TERNATIONALDAILY

16 Pages | Price 10,000 Rials | 38th year | No.12850 | Monday | JUNE 12, 2017 | Khordad 22, 1396 | Ramadan 17, 1438





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Austria to open €1b credit line for Iran



Iranian Industry Minister Mohammadreza Nematzadeh (L) met Austria's Federal Minister of Finance Hans Jörg Schelling (R) on Sunday in Tehran.

Leader asks literati to satirize **sword dance of modern ignorance**CULTURE TEHRAN — Sud e s k preme Leader of the son and Commerce Secretary Wilbur

Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has asked Iranian literati to satirize the ceremonial sword dance of U.S. President Donald Trump and White House officials in Saudi Arabia as he called it "the sword dance of modern ignorance.

Speaking at his annual meeting with Iranian poets and literary figures on Saturday night, Ayatollah Khamenei said, 'Today, issues like the sword dance of jahiliyyah [ignorance], in addition to ethnic jahiliyyah or the election of Saudi Arabia to the UN women's rights commission, well deserve to be satirized."

Ross took part in a ceremonial sword dance in Saudi Arabia during their recent visit to the country.

In other part of his speech, the Leader said, "The tree of poetry in our country has great potential to flourish and great efforts should be made to find new subjects and terms to convey new concepts."

A number of poets recited their latest works at the end of the meeting.

The Leader receives literati and poets every year on the birthday of Imam Hassan (AS), which falls every year on the 15th of Ramadan.

Scholar urges Iran to launch 'Ramadan diplomatic offensive' in Qatar row

By Javad Heirannia

TEHRAN — A professor of global thought and comparative philosophies says he thinks it is "essential" for Íran to láunch a "Ramadan diplomatic offensive" to lessen the effects of the blockade on Qatar by Saudi Arabia and some other Persian Gulf Arab states and to "signal to Qatar full humanitarian and diplomatic support".

In an exclusive interview with the Tehran Times, Arshin Adib-Moghaddam says "rregional states need to learn that they can't secure their national interests in exclusion of each other."

Following is the text of the inter-

view with Adib-Moghaddam, chair of the Centre for Iranian Studies at the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies:

What are the real reasons behind the decision of some Arab states to cut ties with Qatar? What approach should Iran take in order to protect its national interests?

A: I see the crisis between the Persian Gulf states as a political farce, with major strategic implications for the region in general and Iran in particular. There have been repeated quarrels between Saudi Arabia and Qatar over Al-Jazeera, →2

Araqchi: Senate move hampers successful implementation of nuclear deal

POLITICS TEHRAN — Iranian d e s k Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi said on Sunday that the U.S. Senate's move to impose new sanctions on Iran will scupper a successful implementation of the July 2015 nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

"We believe that approval of such a bill is contradictory to the principle of goodwill and successful implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action," noted Aragchi who served as a leading negotiator in drafting the nuclear deal with great powers and the European Union.

On June 7, Senate voted to proceed with a bill that would sanction Iran over its ballistic missile activity, its alleged human rights violation and claims of support for terrorist organizations. It came just hours after the Iranian capital suffered a deadly terrorist attack.

Aragchi said the Senate action is "shameful" and shows "confusion" on the part of the U.S. toward the Middle East. He added the U.S. Senate's allegation of Iran's support for terrorism is farcical" and "shameful"

In a series of Twitter messages in late May, former Secretary of State John Kerry urged the U.S. senators not to move ahead with legislation saying "this is not the moment for a new Iran bill".

"This is a time to tread carefully," Kerry advised the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

"We need to consider the implications of confrontation without conversation," tweeted Kerry who was President Barack Obama's chief nuclear negotiator with Iran.



Military chief pledges 'unforgettable lesson' to terrorists after Tehran attack

POLITICS TEHRAN — The head of d e s k the Iranian armed forces pledged a "new, unforgettable" blow to terrorists and their backers, warning them not to "even nurture and repeat the mistake" in

"Iran's security forces will give new, unforgettable lessons to terrorists and their regional and trans-regional backers," Major General Mohammad Baqeri said in a statement on

Bageri made the comments days after ISIS-linked terrorists launched a twin assault on Iran's Parliament and the mausoleum of the founder of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Khomeini on Wednesday.

The attacks left 17 people dead and some 56 more injured, marking the first such attack by the Islamic State on Iranian soil.

"We warn those who participated in the Saudis' recent sword dance as well as those who seek to hatch plots and anti-security scenarios against the Islamic Republic to learn from the fate of the June 7 terrorists and to avoid even nurturing and repeating the mistake in their mind," the senior commander underscored.

"Sword dance" was a reference to the recent visit by U.S. President Donald Trump to Saudi Arabia, during which he performed a traditional dance with Saudi princes with swords in their hands.

Bageri also pointed the finger of suspicion toward what he called "the ominous U.S.-Israeli regime-Al Saud triangle" for the Tehran attacks, emphasizing that "blind terror acts and disgusting fireworks" will not tremble Iran's adamant fight against terror-

On Wednesday, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei dismissed the twin attacks as mere "fireworks" that would not weaken the country's fight against

"These fireworks have no effect on Iran. They will soon be eliminated ... They are too small to affect the will of the Iranian nation and its officials," the Leader stated. →2

UN Ocean Conference wraps up with actions to restore ocean health, protect marine life

oceans wrapped up on Friday 9 June with a global agreement to reverse the decline of the ocean's health, and more than 1,300 pledged actions for protecting the blue.

"The bar has been raised on global consciousness and awareness of the problem in the oceans," the President of the UN General Assembly, Peter Thomson, told journalists in New York.

Mr. Thomson, whose native Fiji co-sponsored the event along with Sweden, said the organizers got what they wanted from the conference: "I'm 100 per cent satisfied with the results of this conference. Our aim was high. Our aim was to start the reversal of the cycle.

Call for Action where the participating Heads of State and Government and senior representatives "affirm our strong commitment to conserve and sustainably use our oceans, seas and marine resources tor sustainable development."

Speaking alongside Mr. Thomson, the Secretary-General of The Ocean Conference, Wu Hongbo, said the negotiated document lists specific measures "to galvanize global commitment and partnerships" for the

The main points from the political document and this week's discussions will be

The first-ever United Nations summit on oceans wrapped up on Friday 9 June with the adoption by consensus of a 14-point on Sustainable Development (HLPF), the UN's central body for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in September 2015. The HLPF is scheduled to meet next month in New York.

In addition to the political Call for Action, participants – who also included thousands of civil society representatives, academics, artists, financial institutions and other practitioners and activists - pledged actions to conserve and sustainable use the oceans, seas and marine resources. This is the goal of



Iftar show in Tehran streets

A large number of people come together every iftar in the fasting month of Ramadan in Tehran streets.

Iftar is one of the religious observances of Ramadan, and is often done as a community, with people gathering to break their fast to-

In Iran, a select of foods is cooked to break the fast at Maghrib time (just after sunset) and is summarily followed by a proper Persian meal.

U.S.-led coalition appears to be using white phosphorus in Syria, Iraq

Newly released videos appear to show U.S.-led coalition bombers using white phosphorus-loaded munitions in densely-populated areas in Syria and Iraq.

White phosphorus is an incendiary and toxic chemical substance. The munitions filled with the substance create a thick white cloud when they explode. Upon contact with flesh, the substance can maim and kill by burning to the bone. Human rights groups warn against the use of the substance.

Raqqah is Being Slaughtered Silent-(RBSS), a group of citizen journalists who document abuses in the Daesh stronghold of Raqqah, posted footage online showing the signature spread of airburst white phosphorus — probably from M825 series 155-milimeter artillery rounds — while exploding over the Syrian city's eastern part.

Similar videos were also published online, appearing to show the use of white phosphorus bombs by the U.S.-led coalition warplanes in the Iraqi city of Mosul as well. Mary Wareham, the advocacy director at Human Rights Watch's arms division, said the organization was trying to determine the veracity of the videos.

U.Ś. Army Colonel Ryan Dillon, a spokesman for the U.S.-led coalition, said he would not confirm the use of the munitions but claimed that the US military employed it in "accordance with the law of armed conflict" and that white phosphorus rounds were "used for screening, obscuring, and marking in a way that fully considers the possible incidental effects on civilians and civilian structures." "The coalition takes all reasonable precautions to minimize the risk of incidental injury to non-combatants and damage to civilian structures," he claimed.

Last month, the Pentagon posted photographs taken in March of U.S. Marines using white phosphorus munitions in Syria.

The U.S. and its allies have been bombarding what they say are ISIL (Daesh) positions inside Syria and Iraq since 2014. The coalition has repeatedly been accused of targeting and killing civilians. It has also been largely incapable of fulfilling its declared aim of eliminating Daesh.

(Source: Press TV)

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Six terror suspects arrested in Iran's Kordestan

POLITICS TEHRAN — Six terror suspects d e s k affiliated with the perpetrators of the June 7 terrorist attacks in the capital Tehran have been arrested in the western province of Kordestan, the provincial prosecutor told IRNA on Sunday.

Ali Akbar Garousi said some other terror suspects have also been identified and are expected to be

Two terrorist attacks on the late Imam Khomeini's mausoleum and Iran's Majlis left 17 dead and 54



Iranian warships move toward Oman

POLITICS TEHRAN — Two Iranian warships d e s k set sail for Oman and the high seas

The 47th flotilla of Iranian warships, comprised of Alborz destroyer and Bushehr logistic vessel, embarked on the voyage on Sunday afternoon, Press TV reported.

They left southern Iranian port city of Bandar Abbas for Oman and then for the Indian Ocean and the Gulf



Iran's parliament vows 'serious' response to U.S. Senate bill

POLITICS TEHRAN — Iran's parliament is to d e s k deliver a "serious" and "clear" response to the U.S. Senate which voted on June 7 to advance a bill that would impose new sanctions on Iran, Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani announced on Sunday.

Larijani ordered the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee to "immediately" draw up a counter plan and submit it to the legislature, ILNA reported.



Nothing remaining of Daesh team in Iran: intelligence minister

POLITICS TEHRAN — Iran's minister of d e s k intelligence told the Majlis on Sunday that a terrorist team affiliated with Daesh which carried out two attacks in Tehran last Wednesday has been completely wiped out.

"No remnant of the Daesh team has been left in the country," Mahmoud Alavi said, according to MP Akbar Ranjbarzadeh who was briefing Tasnim of Alavi's session

Ranjbarzadeh quoted Alavi as having said the team included Iranian operatives who had been trained by Daesh abroad.



Larijani in favor of amending council election law

ICS TEHRAN — Majlis Speaker Ali Larijani favors amending the council election law, MP Mohammad Mahmoudi Shahneshin said on Sunday.

Shahneshin, who served as head of the council election monitoring body in the Majlis this year, said an amendment is being prepared and will go to the Majlis floor in the near future, ICANA reported.

The lawmaker also said that efforts are being made to create a permanent secretariat to oversee council



Majlis Social Committee chairman elected

S TEHRAN — The members of the Social Committee of the Majlis on Sunday elected Abdolreza Azizi as the head of the

He garnered 11 votes to come first, while Mohammad Reza Badamchi and Masoud Rezaee became first and second deputies with 9 and 8 votes respectively, Fars

Also, Zahra Saei received 13 votes to become the committee's spokeswoman. Ruhollah Babaei was elected as the committee's first secretary with 11 votes, while Nahid Tajeddin became second secretary with 9 votes.

Iran says has killed mastermind of Tehran terror attacks

d e s k days after a deadly assault in the capital Tehran, Iran said its security forces killed on Saturday the mastermind of the attacks outside Iran, the intelligence minister said in a live program.

mastermind and main commander of terrorist attacks on the Majlis and mausoleum of Ayatollah Khomeini was killed today by the security forces," Mahmoud Alavi said.

"The main commander was in border areas, but exited the country after the terrorists were killed (in Tehran)," Alavi

"He was killed in collaboration with other intelligence services," Alavi further explained.

Alavi gave no details on "other intelligence services" and where the mastermind was killed.

The attacks on Iran's parliament and the mausoleum of Imam Khomeini, the Islamic Republic's founder, left 17 people dead and 56 injured, causing the country to ratchet up security measures all across

The Islamic State, also called Daesh, took credit for the suicide bombings and gun attacks, the first such attack on



Iranian Intelligence Minister says "The mastermind and main commander of terrorist attacks on the parliament and mausoleum of Ayatollah Khomeini was killed today by the security forces."

Iranian soil by the group. All five attackers released a video through its Amaq news

agency, showing the Tehran terror attack from Following the raids, the terrorist group inside the Iranian parliament building.

Back in April, the group put out a 36-minute video in Persian language, threatening to attack Iran.

The footage also condemned the Islamic Republic as an un-Islamic establishment modeled on westernstyled governance.

On Friday, intelligence authorities announced the arrest of 41 suspects in connection with the Tehran attacks in their hideouts across the country.

Alavi said that during the last month the Intelligence Ministry had identified and crushed "a terrorist team" almost every day but had not publicized it to avoid spreading fear among the public.

Also, officials said more suspects have been arrested around Tehran, and the car the attackers had used on Wednesday has been discovered in the city center.

Over the past two years, security forces have thwarted upwards of 100 terrorist plots, according to Alavi.

In June 2016, Iran said it has thwarted what it described as "one of the biggest plots" by terror groups targeting Tehran and other major Iranian cities.

Iran has been helping the governments in neighboring Iraq and Syria in fight against Daesh, which considers Shiites to

Top Austrian, Iranian officials hold talks, push for closer ties

POLITICS TEHRAN — Austrian Finance Minister e s k Hans Jorg Schelling and Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif held talks in Tehran on Sunday as the sides expressed interest to

Zarif said Iran has established stronger banking ties with Austria in comparison to other European

There have been good advances in relations between the two countries especially after the historic agreement over the Iranian nuclear program, Zarif

The nuclear agreement, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, was brokered in Vienna, the Austrian capital, on July 14, 2015 between Iran, the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, Germany and the European Union. The landmark deal, which entails the termination of economic and financial sanctions against Iran in return for a curb on Tehran's nuclear work, went into effect in January 2016.

'Collective cooperation' needed to fight terrorism

Elsewhere, Iran's chief diplomat said Takfiri terrorism is a threat against all countries in the Middle East region, renewing Tehran's call that a "collective cooperation" is required to counter the scourge of terrorism.

For his part, Schelling expressed regret over

Wednesday's terrorist attacks in Tehran and said that terrorism is source of concern for the entire world.

In two simultaneous terrorist attacks on the administrative building of Iran's Majlis and the shrine of Imam Khomeini in Tehran, 17 people were killed and 52 injured. Daesh claimed responsibility for the attacks.

The Austrian minister said the extremist groups

actions have nothing to do with religions.
Schelling who had visited Tehran with an accompanying team said that his visit to Iran was aimed at deepening relations, especially in economic area.

During Schelling's visit to Iran Austria allocated a credit line of €1 billion for a major steel production project in southern Iran.

Military chief pledges 'unforgettable lesson' to terrorists after Tehran attack

plicitly rapped Saudi Arabia for the attacks, launched just hours after Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir said Iran must be punished for its interference in the region, what Iran flatly reject.

In a tweet which appeared to refer to the was behind the attacks.

1 -> Other Iranian authorities im- comments, Zarif said, "Terror-sponsoring despots threaten to bring the fight to our homeland. Proxies attack what their masters despise most: the seat of democracy."

Also, in a statement, the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps said Saudi Arabia

"This terrorist attack happened only a week after the meeting between the U.S. president (Donald Trump) and the (Saudi) backward leaders who support terrorists. The fact that Islamic State has claimed responsibility proves that they

"Let there be no doubt that we will take revenge for today's attacks in Tehran, on terrorists, their affiliates and their supporters," promised Brigadier General Hossein Salami, the deputy

Scholar urges Iran to launch 'Ramadan diplomatic offensive' in Qatar row

Immensely successful Qatar has aroused the enmity of Saudi Arabia like a 'jealous diva', Arshin Adib-Moghaddam says

now one of the most successful news networks in the world (something that Press TV never managed to replicate). After the Arab Spring, Oatar and Saudi Arabia fell out over the support of Qatar to the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and the generous airtime that Al-Jazeera gave to the movements for democracy all over the Arab world. Obviously, Saudi Arabia has also been critical about Iran's relations with Qatar, but the real question is why Qatar is singled out and not Oman which has even closer ties to Iran? One of the reasons is the competition of the two royal families. Qatar is immensely successful. In repeated trips to the country, I have witnessed the success in terms of culture, education and business. Qatar acts like a huge contemporary beit al-hikmah for many Arab and regional intellectuals. It boasts a huge academic infrastructure which provides a deep, scholarly informed source of knowledge that Qataris can tap into. All of these features have allowed Qatar to considerably punch above its weight. The Saudis have none of these achievements and there is a good deal of envy about the influence that Qatar has on a global scale. Saudi Arabia acts like a jealous diva, that is left behind by history. In Yemen, in Syria, in Lebanon and in Iraq, Saudi Arabia is entirely marginal to mainstream politics. In Egypt the country is supporting a military autocracy that Egyptians rejected during the Arab Spring. The people of the region have proved repeatedly that the new yardstick for politics is democracy, pluralism, human rights and social equality. Any state that does not adhere to those standards will be washed away by the currents of history. I have discussed this in my "On the Arab revolts and the Iranian revolution" which was published by Bloomsbury a couple of years ago. The book sets out the mechanisms of power and resistance with reference to the recent events in the region.

Moreover, I just came back from giving a policy speech at the 2017 Doha Forum where I set out a vision for peace in the Persian Gulf. There was real

"In Yemen, in Syria, in Lebanon and in Iraq, Saudi Arabia is entirely marginal to mainstream politics."



"The people of the region have proved repeatedly that the new yardstick for politics is democracy, pluralism, human rights and social equality. Any state that does not adhere to those standards will be washed away by the currents of history."

concern and suspicion towards Iranian designs for the region, some of it mixed with paranoia, which, nonetheless, need to be addressed through diplomatic means.

The Saudi decision to boycott Qatar was precipitated by the vote of confidence given to King Salman by Donald Trump whose administration is geopolitically incompetent, as I have mentioned several times in the global media. It is framed by a policy of bullying and a neo-imperial language that is meant to inflate the importance of Trump as an important global actor at a time when he may be impeached in the United States because of alleged Russian meddling in Trump's favour during the election. I am in no doubt that history will judge him even worse than George W. Bush who has almost entirely vanished from the public eye for a reason. Trump is already seen as the most illiterate

and damaging President in the history of the United States. Everyone who knows me is aware that I don't usually use such explicit language when it comes to world events. But the fact is that the Trump administration is on the wrong side of history. The biggest irony in this farce is that the "Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques" is spearheading a boycott of a fellow Muslim nation during Ramadan. This decision to boycott Qatar questions the ability of the Saudi royal family to act as a force for peace amongst Muslim nations which is linked to their sovereignty over Mecca and Medina. Saudi Arabia has the duty to forge closer Muslim relations. This is linked to their claim to manage the haj for the ummah.

I think it is essential for Iran to launch a "Ramadan diplomatic offensive" to mitigate the repercussions of the conflict and to signal to Qatar full humanitarian and diplomatic support. In particular, Iran needs to liaise closer with Turkey which administers an important military base in Qatar. At the same time, I have always argued for close trans-Gulf relations that include Saudi Arabia. As I mentioned in my speech in Doha: In the 1970s, Iran and Saudi Arabia followed a modus vivendi in their relations, despite of Iran's interventions in the Arab world, the Shah's pro-Israeli policies, his support of Kurdish separatists in Northern Iraq with the help of the CIA and the Mossad, his attempt to annex Bahrain and his antagonism towards Nassir's Egypt. Regional states need to learn that they can't secure their national interests in exclusion of each other. Even Saudi Arabia and Iran share a common fate, if they want it or not. They are conjoined by geography, culture and religion. Any instability in one country will have detrimental effects on the other. We need ideas for peace, strategies of cooperation, theories of reconciliation. What about a Muslim Peace Studies Institute with a joint headquarter in Doha and Kish, for instance? →13

"Trump is already seen as the most illiterate and damaging President in the history of the **United States."**

Macron aims to consolidate power as France elects parliament

French voters cast their ballots on Sunday in the first round of a parliamentary election expected to give centrist President Emmanuel Macron the strong majority needed to carry out the far-reaching economic and social reforms he promises.

The vote to elect the lower house's 577 members comes a month after Macron, a 39-year-old former banker with little political experience, defied the odds to win the presidency of the euro zone's second-largest economy.

If, as polls project, Macron and his fledgling party win a commanding majority in next week's second round, it will be another blow for the mainstream parties on the right and left which failed to get a candidate into the presidential run-off.

"We want a big majority to be able to act and transform France over the next five years," Mounir Mahjoubi, a tech entrepreneur running under Macron's Republic On The Move (LREM) banner told Reuters as he canvassed support in his northern Paris constituency ahead of the vote.

Opinion polls forecast LREM and its center-right Modem allies will win at least 30 percent of votes on Sunday.

The conservative The Republicans party and its allies trail with about 20 percent, ahead of the far-right National Front on about 17 percent.

Such an outcome would transform into a landslide majority in the second round, the opinion polls show.

"I think voters are pretty mobilized behind LREM," said Georges Garion, a 64-year-old company manager, before voting began in Paris. "We're seeing a kind of majority cohesion, it's democracy at work."

While predicting the outcome can be tricky with 7,882 candidates vying for parliament's seats, even LREM's rivals have been saying they expect Macron to secure a majority.

Their strategy has been to urge voters to make sure the opposition will be big enough to have some clout in parliament. "We shouldn't have a monopolistic party," former prime minister Bernard



Cazeneuve, a Socialist, told Reuters.

Macron overhaul

The survival of the Socialist Party, which ruled France for the past five years but is forecast to get just 15 to 30 seats, is at stake, as is the unity of The Republicans. Some key figures from both parties have rallied behind Macron.

The National Front, reeling from a worse than expected score for chief Marine Le Pen in the presidential election, could miss its target to get enough lawmakers to form a parliamentary group. It is expected though to improve on the two deputies it had in the previous legislature.

In a country with unemployment hovering near 10 percent and at risk of breaking its public deficit commitments, Macron was elected president in May on pledges to overhaul labor rules to make hiring and firing easier, cut corporate tax and invest billions in areas including job training and renewable energy.

Macron also promised to clean up French politics after a string of scandals - a vow already tested by conflict of interest allegations against his former campaign chief Richard Ferrand, as well as reports that centrist ally Francois Bayrou's MoDem party used EU cash to fund Paris staff jobs.

"I thought about voting for Macron but I didn't," said pensioner Jacqueline Laurent after casting her ballot in the eastern town of Annecy, close to the Swiss border.

"With Ferrand and Bayrou we could see them falling back into the same old ways, so that was that. I changed my mind."

Polling stations close at 1800 (1600 GMT) in smaller cities and two hours later in Paris and other big cities. Results will come in slowly, alongside pollsters' estimates of the results.

Very few lawmakers are expected to be elected directly in the first round. To win, a candidate needs more than half of the votes cast and they must account for at least a quarter of the registered voters.

With many fresh faces among the candidates, a political landscape divided among many forces from the far-left to the far-right, and abstention predicted to be at over 40 percent, that is unlikely to happen in many constituencies.

(Source: Reuters)

U.S., Turkey discuss Qatar row, Syria on phone call Saudi 'blocking' of Qatari pilgrims in Mecca condemned

U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Turkish counterpart Mevlut Cavusoglu discussed developments in Syria and in the row between Qatar and its fellow Arab states on a phone call, Turkish foreign ministry sources said.

The call, held at Tillerson's request, came after Tillerson on Friday urged Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf states to ease their blockade of Qatar, saying it was causing unintended humanitarian consequences and affecting the U.S.-led fight against ISIL.

No further details of the call were immediately available.

Referring to Tillerson's comments on the blockade, Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said in a speech at a Ramadan fast-breaking dinner in Istanbul: "I say it should be lifted completely".

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain and Egypt severed relations with Qatar on Monday, accusing it of supporting militants and their adversary Iran - allegations Qatar says are baseless. Several countries followed suit

Erdogan vowed to keep supporting Qatar after his rapid approval of legislation on deploying Turkish troops there. On Saturday, he told Bahrain's foreign minister that the dispute should be resolved by the end of the holy month of Ramadan.

Erdogan on Thursday also approved an accord between Turkey and Qatar on military training cooperation. Both bills were drawn up before the dispute between Qatar and others erupted. Turkey has also pledged to provide food and water supplies to

Turkey has maintained good relations with Qatar as well as several of its Persian Gulf Arab neighbors. Turkey and Qatar have both provided support for the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and backed rebels fighting to overthrow Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

Turkey and fellow NATO member the United States have also been at loggerheads regarding U.S. support



the Syrian Kurdish YPG militia in the fight against ISIL in Syria. Turkey views the YPG as an extension of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which has waged a three-decade-long insurgency on its soil.

The United States said last week it had started supplying arms to the YPG for an assault on the Syrian town of Raqqa, deepening Turkey's anger. The YPG's role in the Raqqa campaign has strained ties between the United States and Turkey, which fears growing Kurdish ascendancy along its border.

Persian Gulf nations may let some Qataris stay amid diplomat-

Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates signaled Sunday they may allow some Qataris to stay in their countries amid a diplomatic rift with the Persian Gulf Arab nation.

Qatar meanwhile pledged those nations' citizens will have "complete freedom" to stay in the energy-rich

The three Persian Gulf nations cut ties to Qatar on June 5 over its alleged support of militants and ties to Iran and ordered all Qataris out within 14 days, while calling their own citizens back. That's created chaos across the Sunni Persian Gulf nations, whose citizens regularly intermarry and conduct

business across countries sharing long historic and cultural bonds.

Early Sunday, the three countries all issued statements urging mixed nationality families to call their respective interior ministries, which would take into consideration the "humanitarian circumstances" of their situation.

For its part, Qatar issued an overnight statement saying residents living in the country from nations that severed ties would have "complete freedom" to stay despite the "hostile and tendentious campaigns" now targeting it.

"The state of Qatar, in accordance to its firm beliefs and principles, works on avoiding political conflicts with states and governments when dealing with their people," the ministry said. "Those residents have the complete freedom in staying in the state of Qatar in accordance with the laws and regulations adopted by the state."

Condemnation

Meanwhile, Saudi authorities have prevented Qatari nationals from entering the Grand Mosque in Mecca, marking a sharp escalation in the Persian Gulf diplomatic crisis, Doha-based Al Sharq newspaper has reported.

Qatar's National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) received complaints from Qatari citizens that pilgrims from Qatar were barred from entering the Masjid al-Haram in Mecca, the paper said on Saturday.

Ali bin Smaikh al-Marri, the NHRC head, called the incident a flagrant violation of the right to practice religious rites as permitted by human rights conventions, the paper said.

The NHRC denounced the incident, considering the step a violation of the right to perform religious rituals guaranteed by human rights conventions, Al Sharq added.

It should be noted that Saudi authorities do not normally question people entering the Grand Mosque on their ethnicity or sectarian affiliation.

The claims come a few days after the UAE and Bahrain criminalized" sympathy" for Qatar on social media.

The UAE said offenders would be punished with a jail term of up to 15 years, and a \$136,000 fine. Bahrain declared it punishable by imprisonment of up to five years.

Since the diplomatic row erupted, slogans against and in support of Qatar have been among the top topics discussed on Twitter in Arabic, which is a hugely popular medium of expression in the Arab world, particularly in Saudi Arabia.

Protesters hold rally outside Saudi embassy in Ankara

Meanwhile, Protesters have rallied in front of the Saudi embassy in Ankara to denounce the kingdom's sudden rupture of diplomatic relations with Qatar.

The protesters on Saturday held up banners depicting U.S. President Donald Trump and leaders of Saudi Arabia and Egypt, in which they were seen placing their hands on a globe during a ceremony last month.

The banners referred to the controversial opening of the so-called Global Center for Combating Extremist Ideology in Riyadh during Trump's visit which culminated in the U.S. signing of a \$110 billion of arms deal with Saudi Arabia.

(Source: agencies)

Qatari FM: For Arabs, Hamas is a resistance movement

The Arab nations view Hamas as a "legitimate resistance movement" and not a "terrorist organization as viewed by the U.S.", Qatar's Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani has said.

In an interview with Russia Today during a visit he paid to Moscow, the Qatari foreign minister rejected accusations that Qatar was supporting Hamas.

"The U.S. views Hamas as a terror organization. But to the rest of the Arab nations, it is a legitimate resistance movement. We do not support Hamas, we support the Palestinian people," he said.

Hamas is the Palestinian group that has governed Gaza since 2007. The small strip of land, home to nearly two million Palestinians, has been under a crippling Israeli blockade for a decade. On Wednesday, Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Adel al-

Jubeir said Qatar must end its support for Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood before ties with other Arab Persian Gulf states could be restored. Jubeir added that Qatar was undermining the Palestinian

Authority and Egypt in its support of Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood.

"We don't think this is good. Qatar has to stop these policies so that it can contribute to stability in the Middle

policies so that it can contribute to stability in the Middle East," he said.

Qatar's foreign minister, however, added that the coun-

try's stance was in line with other Persian Gulf states.

"Hamas' presence in Qatar doesn't mean there's support for Hamas in Qatar which cooperates with the Palestinian Authority. Hamas' presence is a political representation of the Hamas movement."

Qatar's foreign minister told Al Jazeera on Thursday that the presence of Hamas' leaders in Qatar's capital Doha was "coordinated with the U.S." and aimed at facilitating Pales-

"Hamas' presence [in Doha] is coordinated with the U.S. and the countries in the region, and it's part of our effort to mediate between the Palestinian factions to reach reconciliation."

Hamas, meanwhile, said it was "shocked" by Saudi Arabia's call on Qatar to stop supporting the group.

Jubeir's remarks "constitute a shock for our Palestinian people and the Arab and Islamic nations", according to a Hamas statement released on Wednesday.

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt severed relations with Qatar on Monday, accusing it of supporting "extremists" and Iran - charges Qatar calls "baseless". (Source: Al Jazeera)

Trump state visit to Britain delayed over protest fears

U.S. President Donald Trump's planned state visit to Britain has been postponed after he told Prime Minister Theresa May in a phone conversation he did not want to come until the public supported his visit.

Citing an unnamed adviser at May's Downing Street office who was in the room at the time, the Guardian reported on its website that the conversation between the two leaders took place in recent weeks.

Downing Street spokesmen were not immediately available to comment.

(Source: Guardian)

Saif al-Islam Gaddafi freed from prison in Zintan

Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, the son of slain Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, has been released from prison, according to fighters who control the facility.

A statement from the Abu Bakr al-Siddiq Battalion, a militia which controls Zintan, a mountainous region southwest of the capital Tripoli, said Saif al-Islam was released late on Saturday.

"The armed group has issued a statement on its Facebook page saying that it has recently released Saif al-Islam Gaddafi upon request from the House of Representatives (HoR), the parliament that is based in the eastern city of Tobruk," Al Jazeera's Mahmoud Abdelwahed, reporting from the capital,

Since Gaddafi's four-decade rule ended in 2011, Libya has struggled to establish basic institutions and rule of law.

The Tobruk-based HoR is one of the three rival administrations in Libya - the others being the UN-backed government of National Accord (GNA) in Tripoli, which has struggled to exert its authority, and the self-declared National Salvation Government, also in the capital.

HoR, which does not recognize the other two governments' leadership, is backed by renegade General Khalifa Haftar.

"We understand that a couple of days ago, a deputy justice minister of the government affiliated to the Tobruk-based parliament visited Saif al-Islam Gaddafi in the jail in Zintan and demanded his immediate release," said Abdelwahed.

"There has been no official comment from the GNA, and the news of the release of Saif al-Islam Gaddafi might add more fuel to the fire, [worsening] the chaotic political and security situation in the country," he added.

The most prominent of Gaddafi's sons, Saif al-Islam, 44, was captured in Zintan in November 2011 as he was fleeing to neighboring Niger after opposition fighters seized Tripoli

He was sentenced to death in July 2015 by a court in Tripoli in a mass trial of former Gaddafi government officials. He is wanted by the International Criminal Court on

charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The commander of the Abu Bakr al-Siddiq Battalion, Ajmi al-Atiri, was set to release a video statement explaining the details of the release.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

NEWS IN BRIEF



Copper cathode output exceeds 26,000 tons in 2 months

TEHRAN — Iran's copper cathode outd e s k put has exceeded 26,000 tons during the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-May 21, 2017), IRNA reported on Sunday.

Based on the report, the figure fell near 12 percent compared to the same period last year.

compared to the same period last year.

Iran has put the annual production of 450,000 tons of

Iran has put the annual production of 450,000 tons of copper cathode on the agenda by the end of its outlook plan for the calendar year of 1404 (ends on March 20, 2026).

Qatar banks can survive Persian Gulf, foreign funds withdrawal, S&P says

Qatari banks are strong enough to survive the pullout of all Persian Gulf money and then some, according to S&P Global Ratings

SPGR ran two hypothetical scenarios of capital flight, and concluded that Qatar's lenders could survive the withdrawal of all Persian Gulf deposits plus a quarter of the remaining foreign funds the banks keep.



Deposits and other funding sources from PGCC countries represent about 8 percent of total liabilities of Qatari lenders or \$20 billion, S&P said after examining the 2016 positions of the four biggest banks in Qatar. In the worst case, only two unidentified lenders would have to dip into their investment securities portfolio, it concluded.

"We believe the recent developments might result in an outflow of external funding for Qatari banks over the next few months, depending on how the situation evolves," S&P Global Ratings said. In both scenarios, "the results show the rated Qatari banks to be in a decent position, on a stand-alone basis, to face a significant reduction of external funding."

Capital flight has been a looming potential danger since Saudi Arabia and its allies began tightening the noose on Qatar on June 5. The kingdom, along with the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Bahrain, cut diplomatic relations and imposed a land, sea and air blockade. Qatar, the world's largest exporter of liquefied natural gas, denies the charges and says the Saudis aspire to dominate the region.

So far there have been no orders to withdraw money from Qatari banks, but the Saudi central bank has ordered banks not to increase their exposure to Qatari clients. It has also told banks licensed in the kingdom not to process payments denominated in Qatari riyals, people familiar with the matter said last week.

The U.A.E.'s central bank asked local lenders to do enhanced customer due diligence for any accounts they hold in six Qatari banks, state-run WAM news agency reported Sunday.

Despite the resilience that S&P's tests showed, "the situation remains very fluid" and could evolve in different directions, in part depending on how long the spat lasts and whether other countries join the sanctions, it said.

Qatar banks' net external debt totaled about \$50 billion at the end of April, the company said. The average tenor of these funds is "relatively short," expiring in less than one year, with a "significant portion coming from Europe and Asia," it said.

S&P last week lowered Qatar's long-term rating by one level to AA-, the fourth-highest investment grade, and put it on negative watch. Qatari stocks have dropped 5.3 percent since June 5, and the index was down 2.25 percent as of 11:41 a.m. in Doha.

(Source: Bloomberg)

Airbus may look beyond UK unless Brexit demands met

Airbus could move production of new aircraft models out of Britain if the European plane-maker's "non-negotiable" demands over the free movement of people and trade tariffs are not delivered in upcoming Brexit talks, the Sunday Times reported.

Britain is due to begin negotiations with the rest of the European Union about the terms of its departure in nine days time, despite Prime Minister Theresa May being weakened by losing her majority in Thursday's election.

Fabrice Bregier, chief operating officer of Airbus, said a deal must allow its staff from all over the world to enter Britain easily, ensure that parts are exempt from trade tariffs and ensure certain regulatory standards are maintained.

Otherwise, he said, Britain would risk losing Airbus production in the future. "For new productions, it's very easy to have a new plant somewhere in the world. We would have plenty of offers to do that," Bregier said, according to the newspaper.

"We want to stay in the UK— provided the conditions to work in an integrated organization are met."

May might be forced to reassess her Brexit priorities after being weakened by the election. She has previously said she wants Britain to withdraw from Europe's custom union as well as its single market. She has also said no deal would be better than a bad deal, implying she could accept tariffs on imports and exports.

Airbus Chief Executive Tom Enders said on Thursday that a "hard Brexit" where trade tariffs between the UK and European Union were imposed could potentially impact the competitiveness of the firm's activities in Britain.

Airbus employs over 10,000 people across two plants in Britain, according to the company's website.

site. (Source: New York Times)

Tehran, Vienna seek deeper economic ties

Austria to open €1b credit line for Iran

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iranian Finance Minister de s k Ali Tayyebnia and Industry Minister Mohammadreza Nematzadeh in separate meetings with Austria's Federal Minister of Finance Hans Jörg Schelling on Saturday and Sunday sought avenues for increasing economic and banking ties between the two countries.

During his meeting with Tayyebnia at the place of Iran's Ministry of Finance on Saturday evening, Schelling announced that Austria's Oberbank will grant €1 billion for financing investment projects in Iran, IRNA reported.

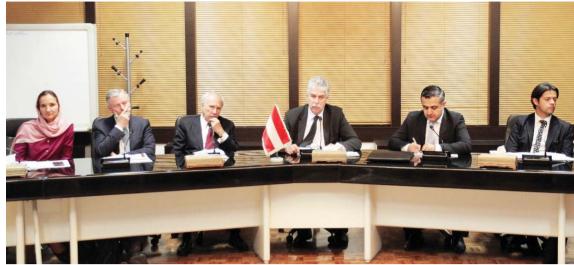
The two sides underscored the vitality of improving banking ties and in particular brokerage relations.

The two ministers also accorded on signing a Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) in future as well as developing customs cooperation under EU regulations.

After the held meeting, as Tasnim news agency reported, the Governor of Central Bank of Austria (Oesterreichische Nationalbank) Ewald Nowotny told reporters in a news conference that after the visit paid by the governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) to Austria, last year, the two countries have been enjoying warm mutual banking ties.

He added that an account was opened in Oester-reichische Nationalbank for Iran's CBI last year and as agreed during the Saturday meeting between the two ministers an Austrian bank will resume operation in Iran in near future.

Iran-Austria trade currently stands at \$400 million and the figure is planned to reach \$5 billion in future, Mehr news agency quoted Tayyebnia as saying.



"There is a long way to hit the set target, but regarding the available capacities, I believe that the trade volume will reach \$5 billion within three next years," he

In a Sunday meeting between Schelling and Nematzadeh at the place of Iran's Ministry of Industry, both ministers underlined the importance of enhancing mutual economic ties, Shata news agency reported.

Expressing content about the growth of economic partnership between the two sides as of implementation

of Iran's nuclear deal in January 2016, Nematzadeh said that despite existing impediments on the way of boosting ties, we hope that we can improve our common ties in various fields such as scientific, technical, trade, and investment.

The Austrian minister, for his turn, referred to the mutual cooperation background between Iran and Austria and voiced tendency for resuming all-out ties. He also highlighted the significance of forming a joint economic committee between the two sides.

Iran exports food products to Doha amid Qatar blockade

ECONOMYd e s k sent five cargoes of food products to Qatar in recent days and one more will be sent soon, Tasnim reported on Sunday.

According to Íran Air spokesman Shahrokh Nooshabadi the cargos each weighing 90 tons contained perishable products.

"We will continue sending such cargos while there is still request from the Qatari side," the official said.

Three ships loaded with 350 tons of fruit and vegetables were also set to leave an Iranian port for Qatar, the Tasnim news agency quoted a local of-

ficial as saying.

The port of Dayyer is Iran's closest port to Qatar.

In the biggest diplomatic crisis in the region in years, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates, plus Egypt and Yemen, last Monday announced they were cutting all ties with Qatar, accusing it of supporting extremism.

The Islamic republic has also opened its airspace to about 100 more Qatari flights a day, after Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates banned Oatari planes from their airspace.

The new flights have increased Iranian air traffic by 17 percent.

Tehran, Damascus discuss broadening banking ties

d e s k nor of Central bank of Iran (CBI) and his Syrian counterpart and his accompanying delegation discussed expansion of bilateral banking ties in Tehran on Sunday, Mehr news agency reported.

Underscoring that common banking ties between Iran and Syria should be developed via using national currencies, CBI governor Valiollah Seif said that barriers on the way to boost banking ties have been recognized and will be removed in near future.

The Syrian bank governor Duraid Durgham, for his part, said that regarding the held joint meeting between

banking officials of the two countries and the current relations between Iran and Syria, common banking partnership should be improved.

He called for both countries' banks to support economic projects in each of the countries.

Foreign investment in Iran rose 63% in 2016: UNCTAD

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Attracting d e s k \$3.372 billion worth of foreign investment in 2016, Iran has registered a 63 percent rise in this regard, IRNA reported on Sunday.

According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)'s latest report called World Investment Report 2017, Iran has been among successful countries in terms of signing investment agreements in 2016.

The report also said Iran's highest rate of foreign investment attraction goes back to 2012 when the country recorded \$4.662 billion of foreign investment. The figure though fell significantly in the next few years due to the sanctions imposed

on the country's economy.

In 2015, the total value of foreign investment in the country stood at \$2.05 billion, the lowest rate in the last six years

Based on the report, signing a total of 37 international investment agreements (IIA) in 2016, Iran ranked third among the world's top economies in terms of

the number of signed IIAs.

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development was established in 1964 as a permanent intergovernmental body.

UNCTAD is the principal organ of the United Nations General Assembly dealing with trade, investment, and development issues.



ONE-STEP INTERNATIONAL TENDER GOVERNMENT TRADING CORPORATION OF IRAN

The Government Trading Corporation of Iran (hereinafter referred to as GTC), affiliated to the Ministry of Agricultural Jihad of the Islamic Republic of Iran, intends to **purchase 60,000 M/Ts 10 pct M/L** raw cane sugar, through single stage international tender.

All of qualified companies and suppliers that are interested to bid above tender are invited to receive tender documents from Thursday June 13, 2017 until Saturday July 01, 2017 from the secretary of Tenders Committee, located on the 4th Floor, No. 12, Jahad Square, Tehran, Iran along with an official letter of introduction.

The bid participants are required to submit their stamped and sealed envelopes containing their offers latest on Tuesday August 01, 2017 (during working hours) to the secretary of Tenders Committee located on the 4th Floor. Meanwhile, the meeting for the opening of the envelopes will be held on Wednesday, dated August 02, 2017 at 11:00 AM, with the presence of bidder's representatives in our Purchasing Committee (9th Floor, No. 12, Jahad Square, Tehran, Iran).

Bid Bond: The bid bond worth **EUR 481,490** in cash or bank guarantee with three months validity and extendible for another three months.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, YOU MAY REFER TO OUR WEBSITE: WWW.GTC-PORTAL.COM OR CONTACT US BY PHONE NO. 0098 21 88957477 (Foreign Trade Department)



ONE-STEP INTERNATIONAL TENDER

GOVERNMENT TRADING CORPORATION OF IRAN

The Government Trading Corporation of Iran (hereinafter referred to as GTC), affiliated to the Ministry of Agricultural Jihad of the Islamic Republic of Iran, intends to **purchase 30,000 M/Ts 10 pct M/L** crude degummed soybean oil, through single stage international tender.

All of qualified companies and suppliers that are interested to bid above tender are invited to receive tender documents from Thursday June 13, 2017 until Saturday July 01, 2017 from the secretary of Tenders Committee, located on the 4th Floor, No. 12, Jahad Square, Tehran, Iran along with an official letter of introduction.

The bid participants are required to submit their stamped and sealed envelopes containing their offers latest on Tuesday August 01, 2017 (during working hours) to the secretary of Tenders Committee located on the 4th Floor. Meanwhile, the meeting for the opening of the envelopes will be held on Wednesday, dated August 02, 2017 at 9:00 AM, with the presence of bidder's representatives in our Purchasing Committee (9th Floor, No. 12, Jahad Square, Tehran, Iran).

Bid Bond: The bid bond worth **EUR 447,750** in cash or bank guarantee with three months validity and extendible for another three months.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, YOU MAY REFER TO OUR WEBSITE: WWW.GTC-PORTAL.COM OR CONTACT US BY PHONE NO. 0098 21 88957477 (Foreign Trade Department)

Russia sees oil market balancing in first quarter as prices slip

A deal among oil-producing countries to curb production and balance an oversupplied market will achieve its objective in the first quarter of next year, Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak said, after prices slipped on news of a build-up in U.S. inventories.

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and other crude producers including Russia agreed on May 25 to extend the deal, which they reached last year, until the end of the first quarter. Prices slumped on the news that they would not cut any deeper and fell further on June 7 as U.S. stockpiles unexpectedly grew. Benchmark Brent crude closed at \$48.15 a barrel on Friday.

The agreement is working and crude inventories are decreasingly gradually at a global level, Novak said Sunday in Astana, a day after meeting his Saudi counterpart Khalid Al-Falih. Demand will recover in the first quarter, reducing stockpiles, and Russia is committed to doing everything to balance the market,

OPEC's biggest producer Saudi Arabia also weighed in on Saturday, as Al-Falih said the market would stabilize in the next few months. There is no need for producers to cut more than they're doing already, Al-Falih said, according to the Interfax news agency.

(Source: Bloomberg)



Saudi's Falih sees no need to alter oil-cuts deal, Interfax says

Saudi Arabia doesn't see any need for changes to the oil-cuts deal agreed on by OPEC and its allies last month in Vienna, Oil Minister Khalid Al-Falih said, according to Interfax.

Additional production curbs aren't necessary, Al-Falih said Saturday in Astana, Kazakhstan, according to the news service. The oil market will stabilize in the next few months,

Although members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and its partners agreed May 25 to extend their oil-cuts agreement for nine months, crude prices have since slid as rising supplies show the difficulty in clearing the global glut. Prices have continued to slip even amid turmoil in the Middle East, the world's largest producing region.



The recent price decline doesn't warrant a reaction, Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak said Saturday, according to Interfax. There's no need for an extraordinary OPEC/ non-OPEC meeting, he insisted after meeting with Al-Falih and his Kazakh counterpart Kanat Bozumbayev in Astana, according to the news ser-

(Source: Bloomberg)

Russia, Saudi Arabia, Kazakhstan committed to OPEC deal

Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak said Saturday he had discussed the current situation on the oil market during the meeting with his counterparts from Saudi Arabia and Kazakh-

As part of the meeting, Novak, Khalid Falih and Kanat Bozumbayev reiterated their commitment to the oil production cuts deal of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and non-OPEC states.

"We have discussed the current situation, we have once again confirmed the commitment... to the agreement. We will work together on the market regulation," Novak told journalists.

There is no need for reacting on any events occurring around OPEC countries, since the oil output cut deal was being implemented in line with



the plan, Novak added.

In November 2016, the OPEC member states signed an agreement in Vienna limiting oil production by 1.2 million barrels per day. On December 10, 11 non-OPEC countries decided to jointly cut oil output by 558,000 barrels per day, with Russia cutting its output by 300,000 barrels per day for six months from January 2017.

(Source: Sputnik)

Oil pipelines to be inspected by robots

The robots are coming to oil and gas. This message is something we've been hearing a lot lately, what with autonomous trucks, piloted by Canada's Suncor, to automated drilling rigs, robots that collect seismic survey data, and even self-sufficient, remotely operated entirely submerged oil production platforms. And that list is likely to grow in

Besides all these major robotic applications for the oil and gas industry, there are also robots that can conduct pipeline inspections from the inside. An array of four such robots will later this year be used to inspect a 40-year branch of the Trans-Alaska pipeline system at the Valdez

The robots were developed by a Russia-based company, Diakont, which says that its pipeline crawlers—Remotely Operated Diagnostic Inspection System or RODIS crawlers—supply highly accurate data and they do it in real time, which helps with timely decision-making. From a single access point, the company says, its robots can examine up to 1,800 feet of pipes with diameters ranging between 8 and

Alaska Dispatch News reporter Alex DeMarban writes that the four robots, all with human names, by the way, will use lasers and a technology similar to ultrasound to check a 350-foot underground pipeline section for signs of corrosion. The pipeline branch feeds crude from the Trans-Alaska pipeline to storage tanks at Valdez.

This is not the first-time robots will be used for internal pipeline inspection, replacing the so-called smart pigs, or pipeline inspection gauges, that rely on magnetic sensors to detect corrosion and cracks. However, the smart pigs are quite long and cannot be used to inspect branches off the

DeMarban quotes a spokeswoman for the Alveska Pipeline Service Co. as saying that in the last few years, the likes of Alice, Dee, Fiona, and Gary have been deployed to several underground branches of the Trans-Alaska pipeline that were never before inspected internally because of the impossibility of access for the smart pigs. All the robots need is a clean pipe, flushed with hot water and detergent or diesel fuel.

The robots have retractable legs that allow them to basically circle the diameter of the pipeline, go into vertical sections and turn other corners. They are not wireless, however - they are connected to their operator by a cord via which the data they receive from their surroundings is transmitted. And here's one fun fact from Diakont's U.S. management: the three robots with female names got them because they are a bit smarter than the "male" one. They can crawl through changing diameters mid-pipe, the company's director of pipeline services Brian Carlson told DeMarban.

Diakont says that its robots can be used for all sorts of pipelines, including offshore ones - an application that should have a bright future in light of all the worries around underwater oil and gas pipelines. A robot inspection could quench these worries—albeit temporarily—much better than a company statement full of verbal assurances.

Could all these robots one day combine into an almost completely automated supply chain? It's not impossible. Automated rigs will drill the wells, extraction will also be automatic and so will field maintenance. How soon this will happen, however, is another question. (Source: oilprice.com)

U.S. aims to dethrone Qatar with LNG war



The U.S. is expected to 'dethrone' Qatar, the biggest global LNG exporter, with its 30 planned LNG terminals and with six more under construction.

According to official figures from the International Gas Union and the International Group of Liquefied Natural Gas Importers, Qatar exported 77 million tons of LNG in 2016.

While sales to the Asian region accounted for more than 60 percent of Qatar's total LNG exports, the country's top export destinations were Japan, South Korea, India, the UK and China. Qatar exported 14.5 million tons of LNG to Japan, 12.3 million to South Korea, 8.8 million to India, 9.3 million to the UK and around 5 million tons to China.

The U.S. appears to be the strongest challenger to Qatar's LNG leadership in the near term, with annual LNG exports in 2015 totaling 330 thousand tons.

The U.S. aims to take a more active role in Asia in the mid-term with plans to invest in LNG terminals, with anticipated completion dates between 2018 and 2024.

The country currently has two active terminals set for LNG exports - the Kenai LNG terminal with a capacity of 1.5 million tons, which in 2016 did not export LNG. The second is the Sabine Pass LNG terminal, which is actively exporting LNG. Exports of around 2.9 million tons of LNG were made through the Sabine Pass in 2016. Further plans are afoot to have additional capacity of

Other LNG terminals under construction are Freeport (15.3 million tons), Cameron (12 million tons), Covepoint (5.25 million tons), Elba Island (2.5 million tons) and Corpus Christi (9 million tons).

The total capacity of the U.S.' six under-construction projects is estimated at 57.55 million tons, and when all planned terminals are operational, the total LNG export capacity of the country is expected to exceed 300 mil-

It is anticipated that the U.S.' targeting of Asian and Latin American markets through its planned projects will displace Qatar from its position as the world's LNG Currently, Australia is the second largest LNG seller

worldwide. The country, which has a total export capacity of 32.8 million tons of LNG, has five terminals under construction and eight planned terminal projects.

The total capacity of the planned investments is 63.8 million tons, and when combined with the current capacity, Australia could surpass Qatar in the mid-term.

Russia, which is the global leading seller of natural gas, sells the most pipelined gas and is also trying to adapt to the dominant LNG trend in energy markets.

The current capacity of Russia's active LNG terminal Sakhalin II amounts to 9.6 million tons. The country makes the most LNG sales to Japan through this terminal. It is also constructing the Yamal LNG terminal with a current capacity of 16.5 million tons, and plans three more LNG terminals, namely Vladivostok (15 million tons), Baltic LNG (10 million tons) and Sakhalin LNG terminal (5 million tons).

The Yamal LNG is expected to be operational by

While the construction of the China-backed Yamal LNG terminal is ongoing, the combined capacity of the other three projects with Yamal will reach 46.5 million tons in the mid-term

Russia's Novatek holds a 50.1 percent share in the Yamal LNG project while Total and China's CNPC each hold a 20 percent stake while the Chinese Silk Road Fund has a 9.9 percent share interest.

Due to international sanctions, Iran was unable to realize its previously planned LNG terminal projects, but it now wants to have a share in the LNG market.

Currently, Iran does not have an operational LNG terminal, but previously the country had plans for four LNG terminals. Due to the sanctions, the construction of the Iran LNG terminal was suspended.

Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zangeneh invited the French giant Total to invest in LNG in late April. In the meantime, Qatar is pursuing business alliance

opportunities with Iran in the natural gas field. (Source: Daily Sabah)





Public Calls For Quality Evaluating Of Tender(First publish/second publish)

one-stage(compressed)						
TENDER GUARANTEE		ESTIMATED	SUB.JECT OF	Tenders Portal	TENDER NO. /	
Euro	Rial	VALUE (Rial)	TENDER	Reg. No.	INDENT NO	No
5327	186,420,000	3,728,300,000	p/f mi " swaco " centrifuge model:cd500	1487378	Tender No .: PF/05-96/015 Indent No.: 9245351	1

Brief description of subject:

National Iranian Drilling Company(NIDC) address Pasdaran Blev., Airport Saqare, Ahvaz, Iran hereby intends to purchase some oil well crown block sheave from qualified and interested tenderers through one-stage public tender (semi-pressed) upon following terms

A) Oualitative evaluation of tenderer:

The evaluation is based on article (j) implementing regulations of the law of tenders and also carried out base on worksheets qualitative evaluation inquiry in the tender documents. Minimum acceptable point of quality is 60.

B) Preparation of tender documents:

Purchasing of documents: In order to receive the tender documents, 510,000 Rials should be paid to SIBA account number 2174652205004 of NIDC in Bank Meli Iran and providing the original deposit receipt.

Receiving of documents: Tenderers must be obtain the quality evaluation documents along with tender documents maximum ten days after the date of second publication in person at the following address: Hall No.:113, 1thfloor, Foreign

Procurement Dept., National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN

Notice: Only the real or legal persons who apply to purchase and receive tender documents from foreign procurement department in due date will be known as tenderer from tender committee.

C) Delivery of envelopes of bids and call quality evaluating:

Tenderers shall submit simultaneously envelopes of bids including bank guarantees (A), financial offer(C) and stamped and signed of tender documents (B) along with qualification worksheets in form of software in CD and documentary within 40 days from last day of document received deadline to the following address: Hall No.:107, 1st Floor, Tender Committee, Building operations, National Iranian

Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN. Notice: The deadline for the refusal of bidders participation in the tender is the last day of determined for submission of bids.

D) Tender Guarantee: Type of guarantee:

A)Bank guarantees or guarantees issued by non-bank institutions that have activities licensed by the Central

Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran. B) The original cash deposit receipt paid to National Iranian Drilling Company.

Duration of credit guarantee & quotation:

This duration should be valid for 90 days and extendable maximum For one time in initial credit amount. More on this & other tenders is accessible by click on. WWW.NIDC.IR

> Foreign Procurement Dept National Iranian Drilling Company

تهران تایمز : نوبت اول ۹۶/۳/۲۱نوبت دوم ۹۶/۳/۲۲

What is fuelling ISIL's wave of Ramadan violence?

The end of Ramadan is always eagerly anticipated. This year, for security officials in the Islamic world and the west, it cannot come fast enough.

Even before the start of the Muslim holy month two weeks ago, attacks claimed by Islamic State (ISIL) were bringing death and destruction. On 22 May, a suicide bomber outside a pop concert in Manchester killed 22 people. The bloodiest attack in the UK for 12 years, it marked only the beginning of a wave of violence stretching across half the planet.



the city of Marawi last week.

Since then, gunmen in Egypt have opened on a convoy of Coptic Christian pilgrims. Nigeria, the ISIL affiliate Boko Haram launched an attack on a regional capital in the country's north-east. In the Philippines, the fought government hundreds of gunmen linked to ISIL to regain control of a city. In Baghdad, ISIL terrorists bombed queuing for ice cream. A Philippine soldier fighting Isis in In Kabul a truck bomb blamed on ISIL killed

150. Three men killed eight people and injured more than 50 in the center of London using a van and knives. Twelve died in a startling attack in Iran. In Australia and in Paris, there have been lone attackers claiming to be ISIL members

An upsurge of violence

The intensity and scope of this onslaught surprised analysts and officials. Ramadan was favored by ISIL to launch attacks long before the group surged to global prominence. But since the group's capture of swaths of territory in the core of the Middle East and its declaration of a new caliphate in 2014, the holy month has always seen an upsurge of violence.

This year, however, there is an added factor fuelling the strikes, experts say.

"ISIL wants to survive as an organization. It does not want to disappear when it loses territory ... Top of the list of its strengths is external operations, so it needs to keep that going to attract donations, recruits and keep up the brand strength," said Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, a Washington-based analyst.

ISIL has denied that the current wave of attacks in the UK and Europe is linked to the series of military defeats it has suffered in its Middle Eastern strongholds over the last 18 months, saying it will recapture "every inch of territory lost" over the coming years.

The group has lost most of the towns it once held in Iraq and much of the city of Mosul. In Syria, an offensive against its headquarters in the provincial capital of Ragga is under way.

In the most recent issue of its online magazine, Rumiyah (Rome), ISIL said losing territory was "nothing new" and would lead only to "ISIL regrouping ... [and]

rekindling the flames of war". The group has previously said it was forced "into the desert" between 2006 and 2011 but overcame the setback. Many analysts believe recent victories over the group

in Iraq and Syria may not be decisive. Jean-Pierre Filiu, professor of Middle East studies at Sciences Po in Paris, said any supposed victory might be "pyrrhic" as there was "no credible Arab Sunni partner fighting alongside Kurdish and Shia forces which could control the ground with the support of local communities

Total defeat

"ISIL is very far from total defeat ... Only two-thirds of Mosul is liberated. The battle for Raqqa will be long and dirty. And even afterwards it is a delusion that ISIL will be eliminated," Filiu said.

Many experts foresee ISIL retaining scattered bases in Iraq and Syria from which it could launch – or at least organize and inspire - further terrorist attacks on the west, as well as violence across the Islamic world.

"The losses would limit capacity, but [terrorist planners] don't need to control the territory, they just need a safe haven and there is no shortage of places in the world where they can find them," said Gartenstein-Ross.

One powerful **•** dynamic continuing rivalry with al-Qaida, the veteran group responsible for the 9/11 attacks. The recent bombing Iran was motivated by sectarian hatred but also distinguish ISIL from al-Oaida, which has never

Intensity and scope of onslaught has surprised many, **but ISIL has** long favored by a desire to further launching attacks over holy month.

attacked the Shia-majority state.

Al-Qaida has consolidated a powerful presence in the Sahel, Yemen and Syria in recent years and recently called for so-called "lone wolf" attacks in the west. Its affiliate in Somalia has launched a series of attacks on local security forces in recent weeks.

ISIL devoted much of the most recent edition of

Rumiyah to east Asia.

"We have all focused on ISIL because of the territorial gain ... [But] Al-Qaida is still there ... And more generally, this sort of ideology is still attractive and very effective ... it has been growing for two decades at least and is still on the up in the Arab world, in Africa and in Asia," said Richard Barrett, former head of counter-terrorism for MI6.

(Source: The Guardian)

How Trump's ME trip could make Saudi compensate families of 9/11 victims

Jim Kreindler was in his law firm's offices in New York's midtown when the attackers struck on 9/11.

Since then, he has dedicated thousands of hours and millions of dollars trying to secure what he considers justice for the families of those who were killed – an admission, or else a court decision, that officials from Saudi Arabia provided material support to the 19 al-Qaeda hijackers.

Earlier this year, Kreindler filed a suit against Saudi Arabia on behalf of the families of 850 individuals who were killed and 1,500 who were injured. "9/11 could not have happened without Saudi Arabia's support for al-Qaeda," he said.

First foreign trip

Last month, Donald Trump visited the kingdom during his first foreign trip as president, where he agreed a \$100bn

Saudi Arabia has always denied that it was involved in the attacks that left almost 3,000 dead. But Kreindler now believes Trump's engagement with Riyadh has created a situation whereby Saudi Arabia may be tempted to settle.

"I believe this engagement helps," he said, seated at his desk, looking out over Manhattan. "If they are going to make billions of dollars out of infrastructure deals and the Royal family is preserved, maybe some wise person is going to say 'we have to get out of this 9/11 mess'. Because it's not going away."

The issue is hugely controversial. The filing of the lawsuit against Saudi Arabia was only possible after the passing earlier this year of the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act (JASTA) – a piece of legislation that allows Americans to sue foreign states in U.S. courts. Barack Obama had opposed the law, but the Senate overturned his veto of the legislation. (Trump, by contrast, strongly supported the bill.)

Saudi Arabia had spent millions of dollars lobbying against the law, and is now trying to have it modified. It was recently revealed that a Washington lobbying firm, Qorvis MSLGROUP, had paid scores of U.S. military veterans to protest against the legislation, claiming



Saudi Arabia had spent millions of dollars lobbying against the law (JASTA), and is now trying to have it modified.

that it could threaten U.S. service personnel by making them vulnerable to retaliatory lawsuits by foreign governments.

The veterans were sent on all-paid four day trips to Washington DC, without

being told that Saudi Arabia was picking up the tab. When they found out, most were horrified.

"I joined the Marine Corps as a direct result of 9/11, so to be wined and dined by the very people I joined to fight

against, that was sickening," Timothy Cord, who served as a Marine sergeant in Iraq, told the New York Post.

The suit, which was filed in federal court in the Southern District of New York and will be heard U.S. District Judge George Daniels, seeks unspecified monetary damages.

It claims that Saudi Arabia supported al-Qaeda in four critical ways. Firstly, it names several Saudi charities that were "alter egos of the government" and ran terrorist training camps in Afghanistan. It says the Saudi Arabia directly funded Osama Bin Laden's terror group, and supported it by providing the hijackers with passports.

Finally, it identifies Saudi officials in the U.S. who worked with the hijackers in the 18 months leading up to the attacks, "providing them with money, cover, advice, contacts, transportation, assistance with language and U.S. culture, identification, access to pilot training and other material support and resources".

A source of radical

Saudi Arabia has long existed as a source of radical, extremist - something that both the U.S. and UK have been happy to exploit, or either look the other way, when it has suited them.

Yet it has retained its own lawyers in the U.S., as it has sought to defend itself and deny involvement in the attacks. Two years ago, lawyer Michael Kellogg told a court that plaintiffs seeking damages had failed to produce "admissible, concrete, competent evidence" that Saudi Arabia

Asked to comment on the lawsuit filed following the passage of JASTA, Kellogg said: "Sorry. But I don't speak about pending cases."

Kreindler said Saudi Arabia had until 1 August to file a motion to dismiss his firm's lawsuit. His response to that is due on 1 October. He believes that if all goes to plan, the case could begin in either December, or January of next year.

"We have tones of evidence. Most of it is based on things the government has said - either the U.S. government, or else other governments, such as the Germans," he said. "I'm an optimist."

(Source: Independent)

After rushing to Qatar's aid, Turkey may have to rethink its Mideast ties

The only firm opposition to the "Let's Teach Qatar a Lesson" operation currently underway in the Middle East is coming from Turkey. Even U.S. President Donald Trump initially loudly applauded the campaign led by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates — though he has since taken a more conciliatory tone.

The Turkish government, which had drafted a plan some time ago to send troops to Qatar to firm up a Sunni front against Iran, fast-tracked legislation needed to send troops abroad.

Turkish-Arab relations are passing through erration times. Everyone was wondering what position Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan would take in the Qatari crisis. Erdogan had won the hearts and minds of the Persian Gulf emirs and kings earlier this year by declaring the need to "prevent the Persian nationalist expansion." Many observers thought he would take a pragmatic approach to avoid losing favor with many other countries just to please Qatar. Erdogan's widely publicized but futile telephone diplomacy to solve the crisis was interpreted as a desperate attempt to avoid having to choose between Qatar and Saudi Arabia and its allies. But at the end of the day, Ankara decided to interpret the actions against Qatar as if they had been taken against Turkey.

Erdogan said there are other motives behind what is being done to Qatar, but he wasn't specific.

It didn't take Ankara long to reach the conclusion that, after Qatar, Turkey is the likely next target. After all, just like Qatar, Turkey had become a staunch guardian of the Muslim Brotherhood and was in full harmony with Qatar in the proxy war raging in Syria. All the reasons cited by the Saudi king and the U.S. president to declare Qatar a "supporter of terror" could easily be applied to Turkey. Full support of the sanctions against Qatar from Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, who had toppled the Muslim Brotherhood in his country, no doubt played a key role in Erdogan's lining up with Qatar.

A critical step

Turkey felt compelled to take a critical step, convinced that the developments were not confined only to Qatar. Turkey, which had earlier decided to build a base in Qatar, fast-tracked through the parliament this week two accords approving deployment of Turkish soldiers in that country and to train the Qatari gendarmerie. According to the first accord, which will be valid for 10 years and can be extended for five-year periods, there will be a Qatar-Turkey Tactical Division Headquarters to be commanded by a Qatari major general, assisted by a Turkish brigadier general. Some 500-600 soldiers will be based at the headquarters. Currently there are



Turkey's misguided actions in the Syrian crisis poisoned and complicated relations with Arab and Islamic worlds.

95 Turkish military personnel in Qatar. An explosives demolition team with 25-30 members will also be going. The second accord will enable Turkey to train about 4,000 Qatari gendarmerie personnel.

Opposition parties in Turkey's parliament called for Turkey to remain neutral in the Arab world dispute, but their demands didn't prevent the ruling Justice and Development Party from passing the accords. In arguing the case, Ozturk Yilmaz, deputy chairman of the main opposition group, the Republican People's Party, said: "We know that some countries want to topple the emir and replace him with a new ruler. Who will our force confront? If [Qatar wants] to use those troops to preserve the Qatari ruling family, shall we be supporting that objective? Will we be involved in internal security operations of Qatar? Please don't subject Turkey to this nasty nonsense.

Filiz Kerestecioglu of the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) accused the government of trying to drag the country into a quagmire to find new markets for the defense industry. HDP deputy Chairman Mithat Sancar warned that Turkey might soon be accused of cooperating with terrorists.

According to sources close to the Ankara government, although Saudi King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al Saud had developed close relations with Ankara, Qatar has a special, distinct place in Erdogan's heart and Turkey sees Qatar as its most important ally in the Persian Gulf.

Turkey's government has yet come up with a satisfactory explanation of what its troops will be doing in Qatar, apart from noting that, after all, Turkey has gendarmerie cooperation accords with 18 countries.

Turkey's misguided actions

There have been several striking examples of Turkey's earlier attempts to assist with crises in the Arab world, all of which backfired. Turkey almost intervened to protect King Faisal II of Iraq against the uprising by Gen. Abd al-Karim Qasim in 1958. Turkey almost ended up in Lebanon in 1958 upon invitation of President Camille Chamoun. Of course there is no need to elaborate nere on how Turkey's misquided actions in the Syrian crisis poisoned and complicated relations with Arab and

After openly taking sides with Qatar in the current crisis, Turkey might have to reshuffle its cards in regional relations. Against its best interests, it might have to warm up relations with Iran, just as Qatar is doing. Isn't this why Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif immediately showed up June 7 in Ankara, saying he needed to consult with Turkey because of dangerous developments in the region?

When Turkey-Qatar military cooperation first appeared on the countries' agendas, pro-government news outlets in Turkey were regularly citing the threat from Iran. In April 2016, when then-Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu was signing the military accords with Qatar at Doha, Turkish media interpreted Turkey's setting up a base in Oatar as balancing the increasing influence of Iran. For those commentators, the Turkish base reflected a Sunni security alliance among Turkey, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

At that time, state-owned TRT Avaz TV did not mince words declaring Iran as the target. "Turkey and Qatar have taken positions very similar in Middle East crises. Their stances in assisting the opposition in Syria are the same. They took similar positions vis-avis the crises in Iraq and Yemen. This Sunni alliance is particularly important for Qatar. Sunni rule in Doha is uncomfortable, with the U.S. melting the ice with Shiite Iran. Qatar doesn't see the American forces on its land as a militarily adequate deterrent. Qatar is trying to close the gap by opting for cooperation with Turkey," the statement said.

History has repeatedly shown that Turkey's interventionist moves in the Arab world have always poisoned Turkish-Arab relations. We are, of course, aware that since the July 15 coup attempt, Ankara is engulfed by rumors of foreign forces plotting further coups. This is enough to explain Ankara's actions regarding Qatar today.

(Source: Al Monitor)

French auto giants keen on stronger presence in Iran

By Maryam Azish

The Iranian car manufacturers have managed to turn the threats posed by sanctions into the opportunities. Although some had predicted that the automobile industry in Iran would die after the sanctions, it did not.

The conditions after the 2015 nuclear deal known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) have created a tangible competitive atmosphere in the country.

Recently a large number of foreign companies have once again lined up to enter the country's 80-million-strong market, with the French car producer Peugeot and Renault as usual ranking at the vanguard of the queue.

Ahead of other interested European companies, who mull to begin a new round of visits to Tehran for holding negotiations with Iranian companies and ink contracts with them, the French ones have already stepped forward to start cooperation with their Iranian counterparts.

The two French auto giants have voiced their keenness to make investment in automobile lucrative business in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Although following the signing of the nuclear deal a number of contracts were signed between Iran Khodro Company (IKCO) and Saipa Group from Iran and their French counterparts Peugeot and Renault, respectively, it appears that France's automobile industry does not regard these deals as sufficient, seeking to expand cooperation with Iranian automanufacturers, Ifpnews wrote.

Iran Khodro Company cooperation with France's Peugeot dates back to more than two decades ago and seven different Peugeot models accounted for about 64 percent of the total of 542,000 passenger cars and pickups produced by IKCO in 2007. IKCO and Iran's second-largest car company, Saipa, produce Logan in a joint venture with France's Renault.

The French auto maker's officials have expressed reluctance to witness the recurrence of the same experience they had in their former partnership with Iran and, thus, this time, intend to display greater sensitivity over issues such as

controlling the quality of the cars as well as after-sales services to have a different presence in Iran.

Supply chain

In Feb 2017, Iran's RISECO and MECA-PLAST of France signed a joint venture in a situation that 30-percent exports condition will be implemented for a spare part contract.

Speaking in the ceremony to sign the contract, Chairman of RISECO Board of Directors Hamidreza Samadi said that MECAPLAST is one the biggest spare parts suppliers of France.

Samadi pointed to thirty-percent exports of products, saying this condition has been set by Iran's request since 'our activities are not supposed to be restricted to Iran's borders but beyond the borders'

Iranian ambassador to France Ali

Ahani also referred to producing highly standardized car parts in Iran as one the advantages of the recent contract.

In the meantime, The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of MECAPLAST Pierre Boulet pointed to the suitable and considerable infrastructures of Iran spare parts industry, saying that during the last years MECAPLAST products were exported to Iran through establishing cooperation with Renault and Peugeot.

"After lifting sanctions and the implementation of Iran nuclear deal also known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), we are trying to make Iran as one of MECAPLAST's exports hub," he said

Long-lasting ties

On Jan 2017, French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault in a conference in Tehran which he was attending in accom-

"France has been committed to defend JCPOA," Ayrault said adding that his country was among the first ones to re-establish ties with Iran after the deal.





pany of his Iranian counterpart Zarif said respecting the JCPOA has been of high importance for France and it has been committed to defend it.

"France has been committed to defend JCPOA," Ayrault said adding that his country was among the first ones to re-establish ties with Iran after the deal.

He continued "bilateral ties particularly in field of economy is beneficiary for both Paris and Tehran and France has never acted so fast in working with any other country."

Elsewhere in his speech, French official underlined that Paris is seeking long-lasting ties with Tehran in energy and transport sectors.

Ayrault also noted Iran's "well-known higher education" and expressed France' will to expand academic ties further while recalling that 17 MoUs have been signed before in this regard.

"Peugeot and Renault have resumed their activities in Iran and the first Airbus has been delivered; Total also has sealed oil purchase deal with Iran; I hope all other contracts get into action as fast," he said.

Ayrault reaffirmed the bright future of Tehran-Paris ties and urged both sides to try the best to ease the financial issues; "France has been active in issuing export guarantees for Iran and this is an indication of trust we have in Iran; Iran also has to remove its financial obstacles for foreign investors to enter the market."

Strategic agreement

In September 2017, the Industrial Development & Renovation Organization

of Iran (IDRO) and Renault have signed a strategic agreement in Paris to create a new joint venture.

The agreement which would allow Renault to strengthen its presence and accelerate its growth in Iran, was signed on the sidelines of the Paris Motor Show between Mohammad Reza Nematzadeh, Iranian Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade, and Carlos Ghosn, Chairman and CEO of Renault.

The French automotive group will be the majority shareholder. In 2015, Renault sales to Iran increased by 56.1% over 2014 to a total of 51,500 vehicles and a market share of 4.8%.

The first vehicles to be produced in the plant will be the Symbol and the Duster, beginning in 2018.

"With 2 million vehicles planned for 2020, the potential of the Iranian car market is undeniable. This agreement confirms our strategic choices made in Iran and opens a new era allowing Renault to hold a privileged position in the country," said the CEO of Renault.

The joint venture will, on the one hand, include an engineering and purchasing center which will support the local suppliers, as well as a plant with an initial production capacity of 150,000 vehicles a year, which will be added to Renault's current capacity of 200,000 vehicles.

Under the agreement, the group will, for the very first time, develop its own distribution network with sales and after-sales services in line with Renault brand standards.

Punishing Qatar

By Dr. Binoy Kampmark

Are we in need of distractions? The political masters obviously think so. There have been hackings, cuttings, slayings and crushing events. As battles continue raging in Syria and northern Iraq, European cities face the next round of urban slavings.

As that was taking place, eyes in the western media were taken off brewing troubles among the Gulf States. Eager pots have been calling kettles the most unspeakable things. (Not so much black as crispy charred.) No one would have been surprised by calling out that tenured terrorist state known as Saudi Arabia for its various actions in Yemen and its own vicious brand of fundamentalism advertised globally.

Yet it was Saudi Arabia, along with Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Yemen and Libya insisting that Qatar was the destabilising influence in the region. (The others were naturally innocent of that.) All land, air and sea traffic would be halted with the state, while diplomatic missions would be removed. Qatari citizens would also be given their marching orders, having to leave within 14 days.

Disagreements between Doha and Riyadh are far from new. Being eager practitioners of censorship and media control, Riyadh has shown little time for such bold media efforts as Al-Jazeera. Bristling at what it has deemed negative coverage, officials in Riyadh have repeatedly insisted that Qatar be rebuked for backing its own horses in the Islamist struggle, much of this borne by the rumblings of the Arab Spring.

The Islamic Brotherhood is top of that list, and what is not surprising by looking at the list of states intent on strangling Qatar is that they have taken a dim view about the populist aspirations of the Muslim Brotherhood.

In Egypt, an elected head of state from the organisation was deposed in a coup that re-established the primacy of the military. Qatar's backing of Mohamed Morsi's short stint at the helm was well and truly noted. In a measure of placation, Qatar closed down Al Jazeera Mubashir Misr, its twenty-four hour news channel in Cairo. Since then, spats have grown in number. Ambassadors have been sporadically recalled. In September 2002, Saudi Arabia did so over what it regarded as unfavourable coverage of a Saudi plan which entailed normalising ties with Israel in exchange for a peace deal with the Palestinians.

In 2014, the three Persian Gulf States intent on punishing Qatar also withdrew their ambassadors citing the usual grounds of interference in internal affairs and "jeopardizing regional security". Those concerns have not changed, and

the move of severing ties and effectively shutting off Qatar is a measure of how dissatisfied the other state have been towards Doha's efforts.

More recently, Qatar's efforts to secure the release of a group of falconers, among them members of the royal family, captured by a Tehran-backed Shia group in Iraq, drew attention from Abu Dhabi and Riyadh. The intended ransom could well have run into a billion dollars.

The isolating move has triggered obvious consequences. Qatar has become a place of strategic importance for various powers. The U.S., for one, has its largest airbase in the Middle East located in the state.

Nor has the provocative move gone unnoticed by others who have thrown their weight behind Doha. The Turkish parliament has passed legislation drafted in May permitting the deployment of troops to the country's military base in Qatar. In 2015, Turkey's ambassador to Doha, Ahmet Demirok, forecast an eventual troop number of 3,000.

Then comes that important matter of aviation. Qatar's flag carrier, Qatar Airways, has had to re-route flights over Turkey, Iran and Oman, given the forced closure of airspace to their planes. On Tuesday, 70 flights were grounded.

Other airline carriers will be delighted by the move, given the relentless rise and appropriation of key routes of travel from Europe to Asia and Australasia by the Middle Eastern carriers. The gesture of isolating Qatar is looking, at best, one of economic self-harm, affecting such carriers as Bahrain's Gulf Air, Dubai's Emirates, Saudi Arabia's Saudia and Abu Dhabi's Etihad Airways.

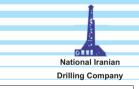
The demands this time for resolving this monumental tiff are bound to be even steeper than they were in 2014. Sultan Sooud Al-Qassemi makes his own hazard at a set of guesses, and it involves a conventional, authoritarian ploy: muzzle media coverage, entailing the "shuttering of the Al Jazeera TV Network before any mediation can take place" (Newsweek, June 5).

That will just be the beginning. The main course will feature the expulsion of Hamas figures and affiliates, along with such undesirables as Islamist writer Yasser Al-Za'atra and Azmi Bishara. For dessert, the Egyptians will wish for a cessation of any pro-Morsi coverage, while the entire collective will push for shackles to be placed on charitable organizations.

Such demands are what is conventionally called unwarranted interference in the internal affairs of another state, but the despots of the Gulf are bound to miss that irony. What Qatar is accused of will not only be matched but surpassed

(Source: Global Research)





Public Calls For Quality Evaluating Of Tender(First publish/second publish) one-stage(compressed) TENDER GUARANTEE ESTIMATED SUB.JECT OF Tenders Portal VALUE (Rial) TENDER Reg. No. INDENT NO Rial Euro p/f "OILWELL" . CROWN BLOCK MOUNTED ON Tender No .:PF/05-96/016 1478347 5,000,000,000 7310 250,000,000 LEE C MOORE Indent No.: 9545044 DERRICK REF:OIL WELL SUPPLY CO

Brief description of subject:

National Iranian Drilling Company(NIDC) address Pasdaran Blev., Airport Saqare, Ahvaz, Iran hereby intends to purchase some oil well crown block sheave from qualified and interested tenderers through one-stage public tender (compressed) upon following terms and conditions:

A) Qualitative evaluation of tenderer:

The evaluation is based on article (j) implementing regulations of the law of tenders and also carried out base on worksheets qualitative evaluation inquiry in the tender documents. Minimum acceptable point of quality is 60.

In order to receive the tender documents, 510,000 Rials should be paid to SIBA account number 2174652205004 of NIDC in Bank Meli

B) Preparation of tender documents: Purchasing of documents:

Iran and providing the original deposit receipt.

Receiving of documents:

Tenderers must be obtain the quality evaluation documents along with tender documents maximum ten days after the date of second publication in person at the following address: Hall No.:113, 1th floor, Foreign

after the date of second publication in person at the following address: Hall No.:113, 1thfloor, Foreign Procurement Dept., National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN

Notice: Only the real or legal persons who apply to purchase and receive tender documents from foreign procurement department in due date will be known as tenderer from tender committee.

C) Delivery of envelopes of bids and call quality evaluating:

Tenderers shall submit simultaneously envelopes of bids including bank guarantees (A), financial offer(C) and stamped and signed of tender documents (B) along with qualification worksheets in form of software in CD and documentary within 40 days from last day of document received deadline to the following address: Hall No.:107, 1thfloor, Tender Committee, Building operations, National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN.

Notice: The deadline for the refusal of bidders participation in the the tender is the last day of determined for submission of bids.

D) Tender Guarantee: Type of guarantee:

A)Bank guarantees or guarantees issued by non-bank institutions that have activities licensed by the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

B) The original cash deposit receipt paid to National Iranian Drilling Company.

Duration of credit guarantee & quotation: This duration should be valid for 90 days and extendable maximum For one time in initial credit amount.

More on this & other tenders is accessible by click on. WWW.NIDC.IR
Foreign Procurement Dept
National Iranian Drilling Company

تهران تایمز : نوبت اول ۹۶/۳/۲۱نوبت دوم ۹۶/۳/۲۲

INTERNATIONAL DAILY **TEHRANTIMES**

By Paul Krugman

After Donald Trump's surprise election victory, many people on the right and even in the center tried to make the case that he wouldn't really be that bad. Every time he showed a hint of self-restraint — even if it amounted to nothing more than reading his lines without ad-libbing and laying off Twitter for a day or two — pundits rushed to declare that he had just "become president."

But can we now admit that he really is as bad as — or worse than — his harshest critics predicted he would be? And it's not just his contempt for the rule of law, which came through so clearly in the James Comey testimony: As the legal scholar Jeffrey Toobin says, if this isn't obstruction of justice, what is? There's also the way Trump's character, his combination of petty vindictiveness with sheer laziness, leaves him clearly not up to doing the job.

And that's a huge problem. Think, for a minute, of just how much damage this man has done on multiple fronts in just five months.

Take health care. It's still unclear whether Republicans will ever be able to pass a replacement for Obamacare (although it is clear that if they do, it will take coverage away from tens of

Wrecking the ship of state

are big problems developing in the insurance markets as we speak: companies pulling out, leaving some parts of the country unserved, or asking for large increases in premiums.

Obamacare an unworkable system

Why? It's not, whatever Republicans may say, because Obamacare is an unworkable system; insurance markets were clearly stabilizing last fall. Instead, as insurers themselves have been explaining, the problem is the uncertainty created by Trump and company, especially the failure to make clear whether crucial subsidies will be maintained. In North Carolina, for example, Blue Cross Blue Shield has filed for a 23 percent rise in premiums, but declared that it would have asked for only 9 percent if it were sure that costsharing subsidies would continue.

So why hasn't it received that assurance? Is it because Trump believes his own assertions that he can cause Obamacare to collapse, then get voters to blame Democrats? Or is it because he's too busy rage-tweeting and golfing to deal with the issue? It's hard to tell, but either way, it's no

Or take the remarkable decision to take Saudi Arabia's side in its dispute with Qatar, a small nation that houses a huge U.S. reason for the U.S. to stay out of the middle.

So what was Trump doing? There's no hint of a strategic vision; some sources suggest that he may not even have known about the large U.S. base in Qatar and its crucial role.

The most likely explanation of his actions, which have provoked a crisis in the region (and pushed Qatar

into the arms of Iran) is that the Saudis flattered him the Ritz-Carlton projected a five-story image of his face on the side of its Riyadh property — and their lobbyists spent large sums at the Trump Washington hotel.

Normally, we would consider it ridiculous to suggest that an American president could be so ignorant of crucial issues, and be led to take dangerous foreign policy moves with such crude inducements. But can we believe this about a man who can't accept the truth about the size of his inauguration crowds, who boasts about his election victory in the most inappropriate circumstances? Yes.

Central principle of NATO

And consider his refusal to endorse the central principle of NATO, the obligation to come to our allies' defense — a refusal that came as a shock and surprise to his own foreign policy team. What was that about? Nobody knows, but it's worth considering that Trump apparently ranted to European Union leaders about the difficulty of setting up golf courses in their nations. So maybe it was sheer petulance.

Trump is neither up to the job of being president nor willing to step aside and let others do the work right. And this is already starting to have real consequences, from disrupted health coverage to ruined alliances to lost credibility on the world stage.

But, you say, stocks are up, so how bad can it be? And it's true that while Wall Street has lost some of its initial enthusiasm for Trumponomics — the dollar is back down to pre-election levels — investors and businesses don't seem to be pricing in the risk of really disastrous policy.

That risk is, however, all too real — and one suspects that the big money, which tends to equate wealth with virtue, will be the last to realize just how big that risk really is. The American presidency is, in many ways, sort of an elected monarchy, in which a temperamentally and intellectually unqualified leader can do immense damage.

That's what's happening now. And we're barely onetenth of the way through Trump's first term. The worst, almost surely, is yet to come.

(Source: The NYT)

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How looking at a building can trigger headaches, seizures

It's three o'clock -- you're at work, struggling to focus during the afternoon lull. You gaze out of your office window, hoping for some relief, but instead you feel a headache coming on.

Flat gray concrete lines the streets, while windows form repetitive glassy intervals in stark brick walls. With monotonous straight lines as far as the eye can see, there's nowhere pleasant to rest your gaze. It may seem a superficial problem, but our research has found that looking at urban landscapes may actually give you a headache.

Over tens of thousands of years, the human brain evolved to effectively process scenes from the natural world. But the urban jungle poses a greater challenge for the brain, because of the repetitive patterns it contains. Mathematician Jean-Baptiste Joseph Fourier showed that we can think of scenes as being made up of striped patterns, of different sizes, orientations and positions, all added together. These patterns are called Fourier components.

In nature, as a general rule, components with low spatial frequency (large stripes) have a high contrast and components with high frequency (small stripes) have a lower contrast. We can call this simple relationship between spatial frequency and contrast a "rule of nature". Put simply, scenes from nature have stripes that tend to cancel each other out, so that when added together no stripes appear in the image.

Hurts to look at

But this is not the case with scenes from the urban environment. Urban scenes break the rule of nature: they tend to feature regular, repetitive patterns, due to the common use of design features such as windows, staircases and railings. Regular patterns of this kind are rarely found in nature.

Striped patterns can cause seizures and headaches in much the same way as flicker does. So stripes on door mats, carpets and shirts can be a problem for people who are light-sensitive.

This has been documented since the 1980s. What is new is that we have now shown that there is also a problem from more complex images that are not obviously striped but contain regular stripes within their mathematical makeup, such as regularly spaced features of buildings.

We have also shown that the discomfort is felt by most people, not just those who are lightsensitive. And the discomfort is accompanied by changes in brain oxygenation.

We came to these conclusions by measuring the efficiency with which the brain processes images of natural and urban scenes. There are two ways of measuring efficiency; the first is to build simple computer models of the way that nerve cells compute what we see.

One model was built by Paul Hibbard (University of Essex) and Louise O'Hare (University of Lincoln), and another at the University of St Andrews by Olivier Penacchio and colleagues. Both models show that when the brain processes images that depart from the rule of nature, the activity of the nerve cells is increased, and becomes less sparsely distributed. In other words, such images take more effort for the brain to process.

How would engineers build the Golden **Gate Bridge today?**



It may seem a superficial problem, but our research has found that looking at urban landscapes may actually give you a headache.

For our own research, Olivier and I designed a computer program that measures how well images adhere to the rule of nature. After running the program, we found that departure from the rule of nature predicts how uncomfortable people find it to look at any given image -- whether it's an image of a building or a work of art.

We then analyzed images of apartment buildings, and found that over the last 100 years, the design of buildings has been departing further and further from the rule of nature; more and more stripes appear decade by decade, making the buildings less and less comfortable to look at.

Another way to measure the efficiency of the brain's visual processes is to measure the amount of oxygen used by the visual part of the brain. located at the back of the head. When the brain uses oxygen, it changes colour. We can track these changes by shining infrared light onto the scalp, and measuring the scattered light which bounces

Typically, oxygen usage is greater when people look at uncomfortable images, such as urban

back off the brain and through the skull.

We found that the rule of nature not only predicts the levels of discomfort suggested by computer models, it also predicts how much oxygen is used by the brain. That is, our brains use more oxygen when we look at scenes which depart from the rule. Since headaches tend to be associated with excess oxygen usage, this may explain why some designs give us headaches.

People who get migraines are particularly susceptible to the discomfort from repetitive patterns; these patterns increase the use of oxygen (which in those who sufferer migraines is already abnormally high). The patterns can give rise to a headache, possibly as a result. Indeed, some individuals with migraine cannot function in certain modern offices, because the patterns bring on a headache every time they enter the building.

Trump Tower, the skyscraper and the future of urban development

Perhaps it's time for the rule of nature to be incorporated into the software that is used to design buildings and offices. Or interior designers can vary the wall designs, blinds and carpets they install, to avoid adding more stripes indoors.

Of course, some repetitive patterns are an unavoidable result of modular construction. But many stripes are there quite unnecessarily, simply as design features -- to catch the eye. Unfortunately, they may end up hitting the head,

Striped patterns can cause seizures and headaches in much the same way as flicker does. So stripes on door mats, carpets and shirts can be a problem for people who are light-sensitive.

The one word that can instantly change your mood

Late last year I bought a \$6 latte (since when did coffee get so freakin' expensive?) from a hipster hangout, where I went to feel cool and write. When I went to take a sip after finishing a satisfying sentence, I was surprised to discover that I'd already finished it.

My fancy \$6 coffee was gone. And I didn't even remember tasting it.

In that moment—while on yet another deadline—it struck me that I've been busy for so long that when I'm doing stuff (including fun stuff!), I'm not sure I'm actually enjoying it. I'm not "in it"

It gave me a niggling feeling that I'm not having the full experience of my life as I'm living it. The tragedy wasn't the evaporated, expensive drink (although that did leave me bewildered). It was life passing me by while I'm in my head and out of my body somehow. And I know I'm

I decided I needed something simple and easy to jolt me into the present, while, like everybody else, I'm just trying to make it through the week. It was a word: pleasure.

How much pleasure do you allow yourself to experience? Here are three simple ways to dial it up, pronto:

1. Have a trigger.

Next time you buy a coffee, a salad, a fro-yo—can the very activity itself trigger you into presence? Can the very ritual of it remind you to pause, just for a second, consider the word pleasure, and dig



Pleasure—kicks a mundane day into living color.

in mindfully to actually enjoy the dang

2. Set reminders.

This might be annoying to some people, but I have an alarm that I set at random times of day that pops up when I least expect it with my one word: PLEASURE. Yesterday I was walking in the rain, and it popped up. I took a deep inhale, looked around, and noticed how much cleaner the city feels after a rainfall. I also remembered how pleasant the smell of rain can be, if you take a proper

whiff. Even running an errand in a shower can spark pleasure if you allow it!

Another time, I was with my friends at a restaurant. I was on my phone (like most people). Then PLEASURE popped up. I looked up and truly saw my friends' faces. One of them was laughing. In that moment, it was like I was seeing life in high-def. I put my phone down and dove into the guacamole and conversation.

3. Tune into your senses.

Many of us spend a good chunk o' change on our furniture, threads, and accessories. When was the last time you really felt them?

For example, do you:

 Feel the luxurious thread count of your sheets and cotton pajamas, or just fall into bed in a daze? Once you consider it—what's better than your cozy, inviting bed at the end of the day?

- Savor the softness of your scarf as it wraps around you and completes your look, or grab it while hollering, "Hold the
- Taste your pasta and your drink, or shovel it in while catching up on The Handmaids Tale? No wonder it's so easy to overeat!
- Enjoy the scent and texture of applying your hand cream or whack a blob on your palm and toss the tube in your bag? Most hand creams smell divine—we just never sniff them outside of the store we purchase them from on the first day.
- Actually absorb the vibes emanating from your Spotify shuffle or skip, skip, skip until you land on a satisfactory song? Then skip, skip, skip again? Are you actually listening? Chill out and let the playlist surprise you!

Coming back to one word pleasure—kicks a mundane day into living color. Whether I'm submitting my column, preparing my breakfast, petting my dog, calling my sister, or even sitting on the subway, listening to the hum of the carriage, I remember "pleasure, pleasure, pleasure," and it all feels a little more delicious somehow. (Source: greatist.com)

How to treat chest wrinkles

While the thin skin of the face is often the first place to show wrinkles, unfortunately, it is not always the last. The skin of the chest can experience deep wrinkling that makes wearing a button-down shirt or décolleté-bearing dress a cosmetic concern. Like facial wrinkles, chest wrinkling can occur due to the breakdown of collagen and elastic fibers, sun exposure and repeated wrinkling, which can be due to sleeping on your chest or side. Treatments are available to reduce your chest wrinkling.

Apply a topical wrinkle treatment cream to the chest daily. Wrinkle-fighting ingredients include retinol, alpha hydroxy acids, kinetin or copper peptides, according to MayoClinic.com. These ingredients are available over-the-counter. However, prescription wrinkle treatment creams are available that contain stronger concentrations of wrinkle-fighting ingredients.

Change your sleeping position by sleeping on your back. Sleeping on the stomach and side can cause your skin to fold, creating wrinkling. While it can take some time to adjust to a different sleeping position, attaching a tennis ball to the front of your night clothing can prevent you from rolling to your

Step 3

Drink plenty of water to keep the skin moisturized and in good condition. Water keeps the skin plump and temporarily reduces the appearance of wrinkles.

Undergo a chemical peel to remove dead and wrinkled skin cells. Chemical peels involve the application of skin-peeling chemicals to remove dead skin cells and encourage the growth of new skin cells. Talk to your physician or aesthetician about the best chemical peel type for your skin.

Step 5

Undergo a laser treatment to remove the outer layer of skin and stimulate collagen growth in the dermis, the layer of skin underneath the outermost layer of skin. Advances in skin treatment mean recovery following laser treatment can be minimal. Laser treatments may require several follow-up sessions in order to prove effective.

- Apply a sunscreen with a sun protection factor of 15 or higher to your chest and neck daily in order to protect your skin against further chest wrinkling. Even when your skin is not exposed, the sun's rays can penetrate some clothing making constant protection necessary to prevent sun-related wrinkling.
- Dark spots known as age spots can accompany chest wrinkling. To treat this condition, apply a hydroquinonecontaining cream. Hydroquinone blocks the production of brown pigments in your body, reducing the appearance of age spots. Prescription hydroquinone creams

Things you'll need

Wrinkle treatment cream

(Source: strongbody.com)

The dangers of wrapping your stomach with plastic wrap

By Angela Joseph

Society's preoccupation with weight loss has led to the rise of many quick-fix products and methods to lose weight. One of these is the body wrap, which is touted by some spas as a means of permanently losing weight. The body wrap is supposed to aid weight loss through the application of plastic wrap dipped in an herbal substance. This causes sweating, which is supposed to detoxify your body and help you lose

The dangers of excessive sweating

Sweating too much can lead to dehydration which is dangerous as the sweat does not dry, but stays on the body, raising body temperature possibly to unsafe levels Profuse sweating also leads to changes in blood chemistry, reducing blood volume and sending less oxygen to the cells. Weakness, dizziness, confusion, coma and even death can result because of excessive fluid loss. If you are having a body wrap at a spa, your attendant may not be qualified to deal with any of these reactions.

Dangers of products involved

The dangers of wrapping your stomach in plastic are not limited to sweating alone. Cling wrap used for wrapping the stomach is made from Polyvinyl chloride (PVC), which has been described as one of the most dangerous consumer products. It leaches harmful substances which have been linked to negative effects on the liver, spleen, kidneys, bone formation and body weight. PVC is also linked to cancer. Some wraps are dipped in mineral products, some of which may contain aluminum, which is linked to Alzheimer's. In addition, you may be allergic to some of the ingredients used

Other considerations when considering a body wrap

Plastic wraps do not help you burn fat. All you lose is water weight, which comes right back when you rehydrate your body. You must also consider the cost factor. Some businesses that perform body wraps claim that you can have as many as four a day, others claim that once a week is fine. Prices vary; however, the average price of a body wrap in the spa is \$159, and you need at least one treatment per week. If you decide to do it at home, there are kits that range from \$80 to \$200.

Body wrap safety

Most people who report satisfaction with the results of the body wrap also go on to say that they eat a sensible diet and work out four or five times a week. Therefore, if it is necessary to diet and exercise in order to achieve your weight loss goals, why not spend that money on a gym membership, which will guarantee results, and avoid the dangers that come from having toxic plastic substances enter your skin and bloodstream? If you are diabetic, suffer from high blood pressure, are pregnant or have any medical condition, consult your doctor before using any form of body wrap.

(Source: livestrong.com)

10 hot titles of IT world

Bv Alireza Khorasani

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

Business Chat for iMessage available on the developer preview for iOS 11.

Business Chat for iMessage allows customers and companies to communicate using chat.

The platform lets customers purchase a product, track shipments and more.

Moto X4 with dual camera and 3,800 mAh battery could be announced on June 30.

Moto X4, which is expected to be a mid-range Android smartphone that will cost around \$325.

New Xiaomi Mi Notebook Air 13.3 leaks with 7th New Xiaomi Ivii Notebook Ali 13.3 locato and gen Intel CPU, new GPU and a fingerprint reader. The model seems to be another hardware refresh on the original 2016 ultrabook, rather than the eagerly-anticipated second generation product.

Microsoft Edge, working with Cortana, may soon be able to unearth lower prices on shopping websites. The pilot feature being rolled out for the Windows 10 Creators Update will initially deliver price checks for 14 business including Amazon, Walmart, and Home Depot.

The HTC U11 is now also available from Sprint in the US. A quick look at the device's listing on the carrier's website reveals a \$696 price tag. Alternatively, you can also pay zero down followed by 24 monthly payments of \$29 each. Color options include black and blue.

The handset (unlocked model) is already available from Amazon, which has it listed for \$649.

6 It's confirmed! Nokia 6, 5, and 3 arriving in India on June 13.

While there's no official information on the India pricing of the phones, a new rumor says the Nokia 6 will carry a price tag of INR 15,990 (around \$250), while the Nokia 5 and 3 will set you back INR 12,990 (around \$200) and INR 9,990 (around \$155), respectively.

The Xbox One S will be \$50 cheaper.

Microsoft has clarified the news including Xbox One bundles, including a 500GB model with Battlefield 1 and a 1TB model with Forza Horizon 3. The new deal means all 500GB bundles are \$249 this week and all 1TB bundles are \$299 this week.

Australia's sandstone monolith Uluru is an immensely sacred place to the local A?angu people, and somewhere many people have dreamed of

Now Uluru is available on Google Street View, offering the internet an up-close look at the ochre, rust, wild plum, and charcoal hues of the rock, which measures 348 metres (1,142 ft) high, and has a circumference of 9.4 kilometres (5.8 mi).

The original Samsung Galaxy J7 could receive 9 Ine original samsung called, Android 7.0 Nougat update soon.

Verizon rolling out Android 7.0 Nougat for Samsung Galaxy

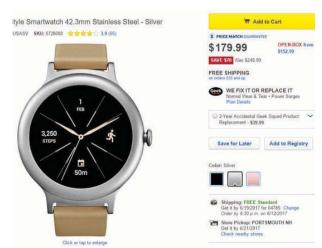
Sony Xperia L1 makes its debut in Europe, priced to sell for €199.

The smartphone is powered by a 1.45GHz quad-core MediaTek MT6737T processor, 2GB RAM and 16GB of expandable storage.

LG Watch Style on sale for just \$179.99

One of the first two Google smartwatches, the LG Watch Style is now on sale in the United States. Built by LG, the Watch Style and Watch Sport are the first smartwatches to ship with Android Wear 2.0 on board.

The cheapest of the two, LG Watch Style is usually available for purchase for \$249, but Amazon and Best Buy have a better deal on the smartwatch.



For a limited time, customers will be able to save \$70 (28%) when they purchase the LG Watch Style on Amazon

The smartwatch is available in three color options: Titanium, Rose Gold and Silver. Also, both U.S. retailers offer free shipping all across the country, so you'll only have to pay

\$179.99 – the price of the smartwatch. Keep in mind that the LG Watch Style does not feature 4G LTE support, unlike its more expensive brother, the LG Watch Sport. So, in case you need 4G LTE, the latter can be had for

\$249.99 with a 2-year contract or \$349.99 outright.

(Source: phonearena)

Will autonomous vehicles solve traffic safety inequality?

Last year 40,000 people died in traffic crashes in the United States. That devastating figure hasn't been distributed equally across all sectors of the population. Low-income areas were disproportionately affected by the traffic cash epidemic. How much so? Two times worse! According to research conducted by Governing Magazine in 2014, highincome areas had 5 traffic crash fatalities per 100,000 people, while the proportion for low-income areas was 10.4.

The correlation between socioeconomic status and traffic crash fatalities is well documented. In the United States, High GDP per capita of a state is correlated to lower traffic crash fatalities in that state.

Research in California from 2009 even found that income is much more strongly correlated to traffic crashes than age. In OECD countries as well, a correlation was found between economic conditions (such as high income per capita) and high traffic safety levels. And research in China from 2010 found that, once a province reached a GDP per capita of about \$1,500, traffic fatalities began to decline. Even in Iran we can find evidence of a correlation between economic status and traffic crash fatalities.

What drives this inequality of traffic crash fatalities? Correlation is, of course, easier to demonstrate than causation,



but there are some possible explanations. Some point to the fact that people with low incomes tend to drive less and walk more, therefore being more vulnerable as

A 2009 report found that 45 percent of traffic fatalities that occur in lowincome countries are among pedestrians, compared to only 18 percent in highincome countries.

Another explanation concerns the quality of the vehicles driven in lowincome areas. These tend to be older and not equipped with modern life-saving safety technology such as rear cameras

and lane-keeping systems.

So, as autonomous vehicles take the place of manually-driven cars, should we expect traffic safety inequality to change as well? Currently, the cost to own and operate a car is 57 cents per mile (according to AAA).

Will autonomous vehicles be more affordable? Some people think so (Barclays and Deloitte), while others disagree (Ford). As AVs gain greater market penetration it is likely that the price of what is now considered "a safe modern car" will decrease significantly.

That by itself might help to lower traffic

fatalities in low-income areas (assuming manual driving isn't banned altogether), but it won't solve inequality as long as AVs are safer and costlier.

Having said that, AVs might help create equitable roads in an indirect way. Just as trees create the valuable resource of oxygen as a by-product of their very existence, AVs will create resources for everyone, not just their owners. Each autonomous vehicle that operates on the road creates, as a by-product, immense amounts of information that is incredibly useful for traffic safety analysis.

For example, AVs are expected to generate about 4TB of data per day; compare that to the 20GB per year that current city road sensors generate. Therefore, AVs might help cities to better identify the unique traffic characteristics of low income areas.

Cities should keep that in mind when they choose the first couple of roads to allocate to autonomous driving pilots. The precious safety data will only be generated in areas where AVs are allowed

To be sure, lowering traffic fatalities in an equitable way can't be done with a "one size fits all" policy.

Municipalities will need to drill deeper into the typical patterns of traffic crashes in their communities and take appropriate preventative measures in each one.

(Source: Venturebeat)

Most gaming jobs are in arts and design

Artists and designers are taking the majority of gaming-related jobs, according to LinkedIn.

The professional social site released a study on its users discovering the most popular jobs in the gaming industry. It gathered info from the 771,000 gaming professionals (which counts anyone that has at least on gaming-related skill listed on their profile) that use LinkedIn. Of them, most of them work in the arts and design spaces in gaming, with 29 percent of the 771,000 working in those fields.

Engineering was No. 2 with 16 percent. Operations takes the No. 3 spot with 8 percent. So, if your you're working toward a degree in the arts and your parents or friends ask you how you expect to find a job after college, you can point them to the gaming industry.



Companies use artists and designers for preproduction, helping to establish the look and feel of a game, its characters, and its worlds through drawings, paintings, and

more. Artists also help create the assets used in the final

Software engineer, meanwhile, is the most common job title for gaming professionals on LinkedIn. Over 30,000 of the 771,000 have that title. Owner is at the No. 2 spot, just under 20,000. Chief executive officer is No. 3. While most companies only have one CEO, many claim that title for their own small, independent studios.

Oddly, a non-gaming firm has hired the most people with gaming-related skills on LinkedIn. That would be Moving Picture Company (MPC), a visual effects company with studios across the world, including New York City, Montreal, Shanghai, and Paris. Microsoft follows at second, while Ubisoft is in third.

(Source: LinkedIn)

The Switch version of 'FIFA 18' doesn't have a story mode



If you were wondering how Switch versions of conventional sports games would compare to their PS4 and Xbox One counterparts, you just got your answer. EA has detailed the Switch edition of FIFA 18, and it's evident that you're getting a full-fledged console title... with a notable exception.

You'll get modes like FIFA Ultimate Team, a career mode and women's soccer, but there's no mention of a story mode -- sorry, you can't follow Alex Hunter's story while you're on the bus.

EA hasn't explained the absence at this point, but it's likely for technical reasons. The Switch version uses the older Ignite game engine (originally used for previous-gen consoles like the PS3), while the games with story modes use the newer Frostbite engine. As much as the Switch can do, it's still a mobile tablet with lim-

As it stands, this still promises to be miles above other portable footie games in terms of quality.

The Switch version won't be delayed, either, as it's arriving on September 29th like the other FIFA 18 re-

Google reveals when it'll stop supporting Pixel and **Nexus phones**



Wondering when you should upgrade your Nexus or Pixel? Google has updated its support page to reflect when it will no longer offer telephone and online support for the devices, and you can use that info to make a

Based on the info Google listed on its support page, it's staying true to its word.

The Pixel and the Pixel XL, which were released in 2016, will get the latest Android updates until October 2018. They'll get security updates until October 2019, the same month Google will stop providing customer service for them.

Mountain View will also stop supporting the Huawei-made Nexus 6P and the LG-made 5X in September 2018, a year after they stop getting new OS updates.

If you still own a Nexus 6 or a 9, you'll only get security updates until October this year -after that, you can't call or chat with Google anymore in case you encounter issues with your

(sOURCE: 9to5Google)

2017 Apple iPhone units might lag compared to rival handsets



It would appear as though Apple's 2017 iPhones are going to have connectivity speeds lagging behind competing handsets. While iPhone rivals will be able to run at a download speed of as much as one gigabit per second, an issue that Apple is having now with its modem suppliers could very well have a negative impact on the iPhone later this year. Qualcomm can sell to Apple right now a modem that will support 1 Gb/ sec data speeds. While Intel is working on a modem with similar capabilities, it won't be ready for the next iPhone models, which are expected to be unveiled in

There are a couple of reasons why Apple doesn't want to use Qualcomm only to provide this chip. One, Apple has always sourced components from two or more suppliers to keep the flow of parts coming in case one source cannot deliver for any reason. Relying on a single source could result in the hold up of iPhone production which is why Apple traditionally eschews a single source arrangement for its products. In addition, it allows Apple to play one supplier against the other when it comes to pricing.

(Source: bloomberg)

Redesigned Skype 8.0 now available for Android

Microsoft's new Skype 8.0 app is now available on the Google Play Store. The app is currently only available

Skype 8.0 features a brand new UI courtesy of a complete rebuild of the app. There are new colors, animations and shapes everywhere and it really doesn't look anything like the old app.

The main screen has three tabs, with the main one in the center being where all your chats reside. The one on the left is called Highlights, which is basically a rip-off of Stories feature from Snapchat. Here you can share your activities during your day and all the photos and videos you upload here appear as a highlights reel for



your friends to see.

Capture tab on the right is yet another Snapchat ripoff. You can take a picture here and send to your contacts or add it to your Highlights reel. The editing tools available here, including drawing or adding stickers is straight out of Snapchat with nearly identical design.

The rest of the functionality seems similar to the previous app except for a cards UI that shows these floating cards on screen but so far all we have seen it do is show

The new version is rolling out on Android today and on iPhone in the coming weeks. Windows and Mac will be getting the update in the coming months

(Source: Skype)

The radiation risk of air travel: should we be worried?

This past April, business traveler Tom Stuker became the world's most frequent flyer, logging 18,000,000 miles of air travel on United Airlines over the last 14 years.

That's a lot of time up in the air. If Stuker's traveling behaviors are typical of other business flyers, he may have eaten 6,500 inflight meals, drunk 5,250 alcoholic beverages, watched thousands of inflight movies and made around 10,000 visits to airplane toilets.

He would also have accumulated a radiation dose equivalent to about 1,000 chest x-rays. But what kind of health risk does all that radiation actually pose?

You might guess that a frequent flyer's radiation dose is coming from the airport security checkpoints, with their wholebody scanners and baggage x-ray machines, but you'd be wrong. The radiation doses to passengers from these security procedures are trivial.

Major source

The major source of radiation exposure from air travel comes from the flight itself. This is because at high altitude the air gets thinner. The farther you go from the Earth's surface, the fewer molecules of gas there are per volume of space. Thinner air thus means fewer molecules to deflect incoming cosmic rays — radiation from outer space. With less atmos-



pheric shielding, there is more exposure

The most extreme situation is for astronauts who travel entirely outside of the Earth's atmosphere and enjoy none of its of radiation dose that is the limiting fac-

protective shielding Accumulation of radiation

Consequently, they receive high radiation doses. In fact, it is the accumulation

The major source of radiation exposure from air travel comes from the flight itself. This is because at high altitude the air gets thinner.

tor for the maximum length of manned space flights. Too long in space and astronauts risk cataracts, cancer and potential heart ailments when they get back home.

Indeed, it's the radiation dose problem that is a major spoiler for Elon Musk's goal of inhabiting Mars. An extended stay on Mars, with its extremely thin atmosphere, would be lethal due to the high radiation doses, notwithstanding Matt Damon's successful Mars colonization in the movie "The Martian."

It depends entirely on how much time he has spent in the air. Assuming an average flight speed (550 mph), Stuker's 18,000,000 miles would translate into 32,727 hours (3.7 years) of flight time. The radiation dose rate at typical commercial airline flight altitude (35,000 feet) is about 0.003 millisieverts

(As I explain in my book "Strange Glow: The Story of Radiation," a millisievert or mSv is a unit of radiation dose that can be used to estimate cancer risk.) By multiplying the dose rate by the hours of flight time, we can see that Stuker has earned himself about 100 mSv of radiation dose, in addition to a lot of free airline tickets. But what does that mean for

(Source: Newsweek)

Eating in front of a mirror makes meals taste better, say scientists

Previous studies have found that people rate food as more flavorsome and, eat bigger portions, when they dine with company, a phenomenon known as the 'social facilitation of eating.

But researchers at Nagoya University in Japan wanted to find out whether the effect could be recreated by simply using a mirror, to trick the brain into thinking another person was present.

"We wanted to find out what the minimum requirement is for the social facilitation of eating," said lead author Dr. Ryuzaburo Nakata.

"Does another person have to actually be physically present, or is information suggesting the presence of others sufficient?'

For the experiment, 16 adults aged between 65 and 74, were invited to eat salted or caramel popcorn for 90 seconds and then rate their enjoyment when sitting alone, in front of a mirror, or watching a monitor showing a video of them eating.

People eating alone

The researchers found that people eating alone reported food as tasting better, and ate more of it, when they could see themselves reflected in a mirror, compared with when they ate in front of a monitor. Eating in front of a mirror improved sweetness by 25 percent, goodness by 21 percent and quality by 12 percent.

In a further experiment, when the researchers replaced the mirror with photos of the volunteers eating, they discovered that the volunteers still experienced an increase in the appeal of food and ate more.

The researchers are hoping that the findings could help lonely older people enjoy their food more and eat larger portions.

"Studies have shown that for older adults, enjoying food is associated with quality of life, and frequently eating alone is associated with depression and loss of appetite," added corresponding author Dr. Nobuyuki Kawai.

"Our findings therefore suggest a possible approach



to improving the appeal of food, and quality of life, for older people who do not have company when they eat for example, those who have suffered loss or are far away from their loved ones."

(Source: The Telegraph)

SpaceX might launch the biggest rocket ever built in 3 months

Elon Musk just announced that SpaceX might be about to launch the biggest rocket ever built, and if it all comes out as planned, the Falcon Heavy – as it has been called – might be headed to space in just three months.

Definitely, Elon Musk keeps surprising people around the world. The Falcon Heavy will be a 230-foot-tall rocket that combines the power of three smaller Falcon 9 rockets.

"All Falcon Heavy cores should be at the Cape in two to three months, so launch should happen a month after that," he tweeted.

Will SpaceX meet the date set by Musk for the launch

SpaceX's Falcon Heavy might become the biggest rocket to get to space in history. It has the power of 27 engines that can produce more than 5 million pounds already launched Falcon 9 boosters. Af-

of thrust at liftoff. That would be enough energy to put a fully loaded 737 jet into orbit. The Falcon Heavy could also be sending a small spaceship and two passengers to space.

The ambitious program

This all seems great, but skepticism is also surrounding the ambitious project. A lot of people think that SpaceX won't be able to stick to the launching's due date since Musk is not exactly diligent when it comes to meeting deadlines. He might be minimizing the difficulty to achieve the things he proposes.

was set in March 2017, but it had to be separate from the Falcon Heavy and will ostponed due to an explosion on a Launchpad back in September 2016.

Parts of this incredibly big rocket are being reused. It will be powered with two

The Falcon Heavy's first launch date ter the launch, this two side rockets will they could be refurbished and reused for a third launch.

The central core While that happens, the central core of the big rocket will keep on flying, and then it will peel off from an upper stage rocket that will enter into orbit. This core will find its way back to Earth, falling in the Atlantic Ocean on a drone ship so it can be later reused for another launch.

"We will probably fly something really silly on Falcon Heavy because it is quite a high-risk mission," Musk said in March after the successful launch of the SES-10 mission, which was the first to reuse a Falcon 9 booster.

Though it is impossible to know right now whether SpaceX will actually launch the Falcon Heavy when Musk said it would, there certainly still is a positive light in all of this. SpaceX is trying to make progress by putting a deadline for a project that has already faced a lot of challenges since last year.

(Source: Pulse Headlines)

Decoding octopus species, one wart at a time

A decade ago, a group of scientists stumbled upon an octopus tending her eggs on a rocky outcropping off the coast of California, nearly 4,600 feet below the surface. They checked in on her every few months and shocked the world with their discovery that she had brooded her eggs for a record 53 months.

This "Octomom," as they called her, was a member of a genus of wart-covered octopuses called Graneledone, which live up to 9,500 feet below the ocean's surface. These slimy sea aliens exist in great numbers in nearly all of the world's oceans. But there are a handful of species within this particular octopus family that look very similar, which makes distinguishing them a challenge for marine scientists.

"If we can't tell them apart, how do we know anything about biodiversity?" said Janet Voight, a biologist at the

Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago. Worried about how proposals for deep sea mining might threaten the oceans, including the habitat and behavior of these mysterious octopuses, she set out to devise a system to tell them apart. And in a paper published lasts week in Marine Biology Research, Dr. Voight and her colleague, Jessica Kurth, a biologist at Pennsylvania State University, revealed how the distribution of warts on the bodies of at least two octopus species in this important genus might be their distinguishing fea-

Sucker-lined arms

Members of Graneledone are actually kind of cute. They have two dark, big eyes mounted on a bulbous, head-like thing called a mantle with eight sucker-lined arms sticking out. They have no ink sac. Their colors, vibrant or pale, don't appear to be that important: Sometimes they're pink or purple or orange. Dr. Voight has seen just half of the body of one blanch white when threatened.

But then, like only a few other kinds of octopuses, they have all these warts — covering the arms and mantle. "Some of the warts are really like warts, like the caricatures of witches," Dr. Voight said, "and others are really subtle."

But it's not the bumpiness of their warts that's special, the team found, after examining more than 70 dead specimens, as well as images obtained from deep sea dives. They found differences in how the warts spread out across the mantle and down the arms.

In Graneledone pacifica, a commonly found species from the North Pacific, warts moved across the mantle, stopping abruptly at the back of it, like a clean line on a short haircut. But in G. verrucosa, another commonly found species from the northwest Atlantic, the warts gradually disappeared toward the back of the mantle like a smooth fade.

(Source: The NYT)

Intl. EXPO-2017 Exhibition Kicks Off in Astana

International EXPO-2017 Exhibition was inaugurated in Kazakh capital Astana.

Focusing on the "Future Energy", a number of 150 countries in the world and also 20 international organizations will showcase their latest achievements in the

field of energy to the public. Attendance of 16 presidents of different countries in the inaugural ceremony of the exhibition in Astana has increased the significance of this prestigious interna-

tional event. As the first Central Asian country hosting this pres-



tigious event, only \$1.3 billion has cost for the construction of the exhibition site at the condition that the country has been suffering from serious economic crisis since the past four years up to the present time.

It should be noted that International EXPO-2017 Exhibition will run in Kazakh Capital Astana from June up to Sept. for a period of 90 days.

It is predicted that five million people from across the world will visit this prestigious exhibition. So far, one million exhibition tickets have been sold, the report

New sound diffuser is 10 times thinner than existing designs

Researchers from North Carolina State University and Nanjing University have developed an "ultra-thin" sound diffuser that is 10 times thinner than the widely used diffusers found in recording studios, concert venues and movie theaters to reduce echoes and improve the quality of sound.

In a typical room with flat walls, sound waves usually bounce off the walls, like light reflecting off a mirror. This creates echoes and overlapping sound waves that result in uneven sound quality depending on where you are in the room. "Sound diffusers are panels placed on the walls and ceiling

of a room to scatter sound waves in many different directions, eliminating echoes and undesirable sound reflections - ultimately improving the quality of the sound," says Yun Jing, an assistant professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering at NC State and corresponding author of a paper on the

But the most widely used diffusers, called Schroeder diffusers, can be very bulky. That's because the size of a diffuser is governed by the wavelength of the sound it needs to diffuse. Specifically, the depth of a Schroeder diffuser is about half of the wavelength of the lowest sound it needs to diffuse.

For example, a typical man's voice can be as low as 85 hertz, with a wavelength of 4 meters or 13.1 feet. If that's the lowest sound the Schroeder diffuser will have to deal with, the diffuser would need to be roughly 2 meters - or just over

But the new, ultra-thin diffuser design requires a thickness that is only 5 percent of the sound's wavelength. So, instead of being 2 meters thick, it would only be 20 centimeters - or less than 8 inches - thick.

(Source: EurekAlert)

Taking vacations helps your career, study says

A new study found that if you have more unused vacation days, you are less likely to receive a promotion, a raise or a bonus as compared to others who take time off.

Do you want to be more successful in your career? Then take more vacations. A new study published Thursday by "Project: Time Off" discovered that Americans who don't take enough time off from their jobs and go for vacations are 78-84 percent less likely to be eligible for a bonus or a raise, compared to those who take reasonable time off from work.

GfK, Gesellschaft für Konsumforschung (Society for Consumer Research), Germany's largest market research institute, conducted an online survey from Jan. 26 to Feb. 20, 2017, that included a sample of 7,331 American workers, above the age of 18 years, who put in 35 work hours a week and are also awarded paid time off. The study analyzed the data collected from GfK's survey and concluded that 54 percent of the sample size did not use their vacation time in 2016. The country, on a whole, had a total of 662 million unused vacation days left at the end of 2016. Even of those who did not use their vacation days, 92 percent said vacations were important to them.

(Source: IBT)

Pretty volcanic plume seen in space image

A plume of ash and sediment turns the Bering Sea an eerie shade of green in a new image of an erupting Alaskan vol-



The snapshot was taken by the Operational Land Imager on the Landsat-8 satellite on June 5, as Bogoslof Volcano in the Aleutian Islands belched steam. The volcano has been erupting since December 2016, according to NASA Earth Observatory, which released the image.

Bogoslof Island is a tiny protuberance in the Bering Sea. According to the Alaska Volcano Observatory, it rises about 300 feet (100 meters) above sea level. The rest of the volcano's bulk — 6,000 feet (1,800 m) of elevation — is hidden beneath the surface of the sea.

The portions of Bogoslof that are visible are ever-changing as eruptions reshape the volcano. In 1992, for example, a new chunk of land just 500 feet by 900 feet (150 m by 275 m) popped up on the north end of the island.

Bogoslof is currently at an "orange" level of alert for aviation, according to the Alaska Volcano Observatory. That means the volcano is active, with small explosions and ejections of ash and steam. On June 5, when Landsat 8 swooped over the volcano, it had recently shot volcanic ash 20,000 feet (6,096 m) into the air. Later that day, the volcano steamed and let out a seismic shiver. A small puff of steam can be seen in the Landsat-8 image, which was taken at 2 p.m. local time.

These rumblings were nothing compared to the volcano's unrest on May 28, when the aviation color code shot up to red. During a 50-minute eruption, Bogoslof emitted a cloud of ash that reached between 35,000 feet and 45,000 feet (nearly 11,000 m to 14,000 m), cruising altitude for passenger

(Source: space.com)

Health tips for Ramadan



ARTICLE

By Seyed Mahdi Mirghazanfari, MD, PhD

Fasting during the holy month of Ramadan is seen as a way to purify spiritually as well as physically - a time to detach from material pleasures and be closer to God. The act of fasting is also believed to increase Muslims' piety, reminding them that others are less fortunate than themselves.

Fasting involves abstaining from all food, drink from sunrise to sunset. Muslims will wake up before sunrise for Morning Prayer and to eat before the day's fast begins. Most will break their fast alongside their families in the evening with a communal "Iftar" meal, typically often started with dates.

Children and elderly people are exempt. Pregnant or breastfeeding women, anyone who is sick and anyone travelling on a journey are also exempt.

Nonetheless fit and able adults are expected to fast which could be pretty beneficial to the body.

The Iranian traditional medicine has provided the Muslims with some dietary recommendation to avoid illnesses and discomfort after long fasting days.

Here are some tips Eat less sweats

It is better to cut back on sweets such as halve (a dessert made with flour, rosewater and oil), Sholezard (an Iranian traditional saffron rice pudding dessert), or Zulbia and Bamiyeh (traditional deep fried sweets) as they are rich in sugar and fat and consuming them in large quantities might work up thirst, cause poor digestion, spoil appetite and increases risks

It is better to eat them in very small quantities and two hours after Iftar.

How to avoid sever thirst

Smelling apple, cucumber, lemon, and rosewater, washing or spraying face and neck with cold water and rosewater, avoid spending long hours outside and not involving in mental and physical activities especially in hot places, wearing light colored clothes to keep cool, rubbing violet or almond oil on the belly, cheeks, forehead and behind the ears, and taking rests in dark and cool places with cool scents would help to avoid sever thirst.

LEARN ENGLISH

Interview Skills 8 - Discussing Salary and Benefits

Mr. Parsons: Okay, well I'm sure you have a number of questions to ask me regarding the **position**.

Rebecca: Yes, well Miss Childs did give me an overview of the position over the phone, but there were some details I'd like to clarify.

Mr. Parsons: Well **feel free** to ask me anything, and I'll try to fill in the details

Rebecca: Could I first ask about the **remuneration package**? Mr. Parsons: Yes of course. That's quite an important point isn't it? As a junior **sub editor** we offer a starting salary of 150,000 HK dollars **per annum**. This doesn't include a generous housing allowance also.

Rebecca: I understand. And are there other bonuses included? Mr. Parsons: Well apart from full health insurance we do offer a company staff bonus scheme linked to readership numbers. But we could **go through** all the details of that at a later date. Rebecca: Well Mr. Parsons, I am **flexible** when it comes to salary. The opportunity to work in Hong Kong for you is the most important thing for me.

Mr. Parsons: Excellent. Well, what other questions do you have Rebecca?

Key vocabulary

position: a job

overview: a short description of a subject or situation that gives the main ideas without explaining all the details

clarify: to make something clearer or easier to understand fell free: used to tell someone that they can do something if they want to

fill in: to tell

remuneration package: money and benefits given to someone for the work

sub editor: sub-editors, or subs, check the written text of newspapers, magazines or websites before it is published to ensure the correct grammar, spelling, house style and tone of the published work and make sure that the copy is factually correct and that it suits the target market

per annum: each year

housing allowance: money that a company provides for rent of a bonus: an additional payment or reward given for good

work or performance readership number: the number of people who have read

or looked at an average issue of a publication

go through: to study or look at (something) in a careful way flexible: able to change or to do different things

Supplementary vocabulary

gross: overall sum excluding tax and any deductions **net:** free from all charges or deductions income tax: tax on the amount of money you earn

stock options: benefit offered by a company to purchase stock for a fixed price

(Source: irlanguage.com)



Migrating flamingos opt to stay in reviving Lake Urmia

ENVIRONMENT TEHRAN — Some e s k 10,000 flamingos have stayed in Lake Urmia national park this year instead of migrating as better ecological conditions in the biosphere reserve are already satisfying their needs.

This year the birds didn't fly to other areas such as South Africa and the Persian Gulf, IRNA quoted Omid Yousefi, an official with West Azarbaijan province's department of environment as saying.

Flamingos are now living in Lake Urmia national park's southern areas such as Hasanlou and Kaniborazan wetlands mostly because of enough food supplies,

With a surface area of approximately 5,200 square kilometers, Lake Urmia in northwest Iran, was once the largest lake in the Middle East and the sixth-largest saltwater lake on Earth, but is facing a dramatic decline for some years now.

Old and inefficient irrigation methods, depleting ground water resources



within the lake watershed, long periods of drought, damming rivers which were supposed to flow into the lake and on top of that mismanagement and inappropriate measures intensified the lake's status

The lake which was a major tourist attraction and a home to hundreds of thousands of migratory birds has shrunk substantially. In 1997 the volume of water at the lake measured at 30 billion cubic meters which dramatically decreased to half a billion cubic meters in 2013 and while the lake had a surface area of 5,000 square kilometers in 1997 the surface shrunk to one tenth of that to 500 square kilometers in 2013.

However by planning restoration programs the volume of water rose to 2.5 billion cubic meters in 2017 and the surface area has now restored to almost half of the original amount measuring at 2,300 square kilometers. The return of the migratory birds could be also a sign of restoration of the lake

95% of wildfires in Iran are human-caused: official

ENVIRONMENT TEHRAN — Some 95 percent of wildfires which occur in Iran are rooted in human factors, an official with Forests, Range and Watershed Management Organization said.

Since the beginning of the current [Iranian calendar] year [falling on March 21], some 30 to 40 wildfires have erupted mostly in 5 to 10 hectares of Zagros forest area, ISNA quoted Qasem Sabz'ali

Additionally, forests in the provinces of Golestan, Khuzestan, Kerman, Lorestan, and Kohgiluyeh-Boyerahmad also sustained damages to some extent due to wildfires, Sabz'ali added.

'Though the hot weather can spark fire 95 percent of the wildfires are caused by human beings," he restated.

Some 60 percent of human-caused fires happen unintentionally and 40 percent start on purpose for instance in retaliation against one family or to get one's hand on a piece of land, he explained.

Considering the 16 million hectares of forests and 82 million hectares of pastures contributing to 60 percent of land areas of the country it is highly important to take measures to safeguard these areas, he pointed, adding, "over the past three years we have spent some 300 billion rials (\$7.5 million) worth of equipment to extinguish the fire in the forests."

However, the equipment are not sufficient and despite the 30 percent decrease in forest fires compared to the same period last year the pastures and rangelands wildfires are still increasing, he regretted.

Municipalities unsuccessful in waste management: DOE

ENVIRONMENT TEHRAN — Municipalities have so far failed to perform effective waste management nationwide, the deputy director of the Department of Environment said on Saturday.

Unfortunately in a northern city the waste has been piled to a height of 100 meters in landfills while some 18 liters of leachate is being drained from it per second, Saeed Motesaddi lamented, warning, "This is an environmental disaster". The best way to manage waste is to collect and manage leachate in the first place but one or two waste management organizations in the country are capable of providing effective waste management services and in other cases the leachate flow directly in

to the soil, groundwater, springs or rivers, IRNA quoted Motesaddi as saying.

Waste sorting is pretty vital to waste management and should become a priority for the municipalities, he highlighted, stating, sadly in metropolis of Tehran some 7,000 tons of waste is being produced on a daily basis which is not being segregated efficiently.

Mentioning the current obsession with incinerators, Motesaddi noted that sorting the waste, recycling it, and producing compost are of greater importance than developing incinerators.

He finally expressed hope that the newly elected Tehran city councilors and the would-be mayor direct more attention to waste management in

Spotted owls facing their nemesis

Spotted owl upperparts are brown, colder and darker with white spots; dusky facial disc with broad white patch over and below the eyes, forming broad white spectacles, crown and nape finely spotted white. When perched, a broad white collar around the front of the neck is distinctive; under-parts strongly barred or spotted. Juveniles are gingery, with diffuse barring below. As mentioned before, spotted owls are crepuscular but frequently seen in daytime.

Wise owls

For centuries, owls have had a reputation for being wise birds. This came about because in Greek mythology, the spotted owlet was the sacred bird of the goddess of wisdom, Athena. She gave her name to Greece's capital city, Athens. The best-known coin of the ancient Greek world was issued in Athens and featured an owl.

Good hunters

Owls are the supreme night hunters, their bodies well adapted for hunting in the dark. But spotted owls are diurnal too. For one thing, they fly silently. The flight feathers on their wings are covered with a fine down to muffle the sound of air passing through them. The owl's eyes are particularly adapted for night vision. They contain many more rods than the eyes of other species. Rods are the structures that make eyes sensitive to light. The owl's hearing is superb, too. The rings of fine feathers owls have around each eye help channel sounds into the ears. The ears themselves are surrounded by flaps of skin that can be moved to pinpoint exactly the sources of sounds. A few other raptors such as spotted owls also hunt after sundown. They eat bats, swallows and insects while in flight. They see well in low light levels, although not in complete darkness, and many can pinpoint prey accurately by sound alone. Their ears are slightly asymmetrical in size, shape, or position. As an owl twists and bobs its head it is using this adaptation to get a "fix" on its prey. Owls often attract the attention of smaller birds (and also sometimes jays) if discovered by day, and mixed parties "mob" the roosting owl with loud calls, sometimes diving at its head.



Spotted little owl in Iran

Spotted little owl also lives in Iran. Southern parts of Iran are their main habitat. There is no population survey in our country and even their distribution is in doubt. They are very noisy in breeding season; often short, loud series of chattering, harsh shrieks including rapid and sudden outbursts, rising and falling in tempo and pitch: kuerk-kuerk-kuerk... reminiscent of domestic cats fighting. Spotted little owl lives in gardens, villages, cultivated areas, semi-deserts and earth cliffs. They nest in hole in tree or wall

Spotted owls facing extinction

In the early 1990s the spotted owl, which many people had never heard of, was listed as threatened under the U.S. Endangered Species Act. Experts claimed that the spotted owl nested and lived only in old- growth forests (forests that have never been cut and thus consist mainly of large, ancient trees) of the Pacific Northwest. The experts said that widespread clear-cutting of these foreststhe usual logging practice in the Pacific Northwest at that time- was going to cause extinction of these owls.

The federal government funded a study involving 600 scientists, who produced a Northwest Forest Plan that required conservation of existing old-growth forest. This plan caused one of the greatest economic changes of any American conservation policy, putting a stop to logging on 2.4 million acres in the state of Washington alone, and end-

ing an estimated 30,000 jobs in the state. Towns like Forks, Washington, on the Olympic Peninsula, which had been a center for the timber industry, found themselves with many people out of work and forced to seek other kinds of jobs.

As you can imagine, the whole issue caused fierce arguments. Opponents claimed that the owl could live just as well in second- growth forest (forests that have grown back after logging, thus having young and relatively small trees and lacking many other features of an old- growth forest). They said the owl and the loggers could continue together, and that in any case the owl was not worth the cost. They claimed that the real goal of the so-called supporters of the spotted owl was to stop the logging and preserve oldgrowth forests, and they cried "Fowl"!

Ironically, although much old-growth forest has been conserved for the owl, today this species is suffering from other threats. The barred owl, a competitor, is moving into the spotted owl's habitat; in fact the two species cannot coexist. Not only is the barred owl driving out the spotted owl, but in addition a new disease called "sudden oak disease" is killing many oaks and may wipe out the owl's preferred tree, the tanoak. As well, the introduced West Nile virus is attacking the spotted owl. And the story of spotted owl conservation continues till now. There are many challenges and questions, all without answer: why clear cutting of forests considered so bad? Was old-growth forest actually necessary for the owl? Do we really need all that forestland, and who cares about some little owls that most of us will never see? Similar questions exist in our country too.

What is the answer?

A big question is: "Can we have our forests and wildlife and use them too?" The answer is: "Yeah, we can if we understand how they work." This means that we have to apply a scientific approach to forestry and wildlife management, and recognize that forests and the wildlife that live in them are always changing. We can but we may achieve this best by seeking the two goals in different places at the same time. We can but only if we seek long-term historical records. This means that long-term scientific monitoring is necessary.

Iran official urges pressure on Turkey over dams

An Iranian official has urged active diplomacy with Turkey towards tackling the problem of dust storms, which chronically blight regional states as a result of Ankara's massive dam building projects.

As part of its Southeastern Anatolia Project known as GAP, Turkey has built 22 dams on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, which also run across Syria, Iraq and Iran.

The project has reportedly reduced water flow in the rivers' basin by 34 percent and caused 94 percent of the Mesopotamia to dry up, kicking up dust storms in Syria and Iraq which head to Iran and cripple life in its southwestern and west-

Hedayat Fahmi of Iran's Energy Min-

build more dams, leaving more parched river basins which become new breeding grounds for dust storms.

This becomes more palpable if we consider that the dams hold back as much as 100 billion cubic meters of water, half of which is harnessed in the country's Ataturk Dam.

The project, which is executed by US, German and Israeli firms among others, is due to provide water for up to two million hectares of arable lands in Turkey and boost the country's electricity production by 7,500 megawatts.

'Water wars likely'

Expert projections, Fahmi said, hold istry said on Sunday Turkey was exac- that the Middle East would be losing as

erbating the situation by continuing to much as 10 percent of its water resources by 2045. Over the same period, the demand for water in the region would increase by 60 percent, he said, adding this could even lead to regional wars.

"To tackle the problem of fine particles in the country, the four countries are needed to interact and engage in water diplomacy toward ensuring their entitlement to joint water resources," Fahmi said.

The official said given that Iraq and Syria are faced with security and social predicaments, Iran should take a more active role in diplomatic efforts.

stalled in 2011 when terrorism and conflicts began to blight the two Arab countries. Back in March, Iran sent a letter to

Regional cooperation on the matter

force to address the pressing issue of dust storms in the region ■ Iran urges regional states to fight dust storms

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres,

calling for the creation of a regional task

In February, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani visited Khuzestan after the province was hit by dust storms and power

Social networks were filled with images of the suffering along the Iraqi border, prompting Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei to say that "what has happened in Khuzestan province has caused heartache for any human being".

(Source: Press TV)

Syrian govt. forces hold fifth of strategic desert, reach Iraqi border

Stop attacking Syrian forces: Russia to U.S.

Syrian government forces have recaptured more than a fifth of the country's strategic Badiya desert from ISIL (Daesh) Takfiri terrorists, reaching the eastern border with Iraq for the first time since 2015.

"In cooperation with our allies, our units have captured a large number of locations and strategic positions in the Badiya, amounting to an area of 20,000 square kilometers," the general command of the Syrian army announced in a statement.

"This important achievement represents a strategic shift in the fight against terrorism and a launching pad to broaden military operations in the Badiya and along the borders with Iraq," it added.

Badiya extends over some 90,000 square kilometers from central Syria to the Iraqi and Jordanian borders.

The successful operation highlights the ability and determination of Syrian forces in defending the Takfiri terrorists, and shows that it is the "only effective force in fighting terrorism," added the statement. It went on to stress that the U.S. attacks on Syrian force are nothing but an attempt to "hinder the advance of the Syrian Arab Army and its allies in their war on terrorism."

On Tuesday, U.S.-led warplanes attacked a Syrian military position on the road to the town of al-Tanf -- where U.S. forces are based -- killing a number of people and causing some material dam-



The U.S. claims the air raid was carried out after Syrian forces "advanced inside the well-established deconfliction zone in southern Syria," where they posed a threat to "partner forces" based in al-Tanf. The U.S. had previously declared the surrounding 55 kilometers around the town a "deconfliction zone," in which only forces allied to Washington were al-

Stop attacking Syrian forces: Russia to US

Also on Saturday, Russia announced that it had told the Ú.S. that its strikes on

Syrian forces were unacceptable.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov gave the warning to U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson during a phone conversation, said a statement released by

the Russian foreign ministry. "Lavrov expressed his categorical disagreement with the U.S. strikes on pro-government forces and called on him to take concrete measures to prevent similar incidents in future," said the statement.

U.S.-backed SDF forces enter

Meanwhile, the so-called Syrian Dem-

ocratic Forces (SDF) have entered the western regions of Daesh's last stronghold in Syria, Raqqah, says a UK-based monitoring group.

According to the so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, the US-backed SDF entered the city from the western front that is currently engaged in heavy clashes with the ter-

"The SDF captured the western half of the al-Sabahiya neighborhood and are reinforcing their positions there," said observatory head Rami Abdel Rahman.

"They then advanced north to the adjacent district of al-Romaniya and are fighting Daesh," he added.

The SDF has also confirmed that it has entered the city and is engaged in "fierce fighting" in Romaniya.

"Daesh has reinforced the northern approach to Raqqah much more, thinking that's how the SDF would try to advance on the city...The western and eastern entrances to the city were much less fortified," noted Rahman.

The SDF is led by the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) which Ankara views as a terrorist organization over its alleged links to the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

Daesh seized Raggah in 2014, the same year when it started its campaign of terror in Syria. It then proceeded to capture large swathes of Syrian territory.

(Source: agencies)

Pakistan scrambles to protect China's 'Silk Road' pioneers

Chastened by the ISIL terrorist group's claim to have killed two kidnapped Chinese teachers, Pakistan is beefing up security around Chinese citizens streaming into the country on the back of Beijing's "Belt and Road" infrastructure splurge.

China has often urged Pakistan to improve security after pledging around \$57 billion to build power plants, railways, and roads that will cross the Himalayas to connect western China with Pakistan's Arabian Sea port of Gwadar.

Pakistani officials have outlined to Reuters extensive security plans that include thousands-strong police protection forces, tighter monitoring of Chinese nationals, and in the province of Baluchistan - where the two teachers were kidnapped on May 24 - a review of security arrangements.

The protection forces will buttress a 15,000-strong army division set up specifically to safeguard projects in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative, which has been credited with rejuvenating Pakistan's \$300 billion economy.

"We are already alert, but this incident has made us extra vigilant over Chinese security," said Amin Yousafzai, deputy inspector general of police for the southern province of Sindh, which is home to about 50 million people.

Sindh is raising a protection unit of about 2,600 police officers to help safeguard 4,000 Chinese working on CPEC projects, and another 1,000 working in other

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, which signed billions of dollars in contracts with Chinese companies, is also conducting a census of Chinese nationals and raising a by gunmen pretending to be police, but little else is

force of about 4,200 officers to protect foreigners.

Baluchistan would "review the whole security arrangement" and Chinese nationals who come in a private capacity should inform the authorities about their activities, said Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, spokesman for the provincial government.

The number of militant attacks in Pakistan has fallen sharply in recent years, but violent groups still pose a threat, and in Baluchistan separatists opposed to CPEC also carry out attacks.

The ISIL killings were a rare attack on Chinese nationals in Pakistan, but the incident has unnerved Islamabad and the growing Chinese community.

Miftah Ismail, a state minister involved in CPEC planning, said Pakistan had devoted huge resources to improving security and Chinese investors should not be put off by a one-off attack.

"The country's security situation has improved," Ismail said. The scale of the task facing security agencies is increasing by the day as more Chinese entrepreneurs arrive to set up businesses. Most stay in big cities, but some venture into riskier areas.

The challenge for authorities will increase in 2018, when the corridor is due to become operational and trucks ferrying goods to and from China cross more than 1,000 km (620 miles) of road in remote Baluchistan areas currently off-limits to foreigners.

The two Chinese-language teachers were kidnapped

known about how the they ended up in Baluchistan's provincial capital, Quetta.

Baluchistan's government afterwards evacuated 11 other Chinese nationals based in the city. "There are no more Chinese living in Quetta", said Ahsan Mehboob, Baluchistan's inspector general of police. It was not clear

The new Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa forces resemble the Special Protection Unit (SPU) recently established by Punjab, Pakistan's biggest province, which has attracted most Chinese investment.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province was already working on plans to set up the force, but after the Quetta kidnappings the process was "accelerated", according to one regional official. Sindh was also planning to set up a force before the Quetta attack, and was now expanding it, another official said.

Punjab's SPU, dedicated to protecting Chinese nationals and other foreigners, has more than 6,000 officers and is set to grow to 10,000.

Raja Jahangir, Punjab secretary for information, said SPU chiefs hold daily meetings with intelligence agencies and police chiefs to ensure Chinese nationals stay safe, while a database has been set up to track foreigners from their arrival, to their hotels, and their departure. Jahangir said security has been stepped up since the

Quetta attacks "Almost all personnel are on alert and they are on

their toes," he said.

(Source: Reuters)

Philippines' Duterte not aware of U.S. support against terrorists in Marawi

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte said on Sunday he was not aware the U.S. government was providing assistance to government troops in its battle against militants in a southern city.

Duterte also said he "never approached America" for help.

"I am not aware of that until they arrived," Duterte told a media briefing when asked about U.S. support to fight the pro-ISIL militants in Marawi City.

U.S. forces were providing the Philippines with technical assistance, but they had no "boots on the ground", the Philippines military said on Saturday.

The Philippine military said on Sat-

urday that the U.S. special forces would be providing "technical assistance" to the operations against ISIL (Daesh) in Marawi City on Mindanao Island and would not participate in the actual fighting there.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, a U.S. official said military support, including aerial surveillance and targeting, electronic eavesdropping, communications assistance, and training, were being given to the Philippine forces.

Terrorists from local militant groups that have pledged allegiance to Daesh have taken over large parts of Marawi, and at least 200 militants are holed up in a corner of the town. An estimated 500 to 1,000 civilians are trapped there, some being held as human shields, while others are hiding in their homes with no access to running water, electricity, or food.

The Philippine government has downgraded its military ties with the U.S. over Washington's criticism of President Rodrigo Duterte's trademark war on drugs in the Southeast Asian country. The deployment of U.S. forces to Marawi may now be a prelude to a potential renewal of such ties.

The military said it was making headway in the town but was proceeding with care so as not to destroy mosques, where some of the militants have taken up positions.

"We give premium to the mosques, because this is very symbolic to our Muslim brothers," military spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Jo-Ar Herrera said.

The military has said it is aiming to end the operations and eradicate Daesh by Monday, the Philippines' independence day.

The death toll from more than two weeks of fighting so far includes 58 government troops, 138 militants and 20 civilians, according to government sources.

The majority of the people in the Philippines are Christians, but Mindanao has a significant population of Muslims and Marawi is majority-Muslim.

(Source: agencies)

Scholar urges Iran to launch 'Ramadan diplomatic offensive' in Qatar row

How far will the recent crisis go and should we expect Qatar to turn its back on Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood? Should we expect an effort by Saudi Arabia to organize a coup in

Qatar if the country does not live up to the expecta-

A: It is very likely that Qatar will try to mitigate the current conflict, but I don't expect King al-Thani to compromise about the strategic preferences of the state. The Qatari leadership can't suddenly change the core tenets of their regional policies under pressure from other countries, without losing a good deal of political legitimacy. I mean this is the big analytical factor here: We are talking about a question of sovereignty. Saudi Arabia, under the influence of the Trump administration, is commanding the leadership of Qatar to fall into line. So this is a direct challenge to the sovereignty of the Qatari leadership and their control over Qatari politics. If Qatar would accede to

the demands at this time, it would set a precedence for the future. Ultimately, it would be equal to giving up control over the country's political conduct. No leadership can afford such submission without undermining the future of the state as legitimate and autonomous. The Qatari political elites are wise

"The biggest irony in this farce is that the "Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques" is spearheading a boycott of a fellow Muslim nation during Ramadan. This decision to **boycott Qatar questions the** ability of the Saudi royal family to act as a force for peace amongst Muslim nations."

As for the threat of a coup: Neither Saudi Arabia, nor the United States are remotely in the position to directly interfere in the domestic affairs of Qatar and to determine the political outcome, even if they would want to. What is important for Iranian decision-makers is to keep a cool head, to resist the temptation to use antagonistic language towards Saudi Arabia, and to facilitate closer regional cooperation. Again, Iran is seen as a major problem by many leaders in the Arab world. This perception needs to change which requires changes in Iran's discourse. Language is important in world affairs. A language of humanitarianism and empathy goes a long way. This is what I called the "Ramadan diplomatic offensive" and it goes back to what I suggested in several interviews and speeches on both sides of the Persian Gulf: The institutionalisation of peace and security throughout the region. The philosophy is out there, our politicians are well advised to follow.

Iraqi govt. forces find ISIL prison for Izadi women

Iraqi army soldiers have discovered a detention facility in the western flank of Mosul, which members of the ISIL (Daesh) terrorist group used to incarcerate women from the Izadi mi-

The Ministry of Defense, in a statement released on Sunday, announced that the government forces found the prison in the recently-liberated 17th Tammuz neighborhoods of Mosul, located some 400 kilometers (250 miles) north of the capital Baghdad. A military official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said

the building also incorporated a so-called judicial tribunal, where army soldiers could recover dozens of classified pa-The official added that Daesh has installed a comprehen-

sive CCTV surveillance system across the building for the principal purposes of keeping an eye on the movements of the female detainees. An unnamed commander said Daesh militants had

set up the prison in the 17th Tammuz neighborhood as they never thought army soldiers would recapture the

Commander of Federal Police Forces Lieutenant General Raed Shaker Jawdat said on May 20 that his forces had fully recaptured 17th Tammuz and Eqtesadieen neighborhoods of Mosul, and set up barricades and barriers in the liberated areas, Arabic-language al-Sumaria television network report-

He added that 66 Daesh terrorists had been killed while 13 explosive-laden cars and nine motorcycle bombs had been destroyed during the operations.

On March 13, Iraqi forces in western Mosul regained control over a textile factory that Daesh used as a jail to hold

"Daesh imprisoned nearly 300 women in the building," Gayath Surchi, the speaker of Patriotic Union of Kurdistan party in Mosul said at the time.

Surchi added that the women were transferred to refugee camps in northern Mosul, where they were identified and later reunited with their families.

"Their ages vary between 20-year-old to 70-years-old and some of them speak Kurdish," he pointed out.

Back in August 2014, Daesh terrorists overran Sinjar, killing, raping, and enslaving large numbers of Izadis. The town was later recaptured on November 13, 2015, during a two-day operation by Peshmerga forces and

The Office of Kidnapped Affairs in the northern Iraqi city of Dohuk says around 3,500 Izadi Kurds are being held captive in the Daesh-held areas, and that a large proportion of the abductees are women and children.

Iraqi army soldiers and volunteer fighters from the Popular Mobilization Units, commonly known by the Arabic name Hashd al-Sha'abi, have made sweeping gains against the Takfiri elements since launching the Mosul operation on October

The Iraqi forces took control of eastern Mosul in January after 100 days of fighting, and launched the battle in the west on February 19.

(Source: Press TV)

UN Ocean Conference wraps up with actions to restore ocean

By Friday afternoon, more than 1,300 voluntary commitments had already been registered.

Calling the figure "truly impressive," Mr. Wu, who is also UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, underscored that the commitments now comprise "an ocean solution registry

'It's all of us or nothing'

The week-long conference, where some 6,000 people participated, was the first time that the UN brought everyone together to discuss the challenges facing the world's oceans.

'When it comes to the ocean, it's the common heritage of humankind. There's no North-South, East-West when it comes to the ocean," Mr. Thomson said. "If the ocean is dying, The senior official underscored that by "getting the wheels

turning" on SDG 14, the conference helped push forward action on all 17 SDGs. finance ocean science, but much more is required to fill the capacity gaps," he explained. Topics that were discussed ranged from plastic pollution

in the oceans and seas to ocean acidification and illegal fishing – which tie in with topics of alleviating poverty, ending hunger, promoting health, ensuring access to water and sanitation, and so on.

Mr. Thomson attributed the success of the conference to the "wonderful way" in which all the different participants came together to discuss and work together.

He lauded the "openness to civil society, to the science sector, to private society" in breaking down the typical divisions between governments and other sectors. "There's no them and us. It's all of us or nothing."

In addition to eight plenary meetings and seven partnership dialogues, The Ocean Conference included 150 side events, 41 exhibitions and interviews at the SDG Media Zone.

These included events with New Oceans Advocate and globally-acclaimed Australian singer-songwriter Cody Simpson, as well as Marine biologist Douglas McCauley, Aboriginal artist Sid Bruce Short Joe and Spanish philanthropist Álvaro de Marichalar, for example.

The mix of personalities and strong support for action brought "creativity and a sense of unity" to the action for oceans, said conference co-chairwoman, Deputy Prime Minister of Sweden Isabelle Lovin.

(Source: UN News Center)

Italy beat Uruguay on penalties to finish third

Italy finished in third place at the FIFA U-20 World Cup Korea Republic 2017 after beating Uruguay 4-1 on penalties following a goalless draw.

Both teams struggled to take control of the game in the first half. Uruguay relied on a couple of counter-attacks and



Uruguay took 24 attempts to Italy>s six by the end of regulation time, but their finishing was not quite sharp enough and Italy goalkeeper Alessandro Plizzari, who was standing in for the regular Andrea Zaccagno, was up to every

The match finished goalless after 90 minutes, so the third place spot on the podium had to be decided by a penalty

The Italians were superior from the spot and thanks to Plizzari, who saved penalties from Amaral and Juan Boselli, they secured a place on the podium in third place.

(Source: FIFA)

Sharapova out of Wimbledon after injury setback

Maria Sharapova will miss Wimbledon and the entirety of the grass-court season after a scan revealed her thigh injury was more problematic than first thought.

The five-time Grand Slam winner was due to play at the Aegon Classic in Birmingham and at Wimbledon qualifying in Roehampton but revealed she would now be out of action until the end of July.

Her skipping of the grass-court season will also prove problematic in entering the US Open as she will require a wildcard from the USTA if she's to feature in the main

Should tournament directors not offer her a wildcard, she will have to go through qualifying, as she was scheduled to do for Wimbledon but that would be another setback in what's already been a difficult year.

French Open officials refused to offer her a wildcard and her ranking was too low to go through qualifying, which meant she missed all the action at Roland Garros.

She is currently ranked at world No. 178 having seen her ranking fall outside the top-500 after she testing positive for meldonium at the 2016 Australian Open.

Sharapova wrote on Facebook: After an additional scan, the muscle tear that I sustained in Rome will unfortunately not allow me to compete in the grass court tournaments I was scheduled to play.

'I look forward to meeting you there next year.

'I will continue to work on my recovery and my next scheduled tournament is in Stanford.

(Source: Metro)

Low unhappy with Germany fans over Werner treatment

Germany coach Joachim Low has voiced his dismay at the hostile attitude shown toward RB Leipzig attacker Timo Werner during Saturday's 7-0 win over San Marino.

Werner came off the bench 10 minutes after half-



time to replace Lars Stindl in this weekend's World Cup qualifier and was jeered and whistled by his own fans throughout his substitute cameo.

The 21-year-old has been an unpopular figure among German football fans ever since diving to win a penalty for Leipzig in the 2-1 home win over Schalke in December 2016.

Low was not impressed with the German fans' behavior and has urged

them to change their attitude toward the young attacker. "There was a dive once, he made a mistake, and he admitted he was wrong," Low told Bild.

"But we are talking about a very young player here. "Someone who plays for the national team, is only at the start of his career and who has scored 21 goals in one season in the Bundesliga should not be jeered and

whistled. That is simply not okay." Werner himself, meanwhile, believes he is being treated different than other players because he plays for hugely unpopular Leipzig.

"I do not know what all the fuss is about," Werner

"We have seen people dive for years. People are making a big thing out of it just because I play for RB

(Source: Soccerway)

England defeat Venezuela to win 2017 U-20 World Cup



England won their biggest international title since 1966 by beating Venezuela 1-0 in the Under-20 World Cup final.

It was England's first appearance in the final of a global tournament since their World Cup victory 51 years ago.

Everton forward Dominic Calvert-Lewin's first-half goal was enough for victory thanks to Newcastle goalkeeper Woodman's second-half

penalty save.

Adalberto Woodman denied Penaranda from the spot after the Malaga forward was fouled by Kyle Walker-Peters.

With 17 minutes to play, the referee pointed to the spot to signal a penalty before immediately referring to the video assistant referee

The decision stood - there was the slightest of contacts - but Newcastle

keeper Woodman>s strong palm kept out Penaranda>s effort

In the first half Ronaldo Lucena hit the post with an audacious long-range free-kick that had Woodman well beaten, while Tottenham midfielder Josh Onomah saw a powerful effort strike the underside of the Venezuela bar after the break.

After the match, England forward Dominic Solanke, due to join Liverpool

from Chelsea on 1 July, was awarded the Golden Ball given to the player of the tournament. Previous winners of the award include Diego Maradona, Lionel Messi, Luis Figo, Paul Pogba and Sergio

Aguero. Woodman was awarded the Golden Glove, given to best goalkeeper of the tournament.

(Source: BBC)

Jelena Ostapenko to take French Open glory in her stride

Jelena Ostapenko is confident she can take the attention in her stride as she targets more grand slam success at Wimbledon.

The 20-year-old produced one of the most remarkable tennis stories in recent years by becoming the first unseeded player in the Open era to win the French Open title.

Having arrived in Paris as the little-known world number 47 from Latvia, Ostapenko leaves as the world number 12 and with her career earnings almost tripled.

The final against Simona Halep was shown on a big screen in the centre of Riga and Ostapenko can expect plenty of fuss when she makes a brief trip back on Monday.

"I think when I go back home there will be a lot of attention and this is really nice because I made history for my country," said said.

"Of course now I probably will have more pressure but I'm going to try to deal with that. I think it's going to be a little bit difficult but I chose to be a tennis player, that's my career, so I should be fine with that."

Next on the agenda for Ostapenko is the Aegon Classic in Birmingham, although it is a sign of just what an outsider she was that she is not yet even in the field.

With the rankings cut-off several weeks ago, Ostapenko is currently still one out, although a wild card will surely be made available for her if she

Ostapenko has more pedigree on grass than clay having won the Wimbledon junior title three years



ago and rates the surface as her

It was not always like that.

Recalling her first experience of grass aged 15, Ostapenko said: "When I first played on it I didn't like it at all. I didn't really understand how to play on grass and I was like, 'How can people play on grass? It's made for soccer'

"But in the next couple of years understood how to play, how to move and then I really liked it."

Ostapenko stunned observers and opponents alike with her utterly fearless game at Roland Garros - smacking 299 winners in seven matches.

Her confidence comes both from youth and the knowledge that, when she is on form, very few players can live with her.

Ostapenko has been coached throughout her career by her mother Jelena Jakovleva, adding former world number 16 Anabel Medina Garrigues to her team a month ago.

(Source: BT Sport)

Roberto Carlos responds to doping scandal claims

Former Real Madrid and Brazil legend Roberto Carlos has responded to claims he took performance-enhancing drugs, insisting he has never met the doctor cited in the doping controversy.

Sportsmail reported that a German documentary alleged he was one of at least two Brazilian international footballers who took banned performance enhancing drugs around the 2002 World Cup in Japan and Korea, a tournament

But Carlos has moved in a bid to clear his name by vehemently denying any wrong-doing, and pointed to his record of having passed several drug tests at the nine clubs he played for over a 20-year period.

'I vehemently repudiate the irresponsible accusations made by ARD and reaffirm that I have never pulled any stunt that would let me take advantage of my colleagues,' he said in a statement reported by Globoesporte.

The report cites the name of a doctor, whom I have never met in my life, and my lawyers are already working to refute the charges in court and publicly try them before a judge!

During a long investigation into doping in Brazilian sport, led by the acclaimed journalist Hajo Seppelt, undercover reporters obtained substances including steroids and EPO from a doctor, Julio Cesar Alves, who has claimed to provide doping substances to dozens of Brazilian stars across multiple sports for more than a decade.

Runner Eliane Pereira, who has represented her country, told Seppelt she had been given doping products since the age of 17 by Alves.

Marco Aurelio Klein, who was until re-



cently the head of Brazil's anti-doping organisation, told Seppelt that a dossier of sportsman's statements about their visits to Dr Alves had been handed to prose-

Among paperwork compiled as part of a potential case against Dr Alves was a claim that Roberto Carlos, who won the Champions League three times with Real among many trophies in his career, visited Dr Alves in July 2002, within weeks of the World Cup.

Filmed by undercover reporters pretending to want drugs for performance-enhancing reasons, Dr Alves told them: 'I treated Roberto Carlos. The national player. He came to me at the early age of 15. He was a lanky boy. I developed his thighs. It was me who made Roberto Carlos's thighs into what they are today.'

The documentary, 'Doping top secret: Brazil's dirty game', also included Dr Alves making claims that he continues to work with a wide range of sportsmen, including cyclists from Spain, Belgium and Germany, and footballers from around the world, including in Europe.

(Source: Daily Mail)

Nervous Bolt wins final 100 meters race on home soil

An emotional Usain Bolt recovered from a moderate start to win his final 100 meters sprint on home soil, clocking 10.03 seconds at the 2nd Racers Grand Prix in Kingston on Saturday.

The multiple Olympic and world gold medalist, who will retire after August's world championships in London, confessed to being a nervous wreck before running his last race on Jamaican soil.

"The run, it was just ok. I must say it was ok. I don't think I've ever been that nervous running a 100m," Bolt said after a lap of honor before a packed stadium, including International Association of Athletics Federations President Sebastian Coe and the top brass of Jamaican politics including Prime Minister Andrew

"I think that was possibly one of my worst race. My execution was poor, my start was poor as always. I think in the last bit I lost it a little.

"But I didn't expect anything spectacular... my first race since January when I ran a 150m and some relays in Australia so I just wanted to stay injury free, put on a show for the crowd and shown them I'm thankful for



the support over the years.

"Just the atmosphere and the people, the support they came out and give me tonight, it was really nerve racking. I never expected this, I knew it was going to be Big, the stadium was ram packed so thank you guys for coming out and supporting me."

Running from lane five, Bolt took control of the race

before the halfway mark and pulled away to the delight of more than 30,000 spectators.

"It's Big to see everybody that turned out. It shows that what I've done for the sport is a big deal to them

and they really appreciate it," said the 30-year-old. "So thank you and it was my honor to put the sport of track and field at the top and to continue to dominate. I'll try my best even when I've hung up my spikes, to really continue to push track and field in anyway possible."

The double sprint world record holder, who has amassed eight Olympic golds and 13 world championship medals, will make his final bow in August in the British capital, where he will only run the shorter sprint despite having a wildcard for the 200m.

"It will definitely just be the 100. I know a lot of people really want to see me run it (200m) but the 100m will be the one cause I know people really want to see that also," Bolt said.

"I'm just going there to do my best and to come through victorious as always."

(Source: Reuters)

Fans are our 12th man against **Uzbekistan: Carlos Queiroz**

d e s k Carlos Queiroz calls for fans to pack out Azadi Stadium for 2018 FIFA World Cup qualifier against Uzbekistan.

Team Melli will host Uzbekistan on Monday at the Azadi Stadium and a win will see team advance to the World Cup.

Iran stand on the brink of advancing to successive FIFA World Cups for the first time in their history.

"Uzbekistan are strong and we need to our fans as Iran's 12th man. If we want to reach our standards we've planned we need to concentrate 90 minutes and show a good performance. Team Melli have to be strong both in attack and defense," Queiroz said in the pre-match news conference.

"Our best player in the match against Uzbekistan is our fans. All teams need the fans and we will have an easier work with them," the former Real Madrid coach added.

Unbeaten in seven qualifying games, Iran have been in dominant form in Group A, having yet to concede a goal on the Road to Russia.

"In football you can't achieve anything without hard work. We will see our match as a World Cup final. I am sure we will get a good result on Monday," he added.

"Iran have not qualified for the World Cup yet and after the final whistle we can talk about that. We know that Uzbekistan are candidate to finish the campaign as the first or second team. The match against Uzbekistan is our most important game in the competition," Queiroz concluded.



Werder Bremen Alexander Nouri comes to Tehran



SPORTS Werder Bremen Ald e s ^k exander Nouri has traveled to Tehran, capital of Iran on Sunday.

The 37-year-old Iranian-German coach will attend Iran and Uzbekistan match in the 2018 World Cup qualifier on Monday.

The match will take place in Tehran's Azadi Stadim and a victory would see Iran qualify for the 2018 World Cup with two remaining matches.

Alexander Nouri is a retired Iranian-German footballer and current coach of Werder Bremen. He played professionally for 14 years with Werder Bremen, Seattle Sounders, Uerdingen 05, VfL Osnabrück, Holstein Kiel and VfB Oldenburg.

According to Iranian media, Wreder Bremen club's officials have also traveled to Tehran to sign a bilateral cooperation with Iranian football club

Iran lose to Canada in U-23 World **Wheelchair Basketball Championship**



SPORTS Iran lost to Canada d e s k 68-59 in the third day of competition at the 2017 Men's U-23 World Championship on Sunday

Ben Moronchuk paced the Canadian attack with a game-high 38 points and 12 rebounds for a double double while Liam Hickey contributed the game's only triple double with 14 points, 14 rebounds and 10 assists.

Iran's Mojitaba Kamali countered

with 23 points and Ali Karimi Kerdabadi secured a double double with 13 points and 11 assists

Iran started the campaign with a 72-68 win over Australia and lost to Turkey 71-53 in Day 2.

The Iranian wheelchair basketball team will face Brazil on Tuesday.

The U-23 World Wheelchair Basketball Championship will take place from June 8 to 16 in Toronto, Ontario

Montazeri believes Iranian success due to years of hard work

Tehran: Pejman Montazeri believes the Islamic Republic of Iran's dominant form in Group A of the FIFA World Cup Russia 2018 qualifiers is down to years of hard work as Team Melli stand on the brink of advancing to the global showpiece.

Carlos Queiroz's side sit four points clear at the top of the standings after claiming five wins and two draws from their seven qualifying games with a defence that has still yet to be breached.

Iran now welcome Uzbekistan to Azadi Stadium on Monday needing a win to qualify for a second successive FIFA World Cup for the first time in their history.

"During the past four or five years we worked very hard and we had a bunch of young guys who are now mature enough and we think we have reached the goal we were looking for," said Montazeri.

"The team is ready and we are strong defensively and play very compact. I think we reached the goal we wanted to achieve five years ago."

The Qatar-based defender played all three games at the FIFA World Cup in Brazil in 2014 as Iran claimed one point from three games and exited at the first hurdle.

But the points tally does not tell the whole story as



the Asian powerhouse came within seconds of holding Argentina to a scoreless draw only for Lionel Messi to pop up with a stoppage-time winner.

Aside from a quarter-final exit to Iraq in the AFC Asian Cup Australia 2015, IR Iran have gone from strength to strength since and, should they progress to Russia, will head to the tournament with high hopes.

"Concerning the last World Cup, one of the best memories was coming back to Iran and people being so happy with how we performed," added Montazeri.

"If we can qualify for this World Cup, people will now be expecting us to get through the group stage, so reaching the second round would be our main goal.

"But it's better to talk about this once we qualify beuse we still haven't and we have one of our most important games of the past seven or eight years, so we are only focusing on this."

Uzbekistan arrive in Tehran in third place in Group A with eyes firmly fixed on catching second-place Korea Republic, who stand a point above them in an automatic qualification spot.

And the hosts will be wary of Monday's visitors after the Cenrtral Asians came away with all three points following a 1-0 win in the 2014 qualification campaign almost five years ago.

"We know it will probably be one of the most difficult games we have had," said Montazeri, whose side defeated Uzbekistan 1-0 in Tashkent earlier in the cam-

paign.
"We know them very well and have analysed them for two weeks so we know it's going to be a tough game. But everyone is focused and we hope to get the result we need."

(Source: AFC)

Mahrez waits on Barcelona after receiving Arsenal offer

LEICESTER winger Riyad Mahrez is waiting on an offer from Barcelona, according to reports in Spain.

Mahrez has been linked with a big-money move from the King Power this summer after Leicester failed to secure European football for next

The Algeria international has made it clear he wants to join a top club, with Leicester wanting at least £35million to consider selling their prize asset.

Premier League duo Arsenal and Chelsea are both said to be interested, while Barcelona are also reportedly

fond of the winger. And according to Spanish outlet SPORT, Arsenal have already made an offer for Mahrez in an effort to win the race for his signature.

But the 26-year-old is reportedly waiting for Barcelona to make their move as the Nou Camp is his preferred destination.

SPORT claim his agent has spoken with Barca officials, but the Catalan giants are reportedly focused on signing a new right-back and a midfielder this

Barca are also unwilling to meet Leicester's £35m valuation and are said to prefer either re-signing Everton winger Gerard Deulofeu or renewing their interest in Borussia Dortmund's

Ousmane Dembele.

Mahrez, who cost the Foxes just £400,000 in 2014, revealed last month that he intends to leave Leicester this

His statement said: "I've always enjoyed a good relationship with the chairman and everyone at the club, and I hope I have been able to repay the faith shown to me by my performances and commitment on the pitch during my time here.

"I've had the four best seasons of my career at Leicester and have loved every moment. I feel immense pride to have been a part of what we have achieved during my time at the club,



culminating in becoming Premier League champions.

'The relationship I share with the club and our amazing fans is something I will treasure forever and I truly hope they will understand and respect my decision.

(Source: Express)

Iran to secure place at 2018 **World Cup with win over Uzbekistan**

Group A leader Iran will host third-placed Uzbekistan at Azadi Stadium on Monday knowing a win will see the team advances to a second successive FIFA World Cup

Unbeaten in seven qualifying games, Iran have been in dominant form in Group A, having yet to concede a goal on the Road to Russia and boasting an attacking line-up featuring the likes of Sardar Azmoun and Mehdi Taremi.



The White Wolves of Uzbekistan are in familiar territory in third place in the standings, but a shock away victory would see the team remains in firm contention for a top-two finish with two games remaining.

Carlos Queiroz's team is ready for the match with a 2-0 friendly win over Montenegro thanks to a brace from

Uzbekistan also defeated Thailand 2-0 in a friendly in Tashkent last week with goals from Temurkhodja Abduhalikov and Sardor Rashidov, who will both hope to help their team become the first side to unlock the Iranian defence.

(Source: AFC)

Iran is one of world's best volleyball countries, Serbia captain says

Serbia volleyball captain Marko Podrascanin says that Iran is one of the best volleyball countries in the world and the Iranian fans love the sport.

Serbia defeated Iran 3-1 (20 - 25, 23 - 25, 25 - 16, 16 -25) in Pool D1 in the full-packed Azadi Hall.

'Thanks to the crowd in Iran. Iran is one of the best volleyball country in the world and the crowd love volleyball here. They are really a great team. They have great players, great staff. I wish all the best for them in the World League and Asian championship," Podrascanin said

"I am very happy for this victory. It was our best game in the World League for this summer. We played a good match especially in the first two sets. And after the third set, we had a good reaction in the fourth set getting together for victory," he added.

(Source: FIVB)

Djeparov believes Uzbekistan could defeat Iran in Tehran

Server Djeparov has set his sights on winning the remaining three FIFA World Cup Russia 2018 qualifiers as Uzbekistan prepare to face Group A leaders Iran on Monday.

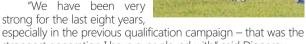
The Uzbeks go into the tie in third place, just a point behind second-placed Korea Republic, but against an unbeaten Iran side who will advance to the tournament in Russia should they secure all three points at Azadi Stadium.

"I think everything is very simple, we need to win the re-

maining three games so we won't be in the play-offs and will go straight to the World Cup," said the two-time AFC Player of the Year. "[Being 34] is a big moti-

vation for me to get to the World Cup but it's not just for me, it's for the people of Uzbekistan. People have been dreaming of the World Cup for a long time and we need to realize these dreams."

'We have been very strong for the last eight years,



strongest generation I have ever played with," said Djeparov. "We were doing well, but we were one goal away from qualifying for the World Cup, which was very disappointing.

"After the game when we heard Korea had lost their game [to Iran] and thought about all the chances we missed, I was very upset. I didn't want to play football anymore, I was thinking about quitting and didn't even want to watch any games."

The strong side Djeparov refers to was in fact the last to win a FIFA World Cup qualifying game against Iran in Tehran, where Ulugbek Bakayev's goal secured a 1-0 victory in November 2012

Team Melli went on to recover from that defeat and win their remaining three games to advance to Brazil and have not looked back since.

Five wins and two draws in the current campaign has left Carlos Queiroz's team on the brink of qualification for a second successive World Cup, yet Djeparov remains optimistic ahead of Monday's clash.

'Yes, this gives us confidence that we can beat any team, even in the away matches," added Djeparov.

"We believe we have a chance to beat the strongest team in our group and that's the confidence we received from that game."

(Source: AFC)

INTERNATIONAL DAILY www.tehrantimes.com

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Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 — 88808895

- Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807
- Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603 www.eshterak.ir Distributor: Padideh Novin Co.
- Webmaster: webmaster@tehrantimes.com
- Printed at: Kayhan ISSN: 1017-94

No. 18, Bimeh Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran P.o. Box: 14155-4843 Zip Code: 1599814713



Iranian artist wins Grand Prix at World Press Cartoon

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian artist Alireza Pakdel d e s k has won the Grand Prix of the World Press Cartoon, one of the world's largest and most prestigious annual press cartoon contests held in Lisbon, Portugal.



"Immiarants" by Iranian artist Alireza

his cartoon "Immigrants", which also won the first prize in the editorial section of the festival, the organizers announced on Saturday.

He received the prize for

The jury, comprised of Antonio Antunes from Portugal, Ross Thomson from Great Britain, Hermenegildo Sabat from Uruguay, Angel Boligan from Mexico and Zoran Petrovic from Germany, announced the winners during a ceremony on June 10.

The participating works Pakdel won the Grand Prix of the coming from Brazil, Ecuador, World Press Cartoon in Lisbon, France, Greece, Iran, Italy, Serbia and Switzerland were

competing in the three sections of editorial, gag and

"Dramatic Quote" honored at **Finnish poster triennial**

R T TEHRAN — Mehdi Mahdian from Iran d e s k has received the Certificate of Honor for his poster "Dramatic Quote" at the Lahti International Poster Triennial 2017.



"Dramatic Quote" by Mehdi Mahdian at the Lahti Art Museum

Mahdian "Dramatic Quote" in 2015 as part of an epopee reading telling the story of Rustam and Sohrab from Ferdowsi's masterpiece Shahnameh.

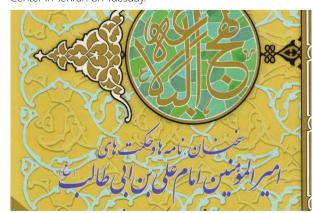
The Grand Prix was oresented to Jianping He rom Germany for poster 'Desian X Taipéi".

The Association Professional Graphic Designers — Grafia in Finland and the Lahti Poster Museum organize the Lahti International Poster Triennial

from June 9 to September 24.

Literati to discuss **Persian translation** of Nahj-ul-Balagha

A R T TEHRAN — Various Persian translations of d e s k the Nahj-ul-Balagha, an anthology of political discourses, sermons, letters and sayings attributed to Imam Ali (AS), will be discussed in a meeting at the Persian Language Center in Tehran on Tuesday.



The Bukhara literary magazine will organize the meeting in collaboration with the Center for Publication of Islamic Science at 5:30 p.m., the magazine announced in press release on Sunday.

Mostafa Mohaqqeq-Damad, Abdolmajid Ma'adikhah, Mohammad-Ali Mahdavi-Rad and Ahmad Pakatchi are scheduled to deliver speeches.

A new Persian translation of the Nahj-ul-Balagha by Ali-

Asghar Faqihi will also be introduced at the session.

The Nahj-ul-Balagha ("The Peak of Eloquence") were compiled by Seyyed Razi (d. 1015). It has been translated into many languages, including English, French, Russian and Spanish.

Fariba Vafi wins LiBeratur Prize

CULTURE TEHRAN — Iranian des skathor Fariba Vafi won the LiBeratur Prize, a literary honor that is presented by the Litprom Association in Frankfurt, the organizers announced on Sunday.

She was selected as the winner for her second novel "Tarlan" while writers from South Korea, Kenya, Lebanon, India Singapore, Haiti and Swaziland were among the

The book, which has been translated into German by Jutta Himmelreich and published by Sujet Publications in Germany in 2015, tells the story of a young girl, Tarlan, who dreams of becoming a writer but instead she chooses to go to the Police Academy.

LiBeratur Prize is awarded annually to inform about literary developments and trends in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The award ceremony will take place at the Frankfurt Book Fair, which will be held from October 11



This combination photo shows Iranian writer Fariba Vafi and the front cover of her novel "Tarlan".

"Secrets of God's Mystical Oneness" displayed at Madrid Book Fair

CULTURE TEHRAN — A e s k Spanish version of the 12th century Persian literary work "Secrets of God's Mystical Oneness" ("Asrar al-Tawhid") on the Persian mystic and poet Abu Sa'id ibn Abul-Khayr (967-1049 CE) was on display at the Madrid Book Fair 2017, which came to an end on Sunday.

Written by Muhammad ibn Monavvar. one of Abul-Khayr's grandsons, 130 years after his death, the book is considered a landmark work of Sufi literature as well as Abul-Khayr's biography.

Translated into Spanish by scholar Joaquin Rodriguez Vargas, the book was published by Mandala Publications in last February.



collaboration with Iran's Cultural Office in

The book was one of the winners in the international section of the 24th edition of Iran's Book of the Year Awards

Tehran university to commemorate World Day Against Child Labor with "Valderama"

Iranian director Abbas Amini's drama "Valderama" will go on screen in a commemoration for the World Day Against Child Labor at Tehran's Allameh Tabatabai University

The film is about the 15-yearold Valderama, so called by the townsfolk for his long curly hair resembling the former Brazilian soccer star Carlos Valderrama, who is trying to obtain the ID card he's never been able to have.

The screening is part of a

A R T T E H R A N program arranged for a meeting on child labor in Iran, during which Iranian scholars Shirin Ahmadinia, Golnar Mehran, Mohammad Malju, Puya Alaeddini and Farshid Yazdani will deliver speeches.

> The film, which was acclaimed at several international events, is currently on screen at the Art and Experience Cinemas dedicated to screening art films. Producer Majid

> announced in late May that the box office receipts of the film will be donated to the Iranian Association for the Protection of Child Labor.

President Hassan Rouhani honors Quran activists

CULTURE TEHRAN — President Hassan e s k Rouhani honored several Quran activists and promoters of the Holy Quran during a special ceremony at Tehran's Islamic Summit Conference Hall on Saturday.

Iranian Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Reza Salehi-Amiri, and a number of cultural officials attended the program.

The honoring ceremony is part of an annual event held on the sidelines of the ongoing

International Holy Quran Exhibition. The twelve honorees were active in different courses including recitation, memorization, and

translation of Holy Quran, and different sections such as management of Quranic organizations.

Reciter Mohammad Abolqasemi, memorizer Shoja Zoveidat, and the filmmaker of a documentary on religious scholar Allameh Mohammad-Taqi Jafari (1923-1998), Mohammad Davudi, were among the honorees.

Also included were Hojjatoleslam Jafar Kashfi, the calligrapher of Quranic verses, and Ayatollah Mohammad-Ali Gerami, the writer of several books on Islamic science.

The 25th Quran exhibit will be running until A Quaran activist receives a prize from President Hassan Rouhani



at Tehran's Islamic Summit Conference Hall on June 10, 2017.

Adam West, TV's campy Batman in 1960s series, dies at age 88

NEW YORK (Reuters) — Adam West, who earned a place in American pop culture history with his campy portrayal of the title character in the classic 1960s TV series "Batman," has died at age 88, his family said on Saturday.

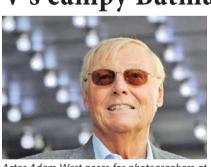
West, who was so closely identified with Batman for the rest of his life that it was both a blessing and a curse for him, died on Friday evening after a short struggle with leukemia, his representative told Variety.

"He was the greatest. We'll miss him like crazy," his family said on the actor's

The live-action "Batman" show, starring West along with Burt Ward as his sidekick Robin and a collection of colorful villains, was inspired by a long-running comic book series. It ran only three seasons from 1966 to 1968 on the ABC network, but became a television phenomenon and cult classic. It also spawned a "Batman"

feature film in 1966. West portrayed Batman and his alter ego Bruce Wayne as painfully earnest, straight-laced, clean-cut and trustworthy. The darker aspects of the Batman character - mined so successfully in later film versions - were ignored.

The show's various memorable villains -Cesar Romero as the Joker, Frank Gorshin as the Riddler, Burgess Meredith as the Penguin and Julie Newmar as Catwoman - were allowed to chew the scenery.



Actor Adam West poses for photographers at a ceremony where he received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in Los Angeles April

Numerous Hollywood luminaries stepped in to play Batman's demented adversaries

in the show's 120 episodes. "He was bright, witty and fun to work with," Newmar said on Saturday in a statement. "I will miss him in the physical world and savor him always in the world of

imagination and creativity." After the cancellation of the series, West found it difficult to land other acting jobs, even though he was an established film and TV actor, because he had become so linked to the Batman role.

Eventually he came to accept that his identity was closely intertwined with the masked crime-fighting hero in the black cape whether he liked it or not. He often was hired to play a comically fictionalized version of himself in live-action and animated roles and became a successful

On the long-running animated series "Family Guy," he provided the voice of the character Mayor Adam West. He played himself for years on the animated "The Fairly OddParents" and appeared on the venerable animated series "The Simpsons." West also voiced the Caped Crusader and other characters in numerous animated incarnations of Batman.

'We had some very good writers for the original show," West said in a 2010 interview with the Slice of SciFi website.

In protecting Gotham City from super criminals, Batman and Robin invariably would find their lives threatened in some fiendish trap, only to escape using their endless ingenuity.

For example, Robin was once nearly swallowed alive by a giant clam in an episode with the Joker. Batman and Robin were nearly turned into frozen desserts -Frosty Freezies - in an episode with famed film director Otto Preminger as Mr. Freeze.

Like some other actors who became inseparable in the minds of fans from a character they played - Leonard Nimoy as Mr. Spock on "Star Trek" is another example - West long resented his association with Batman but learned to like it.

"I think it was a very simple deduction. I think any intelligent person would come to the same conclusion," he said in 2010. "And that is: if I am being turned down for other roles because of my association

with Batman, then maybe what I should do is really embrace Batman. Pursue it and keep it alive, which is what I've been trying to do for 30 years."

Bob Kane, who created Batman in 1939, seemed to agree. West kept a drawing of Batman by Kane, who inscribed it: "To my buddy, Adam, who breathed life into my pen and ink creation."

While struggling to land post-Batman acting roles, West turned to making personal appearances wearing the Batman cape and cowl - some rather undignified, as when he appeared on a Memphis pro wrestling program opposite wrestler Jerry "The King" Lawler.

West was born as William "Billy" Anderson in Washington state in 1928. He took the name Adam West when he came to Hollywood in 1959.

Pre-"Batman," he co-starred in the 1965 Three Stooges feature film "The Outlaws Is Coming" and the 1964 scifi film "Robinson Crusoe on Mars." But it was his performance in a TV commercial that caught the notice of the "Batman"

"They'd seen a series of commercials I'd done for Nestle Quick instant milkshake in which I did a kind of spoof on the James Bond character," West told Bizarre magazine in 2004. "They saw the commercials and thought, 'Hey, maybe this is the guy that can play the character in the way that we envision it."



Richard Hammond, host of the BBC America series "Richard Hammond's Crash Course," speaks at the Cable portion of the Television Critics Association Summer press tour in Beverly Hills, California August 1, 2012.

(Reuters/Fred Prouser)

Ex "Top Gear" presenter Hammond in hospital after crash in September 2006.

GENEVA (Reuters) — Former "Top Gear" presenter Richard Hammond was airlifted to hospital in Switzerland on Saturday following a dramatic car crash while filming for his new show, but his injuries were not serious, a spokesman said.

Hammond, 47, was driving an electric sports car during filming for "The Grand Tour" when the crash happened, the spokesman for the show said.

"Richard was conscious and talking, and climbed out of the car himself before the vehicle burst into flames," a spokesman for

"The Grand Tour" said in a statement.

"He was flown by air ambulance to hospital in St Gallen to be checked over, revealing a fracture to his knee," it said. "The cause of the crash is unknown and is being investigated."

Hammond was involved in a much more serious crash over a decade ago, while filming for his old show "Top Gear". He suffered serious brain injuries and was

in hospital for five weeks after a Vampire drag racer he was driving burst a tire and left the course at 288 mph (463 kph) at Elvington airfield, near the British city of York, Hammond recovered and returned to

broadcasting and to "Top Gear", which aired in more than 200 countries and was watched by 350 million viewers worldwide. He left the BBC show along with

colleagues Jeremy Clarkson and James May when Clarkson was fired in 2015 for physically attacking a member of the production team.

"The Grand Tour", an Amazon series, reunites the old "Top Gear" team. Saturday's accident occurred during the filming of its