

Iran capable of 500,000 bpd oil swap with Caspian Sea states: official **4**

Female bikers promote clean transportation in Tehran **12**

Hamed Haddadi reaches 700 points in Asia **15**

"Subdued" scoops up awards at Celebration of Iranian Cinema Critics and Screenwriters **16**

Defense pick vows stronger missiles



Iran condemns 'blind terror act' in Barcelona

POLITICS **TEHRAN**—After a van d e s k rammed into pedestrians in a crowded tourist area of Barcelona, Spain, the Iranian Foreign Ministry issued a statement saying terrorists who have suffered defeats one after another in Iraq and Syria are planning to commit "blind terror acts" in different parts of the world. "Following extremist terrorists' repeated defeats in the region [the Middle East region], these criminals have put on agenda to expand terrorist operations across the world and murder of the innocent people is among their objectives," Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi said.

The attack claimed by Daesh targeted Barcelona's most famous street, killing at least 13 people and injuring more than 100.

The ministry spokesman said Daesh have been targeting people from the Middle East to Africa and Europe.

Noting that that terrorism has turned into an international problem, he suggested, "It is the time all the peace-seeking countries, which intend real fight against terrorism, form an international unity against violence, insecurity and terrorism which would prioritize eradicating terrorists with a firm determination." **→2**

64 years since CIA coup in Iran

By Mohammad Homaeifar

TEHRAN — Sixty-four years ago, a foreign-backed coup d'état - known in Iran as the 28 Mordad coup - was staged in Iran which saw the overthrow of the democratically elected government of Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh on 19 August 1953 in favor of strengthening the monarchical rule of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

Known as Operation Ajax, the coup was carried out after an earlier coup attempt failed to overthrow Mosaddegh and install General Fazlollah Zahedi, the shah's reliable ally, as prime minister. As a result, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the shah of Iran, had fled to Baghdad.

Days before the first coup attempt, Mosaddegh had dissolved the parliament to get rid of the shah's close allies, giving himself and his cabinet more power to rule, while effectively stripping the shah of his powers.

With the success of the second coup, Zahedi was installed as prime minister, and the shah returned to Iran and continued to rule more firmly as monarch.

Mosaddegh was then arrested, tried and convicted of treason by the shah's military court. He was sentenced to death, but on the shah's personal orders, his sentence was commuted to three years in solitary confinement in a military prison, followed by house arrest until his death. **→2**

Kurdish independence will spread fear across region: Ibrahim al-Jaafari



Iraq's Kurds are spreading fear across the Middle East in their push for independence and must involve neighboring countries if they wish to secede from Baghdad, the Iraqi foreign minister has told Middle East Eye.

Ibrahim al-Jaafari said that while the Kurds had a right to hold a referendum, a secession process could not take place in isolation and without the involvement of others.

Meanwhile, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu has warned that a plan by Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdistan region to hold an independence referendum late next month will lead to "civil war" in the conflict-stricken Arab country.

"In that country (Iraq), which has been through so many problems, a referendum on independence can make the situation even worse," Cavusoglu told the state-run TRT Haber television news network on Wednesday.

"God forbid, it could even bring it to civil war," he added.

His remarks came a day after Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Bekir Bozdog said the referendum for an independent Kurdish state violates Iraq's constitution and will further destabilize the Middle East.

"Turkey gives importance to Iraq's territorial and political integrity. It is very important that the stability is achieved in the region and people live in peace and safety. This decision by Iraqi regional government would contribute to instability in the region. It also violates the constitution of Iraq," he told a news conference after a cabinet meeting in the capital Ankara.

Hoshiyar Zebari, a close adviser to Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) President Massoud Barzani, told Reuters on Saturday that Kurdish authorities were determined to hold the referendum on September 25 irrespective of all objections.

Zebari's remarks came only two days after US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson asked Barzani in a phone call to delay the referendum.

"On the issue of the postponement of the referendum, the president (Barzani) stated that the people of the Kurdistan region would expect guarantees and alternatives for their future," a statement issued on Friday by the KRG presidency read after Tillerson's call.

In June, Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi described as untimely the decision by Barzani to hold the referendum.

"We have a constitution that we've voted on, we have a federal parliament and a federal government...The referendum at this time is not opportune," Abadi said on June 13.

Iran has also expressed opposition to the "unilateral" scheme, underlining the importance of maintaining the integrity and stability of Iraq and insisting that the Kurdistan region is part of the majority Arab state.

(Source: agencies)

EDITORIAL
By Mohammad Ghaderi
 Tehran Times editor-in-chief

An Iranian martyr's message to the world

Mohsen Hojaji was captured on August 7 and martyred in a terrible way two days later in a counterattack by Daesh terrorists. He was martyred when Daesh made a counterattack against a position of the resistant forces in Tanf, an area in Iraq-Syria border. The attack was carried out with the U.S. intelligence.

The Takfiri terrorists had committed such inhuman crimes before, however the world was affected more by this one.

The world was affected by this Iranian youth's courage in countering the criminal enemy and the epic which could be seen in his eyes.

Following are remarkable points related to this issue which hopefully will teach lesson to the terrorists and their masters who have deprived the innocent people in the region of peace and security:

1-The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a victim of terrorism in the past four decades, counters this evil phenomenon with full force and have made the enemies of peace and security upset. Iran has sent the world this message that the country and the axis of resistance are forerunners in seeking peace by adopting the mentioned policy.

2- The hegemonic system led by the U.S. and the Zionist regime of Israel has been making serious efforts to portray a violent image of Islam and Iran, but the public opinion has become aware that Iran is pursuing a peace-seeking policy based on the rights of people regardless of their ethnicity or religion. This approach detests the ideology of Takfirism.

3-The new generation has been educated by the divine teachings of Islam and is ready to help the innocent people, something which has put Iran on the peak of the fight against the anti-human nature of the hegemonic system.

Spanish police shoot five suspects dead



Spanish police shot dead five would-be attackers after confronting them early on Friday in a town south of Barcelona where hours earlier a suspected militant drove a van into crowds, killing 13 people and wounding scores of others.

ISIL terrorist group claimed responsibility for the deadly rampage along the city's most famous avenue on Thursday, which was packed with tourists taking an afternoon stroll. The death toll could rise, with more than 100 injured, authorities said.

Iranian official urges full free trade with Syria

An Iranian business official called for efforts to make the most out of a free trade agreement with Syria, voicing Iran's readiness to satisfy the Arab country's trade needs.

In a meeting with Syria's Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade Mohammad Samer al-Khalil in Damascus on Thursday, deputy head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), Hossein Selahvarzi, called on the Syrian minister to assign a special envoy to arrange for the "thorough and full implementation of a free trade agreement" between the two countries, according to Tasnim.

Selahvarzi also pledged that ICCIMA would do its utmost to satisfy Syria's demands if the Damascus government lists its urgent needs and determines the construction or reconstruction projects that require assistance from Iran.

For his part, Khalil expressed the hope that ICCIMA's experience would contribute to stronger economic cooperation between Iran and Syria and strengthen interaction between the private sectors of the two countries.

The Syrian minister also unveiled plans for a visit to Iran with a big business delegation.

Iran is among the 43 countries that have attended the 59th edition of Damascus International Fair, which kicked off on Thursday after a 5-year hiatus.

Iran has the highest number of companies in the event, with 30 firms in a pavilion with an area of more than 1,000 square meters.

Earlier this month, Syrian Prime Minister Imad Khamis said his country hopes to get assistance from Iran to nurse its ailing economy back to health.

Syria is increasingly restoring its political and military power, but the major challenge it now faces is economic issues, Khamis said in a meeting with Iran's parliament speaker in Tehran on August 6, adding that Syria relies on Iran to go through the "economic revival and development" stage.

More than six years of war have taken a severe toll on Syria, costing the economy \$226 billion, according to a new World Bank report.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Rouhani congratulates Indonesia on national day

POLITICS TEHRAN — President Hassan Rouhani d e s k sent a message to President Joko Widodo to congratulate him on the national day of the Republic of Indonesia.

"I sincerely congratulate the national day of the Republic of Indonesia to your Excellency and the people of your country," Rouhani wrote, his official website reported on Thursday.

"I hope with regard to historic, friendly ties between the two countries and based on ample potentials, we witness growing ties and cooperation," Rouhani added.



'Hojaji showed revolution's third generation still fervent'

POLITICS TEHRAN — The bravery of Mohsen d e s k Hojaji, who was brutally beheaded by Daesh recently in Syria, has proven that the third generation of the Islamic Revolution is still fervent, the Friday prayer leader of Tehran told worshippers.

According to Fars, Ayatollah Ahmad Khatami also said the fact that the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps has promised it will take revenge against Daesh is praiseworthy, predicting the expected revenge will be harsh.



French martyr's father visits tomb 30 years later

POLITICS TEHRAN — The father of French martyr Kamal Kourselle who had been killed while fighting for Iran visited his son's tomb this week after nearly 30 years.

Jerome Imanuel Kourselle visited Iran a couple of days ago to visit his son's tomb, Mehr news agency reported on Friday.

Kamal had been studying theology at the Qom Seminary of Islamic Studies before he was martyred in the Iraqi war against Iran in the 1980s.



U.S. shipping firm to pay over \$500,000 for violating Iran sanctions

POLITICS TEHRAN — The U.S. shipping firm d e s k Blue Sky Blue Sea has agreed to pay more than half-a-million dollars for violating sanctions against Iran 140 times, the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control said in a statement on Thursday.

The shipping company appears to have violated the sanctions clause on 140 occasions between April 25, 2010, and June 2, 2012, by transshipping used and junked cars and parts from the United States to Afghanistan via Iran, the OFAC said.



Mehdi Karroubi ends hunger strike, in good health

POLITICS TEHRAN — Mehdi Karroubi, a 2009 d e s k presidential candidate who has been under house arrest for claiming vote rigging, has ended his hunger strike.

The 79-year-old cleric stopped eating on Wednesday morning and was taken to hospital on Thursday due to high blood pressure.

Hassan Qazizadeh Hashemi, the health minister and one of the officials who had visited him, said Karroubi was in good health.



Iran will not play into U.S. hands: ex-diplomat

POLITICS TEHRAN — Iran will not play into d e s k the hands of the United States in the face of Washington's provocative actions to derail the July 2015 nuclear deal, a former Iranian diplomat has said.

While the Trump administration has from the onset showed that it is trying to provoke Iran to walk out of the deal, Iran's incoming administration will do its best to safeguard the implementation of the deal, Ali Khorram, former ambassador to the European headquarters of the United Nations, told ILNA on Friday.

Defense pick vows stronger missiles

By Ali Kushki

TEHRAN — President Hassan Rouhani's pick for defense minister promised on Thursday to increase the "accuracy and power" of Iran's ballistic and cruise missiles if granted a vote of confidence.

Plans for more accurate and destructive missiles appeared atop a priority list Amir Hatami took to the parliament as he was defending his four-year agenda.

"The missile program is definitely one of the most important priorities of the Defense Ministry in the upcoming four years," IRNA quoted Hatami as saying after the parliamentary hearing.

"While monitoring the enemies' activities in military areas, we have concentrated on upgrading the number and capabilities of our missiles to boost the Islamic Republic's deterrence manifold," he added.

Iran's missile program has been a bone of contention between Tehran and Washington particularly under the Trump administration.

In what appeared to be an early manifestation of U.S. President Donald Trump's promise of a tougher American approach to Iran, in February the Trump administration said it was "officially putting Iran on notice" in reaction to a missile launch test, saying Iran "was playing with fire."

Tehran reacted defiantly and shrugged off the warnings as "hallow bragging."

"Iran unmoved by threats as we derive security from our people. Will never initiate war, but we can only rely on our own means of defense," Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Zarif tweeted.

Washington has tried to tie Iran's missile tests to the international nuclear deal between Tehran and six world powers, including the U.S., claiming that the program violates the UN Security Council resolution 2231 which



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"The missile program is definitely one of the most important priorities of the Defense Ministry in the upcoming four years," IRNA quoted Hatami as saying after the parliamentary hearing.

endorses the agreement. One day after the Trump administration reluctantly confirmed that Tehran was complying with the nuclear accord in

Turkey, Russia, Iran may launch joint military operation in Syria

By Negar Asadi

TEHRAN — Turkey, Russia and Iran may start a joint military operation in Syria. The exact date for the start of the joint operation is not reported, but Russian troops have already been stationed on the south of Idlib in the Muradah and Halfaya settlements, Azernews reported on Friday.

The Turkish media reported on August 18 that the joint military operation may begin in the Syrian city of Idlib. Russia and Iran are expected to begin operations in the southern part of Idlib, and Turkey will advance from the northern direction.

The Astana talks have brought representatives from the Syrian government and some opposition groups to the negotiating table in order to find a solution to the Syrian conflict.

On May 4, Russia, Iran and Turkey signed a document during the fourth round of Syrian talks in Astana, Kazakhstan, to form four "de-escalation zones" in Syria.

The most significant achievement of a three-pronged diplomatic effort since the beginning of 2017 to reduce bloodshed in a war now in its seventh year, the deal brought together three of consequential actors in the conflict from opposite sides.

Russia and Iran back the Syrian government while Turkey supports some of the armed insurgent groups that seek to topple the government.

The top United Nations envoy dealing with Syria, Staffan de Mistura, hailed the memorandum, which took force on May 6, an "important, promising, positive step



Syrians walk amid destroyed buildings in Aleppo.

in the right direction."

The agreement, which is to last initially for six months, calls for a pause in fighting, including government airstrikes, and for unhindered aid deliveries in and around the four main zones still held by rebels unaffiliated with the Islamic State.

The pact, however, does not apply to militants associated with the Islamic State or a Qaeda-linked group commonly known as the Nusra Front, which were designated as terrorist and hence, left out of the Astana talks.

The de-escalation zones, envisioned as places where

displaced Syrian civilians could voluntarily return and settle, include the northern province of Idlib, the central province of Homs, the East Ghouta region outside Damascus, and southern Syria along the Jordanian border.

Neither the Syrian government nor the rebels signed the document although the Syrian government voiced its support for it. Rebel groups objected, arguing it left too many loopholes for the Syrian military to continue what they called indiscriminate bombings of civilian areas.

While the de-escalation zone initiative was implicitly welcome by Washington, which said it supported any effort "genuinely" aimed at creating "a credible, peaceful resolution," it is unclear how the guarantors will monitor compliance.

Aleksandr Lavrentyev, the Russian negotiator at the talks, told Russian news outlets that Russia could send observers and "work more closely" with countries that back the rebels, including the United States and Saudi Arabia.

In an apparent opposition to the remarks, the Syrian government ruled out the "de-escalation zones" being monitored by other actors, including the United Nations.

"We do not accept a role for the United Nations or international forces to monitor the agreement," Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Moallem was quoted as saying at a news conference in Damascus on May 8.

In addition to the compliance issue, the American intervention in the agreed-upon zones is open to question. Russia, Iran and Turkey have to finalize maps of the de-escalation zones. The sixth round of the Astana talks is due to take place in the last week of August.

64 years since CIA coup in Iran

1 -> Mosaddegh had also played a key role in the country's 1951 movement that resulted in the nationalization of oil industry, which had been mainly controlled by the British-owned Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC), also known as BP.

Experts say the 1953 coup was aimed at securing the West's oil interests in the country by restoring power to the Shah.

For years, the United States and Britain were blamed for the coup but both governments tried their best to sweep the story under the rug.

In 1989, the U.S. State Department first released coup-related documents, but edited out any reference to American or British involvement. Since then, the omission of CIA's role has been widely

criticized by historians.

Finally, in 2013, the CIA publicly admitted for the first time that it was behind the coup. It also released documents that showed how the British government tried to block the release of information about its own involvement in overthrow of Mosaddegh.

Again, the CIA failed to release all documents. According to Malcolm Byrne, who directs the U.S.-Iran Relations Project at the National Security Archive at George Washington University, the full installment of declassified material was scheduled

to be released in 2013, but might have interfered with the Iran nuclear talks and were delayed again.

"This is going to be an important source for anyone interested in the tortured relationship between Washington and Tehran," said Byrne. "But the fact that it has taken over six decades to declassify and release these records about such a pivotal historical event is mind-boggling."

In June 2017, the CIA declassified more documents, shedding more light on the agency's role in the coup, though numerous original CIA telegrams from that

period are known to have disappeared or been destroyed long ago.

The approximately 1,000 pages of documents revealed that the CIA, believing the coup to have failed, attempted to call it off.

"Operation has been tried and failed and we should not participate in any operation against Mosaddegh which could be traced back to US," CIA headquarters wrote to its station chief in Iran on August 18, 1953. "Operations against Mosaddegh should be discontinued."

According to Byrne, the message was purportedly and famously ignored by Kermit Roosevelt, top CIA officer in Iran. "One guy was in the room with Kermit Roosevelt when he got this cable. [Roosevelt] said no - we're not done here."

Finally, in 2013, the CIA publicly admitted for the first time that it was behind the coup.

Iran condemns 'blind terror act' in Barcelona

1 -> Qassemi noted that Iran as a victim of terrorism is ready to cooperate with the international community in fighting terrorism.

Iranian Majlis Speaker Ali Larijani issued a message on Friday offering the Senate of Spain and

the Congress of Deputies condolences over the attack.

"Such inhuman actions indicate spread of insecurity, violence and terrorism in the today's world which make it clear that an international consensus to fight terrorism

is essential," he said.

Lebanon's Hezbollah also issued a statement on Friday condemning the terrorist attack.

Iran and Hezbollah are key players of the axis of resistance who are fighting Daesh.

NEWS IN BRIEF



TEDPIX adds 163 points in a week

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Tehran Stock Exchange desk (TSE)'s main index (TEDPIX) gained 163 points to 81,741 during the five dealing days (Saturday-Wednesday) of the past Iranian week ended on Friday, Tasnim news agency reported.

Some 3.181 billion securities worth 7.816 trillion rials (about \$205.1 million) were traded through 219,000 deals in TSE.

The first market's index rose one point to 57,174 and second market's index added 967 points to 178,720, showing 0.002 percent and 0.54 percent growth, respectively, in the mentioned week.



Iran, Syria to expand economic ties through chambers of commerce

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iran and Syria's chambers of commerce has put expansion of economic cooperation on the agenda and Iran's private sector is eager for presence in Syria, IRIB reported on Friday quoting a deputy at Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) as saying.

ICCIMA's Deputy Chairman Hossein Salahvarzi made the remarks during a visit with Mohammad Ghassan Al Qallaa, president of the Federation of Syrian Chambers of Commerce, in Syria.



Tehran, Ashgabat mull over road transport cooperation

ECONOMY TEHRAN — An Iran-Turkmenistan meeting on expansion of road transport cooperation on the deputy transport ministers level was held in Ashgabat during which the two countries explored avenues of mutual cooperation, IRNA reported on Friday.

According to Davoud Keshavarzian, the head of Iran Road Maintenance & Transportation Organization, during this event the two sides stressed the significance of ever more expansion of bilateral transport ties considering the Ashgabat agreement, a multimodal transport agreement between Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Oman and Pakistan for creating an international transport and transit corridor facilitating transportation of goods between Central Asia and the Persian Gulf.

UK exports to the EU surge on weaker pound

Britain's factories benefited from a surge in sales to the EU in the first half of this year as export growth outstripped import growth.

The UK still imports far more than it exports leaving the country with a goods deficit amounting to €53bn (£48bn) for the six months to June in its trade with the EU, but that is down from €57.8bn in the same period of 2016.



Britain is a good customer for EU companies, with a goods trade deficit of €53bn in the first half of the year.

A weaker pound means British-made goods are more competitive abroad, while imports are more expensive to UK companies and consumers.

Britain exports €104bn of goods to the rest of the world, outweighing the €94.7bn of goods it sends to EU customers. But UK imports from the EU amount to €147.7bn, while those from elsewhere come in at €134.7bn.

The UK's total trade deficit has shrunk from €102.2bn in the first half of 2016 to €83.7bn this year.

The annual snapshot of international trade, published by Eurostat, lends weight to arguments that the EU depends heavily on Britain's market for its products but also showed that British business relies on trade with the bloc.

The British trade deficit could give leverage to British Brexit negotiators who travel to Brussels for the third round of talks next month. This week the government published a position paper calling for UK-EU trade to remain as frictionless as possible.

In June Germany exported almost twice as much to Britain as it imported - €6.8bn to €3.6bn - leaving the UK with a €3.2bn deficit in the month.

France, the other member state with the most influence on the Brexit talks, sold €2.9bn-worth of goods to Britain and imported just over €2.7bn, leaving a more modest gap of €1.78m.

But Britain sold more goods to Ireland (€1.9bn) than it imported (€1.2bn). Preserving the "invisible border" between Northern Ireland and Ireland will be discussed by British and EU Brexit negotiators in the week of August 28.

At the same time the Food and Drinks Federation said exports from Britain soared 8.5pc to a record high of £10.2bn in the first half of the year.

"It is great to see such strong growth in our exports to EU Member States," said the group's director general Ian Wright.

"The EU remains an essential market for UK exports as well as for supplies of key ingredients and raw materials used by our industry. We believe there are significant opportunities to grow our sector's exports further still." (Source: The Telegraph)

Iran capable to swap 500,000 bpd oil with Caspian Sea states: official

ENERGY TEHRAN — Iran has desk the capacity to swap 500,000 barrels per day (bpd) of oil with the Caspian Sea littoral states, IRNA reported on Friday quoting Seyed Hamid Hosseini, the director for north part of the country in the Iranian Oil Pipelines and Telecommunication Company (IOPTC), as saying.

Iran's oil swap in the Caspian Sea has resumed following a roughly seven-year suspension, National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) reported on its website on August 12.

Under the swap deals, Iran accepts oil from other Caspian Sea littoral states and it delivers the same amount and quality of crude to its southern oil terminals in the Persian Gulf region for delivery to international customers of Caspian oil suppliers.

Several oil tankers have been of-flooded at Neka port on Iran's shore



of the Caspian Sea. The swap consignments will gradually increase in vol-

ume, the report said. Neka received two batches of Turk-

men oil this month, Hellenic Shipping News reported on Thursday.

The swap arrangement was halted during the tenure of former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as authorities questioned its economic merits, according to Press TV.

Their successors, however, decided in 2016 to resume the scheme with Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan — all among the littoral states of the Caspian Sea.

Yet, the plan has got into a slow start, with NIOC repairing and renovating the storage and terminal facilities in Neka.

The average daily swap was 90,000 bpd in 2009, which Iran planned to raise to 300,000 bpd by 2015. Iran also charged the partners with a transit fee which totaled \$880 million between 1997 and 2009, according to the local media.

Supporting farmers to achieve food security on Agriculture Ministry agenda

ECONOMY TEHRAN — To tighten desk Iran's food security, supporting farmers stands as the new agriculture ministry's top priority, President Rouhani's ministerial nominee for agriculture Mahmoud Hojjati announced defending his future plans in an open session of Iranian parliament (Majlis) on Thursday.

As Mehr news agency quoted Hojjati saying, at the present time, Iran supplies 90 percent of its need of food domestically and that is the main reason for supporting the agriculture sector more effectively in future.

"In line with supportive risk management in agriculture sector, the Agriculture Ministry paid 120 trillion rials (about

\$3.14 billion) to domestic farmers via Agricultural Insurance Fund in the last Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20, 2017)," the proposed minister said.

Iran has become self-sufficient in production of wheat, he underscored.

Exports of agricultural products constituted for one fifth of the country's total exports last year, he added.



European stocks slide as Spanish attack adds to market unease

European stocks fell, with Spanish shares leading losses, as a terror attack in Barcelona weighed on investor sentiment.

The Stoxx Europe 600 Index dropped 0.8 percent at 8:10 a.m. in London, trimming their weekly advance to 0.4 percent. While stocks around the world declined, financial markets have proven increasingly re-

silient to terror attacks in recent years.

Europe's benchmark has struggled to rebound since a mid-May peak, weighed down by a strengthening euro and geopolitical tension. Also contributing to global market unease this week are worries about U.S. President Donald Trump's administration following last week's violence in Virginia.

(Source: Bloomberg)

Eurozone current account surplus falls in June

The eurozone's current account surplus with the rest of the world shrank again in June.

The current account of the euro area recorded a surplus of €21.2 billion in June, down from €30.1bn in May, in seasonally adjusted terms.

The 12-month cumulative current account to June made a surplus of €336.5bn, or 3.1% of euro

area GDP — down from 3.2 per cent in May.

The eurozone has swung dramatically into a current account surplus since its debt crisis struck in 2012.

The balance has been driven largely by Germany, whose surplus hit a record of 8.6 per cent of GDP in 2016.

(Source: The Financial Times)

Venezuela central bank has \$2b cash to pay 2017 debt

CARACAS (Reuters) — Venezuela's government has around \$2 billion in available cash to make \$1.3 billion in bond payments by the end of the year and to cover the import of food and medicine, according to documents reviewed by Reuters.

The funds that could be used for debt payment include \$1.3 billion in cash and IMF Special Drawing Rights held in central bank reserves, and \$700 million in separate accounts that the central bank lists as "other financial assets," according to a report by local firm Financial Synthesis.

The figures show that Venezuela, which many economists and analysts believe is on the verge of default, has the resources on hand to cover this year's sovereign bond payments.

But making the payments will leave the government of President Nicolas Maduro with minimal hard currency to import basic consumer goods, which may fuel shortages of food and medicine and spur triple-digit inflation.

"The country's financial vulnerability has been exacerbated by the weakness of the central bank's foreign currency assets," wrote economist Tamara Herrera of Financial Synthesis in a research report.

Separately state oil company PDVSA, for the remainder of 2017, faces \$3.0 billion in interest and principal payments. PDVSA typically uses its own funds to make debt payments, while sovereign bond payments usually come from central bank coffers.

Maduro says the country, which is struggling under a deep recession as its socialist economy unravels, is the victim of an economic war. He has promised to make all bond payments.

The central bank did not respond to a request for comment on available funds to make debt payments.

International reserves stood at \$9.9 billion on Thursday, near a 22-year low.

Most of the country's reserves are tied up in gold that cannot be used in financial transactions without going through a certification process in another country, meaning there is little short-term opportunity to use it for debt payments.

The central bank's financial statements also list "other financial assets" of some \$30 billion, which economists say include exotic and illiquid securities that would require complex financial operations to be converted to cash.



IN THE NAME OF GOD

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING

INTERNATIONAL TENDER NO. 96-05/125

First Announcement

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Time and Place of Opening Envelopes
The date of opening envelopes A&B is at **8:30 a.m.** on **Monday Sept. 25, 2017** in the office of Vice President of IRIB Planning and Financial Resources and opening of envelope C will be after technical evaluation.
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Public Relations Dept. of IRIB

Inpex eyes bid for Iran's Azadegan oil project

Japan's Inpex Corp. might participate in a tender to develop the Azadegan oil field in southwestern Iran and form a consortium with other foreign oil firms to that end, a high-ranking Iranian official says.

If Inpex gets involved in the Azadegan again — after giving up its stake in the development project in 2010 to avoid being placed on a list of companies subject to U.S. sanctions over Iran's nuclear program — it would be a symbolic achievement as Japan tries to resume investment in the country.

"Inpex replied to our invitation letter for international bid, then told us they liked to be our partner in developing Azadegan," Ali Kardor, managing director of the National Iranian Oil Co. and also deputy oil minister of Iran, said in a recent interview.

"We had meetings with executives from Inpex many times. They asked us how they could find a foreign operator, so we advised them to negotiate with major European companies with high technology," Kardor said.

"Azadegan is a huge oil field. We certainly need new technology introduced by foreign firms. Forming a consortium would be better for both sides," he added.

Inpex, Japan's largest oil and gas exploration and production company, signed a memorandum of understanding to conduct studies for Azadegan in June 2016.

In a telephone interview, a spokesperson for Inpex confirmed receiving the invitation letter from NIOC and said, "It is true that we are mulling how we should deal with Azadegan, though we cannot announce details."

"A final decision will be made after we finish evaluating the condition of the international bid, and also the international situation."

Moreover, President Hassan Rouhani, a moderate who called for dialogue with the world community and seeks more foreign investment — began his sec-



ond four-year term earlier this month.

On the other hand, foreign companies regard the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump as a potential risk. He has repeatedly vowed to dismantle or renegotiate the nuclear deal. For Inpex, forming an international consortium is a good option to hedge this political impasse.

According to Kardor, the NIOC will soon provide all necessary data about the Azadegan oil field to interested firms. It will take about six months to gather technical and financial proposals from all applicants

and evaluate them, and the contractor will be finalized by early next year, he said.

Kardor said the number of foreign firms participating in the Azadegan tender will exceed 10.

In addition to Inpex, Total S.A., Royal Dutch Shell PLC, Petroliam Nasional Bhd (Petronas) and China National Petroleum Corp. have already signed memorandums of understanding with NIOC. Several other oil giants, including Eni and BP have expressed a desire to participate in the tender.

(Source: The Japan Times)

Chinese energy conglomerate begins talk to buy Rosneft shares



A Chinese energy conglomerate is in early talks to buy a stake in Russian energy giant Rosneft, according to exclusive sources who spoke to Reuters.

Senior executives at both firms have begun negotiations regarding a deal, the sources told the news agency. Already, CEFC China Energy chairman Ye Jianmin and Rosneft CEO Igor Sechin have held two meetings regarding future agreement.

Reuters sources did not reveal information on the cost of the deal, but one source suggested Rosneft would be open to selling the Chinese company a portion of its retail business, which includes 150 storage facilities, as well as thousands of filling stations and gasoline tankers. CEFC plans to expand its influ-

ence by becoming an international energy company through its involvement with Russian oil and gas companies.

So far, Rosneft has sold a 19.5 percent stake to Glencore and the Qatar Investment Authority (QIA—a sovereign wealth fund) for \$11.8 billion. Both Glencore and the QIA told The Wall Street Journal that the deal's details did not include a right for Russia to buy back Rosneft shares from the Glencore-QIA consortium they had formed for the deal.

British Petroleum owns 19.75 percent of the company. An additional sale of shares that would reduce the Russian government's ownership to below 50 percent would require a special governmental decree.

(Source: oilprice.com)

Libya gets better at keeping oil flowing as industry stabilizes



Libya's getting better at resolving stoppages in its oil industry, underpinning a growing perception that the OPEC member is closer to becoming a stable producer again.

That's because of the duration of the incidents. While in prior years protests could shutter fields for months and years, now the stoppages are being resolved within days and barely hindering flows. Sharara, Libya's biggest field, had several short disruptions this year, including two this month, after being closed for more than two years. Mustafa Sanalla, chairman of state-run National Oil Corp., was quick to visit Sharara this week to resolve the latest dispute, offering to revise security measures.

"One fundamental change that allows upstream activities to restart

quickly after a disruption is that Sanalla is willing to get on the ground, visit the sites and demonstrate his commitment to local communities," Geoff Porter, founder of New York-based North Africa Risk Consulting, said by email on Wednesday. "There is a level of trust that was missing for a long time."

Libya is reviving its oil production and exports in spite of continuing political uncertainty. In July, crude production was at a four-year high and exports were the most in three years, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. While the expansion has helped Libya's oil-dependent economy, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries is trying to cut global supplies. That effort has been undermined by recovering output at OPEC members Libya and Nigeria. (Source: Bloomberg)

Oil torn between broader market selloff, signs of tightening supply

Oil prices were largely steady on Friday, torn between a broad-based selloff across markets and signs that crude supplies are gradually tightening.

Brent crude futures, the international benchmark for oil prices, were at \$51.12 per barrel at 0711 GMT, up 9 cents from their last close but still set for a weekly drop of some 2 percent.

U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures were at \$47.17 a barrel, up 8 cent but also on track to fall over the week, down over 3 percent.

Oil prices have been weighed down amid a selloff across markets, including U.S. and Asian stocks, where investors voted with their feet amid growing skepticism that U.S. President Donald Trump, embroiled in controversy, would achieve his economic agenda.

The overall softness in financial markets added to the perception that oil supply remains higher than demand despite producer efforts to reduce output. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), together with non-OPEC producers like Russia, has pledged to restrict output by 1.8 million



barrels per day (bpd) between January this year and March 2018.

"Sentiment in oil markets remains weak," U.S. investment bank Jefferies said.

Oil is declining even amid signs that crude markets are tightening.

The Brent forward curve has moved from contango into backwardation,

where prices for immediate delivery are higher than those later on, for the three months of futures. A so-called backwardated market is considered a bullish sign for prices since it indicates that demand is outpacing supply.

Signs of supply tightness are also appearing in the United States, the world's biggest oil consumer. Despite a 13 per-

cent jump in production since mid-2016 to 9.5 million bpd, the country's commercial crude inventories have fallen 13 percent from their March records to below 2016 levels.

On the demand side, Asia in particular could see some stronger crude orders going into the second-half of the year.

Driven by the start-up of a refinery in Yunnan province in southern China and the completed expansion of a fuel processing facility at Huizhou, Chinese crude oil imports are expected to pick up.

"We expect Chinese crude imports to increase by 700,000 bpd year-on-year on average in 2H 2017," said energy consultancy FGE.

New oil demand is also coming from Vietnam, which will see record crude oil imports in August as it readies its second refinery for start-up.

"As domestic crude production continues to fall, Vietnam's historical surplus in crude oil will come to an end by 2019, turning the country into a net importer," said Peter Lee, oil analyst at BMI Research. (Source: Reuters)

Pertamina eyes development of 2 oilfields in Iran

Indonesia's State-owned oil and gas company Pertamina CEO Elia Massa Manik is confident that the company can explore and develop two oilfields in Iran. The oilfields are Mansouri and Ab Teymour.

"Two oilfields; the process has been long. We had asked through the Coordinating Minister [for Economic Affairs Darmin Nasution], to accelerate [exploration]," Massa said on August 16 at Pertamina building.

Massa said that Pertamina will focus on one oilfield first and foremost. The second one will be developed later after the exploration of the first one is completed.

Indonesia needs to explore the oilfields to increase oil supply, according to Massa. He reasoned that the two oilfields can produce 250,000 barrels per day. "But we should not rely on it," he said.

Massa added that the government is open to new partners to add to the existing ones. He said that Indonesia will take part in more oil exploration projects abroad in the future.

"Negotiation process is ongoing," said the Pertamina CEO. "We will have to partner with a local company [in Iran]. We are open to partnership."

(Source: tempo.co)

What comes of solar power when the sun's eclipsed

The last time a total eclipse cast a shadow across the entirety of the U.S., from West Coast to East, was 99 years ago. Back then, the modern power grid was just getting started, and harnessing the sun's energy on a widespread scale was little more than a notion in the minds of scientists. On Aug. 21, when the moon will completely obscure the sun across a swath of the U.S., the rare daytime darkness will affect a real -- though still small -- segment of the energy supply.

1. How much will the eclipse affect solar power?

Enough to notice. It will reduce the sunlight that reaches 1,900 solar-power plants in the U.S., according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. More than 12,000 megawatts of solar generation may be forced off line during the roughly four-hour event, equivalent to the power of about 12 nuclear reactors. Though few power plants are within the narrow band of land that will see a total eclipse, some reduction in sunlight will be experienced everywhere in the U.S.

2. How is this different from when the sun goes down each day?

At night, when solar panels produce no energy, most people are sleeping and demand for power is low. This eclipse, by contrast, will coincide with the ramping up of the American workday, with the so-called path of totality starting at 9:05 a.m. local time near Lincoln City, Oregon, and leaving the U.S. at 4:09 p.m. East Coast time.

3. Doesn't the sun go in and out on a typical day?

Sure. And where it's overcast along the eclipse's path on Aug. 21, giant solar farms will already be operating at reduced capacity, and homes and businesses equipped with rooftop panels will be relying more on the power grid for electricity. Still, it's the very rare cloudy day when the sun gets completely blacked out, even for a short time.

4. How dependent is the U.S. on solar power?

It's still a very small part of the U.S. electricity mix, lagging behind even other renewable sources of energy. Solar power accounted for 2.6 percent of U.S. power generation in May, compared with 6.9 percent for wind power and 10 percent for hydroelectric sources. By contrast, traditional gas-fired plants produced 30 percent.

5. Where will the eclipse have its biggest effect on power?

California is by far the leading U.S. state when it comes to generating solar energy, and the moon will block roughly 70 percent of its sunlight during peak eclipse around 10:20 a.m. local time. North Carolina, the No. 2 state in solar-power capacity, will see its sunlight reduced by more than 90 percent, and the impact there might be greater, since the eclipse will happen in mid-afternoon, the time of day when electricity demand is at its highest.

6. What will compensate for the reduction in solar power?

Power grid operators and utilities say they'll tap natural-gas-fired power plants, keep more electricity supplies in reserve and encourage conservation to make up for the loss of solar energy. (The California Public Utilities Commission urged companies and residents to pledge to "do one small thing to reduce energy usage" during the eclipse.) Utilities will be using new technologies such as smart thermostats to control customer demand. The eclipse is happening at a good time for California, where hydropower supplies are plentiful because of melting snow.

7. Might there be service disruptions?

That's highly unlikely, says the North American Electric Reliability Council Corp., noting that transmission operators have had months to prepare.

8. Will there be any change in power prices?

It's possible that the sudden ramp-down in the solar power supply will cause wholesale electricity prices to spike. California's grid operator expects to see solar generation fall off at a rate of 70 megawatts a minute over an 82-minute period. Taking that power offline so quickly threatens to create bottlenecks along the grid. Keeping a healthy margin of reserves on hand will help transmission operators avoid these choke points. In fact, prices may end up falling as people venture outside to watch the eclipse and the moon's shade curbs the demand for air conditioning. Prices may also slump when the sun reemerges and panels start producing electricity again. (Source: Bloomberg)



North Korea and America could stumble into a Nuclear War

By Matthew Bunn

People from Los Angeles and San Francisco are calling me and asking: "Should we be getting our families out of the city? Are we about to be nuked?" The short answer is no. Despite North Korean missile tests and President Donald Trump's warnings about "fire and fury," the missiles are not about to fly. All parties have overwhelming interests in avoiding an actual shooting war. That said, there are



steps that can and should be taken to reduce the danger of deadly accidents.

North Korea's leader, Kim Jong-un, knows very well that he and his regime would not survive a large-scale war, because of the overwhelming power of the U.S. and South Korean militaries. Secretary of Defense James Mattis' sober threat that any North Korean attack would "lead to the end of its regime and the

destruction of its people" was intended to underscore the point. Kim's fiery threats are intended to deter the United States from launching such an attack, to play to domestic audiences and to browbeat North Korea's neighbors.

The United States and South Korea, similarly, know very well how "catastrophic," as Mattis put it, a war on the Korean peninsula would be for the United States and its allies. Even a conventional war could kill tens of thousands of American soldiers and hundreds of thousands of South Koreans; North Korea has well over 10,000 artillery tubes and rocket launchers within range of Seoul. Nuclear strikes could pull the death toll into the millions. The reverberating global effects would likely provoke a downturn worse than the Great Recession. President Trump does not want such a nightmare on his watch.

■ A dangerous fantasy

Some analysts argue the United States could carry out precision strikes on North Korea's nuclear and missile arsenals, and then deter North Korea from striking back, avoiding a large-scale war. That is a dangerous fantasy, on several counts. First, the U.S. government doesn't know for sure where all North Korea's missiles and nuclear weapons are: even the U.S. military can't hit what it can't find. Second, given that the Kim regime's legitimacy is based on its claim to protect the country from foreign attack, Kim Jong-un would likely feel he had to retaliate. Secretary Mattis and Gen. Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, understand completely both the dangers and the limited value of any such a strike.

Don't take my word that we're not about to go to war — listen to the people whose money and lives are on the line. The crisis of the last couple of weeks has led the South Korean stock market to decline a few percent, but that means back to where it was in May. Last I checked, trending topics on South Korean social media included a hip-hop artist, the latest lottery prizes, a nude bed and breakfast and a corruption scandal. In other words: life goes on.

There is still a danger that the sides could blunder over the brink inadvertently — a danger that will tick up a notch as major U.S. and South Korean military exercises begin this month. North Korea regularly carries out provocations against the South. South Korea is fed up, and has said that next time it will hit back twice as hard. Kim Jong-un would likely feel obliged to retaliate in turn. And with hatred, misperception and cyber attacks on all sides, the potential for escalation to full-scale conflict seems clear. In a large-scale war, the U.S. and South Korean forces would try to destroy the North Korean regime and take out every missile they could find — which would give North Korea the incentive to use them before they lose them, with horrifying consequences.

Major U.S. and South Korean military exercises this month could increase the tensions.

What to do? First, we need to accept reality. North Korea is not going to give up its nuclear weapons as long as the Kim regime remains in power. Denuclearization should remain the long-term goal, but it cannot be the immediate focus of U.S. policy. Second, the United States and its allies need to focus on deterring, containing and defending against North Korea — while keeping up the sanctions pressure for Kim's regime to change course. (The tough recent UN sanctions resolution against North Korea, which both China and Russia voted for, represents one of the Trump administration's biggest diplomatic successes so far.) Making sure South Korea and Japan see U.S. protection as ironclad — and do not view the United States as unnecessarily risking war — is crucial to quieting the voices calling for those countries to develop their own nuclear weapons (something President Trump didn't help when he encouraged them to do so during the campaign).

Third, we need to get going on the negotiation track. The focus should be to reduce the risk of inadvertent conflict through a variety of confidence-building measures — from more lines for political and military crisis communication to preventing incidents at sea — and to get North Korea to freeze further nuclear and missile testing and production. That means putting substantial offers on the table, including a step-by-step path out of sanctions.

After the Cuban Missile Crisis, President Kennedy said the greatest lesson he drew was to always leave the adversary a face-saving way to back down. It's time for all sides in the Korean crisis to heed that lesson.

(Source: *The National Interest*)

Trump is just six senate votes away from impeachment

By Elaine C. Kamarck

At some point in 2019 (if not sooner) a Republican Senator may walk into the Oval Office and say to President Trump: "Mr. President, we don't have the votes," at which point the Trump presidency will end in a resignation or a conviction in the Senate.

This scenario actually occurred forty-three years ago this summer when Republican Senator Barry Goldwater walked into the Oval Office and told Republican President Richard Nixon that they didn't have the votes in the Senate to save his presidency.

Following impeachment in the House, a trial takes place in the Senate. Conviction requires two-thirds of the Senate and by my count there are already twelve senators who have shown a willingness to take on the president when they believe he is in the wrong.

If you add that to the forty-eight Democrats in the Senate (who have shown no inclination to work with this President), Donald Trump could be six votes away from conviction in the Senate.

Of course this assumes that the forces now in motion continue on their same trajectory and result in an impeachment vote. They are: the investigations into the Trump campaign; evidence of weakness in the Republican base; historical trends indicating a possible Democratic takeover in the House; and, last but not least, defiance in the Senate.

This last trend should be particularly worrisome for the president. Article I of the Constitution gives them the last word on the presidency. And yet instead of making friends in the Senate, Trump has done exactly the opposite.

■ The Senate failed

After the Senate failed to pass his Obamacare replacement, Trump took to Twitter to denounce them as "fools" and "total quitters." That could not have gone over well with the senators who opposed him along the way. One of them, Senator Susan Collins (R-Maine), arrived home to an impromptu gathering of supporters at the Portland airport who applauded her vote against the president's replacement of Obamacare.

Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) was defiant after being called out by the president, saying "No second thoughts at all. None," after her vote against the president on health care. Senator Mike Lee (R-Utah) has been none too pleased with the efforts to repeal Obamacare, insisting that it "does not go far enough in lowering premiums for middle-class families."

But perhaps the most high profile op-



Senator Jeff Flake, (R-Ariz.) wrote an entire book accusing President Trump of abandoning conservative Republican principles.

position to the president came from Senator John McCain (R-Ariz.), who returned to Washington from his hospital bed to cast the dramatic and final vote killing the Republican replacement for Obamacare. After Trump, during the presidential campaign, ridiculed McCain's seven years in a prison camp in Hanoi, the Arizona senator showed he is clearly not afraid to take on the president.

Another Republican senator from the west, Dean Heller (R-Nev.) also felt free to criticize the President and vote against him on several key issues. Senators Rob Portman (R-Ohio) and Shelley Moore Capito (R-W.Va.) have been vocal in their opposition to the president's budget — especially the proposed cuts in drug treatment programs.

Capito threatened to lead "a bipartisan group of my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee and in the Senate to reject those proposed cuts." They are part of the 18 Republican senators who voted against the Trump budget.

■ Major setback

A second major setback for the president in the Senate was passage of a Russia sanctions bill that curtailed the president's

freedom of action in adjusting sanctions — a clear signal that an overwhelming number of senators don't trust the president on Russia issues.

As a further reflection of that inter-branch distrust, there are two bipartisan bills in the Senate which would check the president's ability to fire the special prosecutor Robert Mueller looking into the Russia issue.

One is sponsored by Senator Thom Tillis (R.N.C.) and Senator Christopher Coons (D-Del.) and the other by Senator Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) and Senator Cory Booker (D-N.J.). Senator Graham has gone so far as to warn the president that firing Mueller would mark "the beginning of the end of the Trump Administration."

And then there is the man who used to be the president's closest friend in the Senate, Jeff Sessions, who endorsed Trump when no one else would and became his Attorney General only to suffer weeks of embarrassing insults from the President.

Senators such as Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) have defended Sessions against the president, warning that if Sessions is fired there will not be a confirmation hearing for another attorney general this year.

Senator Rand Paul (R-Ky.) has been a

consistent thorn in President Trump's side, repeatedly questioning his foreign policy appointments and insisting in an op-ed, "Make no mistake, no matter who is president or what their party is, it is my firm belief that the president needs congressional authorization for military action, as required by the Constitution."

Finally, Senator Jeff Flake, (R-Ariz.) wrote an entire book accusing President Trump of abandoning conservative Republican principles. Flake is facing a tough re-election race, and his book *Conscience of a Conservative* (the same title used by his hero Senator Barry Goldwater 57 years ago), is either a Hail Mary play, a genuine attack on what Trump has done to his party, or both. In it he writes, "Never has a party so quickly or easily abandoned its core principles as my party did in the course of the 2016 campaign."

These 12 Republicans have no fear of the president. You could probably add Senator Cory Gardner (R-Colo.), who is up for re-election in 2020 and whose state also voted for Clinton in 2016. The president needs to start making friends in the United States Senate.

(Source: *Newsweek*)

Nature of Las Ramblas attack provides harsh lessons in fight against terror

The apparent terrorist attack in Barcelona underlines three harsh lessons learned by security services — and the general public — over recent months and years.

The first is that the use of vehicles as weapons is now an established tactic by extremists, one of the dozen or so employed in the last two decades that should be considered a standard part of the terrorist arsenal. In the last 13 months there have been similar attacks in France, Germany, Sweden and the UK.

A woman was killed by a car driven at speed by a rightwing extremist in the U.S. last week in slightly different circumstances.

The precise motivation and the identity of the Barcelona attackers will become clear in the next few hours. Islamic State [ISIS] has claimed responsibility on its Amaq news agency, though in recent months such claims have become highly unreliable.

Individuals close to ISIS and active on social media have been celebrating the attack, but this does not necessarily indicate a direct connection between the attacker or attackers and the group.

Tactics spread among militants when they are seen to work. There is no skill needed to drive a vehicle into a crowd, nor any difficulty involved in obtaining one. This makes a car, van or lorry an ideal weapon for today's terrorists, who are often inspired by a group but are not actually part of it, and for the most part, lack the training and means necessary for more complex attacks.

The second lesson is that there is now little discrimination in targeting. This means tourists are very much in the line of fire. A decade or so ago, ISIS sought to send specific messages through their violence. Random attacks against unarmed civilians were seen as ineffective, and even counter-productive in terms of garnering public support in the Muslim world. The 9/11 attack was launched against targets seen by al-Qaida as symbols of U.S. economic, political and military power.

In 2004, Spain was the target of the bloodiest terrorist attack on European soil when commuter trains were bombed by al-Qaida sympathizers in Madrid. One aim was to undermine Spanish support for military intervention in Iraq, and influence an election. Spain was also a particular target because of the historic resonance for militants of the Islamic kingdom of Andalusia, lost to Christendom 900 years ago.



The attack on tourists in Barcelona followed a now familiar pattern and shows the indiscriminate nature of today's terrorists.

■ Public spaces

This has changed. ISIS has led a broader shift towards attacking anyone, anywhere, anyhow. Public spaces, always inherently vulnerable, are now more at risk than ever. Music fans in Manchester, summer revelers in Nice, pub-goers in London, and of course tourists, whether taking pictures on Westminster Bridge, on a beach in Tunisia, or on an airplane returning to Russia from Egypt.

Western holidaymakers overseas were targeted long ago. In 1997 there was a bloody attack in Luxor by Egyptian militants. But tourists were never a principle focus of violence. Now, they appear to be. Anyone driving a van on to the central pedestrianized concourse in Las Ramblas, one of the most crowded tourist zones in the world, was trying to kill foreign travelers.

Spanish authorities were aware of the threat, and at Christmas sought to reinforce the protection of public spaces. One plot to use a truck against pedestrians was thwarted in November. Bollards, concrete blocks and other defenses were considered. Intelligence gathering was increased.

But there is little that can be done in a hugely popular Mediterranean port city to guard against such an attack, and the third lesson is that good policing can keep you safe only for so long.

French intelligence services, in part due to their experience of fighting terrorists in the 1990s, were well ahead of their UK or U.S. counterparts for a decade or so. But by 2012, French spies, under-resourced and undermined by poor national and Europe-wide intelligence sharing, were struggling to contain the threat. They were ill-equipped to face the offensive launched in 2014 by ISIS against their country from its newly won enclaves in Syria and Iraq.

The same may be true for Spanish services, which are much admired for their professionalism in the counter-terrorism world. Spain invested heavily in intelligence agencies after the 2004 attacks, building up a formidable capability for gathering information and acting on it. This has kept the country safe from terrorism for 13 years. Major plots were broken up in 2008. Last year Spain foiled at least 10 separate conspiracies. This year two more networks have been uncovered, including at least one with connections to ISIS-led attackers elsewhere in Europe.

As Britons discovered this year, just because there are no successful attacks does not mean there's no terrorists. So the final harsh lesson is that something, or someone, will get through eventually.

(Source: *The Guardian*)

Survival of premature babies more likely now than in mid-1990s, study shows

Premature babies born in recent years are more likely to survive and less likely to have severe disabilities than those born in the mid-1990s, research has revealed.

According to the World Health Organisation, around 15 million babies worldwide are born before the 37th week of pregnancy every year, with premature babies at higher risk of severe disabilities, such as cerebral palsy, as well as a greater chance of delayed development of language and motor skills.

But experts say the new research offers good news, at least for children in developed countries.

"Not only has survival [of premature babies] improved, but survival without these [severe] disabilities," said Pierre-Yves Ancel, professor of public health at the French National Institute of Health and Medical Research and co-author of the research.

The latest study sought to probe not only the later health of babies born extremely prematurely – below 26 weeks of gestation – but also those born on a less dramatic time-frame at 27-34 weeks, that have been studied less often.

"When you go up to the higher gestations you start to include more and more children that are born prematurely," said Andrei Morgan, another author of the research.

Published in the British Medical Journal by a team from a number of French institutions, the research drew on the results of a study known as Epi-page 2. This study collected data from across France for babies born between 22 and 34 weeks of gestation during 2011 – with a total of 5,567 live births noted.

Based on medical questionnaires from 3,599 of the children assessed at around two years old (an age relating to their due date), rather than their birth date) the results reveal that 6.9% of children born at 24-26 weeks had cerebral palsy. The figure fell to 4.3% for those born at 27-31 weeks and to 1% for those born at 32-34 weeks. Fewer than 1% of the children overall were found to have severe visual impairments or hearing difficulties.

The medical data was also compared to that collected in the original Epi-page study, which tracked the outcomes for premature babies born at



"Data suggests that improvements in care to mother and baby are now having a beneficial impact in terms of survival."

22-34 weeks in nine regions of France during 1997.

The results reveal that since 1997, survival for babies born at 22-31 weeks has increased by 6%, while survival without sensory or neuromotor disabilities increased by just over 7%. No change was seen for less premature babies, with survival – and survival without severe disabilities – high in both studies. More specifically the rate of cerebral palsy among toddlers declined by 3.3% both for those born at 24-31 as well as those born at 32-34 weeks.

"It is not clear what causes cerebral palsy – it is probably a combination of factors," said Morgan, adding that advances in the care of pregnant women, women in labour and newborns are all likely to have contributed to the improved rates, with improvements in screening for various conditions also likely to have increased the rates of survival without severe disabilities.

The latest study also asked parents

to complete a questionnaire probing various areas of neurodevelopment, including their toddler's communication abilities and motor skills.

The results from 2,506 children without severe disabilities reveal that just over half of children born at 24-26 weeks were found to have scores markedly below average. Those who spent longer in the womb fared better, with just under 41% and just over 36% of children born at 27-31 weeks and 32-34 weeks respectively falling below the threshold.

That, says Ancel, suggests that while the rates of severe disabilities among premature babies is improving, they remain at risk of developmental delay.

Andrew Shennan, clinical director of Tommy's Prematurity Research Centre in the UK, agreed that the research showed those born preterm were still at risk of delayed development, but added there was good news.

"This data suggests that improvements in care to mother and baby are now having a beneficial impact in terms

of survival," he said.

Dieter Wolke, professor of developmental psychology and individual differences at the University of Warwick who was not involved in the study, agreed, adding that the positive findings mirrored those of other large studies.

But, he said, it was of concern that babies born very preterm were at risk of developmental delay.

"With higher survival of preterm children but no improvement in neurodevelopmental outcome, there will be overall more children with neurodevelopmental problems in the community," he said, adding that many problems are linked to cognitive and social skills.

"More emphasis should be put in follow-up programmes on social and communications skills and include experts in these fields, [such as] psychologists [and] speech therapists, to suggest appropriate interventions," he said.

(Source: The Guardian)

The effects of low-intensity cardio

By Brian Willett

Although exercise methods such as high-intensity interval training and high-impact aerobics may be popular for their calorie-torching potential, low-intensity cardio has remained popular. This tried-and-true method of exercise may not be the most new or exciting way to work out, but it does offer numerous benefits that can make it an important part of anyone's exercise plan. Before you begin a workout program, consult your doctor to make sure you don't include any off-limits exercises in your routine.

Defining low-intensity cardio

To reap the benefits of low-intensity cardio, make sure what you're doing actually is low intensity. If you're used to performing sprint workouts or high-intensity cardio, you may slip into your old habits and hinder progress toward your current goals. Low-intensity cardio is performed at between 40 and 60 percent of your maximum heart rate. Calculate your maximum heart rate by subtracting your age from 220. Multiplying that number by 0.4 and 0.6 will give you the end points for your low-intensity cardio range.

Calorie burning

Low-intensity cardio can help you drop pounds or maintain your current weight, as many forms of this type of exercise can help you burn calories. For example, walking at just 2.5 miles per hour can burn 257 calories per hour, while bicycling at a leisurely pace can burn 343 calories per hour. These calorie expenditure statistics are based on a weight of 180 pounds; if you weigh more than that amount, you will burn more calories.

Muscular endurance

Low-intensity cardiovascular exercise can be an effective method of building muscular endurance. While sprinting and high-intensity exercise can be helpful for building muscle, long sessions of low-intensity cardio are superior for muscular endurance as they provide a high number of repetitions, such as steps or cycle pedal strokes, at low resistance. This type of exercise builds muscular endurance rather than raw strength.

Appetite control

Low-intensity cardio can also help you control your appetite. From a psychological standpoint, you may feel less hungry and tired because you haven't exerted yourself to the point of sweating heavily and haven't lifted large amounts of weight. Research from the January 2009 edition of the "American Journal of Physiology: Regulatory, Integrative and Comparative Physiology" indicates that long sessions of low-intensity cardio can also influence hormone activity in a manner that blunts hunger. A study found that a 60-minute session of cardio increased the body's release of an appetite-blunting hormone and decreased the release of a hormone that promotes hunger.

(Source: livestrong.com)

What is turmeric good for?

Belonging to the ginger family, turmeric has been used in East India and the Middle East for thousands of years, and is now one of the most highly-prized spices in the world. It's actually unclear whether it was first used for its peppery flavor and the unique kick it lends to foods. Ancient medicinal uses for turmeric began when it was noted as an anti-inflammatory agent, and then to treat a wide variety of conditions, such as jaundice, menstrual problems, blood in the urine, hemorrhaging, toothaches, bruises, chest pain, flatulence, and colic.

The name "turmeric" is derived from the Persian word for «saffron», the neon yellow-orange hue used to make curry and yellow mustard. A domesticated plant rather than wild, India remains one of the most prominent producers of turmeric, along with Indonesia, the Philippines, China, Taiwan, Jamaica, and Haiti.

Health benefits of turmeric

Basic nutritional aspects of turmeric include a 26% daily value in manganese and 16% in iron. It's also an excellent source of fiber, vitamin B6, potassium, and healthy amounts of vitamin C and magnesium.

While it's improbable that someone would ingest an entire ounce of turmeric in one sitting (although it would be completely safe), the nutritional aspects listed above can be seen more easily in this amount than in a teaspoon, which accounts for zero amount of anything. But one tablespoon, being a more reasonable serving, does communicate excellent phytonutrients. In fact, turmeric is effective even in very small quantities, such as one serving of a turmeric-spiced dish.

The health benefits of turmeric include an improved ability to digest fats, reducing gas and bloating, decreased congestion, and improved skin conditions such as eczema, psoriasis, and acne.

Turmeric has been used as a powerful anti-inflammatory in Chinese and Indian medicine for millennia. Curcumin, the primary pharmacological agent in this spice, contains proven effects in this area that are comparable to over-the-counter anti-inflammatory agents as well as some prescription medications. But curcumin doesn't produce the toxic effect that synthetic drugs sometimes do, such as ulcer formation, internal bleeding, and even a lowered white blood cell count.

More reported health benefits of turmeric include relief from joint pain, such as rheumatoid arthritis, reduced joint swelling, and greater range of motion when used regularly. It's another case of the spice alone having similar effects to that of a prescription medication, but with fewer symptomatic downsides.

Research also suggests that turmeric may be helpful in treating inflammatory bowel diseases, lowering cholesterol counts, protecting the heart, relieving indigestion, improving liver function, and even preventing Alzheimer's disease. Cancer prevention and inhibited cancer cell growth – specifically cancer of the breast, colon, prostate, and lung, and childhood leukemia – are also on the list of possible benefits.

(Source: foodfacts.mercola.com)

What to eat for... Healthy joints

How these ingredients and others promote healthy joints...

Nuts and seeds

Full of omega-3, these healthy fats hold anti-inflammatory properties. We've used chia seeds in our porridge because they're one of the richest seed sources of omega-3. Oily fish like salmon, mackerel, sardines and trout also contain a potent form of omega-3, which dampens inflammation and relieves stiffness. Aim for two or more portions of fish per week and use gentle methods of cooking such as poaching and baking to protect their beneficial oils.

Colorful fruit & veg

Eating a rainbow of fresh, dried and/or frozen fruit and veg will mean your diet is full of potent antioxidant vitamins, which fight free radicals and reduce the damage caused by inflammation. Stars of the show include kale and broccoli, which research has shown may protect joints from damage, thanks to a compound called sulforaphane.

Ginger and turmeric

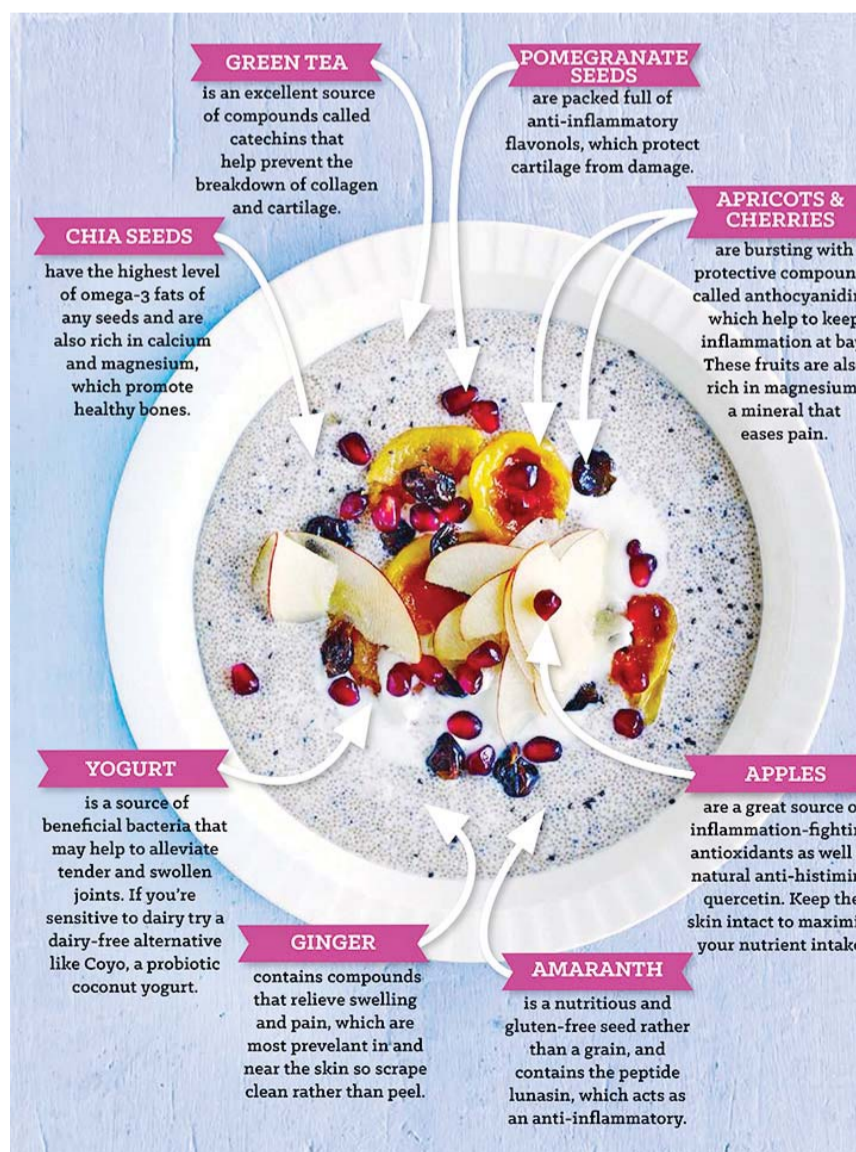
Both of these warming spices contain potent anti-inflammatory compounds – use liberally in your cooking.

Lean protein

Protein is key for building healthy connective tissue and inadequate intakes may lead to loss of muscle mass and diminished strength. Poultry, fish and plant-based proteins such as beans and pulses are great options.

Optimize your nutrient intake

Amaranth Certain medications interfere with the metabolism of vitamins and minerals like folate, vitamin B6, zinc and magnesium. Low levels of nutrients like B vitamins (which includes folate and B12) can increase your risk of joint degeneration, so include dark green leafy veg as well as gluten-free whole-grains like rice, buckwheat and amaranth. We've soaked the amaranth for our



Low levels of the 'sunshine' vitamin are associated with osteoarthritis.

porridge overnight as this speeds up the cooking time and reduces levels of naturally occurring phytic acid, which means you absorb more of amaranth's nutritious goodness.

Is there anything I should avoid?

Some arthritis sufferers have reported that omitting certain foods has helped to alleviate their symptoms. Foods commonly cited include oranges, tomatoes and peppers as well as dairy foods and wheat. Because there is no scientific evidence yet to support these claims it may be worth keeping a food diary to see what works for you. Don't omit any major food groups from your diet without seeking the advice of your GP or dietician first.

What else can I do to protect my joints?

- Maintain a healthy weight – for every extra pound you lose, you can reduce the load on your joints three-fold.

- Get active – aim for 30 minutes of gentle exercise most days – try joint-supportive activities such as swimming.

- Rest your joints regularly – listen to your body and know when you need to take time out.

- Stop smoking – those who smoke are twice as likely to develop cartilage loss.

- Boost your vitamin D levels – the action of sunlight on your skin promotes the production of vitamin D. Low levels of the 'sunshine' vitamin are associated with osteoarthritis, so head outside in the morning or late afternoon when the sun is less intense without sunscreen for 15 minutes. Don't forget vitamin D-rich foods such as oily fish, eggs and fortified spreads.

- Medicate mindfully – take painkillers with or after your meals to prevent gut discomfort – ask your GP for advice.

(Source: bbc.goodfood.com)

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 Google CEO Sundar Pichai on Thursday denounced the recent violence by extremists in both Charlottesville and Barcelona, calling the incidents in both cities "terrorism [that] is designed to divide us." "Terrorism is terrorism and it takes many forms," Pichai said in an email sent to employees, which he also posted on Twitter.

2 Instagram Direct now lets you reply with a photo or video. Starting with Instagram version 10.34, you can reply with a photo or video to specific photos, videos, and reshared posts in Direct.

3 Cisco posted a seventh consecutive quarter of declining revenue. The computer networking company avoided any big downgrades from Wall Street analysts after reporting a 4% decline for its fiscal fourth quarter revenue.

4 Facebook shut down an anonymous group used by its Trump-supporting employees after people started harassing one another. The group was abruptly shut down by Facebook in December 2016. CEO Mark Zuckerberg later told employees that the group had been used to harass others.

5 The Ukrainian central bank said on Friday it had warned state-owned and private lenders of the appearance of new malware as security services said Ukraine faced cyber attacks like those that knocked out global systems in June. The June 27 attack, dubbed NotPetya, took down many Ukrainian government agencies and businesses.

6 The ousted chief executive of Uber Technologies Inc rejected a lawsuit filed against him by one of the company's top investors as a "public and personal attack" without merit, according to court documents filed late on Thursday.

7 Cybersecurity firm UpGuard has discovered that personal information from over 1.8 million Chicago residents was unintentionally exposed by voting machine supplier Election Systems & Software (ES&S). The backup files of voter data were found on an Amazon Web Services device and weren't protected with a password.

8 Skype is making a preview version of its new desktop design available for users to try out. Skype says the changes are made with the larger screen of desktop in mind. Chats are getting a notification panel and you'll be able to see conversations that @ mentioned you while you were away. There's also a new media gallery in chat that helps you find images, links or documents that were shared with you through the feature.

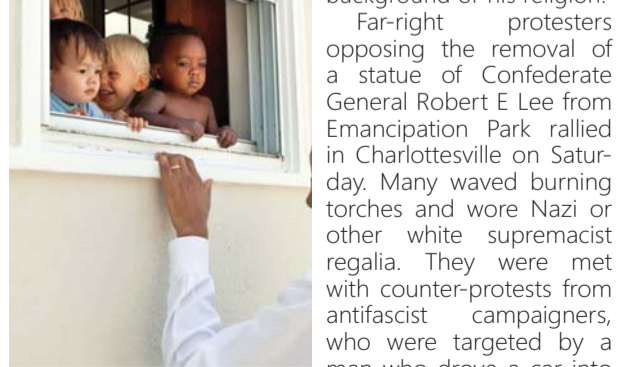
9 In a bid to promote "authentic communication," Facebook will now demote clickbait stories that present static images as video along with images with fake playback buttons in them. While the former practice just ends up confusing users, the latter actually tricks people into clicking through to a website.

10 The new high-end smartphone from the co-creator of Android is finally available to order. Essential says the device, called the Essential Phone, is available at Sprint, Best Buy, and its website and it costs \$699.

Obama's anti-racism tweet after Charlottesville is most liked ever on Twitter

A tweet by Barack Obama condemning racism in the aftermath of a far-right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, has become the most liked tweet ever, with more than 3 million social media users so far endorsing the sentiment.

The tweet, quoting the late South African president Nelson Mandela, read: "No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin or his background or his religion."



Far-right protesters opposing the removal of a statue of Confederate General Robert E Lee from Emancipation Park rallied in Charlottesville on Saturday. Many waved burning torches and wore Nazi or other white supremacist regalia. They were met with counter-protests from antifascist campaigners, who were targeted by a man who drove a car into a group, killing civil rights activist Heather Heyer and injuring several more.

In the wake of Heyer's death, many in the US and across the world criticised a terse response from President Donald Trump on Twitter, followed by a press conference in which he failed to condemn white supremacists.

Many on social media pointed out the difference in tone between US presidents 44 and 45.

Six of the 10 most liked tweets of all time are by Obama, from his personal @BarackObama account and as @POTUS44.

(Source: WashingtonPost)

Cloud is the ignored dimension of security

By Asha McLean

When it comes to enterprise security, the cloud is the ignored dimension, a report from networking vendor Cisco has found.

According to the Cisco 2017 Mid-year Cybersecurity Report, the cloud is a whole new frontier for hackers, and they are increasingly exploring its potential as an attack vector as often cloud systems are "mission-critical" for organisations.

Hackers, the report explains, also recognise that they can infiltrate connected systems faster by breaching cloud systems.

Since the end of 2016, Cisco said it observed an increase in activity targeting cloud systems, with attacks ranging in sophistication.

In January 2017, the company's researchers caught attackers hunting for valid breached corporate identities using brute-force attacks. The hackers were creating a library of verified corporate user credentials, which saw them attempt to log into multiple corporate cloud deployments using servers on 20 suspicious IP addresses, Cisco said.

The report says that open authorisation (OAuth) -- which allows an end user's account information to be used by third-party services, such as Facebook, without exposing the user's password -- is in fact creating risk, in addition to its intended purpose of powering the cloud.

"OAuth risk and poor management of single privileged user accounts create security gaps that adversaries can easily exploit," the report states. "Malicious hackers have already moved to the cloud and are working relentlessly to breach corporate cloud environments."

According to Cisco, some of the larg-



est breaches to date began with the compromise and misuse of a single privileged user account.

"Gaining access to a privileged account can provide hackers with the virtual 'keys to the kingdom' and the ability to carry out widespread theft and inflict significant damage," the report explains. "However, most organisations aren't paying enough attention to this risk."

The average enterprise today has more than 1,000 unique apps in its environment and more than 20,000 different installations of those apps.

Cisco said its threat researchers examined 4,410 privileged user accounts at 495 organisations and found that six in every 100 end users per cloud platform have privileged user accounts, with many organisations having an average of two privileged users that carry out most of the

administrative tasks.

As part of good practice, Cisco recommends administrators pay close attention to the IP addresses used to log in, with the average two users generally accessing the platform via the same handful of IP addresses.

"Activity outside those normal patterns should be investigated," Cisco said.

Another action Cisco recommends is to have administrators log out once they have completed their required tasks, as open sessions make it easier for unauthorised users to gain access and to do so undetected.

The recent phishing campaign that targeted Gmail users and attempted to abuse the OAuth infrastructure underscored the OAuth security risk, Cisco said.

The bogus Docs app used Google's OAuth implementation to request access

to the Gmail accounts of targets. If users granted the app access, it sent the same phishing email to the user's contacts.

Google reported that about 0.1 percent of its 1 billion users were affected by the campaign, with Cisco "conservatively" estimating that more than 300,000 corporations were infected by the worm.

As companies look to expand their use of the cloud, Cisco urges them to understand their role in ensuring cloud security, noting that cloud service providers are responsible for the physical, legal, operational, and infrastructure security of the technology they sell, but businesses are responsible for securing the use of underlying cloud services.

"Applying the same best practices that they use to ensure security in on-premises environments can go a long way toward preventing unauthorised access of cloud systems," Cisco explained.

The company's midyear report covers multiple threat types across many vectors, with Cisco noting its security experts are becoming increasingly concerned about the accelerating pace of change and sophistication in the overall global cyber threat landscape.

Revenue generation is still the top objective of most threat actors, Cisco said, noting however that increasing is the malicious inclination to lock systems and destroy data as part of their attack process -- simply because they can.

"The breadth and depth of recent ransomware attacks alone demonstrate how adept adversaries are at exploiting security gaps and vulnerabilities across devices and networks for maximum impact," the report says.

(Source: zdnet)

Nokia 8 hopes to beat Apple and Samsung with 'bothie'

Nokia has launched the most important new handset in its attempts to revitalise the once world-beating brand for the modern smartphone era dominated by Samsung, Apple and China's Huawei.

The Nokia 8 marks the culmination of efforts to bring the Finnish telecoms brand back to the mainstream handset market, which kicked off six months ago with the nostalgia-inducing remake of the classic Nokia 3310 feature phone.

The Android flagship smartphone, designed to compete with the likes of the iPhone 7 and Samsung's Galaxy S8, features a polished aluminium body, Carl Zeiss cameras, spatial audio pulled from Nokia's high-end 360-degree camera and a high-resolution 5.3-inch screen.

Nokia handsets are being revived by HMD Global, a private equity-backed firm led by former employees of the Finnish company.

The company is pushing what it calls the "bothie" as the next evolution of the selfie, using Nokia's Dual Sight technology to fire up both the rear and front-facing cameras at the same time, shooting video or photos of a subject and the smartphone operator simultaneously, which can be shared live directly to



Facebook or YouTube.

"We know that fans are creating and sharing live content more than ever before, with millions of photos and videos shared every minute on social media," said Juho Sarvikas, HMD chief product officer. "People are inspired by the content they consume and are looking for new ways to create their own."

The 7.9 mm-thick smartphone has similar specifications to other top-end rivals, but lacks the super-slim bezel designs of the best devices from 2017, with large panels above and below the screen, which have been

eliminated by rivals.

Nokia's rekindled partnership with Zeiss has produced dual 13-megapixel cameras for the back of the phone. The new so-called computational photography technique is similar to that employed by Apple, Google, Huawei and LG in their latest smartphones.

The new phone has spatial audio technology that was previously used in Nokia's high-end OZO 360 camera, which can play back sound in multiple directions, imitating how it was captured during recording.

Ben Wood, chief of research at CCS Insight, said: "The Nokia 8 has some innovative features including the dual-sight function on the camera and the 360-degree audio recording but it's not yet clear whether these are game-changing features that will lure consumers away from established rivals such as Apple and Samsung."

Coming off the back of the launches of the Nokia 3, 5 and 6 smartphones aimed at the low-end smartphone market, HMD said the Nokia 8 will cost €599 (£546) and will go on sale in early September, placing it in the middle of the launch season for new smartphones from both Samsung and Apple.

(Source: Guardian)

Samsung Galaxy S8 is the best-selling Android phone in Q2 2017



The only real competitor for Samsung's flagships are Apple's iPhones, so there will be no surprise if the Galaxy S8 will be the best-selling Android smartphone in 2017.

The latest research from Strategy Analytics suggests Samsung Galaxy S8 and S8+ smartphones shipped 19 million units worldwide.

Apple's iPhone 7 remains world's most popular smartphone model overall with no less than 16.9 million units shipped, while its bigger brother, the iPhone 7 Plus ended Q2 with 15.1 million units shipped. Apple's iPhone 7 models account for 8.9% of the global smartphone market share, while Samsung's Galaxy S8 and S8+ captured only 5.3%.

(Source: StrategyAnalytics)

Lenovo posts Q1 loss due to higher costs, slowing PC demand



Chinese personal computer maker Lenovo Group Ltd posted a first-quarter loss on Friday citing higher costs and slower growth in the personal computer market, and said the outlook was challenging due to supply constraints. Lenovo, which lost its position as the world's largest PC maker to HP Inc in the quarter through June, lost \$72 million compared with a profit of \$173 million for the same period last year.

Revenue was flat at \$10.01 billion, in line with an estimate of \$10 billion. Lenovo has suffered from a global decline in PC demand as consumers turn to smartphones and tablets, particularly in its home market of China.

(Source: indianexpress)

Technology companies denounce neo-Nazis



Technology companies join together to condemn white supremacists and President Trump in aftermath Charlottesville rally.

Apple, LinkedIn, Spotify and Twitter have joined a growing chorus of technology companies to hit out at the far right and Donald Trump's attempt to put white supremacists and leftwing counter-demonstrators at Saturday's Charlottesville protest on the same moral plane.

Following the lead of Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg, Google, Go Daddy and others, Apple CEO Tim Cook pledged \$1m donations to the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) and the Anti-Defamation League and sent a strongly worded memo to staff quoting Martin Luther King, about the violence in Charlottesville on Saturday.

(Source: Reuters)

GitHub's CEO is stepping down for the second time

GitHub CEO Chris Wanstrath will step down from his role as soon as he finds a replacement.

Wanstrath, one of three founders of the popular development platform for computer programmers, announced his plan at an all-hands meeting in San Francisco, where the company was celebrating hitting a new financial milestone, according to Forbes, which first reported the news.

Wanstrath will become executive chairman once a replacement is found.



The move will mark the second time that Wanstrath has stepped down from the CEO role. He was the company's first CEO, but was replaced in 2012 by fellow co-founder Tom Preston-Werner. When Preston-Werner resigned in 2014 following an investigation into gender based harassment, Wanstrath returned to the CEO role (the company later said the investigation found no evidence of illegal practices, according to the New York Times).

(Source: Businessinsider)

Iran legend Mahdavia hopes Persepolis win AFC Champions League

S P O R T S Islamic Republic of Iran's Persepolis meet Al Ahli of Saudi Arabia in a highly-anticipated 2017 AFC Champions League quarter-final clash on Tuesday in Muscat, Oman.

For such an exciting encounter, the-afc has picked the Iranian club legend to give his views on the mouthwatering meeting.

Legendary Team Melli star Mehdi Mahdavia began and ended his professional career as a player at Persepolis.

The former winger, who numbers over a 100 caps for IR Iran, was one of his nation's leading players and enjoyed an impressive spell in Germany with Hamburg SV and Eintracht Frankfurt.

■ What have you made of your former clubs' performances in the AFC Champions League so far?

Mahdavia: I think Persepolis has given a good performance this season in the AFC Champions League and they are one of the strongest sides in the quarter-final.

■ How have you rated their work in the transfer market?

Mahdavia: They did a good job in the transfer window. They have signed a central defender and a dangerous forward who had scored many goals in previous season. Persepolis have also new faces in the center and left side of the pitch.

■ Which players have the potential to be game-changers?

Mahdavia: This is such an important match. I think Persepolis's strikers, specially Mehdi Taremi, can change the result.



■ What are your predictions for the two matches?

Mahdavia: Well, I'd like it if Persepolis can win both matches. But at the end of the day, getting to the next stage is more important to us and all the fans.

■ Do you think your former team have what it takes to go all the way and win the 2017 AFC Champions League?

Mahdavia: Persepolis have key players in all areas of the pitch. And they are a very well-organized team. I hope

they can finally become Asian champions after so many years, although there is plenty of hard work left to do. Becoming AFC Champions League winners would make the Persepolis fans so happy. I'm really hopeful this year.

Hamed Haddadi reaches 700 points in Asia



S P O R T S Iranian basketball national team center Hamed Haddadi became the first Asian player to reach 700 points in the continent's competitions.

Haddadi top scored Iran with 23 points in the match against Lebanon in the 2017 FIBA Asia Cup.

He has helped Iran win FIBA Asia Championship three times in 2007 Tokushima, 2009 Tianjin and 2013 Manila respectively and won a

bronze medal with the team in 2015 Changsha.

Haddadi started his playing career in his homeland team Shahin Ahvaz in 1999 and has played at Memphis Grizzlies, Dakota Wizards, Phoenix Suns, Sichuan Blue Whales and Qingdao DoubleStar Eagles.

Team Melli will face South Korea in the FIBA Asia Cup semi-final on Saturday in the competition underway in Beirut, Lebanon.

The first match always the toughest match, Vakili says



S P O R T S Iran coach Reza Vakili Farjad says that their first match against Italy in the 2017 FIVB Volleyball Boys' U19 World Championship is the hardest match.

Iran will start the campaign on Saturday with a match against Italy in Pool D.

The Iranian team have been drawn along with Italy, Czech Republic, Mexico and China.

"We are just concentrating on Italy match since the first match is always the hardest. If we can start good the competition we will keep the team motivated," Vakili said in the pre-match news conference.

"Italy are a strong team and we have a difficult match ahead but we also have so many talented players and we can start seeing the future players of the sport in this generation," he added.

Russian football chief rules out Moscow as venue for friendly with Iran

The Russian capital of Moscow will not be the venue for a mooted friendly football match between the Russian and Iranian national teams and two other options are under negotiations at the moment, Vitaly Mutko, the president of the Russian Football Union (RFU), told TASS on Thursday.

A source close to the situation told TASS last week that the RFU and the Football Federation Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) reached an agreement to hold a friendly football match between

the two national teams in Russia on October 10.

"We will come up soon with an official statement," Mutko, who also serves as a Russian deputy prime minister, said in an interview with TASS. "We are still in talks on a possible venue for the match."

"The game will be undoubtedly held in Russia, but Moscow is not the venue," Mutko stated. "Two options are currently negotiated."

Iran, which holds 24th place in the most recently published FIFA World

Rankings list, have already passed the qualifying round for the 2018 FIFA World Cup and secured the birth in the global quadrennial football tournament, which will be held next year for the first time in Russia.

Russia, ranked 62nd in FIFA World Rankings, played a friendly match against Iran in Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), in February losing the game 0-1. The team of the former Soviet Union played against Iran on three occasions winning all of them - in

1976 (Olympic Games 2-1), in 1978 (1-0) and in 1985 (2-0).

National teams around the globe are currently in the qualifying stage, battling for a place in the 2018 FIFA World Cup, while Russia as the host nation has been already guaranteed a berth in the world's main quadrennial football event.

Therefore, the Russian national team is playing friendly football matches in the run-up to the much anticipated 2018 FIFA World Cup.

(Source: TASS)

Costa accuses Chelsea of pricing him out of Atletico move

Chelsea striker Diego Costa has accused the club of pricing him out of a move back to Atletico Madrid in his continuing stand-off with manager Antonio Conte.

The Spanish international is determined to rejoin former side Atletico despite the La Liga club being subject to a transfer ban preventing them from registering players until January.

Costa has not played for Chelsea since the FA Cup final in May, following which he claims manager Antonio Conte sent him a text telling him he was not in his plans for the new season.

Chelsea said that was made clear to him as early as January.

He has accused the Premier League club of treating him like a "criminal" and has said he was willing to see out the remaining two years of his deal unpaid in Brazil.

"My destination is already set," Costa was quoted as saying by Brazilian newspaper O Globo. "I must return to Atletico Madrid next season."

Atletico are banned from signing players in this window as punishment for signing minors.



Costa has remained in Brazil and been fined by Chelsea for not returning to pre-season training.

In a later interview with ESPN Brasil he accused the club of demanding too high a fee for him.

"What I know is that this offer Chelsea will get is bigger than what they paid," he said. Chelsea signed Costa from Atletico for £32 million in July 2014.

"My agent said that Chelsea want something that Atletico can't get near. Atletico is a team growing every year, a big team, but they can't pay an extraordinary amount.

"I think they (Chelsea) should take into account everything that I've done. It's not my fault that I'm not at the club. If it was down to me I'd be playing. It's already been one month. Holidays are good but it gets tiresome."

With less than two weeks until the transfer window closes, Costa is now concerned that he may have to consider other options.

"If Atletico and Chelsea don't come to an agreement and Atletico don't make a big effort, I can't keep on wanting to play for a club that isn't going to make a bigger effort to try and sign me," he said.

Conte, who has been reluctant to discuss the issue in public recently, will face further questions at his news conference on Friday ahead Sunday's Premier League game against Tottenham Hotspur.

(Source: Guardian)

Saipa stun Esteghlal at Iran Professional League

Saipa football team defeated Esteghlal 1-0 in the Iran Professional League (IPL) on Thursday night.

Mohammad Abbaszadeh scored from the penalty spot in the 58th minute in Tehran's Takhti Stadium.

Saipa captain Rouzbeh Shahalidoust was sent off in the injury time after receiving his second yellow card.

Esteghlal suffered their second defeat in four matches in the IPL new season.

Sepahan defeated Zob Ahan 2-0 in Isfahan derby thanks to goals from Sasan Ansari and Jaleddin Alimohammadi.

Pars Jonoubi Jam edged past Sanat Naft 2-1 and Tractor Sazi earned its first win after three defeats, beating Naft Tehran 2-1.

On Wednesday, IPL leader were held to a 1-1 draw by Siahjamegan.

(Source: Tasnim)

Iran volleyball team beat Ukraine in preparation for Universiade

Iranian volleyball players have defeated their Ukrainian counterparts as part of preparations for the 29th edition of Universiade in Chinese Taipei, which is going to open within hours.

On Thursday evening, the Payame Noor University outfit, which are representing the Islamic Republic of Iran in the tournament, sealed their win by seeing off Ukraine 3-1 (25-23, 23-25, 27-25 and 25-18) in a demonstration game played in Taipei.

The 2017 Summer Universiade, which is the 29th edition of the international multi-sport event, will start in Taipei on August 19 and will finish on August 30.

Iran's Payame Noor University students' volleyball team have been drawn in Pool D along with Argentina, Canada, Cyprus, Switzerland and the United Arab Emirates.

Brazil, Chinese Taipei, France, Japan and the United States are in Pool A. Latvia, Mexico, Portugal, South Korea and Ukraine are pitted against each other in Pool B.

Pool C consists of Australia, China, the Czech Republic, Hong Kong, Romania and Russia.

(Source: Press TV)

British aerial skier Wallace suffers head injury

British aerial skier Lloyd Wallace has sustained a serious head injury after a training accident and is in hospital in Switzerland, the International Ski Federation and British Ski and Snowboard (BSS) said.

The 22-year-old aerial specialist, who is hoping to participate in the 2018 Winter Olympics at PyeongChang, suffered the injury while training with the Swiss national team and was given first aid on site before being flown to hospital.

A detailed prognosis for the injury is expected to be released over the next week.

"The whole situation is hard on us as Lloyd Wallace was part of a combined training group with the Swiss Ski team. Our thoughts are with Lloyd and his family," Head of Freestyle Swiss Ski Christoph Perreten said.

Wallace's winter sports compatriots sent their support to the 2015 Junior World Championships Bronze medalist.

(Source: Reuters)

Former Barcelona keeper Victor Valdes retires

Ex-Barcelona and Manchester United goalkeeper Victor Valdes has decided to retire from football, according to a report in El Mundo Deportivo.

Valdes, 35, had offers from Deportivo La Coruna, Real Betis and Las Palmas to continue to play after leaving Middlesbrough in the summer, but has opted to hang up his gloves and focus on his new TV production company.

Valdes' agent Gines Carvajal would not confirm or deny the story when contacted by ESPN FC.

The former Spain international has set up Crazy4fun TV, which was launched on July 27, an international production company with bases in Barcelona, London and Abu Dhabi.

El Mundo Deportivo reports that Valdes will not only be behind the camera but is also expected to present a TV show that will feature former players that has already been sold to 12 countries.

Valdes left Middlesbrough in May after his one-year contract expired following the club's relegation from the Premier League, making 28 appearances for the club.

Valdes was a huge figure in Barcelona's success, playing 535 games and winning 21 titles, including six La Liga titles and three Champions League trophies in his 12 years at the club.

(Source: Soccernet)

Liverpool reject third Philippe Coutinho bid

Liverpool have rejected a third bid from Barcelona for Philippe Coutinho, a source has told ESPN FC.

The bid was immediately rejected by Liverpool, who maintain their stance that Coutinho will not be leaving Anfield this summer.

The latest offer was worth £118 million (€129m) including add-ons, according to The Times. That follows two previous rejected bids from the Catalan side worth £72m and £90m.

Sources close to Liverpool say it does not matter what Barca offer for Coutinho, as they will not sell the player at any price.

Coutinho handed in a transfer request last week and has not featured in Liverpool's first two games of the season.

(Source: ESPN)

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Avaye Tabari performing at World Championship of Folklore

A R T TEHRAN — Avaye Tabari, an ensemble from the northern Iranian city of Sari, is currently in the Bulgarian town of Nessebar to participate in the 7th World Championship of Folklore - World Folk.



Led by Iranian musician Seyyed Jalal Mohammadi, the ensemble performed its first concert on Friday. It will give five other performances on August 19, 20, 21, 25 and 26 at the festival. Groups from around the world are participating in the event, which will come to an end on August 27.

NEWS IN BRIEF



Hamedan to host symposium on photography

A R T TEHRAN — The western Iranian city of Hamedan will be hosting the 1st National Symposium of Photography on Saturday, which is World Photography Day.

Fakhreddin Fakhreddini, Kamaledin Shahrokh and Dariush Mohammadkhani are scheduled to deliver speeches during the one-day symposium.

WHAT'S IN ART GALLERIES

Painting

■ Paintings by Nilufar Sasani and Sara Rashidi are on display in an exhibition at Gallery No. 26.



The exhibition named "Duet" runs until August 29 at the gallery located at 26 Salmanpur-Zahir St., in the East Farmanieh neighborhood.

■ A collection of paintings by Soheila Noruzi is on display in an exhibition at Sa Gallery.

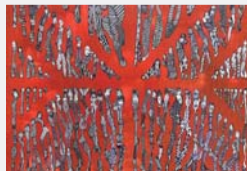


The exhibit titled "And Things Will Grow from Us" will run until August 27 at the gallery located at No. 134, 8th Bustan St., off Pasdaran Ave.



■ Laya Hossein-Rashidi is currently displaying her latest collection of paintings in an exhibition at Kabiri Gallery.

The exhibition entitled "Apple Aroma" will be running until August 23 at the gallery located at 60 South Dibaji St.



■ Paintings by Mona Moin-Ansari are on display in an exhibition at Golestan Gallery.

The exhibit will run until August 23 at the gallery that can be found at 34 Kamasai St. in the Darus neighborhood.

Photo

■ Knack Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of photos by Elmira Ali-Akbari, Taher Tatari, Masud Sabetzadeh, Puya Sediqi and Alireza Fatehi.



The exhibition titled "The Inverted Pyramid" will run until August 31 at the gallery located at 7 Sina Alley, Takharestan St., Zafar Ave.

■ Photos by Saeid Fallahfar are currently on display in an exhibition at Negar Gallery.



The exhibition runs until August 23 at the gallery, which can be found at 33 Delaram Alley, East Roshanai St., in the Qeitarieh neighborhood.

"Subdued" scoops up awards at Celebration of Iranian Cinema Critics and Screenwriters

A R T TEHRAN — "Subdued", director Hamid Nematollah's drama about an emotional journey, has won several awards including one in the best film category at the 11th Celebration of Iranian Cinema Critics and Screenwriters.

Nematollah was also picked as best director, while Leila Hatami won the award for best actress for her role in the movie by the France-based company Dreamlabs.

Hatami's co-star, Kurosh Tahami, also received an honorable mention.

The film also brought Sohrab Purnazeri the best composer award, and Masumeh Bayat won the best screenwriter award.

The film is about Mina who is recently divorced from her drug addict husband. With her mother deceased and estranged from her father, she leads an independent life. After finding a job in a restaurant, she strikes up a friendship with its attentive manager. She starts having feelings she has never before experienced. These feelings, eventually shared, are shaken when the manager begins to distance himself from her. Thus commences a tumultuous emotional journey.

"I really care about critic's views, because their views help make a film memorable," Nematollah said after accepting his award at the Conference Hall of the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults on Thursday evening.

The award for best actor went to Hamed Behdad for his role in "Blockage" directed by Mohsen Qarai.

He dedicated his award to Mohsen Hojaji, an Iranian soldier who was killed by ISIS terrorists in Syria a few weeks ago.

The best supporting actress award was presented to Tannaz Tabatabai for her role director Monir Qeidi's debut feature film "The Villa Tenants", and the award for best supporting actor award went



Hamid Nematollah speaks after being honored as best director for his latest drama "Subdued" during the 11th Celebration of Iranian Cinema Critics and Screenwriters in Tehran on August 17, 2017. Director Rakhshan Bani-Etemad is also seen in the photo. (Mehr/Asghar Khamseh)

to Hadi Hejazifar for his role in director Mohammad-Hossein Mahdavian's political drama "The Midday Event".

The Society for Cinema Critics and Screenwriters, which is the organizer of the gala, honors two first-film directors every year with the Best Creative and Promising Filmmaker Awards.

This year, Qeidi for "The Villa Tenants"

and Asghar Yusefnejad for "The Home" received the awards.

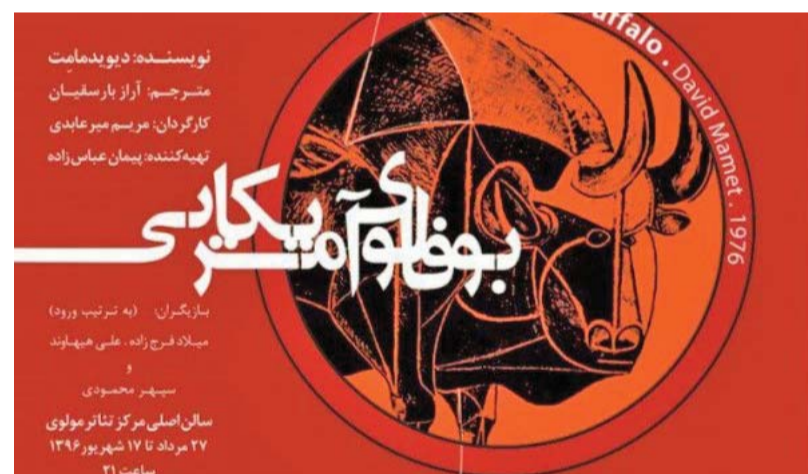
The award for best cinematographer went to Masud Salami for "Stiffness" directed by Fereidun Jeirani.

Bahram Dehqani was named best editor for his collaboration in both "Stiffness" and director Rambod Javan's drama "Negar".

Behzad Jafari received the best costume and set designer award for "The Midday Event", which also brought Mohsen Daarsanj the best makeup artist award.

The organizers also honored Jamshid Hashempur, the Iranian actor who is mostly famous for his roles in action movies, with a lifetime achievement award.

David Mamet's "American Buffalo" comes to Tehran's Molavi Hall



A R T TEHRAN — Maryam Mirabedi is directing U.S. dramatist David Mamet's 1975 play "American Buffalo" at Tehran's Molavi Hall.

Mirabedi has chosen the drama to stage due to close similarities between what happens in Iranian society and the story line of the play, he said in a press release published on Friday.

"The characters' inertia and those people who live with over-ambitious plans in society made me to choose the

play to stage," Mirabedi explained.

She spent a year rehearsing the play with a cast mostly composed of university students.

The play, which has been translated into Persian by Araz Barseqian, will be on stage until September 8.

"American Buffalo" is about a junk shop owner named Don who plans to steal back a buffalo nickel that he sold to a customer for ninety dollars after he suspects it is worth considerably more.

Emma Stone ascends to top of Forbes' highest-paid actresses

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) — Fresh off winning her first Oscar, actress Emma Stone ousted Jennifer Lawrence on Wednesday to claim the top spot on Forbes' 2017 list of the world's highest-paid actresses.

Stone, 28, who won best actress for her role as a struggling actress in "La La Land", made \$26 million in pre-tax earnings, according to Forbes' calculations over a 12-month period from June 2016 to June 2017.

She outpaced Jennifer Aniston, 48, who came in at No. 2 this year with earnings of \$25.5 million, with residual income still coming in from the television sitcom "Friends" and endorsement deals with brands such as SmartWater and Emirates Airline.

Lawrence, 27, who topped the Forbes list for two consecutive years, dropped to No. 3 this year with earnings of \$24 million, almost half of her prior year's earnings of \$46 million.

The actress, who has spoken out on equal pay for



Actress Emma Stone arrives at the 2017 American Film Institute Life Achievement Award in Los Angeles, California, U.S. on August 6, 2017.

(Reuters/Mario Anzuoni/File Photo)

Tom Cruise breaks ankle in stunt, halts production on 'Mission' film

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) — Tom Cruise broke his ankle while performing a stunt on the set of the upcoming "Mission: Impossible 6," causing production on the film to go on hiatus while the actor recovers, Paramount Pictures said in a statement on Wednesday.

Paramount, a unit of Viacom, said the action movie, which is one of its biggest franchises, remains on schedule to open on July 27, 2018.

Cruise, 55, who is known for doing his own stunts, was seen in a video on celebrity news website TMZ trying to jump between

the roofs of two high-rise buildings and landing hard against a wall during filming in London at the weekend. He was later seen limping off the set.

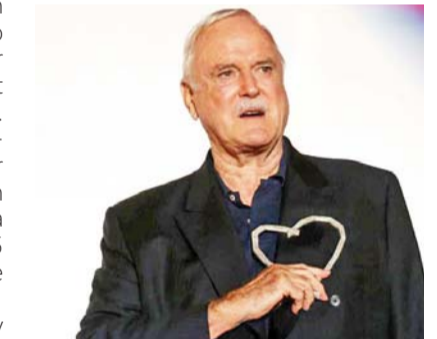
"During production on the latest 'Mission: Impossible' film, Tom Cruise broke his ankle while performing a stunt. Production will go on hiatus while Tom makes a full recovery," Paramount said. "Tom wants to thank you all for your concern and support and can't wait to share the film with everyone next summer."

Paramount did not say how long

production would be delayed. Hollywood trade paper Variety said filming could be halted anywhere from six weeks to three months while Cruise recovers. Variety said the actor also injured his hip.

"Mission: Impossible - Rogue Nation," in which Cruise reprised his role as agent Ethan Hunt, made more than \$680 million at the worldwide box office in 2015, according to movie tracker BoxOfficeMojo.com

Cruise has carved a career as one of Hollywood's top-earning and longest-running action stars, much of it built on his



British actor John Cleese poses with the Heart of Sarajevo honorary award during the 23rd Sarajevo Film Festival in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, August 16, 2017. (Reuters/Dado Ruvic)

The best actress award went to Canadian actress Ornella Kapetani for her role in "Daybreak", a debut feature by Albanian director Gentian Koci.

The Sarajevo Film Festival, founded as an act of defiance toward the end of the 1992-95 siege during the Bosnian war, has grown into the largest industry platform for the region stretching from Austria to Russia and Turkey.

women in Hollywood, saw her earnings dip this year after the conclusion of the "Hunger Games" franchise, but continues to make money from movie deals and an endorsement deal with fashion brand Christian Dior.

Forbes compiles its annual celebrity earnings lists from box office and Nielsen data, as well as from interviews with industry insiders.

The top-ten list also includes Charlize Theron, Emma Watson and Melissa McCarthy. Forbes said no stars from Asia made the cut this year.

Forbes said the cumulative total earned by the world's top ten highest-paid actresses - \$172.5 million - was down 16 percent from the previous year.

Last year, Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson topped Forbes' list of highest-paid actors at \$64.5 million, more than double the amount made by Stone this year. Forbes is expected to release its list of top-earning male actors later this week.

reputation for doing his own stunts, including swinging around a Dubai skyscraper and hanging off a plane as it taxied down a runway and took off.

"I just don't sleep, I just keep going," he told Reuters in 2015 while promoting "Mission: Impossible - Rogue Nation."

"Mission: Impossible 6" director Christopher McQuarrie told Britain's Empire magazine in an interview posted on Wednesday that the production schedule would be rearranged to shoot around Cruise while he recovers.