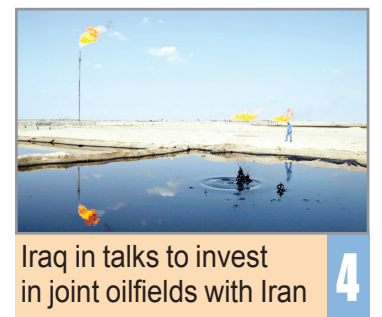




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OPEC's pact compliance 'acceptable', some changes needed: Zanganeh



OPEC's compliance with an agreement among oil producers to reduce output has been acceptable, said Iran's oil minister on Monday, adding that some changes were needed if participants seek to balance the market.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, Russia and several other producers have cut production by about 1.8 million barrels per day (mbd) since the start of 2017, Reuters reported. Oil prices have risen by 15 percent in the past three months.

Participants have been considering extending the deal beyond the end of March 2018 when it is due to expire. "OPEC's compliance has been acceptable overall. However, some changes are needed," Iran's Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said.

"Firstly, all members should commit 100 percent to the production cut agreement and secondly, the production level of Nigeria and Libya should be brought into consideration," he said.

OPEC members Libya and Nigeria have been exempted from supply curbs as their oil industries recover from years of unrest.

OPEC also let Iran have a small output increase so it could recover the market share it lost while under Western sanctions.

Iran "will consider everything within the framework of our national interest and cooperation with OPEC", he said when asked whether the country would adjust its output.

Merkel tries to build coalition after vote

Germany's Angela Merkel began the tough task of trying to build a government on Monday after securing a fourth term as chancellor, urging the center-left Social Democrats not to shut the door on a rerun of their "grand coalition."

Damaged by her decision two years ago to allow more than one million immigrants into Germany, Merkel's conservative bloc secured 33 percent of the vote, losing 8.5 points - its lowest level since 1949. Her coalition partners, the center-left Social Democrats, also slumped and said they would go into opposition, Reuters reported.

Voters flocked to the anti-immigration Alternative for Germany (AfD), the first far-right party to enter the German parliament in more than half a century. However, the AfD hardly had time to savor its third-place showing before it fell into internal bickering.

Many Germans see the rise of the AfD as a similar rejection of the status quo as votes for Brexit and Donald Trump last year. But Germany's political center held up better than in Britain and the United States as more voters have benefited from globalization and most shun the country's extremist past.

Merkel's party remained the biggest parliamentary bloc and Europe's most powerful leader sought to keep her coalition options open on Monday, saying she would start talks with the Free Democrats (FDP) and the Greens as well as the SPD.



REUTERS

SPD Leader Martin Schulz said earlier his party had no choice but to go into opposition "to defend democracy against those who question it and attack it," after dropping to a post-war low of 20.5 percent.

"I heard the SPD's words, nevertheless we should remain in contact," Merkel told a news conference. "I think all parties have a responsibility to ensure that there will be a stable government."

Merkel made clear she still intended to serve a full four years as chancellor. But her next coalition could be her toughest yet with her only remaining potential partners, the business-friendly FDP and the pro-regulation Greens, at odds on issues from migrants to tax, the environment and Europe.

The FDP's leader Christian Lindner set the stage for tricky talks, saying his party would not agree to a coalition with the conservatives and the Greens, dubbed "Jamaica" because the parties' colors mirror the country's flag, at any price.

He said changes were needed in Germany's energy policy and its stance on euro zone fiscal policy. But he struck a more conciliatory tone on Europe, saying Germany had an interest in a strong France.

The Greens set out climate change, Europe and social justice as their priorities in any coalition talks.

The emergence of the Greens as powerbrokers in any coalition weighed on markets. Shares in carmaker BMW were down 0.2 percent, while those in automotive supplier Continental dropped 0.4 percent. RWE - which operates 15.25 gigawatts (GW) of coal-fired plants in Germany, 38 percent of its total European capacity - fell 4.6 percent to a six-week low.

Iraqi Kurds in independence vote despite Baghdad, neighbors' warnings

Iraqi Kurds voted in an independence referendum Monday, defying warnings from Baghdad and their neighbors.

The nonbinding vote, initiated by Kurdish leader Masoud Barzani, has angered not only Iraq's federal government but also neighboring Turkey and Iran, AFP reported.

Turkey's president on Monday said Ankara would close its border with northern Iraq and threatened the Iraqi Kurds with blocking their key oil exports, after Iran closed its frontier with the region.

Kurdish flags were festooned in all the streets, on cars and outside homes across Iraqi Kurdistan.

Voters headed to the polls early Monday, many men dressed in traditional Kurdish dress of brown shirt and billowing trousers for the occasion.

Initial results are expected to be announced 24 hours after polls close. An overwhelming "Yes" out-



Barzani, smiling and wearing a traditional outfit, cast his vote early in the morning.

Barzani, smiling and wearing a traditional outfit, cast his vote early in the morning.

Continued on Page 2

Pakistan seeks greater share in Iranian rice market

Exclusive
By Reza Abesh Ahmadlou

Pakistan produces favorable-quality rice and looks to boost export to the Iranian market, said president of Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Talking to Iran Daily in Quetta of Baluchistan Province, Abdul Wadood Achakzai said Pakistani rice is of better quality than the Indian product adding that Pakistani rice can have a bigger share in the Iranian market.

The official also called for facilitating exports from Pakistan to Iran and hoped the 30-percent reduction in tariff rate would be implemented soon.

He pointed to preferential trade agreement (PTA) between Iran and Pakistan and said talks are underway with officials to include Pakistani rice in the list of PTA items.

The official said both countries are working on free trade agreement (FTA) which can help the private sector.

Achakzai further said mango, rice and textile products are the main exports to Iran while the main imports from Iran includes petrochemical products, electricity and liquefied natural gas.



IRAN DAILY

He said that his office is working with its Iranian provincial counterpart at Zahedan Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture to extend border markets.

"I had meetings with Abdolhakim Rigi, the head of Zahedan chamber in Quetta and Zahedan on development of border markets," Achakzai said.

A participant in the Quetta Chamber Of Commerce and Industry meeting, Ajmal Khan Achakzai from the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority affiliated to Ministry of Industries and Production of Pakistan said his country needs more Iranian oil and gas products to develop its industry.

Continued on Page 4

Trump imposes new travel restrictions

Zarif: Travel ban shows Trump's fake empathy for Iranians

US President Donald Trump on Sunday slapped new travel restrictions on citizens from North Korea, Venezuela and Chad, expanding to eight the list of countries covered by his original travel bans that have been derided by critics and challenged in court.



REUTERS

Iran, Libya, Syria, Yemen and Somalia were left on the list of affected countries in a new proclamation issued by the president. Restrictions on citizens from Sudan were lifted, Reuters wrote.

Unlike the president's original bans, which had time limits, this one is open-ended.

"Making America safe is my number one priority. We will not admit those into our country we cannot safely vet," the president said in a tweet shortly after the proclamation was released.

Iraqi citizens will not be subject to travel prohibitions but will face enhanced scrutiny or vetting.

The current ban, enacted in March, was set to expire on Sunday evening. The new restrictions are slated to take effect on Oct. 18 and resulted from a review after Trump's original travel bans sparked international outrage and legal challenges.

The addition of North Korea and Venezuela broadens the restrictions from the original, mostly Muslim-majority list.

Rights group Amnesty International USA condemned the measures.

"It is senseless and cruel to ban whole nationalities of people," it said in a statement.

The American Civil Liberties Union said in a statement the addition of North Korea and Venezuela "doesn't obfuscate the real fact that the administration's order is still a Muslim ban."

Continued on Page 2

Iraqi Kurds in independence vote despite Baghdad, neighbors' warnings

From Page 1

Polling stations were scattered across the three northern provinces of autonomous Iraqi Kurdistan – Erbil, Sulaimaniyah and Dohuk – as well as in disputed bordering zones such as the oil-rich province of Kirkuk.

A total of 12,072 polling stations were open for more than 5.3 million registered voters.

In disputed Kirkuk, mosque loudspeakers blared a prayer normally reserved for religious celebrations, but participation in the vote was limited.

The non-Arab ethnic group number between 25 and 35 million people spread across Iraq, Iran, Turkey and Syria.

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi on Sunday pledged to take all the "necessary measures" to protect the country's unity as his government urged all countries to deal only with it on oil transactions.

Abadi said the Kurds' unilateral decision to stage a referendum affected both Iraqi and regional security, and was "un-constitutional and against civil peace."

Hours later, the Iraqi government called on all countries "to deal only with it on matters of oil and borders".

The Iraqi Kurds export an average 600,000 barrels per day (bpd) through a pipeline running through Turkey to Ceyhan on the Mediterranean.

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Monday threatened to halt these oil exports, angrily denouncing an "illegitimate" referendum.

He also said Turkey's Habur border crossing with Iraqi Kurdistan would be closed.

Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim earlier said sanctions could also be "with regard to airspace."

Iran backs Iraq sovereignty

Tehran closed its border with Iraqi Kurdistan after saying on Sunday it had blocked all flights to and from the region at Baghdad's request.

President Hassan Rouhani had called Abadi late Sunday to reiterate his support.

Rouhani said that Iran is against any move that would undermine Iraq's territorial integrity and national unity.

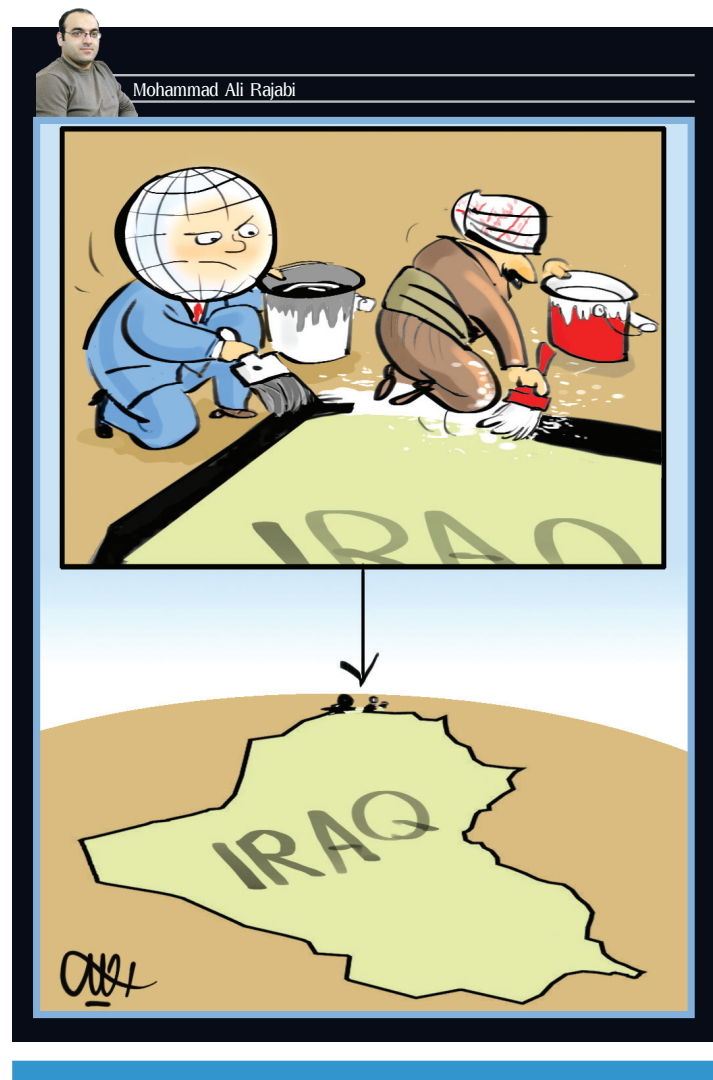
He told the Iraqi premier, "In our view, Iraq's Constitution should be respected by all, and any action that is in contravention of the Constitution shall be deemed illegal. All should know that their legitimacy lasts as long as they act within the framework of the Iraqi Constitution."

"In this important issue concerning Iraq, we will stand by our neighbor and the Iraqi government," Iran's president reiterated.

Rouhani also pointed to an earlier conversation he had with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and said Ankara and Tehran shared a common stance in their support for Baghdad on the issue.

Rouhani, however, expressed certitude that the Iraqi government and people would overcome this predicament, as they did in other cases before, by virtue of prudence and wisdom.

Abadi warned that Barzani would direct the course of events toward a new confrontation.



Rouhani: Iran welcomes development of ties between Tehran, Moscow

In a telephone conversation with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani welcomed the development of Tehran-Moscow relations in all fields.

He said that the presidents of Iran, Russia and the Republic of Azerbaijan would hold a meeting in Tehran in the near future to discuss issues of common interests, Press TV reported.

"We attach significance to trilateral relations among Iran, Russia and Azerbaijan," the Iranian chief executive said.

Rouhani also stated that Iran and Russia had a common stance on the crisis in Syria, adding, "[Protecting] the territorial integrity [of countries] in the region and [preventing] any change in borders are very important to the Islamic Republic of Iran, and we are completely prepared to continue cooperation for [holding] the next round of [Syria peace] talks in Astana."

Representatives from the Syrian government and the foreign-sponsored armed opposition held the sixth round of peace talks in the Kazakh capital, Astana, in September in a bid to resolve the Syrian conflict.

The negotiations were supervised by Iran, Russia and Turkey as mediators of the talks.

Russia and Iran are the main international backers of the Syrian government in its battle against foreign-backed terrorists.

At Damascus' request, Iran has been providing military advisory support to the Syrian Army in its counterterrorism operations.

Russia has been carrying out an aerial campaign



Iranian President Hassan Rouhani



Russian President Vladimir Putin

in Syria, in coordination with Damascus, since September 2015 to further boost the Syrian military's anti-terror fight.

In the same conversation, Putin indicated Mos-

cow's resolve to boost all-out relations with Iran, saying that the speedy implementation of development projects currently underway between the two countries would help promote ties.

Iran: Trump claims of North Korea links 'nonsense'

Iran said Monday that suggestions by US President Donald Trump that it was working with North Korea on missile development were "nonsense".

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi was responding to a tweet by Trump over the weekend in which the US president wrote: "Iran just test-fired a ballistic missile capable of reaching Israel. They are also working with North Korea," AFP reported.

Qassemi, who was speaking at a press conference in Tehran on Monday, said there were "no similarities nor resemblance" with the actions of North Korea, and that claims they were working together on ballistic missile development amounted to a "clear lie".

"It is very clear that this is a nonsense and baseless claim," he told reporters.

Lacking logic

Shifting to the Kurdish secession referendum in Iraq, Qassemi once again reaffirmed Iran's opposition to the vote, underlining the need for maintaining the Arab country's national sovereignty at a time that Baghdad is making great strides against terrorists.



Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi gives a press conference in Tehran on September 25, 2017.

"Our position is totally clear. This measure came at a wrong juncture and lacked the necessary logic."

He added the vote was held as "the Iraqi government had managed to score gains to a large extent in the fight against terrorism," Press TV reported.

The vote was announced earlier in the year much to the consternation of the international community that warned it could most likely throw the already violence-weary country into more trouble. Despite all opposition, the referendum was held on Monday.

"We emphasize Iraq's territorial integrity, national sovereignty, and the trend of democratic developments in the country," Qassemi said. "Any measure that contradicts Iraq's stability, security and territorial integrity is unwarranted and wrong."

Iraqi Kurds voted in a controversial independence referendum that has drawn massive objection at regional and international levels.

The official also roundly rejected some Western media reports, which came out on Sunday, alleging that Iran had bombarded Iraq's Kurdistan region, calling them media hype on the eve of the referendum.

Qassemi said Iran's closure of its borders with the region came at a request from the Iraqi government.

Iranian MP hails French push to save JCPOA

An Iranian lawmaker commended French President Emmanuel Macron for stressing the need to protect the nuclear deal, also known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), signed between Iran and the 5+1 Group (US, UK, France, Russia, China, plus Germany).

Macron's comments at the UN General Assembly on September 19, about the importance of saving the JCPOA, were remarkable and significant, chairman of Iran-France Parliamentary Friendship Group Kazem Jalali said in a meeting with Director General of the International Diplomatic Academy of France Michel Duclos in Tehran on Monday, Tasnim News Agency reported.

He stressed Iran's commitment to the nuclear accord, calling on the other signatories to honor the deal.

Jalali also slammed Trump's speech at the UN General Assembly against Iran as illogical and irrational, warning



Chairman of Iran-France Parliamentary Friendship Group Kazem Jalali (R) speaks to Director General of the International Diplomatic Academy of France Michel Duclos in Tehran on September 25, 2017.

that withdrawal from the agreement would elicit a proportional reaction from Tehran.

Speaking at the same meeting, Duclos described the JCPOA as a good deal that has raised the level of cooperation between Iran and Europe.

The French president and the European Union share views on safeguarding the JCPOA, he added.

Iran and the Group 5+1 signed the JCPOA in July 2015. The deal went into effect in January 2016.

Trump imposes new travel restrictions

From Page 1

The announcement came as the US Supreme Court prepares to hear oral arguments on Oct. 10 over the legality of Trump's previous travel ban, including whether it discriminated against Muslims. The rollout on Sunday was decidedly more organized than Trump's first stab at a travel ban, which was unveiled with little warning and sparked protests at airports worldwide.

Earlier on Sunday, Trump told reporters about the ban: "The tougher, the better."

Critics have accused the Republican president of discriminating against Muslims in violation of constitutional guarantees of religious liberty and equal protection under the law, breaking existing US immigration law and stoking religious hatred.

Some federal courts blocked the ban, but the US Supreme Court allowed it to take effect in June, with some restrictions.

Fake empathy

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said that Trump's new travel ban is proof of his fake empathy for Iranians.

"Trump's fake empathy for Iranians rings ever more hollow, with his new and even more offensive travel ban against such outstanding citizens," Tweeted Zarif.

Zarif appeared to be referencing Trump's recent speech at the United Nations General Assembly in New York, to which the Iranian foreign minister responded, "Fake empathy for Iranians fools no one."

UN seeks rapid increase in Rohingya aid

Muslim refugees seeking shelter in Bangladesh from “unimaginable horrors” in Myanmar face enormous hardship and risk a dramatic deterioration in circumstances unless aid is stepped up, the head of the UN refugee agency said on Monday.

The warning comes as a wave of violence in Myanmar has sent 436,000 Muslim Rohingya fleeing to Bangladesh, Reuters reported.

The violence in western Myanmar’s Rakhine state and the refugee exodus is the biggest crisis the government of Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi has faced since it came to power last year in a transition from nearly 50 years of military rule.

UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi told a news conference in Bangladesh that “solutions to this crisis lie with Myanmar.”

But until then, the world had to help the “deeply traumatized” refugees facing enormous hardship, whom he had met on a weekend visit to camps in southeast Bangladesh.

“They had seen villages burned down, families shot or hacked to death, women and girls brutalized,” Grandi said.

He called for aid to be “rapidly stepped up” and thanked Bangladesh for keeping its border open.

Buddhist-majority Myanmar regards the Rohingya Muslims as illegal immigrants from Bangladesh.

The latest violence began on August 25 when 30 police posts and an army camp were attacked which were blamed on the Rohingya.

The United Nations has described a sweeping military response as ethnic cleansing, with refugees and rights groups accusing Myanmar forces and



japantimes.co.jp

Buddhist vigilantes of violence and arson aimed at driving Rohingya out.

The United States has said the Myanmar action was disproportionate and has called for an end to the violence.

Myanmar rejects accusations of ethnic cleansing, saying it is fighting terrorists.

Cholera warning

The World Health Organization

(WHO) warned on Monday of a growing cholera risk in the makeshift refugee camps in Bangladesh where Rohingya Muslims have sought shelter from unrest in Myanmar, AFP wrote.

“Risk of waterborne diseases is high, especially (as) there is a very high risk of cholera and this is why everyone is concerned,” the WHO said in a statement. “Interventions are being scaled-up, however, the situation remains critical and

challenging.”

The WHO says mobile medical centers have been set up, while Bangladesh health authorities say they have treated some 4,500 Rohingya for diarrhea in a month and vaccinated some 80,000 children for measles and polio.

“We are trying our best to face the challenges. But we are concerned,” Enayet Hossain, deputy head of Bangladesh’s Health Services Department, said.

Syria: US-led airstrikes killed dozens near Raqqa

Two aerial attacks near Raqqa, Syria in March killed at least 84 civilians, including 30 children, and raise concerns that US-led coalition forces fighting Daesh did not take adequate precautions to minimize civilian casualties, Human Rights Watch said in a report.

The conclusions are based on an on-the-ground investigation into the attacks, hrw.org reported.

The 42-page report documents coalition attacks in March on a school housing displaced families in Mansourah and a market and a bakery in Tabqa, towns west of the city of Raqqa.

Human Rights Watch found that Daesh terrorists were at these sites, but so were dozens, perhaps hundreds, of civilians. The coalition should conduct thorough, prompt, and impartial investigations of the attacks, do everything feasible to prevent similar attacks, and provide compensation or condolence payments to people

who suffered losses due to the coalition’s operations, Human Rights Watch said.

“These attacks killed dozens of civilians, including children, who had sought shelter in a school or were lining up buy bread at a bakery,” said Ole Solvang, deputy emergencies director at Human Rights Watch. “If coalition forces did not know that there were civilians at these sites, they need to take a long, hard look at the intelligence they are using to verify its targets because it clearly was not good enough.” Human Rights Watch also investigated three other attacks in the area that resulted in significant civilian casualties.

The attacks took place as coalition forces and allied ground forces carried out a major military offensive to take Raqqa, Daesh’s de facto capital. Human Rights Watch visited the sites from July 1 to 4, interviewing 16 residents including survivors, witnesses, first respond-

ers, and medical personnel.

All of those interviewed said that while some Daesh members were at the sites, dozens of civilians were also there. Those interviewed said that the Mansourah school housed a large number of civilians, including many completely unaffiliated with Daesh, and that the Tabqa market, which included a bakery, overwhelmingly served civilians, many of whom were lined up at the bakery at the time of the attack.

The coalition’s Combined Joint Task Force has acknowledged that it attacked Mansourah school, saying it targeted what it believed was a Daesh headquarters and weapons storage facility and that no civilians were present. While the task force says it is still assessing allegations that coalition aircraft killed dozens of civilians in the Tabqa market attack, the circumstances of the attack make it unlikely that anyone else was responsible.

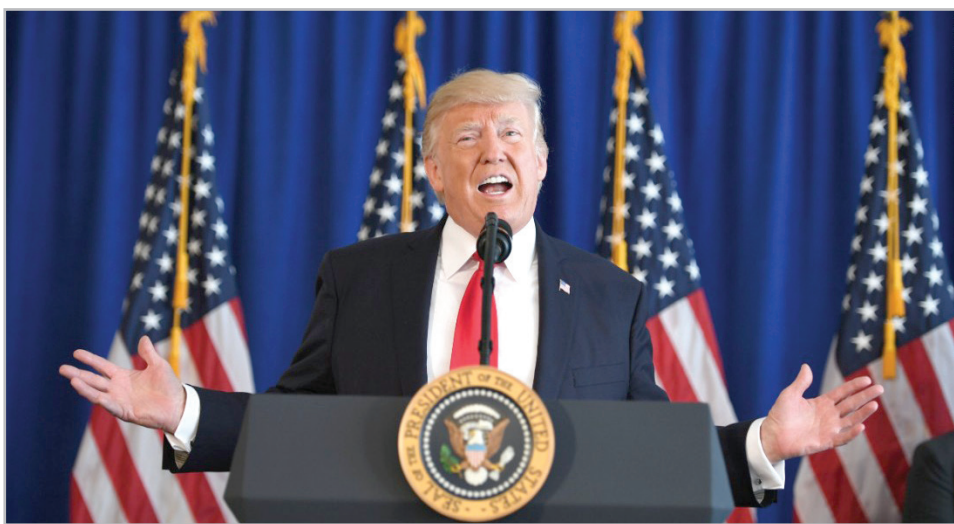
Keeping up national anthem controversy, Trump touts NASCAR’s patriotism

US President Donald Trump is not putting to rest this weekend’s uproar over professional football players’ protests during the national anthem, declaring early Monday that a rival sports franchise was more suitably patriotic.

“So proud of NASCAR and its supporters and fans,” Trump wrote on Twitter. “They won’t put up with disrespecting our Country or our Flag – they said it loud and clear!”

He went on to write eight minutes later: “Many people booed the players who kneeled (which was a small percentage of total). These are fans who demand respect for our Flag!” He later tweeted “#StandForOurAnthem” and retweeted a user who cited for NFL player Pat Tillman, who was killed in Afghanistan in 2004 while serving with the Army Rangers, CNN reported.

The message praising America’s foremost auto racing circuit came after widespread demonstrations at football games over the weekend, prompted by Trump’s repeated calls to fire players who kneel during the national anthem. Several NASCAR (National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing) team owners said over the weekend they wouldn’t tol-



CNN

erate a similar movement in their sport.

The rancor began Friday evening, when Trump used an expletive to describe players who took part in protesting the anthem during a campaign rally in Alabama. He threw gasoline on the flames Saturday and Sunday, writing on Twitter that the league was suffering a decline in viewership because of the political protests.

His remarks struck many as stoking racial resentments because the play-

ers he criticized were black and their protests were meant to highlight racial injustice. But Trump told reporters his objections had nothing to do with race.

Departing New Jersey, where he had spent the weekend at the Bedminster Golf Club, Trump said his comments had “nothing to do with race or anything else – this has to do with respect for our country and respect for our flag.”

He sought to underscore that point Monday morning, writing on Twitter:

“The issue of kneeling has nothing to do with race. It is about respect for our Country, Flag and National Anthem. NFL must respect this!”

But his praise of NASCAR will do little to quiet the suggestion that Trump is, at least implicitly, fueling a racial issue. While many of the most prominent players in the NFL and the NBA are black, auto racing has long been viewed as the whitest of professional American sports. Even as other leagues — like those for golf and tennis — have seen black athletes rise to stardom, NASCAR has remained dominated by white drivers.

When he raced in NASCAR’s top national series this summer, Darrell “Bubba” Wallace Jr. became the first black driver to compete at that level since 2006. He was only the fourth black driver to compete at that level for NASCAR since 1961.

For decades it was not uncommon to see the Confederate flag waved at NASCAR tracks, though the sport’s governing body took steps in 2015 to rid its events of the symbol.

Television ratings have been declining for NASCAR over the past decade, as they have for the NFL.

UK arrests

British police on Monday arrested a 20-year-old man in Wales in connection with the London Underground train bombing this month, bringing the number of people in custody to four.

OPINION

Historic leap of extreme right in Germany

By Hossein Ziaei*

The international community was shocked after the extreme right managed to enter the German parliament in the wake of Sunday’s vote. This was the third shock following a referendum on Brexit in June 2016 – in which Britons voted in favor of leaving the European Union – and the election of Donald Trump as US president last November.

The anti-immigration Alternative for Germany (AfD), the first far-right party to enter the German parliament in over half a century, came in third place with about 13 percent of the vote.

Before the elections, a Forsa poll showed that the AfD would be able to secure adequate votes to win seats in parliament. This is while despite an impressive showing in the 2013 election — winning 4.7 percent of the vote — the AfD failed to gain the five percent needed to enter the German parliament.

The election results showed that Merkel’s conservative bloc secured 33 percent of the vote, losing 8.5 points since 2013 — its lowest level since 1949.

The Social Democrats that have governed with Merkel since 2013 dropped to a postwar low of 20.5 percent.

This indicates that Merkel’s party will have to build a coalition government with other parties.

Besides, the German parliament will now have six parties after the AfD secured enough votes to return to the legislative body.

Although Merkel’s party came first in the elections, it seems that the far right is the only winner of Sunday’s election.

*Hossein Ziaei is an Iranian journalist.

Republicans revise Obamacare repeal bill amid tepid support

US senators made a last-ditch effort on Monday to secure support for the latest Republican attempt to repeal former president Barack Obama’s signature health care law, releasing revised legislation to appeal to undecided senators.

The bill had faced possible defeat this week as several senators in the party voiced concerns, according to Reuters.

The Senate is up against a Saturday deadline for deciding the fate of the 2010 Affordable Care Act, popularly known as Obamacare, because of an expiring rule that lets the Republican health care legislation pass with just a simple 51-vote majority, instead of the 60-vote threshold needed for most measures.

Republicans, who control the Senate 52-48, were finding it difficult even to clear that lower hurdle.

Republican senators leading the effort on Monday released a revised version of their bill, originally introduced by Senators Lindsey Graham and Bill Cassidy.

It included a table that said some states where senators have been undecided, such as Alaska and Maine, would do better under the bill than under current law. The Washington Post first reported the revision.

For seven years, Republicans have hammered Obamacare as an unwarranted and overly expensive government intrusion into American health care. Republican President Donald Trump made repealing Obamacare one of his top campaign promises in 2016. Democrats have fiercely defended it, saying it has extended health insurance to millions.

Democratic leaders roundly rejected the revised draft as a sleight of hand to gain support.

The last attempt to repeal Obamacare fell one vote short in July, in a humiliating setback for Trump and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell.

The Graham-Cassidy bill would take federal money spent on the Medicaid program for the poor and disabled, as well as subsidies to help Americans buy private insurance, and divvy it up to the states in block grants.

Advocates say that would give states more discretion to manage their own health care schemes.

Opponents fear that undoing Obamacare will mean millions lose health care, including some with preexisting medical conditions.

More time is likely needed for the CBO to gauge how the bill could affect Americans’ access to health insurance.

Opposition to the Graham-Cassidy plan grew on Sunday. Conservative Republican Senator Ted Cruz, speaking at an event in his home state of Texas, warned on Sunday that Trump and McConnell could not count on his vote. Cruz has pushed for greater government cost savings in health care.

Moderate Republican Senator Susan Collins of Maine, who voted against her party’s bill in July, said on CNN’s “State of the Union” on Sunday that it was difficult to “envision a scenario where I would end up voting for this bill.” She worried about cuts to Medicaid benefits to the poor and disabled.



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ANALYSIS

Iran's ultra-light crude exports to Asia set to remain strong

By Gawoon Philip Vahn*

Iran has shipped more than 500,000 bpd of ultra-light crude to the Far East so far in 2017 and that flow is expected to remain strong for the rest of the year as South Korea steps up its purchasing plans and other Asian end-users eye naphtha-rich South Pars condensate for its competitive price.

Iran's return to the international market following the lifting of economic sanctions in early 2016 was welcomed by various North Asian end-users, and condensate trade flows between Tehran and the Far East will likely remain robust, setting aside any potential supply disruption risks stemming from the recent US-Iran diplomatic tension for now, regional condensate traders said.

Iran's flagship South Pars condensate has fast become South Korea's favorite ultra-light crude this year, and Asia's top condensate consumer aims to buy at least 250,000 bpd of the grade in the fourth quarter, two sources with close knowledge of Iran-South Korea term deals said.

Hanwha Total Petrochemicals has been consistently receiving 100,000-120,000 bpd of South Pars condensate to date this year, said one of the sources, adding the growing popularity of US Eagle Ford condensate was unlikely to alter South Korea's preference for Iranian supply.

"US condensate is hot property this year but, so what? South Pars is still cheaper delivered and the sheer volume can never be matched," the Seoul-based source said.

Regional condensate traders said other major North Asian end-users with term purchase agreements, including South Korea's SK Innovation and Hyundai Chemical and Japan's JXTG, may continue to take at least one VLCC each of South Pars every month until the expiry of their 2017 supply contracts.

Traders also pointed out that Iran may have sacrificed the least among the key OPEC members at a time when major Middle Eastern producers are controlling their export volumes to Asia, and Tehran could also take full advantage of recent tightness in Qatari condensate supply.

"The absence of [Qatari] DFC [deodorized field condensate] for November may encourage them [South Pars term buyers] to ask for increment barrels... the delay in US crude [deliveries due to recent hurricanes] would also work in Iran's favor," the second source said. Last week, Qatar Petroleum for the Sale of Petroleum Products issued a spot tender offering an unspecified volume of low sulfur condensate for loading in November. QPSPP did not offer any DFC for the month, without indicating why in the official tender notice.

Some regional traders said the absence of DFC supply could be related to an expected jump in Q4 run rates at Qatar's 146,000 bpd Laffan Refinery 2. In a typical trading cycle, QPSPP sells around four to seven cargoes of DFC and LSC in the spot market.

South Korean petrochemical firms may scramble to find naphtha feedstock for the typically busy winter season, providing incentives for condensate splitters to run close to their maximum capacities in Q4, traders said.

"Naphtha demand generally spikes [in Q4] because [South Korean] downstream players need to keep up with busy winter goods and clothes manufacturers," said one North Asian condensate trader. For light-end product margins, the second-month naphtha versus Dubai swap crack has averaged 59 cents/b to date in September, up from minus 31 cents/b in August and minus \$2.16/b in July. South Korea's increased condensate processing capacity could also spur much higher ultra-light crude imports in Q4 than in the same period of last year, sources said.

Hanwha Total said earlier in Q3 that it has increased the capacity of its condensate splitter at Daesan to 180,000 bpd from 150,000 bpd. Lotte Chemical's new condensate splitter has been actively processing ultra-light crude feedstocks this year and its run rate could have surpassed 80-85 percent in recent months, sources said. It started up a 130,000 bpd condensate splitter in a joint venture with refiner Hyundai Oilbank in Q4 last year, which likely needs about 4 million barrels/month of condensate feedstock.

Attractive price tags on South Pars condensate could encourage Northeast Asian term buyers to ask National Iranian Oil Corp. for additional supplies in Q4.

An NIOC source put Iran's shipments of ultra-light crude to the Far East at more than 500,000 bpd in 2017 to date. "Official selling prices [set for major Middle Eastern] light crudes are very expensive... Qatari [condensates] command [high] premiums too," said a Singapore-based condensate trader.

Qatari ultra-light grades have been fetching solid premiums in recent weeks, with latest market talk indicating that QPSPP may have sold a 500,000-barrel cargo of LSC to a South Korea refiner at a premium of more than \$3/b to Platts Dubai, FOB.

Last month, QPSPP was said to have sold three cargoes of DFC for October loading at premiums in the range of 80-85 cents/b.

In comparison, trade sources said the price differential set for term South Pars condensate barrels for loading in Q4 and bound for various North Asian term customers may have been set at discounts in the range of 50 cents-\$1/b to Platts front-month Dubai assessments on an FOB basis. NIOC, however, declined comment on the latest term price when contacted, and the price details could not be immediately confirmed.

Although spot cargoes for South Pars condensate have been rarely seen in recent months, as barrels are largely tied up with term buyers, traders noted the cash differential spread between South Pars and DFC has remained in negative territory.

The Iranian grade's discount to DFC has averaged \$1.38/b so far in Q3, after averaging \$1.57/b in Q2 and \$2.47/b in Q1, S&P Global Platts data showed.

"The [South Pars-DFC] price spread may have narrowed [over the past year] but it's still one of the cheapest condensates available in abundance," the Singapore-based trader said.

"[In terms of pure spot market value], Asian end-users typically value South Pars about \$2-\$3/b below DFC," a sour crude trader at a South Korean refining company said last month.

* Gawoon Philip Vahn is a regular contributor to Platts.

Iraq in talks to invest in joint oilfields with Iran

Iraq's Oil Minister Jabbar al-Luaibi said an agreement will be signed with Iran soon to jointly invest in two oilfields shared by the two countries.

Luaibi did not specify the fields and when the agreement would be signed. Nevertheless, it would be a groundbreaking move in the history of economic cooperation between two important oil heavyweights in the region, Press TV reported.

In August, Iraq's Ambassador to Iran Rajih al-Mussawi said his country was considering a plan to cooperate with Iran in the development of Azadegan oilfield which is shared by the two countries.

Mussawi added that oil ministry officials from the two countries are already in talks to this effect, adding that some 'good news' would be announced soon.

Iran's biggest oilfield in decades

Iran discovered Azadegan oilfield in 1999 in what was the country's biggest oil find in decades. The country accordingly teamed up with Inpex to push the project toward development. However, the Japanese company later quit the project in what appeared to be the outcome of US sanctions against Iran.

The oilfield was later divided into North Azadegan and South Azadegan. South Azadegan — which is popularly referred to only as Azadegan — is believed to be connected with Iraq's super-giant Majnoon oilfield with recover-



IRNA

able reserves of 13 billion barrels. It was developed by Shell and is now producing 200,000 barrels per day (bpd) of oil for Iraq.

Earlier this month, Shell announced that it had quit Majnoon. The decision was seen as part of a strategy by the

global giant to sell out of its oil fields in Iraq — a move in line with its global \$30 billion asset disposal program.

Iran announced in August that it had received proposals from Shell for the development of Azadegan as well as another field also shared with Iraq namely

Yadavaran — both in the southwestern province of Khuzestan.

Shell signed a preliminary agreement with the NIOC in December 2016 to study the investment potentials in South Azadegan and Yadavaran as well as the Kish gas field.

Growth in domestic demand to cap Iran oil exports: NIOC

Iran aims to maintain crude and condensate exports for the rest of 2017 though recent maintenance, depleted oil storage and a growing domestic appetite will limit shipments abroad, said a senior official at the state oil company on Monday.

pected to take one to two months to complete, he said.

Meanwhile, crude exports are expected to stabilize at about 2.1 million to 2.3 million bpd through the end of the year, he said. Iran is the third-largest producer in the

in January 2016 enabled it to ramp up exports.

Iran is also expanding output capacity from its three condensate splitters at the Persian Gulf Star Refinery (PGSR) in Bandar Abbas. Each splitter, which breaks down the condensate into fuels such as naphtha, gasoline and diesel, has a capacity of 120,000 bpd.

Khoshrou said Iran may stop gasoline imports in the second half of 2018 once PGSR's second splitter comes online.

Sanctions against Iran were lifted under a 2015 deal allowing Tehran to ramp up its oil exports.

Khoshrou dismissed the unilateral US sanctions as something to hinder Tehran's exports to Europe.

"Iran is used to living under sanctions. It made Iran sturdier. It is not something that Iran is worried about," he said. He added that NIOC aims to keep exports to Europe at an average of 30 percent to 40 percent of its total exports.

Khoshrou also shrugged off threats by India to cut Iranian crude imports, adding that exports to India have remained at an average 400,000 bpd.

"Some other customers approached us and wanted more crude so we're not worried about it," he said.

India had planned to import 369,000 bpd of Iranian crude in the fiscal year that will end in March 2018, about a quarter less than a year ago, as Iran did not award an Indian consortium the rights to develop Iran's huge Farzad B natural gas field.



IRNA

Iran targets the export of around 2.6 million barrels per day (mbd) of crude oil and condensate combined for the rest of the year, said Saeed Khoshrou, the director of international affairs at National Iranian Oil Company, on the sidelines of an industry conference in Singapore, Reuters reported.

Exports of condensate — an ultra-light crude used in petrochemical production — will fall to about 450,000 bpd due to maintenance works at the South Pars field, from an average of 550,000 bpd over the last 15 months, Khoshrou said.

The maintenance, because of a technical problem at South Pars, is ex-

Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

"We had a huge amount of stock of condensate... but this stock is already finished — floating and on shore — whatever stock we had it is already finished... we have to decrease the exports of condensate (also) because of domestic demand," said Khoshrou.

NIOC has informed buyers in Asia that it could reduce condensate exports in October because of maintenance works at South Pars, industry sources have said.

By the second quarter of 2017, Iran had cleared excess oil stored onshore and offshore as the easing of international sanctions

Iranian firm to build utility vessels for oil platforms

Arvandan Shipbuilding Company plans to construct utility vessels for oil platforms for the first time, announced the company's managing director.

Hossein Qorbani further told Tasnim News Agency that the firm is in talks with Iranian Offshore Oil Company (IOOC) on the construction of the utility vessels.

He said the IOOC is working on most of Iran's oil platforms, adding that since about two years ago, the managing director of the company has sought to employ domestic utility vessels for oil platforms rather than hiring them from foreign companies.

Qorbani said that in recent talks with the IOOC, Arvandan Shipbuilding Company has proposed to build some of the utility vessels needed by the IOOC in line with the country's policy of resistance economy.

In 2014, Leader of the Islamic Rev-

olution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khomeini issued directives to the heads of Iran's branches of power outlining the general policies to boost the economy



SHANA

and reduce its vulnerabilities under a grand plan, called the 'resistance Economy'.

Iranian experts and technicians in different fields have in recent years made great headway in manufacturing a broad range of indigenous equipment, making the country self-sufficient in diverse spheres.

Pakistan seeks greater share...

From Page 1

He hoped to import Iranian oil and gas products at reduced rates by lowering transit prices.

The official said that Iran-Pakistan trade currently stands at \$1.2 billion of which about \$400 million pertains to Pakistan's exports to Iran.

He said that both countries have planned to increase the annual trade turnover to \$5 billion.

Last week, Pakistani Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi in a meeting with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session in New York discussed strengthening of relations between the two countries.

The premier said while pursuing a

policy of good neighborliness, Pakistan is committed to strengthening relations with Iran.

Reaffirming Iran's commitment to strengthen ties with Pakistan, Rouhani underlined that both countries should work closely for in the areas of border management, trade and investment.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Quetta, Baluchistan was established in 1972.

There are 42 pioneering members who initially took part in the process. The chamber was registered with Directorate of Trade Organization, Government of Pakistan, Islamabad under Section 3 of the Trade Organization Ordinance, 1961 on March 12, 1973 with their Memorandum and Article of Association published and registered.

More and more small cars with price tags of \$9,000 upward will be imported to or launched in Vietnam in the coming years, local media reported on Monday.

Emerging markets poised to lead pack on renewable energy

Emerging markets are set to eclipse developed nations next year in their capacity to generate wind and solar power as equipment costs fall and the energy market approaches 'peak coal', according to Moody's, the credit rating agency.

While developed countries have long been leaders in renewable power generation, emerging economies are close to overtaking them, bringing their total installed capacity of wind and solar to 307GW and 272GW — respectively 51 percent and 53 percent of global capacity, according to Moody's calculations, FT reported.

China accounts for the lion's share of the upsurge. But Middle East and North African countries are scheduled to have installed 14GW in solar plants by the end of 2018 — a seven-fold increase from 2015. Central and South America are also expected to reach 14GW — nearly five times more than in 2015 — while India is set to hit 28GW, a jump of nearly six times.

Swami Venkataraman, senior vice-president at Moody's Investors Service, said, "Everyone knows the cost of installing solar and wind energy has been coming down, but recently we have seen prices hitting extreme lows in places such as Mexico, Chile, India and Abu Dhabi.

"This fall in costs is definitely changing the calculus of [emerging market] governments, allowing them to pursue renewables much more aggressively."

Another factor is the onset of 'peak coal' in the energy market. In 2013, the US Energy Information Administration projected that world coal demand would rise 39 percent by 2040. Now it is expecting growth of just one percent.

The attractiveness of wind and solar power derives mainly from technological advances that are slashing costs and erasing the need for subsidies, with the trend seen as by no means over.

A recent report by Morgan Stanley, the investment



vox-cdn.com

bank, said, "Numerous key markets recently reached an inflection point where renewables have become the cheapest form of new power generation, a dynamic we see spreading to nearly every country we cover by 2020.

"The price of solar panels has fallen 50 percent in less than two years. All-in costs for wind power in countries with favorable wind conditions can be as low as one-half to one-third that of coal-fired or natural gas-fired power plants, and wind turbine output will increase exponentially as wind blade lengths continue to increase."

The popularity of solar power in emerging markets is growing more quickly than that of wind. By the end of

2019, Moody's estimates, emerging markets will host 353GW of solar capacity — a 2.6-fold increase over 2015 levels — eclipsing an estimated 349GW of wind power, a level 1.5 times higher than in 2015. The cost of storing power in batteries, a shortcoming that has hampered adoption of renewable energy, is also declining rapidly, with benchmarks that had been projected for 2020 being reached over the past two years, Venkataraman said.

Cheaper storage should not only help resolve the intermittent generation problems of wind and solar plants but could also cut the price of electric cars, giving them mass-market appeal within a few years, he added.

WB arm to invest \$150m in Egypt's agriculture sector



REUTERS

International Finance Corporation (IFC) has agreed to invest \$150 million (SR562.5 million) in Egypt's agriculture sector in partnership with the country's private sector, UAE state news agency WAM reported late Saturday.

The investment aims at developing the country's nutrition sector, introducing the newest technologies in manufacturing, as well as providing new job opportunities for the youth, WAM said, quoting investment and international cooperation minister Sahar Nasr's interview with Ahram Online.

IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, focuses on developing the private sector in developing countries, Arab News wrote.

The agreement comes following a meeting between Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi and World Bank chief Jim Yong Kim in New York on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly meetings, where the two discussed cooperation between Egypt and the bank.

World Bank currently has a commitment of \$5.92 billion in Egypt, spread in 26 projects. Foreign direct investments in Egypt are up 14.5 percent to \$7.9 billion for the fiscal year 2016-2017.

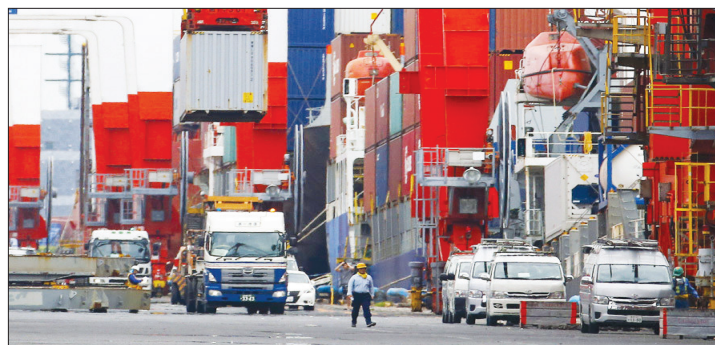
Similarly, a UK trade delegation representing 14 companies is now in Cairo to explore investment opportunities in Egypt's key sectors from infrastructure, agriculture, health care to defense.

The companies, including Rolls Royce and Bombardier, were attracted by the Egyptian government's spate of economic reforms and improve the economic climate, said Jeffrey Donaldson, the UK's trade envoy to Egypt.

"The recent reforms that have been implemented have brought about stronger economic growth in Egypt and this has heightened the interest of British companies in doing business with Egypt," Donaldson said.

Ratings agency Moody's in its latest annual report has credited Egypt's strong reform momentum, despite weak government finances, which has resulted into a pick-up in economic growth and improved investor sentiment.

View on Japan economy moderately upbeat in September



rt.com

Japan's government maintained its moderately optimistic view on the economy, signaling that a recovery is broadening and gathering strength even as inflation remains anemic.

In its monthly economic report for September released on Monday, the government also maintained its optimism on consumer spending and exports as domestic and external demand drive growth in the world's third-largest economy, according to Reuters.

"Japan's economy continues to recover moderately as a trend," the Cabinet Office said in the report, maintaining the assessment for the fourth straight month.

The government kept intact its view that capital expenditure, exports and output were 'picking up', as well as its assessment that consumption was 'picking up moderately'.

The Cabinet Office report comes after Bank of Japan (BoJ) Governor Haruhiko Kuroda last week expressed confidence in the economy following the central bank's decision to keep monetary policy unchanged.

Recent data on exports, consumer spending, and the labor market have pointed to an economy growing at a healthy clip.

Analysts expect growth to continue in coming quarters, although inflation has remained stubbornly low, causing some economists to lose faith in the central bank's monetary policy.

Consumer inflation has remained well below the BoJ's two percent target despite over four years of massive stimulus.

The course of economic policy has also been thrown into doubt as sources tell Reuters Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will soon dissolve the lower house and call a snap election.

Abe's ruling coalition is expected to maintain its majority, but a poor showing at the polls could deplete the government's political capital needed to push through structural reforms.

Switzerland to expect lowest annual growth since 2009

The annual economic growth of Switzerland in 2017 is expected to be below one percent after revision, possibly the slowest since 2009, State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) said.

The latest statistics from SECO predicted a growth rate of 0.9 percent for 2017, which has fallen from previous estimates of 1.4 percent, possibly marking the worst-performing economic year since a 2.2 percent contraction in 2009, Xinhua reported.

SECO said the economy is "only gradually resuming a stronger growth trajectory", mostly due to slow growth in most service sectors, despite an uptick in the

performance of the manufacturing, hotel and catering industries.

The figures are in line with similar downgrading of expectations by the Swiss National Bank.

Earlier this week, Credit Suisse revised its forecast from 1.5 to 1 percent, noting decreased dynamism of some recent growth drivers including high immigration and a housing boom.

However, SECO seems to be optimistic that stronger growth would take off again next year, predicting a two-percent growth for 2018, due to predicted global growth and the effect of the current depreciation of the Swiss

franc.

"The Swiss export sector is benefiting from the healthy global economy, and will do so all the more if the Swiss franc, which has depreciated in the summer, maintains its new level," SECO said.

It also noted that domestic demand is expected to gain momentum from 2018, with the private consumption expected to achieve moderate growth.

Meanwhile, the job market is also tipped to slowly improve by a 0.8-percent rise next year, SECO claims, bringing the unemployment rate down to three percent.

Main Indices of TSE

Index	Value	Change	Percent
Total Index	85516.9	2522.5	3.11
Industry Index	74484.5	2306.2	3.29
Free Float Index	93215.6	3826	4.27
First Market Index	59442.1	2388.7	4.21
Second Market Index	188985.9	2030.5	1.14

Overall Index details on 20170925

First	85588.8	Change end of year(%)	919.04%
High	85645.8	Historical highest	89500.6 (20140105)
Low	85516.9	Historical lowest	100 (1369/1/6)
Close	85516.9	Base Value	100 (1369/1/6)
Change	2522.5		

Industry Index details on 20170925

First	74557.6	Change end of year(%)	1034.32%
Max Value	74603.0	Historical highest	75181.9 (20140105)
Max Value	72675.1	Historical lowest	1226.8 (1377/8/25)
Closing	74484.5	Base Value	
Closing	2306.2		

Free Float Index details on 20170925

First	93494.1	Change end of year(%)	
Max Value	89665	Historical highest	105040 (20140105)
Max Value	89154.9	Historical lowest	
Closing	93215.6	Base Value	
Closing	3826		

Main Board Index details on 20170925

First	59575.7	Change end of year(%)	787.77%
Max Value	59596.3	Historical highest	67441.4 (20140105)
Max Value	56380.7	Historical lowest	
Closing	59442.1	Base Value	4740.4 (1381/6/2)
Closing	2388.7		

Secondary Index details on 20170925

First	188707.4	Change end of year(%)	1317.58%
Max Value	189061.4	Historical highest	181353 (20170522)
Max Value	177894	Historical lowest	
Closing	188985.9	Base Value	4740.4 (1381/6/2)
Closing	2235.2		

Major Currencies

Currency	To USD	Currency	To USD
Turkish Lira	0.2841	Chinese Yuan	0.1510
Euro	1.1884	UAE Dirham	0.2722
British Pound	1.3500	Kuwaiti Dinar	3.3125
Australian Dollar	0.7962	Iraqi Dinar	0.0008
Japanese 100 Yen	0.0089	Saudi Riyal	0.2666

Major Commodities

Crude Oil	\$50.65	Silver	\$17.00
Gold	\$1298.60	Platinum	\$936.90
Copper	\$2.93	Wheat	\$446.25

South Korea will launch a pilot program to build the world's largest vessel powered by liquefied natural gas (LNG) in a bid to support more green shipping and develop associated industries.

Saholan: A beautiful water cave in northwest

Saholan Cave, Iran's second water cave, is a potentially attractive site for tourists and nature lovers.



KHALIL GHOLAMI/TASNIM

A beautiful water cave in Iran, Saholan is second only to Hamedan's Ali Sadr Cave, which is the world's largest. The cave's scenic view makes it attractive for nature lovers and eco-tourists alike, Tasnim News Agency wrote.

Saholan cave is located near a village by the same name, 43km to the east of Mahabad, in West Azarbaijan Province. The cave, which sits on a hillock of limestone, has two entrances and has been created by the corrosive impacts of water.

Geomorphological evidence from within the cave suggests that it was formed under phreatic conditions by still water and not running water. Throughout the cave, there are horizontal ledges of calcite deposits along the walls which indicate higher water levels in the past.

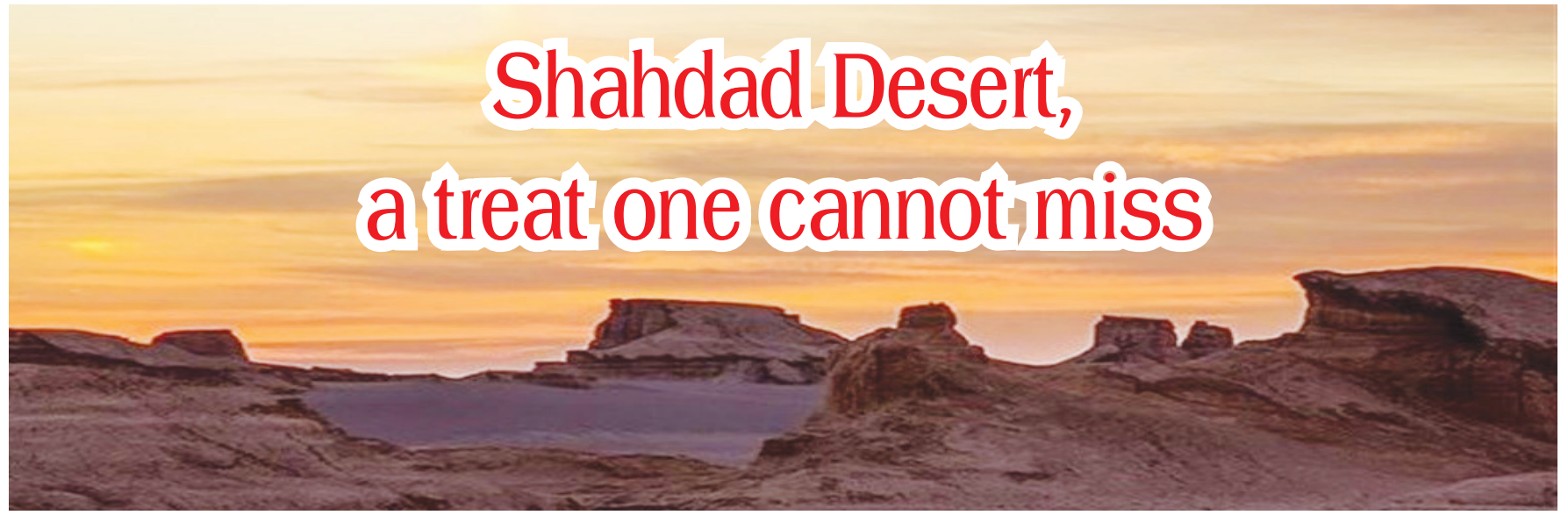


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Shahdad Desert, a treat one cannot miss



TASNIM

A trip to the uncharted desert and the fantastic city of Kalout, in the southern province of Kerman, is a special treat, cherished even by native Iranians. You will experience the walk among the fantasy-land structures, carved out of sand dunes through the whistling of gusting winds.

Shahdad Desert is 100 kilometers from Kerman. From the east, it is 30 kilometers from Dasht-e Lut overlooking a plain called Tekab that makes up the main part of Khabis, according to Tasnim News Agency.

You will let yourself roll down the supple

sand dunes, see the Nebka's (the flower pots of the desert), the incongruent citrus gardens in the heart of the desert and old fortresses.

You will explore the historic cities of Kerman, Mahan and adjacent villages and visit the lush green Bagh-e Shazdeh (Prince Garden) known as the 'Paradise of the Desert'.

The inner tranquility that will descend upon you by spending a night or two under the dark and starry skies of Shahdad, in the heart of Lut Desert surrounded by the deep silence of the desert, will add so much more to the pleasures of your trip.

Lut Desert is divided into three sections:

The northern, central and southern sections. The central section, which is the largest stretch of Lut Desert, also attains its lowest altitude. There are several kalouts, a moving sand castle that is built one day and relocates on the next, in this region that extends from central Lut to the west.

These kalouts are located in an area 40km east and northeast of Shahdad. They have been generated by the intense soil and water erosion and extend from northwest to the southeast of the region. The kalouts cover part of the western fringe of Lut Desert with an average length of 145km. There is little

vegetation in the desert region. In addition to the kalouts, there are other beautiful attractions to the east of Kerman, the lowest point of Lut Desert to the east of a salt mine called 'Gowd-e Namak', which is located in the western region of the kalouts.

At this point, the altitude is a mere 56 meters above sea level and is recorded as the lowest region in Iran and not only the hottest place in Iran, but the hottest place on Earth. They call this place 'Gandom Beryan', which means roasted grain. The temperature in Lut Desert can exceed 70°C in the shade, which makes it even hotter than the 'Death Valley'.



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Suitable for Residency or Embassy
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و مدیران شرکت‌های بین‌المللی
در مناطق شمالی تهران نیازمندیم

بهترین مشاوره، برترین سرویس، بالاترین رضایت
مالکین محترم املاک مبله و غیرمبله، مسکونی، اداری و تجاری، ویلا
و مستغلات شما را جهت اجاره به سفارتخانه‌ها و شرکت‌های خارجی نیازمندیم

مالکین محترم
ساختمان در دست در مناطق شمال تهران
جهت اجاره به یک سفارتخانه
و کمپانی‌های خارجی نیازمندیم

Epilepsy drug raises risk of birth defects

Women on a powerful epilepsy drug have not been warned about the dangers of taking it during pregnancy, a survey found.

The drug, sodium valproate, carries a 10 percent chance of causing physical abnormalities in children born to mothers who take it, telegraph.co.uk wrote.

Babies exposed to it also have a 40 percent risk of developmental problems, including autism, low IQ and learning disabilities.

The medicine is prescribed in the UK under brand names including Epilim, Episenta and Epival, and effectively controls seizures in epilepsy sufferers.

About 20,000 children have been harmed by valproate medications since the 1970s and a toolkit was introduced in February last year after the European Medicines Agency (EMA) told watchdogs to improve patient information.

But a survey of 2,000 female epilepsy sufferers conducted over the past month revealed 68 percent of the 475 polled currently taking the drug had not received any materials from the toolkit — which includes printed warnings in GP surgeries.

The survey, commissioned by Epilepsy Action, Epilepsy Society and Young Epilepsy, also found one in six of those taking sodium valproate did not know of the risks, while 21 percent had not had a discussion initiated



livescience.com

by a healthcare professional about the issue.

The charities want the government to change the way repeat prescriptions of the drug are issued for women of childbearing age, saying they should not be routinely renewed for more than a year without a face-to-face consultation — which should include information about the potential dangers.

Philip Lee, chief executive at Epilepsy Action, said, "It is vital that women with epilepsy get the right information about their care and treatment to ensure a healthy pregnancy and minimize the risks associated with sodium valproate."

"Yet these figures suggested that information is not filtering down to women and that conversations about the potential risks are not always

happening.

"Discussions with a health professional about these risks should be a mandatory part of care for all women with epilepsy so they can make informed choices, ideally before they conceive."

The charities advise women taking sodium valproate not to change medicines or dosage without speaking to their doctor.

Effective help available for migraine sufferers

World Health Organization lists migraine — the condition that produces recurring, severe, often-incapacitating headaches and other debilitating symptoms lasting from a few hours to a few days — as the third most prevalent illness in the world, behind only tooth decay and tension-type headaches.

More than 38 million Americans suffer from migraine, including approximately 28 million women, who are afflicted at a rate three times that of men, sciencedaily.com reported.

The nonprofit Migraine Research Foundation said health care and lost-productivity costs associated with migraine are estimated to be as high as \$36 billion annually in this country.

Despite those (and many other) daunting statistics, migraine is still widely misunderstood and frequently undiagnosed.

And until quite recently the most commonly prescribed 'remedy' for migraine was to lie in a dark room and wait for the pain to pass.

Juline Bryson, MD, a neurologist and headache specialist at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center, said, "It used to be that people with migraine were largely ignored and had to sequester themselves off somewhere for hours or even days."

"But people who have migraine don't have to suffer. We have treatments that work and even better ones are in the pipeline."

The first thing to realize about migraine, Bryson said, is that it's not just a bad headache. Rather,

migraine is a complex neurological disorder that is genetic in nature.

"It's a strong hereditary trait. If one of your parents has migraine, there's a 50-percent chance you will, too. If both parents have it, there's a 75-percent chance."

In people who have this genetic predisposition to migraine the brain is abnormally sensitive to certain stimuli.

Bryson explained, "When the brain is irritated it slows everything down, which is why people can't see clearly, feel clumsy, can't think straight, can't speak well, feel nauseous."

"Blood vessels get super-sensitive with increased blood flow, which causes throbbing pain."

"And the trigeminal nerve [the large nerve on both sides of the head that supplies sensations to the head and face and controls the muscles used in biting and chewing] flips out and sends all sorts of pain signals."

Not all migraine attacks are the same — some, for example, are preceded by visual disturbances called aura — nor are the triggers that initiate them.

And because migraine doesn't produce a visible sign like a bruise or rash and can't be detected by an X-ray or other imaging technique, doctors have to depend on patients' accounts of their episodes to know exactly what they're dealing with.

Bryson said, "We do rely on what patients tell us.

"But people don't have very good recollections of their migraines. Some people think they have more headaches than they actually do, some fewer."

"So we tell a lot of patients to do a headache diary. When they keep a record of their migraines, when they occur, how bad they are, how often they last, what they did or consumed before they happened, we can get a much better idea of how to proceed."

Some of



theapplevalleyclinic.com

the factors that can trigger migraines or make them worse are common to most patients.

These include fluctuations in estrogen levels in women, a drop in barometric pressure (as when a storm is approaching), anything that causes inflammation (such as a cold or any type of infection) and the overuse of over-the-counter medications and prescription opiates.

Physical conditions such as obesity and sleep apnea also can contribute, as can lifestyle choices like smoking, drinking and eating foods high in preservatives and artificial sweeteners. But by no means does the list stop there.

"I could talk for hours about migraine triggers. There are probably as many triggers as there are patients," Bryson said, adding that some people have no clear triggers.

The prescription medications currently used to prevent migraine were all developed for other purposes.

These blood pressure medicines, anti-seizure drugs and antidepressants have proven effective in reducing migraine.

There's also onabotulinum toxin type A (Botox), which is approved as a preventive measure for people who have attacks more than 15 days a month.

Medicines in a group called triptans can be taken at the onset of migraine attacks to lessen their effects.

Bryson said, "There are some good medications, but not everybody responds to them."

"Fortunately, we have a whole new class of medications formulated specifically for migraine that are probably going to be released in the next year or two, which should change the face of migraine treatment strategies as we know them."

Benefits of matcha

Cancer risk could be reduced by drinking matcha — a green powder made from green tea leaves. It is packed with antioxidants said to ward off symptoms.

Molecule identified as key to suppress inflammation in brain

New research at the University of California, San Francisco, or UCSF, has discovered a molecular key to the ketogenic diet's apparent effects on patients with epilepsy and other neurological illnesses.

The diet, namely extreme low-carbohydrate, high-fat regimen, may work by lowering inflammation in the brain, according to news.xinhuanet.com.

Raymond Swanson, a professor of neurology at UCSF, said, "It's a key issue in the field — how to suppress inflammation in brain after injury."

Swanson and his colleagues found the previously undiscovered mechanism by which a low carbohydrate diet reduces inflammation in the brain, and identified a pivotal protein that links the diet to inflammatory genes, which, if blocked, could mirror the anti-inflammatory effects of ketogenic diets, which are known to change the way the body uses energy.

In response to the shortage of carb-derived sugars such as glucose, the body begins breaking down fat into ketones and ketoacids, which it can use as alternative fuels.

In rodents, ketogenic diets are known to reduce inflammation, improve outcomes after brain injury and extend lifespan.

However, these benefits are less well-established in humans because of the difficulty in maintaining a ketogenic state.

In addition, it has been difficult to tease out the molecular nuts and bolts by which these diets influence the immune system.

In the new study, the researchers used a small molecule called 2-deoxyglucose, or 2DG, to block glucose metabolism and produce a ketogenic state in rats and controlled laboratory cell lines, leading to the discovery that 2DG could bring inflammation levels down to almost control levels.

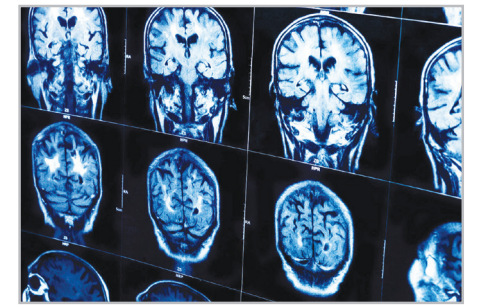
They further found that reduced glucose metabolism lowered a key barometer of energy metabolism, namely the NADH/NAD⁺ ratio, which in turn activated a protein called CtBP that acts to suppress activity of inflammatory genes.

In an experiment, the researchers designed a drug-like peptide molecule that blocks the ability of CtBP to enter its inactive state, forcing the protein to constantly block inflammatory gene activity and mimicking the effect of a ketogenic state.

Swanson said, "Peptides, which are small proteins, don't work well as drugs because they are unstable, expensive and people make antibodies against them."

"But other molecules that act the same way as the peptide could provide ketogenic benefits without requiring extreme dietary changes."

The findings may open the door for new therapies that could reduce brain inflammation following stroke and brain trauma by mimicking the beneficial effects of an extreme low-carb diet, and also provide a way of interfering with the relationship between the extra glucose in patients with diabetes and this inflammatory response.



futurelearn.com

Obesity epidemic puts 240,000 lives at risk each year

Britain's obesity epidemic has put hundreds of thousands at risk of heart disease and stroke, analysis showed.

Bulging waistlines are blamed for spiraling rates of type 2 diabetes, express.co.uk reported.



hidocotr.ir

About 240,000 people with the condition are diagnosed with heart disease or stroke each year.

The British Heart Foundation, which conducted the research, said the figure included 23,200 who suffer a heart attack, 31,900 struck by a stroke and 92,800 who develop heart failure.

Experts warned rates of the deadly conditions would rise as the population ages and levels of obesity continue to rocket.

Dr. Mike Knapp, associate medical director at the British Heart Foundation, said, "These estimates are a stark reminder that people living with diabetes are two to three times more likely to suffer a heart attack or stroke."

"The tragedy is that often the onset of these conditions can be prevented, while research could lead to new treatments."

Latest figures show four million people in the UK are blighted by type 2 while a further 12 million are said to be at increased risk of the debilitating lifestyle-driven condition.

The scale of the crisis comes as a helpline receives more than 50 calls a day from worried Britons for advice about the link between diet and the condition.

Colette Marshall, of charity Diabetes UK, said, "Our counsellors were contacted more than 20,000 times last year by people looking for information and guidance."

"We're seeing the number of calls about diet and lifestyle steadily increase, which highlights what a wide and growing issue this is."

"Questions can range from very broad issues about healthy eating in general to very specific questions about particular types of food and how they might affect someone's diabetes."

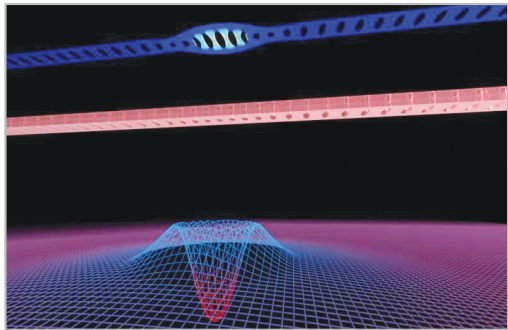
A way to measure, control phonons

A team of researchers with the University of Vienna in Austria and Delft University of Technology in the Netherlands has developed a technique using photons for controlling and measuring phonons.

In their paper published in the journal *Science*, the team describes their technique and suggest that their work might have laid the groundwork toward a method to store information in a quantum computer, phys.org reported.

Phonons are waves of particles moving together through a material — like ocean waves, they propagate, leaving the particles through which they move in their original state.

Prior research has shown that phonons have some behavioral characteristics that resemble particles, which is why they have



In the center is an image showing the mechanical oscillator which was cooled to its ground state and then successfully excited by a single quanta of energy. Depicted above is the simulation of the shape of the mechanical mode that is used in the experiment. The bottom picture shows an artist's impression of a quasi-probabilistic distribution of the quantum state.

been labeled quasiparticles, and also why they have been of interest in so much recent research.

Scientists are interested in phonons because they may provide a bridge between the classical world and the quantum world.

In this new effort, the researchers have developed a way not only to measure phonons as they propagate, but show that it is possible to control them, as well.

The technique involved firing a blue pulse of light at what they describe as a microfabricated silicon nanobeam — a form of optomechanical crystal.

It was designed to vibrate in particular ways when hit by a photon. As the blue light struck the device, it created phonons.

They next fired a red pulse of light at the phonons to induce a state-swap interaction. Those photons were then reflected back to a photon detector and were subsequently analyzed using Hanbury Brown and Twiss interferometry.

The researchers used the state of the photons to determine the non-classical state of the phonons in the device.

The team showed that individual phonons moving in a crystal follow the laws of quantum mechanics as opposed to classical physics.

The researchers point out that because of its quantum properties and the use of light, the technique offers a possible path toward using phonons as a means for storing quantum information of the type that could be needed in a quantum computer.

Fish have complex personalities



ucrtoday.ucr.edu

Fish appear to be individuals with complex personalities, according to new research.

Researchers tested the idea that Trinidadian guppies all had a fairly standard response to potential dangers, independent, co.uk wrote.

The theory went that they had a 'simple spectrum' of reactions to danger — some things were more frightening than others but the fish basically all responded in the same way.

However, when confronted by a

new situation or a potential predator, such as a model of a heron in laboratory tests, the guppies proved they were all individuals. Some were, essentially, braver than others.

One of the researchers, Dr. Tom Houslay, of Exeter University, said, "The idea of a simple spectrum is often put forward to explain the behavior of individuals in species such as the Trinidadian guppy."

"But our research shows that the reality is much more complex.

"For example, when placed into an unfamiliar environment, we found guppies have various strategies for coping with this stressful situation — many attempt to hide, others try to escape, some explore cautiously, and so on.

"The differences between them were consistent over time and in different situations.

"So, while the behavior of all the guppies changed depending on the situation — for example, all

becoming more cautious in more stressful situations — the relative differences between individuals remained intact."

The study, described in the journal *Functional Ecology*, involved causing different degrees of stress to the guppies and then monitoring their 'coping' mechanisms.

Putting the fish into a different tank caused mild stress as they were forced to explore an unfamiliar environment that might be dangerous.

For some poison dart frogs, gaining resistance to one of their own toxins came with a price.

The genetic change that gives one group of frogs immunity to a particularly lethal toxin also disrupts a key chemical messenger in the brain, sciencenews.org wrote.

But the frogs have managed to sidestep the potentially damaging side effect through other genetic tweaks, researchers re-

ported. Butch Brodie, an evolutionary biologist at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville in the research, said, "While other studies have identified genetic changes that give frogs resistance to particular toxins, this study 'lets you look under the hood' to see the full effects of those changes and how the frogs are compensating."

Many poison dart frogs carry cocktails of toxic alkaloid molecules in their skin as a defense against predators. These toxins, picked up through the frogs' diets, vary by species. Here, researchers

studied frogs that carry epibatidine, a substance so poisonous that just a few millionths of a gram can kill a mouse.

Previous studies have shown that poisonous frogs have become resistant to the toxins the amphibians carry by messing with the proteins that these toxins bind to in the body.

Coauthor Rebecca Tarvin, an evolutionary biologist at the University of Texas at Austin, said, "Switching out certain

Identifying differences between the frogs in the receptor protein's amino acids allowed researchers to systematically test the effects of each change.

To do so, the scientists put the genetic instructions for the same protein in humans, who aren't resistant to epibatidine, into frog eggs.

The researchers then replaced select amino acids in the human code with different poison frog substitutions to find an

change that made the receptor protein resistant to epibatidine also made it harder for acetylcholine to attach, potentially impeding the chemical messenger's ability to do its job.

But the frogs themselves don't seem impaired. That's because other amino acid replacements elsewhere in the receptor protein appear to have compensated, Borghese and Tarvin found, creating a protein that won't let the toxin

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Pair of asteroids could reveal secrets of Solar System



Astronomers discovered a pair of asteroids orbiting each other and exhibiting comet-like features.

Astronomers have discovered a pair of mysterious asteroids orbiting each other and exhibiting comet-like features between Mars and Jupiter.

The two space rocks, located in the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter, are collectively known as 288P and represent the first known binary asteroid which is also classified as a main-belt comet, according to express.co.uk.

Comet-like features exhibited by the binary asteroid include a bright halo of material and a long tail of dust, scientists discovered.

The two asteroids of almost the same mass and size were orbiting each other at a distance of 96km when discovered.

Jessica Agarwal of the Max Planck Institute for Solar System Research, explained, "We detected strong indications of the sublimation of water ice due to the increased solar heating — similar to how the tail of a comet is created."

She also noted how the observed activity of 288P also reveals information about its past.

Agarwal, who led the study, said: "Surface ice cannot survive in the asteroid belt for the age of the Solar System but can be protected for billions of years by a refractory dust mantle, only a few meters thick."

Due to this, the team of researchers has concluded

that 288P has existed as a binary system for roughly 5,000 years.

Certain features of 288P — such as wide separation of the two components, near-equal component size, high eccentricity and comet-like activity — make it unique among the few known wide asteroid binaries in the solar system.

The fact 288P is vastly different from all other known binary asteroids raises questions about whether it is not just a coincidence that it has such unique properties.

Agarwal added, "We need more theoretical and observational work, as well as more objects similar to 288P, to find an answer to this question."

Understanding the origin and evolution of main-belt comets is crucial to our understanding of the formation and evolution of the whole Solar System.

Further understanding main-belt comets may, for example, help to answer how water came to Earth.

Because of the fact that only a few objects of this type are known, 288P represents an important system for future studies.

Asteroids are difficult for researchers to study, simply because these space rocks are very small and very dim.

The research was presented in a paper published in the journal *Nature*.

How poison frogs keep from poisoning themselves



sciencenews.org

ported. Butch Brodie, an evolutionary biologist at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville in the research, said, "While other studies have identified genetic changes that give frogs resistance to particular toxins, this study 'lets you look under the hood' to see the full effects of those changes and how the frogs are compensating."

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Social media 'impacts' mental health among young people

Social media is distorting children's grasp of reality and having an impact on their mental health as a result, a support teacher said.

Spotting early signs of children with problems is a priority for schools, BBC wrote.

A £1.4 million trial has been launched where National Health Service (NHS) staff will offer specialist help in schools to those showing signs of anxiety, depression or self-harm.

The two-year Welsh Government trial will take place across northeast and southeast Wales and Ceredigion.

A week ago, the National Education Union urged the Welsh Government to introduce wellbeing officers into schools.

In the 12 months to October 2016, there were 19,000 referrals to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in Wales — a 3,000 rise on the previous year.

Some children feel under pressure to do well in exams while others have said they are being bullied through social media.

But a UK-wide benchmarking of specialist CAMHS in 2016 indicated around a third of all referrals were inappropriate.

Carol Phillips, student support and child protection officer at Crickhowell High School in Powys, said she had noticed a big change over the years.

"In today's society for young people they are faced with so many challenges," she said.

"I think social media has had a major impact on how this generation are."

"They live their lives online, often skewing what's reality and what's not reality, and with that comes many problems."

She said it could affect self-esteem and their image but added there were other reasons people suffer mental health issues.

"We also see people who present to us with anxiety, depression, eating disorders, self-harm to name a few."

"In school as well there are exam pressures and [pressures] with the current changes in the framework of



cnn.com

assessments for young people."

Dave Williams, divisional director of family and therapy services at Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, said there was concern about the number of children needing mental health help.

"There are lots of people who have mental health problems, not all of whom have mental illness."

"CAMHS has come under a lot of pressure to be able to be the solution to some of these problems."

"But if we don't do anything to turn the tap off, we'll run out of resource. It's a whole system approach which is required."

Health Secretary Vaughan Gething said: "One in four

people in Wales will experience mental health problems at some point in their lives."

"Getting the right treatment at an early stage, coupled with greater awareness of conditions, can in many cases prevent long term adverse impacts."

"This will ensure children, teachers and others charged with caring for children in our schools, receive support to promote good emotional and mental health."

In August, charity Samaritans Cymru called for lessons in emotional and mental health to be mandatory for all secondary schools in Wales and has launched a pilot scheme in Cardiff.

Ireland to ban high sugar, fat, salt foods in school meals

Daily fruit and vegetables and a ban on foods high in sugar, fat and salt are on the menu for 250,000 children under changes to the school meals program in Ireland.

Schools should not offer meals containing foods and drinks high in fat, salt and sugar and will not receive funding for these if they do, according to the new nutrition standards, irishtimes.com reported.

The standards, to be launched by four government ministers, outline healthy and balanced choices for each meal and snack



irishtimes.com

provided for children under the scheme.

They take account of revisions to the food pyramid last year that emphasize the role of salads, fruit and vegetables in a healthy diet and accord less prominence to cereals, breads, potatoes, pasta and rice.

High-fat, high-sugar and high-salt food, which were already at the top 'shelf' of the pyramid, have been split from the lower shelves to emphasize that they should not be eaten more than once or twice a week.

Under the changes, only healthy food choices that meet the standards will be funded for breakfast clubs, school lunches and snacks, afterschool clubs and school dinners.

The standards also emphasize that milk and water are the best drinks to serve children.

At present, typical school meals include cereals or toast for breakfast, and filled sandwiches, or soup and a roll, or a salad plate for lunch. Suggested dinner options include meat, potatoes and vegetables, or chicken curry, or spaghetti Bolognese.

The school meals program has a budget of almost €50 million a year, with priority being given to disadvantaged schools in the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) Program.

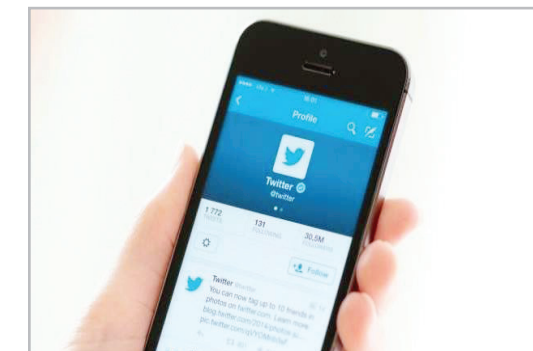
Minister for Health Simon Harris, Minister for Education Richard Bruton, Minister for Social Protection Regina Doherty and Minister of State at the Department of Health with responsibility for Health Promotion, Catherine Byrne, will launch the standards, developed as part of the Healthy Ireland initiative, in Dublin.

Bots can spread positive messages

Twitter bots, if used properly, can help to spread positive messages and encourage good behavior, suggested a new study by University of Southern California (USC).

According to Xinhua, Emilio Ferrara, a computer scientist at the USC Information Sciences Institute, said in a statement, "We found that bots can be used to run interventions on social media that trigger or foster good behaviors."

In a large-scale experiment designed to analyze the spread of information on social networks, Ferrara and a team from the Technical University of Denmark deployed a network of algorithm-driven Twitter accounts, or social bots, programmed to



dnaindia.com

spread positive messages on Twitter.

"This milestone shatters a long-held belief that ideas spread like an infectious disease, or contagion, with each exposure resulting in the same probability of infection," said Ferrara, whose previous research focused on the proliferation of bots in the election campaign.

"Now we have seen empirically that when you are exposed to a given piece of information multiple times, your chances of adopting this information increase every time," Ferrara said.

In the study, published in PLOS ONE, researchers first developed a dozen positive hashtags, ranging from health tips to fun activities.

Then, they designed a network of 39 bots to deploy these hashtags in a synchronized manner to 25,000 real followers during a four-month period from October to December 2016.

Scientists saw that every exposure increased the probability of adoption — there is a cumulative reinforcement effect.

According to the study, coauthored by Ferrara and a research assistant professor at the USC Viterbi School of Engineering's Department of Computer Science, the new discovery could also improve how positive intervention strategies are deployed on social networks in many scenarios, including public health announcements for disease control or emergency management in the wake of a crisis.

Portuguese children to crowdfund European climate change case

climatechangenews.com

Portuguese schoolchildren from the area struck by the country's worst forest fires are seeking crowdfunding to sue 47 European countries, alleging that the states' failure to tackle climate change threatens their right to life.

The children, from the Leiria region of central Portugal, where fires this summer killed more than 60 people and left hundreds injured, are being represented by British barristers who are experts in environmental and climate change law, theguardian.com wrote.

Supported by the NGO Global Legal Action Network (Glan), they are seeking an initial £35,000 to mount the case in the European Court of Human Rights.

The crowdfunding bid was published on the platform CrowdJustice, which has raised millions to help bring citizen-led cases to court.

Lawyers will seek a ruling from the court that the countries being sued must significantly strengthen their emissions

reduction policies and commit to keeping the majority of their existing fossil fuel reserves in the ground.

The lead counsel, Marc Willers QC of Garden Court Chambers, said: "This case intends to build on the successes which have been achieved through climate change litigation across the world so far."

"It will be unique because it will be the first case in which multiple governments are brought before a court at the one time in relation to their failure to properly tackle climate change."

"Climate change poses a major and increasingly worsening threat to a number of human rights and governments in Europe are simply not doing enough to address it."

The children, aged between five and 14, all come from Leiria, which suffered Portugal's deadliest fires this summer.

Some experts have blamed the increase in forest fires in Europe on

climate change.

A 14-year-old who is part of the group taking action said: "Climate change causes many problems, but if I had to name the ones that worry me the most, it would be the sea level rise, which leads to the destruction of shores and infrastructure such as dams, roads and houses, and also the increase in the number of forest fires that we've been observing lately — especially this summer, as the fires caused many deaths and left our country in mourning."

The legal action will target the 47 nations who are the major emitters in Europe — including the UK, Ireland, Germany and France. These 47 were collectively responsible for roughly 15 percent of global emissions and held a significant proportion of the world's known fossil fuel reserves, said the Glan director, Dr. Gearóid Ó Cuinn.

European Court of Human Rights decisions are binding on these states.

The case is also being taken to raise public awareness about what Glan says are the shortcomings in government policies on climate change.

Ó Cuinn said: "We will work with civil society organizations throughout Europe to use our case to highlight the fact that unless governments urgently take much stronger action to prevent the release of greenhouse gas emissions, it is only a matter of decades before we'll be witnessing the catastrophic consequences of insufficient action."

Two years ago a group of Dutch citizens — organized by the NGO Urgenda — successfully sued their government for negligence for knowingly contributing to a breach of the 2°C maximum target for global warming.

Three judges ordered the Dutch government to cut its emissions by 25 percent by 2020, saying their lower targets were unlawful given the scale of the threat posed by climate change.

Income polarization deepened for decades in South Korea

Income polarization has deepened in South Korea during the past decades amid a growing number of high income earners coming from already rich and well-educated parents, a report said.

The report written by Professor Ju Byeong-ki of Seoul National University said income has been set not only by the efforts of individuals but also the economic clout and education of their parents, Yonhap reported.

The report, which analyzed the disposable income of selected households between 1998 and 2014, showed inequality of opportunity existed between those whose parents have college educations and high-skilled jobs

such as company executives, managers and professionals and others whose parents had just middle school education and worked in low-skill jobs in the farming and fishing sectors.

The inequality index, based on the jobs of the parents of the households surveyed, meanwhile, rose to 40 percent in 2014 from 10 percent in 2001, according to the report.

"The level of income disparity has remained low up until the early 1990s due to the public education system and rapid economic development," the report said.

"However, people's trust in equal opportunity has been shaken due to the deepening inequality and polarization."



koreabizwire.co

Disabled lamb takes first steps with specially-made stroller

If you're feeling fragile or on edge, it's probably best you click off this article.

For your eyes are about to leak. You have been warned.

Meet Pam — a disabled lamb who was born completely unable to walk — was abandoned in a field in Chile at just a few days old, metro.co.uk reported.

Thankfully, she was rescued and taken to Sanctuaries Igualdad, a shelter which cares for farm animals in El Monte, Chile, where she was nursed back to health. And given the gift of walking.

Isadora Godoy, office manager at Santuario Igualdad, said, "She was found in a field by some people and she couldn't move her hind legs at all — they were very stiff — and her front ones didn't work properly."

"We are not sure what happened but we think some people at a dairy farm might have thrown her away because she is a female."

"We did many tests to find out what was wrong with her and gave her the treatment she needed."

"If she hadn't have been found, she would have died in a



SWNS

day or two but we will care for her for the rest of her life."

Volunteers at the shelter dressed Pam in warm sweaters and fed her vitamins in the hope she would regain strength and find her feet.

However, medical exams showed that her stiff hind legs and bent front legs could be due to devastating spinal damage which may have occurred in the womb.

Lucky for little Pam, her rescuers didn't give up — and made her a wheelchair-type

device, specially made for sheep.

"Pam is the most happy and enthusiastic little lamb," said Godoy.

"It is really funny to watch her learning to walk."

"We think she will always need the wheelchair. We don't think she will ever be able to walk normally."

Pam kept trying to walk when she first arrived at the center, but her legs would splay out, and she kept falling.

"Right now she is wearing

bandages on her legs at the front and has something to tie her legs to prevent them from opening so she can walk by herself," explained Godoy.

"We put her in a wheelchair through the day so that she can exercise and get steadier on her feet."

Pam's carers say she's super determined and is undergoing regular physiotherapy.

However, while she's gaining strength, without round-the-clock care she would be unable to fend for herself.

Pam is set to get a new wheelchair soon after Santuario Igualdad, which cares for 80 animals, launched a fundraiser.

The one she is currently using is too heavy and large as it was made for bigger sheep with disabilities and the new one will better fit her teeny weeny size.

So, while Pam's story has a horrible start, it seems like she's getting the happy ending she deserves.

To sponsor Pam or learn more, visit the shelter's website and follow Santuario Igualdad on Instagram.

Good luck little Pam, we're all rooting for you, darling.

Why do dogs, cats lick people?

Dogs and cats often lick more than themselves or other animals they sometimes transfer their sloppy affection to their owners.

But is that what lick is? Are they showing affection?

There are many different reasons, both environmental and biological that encourage your cat or dog to lick you, according to metro.co.uk.

Why do dogs lick? For dogs it is something they have grown up with, a mother dog communicates with and cleans her puppies by licking them, so is a very important behavior for survival.

The dogs then continue to lick around the mother's mouth and it remains an instinct.

It is also a submissive gesture as more subordinate members of the pack lick more dominant members to keep the harmony.

Dogs also lick their owners because they like how you taste.

A human's skin can be salty from sweat which

they like or they have formed a habit of licking their owner.

When dogs lick, it gives them a feeling of pleasure as it releases endorphins and relieves stress.

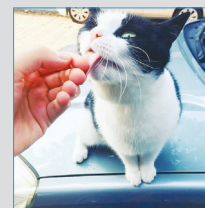
If a dog chronically licks themselves, it could be because they are bored or anxious, they could have a skin problem so make sure you give your dog enough attention.

Why do cats lick? On the other hand, the more complicated animal friend is the cat.

Since cats are so complex in their emotions, it's hard to know exactly why they lick.

Cats lick themselves to groom and they lick their kittens as well, they also lick each other as a sign of affection.

Cats can also lick humans as a sign of affection, if their owner pets them they want to return the favor and do this by licking.



EXCLUSIVEPIX MEDIA

In this Turkish town, the poor never go hungry

The Merkez Restaurant in a small eastern Turkish town of Karakocan is one of the many establishments across the town where those in need are invited to eat free of charge.

The tradition has been carried down from generation to generation for decades, according to sunnyskyz.com.

Mehmet Ozturk, 55, the owner of Merkez, said he always keeps at least three tables reserved for the needy, even during rush hour when his restaurant is packed.

Ozturk said at least 15 people come to his restaurant every day to receive a free meal. According to residents, around 100 people eat for free each day across the whole town, which is home to around 28,000 people.

Galip is one of the familiar faces at the restaurant who has eaten there every day for the last 10 years.

Suffering from mental illness, Galip



sunnyskyz.com
Galip, a regular at Merkez Restaurant.

doesn't say much.

"The Merkez is my favorite place in town, because the food is great," he told Middle East Eye.

According to residents, the tradition to feed the needy for free first started in the 1940s at the Merkez Restaurant, one of the first eateries in town, when the former

owners started offering free meals to those in need every day.

The practice was quickly picked up by other restaurants in the area.

"I remember Hacı Huseyin, the former owner of the restaurant, and witnessed his enthusiasm when I was waiting tables at a very young age. He used to look for needy people to feed on the streets, bring them in groups to the restaurant, sometimes three, sometimes five times a day," Ozturk said.

Hasan Gulbasan has managed five different restaurants in Karakocan and now serves as the owner of the restaurant Saray Lokantasi.

Gulbasan said he started to receive calls from strangers across Turkey who wanted to thank him after learning of the tradition.

"I tell them what we do is not unique. Inviting the poor does not have a slight effect on my earnings, if anything it brings barakah (blessings)."



PICTURE OF THE DAY

JASON REED/REUTERS
Australian Phillip Leitch jousts against Frenchman Michael Sadde on the way to winning the inaugural World Jousting Championship at the St. Ives Medieval Faire, New South Wales, Australia.

Octo-Cross

1	2	3	4		5	6	7
8					9		
10					11		
			12	13			
14	15	16					
17				18	19	20	21
22				23			
24				25			

DOWN

- Writing fluid
- Digit
- The night before
- Tree
- Finale
- Finished
- Sunrise
- Choose by vote
- Grasp
- Halo
- Swerve
- Demure
- Pelvis
- Single

ACROSS

- Component
- Fish
- Kind of star
- Eggs
- Medieval castle tower
- Condensation
- Acquire knowledge
- Small mallet
- Regret
- Reverberation
- Anger
- Metal currency
- Golfing term
- Sort

Yesterday's solution

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

Sudoku

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

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

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

Persepolis to face Al Hilal for historic ACL final place

Al Hilal hosts Persepolis in a much-awaited clash in the first leg of their 2017 AFC Champions League semifinal on Tuesday, with both sides looking to seize the initiative as they aim to win their first Asian title since the tournament revamp in 2002.

The teams met twice in Muscat during the group stage this year; the first match ended in a 1-1 draw while the return fixture brought about a goalless stalemate, the-afc.com reported.

Persepolis has had a historic AFC Champions League campaign in 2017, progressing to the Round of 16 where the Iranians defeated Lekhwiya of Qatar 1-0 to reach the quarterfinals for the first time.

Branko Ivankovic's men then went one step further when they completed a 5-3 aggregate victory over Al Ahli 3-1 in the semifinals.

The Tehran-based side showed great spirit and belief in the quarterfinals after overcoming a 2-0 deficit in the first leg before managing to defeat Al Ahli 3-1 in the second leg, despite being a man down since the 12th minute after Kamal Kamyabini's sending off.

Persepolis leading scorer Mehdi Taremi with seven goals is set to miss the tie due to a FIFA suspension for



GETTY IMAGES

breaching his contract with the Turkish side, Çaykur Rizespor, in 2016, however Godwin Mensha who has chipped in with two crucial goals off the bench in the quarterfinals is likely to fill in for the Iranian interna-

tional.

Mohsen Mosalman and Ali Alipour have the ability to change the game, with both registering three assists each so far.

Mosalman, in particular, has excelled, with his 21 chances created putting him joint-highest among the semi-finalists.

Since topping Group D back in May, Al Hilal has kept up its unbeaten run in this year's competition to reach this stage.

The Saudi giant defeated Esteghlal Khuzestan 4-2 on aggregate in the Round of 16 before seeing off 2003 champion Al Ain 3-0 in the quarterfinals.

Tonight's game will see Al Hilal make its third semifinal appearance in four years and its fans will be hoping for a positive outcome, especially after the impressive victory over Al Ain in the last round.

Carlos Eduardo netted all three goals in that win and his hat-trick heroics increased his personal tally to seven for the tournament.

Al Hilal's attack also features the Syrian forward Omar Khribin, who has scored four times so far.

Despite missing the injured Nawaf Al Abed, manager Ramon Diaz can look to key Uruguayan midfielder Nicolas Mileti and his contributions from midfield.

Iran claims Asian women's futsal bronze in Ashgabat

Sports Desk

Iran beat China 5-1 to finish third in the 2017 Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games women's futsal in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

On Monday, Iran and China, having suffered semifinal defeats at the hands of Japan and Thailand, respectively, went into the third-place playoff with their last-ditch effort for silverware in the competitions.

Iranians started right on the front foot and went in front through Fereshteh Karimi with only three minutes into the game.



Sara Shirbeigi then doubled Iran's lead two minutes later and the 26-year-old Iranian got his second of the match in the 10th minute.

Jiabao Dong pulled one back for China to make it a 3-1 halftime score line.

It was pretty much the same story in the second half as Karimi got her brace right after the interval.

Shirbeigi completed her hat-trick in the 31st minute to seal Iran's victory as the 2015 AFC Women's Futsal champion finished its decent campaign with a bronze medal.

"I am happy but I wanted to be happier and win the silver or gold. But bronze is still valuable. It is still important. It is better than nothing, Iran's coach, Shahrzad Mozafar, said after her side grabbed the bronze medal.

"After losing in the semifinals we had time to talk to the players and inspire them so they could overcome their disappointment," Mozafar added.

"I was national coach when we won the silver medal at the Asian Indoor Games in 2013 and then I left.

"I only came back two months ago so I only had a short time to prepare the team.

"I hope to stay on as coach for the AFC Championships next year. But the average age of this team is close to 28 so we need to make it younger and bring in new players," the Iranian said on her future as Iran's coach.

Federer leads Team Europe to victory in first Laver Cup



GETTY IMAGES

Roger Federer holds aloft the first ever Laver Cup trophy after Team Europe beat Team World in Prague, the Czech Republic, on September 24, 2017.

Roger Federer won the inaugural Laver Cup for Team Europe on Sunday, beating back a fierce challenge from players from the rest of the world to claim the trophy in a dramatic final match of the weekend.

Despite cruising through the first two days, the Europeans needed the last match to finalize the victory and show the dominance expected from a team featuring five of the world's top seven players, Reuters reported.

Federer delivered in a tight 4-6, 7-6(6), 11-9 win over world number 20 Nick Kyrgios, with the Australian pushing to the final point as he sought a win that would have forced an overtime doubles match to decide the tournament.

But Kyrgios squandered a chance at match point and then smashed the ball into the net to end the battle, spurring Federer's European team mates, led

by top-ranked Rafael Nadal, to leap off the bench and embrace the Swiss at the net.

"I was ready to go. I had to be. That is what a team member does. The boys played fantastic all weekend but we knew it could change very quickly on Sunday," Federer said.

"I was looking at getting ready maybe for doubles at the end... But I got it done."

An earlier victory from big-hitting German Alexander Zverev also helped fight off the last-day comeback from Team World, which entered the day 9-3 down after dropping six of the first eight matches.

With matches worth three points on Sunday – versus two on Saturday and one on Friday – the group battled back with Americans John Isner and Jack Sock downing Croatian Marin Cilic and Czech Tomas Berdych, who

was playing in front of the hometown crowd at Prague's O2 Arena.

The American duo limited the hard-serving Europeans to three aces in a 7-6(5), 7-6(6) victory.

Zverev, the youngest player in the top 10 at age 20, then faced Team World's highest ranked player at number 16, Sam Querrey.

He broke the American's serve midway through the first set and never looked back en route to a 6-4, 6-4 win.

Giant killer

That left Nadal to face Isner, winless in six career meetings with the Spaniard. But the world number 17 rattled Nadal from the beginning and delivered a barrage of 23 aces and several forceful winners and drop shots.

"I walked to the court like I had absolutely nothing to lose and I just went

for it," Isner said.

Federer then played hero, battling back after dropping the first set to Kyrgios who had looked to keep Isner's giant-killing momentum going.

The Laver Cup, named after Australian tennis hero Rod Laver, has won plaudits from the players. Matches were close despite fears they would be little more than an exhibition.

Federer and Nadal, the game's top two players who split this season's four grand slams, teamed up on Saturday, putting aside a long-running rivalry to play doubles competitively for the first time, giving fans an eagerly anticipated treat.

With next year's play moving to Chicago, a John McEnroe-captained Team World will look to bounce back against Bjorn Borg's Team Europe.

"We were so, so close to pulling this off," McEnroe said.

Petrochimi seals second victory in Asian club tourney



fiba.com

Petrochimi's Meysam Mirzaei (C) scores against Thailand's Mono Vampire at the 2017 FIBA Asia Champions Cup in Chenzhou, China, on September 25, 2017.

Iran's Petrochimi clinched its second consecutive victory at the 2017 FIBA Asia Champions Cup in China as the Iranian side demolished Thailand's Mono Vampire 111-60 on Monday.

The result meant that Petrochimi, having routed Palestine's Sareyyet Ramallah 108-45 on the preceding night, may still end up as Group A's top team should the Iranians topple Chooks-To-Go Philippines later today, fiba.com reported.

Mono Vampire gave the Iranians a strong challenge in the first quarter, but the ASEAN side just could not sustain its momentum, falling behind by 10 at the half and completely losing control in the last two periods.

Petrochimi's size and ball movement were just hard to match. The Iranians outrebounded Mono Vampire, 48-24, and utilized far superior play-making to gain more assists, 26-13.

It also did not help that the Thais turned the ball over way too many times – 25 to be exact – which let to 36 points off turnovers for Petrochimi.

Willie Warren led five Petrochimi players in double-figure scoring with 20 points, while Navid Niktash and Sajjad Mashayekhi each dropped 16 points.

Young big man Meysam Mirzaei also turned a lot of heads by notching 14 points, 15 rebounds and 3 steals. As for Mono Vampire, the Thai side drew a combined 23 points from Mike Singletary and Sorot Sunthonsiri but got next to nothing from Jason Brickman, who had only 3 points in under 17 minutes of action.

Art & Culture

Iran to take part in Russia's Qur'an contest

Russia's international Holy Qur'an competition will be held from October 5 to 9 in the category of Qur'an recitation, announced the organizers of the event.

According to IQNA, Amir Laal Avval, a young Qur'an reciter from Khorasan Razavi Province will represent Iran in the international event while Iranian Qur'an master Javad Sadat Fatemi will accompany Amir Laal Avval as a guide.



Russia's Qur'an contest, known as the Moscow Qur'an reciting competition, has been held annually since 2000. The competition has been held at the international level since 2007.

Born in 1982 in the holy city of Mashhad, Laal Avval acquired Qur'an recitation skills with masters such as Javad Panahi, Shafiei, Momen, Hassani and Mojtahedzadeh.

He has a number of titles in national and international Qur'anic events to his credit, including the top rank in Iraq's international Qur'an competition in 2014.

Christie's sells nearly \$15m of art at Shanghai auction

Christie's sold nearly \$15 million worth of art at its autumn auction in Shanghai, with a painting by abstract master Zao Wou-ki fetching more than \$5 million.

According to Reuters, the combined 98.5 million yuan (\$14.8 million) sale was 35 percent higher than the previous year, the company said.

Zao's '24.12.2002 — Diptyque' sold for 33.6 million yuan, the most expensive work of art to be sold in Christie's Shanghai.

The highest price for a Western work of art was 13.2 million yuan for Salvador Dali's sculpture 'Elephant du triomphe'.



"We have presented both young and established artists to an international audience and witnessed strong buying from Chinese and international clients," said Charlotte Liu, managing director of Christie's China.

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Armenia, Iran sign cinema cooperation agreement



National Cinema Center of Armenia (NCCA) and Iran's Farabi Cinema Foundation on Monday signed a cooperation agreement in the field of cinema at the Ministry of Culture in Yerevan.

The document was signed on the Armenian side by NCCA Director Shushanik Mirzakhanyan, and on the Iranian side by director of Farabi Cinema Foundation Alireza Tabesh, according to an NCCA report.

The two sides hoped that the agreement will greatly

contribute to the development of new processes in the field of cinema.

According to Mirzakhanyan,

Tabesh contended that the document will open a new chapter in the partnership between the cinema sectors of the two states.

The agreement lays out numerous directions for cooperation, including in the film production sector, ranging from scriptwriting up to post-production phase, implementation of educational programs in both countries, establishment of Armenia-Iran film market, distribution of films, development of festival partnership among others.



Art, culture of 100 nations in Beijing Biennale

The 7th Beijing Biennale focusing on divulging the thought and culture of over 100 nations through their artists' vision is underway at National Museum of Art until October 15.

minican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Venezuela, Honduras, Spain and Panama, among others.

Besides, it will include six special exhibitions dedicated, for



The event's topic is 'Beyond the Silk Route', because it seeks to promote contemporary integration between Eastern and Western territories, plenglish.com reported.

The audience will enjoy 601 pieces made by professionals of Mexico, Chile, Costa Rica, Peru, Argentina, Colombia, Cuba, Do-

example, to contemporary art of Georgia, Greece, Indonesia and Mongolia.

According to the curator and organizer of the Biennale, Tao Qin, the present event is the largest and most international, which transforms China in a platform with great influence worldwide.

Two centuries later, Jane Austen still an author for our time

The characters and writing of Jane Austen, who lived from 1775 to 1817, are just as relevant, revealing and fresh in 2017 as they were in her day, say her many fans — a point that will be made in 'Jane Austen: Remembered and Revisited', a series of book talks and courses from UW-Madison Continuing Education this fall.

Anyone can sign up for the learning opportunities, which range from a one-time library discussion of Austen's 1817 novel 'Persuasion' to month-long courses centering on the brilliance and popularity of a writer who published her works under the pseudonym 'A Lady'.

"Her work is just as popular if not more popular than it's ever been," said Jessica Courtier, program area director in arts and humanities in the UW Division of Continuing Studies, chipewa.com reported.

"There are coloring books based on some of her novels. There's fan fiction," Courtier said. "And there are so many different representations of her novels in film and TV."

She said, "She's this really popular cultural force.

"We think the courses we're offering bring unusual or unexpected angles to thinking about her work and also the cultural context in which she was writing."

Courtier will teach a class about music — and the rise of the music publishing industry — as part of the Continuing Studies course 'A Lady's Education: Women's Arts During the Era of Jane Austen', running Tuesdays through Oct. 10 at the Pyle Center, 702 Langdon St.

"A Lady's Education" also will include talks by English professor Emily Auerbach, art history professor Nancy Marshall and dancer Joanna Thompson.

Auerbach is UW-Madison's resident Jane Austen expert. Her book 'Searching for Jane Austen', peels away many of the misconceptions surrounding Austen's identity. Auerbach has written and spoken widely on Austen, did a series of radio programs on the novelist and in 2001 helped organize a 40-event festival in Madison called 'Jane Austen

in the 21st Century', which drew more than 4,000 people.

"She has never really gone away," Auerbach explained about the 19th-century English writer's popularity.

"I think Jane Austen's novels are often on the surface about courtship and marriage. But they're also about economic injustice," she said. "They are about gender inequality and political oppression. They are really revolutionary."

"She changed the world with her novels, but she did so quietly, and I find that somehow inspiring," Auerbach said.

"I think especially to those of us who were shy, and didn't necessarily want to go out there on the front lines, I think there is something encouraging about a woman who can quietly subvert her world — and do so with humor."

Auerbach, who is also director of the UW-Odyssey Project, a program to help low-income adults get on the path to college, calls Austen a master at understanding human nature.

"One of the things that has led Aus-

ten to be compared to Shakespeare is that she will take a character and sometime nail a universal human quality," she said.

Those universal traits apply to both women and men — who, it frustrates Auerbach, are often less exposed to Austen than female readers.

"We don't say that Mark Twain or William Shakespeare or Herman Melville are for men only. I think exploring why we've sort of done that with Jane Austen is an interesting subject in and of itself," she said.

At the 200th anniversary of her death, Jane Austen is being saluted and studied in programs around the world.

"I think we've had enough distance from her era to really stand back and look at her legacy in a fresh way," Auerbach said. "I would like people to come (to the UW courses) who don't think they like Jane Austen or have any reason to. I think reading Jane Austen you see yourself in the mirror more sharply. You also see the world around you. I think she helps you see the complexity in human interactions."



host.madison.com

Weather

