



Rouhani to take oath of office on August 6 **2**

# IRAN DAILY



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Number 5646 • Wednesday May 31, 2017 • Khordad 10, 1396 • Ramadan 5, 1438 • Price 5,000 Rials • 12 Pages • www.irandailyonline.ir

## Iran urges enhanced ties with Azerbaijan

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said the Islamic Republic and Azerbaijan enjoy very good potential for developing relations in various fields.

In a telephone conversation with Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev on Monday night, Rouhani added that the firm determination of the Iranian and Azerbaijani governments and deep commonalities between the two nations had laid the groundwork for strengthening mutual relations in all fields, Press TV reported.

He emphasized that no obstacle could hinder the expansion of political, economic, trade and cultural cooperation between the two countries, saying that the speedy implementation of agreements could further increase the level of bilateral and regional relations.

The Iranian president also called for collective efforts to fight terrorism and extremism and foster unity among Muslim countries, stressing the importance of eliminating the ideological roots of extremism in Muslim states.

The Azerbaijani president said relations between Tehran and Baku had always been expanding, but the past four years had been a remarkable period for both countries.

He urged the two countries' officials to implement all agreements previously signed, saying that a railway contract would also be inked between Tehran and Baku in the near future.

Aliyev further stressed the importance of enhancing bilateral cooperation on regional developments, particularly the regional stability and security as well as the joint fight against violence, extremism and terrorism.



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## Nighttime, early morning bombings in Baghdad kill dozens

A massive bombing by the Daesh terror group outside a popular ice cream shop in central Baghdad and a rush hour car bomb in another downtown area killed at least 31 people on Tuesday, Iraqi officials said.

Later in the day, bombings in and around the Iraqi capital killed seven more people.

The attacks come as Daesh terrorists are steadily losing more territory to Iraqi forces in the battle for Mosul, the country's second-largest city. The terrorists are increasingly turning to insurgency-style terror attacks to detract from their losses, AP reported.

The nighttime attack outside the ice cream parlor in the bustling Karrada neighborhood killed 17 people and also wounded 32, police and health officials said.

A closed-circuit camera captured the moment of the explosion, the video showing a busy downtown avenue, with cars driving down the street when the blast strikes. A huge fireball then engulfs a building, forcing the cars to scramble to get away. Other videos of the attack posted on social media show wounded and bloodied people crying for help on the sidewalk outside the ice cream parlor.

In the second attack, an explosives-laden car went off during rush hour near the state-run Public Pension Office in Baghdad's busy Shawaka area, killing 14, a police officer said. At least 37 people were wounded in that attack, he added.

In separate online statements, Daesh claimed responsibility for the two attacks.

Later Tuesday, seven people died and 19 were wounded in four separate bombings in and around Baghdad, officials said. The attacks targeted commercial areas and a patrol of Sunni anti-Daesh tribal fighters, they said. No group immediately claimed those attacks.

The attacks came just days into the holy month of Ramadan when Muslims fast during daylight hours. After sundown, families break their fast and Baghdad's restaurants and cafes quickly fill up with people staying up long into the night.

During Ramadan last year, another section of Karrada was hit by massive suicide bombing that killed almost 300 people, the deadliest single attack in the Iraqi capital in 13 years of war. The attack was also claimed by Daesh.

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## Unknown ancient civilization rock art found in NE Iran



In Iran's remote northeast, the discovery of mysterious rock art is intriguing archeologists. Strange symbols engraved on an outcrop of volcanic rock, on top of a mountain, appear particularly puzzling.

The site, known as Pir-e Mazar Balandar (or PMB001), is situated near a small village and is well known to the locals. They in fact consider the engraved stone to be sacred.

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## Philippines warns militants to surrender or die

Philippine authorities on Tuesday warned militants occupying parts of a southern city to surrender or die, as attack helicopters pounded the gunman's strongholds where up to 2,000 residents were feared trapped.

More than 100 people have been confirmed killed in the conflict, which began last week when gunmen waving black flags of the Daesh terror group rampaged through the mostly Muslim-populated city of Marawi, AFP wrote.

President Rodrigo Duterte declared martial law across the entire southern region of Mindanao, home to roughly 20 million people, in response to the crisis as he warned that local militant groups were uniting behind Daesh and becoming a major security threat.

But the militants, initially estimated by the nation's defense chief to number just 100, have withstood eight days of intense air assaults and street-to-street combat, prompting the government's threats on Tuesday. "We call on the remaining terrorists to surrender while there is an opportunity," Military spokesman Brigadier General Restituto Padilla said in a statement. "For the terrorists, not surrendering will mean their sure death." Padilla also said the surrender call warning was aimed at limiting the loss of more lives and property.

Up to 2,000 residents were trapped in areas held by the militants, according to the local government, and the International Committee of the Red Cross had voiced alarm they would be caught in the bombing raids or crossfire.

Clashes on Tuesday appeared to be as intense as previous days. Military helicopters fired rockets repeatedly on that part of the city on Tuesday morning, and black smoke rose from the buildings that were apparently hit. The gunmen were being backed by foreign militants, including Malaysians, Indonesians and Singaporeans, authorities said.

The militants had killed at least 19 civilians, while 20 security forces and 65 gunmen had died, according to the military.

The death toll looked likely to climb, with soldiers reporting the smell of corpses in a public market site being held by the militants.

The violence began when dozens of gunmen went on a rampage in response to an attempt by security forces to arrest Isnilon Hapilon, a veteran Filipino militant regarded as the local leader of Daesh. Hapilon, a senior member of the Abu Sayyaf kidnap-for-ransom gang, is on the US government's list of most-wanted terrorists.

He was being protected in Marawi by the local Maute group, which has pledged allegiance to Daesh.

## 'Shocked' South Korea leader orders probe into US missile additions

South Korean President Moon Jae-in has ordered a probe after the Defense Ministry failed to inform him that four more launchers for the controversial US anti-missile system had been brought into the country.



REUTERS

"President Moon said it was very shocking" to hear the four additional launchers had been installed without being reported to the new government or to the public, presidential spokesman Yoon Young-chan told a media briefing on Tuesday, Reuters reported.

The Terminal High Altitude Area De-

fense (THAAD) system battery was initially deployed in March in the southeastern region of Seongju with just two of its maximum load of six launchers to counter North Korean "missile threats."

During his successful campaign for the

grams in defiance of UN Security Council resolutions and threats of more sanctions.

### China tensions easing

Moon's order of a probe into the THAAD launchers came amid signs of easing tensions between major trading partners South Korea and China.

South Korea's Jeju Air said on Tuesday China has approved a plan to double its flights to the Chinese city of Weihai from June 2.

China has been incensed over the THAAD deployment, fearing it could give the US military the capability of seeing into its own missile systems, and could open the door to a wider deployment of the system, possibly in Japan and elsewhere.

China has denied it had discriminated against South Korean companies, which have faced product boycotts and bans on Chinese tourists visiting South Korea.

Although there have been no official orders from the Chinese government to lift the ban, a few Chinese travel agencies have sent inquiries about package tours, he said. However, Lotte Group has yet to reopen any of the 74 retail stores in China it was forced to close in March after the group allowed South Korea to install the THAAD system on land it owned.

## WHO: Tobacco kills more than 7m a year

Smoking and other tobacco use kills more than seven million people each year, the World Health Organization said Tuesday, also warning of the dire environmental impact of tobacco production, distribution and waste.



AFP

The UN agency said tougher measures were needed to rein in tobacco use, urging countries to ban smoking in the workplace and indoor public spaces, outlaw marketing of tobacco products and hike cigarette prices, AFP reported.

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Secretary of Iran's Expediency Council Mohsen Rezaei said Saudi Arabia's interference in Qatar's internal affairs on the pretext of Doha's friendship with Tehran is the highest-level transgression.

# Rouhani to take oath of office on August 6

Hassan Rouhani who won a second term will be sworn in as Iran's president in the Parliament on August 6, a member of the Parliament's presiding board said on Tuesday.

Ahmad Amirabadi Farahani told reporters that the inaugural ceremony will be held four or five days after endorsement of Rouhani's presidency by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, IRNA reported.

Following the swearing-in ceremony, Amirabadi added, the president will have two weeks to submit his new cabinet to the Parliament for a vote of confidence.

The lawmakers will then assess the programs of the proposed ministerial picks for a week, before an open sessions for the vote of confidence, he added.

Rouhani garnered 23,549,616 votes from a total of 41,220,131 ballots in Iran's presidential election held on May 19.

No sitting president in Iran has failed to win a second term since 1981.

During the previous presidential election in June 2013, Rouhani had emerged victorious by winning 50.7 percent of a total of over 36 million votes. He had won more than three times as many votes as his closest challenger.



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## OPINION

### Why Iran represents an opportunity for Europe

By forging closer relations with Iran, Europe could unshackle its foreign policy from US.

By Cornelius Adebahr

The final result in Iran's election was more clear-cut than President Hassan Rouhani's supporters had dared to hope: the incumbent received 23.5 million votes (around 57 percent of the 41+ million votes cast), enough to secure outright victory in the first round. His win allows him to continue the policy of rapprochement that he has pursued since assuming office in 2013, with the 2015 nuclear agreement his biggest success to date. Given the uncertainty emanating from the new US administration, the European Union now has a key part to play. By taking a determined approach on foreign policy, the EU could unshackle itself from the US on a matter of global political importance.

The short but intense election campaign in Iran has shown that lively political debate is possible in the Islamic Republic, despite controls on the media. Conservatives and moderates went on the offensive, with the former accusing the government of incompetence while the latter denounced the hardliners for wanting to bring back the bad old days of deprivation and no freedom.

Both sides withdrew one of their candidates shortly before voters went to the polls, meaning that from the first round the election was a contest between two clerics: the incumbent Rouhani and his opponent Ebrahim Raisi, the custodian of the Imam Reza Shrine in Mashhad (Iran's second-largest city and an important religious center). The former attorney general, who was virtually unknown a year ago.

With a high turnout of 73 percent, the result is also a victory for the system. In an emphatic endorsement of the moderate course he has taken, President Rouhani received almost five million more votes than in the 2013 election; however, in his second term he will still be able to act only within the limits laid down by the Leader.

For Europe and the international community, the result represents continuity in terms of foreign policy, as the election was a de facto referendum on whether Iran would stick to its nuclear deal (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, JCPOA). This was reflected in the words of the EU's High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, who took to Twitter shortly after the result was officially announced to congratulate Rouhani on his "160 mandate". She summarized Europe's priorities in under 160 characters: "#EU ready to continue work for full JCPOA implementation, bilat engagement, regional peace, and meet expectations of all people in #Iran"

She was addressing the main criticism levelled by the president's opponents, who claim his deal has not brought a promised economic recovery. Although the Iranian economy has grown by almost five percent in the past year and Rouhani's government has managed to bring down inflation from over 40 percent to less than 10, the upswing has not been felt by ordinary Iranians.

Since Washington is unlikely to make concessions on sanctions, the EU must take the initiative, for example by providing financing and payment channels or exercising due diligence to verify that Iranian business partners are not affected by existing sanctions.

Mogherini's second point - greater engagement between Europe and Iran - is in line with the principle of broad-based, bilateral cooperation with third-party states that is at the heart of European foreign policy. It represents a determination to move beyond a narrow focus on the nuclear question, which dominated the 12 years of negotiations that led up to the signing of the JCPOA.

On both these points, there are frictions with Washington. Both the Trump administration and Congress believe trade with Iran is tantamount to strengthening the Iranian government. The US is therefore willing to cooperate further with Iran on a very limited set of issues, such as in the fight against so-called "Islamic State" (IS) in Iraq. Members of Congress from either party want to force Iran to its knees with new sanctions over its missile program and its activities in Syria and Yemen.

This is the issue addressed by the third and most ambitious point in Mogherini's tweet: bringing peace to the region. Israel and the neighboring Persian Gulf states see Tehran's support for Shiite militias in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Yemen as a threat. They believe the problem with the JCPOA lies not in temporary restrictions on the Iranian nuclear program (indeed, they support this restriction) but in the elevation of Tehran's status in the region's politics following successful negotiations with the Obama administration. From the Arab and Israeli perspective, Donald Trump's visits to Riyadh and Jerusalem (the first calling points on his maiden foreign tour) represented an important, and not merely symbolic, return to old lines of conflict.

This marks a formidable foreign policy challenge for the EU and its member states. Although Rouhani's reelection means rapprochement between Europe and Iran will continue (provided Iran continues to uphold its JCPOA obligations), tensions with the US are likely to increase. Although the US itself is unlikely to pull out of the actual agreement, it is deliberately endangering the deal with its provocative rhetoric and harsh anti-nuclear measures. Some Iranian institutions are likewise opposed to the deal, making an uncontrolled escalation likely.

Expanding bilateral relations in the face of US resistance will demand courage and farsightedness from the EU. Europe demonstrated both these qualities when it began nuclear talks with Iran in 2003. If the EU and its member states build on their diplomatic successes, they could make crucial progress towards another goal: unshackling themselves from the USA on a key security policy issue and showing themselves capable of acting autonomously on the global political stage.

International Politics and Society

## Iran releases 15 Indian fishermen

Indian officials announced on Tuesday that Iran has released 15 Indian fishermen who had been detained in the country since December 2016.

The 15 fishermen were working on fishing vessels in the United Arab Emirates and were detained in the Iranian southern island of Kish, IRNA reported.

According to Time of India newspaper, the fishermen ventured on a fishing expedition in three boats from Dubai in December 2016, but were apprehended by Iran naval forces on charges of trespassing.

After inquiry, the fishermen along with their boats were detained on Kish Island in Iran. Since then, the families of these fishermen have been petitioning the district administration seeking the state and central governments' help in securing their release.

After the owner of the fishing vessels paid the penalty amount, Iranian authorities allowed the Indian fishermen to leave the country.

In April 2017, Iran released 15 Indian fishermen who had been detained in the country since October 20, 2016.

The fishermen were working for a Bahraini company and were arrested due to illegal entry into Iran's waters.

## IRNA, Sputnik sign cooperation agreement

Iran's leading news agency, the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), and Sputnik International News Agency and Radio signed a cooperation agreement.

Rossiia Segodnya Director General Dmitry Kiselev and IRNA Managing Director Mohammad Khoddadi sealed the agreement. The parties have agreed to exchange information, hold joint events, and strengthen media cooperation between Russia and Iran, Sputnik reported.

Iran and Rossiya Segodnya and Sputnik will have important role in introducing potential capacities of cooperation between Iran and Russia in all fields.

Sputnik is a news agency and radio network with multimedia news hubs in dozens of countries. Sputnik broadcasts through its websites in over 30 languages, as well as on analogue and digital radio, mobile apps, and social media. Sputnik newswires, available by subscription, 24/7 in English, Arabic, Spanish



Khoddadi said, "Cooperation with influential foreign news agencies is on IRNA agenda. We believe that direct news exchange between news agencies is the only way to counter one-way flow of information in the world. Therefore, cooperation between IRNA as official news agency of the Islamic Republic of

and Chinese. IRNA is a state-run news agency of the Islamic Republic of Iran that was established in 1934. One of the most respected and quoted media in the country, the agency publishes daily news in Farsi, Urdu, English, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic and Turkish.

## Nighttime, early morning bombings...

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### Iran condemnation

Iran condemned the terrorist bombings, saying the "criminal move" clearly indicated the inherent enmity of terrorists toward Islam and Muslims.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi on Tuesday expressed his sympathy with the Iraqi government and people as well as the bereaved families of the victims of the terrorist blasts.

It was also the latest futile attempt by terrorists to make up for their defeats in Iraq, he added.

Qassemi emphasized that the final victory against terrorism in Iraq was imminent and expressed hope that Iraq would be completely cleansed of Takfiri terrorists soon given the recent achievements by the Iraqi popular forces in the northern city of Mosul.



IRNA



Mohammad Ali Rajala

# Trump hits back at Merkel with ominous warning for Germany

Compiled from Dispatches

The US President Donald Trump hit back at Angela Merkel's recent comments about the unreliability of the US as a trading partner.

In a tweet, the US president said America had a "massive trade deficit with Germany" and warned: "This will change," the Independent reported.

It came after the German Chancellor said her country can no longer rely on the US under Trump's presidency.

Speaking at a campaign event held in a Bavaria, Merkel emphasized the need for friendly relations with the US, Britain and Russia, but added: "We Europeans must really take our destiny into our own hands."

Merkel said that as the traditional Western alliance is threatened by the new US presidency and Brexit, "the times in which we can fully count on others are somewhat over".

Her comments came after Trump said he needed more time to decide if the US would continue backing the Paris climate deal, which has frustrated European diplomats.

On Monday, Merkel again underlined her doubts about the reliability of the US as an ally but said she was a "convinced trans-Atlanticist", fine-tuning her message after surprising Washington with her frankness a day earlier.

"We have a MASSIVE trade deficit with Germany, plus they pay FAR LESS than they should on NATO & military. Very bad for US. This will change," Reuters quoted Trump as tweeting on Tuesday.

The image of friendly relations between Germany and the US seems distant since



JONATHAN ERNST/REUTERS

Trump took office. His administration has previously said that Germany's trade surplus is a result of the country's manipulation of the euro.

Germany fought back arguing that it doesn't have powers to manipulate the euro and the only reason consumers opt for its products is because they are more competitive.

Meanwhile, contributions to the defense alliance NATO has emerged as another problem between Berlin and Washington. Trump has repeatedly asked NATO allies to step up their contributions. At the moment, only 5 of the 28 members fulfill the target of paying at least 2 percent of their gross domestic product (GDP) on defense, cnbc.com reported.

According to NATO data, Germany is currently spending 1.2 percent of its GDP on NATO. The US spends 3.6 percent.

Germany, like other NATO members, vowed to present an action plan on how it's planning to increase defense spending at a summit last week. At the time, Trump told his allies they were being unfair towards US taxpayers.

# UNHRC names team to probe Myanmar Rohingya abuses

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) on Tuesday named a three-person team to probe alleged atrocities against Myanmar's Rohingya Muslims, a key step in an investigation already rejected by the country's government.

The Geneva-based UNHRC voted in March to create a Myanmar fact-finding mission, in a politically sensitive move that faced fierce resistance from the government of Aung San Suu Kyi, AFP reported.

The mission was ordered to "urgently" investigate abuses reportedly committed by the security forces, particularly in Rakhine state where troops have been accused of raping, torturing and murdering members of the Rohingya community. Decorated Indian lawyer and women's rights campaigner, Indira Jaising, Sri Lanka's former human rights chief Radhika Coomaraswamy and Christopher Dominic Sidoti, a prominent human rights advocate from Australia, were appointed to lead the probe.

The group is scheduled to meet soon in Geneva to chart a work plan, a rights council statement said.

But it is not yet clear if they will be granted access to Rakhine, or even be permitted to land in Myanmar.

Speaking in Brussels earlier this month, Suu Kyi made clear that her government had "disassociated" itself from the resolution setting up the probe, calling it out of touch "with what is actually happening on the ground."

The north of Rakhine state has been under lockdown since October, when the military launched an operation against the minority after deadly attacks on police posts on October 9.

The government blamed the Rohingya for the assault that left nine policemen dead despite the fact that Rohingya have no militant faction to fight for them. The minority has flatly denied the allegations against it.

Some 100,000 people from the Muslim minority were displaced by the violence, most of them fleeing to Bangladesh.

An earlier UN rights office report based on testimony from Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh said Myanmar's security forces may be guilty of crimes against humanity.

Myanmar has rebuffed those charges and has refused to allow international observers into the area.

The rights council called on the government to give investigators "full, unrestricted and unmonitored access to all areas."

Matthew Smith, who heads the Fortify Rights watchdog in Bangkok which closely tracks the Rakhine situation, told AFP the government had "no defensible reason to not cooperate with this mission."

He said investigators appointed Tuesday were "a strong team that's certainly up to the task."

The mission is scheduled to give the rights council an oral update of their findings in September.



AFP

## North Korea says ballistic missile test successful

North Korea on Tuesday said its test of a precision guided missile was "successful", adding it had zeroed in within a few meters of a target provocatively close to Japan the day before.

The North's leader Kim Jong-un supervised the launch of the guided ballistic rocket - the third missile test by the nuclear-armed state in less than three weeks and carried out in defiance of US threats of military action and UN sanctions, AFP reported.



KCNA VIA KNS/AFP/STR  
This undated picture released from North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency shows leader Kim Jong-un watching the test of a new anti-aircraft guided weapon system.

"The ballistic rocket flew toward the east sky where the day broke and correctly hit a planned target point with deviation of seven meters after flying over the middle shooting range," the state-run news agency KCNA said.

South Korea's military earlier said the Scud-type missile traveled eastward for 450 kilometers (280 miles). Japan said it believed it had fallen ten into its exclusive economic zone, extending 200 nautical miles from the coast.

The missile test triggered swift condemnation from US President Donald Trump who said it showed "disrespect" to neighboring China, the North's sole major ally, which has sought to dampen tensions over Pyongyang's weapons program.

The launch was aimed at testing a weapon "capable of making ultra-precision strike on the enemies' objects at any area", KCNA said.

The country rejects UN and unilateral sanctions by other states against its weapons program as an infringement of its right to self-defense and says the program is necessary to counter US aggression.

The projectile was showcased for the first time last month as part of Pyongyang's annual military parade to mark the 105th birth anniversary of the state's founder Kim Il-sung, the news agency added.

Following North Korea's test-firing earlier this month of what analysts said was its longest-range rocket yet, the UN Security Council vowed to push all countries to tighten sanctions against Pyongyang.

But China has made it clear that the push for talks - and not more sanctions - is its priority. On Monday it pleaded again for dialogue.

"We hope that related parties can remain calm and restrained, ease the tension on the peninsula, and bring the peninsula issue onto the right track of peaceful dialogue again," the Chinese Foreign Ministry said.

The US has said it is willing to enter into talks only if the North halts its missile and nuclear tests. The nation has staged two atomic tests and test-fired dozens of rockets since the beginning of last year, including 12 launched this year.

## WHO: Tobacco kills more than...

From Page 1

"Tobacco threatens us all," the WHO chief, Margaret Chan, said in a statement.

"Tobacco exacerbates poverty, reduces economic productivity, contributes to poor household food choices, and pollutes indoor air," she said.

In a report released ahead of World No Tobacco Day on Wednesday, WHO warned that the annual death toll of seven million people had jumped from four million at the turn of the century, making tobacco the world's single biggest cause of preventable death.



AFP

And the death toll is expected to keep rising, with WHO bracing for more than one billion deaths this century.

"By 2030, more than 80 percent of the deaths will occur in developing countries, which have been increasingly targeted by tobacco companies seeking new markets to circumvent tightening regulation in developed nations."

Tobacco use also brings an economic cost: WHO estimates that it drains more than \$1.4 trillion (1.3 trillion euros) from households and governments each year in healthcare expenditures and lost productivity, or nearly two percent of the global gross domestic product.

In addition to the health and economic costs linked to smoking, the WHO report for the first time delved into the environmental impact of everything from tobacco production to the cigarette butts and other waste produced by smokers.

**آگهی شناسایی پیمانکاران**

سازمان هواپیمایی جمهوری اسلامی ایران در نظر دارد نسبت به راه اندازی سامانه دریافت اطلاعات مسافران هوایی قبل از پرواز یا Advance Passenger Information (API) مطابق الزامات مشخص شده توسط سازمان بین المللی هواپیمایی کشوری (ایکائو) در سطح فرودگاههای بین المللی کشور اقدام نماید. از تمام شرکتهای داخلی و خارجی که توان انجام این کار را داشته و تجربه انجام این پروژه را دارند دعوت می شود سوابق اجرایی مرتبط و مشخصات کامل شرکت را حداکثر تا تاریخ ۱۳۹۶/۰۳/۳۰ به آدرس زیر ارسال نمایند: آدرس: تهران- فرودگاه بین المللی مهرآباد- خیابان پرواز- سازمان هواپیمایی کشوری- دفتر فناوری اطلاعات و بررسی های آماری

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Please be advised that the deadline for proposals is 20 June 2017.

## PERSPECTIVE

## Chabahar Port: Strategic necessity for India

By Bharat Shakti

Chabahar is definitely an opportunity for Iran, Afghanistan and India. Located close to Gwadar, it provides India an avenue to extend its reach and contest the emergence of China as the predominant influence in the region.

In terms of capacity, the port is much smaller in design as compared to Gwadar, but with investments being more limited its viability is definitely greater. For India, it provides a routing to Afghanistan without having to pass through Pakistan. The author provides an evaluation of the project both from the strategic and also the economic viewpoint.

Located in close proximity to Afghanistan and the Central Asian countries of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, Chabahar Port has been termed as the 'Golden Gate' to these landlocked countries.

## Iran-India partnership

Iran invited India in 1990s to develop the Chabahar Port to obtain a land access into Afghanistan. This was followed by a trilateral agreement in 1997 with Turkmenistan to expand trade into Central Asia followed by another agreement with Russia to provide seamless transport between India and Europe via an International North South Transport Corridor.

India agreed to expand the Chabahar port and to lay a railway track between Chabahar and Zaranj.

India spent \$134 million during 2005 to 2009 to construct a road from Delaram in Afghanistan to Zaranj at the Iran-Afghanistan border. Iran has completed first phase of the Chabahar Port at a cost of \$340 million.

Connectivity from Chabahar through Mirak, Zaranj and Delaram has been established to the Garland road in Afghanistan which connects the major Afghan cities Herat, Kandahar, Kabul and Mazari-e-Sharif.

In March 2012, ships from India docked at Chabahar carrying 100,000 tons of wheat under humanitarian aid to Afghanistan. However, without further development of the port the roads remained unutilized.

In May 2016, India signed a series of 12 memorandums of understanding pertaining to the port of Chabahar. The most important one pertains to the deal between Iran and India which permits India to develop and operate two berths of the Chabahar Port for 10 years. This will be done by India Ports Global — a joint venture between Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust and Kandala Port Trust in partnership with Iran's Aria Banader. The company has guaranteed handling of 30,000 twenty foot equivalent units (TEUs) ships on completion of two years and eventually reaches a figure of 250,000 TEUs. The berths will be developed at a cost of \$85 million. A container handling facility of 640 meters will be constructed and reconstruction of the existing 600 meters container handling capability in the second berth will be taken up. All these will be fitted with modern port handling equipment. This would result in the port handling capability of Chabahar being enhanced from 2.5 million tons to 8 million tons.

It is pertinent to note that the investment is supplemented with a \$150 million line of credit to Iran through the Exim Bank of India. Apart from this, a memorandum of understanding was also signed for the financing of the planned Chabahar-Zaranj railway line as a part of the North South Transport Corridor by Indian Railways construction unit — Infram International.

The offer entails providing the cost of \$1.6 billion. This would enable Chabahar to be linked to Afghanistan and Russia by rail.

## Strategic necessity

As per political observer Aagam G Shah's statement in quora.com, the reason for Indian economic and geopolitical involvement with Iran is to counter the influence of China's string of pearls strategy. The advantages that would accrue are:

- It will provide a land route to Afghanistan, Iran, Central Asia and Russia. In doing so it will make way for India to bypass Pakistan in transporting goods to Afghanistan using a sea land route. At present Pakistan does not allow India to transport goods through its territory to Afghanistan.
- It would give momentum to the International North-South Transport Corridor of which both are initial signatories. It entails the ship, rail and road routes for moving freight between India, Russia, Afghanistan, Central Asia and Europe.
- It would counter the Chinese presence in the Arabian Sea through the support to Pakistan in developing Gwadar port. Further it would enable our shipping vessels to be provided security if the need arises in the region.
- All these leads to the development of the region and with iron ore deposits available it could result in a steel plant being opened in this region. This would see the region developing economically apart from being a communication hub.

The other important issue is the Japanese interest in developing Chabahar. Japan's State Minister for Foreign Affairs Kentaro Sonoda during a visit to Afghanistan in January 2017, pledged to develop access to Chabahar.

Japan's interest in Chabahar is important to India as the assistance would ensure time-bound completion of the port leading to timely optimization of facilities. Japan is an important strategic partner of India and its support would be essential in countering Chinese influence in Gwadar.

India is playing an important strategic role in Afghanistan. Currently India is training the Afghan National Army and providing limited military equipment. We are undertaking Capacity Development for which material both civil and military needs to reach Afghanistan. Chabahar provides connectivity and this in turn provides multiple strategic options. Apart from move of equipment, we could plan training exercises initially at a small scale and later at a larger scale between the two armies.

## Way ahead

Undoubtedly the development of Chabahar port would be a game changer for the region. Apart from countering the Chinese port of Gwadar, the route would possibly eliminate the term 'strategic depth' from the lexicon of the Pakistan Armed Forces. It is hoped that the Iranian government completes the application for the \$150 million loan and forwards it to the Exim Bank of India. Thereafter, Indians can move expeditiously. India would be able to extend its reach as a regional power, too. It is extremely important that India connects on a direct route to Afghanistan without having to go through Pakistan to exercise its strategic options. Such a routing also provides a passage to the Central Asian Republics. Chabahar provides us this great opportunity and we must leave no stone unturned to turn this concept into a reality.

This article originally appeared on portnews.com.



# OMV to develop Band Karkheh oilfield soon

Executive manager of the project to develop Band Karkheh oilfield announced that OMV, the international, integrated oil and gas company based in Vienna, will begin developing the oilfield in the near future.

Fars News Agency quoted Alireza Zamani as saying on Tuesday, "The OMV will soon start development activities in Band Karkheh oilfield."

Noting that the oilfield was discovered by OMV, he said, "The operation was carried out based on a discovery and development contract between the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) and the OMV firm."

In a relevant development in January, an Iranian oil

exploration and production (E&P) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Austria's OMV for cooperation in upstream oil projects in Iran.

OMV and Dana Energy, a leading Iranian company involved in upstream oil and gas field development activities, signed a memorandum of understanding on January 20, 2017.

The parties agreed to evaluate possible upcoming development and redevelopment projects in the Iranian oil and gas industry. The document was signed in Vienna by S. Mostafa Khoee, Dana Energy board member and E&P president, and Johann Pleininger, OMV executive board member responsible for upstream division.

OMV has a long lasting partnership with Iran and entered the country in 2001. In 2016 the NIOC and OMV signed a memorandum of understanding to evaluate fields in the Zagros area in the west of Iran, for potential future development.

OMV also signed a joint study agreement with NIOC Exploration for the Fars area.

OMV entered Iran in 2001 as the operator of the Mehr exploration block in western Iran, leading to a successful discovery (of Band Karkheh) in 2005. Most recently, in announcing OMV's strategy on February 18, 2016, OMV CEO Rainer Seele set Iran as one of the three development areas in the upstream portfolio.

## Renovating aviation fleet will generate jobs, revenues

## Domestic Economy Desk

A university lecturer described the purchase of medium-range ATR passenger planes as a 'very important' development in activating Iran's airports and promoting tourism as well as entrepreneurship.

Ali Dadpey, who serves as the associate dean and MBA director for The Bill Munday School of Business at St. Edward's University, made the remarks in an interview with IRNA.

Iran has purchased 20 medium-range planes from Franco-Italian aircraft manufacturer ATR.

On May 17, Iran received the first batch of the aircraft which included four planes.

Dadpey hailed the performance of President Hassan Rouhani's administration to boost national aviation fleet noting ATR aircraft can be employed in the country's low-income markets and promoting tourism.

"The incumbent government has been the first administration which



has taken steps to tap tourism potentials because it has renovated the aviation fleet, promoted ties with foreign nations and paved the ground for international airlines to use domestic airports. This has contributed to

boosting revenues from air transit," he said.

The university lecturer said investing in air transport and establishing airports can generate jobs and wealth.

Citing Iran's tourism attractions, he

said the promotion of the aviation fleet will result in economic development.

"Iran has historical cities with numerous tourism attractions. You can easily name five historical Iranian cities which are known for their tourism attractions in the world. Hence, the development of air transport and aviation fleet will not only impact the economy of metropolises such as Tehran but all cities across the nation," Dadpey said.

He said countries which have good airlines have turned into investment centers for hotel construction to take in greater numbers of tourists.

He said the establishment of more than a dozen of airlines turned Kish Island into a hub for investment.

Dadpey rejected criticisms that the purchase of new aircraft only benefits the rich saying all walks of life irrespective of financial needs can benefit from this.

He said ART planes are among low-cost planes which are designed for use in less developed regions.

## NPC rejects claims of Iran's frozen petrochemical assets in China



Marzieh Shahdai

Managing Director of the National Iranian Petrochemical Company Marzieh Shahdai has rejected claims that the company's assets have been frozen in China.

According to Fars News Agency, she told reporters on Tuesday, "Iranian assets have not been frozen in China, but there are some difficulties in the payment process."

She added that the main cause for the current difficulties is the anti-money laundering laws which have come into effect in China since the beginning of May, under which some strict restrictions have been placed on exports of petrochemical products and transfer of funds.

Iran exports about 40 percent of its petrochemical products and 60-70 percent of the polymer materials to China.

In a relevant development in early December, Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) agreed to invest in a joint venture with an Iranian energy company to develop a petrochemical complex in the city of Mehran in the western province of Ilam.

The memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed by ICBC and Iran's Petro Samaan Zagros Company.

"Some 85 percent of the share will be provided by the Chinese bank," a local official Heidar Nemati said.

He added that the Iranian partner undertook 15 percent share of the joint venture investment project. "The development of the petrochemical complex in Mehran city is aimed at setting up a natural-gas-to-polypropylene conversion process," he added.

Nemati hoped that the project would provide jobs for more than 1,000 technicians.

## Has global trade revival run out of puff?

A revival of global trade this year may be running out of steam before it has got under way, with widely-followed data indicating a slowdown in the pace of growth as analysts warn of sluggish demand in industrialized and developing countries alike.

Figures from CPB World Trade Monitor, a research bureau at the Dutch ministry of economic affairs, show growth in the volume of global trade slowing to 1.4 percent in the quarter to March, down from a recent high of 2.6 percent in January, as the first chart shows, FT reported.

January's rate was the fastest for seven years, helping fuel hopes that the world economy was back on a path to growth after two years of disappointing performance.

Economists have been encouraged by the promise of a 'reflation' of the US economy and of a revival in the fortunes of emerging economies, especially those in Asia.

Indeed, compared with the same month last year, emerging market exports surged in March, by nearly 10 percent. Global trade as a whole rose by 5.6 percent on that basis, according to the CPB. Analysts have pointed to a recovery in commodity prices, the resilience of China's construction industry and the integration of supply chains between China and other Asian manufacturing countries as drivers of export growth.

But Simon Evenett, a trade specialist at the University of



eurogrus.com

St. Gallen, warned against reading too much into the surge in the year-on-year figures. CPB's seasonally-adjusted data typically show a significant fall in trade volumes in the month of March.

This year, they showed a significant increase — perhaps because the Easter holiday fell a month later than usual, in April.

Even smoothing out the year-on-year figures by comparing moving three-month periods, the unusual March data were enough to produce a surge in the annualized comparison that Evenett described as "precious little signal and too much noise".

He noted that there had been

two jumps in world trade in the most recent six months of data, in March and in November last year. "The growth hasn't been sustained, nor is it broad-based," he said.

The quarterly data — which the CPB describes as revealing the 'momentum' of trade — show that the upturn in volume growth has been led by exports from emerging markets, which grew at a quarterly pace of more than four percent in January, also the fastest for seven years. But the pace slowed to 1.9 percent in the quarter to March.

David Mann and colleagues at Standard Chartered Bank in Singapore argued in a report

last week that the drivers of recent export growth in Asia were 'temporary'.

"The first was the rise in goods export prices," they wrote, "led by the rebound in commodity prices from their lows of Q1 2016. The second was China's inventory rebuilding, which is already showing signs of slowing. We believe that Asia's export growth has already peaked or is close to peaking."

Freight rates suggest that trade between Asia and developed markets may also have peaked. The average cost of shipping a 40-foot container from China to northern Europe

rose from about \$400 in March last year to a recent high of \$2,081 in October, according to Xeneta, a Norwegian firm that monitors container freight rates. It has since fallen back to about \$1,719.

Patrik Berglund, Xeneta's chief executive, said shipping industry consolidation, bottlenecks and other factors were also at play, but that shipping lines would struggle to hold rates high as their customer demand fails to keep pace with the supply of very large new ships being delivered from this year, ordered when the outlook for trade was seen as much brighter.

### Main Indices of TSE

Index	Value	Change	Percent
Total Index	80511.5	0	0
Industry Index	69197.9	(18.3)	(0.03)
Free Float Index	87907.5	86.3	0.1
First Market Index	55611.6	(34)	(0.06)
Second Market Index	179931.1	192.8	0.11

### Overall Index details on 20170530

First	80599.6	Change end of year(%)	918.32%
High	80621.9	Historical highest	89500.6 (20140105)
Low	80503.7	Historical lowest	100 (1369/1/6)
Close	80511.5	Base Value	100 (1369/1/6)
Change	0		

### Industry Index details on 20170530

First	69258.0	Change end of year(%)	1027.74%
Max Value	69278.2	Historical highest	75181.9 (20140105)
Max Value	69610.5	Historical lowest	1226.8 (1377/8/25)
Closing	69197.9	Base Value	
Closing	(18.3)		

### Free Float Index details on 20170530

First	88047.1	Change end of year(%)	
Max Value	88753.6	Historical highest	105040 (20140105)
Max Value	88687.9	Historical lowest	
Closing	87907.5	Base Value	
Closing	86.3		

### Main Board Index details on 20170530

First	55704.9	Change end of year(%)	777.1%
Max Value	55746.4	Historical highest	67441.4 (20140105)
Max Value	55990.5	Historical lowest	
Closing	55611.6	Base Value	4740.4 (1381/6/2)
Closing	(34)		

### Secondary Index details on 20170530

First	179943.6	Change end of year(%)	1345.03%
Max Value	179959.4	Historical highest	181353 (20170522)
Max Value	181452.5	Historical lowest	
Closing	179931.1	Base Value	4740.4 (1381/6/2)
Closing	192.8		

### Major Currencies

Currency	To USD	Currency	To USD
Turkish Lira	0.2806	Chinese Yuan	0.1458
Euro	1.1157	UAE Dirham	0.2721
British Pound	1.2860	Kuwaiti Dinar	3.2904
Australian Dollar	0.7445	Iraqi Dinar	0.0008
Japanese 100 Yen	0.0900	Saudi Riyal	0.2666

### Major Commodities

Crude Oil	\$49.53	Silver	\$17.29
Gold	\$1262.50	Platinum	\$947.40
Copper	\$2.54	Wheat	\$434.75

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## How Britain will pay a key role in building China's New Silk Road

Britain will play a pivotal role in building China's New Silk Road, cementing London's position as the world's financial center after Brexit.

Sam Xu, head of China transaction banking at Standard Chartered, said the UK would serve as a financial hub for the 'One Belt, One Road' initiative, which spans 65 countries and covers 64 percent of the global population. Xu said no other city in the world could match London's expertise and financial infrastructure, The Telegraph wrote.

"In terms of global money centers, there's only London and New York. Given the geographic location of New York compared with London, and less passion from the Americans for the project, London's expertise and the infrastructure will ensure the UK plays a very important role," he said.

Philip Hammond, chancellor of the exchequer, described China as a 'natural' trade partner for the UK on a recent trip to the country, where he was followed by a number of UK-based businesses, including Standard Chartered and KPMG.

Sherry Madera, the City of London Corporation's special adviser for Asia who also traveled to China this month, said policymakers had shifted their focus on to how countries and businesses would raise the funds to complete the ambitious projects.

"I always thought the UK's role was going to be important, but this shift towards execution has focused the discussion much more squarely in terms of what can be financed."

Xu said Chinese investors were not that concerned about Brexit and were eager to reinforce trade ties. "People in China do follow the election and Brexit, but in general people there are still evaluating the real impact. Business is business, and so far I haven't seen any Chinese client that has let Brexit get in the way of that."

Simon Bevan, a partner at Grant Thornton, said, "The good thing about British expertise is that it is used to dealing with things in different parts of the world."

"It's not as if we're just used to providing services here in the UK — all of the world class financial services in the UK have been internationally minded for years."

Beekeepers across the United States lost 33 percent of their honey bee colonies during the year spanning April 2016 to April 2017, according to the latest preliminary results of an annual nationwide survey.

## Historical rainfall levels are significant

Scientists have known that microbes living in the ground can play a major role in producing atmospheric carbon that can accelerate climate change, but now researchers from The University of Texas at Austin have discovered that soil microbes from historically wetter sites are more sensitive to moisture and emit significantly more carbon than microbes from historically drier regions.

The findings, reported today in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, point the way toward more accurate climate modeling and improve scientists' understanding of distinct regional differences in microbial life, phys.org wrote.

Microbes in the soil add between 44 billion and 77 billion tons of carbon to the atmosphere each year — more than all fossil fuels combined — through a process called respiration.

As the planet warms, soil respiration is expected to increase, but forecasters have had trouble accurately pinpointing by how much. The new research indicates that to do a better job of predicting changes in soil respiration, forecasters need to pay attention not only to climate change but also to climate history, as microbes respond differently to shifts in their environment in wetter versus drier areas.

In regions with more rainfall historically, soil microbes were found to respire twice as much carbon to the atmosphere as microbes from drier

regions. Scientists determined that this was because the microbes responded differently to change: Those from the wettest areas were four times as sensitive to shifts in moisture as their counterparts from the driest areas.

"Current models assume that soil microbes at any site around the world exhibit the same responses to environmental change and do so instantaneously," said Christine Hawkes, a professor of integrative biology, "but we demonstrated that historical rainfall shapes the soil respiration response."

It is unclear whether the insight into how soil microbes respond to moisture would drastically change the results of worldwide climate modeling efforts, which, so far, have taken different approaches to estimating how soil respiration re-

sponds to moisture.

Incorporating the new discovery into ecosystem models, however, could help improve predictions based on local or regional differences in soil respiration and climate history.

Hawkes and the team conducted three long-term studies involving field research and lab experiments occurring over six years. In each case, the finding was the same: Historical rainfall levels proved critical for how soil microbes would respond to change, affecting the outcome just as temperature does.



amazonaws.com

## Climate change could make cities 8°C hotter

Under a dual onslaught of global warming and localized urban heating, some of the world's cities may be as much as 8°C (14.4°F) warmer by 2100, researchers warned.

Such a temperature spike would have dire consequences for the health of city-dwellers, rob companies and industries of able workers, and put pressure on already strained natural resources such as water, The Guardian reported.

The projection is based on the worst-case scenario assumption that emissions of greenhouse gases continue to rise throughout the 21st century.

The top quarter of most populated cities, in this scenario, could see temperatures rise 7°C or more by century's end, said a study in the journal Nature Climate Change.

For some nearly 5°C of the total would be attributed to average global warming.

The rest would be due to the so-called 'urban heat island' effect, which occurs when parks, dams and lakes, which have a cooling effect, are replaced by concrete and asphalt — making cities warmer than their surrounds, the researchers said.

"The top five percent of cities by population could see increases in temperatures of about 8°C and larger," study coauthor Francisco Estrada of the Institute for Environmental Studies in the Netherlands said.

Estrada and a team used different projections of average planetary warming, combined with the UHI effect and potential harms, to estimate the future costs of warming on cities.



twimg.com

The median city, right in the middle of the range, stands to lose between 1.4 percent and 1.7 percent of GDP per year by 2050 and between 2.3 percent and 5.6 percent by 2100, they conclude.

"For the worst-off city, losses could reach up to 10.9 percent of GDP by 2100," wrote the team.

UHI 'significantly' increased city temperatures and economic losses from global warming, they added.

This meant that local actions to reduce UHI — such as planting more trees or cooling roofs and pavements — could make a big difference in limiting warming and minimizing costs.

Cities cover only about one percent of

earth's surface but produce about 80 percent of gross world product and account for around 78 percent of energy consumed worldwide, say the researchers.

They produce more than 60 percent of global carbon dioxide emissions from burning coal, oil and gas for fuel.

The world's nations agreed in Paris in 2015 to the goal of limiting average global warming to two degrees centigrade over pre-industrial revolution levels by curbing greenhouse gas levels in the Earth's atmosphere.

For the latest study researchers used data from the world's 1,692 largest cities for the period 1950 to 2015.

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# Celiac disease symptoms more likely to be resolved in children

In response to a strict gluten-free diet, celiac disease symptoms are more likely to go away in children than in adults, researchers said.

Senior author Dr. Hilary Jericho from University of Chicago said, "The study team found faster and greater rates of improvements for most gastrointestinal (GI) and extra-intestinal manifestations of celiac disease in children as compared to adults."

Celiac disease is an autoimmune disorder triggered by consuming the gluten protein in wheat, rye and barley, Jericho's team wrote in *Journal of Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition*, foxnews.com reported.

Diarrhea, abdominal pain, bloating and other GI symptoms are common in people with celiac disease, but so are 'extra-intestinal' symptoms like joint and muscle pain, infertility and numbness and tingling.

In all age groups, Jericho noted, the study found greater improvements in GI symptoms compared to the non-GI symptoms in response to following a strict gluten-free diet.

The team used 13 years of medical records to compare symptoms in 513 children and adults with celiac disease, and to track how strictly they stuck to a gluten-free diet and whether symptoms improved over time.

Among children, abdominal pain, diarrhea and failure to thrive were the most commonly reported GI symptoms and short stature, fatigue and headache were the most common



bountyfromthebox.com

extra-intestinal symptoms.

Adults most commonly experienced diarrhea, bloating and abdominal pain, along with anemia, fatigue, headache and mental problems.

More than two years after diagnosis, improvements in symptoms were greater among children than among adults for bloating, diarrhea, weight loss and abdominal pain.

Extra-intestinal symptoms in children and adults also had improved, although slow to improve were short stature and mental problems in children and muscle aches and poor mood in adults.

Only eight percent of the children

and 12 percent of adults did not follow a strict gluten-free diet, and they were more likely to have persistent symptoms.

Sticking to the gluten-free diet was associated with better outcomes: 34 percent of kids who stayed on the diet, compared with 62 percent of kids who didn't, still had symptoms after two years.

Among adults, 52 percent who followed the diet closely and 70 percent of those who didn't have ongoing symptoms.

More than a third of children and nearly three quarters of adults had other medical conditions, but these

were not associated with the likelihood of improvements in celiac disease symptoms.

"It is important to know that not all patients have resolution of symptoms overnight and for some it can take up to 24 months before all their labs and symptoms resolve," Jericho said, adding that often those that have the worst disease severity at presentation will take the longest to see normalization of lab results and symptoms.

"For children more often than adults, most GI and extra-intestinal symptoms should improve if strictly adherent to the gluten-free diet.

"If they don't, and the patient is 12-24 months from the diagnosis and is strictly adherent to the diet, then it is very important that the physician not blow off the symptoms but look for another cause that may require an alternate treatment."

Dr. Runa D. Watkins from University of Maryland School of Medicine in Baltimore said, "It is important for patients to adhere to a gluten-free diet, as this is only treatment we currently have."

"It is also important for patients to receive yearly follow-ups with both their GI physician and their dietitian."

"Yearly serologies and vitamin levels need to be checked to determine if a patient is compliant and to monitor for any nutritional deficiencies."

"The other point to be made is the importance of early diagnosis of celiac disease and close follow-up of patients with celiac disease."

## Congo approves use of Ebola vaccination to fight outbreak

Democratic Republic of Congo's Health Ministry has approved the use of a new Ebola vaccine to counter an outbreak in its northeast that has killed four people, a spokesman said.



businessinsider.com

Quoting Jonathan Simba, a Health Ministry spokesman, Reuters.com reported, "The non-objection was given. Now there's a Medicines Sans Frontiers team that is arriving (in Congo) to validate the protocol with the technical teams."

The vaccine, known as rVSV-ZEBOV and developed by Merck, is not yet licensed but was shown to be highly protective against Ebola in clinical trials published last December.

Congo had registered 52 total suspected cases, including two that have been confirmed, the World Health Organization (WHO) spokesman in Congo, Eugene Kabambi, said by telephone, adding that the situation appeared to be under control.

Simba said that the details of the vaccination campaign would be announced after a meeting of the health ministry and its partners.

WHO spokesman Tarik Jasarevic said in Geneva that vaccination would be deployed should an EVD (Ebola virus disease) laboratory confirmed case be identified outside already defined chains of transmission. Jasarevic said, "In that case, it would be offered to contacts and contacts of contacts of a confirmed EVD case, including healthcare workers and field laboratory workers."

A vaccination campaign would present logistical challenges in Congo's isolated northeastern forests, including transporting and storing the vaccine in special containers at the required minus 80°C.

## Scientists find smoking harms livers of unborn babies

The impact of cigarette damage to unborn babies has been revealed in a new stem cell study.

Scientists found that the cocktail of chemicals in cigarettes is particularly harmful to developing liver cells, BBC.com reported.

They developed a method of studying the effects of maternal smoking on liver tissue using embryonic stem cells.

The team, led by the University of Edinburgh, also discovered the cigarette chemicals affect male and female fetuses differently.

During their research they used pluripotent stem cells — cells which have the ability to transform into other cell types — to build fetal liver tissue.

Liver cells were exposed to the harmful chemicals found in cigarettes, including specific substances known to circulate in fetuses when mothers smoke.

The study showed that a chemical cocktail — similar to that found in cigarettes — harmed fetal liver health more than individual components.

### Lasting harm

Dr. David Hay from the University of Edinburgh's Center for Regenerative Medicine, said, "Cigarette smoke is known to have damaging effects on the fetus, yet we lack appropriate tools to study this in a very detailed way."



medicaldaily.com

"This new approach means that we now have sources of renewable tissue that will enable us to understand the cellular effect of cigarettes on the unborn fetus."

The liver is vital in clearing toxic substances and plays a major role in regulating metabolism.

Smoking cigarettes, which contain around 7,000 chemicals, can damage fetal organs and may do lasting harm.

The findings of the latest research, which was carried out in collaboration with the Universities of Aberdeen and Glasgow, also highlighted the different effects of cigarette smoke on livers in male and female fetuses.

Male tissue showed liver scarring and female tissue showed more damage to cell metabolism.

Professor Paul Fowler, director of the Institute of Medical Sciences at the University of Aberdeen, said, "This work is part of an ongoing project to understand how cigarette smoking by pregnant mothers has harmful effects on the developing fetus."

"These findings shed light on fundamental differences in damage between male and female fetuses."

The study was published in the journal *Archives of Toxicology*.

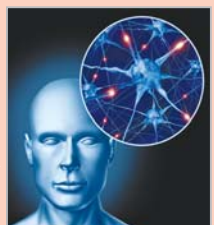
An Australian research institution has been awarded a research grant to develop a drug to slow the progression of Motor Neuron Disease (MND).

Tasmania's Menzies Institute was given the \$750,000 grant to research treating MND with a drug already being trialed for the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), epilepsy and schizophrenia, xinhuanet.com wrote.

MND is a name given to a group of diseases that cause motor neurons, the brain cells that control voluntary movement, to deteriorate and die.

The disease, which currently does not have a cure, can affect a person's ability to walk, speak, swallow and breathe and

## Researchers given grant to slow progression of degenerative brain diseases



valleysleepcenter.com

eventually causes death.

Once diagnosed with MND, a person's life expectancy is typically between three and five years.

More than 2,000 Australians are afflicted with MND with an average of two people being killed by the disease every day.

Tracey Dickson, the deputy director of the Menzies Institute, said that researchers were optimistic of slowing the progression of MND.

## Injury rates in young female athletes may be underestimated

Injury rates among elite young female athletes may be higher than what's been reported, new data suggested.

According to Reuters.com, researchers wrote in the journal *BMJ Open Sport and Exercise Medicine*, "Most studies define injury as time loss from participation, whereas many athletes with overuse injuries continue to participate despite pain and reduced performance."

"When time-loss definitions are used, about 90 percent of overuse injuries appear to be missed."

Angelo Richardson of Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands and colleagues studied 60 young women who competed at the national or international level in soccer, basketball or gymnastics. The average age of the study participants was 17.

Every two weeks during the 2014-2015 season, the athletes filled out questionnaires that asked about health problems, including not just new injuries but also overuse injuries, which occur over time as a result of repeated stresses on tissues, bones and joints.

Overall, at any given time during the study, 48 percent of the athletes reported injuries, the authors found.

And every two weeks, nearly 61 percent of the athletes were reporting some sort of health problem — either injury or illness.

Put another way, if a thousand athletes such as these were to participate in their sports for an hour, nine of them would sustain an injury, the researchers said.

By comparison, a 2016 study of high school soccer players in the US found that if a thousand of them were to practice or play soccer for an hour, only two would sustain an injury — with only a slight difference between girls and boys.

Injury rates were similar for all three sports. But when it came to 'substantial' injuries, the soccer and basketball players were at higher risk, with rates of roughly 28 percent in each group, compared to the gymnasts, whose rate of substantial injuries was 16 percent.

The high prevalence of self-reported injuries among these talented female athletes suggests that efforts toward prevention are needed, the authors wrote.

Athletic trainer Scott Sailor, who is president of the National Athletic Trainers' Association, said, "I believe this study provides some real value to what we know as health care providers who work in sport."

"Often the data we have deals with time loss injuries and the majority of injuries athletic trainers treat on a daily basis are non-time loss."

"It's crucial that athletes be appropriately prepared for the demands of the sport."

"This involves making sure they have adequate strength and flexibility, but it goes beyond that, to making sure they have appropriate movement patterns — that is the way they run, jump, lunge, land, etc. is efficient and effective so that they don't get their joint in a position where their body can't protect them from injuring tissues."

"Working with athletic trainers or other sports medicine professionals can provide added benefit and ensure proper form, movement and reduced risk of injury. Equally important is ensuring our

athletes have adequate nutrition, hydration and rest."

"Failing to do these things predisposes the athlete to injury and illness."

Lawrence Spriet, a researcher in the Department of Human Health and Nutritional Sciences at the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada, said, "Most training for athletes has now transitioned from maximum lifts in the gym to functional exercises that train sport-specific movement patterns."

"Ensuring that athletes fuel properly through their diet, have consistent warm-ups and cool-downs before and after exercise, and use individualized training protocols can all assist in injury prevention."

"It is not uncommon for athletes to sustain injuries but it is essential to try to prevent injuries that cause time-loss from training and competition, decrease performance levels, and that can become chronic if not treated properly."

"Seeking treatment at the onset of complaints or injury will help avoid this."

## DNA breakthrough on sunflowers could help beat climate change

The complete DNA of the humble sunflower has been mapped for the first time — and it's more complicated than a human's.

Once worshipped by the Incas because it looked like the 'Sun God', its genome has about 22,000 genes — about ten percent more than ours, according to mirror.co.uk.

The breakthrough could combat climate change by leading to better breeding programs for one of the five most important oilseed crops in the world.

Botanist Dr. Loren Rieseberg, of British Columbia University in Vancouver, said it had been one of the most challenging genomes to unravel to date.

The sunflower is native to the Americas where the Incas worshipped its image as a symbol of the sun god.

At the beginning of the 16th century Europeans discovered many gold figures of sunflowers — including in temples in the Andes.



mirror.co.uk

American Indians placed bowls of seeds — from which sunflower oil is produced — on the graves of the dead.

The study published in Nature makes it the last of the 'big five' oilseed crops to have its genome fully sequenced.

It represents a cornerstone of future work to improve genetic diversity and use the sunflower's stress resistance and ability to grow across different climates.

The sunflower oilseed industry is already worth over €15 billion and holds great promise for climate change adaptation.

It can grow and flourish across a diverse range of environmental conditions — including drought.

In evolutionary biology the sunflower is a long-time model for research on how new species arise.

It's also a model for understanding solar tracking and plant growth. Despite this large interest, assembling the sunflower genome has been extremely difficult because 70 to 80 percent is made up of repeating regions.

The problem is the genes are much more similar to each other than in the human genome.

Rieseberg said, "This is one of the most challenging genomes published to date."

Xue Suijian, professor and deputy director of the National Astronomical Observatories of China (NAOC) under Chinese Academy of Sciences, said, "To unveil the mystery of the cosmic acceleration, the astronomers have been trying to map the Universe from now to the remote past."

The Chinese astronomers, especially those from National Astronomical Observatories of Chinese Academy of Sciences (NAOC) working on observational and theoretical cosmology, have been playing key roles in the large international collaborations of the eBOSS galaxy survey."

"Not only have we sequenced sunflower's genome but we have also built physical and genetic maps of its structure, which increases the genome's value for research and breeding."

Another reason sunflowers inspire excitement is because they can grow very, very tall. The 'Russian Giant' can grow to three meters.

Dr. Catalina Lopez-Corra, chief scientific officer and at Canadian company Genome British Columbia which funded the research, said, "We congratulate Rieseberg and the entire team on this accomplishment."

"Our investment will have significant benefits to academic and industry stakeholders because this information will help to inform the development of strains with stress-resistant traits like resistance to drought and low nutrients, enabling them to grow in dry and degraded soils."

"Such resistance traits will be key to increasing food production under climate change, especially in demanding environments like those found in sub-Saharan Africa."

# Astronomers make largest-ever map of Universe yet



en.freshnewsasia.com

Based entirely on the positions of quasars, an international collaboration of astronomers with the Sloan Digital Sky Survey (SDSS) has created the first map of the large-scale structure of the Universe.

It could also help improve our understanding of dark energy, according to news.xinhuanet.com.

Xue Suijian, professor and deputy director of the National Astronomical Observatories of China (NAOC) under Chinese Academy of Sciences, said, "To unveil the mystery of the cosmic acceleration, the astronomers have been trying to map the Universe from now to the remote past."

The Chinese astronomers, especially those from National Astronomical Observatories of Chinese Academy of Sciences (NAOC) working on observational and theoretical cosmology, have been playing key roles in the large international collaborations of the eBOSS galaxy survey."

Quasars are the incredibly bright and distant points of light powered by supermassive black holes.

As matter and energy fall into a quasar's black hole, they heat up to incredible temperatures and begin to glow.

It is this bright glow that is detected by a dedicated 2.5-meter telescope here on Earth.

The telescope's observations gave the scientists the quasars' distances, which they used to create a three-dimensional map of where the quasars are.

Gongbo Zhao from the National Astronomical Observatories of Chinese Academy of Sciences, the study's other co-leader, said, "These quasars are so far away that their light left them when the Universe was between three and seven billion years old, long before the Earth even existed."

To make their map, the international research team used the Sloan Foundation Telescope to observe an unprecedented number of quasars.

During the first two years of the Sloan Digital Sky Survey (SDSS)'s Extended Baryon Oscillation Spectroscopic Survey (eBOSS), astronomers measured accurate three-dimensional positions for more than 147,000 quasars.

And to use the map to understand the expansion history of the Universe, the astronomers had to go a step further, using measurements of a phenomena known as baryon acoustic oscillations (BAOs), which are the present-day imprint of sound waves which traveled through the early Universe, when it was much hotter and denser than the Universe we see today.

But when the Universe was 380,000 years old, conditions changed suddenly and the sound waves became 'frozen' in place.

These frozen waves are left imprinted in the three-dimensional structure of the Universe we see today.

The results of the new study also confirm the standard model of cosmology that researchers have built over the last twenty years.

In this standard model, the Universe follows the predictions of Einstein's General Theory of Relativity — but includes components whose effects we can measure, but whose causes we do not understand.

There is still work to be done however, and the eBOSS experiment continues using the Sloan Telescope at Apache Point Observatory in New Mexico, USA, in order to observe even more quasars and increase the size of any future maps.

Xue said, "Besides eBOSS, the Dark Energy Spectroscopic Instrument (DESI), which is a larger galaxy survey mapping the Universe using remote astronomical objects up to 10 billion light years from us, will start observations in 2018, and Chinese astronomers will continue contributing great efforts."

## Visual brain predicts future events based on past experience

For a long time, researchers thought of the visual cortex as a brain area that determines what you perceive based on information coming from the eyes.

Neuroscientists from Radboud University now show that the area is also involved in the prediction of future events, sciencedaily.com wrote.

Imagine that you are standing on the sidewalk, ready to cross the street. A car approaches and you need to decide whether to wait, or to cross the street before the car passes by.

Did you ever wonder how you predict the future trajectory of the car? An experiment by Matthias Ekman and fellow researchers from Radboud University's Donders Institute shows that the primary visual cortex — the main visual area of our brain — is not only involved in perceiving the car, but also in predicting its future locations.

### White dots

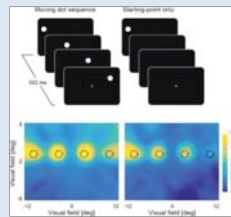
The Radboud researchers designed an experiment that mimics this kind of situation. Instead of a car, study participants were shown a white dot moving quickly from the left to the right side of the screen, while lying in an fMRI scanner.

The brain activity pattern in their visual cortex proved remarkably similar to the visual dot stimulus that was shown on the screen.

The crucial part of the experiment began after participants had watched the moving dot sequence for a few minutes.

Now, occasionally, only the first dot on the left side of the screen was shown.

Interestingly, the visual cortex's activity pattern represented not only the starting point of



The white dot (L) moves from the left to the right side of the screen in 0.5 seconds. The bottom image shows the brain activity pattern in the visual cortex, which is similar to the visual dot stimulus. In another condition of the experiment, only the first dot on the left side of the screen was shown to the study participants.

the dot sequence — the one that was shown on screen — but also the remaining dots of the sequence.

Ekman said, "Our results show that we form expectations about upcoming events, and that the visual cortex can complete a sequence from only partial input."

### Automatic process

The predictive power of the visual cortex is also apparent from the results of one study condition in which participants were asked to focus on a changing letter in the background, completely ignoring the moving dots — see this video for an illustration of the task.

Surprisingly, the same pattern of activity as before was measured in the visual cortex.

Ekman added, "Your visual cortex predicts these events, even when your attention is else-

where.

"The fact that the event prediction is independent from the attentional state, suggested that it reflects an automatic process,"

Of course, the MRI experiment is simplified compared to real life.

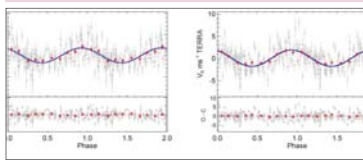
But according to Ekman, the results can still tell us about how we anticipate future events in the ever changing world.

"Our visual cortex might constantly predict events happening all around us on a daily basis: The rotating arms of a windmill, or how to catch the ball that is moving towards us."

In a follow-up study, the researchers examine which brain areas collaborate with the visual cortex to anticipate upcoming events.

"We expect that the hippocampus — a brain area linked to memory — plays an important role in this process."

## Astronomers discover 'super-Earth' planet orbiting nearby star



Phase folded curve of the planetary signal detected in GJ 625 using the parameters of the Markov chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) model.

European astronomers report the detection of a new extrasolar world several times more massive than Earth.

The newly-found exoplanet, classified as a so-called 'super-Earth', is circling a nearby star designated GJ 625, phys.org reported.

'Super-Earths' are planets more massive than Earth but not exceeding the mass of Neptune.

Although the term 'super-Earth' refers only to the mass of the planet, it is also used by astronomers to describe planets bigger than Earth but smaller than the so-called 'mini-Neptunes' (with a radius between two to four Earth-radii).

Located only 21 light years away, GJ 625 is an M-dwarf star (spectral type M2) about 1/3 the size and mass of the Sun.

Such stars offer great potential in the search for alien Earth-like worlds, as low-mass rocky planets appear to be more frequent around M-dwarfs.

However, finding an Earth-like planet orbiting low-mass stars is difficult due to their stellar activity.

This is because signals induced by the rotation of a star can easily mimic those of planetary origin.

Therefore, the signals coming from M-dwarfs tend to be comparable to those of rocky planets close to the habitable zone of their stars.

Recently, a team of astronomers led by Alejandro Suarez Mascareño of the Canary Islands Institute of Astrophysics, completed challenging studies of GJ 625, which began in 2013 and lasted over three and a half years.

The observations were conducted with the High Accuracy Radial velocity Planet Searcher for the Northern Hemisphere (HARPS-N) spectrograph installed at the Telescopio Nazionale Galileo on the Roque de los Muchachos Observatory on the island of La Palma, Canary Islands, Spain.

The researchers analyzed 151 radial-velocity time series from HARPS-N as part of the HARPS-N red Dwarf Exoplanet Survey

(HADES) radial velocity program, which resulted in the discovery of a new planet.

The author wrote, "We report the discovery of a super-Earth orbiting at the inner edge of the habitable zone of the star GJ 625 based on the analysis of the radial-velocity (RV) time series from the HARPS-N spectrograph, consisting in 151 HARPS-N measurements taken over three years."

The newly found alien world, designated GJ 625 b, has a minimum mass of 2.8 Earth masses, which makes it the lightest exoplanet found around an M2 star to date.

The planet orbits its host every 14 days at a distance of

approximately 0.08 Alpha Centauri (AU) from the star, which is relatively close. By comparison, Mercury orbits the Sun at a mean distance of 0.38 AU.

The results of radial velocity measurements allowed the team to conclude that GJ 625 b is a small 'super-Earth' on the inner edge of the habitable zone and has a mean surface temperature of 76°C that is very dependent on the atmospheric parameters.

Moreover, the researchers assume that the newly detected exoworld might potentially host liquid water, but more observations focused on GJ 625 b's atmosphere are required to confirm this assumption.

The Australian government said it would introduce legislation to allow clean energy funds to back carbon capture and storage projects.

# Children in Yemen need support

By Mike Penrose

With more than two years of brutal conflict, a looming famine and now life-threatening cholera that is spreading rapidly — right now, nearly 10 million children in Yemen are in extreme danger.

Yemen is currently facing a fast-spreading cholera outbreak that is of an unprecedented scale. In the last month, the number of reported cases has nearly doubled since the previous outbreak, and a much more infectious strain seems to be the culprit this time. Contaminated water, untreated sewage and uncollected garbage have led to more than 400 associated deaths alone, [huffingtonpost.co.uk](http://huffingtonpost.co.uk) wrote.

Overcrowded cities are helping the disease spread quickly. Amongst a crumbling health system and poor infrastructure, this epidemic is continuing to spread against the backdrop of a major humanitarian crisis, and children continue to bear the biggest brunt.

One out of every hundred people are dying in this most recent outbreak. In just one month there have been 41,866 new cases — of these, 30 percent are children. The consequences could be catastrophic if the world does not act now.

Malnourished children and people living with other chronic health conditions are now at greater risk of death as they are facing a 'triple threat' of conflict, famine and cholera — this outbreak has come at a time when children really are at their most vulnerable.

Here in the UK, when



[huffingtonpost.co.uk](http://huffingtonpost.co.uk)

children get sick and have diarrhea, it can be worrying but certainly not life-threatening. However, this is far from the reality in Yemen, where mothers and their fatally sick children are filling up health centers desperately seeking treatment in the country's capital, Sana'a.

Much of this outbreak is treatable and preventable. Through Department for International Development (DfID), British aid has played and still is playing a huge role in this humanitarian response, with water and hygiene programs reaching more

than 300,000 people in cholera-affected areas already.

UK aid is effective in crises like this thanks to the UK having an independent and dedicated department focused on scrutinizing the use of every penny and operating within rules that ensure its mission is clear.

The effective delivery of this vital, life-saving aid that children so desperately depend on is unequivocal and must be protected to continue to reach the people who need it the most. In these very weeks, millions of

pounds are being given toward the immediate cholera response — British aid is delivering supplies, distributing hygiene kits and establishing centers where children will have access to oral rehydration, which could save their lives.

Having visited Yemen last year, I saw the gradual decline in services for children first hand. Many schools were closed, food supply was erratic and most children already didn't have access to a doctor or a hospital. Malnutrition levels were startling then. Since that time things

have continued to get worse. UNICEF staff are sparing no effort throughout the country, even in the hardest to reach areas — monitoring and treating contaminated water, ensuring children have access to treatment such as oral rehydration salts and health services, as well as continuing to respond to the ongoing needs of children suffering from food insecurity.

*\* Mike Penrose is the CEO of Action contre la Faim — an international NGO specialized in the fight against hunger.*

## EU demands 'right to remain' for unborn children of EU nationals in UK

European Union (EU) bureaucrats are demanding that 'current and future family members' of European nationals in the UK should have an open-ended right to settle in this country after Brexit.

They also want Britain to continue to agree to pay the pension costs of Brussels bureaucrats after Britain leaves the EU in March 2019, [telegraph.co.uk](http://telegraph.co.uk) reported.

The demands are made in two negotiating papers which have been published by the EU ahead of formal Brexit talks starting on June 19, just 11 days after next Thursday's general election.

Theresa May, the prime minister, will condemn them as 'aggressive' and stress that she is better placed to negotiate Britain's exit from the EU.



[bbc.co.uk](http://bbc.co.uk)

The document, titled 'Essential Principles on Citizens' Rights' said that "family members — will join the holder of the right at any point after the date of entry into force of the withdrawal agreement".

It then added that this will apply to 'current and future family members', which makes the commitment potentially open-ended over generations for decades.

EU nationals will also receive an identity document giving them, their wives and husbands and children the right to remain in the UK.

Another document, entitled 'Essential Principles on Financial Settlement', set out the scale of the bill the EU wants Britain to pay to leave the EU.

It listed 74 different EU bodies which it wants Britain to pay its share of funding, including the European Commission, the European Standards Agency and the EU Council.

The final bill should be paid in euros, it said, adding that the "financial settlement should be based on the principle that the United Kingdom must honor its share of the financing of all the obligations undertaken while it was a member of the Union."

"The United Kingdom obligations should be fixed as a percentage of the EU obligations calculated at the date of withdrawal in accordance with a methodology to be agreed in the first phase of the negotiations."

## Lives of Indian mothers, children at risk

Campaigners have warned that the lives of mothers and children are at risk after an Indian government scheme that pays women to receive maternal healthcare throughout their pregnancy was amended to apply only to first-borns.

The program was introduced in 2010 to help stem India's high rates of infant and maternal mortality. An estimated 38 children die for every 1,000 live births, and 55,000 women die of preventable pregnancy-related causes each year, [theguardian.com](http://theguardian.com) wrote.

The scheme, which operates in 53 districts across India, originally applied to a mother's first two children, with another program offering an additional 1,400 rupees (£17) for every child born in a medical setting.

Last week, India's Ministry for Women announced that as part of a national expansion of the scheme, the two entitlements would be rolled together and restricted to first-born children only.

Researchers said the change will reduce the program's scope reach to about 43 percent of India's nearly 30 million annual pregnancies.

Under the scheme — the Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY) — mothers were paid up to 6,000 rupees in installments as long as they complied with conditions such as registering their pregnancy, attending pre-natal care sessions, immunizing their child and breastfeeding for at least six months.

Women also had to be 19 years or older to qualify, encouraging families to delay childbirth in a country where around half of all women are married before they reach adulthood.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced in December that the program would soon be expanded across India.

Campaigners welcomed the move but questioned how the wider rollout would be funded, estimating it would cost almost the entire budget allocated to India's Ministry for Women and Development.

The ministry did not explain why the program was being restricted, but Sureshna Sengupta, a researcher, said it was clear the extra money set aside to fund the national expansion was "only adequate to cover one child".

Poonam Muttreja, the executive director of the Population Foundation of India — a leading family planning organization — said the program appeared to have "shrunk even before it began its expansion at a pan-India level".

"This is a disappointing development and does not augur well for the maternal and child health indicators of the country," she said.

The new limits would discourage greater numbers of women from keeping in touch with health professionals during pregnancy, Muttreja added, "putting at risk the lives of both mothers and children."

Evaluations of the program had already been critical, finding that only 63 percent of the money promised between 2013 and 2016 had actually been spent. Onerous paperwork required to prove that women were complying with conditions was also slowing payments, according to a review last year.

Poor health infrastructure in many rural parts of the country — where mothers' health is generally most at risk — was also preventing women from complying with the conditions necessary to receive the payments, data released in 2014 showed.

## Growing unemployed youth in Africa a time bomb

There are nearly 420 million young Africans between the ages of 15 and 35 today. And it is estimated that within ten years, Africa will be home to one-fifth of all young people worldwide.

These millions of young people could be a source of ingenuity and engines of productivity that could ignite a new age of inclusive prosperity, Ipsnews wrote.

But there are no guarantees. Although the continent has shown consistent economic growth in the last decade, it has failed in creating the number of quality jobs needed to absorb the 10-12 million young people entering the labor market each year.

And this, according to AFDB Vice President for Agriculture, Human and Social Development, Jennifer Blanke, is a time bomb waiting to explode.

"While the youth population is Africa's asset, it can also easily become a liability, and this is the whole question about demographic dividends," observed Blanke.

"Let us be clear, it is only the



[modernghana.com](http://modernghana.com)

existence of opportunity and the young person's belief that they can access that opportunity that prevents pessimism and political unrest...inaction is not an option, young people without opportunity, and more importantly without belief in their leaders' ability to provide opportunity are a certain source of civil unrest and we are seeing it every day.

"Transforming Agriculture for wealth

creation in Africa' was therefore the major theme of the 52nd AFDB Annual Meetings held in Ahmedabad, India from May 22-26, 2017."

Experts agreed that transforming Africa's agriculture requires a business approach that would incentivize youth who still see farming as way of life for the poor. As a result of this scenario, the average age of farmers in Africa is 60,

and Akinwumi Adesina, AFDB Group president, fears that "if we don't change the labor composition of agriculture in Africa, in the next twenty years, there will be no farmers."

To get youth involved, Adesina believed, "We need to change the mindset about agriculture — agriculture is not a social sector, agriculture is not a way of life, it is a business."

But the how question is crucial, and he points to finance among other incentives.

"There are opportunities for youth but certain things have to be put in place to realize them, such as financing...our young people are doing amazing things with ICT — they are providing weather index insurance, extension services and a host of other things."

For its part, the bank has provided a roadmap for the growth of agriculture in Africa with a plan to inject nearly \$2.4 billion every year for 10 years to build roads, irrigation infrastructure and storage facilities to attract high-value investors.

## High-fat diets literally re-wire children's brains

Scientists have shown how a high-fat diet can literally alter the brain of a child.

Studying rats, researchers in France found that those who were raised on a diet high in processed foods experienced a far greater rush of pleasure from junk food as adults, according to [dailymail.co.uk](http://dailymail.co.uk).

Consequently these rats — compared to healthy ones — grew up to crave fatty cuisine when they were feeling low, almost akin to a drug user getting a hit.

The researchers said it all boils down to the way fatty foods reinforce pathways in our brain's pleasure center by triggering an intense rush of dopamine with each bite.

And they said they had no doubt their findings applied to humans.

The study, published in the journal *eNeuro*, focused on the way high fat diets fuel reward-seeking behavior.

To do so, Dr. Guillaume Ferreira from the Université de Bordeaux in France led a team looking at dopamine in the brains of male rats.

Dopamine is a neurotransmitter that plays an important role in sensitization — when repeated rewards

(either drugs, food or other stimulants) cause an increase in response.

In the study, Ferreira fed a high-fat diet to a group of rats for three months, from weaning to adulthood.

They then gave each rat two injections of amphetamine, a psychostimulant which triggers the dopamine



[dailymail.co.uk](http://dailymail.co.uk)

system.

The authors found that rats who were raised on a high fat diet exhibited increased happy brain activity in response to a second injection of amphetamine.

Looking closely at their brains, they saw a spike in activity among dopamine cells and a stronger dopamine release, making them happier.

It is hardly the first study to draw such a conclusion.

In fact, the research joins a burgeoning swell of research analyzing junk food's impact on children amid a global obesity crisis and limited access to fresh food among lower-income communities.

In 2015, a high-profile study by the University of Illinois found fatty foods can reduce the speed at which a child's brain works.

It found that children who ate a diet higher in saturated fats and cholesterol had slower reaction times and a poorer working memory.

Children who ate the fatty diet performed worse when they were given a task-switching game to complete, the researchers said.



mirror.co.uk

### Hunter pictured with 'giant Frogzilla'

A man claims to have hunted a giant frog dubbed 'Frogzilla'.

In the photo the smiling hunter is seen holding the massive creature, which reportedly weighs 13 pounds or 5kg, in one hand and a rifle in the other, according to mirror.co.uk.

The South Texas Hunting Association shared the images on its Facebook page.

Markcuz Rangel shared the photo with the website, stating that it was caught in a pond on a ranch near Batesville, Texas.

Nearly a quarter of a million people have shared the image since it was posted on May 25.

But there have been accusations the photos are fake, particularly due to the long hair the 'creature' appears to have.

Commenting on the image post, Cheryl Stewart-Williams

wrote: "My first thought, 'Oh wow it has dreadlocks. It's fake!'"

While Ron Baia added: "My chihuahua weighs 12lbs and is not even a 1/2 that size!"

But one wildlife expert thinks the photo is real and more of "an optical illusion".

Steve Lightfoot, of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, confirmed that the photo is real, but reassured the public that wild frogs are not taking over South Texas.

He said: "It's not as bigly as it appears."

Lightfoot continued, "It's more of an optical illusion created by extending frog toward the camera, similar to what you see with fishermen holding up fish to make them appear larger."

"Still a big bullfrog, though."

## TV adventurer takes part in Cheese Rolling Race

Ben Fogle has rowed the Atlantic, run across the Sahara Desert and trekked the Antarctic but he has ticked off another feat — chasing an 8lb cheese down a very steep hill.

The TV presenter and adventurer had always wanted to take part in the annual death-defying Cheese Rolling event but had always been prevented by health and safety authorities due to filming commitments, dailymail.co.uk reported.

Fogle took part in the first race of the day as he and another two dozen competitors chased a Double Gloucester cheese 200 yards down the 1:2 gradient Cooper's Hill at Brockworth, Gloucestershire.

Speaking afterwards, the 43-year-old father of two said the race course was a lot steeper than it looked and he was nervous as he waited at the start.

"When I was filming things for TV, I was never allowed to, for health and safety reasons, so I've come along on my own today," he said.

"It is the first time I have done the Cheese Rolling. I've covered all sorts of weird and wonderful events across Great Britain and this was almost the last one on my list."

"I've watched from afar for years. I made the long journey to be here. I was in Canada and I



TV adventurer Ben Fogle

dailymail.co.uk

### Cheese champ equals all-time record

A champion cheese-chaser has equalled the all-time record for the most cheeses won in the Cheese Rolling Race.

Chris Anderson, 29, from Brockworth, has now taken home a total of 20 double Gloucester cheeses over the past 13 years.

After winning all three men's downhill races this year, he is now level with record-holder Stephen Gyde and has set his sights on breaking the record



Chris Anderson

next year.

Anderson left other daredevils trailing in his wake as he sprinted, tripped and tumbled down Cooper's Hill.

However, he will not be tucking into his prizes — an 8lb double Gloucester — as he only likes cheddar.

The women's race was won by 18-year-old Keavy Morgan, also from Brockworth, who has now had two victories after first winning in 2015.

### Travel misery as two horses bring traffic to a standstill on the M5



of tailbacks.

Traffic ground to a halt on the motorway between Junctions 21 and 22 in Somerset, southeast England, the UK, with vehicles in both directions completely gridlocked, dailymail.co.uk wrote.

It later emerged that two horses had caused the motorway chaos after escaping

onto a road nearby.

The mother and its foal were captured by a driver's dashcam as they sprinted along the carriageway on the A370 at Weston-super-Mare, after coming off the M5.

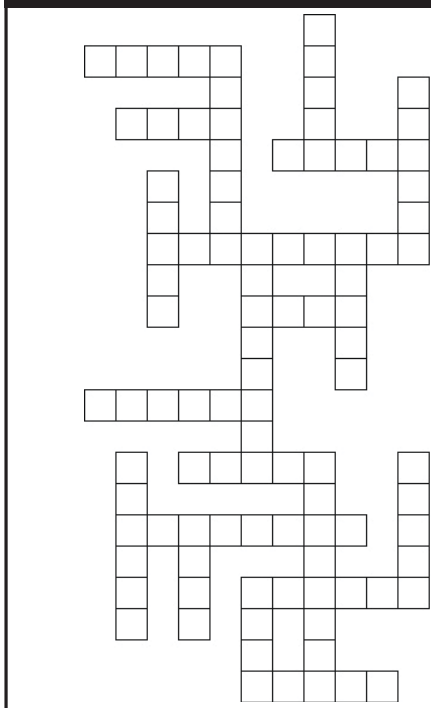
The motorist posted: "I was driving along the A370 in Weston-super-Mare and I come across this cropper lol."

Highways England also tweeted that a crash had taken place on Junction 23, near the Bridgewater area, causing further delays, but it is not clear if this was related to the horses.



dailymail.co.uk

### Puzzle Verse



### Fit the bold words in the puzzle

Up . . up . . up above,  
Away from the **darkened** deep,  
Surging up towards the **light**,  
In one **gigantic** leap.

Crashing through the tossing **waves**,  
Ocean meets the sky,  
A roaring gust of seething **brine**,  
A long and **mighty** sigh.

Falling . . falling . . falling down,  
Towards the **swirling** foam,  
Through the roll and **surface** swell,  
Emerald **ocean** home.

Then the sound of **predators**,  
Closing for the kill.

Hunting bloodied **waters**,  
Aching for their **fill**.

Turn . . turn . . turn again,  
Still they **follow** on,  
Drifting down **below** once more,  
Soon he will be **gone**.

The rumble of the iron **beast**,  
Slowly **fades** away,  
Those who **ride** upon its back,  
Curse against the spray.

Down . . down . . down . . down,  
Here no man will go,  
They **fear** the **depth** of his **domain**,  
Far, far, below.

### Yesterday's solution



### Sudoku

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

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

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

Luciano leaves

Luciano Spalletti has stepped down from his position as Roma manager on Tuesday, two days after leading his side to a second-place finish in Serie A.

# Depleted Esteghlal crashes out of ACL

Persian Gulf Pro League runner-up Esteghlal of Tehran depleted by injured and banned players went out of the 2017 AFC Champions League after suffering its heaviest defeat in the history of the competition at the hands of UAE's Al Ain. Last year's beaten finalist Al Ain cruised into the quarterfinals of the competition on Monday with a 6-1 thrashing of Tehran's Esteghlal, the-afc.com reported.

Caio and Omar Abdulrahman both scored twice as Al Ain bounced back from a 1-0 first leg defeat in Iran to notch up a 6-2 aggregate win and signal its intent as the competition breaks for the summer.

Caio's first half double put Al Ain in command, the Brazilian netting in the 27th and 33rd minutes, before the floodgates opened in the second half as Esteghlal sought a way back into the tie.

Abdulrahman scored from the tightest of angles four minutes after the restart, while Lee Myung-joo added the fourth seven minutes later before a long-range attempt from Abdulrahman made it into the bottom corner on the hour mark.

Nassir al-Shamrani slammed home the sixth in the 76th minute and Kevah Rezaei claimed a consolation for Esteghlal seven minutes from time when his free kick sneaked in at Khalid Eisa's net post.



Omar Abdulrahman was the key man for his side as his brace in the second half steered Al Ain to a 6-1 home victory against Esteghlal in the ACL Round of 16 on May 29, 2017.

## Valverde in charge of a new era at Barcelona

Barcelona have confirmed Ernesto Valverde as its new manager following Luis Enrique's departure.

Valverde, 53, stepped down from his role in charge of Athletic Bilbao last week having led the Basque club to seventh place in La Liga and Europa League qualification, The Guardian reported.

He has also managed Villarreal, Valencia and Barca's city rival Espanyol in a varied coaching career that included two years in Greece with Olympiakos. Valverde also had a two-year spell as a Barcelona player in the late 1980s and will now return to the Camp Nou after a 27-year absence.

Barcelona lifted the Copa del Rey with a 3-1 win against Alaves in Enrique's final game in charge on Saturday, the ninth trophy of his three-year reign.

However, the victory came at the end of a campaign which included disappointment in both La Liga and Europe, with the title going to Barca's bitter rival Real Madrid, which is also in the Champions League final on Saturday, aiming to retain the European Cup by beating Juventus.

Enrique had announced in March he would be leaving the club at the end of the season to take a one-year break from management.

The Barcelona president, Josep Maria Bartomeu, said: "Valverde has the ability, the judgment, the knowledge and the experience. He promotes the youth players and he has a Barça way. He is a hard worker and he is a fan of using technology in training and in managing matches."

"He was not the only name on the table. From the moment Luis Enrique said he was not going to continue (technical secretary) Robert Fernandez began a search. He spoke to a lot of people and studied the market. Many people took part in this decision and we did look at different names but our conclusion was one name and one coach. We know him, we know what he can do."



fcbarcelona.com

"Robert explained he was looking for a coach who had the Barcelona profile and knows the style. Ernesto is a very hard worker. He has knowledge, experience and has a philosophy similar to ours. He works a lot, he likes using technology."

## Wenger to pen new deal

Arsenal boss Arsene Wenger has agreed a new two-year contract, extending his 21-year reign at the club.

Wenger and club owner Stan Kroenke met on Monday to determine the Frenchman's future, with the decision relayed to directors at a Tuesday board meeting, BBC reported.

Arsenal is planning to make an official announcement later today.

The Gunners were fifth in the Premier League this season, the first time they have finished outside the top four since the Frenchman joined in 1996.

Arsenal finished 18 points behind champion Chelsea, but beat the Blues 2-1 to win the FA Cup at Wembley on Saturday.

Wenger's contract was set to finish at the end of the current campaign.

Wenger led the Gunners to three Premier League titles and four FA Cups in his first nine seasons in charge.

In 2003-04, he became the first manager since 1888-89 to lead a team through an entire top-flight season unbeaten.

But after winning the 2005 FA Cup, Arsenal had to wait another nine years - or 3,283 days - for its next silverware. It came as it beat Hull City to win the 2014 FA Cup, before winning the trophy again the following year.

Some Gunners fans turned on the 67-year-old Frenchman as a result of Arsenal's league performances and it lost 10-2 on aggregate to Bayern Munich in the Champions League last 16 in March.

The London club finished the league season with five successive victories, but it was not enough to carry it above Liverpool to take the fourth and final Champions League spot.

Wenger told BBC's Football Focus on Saturday the criticism he has faced this season is "a disgrace" he will "never forget".

Anti-Wenger banners were held aloft by Gunners fans in the closing stages of a 3-1 defeat at West Brom on March 18, while in the first half two planes towed banners over the ground - one criticizing the manager and the other supporting him.

After that loss, Wenger said he had made a decision on his future which would announce "very soon".

Chelsea manager Antonio Conte, meanwhile, described Wenger as "one of the best managers in history".

## Djokovic, Nadal pass tricky tests

Novak Djokovic won his first match under new coach Andre Agassi, while Rafael Nadal took a first step toward his 10th title at the French Open.

Defending champion Djokovic, who split with his coaching team last month, beat Spain's Marcel Granollers 6-3, 6-4, 6-2, BBC reported.

Asked about Agassi, the Serb said: "He has a lot to share with me outside and inside of the tennis lines. I'm really enjoying it so far."

Nadal saw off Frenchman Benoit Paire 6-1, 6-4, 6-1 with little trouble.

"Always at the start, I'm happy for the victory," said the Spaniard. "It was not an easy opponent in the first round, obviously."

"He's an uncomfortable opponent that already had some good victories this year. I came on court with a lot of respect."

For Agassi it was a successful, if not entirely comfortable, return to the court where he completed his career Grand Slam in 1999.

At one point there was a chance to catch up with old rival Boris Becker, the man he replaced as Djokovic's coach, that partnership producing six Grand Slam titles.

The Las Vegas is only scheduled to stay in Paris until the end of this week before he has to leave for other prior engagements.

"I'm going to try to use the time spent with him as best as I can, as best as we can," said Djokovic. "So far plenty of information, plenty of things to kind of process."

"I think this is exactly what I need at this moment, a person like him that understands the transitions as a tennis player and as a person as well, going through these kind of life-



REUTERS

Rafael Nadal began his quest for 10th French Open title in resounding fashion as he overcame French Benoit Paire in straight sets on May 29, 2017.

Elsewhere, Canadian fifth seed Milos Ranic beat Belgium's Steve Darcis 6-3, 6-4, 6-2.

Seventh seed Marin Cilic is also through after he won 6-3, 6-3, 6-3 against Ernest Gulbis.

Djokovic, 30, was out early on Philippe Chatrier practising under the watchful eye of new coach Agassi, and he returned a few hours later to get their first win on the board.

It was hardly vintage Djokovic, with the second seed making 29 unforced errors and falling to convert 12 break points.

He needed eight chances just to clinch the second set as he eventually made it through after two hours and 27 minutes of hard work in sweltering conditions.

style and certain choices that you make, how that affects you later on."

Nadal, 30, was up against the crowd as much as his opponent as he took on Frenchman Paire on the lively Suzanne Lenglen Court.

The fourth seed was himself given a huge ovation as his list of title wins stretching back to 2005 was read out, and he dominated for the most part.

An unexpected rash of errors early in the second set allowed Paire into the match, and the world number 45 had a break point to lead 5-3, but Nadal snuffed out the danger and powered home.

"For me, it's important to serve a little bit better than I did today," said Nadal.

"The rest of the things I am happy with."

## National Grassroots Conference held in Iran

The Football Federation Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) held its second Islamic Republic of Iran National Grassroots Conference recently in conjunction with the Asian Football Confederation's (AFC) Grassroots Football Day.

Over 600 grassroots coaches and managers from across Iran participated in the conference, the main objective of which was to discuss the development of grassroots activities throughout Iran, the-afc.com reported.



ffiri.ir

Head of Iran Grassroots Committee Mostafa Zarei who opened the conference, began by detailing the previous year's accomplishments, and outlining the programs currently being undertaken. Zarei said: "The main aim of the Committee is to promote and increase the number of participants in football, especially women's grassroots football."

"We hope that our current plans and programs will lead to a twofold increase in the participation of women in grassroots by the year 2020."

The conference also covered the topic of Fair Play in grassroots football courtesy of a

presentation by Dr. Kabiri, while UEFA/FIFA instructor Richard Bate discussed the future of football and role of grassroots in building a future for football.

Finally, AFC Grassroots Panel member Anders Krystad spoke about the upcoming AFC Grassroots Charter. The Charter is a development tool with which Member Associations (MA) can raise the quality of their grassroots activities through an endorsement program, and Krystad explained the criteria, key con-

cepts and financial support required to develop grassroots in Asia.

"I am truly impressed with the dedication FFIRI has shown," said Krystad in his closing remarks.

"Gathering 600 coaches and leaders to discuss the future of Iranian football proves commitment. I am also impressed with the quality of the presentations, they were all up-to-date which represents a modern and forward looking MA. I wish Iranian football the very best, and am assured that the FFIRI will take the necessary steps to implement the AFC Grassroots Charter."



GETTY IMAGES

## Art & Culture

### Iranian artist wins

#### Focus Photo Club prize

An Iranian photographer, from the southern province of Bushehr, won the best photo prize of Focus Photo Club, said the director general of Bushehr Province Culture and Islamic Guidance Department.



IRNA

Hamideh Mahoozi told IRNA that by winning the prize, Saeed Arabzadeh was entitled to membership in the jury of Khayyam International Photo Festival.

According to the official, at the end of each year, the prize is given to the artist who has gained the most admissions and prizes in international festivals in the year.

He said that if the winner meets other requirements of Fédération Internationale de l'Art Photographique (FIAP) to judge, he will join the panel of jury at the Khayyam International Photo Festival.

### Iranian ensemble shines

#### in Georgia Golden Dolphin festival

Iranian folklore music band 'Herron' ranked first in the Georgia Golden Dolphin 2017 international folk and art festival in the categories of solo, ensembles and choreography of rituals.

The Iranian band managed to rank first among 26 bands from 18 countries, IRNA reported.

The event took place in Batumi from May 20 to 25.

Herron — a famous music band from the southern province of Bushehr — has taken part in several international music festivals.

The members of the band are: Saeed Saheli-Rad, Hossein Sohrabi, Nima Tangsiri, Farshid Chehreh-Azad and Hadi Manouchehri.

### Kandinsky's painting appears

#### at auction for first time

Hailing from a landmark moment in Kandinsky's mastery of abstraction, *Bild mit weissen Linien* reveals the artist's discovery that color, when dissociated from representational concerns, could become the principal subject of a painting.



artdaily.com

It is a powerful masterpiece that encapsulates Kandinsky's innovation and invention in the revolutionary year of 1913, crucial within the history of modern art as it was marked by events and works across Europe and America that fundamentally changed the way art was conceived and understood.

Early in his career, Kandinsky recognized that he was moving towards something that would drastically transform the landscape of modern art, writing in a letter of 1904 to his companion Gabriele Münter "without exaggerating, I can say that, should I succeed in this task, I will be showing a new, beautiful path for painting susceptible to infinite development. I am on a new track... which will be recognized, sooner or later".

This was a quest that he accomplished in 1913 when he finally achieved abstraction in a uniquely pure, lyrical form, artdaily.com reported.

Executed on a grand scale and in dazzling colors, this painting was prized highly by the artist himself and boasts an impressive early exhibition history. Never offered at auction before, it will be offered as part of Sotheby's Impressionist and Modern Art Evening Sale with an estimate in excess of \$35 million.

Created in the same year as the important *Kompositionen VI* and *VII, Bild mit weissen Linien* achieves a synthesis of both 'absolute' paintings whilst also being a unique composition in its own right. During this period, Kandinsky took his cue from the language of musical composition — determined that every color corresponded with a particular emotion or 'sound'.

# IRAN DAILY



» License Holder: Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA)  
 » Managing Director: Sadroddin Moosavi  
 » Editor-in-Chief: Kambakhsh Khalaji  
 » Editorial Dept. Tel: +98 21 88755761-2  
 » Editorial Dept. Fax: +98 21 88761869  
 » Subscription Dept. Tel: +98 21 88521954, +98 21 88748900  
 » ICPI Publisher: +98 21 88548992, 8  
 » Advertising Dept. Tel & Email: +98 21 8850067- irandaily@iranagahiha.com  
 » Website: http://www.irandailyonline.ir  
 » Email: irandaily@icpi.ir  
 » Printing House: Iran Cultural & Press Institute

Add.: Iran Cultural & Press Institute, #208 Khorramshahr Avenue Tehran/Iran

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MEHDI JAFARVIRNA

Concurrent with holy month of Ramadan, Iran's Culture Minister Reza Salehi-Amiri opened the 25th International Holy Qur'an Exhibition at Tehran's Imam Khomeini Grand Prayer Grounds (Mosalla). The exhibition will continue until June 16.



## Unknown ancient civilization rock art found in NE Iran

From Page 1

It is covered in 16 simple symbols, including U-shapes which the villagers believe are the hoof prints of the horse of Imam Reza (PBUH), who is buried at a nearby shrine.

Pilgrims had for years left offerings by the volcanic stone and had started to build a small temple around it. But it was only recently, in 2015, that archeologist

volcanic rocks covered with engravings representing animals and humans.

"We found this second rock art group after a local pilgrim invited us to have lunch at his home. There, we discovered rock outcrops with several engravings showing specific subjects — anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figures. They are small in size, different from the ones documented on PMB001 but similar to other figures found in rock art all over Iran," co-au-

chronology.

Some of the symbols at PMB001 do give some clues. For instance, circular symbols on the stone are comparable to those found at another site and attributed to the Bronze Age.

However, no precise dates can be put forward by the archeologists without conducting more in-depth excavations in the area.

"There is a lot of debate when it comes to rock art in Iran that it is whether we can attribute certain engravings to a period or another. We have a dating problem, because the same figures were represented, at different points in time from the Neolithic to the Iron Age. Probably the PMB001 area was settled at different periods, and the rock art represents all these phases. But without more excavations conducted at the site, we can't say for certain what the chronology of the two sites is," Sigari said.

The archeologists also want to investigate what the location of the stones in the landscape can reveal about the significance of the rock art. The fact that PMB001 is located at the top of a mountain may prove important in interpreting the engravings.

It's possible that this position gave it a greater perceived sacred value, which was later adapted by modern population, in light of their new beliefs. "Such re-purposing of rock art for new beliefs and rituals will form another part of our ongoing research," the authors concluded.



ibtimes.co.uk

Mahmoud Toghræ discovered the site and began documenting the rock art.

The first results of these investigations are now published in the journal *Antiquity*.

In August 2016, Toghræ and two of his colleagues conducted fieldwork at the site, carefully describing the mysterious symbols marked in the stone.

They also conducted a survey of the area and met with local people.

This led them to discover a second nearby site with



ibtimes.co.uk

thor of the paper Dario Sigari, from the University of Ferrara in Italy told IBTimes UK.

At present, it is impossible to date the engravings or to associate them with any particular culture. This is a problem that archeologists have always almost encountered when trying to date rock art in Iran. Because similar symbols and figures have been depicted repeatedly over the years, it is difficult to link them to a specific period — unless artifacts are found nearby, helping researchers come up with a more precise

### Weather

