

"Zambia is pursuing economic diversification to shift reliance on mining to agriculture and other sectors, including exploration for oil and natural gas," he said.

President Lungu said Zambia and Iran have a long-standing history of collaboration, particularly within the framework of non-aligned movement.

He is confident that during the tenure of Iran Ambassador to Zambia Ahamad Erfanian, the two countries will continue to enhance co-operation.

Erfanian said Iran is advanced in science, medicine and agriculture and is ready to share its experiences with Zambia. (Source: Zambia Daily Mail)

Oil falls after Harvey floods U.S. refineries

Oil prices fell on Friday in the wake of Hurricane Harvey, which has killed more than 40 people and brought record flooding to the oil heartland of Texas, paralyzing over a quarter of the U.S. refining industry.

Harvey, downgraded to a tropical storm and losing steam as it moved inland, shut at least 4.4 million barrels per day (bpd) of refining capacity, according to company reports and Reuters estimates.

That sparked fears of a fuel shortage ahead of the Labor Day weekend, and cut refinery demand for crude oil, widening the spread between oil products and crude, particularly between U.S. gasoline and light crude.

This gasoline "crack spread" hit a high of \$27.79 a barrel on Friday, up \$10 in a week.

"The hurricane will affect refining more than production," said Tony Nunan, oil risk manager at Mitsubishi Corp. "Production will come back faster than refining so it is just going to exacerbate the situation where there's too much oil."

Benchmark Brent crude for November was down 40 cents at \$52.46 a barrel by 0830 GMT. The Brent contract for October, which expired on Thursday, closed up \$1.52, or 2.99 percent, at \$52.38.

U.S. crude was last down 45 cents at \$46.78 a barrel. The contract rebounded 2.8 percent on Thursday but is still heading for a weekly decline of around 2 percent.

U.S. gasoline hit a two-year high above \$2 a gallon on Thursday, but eased back on Friday. The gasoline September futures contract settled up 25.52 cents, or 13.5 percent, at \$2.1399 on the last day of trading in the contract. Gasoline for October opened much lower on Friday, at \$1.7744 a gallon.

The U.S. government tapped its strategic oil reserves for the first time in five years on Thursday, releasing 1 million barrels of crude to a working refinery in Louisiana.

An adviser to President Donald Trump told a White House briefing more oil could be released from reserves.

"We would be very comfortable tapping into that," homeland security adviser Tom Bossert told reporters.

U.S. crude oil stocks fell sharply last week as refineries raised output with the approach of Harvey, the Energy Information Administration said.

The oil market outside the United States remains well supplied with ample production by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries.

OPEC oil output slipped in August by 170,000 bpd from a 2017 high, a Reuters survey found.

(Source: Reuters)

Iraq's solution to lower for longer oil prices

OPEC's second-largest oil producer, Iraq, has never hidden the fact that it wants to get the highest possible revenues from its oil. It even pleaded exemption from the cartel's cuts in the talks leading to the production reduction deal, on the grounds that it needed more funds to fight ISIS.

Iraq didn't get that exemption, but it is now considering a change in the way it prices its oil exports to the most prized market for the Middle Eastern producers--Asia--in an effort to increase its oil revenues.

Iraq's state marketing company SOMO is seeking feedback from customers by August 31 on a plan to change the Basra crude pricing for Asia to the Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME) Oman futures beginning next year, dropping the average of Oman and Dubai quotes by S&P Global Platts. Iraq's idea is seen as a breakaway move from the leading Middle Eastern exporter, Saudi Arabia, whose official selling prices (OSP)--using S&P price assessments for decades--are usually followed by the other main producers in the region.

Iraq's plan is still being discussed within SOMO, and needs refinement and buyers' feedback, but it is generally seen as an attempt by Iraq to squeeze every possible dollar out of its crude in this lower-for-longer oil price era.

"The Iraqis are probably looking at the high premiums paid for their oil that's over and beyond their announced official prices, and recognizing that there's money left on the table," Nevyn Nah, a Singapore-based analyst at Energy Aspects, told Bloomberg. "I'd say SOMO is steps ahead of the rest of Middle Eastern exporters, Saudi Arabia, whose official selling prices (OSP)--using S&P price assessments for decades--are usually followed by the other main producers in the region."

Other Middle Eastern producers are monitoring this proposed change, but they are unlikely to break away from the tradition--using Platts assessments--until Saudi Arabia makes changes to its pricing, and there are no indications that Aramco is considering a change to its pricing method.

(Source: oilprice.com)

Only international pressure can save Rohingya now

By Tun Khin, President of Burmese Rohingya Organization UK

How many lives will it take for the international community to act? Tens of thousands of Rohingya are fleeing for their lives as the Burmese military engages in a scorched earth policy against Rohingya civilians. My organization, Burmese Rohingya Organization UK, has confirmed more than 1,000 deaths so far, but the figure is probably much higher. More than 10,000 homes have been burned or destroyed, as have shops and businesses. The military is systematically going from village to village, looting and destroying everything. They leave nothing behind. There is nothing for Rohingya to return to.

The question I am asked over and over again by my Rohingya brothers and sisters in Burma is, how can this be allowed to happen again?

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, has described what is happening now in Rakhine State, Burma as predicted and preventable. History is repeating itself, but on a more horrific scale.

Last October, attacks on police stations by a new armed Rohingya organization, now calling itself the Arakan (Arakan is another name used for Rakhine State) Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), triggered a major military operation in which hundreds were killed, villages were destroyed, and mass rape of Rohingya women took place. The United Nations described what took place as possible crimes against humanity, and the Human Rights Council established a Fact Finding Mission to investigate. The government of Burma is refusing to allow them into the country.

It was always feared that more attacks by ARSA would lead to a new offensive by the military, and that is what happened on August 25. As in 2016, the military offensive is not targeting ARSA, it is targeting civilians, with mass killings of civilians and destruction of civilian property.

We had hope that when a new government led by Aung San Suu Kyi came to power in 2016, things would change. Instead, she kept all the laws and policies which oppress us in place. She even kept in place restrictions on aid to Rohingya living in camps since their homes were destroyed by attacks in 2012. Those restrictions kill children and leave others stunted and malnourished.

One positive step by the government was the establishment of a commission chaired by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. However, it excluded any Rohingya from being members and had a limited mandate, not being allowed to look at human rights violations last week. At times, it seemed like a delaying tactic and was used as an excuse by the government for delays in changing policy and refusing to allow in the UN investigators. Last week, it did put forward some positive proposals, which the government accepted.

The situation of the Rohingya in Burma can be resolved if the political will is there. It won't be easy but it can be done.

■ implementing the recommendations

However, at the same time as Aung San Suu Kyi was talking about implementing the recommendations, her office and government were doing the opposite of what the report recommended, using social media and state media to whip up fears and tensions against Rohingya. Her government has even gone so far as to imply the UN and other international aid agencies are helping what the government called "extremist Bengali terrorists". Stirring up pre-existing allegations some Rakhine nationalists have made in this way puts aid workers at risk of attacks and risks stopping delivery of life-saving aid to vulnerable people, including tens of thousands of children.

When the military launched its operation against us in October 2016 instead of trying to protect us, Aung San Suu Kyi's government launched a propaganda offensive defending the military and denying human rights violations were happening. Flashing "Fake Rape" signs were on her Facebook page and website. The UN later confirmed the most horrific details of mass rape of Rohingya women.

Aung San Suu Kyi used to be our only hope for changing policies and attitudes towards the Rohingya. With that hope gone, we looked towards the international community for help, but they also failed us. Despite the establishment in March of the investigation by the UN into possible crimes against humanity committed by the Burmese military against Rohingya, and possible crimes against humanity and war crimes against other ethnic groups, no pressure has been put on the military. In fact, the opposite has happened.

In Europe and Asia, Min Aung Hlaing, the head of the military, is given red carpet treatment as an honored guest. The EU has an arms embargo against Burma, but European companies are still supplying the military with other equipment.

As the international community is trying to sell him equipment instead of trying to prosecute him for violating international law, it is no surprise that he has now confidently ordered a new offensive against my people. Within Burma, Aung San Suu Kyi protects him. He knows he can act with impunity and my people pay the price.

As this new military offensive continues we will start to get many more horrific eye-witness testimonies of atrocities committed by the military - of rape, torture, babies and children being killed. All, as the UN human rights head has said, were preventable.

A major change in approach is needed by the international community if we are ever going to stop this cycle of violence against the Rohingya. The government of Burma needs to be told that international support and finance is conditional on a major change in policy towards the Rohingya. Propaganda and incitement of hatred and violence against Rohingya must stop, discriminatory laws and policies must go, the recommendations of Kofi Annan's commission must be implemented immediately and in full.

Policy must change towards the military must change as well. A visa ban should be in place for military personnel, instead of red carpet visits. There must be engagement, but it must be critical engagement on human rights and democracy, no more training and cooperation between militaries. Sanctions should be considered against military owned companies. When the UN fact-finding mission makes its report in March next year, its recommendations to hold those responsible for violence accountable, and ending impunity, must be acted upon.

The situation of the Rohingya in Burma can be resolved if the political will is there. It won't be easy but it can be done. The only alternative to action is letting us be killed. Letting Rohingya be killed has been the approach of the international community so far. There is no sign of that changing. (Source: Al Jazeera)

President Trump is giving police forces weapons of war. This is dangerous



By Hank Johnson

Member of the House Armed Services and Judiciary Committees

The president has signed an executive order that will reopen the floodgates of military-grade weaponry entering American streets.

"A standing military force, with an overgrown Executive will not long be safe companions to liberty." – James Madison, Constitutional Convention (1787).

Our Founders opposed using a standing army to patrol our streets, and for good reason. While most of America is rightfully focused on the destructive path left in the wake of tropical storm Harvey last week, Donald Trump lifted the ban on certain military-grade weapons and equipment available from the Pentagon to our local police forces across the nation.

Trump's unwise and ill-considered executive order reopening the floodgates of free surplus military-grade weaponry (as reported on CNN) from war zones across the world straight onto the streets of American cities, towns and university campuses, is the fulfillment of a campaign promise to the law enforcement lobby.

■ It is not just bad policy – it's dangerous

Before Barack Obama signed an executive order in 2015 limiting the transfer of certain types of military equipment under the Pentagon's 1033 Program, the Department of Defense transferred more than \$5bn in surplus military equipment directly to police agencies across the nation.

Because of lax oversight, some of the equipment has gone missing or been



The use of military-grade weapons at an inappropriate time by an untrained police officer is a recipe for disaster.

sold, possibly falling into the hands of wrongdoers.

The Pentagon program creates a pipeline that bypasses normal city council and county commission procurement processes, enabling departments to acquire expensive-to-maintain and often unneeded military equipment directly from the Pentagon without the approval or even knowledge of government officials elected by citizens.

This is undemocratic and cedes too much power to unelected bureaucrats. The citizens are left to pay the price when these military "toys" are put into the anxious hands of often untrained local law enforcement.

What makes it dangerous is the fact

that this program requires that the equipment be "placed into use" within 12 months of being acquired. The use of military-grade weapons at an inappropriate time by an untrained police officer is a recipe for disaster, as evidenced by the Ferguson police department's response to non-violent protesters after the killing of unarmed teenager Michael Brown.

Handing our police weapons of war, including but not limited to large-capacity, rapid-fire weapons and ammunition – including .50-calibers – bayonets, grenade launchers, armored vehicles including military tanks, unmanned vehicles (armed drones), explosives and pyrotechnics, and similar explosive devices, makes us less safe.

War, hunger and now cholera: Yemen's crisis worsens

By last December, the main hospital in the city of Hajjah in northern Yemen had already received 200 suspected cases of cholera. The patients were being treated at a month-old cholera center supported by the World Health Organization.

Across the country, UN workers had recorded 122 confirmed cases by then, including 10 confirmed deaths and 72 suspected deaths.

Today, the number of suspected cholera cases in Yemen has reached half a million and nearly 2,000 people have died, the WHO recently reported. It is now the largest cholera epidemic in the world.

Only a few years ago, the waterborne disease had been nearly eradicated in Yemen.

It was hard to imagine another instigator tormenting the poorest nation in the Middle East. War-ravaged Yemen is reeling from a severe hunger crisis and worsening poverty. Parents were being forced to choose between taking their sick children to the hospital and feeding their healthy ones.

The hospital itself was in shambles. Ventilation machines and other essential equipment were broken. The staff had not been paid in four months. The facility owed \$55,000 to the water department in unpaid bills.

If it wasn't for international funds, the hospital would have never opened the cholera center. The outbreak started to spread fast at the end of April, propelled by poor sanitation and limited access to clean water for millions of Yemenis. And although its spread has slowed in some areas, it is speeding up in other zones, infecting an estimated 5,000 people per day, the WHO said.

All this as the health system has further crumbled. Airstrikes from a Saudi-led coalition fighting Houthis have destroyed or damaged more than half of Yemen's health facilities. A lack of funds has forced others to close.

Shortages of medicine and supplies have grown



"In backing this war with billions of dollars of arms sales and military support the U.S. and the UK are complicit in the suffering of millions of people in Yemen", Katy Wright, the head of advocacy for Oxfam said in a statement, referring to the cholera crisis.

dire, largely because of a Saudi-imposed economic blockade. The hunger crisis is propelling the country toward famine, leaving even more of the population vulnerable to diseases such as cholera.

About 30,000 government health employees vital to fighting the epidemic have not been paid in nearly a year, according to the WHO.

"These doctors and nurses are the backbone of the health response — without them we can do nothing in Yemen," Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the director general of the WHO, said in a statement. "They must be paid their wages so that they can continue to save lives."

The reemergence of cholera is the latest fallout from a crushing war driven by regional and sectarian rivalries, and backed by Western powers. Saudi Arabia and its neighbors are seeking to restore Yemeni President

Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi, who was ousted by the Houthis in early 2015. The region's Sunni rulers are wary of the Shiite Houthis.

"This is no accidental disaster — it is a man-made disaster driven by national and international politics," Katy Wright, the head of advocacy for Oxfam said last week in a statement, referring to the cholera crisis. "In backing this war with billions of dollars of arms sales and military support the U.S. and the UK are complicit in the suffering of millions of people in Yemen."

The Saudi-led coalition has largely used U.S. and British weapons that have killed thousands of Yemeni civilians. The United Nations estimates that more than 10,000 have died and 3 million have been driven from their homes.

(Source: The Washington Post)

Trust and politics

been expressed worldwide.

"Brexit" bespoke a distrust in Britain's relationship with the European Union. Britain is still dealing with the fallout from that vote.

In France, meanwhile, President Emmanuel Macron campaigned on a pledge to reform ethics in public life.

France has a long history of corruption scandals, no-show jobs with kickbacks to a political party, embezzling public funds, and nepotism. Former President Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister Alain Juppé were both convicted of misuse of public funds after they left office.

■ Political nepotism

Yet even after Macron succeeded in winning a ban on political nepotism and tighter laws to ensure that lawmakers and officials pay taxes on all their income, his popularity rating has still dropped to 36 percent.

In Washington, President Trump has moved in the opposite direction. Though he vowed to "drain the swamp," he has promised to roll back corruption legislation,

such as the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and elements of the Dodd-Frank Act.

"President Trump's statements are not helpful at all," says Peter Eigen, founder of Transparency International, a nongovernmental organization that combats corruption. "We have to have an international movement on corruption that is very active."

Trump's approval rating has also fallen to about 38 percent, according to polls.

So what's happening? What politicians do does matter, especially when they appear to use public office for private gain. Trump and Hillary Clinton have blurred lines on conflict of interest and nepotism on one hand and questionable fundraising on the other.

But there's a deeper problem, too. More generally, politicians just need to be honest with themselves.

In the United States, for example, the deeper distrust is not based on actual corruption. It's not something any legislation can fix. It goes to the nature of politics to-

day. Citizens today want to feel heard and understood, and with the web and cable news they have more tools at their disposal than ever to check in on their politicians. And what they see are politicians that put their own political interests first.

That's what many political scientists see, too. The rich and well-connected most often get what they want, notes Stephen Medvic, a professor of government at Franklin & Marshall College, in an opinion article for The Washington Post. "There is evidence that economic elites and business organizations have a greater impact on policy outcomes than do groups representing average citizens," he writes.

That leaves a country feeling disenfranchised. The earliest American patriots demanded representation in government in return for their taxes. Tellingly, the upheaval of today on all sides is largely making the same demand. (Source: The CSM)

It also drives a wedge between police officers and the communities they are sworn to protect and serve. Militarization runs counter to concepts of community policing, and hurts efforts to bridge the growing chasm between police and our communities.

■ Trump's reckless action

Trump's reckless action highlights why Congress must pass my bill – the bipartisan Stop Militarizing Law Enforcement Act of 2017 (SMLEA), HR 1556 – which would restore civilian authority over law enforcement by shutting down the direct pipeline between Department of Defense and law enforcement for certain types of military-grade weaponry.

The Stop Militarizing Law Enforcement Act would limit the requirements that incentivize law enforcement to use the equipment. It would also require that recipients account for all military weapons and equipment, create enforcement mechanisms to better monitor and control the transfer of equipment and require the Pentagon to take back weapons from state and local law enforcement agencies that are being investigated by the Department of Justice for civil rights violations.

Our nation was built on the principle that there are clear lines between our armed forces and domestic police. Moreover, just like the military, law enforcement is subject to civilian authority. This program blurs those lines.

It's time for Americans to stop and take notice of the creeping militarization our streets before it changes the character of our country forever. Militarizing America's main streets won't make us any safer, just more fearful and more reticent. It's time to stop militarizing law enforcement before it's too late.

(Source: The Guardian)

Trump's view of world is filled with contradictions: Professor

By Javad Heirannia

Robert R. Bianchi, a professor of University of Chicago Law School says "Trump's view of the world is filled with contradictions. He wants to concentrate on domestic problems, but he thinks that is only possible if he intimidates troublemakers around the globe."

He says that Political competition has increased in the Middle East because "there are more actors jostling for advantage and no dominant power or coalition that can control events."

Advisor and Visiting Professor of Middle East Studies Institute, Shanghai International Studies University also adds that "The great powers are weaker and more evenly balanced than during the Cold War. Several local states are flexing their muscles in the region and seeking wider influence globally."

"Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan have gained importance while Israel, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia have declined in stature," Bianchi tells to the Tehran Times.

Following is the text of the interview:

■ **The theoretical basis for Barack Obama's foreign policy was that the US didn't have the power and influence of the past; thus Washington had to be careful and selective in which problems it should interfere. Insisting on domestic policy, Trump was even tougher than Obama in the very first steps of his presidency. So how is it that suddenly Trump changed his iso-**



lationalist stance for an interventionist one?

A: Trump's view of the world is filled with contradictions. He wants to concentrate on domestic problems, but he thinks that is only possible if he intimidates troublemakers around the globe. Hence, he flounders between empty threats to make war and half-baked schemes to make America great again. In practice, U.S. foreign policy is in the hands of a few generals who are sober people with little or no diplomatic experience.

■ **In the new world order (since 1990s), the competition for more influence and power in both regional**

and international arenas has heavily increased. Isn't this worldwide competition a reason why the Middle East crises including in Syria, Yemen and Iraq have lasted so long? A reason for the presence of the US and Russia in the region? (However, Russians are more in Syria rather than anywhere else in the region.)

A: Political competition has increased because there are more actors jostling for advantage and no dominant power or coalition that can control events. The great powers are weaker and more evenly balanced than during the Cold War. Several local states are

flexing their muscles in the region and seeking wider influence globally. Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan have gained importance while Israel, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia have declined in stature. In this environment, we should expect regular displays of brinkmanship and frequent realignments between all of the major state actors.

■ **We hear that the Middle East has turned into a field of competition for regional and international powers; hence the hope for any peace deal hangs in the balance. It is said that these so-called big powers, for the sake of their own interests (including arms sales), prefer conflict management rather than conflict resolution. So, when can the Middle East expect to enjoy the blessings of the peace?**

A: Because the Middle East is firmly integrated into the global economy and political system, it is hard to imagine a peaceful region unless the world at large is prospering as well. Middle Eastern solutions and global solutions must succeed together or they will fail together. Just as Trump cannot remove the U.S. from external influences, Middle Eastern leaders cannot ignore increasing ties with Europe, Africa, and Asia. As China advances its efforts to create a more integrated Afro-Eurasia, the Middle East will be more dependent than ever on transcontinental cooperation. Eventually, a post-Trump America is likely to move in a similar direction.

Turkish expert: Dialogue necessary for Iran, Turkey

By Payman Yazdani

After unprecedented talks in Ankara between the chief of staff of Iran's armed forces and Turkish leaders, there were some reports on joint military operation against threatening terrorist groups by Iran and Turkey.

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) has denied the claim by some Turkish officials that the two countries were planning to conduct joint military operations against Kurdish rebel groups beyond the country's borders.

On August 22, IRGC in a statement announced, "we have not planned any operations across the borders of the Islamic Republic of Iran. But as always we will strongly confront any group, team, or person who wants to penetrate into Iran's territory for anti-security or terrorist operations."

Payman Yazdani from Tehran Times sought the issue with Turkish-Iranian relation expert from Istanbul Yildiz Technical University, Dr. Hazar Vural.

Commenting on the necessity of Iran and Turkey cooperation as two key players in the region, Hazar Vural said, "Turkey and Iran belong to this region as important actors, while so many transformations are coming into being, including Iraq invasion in 2003, Arab Movements or as some countries says 'Arab Spring' which started at the end of 2010 and now new developments are on the agenda. The regional neighbors Turkey and Iran are aware of the dangers threatening their territorial security and survival case. PKK and PJAK terrorists have been posing the same threats during the last years. And now both country face a new security concern which is possible independence referendum of Iraqi Kurdish region."

Referring to the importance of Russia's role in cre-

ating balance in the region and criticizing the US for arming YPG, she noted, "Russia's return to equation, balance between the US and Russia which is the key for the region. Because unfortunately the Middle East is a region for the global hegemony not just the local or regional powers. USA armed YPG, of which even Turkey is against. And the region is suitable for the terrorists' mobility."

In view of the message signaled by Iranian Armed Forces Chief of Staff, General Mohammad Hossein Bagheri's visit to Ankara and security cooperation between Iran and Turkey, she noted, "many actors voiced concern when the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan made a speech on Iran-Turkey 'possible common operation against the terrorists'. For the first time in the history, chief of staff of Iran's armed forces General Mohammad Hossein Bagheri visited Turkey, which means a lot for the neighbors. The visit was an important and constructive event for both neighbors. As the both sides explained, the issues are obvious. The visit is about the regional developments, common border security and terrorism. But this meeting was twisted differently by some countries. But at such a time, it is normal to see tactical and strategic movements. On the other hand, Iranian Revolutionary Guards made an explanation about this visit and rejected the joint military operation claim of Turkey and Iran. On the other hand, Iranian officials evaluated the visit as positive for both country."

She referred to the possible effects of regional cooperation between Ankara and Tehran and some differences between two sides added, "previously, Iranian authorities always criticized Turkey's relations or position towards Iraq Kurdish Administration. Also, Iran and Tur-



key hold different approaches to Syrian issue. In addition, Turkey's decision to build a "security wall" on its border with Iran, which is something about the border security against terrorism and smugglers and which Iran is sensitive about and they need to be informed.

Iraq's separation and possible Kurdish artificial state is something which Turkey and Iran are against. Because this situation will create a fertile place for the terrorist groups, increasing the instability and leading to new crises."

Commenting about feasibility of military and security cooperation between Iran and Turkey, while Turkey is a member of the NATO and US ally, "balance is the key word for actual situation. Ankara and Tehran have to create a dialogue, for their own peace and security. Now they have no chance to be at the different sides or have blind confidence about their differences. Continuous dialogue, close coordination, logical and calm communication is vital. So the reciprocal visits needed more."

Whispers of California Independence

By Amir Naseri

Hillary Clinton's defeat in the 2016 presidential election and Donald Trump's move to the White House have sparked a lot of negative reactions in the United States. Vast and populous state of California has faced a crisis after Trump's victory. These turmoils initially showed themselves in the form of protests and demonstrations against the Trump and some internal conflicts. However, the story of California is now far more serious than it was thought! The whispers of California's independence from the United States and its transformation into an independent state are becoming more and more rigorous.

Many residents of California are due to vote in a referendum on their departure from the United States. They hope that this referendum will be held next year. Probably, with the presence of the Trump in the power and the opposition of most California residents with this issue, the outcome of the referendum will not benefit the United States! Unit California's advocates believe that the political and economic conditions prevailing in this state are unbearable



and can only be resolved by separation from the federal government. The two Democratic and Republican officials have a lot of concerns about the current situation in the state of California. Increasing public support for California's independence has made it harder for the government and the US Congress. California has about 40 million inhabitants, considered the most populous states in the United States.

In the presidential race, the state

has 55 electoral votes, which is always in the interest of the Democratic Party. It is also the third largest state in the United States. Beyond that, California alone is the ninth largest economy in the world. California's GDP is equivalent to GDP in some of Europe's most powerful countries, such as Italy. As can be seen, California has the potential of independence from the United States and becoming an independent state, potentially, in terms of its economy, size and population.

However, US officials' concerns about California's independence do not end with its unique features. American officials are deeply concerned about the impact of the California residents' autonomy on residents of other US states. In some other US states, such as Texas, there is a great desire to become independent. In such a situation, the realization of California independence is a difficult nightmare for both Democrat and Republican leaders.

Managing conditions in the state of California appears to be difficult for US officials. This difficulty gets bigger when someone such as Donald Trump is in power! Certainly, the presence of Trump at the White House will strengthen the desire of California residents to separate from the United States. On the other hand, California's independence will affect the entire political, economic, and geopolitical equations of the United States. Finally, in the past, no one thought of separating California from the United States, but now the probability of separation from the United States has increased. Will California residents, and especially its state supporters, hold a referendum on exit from the United States next year?

Democrats' major fault

By Ana Sadat Hosseinfard

With the passing of months since the 2016 presidential election, the popularity of Bernie Sanders among Americans continues to rise. In the run-up to the 2016 presidential election, Sanders was able to identify itself as a symbol of change. According to a poll conducted to determine the most popular and hapless American politicians, it was found that Bernie Sanders is the most popular.

Sanders is viewed favorably by 57 percent of registered voters, according to data from a Harvard-Harris survey provided exclusively to The Hill. Sanders is the only person in a field of 16 Trump administration officials or congressional leaders included in the survey who is viewed favorably by a majority of those polled.

In the course of the 2016 US presidential election, Sanders repeatedly challenged Trump's foreign policy agenda and described it as a threat to international security. Sanders was the victim of the lobby behind the Democratic Party in the electoral campaign of 2016 and left the final round of the election, but his warnings about the victory of Trump and even his attempt to prevent the presence of the current President of the United States at the White House remained.

For example, Sanders has sent a meaningful warning to Donald Trump about the consequences of the confrontation with Iran and the elimination of the nuclear deal. It should be noted that during the Senate vote on the recent sanctions against Iran, Sanders and Rand Pal were two senators who voted against the plan. In other words, Sanders was the only Democrat to oppose this plan. Meanwhile, other Democratic senators voted for sanctions against Iran. Recent polls in the United States have clearly shown that Sanders' independent approach has attracted many citizens. This has led him to become a popular politician.

At the moment, we can criticize the Democrat's performance in the 2016 presidential election. That's when Democrat leaders hid the Sanders victory over Hillary Clinton!

Obviously, the Democrats suffered a big mistake during the 2016 presidential election race. If Democratic leaders were not lobbying for Hillary Clinton and allowed Democratic elections to be held in their natural contexts, Sanders could have won the race with Clinton. At the same time, election polls in the United States showed that Sanders would be able to overcome Trump with a 15% difference, if Sanders arrived at the final round of the American electoral campaign.

Republicans in the United States in 2016 were worried about the presence of Sanders in the final round of the presidential election race. They were well aware that Sanders' presence in the final round would mean Donald Trump's defeat. Many American citizens saw Sanders as a symbol of real change in the United States. That made the Sanders fans angry. They were the victims of the secret lobbies of the Democratic Party. Many Sanders fans did not support Hillary Clinton, and some even preferred to support Trump! Now, after about 10 months since the presidential election in November 2016, there is still chaos in the Democratic Party.

Now Sanders continues to oppose Trump's policies. Some Sanders fans still hope that he will be more active in the US political scene. Recent polls have encouraged Sanders fans in this regard.

Trump and the JCPOA puzzle

By Mohammad Hashemi

President of the United States recently announced: "If I stay in the agreements that have been made by the previous governments of the United States, I am a fool." Donald Trump called the nuclear deal between Iran and members of the 5 + 1 as one of the worst US foreign policy agreements. There are some points in this regard:

During the 2016 presidential election race, Trump has repeatedly disputed and condemned JCPOA as the worst possible agreement. Even Trump promised that he would cancel the nuclear deal on his first day at the White House. However, after Trump's presence in power, his opposition to the nuclear deal continued.

Trump has set up a special working group to examine how to deal with the JCPOA. However, the US president has found that leaving the nuclear deal will face opposition from the European Union, China and Russia. As a result, he initially sought to establish non-nuclear sanctions against Iran.

However, US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson's resignation from the committee showed that Trump is not satisfied with the existing sanctions against Iran. Trump's passion for cancellation of the nuclear deal is such that even in this regard, Tillerson's warnings have not been taken into consideration.

Trump showed no commitment to international contracts during the withdrawal from the Paris climate deal. Although Paris climate deal is less complicated than JCPOA, it should not be forgotten that the US president is still eager to quit and cancel this collective agreement. Trump intends to put an end to the nuclear deal.

However, the White House appears to be too powerless to advance this tactic. Trump plans to not confirm Iran's adherence to the nuclear deal in its next quarter's report! But, the International Atomic Energy Agency, in its six continuous reports, has confirmed the full commitment of our country to JCPOA.

Undoubtedly, Trump's claim that Iran is not complying with the nuclear deal will not be welcomed by international system actors. Recent events in US diplomacy and foreign policy and Trump's remarks about non-compliance with previous agreements indicate that the White House is trying to create tension in the international system.

In such circumstances, the Iranian Foreign Ministry needs to make the necessary predictions for dealing with US behavior. In other words, Trump's intention is to leave the nuclear deal seriously, and he uses any method and means to achieve this.

Even Trump has shown that he has not legal legal concerns about this. In the near future, Trump will be confronted with a nuclear deal. He has also negotiated with some European countries and IAEA officials in this regard. However, the president of the United States knows well that the cancellation of the nuclear deal is not easy.

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Velenjak: 300 sq.m built up, 4 beds, large balcony, indoor s/p, furn. 3500\$
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The one time it's totally ok to eat a lot of sugar

By Shaun Dreisbach

OK, just to be clear, we're not green-lighting a king-size Snickers habit. But it's true sugar and exercise go together like chocolate and peanuts. "These days, there's such a focus on protein and healthy fats and avoiding carbs at all costs (including sugar, which is, of course, a carb). However, carbs are actually good—and necessary!—if you exercise regularly, particularly for endurance workouts," says Melissa Majumdar, R.D., a spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics who specializes in sports nutrition.

Here's a quick primer: Whether you're eating a complex carb (like brown rice) or a simple one (the honey on your Greek yogurt), your body breaks it down into glucose—and that liquid sugar coursing through your veins is the preferred fuel source for your muscles (and brain, and everything else for that matter). "Think of it as the energy that powers the building," Majumdar says. "Your body can use fat and protein as fuel, but they're not nearly as efficient and readily available as carbohydrates."

The thing is, no matter how much liguine you inhale before a HIIT session or a 10K run, your body can only store so much. And during long, challenging workouts—we're talking more than 60 minutes—your body will burn through its glycogen stores. If you don't replenish them, you won't have the energy to keep going. (For shorter cardio sessions and resistance workouts, which don't rip through as much glucose, extra carbs aren't necessary, Majumdar notes.)

Being carb depleted also impedes muscle repair and recovery—not exactly the situation you want. And while, sure, you could grab any old bar or sports drink to get your sugar fix, to really do it right, there's actually an art to it. Here's exactly how much you need and what to know about timing your carb intake.

To just maintain the status quo—meaning, a day you're not exerting yourself too much—you need about 3 to 5 grams of carbohydrates per kilogram of body weight. But endurance workouts require extra: Once you hit that 60-minute mark, the number jumps to 5 to 7 grams per kilo of body weight.



To just maintain the status quo—meaning, a day you're not exerting yourself too much—you need about 3 to 5 grams of carbohydrates per kilogram of body weight. But endurance workouts require extra: Once you hit that 60-minute mark, the number jumps to 5 to 7 grams per kilo of body weight.

To give you an idea what that looks like, for a 130-pound woman, it's equivalent to eating a cup of steel-cut oatmeal, 2 slices of bread, 1 1/2 cups of whole-wheat pasta, a granola bar, and 1/2 cup of dried fruit over the course of the day. So, you know, totally doable.

What to eat before an endurance workout

"The ideal way to prep is to have a meal of complex carbs three to four hours before you exercise—something like whole-grain toast with peanut butter and honey, or oatmeal with skim milk, almonds, and sliced banana," Majumdar says. "Whole grains stay with you, and the more complex the carb, the longer it will take your body to break it down." But if you miss the boat and need to fuel up much closer to your workout—say, 30 to 60 minutes prior—then simple carbs are the way to go, because of the quick hit

of energy they'll deliver, she says. Think: a handful of pretzels, an energy bar, or toast with jam.

What to have during your sweat sesh

"After that hour mark, that's when you're going to want to reach for sports drinks, gels, and chews—about 30 to 60 grams worth. Again, it's those simple carbs you want," Majumdar says. And products like these make it into your bloodstream particularly quick. For perspective: A 20-ounce sports drink has around 36 grams of carbs.

But don't go overboard or make yourself crazy trying to count carb grams. Just have a little something when you begin to feel like you're flagging. Or if you're training for a longer race like a 10K or half-marathon, practice your fuel plan (such as one energy chew every 15 to 20

minutes) during training. But, she adds, "do steer clear of fat and protein, because they'll slow digestion and your body's ability to use those carbs."

How to refuel afterward

Majumdar recommends a four-to-one ratio of carbs to protein for post-workout recovery. "Avoid high-fat meals like fried foods or eating a whole avocado because it will interfere with the process," she says. "Your body won't be able to use the protein and carbs to replenish glycogen and aid in muscle repair and recovery as well." A smoothie made with Greek yogurt or some cottage cheese with whole-grain crackers are two good (and quick) options to reach for.

Just remember, sugar isn't always the enemy, but it does taste a whole lot sweeter when you've earned it.

(Source: greatist.com)

What are herpes prodromal symptoms?

By Elizabeth Boskey

Genital and oral herpes infections are experienced very differently by different people. Some people never have an outbreak. Some people have one outbreak and then never have symptoms again. Then there are the approximately 20-40 percent of infected individuals who have herpes outbreaks on a regular or semi-regular basis. Many of those people will notice that they have tingling and other sensations that appear before each recurrence of their herpes. Those symptoms are referred to as herpes prodromal symptoms.

The prodromal period is the period between when symptoms start to appear but full symptoms haven't developed. Another way to think of it is that the prodromal period is an advanced warning sign that an outbreak is about to occur. Prodromal symptoms are symptoms of a disease that are not a full-on outbreak or attack. The term isn't solely used to refer to herpes infections. Other infections can have prodromal periods as well. For instance, a measles outbreak is often preceded by a fever. Non-infectious conditions can also have prodromal periods. For example, migraines are sometimes preceded by prodromal symptoms. Prodromal migraine syndromes are not the well-known migraine "aura", but symptoms that appear even before that. These can include irritability and sensitivity to light or sound.

What are herpes prodromal symptoms?

The herpes prodromal period lasts anywhere from two to 24 hours. During that time, people may experience:

- Pain
- Tingling
- Burning

All of these symptoms can either be local to the outbreak area, or in the broader area of the body

where outbreaks occur. In addition to these more localized symptoms, some people also feel generally unwell during the prodromal period. For example, they may lose interest in eating.

They may also have a headache, a fever, or swollen lymph nodes.

After the prodromal period, people usually then undergo an outbreak. Over the next few hours or days, they'll develop the classic herpes lesions. Those lesions will then crust over and heal on their own, usually without any scarring. However, there are topical treatments that may reduce the discomfort of lesions and potentially speed healing.

The prodromal period and herpes treatment

Some people take daily medication for herpes as a form of suppressive therapy. The goal of suppressive therapy is to reduce the number of outbreaks they have as well as to reduce the risk of transmitting the virus to a partner. Other people use what is known as episodic therapy. They take their herpes medications as soon as their herpes prodromal symptoms start, or within 24 hours of the start of an outbreak. The goal is to have the brief episode of therapy either shorten the upcoming outbreak or decrease its likelihood.

Data suggests that the suppressive therapy approach may be more effective in preventing outbreaks. However, it is not always an option for people due to cost, lack of willingness to take a daily medication, concern about side effects, and other reasons.

For them, starting episodic herpes treatment during the prodromal period can sometimes help prevent outbreaks, or at least make them less severe. However, this type of therapy does not reduce the risk of transmitting herpes to a partner. Therefore, when compared to suppressive therapy, it is less likely to be recommended for people who have sexual partners who might be at risk of acquiring an infection.

How common are herpes prodromal symptoms?

Not everyone with genital or oral herpes infections will have recurring outbreaks. In fact, most people will either never have a noticeable outbreak or only have a single noticeable outbreak.

Unfortunately, there is little to no data about how many people have herpes prodromal symptoms, either before an outbreak or instead of one. (For example, the outbreak might be interrupted by therapy and never occur.) It is, however, generally assumed that most people with outbreaks will have prodromal symptoms before then. In fact, it is the reliability of herpes prodromal symptoms preceding and predicting an outbreak that allows episodic therapy to work in the way described above.

Are people with herpes infectious during the prodromal period?

People with herpes can potentially transmit the disease to their partners whether or not they have noticeable symptoms of an outbreak. That absolutely includes during the herpes prodromal period. Several studies have looked at viral shedding during this period. In general, research has found that there isn't quite as much herpes virus present on the skin during the prodromal period as during the worst phases of an outbreak. Still, there is more virus present than when no symptoms are present. That said, up to half of individuals may shed herpes virus even once they are healed from an outbreak and showing no symptoms at all.

It's important to realize that most herpes infections are transmitted when the person with the virus does not have symptoms—neither during an outbreak nor during a prodromal period. That's why it's important for sexually active people with herpes infections to consistently practice safe sex and consider suppressive therapy. That's particularly true if someone with an infection is part of a discordant couple. Neither safe sex nor suppressive therapy is a guarantee of safety, but both can reduce a partner's risk.

(Source: verywell.com)

How collaboration is improving orthopedic patients' outcomes

Some in the health care industry speculate that consolidation is the fate for most providers. But Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS) has evidence that a sustainable advantage is gained not so much from economies of scale, but rather from economies of knowledge. Expertise correlates to patient outcomes and operational efficiency. And through collaborative relationships with third-party hospitals from up the road to across the globe, and advanced education used by

medical professionals in more than 150 countries, HSS is getting bigger by helping others get better.

"154 years of specialization gives HSS the opportunity and responsibility to focus on sustainable leadership, at a time when quality is the answer to meeting the global challenges of surging demand and cost," says HSS President and CEO Lou Shapiro. "At HSS, a unique level of experience has long propelled the most advanced knowledge and prolific invention and

innovation; now, we are syndicating that to other institutions in a sustainable business model that fuels growth through quality performance for consumers, our partner institutions, and for HSS."

The HSS Global Orthopedic Alliance was created recognizing that specific needs vary among health systems. The Alliance systematically transfers knowledge, protocols and other support from HSS to achieve different degrees of transformation, the highest of which

is recognized as an HSS Center of Excellence.

Through the Alliance, HSS provides mentorship, education, and consulting to hospital systems that want to specialize in musculoskeletal care and adopt the model of care that has been successful for HSS. To date, it has collaborated with hospital systems in six countries outside the U.S., including Brazil, Greece, Ghana, China, South Korea and England.

(Source: cnbc.com)

Are you getting enough B12?

There are very few reasons to take supplements, but getting enough of this vitamin may be one of the most important.

Vitamin B12 may not be high on your nutritional radar, yet it is essential to some of the body's most important functions, like forming red blood cells and maintaining nerve function. Doctors don't routinely test for vitamin B12 levels, so vitamin B12 deficiency can go unnoticed. But over time, such deficiency may cause anemia, nerve damage, and even problems with memory and reasoning. However, it's easy to avoid vitamin B12 deficiency, according to Stacey Nelson, manager of clinical outpatient nutrition at Harvard-affiliated Massachusetts General Hospital. "What's important is to recognize if you're at risk and take measures to avoid developing a deficiency," Nelson says.

How vitamin B12 works

Vitamin B12 is a water-soluble vitamin that is naturally found in animal products. Some fortified foods, dietary supplements, and medications contain a synthetic version of vitamin B12. When you eat meat, fish, eggs, or dairy products, vitamin B12 is released from protein by hydrochloric acid and enzymes in the stomach; synthetic vitamin B12 is already in this released (free) form. Free vitamin B12 then combines with intrinsic factor — a substance secreted by the stomach cells—which enables it to be absorbed from the small intestine.

Who needs more B12?

Most women get the recommended daily amount — 2.4 micrograms (mcg) for most adults, 2.6 mcg for pregnant women, and 2.8 mcg for women who are breastfeeding — in their diets. However, you are at increased risk of vitamin B12 deficiency if any of the following applies:

- You're age 50 or older. With age, your stomach cells



become less efficient and secrete less hydrochloric acid, which means you absorb less B12.

- You have altered gastrointestinal function. People who have gastrointestinal disorders like celiac disease or Crohn's disease or who have undergone adequate weight-loss surgery may secrete too little hydrochloric acid or -intrinsic factor.

- You're a strict vegan. If you've given up all animal products, you should consider using fortified cereals or nutritional yeasts or taking a vitamin B12 supplement. It's especially important

that pregnant vegan women who are planning to breastfeed exclusively talk to their medical team about getting adequate vitamin B12 for both themselves and their infants. Babies who don't get any vitamin B12 can develop a deficiency and may sustain permanent neurological damage.

A vitamin B12 deficiency may go undiagnosed because many of the symptoms — fatigue, weakness, constipation, loss of appetite, and weight loss — mirror those of minor illnesses or chronic conditions.

- You take certain medications. Two types of medications for ulcers and gastric reflux — proton-pump inhibitors, such as omeprazole (Prilosec) and lansoprazole (Prevacid), and H2 blockers like cimetidine (Tagamet), famotidine (Pepcid), and ranitidine (Zantac) — inhibit the release of stomach acid necessary to free dietary vitamin B12. There is some evidence that the diabetes drug metformin (Glucophage) may reduce vitamin B12 absorption when used for several years.

metformin (Glucophage) may reduce vitamin B12 absorption when used for several years.

- You have pernicious anemia. This autoimmune condition affects the stomach's ability to produce intrinsic factor, so you can't absorb vitamin B12 through your digestive system.

Symptoms of B12 deficiency

A vitamin B12 deficiency may go undiagnosed because many of the symptoms — fatigue, weakness, constipation, loss of appetite, and weight loss — mirror those of minor illnesses or chronic conditions, Nelson explains. Other symptoms of B12 deficiency, such as numbness and tingling in the hands and feet, are also common in people with diabetes and spinal stenosis. If you have some of those symptoms — especially if you have a low red blood cell count — you should talk to your doctor about further blood tests for vitamin B12.

Preventing B12 deficiency

If you're at risk for vitamin B12 deficiency, the following can provide some protection:

- Supplements. Even the lowest doses in B12 supplements are many times the recommended dietary allowance. Doses up to 1,000 mcg, though unnecessary, probably aren't harmful.
- Fortified foods. Many breakfast cereals, soy products, and yeasts are fortified with B12.
- Fortified toothpaste. Sante toothpaste delivers vitamin B12 to the bloodstream through the mucous membranes lining the mouth.
- Injections. If you have had weight-reduction surgery or have pernicious anemia, celiac disease, or Crohn's disease, B12 injections may be recommended.

(Source: health.harvard.edu)

10 hot titles of IT world

By Alireza Khorasani

Here are high rated IT titles in the world that reviewed by savvy tech users:

1 Dozens of tech-industry titans are joining forces to urge President Donald Trump to maintain protections for undocumented immigrants who are covered by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. That program, better known by the acronym DACA, is an Obama-era policy that shields immigrants from deportation if they were brought to the US illegally as children. Trump was expected to announce changes to DACA on Friday, ahead of a deadline by which 10 attorneys general threatened to sue over the program if Trump did not take action.

2 The so-called iPhone 8 will be announced September 12 at the Steve Jobs Theater at Apple's new headquarters in Cupertino, California. This year's iPhone will mark the product's 10th anniversary, and most Apple watchers are expecting the company to make a big deal out of the event. It'll also be the first time Apple will publicly show off its new Apple Park headquarters.

3 A US judge said Yahoo must face nationwide litigation brought on behalf of well over 1 billion users who said their personal information was compromised in three massive data breaches. Decision from US District Judge Lucy Koh in San Jose, California, was a setback for efforts by Verizon, which paid \$4.76 billion for Yahoo's Internet business in June, to limit potential liability. The breaches occurred between 2013 and 2016, but Yahoo was slow to disclose them, waiting more than three years to reveal the first.

4 A Dallas jury awarded iLife Technologies \$10 million in its patent infringement lawsuit against Nintendo of America. The suit, which was brought forth in 2013, alleged that Nintendo used iLife's technology when creating its motion-sensing Wii Remote. The technology created by and patented by iLife was designed to detect when elderly individuals fell and monitor babies for sudden infant death syndrome. It sought \$144 million in damages, or \$4 for each of the 36 million Wii systems sold prior to the suit being filed, along with an injunction against Nintendo's use of the technology in question.

5 Facebook will use AI to help correct skewed 360-degree photos. Ever since Facebook added 360-degree photos to your news feed last year, more and more images of this type have appeared. You can even take and share these full-circle images right from your mobile device, as well, making them even more ubiquitous. Finding them is even easier with Facebook's Gear VR app, too. As reported by VentureBeat, the social network is now using deep neural networks to analyze 360-degree photos to fix the image orientation for a better viewing experience, especially in VR.

6 Windows 10 Fall Creators Update may arrive on October 17th. The Fall Creators Update is slated to feature some big changes, too, including built-in AI to fight malware, new Cortana features and handwriting recognition. While many expected bi-annual updates for Windows 10 starting in September, PC World reports that hardware partner Lenovo leaked a Windows 10 ship date of October 17th on a since-deleted product page for its upcoming two-in-one PC, the Miix 520.

7 The smartwatch market is actually performing pretty well. In a report from International Data Corporation on this year's second quarter earnings, sales numbers show that wearables are up 10.3 percent year over year. That number includes a small -- nearly one percent -- but notable first time drop in annual growth for basic wearables, like most Fitbit trackers, that don't run third party apps. On the other side of that, though, smartwatch growth topped 60 percent this quarter compared to the same time last year.

8 WikiLeaks suffered an embarrassing cyber-attack when Saudi Arabian-based hacking group OurMine took over its web address. The attack saw visitors to WikiLeaks.org redirected to a page created by OurMine which claimed that the attack was a response to a challenge from the organisation to hack them. But while it may have been humiliating for WikiLeaks, which prides itself on technical competency, the actual "hack" appears to have been a low-tech affair: the digital equivalent of spray-painting graffiti on the front of a bank then claiming to have breached its security. The group appears to have carried out an attack known as "DNS poisoning" for a short while on Thursday morning.

9 Samsung Electronics Co Ltd said it has received a permit to test self-driving vehicles in California, marking the entry of the world's largest smart phone maker four months after iPhone maker and arch rival Apple Inc received a permit. Its parent company in May secured permission from South Korean authorities to test a self-driving car fitted with its own sensors and software systems. At that time, South Korean officials said the company planned to use the car to develop a self-driving car algorithm that could drive in adverse weather.

10 Qualcomm on Friday is introducing a new Cellular Vehicle-to-Everything (C-V2X) chipset and reference design that should bring automakers one step closer to deploying the communications systems needed for fully autonomous vehicles. The Qualcomm 9150 C-V2X chipset, expected to be available for commercial sampling in the second half of 2018, is based on specs from the 3rd Generation Partnership Project (3GPP), a collaboration between groups of telecommunications associations. Qualcomm's 9150 C-V2X chipset and reference design should bring automakers one step closer to deploying the communications systems needed for fully autonomous vehicles.

IFA 2017: The biggest announcements from Berlin's tech show

IFA Berlin, one of the world's biggest consumer technology trade shows, is now under way. There's so much to see. But which announcements and products will really move the needle?

Here are the announcements (and gadgets) that piqued our curiosity.

■ **Dell Visor**



One of a wave of Windows Mixed Reality products (think VR, but without external sensors) announced ahead of IFA, the Dell Visor certainly has a unique look.

It's also uniquely comfortable, according to CNET editors. It'll be available in October for \$349, or roughly £270 or AU\$440 converted. The controllers cost \$99 extra.

■ **Asus Windows Mixed Reality Headset**

Don't like the look of that Dell? Asus has its own spin on the same Windows Mixed Reality idea, and announced this similar headset at the show.

■ **Miele Dialog Oven**



When you hear "smart oven," you might think of a plain ol' oven with built-in Wi-Fi so you can control it from across the room. But the Miele Dialog Oven actually uses different technologies to cook your food. It emits electromagnetic waves at 915MHz that intelligently adjust in intensity by monitoring the texture of your meal while cooking. It's called the Dialog because it "talks" to your food.

■ **Acer Holo360**



Remember the Flip Cam, the ubersimple all-in one portable video camera? Acer wants to do that for 360-degree video too. That's what the Holo360 is all about, with its built-in touchscreen and LTE data so you can set up a 360-degree livestream anywhere or share on the go. \$429 (approximately £330 or AU\$540) this November.

■ **Google Assistant expands to third-party speakers**



Soon, you won't need a Google Home to use the Google Assistant voice helper in your house. You'll be able to buy an Assistant-enabled speaker from another company, like this boring-looking -- or should I say, utilitarian -- Panasonic GA-10 you see right now. At IFA, three speaker manufacturers announced such products.

■ **Bang & Olufsen BeoVision Eclipse**

The BeoVision Eclipse, a partnership with LG, is one of the weirder TV designs we've seen -- the glass extends down beyond the 450-watt soundbar of this sharp OLED TV. Plus, the stand has motorized wheels so you remote-control it to get the best viewing angle no mat-

ter where you sit in the room.

■ **Intel's 8th-gen Core processors arrive**

The always-delightfully-small Dell XPS 13 is getting a decent performance boost from its new chip, up to an 8th-gen dual-core Intel Core i7-8550U processor.

■ **Acer Predator Orion 9000**



Acer's also got a new Predator gaming desktop, and gosh is it beefy. We're talking an 18-core Intel Core i9 Extreme processor, four GeForce GTX 1080 Ti GPUs and up to 128GB of DDR4 memory in its maximum configuration. Plus, wheels. Yes, you heard that right. In addition to two handles, there are wheels on the bottom of this PC.

■ **JBL Reflect Fit**



These earphones do more than deliver tunes to accompany your workout. They help! A built-in heart rate monitor audibly delivers reports to you to help make sure you're hitting your max heart rate target.

■ **Razer Blade Pro**



Razer delivers a much cheaper brother to the excellent but pricey laptop line. It does so by incorporating less powerful components, such as an Nvidia GeForce GTX 1060 GPU and dropping from a 4K-resolution version to a 120Hz IPS 1,920x1,080 panel. The latter's not that much of a compromise, though, since 4K tends to overstress your battery and graphics subsystem, dropping your frame rates.

■ **Ricoh Theta V**



The Theta S's low-resolution, low-bit-rate video has been replaced with 3,840x1,920/30p video that records with a bit rate of 56Mbps, and it's now powerful enough to stitch your video together in real time. Plus, the camera's four omnidirectional mics can capture 360-degree audio.

■ **Logitech Craft keyboard**



It's not for everyone, but the dial on Logitech's new multidevice wireless keyboard can be a time saver if you frequently change parameters like brush size, stroke

width, blend modes and so in Adobe Creative Cloud applications or need a better way to scrub through video in Premiere Pro. The well-designed keyboard also seamlessly connects to and switches among up to three devices via Bluetooth and Logitech's Unifying Receiver.

■ **DJI Mavic Pro Platinum**



The new Mavic Pro Platinum takes the current Mavic Pro model and adds new electronic speed controllers (ESCs) and redesigned propellers; they reduce noise by 60 percent and increase flight times up to 30 minutes. That's only a few extra minutes over the original, but anyone who's ever tried to get a perfect aerial shot knows every minute counts. And yes, this version has a platinum-colored shell.

■ **Segway MiniLite**



Now kids have a Segway of their own. For young'uns age 6 and up, it has customizable LED lights and bumper attachments, plus wider, sturdier wheels for safety. It's slightly slower, reaching a maximum speed of 16 kph (10 mph). You'll get about 18km (11 miles) out of one full charge.

■ **Lenovo Explorer**



Like the Dell Visor also debuting at the show, and the previously announced Acer and HP Mixed Reality headsets launched earlier in 2017, the Lenovo Explorer is based on the Windows Mixed Reality platform. There's nothing fancy about it -- it's just a comfortable, subdued-looking alternative. A collection of Windows Store apps will be supported, as well as a bunch of Lenovo-specific apps from its own branded Entertainment Hub.

■ **Sphero R2-D2**



Sphere rolled out (pardon the pun) a couple of Star Wars app-controlled robots. The BB-9E is nice, but the R2-D2 excels. It rolls around on treads, or sprouts its third leg and leans back for movement on tougher surfaces like carpets. It can wobble with its feet, too. R2's head turns and lights up, and it makes all of R2's beeps and noises with its own speaker, something BB-8 couldn't do. It also works with Apple's Swift Playgrounds programming environment for kids.

■ **Fitbit Ionic**

Fitbit has finally unveiled its first smartwatch, the Fitbit Ionic. Waterproof, slickly designed and (as you'd expect from Fitbit) fitness focused, it opts for a square face and uses the company's own Fitbit OS. With a 384 x 250 LCD reaching 1000 nits and built in GPS, you'll get 10 hours of constant tracking from the Ionic.

(Source: CNET)

Hacking risk leads to recall of 500,000 pacemakers due to patient death fears

Almost half a million pacemakers have been recalled by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) due to fears that their lax cybersecurity could be hacked to run the batteries down or even alter the patient's heartbeat.

The recall won't see the pacemakers removed, which would be an invasive and dangerous medical procedure for the 465,000 people who have them implanted: instead, the manufacturer has issued a firmware update which will be applied by medical staff to patch the security holes.

Six types of pacemaker, all made by healthtech firm Abbott and sold under the St Jude Medical brand, are affected by the recall. They are all radio-controlled implantable cardiac pacemakers, typically fitted to



patients with slow or irregular heartbeats, as well as those recovering from heart failure.

There have been no reports of unauthorised access to any patient's implanted device, according to Abbot. The FDA says that the vulnerability allows an unauthorised user to access a device using commercially available equipment and reprogram it. The hackers could then deliberately run the battery flat, or conduct "administration of inappropriate pacing". Both could, in the worst case, result in the death of an affected patient.

The US Department of Homeland Security said that "it is recommended that healthcare providers discuss this update with their patients and carefully consider the potential risk of a cybersecurity attack along with the risk of performing a firmware update".

(Source: Guardian)

Infertile women more depressed than their male peers, say Iranian researchers

Results of a recent study conducted by Iranian researchers at Royan Institute show that men who cannot have children are more optimistic than infertile women.

Researchers at Royan Research Institute have studied the relation between infertility and hopefulness among infertile men and women. The results of their studies show that men who cannot have children are more optimistic than infertile women.

Infertility is more than just a dysfunction in the reproduction system of human body. It can levy a great toll on the mental health of such patients due to pressures from society and culture.

Common symptoms

Stress, depression and anxiety are some common symptoms that are seen among people who are unable to have offspring.

So it is essential to analyze these symptoms and their distribution between men and women, normal infertile people and candidates of receiving eggs.

This is why the Royan researchers have come up with an experiment to study 180 infertile men and women



who are literate and above 18 years old. The purpose of this research is to examine the level of stress, depression, anxiety and optimism in these partici-

Stress, depression and anxiety are some common symptoms that are seen among people who are unable to have offspring.

pants. The subjects were assorted in three categories: 60 candidates to receive fetus, 60 candidates to receive egg and 60 normal infertile subjects.

The results of this study which has been published in the Cell Journal have shown that in the normal group, men were significantly more optimistic and hopeful than women.

Considerably different

While the average level of optimism and hopefulness between men and women in the three groups were considerably different.

In the normal infertile group, the distribution of anxiety between men and women was very distinct. The same pattern was observed among the receivers of fetus and women were more stressed and anxious.

The results of this research show that hopefulness has an important role in reducing psychological disorders such as stress and anxiety. Therefore getting psychological help such as hope therapy from the experts can be effective in improving the mental health of such patients.

(Source: mehrnews.com)

Galaxy clusters offer clues to dark matter and dark energy

Elizabeth Blanton, a Boston University associate professor of astronomy, started hunting for distant galaxy clusters more than 20 years ago. A single galaxy cluster can be as massive as a quadrillion suns, yet faraway clusters are so faint that they are practically invisible to all but the biggest Earth-bound telescopes.

Distant clusters hold pieces of the story of how the web-like structure of the universe first emerged and could help illuminate the true nature of dark energy and dark matter.

Now, her team's search is delivering its biggest return yet: a catalog of about 200 candidate galaxy clusters which, if confirmed, may include some of the most distant clusters ever found. The new results, which will be a useful tool for astronomers worldwide, were published in the July 26, 2017, edition of the Astrophysical Journal by a team that includes Rachel Paterno-Mahler (GRS'15), Ph.D. candidate Emmet Golden-Marx (GRS'16'19), Gagandeep Anand (GRS'17), Joshua Wing (GRS'07'13), and colleagues at the University of Missouri-Kansas City and the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics.

Trillions of stars

Galaxy clusters can contain thousands of galaxies and many trillions of stars — and that's just what astronomers can

see with ordinary telescopes. Hot gas between the galaxies glows with X-rays, and astronomers suspect that more than 85 percent of every cluster's mass is hidden in the form of dark matter.

Mapped in three dimensions, the universe is a web of bright filaments and dark voids, with galaxy clusters occupying the spots where the filaments intersect.

Woven into this cosmic web are clues to two major cosmic mysteries: dark matter, the invisible stuff that permeates galaxies and the spaces between them, and dark energy, which is driving the accelerating expansion of the universe.

Together, dark matter and dark energy make up some 95 percent of our universe, scientists suspect, but astrophysicists know of dark matter and dark energy's existence only indirectly, by their influence on the stars and galaxies that light up the sky.

Galaxy cluster

The new cache of distant galaxy cluster candidates may help researchers pin down the properties of dark matter and dark energy, says Paterno-Mahler, first author on the new paper, one of a series forthcoming from Blanton's team.

By comparing faraway clusters with their local counterparts, researchers can also assemble a timetable of how



galaxy clusters formed and grew. That's because light from the most distant clusters had to travel billions of years before reaching Earth, so astronomers see those clusters as they were long ago. "If we want to learn how clusters — the most massive collapsed structures in the

universe — form and evolve, we need to study them over a range of distances, going all the way back," says coauthor Mark Brodwin, assistant professor of physics and astronomy at the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

(Source: farsnews.com)

Volcanic emissions caused the warmest period in past 56m years: new study

To predict what type of Earth lies ahead of us, we scientists usually turn to complex computer simulations. But how can we test whether these models are remotely accurate? Perhaps the best solution is to turn to instances in the geological past when Earth's climate experienced similarly rapid warming. One such event is the Palaeocene-Eocene Thermal Maximum (PETM) that occurred 56m years ago.

In our latest research, we have identified the cause of this well-known warm period. Its links to present day climate change are clear.

Just prior to the PETM, Earth looked very different than it does today. The polar regions were devoid of ice sheets, with temperate or even subtropical forests

along the coastlines of Antarctica, and Arctic Canada resembling the swamplands of modern Florida. The deep oceans were about 10°C warmer than today, and warm climate zones were all shifted polewards.

Against the background of this "greenhouse world", the planet warmed by at least a further 5°C over a few thousand years at the onset of the PETM. Life in the deep sea suffered disproportionately; many species went extinct and parts of the deep ocean became anoxic (oxygen depleted). On land, the water cycle strengthened, leading to both floods and droughts. It took about 150,000 years for Earth's climate to naturally recover from this "fever" and regain some sort of equilibrium.

Geological terms

Here's the really worrying part: 5°C over a few thousand years is breakneck speed in geological terms, but is still nothing compared to our current rate of warming. In fact, if we keep burning fossil fuels at our current rate, the worst-case scenarios suggest we could hit 5°C by the end of the century.

So what can the PETM tell us about the future? It has long been suspected that the warm period was triggered by increasing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere. These gases absorb and trap solar heat, which is why any significant increase unavoidably leads to global warming.

We know there was a huge release of

"new" carbon into the atmosphere and oceans at the time, thanks to analysis of 56m-year-old sediments. Yet where this carbon came from has always been disputed. Carbon can be emitted as carbon dioxide or methane (aka CH₄) and both are greenhouse gases.

Some say the PETM carbon was methane from marine sediments, while others have advocated methane from thawing Antarctic permafrost or the impact of a large comet releasing carbon from rocks.

In our study recently published in Nature, we identified the distinctive chemical fingerprint of this carbon — it pointed not to methane, but to emissions from intense and prolonged volcanic activity.

(Source: Yahoo News)

What happens when you heat the Antarctic Ocean by a single degree?

What happens to aquatic life along the Antarctic seabed when the surrounding waters warm by a degree or two?

Researchers spent six years developing a heating device capable of heating the ocean — while surviving the region's cutting climate — in an attempt to find out. Their findings were released today in the journal Current Biology, and suggest that even this tiny shift could have a big impact on the local ecosystem.

It wasn't just curiosity that drove lead author Gail Ashton, a marine ecologist with the British Antarctic Survey and the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, to spend 18 months in Antarctica investigating the biological impacts of warming waters.

Ice sheets

While our image of Antarctica tends to crystallize around fragmenting ice sheets and frolicking penguins, researchers are also trying to forecast how climate change will impact marine life that don't sport perpetual tuxedos. This includes animals like Fenestrulina rugula, a sort of aquatic invertebrate (an animal lacking a backbone). They're sometimes nicknamed "moss animals," because not only do they look a lot like moss, but they feed by filtering nutrients out of the surround-



ing water.

"We wanted to know what communities in the ocean might look like in the future," Ashton says. "To date, the best way we had of doing that is bringing animals into tanks and warming them. But that's quite removed from their natural setting."

It took six years for Ashton and her colleagues to bring the warming to the animals instead of the other way around. The final device might look little more than

a plastic box with a heater to the casual observer, but creating it involved a lot of fine tuning to make sure it would only heat the water to the specified temperatures.

Ocean surface

Then the team had to develop cables to keep it connected to a power supply while it sat some 50 feet below the ocean surface, along with a system that would enable Ashton to make sure the device was working — without diving down into the icy depths.

When the heater was finally ready to roll, Ashton and her colleagues created three test sites, warming one by 1 degree Celsius and another by 2 degrees (and leaving a third unheated, as a control). Increasing the temperature led some species to rapidly grow while others declined, resulting in an overall reduction in the biodiversity — or in the number of different species — of animals making their home on the ocean bed.

While it may not seem like swapping some of one species for more of another is so bad, the truth is that the loss of biodiversity — the move towards monoculture, where only one or two species dominate the sea floor — means that we lose the ability to cope with other kinds of change.

(Source: Popular Science)

World's biggest X-ray laser opens vast research vistas

A subterranean X-ray laser, unveiled Friday in Germany, by far the most powerful in the world, has scientists in a dozen fields jostling to train its mighty beam on their projects.

European XFEL will reveal -- and capture in images -- secrets at the sub-atomic level, promising breakthroughs in medicine, biology, energy, information technology and chemistry.

It will map the molecular architecture of viruses and cells; render three-dimensional nano-scale snapshots; and film chemical reactions as they unfold.

Earth scientists should be able to duplicate and study processes occurring deep inside planets, including our own.

"The laser is the biggest, and the most powerful, source of X-rays ever made," Olivier Napoly, a member of the French Atomic Energy Commission who helped build the complex, told AFP.

The European X-Ray Free Electron Laser, or XFEL, is lodged in a series of tunnels up to 38 meters (125 feet) underground near the city of Hamburg.

Its centerpiece is the world's longest -- 1.7 kilometers (one mile) -- superconducting linear accelerator, designed to provide the energy needed to generate X-ray flashes a billion times brighter than the best conventional radiation sources.

That's 27,000 X-ray flashes per second, compared to the 120/sec produced by a laser of the same type at the US National Accelerator Laboratory in Stanford, California, and 60/sec generated by another in Japan.

For X-ray lasers, brilliance is measured in the number of photons -- sub-atomic light particles with no electric charge that move at the speed of light -- generated at a certain radiation wavelength, from high-energy gamma- and X-rays, to low-energy infrared and radio waves.

(Source: AFP)

Planets may still be wet enough for life, despite losing oceans

The seven TRAPPIST-1 (Transiting Planets and Planetesimals Small Telescope) planets all orbit their parent star closer than Mercury orbits the sun. In Earth's Solar System, that position would likely mean certain death for life, but the TRAPPIST-1 star is much dimmer and cooler than our sun, so there is still hope. Three of the TRAPPIST-1 planets appear to orbit at a distance where their surface temperatures could be right for liquid water, also known as the habitable zone.

The new study looks at how much ultraviolet (UV) radiation is received by each of the planets, because this could affect how much water the worlds could sustain over billions of years, according to the study.

Lower-energy UV light can break apart water molecules into hydrogen and oxygen atoms on a planet's surface, while higher-energy UV light (along with X-rays from the star) can heat a planet's upper atmosphere and free the separated hydrogen and oxygen atoms into space, according to the study. (It's also possible that the star's radiation destroyed the planets' atmospheres long ago.)

The researchers measured the amount of UV radiation bathing the TRAPPIST-1 planets using NASA's Hubble Space Telescope, and in their paper they estimate just how much water each of the worlds could have lost in the 8 billion years since the system formed.

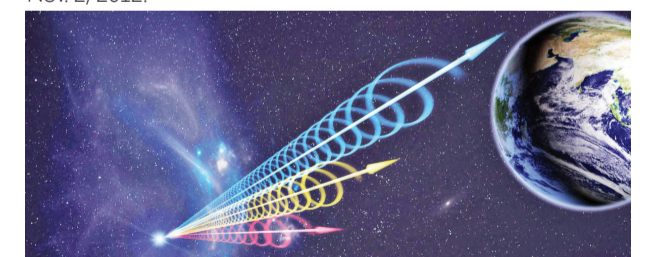
It's possible that the six innermost planets (identified by the letters b, c, d, e, f and g), pelted with the highest levels of UV radiation, could have lost up to 20 Earth-oceans' worth of water, according to the paper. But it's also possible that the outermost four planets (e, f, g and h — the first three of which are in the star's habitable zone) lost less than three Earth-oceans' worth of water.

(Source: space.com)

Scientists detect mysterious radio signals from deep space

Scientists with Breakthrough Listen say they've found 15 fast radio bursts, or FRBs, from a deep space "repeater" called FRB 121102.

The numbers indicate when the first signal was discovered, on Nov. 2, 2012.



While a few other FRBs have been detected, what makes this one unique is that it was heard again in 2015, and its location pinpointed a year later.

Breakthrough Listen used instruments at the Green Bank Telescope in West Virginia to observe that location over 5 hours on Saturday, detecting 15 bursts over the entire 4 to 8 GHz frequency band, the organization said in a news release.

"It's very funky how the individual bursts can pop up anywhere in this wide range of frequencies, even though each individual burst has a relatively narrow frequency coverage," Peter Williams of Harvard University told New Scientist. "I have yet to see anyone offer up a good explanation for how that might happen."

Possible explanations

"Possible explanations for FRBs range from outbursts from rotating neutron stars with extremely strong magnetic fields, to more speculative ideas that they are directed energy sources used by extraterrestrial civilizations to power spacecraft," the organization said.

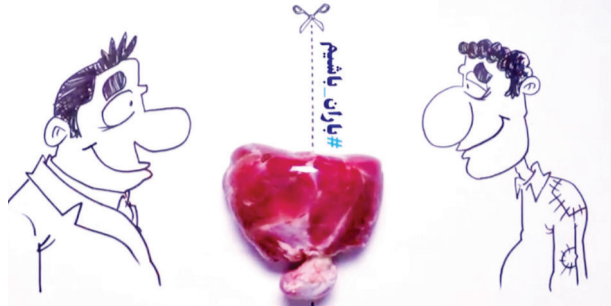
Earlier this year, Harvard researchers speculated that these radio bursts could be "beams set up by extragalactic civilizations to potentially power light sails."

However, they conceded that it was purely speculative, and several other scientists have cautioned against linking these bursts to possible alien intelligence.

(Source: Huffington Post)

'Be like rain' campaign aims to feed mal-nourished children

SOCIETY TEHRAN — A campaign called 'Baran bashim' in Persian (literary meaning be like rain) is soliciting contributions to provide food for mal-nourished children living in underprivileged areas across Iran. Launched by Iranian TV show, Khandevaneh, the campaign is asking for contributions from Eid al-Adha to Eid al-Ghadir (September 1-9) for some 400,000 Iranian children suffering from malnutrition.



By cartoonist Majid Khosroanjom

The dates mark two joyous feast and holidays for Muslims. Eid al-Adha also called 'feast of the Sacrifice' honors the willingness of prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) to sacrifice his son Ismael, as an act of obedience to God's command. Before he sacrificed his son God intervened by sending his angel Gabriel, who then put a ram in his son's place. In commemoration of this, an animal is sacrificed. Eid al-Ghadir is among important feasts and happy holidays of Shia Muslims. It is named after the event in which Ali-ibn-Abi-Talib, the cousin of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH), was appointed as the religious authority and leader after the prophet by God.

National campaign seeking help to safeguard Asiatic Cheetah

ENVIRONMENT TEHRAN — A national campaign is calling for collecting contributions to help protect Asiatic cheetahs living in Touran National Park.

The campaign which began on August 31, National Asiatic Cheetah Day, is seeking to collect contributions to help Asiatic Cheetah conservation project. Many celebrities, actors, athletes, and environmentalist have taken part in the campaign ever since. The campaign is unfolding under the theme '50 cheetahs left till a national regret'. The cheetah thrives in open lands, small plains, semi-desert areas, and other open habitats where prey is available.

The Asiatic cheetah mainly inhabits the desert areas around Dasht-e Kavir in the eastern half of Iran, including parts of the Kerman, Khorasan, Semnan, Yazd, Tehran, and Markazi provinces.

The animal is mostly living in five protected areas, Kavir National Park, Touran National Park, Bafq Protected Area, Dar-e Anjir Wildlife Refuge, and Naybandan Wildlife Reserve.

The Asiatic cheetah has been listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List since 1996.

Reduced gazelle numbers, persecution, land-use change, habitat degradation and fragmentation, and desertification contributed to the decline of the cheetah population.

The cheetah is affected by loss of prey as a result of antelope hunting and overgrazing from introduced livestock. Mining development and road construction near reserves also threaten the population.

LEARN ENGLISH

New Guy in Town IV

A: All right, **drag** her over here, and help me **tie her up**.
B: I can't believe she **fell for it!** She is a lot more **gullible** than I thought!

A: Well, you gotta **admit**, my acting was **brilliant!**
B: Whatever. I was the one that convinced her to come. Look, she's waking up.

C: What's going on? Ellen? What are you doing?
A: The **cat's out of the bag**, you witch! You can stop pretending, now!

B: Yeah Lois, we know who you are! Now, we want some answers! Why are you here?
C: Fools! You don't know who you're dealing with! You can't stop me!

B: Run!

- Key Vocabulary**
- drag:** move something usually heavy
- tie up:** to attach someone or something with a rope or string
- fall for it:** believe a lie
- gullible:** easily believing something that is not true, easily fooled
- admit:** to agree unwillingly that something is true or that someone else is right
- brilliant:** extremely clever or skilful
- the cat's out of the bag:** the truth is revealed
- Supplementary Vocabulary**
- frank:** used to say that someone is speaking or writing in a very direct and honest way
- compulsive liar:** person that can't tell the truth, lies about anything
- disoriented:** state of not knowing where you are, confused
- spill the beans:** tell the truth when you don't really want to; tell someone everything
- wizard:** the male form of a witch; man that practices magic

(Source: irlanguage.com)

Iran to classify internet censorship

SOCIETY TEHRAN — Iran is taking initiatives to classify internet censorship under 'age' and 'occupation' within the next two to three months.

Currently, all users ranging from students to university professors, and journalists to doctors, are subjected to the same internet access restrictions, IRIB quoted Information and Communications Technology Minister Mohammad Javad Azari-Jahromi as saying.

It is necessary to classify internet censorship in accordance with age and job, the minister noted.

For instance, he said, "Once we block a news website for journalists we are actually persuading them to use VPNs (Virtual Private Network) to circumvent the bans."

Now that everyone is entitled to the same regulations, some perfectly legitimate requests (using some website depending on their jobs) of people are being ignored.



The situation must be handled discreetly; both Information and Communications Technology Ministry and the judiciary must take steps in classifying the access based on each groups' needs.

He went on to say that "we have made some positive improvements so far and we hope to implement the new regulations within the next two to three months."

In 2012, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei issued a decree for setting up a body to oversee the Internet. The body which is called The Supreme Council of Cyber Space consists of high-ranking officials, including the president, the parliament speaker, the judiciary chief, the prosecutor general, the ministers of culture, intelligence, science, education, and defense, as well as the police and the Revolutionary Guards chiefs who are tasked with defining policy and coordinating decisions regarding the Internet.

Bus carrying schoolgirls rolls over, 9 killed

SOCIETY TEHRAN — A bus rollover early on Friday killed seven schoolgirls, their teacher, and the driver and 34 others were injured.

The incident happened on a road linking the city of Bandar Abbas, Hormozgan province, to the city of Darab, Fars province, both in southern part of the country, ISNA reported.

The bus was carrying 45 middle school and high school female students who were going on a science camp. However, it crashed at about 4 a.m. local time.

Fifteen ambulances and 3 emergency helicopters attended the scene immediately and transferred the injured students to the nearby hospitals in Shiraz and other cities.

Hassan Noori, deputy executive director of Iran's Emergency Medical Services, explained that the injured victims were soon transferred to the hospitals, but unfortunately 13 of them are in a critical condition and some might not survive.



Some students received outpatient care, but sadly 3 of them lose a limb, Nader Rahmani, an official with traffic police, said.

Hassan Fayazpour, Fars province crisis management director general, said that the accidents was caused by the driver falling asleep at the wheel. According to traffic police the driver died at the scene.

As announced on his twitter account Mohammad Bat'haei, Minister of Education, was departed to Darab for follow-up assessment of the situation and to check up on the surviving students.

"I have a fatherly sympathy for the grieving families. I soon issued orders for checking up on the students' condition and I'm travelling to Darab," Bat'haei wrote.

Felids under threat

By Farnaz Heidari

Habitat fragmentation caused by agriculture and in general human interference results in the division of large, continuous habitats into smaller, more isolated remnants.

Species vary dramatically in their sensitivity to this fragmentation as some species can be classified as area-sensitive species. The key question for each species of concern is "how small a fragment will it occupy successfully?"

The best data available on area-sensitive species are Felidae. The biological family Felidae is a lineage of carnivorans that includes the cats and a member of this family is also called a felid. There have been just few field research in Iran and little information on their ecology is published.

The general rule is that the larger the body size of a species, the larger area it requires to survive and breed. Within this general framework it is important in analyzing felid habitats to know how each species responds to the area of the patches available to it.

Fragmentation ends in extinction

Many species of animals live in habitat patches that are broken up among less suitable habitat. The problem is that human activities have intensified native habitats fragmentation, so that agricultural fields, clear felled areas, suburbs and highways have broken up habitats that were once more continuous.

Asiatic lion (*Panthera leo persica*) could be a good example, once this species was widespread from Mesopotamia through the Iranian province of Khuzestan to Fars. Because of the threat that

lions pose to humans and livestock, they have been systematically eradicated from their former range.

Dasht-e Arjan, Fars province, is also the best example of habitat fragmentation which refers to this case too. Fragmentation in Dasht-e Arjan ended habitat loss and a change in the spatial configuration of the remaining patches. Many species of large mammals such as lions cannot maintain viable populations in small habitat patches, then fragmentation can lead to extinction as for Asiatic lions in Dasht-e Arjan happened.

Cheetahs under threat

Asiatic Cheetah has nomadic behavior, it means as much as protected areas become safer, Asiatic cheetahs go further away! Some hypotheses have been proposed to describe this unusual behavior; one hypothesis is that leopards' presence contributes to Asiatic cheetahs unusual behavior. In fact, as much as habitats become safer, leopards become dominant and cheetahs become more recessive. Here the evil factor of habitat loss increases the chances of extinction. Cases of habitat destruction such as mining, road construction, and so on would appear to provide the simplest examples of the declining population paradigm.

Fragmentation creates patches of habitat that may be suitable for species but are never colonized. Much of the conservation value of unprotected habitats for cheetahs has been lost because patches are too small to support a secure population. Fragmentation in this case may also leads to sub-species loss.

Impacts of introduced species

Introduced animals are responsible for

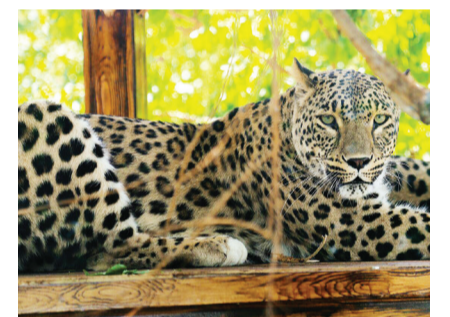
about 40% of historic extinctions. Most of these data come from mammals and birds for which more detailed information is available. Feral dogs are considered as one of those important threats. Tim S. Doherty from Deakin University, School of Life and Environmental Science and his colleagues recently published an important article which refers to the global impacts of domestic dogs on threatened vertebrates.

In this article we read: "All types of domestic dogs can interact with wildlife and have severe negative impacts on biodiversity. Domestic dogs have contributed to 11 vertebrate extinctions and are a known or potential threat to at least 188 threatened species worldwide. A third introduced predator that affects many species- but has received surprisingly less attention- is the domestic dog (*Canis familiaris*)." Bellard et al. (2016) and Doherty et al. (2016) estimated that more than 100 species are affected by domestic dogs as introduced species. Felids' situation in this case is not so good apparently.

Conclusion

Some animals are naturally rare, but many more are now scarce because of recent changes that have sharply reduced their numbers. Most of felids are likely to continue their rapid decline and will become extinct within a foreseeable future. In Iran more felid species are becoming endangered as we had witnessed the same pattern that have led to some species such as Asiatic lion and Caspian tiger extinction.

Ten species of cat live in Iran: Asiatic Cheetah, Caracal, Jungle Cat, Sand Cat, Wild Cat, Eurasian Lynx, Pallas's Cat, Leopard, Lion (Extinct), and tiger (Extinct).



Most of them have small number and are limited to small places or their numbers are in rapid decline so considered as endangered species. They are endangered as a result of rapid loss by hunting, poisoning, natural causes, or simply because they cannot breed fast enough to replace those losses. Nowadays, it is possible to make estimates of the future numbers of a species by feeding information into special computer programs. They can figure out what the population is likely to be in, 10 or 50 years. This technique, population modelling, in Iran needs more basic information. There are many and varied reasons why our felids will extinct, we have to curb certain threats posing felid, because without scientific and rational determination we will lose most of them in near future.

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ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Ebtekar urges Iraq to join hands with Iran to tackle dust storms

The chief of Iran's Department of Environment has urged Iraq to take effective measures to get the grips with dust storms in collaboration with Iran. Over a phone call Masoumeh Ebtekar has asked Iraqi Health Minister Adeelah Humood to help implement the previously signed memorandums of understanding on addressing dust storms between Iran and Iraq, Nasimonline reported on Monday.

ENGLISH PROVERB

Absolute power corrupts absolutely

- Explanation:** one who holds unchecked power or authority is likely to become corrupt or abuse one's position
- For example:** He really started abusing the authority of his office when he was promoted to CEO. Absolute power corrupts absolutely.

PHRASAL VERB

Do somebody out of something

- Meaning:** to dishonestly stop someone from getting or keeping something, especially something they have a right to have
- For example:** Are you trying to do me out of a job?

ENGLISH IDIOM

Beside yourself

- Explanation:** if you are beside yourself (with an emotion), you lose your self-control because of the intensity of the emotion you are feeling
- For example:** He was beside himself with grief when he lost his son.

ابتکار خواستار همکاری کشور عراق برای رفع گرد و غبار شد

رئیس سازمان محیط زیست ضمن تشریح تاثیرات منفی طوفان های گرد و غبار حاصل از کانون های موجود در عراق بر ایران، خواستار همکاری کشور همسایه برای رفع این چالش مهم شد. به گزارش روز دوشنبه «نسیم آنلاین»، معصومه ابتکار در تماس تلفنی با عدلیه حمود وزیر بهداشت عراق ضمن تأکید بر ضرورت افزایش همکاری های دو جانبه به ویژه در حوزه محیط زیست، خواستار اجرایی شدن یادداشت های همکاری دو کشور در این زمینه شد.

An international hashtag to condemn Saudi violence

#I_Speak_For_Buthaina

By staff & agencies

Photo of a one-eyed Yemeni girl, the lone survivor of a recent brutal airstrike by Saudi Arabia, has gone viral, setting off a wave of solidarity on social media networks.

Users around the world started sharing photos of themselves with one eye closed in solidarity with Bouthaina al-Rimi, after footage showed the badly bruised and injured little girl trying to open one of her swollen eyes with her fingers.

The young girl, believed to be four or five, was orphaned after her parents and five siblings as well as her uncle were killed in a Saudi airstrike that destroyed their apartment building in the Yemeni capital Sana'a on Friday. Little Bouthaina suffered severe fractures in her face.

Overall, 14 people were killed and another 16 were injured in the attack, one of them as young as three years old, according to a report by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).



The picture has helped raise awareness about the brutal Saudi military aggression against the impoverished Yemen.

The picture has helped raise awareness about the brutal Saudi military aggression against the impoverished Yemen.

The unprovoked war has so far killed over 12,000 Yemenis and put the country on the verge of a humanitarian crisis.

Bouthaina's image has also brought attention to the plight of some 500,000 Yemeni children suffering from acute malnutrition. The deadly war has also led to a cholera outbreak infecting more than half a million Yemenis.

The hashtags #Bouthaina_The_Eye_Of_Humanity and #I_SPEAK_FOR_BUTHINA had both been used more than 3,000 times since Wednesday, according to BBC.

"Such loss of civilian life is outrageous and runs counter to the basic tenets of the law of armed conflict," Carlos Morazani, the deputy head of ICRC's delegation in Yemen, said in a statement.

Saudis took responsibility for the attack on Saturday, citing a "technical mistake."

Iraq prime minister declares Tal Afar, Nineveh province free of ISIL

Iraq's Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi says the northern city of Tal Afar and the entire Nineveh province have been purged of the ISIL (Daesh) terrorist group.

"Tal Afar has been liberated. We say to the Islamic State (Daesh) fighters: Wherever you are, we are coming for you and you have no choice but to surrender or die," Abadi said in a statement released on Thursday.

The recapture of Tal Afar was made possible with the help of the Iraqi army, Federal Police, counterterrorism units, volunteer troops, and Rapid Response Forces, Abadi said.

"Our happiness is complete, victory has arrived and the province of Nineveh is now entirely in the hands of our forces," the Iraqi premier added.

Abadi also expressed Baghdad's resolve to liberate all Iraqi territory and keep up its firm stance against terrorists who pose a threat to the entire region.

Announcing that Tal Afar had "regained its place in the national territory," Abadi noted, "We pledge to you, our people, that we will continue to liberate every inch of Iraq."

Tal Afar, situated about 150 kilometers from Syria's border, was among the last Daesh-held cities in Iraq. The liberation of Tal Afar deprives Daesh of what was once a key supply route between its territory in Syria and Iraq.

Iraqi army soldiers and allied fighters from Popular Mobilization Units have been leading a major operation to rid the country of the Takfiri elements.

Iraqi forces launched the Tal Afar liberation operation on August 20, one month after fully recapturing the country's second biggest city, Mosul, which was Daesh's so-called "capital" in Iraq.

Daesh unleashed a campaign of death and destruction in Iraq in 2014, but it is currently retreating from much of the territory under its control in the Arab country due to recent advances made by the Iraqi forces on the battlefield.

Britain to send more troops to Iraq

Britain is set to send more troops to Iraq with the purported aim of fighting Daesh terrorists, who have already lost their major bastions in the Arab state in the face of successful Iraqi army operations.

"We are stepping up our contribution to the fight against Daesh and fulfilling Britain's role as a key player in the global coalition," British Defense Secretary Michael Fallon said Thursday.

The contingent of 44 "expert troops" is to be deployed for six months at the Ain al-Asad airbase in Iraq's western Anbar Province to purportedly build infrastructure, including accommodation and offices.

"These extra troops will help support operations to bring the defeat of Daesh a step closer," said the UK defense chief.

This brings the number of British troops at the airbase to more than 300 and the total in Iraq to around 600. The Ain al-Asad airbase also houses hundreds of US advisers as well as Iraqi and Danish troops.

The Anbar Province cities of Ramadi and Fallujah were among the first to fall to Daesh, when the terror group first emerged in the Iraq and began its sweep across its northern and western parts in 2014.

In their first major gains against Daesh, Iraqi government forces backed by Popular Mobilization Units — better known as Hashed al-Sha'abi — managed to retake



the two strategic cities several months later.

Too late
Observers have raised questions about the timing of the British deployment as Iraqi government forces and allied forces have successfully been going after Daesh terrorists from town to town, pushing the terror group to the brink of fall in the country. They cite the West's failure to commit troops when Daesh was overrunning Syrian and Iraqi cities one after another.

In July, Iraq liberated the northern city of Mosul, which used to serve as the terrorist outfit's main urban stronghold in the country, following a months-long offensive, described by an American general as "the toughest urban battle since World War II."

(Source: agencies)

UN sees ISIL defeats in Syria by October, elections possible in a year

ISIL's remaining Syrian strongholds are likely to fall by the end of October, which must be the trigger for the international community to push for free and fair elections, UN Syria envoy Staffan de Mistura said on Friday.

"What we are seeing is in my opinion the beginning of the end of this war... what we need to make sure is that this becomes also the beginning of peace. And that is where the challenge starts at this very moment," he said in a BBC radio interview.

Three places were still far from stabilized, de Mistura said: Raqqa, Deir al-Zor and Idlib.

"After Raqqa and Deir al-Zor, and that

is a matter of a few months, there will be a moment of truth. If the international community will be helping both the opposition and the government by pushing the government to accept a real negotiation, then within a year it would be a possibility of having a truly credible election."

The city of Deir al-Zor has been under siege by Islamic State fighters for years, forcing the UN to conduct an unprecedented and expensive high-altitude air-drop campaign to supply the population.

"The Syrian government and the Russians are very likely between now and the end of this month or perhaps early October, latest, to actually liberate it," de Mistura said.

The United States and the U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces "will probably liberate Raqqa by the end of October."

The third area, Idlib, is "full of al Nusra, which is al-Qaeda," de Mistura said, referring to the Nusra Front, a one-time al Qaeda affiliate. It has been renamed and merged with other groups, but remains the only force in Syria's war, apart from ISIL, that is designated by the UN as "terrorists."

The lesson from the Iraqi city of Mosul, taken over by ISIL a decade after the United States declared "mission accomplished" in the war in Iraq, was that Syria's war needed to be followed by a fair UN-managed election, without neglecting minorities.

"Even those who believe they won the war - that is the government - they will need to make a gesture, otherwise Daesh (ISIL) will come back in a month or two months' time."

Nobody had an interest in a resurgence of ISIL in Syria, de Mistura said. Assad's allies in Moscow, recalling the Soviet experience of war in Afghanistan, "certainly want an exit strategy."

"We are getting close to some kind of understanding even among those who have been involved in the conflict that the priority is to close it. What we need to do is wrap it up in a way that is stabilized, not just close the conflict."

(Source: Reuters)

Mattis signs orders to send more troops to Afghanistan

U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis says he has signed orders to send additional soldiers to Afghanistan, without, however, specifying the size of the force.

"Yes, I have signed orders but it is not complete. In other words I have signed some of the (orders for) troops that will go and we are identifying the specific ones," Mattis told reporters on Thursday, adding that the members of Congress will be briefed before details are made public.

Mattis declined to comment on how many more soldiers were included in the deployment orders.

Yet, U.S. officials told Reuters news agency that President Donald Trump has given Mattis the authority to send about 4,000 additional troops to Afghanistan.

Other officials, speaking to The Associated Press news agency, said the U.S. will send about 3,900 extra troops to the country.

"It is more advisers, it is more enablers, fire support, for example," Mattis said, adding that no additional



troops had moved in yet.
"It's going to take a couple days," he said.
Higher number of troops

Mattis' comments came a day after the Pentagon disclosed that the U.S. troop strength in Afghanistan had reached 11,000 soldiers - thousands more than it had previously stated.

The undetermined increase in soldier figures is to be added to the existing 11,000.

After a months-long review of his Afghanistan policy, Trump committed the U.S. last week to an open-ended conflict in the country and promised a stepped-up campaign against Afghan Taliban fighters.

The security situation in Afghanistan has deteriorated for the U.S. and Afghan government over the past few years.

The Afghan government was assessed by the U.S. military to control or influence almost 60 percent of Afghanistan's 407 districts as of February 20, a nearly 11 percentage-point decrease from the same time in 2016, according to data released by the U.S. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

IAEA report: Another disgrace for Trump

According to officials from the IAEA and signatories to the deal, the IAEA has the authority to request access to facilities in Iran, including military ones, if there are new and credible indications of banned nuclear activities there.

It seems that IAEA official have also realized that Trump is seeking a pretext

to demonize Iran. "We're not going to visit a military site... just to send a political signal," an IAEA official said. "If they (the Trump administration) want to bring down the deal... we just don't want to give them an excuse," the IAEA official told Reuters.

Also, after the Iranian government spokesman said inspection of Iranian

military sites is a dream, Haley made ill-judged remarks to creating confusion over the JCPOA by saying if "inspections of Iranian military sites are 'merely a dream,' then Iranian compliance... is also a dream." Every sensible and unbiased person knows that the Iranian government spokesman was indirectly suggesting that Iran does not accept

any inspection of military sites which does not fall within the mechanism of the JCPOA Joint Commission.

Successive UN reports that Iran is loyal to limits on nuclear program are dealing successive blows to Trump. These reports are proving scandalous for Trump if he really understands what unsubstantiated claims mean.

Lebanon fully liberated from Daesh terrorists: Hezbollah leader

The recapture of Tal Afar was made possible with the help of the Iraqi army, Federal Police, counterterrorism units, volunteer troops, and Rapid Response Forces, Abadi said.



Elsewhere in his remarks, Nasrallah praised the Islamic Republic of Iran for its unwavering support for the anti-Israel resistance front, stressing that Tehran had offered great assistance to the Lebanese, Syrian, Iraqi and Yemeni nations.

"Israel is crying over the fate of its orphans (Daesh terrorists)," Nasrallah said, noting that the Tel Aviv regime had admitted that its plans in Syria had not succeeded.

The Hezbollah chief also described the United States as the real threat to the international community, warning that the policies of the administration of President Donald Trump vis-à-vis North Korea were steering the world towards a nuclear war.

The Hezbollah chief also criticized recent U.S. accusations that Pakistan was harboring armed terrorist groups.

In a speech delivered on August 21 to delineate the U.S. strategy in Afghanistan and South Asia, Trump said, "We can no longer be silent about Pakistan's safe havens for terrorist organizations, the Taliban, and other groups that pose a threat to the region and beyond."

(Source: Daily Star)

Stepping up our response in Yemen is a moral imperative

One million civil servants have not been paid for more than 10 months, even though the money has been made available by the Central Bank. Two million children have been forced from their schools, risking a lost generation. And the level of sexual and gender based violence has risen dramatically.

Despite these immense challenges, 122 humanitarian organizations—two thirds of them national NGOs—have scaled up and are now operating in every governorate of Yemen, reaching for example 4.3 million people each month with food aid.

But this is not enough. To ramp up support to Yemen, to ensure access to people who need it and to bring an end to the suffering, we call for four priority actions.

First, to protect and save lives and to restore dignity, humanitarian organizations require unfettered access to reach vulnerable people. The Security Council reiterated its call on all parties to the conflict in Yemen, to provide safe, sustained humanitarian access and to respect international humanitarian law in its Presidential Statement of 15th June 2017. As underlined by the members of the Security Council on 12th July, it is imperative that all parties, now turn these words into action. The brave volunteers, aid workers and health workers who try to deliver aid, save lives and protect people in the midst of violence must not be a target of attacks by fighting parties. Even wars have rules, and the leaders of the warring parties and their proxies, must do a better job of imposing them.

Second, international donors must follow through on their funding pledges. In April 2017, the Governments of Switzerland and Sweden, and UNOCHA, held a Yemen crisis pledging conference opened by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, where donors generously pledged US\$1.1 billion. Three quarters of this amount has been disbursed. However, the response requirements have now been upped to US\$2.3 billion in light of the mounting cholera outbreak, leaving nearly a 60 per cent funding gap.

These funding gaps have life or death consequences. The World Food Programme, which aims to deliver food to 7 million hungry people, will face disruptions in food delivery in a month if more funding doesn't come in. Aid agencies are now having to re-orient precious resources to the cholera crisis, which could threaten famine prevention efforts. Lives are hanging in the balance - there is no time to wait.

Third, all parties to the conflict must ensure that no restrictions are placed on the import of critical commodities into Yemen — namely life-saving food, nutritional treatments and medicine. It is of paramount importance that the port of Al Hudaydah be kept open and safe, as it is the principal entry point for the majority of Yemen's imports and humanitarian supplies. Limitations to the free movement of civilians seeking assistance must also be lifted, including by immediately opening Sana'a International Airport and the air space over Yemen. The closure has resulted in people dying simply because the assistance they need is unavailable in the country.

Ultimately, of course, the suffering in Yemen will only end when conflict ceases. The need for peace has been reiterated by the Secretary-General, and all members of the Security Council. We urge all stakeholders to make progress on finding an inclusive peaceful solution, one where women are included throughout the process. The people of Yemen have suffered enough — we must be unrelenting in our efforts to meet the life-saving and protection needs of 21 million people who make up over three-quarters of the entire Yemeni population. It is our collective moral imperative to do all we can to bring their suffering to an end.

Angry Vidal hints at Chile retirement

Chile star Arturo Vidal appeared to hint at international retirement after his nation's shock loss to Paraguay in World Cup qualifying.

Vidal scored a spectacular own goal as Chile slumped to a 3-0 loss in Santiago on Thursday, but they remained fourth in the CONMEBOL standings.

A veteran of 96 internationals, the 30-year-old midfielder later suggested he could quit the national team, writing on Instagram that some would be happy with his departure.

"Now, every bad vibe that we have in this country must be happy," Vidal wrote.

"But don't worry, not too long before I leave."
Victor Caceres and Richard Ortiz struck in the second half for Paraguay, who sit sixth and just two points behind Chile and Argentina.

Despite Vidal and Alexis Sanchez starting, Juan Antonio Pizzi's men struggled to create chances in front of their home fans.

Pizzi lamented his side's performance, saying: "We must look for other ways."

"If you don't score, you will not have the chance to compete against the best teams."

Chile have a chance to respond when they visit Bolivia on Tuesday.

(Source: Four Four Two)

World Cup door still ajar for Netherlands, says Robben

The Netherlands are on the brink of elimination from the 2018 World Cup following Thursday's 4-0 drubbing by France but skipper Arjen Robben is optimistic they can still make it to Russia next year.

France now top Group A with 16 points, while the Dutch are six points behind in fourth place, two points behind third-placed Bulgaria.

A 3-2 defeat for second placed Sweden in Bulgaria, however, means if the Dutch win their last three qualifiers, they could still finish second and advance to the play-off.

The winners of the nine groups qualify directly for Russia while the best eight of the second-placed teams take part in two-leg playoffs for four more places.

"Unbelievable but true. We still have our fate in our own hands and we have to grab it with whatever we have," Robben said after the mauling at Paris' Stade de France.

Whether the Dutch deserve to go to Russia was the debate in the country's newspapers on Friday.

"Oranje failed miserably in their Paris mission but crazily enough the World Cup is still in reach," wrote the Algemeen Dagblad in its sports section headline. "But what business will this team have being there," the daily asked.

The Dutch played the last 30 minutes with 10 men after midfielder Kevin Strootman was sent off for two yellow cards in quick succession but Robben did not offer any excuse.

"We deserved to lose against a team that was much better than us," Robben added. "But we are disappointed with the manner in which we lost."

(Source: Daily Star)

Rooney arrested for drink driving after being stopped by police

Former England captain Wayne Rooney has been arrested on suspicion of drink driving near his home in Cheshire.

Rooney, England's all-time record goal scorer, was stopped by police on Thursday night after he had been on an evening out, according to the Mirror.

The striker re-signed for boyhood club Everton this summer after rejoining from Manchester United.

He has lived in Cheshire for the past 12 years, in a £6million home in Prestbury, not far from the Everton training ground at Finch Farm.

The reports indicate the latest drink-related indiscretion in Rooney's private life which have often run parallel to an impressive playing career.

Last November he was seen 'stumbling around' and could 'hardly speak' after crashing a wedding following England's win over Scotland in a World Cup qualifier.

(Source: Daily Mail)

Nadal overpowers Daniel at U.S. Open

World number one Rafa Nadal came from behind to dispatch underdog Taro Daniel of Japan 4-6 6-3 6-2 6-2 in front of a sold-out crowd at the U.S. Open.

Despite playing a marathon five-setter the day before, 121st ranked Daniel looked the fresher of the pair at the outset of the match, breaking Nadal to take a 5-4 advantage when the Spaniard dumped a forehand into the net.

He eventually won the set and appeared poised to deliver a massive upset.

But Nadal soon found the accuracy that had eluded him in the first set and his booming serve proved too much for the exhausted 24-year-old, who is now 0-6 against top 20 opponents in his career.

"All the matches are difficult, especially here where everyone wants to play their best," Nadal said in an on-court interview at the Arthur Ashe Stadium after the win.

"It's true that I didn't play very well tonight but it's also true that I'm through to the next round."

Nadal is now one step closer to a potential semi-finals match against third seed Roger Federer, who won his second consecutive five-set match earlier on Thursday.

"I am here to improve every day. I believe I can do it much better and I really feel I am going to do it much better," Nadal said.

(Source: Reuters)

Ronaldo chasing Ali Daei after beating Pele goals record

Cristiano Ronaldo has more international goals than Pele but who else is left for the Real Madrid superstar to catch?

Cristiano Ronaldo's hat-trick in Portugal's 5-1 demolition of the Faroe Islands in Thursday's World Cup qualifier moved the Real Madrid superstar on to 78 international goals.

It means he now stands joint-fourth on the all-time list – his third of the evening at Boavista's Estadio do Bessa lifting him above Brazil's all-time great Pele, who finished his career as a three-time World Cup winner with 77 goals.

Ronaldo is now on to 14 goals for the current qualifying campaign, equalling Predrag Mijatovic's European record on the road to the 1998 World Cup.

The 32-year-old sits level with Iraq's Hussein Saeed on the all-time list and has another Madrid icon in his sights.

Here, we present the most prolific international goal-getters of all time, including the three men Ronaldo must still overhaul.

■ Ali Daei – Iran (109 goals)

Ronaldo still has some way to go if he wishes to overhaul Iran hero Daei, who played 149 times for his country in an international career spanning 23 years. Between 1993 and 2006, the one-time Hertha Berlin and Bayern Munich striker plundered an astonishing 109 goals for his country. He was on target in a 3-1 Asian Cup qualifying defeat against Kuwait in December 2003 to move to the top of this list but duly kept going, storming into three figures with a four-goal haul in a 7-0 thumping of Laos during a World Cup qualifier the following November. Daei turned his hand to coaching Iran, unsuccessfully, between 2008 and 2009, and was appointed as the boss of former club Saipa last month.

■ Ferenc Puskas – Hungary (84 goals)

An undisputed Real Madrid great of the club's first golden era, Puskas is the only remaining European player ahead of Ronaldo, after the 32-year-old pulled level with the Hungarian's countryman, ex-Barcelona forward Sandor Kocsis, at the weekend. Before defecting from Communist Hungary and relaunching their careers in western Europe, they helped to establish the "Magical Magyars" as one of the most feared and revered international teams of all-time



– almost certainly the finest never to lift the World Cup, and one that dazzled a stunned Wembley in 1953 by thumping England 6-3. Puskas scored twice in that game and four times at the 1954 World Cup, where Hungary's controversial loss to West Germany in the final was their only defeat in a six-year period spanning 50 games.

■ Kunishige Kamamoto – Japan (80 goals)

Widely considered the finest Japanese player ever, Kamamoto raced to his 80-goal tally in quick time, taking only 84 internationals to run up his total. A one-club man who spent his career with Yanmar Diesel, the prolific striker's highlight with the Samurai Blue came in 1968 when he helped them towards the Olympic bronze medal – netting a hat-trick against Nigeria – although he never graced a World Cup.

■ Hussein Saeed – Iraq (78 goals)

A second long-serving Middle Eastern goal-getter, Hussein represented Iraq between 1976 and 1990, notching

78 strikes in 137 appearances. Like Kamamoto, stability at club level appears to have laid a solid foundation, as he remained at Al-Talaba throughout his playing days. With Iraq, Hussein won the Gulf Cup of Nations in 1979 and 1982 and an Asian Games gold medal in 1982.

■ Pele – Brazil (77 goals)

The well of superlatives to describe Edson Arantes do Nascimento has long been exhausted but it is indisputable that none of the other goal hauls on this list have yielded such handsome returns. Pele's contribution came in a career encompassing four World Cups, three of which he won, scoring in two finals. His semi-final hat-trick and final brace in 1958 as a teen sensation serve as the beginning of a global footballing story more celebrated than any other, while his iconic header against Italy in the 1970 final set in motion Brazil's finest hour. His is quite the name for Ronaldo to now have in his rearview mirror.

(Source: Four Four Two)

Rossi vows to make quick return after surgery

Italian MotoGP great Valentino Rossi has vowed to make a quick return to the track after surgery on Friday for a broken leg sustained in an off-road bike accident that effectively ended this year's title chances.

"The surgery went well. This morning, when I woke up, I felt already good," the 38-year-old said in a Yamaha statement after the operation in the eastern Italian coastal city of Ancona.

"I'm very sorry for the incident. Now I want to be back on my bike as soon as possible. I will do my best to make it happen."

Yamaha said Rossi was operated on in the early hours after being transferred from hospital in Urbino, where he had initial X-rays.

"Valentino is doing well," Raffaele Pascarella, director of the Ancona hospital orthopedics and trauma department, told a news conference.

Pascarella said the operation lasted about an hour and involved inserting a pin into the injured limb. Rossi will stay in

hospital for another three or four days, but should rest for around 40 days.

Exactly how long Rossi will wait before getting back on his bike "depends a lot on him", Pascarella said, adding: "I was struck by how calm he was."

The accident, while he was riding an off-road enduro bike, and likely recovery time realistically ends Rossi's title chances for another year.

There are six races remaining and the Italian seems sure to miss at least two of them.

The next race is at Misano on Italy's Adriatic coast, near Rossi's home, on Sept. 10 and that is followed by Aragon in Spain on Sept. 24.

The rider is currently fourth in the overall MotoGP standings and 26 points behind leading compatriot Andrea Dovizioso. A race win is worth 25 points.

Rossi also broke his right leg in practice for the Italian Grand Prix in 2010. The rider returned to MotoGP after an absence of six weeks that time.

(Source: Reuters)



Barcelona's awful transfer window criticized by Xavi

Barcelona legend Xavi has led the criticism of the club's summer of discontent made even worse by a fruitless transfer window.

The former Barca midfielder told Marca: "They have gone to sleep because five or six years ago they had the best players in the world for the system that they wanted to play. Now for that system they have five or six who fit the system but they need 11 to make it work."

"Before you would never see a player and think: 'He would be good at Barca,' because they were all there already. They have signed players who do not fit the system."

Xavi was also critical of the failure to use the club's youth academy, and said: "When in doubt use the players coming through. Thiago Alcantara left and had every right to because he was not getting the chances."

The whole transfer window has been a shambles for Barcelona. There was no reason to believe deadline day in the Premier League would be any different and so it proved.

They began the day convinced Liverpool would sign Thomas Lemar from Monaco, making it more likely that Philippe

Coutinho would be allowed to leave.

That remained their thinking despite Arsenal having done a deal with the French club, pending the player accepting the switch.

Confident of Lemar happening and Coutinho coming in, they were happy to send Andre Gomes out on loan to Tottenham – but Lemar to Liverpool never happened and never was going to happen with Arsenal the only club prepared to pay Monaco's hugely inflated price. Coutinho was not coming either, so Barca ordered Gomes to stay.

As things stand their summer amounts to losing Neymar, spending nearly £100m on 20-year-old Ousmane Dembele, buying former Tottenham midfielder Paulinho and Benfica defender Nelson Semedo, and failing to shift Arda Turan, Thomas Vermaelen and Munir El Haddadi.

Barcelona have already started talking up the merits of not having spent all of the Neymar money and of the possibility of making signings in January, but if the season starts badly then there are no guarantees the board will make it that long.

(Source: Mirror)



Kylian Mbappé: PSG signs 'most promising player in the world'

Not content with making Neymar soccer's most expensive player, French club Paris Saint-Germain has signed Kylian Mbappé — regarded as one of the world's most promising teenagers — from Monaco.

The 18-year-old Mbappé, who was born in Paris, will initially make the move to PSG from French champions Monaco on a one-year loan before signing a permanent deal.

Neither club have revealed the financial figures involved in the transfer, but a fee of \$214 million has been widely reported, which would make Mbappé the world's second most expensive player.

"The international French striker is transferred on a loan basis from AS Monaco until June 30 2018," said PSG on its website.

"The loan agreement also includes a call option for Paris Saint-Germain which, when exercised, will bind the player to Paris Saint-Germain until June 30 2022."

Last season, Mbappé was a key member of a Monaco team that pipped PSG to the Ligue 1 title and also reached the Champions League semifinals. He scored 26 goals in 44 games.

"It was essential for French football that we keep and help develop such a great talent in our championship," PSG president Nasser Al-Khelaifi told the French club's website.

"Among players of his age, he is without doubt the most promising in the world due to his immense technical, physical and mental qualities."

■ Joy and pride

This summer Mbappé has been coveted by some of Europe's top clubs with Barcelona and Real Madrid reportedly leading the race for the French star, who has now opted to continue playing in Ligue 1.

"It is with great joy and pride that I join Paris Saint-Germain," Mbappé told the PSG website. "For any young person from the Paris region, it is often a dream to wear the red and blue jersey and experience the unique atmosphere of the Parc des Princes."

"I really wanted to be a part of the club's project, which is one of the most ambitious in Europe."

However, Mbappé's transfer could prove a watershed moment for the effectiveness of governing body UEFA's financial fair play rules.

According to Deloitte's Football Money League report issued in January, PSG's 2015/16 revenue came to \$627 million.

Under the terms of Financial Fair Play, introduced by UEFA seven years ago to slow the game's spending,

players' wages can't constitute more than 70% of a club's income and losses can't exceed €30 million (\$35 million) over a three-year period.

PSG brought in an estimated \$618 million in 2016/17 — of which over \$350m was from commercial sources — according to KPMG's Football Benchmark.

The Neymar fee alone comes to over 42% of the club's entire income last season — leaving aside his reported wages of more than half-a-million dollars per week.

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger has criticized the Neymar deal, calling it "beyond calculation and beyond rationality."

UEFA declined to comment on the exact details of the Mbappé deal, but did say in a statement "As part of the continuous monitoring of clubs under financial fair play regulations, UEFA will look into the details of these transfers in due course to ensure PSG are compliant with FFP requirements."

PSG have previously fallen foul of FFP regulations and in 2014 they were fined \$72 million and had their Champions League squad reduced from 25 to 21 for failing to break even for the period from 2011-2014.

(Source: CNN)

10-man Iran hold on against S. Korea to share the spoils at World Cup qualifier

S P O R T S Iran kept their unbeaten **d e s k** run in the 2018 World Cup qualifier after they drew 0-0 at the Seoul World Cup Stadium in the 2018 World Cup qualifier on Thursday.

Iran have not conceded just one goal in their nine appearances in the 2018 World Cup qualification.

Just 10 minutes into the second half, Iran midfielder Saeid Ezzatollahi was shown an early red card for kicking Kim Min-jae but the hosts were unable to capitalize on their advantage.

Already-qualified Iran, will host Syria in Tehran's Azadi Stadium five days later, while South Korea play Uzbekistan in Tashkent.

A draw could secure them a place in the FIFA World Cup for the ninth consecutive time.

Iran are top of Group A with 21 points, seven points above the second-placed South Korea.

Iran became the first team to leave Korea with a point during qualification for Russia 2018.



Iran's all-time Paralympics medal winners to be commemorated



S P O R T S The Iranian paralympians, who have won medals in the Paralympic Games, will be commemorated.

The medal winners will be honored in the holy city of Mashhad, northeast of Iran, on Sunday.

A total of 136 medals have been won by 145 Iranian para athletes from Seoul 1988 Paralympics to Rio 2016 Paralympics.

"It will be a good opportunity to bring the Iranian para athletes medal winners together in a one-day ceremony in Mashhad," Masoud Ashrafi, Secretary General of the National Paralympic Committee (NPC) of Iran, told Pars Today.

Iran made its debut at the Seoul 1988 Paralympic Games, winning four gold medals, one silver and three bronzes.

Iran win WABA U17 Championship



S P O R T S Iran claimed **d e s k** the title of the 16th edition of the West Asian Basketball Association (WABA) U17 Championship on Thursday.

The Iranian team overpowered Lebanon 81-40 to claim the title.

Earlier in the day, Syria had defeated Jordan in the bronze-medal match.

Iran started the campaign with a victory over Iraq and also defeated Syria and Jordan in the competition.

The West Asian Basketball Association (WABA) U17 Championship was held in Tehran's Azadi Hall from August 27 to 31.

The Iranian team was headed by Ali Shahali in the competition.

S. Korea captain apologizes for comment on crowd noise

South Korean men's football captain Kim Young-gwon made an apology on Friday for his controversial comment on crowd noise at a recent World Cup qualifier in Seoul.

After South Korea ended in a scoreless draw with Iran at Seoul World Cup Stadium on Thursday, Kim said he had difficulty communicating with his teammates on the pitch because of the loud cheering.

Kim faced a quick backlash for his words with fans criticizing him for being ungrateful for support. Seoul World Cup Stadium drew 63,124 fans, the ninth-largest crowd at the 66,704-seat venue.

"I didn't have any malicious intention when I said it," Kim told reporters at Incheon International Airport

while fighting back tears. South Korea left for Tashkent for their final World Cup qualifier against Uzbekistan next Tuesday.

"If I had meant anything bad I wouldn't be standing here today," he said. "I was only talking about the difficulties of the match. If anyone felt upset and offended by what I said I'd like to apologize."

When asked by a reporter after Thursday's match what challenges he faced on the field, Kim said he and his teammates couldn't hear each other well.

"It was quite difficult to communicate with the guys because it was noisy out there," Kim said at the time. "We could yell all we wanted and still couldn't hear each other well. We prepared ourselves for a situation like

this, but it was still frustrating that I couldn't hear the guys."

Kim said he's now worried that his slip of the tongue may affect the mood in the locker room.

"This is my problem only," he said. "I'll try to make sure this doesn't affect how we fare against Uzbekistan."

South Korea are in second place in Group A of the final Asian qualifying round with 14 points, two ahead of Syria and Uzbekistan. Syria occupy the third place thanks to their tiebreaking edge in goal difference.

A win on Tuesday will send South Korea to their ninth consecutive World Cup but a draw or a loss will require some complicated number-crunching.

(Source: Yonhap)

My plan didn't work against Iran: Shin Tae-yong



South Korea's national football team's coach Shin Tae-yong says that his plan didn't work against Iran in the World Cup qualifying campaign at home.

South Korea failed to defeat 10-man Iran at Seoul World Cup Stadium in Group A but still remained in position to secure its ninth consecutive trip to football's showpiece event with one match remaining in the final Asian qualifying round against Uzbekistan.

"Since we failed to score, I have to say my plan didn't work," he said. "We tried to turn the tide with

substitutions and score a goal, but we couldn't do it."

"It's a pity that we couldn't score, but I want to thank our players who gave their best," Shin said after the match. "I knew we were going to have a difficult match against Iran that have shrewd players with good physical abilities."

The 48-year-old coach is known for his attacking style of football, but Shin said his team played defensively a little bit against Iran due to the visitors' counterattack ability.

(Source: Yonhap)

Queiroz proud of Iranian players for performance against S. Korea



The Iranian national football team's head coach Carlos Queiroz said he is proud of his players' performance against South Korea.

Iran played out a goalless draw in the match against South Korea in the 2018 World Cup qualifier at Seoul World Cup Stadium on Thursday.

Queiroz admitted that his side had some challenging moments against South Korea, but he praised his players for overcoming the 10-man situation. Iran was one man down after Saeid Ezzatollahi was sent off in the 55th minute.

"I can promise you that I never had a game like this," he said. "When we were

one man down, the whole team grew up and became more powerful."

The 64-year-old Portuguese said his players and his team deserve some recognition from the world.

"The international football world should take consideration in what we've been doing for the last seven years," he said. "I'm proud of my players."

Iran will next host Syria on Tuesday to wrap up its World Cup qualifying campaign. Syria moved up to third place after beating Qatar 3-1 and they are now just two points down to second-place South Korea.

(Source: Korea Times)

Iran's Mollaei wins bronze at IJF World Championships

Saeid Mollaei from Iran claimed a bronze medal at the International Judo Federation (IJF) World Championships on Thursday.

In the under 81kg weight category, Germany's Alexander Wierczak secured the title as he overcame Italy's Matteo Marconcini by ippon.



Mollaei took bronze and is the first since 2007 the legendary Arash Miresmaeili (he won four medals including two world titles) who won a World Championships medal for his country.

"For the name of God, I would like to say thank you for this victory to the president of the Iran's Judo Federation, to my coaches, who supported me from the beginning and to my family. It is a fantastic feeling to win a bronze medal, I am really happy I could win the fight for the third position," Mollaei said.

The competition has brought a total of 731 competing judo player (440 men, 291 women) from 126 nations together for the seven-day spectacle in Budapest, Hungary.

(Source: insidethegames)

Rubin Kazan sign Iran's Reza Shekari

Russian top-flight club Rubin Kazan have completed the signing of Iranian midfielder Reza Shekari on Thursday.

The 19-year-old player is reunited with Iranian international striker Sardar Azmoun in Rubin Kazan.

The footballer is widely considered as one of the brightest youngsters in Iran.

In 2015, he was named by British newspapers The Guardian as one of the 50 most exciting young talents in world football.

Shekari had already caught the eye of English premier league side Leicester City and Swiss club FC Basel.

The rising star has also represented Iran at youth levels.

(Source: Tasnim)

Payam Sadeghian joins Turkey's Osmanlispor

Former Persepolis midfielder Payam Sadeghian joined Turkish football club Osmanlispor on Wednesday.

Osmnlspor, currently playing in Turkey's Süper Lig, was founded as "Ankara Belediye Spor Kulübü" (Ankara Municipality Sport Club) in 1978.

The 25-year-old midfielder has joined Osmanlispor on a one-year contract for an undisclosed fee.

Sadeghian was on the verge of joining Iranian club Sepidrood Rasht but changed his mind and penned a contract with the Turkish club.

Payam Sadeghian has made five appearances for Iran national football team and scored one goal.

(Source: Tasnim)

Iran earns seat at WKF Referee Commission

Javad Salimi, Head of Referees Committee at Iran's Karate Federation, was awarded a seat at Referee Commission of World Karate Federation (WKF).

WKF President Antonio Espinós, on Monday, awarded Iran's Javad Salimi a position at the international body's Referee Commission for Iran to regain the influential membership following 47 years.

Following appointment of Iran's Masoud Rahnama to the Technical Commission, the new seat given to Salimi at the Referee Commission of WKF holds great significance for Iran as an outstanding power in the sportive field.

The Referees are a fundamental part of Karate as a sport. The supervision of the different actions, of the quality of the performance, of the fair play and of the strict compliance with the Rules make possible that the discipline stays aligned with the competition scenario defined beforehand.

(Source: Mehrnews)

AFC wishes a joyous and blessed Eid Al Adha

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) wishes the Asian football family and its Member Associations a blessed Eid Al Adha.

The celebration calls for sacrifice and unity, and may it lead to peace and prosperity.

As a time for joy and happiness, may this festival strengthen our sense of brotherhood and goodwill towards all.

(Source: the-AFC)

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WHAT'S IN ART GALLERIES

Painting

■ A collection of paintings by film director Amir-Shahab Razavian is on display in an exhibition at Hilaj Café Gallery.

The exhibition will be running until September 11 at the gallery located at 22 Mohajer Alley off Iranshahr St.

■ Paintings by Sina Javadi are on display in an exhibition at Golestan Gallery.

The exhibit will run until September 6 at the gallery, which can be found at 34 Kamasai St. in the Darrus neighborhood.

■ Paintings by Erfan Jamshidi are currently on display in an exhibition at Tarrahan Azad Gallery.

The exhibit entitled "Blind Evolution" runs until September 6 at the gallery that can be found at 5 Salmas Square, off Fatemi St.

Photo

■ Theme Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of photos by Hamid Deldar, Kazem Gholami, Shadi Shurideh, Amir Mobaraki, Elaheh Salaran and several other artists.

The exhibition named "Urban" will run until September 9 at the gallery located at 10 Zebarjad Alley, North Villa St., off Karim Khan Ave.

■ Photos by Pune Oladazimi are currently on display in an exhibition at Negar Gallery.

The exhibition titled "Breath" runs until September 6 at the gallery, which can be found at 33 Delaram Alley, East Roshanai St., in the Qeitarieh neighborhood.

Sculpture

■ Aran Gallery is hosting an exhibition of sculptures by Behdad Lahuti, Shaqayeq Arabi, Hooman Salimi, Mohsen Vaziri Moqadam and eight other artists.

The exhibit titled "Primeval" runs until September 29 at the gallery located at 5 Lolagar St., Neauphle Le Chateau St.

Miley Cyrus, Beyonce join Harvey storm relief effort

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) — Pop star Miley Cyrus and Oscar-winning actors Sandra Bullock and Leonardo DiCaprio pledged funds to help victims of storm Harvey, while Beyonce on Thursday said she was sending a team to her Houston, Texas hometown to help with relief efforts.

A donation drive organized by Houston Texans NFL star J.J. Watt had reached \$10 million in pledges from celebrities and ordinary people by Thursday, and singer Solange Knowles, Beyonce's sister, announced benefit concerts in Boston and New York for September and October.

A tearful Cyrus, 24, announced a \$500,000 contribution in an emotional appearance on "The Ellen DeGeneres Show."

"It just really makes me just really upset... I go home to my seven dogs and if I didn't have that anymore, it would just be really hard. So I am really happy to help in any way I can. And I hope people understand and can put themselves in those people's shoes," Cyrus said.

Some 779,000 Texans have been ordered to evacuate their homes and another 980,000 fled voluntarily amid concerns on Thursday that swollen reservoirs and rivers could bring new flooding. Harvey roared ashore late last week as the most powerful hurricane to hit Texas in a half-century but has now been downgraded to a tropical depression.

"Gravity" star Bullock, and DiCaprio's foundation said this week they will each contribute \$1 million to organizations helping people recover from the devastating floods.

Beyonce, one of Houston's best-known celebrities, launched BeyGOOD Houston on her website. A statement said a team from her BeyGOOD philanthropic foundation was headed to the city to help with relief efforts, and the website asked fans to make donations to two local groups working there.

The "Lemonade" singer, who now lives in Los Angeles, has not said whether she is making a personal donation, but her pastor Rudy Rasmus said she tends to keep her charitable efforts quiet.

"Beyonce is extremely private and has done a lot that she has requested we don't announce and publicize over the years, Rasmus told celebrity website TMZ.com in an interview this week.

"She has really stepped up and it has been a big blessing for us," added Rasmus, who launched the non-profit Bread for Life in Houston in 1992 to feed homeless people.

"Malaria" named best at Russian film festival

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian director Parviz d e s k Shahbazi's "Malaria" was crowned best at the 10th East and West, Classics and Avant-Garde International Film Festival in Orenburg, Russia, the organizers announced on Thursday.

In his acceptance speech at the closing ceremony of the festival, producer Masud Radai dedicated the award to Mohsen Hojaji, an Iranian soldier who was killed by Daesh forces in Syria last month.

Saghar Qana'at also was picked as best actress for her role in the film. Qana'at could not attend the closing ceremony and a member of the cast Azarakhsh Farahani received the award on her behalf.

"Malaria" tells the story of a young woman who elopes with her boyfriend to spend her time in the company of a band of street musicians in Tehran. Afterwards, she plans to hoodwink her father and brothers by claiming that she has been kidnapped and wants them to promptly send the ransom money.

Bakyt Mukul and Dastan Zhapar Uulu from Kyrgyzstan received the award for best director for their film "A Father's Will".

Wojciech Urbanski received the best actor award for his role in "Kharms", a joint production of Russia and Lithuania by Ivan Bolotnikov.

"Malaria" has been acclaimed at several international events.

The 32nd Warsaw Film Festival honored the film with the grand prix for best film in 2016. It also was named best film at the 12th International Oriental Film Festival of Geneva (FIPOG) this year in April.

The film was also screened at several international



Producer Masud Radai (L) and actor Azarakhsh Farahani hold awards for "Malaria" at the 10th East and West, Classics and Avant-Garde International Film Festival in Orenburg, Russia on August 31, 2017.

festivals including the Horizon section of the 73rd International Film Festival in 2016 and the 20th Venice International Film Festival and the 52nd Chicago Shanghai International Film Festival in June of this year.

Robert Knepper, Armin Amiri join "1st Born" project



This combination photo shows actors Robert Knepper (R) and Armin Amiri.

A R T TEHRAN — "Prison Break" actor Robert Knepper and "The Wrestler" star Armin Amiri have joined "1st Born", the comedy project that will be directed by Ali Atshani from Iran as the first co-production between Iran and America, Variety announced on Wednesday.

Earlier over the past few weeks, Val Kilmer, William Baldwin and Jay Abdo signed on to star in the project, which is scheduled to start shooting in Los Angeles next month.

The film is about a newlywed couple, Iranian-born Ben and his American wife Kate, who are living in California. When the couple's first pregnancy faces complications, both sides of their family must come together — a rather

complicated notion as Ben's father Hamid is an anti-American Iranian politician, while Kate's father Biden (Kilmer) is an American politician who takes a hardline stance against Iran.

The U.S. based Iranian actor Amiri will star as Ben and Abdo will play his father. Knepper's character is an Iraqi war veteran who befriends Abdo's character.

The film will be produced at Hollywood's LA Independent Film and Entertainment. Sam Khoze is the producing the film with a team that includes producer Edwin Avanes and associate producer in Iran Puria Naserbakht.

Khoze, Tarek Zohdi and Medhi Alimirzai wrote the script for the project, whose shooting is scheduled to begin in Los Angeles in August.

London festival to premiere Majid Majidi's "Beyond the Clouds"

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian d e s k director Majid Majidi's drama "Beyond the Clouds" will have its world premiere at the BFI London Film Festival this October.

The film set in the slums of Mumbai represents India at the festival, which will be held from October 4 to 15.

It tells the story of Aamir, a teen-

age roustabout who trying to save his jailed sister. Ishaan Khattar made his acting debut as Aamir in this movie.

Majidi is mostly known for his Oscar-nominated "Children of Heaven".

"Beyond the Clouds" will be screened along with eleven other films in the official competition.

New culture minister visits top clerics



Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Seyyed Abbas Salehi (L) shakes hands with Ayatollah Nasser Makarem Shirazi at his office in Qom on August 31, 2017. (Farhang.gov.ir)

C U L T U R E TEHRAN — Following d e s k an established tradition at the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Seyyed Abbas Salehi, who has recently taken the helm at the ministry, traveled to Qom on Thursday to meet with a number top clerics in the city that is home to Iran's major seminary, Feizieh.

Ayatollah Seyyed Hashem Hosseini Bushehri, Ayatollah Jafar Sobhani and Ayatollah Nasser Makarem Shirazi were among those clerics who received Salehi at their offices.

Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi warned Salehi about "poisonous" materials published in books, in films and on social networks.

He asked Salehi to take control of books seriously and "not to be deceived" by the titles of books and the fame of their writers.

He also asked the culture minister to care about cinema, and said that some films may distort the facts in society and mislead people.

"The enemy is working in the virtual atmosphere," Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi noted and asked for launching a national net, which would provide easier access to innocuous information.

A number Salehi's assistants and colleagues such Deputy Culture Minister for Cinematic Affairs Mohammad-Mehdi Heidarian also accompanied him during the meetings.

New secretary appointed to Fajr Film Festival

A R T TEHRAN — The C i n e m a Organization of Iran (COI) Director Mohammad-Mehdi Heidarian appointed Ebrahim Darughezadeh the new secretary of the 36th Fajr Film Festival on Wednesday.

Darughezadeh replaced Mohammad Heidari who had held the position since 2015.

Darughezadeh was the director of the



Supervision and Evaluation Office (SEO) of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance since June.

Actor Richard Anderson, boss of "Six Million Dollar Man," dies



Actor Richard Anderson, best known for his roles in the TV series "The Six Million Dollar Man" and "The Bionic Woman" arrives at the world premiere of the 40th anniversary restoration of the film "Cabaret" during the opening night gala of the 2012 TCM Classic Film Festival in Hollywood, California April 12, 2012. (Reuters/Fred Prouser/File Photo)

Richard Anderson, who played the boss of both "The Six Million Dollar Man" and "The Bionic Woman" in an on-screen career stretching some 50 years, died on Thursday, a family spokesman said. He was 91.

Anderson died from natural causes at his home in Beverly Hills, California, surrounded by his family, publicist Jonathan Taylor said. Memorial services will be private, Taylor added.

The imposing 6-foot-3-inch (190-cm) actor often appeared on screen as an authority figure - politicians, government officials and policemen - but also played his share of cowboys and criminals. His roster of guest appearances included many popular shows still airing in syndication such as "The Big Valley," "Ironside," "Murder She Wrote" and "Dynasty."

Anderson played the police chief in the Burt Reynolds' detective series "Dan August" (1970-1971), and a police lieutenant in the last season of the long-running legal drama "Perry Mason." Two decades later, he had a

gitive," Anderson played the husband of Dr. Richard Kimble's sister. The climactic episode in which Kimble, played by David Janssen, finally cleared his name in the killing of his wife after four seasons on the run, was at the time the most-watched series program in TV history.

But it was as U.S. intelligence official Oscar Goldman that Anderson left his most lasting mark on television. Goldman was the chief of Steve Austin, a secret agent with enhanced bionic powers after reconstructive surgery in the 1974-1978 hit series "The Six Million Dollar Man," starring Lee Majors.

Anderson became one of the first actors to play the same character simultaneously on two shows on different networks when he reprised his Goldman role in the 1976-1978 spinoff "The Bionic Woman," starring Lindsay Wagner.

"It was a time when everything was down. The Vietnam War had just ended and everybody was down and we came in with a hero," Anderson told "Hollywood Exclusive" in 2009

when asked about the shows' popularity. In the late 1980s, Anderson persuaded studio executives to reunite the two bionic heroes, which led to three television movies in which he reprised his Goldman role and helped produce.

"I'm very grateful to Oscar Goldman. He's been very good to me," Anderson told a Montreal radio show in 1994.

Born in Long Branch, New Jersey, on Aug. 8, 1926, Anderson began his acting career as an MGM contract player in the last days of the studio system. Among his many film credits were "Forbidden Planet" (1956), Stanley Kubrick's "Paths of Glory" (1957), and "The Long Hot Summer" (1958).

He made the leap into television in the early 1950s, becoming one of the medium's most familiar faces through a stream of character roles over five decades.

"When I went into television, that's where the audience was. And in my opinion, still is," Anderson said in the Canadian radio interview.