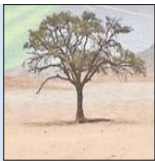




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# Saudis' fear of Iran is delusional



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## Major book center opens in Tehran

**CULTURE TEHRAN** — A major center for publications named the Tehran Book Garden, covering an area of 110,000 square meters on Abbasabad Hills in the northeast of the city, opened during a special ceremony on Monday.

The ceremony was attended by Tehran Mayor Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf and Majlis Speaker Ali Larijani, Persian media reported on Tuesday.

The garden with 10 theaters and amphitheatres will provide a good opportunity for the families and children to study and dedicate some time for book reading.

Permanent bookshops, an art gallery, shops offering cultural products, children's halls and workshops, as well

as a robotics club have also been included in the big project.

"The opening of the book garden is a big cultural event in the country so that our children can make better use of this cultural and academic opportunity," Qalibaf said at the ceremony.

Larijani for his part asked the officials of Ministry of Education to provide the means for teachers and school children to visit the garden and become more familiar with the opportunities available for the creativity of the children.

"The project aims to teach our children to be active and creative through modern methods and equipment," Larijani said. **->16**

## Intl. event issues Tehran Declaration, vows to fight dust storms

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — Ministers and high-level representatives participating in the UN-backed International Conference on Combating Sand and Dust Storms in Tehran (July 3-5) wrapped up the second day with the Tehran Ministerial Declaration, agreeing to "cooperate on combating SDS at sub-regional, regional, and international levels."

Here is the full text of the declaration:  
**Tehran Ministerial Declaration**  
International Conference on Combating Sand and Dust Storms  
Tehran, 3-5 July 2017

We, the Ministers and high-level

representatives participating in the International Conference on Combating Sand and Dust Storms:

**Having met** in Tehran to exchange views, share experiences and best practices on combating Sand and Dust Storms and to contribute to global and regional efforts to put forward a concerted and collective response to this serious challenge.

**Recalling** the UNGA Resolution 70/195, 71/219, UNEA II Resolution 2/21 and WMO Congress Decision Cg-XV/3.3.3.6, UNESCAP Resolution 72/7 in which Sand and Dust Storms has been acknowledged **->3**

## VW follows Peugeot, Boeing with Iran deal

Volkswagen AG plans to sell cars in Iran for the first time in 17 years, taking advantage of easing sanctions to expand amid concerns about stalling growth in Europe and China.

Volkswagen has signed a contract with local importer Mammut Khodro to offer Tiguan compact SUVs and the Passat family car, mainly at dealerships in the Tehran area, VW said in a statement. Expanding into emerging economies is part of VW's strategy to reduce its reliance on its main markets and add new sources of revenue.

"By returning to Iran, the Volkswagen brand is filling another blank spot on the global automobile map," Anders Sundt Jensen, the company's project manager for Iran, said in the statement.

Volkswagen is the market leader in Europe and China, and is struggling to rebuild operations in the U.S. after the diesel-cheating scandal. That leaves Iran, with a population of 80 million, as a rare opportunity for growth. Companies from Boeing Co. to Total SA are jostling for early entry to the Islamic Republic a year after international sanctions tied to its nuclear program were lifted.

PSA Group was the first carmaker to re-enter with a deal announced last year to upgrade its Peugeot factory near Tehran and start building Citroen models in the country. A few months later, Renault SA said it would set up a new plant with capacity to build 150,000 autos per year.

Iran auto production growth will average 11 percent through 2021, Fitch Group's BMI Research said in April. The return of European carmakers to the Iran market will boost the sector, although remaining U.S. sanctions will damp growth.

The German automaker's push in Iran coincides with intensifying political tension in the Persian Gulf region embroiling VW's third-largest shareholder Qatar.

VW sold the Beetle in Iran in the 1950s and the Bulli van in the 1960s.  
(Source: Bloomberg)

## Total deal 'completely razed wall of sanctions': government

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — The Iranian government spokesman has said that the \$5 billion deal between Iran and the French Total sealed on Monday "completely razed the wall of sanctions".

Speaking in a weekly press conference on Tuesday, Mohammad Bagher Nobakht hailed the deal as "a precious deal after the implementation of the JCPOA (nuclear accord)."

Along with investments in the aviation and automotive sectors, this deal indicates that the effects of the nuclear deal are being materialized one after another, Nobakht noted.

Iran signed a new contract to develop the giant South Pars gas field with France's Total holding 50.1 percent of the share, and China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) taking a 30 percent stake, leaving 19.9 percent

for Iran's Petropars.

The contract holds for 20 years.

According to Nobakht, the deal shows that efforts aimed at isolating the Islamic Republic have failed miserably.

He further noted that Total's investment in Iran is of great importance as it is the first major contract since the historic nuclear agreement went into force in January 2016.

Iran's deal with the French energy giant

**Iran signed a new contract to develop the giant South Pars gas field with France's Total, China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) and Iran's Petropars.**

## Iranian diplomat meets UN Syria envoy in Astana

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — Iran's deputy foreign minister for Arab affairs and UN Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura met on Tuesday in Astana, Kazakhstan.

Hossein Jaber Ansari and the UN envoy discussed the latest developments in Syria.

Jaber Ansari highlighted the importance of the UN role in helping the inter-Syrian talks and reducing tension in Syria.

De Mistura said that the UN supports Iran,

Turkey and Russia in the Astana talks.

An Iranian delegation, headed by Jaber Ansari, arrived in Astana on Monday to partake in the fifth round of talks in pursuit of peace in Syria.

Iran, Turkey and Russia brokered the Astana talks on Syria and the first three rounds of the talks were held on January 23-24, February 15-16 and March 14-15.

The fourth round of the talks was held in May during which a document on creating de-escalation zones in Syria was signed.

was signed despite concerns about a new, unpredictable administration in the United States. Since coming to power, Donald Trump has been reviewing Washington's approach to Tehran, discouraging many Western companies from investing in the country.

However, since the deal went into force and nuclear-related sanctions were lifted more than a year ago, Iran has been successfully expanding its ties with various countries.

Nobakht said the country's daily production of crude oil surpassed 3.9 million barrels last month, rising to a record high after the removal of anti-Iran sanctions.

The government spokesman described the hike in oil production as well as the agreement with Total as a milestone for the country, noting the anti-Iran sanctions regime has fully collapsed.

The Astana talks have brought representatives from the Syrian government and opposition groups to the negotiating table in order to find a solution to the Syrian conflict, which broke out in March 2011.

Jaber Ansari also met with Aleksandr Lavrentyev, the Russian negotiator at the talks, and Syria's Ambassador to the UN Bashar Jaafari.

Jaafari leads the Syrian government in the talks with the opposition in Astana.

## West Asian Chess Championship underway in Tehran

The fourth round of the West Asian Chess Championship is being held in Tehran.

The competition has brought 30 men and 20 women chess players together in Iran Chess Federation.

The champion of each section will advance to the World Chess Championship.

The tournament has started on June 30th and will finish on July 8th.



IRNA/Ehsan Naderipour

## Theresa May sitting on report on foreign funding of British extremists

A report on the foreign funding of extremism in Britain was given to Downing Street last year, it has been revealed, but Theresa May is still to decide whether to make its findings public.

The Green party co-leader, Caroline Lucas, said the delay in publishing the Home Office investigation, believed to focus on Saudi Arabia, "leaves question marks over whether their decision is influenced by our diplomatic ties".

Since the beginning of her premiership, May has sought to deepen Britain's relationship with the Persian Gulf, visiting Saudi Arabia as one of her first trips after triggering the formal Brexit process in March, a highly symbolic move.

The whereabouts of the report into foreign funding of extremism and radicalization in Britain became a controversial issue in the final days of the general election after the terror attacks in Manchester and London Bridge.

It was commissioned by David Cameron and approved by May as part of a deal with the Liberal Democrats to secure the party's support before a crucial vote on airstrikes in Syria in December 2015.

In written answers to Lucas this week, both the Home Office and Downing Street said the prime minister was personally responsible for deciding whether to release the report.

The Home Office minister Sarah Newton said: "The review into the funding of extremism in the UK was commissioned by the former prime minister and reported to the home secretary and the prime minister in 2016."

"The review has improved the government's understanding of the nature, scale and sources of funding for extremism in the UK. Publication of the review is a decision for the prime minister."

This week, Lucas resubmitted her parliamentary question on the review's whereabouts to May, who wrote back to confirm ministers were still "considering advice on what is able to be published and will report to parliament with an update in due course". **->13**



MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Envoy: Iran-Total deal carries important message

**POLITICS** d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iran's envoy to Britain in a message said on Monday that signing a major gas deal between Iran and France's Total signals an important message.

"The fact that Total did not wait for conclusion of the U.S. administration's Iran Review Policy to sign the major gas deal carries an important message," Hamid Baeidinejad said in a tweet.

The National Iranian Oil Company, Total, China National Petroleum Corporation and Petropars signed a \$4.8 billion contract on Monday for development of Phase 11 of the South Pars gas field.



'U.S. downing of Iranian passenger plane a clear example of HR violation'

**POLITICS** d e s k **TEHRAN** — A Pakistani parliamentarian has said the shooting of an Iranian passenger plane by the U.S. in 1998 which killed all the 290 passengers aboard is one of the worst examples of human rights violation the world history has ever seen.

In an interview with IRNA on Monday, Shehryar Afridi said it is the collective responsibility of the world states, especially the Muslim countries, to stand up against the human rights violations committed by the U.S. in different parts of the world.



'Iran not to be indifferent to U.S. violation of JCPOA'

**POLITICS** d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Majid Takht-Ravanchi said late on Monday that Tehran won't be indifferent to U.S. violation of the nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Takht-Ravanchi made the remarks in a meeting with Christian Masset, General Secretary of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development.

The implementation of the JCPOA is a shared responsibility of all parties, Takht-Ravchi said, adding all sides must respect their obligations, Mehr reported.



'Senate legislation proved sanctions were unrelated to nuclear program'

**POLITICS** d e s k **TEHRAN** — Senate's new sanctions on Iran proved that previous sanctions had nothing to do with Iran's nuclear program, Iran's human rights chief said on Tuesday.

Speaking at a news conference, Mohammad Javad Larijani added, "Whatever sanctions we lifted through the JCPOA (the nuclear deal) are now being imposed through other channels."

He also said the U.S. shows it "lacks regard for human rights" as it has "turned into a comrade of the murderous and child killer regime of Saudi Arabia".



Zarif: Iranians won't forget U.S. downing of passenger plane

**POLITICS** d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranians won't forget the U.S. downing of a passenger plane over the Persian Gulf waters by a U.S. warship on July 3, 1988, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Monday.

"July 3, 1988, U.S. ship shot down #IR655, killing 290 civilians. Ship capt. was awarded medal for murdering innocents. Iranians won't forget," the foreign minister wrote in a tweet.



Ontario court's anti-Iran ruling against international law: expert

**POLITICS** d e s k **TEHRAN** — The upholding of a ruling against Iran by an Ontario court goes against international law, an expert told the Young Journalists Club on Tuesday.

Under the United Nations Convention on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and Their Property, one country cannot uphold human rights charges against and block the assets of a third country, Masud Zamani said.

Ontario's Court of Appeal on Monday upheld a previous ruling that requires Iran to pay around \$1.7 billion in damages to alleged "American victims of terrorism."

# Saudis' fear of Iran is delusional

Bahram Qassemi: Our goal is cooperation, not hegemony

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

By M.A. Saki & Ali Kushki

**Exclusive** – Saudi Arabia is under illusion in seeing Iran as a threat, the Foreign Ministry spokesman insisted in an hour-long interview with The Tehran Times.

Bahram Qassemi said, "Over the past decades or even centuries, Iran has shown that it has never invaded any country."

In what follows the full transcript of the interview has been given:

■ **What are Iran and Turkey's common interests in Syria?**

A. Iran and Turkey are holding negotiations over the Syrian crisis, but the situation in Syria is changing by the minute, so we ought to continue the talks on the issue. We're keeping in close contact with the Turkish government and such contacts will continue, and we both want to work on our mutual ties. On the regional and international issues, we will continue our consultations; however, we're not in complete agreement all the time.

Turkey made some mistakes in the beginning of the Syrian crisis. At the time, we pointed to their poor decision and told them that they had taken the wrong road. Their borders with Syria were open at the time, letting scores of terrorists and extremist groups pour into Syria from across the world. We were told that terrorists were being trained in Turkey, something that later affected Turkey itself.

We consider Turkey an important neighboring country with which we have close ties. We've always tried to express our views to them. But anyway, I think Turkey made some mistakes regarding Syria.

**Turkey's interference in Syria is disagreeable by all means. Not only Turkey's, but also all countries' presence in Syria is unacceptable. Syria has a legal government and one cannot enter or conduct military actions there without the consent of its central government. This is against all international norms. Turkey had already entered Syria under excuses such as Kurds and so on.**

Be it in Syria or Iraq, Turkey's act of interference in another country's affairs, in our view, is unacceptable. And not just Turkey, but all countries across the world are not allowed to pursue this path.

■ **Iran and Kuwait have exchanged letters regarding developments in the region. Has anything new happened there?**

A. We have a good relationship with Kuwait. Following a series of negotiations, they finally sent a letter to Iran's President Hassan Rouhani, inviting him to visit Kuwait. Mr. President was also invited by Omanis. He visited the two states and discussed Iran's relations and expansion of ties with them as well as our relations with the Persian Gulf countries.

We have relations with these countries and we're holding consultations through diplomatic channels. The main problem is with the Saudis, and it seems that Saudi Arabia's actions are not based on common sense and realism as it needs to free itself from the illusions it's suffering from. Not only they put themselves in a terrible predicament, but also they have tried to provoke other countries against Iran, fanning the flames of fear mongering about Iran.

I think if they (Saudis) had a rationalistic approach, they would come to the conclusion that a stable and powerful Iran can be a trustworthy neighbor which can help with the safety and security of



© Tehran Times/Maryam Kamyab

**Through compensating some of their mistakes and ending their aggressive anti-Iran actions and unacceptable discourse, they would be able to take important steps towards helping create better relations and a positive atmosphere in the region.**

the Persian Gulf and the whole region. But unfortunately, because this is not the case in that country they think otherwise. Provoking Iranophobia has become a costly and major issue across the region for them. We have always advised them to take a rationalistic approach toward the Islamic Republic instead of creating concerns about it. Through compensating some of their mistakes and ending their aggressive anti-Iran actions and unacceptable discourse, they would be able to take important steps towards helping create better relations and a positive atmosphere in the region.

■ **Could you also comment on the future of Iran-EU relations?**

A. Our relations with the European Union or even Europe itself are historical. We've had good relations with majority of European countries and we can continue to do so. We had industrial, scientific, cultural, technological, financial and banking ties with this region before the cruel sanctions imposed on Iran.

In Europe, there are countries about which our people are not optimistic because of their past or even present behavior. These countries are exceptional, maybe one or two. But there's a positive attitude about other countries, meaning they do not have aggressive behavior nor colonial pasts against Iran. If they respect Iran's sovereignty and do not interfere in its internal affairs, I think Iran will have no problem with developing ties with Europe.

**After the nuclear deal (officially known as JCPOA or BARJAM in Persian acronym), Europe has been able to work with Iran. In a statement by the European Parliament and another statement by the European Union a few month ago, Europe's viewpoint toward Iran was**

**Iran is willing to live in an environment surrounded by peace, stability and security. Peace and stability in the region would mean peace and stability inside Iran. In a troubled and conflict-torn region, development would not be possible for Iran. We're in serious need of development, both inside Iran and across the region to fight poverty, starvation and also extremism which itself is partly a product of poverty and hunger. So, Iran, with this worldview, has a positive attitude towards its neighbors. It does not have a hegemonic tendency towards other nations.**

## Iran seeks more Russian involvement in Syria to counter U.S.

**POLITICS** d e s k **TEHRAN** — A senior Iranian security official on Tuesday called for closer cooperation between Tehran and Moscow in Syria as the U.S. is "openly" pounding Syrian army's strongholds to energize terrorists.

"Increasing coordination is unavoidable for Russia and Iran to thwart U.S. illegal meddling in Syria and to prevent the infringement of Syria's territorial integrity and national sovereignty," National Security Council Secretary Ali Shamkhani said in a phone call with his Russian counterpart, Nikolai Patrushev.

"The U.S. is openly targeting the Syrian army's

strongholds to boost the terrorists' morale and keep besieged areas under their control," Shamkhani added.

Iran and Russia back the Syrian government and are, along with Turkey, brokers of the Astana peace initiative, the fifth round of which is underway in Kazakhstan.

Russian Rossiyskaya Gazeta news agency quoted Patrushev as having said Moscow's patience with the U.S. is wearing.

Over the past few weeks, possible direct confrontation between Russia and the U.S. has escalated in Syria.

On June 19, Moscow said it would consider any warplane from the U.S.-led coalition flying west of the Euphrates River as a potential target after U.S. planes

shot down a Syrian jet.

The attack was first one on a Syrian warplane since the start of the country's civil war six years ago.

Also, the U.S. Air Force took down two drones operated by pro-Damascus fighters engaged in operations against Islamic State.

Also, the growing risk of a direct confrontation between the U.S. and Russia follows a decision by Trump to grant his military chiefs untrammelled control of military strategy in Syria, according to The Independent. But the Pentagon insisted it was not seeking to escalate the conflict.

much attention to these voices.

Anyway, this to some extent can delay the process. Europe is willing to cooperate with Iran as a trustworthy partner and a stable country in the region. They are willing to increase their ties with Iran to the pre-sanctions era and be more present in the country. And if we recognize that they are willing to work with us, we are prepared to expand our cooperation not only with Europe but also with various countries across the world.

■ **How does the Kremlin view Iran-EU relations? You know, since 2011, when the Syrian crisis began, Iran-Russia ties have developed to its peak because of their mutual interests in Syria. Do you think our relations with Russia are strategic in all aspects?**

A. Our relations have taken a desirable and positive trend with Russia; it is one of our neighbors that is a global power and has a high status in the international community. We move on this path with a positive view, and this can eventually be considered a strategic partnership. But based on your definition of strategic relations which relates to defense pact and many other possible deals, I think we're not there yet and we should take big steps to hit that goal. But what's obvious is that Iran-Russia relationship has been improving.

The two sides hold consultations. There are good collaborations in different areas such as politics and economy as well as international and regional issues – especially in regard to the Syrian conflict. We've had good collaboration with Russia because of our mutual interests over Syria. So these relations are going forward because Russia is one of our neighbors, and we're willing to have good relations with our neighbors and even to enhance it to the highest level. With regards to Russia, such relations have already been established and we will continue developing it. Of course, in some fields we need to do much more.

During the past few years, the extent of our economic relations have not been desirable. President Rouhani visited Russia in March 2017 and held talks with Mr. Putin. The two sides decided that Tehran and Moscow develop their financial, economic and banking relations to a high level in the coming years. Russia will cooperate with Iran in some projects. In the economic sector, we need to do more. In other areas, such as politics, relations are at a high level already.

In the Astana talks, Iran, Russia and Turkey have made important achievements and succeeded in brokering and consolidating a ceasefire and preparing the conditions for political negotiations. This is while the Geneva talks failed to bear fruit. These are examples of the strategic relations between Tehran and Moscow. In addition to the Syrian issue and other regional issues, we also share mutual interests in the Caucasus and Central Asia, and we think Tehran-Moscow cooperation can help stabilize this region.

During the past year, the European Union issued a few joint statements with Iran. They have also issued a few documents, such as the EU strategy for relations with Iran after the nuclear deal. And in those talks between [EU foreign policy chief Federica] Mogherini and Zarif in Tehran last year, energy sector and economic activities were the main focus of the two sides; on the other hand, there are some analysts who believe Russia is not really happy with expanding Iran-EU relations, especially in the energy sector, because Russia uses gas and energy resources as a leverage against the European Union. ➔3

## Missile program not contrary to UNSC resolution: Boroujerdi

**POLITICS** d e s k **TEHRAN** — Alaeddin Boroujerdi, chairman of the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, has said that Iran's missile program does not run contrary to the UN Security Council's resolution which endorsed the July 2015 nuclear

deal between Iran and great powers.

"We will continue supporting the missile program firmly," he told ISNA in an interview published on Tuesday.

He also said that Iran's missile program is transparent.

On June 18, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary

Guards Corps fired six missiles into eastern Syria, targeting Islamic State strongholds in retaliation for the ISIS terrorist attacks in Tehran on June 7.

On the sidelines of an open session of the parliament on Sunday, Boroujerdi said that Iran is against having nuclear

and mass destruction weapons and develops its missile capability as a "pre-emptive policy" against threats.

On 15 June, the U.S. Senate voted nearly unanimously for legislation to impose new sanctions on Iran over its ballistic missile activity.



# North Korea: First intercontinental ballistic missile test successful

North Korea said on Tuesday it successfully test-launched an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) for the first time, which flew a trajectory that experts said could allow a weapon to hit the United States, state of Alaska.

The launch came days before leaders from the Group of 20 nations were due to discuss steps to rein in North Korea's weapons program, which it has pursued in defiance of the United Nations Security Council sanctions.

The launch, which North Korea's state media said was ordered and supervised by leader Kim Jong Un, sent the rocket 933 km (580 miles) reaching an altitude of 2,802 km over a flight time of 39 minutes.

North Korea has said it wants to develop a missile mounted with a nuclear warhead capable of striking the U.S. mainland.

To do that it would need an ICBM with a range of 8,000 km (4,800 miles) or more, a warhead small enough to be mounted on it and technology to ensure its stable re-entry into the atmosphere.

Some analysts said the flight details on Tuesday suggested the new missile had a range of more than 8,000 km, underscoring major advances in its program. Other analysts said they believed its range was not so far.

Officials from South Korea, Japan and the United States said the missile landed in the sea in Japan's Exclusive Economic Zone after being launched on a high trajectory from near an airfield northwest of the North's capital, Pyongyang.

"The test launch was conducted at the sharpest angle possible and did not have any negative effect on neighboring countries," North Korea's state media said in a statement.

The North said its missiles were now capable of striking anywhere in the world.

"It appears the test was successful. If launched on a standard angle, the missile could have a range of more than 8,000 km," said Kim Dong-yub, a military expert at Kyungnam University's Institute of Far Eastern Studies in Seoul.

"But we have to see more details of the new missile to determine if North Korea has acquired ICBM technology."

South Korean President Moon Jae-in, who convened a national Security Council meeting, said earlier the missile was believed to be an intermediate-range type, but the military was looking into the possibility it was an ICBM.

**■ Heavy move**  
Meantime the U.S. President Donald Trump wrote on Twitter: "North Korea has just launched another missile. Does this guy have anything better to do with his life?" in an apparent reference to North Korean Leader Kim Jong Un.

"Hard to believe South Korea and Japan will put up with this much longer. Perhaps China will put a heavy move on North Korea and end this nonsense once and for all!" Trump said in a series of tweets.

Stock markets in both South Korea and Japan fell, with the Kospi ending down 0.6 percent and Japan's Nikkei share average ending down 0.1 percent.

Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said he would ask the presidents of China and Russia to play more constructive roles in efforts to stop Pyongyang's arms program.

"Leaders of the world will gather at the G20 meeting.



I would like to strongly call for solidarity of the international community on the North Korean issue," Abe told reporters.

Japan said on Monday the United States, South Korea and Japan would have a trilateral summit on North Korea at the G20. Chinese President Xi Jinping will also be at the July 7-8 meeting in Hamburg, Germany.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang called for calm and restraint, and reiterated China's opposition to North Korea's violation of UN resolutions on missile tests.

Responding to Trump's tweet, Geng said China had for a long time been working hard to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue.

"China's contribution is obvious to all. China's role is indispensable," he told a daily news briefing.

China would continue to work hard and also hoped other parties would work hard too, Geng said.

"We hope all sides can meet each other half way."

North Korea says it needs to develop its weapons in the face of what it sees as U.S. aggression.

It has conducted five nuclear tests, two since the beginning of last year, and numerous missile tests over the past year.

It often times its tests to show its defiance and to raise the stakes when it sees regional powers getting ready for talks or sanctions, analysts say.

The launch took place hours before the Independence Day celebrations in the United States. North Korea has in the past fired missiles around this time.

**■ Last chance for talks?**

Despite the unprecedented pace of tests since the start of last year, analysts have said they believed North Korea was

years away from having a nuclear-tipped ICBM capable of hitting the United States.

North Korea is also trying to develop intermediate-range missiles capable of hitting U.S. bases in the Pacific. The last North Korean launches before Tuesday were of land-to-sea cruise missiles on June 8.

David Wright, co-director of the Global Security Program at the U.S.-based Union of Concerned Scientists, said the assessments of the Tuesday flight time and distance suggested the missile might be launched on a "very highly lofted" trajectory of more than 2,800 km.

The same missile could reach a maximum range of roughly 6,700 km on a standard trajectory, Wright said in a blog post.

"That range would not be enough to reach the lower 48 states or the large islands of Hawaii, but would allow it to reach all of Alaska," he said.

South Korea's Moon said on Monday North Korea now faced its "last opportunity" to engage in talks with the outside world.

North Korea has conducted four ballistic missile tests since Moon took office in May, vowing to use dialogue as well as pressure to bring Pyongyang's nuclear and missile programs under control.

This week, North Korea was a major topic in phone calls between Trump and the leaders of China and Japan, both of whom reaffirmed their commitment to a denuclearized Korean Peninsula.

Trump has recently suggested he was running out of patience with China's efforts to pressure North Korea.

(Source: Reuters)

## Saudis' fear of Iran is delusional

**2 → ■ To what extent do you think Russia can be an obstacle in the path of developing relations between Iran and the EU because if Iran's gas reaches Europe, Russia may lose that leverage?**

A: Our policy toward other countries or regions is based on our own interests – like any other country. The overlap that exists between the interests of two countries is what moves the relations between them ahead. As I said, our relationship with Russia is solid and developing in various fields such as energy and in other important economic or industrial projects, and we will try to further expand cooperation. But working with Russia does not mean that we're not going to cooperate with other countries. Russia has its own status for us as does the European Union and European countries; most of which are our old partners in different fields.

We differentiate between these relations,

yet we cannot replace a country with another. We will cooperate with countries that are willing to work with us and have the potential to be a good partner.

**■ Do you agree with this view that Russia might be concerned about the expansion of Iran-EU ties in energy sector?**

A: I see it from another angle. We should examine whether our relationship with other countries is pro-Russia or against it. If this is against, Russia should be concerned. But since our relations with Russia has been formed and defined precisely and the two sides are going to have long term relations, this apprehension does not exist, as we're

not cooperating with other countries against Russia.

When we're not going to take actions against Russia or threaten its interests, eventually this concern would cease to exist. Of course there's always competition in the free market and each country acts according to its own interests.

This is just like to say when you have a product that you can export, you'll try to sell it to the highest bidder. You wouldn't be selling it at a low price without receiving good benefits.

Competition in today's world is a natural thing. For instance, if you want to cooperate with me, you can't expect me to buy a product

from you when you're selling it 10 times higher than its real value.

If you want to buy airplanes and there are 5 manufacturers, you will have to examine a number of conditions including your country's climate, the quality of the airplanes, their prices and so forth. You wouldn't buy a low-quality product at a higher price, because your people wouldn't let you do that. This is true across the world.

This can be true in the relations between Iran and Russia as well as Iran and the European Union. The buyer needs to examine the market to decide from which manufacturer they should make the purchase. Russians act in the same manner. If they think they can buy a product from a country that sells it at a lower price or with higher quality compared to Iran, they will definitely choose that product over ours.

→13

## Intl. event issues Tehran Declaration, vows to fight dust storms

**1 → ■** to be posing a daunting challenge to the sustainable development of affected countries including and in particular in Asia and Africa and that coordinated prompt measures are needed to address it at national, regional and global levels,

**Acknowledging** that Sand and Dust Storms, which are on the rise in terms of severity and frequency in many parts of the world, are detrimental to human health, agricultural land, livelihoods, coastal and marine environment, infrastructure, and the socio-economic systems, in all affected countries,

**Fully aware** that sand and dust storms occur due to natural biogeochemical cycles of the Earth and human-induced factors, including climate change, and unsustainable land management and water use as well as armed conflicts,

**Recognizing** the negative impacts of Sand and Dust storms on some countries and regions that are far away from their hot spots, due to their trans-boundary nature,

**Further Recognising** that combating the challenge of Sand and Dust Storms requires concerted and collaborative global, regional and sub-regional as well as national responses to address this phenomenon and also underlining the role of United Nations in promoting international cooperation and partnerships among countries and other relevant stakeholders to combat Sand and Dust Storms.

**Agree to cooperate on combating SDS at sub-regional, regional, and international levels on the following:**

1. **Share** information, lessons learnt and best practices, exchange views and expertise, develop mitigation and adaptation policies and measures, exchange technical and monitored data

and forecasting information to reduce the risk of Sand and Dust Storms,

2. **Strengthen** national legal and institutional frameworks to share early warning information of Sand and Dust Storms and raise awareness and promote integrated and synergistic actions across sectors and foster strengthened cooperation among relevant institutions at global, regional and national levels.

3. **Enhance** public awareness on the impact and cost of Sand and Dust Storms on human health, agricultural practice, food security, infrastructure, transport and in general socio-economic sectors and the environment and partnerships among relevant stake holders on mitigation of the impacts.

4. **Collectively endeavour** to enhance cooperation and coordination at global, regional and sub-regional levels to address the causes and impacts of Sand and Dust Storms including through the promotion of sustainable water use and land management, to reduce future Sand and Dust Storms risks and impacts.

5. **Develop and implement** a strategy on disaster risk reduction and resilience to promote sustainable land management and water use in croplands, rangelands, wetlands, deserts as well as rural and urban areas.

6- **Strengthen** research activities for effective monitoring, impact based assessment and forecasting and early warning mechanism for Sand and Dust Storms, to address disaster prevention and mitigation and for development of appropriate preparedness and effective response to Sand and dust storms,

7- **Encourage** enhanced regional and international coopera-

tion to observe and forecast, mitigate and cope with the adverse effects of Sand and Dust Storms, and seek technical and financial support from the relevant United Nations organisations to that end.

8- **Consider** to further develop policy dialogue on responding to the issues of sand and dust storms among interested countries in partnership with relevant international bodies and organizations, including the establishment of a future platform, in synergy with relevant United Nations System.

9- **Recognize** the role of the Asian and Pacific Center for the Development of Disaster Information Management (APDIM), regional seas programs and SDS-WAS, to develop human and institutional capacity through strengthened regional cooperation in disaster information management.

10- *Invite the Environment Management Group (EMG) of the UN to consider initiating an inter-agency process involving relevant UN system warranting to prepare a global response to Sand and Dust Storms including a situation analysis, Strategy and an Action Plan. This could result in developing a UN-wide approach in addressing Sand and Dust Storms which can be used as an inter-agency framework for mid- or long-term cooperation and division of labour.*

11- **Request** the UN General Assembly to consider this declaration for appropriate actions.

12- **Express** our deepest gratitude to the Government and people of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the excellent arrangements and the warm hospitality they extended to participants in this important Conference.

## PGCC crisis: European leaders call for de-escalation

Leaders of France, Britain and Germany have urged both sides of the diplomatic standoff in the Persian Gulf to resolve the crisis peacefully.

French President Emmanuel Macron spoke to Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani on the phone about the latest developments of the Persian Gulf crisis, according to Qatar News Agency (QNA).

Macron and the emir "stressed the need to resolve this crisis through dialogue and diplomatic means", QNA said.

Meanwhile, British Prime Minister Theresa May spoke to the House of Saud regime's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman about the ongoing crisis.

She urged all sides to "take urgent steps to de-escalate the situation and restore Persian Gulf Cooperation unity", May's office said in a statement on Monday.

The statement also said that the "UK remains committed to supporting" the process towards finding a solution.

Also on Monday, the House of Saud regime's Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir said that he hopes Qatar will respond positively to a list of demands put forth by his country and three other Arab states.

"We hope for a positive response to be able to resolve the crisis," he said from the Saudi city of Jeddah during a press conference with his German counterpart, Sigmar Gabriel.

The two leaders stressed the need to resolve the Persian Gulf crisis through dialogue and diplomatic means, as well as backing the mediation efforts of Kuwait, according to QNA.

Jubeir said that the response will be "examined with precision".

The press conference came after Qatar delivered its response to a list of 13 demands from the Saudi regime, Bahrain, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Qatar's Foreign Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani was received by Kuwait's Emir Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah on Monday to hand over a letter from Qatar's emir, according to state-run Kuwait News Agency.

The response will be the focus of a gathering in the Egyptian capital of Cairo on Wednesday of foreign ministers from the four blockading states.

The Saudi regime-led group severed diplomatic ties with Qatar and imposed sanctions on it on June 5, accusing it of supporting "terrorism". The allegation has been rejected by Doha as "baseless".

After more than two weeks, the four countries gave Doha 10 days, or until Sunday night, to comply with a 13-point demand list in exchange for the end of the anti-Qatar measures.

The demands included that Qatar shut down the Al Jazeera Media Network, close a Turkish military base and scale down ties with Iran.

**■ Qatar to increase gas production by 30 percent**

Meantime, state-run Qatar Petroleum has said it plans to increase natural gas production by 30 percent over the next several years.

Saad Sherida al-Kaabi, the company's CEO, told reporters on Tuesday that Qatar Petroleum intends to raise production from 77 million tons of natural gas to 100 million tons a year by 2024.

The announcement comes after the company said in April it was boosting output of its North Field, which it shares with Iran off the Persian Gulf state's northern coast.

"The new additional volumes will be secured by doubling the size of the new gas project in the southern sector of the North Field, which Qatar Petroleum had announced last April," a statement by the company said.

The April announcement meant an end to the self-imposed ban on development of the field that it declared in 2005 to give Doha time to study the impact on the reservoir from a rapid rise in output.

Qatar is already the world's largest exporter of liquefied natural gas (LNG). It has several fields within its territorial waters.

The LNG market is undergoing huge changes, however, as the biggest ever flood of new supply hits the market, with volumes coming mainly from the U.S. and Australia.

Gas has helped transform Qatar into one of the richest countries in the world, propelling its rise into a major regional player and helping fund huge infrastructure projects such as the 2022 football World Cup, which will be hosted by Qatar.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

## U.S. Muslims mark anniversary of Jannat al-Baqi destruction by Riyadh

Muslims have held an anti-Saudi regime protest rally in Washington, United States to commemorate the 92th anniversary Riyadh's demolition of the historically revered cemetery of Jannat al-Baqi (Garden of Paradise) in the holy city of Medina.

During the event, demonstrators denounced the radical Wahhabi ideology which has inspired the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) Takfiri terrorists wreaking havoc in Iraq and Syria.

They carried placards reading, "Ban Wahhabism," "stop Wahhabi terrorism," "Muslims against ISIL," "ISIL/ISIL= Wahhabism" and "Rebuild al-Baqi."

Takfirim, which is a trademark of many terrorist groups, is largely influenced by Wahhabism, which is freely preached by Saudi clerics.

"Thousands of protesters are demonstrating against the annihilation of 98 percent of our heritage in Saudi Arabia," said one of the participants at Monday's event.

"The extremist Wahhabi ideology that is propagated and promoted by Saudi Arabia is the reason for the existence of ISIL (Daesh), al-Shabab, Boko Haram [Takfiri militant groups]...and the annihilation of heritage in Iraq and Syria," she added.

On 8th Shawwal, the 10th month of the lunar calendar, in 1345 AH (After Hijra) that falls on April 21, 1925, Saudis razed Jannat al-Baqi and pounded its mausoleums and tombs.

The graves of family members of Islam's holy Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) and of his companions were reduced to dust in the operation.

The systematic state-funded demolition of sacred sites still continues across Saudi Arabia.

(Source: Press TV)



## NEWS IN BRIEF

**Iran's unemployment rate hits 12.6% in spring**

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — Statistical Center of Iran desk has put the country's unemployment rate at 12.6 percent for the spring, which corresponds to the first quarter of current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21), IRNA reported.

According to the report, the figure has witnessed a 0.4 percent rise compared to the last spring, and it shows 0.1 percent increase in comparison to the winter's data.

The figure is estimated based on the data gathered for the economically active population with an age of 10 or above which comprised 40.6 percent of the country's population.

**Iran discusses exports of agricultural machinery with Armenia**

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — Iran is considering the exports of agricultural machinery to Armenia and assembling such machines in the country, IRNA reported on Tuesday.

A high-ranking Iranian delegation comprising Mojtaba Khosrotaj, the head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), Iranian Deputy Minister of Agriculture Ali Akbar Mehrfard and directors from the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade visited Armenia to discuss areas of cooperation.

During the visit, Iranian officials met with Suren Karayan, the Armenian minister of economic development and investments, and also Armenian deputy agriculture minister to discuss the matter.

**About \$4.5b of facilities granted to production sector**

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — Government Spokesman Mohammad Baqer Nobakht announced on Tuesday that 170 trillion rials (about \$4.5 billion) of facilities have been paid to domestic production units by July 3, IRIB news reported.

As he further explained, the mentioned figure has been paid to 25,351 production units by the said time and the government plans to provide industrial units with loans as well on the way to increase employment and production in the country.

**Mongolia exports 4000 tons of meat to Iran**

A 4000 tons of mutton, the first batch of meat to be exported to Iran in scope of an agreement reached between 'Eco Food Trading' LLC and 'Darkhan Meat Foods' LLC, was transported to Iran last Friday.

The meat export to Iran expands Mongolia's foreign export market, noted the authorities of the two companies.

Mongolia is capable of exporting more than 100 thousand tons of meat per annum. If Mongolia can fully utilize this capability, the quality of Mongolian meat will be widely acknowledged in international market which will improve the livelihood of herders, the corresponding ministry sees. (Source: montsame.mn)

# Post-sanctions NITC inks 76 leasing deals

**ENERGY** TEHRAN — National desk Iranian Tanker Company (NITC) has signed 76 deals since the removal of sanctions in January 2016 for leasing out tankers to large foreign companies including European ones, managing director of the company, Sirous Kianersi, announced on Tuesday.

Mentioning the effective role of implementing joint comprehensive plan of action (JCPOA) in Iranian oil industry, the official said lifting of sanctions removed the barriers to the international activities of NITC, as the company's tankers have resumed shipments to the ports in Spain, the Netherlands and other destinations, IRNA reported.

He also announced that the country's fleet of LPG tankers will be developed.

One month ago Kianersi had said



that NITC is looking at options to place its first orders for new very large crude carriers (VLCCs) in post-sanction era, as it plans to renew its existing fleet.

NITC, which operates the largest tanker fleet in the Middle East and has the world's largest fleet of super tankers, transports Iranian crude and also

acts as an independent entity in contracts with foreign concerns for crude oil transportation based on prevailing international freight rates.

## Italy to ink €1.2b railway MOU with Iran

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — Italy's state railway company, Ferrovie, will sign a memorandum of understanding, worth €1.2 billion, with the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (IRIR).

Constructing the Qom-Arak high speed railway in Iran will be subject of the MOU which will be signed in

Tehran on July 11, IRNA reported.

Ferrovie Chief Executive Renato Mazzoncini and the Iranian railways managing director Saeid Mohammadzadeh will sign the agreement, which includes building infrastructure and supplying high speed trains for Iran.

The Italian company also takes the

responsibility of offering technical courses to the personnel of IRIR.

It should be mentioned that the two sides had signed an initial agreement in this regard in April 2017.

Italy was the first trade partner of Iran among the European Union member states, during the first three months of 2017, according to Europe-

an Union's statistics agency, Eurostat.

The volume of trade between Iran and Italy in the said period hit €1.2 billion, with €800 million pertaining to Iran's exports to Italy and €400 million to its imports from the country.

Italy was the first trade partner of Iran while France and Germany came as the second and third.

## Total eyeing \$2b investment in Iran's petchem sector

**ENERGY** TEHRAN — Iran and Total have reached agreement on the construction of three petrochemical plants that if comes to a deal the French oil giant will invest \$1.5-\$2 billion in Iran.

National Iranian Petrochemical Company Managing Director Marziyeh Shahdaie

made the remarks on the sidelines of the signing ceremony of a \$4.879-billion deal with Total in Tehran on Monday for development of phase 11 of Iran's South Pars gas field, marking Total the first major Western energy investment in Iran since the lifting of sanctions, Shana news agency reported.

In the latest talks, the two sides have

reached agreement for construction of petrochemical plants with the total capacity of 2.2 million tons of petrochemical and polymer products per year, the official said.

Total's Chief Executive Officer Patrick Pouyanné has expressed his company's eagerness for investment in Iran's petrochemical industry and they are pursuing this goal

keenly, Tasnim news agency quoted Shahdaie as saying.

Also, Iranian Deputy Oil Minister for International Affairs and Trading Amir Hossein Zamaninia told Tasnim in the same ceremony that after signing the phase 11 deal, Total is seeking contribution in Iran's petrochemical industry as well.

## Qatar boasts massive global holdings

Qatar is facing possible further sanctions after a deadline to meet its neighbor's demands comes to an end. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Bahrain cut diplomatic ties with Qatar on June 5 in a dispute that was allegedly over Qatari support for terrorists, but what many experts say was actually an effort to bring the country in line with Saudi-dominated foreign policy.

But it remains to be seen if Qatar can avoid the long-term grievances with its neighbors impacting its deals in the international community. Many of Qatar's assets are overseas and include a Hollywood movie studio, landmark sky-

scrapers and an Italian luxury designer.

Qatar's massive oil-generated surplus and its tiny population of just about 2.2 million mean it is the wealthiest country per capita in the world. Its sovereign wealth fund, Qatar Investment Authority, established in 2005, oversees around \$338 billion in assets, according to Sovereign Wealth Center. It's the 11th largest fund in the world, according to the research organization.

Here's a look at some of Qatar's largest assets around the world:

### ■ U.K.

• In London, Qatar-backed entities have purchased a number of skyscrapers, including Canary Wharf, HSBC Tower,

and The Shard.

• Qatar bought U.K. department store, Harrods back in 2010.

• Qatar raised its stake in British Airways owner IAG to 20 percent and purchased a 20 percent stake in London Heathrow last year.

### ■ France

• Qatar Sports Investments owns Paris Saint-Germain Football Club.

### ■ U.S.

• In New York, Qatar's investment arm bought nearly a 10 percent stake in, Empire State Realty Trust, the owners of the Empire State Building, last year. The skyscraper was recently lit up with Qatari flag colors to commemorate

the 10th anniversary of flights on Qatar Airways between the U.S. and Doha.

• A Qatari media group, BeIN, purchased Miramax Studios last year for an undisclosed amount.

• The fund has also invested in Uber and recently announced plans to open an office in Silicon Valley to invest more into U.S.-based tech firms.

### ■ Singapore

• In Singapore, QIA purchased one of the well-known Asia Square towers from BlackRock for \$2.5 billion. It was the largest office transaction in Singapore's history.

(Source: cnbc)

**Second Announcement****Quality Assessment Announcement for**

Manufacture, Purchase, Shipment and Delivery of Three  
80T Harbor Rail-Mounted Crane Units for CHABAHAR Port  
(Tender No: 96/HE/1069)  
Ports and Maritime Organization

This is hereby to announce that Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) of I.R. Iran intends to proceed with Manufacture, Purchase, Shipment and Delivery of Three 80T Harbor Rail-Mounted Crane Units for CHABAHAR Port by qualitative assessment method and via international two-phase public tender.

\*Therefore, in order to carry out qualitative assessment of the manufacturers of Harbor Rail-Mounted cranes, all local and foreigner Manufacture companies are invited to refer to [JETS.MPORG.IR](http://JETS.MPORG.IR) website and maximum till **Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2017** to receive the relevant qualitative assessment file of documents and forms.

All foreigner companies shall receive the aforesaid documents either from their local Iranian agent.

\*Place and deadline for submitting the documents and completed forms: Central Secretariat of the PMO, located at the Ground Floor of PMO Building at the below address and to the last working hour on **Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> August 2017**. It should be emphasized again that the relevant receipt against submitting of the said documents and forms must be kept for further steps.

\* Meanwhile, the question & answer session of the qualitative assessment call will be held at **10 A.M on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2017** at the conference room located in the 12th floor of the PMO Building and therefore, attendance of the informed technical and commercial representatives of all manufacture companies of the which are willing to participate in Qualitative Assessment of tender is obligatory (together with an official introduction letter).

**\* The tender winner shall pay for newspaper advertisement costs.**

**Address of the announcing organization:** Ports and Maritime Organization, No.1, Dr. Shahidi

St., Haghani Highway, Vanak Sq., Tehran, Iran.

**Tel: (+98) 21-84932351 and 84932357 Fax: (+98) 21-88651191**  
**E-mail of PMO: Technical@pmo.ir**

**Second Announcement****Quality Assessment Announcement for**

Manufacture, Purchase, Shipment and Delivery of One Unit  
80T Rubber – Tired Yard Mobile Crane Lattice – Boom Type  
For Shahid Beheshti Chabahar Port  
(Tender No: 96/HE/1071)  
Ports and Maritime Organization

This is hereby to announce that Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) of I.R. Iran intends to proceed with Manufacture, Purchase, Shipment and Delivery of One Unit 80T Rubber – Tired Yard Mobile Crane Lattice – Boom Type For Shahid Beheshti Chabahar Port by qualitative assessment method and via international two-phase public tender.

\*Therefore, in order to carry out qualitative assessment of the manufacturers of Rubber – Tired Yard Mobile Crane, all local and foreigner Manufacture companies are invited to refer to [JETS.MPORG.IR](http://JETS.MPORG.IR) website and maximum till **Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2017** to receive the relevant qualitative assessment file of documents and forms.

All foreigner companies shall receive the aforesaid documents either from their local Iranian agent.

\*Place and deadline for submitting of documents and completed forms: Central Secretariat of the PMO, located at the Ground Floor of PMO Building at the below address and to the last working hour on **Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2017**. It should be emphasized that the relevant receipt against submitting of the said documents and forms must be kept for further steps.

\* Meanwhile, the question & answer session of the qualitative assessment call will be held at **10 A.M on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> August 2017** at the conference room located in the 12th floor of the PMO building and therefore, attendance of the informed technical and commercial representatives of all manufacture companies of the which are willing to participate in Qualitative Assessment of tender is obligatory (together with an official introduction letter).

**\* The tender winner shall pay for newspaper advertisement costs.**

**Address of the announcing organization:** Ports and Maritime Organization, No.1, Dr. Shahidi

St., Haghani Highway, Vanak Sq., Tehran, Iran.

**Tel: (+98) 21-84932351 and 84932357 Fax: (+98) 21-88651191**  
**E-mail of PMO: Technical@pmo.ir**

## Abe expected to agree EU-Japan trade deal on Thursday

The European Union and Japan expect to commit to signing a free trade deal on Thursday, the EU said, in what both see as a push back against a feared U.S. turn toward protectionism under President Donald Trump.

Confirming on Tuesday that Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe would meet heads of EU institutions in Brussels on the eve of a G20 summit with Trump and other world leaders in Germany, the European Council said: "Leaders are expected to announce a political agreement on the EU-Japan free trade agreement."

That would be short of a final accord ironing out all the commercial intricacies between two of the world's biggest economies and EU officials said on Tuesday that some key issues still needed to be settled before Thursday's EU-Japan summit.

However, confirming Abe's attendance is a sign of confidence that a deal will be ready for his signature and also puts pressure on trade negotiators to secure at least outline agreements on opening up each other's markets, including in the trickiest areas such as Japanese cars and European farm produce.

Both sides, having seen Trump pull back from free trade relationships, are keen to show they remain committed to removing barriers they say hamper growth.

"It is important for us to wave the flag of free trade in response to global moves toward protectionism by quickly

concluding the free trade agreement with Europe," Abe told ministers at a meeting on Tuesday about the EU negotiations.

"This agreement is also important for our growth strategy. We will negotiate with all our energy until the very end to achieve the best deal for Japan."

Abe will meet European Council President Donald Tusk, who speaks for the 28 EU national leaders, and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, the bloc's executive head.

Juncker's Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmstrom was in Japan at the weekend and said after her talks that she was "quite confident" that a broad agreement could be announced on Thursday. EU officials had said that Abe would only visit Brussels if both sides were certain that the political agreement would be signed.

Malmstrom said: "You can do good, fair, transparent and sustainable trade agreements where you win and I win, and not the American view, which seems to be, 'You lose and I win'."

Abe, Tusk and Juncker will go on to Hamburg on Friday for the G20 summit.

The host, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, is expected to lead calls for Trump to keep trade open. He pulled out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) with Japan and 10 other states on his first day in office in January. U.S.-EU talks on a trade pact called TTIP have been in limbo since then.

(Source: Reuters)



# Iran to build 50MW wind farm in Pakistan

Since the US eased 37-year old economic sanctions on Iran, Pakistan has been looking to normalize trade ties with its neighbor.

The two bordering countries signed an agreement in April 2017 to open commercial bank branches to conduct trade through formal channels. Pakistan has been importing power from Iran for a long time, and in the latest move an Iranian company has been granted a power generation license for its 10-year old proposed 49.5-megawatt wind power project in Sindh.

The power regulator, National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra), announced on Monday that it has granted a power generation license to Iran-Pak Wind Power (Pvt) Limited (IPWPPL) for a 20-year period from the day it starts commercial operations.

"The project will achieve [commercial production] by June 30, 2019," Nepra said.

According to IPWPPL's application for the grant of the generation license, the cost of the project is estimated at \$1.8 million, it was learnt.

The main sponsor of the IPWPPL project includes SUNIR (Iran Power & Water Equipment and Services Export Company) of Iran whereas the minority sponsors include the Planet Group and the Tufail Group of Pakistan, the authority reported. "SUNIR is an Iranian group company, constituted of 24 independent companies involved in manufacturing of a wide range of different equipment and a rich experience of engineering services and consultancy in water and electricity industries.

"Since its establishment in 1994, SUNIR has successfully performed a wide range of activities in more than 18 countries," stated the documents.

SUNIR first expressed interest to set up the wind power project in in Pakistan in 2006. Later, it made



huge efforts and spent time to acquire the required piece of land in the wind corridor of Sindh.

The project also qualifies for carbon credits. "Projects coming into operation up to the year 2020 can qualify for the carbon credits," it said. IPWPPL is setting up an approximately 50-megawatts wind power project in the Jhimpir wind corridor of district Thatta.

Nepra said that the Alternative Energy Development Board has identified two wind corridors (of Jhimpir and

Gharo) in the province of Sindh. The estimated potential for these two corridors is more than 50,000 megawatts.

At the moment, around 13 projects with a cumulative installed capacity of around 650MW have been installed and commissioned whereas another 25 projects including IPWPPL, with cumulative capacity of around 1400MW, are in various stages of implementation.

(Source: Tribune.com.pk)

## Oil halts longest winning streak this year as OPEC supply rises

Oil snapped its longest run of gains this year as OPEC output rose amid a boost from members exempt from supply cuts.

Futures slid 0.5 percent in New York after advancing almost 11 percent the previous eight sessions. OPEC production in June climbed to the highest level this year because of increases from Libya and Nigeria, which aren't bound by the groups accord to cut, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. U.S. crude inventories probably dropped by 2.5 million barrels last week, a Bloomberg survey showed before a government report on Thursday.

While prices have surged in the past week, oil in New York and London still posted a monthly loss in June after tumbling into a bear market on concerns that rising global supply will counter curbs from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and its partners. U.S. crude inventories remain more than 100 million barrels above the five-year average.

"Given the run of gains and the highest OPEC production in 2017, there might be some closing of positions that temporarily puts pressure on prices," said Jan Edelmann,

an analyst at HSH Nordbank AG in Frankfurt. Nonetheless, "these higher production levels by Libya and Nigeria" probably aren't "sustainable given the ongoing political tension in this region."

West Texas Intermediate for August delivery was at \$46.86 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange, down 21 cents, at 9:18 a.m. in London. Total volume traded was about 29 percent below the 100-day average. The contract gained \$1.03 to \$47.07 on Monday.

(Source: Bloomberg)

## OPEC has lost control but prices could hit a bottom: survey

OPEC has lost its grip on the oil market, but crude prices will likely set a bottom in the low \$40s per barrel, according to the latest CNBC Oil Survey.

Sixty percent of participants agree that OPEC has lost control of the oil market, and the same percent also expect the cartel to continue its efforts to "jawbone" or talk up prices.

Just over half — or 53 percent of the participants in CNBC's latest survey — say the bottom for oil prices is likely to be in the low \$40s per barrel. However, 70 percent would not rule out a further drop into the \$30s. Forty-six percent see it holding in the high \$30s if it does go below \$40 per barrel.

Forty-seven percent of the 15 oil market experts say there is more downside risk, but 40 percent say there should not be. Oil prices are expected to end the year between \$40 and \$49 per barrel, according to 47 percent, while 33 percent see prices in the \$50 to \$59 per barrel range.

Oversupply was cited by 93 percent in the survey, as the biggest factor influencing prices right now, and 80 percent expect it to be the biggest factor for the remainder of the year. Just 7 percent see demand as the biggest issue. Seven percent see geopolitical threats as a bigger factor affecting prices, and 6 percent expect OPEC will be the greatest influence in the second half of the year.

Forty-seven percent believe demand is stronger but 40 percent believe it is flat. Thirteen percent say demand is trending weaker.

Commodities analyst Dennis Gartman, publisher of the Gartman Letter, says that the world must understand that the hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling technologies used by U.S. drillers have not even begun to be used in other parts of the world.

"It WILL, the effects of which are obviously long term very, very bearish," he wrote in comments supplied with survey results. Gartman said U.S. technology will expand to Russia, Mexico, China the Middle East and Africa.

The increase in production by U.S. shale drillers, or frackers, has been also a key issue for the market, with U.S. output at about 9.3 million barrels per day. According to the CNBC survey, 60 percent say President Donald Trump's pro-energy policies have had no effect on prices, but 33 percent say they have hurt prices a little and 7 percent see a large negative impact. (Source: CNBC)



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## South Korea and Brazil rejected their female leaders

As two democracies barely three decades old, South Korean and Brazilian liberal regimes have already endured a few existential threats on the way to consolidation. The latest test was an almost simultaneous removal from office of their presidents – Park Geun-hye in Seoul and Dilma Rousseff in Brasília. Although the specific impeachment proceedings for the two cases were distinct from each other, some underlying beliefs and follow-up measures hold similarities and point toward misogynistic motivations.

■ To make a long story short...



Rousseff took over as the first female president of Brazil in January 2011. During the first two years in office, her left-leaning government received the blessings of Brazil's middle and upper classes, but in 2013 the boat started to sink. Corruption scandals involving Petrobras – Brazil's state-run oil company – and the infrastructural arrangements for FIFA World Cup – the football tournament hosted by Brazil in July 2014 – invaded the headlines, even as the economy kept shrinking at an accelerated pace. Although Rousseff was reelected in October 2014 by popular vote for a second presidential term, her victory was promptly contested by PSDB, the main opposition party to Rousseff's PT-led coalition. From the day after her reelection until August 31, 2016, the date when the Brazilian senate made the decision to oust the president, Rousseff never enjoyed a single moment of truce.

In South Korea, Park was sworn in as president in February 2013, also the first female ever to reach such position in her country. After a quick electoral honeymoon with South Korean citizens, this relationship soured after Park's handling of a literal boat sinking: the Sewol ferry tragedy in 2014. But what finally did Park in were allegations of influence peddling. Park was accused of providing her long-time friend Choi Soon-sil with sensitive information about governmental affairs – even while Choi committed a series of wrongdoings spanning from blackmailing and taking bribes from chaebol to buying her daughter a place at Ehwa Womans University, an elite college in Seoul. Two months after the scandal broke, the National Assembly voted for Park's presidential impeachment. In March 2017, South Korea's Constitutional Court upheld the impeachment, officially ousting Park from office. Despite publicly admitting some of her mistakes and apologizing on TV, Park not only lost the presidency but ended up jailed on March 30.

■ Are the two cases even comparable?

The late arrival of a woman to the presidency of both countries is not accidental. South Korea and Brazil fare poorly in the world rankings for women's representation in national parliaments. According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, an intergovernmental organization dedicated to monitoring legislative branches and spurring cooperation between them, in June 2017 South Korea was number 118th in terms of the number of seats taken by women in Congress, while Brazil ranked 154 out of 193 countries. Moreover, it is worth noting that both Rousseff and Park are single women. Some of Brazil's working class members used to say that Rousseff was Brazilian former President Lula da Silva's wife – a false narrative that some people apparently found necessary to justify casting a vote for her. In South Korea, the mental operation behind Park's election was a bit different: being the heir of a South Korean president, Park was bound for leadership.

Brazil was a pioneer in extending democratic suffrage to women in the early 1930s. Nonetheless, this never meant that female leaders were accepted on an equal footing in the most prestigious and important political positions. There has never been, for instance, a Brazilian woman in charge of the ministry of foreign affairs. Being the highest diplomatic representative of Brazil remains, in the 21st century, an exclusively masculine endeavor. Not even Rousseff dared to nominate a woman to run the patriarchal chancellery in Brasília.

Actually, the president herself was judged for being a woman. One episode is telling in this regard: At the 2014 FIFA World Cup opening ceremony, which was exhibited to almost 200 countries around the world, she was booed and called bad names in unison by 80,000 people who were at the stadium. This pattern has been repeated time and again during her years in politics.

In South Korea, Confucianism has consistently played a part in keeping women at bay in politics. In the eyes of traditional Confucian thinking, before qualifying as an individual, a female is socially seen as a daughter and a wife. Until 2008, the family-head system was constitutionally active in Korea, a monument to patriarchalism that would prevent a woman from using her own family name rather than her husband's – to cite only one practical consequence.

Unsurprisingly, in the days preceding her impeachment trial, Park was personally hit by South Korea's social norm, as her friendship with Choi raised questions about her sexuality and religion. In what could be taken as a marked difference between the two stories, however, Park's right-of-center government never promised to fight gender inequality during her tenure in office. Ironically enough, she apparently ended up being devoured by that political alignment. ➔13

# ‘Trumpism’ is a symptom of decades-long imperial arrogance

No matter how hard White House officials try, they cannot construct a coherent ‘Trump doctrine’ that would make sense amid the chaos that has afflicted U.S. foreign policy in recent months.

However, this chaos is not entirely the making of President Donald Trump alone.

Since 1945, the United States has vied for total global leadership. The 1991 dissolution of the Soviet Union, and the subsequent disintegration of the Eastern Bloc, gave it complete global hegemony.

The U.S. became the force that stabilized and destabilized any region in the world, as it saw fit – which always served the interests of the U.S. and its allies.

■ Pro- or anti-American

Political opinions and ideological strands in the U.S., but also globally, were formulated around this reality. Often unwittingly, we are all pushed into one of two categories: pro- or anti-American.

For decades, many critical voices warned of an uncontested unipolar world. Conformists fought back against the ‘un-American’, and ‘unpatriotic’ few, who dared break rank.

In the late 1980's, Francis Fukuyama declared ‘the end of history’, now that the U.S. and its western allies managed to defeat communism. He prophesized the end of ‘sociocultural evolution’, where a new form of a single human government can be formed.

It appeared, however fleetingly, that all the obstacles before the American vision of total domination have been subdued. Thomas Friedman of the New York Times imagined such a world in his bestselling book, ‘The World is Flat’.

He wrote, with the wisdom of a sage and the triumphalism of a victorious war general, ‘Communism was a great system for making people equally poor – in fact, there was no better system in the world for that than communism. Capitalism made people unequally rich.’

But history never ended. It just went through a new cycle of conflicts, problems and alliances of enemies and foes. Unchecked consumerism was hardly a triumph for the neoliberal order, but a defeat of a delicately balanced planet, where global warming emerged as the world's greatest enemy. American military power could hardly wait to rearrange the Arab world, as once promised, by former U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

Since then, the so-called ‘New Middle East’, has become a horrifying nightmare that traversed many countries and destabilized the entire region.

Worse still, the U.S. economy has crashed, taking down with it the global economy and reducing some of the smallest, most vulnerable countries into abject poverty.

The rise of Donald Trump to power is, in fact, an outcome of the chaotic years that preceded his advent. By the end of his second term, former President Barack Obama spoke of his success in stabilizing the economy and creating more jobs in a process of swift recovery, contrary to real evidence.

A U.S. Federal Reserve survey last year concluded that nearly half of all Americans



**The rise of Donald Trump to power is, in fact, an outcome of the chaotic years that preceded his advent.**

“did not have enough money to cover a \$400 emergency expense.” Americans did not elect Trump simply because they are ‘racist’, as some have presumed, but because they are desperate. He knew how to exploit the many woes of his people with ‘Making America Great Again’ type of mantras. For most Americans, Friedman’s ‘unequally rich’ paradigm seemed like detached, intellectual nonsense.

■ Trump's chaotic politics

Expectedly, the greatest backlash to Trump's chaotic politics emanates from the liberal and neoliberal forces in politics and economy that had assiduously defended the failing American order for many years. They continue to rebrand the failures of the past as either astounding success, or well-intentioned but unsuccessful endeavors to make the world a better place.

“No American president since 1945, whether Republican or Democrat, has broken so decisively with the American stewardship of the postwar liberal global order,” wrote Constanze Stelzenmüller recently, with reference to Trump's policies towards Europe and the rest of the world.

She opines: “In the service of the higher good of world peace, even the victorious superpower was willing to be bound to universal rules — a concession that admitted the existence of a worldwide community of humanity based on shared values rather than the principle of ‘might makes right.’” It is a view that is largely inconsistent with history. Immediately following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the U.S. ‘might makes right’ became the new doctrine that was championed by every U.S. administration.

In fact, Iraq was bombed by all U.S. Presidents since George H. Bush in 1991. Trump represents a strange amalgama-

tion of American military power, business monopoly and media savviness. He seems smart enough to understand that his country requires a change of course, but neither has the will, the wisdom nor skills to guide it into any other direction.

After six months in the Oval Office, he is presiding over the same old power struggle between the neoconservative-type ideologues, who want to see more interventions to rearrange the world as they see fit, and the military brass, who want the U.S. military to reign supreme, but on a steady and predictable course.

While Trump himself rejected the idea of regime change during his campaign for office, Politico reported on June 25 that his Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson, “appeared to endorse the ‘philosophy of regime change.’”

Meanwhile, the ideologues vs. the military brass battle, which had defined both terms of the George W. Bush administration, is back. Foreign Policy described that ongoing fight in details in a revealing report on June 16.

Top White House officials, led by senior director for intelligence on the National Security Council, Ezra Cohen, want to expand the Syria war, taking the focus away from defeating ISIS to target American foes involved in that proxy war. Defense Secretary, James Mattis, wants to stay the course. The impulsive way in which Trump makes his decision, the pendulum could swing in any direction without warning or logic.

Contradictions in U.S. foreign policy emerge almost daily. U.S. United Nations Ambassador, Nikki Haley, seems to be running a show of her own, independent of Trump's administration. She recently declared that Muslim sites in Occupied East Jerusalem are part of “Israeli terri-

tory”, before stressing that she is ‘unclear of official U.S. policy on the issue.’

While chaos and contradictions abound, Trump's allies are simply unable to sum up the ‘Trump doctrine’. A top administration official told the Time that it is a “combination of very good personal skills – one-on-one ... defeating ISIS and ... commitment to people that there are certain things that the United States isn't going to put up with.”

While such ‘doctrine’ lacks any serious substance, previous doctrines are equally useless, for none offers a real vision that is predicated on achieving a multipolar world, which is based on mutual respect and adhering to an equitable frame of reference, such as international laws.

This chaos will continue to bode badly for the Arab world and Middle East region, in particular. Since Bush's disastrous war in Iraq, Obama's ‘pivot to Asia’ and the onset of the current turmoil, the region has been in flames. Unable to offer a courageous diagnosis of the violence, the Trump administration is parroting the same old jingoism of defeating ‘terrorism.’

Lacking a vision for peace and unable to win the war, the U.S. administration seems to have no plan, except inconsistent, self-contradictory policies – while blaming everyone else, but never once introspecting.

It turns out that the world is, indeed, not ‘flat’ at all and that history remains in motion, moving beyond the jurisdiction of a single country. But until the U.S. leadership – Trump's or any other – realizes such a notion, the world, in general, and the Arab world, in particular, will continue to suffer the consequences wrought by imperial arrogance and impulsive politicians.

(Source: middleeastmonitor.com)

## Germany is buoyant but tough choices lie ahead

**Merkel launches the CDU manifesto with momentum on her side**

Angela Merkel has a spring in her step — and justifiably so. Six months ago the German chancellor's position looked far less secure. She was still living in the shadow of the EU-wide migrant crisis. Europe appeared to be teetering on the edge of a populist revolt. At one point, Martin Schulz, the candidate for chancellor from the opposition Social Democratic party took the lead in the opinion polls. As her Christian Democratic Union party launched its manifesto on Monday, Merkel could claim to have calmed most of those stormy waters. She has stabilized migrant inflows and in doing so helped neutralize the threat posed by Germany's rightwing populists.

There is a parallel sense that risks to the future of the EU have also dissipated. Rather than encouraging others to follow suit, the UK's Brexit vote appears — at least for now — to have inoculated the rest of the continent against lurching to extremes. The German economy is doing nicely, running on a budget surplus and buoying the eurozone as a whole. The index of business confidence, as measured by the Munich-based Ifo reached an all-time high last week, reflecting a broader national mood of self-confidence. Unemployment is already low at 5.5 per cent — but the CDU pledges to achieve full employment by 2025. External events have swung in the chancellor's favor too. Emmanuel Macron's victory in French presidential elections has given new impetus to European integration and the Franco-German axis that could make it happen.

■ Global standing

Meanwhile, the post-Brexit turmoil in the UK, and in the U.S. since Donald Trump became president, have



**Merkel has stabilized migrant inflows and in doing so helped neutralize the threat posed by Germany's rightwing populists.**

served to enhance Merkel's global standing, while at home her critique of U.S. policy on climate change and trade has played well too. In this, as with domestic initiatives such as the minimum wage, she has cleverly borrowed from her SPD rivals, making it that much harder for them to make a distinctive pitch. Her success is showing. The CDU now leads the SPD by a margin of

16 percentage points in opinion polls. That is not to say that life for whoever becomes chancellor after the September 24 elections will be easy. The CDU, at present the most likely victor, on Monday trumpeted Germany's happy state. The party pledges to increase spending on research and development, bring in €19bn in personal tax cuts, and maintain recent much-needed increases in infrastructure investment. These policies could boost domestic demand and imports.

But even allowing for the fact that a manifesto is aimed at domestic voters, Merkel is proposing to do worryingly little to rebalance the eurozone economy as a whole and cut Germany's vast external surplus. Nor is the EU's future settled. For one, the migrant crisis is not yet over. Having tightened up German border controls, the challenge is for Berlin to help organize a collective response in support of Italy, which is bearing the brunt. Some things lie beyond Merkel's control. If Macron stumbles in his efforts to reform France so too will the closer integration of the eurozone she has publicly backed.

Moreover, beyond that general proposition lie hard questions about how far Germany is prepared to go to build a stronger, more integrated, and more efficient EU. This means, for example, applying fiscal rules more efficiently and completing the banking union. It is understandable that Merkel is cagey about her views on these topics ahead of the elections. But it is a challenge she will ultimately have to face when and if she wins a further term as chancellor.

(Source: FT)



# Make no mistake, we are already at war in Syria

By Philip Giraldi

Something peculiar happens to American presidents after they take office on January 20.

Campaign promises to right the easily perceived misdirections in foreign policy are abandoned, and the new program for dealing with the rest of the world winds up looking very much like the old one. Bill Clinton was an anti-Vietnam War draft dodger who preached the moral high ground for going to war before he turned around and got involved in the Balkans while also bombing Sudan and Afghanistan. George W. Bush promised non-interference and no nation-building overseas, but 9/11 converted him into an exemplar of how to do everything wrong as he sank into the quagmires of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Barack Obama's margin of victory in 2008 was likely due to the perception that he was the peace candidate, particularly in contrast to his opponent Senator John McCain, but he wound up deeper in Afghanistan, out of, and then back into Iraq, interfering in Syria, and bringing about disastrous regime change in Libya while also allowing relations with Moscow to deteriorate. Donald Trump has surrounded himself with generals after promising no deeper involvement in foreign wars and the generals are telling him that winning wars only requires more soldiers on the ground and just a little more time and effort to stabilize things, all of which are self-serving formulae for policies that have already failed.

And then there are the perennial enemies, with Iran at the top of the list while Russia and China play supporting roles. Some would blame the foreign policy orientation on the Deep State, which certainly is suggestive, but I rather suspect that the flip-flops of recent presidents are also based on some other elements. First, none of them has been a veteran who experienced active duty, which makes war an abstraction observed second hand on PowerPoint in a briefing room rather than a reality. And second, the shaping of their views can be directly attributed to the pervasiveness of the establishment view on the appropriate role for the United States in the world.

Sometimes referred to as America's "civil religion," one can also call it "American exceptionalism" or the "leadership of the free world" or even "responsibility to protect" but the reality is that a broad consensus has

developed in the United States that enables serial interventionism with hardly a squeak of protest coming from the American people.

Donald Trump has been in office for five months and it would appear that at least some of the outlines of his foreign policy are beginning to take shape, though that may be exaggeration as no one seems to be in charge. The "America First" slogan seemingly does not apply to what is developing, as actual U.S. interests do not appear to be driving what takes place, and there does not seem to be any overriding principle that shapes the responses to the many challenges confronting Washington worldwide.

The two most important observations that one might make are both quite negative. First, lamentably, the promised détente with Russia has actually gone into reverse, with the relationship between the two countries at the lowest point since the time of the late, lamented Hillary Rodham Clinton as Secretary of State. Second, we are already at war with Syria even though the media and Congress seem blissfully unaware of that fact. We are also making aggressive moves intended to create a casus belli for going to war with Iran, and are doubling down in Afghanistan with more troops on the way, so Donald Trump's pledge to avoid pointless wars and nation-building were apparently little more than glib talking points intended to make Barack Obama look bad.

The situation with Russia can be repaired as Vladimir Putin is a realist head of state of a country that is vulnerable and willing to work with Washington, but it will require an end to the constant vituperation being directed against Moscow by the media and the Democratic Party. That process could easily spin out for another year with all parties now agreeing that Russia intervened in our election even though no one has yet presented any evidence that Russia did anything at all.

Syria is more complicated. Senators Tim Kaine and Rand Paul have raised the alarm over American involvement in that country, declaring the U.S. military intervention to be illegal. Indeed it is, as it is a violation of the United Nations Charter and the American Constitution. No one has argued that Syria in any way threatens the United States, and the current policy is also an affront to common sense: like it or not Syria is a sovereign



**Syria is currently under attack from the air forces of sixteen nations operating within its airspace loosely affiliated with the U.S. effort to bring about regime change.**

country in which we Americans have set up military bases and are supporting "rebels" (including jihadis and terrorists) who are seeking to overthrow the legitimate government. We have also established a so-called "de-confliction" zone in the south-east of the country to protect our proxies without the consent of the government in Damascus. All of that adds up to what is unambiguously unprovoked aggression, an act of war.

The war began in earnest when the Obama administration began building bases and sending Special Ops into Syria in the late summer of 2015, after the White House announced that it would "allow airstrikes to defend Syrian rebels trained by the U.S. military from any attackers, even if the enemies hail from forces loyal to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad."

That policy guaranteed escalation and direct American involvement in the conflict. In the last month, for the first time since the civil war in Syria began in 2011, the United States has directly attacked Syrian government forces or proxies four times, including two air attacks against Iranian militiamen allied to Damascus. Those moves were preceded by the April U.S. Navy launch of 59 cruise missiles in an attack directed against a Syrian air base. The recent escalation has produced a response from Russia, which decied in the strongest terms the latest of these incidents, in which a U.S. F-18 Hornet shot down a Syrian SU-22 fighter-bomber.

Moscow has now threatened to act against any U.S.-led coalition aircraft flying over western Syria, a step that could in short order lead to a Russian-U.S. war in the Middle East.

Syria is currently under attack from the air forces of sixteen nations operating within its airspace loosely affiliated with the U.S. effort to bring about regime change. When Syria resists, it is routinely accused of using "forbidden" weapons by the mouthpieces of the terrorist groups operating inside the country under the American umbrella. Currently, the White House is warning that it has "identified potential preparations for another chemical weapons attack by the Assad regime." UN Ambassador Nikki Haley elaborated in a tweet "...further attacks will be blamed on Assad but also on Russia and Iran who support him..."

Syria will "pay a very heavy price" if a chemical attack takes place, according to the White House statement. The U.S. warning will inevitably motivate the so-called rebels to stage an attack themselves and blame it on Damascus, as they have

done in the past. It also dangerously escalates the conflict by directly targeting both Russia and Iran as Syrian "accomplices" in war crimes. It is a very dangerous move by the Trump Administration and one that apparently was not coordinated with the Defense and State Departments, which were caught flat footed by the White House announcement. The nature and credibility of the information implicating Syria has not been revealed and is being regarded as an "intelligence matter."

Much of this acting against actual U.S. interests has come about due to the "worthless ally" syndrome which has been prevalent in Washington for several decades. In the Middle East, where many of the problems begin, there is no coherent policy that has evolved beyond unconditional support for local "allies" Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey and Israel. This has meant in practical terms that the U.S. defers to Riyadh, Ankara, Cairo, and Tel Aviv in nearly all regional matters while it is also the guarantor of a feckless Afghan government.

So in spite of pledges to disengage from the cycle of warfare in the Middle East, the United States seems to be on course for direct involvement in a series of local conflicts with no clear "victory" and exit policy in place. Remove al-Assad and what comes next? What will the Russians do? Will America's so-called allies Turkey, Israel, and Saudi Arabia be satisfied with dismemberment of the Syrian state or will they insist on pushing on to Tehran? Who would fill that vacuum?

There are certainly other foreign policy black holes, to include the awful decision to rollback normalization with Cuba and the hot-then-cold moves against North Korea. Venezuela, a major U.S. oil supplier, is about to implode and it is not clear if the State Department has any contingency plan in place to deal with the crisis. But Russia and Syria are in a class by themselves as they have the potential to turn into Class A disasters, like Iraq or possibly even worse. And then there is Iran lurking, apparently hated by all the talking heads in Washington and inextricably linked to what is happening in Syria. It is more than capable of becoming the next catastrophe for a White House that is apparently staggering from crisis to crisis. What will Trump do? I am afraid that the lesson learned from the cruise missile attack on a Syrian base in April was that using force is popular, repeat as necessary. That would be a major mistake, but there is every sign that some of the people around Trump have their eyes on escalating and "doing something

(Source: Global Research)



**In spite of pledges to disengage from the cycle of warfare in the Middle East, the U.S. seems to be on course for direct involvement in a series of local conflicts with no clear "victory" and exit policy in place.**

## U.S. intends to use confrontation between Turkey and Kurds

By Firas Samuri

U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said Tuesday that the U.S. would continue to finance and provide weapons to Syrian Kurdish fighters after the operation in Raqqqa, Syria.

It is noteworthy that such plans completely contradict the Pentagon's recent promises that arms given to the Syrian Kurds would be taken back after the offensive in Raqqqa.

Probably, those promises were aimed solely at lulling Turkey into a false sense of security. It also should be mentioned Ankara does not exclude the possibility of launching another military operation in the north of Syria. Taking into account Turkey's principled position towards the Kurdish issue, it is not difficult to guess that this time it is



unlikely to stay out.

According to many Syrian experts, Washington's decision to keep arming Kurds is likely to be a part of the next U.S. plan to escalate the Syrian conflict. Lolita Baldor, a correspondent at

Military Times, stresses that the White House intends to use confrontation between Turkey and Kurds. According to Baldor, if the Turkish side decides to conduct a full-scale operation against Kurds, Washington will have another

pretext to increase the number of its contingent in Syria.

This will allow the U.S. to strengthen its positions and prevent the successful advancement of the Syrian Army near the territory of Deir ez-Zor, which is rich in oil and natural gas. Such a scenario explains the U.S. intentions to use Kurds, who naively believe that Washington is their true ally.

Against the background of the current events, it becomes extremely difficult to take seriously the words of Jim Mattis that the U.S. does not intend to interfere in the Syrian conflict and promotes political settlement of the Syrian crisis.

Obviously, the U.S. continues to realize its plans in Syria, and it is ready to make every effort to reach its aims.

## America's violent century

By John Feffer

The last near-century of American dominance was extraordinarily violent. Is it coming to an end?

John Dower is one of the most preeminent historians of World War II's Pacific theater and the aftermath of the conflict in Asia. His book War Without Mercy (1986) described the racial component of the U.S. campaign against Japan. In Embracing Defeat (1999), he examined the post-war U.S. occupation of Japan. He has long taken a critical look at U.S. foreign policy, subjecting the vaunted ideals of America's global pretensions to skeptical scrutiny. He's not interested in "good wars" or "good occupations." He describes the exercise of power, and it's almost never a pretty picture.

In recent years, Dower has been extending his critical analysis both chronologically and geographically. Cultures of War (2010) was an initial effort to link the violence of World War II to 9/11 and the Iraq War. Now, with The Violent American Century, Dower deepens his analysis by addressing the emergence and expansion of American global power all the way up to the Obama era. Dower is particularly interested in connecting the dots between the United States that emerged victorious from World War II and the America of the 21st century that appears willing to do almost anything to maintain its status as the world's only superpower.

Dower begins his story just at the moment when the United States is poised to become a global titan. It's 1941, the year the United States officially entered World War II. It's also when Time's Henry Luce proclaimed the beginning of "the American century." For all his talk of democratic principles and the American spirit, Luce was not naive. He knew that America would have to use force – in some cases, overwhelming force – to establish its global position. The saturation bombing of Dresden and Tokyo followed by the nuclear attacks against Nagasaki and Hiroshima became the pivotal moments of "war and terror" on which the United States would secure its authority.



Dower traces the impact of America's nuclear policy from Hiroshima to the present, explaining how the "balance of terror" served a key role in cementing U.S. status. He discerns in U.S. indifference to human rights considerations during the Cold War – with the exception of the first two years of the Carter administration – the origins of later torture policy in the post-9/11 era. Certainly successive administrations in Washington introduced innovations in the maintenance and control of U.S. global influence, such as extraordinary rendition, drones, and enhanced surveillance capabilities, but many of the features of the "violent American century" were present at the creation.

And that's Dower's point. He is writing against a "chorus of detached observers who argue that violence has been contained compared to the horrors of World War Two and earlier times – and that even the death, pain, and agony we have seen since September 11 actually reflects, on the part of the United States, a praiseworthy technological and psychological turn in the direction of precision, restraint, and concern with avoiding civilian casualties."

Quite the contrary, the United States, Dower argues, may have refined its techniques, but it has done nothing to minimize the brutality. The casualties of the Iraq War alone – which number in the hundreds of thousands – undermine any notion that the United States had become a kinder, gentler superpower.

By 2016, the "American century" was only three-quarters complete. Dower brilliantly describes the infancy, adolescence, and working years of U.S. global dominance. He spends less time exploring the slowing down of the U.S. war machine during the period of international instability the Obama administration experienced. And he doesn't speculate much on what will happen with America's global power during what might very well be its dotage.

True, the United States seems unlikely to retire from the international stage as the American century passes the 75-year mark. But the election of Donald Trump does appear to herald a kind of second infancy, as the new president toddles about the world stage, promises to use force without restraint, and makes the most elemental of errors.

Even without Trump, whose election came after the completion of Dower's book in September 2016, the United States was showing the strain of its "long war" against terrorism, its military bases and operations in more than 100 countries around the world, and the opportunity costs for American infrastructure and American lives at home. The obvious question, which Dower doesn't ask or answer, is: what comes next?

China has proposed its own dream of power and prosperity. Many Russians would like to put together a Eurasian century. The European Union vacillates between disintegration and a larger global role for itself. The global South – India, South Africa, Brazil – is tired of the arrogance of the global North.

Will these aspirants to global power necessarily adopt comparable policies of war and terror to displace the United States and maintain their new status? That's not part of Dower's remit. But however brutal the century that follows the "American century," you can be sure that the new hegemon will use the same language of virtue and restraint as the United States has done, even as they engage in abuses both large and small.

(Source: Korea Quarterly)



# Is rampant narcissism undermining American democracy?

By Dennis Shen

In 2009, Jean Twenge and W. Keith Campbell published "The Narcissism Epidemic", a haunting diagnostic detailing a gradual, but seismic shift in the nation's cultural norm towards self-admiration.

Though certainly not all the consequences of heightened self-esteem are negative, this cultural phenomenon was de-

scribed as destructive to American society at an extreme: damaging the reciprocity that binds families and communities, and encouraging divisive and antisocial, short-term behaviors over long-term, collective decision-making.

Since the book's publication, further research has supported the referenced increase in feelings of self-worth, with one nationwide data set showing twice as many American college students answering the majority of questions in

a narcissistic direction in 2009 compared with in 1982.

This was based on the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) test, the most widely used metric on the subject in social psychology. Similar conclusions were shown in research that 59 percent of American college freshmen rated themselves above average in intellectual self-confidence in 2014, compared with 39 percent in 1966. And, generational increase in symptoms of Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD) was pointed to in earlier

research from the National Institutes of Health.

At extremes, narcissism undermines institutions that underpin a strong society, with links to shallow values, less intellectual interest and value on hard work, aggression and relationship complications, and lack of empathy and concern for others. When we consider political or economic dilemmas, we should not avoid discussion of the role that cultural factors and social psychology might have. ➔13

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# What’s lurking in your pool water?

By Jennifer Clopton

The holiday weekend is upon us, which for many Americans means it's time to fire up the grill, plan a picnic, and head to the pool.

But while swimming pools and water parks look refreshing, dangers can lurk in them.

Indiana health officials shut down a water park in June after two children got chemical burns from chlorine in the water -- reportedly a result of an equipment malfunction.

But a more common danger comes from something else: urine. And it's staggering how many people are peeing in pools.

So how can you keep yourself and your family safe while swimming? WebMD takes a closer look.

## ■ Peeing in the pool

It's a hard truth, but after 20 years studying swimming pool chemistry, Ernest Blatchley III, an environmental engineer at Purdue University, is willing to tell it like it is: People pee in swimming pools.

"It's fair to assume that any pool that has people in it, also has urine in it," Blatchley says. "What we have found is the average swimmer leaves about roughly the equivalent of a shot glass (1 to 2 ounces) of urine in the pool."

Blatchley says he's never studied a pool that didn't have urine in it.

"If one person pees in a pool, it probably doesn't make a difference. But it's not a situation where only one person is peeing in pools. There is a large fraction of people who regularly pee in pools," he says.

That's what researchers at the University of Alberta recently found, too. In a study published in March, researchers collected samples of the artificial sweetener acesulfame potassium (ACE) from 31 different swimming pools and hot tubs and found high levels of the sweetener in every location.

Based on the amount of sweetener, researchers estimated that a 220,000-gallon pool would have an average of 20 gallons of urine.

"This provides us evidence that people are indeed urinating in pools," says researcher Lindsay Blackstock, who was involved in the study. The only way it gets into swimming pools or hot tubs is from urine, she says.

Blackstock says urine in recreational water isn't necessarily a risk for swimmers. But things like urine and sweat can react with chlorine to create toxic compounds known disinfection by-products, or DPBs, she says.

The potential health issues include more asthma in elite swimmers and less-major respiratory and skin issues sometimes seen in swimmers, lifeguards, and pool workers.

Susan Richardson, PhD, an environmental chemist at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, says there is definitely a risk for asthma from these compounds, mostly among Olympic athletes and other swimmers that spend a lot of time in pools. A recent university study found more than 100 chemicals in pools and hot tubs, some of which are toxic.

"Like anything, it depends on the dose and contact time. So, how many hours per day and how many days per week you would spend in a pool," Richardson says. "I think the risks are much lower for the casual swimmer."

Still, scientists say it is important to know that when your eyes get red in the pool or you smell that classic "chlorine" odor, it's not due to chlorine.

"A healthy pool doesn't have a chemical smell," says Michele Hlavsa, RN, chief of the CDC's Healthy Swimming Program. "It's not the chlorine that is making your eyes red, it is the urine and sweat that combines with the chlorine," she adds.

It also cuts the amount of chlorine that's left to kill germs, she says.

Scientists are looking for solutions. Richardson says her team is looking into a promising new treatment that uses silver/copper disinfection and doesn't rely



**“Swallowing just a mouthful of water contaminated with crypto can make otherwise healthy people sick for up to three weeks with watery diarrhea, stomach cramps, nausea, or vomiting, and can lead to dehydration.”**

on much chlorine, or potentially no chlorine at all. They are testing it in pools in Myrtle Beach, SC.

"From what we can tell so far, it does a great job keeping the water clear and disinfected, without necessarily needing to add chlorine," Richardson says.

## ■ Health outbreaks

Fecal matter (poop) can find its way into water by washing off people's bodies when they swim. This can be a more serious health risk, since fecal matter has germs like cryptosporidium that can cause gastrointestinal illness.

Pool management is important on this front, and not all local and state governments inspect swimming pools. You can go online to see if yours does and check to see if it has been cited or closed for any violations. Results might also be posted at your pool or water playground.

The CDC says that when state and local health departments inspected almost 50,000 public pools in 2013, 12% of inspections resulted in immediate closures of pools for serious public health violations, often because there was no disinfectant in water or no safety equipment.

Hlavsa, the CDC's pool safety researcher, says it is important to know that while chlorine kills most germs within minutes, it doesn't kill them instantly. "When we swim and are ill with diarrhea, we are potentially sharing germs. We share water. We immerse bodies in it, and sometimes we swallow it," she says.

A May 2017 CDC report showed that cryptosporidium outbreaks linked to swimming pools and water playgrounds doubled from 16 to 32 between 2014 and 2016. The federal agency says it's not clear if outbreaks are on the rise or outbreak detection is improving. Hlavsa says the good news is overall, those numbers are small. "We are swimming hundreds of millions of times a year. Most of us, most of the time, will be OK," she says.

Still, she says the CDC warns that "swallowing just a mouthful of water contaminated with crypto can make otherwise healthy people sick for up to three weeks with watery diarrhea, stomach cramps,

nausea, or vomiting, and can lead to dehydration."

Despite the dangers, Hlavsa doesn't think any of this should scare people away from pools. They can be fun and are a great place for exercise and outdoor activity. In fact, she says she swims often with her two young children.

"When we bike, we put on helmets. When we drive, we put on seat belts. This is the same thing. We are sharing water," she says. "So it's not about avoiding swimming. It's about being healthier and smarter about the way we are swimming."

## ■ Other summer safety tips:

- Do your part to keep the pool clean. Practice good hygiene. Before getting into the water, use the bathroom and at least rinse off in the shower to remove any sweat, urine, poop, or excess personal care products.

- Don't urinate in the pool, and teach your children the importance of not doing that, too.

- Help maintain water quality. If you or your child is sick with diarrhea, don't swim. Don't swallow water in the pool. People with weakened immune systems should also talk with their health care provider before swimming.

- Take kids on bathroom breaks every hour while at the pool, and check your children's diapers regularly.

- Don't sit on splash park or playground water jets.

- Use test strips to check the pH and chlorine concentrations of your pool. They are widely available online and at big-box stores, cost around \$10 for a bottle containing many of them, and they are easy to use. Generally, you stick a piece of the strip in the water for a few seconds and compare the colors the stick turns with a chart on the back of the bottle.

- Designate a "water watcher" when you are with children who are swimming, even if there are lifeguards in the pool.

- Also check the drain at the bottom of the pool. You want to see them secured and in good repair, and you want water to be clear so if someone is in distress near them at the bottom of the pool, you can see them.

(Source: WebMD)

## Set a boundary or build a wall

By Fran Simone

Consider keeping your options open when dealing with loved ones.

Help or hinder? Enable or detach? Empathize or criticize? Blow up or shut down? Set boundaries or build walls.

These dichotomies challenge loved ones. Depending on the circumstances, we may handle each differently. I've found that one of my most difficult struggles involves setting and maintaining firm boundaries.

Suppose that a loved one's daughter lands a job but is unable to afford car repairs to get there. Public transportation is not available since she lives in a rural area. She asks for financial help to repair her car. Moreover, she promises to pay the money back. To decide whether or not to help, you might think something like this. Well she's finally been able to land a job and is showing some responsibility by showing up and paying most of her bills. If she loses this job, how will she support herself? Then again, the last time I bailed her out financially she promised

to pay me back, but she didn't. This has happened more times than not. Finally I told her in no uncertain terms that I would not lend any more money. Then again if her car isn't repaired she won't have transportation to get to her job. Might there be other alternatives? Carpool with another employee? And if not, then do I go back on my word or do I cave in and rescue her? Am I helping or enabling? And how will this play out in the future?

This scenario illustrates the challenge of setting and sticking to boundaries. When I was new to my own recovery, a wise mentor advised me to be careful about setting boundaries. She said, "addiction and mental illness are moving targets and we can't predict what will happen in the future or how we will respond. Try to avoid black and white thinking." Good advice. Recently a friend reflected on the difference between a boundary and a wall. Over the years in dealing with his adult daughter, he discovered that his boundaries needed to be flexible. "A wall is rigid and intractable, while a

boundary can be malleable depending on the situation." He said years ago when his daughter phoned in a frenzy in the middle of the night, he answered, listened, pleaded, worried and couldn't get back to sleep. Gradually he came to realize that he had choices and set a boundary to not answer the phone and engage in those middle of the night dramas. Now years later his daughter is in recovery and he chooses to take a middle of the night phone call because he knows she'll call only when there's a genuine emergency.

Another friend set a boundary to not co-sign for a loan for her adult son. His old car was beyond repair and he needed to purchase another. Because his credit was poor, he didn't qualify for a loan and asked his mother to co-sign. So she faced all too familiar boundary/wall dilemma. Luckily her son changed his mind. She was off the hook unless this happened again.

I've faced this challenge as well. My adult son has been in and out of recovery for many years. I also have vowed to not co-sign any loan or rental

arrangement. So far I haven't been asked, but I have vacillated many times on whether or not to provide funds for car repairs, dental bills, or a vet bill or two for his beloved dog. If he's in recovery and struggling financially I usually agree to help, but I don't give him money outright. Instead, I pay a bill directly with a check or credit card. However, I've set a boundary to not help financially or otherwise should he be actively abusing substances. So far I've been able to stick to my guns.

All of this is not to say that at times setting and sticking to a firm boundary may be the best option for you and your loved one. Individuals need to be held responsible for their choices, good or bad. We learn from both our successes and our mistakes. However, addiction is a complex phenomenon. The decisions on how best to deal with our loved ones and also take care of ourselves aren't easy. What works today may not work in the future. Try not to build walls. Instead remain flexible and keep an open heart.

(Source: psychologytoday.com)

## The hidden danger of grilling out

By Carina Storrs

Last winter, a team of doctors at Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children in Delaware treated a 16-year-old girl who had a sharp pain in one spot of her abdomen. Although the doctors suspected she had swallowed something, they were surprised when they pulled out a wire bristle from a grill brush during surgery.

It started to make sense when the doctors thought about the girl's history. She had been on vacation with her family the week before she developed the pain. They had been barbecuing and the girl remembered that one of her relatives cleaned the grill with a brush. A bristle from the brush probably fell onto the grill and then stuck onto the hamburger the girl ate.

"This is a great example of a situation where it is not a very common occurrence, but if physicians are aware there's a potential for injury, they can explore the patient's history" to see if a grill brush bristle injury could be involved, said Dr. Matthew Di Guglielmo, a pediatrician at Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children who was part of the team that treated the girl and wrote an article about her case that was published last August.

A new study published on Wednesday gives insight into how often these injuries happen in the United States. Researchers found that, between 2002 and 2014, there were 43 cases in the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System, a group of about 100 emergency departments in U.S. hospitals that track injuries from consumer products. Based on this number, the researchers estimated there were a total of 1,698 grill brush injuries in emergency departments nationwide from 2002 to 2014, or about 130 per year.

"Our numbers in the study are not huge, especially if you look in terms of other injuries," said Dr. C.W. David Chang, associate professor of clinical otolaryngology at the University of Missouri, and lead author of new study, which was published in the journal Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery. For example, it is much more common for children to swallow batteries, and those injuries account for more than 5,000 trips to emergency departments in the United States in 2009.

However, the study could have missed some grill brush injuries. People could have gone to urgent care clinics rather than the hospital and thus would not have been included in the current study's estimate, said Chang, who has not treated patients with these injuries, but got interested in the topic after hearing from physicians who had.

## ■ Understanding 'outdoor grilling hazards'

The study found that people of all ages have fallen victim to grill brush injuries, but it was most common among people younger than 18, who made up 40% of the cases, and adults age 19 to 40, who made up 30% of cases. Not surprisingly, most injuries happened during the summer and numbers peaked in July. After all, what is a July 4 party without a cookout on the grill?

Although the study had limited data about the outcomes of the injuries, there is reason to think things generally worked out fine. Seventy percent of people were treated in the emergency department and released, but another 28% had to be admitted to the hospital. Based on the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System, as well as case reports from doctors and the Safer Products government database, the study found that most bristles were lodged in the mouth or throat, and in these cases they could usually be "plucked out in the ER," Chang said.

In the rare event that a bristle makes its way all the way down to the intestine, it becomes a concern that the bristle could push its way through the wall of the intestine, as was the case for Di Guglielmo's 16-year-old patient. "It was somewhat remarkable" that she did not develop an infection due to the bristle puncture, which could have been a serious complication, Di Guglielmo said.

Even if a bristle stays in the neck area, there is concern that it could migrate into the soft tissue and require surgery to remove, said Evan J. Harlor, a doctor of osteopathic medicine in the department of Otolaryngology--Head and Neck Surgery at Geisinger Medical Center in Pennsylvania.

Several years ago, Harlor saw a woman in her 40s who developed discomfort in her throat several hours after eating a piece of chicken from the grill. There was a bristle in her throat that he was able to remove without surgery. Harlor and his colleagues published an article in 2012 on this "outdoor grilling hazard" in which they describe the woman's case and five others.

## ■ Don't brush off the dangers

There are steps people can take to reduce the hazard. Although it is important to wipe the grill down after using it, "I would advocate inspecting the grill after cleaning to make sure nothing is adhered to it," Chang said.

There are also alternatives to wire bristle grill brushes, such as brushes with nylon bristles and wire mesh brushes. "I think I would definitely [use one of these alternatives] given the number of incidents, at least anecdotally among physicians, to hopefully reduce the risk of injury," Chang said. And for those die-hard metal brush users, you should "definitely look at your brush, and if the bristles are frizzled or frayed, you should probably get it replaced," he added.

"Usually I tell people it is fine if they want to use a wire brush, but after they use it to get a cloth to wipe down the grill surface and really inspect it before they start cooking on it," Harlor said.

A report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention about grill brush injuries in Rhode Island between 2011 and 2012 said it is unclear whether different brands of brushes or types of grills or foods pose greater risk.

Even though grill brush injuries are less common than swallowing a fish or chicken bone, or children swallowing a coin or battery, "I could see [these injuries] going worse," Di Guglielmo said. Wire bristles tend to be sharp, so the risk of them puncturing the digestive tract and causing an infection could be greater, he added. (Source: CNN)



## 10 hot titles of IT world

By Alireza Khorasani

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

- 1 Germany prepares for cyberattacks ahead of G20 summit.  
Germany is girding itself for possible cyber-attacks on G20 summit in Hamburg, by hacker groups or cells linked to foreign governments, its top cyber official told Reuters.
- 2 Glitch caused Apple, Amazon, Microsoft and other stock prices to spike or plummet.  
The prices of several big-name Nasdaq-listed stocks appeared on some websites to either spike or plummet well after the closing bell on Monday, seemingly due to a glitch related to the market data that runs the largely automated markets.
- 3 Goldman Sachs says Bitcoin price will drop before bouncing back.  
Goldman Sachs analyst Sheba Jafari said Bitcoin, now priced at \$2,568 a piece, could fall as low as \$1,857 before bouncing to a much higher valuation between \$3,212 to \$3,915.
- 4 Clash of Clans Maker Supercell is making investments so its core team can stay small.  
Most of the company is now owned by China's Tencent. Supercell has just 240 employees, and most of them operate in small teams, or "cells," of five or 10 people.
- 5 Apple's new ARKit platform basically looks like Ho-LoLens inside of an iPhone. All that's missing is a controller-free interaction system. A new patent uncovered this week suggests that may be on the way, though. Patently Apple has revealed a new filing from the company for a new 3D camera system with depth sensing capabilities used for gesture recognition.
- 6 WSJ: Samsung to produce smart speaker powered by AI assistant Bixby.  
According to a report in Wall Street Journal, Samsung is joining companies like Apple, Amazon, Google and Microsoft by producing a smart speaker.
- 7 LG G Pad IV 8.0 FHD is new Android powered tablet that extremely light (290 grams) made for people on the go. At 216.2 x 127.0 x 6.9mm, the device is built to fit easily into briefcases and bags. As you can tell from the name of the tablet, the LG G Pad IV 8.0 FHD comes with an 8-inch screen carrying a resolution of 1200 x 1920 (FHD).
- 8 Amazon says it will release the Nokia 6 on July 10, though this is true only for the silver, standard model, and the black, Prime Exclusive model (which comes with "lockscreen offers and ads" from Amazon). There's also a copper version of the Nokia 6 (both with, and without ads), but this will only be released on August 18.
- 9 Apple deciding whether to invest in LG's OLED production?  
A report out of Korea suggests that Apple might make an investment in the range of \$1.75 billion to as much as \$2.62 billion to help LG build OLED production lines. LG will reportedly guarantee that all of the panels that roll off those specific lines will be sent to Apple.
- 10 An 18-year-old student in northwestern England has been charged in a series of cyberattacks on the websites of nearly a dozen multinational firms.  
West Midlands Police said in a statement that "Chappell allegedly attacked the websites of T-Mobile, EE, Vodafone, O2, BBC, BT, Amazon, Netflix, Virgin Media and the National Crime Agency."

## Tencent tackles mobile game addiction with time limits for kids

In the face of public pressure, Chinese internet giant Tencent is limiting play time for younger users of its hit mobile game Honor of Kings (dubbed Strike of Kings in the west). Starting Tuesday, anyone under 12 will be restricted to one hour of play per day, and those between 12 to 18 will be allowed two hours' game time.



The controls are being put in place to appease teachers and parents, who are concerned about how addictive the game has become. Kings has become a smash hit since launching in 2015, and is now China's most popular game, with 163 million monthly users, as of May. Of that figure, Reuters claims that around a quarter -- 40.1 million -- are under 19.

Gaming and internet addictions have long been hot topics in Asia. In 2014, HBO documentary Love Child tackled the subject by examining the case of a South Korean couple whose addiction to an MMORPG resulted in the death of their infant daughter. Additionally, both China and Japan have set up respective detox boot camps to treat web addiction among teens.

Earlier this year, Tencent implemented real-name registration for Kings' users to prevent kids circumventing its rules. The company also set up an anti-addiction system that would ban players who spent too much time in the game.

(Source: Engadget)

# 8 reasons why Berlin will outpace London as Europe's Silicon Valley

By Victor Basta

- London has always been the undisputed technology center of Europe — until now. My view is that Berlin will rapidly begin to take over, and in 10-15 years we will see the Berlin cluster as Europe's technology hot-bed.
- Already the stage is set. German tech companies receive only 400-500 VC investments per year, versus 1,000-1,500 for the UK as whole. However, Berlin has consistently been in Europe's "top 4" (along with London, Paris and Stockholm), and received more tech capital in 2015 than any other European city.
- The Berlin eco-system is being fuelled by two key trends. First the number of international investors coming into Germany is greater than anywhere else in Europe, filling neatly the gap between exciting, investable companies and the current, small, local VC group. Berlin inevitably attracts a major share of this capital year in and year out.
- Second, German VC tech exits are on a par with the UK already, despite many fewer funding rounds. This year German VC exits are set to exceed UK ones by number. This replenishment of the eco-system is critical to fuelling growth; until the UK started seeing meaningful tech exits 10-15 years ago, the UK ecosystem's development could only evolve so far.
- Building on these trends, here is why I believe Berlin will become Europe's long-term Silicon Valley:
- 1) Berlin exceeds even London as a magnet for international talent  
Visitors often remark how one can live and work in Berlin and never speak German. Berlin tech companies are attracting some of the best talent from all over the world, and English is its lingua franca.
- 2) Immigration issues in London will accelerate Berlin's development  
Brexit was largely about immigration, and the UK's departure from the EU will inevitably slow immigration. The best, most mobile workers must reconsider where to work. Berlin has no such issues; free movement in the EU, and in a country which has the most open attitude in Europe towards immigration. Now Berlin is a magnet for immigrants, the UK used to be. And remember Intel was founded by an immigrant. Microsoft is run by one. Apple was started by the son of one. NVIDIA's CEO is one. You get the picture.



- 3) Tech majors are siting operations in Berlin  
Until recently tech majors only operated sales offices. Now they are siting engineering talent, to be close to the eco-system. Google's prominence in Factory Berlin, promoting key technology developments to local entrepreneurs, is a poster child for serious engagement. Numerous German tech and digital companies are ramping their Berlin capability, creating the first seeds of a two-sided eco-system of large companies and start-ups engaging each other in close proximity.
- 4) Berlin tech isn't 'distracted' by a much larger local industry  
London is dominated by financial services and consulting, and tech companies have natural competitors for the best talent. There is no such 'gorilla industry' in Berlin; tech and digital media are the gorilla industries. If anything, Berlin's proximity to key industrial companies makes it a natural magnet for Internet of Things innovation.
- 5) Cost of living is far cheaper than London  
While rents have ramped, Berlin remains far more affordable than London for young

- ambitious coders. We forget that when Silicon Valley was developing in the 1960's, California rents were very modest and hardly grew; its only in recent years that it's gone near vertical, as the graph below shows. Cheap housing means young bright coders able to move there, and only Berlin has this advantage today.
- 6) Berlin has its own Fairchild Semiconductor, it is called Rocket Internet  
It's no exaggeration to say Fairchild Semiconductor created Silicon Valley. The 'traitorous eight' who founded Fairchild fathered dozens of 'Fairchildren' including AMD, Kleiner Perkins, and Intel. Rocket Internet has exploded internationally from Berlin, training a generation of German entrepreneurs now scaling companies. A company is founded in Berlin every 20 minutes today. We expect Rocket graduates' could create 10x the value of Rocket's own €10B market in the next decade.
- 7) Venture money is growing  
In 2016, 32 new German VC funds were raised, the vast majority with a Berlin interest. While 60%+ of all private equity money is based in London, it's also true the second largest target market for that money is usu-

- ally Germany, simply because of size. The more exits, the more quality Rocket alumni build companies, the more investors ready and willing to flock.
- 8) Berlin tech has the huge advantage of the biggest home market in Europe  
Scale creates value. Germany has greater scale, greater economic power, and better prospects than any country other than China and the US. A German start-up has the huge advantage of being able to scale to a larger size locally in Germany than anywhere in Europe. Take N26, Berlin's digital bank. It attracted hundreds of thousands of German customers, fuelling expansion into 18 market, years before the crop of London-based digital banks got going. And London is supposed to be the world centre for digital finance.

The ingredients of a successful tech eco-system have always been: the best people, both large and small companies reinforcing each other, and available capital. Those ingredients are most plentiful in one city in Europe.

And it's no longer London.

(Source: thenextweb)

## Microsoft's cloud focus could mean yet more layoffs

Microsoft is going through another reorganization that could result in "thousands" of layoffs, particularly to its sales force, according to TechCrunch, Bloomberg and others. The company is reportedly shifting teams around to emphasize Azure cloud sales, rather than boxed software, which is rapidly becoming a dying business. So far, there's no news on exactly which groups and regions will be affected.

There's also no word on how this affects Microsoft's Surface division, which has seen solid growth until early this year, when sales dropped by 26 percent. However, Microsoft chalked that up to increased competition and its aging lineup of devices. Since then, Microsoft has unveiled a new Surface Pro and the all-new Surface Laptop, which has generally met with solid reviews.

Last year, Microsoft laid off COO Kevin Turner, who over-



saw a massive group of 51,000 employees dedicated to sales, marketing, operations and corporate technology. The division was subsequently broken into pieces with Judson Althoff heading the business sales division. Althoff recently criticized Microsoft's approach to selling Azure, its cloud computing platform, saying it was still using decades-old strategies developed for physical software.

Last year around this time, Microsoft said it would cut 2,850 jobs, shortly after letting 1,850 staff go -- all mostly related to its pretty-much-defunct smartphone business. The timing for the latest layoffs isn't a coincidence, as the company's fiscal year is nearly over and it's about to release earnings for its final quarter. The company currently employs around 121,500 people, including 10,000 from its \$26.2 billion LinkedIn acquisition.

(Source: Bloomberg)

## Kaspersky offers code to prove it's not a Russian stooge



Kaspersky Lab is understandably worried that it might lose US government contracts over fears that it's in bed with the Russian government, and it's making a dramatic offer in a bid to keep the money flowing. Founder Eugene Kaspersky tells the AP that he's willing to provide source code to prove that his online security company isn't a Trojan horse for Russian spies. He's ready to testify in front of Congress, too -- "anything" to show that his company is above board.

The executive acknowledges that some governments (he hasn't said which) have pressured Kaspersky Lab to go to the "dark side" and launch cyberattacks, and that some staffers are former Russian intelligence officers.

Some in Congress (most notably Senator Jeanne Shaheen, who tweaked a bill to ban Kaspersky Lab from Department of Defense contracts) are convinced that the outfit is connected to the Russian government.

(Source: Associated Press)

## GSK will use supercomputers to develop new drugs



Developing a new drug is a long, complicated and expensive process that takes years before you get to the human trial. There's a hope that computers will be able to simulate the majority of the process, greatly reducing the cost and time involved. That's why GlaxoSmithKline is throwing \$43 million in the direction of Scottish AI company Exscientia, which promises to use deep learning to find new drugs.

Essentially, Glaxo will hand over some data and a series of objectives, and Exscientia will use its systems to simulate way to a conclusion. If successful, the process may be able to spit out potential pills that are close to being ready for tests on humans. Exscientia's Andrew Hopkins claims that his system can find potential treatments in a quarter of the time, at a quarter of the cost.

(Source: PR Newswire)

## Unlock your PC with your Samsung phone's fingerprint reader



Have a recent Samsung phone and a Windows 10 PC? Life's about to get a bit easier. Samsung has updated its Flow app to let you use the fingerprint reader on Galaxy devices running Android Marshmallow or newer (such as the S6, S7 and S8) to log into any Windows 10 PC using Hello, not just Samsung's own Galaxy TabPro S. If you regularly keep your phone on-hand, you won't have to enter your password every time you sit down at your computer.

Flow is also much more helpful if you regularly check alerts on your phone. The app now syncs mobile notifications with any Windows 10 device, rather than just Samsung-branded PCs. You won't have to worry about missing a text message or an Instagram like just because you're working at your desk.

(Source: google play)



# Extinction event that wiped out dinosaurs cleared way for frogs

The mass extinction that obliterated three-fourths of life on Earth, including non-avian dinosaurs, set the stage for the swift rise of frogs, a new study shows.

In a paper published this week in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, an international team of researchers presented a new tree of life for frogs that helps solve longstanding riddles about relationships and sheds light on the history and pace of frog evolution.

Unexpectedly, their analyses showed three major lineages of modern frogs — about 88 percent of living species — appeared simultaneously, evolving on the heels of the extinction event that marked the end of the Cretaceous Period and the beginning of the Paleogene 66 million years ago. Previous research suggested a more ancient origin of many of these modern frog groups.

“Frogs have been around for well over 200 million years, but this study shows it wasn’t until the extinction of the dinosaurs that we had this burst of frog diversity that resulted in the vast majority of frogs we see today,” said study co-author David Blackburn, associate curator of amphibians and reptiles at the Florida Museum of Natural History on the University of Florida campus. “This finding was totally unexpected.”

## ■ Comet impact

The speed at which frogs diversified



after the asteroid or comet impact that triggered a massive die-off of most plant and animal life suggests that the survivors were probably filling up new niches on Earth, Blackburn said.

“We think there were massive alterations of ecosystems at that time, includ-

ing widespread destruction of forests,” he said. “But frogs are pretty good at eking out a living in microhabitats, and as forests and tropical ecosystems rebounded, they quickly took advantage of those new ecological opportunities.”

Frogs rose to become one of the most

diverse groups of vertebrates, with more than 6,700 described species. But sparse genetic data has hindered scientists from reliably tracing their evolutionary history and the links between frog families.

## ■ Frog evolution

Blackburn joined researchers from Sun Yat-Sen University, the University of Texas at Austin and the University of California, Berkeley to tackle the mystery of frog evolution with a dataset seven times larger than that used in prior research. The team sampled a core set of 95 nuclear genes from 156 frog species, combining this with previously published genetic data on an additional 145 species to produce the strongest-supported evolutionary tree, or

phylogeny, to date.

The researchers then used fossil records to translate genetic differences between frog lineages into dates at which they likely diverged from one another. When the analyses pointed to a simultaneous evolution of the three major frog clades — Hyloidea, Microhylidae and Natatanura — the researchers initially eyed the finding with skepticism, said Peng Zhang, a corresponding study author and professor in the department of biochemistry and molecular biology at Sun Yat-Sen University in China.

(Source: *phys.org*)

**Frogs rose to become one of the most diverse groups of vertebrates, with more than 6,700 described species.**

## Arthritis is the price for our ancestors surviving the Ice Age: study

For the 10 million Britons suffering from arthritis, it may be cold comfort to know that they might not be alive today at all, were it not for their aching limbs.

Researchers in the U.S. have discovered that a gene mutation which increases the risk of arthritis evolved in the Ice Age to help protect our ancestors from frostbite. Around half of Europeans carry a variant of the GDF5 gene which nearly doubles the chance of developing painful joints, and also knocks around 1cm off height.

Although it may seem like an evolutionary disadvantage to be shorter and less mobile, in fact, it helped early humans to ward off the freezing temperatures of the north as they ventured out of Africa for the first time around 50,000 years ago.

Being short and stocky not only helped our ancestors withstand the bitter cold but also reduced the risk of life-threatening bone fractures when slipping on icy surfaces.

## ■ Reproductive age

And because arthritis usually appears after reproductive age, it would not have proved detrimental to starting a family, so the mutation was passed on.

“This gene variant is present in billions of people, and it’s likely responsible for millions of cases of arthritis

around the globe,” said Dr. David Kingsley, Professor of developmental biology at Stanford University.

“Many people think of osteoarthritis as a kind of wear-and-tear disease, but there’s clearly a genetic component at work here as well.

“It’s possible that climbing around in cold environments was enough of a risk factor to select for a protective variant even if it brought along an increased likelihood of an age-related disease like arthritis, which typically doesn’t develop until late in life.”

Researchers first linked a mutated form of GDF5 to arthritis and height in the 1990s. They also discovered it was being controlled by a key piece of genetic machinery which they labelled GROW1, and which signals to the gene to turn off bone growth.

## ■ People’s genome

In the new study they looked at the genomes of people from across the world who had submitted their DNA for the 1,000 Genomes project and noticed that the gene variant and its bone-limiting switch were far more common in European populations. In contrast the gene variant is extremely rare in African populations.

The also discovered the variant was common in Ne-



anderthals and Denisovans - hominids who moved north in Europe and Asia around 600,000 years ago ahead of modern humans, but eventually became extinct.

The “variant that decreases height is lowering the activity of GDF5 in the growth plates of the bone. Interestingly, the region that harbors this variant is closely linked to other mutations that affect GDF5 activity in the joints, increasing the risk of osteoarthritis in the knee and hip.”

(Source: *The Telegraph*)

## Sun is getting quieter, displaying some very weird behavior

The sun is about to enter a period of quiet, known as a solar minimum. This cycle happens every 11 years and is characterized of decreased activity — when sunspots fade away and produce fewer solar flares. With this latest period of inactivity approaching, scientists have been monitoring the sun to better understand some of the unusual activity observed over recent years.

In a study published in May the Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society, a team of scientists from the

U.S., UK and Denmark analyzed 31 years’ worth of data from the Birmingham Solar Oscillations Network (BiSON) — a group of six ground-based telescopes that provide constant monitoring of the sun’s oscillations. In the study, Yvonne Elsworth and colleagues studied the sound waves from the sun over the last three solar minimums to see how they have changed during different periods of activity.

The “sun is very much like a musical instrument except that its typical notes are

at a very low frequency — some 100,000 times lower than middle C,” she said in a statement. “Studying these sound waves, using a technique called helioseismology, enables us to find out what’s going on throughout the Sun’s interior.”

## ■ The solar minimum

The solar minimum is expected at some point between 2019 and 2020 and it provides astronomers with the opportunity to study certain activities on the sun not normally possible, such as the development of

coronal holes. These are regions where the sun’s magnetic field opens up, allowing solar particles to escape.

The sun is in a constant state of flux. Last week, NASA put out a press release on how the “solar minimum is coming.” In it, the space agency explains how sunspots — highly magnetized regions that appear on the sun — come and go, over an 11-year period. It peaked in 2014, when sunspot counts were high.

(Source: *Newsweek*)

## Launching “IFS” System Can Facilitate Micro Monetary Transactions: CEO

Commissioning International Financial System (IFS) can facilitate micro monetary exchanges in the country.

Chief Executive of POST BANK Iran Dr. Farahi announced the above statement and said: “Benefitted from the most experienced and expert manpower, the bank has thus far taken giant strides in this regard.”

Speaking in the inaugural ceremony at 12th Asia-Pacific Post Union (APPU), held at Tehran’s Olympic Hotel, he said: “Pursuant to the law observing the banking system of the country, this bank is tasked with helping develop a balanced economy, focusing on the capability of development banking in the arena of Communications and Information Technology (ICT) and also presenting quality banking services in cities and disadvantaged areas.”

The inaugural ceremony was attended by the Minister of Communications and Information Technology (ICT) Dr. Vaezi and Bashar Hussein Secretary General of Universal Postal Union (UPU) and also senior postal officials from 32 countries in the world.

As the sole commissioner of financial postal services in the country introduced by the Universal Postal Union



(UPU), senior official of the bank expounded on commissioning international micro drafts system “IFS” and said: “Helping develop and generate employment, paving suitable way for accessing credit-based resources for the development of economic enterprises and launching minor rural activities, etc. are salient missions of the bank.”

In the end, Chief Executive of POST BANK Iran Dr. Farahi pointed to the payment of more than 74,000 minor and micro facilities and loans out of financial resources of the National Development Bank of Iran

(NDF) and said: “Presently, most rural population in the country use banking and financial services of the Post Company of Iran in line with the development of agricultural, animal husbandry, handicrafts and tourism activities.”

Bashar Hussein Secretary General of Universal Post Union (UPU) was the next speaker on the sidelines of organizing 12th Asia-Pacific Postal Union (APPU) and said: “Post Bank Company of Iran has thus far established fair interaction with the Asia-Pacific countries.”

Financial services are of salient strengths of the company in Asia-Pacific region, he said, adding: “Members of the Union can cooperate and interact with one another by 2020 to set up common markets and exchange information for materializing predefined objectives.”

In the end, Bashar Hussein Secretary General of Universal Postal Union (UPU) said: “Given the nature and activity of the company in line with attracting unused capitals in less developed regional and disadvantaged rural areas, relevant postal activities should be commissioned in other countries.”

## SINA Bank Establishes Brokerage Ties with 25 Reliable Intl. Banks: Official

To take advantage of international experiences and present optimal banking services to its dear customers, SINA Bank has thus far established brokerage relationship with a number of 25 reliable international banks, the Public Relations Dept. of the bank reported.

In line with boosting and developing international trading and banking ser-

vices in order to streamline and promote competitiveness in domestic and foreign arena, SINA Bank has focused on developing international relations with more than 25 world’s most prestigious banks including Russia’s “GAZPROM” Bank, Germany’s “VORARLBERGER” Bank, France’s “BANQUE DELUBAC & CIE” Bank and China’s BANK OF GANSU.

According to this report, SINA Bank has expressed its readiness to offer a wide spectrum of currency services to importers and exporters of the country without imposition of any additional expenses such as granting facilities, opening various types of credits and drafts, foreign exchange guarantee letters and also consultation services.

It should be noted that SINA Bank has taken giant stride for the materializing economic objectives of the country, the issue of which has been put atop agenda.

In the end, the senior management of the bank revealed that rosy and bright future delineated for the bank in the current year in 1396 (started March 21, 2017).

## NASA’s quieter supersonic jet closer to reality

NASA has achieved a significant milestone in developing a quieter supersonic passenger jet that can safely travel over land. The U.S. space agency completed the preliminary design review (PDR) of its Quiet Supersonic Transport (QueSST) aircraft design.

QueSST is the initial design stage of NASA’s planned Low Boom Flight Demonstration (LBFD) experimental airplane, otherwise known as an X-plane.

The QueSST design is capable of fulfilling the LBFD aircraft’s mission objectives, which are to fly at supersonic speeds, but create a soft “thump” instead of the disruptive sonic boom associated with supersonic flight today.

The LBFD X-plane will be flown over communities to collect data necessary for regulators to enable supersonic flight over land.

NASA partnered with lead contractor, Lockheed Martin, in February 2016 for the QueSST preliminary design.

Last month, a scale model of the QueSST design completed testing in the 8x6-foot supersonic wind tunnel at NASA’s Glenn Research Center in Cleveland.

“Managing a project like this is all about moving from one milestone to the next,” said David Richwine, manager for the preliminary design effort under NASA’s Commercial Supersonic Technology Project.

“Our strong partnership with Lockheed Martin helped get us to this point. We’re now one step closer to building an actual X-plane,” said Richwine.

After the success of completing the PDR, NASA can start the process of soliciting proposals and award a contract early next year to build the piloted, single-engine X-plane.

(Source: *indianexpress.com*)

## Do cats purr when humans aren’t around?

Why do cats purr? Humans tend to think that purring is a sign of happiness in a cat – and indeed it can be – but there are other reasons why our feline friends produce this particular vocalization.



Purring is a habit that develops very early in a cat’s life, while suckling from its mother, so clearly it is not a sound that is directed solely at humans. Cat owners will be well aware that a cat can produce more than one kind of purr, just as they have a whole repertoire of meows, chirps, growls, spits and other sounds.

The purr that is produced during suckling, is quite different in quality to the purr that you will hear when your cat is sprawling across your lap being stroked. Analysis of the sound has shown when a cat is asking for food, whether from its mother or a human – the purr contains a high-pitched note that is similar in frequency to a cry (though not as loud). It may have something of the effect of the cry of a newborn, which affects the hormonal state of female mammals and elicits a care-giving response.

When a cat is being petted or is snuggled up to its owner on the sofa, the purr it produces is much more soporific and generally soothing, and acoustic analysis shows that the “cry” component is missing.

Adult cats will often purr when they are close to or in physical contact with another cat, engaging in grooming for example. They will also do it when they play with an inanimate object, or while eating, which can be at a time when they are alone.

(Source: *The Conversation*)

## Europe’s Galileo satnav identifies problems behind failing clocks

Investigators have uncovered the problems behind the failure of atomic clocks onboard satellites belonging to the beleaguered Galileo satnav system, the European Commission said on Monday.

For months, the European Space Agency -- which runs the program -- has been investigating the reasons behind failing clocks onboard some of the 18 navigation satellites it has launched for Galileo, Europe’s alternative to America’s GPS system.

Each Galileo satellite has four ultra-accurate atomic timekeepers, two that use rubidium and two hydrogen maser. But a satellite needs just one working clock for the satnav to work -- the rest are spares.

Three rubidium and six hydrogen maser clocks were not working, with one satellite sporting two failed timekeepers.

The “main causes of the malfunctions have been identified and measures have been put in place to reduce the possibility of further malfunctions of the satellites already in space,” commission spokeswoman Lucia Caudet said.

ESA found after an investigation that its rubidium clocks had a faulty component that could cause a short circuit, according to European sources.

The investigation also found that operations involving hydrogen maser clocks need to be controlled and closely monitored, the same sources said.

The agency has taken measures to correct both sets of problems, the sources added, with the agency set to replace the faulty component in rubidium clocks on satellites not yet in orbit and improve hydrogen maser clocks as well.

(Source: *AFP*)



## Choleric temperament: Specifications and suitable lifestyle



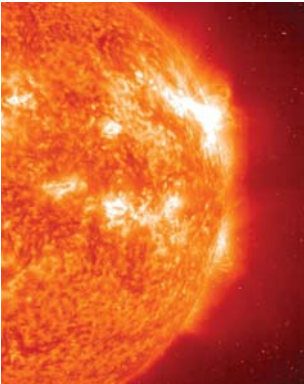
### ARTICLE

By Seyed Mahdi Mirghazanfari, MD, PhD

part 2

Temperament (Mizaj) of a person is a distinguishing factor identifying the most appropriate lifestyle suiting for each person's optimum health.

In the Iranian-Islamic traditional medicine the excess or lack of warmness and humidity define four essential temperaments of “Warm and Wet (sanguine or Damawiy)”, “Warm and Dry (choleric or Safrawiy)”, “Cold and Dry (melancholic or Saudawiy)” and “Cold and Wet (phlegmatic or Balghamiy)” respectively. The terms in the parentheses refer to four groups of material in the body (called “humors” or ‘Akhlāt’) including blood which is hot and moist, phlegm which



The sun represents warmness and is a symbol of choleric temperament

is cold and moist, bilious or yellow bile which is hot and dry and atrabilious or black bile which is cold and dry. Words written in italic show original Persian terms in the ancient literature.

Temperament of the body is specific for each individual fluctuating between certain minimum and maximum limits. Any change in the temperament of a person brings about a change in persons’ state of health. Thus, preservation of balanced temperament under the differing conditions of life is vital for the maintenance of

health and avoidance of disease in an individual.

As thoroughly explained in the previous article people with “choleric” Mizaj are characterized by warmness and dryness in their bodies which exhibit themselves through some distinctive characteristics such as: having thin body, small frame and organs; feeling hot internally; thinking, moving and speaking fast; having dry and warm skin color with yellow undertone; stressfulness, anxiety, sensitivity, idealism, punctuality, being extrovert and sleep deprivation.

Here are some lifestyle tips for this group:

#### ■ Lifestyle

People with warm and dry Mizaj are better not to consume deep fried food stuff specifically during hot seasons.

Choleric people should not consume large amounts of food stuff such as pepper, garlic, cinnamon, and ginger as well as spicy and salty foods. They are better not to eat much sweets either.

They should also consume small amounts of red meat and abstain from eating other hot Mizaj meat with warming characteristics such as camel, quail and partridge meat as much as possible.

Although honey is of great benefits, those with warm and dry Mizaj are not recommended to take too much of it particularly during hot seasons; however, eating honey in cold seasons is fine for them.

Tomato paste and sauces, specifically hot and chilly sauces, are pretty harmful for such people. They should use egg (especially yolk) the least possible during summer.

Considering their Mizaj eating Abdoogh Khiair (a cold cucumber and yogurt soup) is highly recommended for these people during summer. Of course eating too much of it might cause flatulence.

Additionally, eating vegetables such as lettuce and other summer fruits with cooling characteristics (cold Mizaj) is recommended as well. However, they have to be cautious about eating vegetable with warming characteristics (warm Mizaj) such as tarragon, leek, cress which also have strong tastes.

In general people with warm and dry Mizaj can experience a healthier life by consuming food stuff with cooling characteristics such as sour or sweet-and-sour food items and drinks like barberry juice, raspberry juice, or pomegranate juice, liquid chicory extract (Kasni) and fumitory extract (Shahtareh), as well as flaxseed. ➔13

## LEARN ENGLISH

### Daily Life - Cancelled Flight

A: Good afternoon Sir, may I please see your passport and **reservation**?

B: Here you go.

A: I'm sorry sir, this flight has been **cancelled** due to some mechanical problems.

B: Cancelled! So what am I supposed to do now?

A: We apologize for any **inconveniences** that may be caused by this. If your flight is **urgent**, I can put you on a waiting list for another flight this evening, but it's on a first come first served basis, so there is no guarantee that you will be able to take that flight.

B: What's my other option?

A: If you can wait until tomorrow, we will put you up in a hotel for today and you can take **scheduled** flight for tomorrow morning.

B: That's fine. I'll do that then.

A: Thank you for your understanding sir. I will book your flight now.

#### ■ Key Vocabulary

**reservation:** an arrangement to secure accommodations at a restaurant or hotel

**cancel:** to decide that something will not happen

**inconvenience:** he quality or state of being inconvenient

**urgent:** important

**scheduled:** planned at a specific time

#### ■ Supplementary Vocabulary

**route:** a customary or regular line of passage or travel

**diversion:** the act of diverting or turning aside, as from a course or purpose

**delay:** to put off to a later time

**depart:** to go away, leave

**refund:** to give back, especially money; return or repay

(Source: irlanguage.com)

# Iran holds Turkey partly accountable for dust storms; Turkey denies

## INTERVIEW

By Maryam Qarehgozlou

**TEHRAN** — Sand and dust storms (SDS) usually occur when strong winds lift large amounts of sand and dust from bare, dry soil into the atmosphere.

SDS do not respect borders. They keep haunting many countries such as Australia, China, U.S, Iran and many other Middle Eastern countries.

According to the United Nations an estimated 2,000 million tons of dust is emitted into the atmosphere every year with significant consequences for social, economic and environmental well-being.

SDS have become of increasing concern among governments and the international community because of their damaging effects on human health, agricultural land, infrastructure and transport.

On the grounds of such concerns and differences the government of Iran has taken the initiative by co-hosting the International Conference on Combating Sand and Dust Storm (July 3-5) with the UN and brought together leaders and experts from over 30 countries to discuss ways to combat dust storms and form partnerships for action.

Multinational problems need multilateral solutions. In order to combat SDS it is needed to expand cooperation and to continue sharing best practices, experiences and technical expertise from around the globe and it is fitting that ministers, officials and experts from every region are attending the international conference on combatting SDS.

Adoption of the Tehran Declaration on SDS by the end of the three-day conference is expected to pave the way for further progress of the measures at the UN General Assembly in September and UN Environment Assembly in December.

#### ■ What causes SDS?

In addition to natural causes which are intensifying gradually due to climate change and global warming, governments’ inaction and conflicts in the Middle East and Central Asia have also aggravated the current situation.

Iran is being hit hard by sand and dust storms.

Satellite images show that 20 percent of sand and dust storms hitting the country originate from inside Iran and the remaining 80 percent originate from neighboring countries such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, and Syria.

The transboundary waters are also another controversial issue as by monopolizing the rivers by building dams and overlooking the water right of the downstream the wetlands and rivers both in eastern and western Iran have dried up and turned into great hotspots for SDS.

Accordingly, some are protesting Turkey's huge damming projects, called GAP, by trapping waters of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

War-torn Iraq and Syria are adversely affected by Turkey's damming projects. The dams put wildlife and culture at risk in Iraq and Syria and affect the level of water significantly with the marshes drying, the agriculture sector dying, and desertification increasing by a large margin.

Iraq and Syria rely mostly on the waters of the Euphrates and Tigris for their agriculture. Unsurprisingly, the development of engineering projects on the two riv-



ers, notably large dams and irrigation works, has been a source of growing tension between Iraq and Turkey on one hand and Syria and Turkey on the other. Although outright violence has been avoided, hostilities have mounted each time that a new dam has been built or proposed. Such hostilities have brought the various parties to the brink of war, with troops being mobilized and threats made to bomb existing dams.

The start of construction on the Keban Dam prompted protests from Syria to Turkey, while the completion of the Tabqua Dam led Iraq to threaten military action in 1974 and again in 1975, with both Syria and Iraq mobilizing their troops and moving them to the border.

With desertification intensifying in Iraq and Syria, Iran is a victim of sand and dust storms which originate from these two countries.

However, Turkish officials argue that Iran have no firm scientific reasons that damming projects are causing any serious problems in the region.

“The dams and the related projects that are under construction in Turkey or already being built has been targeted by some environmental groups, as one of the main reasons for the problem [of sand and dust storms] but we have different views,” Turkish ambassador to Tehran Reza Hakan Tekin told the Tehran Times on the sideline of the conference on Monday.

“We want to approach all these problems in a scientific way and our data shows that the dams built in Turkey on Tigris and Euphrates has no negative effect on environment in the downstream countries in Iraq and Syria,” Tekin added.

He said, “These dams have helped regulating water; in the arid periods when there was no rain and no water coming to these countries or suffering from droughts..., the dams helped to save water even in dry seasons, so now we can give enough water to the downstream countries; and also from another perspective, when there was extreme rainy periods, there were floods which could also negatively affect the environment, so with the dams we can control the floods.”

The Turkish ambassador further specified that the dust storms mainly originate from already desert areas, not areas which have suffered desertification in recent years, “so when we look at last 15, 20 years of scientific

## Tehran to host ECO workshop on combating desertification

### ENVIRONMENT TEHRAN

**d e s k** The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) secretariat in Tehran will hold a project development consultation workshop on combating desertification on July 5-6.

Organized by the ECO Institute of Environmental Science and Technology, the event is held with a special emphasis on dust haze and sand storm in the ECO region.

Representatives from ECO member countries Iran, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Pakistan, Turkey, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan are to attend the event.

The ECO is a Eurasian political and economic intergovernmental organization which provides a platform to discuss ways to improve development and promote trade and investment opportunities.

## WAIC 2018 meeting in Tehran to spotlight urban environment

### ENVIRONMENT TEHRAN

**d e s k** The World Assembly of Islamic Cities (WAIC) meeting in 2018 will be held in Tehran with the theme of urban environment, WAIC President Masoud Nosrati announced on Monday.

Tehran will host the event, during which, the latest information and achievements in the realm of environment and urban development will be discussed.

The event is supported by the

UN-Habitat, the United Nations program promoting socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements development and the achievement of adequate shelter for all.

Relying on the spiritual and metaphysical values of Islam and their application in the urban realm of Islamic countries, WAIC hope to provide an appropriate framework to promote sustainable settlement and introduce successful sustainable cities – in form and experience to the world.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ↔ ع

## National document on Iranian-Islamic architecture, urban development approved

The Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution has approved a draft of the national document on the Iranian-Islamic architecture and urban development, IRIB reported on Tuesday.

The document, which contains policies regulating and governing urban planning particularly in metropolises, was approved by the council chaired by President Hassan Rouhani with representatives from the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development and the Supreme Council for Architecture and Urban Development in attendance.

## ENGLISH PROVERB

### (The) wish is father to the thought

■ **Explanation:** you think that something is true because you want it to be so

■ **For example:** I'm confident the war won't last much longer and not merely because the wish is father to the thought!

## PHRASAL VERB

### Write up

■ **Meaning:** make complete written version

■ **For example:** Tom conducted interviews, and his colleague wrote them up

## ENGLISH IDIOM

### yes-man

■ **Explanation:** A yes-man is someone who always agrees with a person in authority in order to please them

■ **For example:** George is a yes-man. He agrees with everything the boss says!

## تصویب سند ملی معماری و شهرسازی ایرانی – اسلامی

به گزارش روز سه شنبه خبرگزاری صدا و سیما سند ملی معماری و شهرسازی ایرانی – اسلامی به تصویب اعضای شورای عالی انقلاب فرهنگی رسید.

این سند که شامل سیاست های اصلی برای ساماندهی وضعیت معماری در شهرهای کشور، با اولویت کلان‌شهرهاست به تصویب شورای انقلاب فرهنگی به ریاست رئیس جمهور و نمایندگانی از وزارت راه و شهرسازی و شورای عالی معماری و شهرسازی رسید.



# Kremlin: Putin-Trump meeting agreed for July 7 in Hamburg

A meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and his United States counterpart Donald Trump will take place on the sidelines of a Group of 20 summit in Hamburg on July 7, Russian news agencies quoted Kremlin foreign policy aide Yuri Ushakov as saying on Tuesday.

"(It's been) agreed for the seventh," RIA news agency quoted him as saying.

■ **Hamstrung at home as he seeks closer ties with Moscow**

During his presidential campaign, Trump praised Russian President Vladimir Putin as a "strong leader" with whom he'd like to reset tense U.S.-Russian relations.

But as Trump heads to his first face-to-face meeting as president with Putin on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Germany on July 7-8, he is under pressure at home to take a tough line with the Kremlin.

Allegations of Russian meddling in last year's U.S. elections have alarmed both Republican and Democratic lawmakers, who are pushing to extend tough sanctions placed on Russia following its 2014 annexation of Crimea, a peninsula belonging to Ukraine.

Lawmakers including Cory Gardner, a Republican senator from Colorado, are also concerned Russia has prolonged the foreign instigated war in Syria by backing its President Bashar al-Assad. The foreign sponsored war has fueled instability in the region and a flood of migrants to Europe.

"President (Trump) needs to make it



clear that the continued aggression by Russia around the globe ... is unacceptable, and that they will be held accountable," said Gardner, who was among six lawmakers invited by the White House last month to discuss foreign policy with Trump over dinner.

Meanwhile, the appointment of a special counsel who is investigating potential links between the Russian government and members of the Trump campaign has weakened the president's ability to maneuver with Russia, foreign policy experts say.

The U.S. intelligence community has concluded Russia sponsored hacking of Democratic Party groups last year to ben-

efit Trump over his Democrat challenger Hillary Clinton. Russia has denied those allegations while Trump has repeatedly dismissed the idea of any coordination between his campaign and Russia as a "witch hunt."

Still, just the optics of Trump meeting with Putin, a former KGB (Komitet gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti/Committee for State Security) agent, are fraught with risk, foreign policy experts say.

"If (Trump) smiles, if he wraps his arm around Putin, if he says 'I'm honored to meet you, we're going to find a way forward,' ... I think Congress is going to react extremely negatively to that," said Julie Smith, a former national security aide in

the Obama administration.

■ **Evolving U.S. policy**

Trump has signaled an interest in co-operating with Russia to defeat the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group in Syria and to reduce nuclear stockpiles.

The White House has been mum on what Trump would be willing to give Russia in exchange for that help. But there has been speculation he could ratchet down sanctions, or even return two Russian diplomatic compounds in Maryland and Long Island. President Barack Obama seized those facilities and expelled 35 Russian diplomats just before he left office as punishment for the election hacks.

While some administration officials, including Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, also support engagement, others, such as Vice President Mike Pence and U.S. ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley, have taken a hawkish line on Russia.

The lack of a unified strategy has left U.S. allies anxious. And it has lowered expectations for American leadership to help resolve crises in Syria and Ukraine, where Russian cooperation would be critical.

"Trump is like a horse with his front legs tied," said a German diplomat, who spoke to Reuters on condition of anonymity. "He can't make any big leaps forward on Russia. If he tried people would immediately suspect it was all part of some big conspiracy."

(Source: Reuters)

## Saudis' fear of Iran is delusional

3→ However, when two countries have close ties, they should sell their products to each other at a lower price compared to other countries. We can cooperate [with Russia] in this way, but otherwise it is the market that decides on trades.

■ **What is your view of Saudi officials' harsh tone toward Iran?**

A. Unfortunately, Saudi Arabia is suffering from a delusion. And based on its delusion, sometimes Saudi officials say things that do not adhere to reality at all. In the past decades or even centuries, Iran has shown that it has never invaded any country. Although it has been invaded, Iran has never invaded other states. Iran, based on its population, economic, and human power is a mighty country and will put great efforts to become even more powerful, especially because of the acrimonious experience of the imposed war (Iraq's war against Iraq in the 1980s).

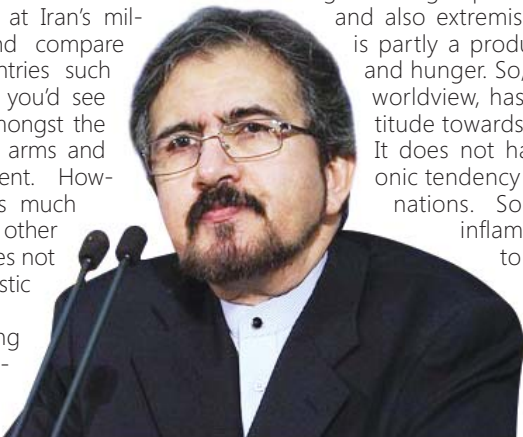
This is something that Iran has learned through its contemporary history: That it can be invaded by its neighbor, while countries such as Saudi Arabia and some other regional coun-

tries helped Saddam in his aggression against Iran by giving him weapons and money. Iran needs to become more powerful so that it can defend itself when necessary.

Iran adopts completely defensive policies. It has never planned to invade any country and will not do so. If you take a look at Iran's military budget and compare it to other countries such as Saudi Arabia, you'd see that Riyadh is amongst the top spenders on arms and military equipment. However, Iran spends much less compared to other countries and does not have a militaristic policy.

Iran is willing to live in an environment surrounded by

peace, stability and security. Peace and stability in the region would mean peace and stability inside Iran. In a troubled and conflict-torn region, development would not be possible for Iran. We're in serious need of development, both inside Iran and across the region to fight poverty, starvation and also extremism which itself is partly a product of poverty and hunger. So, Iran, with this worldview, has a positive attitude towards its neighbors. It does not have a hegemonic tendency towards other nations. Some countries inflame Iranophobia to make others concerned about Iran. They're making a rookie mistake. Our



**The successful Astana talks on the Syrian crisis "are examples of the strategic relations between Tehran and Moscow".**

## Theresa May sitting on report on foreign funding of British extremists

1→ Lucas called the delay "astonishing" and said the government should reveal the advice which has prevented the publication of the report – and whether it was for diplomatic reasons. "The government is sitting on this report but refusing to publish it or give any reason for their continued secrecy," she said.

The Brighton Pavilion MP said it was crucial to determine if the report's delay was linked to whether it was critical of Saudi Arabia. "To defeat terror it's vital that politicians have full view of the facts, even if they are inconvenient for the government," she said.

During the election, the Liberal Democrat leader, Tim Farron, said Cameron had committed to publishing the report by spring 2016, but the Home Office later suggested it would never be published, calling the contents "very sensitive".

The Labor leader, Jeremy Corbyn, and Scotland's first minister, Nicola Sturgeon, also demanded that the report be published, while the Lib Dem foreign affairs spokesman, Tom Brake, wrote to May restating the party's demand for it to be made public.

However, despite Farron's insistence that publication had been part of the deal, both the home secretary, Amber Rudd, and the foreign secretary, Boris Johnson, said the report may never be seen in public.

Lucas said the terror attacks in London Bridge and the Manchester Arena said people were "quite rightly asking questions about routes to radicalization, and the funding of terror is central to this."

"I urge Theresa May to reveal immediately whose advice they are following as to whether or not to publish this report, and to do all they can to put the facts into

the public domain if it is safe to do so."

Farron said the written statement showed the power was in May's hands to release the report. "It is a scandal that the government are suppressing this report. The only conclusion you can draw is that they are worried about what it actually says," he said.

"We hear regularly about the Saudi arms deals or ministers going to Riyadh to kowtow before their royal family, but yet, our government won't release a report that will clearly criticize Saudi Arabia.

"All this government seems to care about is cozying up to one of the most extreme, nasty and oppressive regimes in the world. You would think our security would be more important, but it appears not. For that Theresa May should be ashamed of herself"

(Source: The Guardian)

## South Korea and Brazil rejected their female leaders

6→ Witch-hunting in the 21st century?

In South Korea as well as in Brazil, millions took to the streets to demand that these female presidents should be toppled. Rousseff was finally impeached in August 2016 for committing a crime that hardly qualified as a legal reason for deposition. Park was treated like a criminal whose conduct deserved harsh punishment and, as a consequence, was put behind bars a couple of months ago.

What comes next is probably the most revealing about Brazilian and South Korean social establishments. In Brazil, having come to power after heading the campaign for Rousseff's impeachment, new President Michel Temer failed to nominate

one woman for his 30-member cabinet. Most of his nominees were white men aged 60 or older. For Temer, checking price tags at the supermarket is apparently the female role par excellence.

When it comes to South Korea's President

Moon Jae-in, his commitment to the formation of a gender-balanced cabinet is good news. However, Moon's negative stance toward LGBT rights, which he opposed during a TV show while still campaigning for the presidency, is a step backward.

After all these years, two of the most Westernized countries outside of the North Atlantic circle seem not ready to embrace female leadership quite yet.

(Source: The Diplomat)

**The impeachment scandals that entangled Park Geun-hye and Dilma Rousseff smack of misogyny.**

## Choleric temperament: Specifications and suitable lifestyle

12→ Such people should avoid direct sun exposure; warm colors such as yellow and red either of their clothes or their surrounding environment would stimulate and increase their internal heat.

Watching thrillers and rock music are not recommended to these people.

Placing drops of violet, zucchini or coriander oil in each nostril or rubbing the oils on the face is of benefits for this groups.

Taking daily showers proved to be advantageous for people with choleric temperament as the wetness of the shower would help to balance the warm and dry Mizaj of these people.

Accordingly, floating in water for example in a cold tub, swimming pool, or bath tub as well as using cool moisture humidifiers could be of benefits for these people. However, it is ill-advised to use a dry sauna.

Staying up for long hours, engaging in intense activities, and being stressed out and anxious which will all increase the heat in the body should be avoided as much as possible particularly in hot seasons and warm climate.

Seyed Mahdi Mirghazanfari, MD, holds a PhD degree in medical physiology and is an Iranian-Islamic traditional medicine researcher. He is also an assistant professor in AJA University of Medical Sciences, Tehran.

## Is rampant narcissism undermining American democracy?

8→ In the aftermath of the World War II, a rare consensus within America emerged, the result of existential crises in the form of the World War and looming Cold War. In an era when the United States' hegemony was unchallenged in the West, a type of groupthink existed within the nation's borders—the "Greatest Generation" emphasized conformity and discouraged individuality. This was supported by earlier shared struggles and the decline of class differences during the Great Depression and war era.



This post-war era of togetherness saw unprecedented economic stability and trust in the state as the steward of the people. The nation backed global reciprocity, exemplified during the founding of the United Nations, Bretton Woods institutions and Marshall Plan.

■ **The post-war era**

Authors Twenge and Campbell trace the earliest roots in narcissism back to the 1950s. The Baby Boomers were the first generation to grow up in a post-war era of greater consumer plenitude and less existential hardship. As the Baby Boomers came of age in the 1960s and 70s, the grey society of the post-war consensus had begun to vanish in favor of a more individualistic focus on self-expression and self-identity.

The problem is that this change in the narrative furthered henceforth. It became pronounced enough by the 1970s that Tom Wolfe in 1976 titled this "The 'Me' Decade."

The cohorts that were raised in the 70s and 80s — Generations X and Y — continued this trend: to the extent that one study comparing teenagers found that while only 12 percent of those aged 14-16 in the early 1950s agreed with the statement "I am an important person, 77 percent of boys and more than 80 percent of girls of the same cohort by 1989 agreed with it.

This evolution has accelerated since the 1990s and 2000s, with the rise of the internet and social media influencing the social milieu of the Millennials and Generation Z.

The racial and ideological tensions, and consequential partisanship in Washington — which supported the election of Donald J. Trump — have been exacerbated by the self-focused and competitive behavior of separate interest groups in society and politics, with not enough of the requisite empathy to reassess the world from one another's vantage points.

The financial crisis can be explained in part by the narcissistic behaviors of bankers and consumers alike — creating a "time-delay trap" of near-term greed over long-term logic.

America's trade deficit has been exacerbated by debt-financed "conspicuous consumption" — goods purchased to elevate one's status in front of others, rather than out of necessity.

And the crisis of confidence in government can be ascribed in part to the philosophical "hunkering down" and focus on self-sufficiency, rather than on mutual dependence.

It's critical to recall that across time there's no single cultural norm for a nation, but rather that the behaviors and customs of a society evolve and change drastically as the experiences and personalities of that nation alter.

There are significant contrasts between the America of today and that of the immediate post-war era — whether we recall this or not. In this, not only will the America of tomorrow look different as future generations come, but we ourselves will continue to readapt and change.

■ **Narcissism growing**

Methods to address narcissism are not simple, however, even if society is malleable. During times of economic growth and stability, narcissism tends to grow. This is due to how success and prosperity impacts people, how that then filters to more accommodating parenting norms, and how we're affected by urbanization and changes to smaller family sizes.

Conversely, economic hardship and economic down-cycles tend to support group-minded, non-self-centered people, by enforcing modesty and hard work. In that, there may be both an inherent cyclical dynamic between business cycles and narcissism, and a structural dynamic between economic development and narcissism — with too much societal hubris only correctable in the end through a form of economic or national crisis.

In China, there's been an economic revolution experienced within the span of half a lifetime — with hundreds of millions lifted out of poverty since 1980 and living standards transformed and modernized. But, with the economic miracle has come the sudden upheaval in former collectivistic norms.

The rise of the "Little Emperors" and "Precious Snowflakes" is now evident in younger generations that have grown up in only-child households amongst growing economic abundance.

Research notes the role of sociodemographic factors in this increase in narcissism. In the decades ahead, societal, political and economic dilemmas could manifest, if such trends in China advance absent pushback.

A recognition of the problematic associations with narcissism is critical to solving domestic and international issues impacted by it. In addition, greater attention needs to be placed in policy circles on how economic and political development can be furthered whilst preserving or inducing characteristics of a cohesive, self-critical community.

(Source: Newsweek)



## McGregor and Mayweather expect 10,000 crowd - for a press conference!

Conor McGregor and Floyd Mayweather will stage a press conference at Wembley Stadium in a fortnight - and expect 10,000 people to attend.

According to The Sun, the unlikely opponents will be holding a series of media conferences to promote their fight with the first stop apparently being the national stadium at Wembley.



The mixed martial artist faces Mayweather in Las Vegas on August 26 in a contest that will be staged under normal boxing rules. The media conference will be free to the public with a stage set to hold both men at one side of the pitch.

The pair will hold various conferences to promote the bout with Mayweather, 40, coming out of retirement for the fight.

Few are expecting the UFC lightweight champion to trouble Mayweather despite his punching power and he has been installed as a 5-1 underdog by bookmakers.

He trained at a gym in his native Dublin as a youngster but has never previously boxed as an amateur or professional, while former multi-weight world champion Mayweather compiled a 49-0 record before retiring two years ago.

(Source: Eurosport)

## Klopp will win the Premier League then move to Bayern - Hitzfeld

Jurgen Klopp will lead Liverpool to the Premier League title and then take over at Bayern Munich, according to Ottmar Hitzfeld.

During seven seasons at Borussia Dortmund, Klopp restored the club as one of Germany's top forces, guiding them to two Bundesliga titles, one DFB-Pokal and the final of the Champions League in 2013.

The charismatic 50-year-old secured a return to Europe's top table for Liverpool in his first full season at the Anfield helm and Hitzfeld – a Champions League winner with Dortmund and Bayern – expects him to win their first top-flight title since 1990.



However, the former Switzerland boss believes Klopp's future ultimately lies at the Allianz Arena.

"Jurgen Klopp is one of the top coaches, but compared to others he has yet to win a big international trophy," Hitzfeld told t-online.de.

"He will be Premier League champion sooner or later, I am fully convinced of that.

"He's building something there, is a motivator, and a fantastic advertisement for German coaches. It's not easy to prevail in England, but he did it.

"Jurgen Klopp will always be a candidate for the Bayern job. He knows the Bundesliga, he was a league and cup champion.

"I think and expect him to be the FC Bayern coach one day."

(Source: Soccerway)

## Manchester City need 10 years to match Barcelona and Real Madrid, says Guardiola

Manchester City need 10 years to match the levels of Barcelona, Real Madrid, Bayern Munich or Juventus, according to manager Pep Guardiola.

The 46-year-old's first season in charge at the Etihad Stadium ultimately ended in relative disappointment, with City finishing third in the Premier League and failing to win a trophy.

Their Champions League campaign was ended in the last 16 by Monaco, ensuring that Guardiola missed out on reaching at least the semi-final stage for the first time as a head coach.

City have set about revamping the squad to improve their chances of silverware in 2017-18, having spent a reported £76.5million on Bernardo Silva and Ederson amid links with a number of other possible signings, including Alexis Sanchez and Benjamin Mendy.

Guardiola insists that he will not change his methods in England but he has warned City fans that it takes a decade to establish the kind of success enjoyed by Europe's dominant sides.

"I'm not going to change because I don't know how to do things in another way," he told L'Esportiu.

"Here, just as it is everywhere, it's 11 against 11 and in the same space. The difference is that the referee allows more and then the game is more balanced.

"Seven years as a professional head coach and six league titles, and with respect to the one that was lost, there is plenty to discuss. Always in the Champions League semi-finals. This year, we weren't there, but not even Barca have reached the semi-finals every year.

"City are a great team, they've been in the Champions League for five consecutive years, the only team in England to have done so, but to reach Barca, Real Madrid, Bayern, Juventus... it's very tough. You need time, a decade."

(Source: Sportskeeda)

# Jose Mourinho unhappy with lack of summer transfer business

Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho is unimpressed by the club's lack of summer transfer dealings.

After United's Europa League final win against Ajax on 24 May, Mourinho said he had given executive vice-chairman Ed Woodward a list of transfer targets.

Senior United figures spoke privately about signing three or four players.

There could be developments later this week, but so far the only new signing has been 22-year-old defender Victor Lindelof from Benfica for £31m.

It is understood Mourinho wants at least one forward to compensate for the loss of Zlatan Ibrahimovic, 35, because of injury, as well as a holding midfielder player.

Efforts to sign Atletico Madrid forward Antoine Griezmann, 26, for a fee that would have come close to the world record £89m United paid Juventus for midfielder Paul Pogba 12 months ago were compromised by Ibrahimovic's major knee injury, which will keep him out until the New Year.

Atletico were also banned from buying players during the current transfer window and Griezmann signed a new contract, retaining a 100m euros release clause.

Another potential target, Everton striker Romelu Lukaku, 24, is thought to be more interested in joining Chelsea, so Real Madrid's Alvaro Morata, 24, has emerged as United's preferred striking option.

However, efforts to do a deal with Real have, thus far, met with frustration.

His father and agent met with Real officials at the Bernabeu on Monday and although it is still anticipated a transfer will happen, United's departure for their five-match pre-season tour of the USA on Sunday has created an artificial deadline



there is no certainty of meeting.

Tottenham's Eric Dier, 23, and Chelsea's Nemanja Matic, 28, have been spoken of by club officials as possible additions to fill the holding midfield role.

However, any attempt to get Dier would involve protracted discussions with Tottenham, which United have never found easy.

It is understood Chelsea will not even entertain the prospect releasing Matic until they have completed the transfer of

22-year-old France midfielder Tiemoue Bakayoko from Monaco.

United officials also spoke to Inter Milan about winger Ivan Perisic, 28, but that move is hampered by the Italian side's improved financial situation, meaning they have no urgent need to sell.

The situation is somewhat different to 12 months ago, when Ibrahimovic, centre-half Eric Bailly and midfielder Henrikh Mkhitaryan were all signed two weeks be-

fore United went on their pre-season tour of the Far East, with Pogba coming in later.

Mourinho is mindful his squad needed improving, as - despite winning the EFL Cup and Europa League last season - they finished sixth in the Premier League.

Tour matches against Manchester City, Real Madrid and Barcelona in particular will offer an indication about how much improvement is required.

(Source: BBC)

## With bad knee, 3-time major champ Wawrinka out at Wimbledon



So much for the idea that Stan Wawrinka might be able to complete a career Grand Slam at Wimbledon this year.

Didn't even make it out of the first round.

An owner of one championship from each of the other three major tournaments, and the French Open runner-up just three weeks ago, Wawrinka was bothered by his left knee and lost 6-4, 3-6, 6-4, 6-1 to Daniil Medvedev at Centre Court in the first round at the All England Club on Monday.

Wawrinka was seeded No. 5 and ranked No. 3. He iced his knee during changeovers and never was able to summon his best tennis.

"Apparently grass is not the best surface for my knee," Wawrinka said with a

grin. "I need to figure it out exactly, what's the problem now, what I'm going to do, and come back on the tennis court when I (can play) without any pain."

He said his knee has been a problem off and on this season, including at the Australian Open in January, when he made a run to the semifinals.

Wawrinka said he was a bit hesitant about even playing at Wimbledon, but he thought the knee seemed better during recent practices.

He had no answers when asked what comes next, including how much time he might need to take off.

"What's sure is that I'm going to take the time I need to feel ready again physically," the 32-year-old from Switzerland said.

(Source: AP)

## Evans 'let himself down' with poor decision-making: says Murray



World number one Andy Murray says fellow Briton Dan Evans has a long road ahead of him if he wants to resurrect his career after the 27-year-old was provisionally suspended for failing a doping test for cocaine at the Barcelona Open in April.

Evans broke into the top 50 of the ATP rankings for the first time this year, reached his first Tour final at the Sydney International in January and also reached the last 16 at the Australian Open.

Evans and Murray were part of Britain's Davis Cup squad and the pair reached the second round of the doubles tournament at Indian Wells in March.

"He put himself in a position to do really well for the last few years of his

career and he has blown that now... It's going to be a long road back if he wants to do it," Murray was quoted as saying by The Times.

"He has made poor decisions in the past and he made another really bad one there. He has let himself down and all of the people that help him. I'm sure his team and family will be extremely disappointed with what he's done.

Evans is to face a International Tennis Federation hearing and could be banned for two to four years.

It will be a difficult time for him, but he put himself in that position. The rules are very clear," said Murray.

"He broke those rules and deserves his suspension."

(Source: Reuters)

## Venus breaks down in tears after win over Mertens



The police report estimated Williams was traveling at about 5 miles per hour (8 kph) at the time of impact and was not distracted or suspected of any drug or alcohol use.

Before breaking down in the news conference, Williams had been asked several questions about her emotions in the past month but had avoided directly addressing the matter.

"Life, you can't prepare for everything. I prepared for

a lot of matches, tried to get ready for whatever my opponent will throw at you, but you can't prepare for everything," she said.

"I have no idea what tomorrow will bring. That's all I can say about it. That's what I've learned," she said to another question on how she was handling the situation.

Last week Williams released a statement on Facebook saying that she was "heartbroken" and "devastated" by the death of Barson.

Williams also said she was missing her sister Serena who is on a break from the game while she is pregnant. "I miss her a lot. I think she misses me," she said.

The 37-year-old American faced a tenacious opponent as she began her bid for a sixth Wimbledon singles title with a 7-6(7) 6-4 victory.

While a nervous Mertens struggled early, going 3-0 down in the first set, the 21-year-old, ranked 54th in the world, battled back to force a tiebreak which Williams won 9-7.

Williams, who last won Wimbledon in 2008, was unable to convert two match points in the second set before a rain break, but she returned to serve out for victory.

(Source: Reuters)



# Iran comeback breaks Aussie hearts

For polar opposite reasons, 29 November 1997 is a day etched in the memory of every Iranian and Australian football fan.

Australia, as winners of Oceania Zone qualification and Iran as the fourth-placed Asian side, were left to battle it out for the last of the 32 teams going to France 1998.

One of the two nations was just 90 minutes away from qualifying for their first FIFA World Cup after a lengthy absence. Australia's sole appearance on the world stage had been in 1974, while Iran's came four years later in Argentina.

The venue was the Melbourne Cricket Ground, scene of many a great sporting moment, but the home of Australian sport had never before seen such a monumental football clash.

■ The stakes

After a drawn out campaign and an even longer wait for FIFA World Cup qualification, it all came down to the winner on the night. An inspired performance from goalkeeper Mark Bosnich helped Australia hold Iran to a 1-1 draw just seven days earlier in the Azadi Stadium in Tehran, in front of an estimated crowd of 128,000.

With history beckoning, a record crowd of 85,000 turned up for the Australia home match, full of expectation. Coached by former England boss Terry Venables, Australia were confident on the back of a world record 14-match winning streak.

Conversely, Iran had shown erratic form on the road. Having failed to win their group and losing the play-off with Japan in neutral Malaysia for the third Asian spot, this was their final tilt at qualification.

■ The story

Led by young strikers Mark Viduka and Harry Kewell, the Socceroos spent the entire first half laying siege to the Iranian goal. With Stan Lazaridis and Robbie Slater making inroads on the flanks, and Aurelio Vidmar pushing forward from midfield, it seemed an Aussie avalanche was inevitable.

Captain Ahmad Reza Abedzadeh kept the score level with some inspired goalkeeping and a dose of luck. Notably, defender Mehdi Pashazadeh made a miraculous headed goalline clearance from a point-blank Kewell shot.

The breakthrough eventually came, with 17-year-old Kewell sweeping the ball in at the far post after latching onto a Vidmar cross. Half-time arrived without Bosnich being forced into a save, so when Vidmar doubled the advantage three minutes after the interval it seemed Australia's long history of heroic failure was to be wiped away.

The momentum was with Australia and the Iranians were seemingly dazed and ready to capitulate, often giving the ball away on the relatively rare occasion that they had possession.

Following the pandemonium of the second goal, a spectator managed to enter the field and tear down part of the net, ensuring a five-minute delay in the match. The break allowed Iran to regroup and, suddenly, experienced players such as Ali Daei, Karim Bagheri and



Khodadad Azizi were looking dangerous.

Two goals to the good and with just 19 minutes remaining, Australia were dreaming of France when Azizi suddenly burst into the penalty area and set-up Bagheri for an easy finish.

Four minutes later the unthinkable for the Socceroos happened as Azizi latched onto a hopeful ball, out-sprinted a static defence and beat an exposed Bosnich for the equalizer.

■ The star

The name Khodadad Azizi became immortalized in Iranian football after scoring the goal that sent Iran to France 1998. He had also set-up the first goal and scored the previous week for Iran in the first leg. Then 26, Azizi was in the prime of his career having been named AFC Player of the year, which helped catapult him to a career with Cologne in the German Bundesliga. He played at the FIFA World Cup France 1998, including Iran's famous win over USA.

■ They said

"It is true of football, when it perhaps isn't of a lot of other sports; you can dominate that way but everything can change."

Australia captain Alex Tobin.

"I just sat there and prayed. I'm really sorry for the Australians and I know how Australian kids who play football are suffering. Australia should have been the winner here."

Iran coach Valdir Vieira.

■ What happened next

Iran went to France 1998 and after losing 1-0 to Yugoslavia in their opening match, they famously defeated USA 2-1 with goals from Hamid Estili and Mehdi Mahdavia, before losing 2-0 to Germany to finish third in the group.

Australia somehow regrouped to finish runners-up at the FIFA Confederations Cup in Saudi Arabia just a month later. After knocking out Uruguay in the semi-final thanks to a golden goal from Kewell, Australia lost 6-0 to Brazil in the final.

The Socceroos again missed out on qualification for World Cup in 2002, but ended their long wait with a famous penalty shoot-out win in a Germany 2006 play-off against Uruguay - the same team that had denied them four years earlier.

(Source: FIFA)

## Pourrahnama aims for World Para Taekwondo Championships success



**S P O R T S** Mahdi Pourrahnama **d e s k** is going to get good result at the 2017 WTF World Para Taekwondo Championships in London, England.

Iran's world No.1 Mhadi Pourrahnama successfully defended his title at the 2017 World Taekwondo Federation (WTF) Asian Para Taekwondo Open in the under 75kg K44 by beating Russia's Vladimir Feofanov 16-10 in in Chuncheon, South Korea.

Iran was named Best Male Team after winning four gold medals at the event, which concluded on Saturday.

"I'm very excited to earn my

third gold medal at the third edition of the Asian Open. I think that it is a good record in my sporting career, and hope that it can lead to another good result at the 2017 WTF World Para Taekwondo Championships," Pourrahnama said.

"I shouldn't lay back. I'll continue to train hard and analyze competitors' combat, because their overall level keeps increasing," he said.

The biggest delegation, Russia, topped the medal table with ten medals (three golds, three silvers, four bronze), followed by Iran (four golds, one silver, one bronze), and then Turkey (two golds, three silvers, six bronze).

## Iran lose to India at World Polo Championship 2017 qualifiers



**S P O R T S** Iran lost to India 10-8 **d e s k** in the World Polo Championship 2017 qualifier in Tehran's Kanon Chogan, Qasr Firoozeh & the Army Polo Club on Monday.

Iran will play Pakistan on Wednesday in Pool E and face South Africa on Friday.

The pool's champion will qualify for the World Polo Championship 2017 in Sydney, Australia.

A total of eight teams will participate at the competition.

Australia (host), Chile (reigning world champions), Uruguay and New Zealand have already qualified for the World Polo Championship 2017.

The U.S., Canada, Mexico, Domini-

can Republic and Guatemala will vie for one spot in Zone A.

In Zone C, teams England, France, Spain, Italy, Ireland, Germany or the Netherlands will compete for two places.

Six days of world-class polo will commence on Saturday 21st October, with the final to take place on Sunday 29th October.

Polo originates from ancient Persia. Its invention is dated variously from the 6th century BC to the 1st century AD.

Iranians still refer to the game of polo by its original Persian name of "Chogan", which means mallet. Iranians still maintain some of the ancient rituals of the game in official polo matches.

## Sarmayeh Bank advance to Asian Club Volleyball Championship semi-final

Defending champions Sarmayeh Bank of Iran became the first team to get through to the semi-finals after producing an impressive display of power to defeat Al- Bahri of Iraq 3-1 (25-12, 25-13, 23-25, 25-16) in the quarter-finals at the SMM 2017 Asian Men's Club Volleyball Championship at the Ninh Binh Gymnasium on Tuesday.

Spearheaded by promising Milad Ebadipour Gharah, Farhad Ghaemi and highly-experienced Shahram Mahmoudi, Sarmayeh Bank made a solid start to win the one-sided first set 25-12. The Iranians continued their brilliant performance defensively and offensively to take a commanding 16-5 lead in the second set before widening the gap to 24-12. An error serve from Omar Ali Ahmed handed the Iranian club the 25-13 win.

Holding a 2-0 advantage, the Iranian side fielded substitutions to the court, but their game plan did not work out properly. The Iraqi came back on track with drastically-improved teamwork and consistency to take



the 16-11 lead.

The Iranian coach brought back key players in an effort of making amends. The Iraqi side did not let the golden chance slip through their fingers as they stormed on to close out the set 25-23. Things turned sour for Al-Bahri Sport Club in the fourth set when the

Iranians dominated from start to finish to capture the set 25-16, match and a semi-final berth.

Shahram Mahmoudi was the Sarmayeh Bank's top scorer with 16 points, while Farhad Ghaemi added 13 points. Omar Ali Ahmed led Al-Bahri Sport Club with 14 points and Ali Qasim Dahham added 12 points.

"We did not have a tough game today. But in the third set, I just wanted to give my players from the bench a chance to play more. I am very happy that we get through to the semi-finals," Sarmayeh Bank's head coach Mostafa Karkhaneh commented after the match.

"The next game is going to be more difficult for us. We will play the winners between Taichung Commercial Bank and Al Arabi SC. We already played against the Chinese Taipei team, but we have not yet played against the Qataris. Both teams are very strong. We will have to analyze their game plan and prepare ourselves well for the next match. We will try our best to win the match," he added.

(Source:asianvolleyball)

## Rezaeian linked with Belgium's KV Oostende

Iranian international winger Ramin Rezaeian has been linked with a move to Belgian football club KV Oostende.

The 27-year-old player is without a team after parting ways with Iranian giant Persepolis.

According to the club, Rezaeian can participate in the training and has a chance to convince the sporting staff in a week.

Club Brugge and Gent had also shown interest in signing Rezaeian.

Rezaeian is a main player in the Iranian national football team (also known as Team Melli).

He has made 19 appearances for Team Melli and scored two goals.

(Source: Tasnim)

## Shin Tae-yong named Korea Republic coach

Seoul: Former Korea Republic U-20 and U-23 coach Shin Tae-yong is to take charge of the country's senior team, it was announced on Tuesday.

The Korea Football Association's Technical Committee, led by Kim Ho-gon, said Shin will lead the team through the 2018 FIFA World Cup, should Korea Republic qualify for the tournament.



Shin replaces Uli Stielike, who was sacked last month after Korea Republic's 3-2 loss to Qatar in a World Cup qualifier.

With only two matches remaining, the Taeguk Warriors have automatic qualification to the 2018 FIFA World Cup in their sights. They currently occupy second spot in Group A with 13 points, seven behind the Islamic Republic of Iran, who have already qualified, and one ahead of Uzbekistan.

Korea Republic will host the Iranians on August 31 and face Uzbekistan in Tashkent five days later. Only the top two teams from each of the two qualifying groups are guaranteed places at next year's World Cup in Russia.

(Source: th-eafc)

## Persepolis completes signing of Iraqi midfielder Rasan

Iranian giant football team Persepolis has completed the signing of Iraqi international midfielder Bashar Rasan.

Rasan has joined Persepolis from Al-Quwa Al-Jawiya of Iraq on a two-year contract.

The contract details have been revealed.

The 20-year-old player had made 10 appearance for Iraqi national football team.

The winger has become the youngest player of Iraq football team in the history.

Persepolis is one of the Asia's biggest teams and I would rather play in the Iranian team coached by Branko Ivankovic," Rasan said.

(Source: Tasnim)

## Alexandre Lacazette at Arsenal for medical

Alexandre Lacazette arrived at Arsenal's training ground on Tuesday to have a medical ahead of a move from Lyon, Sky sources understand.

Once the medical is complete, Lacazette is expected to sign a five-year deal at the Emirates Stadium.

Arsenal have agreed a club-record deal with Lyon which could rise to £52m over the course of his contract.



Lacazette had verbally agreed to join Atletico Madrid this summer but that deal collapsed last month after Atletico's transfer ban was confirmed by the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

Arsenal's opening bid of £39m was turned down last month, but Lyon president Jean-Michel Aulas had confirmed a deal was likely to be completed after the sides met on a fee that would eclipse the £42.5m Arsenal paid for Mesut Ozil four years ago.

Lacazette had said he would only move to a club who are playing in Europe's premier club competition but it appears the 26-year-old's stance on the matter has softened.

(Source: Sky Sports)



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## NEWS IN BRIEF



### Iranian shorts to go on screen at Colombian filmfest

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Two Iranian short films will go on screen at the Countercurrent Spiritual Film Festival, which will be held in Bogota, Colombia from July 24 to 28.

"Request" by Siamak Ahmadi and "X Zone" by Ali Akbar Esmaeili will compete with over twenty films from Spain, France, Finland, Argentina, the UK, Mexico and several other countries.



### Iranian "Plight" to compete in Italian, American film events

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Iranian director Mohammadreza Khavari's short film "Plight" has been selected for two monthly film festivals in Italy and the U.S.

"Plight" is the only one-minute short film on the lineup of the June edition of the Roma Cinema DOC.

The winners of this edition of the festival will be announced at the end of July.

The film also will go on screen at the July edition of the Miami Independent Film Festival, Mindie, which will be held in the American city.

The festival will come to end by announcing winners on July 29.

## Tolkien estate, Warner Bros. settle "Hobbit" lawsuit

**NEW YORK (Reuters)** — The estate of J.R.R. Tolkien has settled an \$80 million lawsuit against Warner Bros. over the licensing of online games, slot machines and other gambling-related merchandise based on the author's books "The Hobbit" and "The Lord of the Rings".



A man walks along a fence hung with large format hoardings of J. R. R. Tolkien characters from The Hobbit movie in Wellington November 27, 2012. (Reuters/Mark Coote)

The settlement by the Tolkien estate and book publisher HarperCollins with the Time Warner Inc unit, New Line Cinema and Saul Zaentz Co, which hold various marketing rights, was disclosed in a court filing on Friday in Los Angeles.

It also resolves counterclaims by Warner Bros. and Zaentz. Terms were not disclosed.

"The parties are pleased that they have amicably resolved this matter and look forward to working together in the future," Warner Bros. spokesman Paul McGuire said in a statement on Monday.

Bonnie Eskenazi, a lawyer for Tolkien's estate and HarperCollins, which is a unit of News Corp, provided a nearly identical statement.

Tolkien's estate had accused the defendants of violating a 1969 agreement allowing the sale "tangible" merchandise, by associating the books with the "morally-questionable (and decidedly non-literary) world of online and casino gambling."

It said this "outraged Tolkien's devoted fan base" and irreparably harmed the legacy of the English author, who died in 1973 at the age of 81.

The copyright lawsuit was filed in November 2012.

Total worldwide grosses exceeded \$2.9 billion for each of the big-screen trilogies for "The Lord of the Rings", released from 2001 to 2003, and "The Hobbit", released from 2012 to 2014, according to Box Office Mojo.

## Major book center opens in Tehran

**I →** All the Persian books are gathered here in the garden and present a good opportunity for the readers, he said.

The Abbasabad Complex on Haqqani Highway also includes the Sacred Defense Garden Museum and the National Library and Archives of Iran.

Families can reach the garden via the subway at the Haqqani Metro Station.

# Iranian, Greek artists win top prizes at Trumpism cartoon contest

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Hadi Asadi from Iran and Michael Kountouris from Greece have won the first prizes in two categories of the International Trumpism Cartoon and Caricature Contest.

Asadi received the prize for his work in the caricature section and Kountouris was awarded for his creation in the cartoon category in a ceremony held at the Art Bureau in Tehran on Monday.

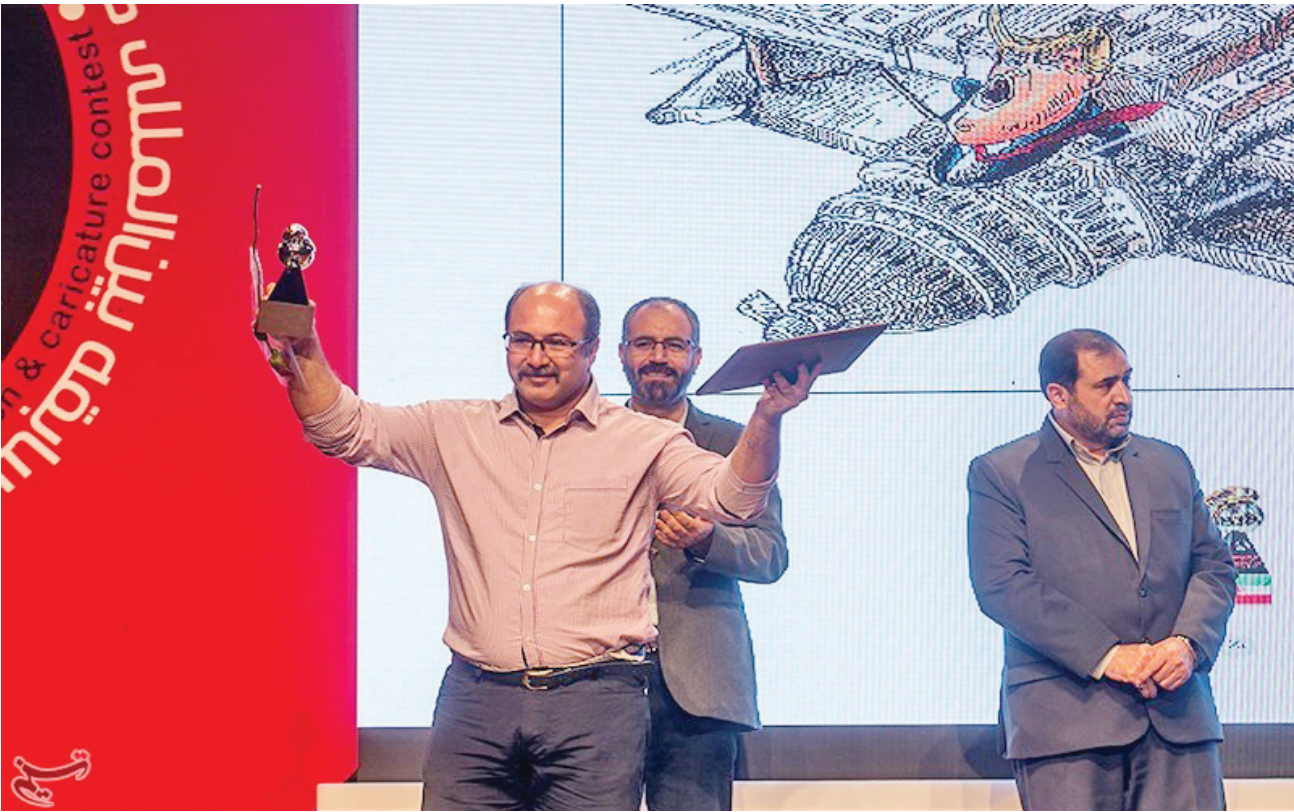
"This movement was organized in the line with the soft war and we made contact with most of the master cartoonists in the world," the director of the contest, Masud Shojaei-Tabatabai, said in his brief speech.

"The mass participation of the international cartoonists in the contest proclaims the legitimacy of our logic," added Shojaei-Tabatabai who was an organizer of the International Holocaust Cartoon Contest in Iran.

In the cartoon section, Saeid Sadeqi from Iran and Mauricio Parra from Colombia won the second and third prizes.

Joaquin Aldeguer from Spain was selected as runner-up in the caricature section while Brazilian caricaturist Eduardo Baptista was presented with the third prize.

Groups of cartoonists were also



A winner reacts after accepting his award at the closing ceremony of the International Trumpism Cartoon and Caricature Contest at the Art Bureau in Tehran on July 3, 2017. (Tasnim/Foad Ashtari)

awarded honorable mentions in both categories.

The Organization for Sacred Defense Artistic and Cinema Affairs held the contest in collaboration with the Art Bureau.

## Tehran to host performance by Iranian, Italian orchestras



Italian musician Riccardo Muti conducts an orchestra in an undated photo.

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Musicians from the Giovanile Luigi Cherubini Orchestra and the Tehran Symphony Orchestra will perform a joint concert at Tehran's Vahdat Hall on Thursday.

The concert will be conducted by Italian maestro Riccardo Muti under

the auspices of Shahrzad Rohani, the conductor of the Tehran Symphony Orchestra, the orchestra announced in a press release on Tuesday.

The orchestras are scheduled to repeat the concert at the Pala de André Center in the Italian city of Ravenna on Saturday.

## French maestro Henri Pompidor to conduct Tehran Tonal Choir



French maestro Henri Pompidor conducts an orchestra in an undated photo.

**A R T d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Prominent French conductor Henri Pompidor is scheduled to conduct the Tehran Tonal Choir during a performance at Tehran's Vahdat Hall on July 13.

A repertoire of classical and jazz pieces by French and Iranian composers will be performed during the concert, which is

being organized in collaboration with the Embassy of France in Tehran, the choir conductor Milad Omranlu said in a press release on Tuesday.

Pompidor, who was the director of the choral singing department of the Conservatory of Thailand, is the conductor of the Charles Munch Choir at the Conservatory of Paris.

## The Scream on cream: Korean barista wows fans with latte art

**SEOUL (Reuters)** — South Korean barista Lee Kang-bin is taking coffee art to the next level, creating miniature imitations of famous paintings on foamy cups of java at his central Seoul cafe.

With meticulous strokes of tiny brushes and spoons, Lee, 26, recreates the likes of Vincent van Gogh's "The Starry Night" and Edvard Munch's "The Scream" using thick cream stained with food coloring atop a cup of coffee.

The result of the painstaking 15-minute process is a 10,000 won (\$8.71) cup of cold coffee that has won Lee thousands of fans at his cafe and online.

"One time I drew 'The Starry Night' and it looked so special as the famous painting placed on top of coffee. After that, lots of people ordered that coffee," Lee said, as he copied the painting off an image on his smartphone.

"Customers usually ask me to draw their favorite art works," he added.



Creamarts, what South Korean barista Lee Kang-bin calls his latte arts, are seen at his coffee shop in Seoul, South Korea, June 30, 2017. (Reuters/Kim Hong-Ji)

## Soaring "Hive" exhibit blends intimate details into its giant scale

**WASHINGTON (Reuters)** — A soaring exhibit of stacked cardboard tubes shaped into three hive-like interconnected structures will make its debut on Thursday at a Washington, D.C., museum as part of its annual interactive art installation series.

The "Hive" exhibit, designed by architect Jeanne Gang, will take over the Great Hall of the National Building Museum, standing more than 60 feet (18 meters) tall. It is open to the public through Sept. 4.

Its three domed chambers are made from 2,700 lightweight cardboard cylinders ranging from several inches to 10 feet (3 meters) in height, painted silver and magenta and stacked in an interlocking fashion.

Gang told Reuters that "Hive" is similar to the vaulted structures of cathedrals, designed to hold their own weight.

"We thought this is such a big space, we wanted to go high," she



A man enters Studio Gang's 'Hive', the latest Summer Block Party interactive installation, at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C., U.S., July 3, 2017. (Reuters/Kevin Lamarque)

said. "We wanted to make something that had some monumentality but at the same time, inside, a certain intimacy."

"Hive" can be explored from the museum's fourth floor balcony as well as on the ground level, where visitors can enter the dark, intimate interiors and interact with the work's multiple acoustic elements such as chimes and small drums.

## DJ Khaled's 'Grateful' tops Billboard 200 album chart

**NEW YORK (Reuters)** — With the help of some of pop and R&B's biggest names, music producer DJ Khaled's latest album "Grateful" debuted atop the weekly U.S. Billboard 200 album chart on Monday.

"Grateful", with songs such as "Shining" with Beyonce and Jay Z and "I'm the One" with Justin Bieber, Chance the Rapper, Lil Wayne and Quavo, sold 149,000 album units, according to figures from Nielsen SoundScan.

The Billboard 200 album chart tallies units from album sales, song sales (10 songs equal one album) and streaming activity (1,500 streams equal one album).

Other new entries in the top 10 of the Billboard 200 chart this week include alt-rock group Imagine Dragons' new album "Evolve" at No. 2, late pop star Prince's reissued "Purple Rain" album at No. 4 and



Record producer DJ Khaled arrives at the 2016 American Music Awards in Los Angeles, California, U.S., November 20, 2016. (Reuters/Danny Moloshok)

rockers 311 at No. 6 with "Mosaic."

Last week's chart-topper, Lorde's "Melodrama," dropped to No. 13 this week.

On the Digital Songs chart, which measures online single sales, Puerto Rican singer Luis Fonsi's summer hit "Despacito" featuring Justin Bieber continued its reign at No. 1 with another 136,000 copies sold.