



Iran exports macaroni wheat to Italy for first time 4

# IRAN DAILY



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**Zarif:**  
Threats against Iran ineffective



**Amano:**  
Iran complying with accord



**Pelosi:**  
President's threat only isolates US on world stage



**Merkel-May-Macron statement:**  
Nuclear deal culmination of 13 years of diplomacy



**Kerry:**  
Trump's decision 'creating international crisis'



**Hillary Clinton:**  
Trump's threat to quit JCPOA ruins US credibility



**Ban:**  
I'm sorry to see what is now happening

## International Desk

US allies in Europe and Russia defended the 2015 nuclear agreement with Iran and said they would stick by it, after US President Donald Trump refused to certify the agreement. The leaders of Britain, Germany and France warned the US against taking decisions that could harm the deal such as reimposing sanctions. British Prime Minister Theresa May, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron issued a joint statement calling the nuclear deal "the culmination of 13 years of diplomacy."

"We encourage the US administration and Congress to consider the implications to the security of the US and its allies before taking any steps that might undermine the JCPOA, such as reimposing sanctions on Iran lifted under the agreement," the European leaders said.

On Friday, Trump in defiance of other world powers, chose not to certify that Tehran is complying with the 2015 deal and warning he might ultimately terminate it.

Britain, Germany and France responded that the pact is "in our shared national security interest". The EU said it was "not up to any single country to terminate" a "working" deal.

The three leaders, who had agreed prior to Trump's announcement to have a common position, stressed that they backed the landmark agreement.

They urged the Trump administration to avoid inflaming the situation by reimposing sanctions on Iran.

Trump's stance put him at odds with key US allies, including Britain, France and Germany who, along with Russia and China, had negotiated the deal with Iran alongside the European Union.

European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini called the Iran nuclear deal a "robust" agreement that is working and cannot be terminated by any single leader, including Trump.

### Trump cannot kill deal

Mogherini, who worked on behalf of major world powers to secure the deal, insisted during a stern-faced address to reporters that Iran has committed no violations of its commitments under the agreement.

She underlined that Trump cannot kill the deal, saying: "the president of the United States has many powers. Not this one."

"We cannot afford as the international community to dismantle a nuclear agreement that is working," said Mogherini, who chaired the final stages of the landmark talks. "This deal is not a bilateral agreement."

"The international community, and the European Union with it, has clearly indicated that the deal is, and will continue to be, in place," Mogherini told reporters in Brussels.

Russia's Foreign Ministry said there was no place in international diplomacy for threatening and aggressive rhetoric, and said such methods were doomed to fail, in a statement issued after Trump's speech.

The ministry said Trump's decision to decertify the deal would not have a direct impact on implementation of the agreement but that it ran counter to its spirit.

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# World powers stick by Iran nuclear deal despite Trump threat

## Syria Army captures Mayadin from Daesh

Syrian troops and allied forces captured the city of Mayadin from Daesh on Saturday, in the latest blow to the terror group.

"Units of our armed forces, in cooperation with allied forces, have regained control of the city of Mayadin in Deir ez-Zor, killing a large number of terrorists and destroying their weapons," state media said, citing a military source, AFP reported.

"Our units are chasing down remaining members of Daesh fleeing the city amid a collapse in their ranks, and the engineering units are removing mines and explosives planted by the terrorists in the streets and square of the city," the source added.

The capture comes despite Daesh terrorists managing last week to push advancing troops out of the eastern city, just two days after they entered it.

A renewed push by the Syrian troops saw them reenter the city, and sever the main road leading from it to the Daesh stronghold of Albu Kamal on the Iraqi border to the east.

The advance left Daesh terror-



ists in the city with the Euphrates River as their only route to escape.

Mayadin's loss is the latest in a string of blows for Daesh, which is on the verge of losing its former de facto Syrian capital Raqqa to the US-backed militants.

The terrorists' hold on Deir Ezzor province is also crumbling in the face of parallel regime and SDF assaults.

In September, Syrian troops broke a Daesh siege of nearly three

years on government-held parts of the provincial capital.

And on Saturday, official news agency SANA reported that Syrian soldiers had now encircled remaining Daesh positions in the city after capturing new areas east of the Euphrates River.

In neighboring Iraq, Daesh has also lost almost all of its territory, holding now just a stretch of the Euphrates valley abutting the Syrian border.

## California wildfires rage as record death toll climbs to 35

Fierce winds stirred wildfires and tested firefighters on Saturday in Northern California where the most lethal outbreak of wildfires in state history has killed 35 people and forced more than 90,000 residents from their homes.

The wind-driven blazes, which erupted on Sunday night in the heart of California's renowned wine country, north of San Francisco, have destroyed an estimated 5,700 homes, Reuters reported.

A total of 17 major wildfires - some encompassing several smaller blazes merged together - had consumed nearly 222,000 acres of dry brush, grasslands and trees across eight counties.

Ground crews on Friday gained ground on the wildfires on Friday as they raced to clear drought-parched vegetation along the southern flanks of fires, removing highly combustible fuels adjacent to populated areas before extreme heat and winds were forecast to revive over the weekend.

Winds were to intensify overnight and into Saturday with gusts of up to 55 mph (90 kph) along with 10 percent humidity, the service warned.

"If new fires start they could spread extremely rapidly," said Brooke Bingham, a National Weather Service meteorologist in Sacramento, California in a video posted on Facebook. "Those fuels are super dry right now. This also could cause problems for the current wildfires and the firefighters who are trying to suppress them."

Wildfire ripped through the Sonoma County town of Santa Rosa, where whole neighborhoods were reduced to landscapes of gray ash, smoldering debris and burned-out vehicles. The 35 confirmed fatalities - 19 in Sonoma County - mark the greatest loss of life from a single fire event on record in California, surpassing the 29 deaths from the Griffith Park fire of 1933 in Los Angeles.

Some victims were asleep when flames engulfed their homes, and many survivors had only minutes to flee.

With 235 people still missing on Friday in Sonoma County alone, and rubble from thousands of incinerated dwellings yet to be searched, authorities have said the number of fatalities from the so-called North Bay fires would likely climb.

The fires have thrown California's wine-producing industry, and related tourism, into disarray at the end of the region's annual grape harvest, damaging or destroying at least a dozen Napa Valley wineries.

Some 45 search-and-rescue teams and 18 detectives were deployed to scour obliterated neighborhoods for victims.

More than 90,000 residents have been evacuated, said Jaime Williams, a spokeswoman for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Officials have said power lines toppled by gale-force winds the first night may have sparked the conflagration, though the official cause remained under investigation.

## Spain to take control of Catalonia if gets ambiguous reply on independence

The Spanish government will take control of Catalonia if regional leader Carles Puigdemont replies ambiguously to Madrid's question about whether he has declared independence from Spain, the interior minister said on Saturday.

Puigdemont made a symbolic declaration of independence on Tuesday night, only to suspend it seconds later and call for negotiations with Madrid on the region's future, Reuters reported.

Spain's Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy has given him until Monday to clarify his position - and then until Thursday to change his mind if he insists on a split - threatening to suspend Catalonia's autonomy if he chooses independence.

"The answer must be without any ambiguity. He must say 'yes' or 'no'," Spanish Interior Minister Juan Ignacio Zoido told Cope radio.

"If he answers ambiguously, it means he doesn't want dialogue and thus the Spanish government will have to take action," he also said.

Puigdemont, who is holding consultations with local parties to prepare his answer, faces a tough dilemma.

If he says he did proclaim independence, the central government will step in. If he says he did not declare it, then the far-left Catalan party CUP would probably withdraw its support for his minority government.

CUP on Friday called on Puigdemont to make an unequivocal declaration of independence in defiance of the Madrid government's deadlines.

Such a headline position has also been backed by influential pro-independence civic group Asambleia Nacional Catalana (Catalan National Assembly).

They were joined on Saturday by another key member of Puigdemont's coalition, Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya, whose leader Oriol Junqueras said they should press ahead with splitting from Spain following an independence vote.

The Catalan government said 90 percent of Catalans had voted for a breakaway in an Oct. 1 referendum that central

authorities in Madrid had declared illegal and most opponents of independence boycotted, reducing turnout to around 43 percent.

"We have an unequivocal and absolute commitment to fulfill the democratic mandate from Oct. 1," Junqueras said.

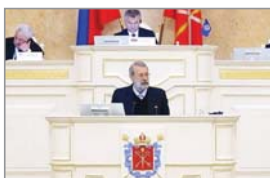
Under Article 155 of the Spanish constitution, the central government in Madrid can suspend the political autonomy of a region if it breaks the law.

This article, which enables Rajoy to sack the Catalan government and call a regional election, has never been activated since the constitution was adopted in 1978 after the death of dictator Francisco Franco.

Larijani: US playing, not battling with terrorism

Iran's Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani said the US government is employing terrorism for commercial purposes instead of combating it, warning against increased presence of the US and NATO in the region.

A review of US policies toward the Middle East reveals that Washington's strategy is based on playing, not battling, with terrorism, Larijani said in an address to the 10th general assembly of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), held in Russia's St. Petersburg on Friday, Tasnim News Agency reported.



The Iranian speaker also lashed out at the US for arms sales, fueling crises in Middle East countries, and seeking to commercialize the issue of security.

"A review of the US record in the Middle East region and its attempts to create instability and crisis in parts of the world demonstrates that we should be sensitive about the presence of the US and NATO in our peripheral areas, and should tap into regional capacities and synergy with neighbors to ensure security," he added.

Describing terrorism as a threat to world peace and security, Larijani warned that the defeats that the Daesh terrorist group has suffered in Iraq and Syria over the past year could force the terrorists to move to other areas such as Afghanistan and Central Asia.

The Iranian speaker also stressed the need for a genuine fight against the root causes of terrorism and extremism, their ideological origins, and states providing financial support for extremists.

The Collective Security Treaty (CST) was signed in May 1992 by Russia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Belarus. The treaty was renewed in 2002 as a military alliance.

Iranian naval flotilla heads for Russia

The Iranian Navy's sixth Peace and Friendship flotilla on Saturday began a voyage to Russia's coastal city of Makhachkala, the capital city of the Republic of Dagestan.

Speaking at a ceremony in the northern port city of Bandar Anzali on Saturday, commander of the navy's Caspian flotilla, Admiral Ahmad Reza Baqeri, said the naval fleet is comprised of the Damavand destroyer and the Paykan missile-launching vessel. He added that conveying the message of peace and friendship of the Iranian people and government to Russia's Dagestan is the main goal of the trip, Tasnim News Agency reported.

In remarks released on Friday, Iranian Navy Commander Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari had announced that the naval flotilla will return to Iran after a three-day trip and following a one-day joint military exercise with the Russian Navy aimed at exchanging experiences and displaying the power and capabilities of the Iranian Navy.



European, African ambassadors call for expansion of ties with Iran

International Desk

Ambassadors from Europe and Africa called for expansion of ties with Iran, especially after US decertification of the 2015 Iran nuclear agreement.



Iranian President Hassan Rouhani (R) talks with Norway's new Ambassador to Tehran Lars Nordrum (L) in Tehran on October 14, 2017.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani held separate meetings with new ambassadors from Norway, Greece, Switzerland, Czech and Nigeria in Tehran on Saturday.

President Rouhani called for further development of relations and cooperation between Iran and Norway in all fields, economy in particular.

He made the remarks during his meeting with Norway's new Ambassador Lars Nordrum, who delivered his credentials to the Iranian president on Saturday.

"I hope all EU member countries, including Norway, play their constructive role in protecting the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and make the best use of cooperation opportunities," Rouhani said.

Norwegian new ambassador said Norwegian companies consider the JCPOA serious and an opportunity to establish close relations with Iran.

He added that Norway's stance is the stance of the European Union, and all parties in the agreement must remain committed to it.

Relations with Greece



Iranian President Hassan Rouhani (R) receives credentials of the new Greek Ambassador to Tehran Dimitri Alexandrakis, on October 14, 2017.

Rouhani described Iran-Greece relations historical, and said: "Tehran and Athens have very good potentials to develop relations in various fields and the Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to activate all these potentials."

"The Islamic Republic of Iran is willing to de-

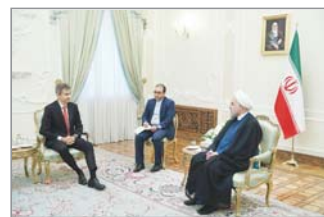
velop and establish inclusive relations with Greece, and the two countries have immense capacities in the fields of science, economy, culture and banking relations, as well as in the field of energy and transit, to increase the level of cooperation for the benefit of the two nations," Rouhani said while receiving the letter of credence of the new Ambassador of Greece to Tehran, Dimitri Alexandrakis.

"The JCPOA proved that dialogue and cooperation are the best solutions to international disputes and in the interest of the international community, including Europe and the United States," he said.

Alexandrakis said, "My special mission is to deepen and strengthen relations between Tehran and Athens in various fields, including energy, science, technology, economy, culture and tourism".

Europe's role

While receiving credentials of the new Swiss Ambassador to Tehran Markus Leitner, Rouhani said, "We believe that spoiling the JCPOA is equal to undermining security and stability of the region and the world, and we hope the European Union prevents incorrect moves that are detrimental to international peace and cooperation".



Iranian President Hassan Rouhani (R) meets new Swiss Ambassador to Tehran Markus Leitner (L) on October 14, 2017.

On Friday, US President Donald Trump officially announced that he would not certify the Iran nuclear deal.

President Rouhani added, "Today, we are in a very sensitive and important situation, and this sensitive situation is not only for Iran and P5+1, but also for the whole region and the world, because the JCPOA has brought peace to the world and the region."

"Tehran's nuclear activities are peaceful and will always be peaceful. And we will not be the first party to violate the JCPOA as long as the other side is committed to it," said the president.

Rouhani said that Iran has always been keen on good relations with its friend, Switzerland, and is interested in developing economic, scientific and cultural ties with it.

"Good negotiations have been held on facilitating banking relations between the two countries over the past two years, which need to be operationalized and implemented as soon as possible."

The new Swiss ambassador also emphasized his country's serious determination to establish a banking relations between the two countries as soon as possible.

Leitner said that "Switzerland supports the JCPOA, and we believe that all parties to this agreement must fulfil their obligations".

Removal of anti-Iran sanctions

In his meeting with new Czech Ambassador to Tehran Svatopluk Cumba, Rouhani said there is no obstacle in the way of the development of Tehran-Prague relations.



Iranian President Hassan Rouhani (R) shakes hands with new Czech Ambassador to Tehran Svatopluk Cumba during a meeting in Tehran on October 14, 2017.

Rouhani also highlighted the effects of lifting of anti-Iran sanctions, saying that the existing potentials in various sectors in Iran and the Czech Republic should be fully developed.

Implementation of agreements

The Iranian president also met the new Nigerian Ambassador to Tehran Ibrahim Hamza.

He described expansion of ties with African countries, especially Nigeria as a key principle of Iran's foreign policy and stressed that major Iranian companies were ready to advance developmental projects in the African country.

Rouhani said authorities in both countries should accelerate the implementation of agreements previously signed between Tehran and Abuja.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to provide technical-engineering services to various sectors of Nigeria, including road construction, energy and power production, as well as cultural, academic, technological and economic sectors".



Iranian President Hassan Rouhani (R) talks with new Nigerian Ambassador to Tehran Ibrahim Hamza (L) at a meeting in Tehran on October 14, 2017.

He also said that Iran and Nigeria should cooperate in international organizations, adding: "Today, terrorism is a threat to the entire world and fighting it requires all countries' cooperation and determination".

The Nigerian ambassador described the latest remarks by the US President about the JCPOA as regrettable and said: "Today, the entire world is unitedly standing up to the opponents of the JCPOA".

World powers stick by Iran nuclear deal despite Trump threat

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IAEA reaffirmation

The head of the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency said Iran was complying with the accord, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, under the world's "most robust nuclear verification regime."

"The nuclear-related commitments undertaken by Iran under the JCPOA are being implemented," Yukiya Amano, the director general of the IAEA said in a statement.

"What has been agreed... must be fully implemented. It is a very important deal, I'm sorry to see what is now happening," former United Nations secretary general Ban Ki-moon told reporters at the United Nations on Friday. Ban, whose term ended in December 2016, was the UN chief when the deal was agreed.

US politicians' reactions

US House Minority Leader Nancy

Pelosi called President Trump's Friday threat to withdraw from the Iran nuclear agreement a "grave mistake" that threatens American security, and argued that the Iranians are in compliance with the 2015 agreement.

Pelosi called the decision "frivolous" and added that Trump reportedly made the threat despite arguments made by Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson in favor of keeping the US in the deal.

Pelosi argued that the president's threat to pull out of the agreement only isolates the US on the world stage, not the Iranians, and said a State Department official who briefed her on the decision told her that Iran was not in violation of the agreement.

Senator Ben Cardin, who is the ranking member on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, described Trump's announcement as "one of the most dangerous and consequential decisions the president has made imperiling US national security."

Officials working under former presi-

dent Barack Obama decried Trump's announcement and warned that the move could jeopardize the United States' position at the negotiating table for future agreements.

"After today, why would the rest of the world join us in pushing for a diplomatic solution we might not uphold? After today, what is America's worth in the world?" former vice president Joe Biden wrote on Facebook.

In a statement issued on Friday, former secretary of state John Kerry said Trump's decision is "creating an international crisis."

Former secretary of state Hillary Clinton said that Trump's threat to pull out of the Iran nuclear deal ruins US credibility.

Threats won't work

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif Trump's speech as "inane," stressing that using threats against Iran will prove to be ineffective.

"Allegations, threats and profanity will never intimidate Iranians. Trump will

eventually discover this; as every predecessor did," Zarif tweeted.

"Everyone knew Trump's friendship was for sale to the highest bidder. We now know that his geography is too," Zarif wrote in another tweet, referring to Trump's using of the "Arabian Gulf" instead of the Persian Gulf in his speech.

"No wonder supporters of Trump's inane Iran speech are those bastions of democracy in the Persian Gulf: KSA, UAE and Bahrain," he noted.

Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates welcomed Trump's policy on Iran.

Trump called Iran a "rogue" state and repeated Washington's allegations that Tehran sponsors terrorism and continues "aggression in the Middle East and all around the world."

Zarif denounced Trump's hostile rhetoric against Iran in another Tweet, saying, "For the definition of rogue, compare Trump's words with President Rouhani's response."

Reuters, AP, BBC, CNN and Press TV contributed to this story.



# The risk of failure is enormous for Donald Trump's Iran strategy

By Nick Wadhams and Margaret Talev

The strategy that President Donald Trump has laid out to confront Iran and renegotiate a 2015 nuclear agreement requires a string of big bets to pay off in short order. The risk of failure is enormous.

A hostile Congress must agree to pass legislation to toughen the terms of the accord. European allies with little appetite to upend the meticulously constructed agreement will have to change their minds. And Iran, no friend of the US for decades, needs to get on board.

The plan Trump announced on Friday, worked out over the course of months by State Department and National Security Council officials with the help of outside advisers, will need all of those pieces to fall into place in just the right order. If they don't and Trump carries out his threat to back out of the deal, the US risks isolation from its allies and may lose critical leverage—verified international controls on Iran's nuclear program.

The biggest challenge will be getting allies on board, said Michael Singh, former senior director for Middle East affairs at the National Security Council under President George W. Bush and an advocate of toughening the deal. "The diplomacy will be difficult," he said.

With his speech Friday, Trump articulated an approach that's been months in the making to reshape a deal he'd promised to shred. It's in keeping with his belief that the nuclear agreement, worked out under his predecessor Barack Obama, was too narrow in its scope and only emboldened Iran to sponsor terrorist groups and pursue ballistic missiles.

The Trump administration argues that Iran, which says it has no intention of seeking a nuclear weapon, is in what the State Department calls "tactical compliance" with the accord but is only waiting for many of its terms to expire in the coming decades to develop a bomb.

"I urge our allies to join us in taking strong actions to curb Iran's continued dangerous and destabilizing behavior," Trump said. "We will not continue down a path whose predictable conclusion is more violence, more terror and the very real threat of Iran's nuclear breakout."

Trump's first step will be Congress. In refusing to certify that Iran is complying with 2015 legislation reviewing the accord, he's asking lawmakers to consider tough new sanctions on Iran. Those measures would go into effect automatically if Iran fails to meet more stringent restrictions on its ballistic missile development, "sponsorship of terrorism" and uranium enrichment.

With that legislation in hand, the administration is betting it will be able to present a solid front to European allies, playing off their own unease about some weaker elements of the deal to threaten new economic isolation of Iran.

That's despite a joint statement Friday by British Prime Minister Theresa May, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron reaffirming their commitment to the accord, which they called "a major step towards ensuring that Iran's nuclear program is not diverted for military purposes."

With the US, France, the UK and Germany all on one side of the table, the Trump team's theory goes, Iran would feel sufficiently isolated and willing to make concessions it wasn't prepared to stomach when the accord was negotiated. It's a bet that US economic and military might are too great to be ignored.

But domestically, Congress could simply fail to pass the bill Trump wants, or conservatives in Congress could push to reimpose sanctions without waiting. Internationally, the European allies could join Iran, Russia and China in pressing ahead with the accord regardless of the US.

In the worst case, there's the threat of US military force to take out Iran's nuclear program—if that's even possible. Or it may come down to economic warfare: European countries, along with China, Russia and other Iranian trading partners, would have to choose between doing business with Tehran or retaining access to the US financial system.

## Iran's response

If Iran backed out of the nuclear deal, it could blame Trump, and the US would be left with less insight than it had previously into the country's nuclear activity.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran will not be the first to withdraw from the deal, but if its rights and interests in the deal are not respected, it will stop implementing all its commitments and will resume its peaceful nuclear program without any restrictions," Iran's Ambassador to the United Nations Gholamali Khoshroo said on Friday in a letter to the Security Council.

It could also fracture relations with Germany, France and the U.K. "This creates a giant wedge—it's Iran and the rest of the world on one side and the US on the other," said John Glaser, director of foreign policy studies at the Cato Institute in Washington.

Former officials who helped hammer out the nuclear deal were disappointed.

"It is indeed a very dangerous path that the president has set us on," said Wendy Sherman, a former undersecretary of state who led the US negotiating team. "I think it will make the allies incredibly anxious. The president again sees this as a negotiating tactic, but this is war and peace, and this kind of blackmail tactic does not get you where you want to go."

Trump's strategy for Iran balances the president's hostility to the nuclear accord against his advisers' wariness of abandoning it. Trump's senior-most national security officials, including Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson have advocated remaining in the agreement, as have even some hard-line conservatives in Congress.

Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Bob Corker, a Tennessee Republican who plans to introduce the legislation critical to Trump's plan, said he was optimistic about winning passage in Congress.

"We have provided a route to overcome deficiencies and to keep the administration in the deal, and actually make it the kind of deal that should have been in the first place," Corker told reporters.

Corker is pressing the legislation despite an ongoing feud with the president. After Corker said the White House had become an "adult day care center," Trump lambasted him as "Liddle Bob Corker" and falsely claimed the senator backed the initial Iran deal. Trump's own advisers played down their prospects for success. Tillerson said the Congress plan isn't a "slam dunk" and repeatedly raised the possibility that it might not work.

"We may be unsuccessful, we may not be able to fix it, and if we're not, we may be out of the deal," Tillerson told reporters. "I don't want to suggest to you that we have a high chance of success."

Source: bloomberg.com

# Trump's goals for decertifying Iran deal remain a mystery

By Aaron David Miller and Richard Sokolsky

President Donald Trump's speech on the Iran deal and Tehran's activities in the region reflects a tough-minded approach with objectives that are at best unclear and likely unrealistic.

He appears to want Congress to pass new deal-breaking terms that Iran will never accept, leverage the Europeans into joining, and force Iran through sanctioning the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) and ratcheting up the pressure to accept a new accord. None of this is likely to happen. In effect, having opened up the certification process, the president has now guaranteed a new competitive and combustible phase in US-Iranian relations.

But Trump's real objective may be to goad Iran into walking away from the accord and thereby accepting the blame for its demise.

The president's decision not to certify that Iran is complying with the 2015 nuclear agreement is a departure according to the terms of the 2015 Iran Nuclear Review Act (INARA). But unless Congress imposes new sanctions related to nuclear issues, it will allow the administration to maintain a flawed but still functional nuclear agreement that allows the US to avoid responsibility for walking away from the accord for now.

Clearly, the president's national security team tried to find a way to keep the US in the deal and avoid provoking a crisis with its allies and Tehran, particularly at a time when the administration can't solve the North Korean nuclear challenge.

However, Trump did ratchet up the rhetoric against what he calls Iran's destabilizing activities in the region and pledged to counter them, particularly singling out the activities of the IRGC. But as with so many Trump administration policies, the so-called strategy was long on words and short on actions and implementation plans.

If the administration is determined to contain Iran more aggressively, let alone roll-back its influence, it better have the will and skill to do so. If the administration is not prepared, it may well find itself embroiled in messy, open-ended, and unwinnable conflicts with Iran, Russia and their proxies.

## Persona and politics

Friday's speech was an effort—as with so many other initiatives in the Trump administration—to develop a solution to a problem the United States does not have. Make no mistake, the Iran deal is flawed... But the so-called new approach seems to follow a pattern set from the beginning of the Trump administration: Policy driven largely by Trump's campaign commitments and the peculiarities of his own ego and persona.

We've seen this play out on the decisions to withdraw from the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Paris climate change accord and on major immigration issues such as the wall and travel bans. It is questionable whether these initiatives were based on a sound and realistic conception of US national interests; to the contrary, they all seemed designed to satisfy the president's base, his own campaign commitments, and his preeminent desire to overturn his predecessor's signature domestic and foreign policy accomplishments. Indeed, at one point the president reportedly "threw a fit" asking his advisers why he should go along with the failed Obama policy on Iran.

## Is there an effective Plan B?

If there is, the president didn't outline it in any detail. Instead, beyond the symbolism of not certifying, the administration seems to want to kick the can to Congress and get it to do two things: First, to agree on new restrictions in the accord that Iran would have to accept in order to ensure continued adherence to the agreement from the US; and secondly, enact new or ramp up existing sanctions on issues out of the accord, such as Iran's support for Hezbollah, ballistic missile development and the IRGC.

Senators Bob Corker and Tom Cotton are already preparing tougher legislation. How far Congress is prepared to go is not entirely clear, but it seems that neither Republicans nor Democrats want to kill the accord. Iran is implacably opposed to re-opening the agreement, and the other negotiating partners of the US have also expressed their strong opposition. Tehran would also react very negatively to penalties for Iran's behavior outside the nuclear agreement. And if there were additional negotiations, Tehran would have demands of its own that the Trump administration would be unlikely to meet.

Bottom line: Without a more compelling and coherent Plan B, the logic of walking away from Plan A seems unwise and not well thought through. And Congress understands it.

## The rollback fantasy

As for toughening up US efforts to counter Iran in the region, we've seen this movie before. It has been almost nine months since former National Security Adviser Michael Flynn put Iran on notice over its "objectionable" behavior. And for the past several months, senior administration officials have talked publicly about the US taking a harder line on what they call "Iran's destabilizing behavior." So far, there has been a wide gap between the administration's pugnacious rhetoric on Iran and the absence of much tougher actions. Rolling back Iranian influence throughout the Middle East will be easier said than done. The administration will turn up the heat on Iran in Lebanon, Yemen, and Bahrain, and in the waters of the Persian Gulf—areas where a more confrontational US posture poses relatively low risks.

But US muscle flexing in Syria and Iraq against Iran is more dangerous primarily because it could undermine the war against Daesh, trigger a broader US-Iranian military conflict that would doom the nuclear accord, and court confrontation with Russia in Syria. In short, the new strategy toward Iran is unlikely to have a transformative effect on Iranian behavior.

And we wonder whether the administration has the will and skill to follow it through.

The bottom line is that Trump's strategy is as clear as mud.

Source: CNN



## Donald Trump's Iran nuclear deal strategy leaves unanswered questions and ramps up tensions

By Matt Brown

Donald Trump's new Iran strategy is a risky gamble. It introduces confusion over US policy on nuclear proliferation in the Middle East while seeking tougher measures on long-standing grievances over Iranian behavior.

It has been met with joy in Israel and defiance in Iran.

Well beyond the nuclear program, the strategy signals growing tension over Iran's nuclear program and targets a military unit that was at the core of an agreement to share intelligence with Australia.

Shortly after Trump's speech, Iran's President Hassan Rouhani said, "No president can revoke an international deal... Iran will continue to respect it as long as it serves our interests."

But he warned Iran would respond if its interests are harmed and pledged to redouble efforts to build conventional military forces, especially Iran's long-range missile program. For Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu it was a landmark moment in years' long campaign against the deal.

When Netanyahu addressed the UN General Assembly last month, he said of the deal, "fix it or nix it."

And he zeroed in on the sunset clauses which would see limits on Iran's ability to enrich uranium lifted eight to 13 years from now: "Above all, fixing the deal means getting rid of the sunset clauses."

That's exactly what Donald Trump has now made a priority.

He also wants more aggressive inspections, in particular of military sites.

As part of the agreement, the world powers established a Joint Commission on which the US and its allies have the numbers and this could be used to push more aggressively for those military site inspections.

But only if the agreement is still in place.

## IRGC will be a focus

President Hassan Rouhani has already said, "Iran's deal cannot be renegotiated" and it's not clear if it will be dead a couple of months for now, or simply on life support.

What is clear is that there will be immediate, increased confrontation on a critical front.

Trump has imposed sanctions on the entire Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC). The IRGC's influence and intelligence gathering capability in Iraq were key factors in the Australian government's decision to agree to share intelligence with Iran about Daesh and Australians fighting for Daesh.

If the agreement ever bore fruit, it would be interesting to know if the new blanket ban on the IRGC has any effect on Australia's cooperation with Iran.

Trump will be trying to garner international cooperation for a tougher line on Iran's missile program.

European powers say they share US concerns about these missiles. But there is doubt about their willingness to do much about it.

Now we are entering a period in which the agreement which limits Iran's nuclear program is in doubt and successful international action on its long-range missile program seems unlikely.

While the stakes couldn't be higher, the path to put this new strategy into action couldn't be less clear.

Source: abc.net.au

## OPINION

## German economic growth gains momentum

By Hossein Ziaei\*

Although the crisis and growing damages brought about by the entry of Germany's rightwing AfD party into the parliament have been considered irrefutable by political observers, but there are evidences of continued growth process of the country's economy.

Based on estimates by German economic experts, the country's gross domestic product will witness a two-percent growth during current year and the rate will show a 9.1-percent growth during 2018.

The German government has already forecast a 5.1 percent growth in GDP for 2017 while the figure will rise to 6.1 percent in 2018, according to government estimates.

So, it is not surprising that German Economy Minister Brigitte Zypries recently told reporters that the German economy is in very good condition.

She said that the reduction in unemployment and the rise in wages are undergoing an upward trend in the current year and this will continue in 2018.

On the other hand, according to a report by German central bank, Deutsche Bundesbank, the Germans are among the wealthiest nations in the world with €5.676 trillion in reserves which includes cash, bank deposits and bonds. In fact, the fund stimulates a boom in the German economy.

These positive points of Germany's economy are not reserved just for Germans but also help joint investors of the country to provide more than four million jobs throughout the European Union.

A Swiss research institute published the results of a new study that Germany's positive trade balance has contributed to the rise in job opportunities in the European Union. The findings reject claims by the US president that the economic development of Germany strikes the economy of the US and other European countries.

Anyway, what is certain is that Germany's continued growth helps the country to have a strong position in the international arena and emerge as a powerful player in the European Union.

\*Hossein Ziaei is an Iranian journalist based in Germany.



## Iran exports macaroni wheat to Italy for first time

Iran exported 31,000 tons of quality durum wheat to Italy for the first time, in another sign that the country's food security drive is on target.

Exports of one million tons of surplus wheat to countries in the region and to Europe are scheduled, said Managing Director of Government Trading Corporation of Iran (GTC) Yazdan Seif, reported Press TV on Saturday.

In the six months from March, Iran exported 120,000 tons of wheat flour to Europe and regional states, he said.

Iran has also signed a trilateral protocol with key wheat producers Russia and Kazakhstan based on the Islamic Republic's exports of the strategic commodity will rise to 700,000 tons a year, Seif added.

For years, Iran has been bartering locally-produced durum wheat with milling wheat. According to former GTC head Ali Qanbari, the country would be exporting 300,000 tons of durum wheat this year.

Durum or macaroni wheat, used in pasta-making, is the hardest of all wheats, which is widely cultivated across the world.

Wheat is one of the items in Iran's basic commodities on its production list as per the 'economy of resistance' which promotes growth and dynamism under sanctions. This year the country exported its first consignment of wheat after a lapse of many years.

Iran's wheat production has experi-



enced a cycle of boom and bust. Largely self-sufficient in wheat a decade ago, the country had turned into one of the world's biggest importers over the past few years.

State purchases from Iranian wheat growers so far this year are also robust, and the purchase of 8.8 million tons has already been secured, according to officials.

The country is also exploring overseas

resources to ensure stable supplies of agricultural products for a rapidly urbanizing population in the face of constraints brought about by worsening land and water resources.

## Non-oil trade to play key role in Iran's economic growth

In the latest report by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) there are strong signs of the significant role played by the non-oil sector in boosting Iran's economy.

The IMF has predicted a 3.5-percent growth in Iran's economy in 2017, Trend News Agency reported.

According to IMF's World Economic Outlook, Iranian economic growth in 2016 witnessed a huge surge of 12.5 percent. The report has projected the figure for the next year at 3.8 percent.

Many believe the huge surge of 2016 came following the implementation of Iran's nuclear deal with world powers which led to the removal of nuclear-related sanctions and a considerable hike in Iran's oil output.

The report assumed that the price of oil will average \$50.28 a barrel in 2017 and \$50.17 a barrel in 2018.

Considering OPEC's plans to extend cuts in oil out-



put and the fact that Iran is not expected to add a huge amount to its output over the coming year, the country is very unlikely to see a considerable change in oil revenues in 2017 and 2018.

Earlier on Wednesday, OPEC reported that Iran's oil output registered a slight increase in September by 9,000 barrels per day month-on-month, and stood at 3.827 million barrels per day (mbd). During the sanctions era, Iran was producing 2.8 mbd.

Given these figures, it appears that non-oil sectors, including construction, agriculture and industry would play a crucial role in the country's economic growth over the current and the next year.

Iran's non-oil exports in the fiscal year which ended on March 20 was valued at \$43.93 billion. The figure for the March-September period was \$20.5 billion.

## Iran airlifts cattle from France to boost meat supplies

Iran has imported a herd of Charolais cattle for the first time from France with the aim of complementing its red meat production chain.

The air cargo of 310 heads of Charolais calves was delivered at Payan International Airport in Karaj early Saturday, Tasnim News Agency reported on Saturday, citing the Keshavarzi Bank which funded the enterprise.

Charolais is a breed of beef cattle originating in eastern France, weighing an average of 900 kilos for cows and 1,100 kilos for bulls. Their best advantage is the ability to thrive in changeable weather conditions including in unusually harsh winter or exceptionally sweltering summer.

With significant concentration of Iran's population around

introduction to Iran.

The cattle also grow quickly, and are fast weight-gainers while they are admired for high yield and good quality meat.

The introduction of Charolais cattle to Iran comes following a recent visit to France by Minister of Agricultural Jihad Mahmoud Hojjati who signed a number of MoUs on plant and animal breeding.

French delegations interested in investing in Iran's agribusiness were the first among foreign business groups flocking to Tehran after sanctions were lifted in January 2016.

Earlier in 2016, Iranian and French firms signed a contract for joint production and export of 1,000 tons of shrimp a year.

Under its development plan, Iran seeks to turn into a major food exporter.

In April 2015, the country imported a herd of Alpine and Saanen goats from France to boost its dairy production.

The French Alpines are highly adaptable animals as milkers with high cheese yields, thriving both on pastures and dry hay-fed conditions. Alpine bucks are also as good as meat breeds, with an ability to gain weight over a short period of time.



"The import of this breed compared with other type of beef cattle is more cost-effective and significantly reduces the waste resulting from its slaughter," a statement by the bank said.

mountains, Charolais cattle are best suited to uneven or rugged and rocky terrain in view of their sturdy hooves. That makes them an ideal substitute for the Holstein breed with a checkered record since its in-

## Pakistan approves purchase of additional 100 MW electricity from Iran

Pakistan's Cabinet Committee on Energy (CCE) has approved purchase of additional 100 MW electricity from Iran and directed the Ministry of Power to make immediate arrangements and to complete the spade-work expeditiously, state media reported.

A meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi also reviewed progress on other energy projects, IRNA reported.



Ministry of Power informed the meeting that the government of Iran was interested in providing 100MW of electricity in addition to existing arrangement for 100 MW.

The CCE approved the proposal and directed the ministry to make immediate arrangements to purchase additional electricity from Iran.

For the additional 100 MW, transmission line and grid station has to be constructed to meet immediate needs of Makran division especially Gwadar Port and industrial area in the southwestern Balochistan Province.

Ministry of Power also informed the meeting that as per the latest projections, Pakistan will have surplus power starting in the year 2017-18.

Pakistan is currently importing 100 MW electricity from while Iran has already announced its readiness to increase electricity exports to Pakistan to 1,000 MW.

## Azerbaijan seeks Iran's help in Baku-Nakhchivan railway project



Azerbaijan is seeking Iran's assistance in implementing Baku-Nakhchivan railroad project, said the chairman of Azerbaijan Railroads.

Javid Gurbanov added that there are two main routes for the project and the most suitable and economical one is the one through Iran, reported IRNA.

The railroad from Baku to Nakhchivan would be possible once the North-South International Corridor materializes, he said.

The route crossing Iran extends for 1,450 kilometers and requires an investment of \$1 billion while the track via Turkey would need \$2.5 billion, Gurbanov noted.

Road and rail links between Baku and Nakhchivan were blocked following a dispute between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Karabakh.

Currently, Iran provides the only road transportation between Azerbaijan and Nakhchivan.



South Korea's central bank is likely to hold its key rate steady this month as soft domestic demand could keep monetary policy accommodative in the near term, a leading provider of economic analysis said.

# Eurozone bailout fund may get monitoring powers next year

The European Stability Mechanism (ESM) could get new powers to monitor eurozone economies next year as part of the single currency bloc's plan to integrate more deeply, Klaus Regling, the head of the eurozone bailout fund, said.

The new powers, which would require amendments to the ESM treaty signed by eurozone governments, would allow the bailout fund to be ready with a possible bailout and attached conditions for a troubled sovereign at very short notice, Regling said, Reuters wrote.

"It is correct that if the ESM gets the mandate to be ready at any time on short notice to put together, with the European Commission, a program with conditionality, we would only be able to do that if we do some continuous monitoring," he said.

"Otherwise one cannot do that job," Regling told Reuters on the sidelines of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank fall meetings in Washington. He added that the idea was "not so revolutionary" because it was already in place for half of the Eurozone countries.

The issue is delicate because European Union treaties have assigned the job of policy monitoring and surveillance to the European Commission.

Germany, however, would be happy to see those powers shared by an intergovernmental institution like the ESM, because it believes the Commission has become too political in enforcing EU rules to limit government borrowing that underpin the euro.

"I do not intend to take away any competences of the European Commission, it would not be possible, because they are enshrined in the EU treaty," Regling said, adding that the two institutions could peacefully cooperate.

## Keeping a close eye

He said the ESM was already monitoring Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Spain and Cyprus — the five countries that borrowed from the bailout fund during the sovereign debt crisis started in 2010 (not 2007-2009) and were under post-bailout surveillance until they repay the loans.

"We also monitor our largest economies. They are sometimes surprised to hear that. But because of our market activities on the funding side, on the investment side we must



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understand what is happening in Europe," Regling said.

That means keeping a close eye on what is happening in Germany, France, Italy and Spain, he said.

"So half of our countries, for different reasons, are monitoring already but not the other half. To monitor the other half we would need ESM treaty changes," he said.

Such changes may come next year, he said, including one allowing the ESM to become a financial backstop for the Single Resolution Fund for banks that will not reach its full capacity, funded from bank annual contributions, until 2023.

Asked when the ESM treaty change could take place, Regling said pointed to 2018 as "a good year".

## Debt restructuring

The changes would be part of a broader package of

reforms in the eurozone aimed at helping the 19 countries that share the single currency to rally around it. That has become more of an urgent matter as Britain prepares to leave the EU in 2019.

"We have a window of opportunity in the next 12 months because there are no other big distracting events like in 2019, when we have the elections to the European Parliament and the selection of the new Commission," Regling said.

Germany would also like the eurozone reforms to include a mechanism for sovereign debt restructuring.

Under such a mechanism, if a country were to ask for a bailout from the ESM, its bond maturities would be automatically extended and its debt could be more deeply restructured if that were needed to make it sustainable.

## Main Indices of TSE

Index	Value	Change	Percent
Total Index	85263.6	2522.5	3.11
Industry Index	74323.0	2306.2	3.29
Free Float Index	91515.5	3826	4.27
First Market Index	59017.4	2388.7	4.21
Second Market Index	189727.1	2030.5	1.14

## Overall Index details on 20171014

First	84736.9	Change end of year(%)	919.04%
High	85263.6	Historical highest	89500.6 (2014/01/05)
Low	84852.9	Historical lowest	100 (1369/1/6)
Close	85263.6	Base Value	100 (1369/1/6)
Change	2522.5		

## Industry Index details on 20171014

First	73814.2	Change end of year(%)	1034.32%
Max Value	73825.1	Historical highest	75181.9 (2014/01/05)
Max Value	72675.1	Historical lowest	1226.8 (1377/8/25)
Closing	74323.0	Base Value	
Closing	2306.2		

## Free Float Index details on 20171014

First	91490.7	Change end of year(%)	
Max Value	89665	Historical highest	105040 (2014/01/05)
Max Value	89154.9	Historical lowest	
Closing	91515.5	Base Value	
Closing	3826		

## Main Board Index details on 20171014

First	58520.6	Change end of year(%)	787.77%
Max Value	59022.3	Historical highest	67441.4 (2014/01/05)
Max Value	56380.7	Historical lowest	
Closing	59017.4	Base Value	4740.4 (1381/6/2)
Closing	2388.7		

## Secondary Index details on 20171014

First	189247.7	Change end of year(%)	1317.58%
Max Value	189727.1	Historical highest	181353 (2017/05/22)
Max Value	177894	Historical lowest	
Closing	189727.1	Base Value	4740.4 (1381/6/2)
Closing	2235.2		

## Major Currencies

Currency	To USD	Currency	To USD
Turkish Lira	0.2706	Chinese Yuan	0.1519
Euro	1.1824	UAE Dirham	0.2722
British Pound	1.3188	Kuwaiti Dinar	3.3095
Australian Dollar	0.7782	Iraqi Dinar	0.0008
Japanese 100 Yen	0.0089	Saudi Riyal	0.2666

## Major Commodities

Crude Oil	\$51.02	Silver	\$17.14
Gold	\$1290.40	Platinum	\$934.10
Copper	\$3.06	Wheat	\$430.00

**Second Announcement**  
TENDER No. 96/002/AT  
Permit No: 1396/3197

**INVITATION TO COMMON BID (Pre-Qualification)**  
CHARTERING OF ONE ASD VESSEL

**Iranian Offshore Oil Company (IOOC) intends to open Pre-Qualification for above tender with the following conditions:**

Scope of work: Chartering of One ASD Vessel  
Locations: IOOC Oil Fields in Persian Gulf  
Performance Period: Two years  
Other items that shall be considered:

- 1 Ability of submitting Bid Bond as in the amount of Iranian Rial 4,774,571,700 or AED 514,557,000
- 2 Ability of submitting 10 percent of total Contract Price value as performance guarantee in case of winning according to company's procedure.
- 3 Proposals should be submitted with no condition, incomplete, ambiguous or adverse of package specification in deadline
- 4 Company shall reserve the right to accept or reject any or all of proposals or port(s) within the framework of the law of holding tenders.
- 5 The validity of the submitted financial proposals shall be three months from the closing date that is extended for one further period.
- 6 For invitation to the above tender, it is necessary to achieve the determinate minimum score in the Pre-qualification.

Bidders, who have ability and are willing to participate in the Pre-qualification, are requested to submit a written request to Contract Department, within one week from Second Announcement through a representative and collect the Pre-Qualification Forms.

Closing date for submission of the Pre-Qualification documents shall be up to 14 days after the deadline of collecting Pre-Qualification documents. Place and time of submission and opening of proposals will be stated in Tender Documents.

Address for those willing to participate and submit Pre-qualification Documents is as follows: Fifth Floor, #12, Touraj St., Khakzad St., between Vali-e Asr Ave. and Balal Mosque, before Modarres Crossroad, Tehran, Iran.  
Tel: +9821-23942510  
Note: Additional information is available at IOOC website address: [www.iooc.co.ir](http://www.iooc.co.ir) on the day of Second Announcement  
Public Relations Department of Iranian Offshore Oil Company

**Second Announcement**

**IRANIAN OFFSHORE OIL COMPANY**  
Pre-Qualification  
PROVISION OF COILED TUBING SERVICES  
IN THE PERSIAN GULF  
INVITATION TO COMMON BID  
TENDER NO. OF/069/96

**Iranian Offshore Oil Company (IOOC) intends to open Pre-Qualification above tender for Two (2) Years with the following conditions:**

Scope of work:  
Provision of two Coiled Tubing packages for call-out basis and its related services.  
Location:  
Districts of IOOC in Persian Gulf Waters  
Performance period:  
Two years  
Other items that shall be considered:

- 1 Ability of submitting Bid Bond as in the amount of RIAL 8,518,380,000.00 or amounting EURO 213,000.00 in case of passing Pre-Qualification evaluation.
- 2 Ability of submitting 10 percent of total Contract Price value as performance guarantee.
- 3 Proposals should be submitted in due date with no condition, incomplete, ambiguous or adverse of Package specification.
- 4 Obtain a minimum Score of Pre-qualification assessments.
- 5 The validity of the submitted financial proposals shall be 3

Note: Bidders shall be the Owner of the Packages or submit the valid agreement for hiring the Packages among the Period of the Contract.  
Bidders, who have ability and are willing to participate in the Pre-qualification, are requested to submit a written request to Contract Department, within Ten Days from Second Announcement through a representative.  
Closing date for submission of the Pre-Qualification Documents shall be up to 14 days after the deadline of receiving Pre-Qualification Documents. Place and time of submission and opening of proposals will be stated in Tender Documents.  
Address for those willing to participate and submit Pre-Qualification is as follows: Fifth Floor, #12, Touraj St., Khakzad St., Vali-e Asr Ave., between Balal Mosque and Modarres Crossroad, Tehran, Iran.  
Telephone: +98 21 23 94 25 11 Fax: +98 21 22 66 42 34  
Note: Additional information is available at IOOC website address: [www.iooc.co.ir](http://www.iooc.co.ir)  
Public Relations Department of Iranian Offshore Oil Company

## 'Robust' manufacturing fails to boost UK growth

The UK economy grew at a muted rate in the third quarter of 2017 despite progress in the manufacturing sector, the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) said.

The number of manufacturers reporting improved domestic sales and orders rose in the quarter to its highest level since early 2015, the BCC said. Export sales and orders in the sector also improved.

But in services, domestic sales and orders remained static, as did the sector's employment expectations.

The BCC said its survey also showed the prevalence of recruitment difficulties facing UK businesses, which worsened further during the quarter.

Almost three-quarters of manufacturers reported difficulties hiring staff, and in services, the percentage rose to its highest since early 2016.

## Action needed

BCC Director General Dr. Adam Marshall said: "The uninspiring results we see in our third-quarter findings reflect the fact that political uncertainty, currency fluctuations and the vagaries of the Brexit process are continuing to weigh on business growth prospects."

"The chancellor's autumn Budget is a critical opportunity to demonstrate that the government stands ready to incentivize investment and support growth at home."

"While much of Westminster and Whitehall is distracted by Brexit, business needs action now on the home front. The solutions to some of the biggest issues currently facing our firms — including high up-front costs, a lack of incentive to invest, and a need for better infrastructure — are entirely within the power of the UK government to deliver."

The BCC also said that in the current economic climate, it seemed "extraordinary" that the Bank of England was considering raising interest rates.

"We'd caution against an earlier than required tightening in monetary policy, which could hit both business and consumer confidence and weaken overall UK growth," said BCC head of economics Suren Thiru.

"While interest rates need to rise at some point, it should be done slowly and timed to not harm the UK's growth prospects."

## Startling results

Buoyancy in the UK manufacturing sector is not universal at the moment, one company said.

Andrew Varga, managing director of Seetru, a Bristol-based manufacturer of safety valves for industry, told the BBC's Today program his firm was "slightly more pessimistic" than the BCC.



A giant hole almost the size of the state of Maine has opened up in Antarctica's winter sea ice cover, leaving scientists with a handful of unanswered questions.

## Penguins die in 'catastrophic' Antarctic breeding season

All but two Adelie penguin chicks have starved to death in their east Antarctic colony, in a breeding season described as "catastrophic" by experts.

It was caused by unusually high amounts of ice late in the season, meaning adults had to travel further for food, BBC reported.

It is the second bad season in five years after no chicks survived in 2015.

Conservation groups are calling for urgent action on a new marine protection area in the east Antarctic to protect the colony of about 36,000.

WWF said a ban on krill fishing in the area would eliminate their competition and help to secure the survival of Antarctic species, including the Adelie penguins.

WWF have been supporting research with French scientists in the region monitoring penguin numbers since 2010.

# Huge spike in global carbon emissions linked to El Niño



fao.org



PAWEŁ KOPCZYŃSKI/REUTERS

A drought caused by the El Niño climate phenomenon made ruins reemerge of the western Venezuelan town of Postos, inundated more than 30 years before when a hydroelectric plant was built and pictured on June 4, 2016.

A huge spike in carbon emissions seen in the past couple of years has puzzled scientists, since there was no evidence of a rise in human activities, like fossil fuel burning, that might explain it, according to phys.org.

But new satellite data showed that the weather phenomenon El Niño is to blame, because it led to dry spells that put stress on plants and trees across the tropics, and made it harder for them to perform

their important role of absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Experts warn that in the coming decades, climate change could lead to even more such warming in the future, as severe droughts and heat waves become more common across the planet.

The 2015-16 El Niño was one of the strongest on record, and led to the biggest increase in annual concentrations of carbon released into the atmosphere in some 2,000 years, according to the NASA-led study published in the journal Science.

In those two years, the tropical regions of Africa, South America and Asia released 2½ billion tons more carbon into the atmosphere

than they did in 2011, it said.

These increases in atmospheric carbon dioxide were 50 percent larger than the average increase seen in recent years.

Excess heat and drought related to El Niño in the tropics of South America, Africa and Indonesia "were responsible for the record spike in global carbon dioxide", NASA said in a statement.

Key drivers of this change in carbon emissions were lower precipitation in South America and increased temperatures in Africa.

An April 2016 "heatwave brought on by the El Niño weather phenomenon severely affected food production and caused chronic water shortages in many countries.

"These drier and hotter conditions stressed vegetation and reduced photosynthesis, meaning trees and plants absorbed less carbon from the atmosphere," NASA said.

In tropical Asia, the increased carbon release was mostly due to biomass burning.

### Satellite data

Carbon dioxide is a leading by-product of fossil fuel burning, and its accumulation in the atmosphere heats up the Earth, hence the name "greenhouse gas".

Scientists have suspected El Niño — a weather pattern that causes sea surface temperature and air pressure in the tropical Pacific

Ocean to fluctuate, and may last years at a time — might wield an influence on the balance of carbon in the atmosphere.

But 28 months of data from a NASA satellite — called the Orbiting Carbon Observatory-2 (OCO-2) and launched in 2014 — have clarified its role.

The satellite's mission is to examine how carbon dioxide moves across the Earth and how it changes over time.

Scientists compared 2015-16 data from the NASA satellite in recent years to 2011 data from the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency's Greenhouse Gases Observing Satellite (GOSAT), because 2011 was a normal year, weather-wise, with no El Niño.

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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 دربیست در مناطق شمال تهران  
جهت اجاره به یک سفارتخانه  
و کمپانی‌های خارجی نیازمندیم

Treatment provided to people affected with dengue in the ICUs of empaneled private hospitals in India is already covered under the Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme.

# Good lifestyle choices likely to add years to lifespan

Change your lifestyle, change your life span.

That's the claim of a new study that found not smoking, watching your weight and continuing to learn new things could help you live longer, UPI reported.

And genes play a part in the lifestyle choices people make, according to researchers at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland.

"The power of big data and genetics allow us to compare the effect of different behaviors and diseases in terms of months and years of life lost or gained, and to distinguish between mere association and causal effect," researcher Jim Wilson said in a university news release. But this study didn't prove that lifestyle choices cause life span to shorten or lengthen.

For the study, scientists analyzed genetic information from more than 600,000 people in North America, Europe and Australia to determine how genes affect life span.

For example, certain genes are associated with addiction, the study authors explained.

Smoking and traits associated with lung cancer had the greatest effect on shortening life expectancy. The researchers determined that smoking a pack of cigarettes each day over a lifetime leads to an average loss of seven years of life.

But the good news was that



cloudfront.net

smokers who quit the habit lived as long as people who never smoked, according to the report.

The investigators also found that body fat and other factors linked to diabetes reduce life expectancy. For every excess 2.2 pounds a person carries, life expectancy is cut by two

months, the findings showed.

People who are open to new experiences and who have higher levels of learning also tend to live longer, the researchers said. Every year spent studying beyond school added almost a year to a person's life span.

Wilson and colleagues also found

that differences in a gene that affects blood cholesterol levels can reduce lifespan by around eight months, and differences in a gene linked to the immune system can add about half a year to life expectancy.

The study was published Oct. 13 in the journal Nature Communications.

## Little evidence new cancer drugs improve survival

There's not much evidence to show that most new cancer drugs approved in Europe in recent years can help patients live longer or improve their quality of life, a recent study suggested.

Researchers looked at 48 cancer drugs approved by the European Medicines Agency for 68 different uses from 2009 to 2013, channelnewsasia.com reported.

At the time of approval, just 24 of the 68 uses for these new medications, or 35 percent, had evidence showing the drugs were better at helping patients live longer compared to dummy pills or alternative treatments, researchers report in The BMJ. The survival benefit ranged from about 1 to 6 months, and half the time was no more than 2.7 months.

The evidence was even weaker for quality of life improvements, which at the time of approval were documented for just seven of the 68 new uses of these new medicines, researchers found.

Lead study author Dr. Courtney Davis of Kings College London said, "This does not necessarily mean that patients are taking unsafe or ineffective medicines."

"What it means is that for around half of all new drugs coming on the market in the European Union, patients and physicians will not know whether the drugs offer survival or quality of life benefits over existing treatment options, or in some cases over no treatment," Davis said.

"It also means that where survival benefits have been shown, they may not be worth the risk of side effects or additional toxicity for some patients."

Many newer, targeted cancer medicines have offered fresh hope to patients with tumors that don't respond to older drugs, but many of these new medicines carry hefty price tags in excess of \$100,000 a year.

Because some cancers grow slowly and a survival benefit may need to run for decades and include large numbers of participants. This has prompted many new cancer drug trials to focus on different goals.

For example, instead of proving that a drug helps patients live longer, studies may aim to show how long the drug keeps the tumor from growing larger.

This has led doctors and regulators to question the necessity of some new treatments, particularly medicines approved based on studies that don't document an overall survival benefit.

"While it makes sense to use drugs that shrink cancer and slow growth, the reality is sometimes we do that, but a person doesn't live any longer," said Dr. Vinay Prasad, author of an accompanying editorial and a researcher at Oregon Health and Science University in Portland.

For some recently approved cancer drugs, companies agreed to do additional studies testing for overall survival benefits as a condition of winning permission to sell the drugs.

In the current study, after at least 3.3 years on the market, most of the new medicines still lacked conclusive evidence that they helped people live longer or offered patients a better quality of life.

A Spanish company has been making headlines this week after announcing that it will be launching reduced-fat avocados later this month.

According to Isla Bonita's website, the 'Avocado Light' will contain 30 percent less fat than regular avocados.

The company claimed the product is 100 percent natural and 'cultivated in very specific climates' in Latin America, obsnews.com wrote.

It also said the fruit ripens faster, oxidizes slower (meaning it won't turn brown as quickly when sliced), and will be produced year-round, though at this time it will only be available for purchase in Spain.

The Food and Health Program of the Spanish Heart Foundation has given the Avocado Light its seal of approval as a product with reduced fat content.

But does the world need a low-fat version of the much beloved avocado?

## Does the world really need 'diet' avocados?

Generally lauded as a 'super-food', avocados contain heart-healthy monounsaturated fat that may help lower LDL cholesterol levels — often referred to as the 'bad' kind of cholesterol.

"Avocados are also a good source of fiber, and this combined with its healthy fat helps stabilize blood sugar levels and promotes satiety after meals," Kelly Hogan, a registered dietitian and clinical nutrition and wellness manager at the Mount Sinai Dubai Breast Center, told CBS News.

"They also contain a variety of vitamins and minerals, and consuming it with other plants helps our body absorb fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E, K) found in various foods."

While millennials in particular are



huffpost.com

known to consume quite a bit of the stuff in trendy dishes like avocado toast, the recommended serving size of an avocado is actually just one-third of the fruit, according to California Avocado Commission. But Hogan said this is "arbitrary guidance."

"We have to think about a lot of things here," she said. "What kind of meal is being eaten with avocado in it, for example. This recommendation can vary by individual as well — their size, activity level, hunger levels, etc."

An average medium-sized avocado

has about 250 calories.

Low-fat avocado varieties are not new and include Brooks Tropicals SlimCado, which is sold in the US and contain 'up to half the fat and a third of the calories' of other varieties, according to the company website.

Yet, experts said eliminating this nutritional content can also sacrifice taste.

While that is subjective, Nina Crowley, PhD, a registered dietitian nutritionist and health psychologist at the Medical University of South Carolina, described low-fat avocados as 'very flavorless' and lacking 'the redeeming quality of avocados — that buttery texture, delicious mouth-feel'.

"Personally, I think it's incredible that there are literally thousands of

foods that need a 'nutritional spruce-up', so why pick on the avocado?!" Crowley said.

But others say there may be a place for low-fat avocados in our diet.

"As long as the nutrient content of this version of avocado was not somehow artificially manipulated, then a reduction in fat from 85 to 55 percent may serve a purpose on our toast, in our smoothies, or as a condiment on top our salmon dinners," said Nancy Z. Farrell, a registered dietitian nutritionist and spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Both Hogan and Crowley expressed concern that this is another example of how society tends to demonize all types of fat, even though a healthy amount of fat — preferably the monounsaturated fat that is found in avocados — is essential for a balanced diet.

## Black women face double risk of pregnancy-related heart failure

Black American women are twice as likely as women in other racial/ethnic groups to develop a form of pregnancy-related heart failure, a new study found.

Peripartum cardiomyopathy (PPCM) is a potentially life-threatening condition that can occur in the last month of pregnancy or up to five months following delivery. With this disorder the heart chambers enlarge and heart muscle weakens, leading to reduced blood flow that affects the lungs, liver and other organs, UPI reported.

Researchers analyzed the medical records of 220 women diagnosed with PPCM. Black women with PPCM were younger (age 27 vs. 31), had more severe disease, and took longer to recover than white, Hispanic or Asian women.



guardian.ng

"Not only are African-American women at twice the risk, but in this study we found they also took twice as long to recover, they were twice as likely to worsen before getting better after diagnosis, and they were twice as likely to fail to recover altogether, meaning their heart failure persisted for

months following delivery," said senior author Dr. Zoltan Arany in a University of Pennsylvania news release. He is an associate professor of cardiovascular medicine and director of the university's Cardiovascular Metabolism Program.

The study "opens the door for even more research on

this subject, to find out why these women are more at risk," study author Dr. Jennifer Lewey said. She's an assistant professor of cardiovascular medicine and director of the Penn Women's Cardiovascular Center.

The researchers don't know why these differences occur. Lewey suggested the increased risk might be due to genetics, socioeconomic status or access to care. Or it could be due to medical problems such as high blood pressure.

"Our next step will be to answer these questions, and identify how we can proactively diagnose and potentially prevent such a dangerous diagnosis in this at-risk patient population," Lewey said.

The study was published in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

## Study finds hormone therapy safe for women with migraines

Migraine headaches are common among women, but due to various health risks can be challenging to treat in the elderly.

While hormone therapy is effective in relieving many menopause symptoms, its safe use in women with migraines was unconfirmed, deccanchronicle.com wrote.

There have been few studies demonstrating the effect of hormone therapy on migraines and subsequent cardiovascular disease.

"Since migraines affect one in every four women and women with migraines are often advised to avoid hormone therapy, these findings may have significant public health implications," said Jelena Pavlovic, from Albert Einstein College of Medicine in the US.

Hormones have often not been prescribed for migraine sufferers because of the association between exogenous estrogen use and an increased risk of stroke in women who have migraines.

This led to the recommendation that combined oral contraceptives — better known as birth control pills — should be used cautiously or avoided entirely in women with a history of migraines, depending on whether or not the migraines were accompanied by an aura.

Data for 67,903 participants of a clinical trial were analyzed to further examine the relationship between migraines and cardiovascular disease events and their interaction with hormone therapy use.

It was discovered that women with migraines tended to exercise less than those without migraines and had higher vitamin D and calcium intake. Migraine sufferers were also more likely to have night sweats and hot flashes.

Importantly, researchers did not detect a significant risk of cardiovascular disease events associated with a history of migraines.

Most significantly, from the treatment safety perspective, there was no impact from hormone therapy on this relationship.



asianage.com



## 'Son of Concorde' private supersonic jet takes to the skies

It is a plane that could fly from New York to London in just three hours — and finally end the argument over who gets the window seat.

A firm attempting to build a private supersonic jet has revealed a prototype of its radical new 'son of Concorde' has flown for the first time, [dailymail.co.uk](http://dailymail.co.uk) wrote.

The jet is an early unmanned prototype of the company's 18 passenger S-512 Quiet Supersonic Jet, and the firm says the tests were a "huge success" — although it has not released any pictures or video of it.

It hopes to have the S-512 aircraft flying by early 2021, with customer deliveries beginning in 2023.

The S-512 will seat up to 22 passengers, with a range of 6,200 miles and a cruise speed of Mach 1.6, saving 50 percent on flight times.

Vik Kachoria, president and CEO of Spike, said, "The SX-1.2 test flights were conducted in a real world situation, and provide significantly more data than wind tunnel tests done in an artificial environment."

"We were able to test not only handling, but also a range of other considerations."

In total, seven short flights were performed to test the design and flight controls of the jet.

Between each test flight, adjustments were made to the aircraft's center of mass, balance and control surfaces.

Additional performance data was observed and collected.

Krishna Kumar Mala piloted the aircraft, assisted by Mike Ridlon, at a private airfield in New England, and said, "These test flights are providing incredibly valuable information which we can use to refine the design."

"I am very excited about how helpful these tests will be to our supersonic development program."



SPIKE AEROSPACE

Work on SX-1.3, the next in the demonstrator series, has also begun.

The engineers, who have previously worked for aerospace giants such as Airbus, Gulfstream and Bombardier, have spent the past two years designing the luxury aircraft and believe the jet will be capable of flying between New York and London in three hours.

LA to Tokyo will take just five hours and London to Mumbai, four hours, according to the firm.

Significant engineering resources and assistance were provided by Siemens, Quartus, Aermova, Greenpoint, BRPH and others who have all been part of the development efforts to date.

In the final jet, the entire cabin wall is a screen that can be turned into a giant window.

"Flying 450 mph faster than any other civilian jet, the Spike S-512 will enable customers to do more and enjoy more out of life," the firm said.

In total, seven short flights were performed to test the design and flight controls of the jet in the latest tests.

"London will be just three hours away from NYC — making day trips for business possible."

"Or Paris to Dubai for shopping and entertainment and back home in time for dinner."

Live video from outside the plane can create a panoramic image — or the passengers of the \$60 million jet can opt to have their family snaps shown or even watch a movie on the walls.

The original design was developed in 2013.

According to Senior Engineer Dr. Anutosh Moitra 'the new delta wing of the S-512 delivers high aerodynamic efficiency and improved flight performance in both low-speed flight and supersonic cruise."

"The highly swept leading-edge reduces wave drag and consequently reduces fuel burn and increases range."

The new S-512 design allowed us to eliminate the horizontal tail resulting in further reduction of drag and weight, the firm said.

"As we continue our engineering efforts, there will likely be additional changes to the aircraft that optimize flight and performance characteristics."

"The latest design meets at the intersection of engineering, business requirements and market demand for an incredible supersonic business jet."

The supersonic jet has a revolutionary windowless passenger cabin. Instead, the interior walls will be covered with a thin display screen. The Spike Aerospace S-512 claims to be the 'first supersonic business jet' and promises to cut flight times in half so that busy billionaires will be able to travel from New York to London in just three hours.

However, such convenience and speed comes at a price, as the jet will cost between \$60 million and \$80 million (£36.3 million and £48.4 million).

The new supersonic jet will also feature a revolutionary windowless passenger cabin so no more glaring Sun and no more shades to pull down or push up.

Instead, the interior walls will be covered with a thin display screens embedded into the wall.

Cameras surrounding the entire aircraft will construct breathtaking panoramic views displayed on the cabin screens.

Passengers will be able to dim the screens to catch some sleep or change it to one of the many scenic images stored in the system.

"There are several reasons for removing the windows from the cabin," the firm said.

"It has long been known that the windows cause significant challenges in designing and constructing an aircraft fuselage. They require additional structural support, add to the parts count and add weight to the aircraft. But until recently, it has not been possible to do without them."

# Out-of-control space station to crash into Earth

An 8½-ton space station is out-of-control and about to crash into Earth within months but no one knows where it will land, according to experts.

The Chinese space lab Tiangong-1 or 'Heavenly Palace' was launched in 2011 and was described as a 'potentially political symbol' of China, [express.co.uk](http://express.co.uk) wrote.

But the Chinese space agency lost control of Tiangong-1 in September 2016 and now it is predicted to come crashing down to Earth within months.

Speaking to The Guardian, Harvard University's Dr. Jonathan McDowell said: "Now that its perigee is below 300km and it is in a denser atmosphere, the rate of decay is getting higher."

"I expect it will come down a few months from now — late 2017 or early 2018."

Although much of the craft is expected to burn up in the atmosphere, McDowell said some parts might still weigh up to 100kg when they crash into Earth.

The station's orbit has also been steadily decaying and it has begun to fall faster in recent weeks.

China told the UN in May that it would track the space station and vowed to issue warnings if there are any potentially imminent collisions.

But McDowell said that predicting where it is going to come down is impossible even in the days ahead of its landing.

McDowell said a slight change in atmospheric conditions could nudge the landing site "from one continent to the next."

He said that there may only be hours



The spacecraft weighs 8½ tons and can land anywhere.

GETTY

of warning about where the spacecraft will land.

He added: "You really can't steer these things."

"Even a couple of days before it re-enters we probably won't know better than six or seven hours, plus or minus when it's going to come down."

"Not knowing when it's going to come down translates as not knowing where it's going to come down."

Amateur satellite tracker Thomas Dorman said: "If I am right, China will wait until the last minute to let the world know it has a problem with their

space station."

"It could be a real bad day if pieces of this came down in a populated area, but odds are it will land in the ocean or in an unpopulated area."

In a statement in 2014, officials from CMSE, said: "Tiangong-1 has obtained a great deal of application and science data, which is valuable in mineral resources investigation, ocean and forest application, hydrologic and ecological environment monitoring, land use, urban thermal environment monitoring and emergency disaster control."

There have been many uncontrolled

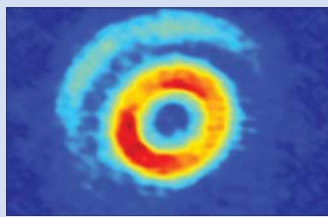
re-entries of larger spacecraft and none have caused any injuries to people.

In 1991, a 20-ton Soviet space station called Salyut 7 crashed to Earth still docked to another 20-ton spacecraft called Cosmos 1686.

They broke up over Argentina and scattered debris over the town of Capitán Bermúdez.

A 77-ton NASA space station called Skylab crashed in an uncontrolled descent in 1979 with some large pieces landing outside Perth in Western Australia.

## Study reveals secrets of planet formation

STEFAN KRAUS/EXETER UNIVERSITY  
Researchers believe the gaps in the disk surrounding V1247 Orionis was carved by a newborn planet.

Scientists have discovered a new explanation for how young stars and their newborn planets avoid 'radial drift', a phenomenon that can rob stellar systems of their planet-forming material.

Most planets form as material coalesces in a star's circumstellar disk of dust and debris. But debris disks can also diffuse or be eaten up by their host star, and researchers have struggled to figure out why this doesn't happen more often, UPI reported.

Gas in a circumstellar disk should exert a drag force on debris, pulling the dust inward where it is consumed by the host star. The process, called radial drift, can deplete the material a young stellar system needs to form and grow planets.

But new images of the debris disk surrounding the star V1247 Orionis has offered scientists insights into how young stars avoid radial drift.

ALMA observations revealed a thick inner disk of material and a separate outer crescent. Researchers at the University of Exeter in England believe the gap between the two concentrations of debris was carved by a newborn planet.

Their analysis also suggests the planet has created a pair of

high-pressure regions as it moves through the disk — like the bow of a ship creates a wake as it plows through the water.

Scientists hypothesize that these high-pressure zones can trap dust and debris for millions of years, ensuring the young planet has a reservoir of materials from which to accumulate and grow.

Exeter scientist Stefan Kraus said in a news release. "The exquisite resolution of ALMA allowed us to study the intricate structure of such a dust-trapping vortex for the first time."

"The crescent in the image constitutes a dust trap that formed at the outer edge of the dark strip."

Kraus and his colleagues published their findings in the *Astrophysical Journal Letters*.

"It also reveals regions of excess dust within the ring, possibly indicating a second dust trap that formed inside of the putative planet's orbit," Kraus said.

"This confirms earlier computer simulations that predicted that dust traps should form both at the outer edge and inner edge of disc gaps."

The discovery offers a new solution to the problem of radial drift predicted by most planet-formation models.

## Magic mushrooms can help beat depression

A mind-altering magic mushroom drug can treat depression by 'rebooting' the brain, research suggested.

According to [mirror.co.uk](http://mirror.co.uk), scientists tested the drug, psilocybin on 19 depressed patients who could not be helped by conventional treatments.

The patients reported an immediate mood improvement described by some as an 'afterglow' effect that lasted up to five weeks.

Brain scans indicated the drug had re-set the activity of key neural circuits known to play a role in depression.

Dr. Robin Carhart-Harris, head of psychedelic research at Imperial College London, said: "We have shown for the first time clear changes in brain activity in depressed people treated with psilocybin after failing to respond to conventional treatments."

"Several of our patients described feeling 'reset' after the treatment and often used computer analogies."

"For example, one said he felt like his brain had been 'defragged' like a computer hard drive, and another said he felt 'rebooted'."

The drug may be giving the patients the 'kick start' they need to break out of their depressive states, he said.

Similar brain effects have been seen in patients undergoing electroconvulsive therapy (ECT), a controversial treatment that triggers temporary seizures with electric shocks.

Magic mushrooms containing psilocybin and its derivative psilocin can cause hallucinations, changes in perception

and an altered sense of time.

Both chemicals are classified as illegal Class A drugs in the UK, as are the mushrooms themselves.

In the study, reported in the journal *Scientific Reports*, patients with treatment-resistant depression were given a 10mg and 25mg doses of psilocybin seven days apart.

Functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) scans showed reduced activity

BIRMINGHAM POST AND MAIL  
Depression patients experienced an immediate mood improvement after taking the magic mushroom drug.

in certain parts of the brain after taking the drug.

They included the amygdala — a small almond-shaped region known to be involved in processing emotional responses, stress and fear.

Psilocybin also induced increased stability in another brain network previously linked to depression.

The scientists warned that despite the encouraging results people with depression should not attempt to self-medicate with psychoactive drugs.

They pointed out that the study provided a special therapeutic setting for the 'drug experience' to protect participants from potentially harmful effects.



In his speech on the Iran nuclear agreement, known formally as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), President Trump made a number of factual assertions. The deal was negotiated by Iran, the five permanent members of the United Nations (United States, Russia, United Kingdom, France and China), Germany and the European Union.

Here's a guide to some of his rhetoric, in the order in which he made these statements.

**"The regime harbored high-level terrorists in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, including Osama bin Laden's son."**

This claim — that Iran harbored Al-Qaeda terror suspects — might be less well-known, but it was recently documented in a 2017 book, "The Exile," by investigative reporters Cathy Scott-Clark and Adrian Levy.

The book noted that the steady flow of senior Al-Qaeda figures into Iran after the 9/11 attacks was controversial among various factions. The government actually made some arrests and sent some Al-Qaeda figures back to countries of origin.

**"The regime remains the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism, and provides assistance to Al-Qaeda, the Taliban, Hezbollah, Hamas and other terrorist networks."**

Trump suggests the assistance to Al-Qaeda continues to the present day. The State Department Country Reports on Terrorism indicated the support was in the past [when the US, too, supported the AQ].

**"The previous administration lifted these sanctions, just before what would have been the total collapse of the Iranian regime, through the deeply controversial 2015 nuclear deal with Iran."**

There is little evidence that the Iranian government was on the verge of "total collapse". The Obama administration had been able to win broad international support for sanctions precisely because it convinced Russia and China, two major Iranian partners, that the pressure was designed to curb Iran's nuclear ambitions [Iran never pursued any plan to build a nuclear weapon]. If the government had started to totter because of the sanctions, especially if it was perceived as part of an American campaign of regime change, that support likely would have been withdrawn.

**JCPOA "also gave the regime an immediate financial boost and over \$100 billion its government could use to fund terrorism. The regime also received a massive**

## Fact-checking President Trump's speech on the Iran deal



**cash settlement of \$1.7 billion from the United States, a large portion of which was physically loaded onto an airplane and flown into Iran."**

Trump often suggests the United States gave \$100 billion to Iran, but these were Iranian assets that had been frozen. The Treasury Department has estimated that once Iran fulfills other obligations, it would have about \$55 billion left.

As for the \$1.7 billion in cash, this was related to the settlement of a decades-old claim between the two countries. An initial payment of \$400 million was handed over on Jan. 17, 2017.

The initial cash payment was Iran's money. In the 1970s, the then-pro-Western Iranian government under the shah paid \$400 million for US military equipment. But the equipment was never delivered because the two countries broke off relations after the revolution.

Two other payments totaling \$1.3 million — a negoti-

ated agreement on the interest owed on the \$400 million — came some weeks later.

**"The deal allows Iran to continue developing certain elements of its nuclear program and, importantly, in just a few years, as key restrictions disappear, Iran can sprint towards a rapid nuclear weapons breakout."**

The JCPOA has been in place for two years. Certain provisions of the nuclear aspects of the deal do not last indefinitely, but virtually all phase out between years 10 and 25. It is doubtful Iran would have agreed to an indefinite ban on nuclear activities, given that it has a right to have a nonnuclear program under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Trump does not mention that under the agreement, Iran is permanently prohibited from acquiring nuclear weapons, and will be subject to certain restrictions and addi-

tional monitoring indefinitely.

It's unclear why Trump refers to a "few years" before a potential nuclear breakout. Nonnuclear provisions having to do with arms-related transfers to and from Iran will expire in three years, or possibly sooner. In six years, UN Security Council restrictions end on any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons. Iran has no plan to build a nuclear weapon and is not allowed to do so under the deal. Hence a missile designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons is totally irrelevant.

**"The Iranian regime has committed multiple violations of the agreement. For example, on two separate occasions, they have exceeded the limit of 130 metric tons of heavy water. Until recently, the Iranian regime has also failed to meet our expectations in its operation of advanced centrifuges."**

Since the nuclear deal has come into effect, the IAEA has confirmed Iran's compliance with the deal eight times. It is the sole body to verify Iran's compliance.

**"There are also many people who believe that Iran is dealing with North Korea. I am going to instruct our intelligence agencies to do a thorough analysis and report back their findings beyond what they have already reviewed."**

This was a puzzling statement. The phrasing suggests there is not enough evidence to claim that Iran has dealings with North Korea, but the intelligence agencies will question. But it raises the question about why the president made the assertion in the first place.

**"It is under continuous review, and our participation can be canceled by me, as president, at any time."**

The other partners to the agreement dispute that Trump has the authority to end the deal. In an unusual joint statement, British Prime Minister Theresa May, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron noted: "JCPOA was unanimously endorsed by the UN Security Council in Resolution 2231. The International Atomic Energy Agency has repeatedly confirmed Iran's compliance with the JCPOA through its long-term verification and monitoring program."

Similarly, Federica Mogherini, the EU foreign policy chief, said no one country could terminate the deal. "This deal is not a bilateral agreement," she said. "The international community, and the European Union with it, has clearly indicated that the deal is, and will, continue to be in place."

## Trump risks making US rogue actor as he condemns Iran nuclear deal

By Julian Berger

The content, tone and style of Donald Trump's speech about Iran on Friday was a reminder of how much the current president of the United States relishes conflict.

With his domestic legislative agenda stalled and a federal investigation scrutinizing his finances and his relations with Moscow, Trump has taken to finding enemies to rail against, including the press and black football players who kneel during the national anthem.

The tactic galvanizes his core supporters and seems to rejuvenate him. He appeared similarly energized exhorting Iran on Friday. But taken into foreign policy, Trump's visceral drive for confrontation threatens to add a second nuclear crisis to the one Trump has already escalated in the Pacific with North Korea.

The 2015 nuclear agreement with Iran, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), was aimed at ensuring that nearly 40-year feud between the US and Iran did not mutate into a confrontation between the two states.

In return for sanctions relief from six major powers and the international community as a whole, Iran accepted very deep constraints on its nuclear program. Its current stockpile of enriched uranium, for example, is just over 1% of what it was before the deal.

But in his speech, Trump completely ignored the non-proliferation gains represented by the JCPOA, and portrayed the repatriation of Iran's previously frozen assets as money for nothing.

He made the false claim that Iran had been on the point of "total collapse" when the agreement was signed.

His claims that "the Iranian regime has committed multiple violations of the agreement" were also misleading at best. On two occasions, Iran's stockpile of heavy water flowed over the ceiling imposed by the deal, but the situation was quickly rectified and Iran's reserve is now below the limit.

Nor is heavy water a direct proliferation threat. It is used in certain reactors that produce plutonium as a by-product. However, under the deal, Iran has destroyed the only reactor of that type.

Trump's remark that Iran had "failed to meet our expectations in its operation of advanced centrifuges" appeared to refer to an ambiguity in the deal that has since been resolved and was not declared to be a violation.

Trump's litany of Iran's past alleged offenses was also highly contentious, including an effort to link Iran with the militants of al-Qaida, and in particular Osama bin Laden's 1998 attacks on US embassies in east Africa.

The State Department did not comply with White House pressure to designate Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist organization, but the Treasury did make that designation — under a relatively obscure clause — marking the first time a major part of a country's armed forces has been described as terrorist. It was — to say the least — a risky move given that troops from both countries are in close proximity in Syria and potentially elsewhere in the region.

Trump's speech also dimmed hopes that the nuclear deal could escape Trump's hostility if he passed the decision over its fate

to Congress. Congress is deeply divided over the issue and therefore might end up doing nothing, European diplomats had reasoned.

But after Trump's remarks, that escape ramp appears to be blocked. Trump has called on Congress to add conditions to those Iran already complies with under the JCPOA, restricting ballistic missile development and extending restrictions on its nuclear program indefinitely.

Even if a deeply divided Congress agreed on such changes — which would require the support of 60 senators — there is no realistic possibility Iran would accept them.

In that case, Tehran would be bound to cast the US as the rogue actor on the world stage — and Washington's European actors would find it hard to disagree.

"Iran is not going to comply with provisions imposed unilaterally by the US. If the US then imposes sanctions or scraps the deal, then the US will be left highly isolated," said James Acton, co-director of the Nuclear Policy Program and a senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

"The US will be blamed across the world

for the collapse of the Iran deal, other countries will not cooperate with the US in reimposing sanctions on Iran, and the end effect will be that Iran's nuclear program will be unconstrained and the US will have no leverage to try to constrain it."

However, if Congress does not agree on new conditions, Trump threatened to "terminate" the deal himself, by executive order. If he sticks to his word, the JCPOA appears doomed in its current form.

The other signatories could try to keep it going but major European companies are likely to flee Iran for fear of losing US markets. The benefits for Iran would shrink significantly, as would incentives to abide by its strictures.

A change of mind is always possible. Trump on Friday said he was "always open" to negotiation with North Korea after weeks insisting that he had no intention of talking to the country. Yet his animus towards Tehran, stoked by Israel, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates seems, if anything, even more deeply entrenched.

Source: [theguardian.com](http://theguardian.com)

## All De Silva family members have six fingers and toes

Most parents would find having an extra finger a distressing deficiency, especially if their baby boy was born with the same abnormality.

But for the extraordinary De Silva family having six fingers and six toes has not proved to be a burden, and they have instead turned Polydactyly to their advantage, metro.co.uk wrote.

Members of the 14-strong family from Brasilia, Brazil, all believe their extra fingers are an asset which have made them better musicians and competitive goalkeepers.

And for the latest addition, baby boy Vinicius, inheriting the six-finger gene makes him 'stand out from the crowd', according to new dad Alessandro. The six-fingered father says it 'is a mark no other family has' after his grandfather Assis turned the deficiency into something to be proud of.

Alessandro's wife Katia said: "We found out that Vinicius was a boy in the 13th week of pregnancy and from that moment on we



DISCOVERY / BARCROFT PRODUCTIONS  
The family are proud of their condition.



were hoping that he would have six fingers."

Her husband added: "Since Vinicius was born, we noticed that his fingers are perfectly functional. He is already trying to grab things, so all his fingers

work normally."

Because Katia only has five fingers, there was only a 50-percent chance that Vinicius would be born with the gene.

Both hoped the newborn would follow in elder brother Guilherme's footsteps who proudly owns six fingers.

The genetic syndrome that causes people to be born with extra fingers and toes is called Polydactyly, occurring in one in 1,000 births. The De Silva's are fondly known in their city as 'The Family of Six'.

Alessandro said: "My grandfather transformed having six fingers into a valuable thing."

"Everything he did carried the six finger family symbol. He transformed the six finger thing into a family brand."

## Giant panda cubs melt hearts at first public appearance

Dozens of adorable baby giant pandas born this year made their first public appearance.

And as expected, it was a cuteness overload.

A total of 17 pandas were shown off at the Bifengxia Base of the China Conservation and Research Center for the Giant Panda, in the Sichuan city of Ya'an, metro.co.uk reported.

The others met the public at Shenshuping protection base in Wolong National Nature Reserve.

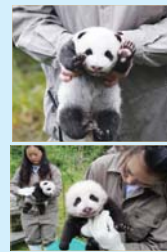
The center broke its record this year after successfully breeding 42 giant pandas cubs in 2017.

Before the grand unveiling, keepers have been working non-stop since May making sure the pandas are well-fed and cared for, Xinhua Net reported.

The center's deputy head,



REX



techniques have matured."

The fertility and survival rate of cubs at the center reached 87 percent and 95 percent respectively this year, Zhang added.

Better breeding technology has seen the number of giant pandas boom from just six born in 1983 to 273 this year.

In the wild, giant pandas populate southern Gansu and Shaanxi provinces, as well as the mountains of northern Sichuan.

### PICTURE OF THE DAY



IRFAN TURI, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC YOUR SHOT

A duck hunter and his dog wait in a quiet morning in Pakistan, near the Afghanistan border.

## Train strikes in Sri Lanka

Train strikes are an absolute nightmare — but as frustrating as they are in Britain, they don't come close to these scenes in Sri Lanka.

Incredible images show desperate passengers clinging on to the side of carriages and hanging out of open doorways of trains in the capital Colombo, according to metro.co.uk.

Strikes by train drivers and guards in the tropical island were made even worse for commuters as they were completely unannounced beforehand, according to local media.

As disruptive as Tube strikes are in London, at least they let



GETTY

us know in advance.

Stop for a second and picture how sweaty it must have been inside those carriages. Thousands of commu-



ters were affected by the unexpected strike during the evening rush hour, Xinhua news agency reported.

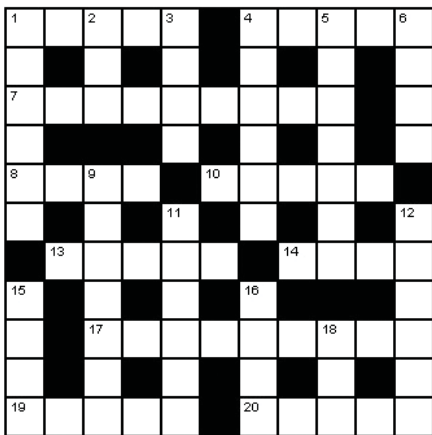
Passengers were so furious at the cancellation of services that police were called in to calm them down.

The few services that continued running were full to the brim, with images showing thousands of passenger's queuing on busy platforms.

However, after the initial chaos, the strike was called off following successful negotiations, Sri Lanka's Daily Mirror reported.

The Locomotive Operating Engineers' Union said President's Secretary Austin Fernando had agreed to their demands over the recruitment of workers.

### Quick Crossword



### DOWN

- Relinquished (6)
- Atmosphere (3)
- Boundary of a surface (4)
- Stringed instrument (6)
- Confound (7)
- Desiccated (4)
- State of equilibrium (7)
- Bird of prey (6)
- Implement for writing or drawing (6)
- Optical device (4)
- Small snakes (4)
- Colony insect (3)

### ACROSS

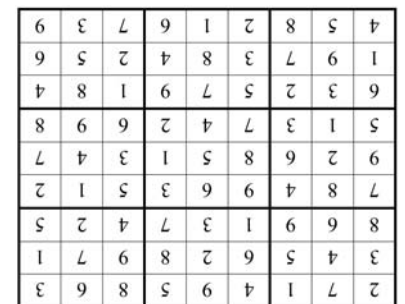
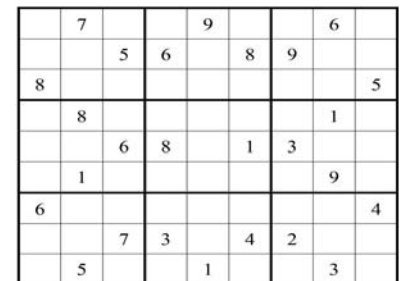
- Aquatic mammal (5)
- Striped equine (5)
- Watered (9)
- Flows back (4)
- Tennis stroke (5)
- Assumed name (5)
- Disparaging remark (4)
- Essential (9)
- Rear part of a ship (5)
- Smooth fabric (5)

### Yesterday's solution



### Sudoku

Sudoku was inspired by the table devised by the 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.





# Nadal, Federer set for Shanghai final meet

Rafael Nadal advanced to the final of the Shanghai Masters on a crisp Saturday evening in the Chinese metropolis. He will bid for a record 31st ATP World Tour Masters 1000 title against Roger Federer.

Nadal overcame a dogged effort from Marin Cilic to secure the semifinal victory 7-5, 7-6(3), reaching his 11th final and 10th of the year, [atpworldtour.com](http://atpworldtour.com) reported.

It marks the fifth time in his career that he has contested at least 10 title matches in a single season.

"Very happy. Of course I played I think a very high level of tennis," Nadal said.

"[It] was a great match again. He

[Cilic] played well, too. Was a great, good quality of tennis this afternoon."

"We are at the highest level of our sport, so nobody wins easy," the Spaniard added.

"If you want to compete in the most important events of the year and try to go for the victories, for sure you're going to have tough matches, and today was one of them."

With the victory, the 871st of his career, Nadal moves past Andre Agassi for solo sixth place on the Open Era wins list.

Federer had to bounce back from one set down to beat the Argentinian Juan Martin del Porto 3-6, 6-3, 6-3 in just under two hours.



Rafael Nadal celebrates his semifinal victory over Marin Cilic at the Shanghai Masters in China on October 14, 2017. PA SPORT

With rain falling, the roof was closed for the second semifinal, in which del Potro was able to participate after a test on the wrist he injured during a victory over Viktor Troicki in the previous round.

Federer claimed a key early break in the decider and, as del Potro began to show signs of fatigue, he meticulously maintained his advantage to complete a 17th win in 23 matches against the Argentine.

# Iran, benchmark for AFC Futsal Championship hopefuls



the-afc.com

Iran is the setting as the countdown starts for the AFC Futsal Championship 2018 with the South and Central Zone Qualifiers which kicks off today.

The South and Central zones have been merged into one qualification zone as Nepal is the only representative from the South, bringing the total to seven teams competing for four spots in the finals in Chinese Taipei next year, the-afc.com reported.

Uzbekistan, runner-up in the previous edition, is one of the favorites to qualify.

The White Wolves had an impressive run at the 2016 tournament, topping Group A to progress into the quarterfinals where it beat Iraq 3-0, before a 3-1 penalty shootout win in the semifinals against Thailand secured them a place in the final against Iran.

In the recent 2017 Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, history repeated itself with Iran beating Uzbekistan to claim the title.

Uzbekistan will face Kyrgyz Republic, Turkmenistan and Nepal in Group A of the qualifiers.

Kyrgyz Republic finished sixth in the AFC Futsal Championship 2016, and an early elimination from the 2017 Asian Indoor Games leaves the Snow Leopards with much ground to cover.

However, they have not missed a single finals since the tournament's inception in 1999, and can be expected to provide stiff opposition.

After two failed attempts to qualify for the finals, Turkmenistan is ready to make a difference.

Despite losing out to Afghanistan on penalties in the quarterfinals in 2016, hosting the 2017 Asian Indoor Games has helped the team improve significantly.

Having played more competitive matches, the Turkmenistan side will be aiming to outdo its previous performances.

The South zone's sole representative Nepal will make their AFC Futsal Championship debut against Asia's best, but in a top flight tournament, surprises cannot be ruled out.

In the three-team Group B, Iran is the one to beat and the odds are surely against Tajikistan and Afghanistan.

The futsal powerhouse holds the record of 11 championship titles, and the team has enjoyed much success in recent years.

After winning the 2016 AFC Futsal Championship, the Iranians finished third in the FIFA Futsal World Cup Colombia 2016, before claiming their fifth Asian Indoor Games gold medal.

Dangerman Ali-Ashghar Hassanzadeh, who was named the Most Valuable Player after assisting Iran beat Uzbekistan in the final, will definitely play a huge role in this qualifier.

Tajikistan's closest attempt at the title was its 2007 campaign where it reached the quarterfinals but was halted by Uzbekistan.

Tajiks have struggled to make the cut into the knockout phase ever since, despite consecutive qualifications.

Afghanistan turned heads in the 2017 Asian Indoor Games when it defeated Uzbekistan 4-2 to claim top spot in its group to progress to the quarterfinals, but losses to eventual champion Iran in the semis and Japan in the third place playoff secured them fourth place.

A result worth highlighting, as the Afghans have yet to make an appearance in the AFC Futsal Championship Finals stage.

# Wasteful Liverpool frustrated by United

Liverpool was held to a frustrating draw despite dominating Manchester United at Anfield and has now won just once in eight games.

The Reds were on top for long periods and peppered the United goal with 19 shots, but a combination of outstanding goalkeeping by David de Gea and poor finishing denied them a decisive moment, BBC reported.

The most noteworthy incident of an uneventful first half was De Gea denying Joel Matip from close range with a brilliant reflex save with his outstretched left boot, before Mohamed Salah fired the rebound wide.

United offered very little quality in attack although Simon Mignolet had

to smartly parry Romelu Lukaku's fierce attempt before the interval.

Liverpool dominated even more after halftime but Emre Can wasted the best chance when he volleyed over the bar from eight yards after being picked out by the impressive Joe Gomez's precise cross.

This was only Liverpool's third clean sheet in 13 games this season but Mourinho will have been the happier manager at the final whistle.

The visitor had just 38 percent of possession - a 3 percent improvement on their last visit - yet United produced a dogged defensive display to stop Liverpool from scoring for only the second time this season in the Premier League.

## 'Not tolerated at Liverpool'

Jürgen Klopp said after the game the defensive approach Manchester United adopted at Anfield would perhaps not be tolerated at Liverpool.

When asked by Sky Sports whether he was frustrated with Jose Mourinho's setup, Klopp said, "It's not my right to be frustrated."

"I'm sure if we would play like this then we could not do it at Liverpool, but obviously in Manchester it's OK. I don't judge this, it's all OK."

"We have to think about our performance, our situation and it's not

worse. Yes, we wanted to win, 100 percent. We were working for it. All the subs were quite offensive. There were a lot of brilliant individual performances in a really difficult game," the German added.

Meanwhile, Mourinho questioned why Klopp had not shown the adventure to replace one of his three central midfield players with another attacker despite United fielding just two in Nemanja Matic and Ander Herrera.

Mourinho told Sky Sports, "In the first half, while we had energy in our midfield, we were very much in control. We had no problems and they had one chance. Apart from that we had total control."

"In the second half, I was feeling that I need my bench and I had no bench. I need to play against Henderson, Can and Wijnaldum with power and energy and no power, no energy."

"We were playing with only two midfield players and nobody else to compensate that. So progressively we were losing some control and they were having a little bit more initiative and in the end, a point."

"They kept three midfield players in the center of the pitch and I had no chance to answer."

Mourinho is likely to face more criticism for the way he approached the trip to Anfield but the United manager insisted it was a "positive" result. It maintains his team's unbeaten start of the season with games against Tottenham and Chelsea to come in the next three weeks.

Mourinho added, "It is easy for the experts to speak but it is more difficult when you are on this side. Liverpool midfield was really strong and they never changed for 90 minutes."

"I had no chance to bring the game in another relation so I think it's a positive point for us. We controlled them and it was quite frustrating for them."



David De Gea (R) makes a save with his left foot from Joel Matip's shot in Anfield on October 14, 2017. CARL RECINE/REUTERS

# Valcke denies receiving 'undue advantages' from al-Khelaifi

Former FIFA general secretary Jerome Valcke denied receiving "undue advantages" from Nasser al-Khelaifi, the chief executive of Qatar's beIN Media and president of Paris St. Germain, after Swiss prosecutors opened a criminal investigation.

The Office of the Attorney General of Switzerland (OAG) said on Thursday it suspected Valcke accepted "undue advantages" from al-Khelaifi in connection with the award of media rights for the 2026 and 2030 World Cups, Reuters reported.

On Friday, world soccer's governing body FIFA said they were opening an investigation into the issues raised by the Swiss probe.

Italian finance police said they had seized a villa in Sardinia worth €7 million (\$8.3 million) which Swiss prosecutors believed was made available to Valcke by al-Khelaifi as a bribe to try to secure the media rights.

The villa was seized from an unnamed international property company in connection

with crimes including fraud, corruption and forging documents, the finance police from the Sardinian city of Sassari said in a statement.

It followed an investigation led by the Swiss police, which also involved investigators in France, Greece, Italy and Spain.

"I just want to say that it's not true. I have never done that. I have never received anything in exchange for anything," Valcke told French sports daily L'Equipe on Friday.

"I refute the accusations against me or Nasser. I have received nothing from Nasser. I can assure you. There was never any exchange between Nasser and I. Never."

Valcke was Sepp Blatter's right-hand man when the latter ran FIFA, the Swiss-based world soccer body.

BeIN Media denied any wrongdoing on Thursday and said it was cooperating with officials. But a spokesman at France's financial prosecutor's office on Friday said BeIN's cooperation was "minimal." BeIN

staff "refused the downloading of data from servers based in Doha," the spokesman said.

Valcke is serving a 10-year ban from football after he was found guilty by FIFA's former ethics judge Hans-Joachim Eckert of misconduct over the sale of World Cup tickets, abuse of travel expenses, attempting to sell TV rights below their market value and destruction of evidence.

After being sacked from his post in January 2016, he was initially banned for 12 years, which was reduced to 10 by FIFA's own appeal committee last June. He has denied wrongdoing and is now appealing at the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS).

On Friday, a FIFA spokesman said they would be looking into the issues raised by the OAG probe.

"We can confirm that the Investigatory Chamber of the independent Ethics Committee will initiate a preliminary investigation into the matter," the spokesman said.



Former FIFA secretary general Jerome Valcke (L) and Paris Saint-Germain's Qatari president Nasser al-Khelaifi are the subject of a criminal investigation in Switzerland. GETTY IMAGES

## Art & Culture

### Chicago hosting four Iranian films

Four Iranian films (two feature and two short films) will be screened at the 53rd Chicago International Film Festival. According to ISNA, Iranian feature film 'A Man of Integrity', directed by Mohammad Rassoul, which won the 'Un Certain Regard' award at the 70th Cannes Film Festival, will be screened in International Feature Film Competition at Chicago International Film Festival.



Another Iranian feature film 'No Date, No Signature', directed by Vahid Jalilvand will also be featured in the festival's New Directors Competition section. Two Iranian short films 'Heyvan' (AniMal), written and directed by Bahram and Bahman Ark, and 'Retouch', directed by Kaveh Mazaheri, will go on screen in the festival's Short Film Competition section. The 53rd Chicago International Film Festival began on Thursday October 12 and will run through Thursday October 26.

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## Majidi's 'Beyond the Clouds' premieres at BFI

A film by acclaimed Iranian Oscar-nominated director Majid Majidi, 'Beyond the Clouds' premiered at the BFI London Film Festival.

Set in Mumbai, the film focuses on estranged siblings Amir and Tara who reconcile following a catastrophic event that changes their lives — and their relationship — forever, easterneye.eu reported. "Shooting [the film] in Mumbai added an immense, invaluable layer and reality," Majidi said.

"I was really interested in having a new experience, [having never worked in India], especially considering the Iranian and Indian cultures are so close."

The 58-year-old director said family is a major theme in all his works and hopes 'Beyond the Clouds' will receive a great amount of attention, since "the society is made up of families and the only way for a society to survive is to protect and maintain family ties."

This will be Majidi's ninth film and first Indian movie. His celebrated 'Children of Heaven' was the first Iranian film to be nominated for an Academy Award

for Best Foreign Language Film in 1998.

Majidi said time and space do not really matter in his films and that his stories could take place anywhere in the world.

The score for his latest film was composed by critically acclaimed Indian musician AR Rahman, who Majidi has worked with in his 2005 film 'Muhammad (PBUH)'.

The director said the pair wanted the music to be a 'character' within the feature, an aspect that would be a part of the film rather than 'carrying' the audience elsewhere.

"We wanted it to be a very soft and subtle music that simply adds to the ambience without going outside the stage," said Majidi.

Newcomers' Ishaan Khattar, the younger brother of Bollywood star Shahid Kapoor, and actress Malavika Mohanan play the protagonists in the film. Majidi said the pair had a great way of communicating as each came from fam-



ilies who have established film careers on their records.

Most of the cast had not acted before which, Majidi acknowledged, could be a challenge at times, but said it achieved 'amazing results'.

Hours before the world premiere of

the film at London's Embankment Garden Cinema, Majidi said it felt 'fantastic' to see the film being presented in such a prestigious festival.

"I am very excited and very curious to see what the public reactions would be, specially in other countries," he said.

## A brief introduction of Iran Cultural and Press Institute publications

### Art & Culture Desk

In line with its mission as a mass media to improve knowledge, promote culture and distribute information, Iran Cultural and Press Institute publishes a number of books each year of which some are penned or compiled by Iranian authors and the rest are translated from English into Persian.

The books cover a wide range of topics in diverse categories such as literature, communication, philosophy, history, medicine, management, politics, international relations and arts.

This column seeks to, in coming days, present some of these books, which are either compiled or written by Iranian authors, as well as put forward other aspects of its cultural activities to domestic and foreign audience:



**'The History of the 20th Century: Third Volume 'The Middle East'**

*Penned & Compiled By: Mohsen Mirzaei*  
 Category: History

The book is the third volume of a trilogy 'The Book of the 20th Century'. Unlike the first two volumes, which cover the history of the world in the 20th century in general, this book is exclusively about the events and developments in the Middle East in the past century. All the volumes are folios and richly bound in an exquisite hard cover.

The book is pictorial containing unique and spectacular historical pictures within its pages and between the paragraphs that talk about the events and developments in Middle Eastern states in the 20th century.  
 Price: \$13.75



**'A Phenomenological Reflection on the Meaning of Culture'**

*Compiled by Akbar Jabari*  
 Category: Philosophy

What can be said about culture and its meaning? Is it possible to decipher the meaning of this concept by merely defining it? What do we basically intend to achieve by defining culture? Is there any other ways, in addition to defining this concept, to work out a meaning for culture?

'A Phenomenological Reflection on the Meaning of Culture' presents a diverse contemplation about the meaning of culture and seeks to provide a definition for the concept employing a phenomenological approach in studying some of its global environmental aspects. Conducting research in the integrated aspects of a concept, helps us discover traces of its meaning, although the process may not lead to an exact and inclusive definition in the end.  
 Price: \$2



**'The Challenges of the New Age in Iran in Qajar Era'**

*Compiled by Mohammad-Ali Akbari*  
 Category: Politics-International Relations

The historical period in which Qajar rulers reigned over Iran (1785-1925) was witness to remarkable and important developments in the world, particularly the West. At that time, new developments began to unfold in Iran as a result of regional exigencies and arrangements of major world powers and the internal characteristics of the new civilization of the Middle Eastern country. This brought about new and emerging developments as well as challenges for the country.

This book is a compilation of articles mainly focusing on the challenges faced by Iran's society and government in modern era. The book has three sections: 1. The structure of the government and corrective scanning. 2. Reflectiveness in the modern era's horizon and 3. Religious developments and emergence of new cults.  
 Price: \$3.5



**'Bitter Like Honey' (The World's Humorous Short Stories)**

*Compiled and translated by Asadollah Amraei*  
 Category: Literature

As acknowledged by the translator of this literary work, the humorous short stories compiled in the book are by writers from different parts of the world. The diverse beliefs held by each writer, stemming from the culture, customs and traditions of his/her homeland, have had impacts on their writing style.

Nevertheless, although the diversity is quite noticeable in their style of recounting social problems and difficulties as well as other human issues, beneath the surface, their stories manifest a unity that enables readers from different parts of the world to understand the issues raised in them. Besides the joy the diversity of the stories compiled in this book brings readers, the different writing style of each author is a major source of enjoyment for the readers.  
 Price: \$1.25

### Weather

