

Saudi govt. may have funded 9/11 'dry run': new data **3**

Cycling group promotes protecting water resources in Iran **12**

Flowers are part of Iranians' daily life: Carlos Queiroz **15**

Iranian artist returns award over disrespect in Italy's visa section **16**

Venice honors "No Date, No Signature" director, actor



Vahid Jalilvand poses with the Orizzonti Award for Best Director for "No Date, No Signature" at the award winners photocall during the 74th Venice Film Festival at Sala Casino in Venice, Italy on September 9, 2017.

Progress entails political stability, Rouhani tells OIC leaders

POLITICS TEHRAN — Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said on Sunday that a stable political, economic, social and cultural situation is necessary for Islamic countries to make scientific and technological advances. Rouhani made the remarks as he was addressing the Organization of Islamic Cooperation summit in Astana, Kazakhstan. "Yesterday, in the world of Islam it was the era of scientific, cultural and civilizational progress. Is it not possible today for the world of Islam to move toward innovation, **→2**

Iran's first data vending agreement signed with Inforex

By Mahnaz Abdi
TEHRAN — The first ever data vending deal in the Iranian capital market was signed between Iran Financial Center (IFC) and Greece's Inforex S.A. data vendor company on Sunday. Based on the deal, which was signed by Inforex Managing Director Eleni Pateropoulou and IFC Managing Director Ali Naqavi in Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE) headquarters, IFC will provide Inforex with data about Iranian companies listed on the exchanges for a period of two years and the Greek company is committed to offer them to the foreigners interested in making investment in Iran. Inforex is servicing the largest securities firms, banks and financial institutions of the Greek market while also providing services to individuals with high interest in the Greek and international markets. **→4**

Oberbank to ink deal with Iran on Sept. 21

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Austria's Oberbank will sign a deal with the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) on September 21 to finance Austrian projects in Iran, the bank's chief executive has said. "I think we are the first European bank (to reach such an agreement)," Franz Gasselsberger told Reuters, adding that he was relying on information from the Iranian authorities. "Evidently some Germans and Italians are also negotiating," he said, adding that a Danish bank was also in talks. He declined to name any of those companies, but Denmark's Danske Bank said in January that it was negotiating with the CBI. Signing the deal at its headquarters in the city of Linz will make Oberbank, Austria's seventh biggest lender, among the first European lenders to do so since sanctions were eased against Iran. **→4**

Turkish politician: U.S. won't be the only game setter in Syria

By Payman Yazdani
TEHRAN — Emphasizing the role of Russia, Iran and Turkey in Syria, a senior member of Turkey's Peoples' Democratic Party (CHP) says the United States is not the only game changer in the conflict-stricken Syria. "Whatever the outcome of the conflict, the U.S. will not be the only game setter in Syria. There are other powers: Russia, Iran and Turkey," Osman Faruk Logoglu told the Tehran Times. The remarks by Logoglu came after former U.S. Ambassador to Damascus Robert Ford told the pan-Arab Mayadeen TV late on Wednesday that Syrian President Bashar

al-Assad's government is in its strongest military position after six years of war but, the opposition, whether the political and military groups, is at its weakest. Ford, now a senior fellow at the Washington-based Middle East Institute, also said the Syrian opposition has made mistakes during the crisis. He said Iran is helping the Russians to shrink the U.S. influence in the region, adding the U.S. has, to some extent, lost in Syria. Regarding the U.S. support for Syrian Kurds, Ford remarked the idea that the U.S. will militarily defend the Kurdish interests is wrong, warning that the Kurds shouldn't rely

on the U.S. help. Instead, he said, the Kurds should embark on direct talks with the Damascus government. For his part, Logoglu said the United States is not seeking to establish a Kurdish state in northern Syria, noting, "The U.S. priority is to defeat ISIL, not to set up an independent Kurdish state in Syria." Logoglu also said it is the Syrian people who must decide about the future of their country. "At the end of the day and after so much bloodshed, it will and must be the Syrians themselves, Arabs, Kurds, Turkmen and others to determine the future design of their country."

Lebanon to file UN Security Council complaint against Israel

Lebanon's Foreign Minister Gebran Bassil says the Arab country will lodge an "urgent complaint" with the United Nations Security Council against Israel over an airstrike conducted from the Lebanese airspace on a military facility in the western Syrian province of Hama. Bassil issued a directive to Lebanese Ambassador to the UN Nawaf Salam on Saturday, calling on him to take the measure "after Israeli authorities admitted to have carried out a missile attack against targets on Syrian territories from Lebanese airspace." The Syrian army said in a statement on September 7 that Israeli warplanes had fired a number of missiles at 2:42 a.m. local time (0042

GMT) from the Lebanese airspace against one of its military positions near the town of Masyaf, located approximately 40 kilometers west of the provincial capital city of Hama. The army statement then warned about the "dangerous repercussions of this aggressive action to the security and stability of the region." Syria's official news agency, SANA, later reported that the air raid had killed two people at the site and caused material damage. The Syrian army operates a military facility north of Masyaf, which includes a training camp and a branch of the Scientific Studies and Research Center, according to an AFP report.

Israel violates Lebanon's airspace on an almost daily basis, claiming the flights serve surveillance purposes. Lebanon's government, the Hezbollah resistance movement and the UN Interim Force in Lebanon, known as UNIFIL, have repeatedly condemned the overflights, saying they are in clear violation of UN Resolution 1701 and the country's sovereignty. UN Security Council Resolution 1701, which brokered a ceasefire in the war of aggression Israel launched against Lebanon in 2006, calls on Tel Aviv to respect Beirut's sovereignty and territorial integrity. (Source: Daily Star)

ARTICLE
By Mehdi Sepahvand
 Tehran Times journalist

Irma: Could you resist remembering 9/11?

Once again, and at a squarely round number of years, 16, we are going to mourn the rise of humanity to a nightmarish realization: that we are living up to our barbarity and doing a great job feeding our resident evil. George W. Bush's "war on terror" that ensued the shameful 9/11, no intention to discuss the hypothetical origins of it no matter how these hypotheses verge on the statement of reality, drew world attention away from under the Texas-based "oil-rich" family's rug, the corner of which was to be lifted four years later when Hurricane Katrina did bring about yet another era of enlightenment to human history: that the best nation on earth (reach the 1 percent) was trampling the buried underprivileged millions who, when struck by a natural disaster, the only thing they inspired was the deployment of security forces to prevent them from robbing places in keeping with their basic instinct of survival. The rise of a black Barack Obama later put, for some eight years, a calming hand over the disadvantaged shoulders of the world, the toiling shoulders of Uncle Toms all around the world. But then again, two years before the 2016 presidential election, mass media divulged their intention they were about to bring yet another Mr. Bush figure to The So White House. The earthen-black revolt that put Mr. Obama over the mantle was now going to be beaten by a Corporate America revolt that was to culminate in an empire builder. The empire builder went on to announce his best of wishes to make the empire great again. His actions later spoke for themselves of how he was going to go about doing so: by disregarding the hardest-earned consent of nations to care for their green origins, the Paris Agreement; by putting a ban on "the wretched of the earth" from setting foot in the empire; **→13**

Critics circle Aung San Suu Kyi over Rohingya crisis

Myanmar's Nobel Peace Prize winning Aung San Suu Kyi is facing intense scrutiny over her response to the plight of her nation's Rohingya population. Almost 300,000 Rohingya have fled into neighboring Bangladesh, according to the UN, since renewed violence between state security forces and the minority group began more than two weeks ago. The disruption started on August 25 after Rohingya fighters attacked police posts in Rakhine, on Myanmar's (formerly Burma) western coast, triggering a military crackdown. Aung San Suu Kyi, the nation's state counsellor and de facto leader, claimed this week that the situation is being twisted by a "huge iceberg of misinformation." "We make sure that all the people in our country are entitled to protection of their rights as well as, the right to, not just political but social and humanitarian defense," she reportedly told Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan during a phone call on September 5. The Rohingya, frequently described as "the world's most persecuted minority", are a mostly Muslim ethnic group, who have lived in majority Buddhist Myanmar for centuries. There are currently around 1.1m residents in the Southeast Asian nation, which is home to more than 100 ethnic groups and approximately 55 million people. A number of high-profile individuals have publicly criticized Aung San Suu Kyi, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991 for her campaign supporting democracy in Myanmar, in light of the crisis. However, not all world leaders have been united in condemning Aung San Suu Kyi. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, for example, has refused to speak out and has instead offered his support to her. "We share your concerns about extremist violence in Rakhine state and especially the violence against security forces," he said during a state visit to Myanmar on September 6. **→13**



Marivan Intl. Street Theater Festival opens

An Iranian troupe performs during the 12th Marivan International Street Theater Festival on September 10, 2017. The festival will run in the northwestern Iranian city of Marivan until September 12.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Crimes against Rohingya Muslims are an Israeli plot: top advisor

POLITICS TEHRAN — Ali Akbar Velayati, a senior advisor to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei, on Sunday slammed the ongoing brutal crackdown on the Rohingya in Myanmar, saying the Muslim community is suffering from organized crimes orchestrated by the Israeli regime.

Velayati warned that such an “ominous and organized plot by international Zionism” would result in genocide against the Muslims, oppression and forced displacement, ethnic and racial cleansing, massacre and regional instability.

He also said the world bears a heavy responsibility to have a correct understanding of such a calculated plot.



Chamran voices regret over rejecting vice presidency

POLITICS TEHRAN — Mehdi Chamran, the former chairman of Tehran City Council, has voiced regret over turning down an offer to serve as the country's vice president during Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's tenure.

In an interview with Etemad newspaper published on Sunday, Chamran said Ahmadinejad had offered him to serve as vice president but he declined.

He also suggested had he accepted the offer, Ahmadinejad might have chosen a more moderate path and things might have been much different.

Chamran is known as a major supporter of Ahmadinejad during his mayorship.



Myanmar blocks Iran's aid shipment

POLITICS TEHRAN — An official with the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) announced on Sunday that Myanmar's government has blocked Iran's aid shipment for Rohingya Muslims who have been targeted by the country's security forces and armed Buddhist militants for months.

The IRCS had sent a 40-ton aid consignment for the Rohingya through neighboring Bangladesh but the Myanmar government did not allow the relief aid reach its soil, Mostafa Mohammadioun told IRNA.

The Rohingya are a Muslim minority community living in Myanmar's Rakhine State.



IAEA board to review Iran's commitment to nuclear deal

POLITICS TEHRAN — The Board of Governors at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which started its seasonal meeting last week, is set to review Iran's compliance with the nuclear agreement on Monday, IRNA reported.

The meeting will begin with IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano's speech.

In its 8th seasonal report on May 2017, the IAEA re-certified Iran's commitment to the nuclear deal — also known as the JCPOA — which was signed between Iran, six world powers — the U.S., Russia, Britain, France, China Germany — and the European Union.



Jahanjiri congratulates appointment of Algerian PM

POLITICS TEHRAN — Iranian Vice President Es'hag Jahanjiri on Sunday congratulated the appointment of Ahmed Ouyahia as the prime minister of Algeria. In a message, Jahanjiri wished success for Ouyahia and prosperity for the Algerian people.

He also hoped for expansion of ties between Iran and Algeria.

Ouyahia had been the prime minister of Algeria from 1995 to 1998, 2003 to 2006, and 2008 to 2012. He was once again appointed as prime minister on August 16.



Bosnian diplomats to take educational courses in Iran

POLITICS TEHRAN — Top Bosnian diplomats have set out on a trip to Tehran to take educational courses on Iran and developments in the Middle East, Mehr news agency reported on Sunday.

Prior to the trip, the Bosnian diplomatic team met with Iran's Ambassador to Sarajevo Mahmoud Heidari. The delegation expressed gratitude to the Iranian embassy and Foreign Ministry for the opportunity.

The head of Bosnia's diplomatic training office also voiced optimism that the trip could help Bosnian diplomats better understand Iran and important developments in the Middle East.

Progress entails political stability, Rouhani tells OIC leaders



POLITICS → Creativity and progress beside rationality and ethics and create a world free from violence and extremism? But today, numerous crises have posed challenges to the Islamic World.

Rouhani also said “solidarity” and “unity” among Muslims are needed more than ever.

“We have gathered here for the sake of peace, coexistence and ensuring further cooperation with you friendly and brotherly states,” Rouhani told OIC leaders.

“The Zionists’ crimes against the Palestinian people, the extremists’ crimes against the Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar, the extremist groups’ humanitarian catastrophes in Syria and Iraq, continuation of military actions against the Yemeni people have made it more essential than ever to maintain the Islamic community’s solidarity and unity,” he stated.

He called the world of Islam an “important and effective part” of the larger world.

The Islamic world’s “capability, progress and stability” will help global advancement and stability, he added.

“Cooperation among us, as members of the great world of Islam, to enter the developed world is actually a joint effort to build a world void of ignorance, poverty, war and violence,” he noted.

Rouhani went on to say that the Islamic countries’ cooperation in the areas of science and technology is “vital,” because

it will result in economic development which is of “political,” “social” and “strategic” importance.

The Iranian president also said that Islamic societies should not be fearful of scientific and technological advances.

Rouhani said the Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to creation of a stable political, economic, cultural and social atmosphere in Islamic countries in which they would cherish scientific and technological advances.

Elsewhere, Rouhani described the OIC summit as a “turning point” in cooperation among the Islamic countries.

He noted that Iran attended the OIC summit to help promote peace and expand cooperation.

The “enemies of Islam” and “war mongering powers” gain benefits from division among Muslims, the cleric president remarked.

The Muslims should seek new areas for scientific and technological cooperation

and should expand political, economic and cultural cooperation, he added.

“Let’s put aside divisions sowed by enemies of Islam and war mongering powers who see their benefit at disintegrating us, and let’s open new grounds of scientific and technological cooperation to further renovate our countries. Let’s develop common political, economic and cultural environments in the world of Islam as far as possible,” the president pointed out.

Iran’s missile boat warns off U.S. warship in Sea of Oman

POLITICS An Iranian missile boat has warned off an American warship approaching an Iranian dhow in the Sea of Oman, the Navy of the Islamic Republic of Iran’s Army said in a statement on Sunday.

“The dhow, Shams (Sun), had set sail from the port city of Jask in southeastern Iran to test its motor. Forty-five miles (72 kilometers) into the sea, the vessel’s motor started to malfunction, prompting the sailors to alert the Iranian Navy,” it said.

The Navy dispatched Falakhan (Sling) missile boat to the vessel’s rescue, which towed the broken-down dhow to the port but before that the U.S. destroyer was seen approaching the site, it said.

“The American warship left the area with a warning and the announcement of the Falakhan missile boat’s timely presence in the region,” the statement said.

Iran’s naval patrols and U.S. warships have been engaged in a series of face-offs in the Persian Gulf in recent months, where Washington has accused Iranian vessels of “harassing” American warships.

Iranian military commanders say while their units continue routine patrols, U.S. naval units have changed their navigational patterns since President Donald Trump came into office, often engaging in provocative maneuvers near Iran’s vessels.

The Islamic Republic has repeatedly warned that any act of transgression into Iran’s territorial waters would be met with an immediate and befitting response.

In July, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps’ Navy said U.S. naval buildup and invasive maneuvers targeting Iranian interests in the waters had been triggered by “fear.”

Rouhani meets counterparts in Kazakhstan, calls for strong ties

POLITICS TEHRAN — Iranian President Hassan Rouhani held separate talks on Saturday and Sunday with leaders of certain countries on the sidelines of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation summit in Astana, Kazakhstan.

During his meeting with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Saturday, Rouhani called for expansion of ties especially in economic spheres.

“The Iranian and Turkish officials are determined to expand relations, and after implementation of the JCPOA [the formal name for the nuclear deal] and the removal of sanction, the grounds to expand ties have been laid,” Rouhani stated.

Rouhani added it is essential to expand banking relations between the two neighboring countries.

Rouhani also described Iran and Turkey as two “influential” countries in the fight against terrorism.

For his part, Erdogan pointed to the removal of sanctions against Iran under the nuclear deal and called for expansion of economic relations with Tehran.

The Turkish president called on the two countries’ central banks to remove obstacles in order to expand ties.

Elsewhere, the Turkish ruler said his government attaches great importance to unity between Ankara and Tehran in fighting terrorism.

The Iranian president also met separately with Azeri President Ilham Aliyev during which he called relations “friendly” and “growing”.

Rouhani called for expansion of cooperation in energy sphere.

Aliyev also said Baku is interested in strengthening relations with Tehran.

Rouhani met separately with President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev and Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev.

Erdogan criticizes U.S. for charging ex-minister over Iran bans

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has denounced as “politically motivated” the U.S. prosecutors’ recent charges against a former economy minister accused of violating U.S. sanctions on Iran, calling on Washington to review the move.

“I say clearly, I see this step taken against our former economy minister [Mehmet Zafer Caglayan] as a step taken against the Turkish republic,” Erdogan told reporters in Istanbul on Friday before departing for a visit to Kazakhstan.

“These steps are purely political,” he added. “The United States needs to revise this decision, there are very peculiar smells coming from this issue.”

Erdogan said that he had previously told U.S. officials that Turkey would not apply sanctions against Iran.

The remarks came two days after U.S. prosecutors charged Caglayan, former Halkbank general manager Suleyman Aslan and two others, of “conspiring to use the U.S. financial system to conduct hundreds of millions of dollars’ worth of transactions on behalf of the government of Iran and other Iranian entities, which were

barred by United States sanctions.”

The charges are part of an ongoing case against Iranian-Turkish gold trader Reza Zarrab and his co-defendants, who have all been accused of allegedly forging false documents and using front companies to process millions of dollars in transactions on Tehran’s behalf.

Erdogan says there are “ulterior motives” in charging Zarrab, who has pleaded not guilty.

Zarrab’s lawyers say the businessman was arrested together with his wife and 5 year-old daughter in March 2016, when they had traveled to the U.S. in order to visit the Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando. He has been detained in New York ever since and is expected to go on trial next month.

Caglayan and other Turkish officials are in Turkey and remain at large from U.S. authorities.

Meanwhile, Turkish Economy Minister Nihat Zeybekci has defended his predecessor, saying U.S. prosecutors have yet to prove their accusations.

“Caglayan did not do anything against Turkey’s interests. It is no concern to Turkey if Caglayan acted

against interests of other countries,” Zeybekci commented.

Ankara-Washington relations have been strained over U.S.-backed militiamen from the so-called Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), who launched an operation on June 6 aimed at pushing Daesh Takfiri terrorists out of Syria’s militant-held northern city of Raqqa.

The SDF is a coalition of Kurdish and Arab fighters, and is dominated by the Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG). Ankara views YPG as a terrorist outfit over its alleged links to the outlawed Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK).

Moreover, there has been no progress on Ankara’s demand from Washington to extradite U.S.-based opposition cleric Fethullah Gulen, whom the Turkish government accuses of having masterminded the failed July 15 coup attempt.

Gulen has denounced the “despicable putsch” and reiterated that he had no role in it.

(Press TV)

Donald Trump’s cynical ploy on Iran

The nation has now seen how Donald Trump deals with the reality gap, that yawning chasm between the world as it is and the fantasies he peddled on the campaign trail.

No way to replace the Affordable Care Act with something better and cheaper? Blame Congress. No way to reconcile his promise to end DACA with his assertion the dreamers should rest easy? Dump the matter in Congress’s lap.

Now we’re apparently about to see Trump apply his buck-stops-there approach to international relations. The president’s team is strongly hinting Trump will leave it to Congress to decide whether to continue the nuclear deal the Obama administration brokered with Iran.

Candidate Trump regularly blasted that agreement as a “disaster” and predicted Iran would cheat on it. There was

no evidence of that then, nor has there been any since. Quite the contrary. Not only has the International Atomic Energy Agency said that Iran is in compliance, Trump’s State Department has said so as well. And not just once, but twice. Which creates a problem for a president who as a candidate told the American Israel Public Affairs Committee that “my number-one priority is to dismantle the disastrous deal with Iran.”

It’s clear how badly Trump wants to accuse Iran of violating the deal. “If it was up to me, I would have had them non-compliant 180 days ago,” he told The Wall Street Journal in late July. Asked if he would overrule his State Department’s finding when the next report is due, in October, Trump replied: “Oh, sure,” saying of Iran, “They don’t comply.”

Actually, though there has been a minor

matter or two, “there is no credible allegation that they are not now in compliance with the central points of the agreement,” notes William Tobey, former deputy administrator for defense nuclear nonproliferation at the National Nuclear Security Administration, and now a senior fellow at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, a Harvard Kennedy School think tank.

Trump sidesteps that reality by contending that Iran isn’t abiding by “the spirit of the agreement.” Actually, there is no larger spirit of the agreement. This was a hard-nosed transactional pact, with concrete deadlines and actions, says Jeffrey Lewis, a nonproliferation expert at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey.

“Imagine if a police officer pulled you over and gave you a ticket because you were violating ‘the spirit’ of the traffic

laws,” he says.

Trump would be roundly rebuked if he went against the judgment of the IAEA and the State Department. But if his administration continues to certify that Iran is in compliance, it becomes ever more obvious that his campaign rhetoric was uninformed, his promise to dismantle the deal an exercise in political pandering. So how to escape that dilemma? By leaving the decision about whether to abrogate the deal to Congress, as he’s reportedly planning to do.

This matter looms larger than the cynical maneuvering of everyday Washington politics because of the perils involved.

No minimally responsible president would risk creating that situation to save face on a foolish campaign promise.

(Press The Boston Globe)

Lavrov urges direct talks, PGCC unity amid Persian Gulf crisis

Arab countries involved in a diplomatic dispute with Qatar should enter into direct talks with Doha to solve the crisis, Russia's foreign minister said on a trip to Saudi Arabia.

Speaking through an interpreter at a news conference on Sunday, Sergei Lavrov also called for the unity of the six-nation Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (PGCC).

"It's for the benefit of everyone to bring back the unity of the PGCC," Lavrov told reporters in Jeddah. "This is important in sorting out the region's problems."

He added that Russia supported mediation efforts by Kuwait and attempts by the United States to resolve the crisis.

"We need to bring stability in the Middle East and North Africa," Lavrov said. "We are keen to sort out this problem and we need to support mediation efforts. We need to maintain the unity of the PGCC."

Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt severed ties with Qatar on June 5, accusing it of supporting terrorist groups - a charge it denies.

Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir told the news conference that Qatar needed to show seriousness in finding a solution to the crisis.

"Qatar knows what Qatar has to do. We need things to be clarified and matters to be serious in order to find a solution," Jubeir said.

He also repeated the kingdom's demand that Qatar stops supporting terrorism and interfering "in other people's affairs."

"We will continue in this direction until Qatar responds to the will of the international community and stops supporting terrorism," Jubeir said.



The press conference in Jeddah came a day after Saudi suspended plans to hold talks with Qatar.

Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman spoke by phone on Friday in the first official contact between Doha and Riyadh since the beginning of the crisis more than three months ago.

However, Saudi Press Agency later reported that Qatar's state media had published a "distortion" of facts, and announced the suspension of the talks.

SPA did not clarify what was meant by "distortion". (Source: Al Jazeera)

UK doesn't need Brexit to curb EU immigration: Blair



Britain could bring in tough new controls on immigration from the European Union without actually having to leave the bloc, former Prime Minister Tony Blair said on Sunday.

Concerns over the impact of high levels of immigration on public services and housing were cited as a factor by many who voted to leave the EU in last year's referendum.

Prime Minister Theresa May's Conservative government has said free movement of EU citizens coming to Britain must end.

Many Brexit supporters blame Blair's government, which allowed citizens of former communist states to settle immediately in Britain despite a long transition period implemented by other EU countries, for a big influx of EU migrants from 2004.

"There is no diversion possible from Brexit without addressing the grievances that gave rise to it. Paradoxically, we have to respect the referendum vote to change it," Blair, who has said Brexit can and should be stopped, wrote in the Sunday Times newspaper.

"We can curtail the things that people feel are damaging about European immigration, both by domestic policy change and by agreeing change within Europe to the freedom of movement principle," added Blair, who led a Labour government for a decade from 1997.

Asked about Blair's proposals, defense minister Michael Fallon said the government had to get on with delivering Brexit.

"The country has taken its decision, we are leaving the European Union now and that means freedom of movement has to end ... there have got to be restrictions on those coming here," he told BBC Television.

A leaked government document last week said Britain was considering measures to restrict immigration for all but the highest-skilled EU workers, plans some companies called alarming.

A paper published on Sunday by Blair's Institute for Global Change said the government could take steps including registering EU migrants when they arrive to keep track of whether they meet EU rules about finding work.

EU migrants could also be forced to show evidence of a job offer before being allowed to enter Britain, and those without permission to reside could be banned from renting, opening a bank account or accessing welfare benefits, it said.

The paper also proposes seeking an 'emergency brake' to implement temporary controls on migration when services are stretched -- a strengthened version of a deal offered to former Prime Minister David Cameron ahead of the referendum. (Source: Reuters)

Report reveals UK exploiting Qatar crisis for own profit through arms exports



Protesters from the Campaign Against Arms Trade, a UK-based organization, lie on the ground as they demonstrate against the Defense & Security Equipment International (DSEI) arms fair in London.

Britain is exploiting a rift between several Arab countries of the Persian Gulf and Qatar through designating both sides as the "priority markets" for its arms sales, a report suggests.

The Middle East Eye (MEE) report cited a list of 46 states highlighted by the UK Department for International Trade Defense and Security Organization as potentially lucrative markets for weapons exports.

The list included Qatar as well as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Bahrain, which cut ties with Doha three months ago.

This is while many of the countries identified as key targets for the British arms sales are included in the government's own "human rights priority registers."

The list comes ahead of the Defense & Security Equipment International (DSEI) arms fair scheduled to be held in London on September 12-15.

"The fact that, despite current tensions, Saudi Arabia and Qatar are both on the list tells us everything we need to know," Andrew Smith, spokesperson of the UK-based Campaign Against Arms Trade organization, told the MEE.

Britain, he said, has "made clear that it will pull out all stops to sell arms to" both sides of the Qatar crisis.

Back in June, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Bahrain

and the UAE imposed a trade and diplomatic embargo on Qatar, accusing Doha of supporting terrorism.

They presented Qatar with a list of 13 wide-ranging demands and gave it an ultimatum to comply with them or face unspecified consequences.

Doha, however, refused to meet the demands and said that they were meant to force the country to surrender its sovereignty.

UK arms fair hosts despots

In a relevant development, the UK government published its official guest list for DSEI, comprising 56 countries, among them Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain, Egypt and Qatar.

Smith said the list included "a roll call of despots, dictatorships and human rights abusers. They will be greeted by civil servants and government ministers who are there for one reason only: to promote weapons."

MP Caroline Lucas, UK Green Party co-leader, also called for the closure of the London arms fair.

"DSEI is a dark stain on our country's already tarnished reputation. It's time that this festival of violence was shut down for good -- and for the UK to engage in peace-building rather than trying to cement itself as the world's weapons dealer," she said.

(Source: Middle East Eye)

NATO's Stoltenberg says North Korea's 'reckless behavior' requires global response

North Korea's "reckless behavior" is a global threat and requires a global response, the head of the NATO military alliance said on Sunday.

NATO has not been directly involved in the crisis, which saw Pyongyang carry out its sixth and most powerful nuclear test a week ago, but has repeatedly called on North Korea to abandon its nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

"The reckless behavior of North Korea is a global threat and requires a global response and that of course also includes NATO," NATO head Jens Stoltenberg said in an interview with BBC television.

Asked whether an attack on the U.S. Pacific territory of Guam would trigger NATO's Article 5, which requires each member of the alliance to come to the defense of any other, Stoltenberg said: "I will not speculate about whether Article 5 will be applied in such a situation."

"We are now totally focused on how can we contribute to a peaceful solu-



tion of the conflict," he said.

"There is no easy way out of this difficult situation, but at the same time we have to ... continue to work for political solution, continue to press also the economic sanctions."

The United States and its allies had been bracing for another long-range

missile launch in time for the 69th anniversary of North Korea's founding on Saturday, but no fresh provocations were spotted while the North held numerous events to mark the holiday.

Throughout last week, South Korean officials had warned the North could launch another intercontinental ballis-

tic missile in defiance of UN sanctions and amid escalating tensions with the United States.

British defense minister Michael Fallon also told the BBC he was very concerned about the situation.

"We are doing now what we can to bring about a diplomatic solution, what we have to avoid at all costs is this spilling over in to any kind of military conflict," he said.

"The U.S. is fully entitled to defend its own territory, to defend its bases and to look after its people but this involves us, London is closer to North Korea and its missiles than Los Angeles."

Fallon said he did not believe North Korea currently had a missile capable of hitting London but said the missile program was accelerating and their range was getting "longer and longer."

"We have to get this program halted because the dangers now of miscalculation, of some accident triggering a response are extremely great," he said.

(Source: Reuters)

Saudi govt. may have funded 9/11 'dry run': new data

New evidence in a lawsuit, which holds Saudi Arabia responsible for the September 11, 2001 attacks, shows that the kingdom may have funded a "dry run" prior to the incident.

The lawsuit alleges that the Saudi embassy in Washington paid for two Saudi nationals, living undercover in the U.S. as students, to fly from the city of Phoenix to Washington "in a dry run for the 9/11 attacks" two years before their occurrence, the New York Post reported on Saturday.

Lawyers for the plaintiffs said the new details had painted "a pattern of both financial and operational support" for the 9/11 conspiracy provided by official Saudi sources.

"We've long asserted that there were longstanding and close relationships between al-Qaeda and the religious components of the Saudi government," said Sean Carter, the lead attorney for the 9/11 plaintiffs, adding, "This is further evidence of that."

Carter said the allegations against Saudi Arabia were based on "nearly 5,000 pages of evidence submitted of record and incorporated by reference into the complaint."

Citing FBI documents, the lawsuit said the Saudi students — Mohammed al-Qudhaeini and Hamdan al-Shalawi — were both members of "the kingdom's network of



agents in the U.S.," had received training at the camps run by the al-Qaeda militant group in Afghanistan, and were in "frequent contact" with Saudi officials while in the U.S.

In a November 1999 America West flight to Washington, the Saudi students reportedly tried multiple times to gain access to the cockpit of the plane.

Consequently, the pair were taken into custody following an emergency flight landing in Ohio, but later the FBI decided not to pursue prosecution.

Meanwhile, the FBI confirmed that the Saudi embassy had paid for the students' tickets for the pre-9/11 "dry run."

"The dry run reveals more of the fingerprints of the Saudi government," said Kristen Breitweiser, one of the New York plaintiffs. "These guys were Saudi government employees for years and were paid by the Saudi government."

Some 3,000 people died in the 9/11 attacks, after four hijacked passenger planes were crashed into the World Trade Center in New York, the Pentagon and a Pennsylvania field. Fifteen of the 19 hijackers were from Saudi Arabia.

In several cases, hundreds of victims' relatives and injured survivors, along with insurance companies and businesses say, the Saudi government assisted the attacks through a variety of activities in support of al-Qaeda over a number of years.

In September 2015, U.S. District Judge George Daniels tossed Saudi Arabia out as a defendant.

One year later, however, the U.S. Congress passed legislation, known as the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act (JASTA), that eliminated some defenses and enabled the 9/11 victims to reassert their claims.

Last month, Saudi Arabia asked a U.S. judge to drop the cases against it, arguing that the plaintiffs had failed to generate sufficient evidence to subject the kingdom to the \$100-billion lawsuits.

Syrian army controls Damascus-Deir al-Zor highway: reports

Syrian government forces seized a final stretch of highway linking the eastern city of Deir al-Zor to the capital Damascus Sunday in further advances against Daesh (ISIL), a Hezbollah affiliated media outlet reported.

Troops moving in from the west linked up with forces already in Deir al-Zor at the entrance to the city, bringing the whole road under their control for the first time in years, the outlet reported.

The Syrian army and its allies, this week broke a three-year siege by the extremists of a government-held enclave of Deir al-Zor and an adjacent air base.

The rapid government advances, accompanied by Russian air strikes, are squeezing Daesh in its last major Syrian stronghold, as U.S.-backed forces separately oust the extremists from areas they hold to the east, on the other side of the Euphrates River.

The U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) said they had made further gains against Daesh a day after announcing an operation to capture northern and eastern parts of Deir al-Zor province.

Syrian state TV broadcast footage of Syrian officers who had been holed up in Deir al-Zor emotionally greeting their superiors after being surrounded by Daesh since 2014.

The United Nations has estimated that some 93,000 people were living in "extremely difficult" conditions in government-held parts of Deir al-Zor, supplied by air drops to the air base.

Daesh has lost nearly half of its territory across both Iraq and Syria, but still has 6,000-8,000 fighters left in Syria, the United States-led coalition has said.

(Source: Reuters)

Australian banks may exit wealth management without being forced

Australian banks are likely to get out of their wealth-management businesses without the need for government to force divestment, according to the head of a parliamentary banking inquiry.

"You will see over time banks will get out of their wealth management businesses because it is an area that has caused them problems and it's a relatively small proportion of their business," ruling Liberal Party lawmaker David Coleman told Sky News Australia Sunday. "I'm not sure I would support forced divestment."

The opposition Labor Party wants a so-called royal commission into the banking industry, with some of its parliamentarians urging a breakup of the nation's biggest lenders amid claims a lack of competition allows borrowing costs to be kept too high. The government's response, based on its 2016 inquiry, is closer scrutiny on how retail interest rates are being set, Coleman said.

The inquiry found that of the 20 times bank lending rates moved out of step with the Reserve Bank's benchmark rate since 2000, it was bad for borrowers on 19 occasions, Coleman said. Now regulators are able to go into banks, get documents and will identify whether an institution was justified in raising interest rates, he said. Banks and their executives could face action in terms of misleading or deceptive conduct.

"We need to ensure every bank executive knows that the representations they are making publicly about interest rates are now subject to deep internal scrutiny," Coleman said.

(Source: Bloomberg)

Bahrain tightens Islamic finance rules with mandatory external audit

DUBAI (Reuters) — Bahrain is tightening its rules for Islamic banks by requiring all of them to undergo independent, external audits to certify they are following Muslim laws known as sharia.

The move, announced by the central bank on Sunday, could make Bahrain among the strictest jurisdictions for Islamic banking and help Manama maintain prominence in the industry, which it helped to pioneer, against competition from centers such as Dubai and Kuala Lumpur.

Islamic banks in the Persian Gulf have traditionally used in-house boards of scholars to determine whether their products and operations obey sharia, which includes rules such as bans on interest payments and pure monetary speculation.

Some scholars argue this decentralized approach allows more flexibility and diversity, but it is not transparent and is vulnerable to conflicts of interest, since scholars are employed by the banks which they vet.

Bahrain is therefore insisting Islamic banks introduce external audits, starting with reports issued in 2020 on their business in 2019. A consultation paper issued by the central bank last year proposed that external audits be annual, but Sunday's statement did not say how often they would occur.

The central bank said it would provide guidance later on who would be qualified to conduct external audits. Banks would not be required to make audit results available to the public.

Because of Bahrain's prominence in Islamic banking, its decision may add momentum to global pressure for more centralized regulation of the industry.

"It is expected to serve as an example for the region and the global Islamic banking market," the central bank said.

In May, the United Arab Emirates approved the formation of a high sharia authority for Islamic finance, which is expected to set rules for governance of banks. Malaysia already has country-level sharia boards in its central bank and capital markets regulator which oversee the industry.

Bahrain's central bank said it would also issue new rules, effective from next June 30, on sharia boards within banks, ensuring their independence and clarifying their roles and responsibilities.

Rulings of in-house sharia boards on financial products and the reasoning behind them will have to be made available to the public, in a move that could press scholars across the industry to develop more uniformity of opinion.

Egypt's inflation eases as central bank sees Q3 peak

Egypt's inflation eased in August, signaling that the surge in prices that followed the government's latest round of subsidy cuts may have peaked.

The annual rate for urban areas dropped to 31.9 percent in August from 33 percent in the previous month, according to data released by the official statistics agency on Sunday. Prices rose 1.1 percent on the month, compared with 3.2 percent in July, a month after fuel and utility prices were raised.

"This month's figures suggest that businesses were not able to pass on the full extent of the increase in costs to consumers so as not to hurt demand for their products and services," said Reham El Desoki, senior economist at investment bank Arqaam Capital. "Inflation should remain within the same range in the coming two months before falling to the mid-twenties range in November."

Consumer prices surged to the highest level in decades after policy makers abandoned most currency controls in November and began cutting subsidies, steps that helped secure a \$12 billion International Monetary Fund loan. The measures have helped the central bank rebuild its foreign-currency reserves and encouraged investors to pour billions of dollars into Egyptian local-currency and dollar-denominated debt.

The central bank said last week it expects inflation to accelerate in the third quarter before easing gradually to its target of about 13 percent -- plus or minus 3 percentage points -- by the end of 2018. (Source: Bloomberg)

Iran's first data vending agreement signed with Inforex

IFC is in the business of enhancing knowledge and skills of financial market participants in Iran. The center's shareholders are mainly Iranian exchanges including TSE, Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market known also as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB), Iran Energy Exchange, Iran Mercantile Exchange and Central Securities Depository of Iran.

'IFC providing a specific data platform'

Addressing the signing ceremony, Naqavi said that having information about the financial status of Iranian companies is necessary for the foreign investors who want to invest in Iran and given the emphasis put by Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization for attraction of foreign investors to the country's capital market, IFC is providing a specific platform to offer data on financial and trade status of Iranian companies to the foreign investors.

He said that IFC has been conducted three rounds of negotiations over the past two months on investigating all legal and technical issues of the deal with Inforex.

He expressed hope that this deal will lead to other deals with the other foreign data vendors and said that some negotiations have been already made in this due and also said: "I hope we will take bigger steps in development of Iran's capital market."

'A chapter for Iran's entering global capital markets'

Pateropoulou, for her part, expressed hope that this deal will open a chapter for Iranian economy and the country's entering the world's capital markets.

Mentioning the deal recently signed between the Iranian and Greek capital markets, she said: "Our efforts will come to result just once we reach a desirable level of cooperation with Iranian exchanges and industries; therefore for success in this due we should work hard and with all-out efforts in Iran's capital market."



IFC Managing Director Ali Naqavi (L) and Inforex Managing Director Eleni Pateropoulou exchanging the documents of data vending deal

The Inforex's managing director further said that they are present in Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, the UAE, Oman, Qatar, the Balkans and also UK, Germany and France; so they will provide Iranian companies' data to the investors in these countries.

'Iran the hot spot, foreigners say'

In an exclusive interview with the Tehran Times on the sidelines of the signing ceremony, Pateropoulou said: "All foreign investors are saying Iran is the hot spot of the planet. [Iran's] economy at present is very strong and it's continually growing. Everybody wants to come to Iran; so

this gives of the great opportunity for the foreign investors to come here and access the data and see the data and also trade with these data."

Mentioning the condition getting better after the sanctions removal against Iran, she said: "We are really strong; we are leading providers in all countries I mentioned before, Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, Balkan countries and we will expand our business to other countries as well. Iran is one of the biggest markets in the world, so we are very happy that we are the first to sign such an agreement."

Oberbank to ink deal with Iran on Sept. 21

IFC is in the business of enhancing knowledge and skills of financial market participants in Iran. The center's shareholders are mainly Iranian exchanges including TSE, Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market known also as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB), Iran Energy Exchange, Iran Mercantile Exchange and Central Securities Depository of Iran.

"We have very concrete projects in the fields of infrastructure, rail, health, hospital construction, factory building, photovoltaics, hydro power," he added.

In a meeting with the former Iranian finance minister Ali Tayyebnia in Tehran on June 10, Austria's Federal Minister of Finance Hans Jörg Schelling said that Oberbank would grant €1 billion for financing investment projects in Iran.

CBI Governor Valiollah Seif said in August that three European countries including Austria, Denmark and Italy are set to open €22 billion credit lines for financing projects in Iran which in



addition to the €8-billion credit line to be secured by South Korea's Eximbank the total value of loan deals will reach €30 billion after Iran's nuclear accord in 2015.

South Korea's Eximbank signed a deal with the Iranian banks in Seoul on August 25 to secure an €8-billion credit line for finance various projects in the Islamic Republic. It was Iran's biggest loan deal since its nuclear deal and marked a new opening in attracting foreign investment to the country.

Annual dairy output to exceed 10m tons by Mar. 2018

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iran's dairy production is anticipated to reach over 10 million tons in the current Iranian calendar year (which ends on March 20, 2018), ISNA reported on Sunday quoting Deputy Agriculture Minister Hassan Rokni as saying.

In an interview with ISNA, the official also put the country's annual dairy output at 9.6 million tons in the past Iranian calendar year.

Saying that Iran has exported 850,000 tons of dairy products to different countries including some European ones in the previous calendar year, Rokni underlined: "We enjoy better condition this year as some



countries such as Russia are putting some big orders."

Given high quality and diversity of dairy products in Iran, not only the neighboring countries but also some European ones are the customers of these products, he noted.

Iran raises October light crude price for Asia

ENERGY TEHRAN — Iran has raised its light crude's official October selling prices for Asia by \$0.48 to set 50 cents above the Oman/Dubai average for the same month, Reuters reported quoting an industry source with direct knowledge of the matter.

Last month, OPEC's third largest oil producer changed the pricing formula for its Soroush grade in a way that it is now priced against the Oman/Dubai average.

According to a report by oilprice.com, Iran's crude oil exports increased by 9.3 percent in August to reach 2.135 million barrels per day (bpd).

As the report stated, Iranian crude oil exports rose by 182,000 bpd in August from July.

The increases came at a time when most of the OPEC members cut their daily crude exports.



After the implementation of the nuclear accord (called JCPOA) in January 2016, Iran has been seeking to expand its target markets. Since then, oil exports to Europe have risen by more than 300 percent.

Also, according to the latest data released by Reuters, Iranian crude oil production increased by 10,000 bpd in August from July.

Exempted from the OPEC, non-OPEC curbs, Iran has increased its crude output to 3.79 million bpd in August from 3.78 million bpd in July.

Iran to increase oil output to 4.5m bpd within 5 years

ENERGY TEHRAN — Iran is planning to increase its oil production to 4.5 million barrels per day (bpd) within five years, Shana reported quoting National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) Managing Director Ali Kardor as saying on Sunday.

Exempted from the OPEC, non-OPEC curbs, Iran has increased its crude output to 3.79 million bpd in August from 3.78 million bpd in July.

According to the official, gas production will also reach 1.3 billion cubic meters per day and production of gas condensate will reach 864,000 bpd in the next five years.

The boost in oil production will come from an increase of 420,000 bpd from the West Karoun oil fields and an additional



280,000 bpd from oil fields in central and southern Iran as well as the Falat Ghare oil company, Kardor told Shana.

Oil exports are expected to reach up to 2.5 million bpd within five years, Kardor added.

The increase in gas production is expected to come from South Pars, the world's largest gas field, according to Kardor.

FAO: Global cereal production to hit a record high

According to a press release published by the FAO Representation in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Global food prices dipped in August, mainly as the prospect of bumper cereal harvests pushed up expectations for larger grain inventories.

The FAO Food Price Index declined 1.3 percent from July, averaging 176.6 points in August.

The drop was largely driven by a 5.4 percent decline in the FAO Cereal Price Index, reflecting a sharp fall in wheat prices as the outlook for production in the Black Sea region improved.

FAO raised its forecast for global cereal production to 2.611 billion tonnes, an all-time record. Worldwide stocks of cereals are also expected to reach an all-time high by the close of seasons in 2018, according to the latest FAO Cereal Supply and Demand Brief, also released today.

The new estimates reflect larger anticipated wheat harvests, as improved production prospects in the Russian Federation more than offset downward revisions made for Canada and the United States of America, as well as higher maize and barley outputs in Brazil and the Russian Federation. Global rice production in 2017 is also now forecast to reach a record high, according



to FAO.

The slight decline in the FAO Food Price Index in August ended three months of consecutive increases. However, despite this, the Index - a trade-weighted index tracking international market prices for five key commodity groups - remained 6 percent above its value a year earlier.

Along with cereals, the FAO Meat Price Index dropped 1.2 percent in the month, while the FAO Sugar Price Index slipped by 1.7 percent - driven by favourable cane

harvest prospects in leading producers Brazil, Thailand and India, as well as by weaker international demand in the wake of higher tariffs imposed by China and India.

But the FAO Vegetable Oil Price Index rose 2.5 percent, led by rising quotations for palm, soy, rapeseed and sunflower oils. And the FAO Dairy Price Index also rose 1.4 percent from July, led by greater demand for butterfat in Europe and North America.

FAO's new forecast also points to greater food use of cereals, especially wheat and rice, while utilization of coarse grains for animal feed is projected to reach an all-time high.

Even so, world cereal stocks are expected to hit a record high of 719 million tonnes, up 2 percent from their already high levels at the opening of the current seasons. Wheat inventories in the Russian Federation and maize inventories in Brazil are expected to rise notably.

World cereal trade is also expected to expand by over 2 percent to reach 403 million tonnes, a new record. The FAO's latest forecast is 8 million tonnes higher-than-earlier anticipated on account of firmer import demand by China, Brazil, the European Union, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Mexico.

(Source: www.fao.org)

Traders expect much tighter oil markets in early 2018

Optimism among oil traders seems to be rising based on Brent calendar spreads, according to Reuters market analyst John Kemp. He notes in a recent column that said spreads have begun moving from contango to backwardation, with the spreads for November to December 2017 and for January to February 2018 already in backwardation.

What's more, Kemp says, the Brent inter-month spreads for the rest of 2018 look flat for the time being, suggesting that traders expect a tighter oil market. Supporting this belief, the Brent spread for the first half of that year is in backwardation. That is the first time this has happened since the start of the oil price crash, three years ago.

According to Kemp, the futures/spot market spreads say a lot about traders' expectations for the future state of a commodity's fundamentals and the way these look now suggests traders are expecting a more balanced market next year and even possibly a consistent decline of global crude inventories.

These expectations come amid a bulky weekly increase in U.S. oil inventories resulting from refinery shutdowns because of Hurricane Harvey and the possibility of further disruptions as three more major storms gain strength in the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico.



bean and the Gulf of Mexico.

At the same time, media have this week reported that Russia and Saudi Arabia are considering another extension of the November 2016 crude oil production cut agreement that was supposed to help markets rebalance by taking 1.8 million bpd from global supply.

While the deal has not lived up completely to the promise to sending crude oil benchmarks to \$60 (or higher), data about production and exports seems to support a gradual decline in global supplies. Still, they remain above the five-year average

that's used to gauge whether the market suffers from excess supply or has returned to balance.

Some observers are warning that the production cut path is not the best one for OPEC's biggest producers and that returning to maximum production is the better option over the longer term. Should Saudi Arabia decide to make such a U-turn, for which there are no indications at the moment, more OPEC producers will follow its example and traders would have to kiss backwardation goodbye.

(Source: oilprice.com)

Venezuela to start selling oil in non-dollar currencies

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro has announced that government will sell oil and other commodities in currencies other than the dollar, in a bid to weather U.S.-imposed sanctions on the embattled country.

"I have decided to start selling oil, gas, gold and all other products that Venezuela sells with new currencies, including the Chinese yuan, the Japanese yen, the Russian ruble, the Indian rupee among others," he said during a television broadcast.

"An economy free from the US imperialist system is possible."

Washington's tough new sanctions on Caracas bar U.S.

banks from trading in new bonds issued by the government or the state run oil company PDVSA. The goal is to restrict Venezuela's access to vital bond and equity markets.

The aim is to "deny the Maduro dictatorship a critical source of financing to maintain its illegitimate rule," the White House said.

Maduro railed that they amounted to a financial and economic blockade, as ratings agency Fitch downgraded Venezuela and warned default was now likelier.

The country has to make \$3.8 billion in debt payments in October and November, while its foreign currency reserves have sunk under \$10 billion.

(Source: trtworld.com)

N.I.O.C
1396.2629

National Iranian
Drilling Company

Public Calls For Quality Evaluating Of Tender(First Publish/Seconed Publish)

One-Stage(compressed)

TENDER GUARANTEE		ESTIMATED VALUE (Rial)	Subject of Tender	Tenders Portal Reg. No.	TENDER NO. / INDENT NO	No
Euro	Rial					
2, 852	112 ,500,000	2,250,000,000	FLOW OUT PADDEL FOR MUD LOGGING UNIT REF:VALCOM	1/498/799	Tender No.: fp/12-96/044 Indent No.: 08-22-9645036	1

Brief discription of subject:
National Iranian Drilling Company(NIDC) address pasdaran Blev., Airport Saqare, Ahwaz, Iran hereby intends to purchase its requirements from qualified and interested tenderers through one-stage public tender (compressed) upon following terms and conditions:

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

B) Preparation of tender documents:
Purchasing of documents:
In order to receive the tender documents, 510,000 Rials should be paid to SIBA account number 2174652205004 of NIDC in Bank Meli Iran and providing the original deposit receipt.
Notice: According to N.I.D.C technical and commercial committee rule, the limitation for job referrals in procurement field is four active and in process contract.
Receiving of documents:
Tenderers must obtain the quality evaluation documents along with tender documents maximum ten days after the date of second publication in person at the following address: Hall No.:113, 1thfloor, Foreign Procurement Dept., National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN
Notice: Only the real or legal persons who apply to purchase and recieve tender ducments from foreign procurement department in due date and participates in tenderwill be known as tenderer from tender committee.

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

D) Tender Guarantee:
Type of guarantee:
A)Bank guarantees or guarantees issued by non-bank institutions that have activites licensed by the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran.
B) The original cash deposit receipt paid to National Iranain Drilling Company.
Duration of credit guarantee & quotation:
This duration should be valid for 90 days and extendable maximum For one time in initial credit amount.
More on this & other tenders is accessible by click on. WWW.NIDC.IR
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Merkel's moral authority sets direction for Europe

By John Lloyd

Germans choose a government on September 24, and that government is likely to be headed, for the twelfth year running, by Angela Merkel. The uncharismatic 63-year-old from East Germany may not have captured her fellow Germans' hearts, but she has appealed so strongly to their rational selves that polls suggest they find no reason to replace her.

Under her chancellorship, Germany has changed in a fundamental sense. Her former advisor, Nikolaus Meyer-Landrut (now Berlin's ambassador in Paris) told a small group two years ago that – according to Spiegel magazine – “today, with matters concerning the euro, Germany finds itself in a different position. It must now enforce a policy (of austerity) regarded by its partners as extreme. This unavoidably changes perceptions of the country.” “Enforce” and “extreme” are not words with which Germany has liked to be associated, and Merkel herself would never use them publicly. But Meyer-Landrut was telling the truth. Germany is Europe's leader.

The fact that the German word for leader is “führer” is a large reason for the sensitivities. The horrors which “Der Führer” Adolf Hitler and his Nazis visited on Europe, especially the Holocaust, remain driven deep into global consciousness. The swastikas displayed during a mid-August neo-Nazi march supporting Confederate statues in Charlottesville, Virginia, roused more disgust than other symbols because they have come to be shorthand for evil.

Yet the country that produced the führer and the Nazi party has embraced democratic practices and human rights more convincingly than many others – certainly more than other states that were allied with Nazi Germany. Since World War Two, successive German governments have striven to become models of civic behavior most of all toward their European neighbors. The cleansing of the German psyche, the deliberate education of children about what Nazism meant, has had no parallels elsewhere.

Post-war generations of Germans had to learn “slowly and painfully and not always fully” to trust themselves, writes Ian Buruma in “The Wages of Guilt” (1994); his lucid treatment of how they dealt with the burden of Nazi infamy.

That self-trust has matured into a more openly proactive style, which a Merkel victory can be expected to continue unchallenged. The United Kingdom is set to leave the European Union, Italy's febrile politics and its present economic weakness keep it from assuming a larger EU responsibility and the mid-sized countries like Spain – still pulling itself out of recession – and Poland – politically hostile to much of what the EU stands for even as it enjoys the EU's largest allocation of funds – can only follow, however reluctantly, the German locomotive.

German-French axis

In France, where Emmanuel Macron is bidding to re-animate the German-French axis of EU power, the French president is on notice by Merkel, who won't countenance his ambitious EU integration plans until he manages to implement controversial reforms at home.

In Germany right now, the campaign style is deliberately low-key and consensual. The debate last Sunday between frontrunners, Merkel and the center-left Social Democratic Party (SPD) candidate Martin Schulz, was “polite and cordial” with none of the emotive storming common elsewhere in Europe. In part this is because the two parties may again form the coalition government in which they have collaborated, without much evident strain, for the past four years. In part it is because, as Wolfgang Streeck, director of the Max Planck Institute has noted, the SPD and Merkel's Christian Democratic Union made up “a centrist national unity party into which the two former Volksparteien (people's parties) have peacefully dissolved.”

Germany's European partners now accept that Berlin is able to set and enforce the basic direction for the European Union – even if they don't like the policies. Italian ministers, seeing some, albeit small, growth but weighed down still by heavy debt and fragile before any future world economic slowdown, complain long and loud about German-imposed austerity, with little effect.

The central figure in this has been, and may continue to be, Wolfgang Schäuble the German finance minister who has found a domestic popularity, seldom bestowed upon finance ministers, in insisting that EU states like France, Greece, Italy and Spain shape up by following the German example of reducing debt, improving productivity and reforming labor regulations. He has mooted the possibility of suspending still-struggling Greece from the euro zone. Merkel disagrees, but his popularity may mean he remains at the finance ministry if Merkel wins this month's federal elections.

Schauble, confined to a wheelchair since a 1990 assassination attempt, sees monetary and fiscal rectitude as a moral issue. When, in 2016, he delivered an economy with the first balanced budget in more than four decades, he used this to show his own moral authority before EU finance minister colleagues who had not been able to approach his record.

His argument, that the euro-using states should be more like Germany, is gaining ground. Eike Schmidt, appointed in 2015 as the first non-Italian director of Italy's premier art gallery, Florence's Uffizi, abruptly announced earlier this week that he would resign in two years time, citing constant battles (and a lack of autonomy) in a sweeping criticism of Italian cultural bureaucracy. This is hardly German imperialism, but it is imperiousness, a dropping of the inhibition to criticize others because of Germany's past, an insistence on efficiency supporting all exercises of public policy.

Germany does not, of course, carry the vast responsibilities of its leadership alone; it is careful to get majority northern support when battling with recalcitrant southern colleagues. It is the lodestar that, as Buruma wrote, trusts itself. In doing so, it has found the confidence to lead, and has shown that it has the capacity. But while the country may have earned those laurels in the 70 years since Nazism was buried in the rubble of Berlin, that doesn't mean Merkel's expected re-election will bring the integrated Europe she wants.

(Source: Reuters)



U.S. arms sales: Giving green light to atrocities and abuses in Bahrain

Here, the Al Khalifa regime has been using counter terrorism as an excuse to ruthlessly crush and persecute critics, peaceful dissidents and human rights defenders. Even as protesters are killed, detained and tortured, the Trump administration has approved a multi-billion-dollar arms deal with Bahrain. This brazen disregard for human rights and humanitarian law will only serve to further embolden the regime in Manama in its pursuit of “security” and “legitimacy” at the expense of people's basic rights:

The U.S. State Department has just approved \$3.8 billion in weapons sales to Bahrain. The Pentagon confirmed the approval and the State Department has notified Congress, who held up a similar sale last year over Bahrain's many human rights problems. The \$3.8 billion sale is almost entirely going to Lockheed Martin, who will be providing 19 F-16V fighter jets, along with substantial upgrades to the nation's existing fleet of F-16s. Raytheon will be selling 221 anti-tank missiles and weapons to go with it.

Sales to Bahrain were supposed to be suspended, “until they resolved tensions with Qatar.” In the end, however, Congress signed off through normal channels. Funny how State Department officials insist that the U.S. is continuing to discuss human rights issues with Bahrain, and is encouraging reform. That historically has never really been the case, as the U.S. has largely turned a blind eye to Bahrain's abuse of its Shiite population, viewing it as a cost of getting to host a major naval base there.

This is a country where even the U.S. government accepts that serious human rights abuses and atrocities are taking place, yet it is still pushing arms to the regime. It is not that hard to know what atrocities and abuses these arms may fuel, or who they will be used against. All the U.S. needs to do is go through various reports by human rights organizations that openly condemn rights abuses in Bahrain. The U.S. will no doubt tell the world how rigorous and robust its system supposedly is, but it is actively arming and supporting one of the most brutal dictatorships in the Persian Gulf.

A dirty war

Nor is that all. If the U.S. government and its European allies want to promote human rights and democracy then they must stop selling arms to the Al Khalifa and other repressive regimes in the Persian Gulf. They also face particular criticism over their sale of weapons to Saudi Arabia, which is leading a dirty war against Yemen in alliance with other Persian Gulf Arab states, excluding Qatar.

Worse still, the United Nations is yet to scrutinize arms exports, much less say it likely that American and European weapons have been used to violate International Law. The Bahraini regime, and to a greater extent, the Saudis stand accused of bombing civilian objects like international hospitals, as well as schools, wedding parties and food factories in Yemen. So far, over 14,000 people have been killed in Saudi air strikes



backed by the U.S. and the UK.

All in all, U.S. arms trade provides the destructive hardware used in human rights abuses, atrocities and conflicts across the Middle East. It undermines democracy and development, contributing to the poverty and suffering of millions. A new report by War on Want, Banking on Bloodshed, has just exposed, for the first time, the extent to which the main American and European banks are also funding this violent trade. They are using money to fund companies that sell arms used against civilians in wars and pro-democracy protests across the region, including the conflicts in Iraq, Syria and Yemen. They are financing an industry that sells arms to regimes committing human rights abuses such as Israel, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. Money from Western banks is also being used to fund companies that produce pernicious weapons like depleted uranium and cluster bombs. Guess what? No one in the West even bothers to impose sanctions on these banks!

Regulation of arms sales

It is high time for the United Nations to call for regulation of arms sales and banking sector in the West. The world body should call on the U.S. government and its European allies to ensure that all manufacturers and banks are made to publish the full details of their holdings and services to the global arms trade. The UN must introduce regulation which prevents Western governments and banks from supporting the arms trade to repressive allies in the Persian Gulf.

To this end, UN member states must work together to hammer out a binding international treaty to end unregulated conventional arms sales – a pact that a powerful U.S. lobby is urging Washington to reject. Arms control campaigners and human rights advocates say one person every minute dies worldwide as a result of armed violence, and that a treaty is needed to halt the uncontrolled flow of weapons and ammunition that they argue helps fuel wars, atrocities and rights abuses.

The treaty should set standards for all transfers of any type of conventional weapon – light and heavy. It should set binding requirements for governments to review all arms contracts to ensure the munitions will not be used in human rights abuses, do not violate embargoes, and are not illegally diverted to terrorist groups. Syria, Iraq and Yemen are just a few recent examples where the world bore witness to the horrific human cost of a reckless U.S.-led arms trade steeped in secrecy. Likewise, the treaty should leave no avenues for abusers of human rights to continue getting weapons from the West.

The UN Charter makes it clear: transferred weapons from the United States and Europe cannot and should not be used to fuel conflicts, arm terrorists or abet violations of international protocols. Without Western ammunition, the sectarian guns will fall silent in the Muslim world.

(Source: FNA)

All in all, U.S. arms trade provides the destructive hardware used in human rights abuses, atrocities and conflicts across the Middle East.

16 years after 9/11: The state of the terrorist threat

Sixteen years after the 9/11 attacks, there is a fair amount of good news about the state of the battle against terrorists: The United States has not suffered a successful attack by a foreign terrorist organization since al Qaeda's horrific attack on the World Trade Center and Pentagon.

Al Qaeda's core group, based in Afghanistan and Pakistan, hasn't launched a successful attack in the West since the suicide bombings on London's transportation system more than a decade ago in 2005, which killed 52 commuters.

The terrorist group that sprang up in the wake of the setbacks suffered by al Qaeda, ISIS is itself now largely defeated, having lost the city of Mosul, its headquarters in Iraq, and much of the city of Raqqa, its headquarters in Syria.

The U.S.-led coalition has also killed an estimated 60,000 to 70,000 ISIS fighters, according to U.S. Special Operations Command's Gen. Raymond “Tony” Thomas, speaking at the Aspen Security Forum in July.

A month later Brett McGurk, the U.S. envoy to the anti-ISIS coalition, said ISIS had lost control of more than three-quarters of the territory that it had once held in Iraq and more than half of what it had once controlled in Syria.

The threat posed by American “foreign fighters” returning to the United States who were trained by ISIS or other terrorist groups in Iraq and Syria is quite low compared to European countries. According to public records, only seven American militants have returned from the Syrian and Iraqi battlefields and none has carried out an act of terrorism.

That's the good news, but there are other troubling trends. Since 2014 there have been six lethal terrorist attacks in the United States, killing 74 people, according to New America's research.

Those attacks were carried out by American citizens and legal permanent residents, not by foreign terrorists as was the case on 9/11. These American terrorists were inspired by ISIS propa-



ganda online, but had no direct contact with the group.

Terrorists in the United States today overwhelmingly radicalize online. Of the 129 militants from the United States who joined terrorist groups in Iraq and Syria, or attempted to do so, or helped others to do so, 101 of them downloaded and shared propaganda online and some conducted encrypted online discussions with ISIS militants based in the Middle East, according to New America research.

In the cases of the 129 militants drawn to the Syrian conflict, none appears to have been recruited in person by other militant operatives.

The Trump administration's temporary travel ban from six Muslim majority countries does nothing to address this “homegrown” militant threat that is

enabled by terrorist propaganda online. Travel bans, of course, have no impact on the Internet.

While the United States has seen no lethal attacks in which the perpetrators were trained and directed by foreign terrorist organizations since 9/11, there have been five ISIS-directed attacks in Europe since 2014 that killed 188 people, around twice the death toll of all deadly terrorist attacks in the United States since 9/11.

Meanwhile, the Taliban in Afghanistan are at their strongest point since their defeat by U.S. forces shortly after 9/11.

Other forms of political violence in U.S.

Terrorism in the United States doesn't emanate only from terrorists, who have killed 95 people in the States since 9/11.

Even as ISIS suffers repeated setbacks, al Qaeda's branch in Syria has shown surprising resiliency and it's possible that a rump version of ISIS might merge with al Qaeda in Syria.

Individuals motivated by far-right ideology have killed 68 people in the United States during the same period, while individuals motivated by black nationalist ideology have killed eight people, according to New America research.

The drivers of terrorism

Even though ISIS is largely defeated, the conditions that led to the group's emergence largely remain, including the regional civil war in the Middle East between Sunni and Shia that has consumed Iraq, Syria and Yemen; the collapse of Arab governance around the region; the collapse of economies in war-torn Muslim states and the population bulge in the Middle East and North Africa.

This has precipitated a tidal wave of Muslim immigration into Europe. Those immigrants are arriving in countries where Muslims are often marginalized and this wave of Muslim immigration has helped fuel the recent rise of European ultranationalist parties. This is a combustible mix, which may help propel some European Muslims to subscribe to the tenets of militant terrorism.

These drivers of terrorism strongly suggest that a son of ISIS will form in coming years.

Even as ISIS suffers repeated setbacks, al Qaeda's branch in Syria has shown surprising resiliency and it's possible that a rump version of ISIS might merge with al Qaeda in Syria. The two groups split from each other in 2014.

Al Qaeda's core group also seems to be grooming Hamza bin Laden, one of Osama bin Laden's sons, as a next generation leader. Hamza bin Laden, who is in his late twenties, has appeared in a number of al Qaeda media productions in recent years.

The continued resilience of al Qaeda in Syria and the fact that the drivers of global terrorism are not going away anytime soon suggests that the long war that began on 9/11 more than a decade and half ago has many years left before it finally sputters out.

(Source: CNN)

Ethnic cleansing of Rohingyas by Myanmar government could be stopped: scholar

By Fateme Mohammadi

Yuram Abdullah Weiler, an American Islamic and political scholar, believes that "While the west has built Aung San Suu Kyi into a heroine of human rights, it would appear that she is at best indifferent to the fate of the Rohingyas, which represent one out of Myanmar's 135 minority groups."

"Given the current Washington regime's entrenched anti-Muslim bias, and the economic factors involved in relations with Myanmar, it is no surprise that the Rohingya Muslims are being ignored," Yuram Abdullah Weiler tells the Tehran Times.

He also adds that "But with continued outcry from Muslims around the world, political pressure from the leaders of the Islamic nations and increased media coverage, the ongoing ethnic cleansing of Rohingyas by the Myanmar government could be stopped."

This is the text of the interview:

■ Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar face disastrous conditions. Why are international organizations and institutions not attentive to their situation?

A: Given the current state of affairs in the Islamic world: the brutal Saudi aggression in Yemen where cholera is skyrocketing; the western-backed effort to topple the Assad government; the ongoing Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands; the ethnic cleansing of Muslims in the Central African Republic; the western-induced chaos in Libya; the famine in Somalia whose new president, Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed, just happens also to be a U.S. citizen; the conflict that split Sudan into two countries where over 5 million people face starvation; the humanitarian crisis in Iraq due to the war against the U.S.-spawned Daesh terrorists; the over 3 million people in Pakistan and Afghanistan in need of aid as a result of U.S. wars in the region; floods affecting 16 million people in Bangladesh, India and Nepal; and many, many others, it should therefore be no surprise that the so-called international community does not view the desperate situation of the Rohingya Muslims as a priority.



■ Aung San Suu Kyi, the Nobel Peace winner, who was herself the victim of the Myanmar Army and had been tortured for many years, remained silent about the situation of the Rohingya Muslims and even accompanied military actions against them. What is your assessment of this topic?

A: Since the military still wields great political influence in Myanmar, and Aung San Suu Kyi appears legally powerless to control them, this, too, would not be surprising except for the fact that she has not even issued a statement condemning the atrocities being committed against the Rohingyas Muslims. Moreover, recent statements made by her are couched in duplicity. She has even suggested that the most recent military attacks on the Rohingyas were part of a crackdown on terrorism and that terrorists were disseminating a "huge iceberg of misinformation." While the west has built Aung San Suu Kyi into a heroine of human rights, it would appear that she is at best indifferent to the fate of the Rohingyas, which represent one out of Myanmar's 135 minority groups.

■ What is the UN and the UNHCR's responsibility towards Muslims and to reduce their suffering and why did they not do so effectively?

A: The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was es-

established in 1950 and given a mandate by the U.N. to protect refugees, those persons fleeing from armed conflict or religious, political or other persecution, sometimes even at the hands of their own governments. Clearly, the Rohingya Muslims fit this definition and clearly fall under the protection of the UNHCR. With Myanmar number six on the UNHCR's list of countries producing refugees, the agency itself must seek the assistance of member states to aid the refugees, and when the major powers are unwilling, there is little that can be done.

The main U.S. interest in Myanmar at this point is that the nation lies between the economic powerhouses of China and India, and to pressure the government in Yangon by re-imposing sanctions formally lifted in July of 2012 after the military eased its grip on power, which it has held from 1962 to 2011, is perceived in Washington as counterproductive to "liberalization." As a major producer of gas and oil, mainly natural gas that it exports to China and Thailand, Myanmar is viewed favorably for investment potential by western oil companies and China. However, Washington will avoid anything that might tip the scales in Myanmar in favor of Beijing, and that includes speaking out against the human rights situation of the Rohingyas.

■ If the situation that Rohingya Mus-

lims face at the moment were imposed on the citizens of a Western country, all of the international organizations and institutions would probably take measures to deal with the issue. Why do these organizations practice dual standards and are indifferent to Rohingya Muslims?

A: The Washington regime views events through the lens of its national interests, so two similar refugee crises or humanitarian disasters may illicit disparate responses. Hence, as far as U.S. leaders are concerned, there is no double standard, only the previously mentioned one. For example, while there is no particular concern over the humanitarian disasters in Gaza and Yemen, the U.S. was quick to play the "humanitarian intervention" card after its invasion of Iraq, and the subsequent failure to find Saddam's fabled WMD. Likewise, there was little delay between former president Obama's first condemnations of President Assad's alleged "atrocities" against the "demonstrators" and the arrival of U.S. "humanitarian" aid, which now totals over \$6.5 billion.

In the case of Myanmar, the actual importance of the country can be gauged not only by former U.S. president Obama's "Asia Pivot," but also by the competition between the U.S. and China to gain the upper hand on this Asian market of some 50 million people. Serge Pun, one of the wealthiest men in Asia, has stated that under Aung San Suu Kyi, Myanmar's economy has not performed as well as it should. Such statements by wealthy investors about Suu Kyi's handling of the economy put her political power at risk and may be a factor in her tepid response to the military's persecution of the Rohingya Muslims.

Given the current Washington regime's entrenched anti-Muslim bias, and the economic factors involved in relations with Myanmar, it is no surprise that the Rohingya Muslims are being ignored. But with continued outcry from Muslims around the world, political pressure from the leaders of the Islamic nations and increased media coverage, the ongoing ethnic cleansing of Rohingyas by the Myanmar government could be stopped.

Suu Kyi' inattending to Rohingya puzzling for many people: professor

By Fateme Mohammadi

TEHRAN — Prof. William O. Beeman, head of the anthropology department at the State University of Minnesota, says "Now that approximately 150,000 Rohingya refugees have fled to Bangala Desh, and President Erdogan of Turkey has issued "genocide" warning, more attention is being paid."

"Suu Kyi has, of course been an icon of civil rights action in the world, so her inattending to the Rohingya has been puzzling for many people", Beeman tells the Tehran Times.

Following is the text of the interview:

■ Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar face disastrous conditions. Why are international organizations and institutions not attentive to their situation?

A: First, Myanmar (Burma) is not of any strategic interest to the major economic powers of the world. Ironically some for the first oil discoveries were in Burma, but the nation has little or no economic interest. The brutal military regime has been of concern to those who are alarmed about human rights around the world, but this has never been a cause for action on the part of any major world nations, and so journalistic attention has also been very limited. Now that approximately 150,000 Rohingya refugees have fled to Bangala Desh, and President Erdogan of Turkey has issued "genocide" warning, more attention is being paid.

■ Aung San Suu Kyi, the Nobel Peace winner, who was herself the victim of the Myanmar Army and had been tortured for many years, remained silent about the situation of the Rohingya Muslims and even accompanied military actions against them. What is your assessment of this topic?

A: Suu Kyi has, of course been an icon of civil

rights action in the world, so her inattending to the Rohingya has been puzzling for many people. She is prohibited from being president of Myanmar by law (due to her marriage to a foreigner), but she is the de facto leader of the nation. She must, however balance her influence with the Myanmar military who threaten to take over the nation at every turn. This delicate balance is very difficult to maintain. Burmese experts claim that Suu Kyi is playing a "long game." They say she is not willing to jeopardize her current position of leadership by defending an unpopular minority. This has opened her up to criticism by international human rights experts. She has recently claimed that the Rohingya are being defended, but this is disputed.

■ What is the UN and the UNHCR's responsibility towards Muslims and to reduce their suffering and why did they not do so effectively?

A: The United Nations is somewhat helpless in this situation. The UNHCR has expressed concern about the Rohingya, but there has to be a "tipping point" before the UN could do something like sending troop--as they finally did in Darfur in the Sudan. This would require a United Nations resolution. No one to date has tried to bring such a resolution before the UN, and of course there would be great resistance in Myanmar. The UN Secretary General has sent the Security Council a letter warning of the disastrous situation there. This is usually his attempt to ask the Security Council to issue a resolution that would allow for UN military action, but this just happened yesterday, so there has been no action thus far.

■ If the situation that Rohingya Muslims face at the moment were imposed on the citizens of a



Western country, all of the international organizations and institutions would probably take measures to deal with the issue. Why do these organizations practice dual standards and are indifferent to Rohingya Muslims?

A: One of the great problems is access to the Rohingya area of Myanmar. It is in a remote region adjacent to Bangala Desh, in fact Myanmar citizens call the Rohingya "Bengalis" though they have been in Myanmar for many generations. The refugees in Bangala Desh are in a more accessible area, including the area around Cox's Bazaar. Myanmar authorities have placed restrictions on international aid in Rakhine State, where the largest concentration of Rohingya are located has also made it extremely difficult for international aid organizations to reach the afflicted population.

Merkel and Reflection on a Poll

By Hamed Rashidi

Recent Pew polls in Germany show that the German citizen's confidence in the United States is about 11 percent. This rate is about 25 percent for Vladimir Putin, the Russian president. Though the German citizens' trust in both the American and Russian presidents is low, this is considered a real disaster for Donald Trump!

During the presidency of Barack Obama, the level of German citizens' trust was far higher than what they have recently shown Donald Trump. Also during the 2016 presidential election, most German citizens and politicians were demanding Democrats and Hillary Clinton winning. The poll's results can be considered from a variety of dimensions:

The fact is that German Chancel-

lor Angela Merkel has failed to halt the president of the United States during the last seven months, since the presence of Trump at the White House. Merkel and her party, the Christian Democrat, raised the anger of the Social Democrats and opposition parties, with the German military mounting up to 2 percent of its GDP. People like the Social Democratic Party nominee, Martin Schulz, for German Chancellery parties, say that Merkel has actually worked to Donald Trump's advantage and has surrendered to him.

Merkel opponents claim in this regard are, to a great extent, real and consistent with the realities of German foreign policy. Many German and European citizens expect the Chancellor to take decisive positions against Donald Trump and his imposing policies and not basically seek

political bargaining with him.

But this demand Merkel has not paid much attention to. The Chancellor of Germany believes that Trump is a tradesman, and on the other hand, Berlin has no choice but to work with the United States in the international system.

This false premise has caused the Chancellor of the Land of Germans to deliberately or unwittingly face the White House with caution. Merkel declared her opposition to the policies of the United States only once during the G20 summit in Germany. At that time, she insisted that the US unilateralism had come to an end.

However, the recent Pew poll in Germany could be a danger to Angela Merkel and the leaders of the Democratic Christian party. The continuation of the German Chancellor and her compan-

ions' passiveness against Donald Trump's actions will reduce their popularity among Germans.

Even if Merkel and her party succeed in gaining victory in the general election this year, it can turn into their Achilles' heels in the near future.

It is not unreasonable for the Social Democrats to focus explicitly on the subject (Merkel's versatility against Trump) during propaganda and campaigning (which lasts for another month).

Finally Merkel and her entourage approach towards the US government should change. Otherwise, the overwhelming dissatisfaction of the vast majority of American citizens will come from Merkel's trampoline. Will the Chief of the Land of the Germans understand the important message of the Pew Institute?

The trail of Riyadh in the incident of 9/11

By Saeed Sobhani

Sixteen years have passed since the September 11, 2001 incident. During this time, many questions about this incident have remained unanswered. Indeed, why do American officials refer to the September 11th incident as a red line in their security equations? What was the role of the United States and Saudi Arabia government in this incident?



New evidence in a lawsuit, which holds Saudi Arabia responsible for the September 11, 2001 attacks, shows that the kingdom may have funded a "dry run" prior to the incident. The lawsuit alleges that the Saudi embassy in Washington paid for two Saudi nationals, living undercover in the US as students, to fly from the city of Phoenix to Washington "in a dry run for the 9/11 attacks" two years before their occurrence, the New York Post reported on Saturday. Lawyers for the plaintiffs said the new details had painted "a pattern of both financial and operational support" for the 9/11 conspiracy provided by official Saudi sources.

As time passes, Saudi Arabia's role in the September 11 incident becomes more apparent. While both the Obama administration and the Donald Trump government do not have the will to condemn Riyadh for these incidents. In other words, American officials have sacrificed the lives of their people in a political deal with Saudi Arabia.

An overview of the recent report by the New York Post can be considered. Citing FBI documents, the lawsuit said the Saudi students — Mohammed al-Qudhaeain and Hamdan al-Shalawi — were both members of "the kingdom's network of agents in the US," had received training at the camps run by the al-Qaeda militant group in Afghanistan, and were in "frequent contact" with Saudi officials while in the US. In a November 1999 America West flight to Washington, the Saudi students reportedly tried multiple times to gain access to the cockpit of the plane.

Consequently, the pair were taken into custody following an emergency flight landing in Ohio, but later the FBI decided not to pursue prosecution. Meanwhile, the FBI confirmed that the Saudi embassy had paid for the students' tickets for the pre-9/11 "dry run." "The dry run reveals more of the fingerprints of the Saudi government," said Kristen Breitweiser, one of the New York plaintiffs. "These guys were Saudi government employees for years and were paid by the Saudi government."

More, investigators learned that the two Saudis traveled to Washington to attend a symposium hosted by the Saudi Embassy in collaboration with the Institute for Islamic and Arabic Sciences in America, which was chaired by the Saudi ambassador. Before being shut down for terrorist ties, IIASA employed the late al-Qaeda cleric Anwar al-Awlaki as a lecturer. Awlaki ministered to some of the hijackers and helped them obtain housing and IDs. The FBI also confirmed that Qudhaeain's and Shalawi's airline tickets for the pre-9/11 dry run were paid for by the Saudi Embassy. "The dry run reveals more of the fingerprints of the Saudi government," said Kristen Breitweiser, one of the New York plaintiffs, whose husband perished at the World Trade Center.

"These guys were Saudi government employees for years and were paid by the Saudi government," she added. "In fact, the Saudi Embassy paid for their plane tickets for the dry run."

Why did not George Walker Bush, Obama and Donald Trump condemn Saudi Arabia for the September 11, 2001 incident? Importantly, after the September 11 incident, Bush invaded Afghanistan and Iraq, and basically did nothing to Saudi Arabia as a major contributor to the incident! Several reports on the incident of September 11, 2001 show that the incident had not taken place without the involvement of the US government. In other words, the George W. Bush administration has been involved in the creation and management of the incident. Therefore, it can be explicitly stated that both the United States and Saudi Arabia have been aware of each other's role in the incident and have even been in harmony with each other.

About 2 years ago, the CBS network in the program analyzed the secret documents called "28-page documents" about the events that had not been disclosed on 11 sep event. In the CBS program, some informed sources people had been informed that some of the information contained in these documents, which remained confidential for years, had been made disclosed. One of these sources was the former Sen. Bob Graham, who also presided over the US Spyware Research Committee. He was also chairman of the Senate Joint Research Committee on the failure of the US intelligence during the events of September 11th. He spoke only about a network of people who allegedly supported the elements of the incident during their stay in the United States, without referring to the confidential information of these documents. He said: "It is not credible. Those who do not know English at all, who had not traveled to the United States before, and did not even have high school education, could do such a complex job without support from inside the United States. Saudi Arabia provided the support, of course, and this support was absolutely fundamental. There were various factors involved in this work and that The Saudi government had been involved with some so-called charitable groups."

The reality is that Democrats and Republicans in the United States are trying to prevent the disclosure of the September 11 incident. The American public now want to see the role of the government of Saudi Arabia and the US government (the George W. Bush administration) in the incident. Extremist neo-cons used the design and implementation of the September 11 project as an excuse to attack Afghanistan and Iraq. →13

Why Serbia must recognize Kosovo's independence

Brussels insists Serbia normalize relations with Kosovo before it can join the European Union. So far 114 countries have recognized Kosovo's independence. However, Serbia campaigns against Kosovo's efforts to gain greater global recognition.

It also supports parallel private structures in North Kosovo, which undermine Kosovo's sovereignty and foment unrest among Kosovo Serbs. The Kosovo-Serbia conundrum can be solved with more effective international mediation.

Diplomacy works best when Europe and the United States work together.

Recent statements by Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic give rise to optimism. He called on the Serbian nation to "stop burying its head in sand" on the issue of Kosovo, and start an "internal dialogue." He told Serbs to "be realistic."

A grand bargain may be in the works. While normalization starts by addressing many bilateral issues, it all comes down

to Serbia's recognition of Kosovo's independence. Recognition would lead to Kosovo's membership in the United Nations. Kosovo and Serbia would negotiate the EU's membership criteria, ultimately entering the EU at the same time.

■ Framework of negotiations

A framework for negotiations already exists. The Kosovo-Serbia dialogue was launched by the EU in 2011. Kosovo and Serbia finalized agreements on technical issues such as freedom of movement, integrated border management,

and license plates. However, implementation has been uneven. The 2013 Brussels Agreement affirmed a "European future" for Kosovo and Serbia. At best, there is patchy progress on the political track.

Existing agreements must be enforced. The EU should suspend its mediation if either side stonewalls its commitments. An official EU Monitoring Mechanism would report to member states via the Political Security Committee of the EU Council. →13

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Top 6 health numbers to know after age 40

By Francesca Marinaro

Our bodies are basically machines; the heart pumps blood through our veins, and our brains are like on-board computers, processing and storing information and monitoring our organs. So what happens as the machine ages?

Think about what happens when the hard drive of the computer you've had for seven years starts to make an alarming clunking noise or you've had to replace the brakes on your ten year-old car several times. The older the machinery gets, the more maintenance it requires.

Our bodies work much the same way. We often find ourselves obsessing a lot about age, making observations like "He's pushing 40" or "She looks great for 75," but age isn't the only numeric indicator of health and longevity. HelloHeart, a company that manufactures a blood pressure monitoring app for smartphones, encourages everyone to learn about and keep an eye on key health-related numbers once you've passed 40, so whether you're over the hill or puffing your way toward the crest of it, knowing these six numbers will help you to maintain your health.

1. Blood pressure

Your blood pressure is the number one indicator of how well your heart is functioning. Blood pressure refers to the pressure in your arteries as blood flows through them. The measurement consists of two numbers. The first number, systolic blood pressure, refers to the amount of pressure present when your heart beats. The second number, your diastolic blood pressure, refers to the amount of pressure present when the heart muscle relaxes between beats.

When your blood pressure reads as "120 over 80," for instance, the top number refers to systolic pressure, and the bottom number refers to diastolic pressure. According to the American Heart Association, while posture and activity level can affect blood pressure, the systolic pressure reading should typically be below 120 and the diastolic below 80; 115 over 75 would be ideal. The AHA also reports that approximately one in three Americans has high blood pressure, and it's recommended that you contact your physician if your systolic pressure exceeds 140 or your diastolic pressure reaches 90.

2. Resting heart rate

Remember that your blood pressure can fluctuate depending on posture



or level of activity, so when you're relaxing, so should your heart. As the term indicates, your resting heart rate should be less rapid than when you're active; a healthy resting heart rate is approximately 6 beats per minute. Keeping in mind the above points about blood pressure, a rapidly beating heart while at rest can indicate high blood pressure.

3. Cholesterol levels

Cholesterol levels measure the amount of fat in your blood. Like everything else, we need a certain amount of fat in the blood, but not too much. According to Jenna Lindsey Channell, you should avoid trans-fats and saturated fats. Unsaturated fats, however, are an important part of your diet because they're required for absorbing certain vitamins like A, E, B, and K.

There are two types of cholesterol: LDL (low-density lipoprotein) and HDL (high-density lipoprotein). LDL is the "bad fat"—essentially plaque in your arteries. When it builds up, it creates blockages that prevent blood from flowing and can lead to heart attacks and strokes. HDL is the "good fat," and

it works to regulate LDL levels and keep your arteries clear. The fat that is stored in the body for energy after eating is called triglycerides.

Together, your LDL, HDL, and triglyceride numbers create what's called your "lipid profile score." Cholesterol is measured in milligrams per deciliter (mg/dl), a unit of measurement that indicates the concentration of a substance in your blood. Desired levels will vary based on whether or not you're at high risk for heart disease. The normal desired LDL level is below 100 if you're not at risk for heart disease and below 70 if heart disease is a high health risk. If you have no risk factors like high blood pressure or heart disease, 100-129 is generally considered a healthy level; a number over 190 is considered high. While your LDL level shouldn't get too high, your HDL level shouldn't drop too low; remember that you need HDL, or "good" cholesterol in your blood to keep your arteries clean. 60 or above is usually a healthy HDL level. For men, an unhealthy level is below 40 and for women below 50. A triglyceride level of 150 is average; below 100 is ideal. Triglyceride levels over 200 are considered high.

4. Blood sugar

Blood sugar measures the amount of glucose (a type of sugar found in carbohydrates) present in your blood. Glucose serves as the main source of your body's energy. Blood sugar levels will usually fluctuate, increasing after you've eaten. If your glucose level rises and remains high over an extended period of time, it can damage your blood vessels, kidneys, eyes, and nerves.

If you have high glucose levels, blood sugar tests can help to detect diabetes, and an A1C test will provide an index of your average blood sugar levels over the past three or four months, which will give a broader, more representative picture of glucose fluctuations than a "spot test." The A1C test measures what percentage of hemoglobin (a protein in your blood that carries oxygen) contains glucose. A healthy glucose level from a fasting blood sugar test (FBS) should fall below 100 mg/dl and not lower than 40 mg/dl. A healthy reading from an A1C test should be less than 7.0%.

5. C-Reactive Protein (CRP)

CRP levels in your blood indicate the amount of inflammation in your blood vessels. It's important to keep an eye on this number because there are often no symptoms associated with high CRP and therefore it can be a "silent killer." High CRP levels are often associated with conditions like diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease. A blood draw and lab test can check your CRP levels. A normal, healthy CRP level should fall below 1.0 mg/dl; a number above 3.0 mg/dl can indicate risk for heart disease.

6. Waist size

In addition to your weight and BMI (body mass index, which measures your weight relative to your height), your waist size can also indicate your overall health. Waist size is also the easiest to measure because you don't need to go to a doctor or schedule any tests. You just need a tape-measure. For an accurate measurement, measure your waist size at bellybutton height. For women, a healthy waist size is less than 36 inches; for men, it's less than 40. Numbers higher than these can increase your risk for heart disease, high blood pressure, or diabetes.

As we age, we become increasingly preoccupied about numbers, but instead of counting your gray hairs or the number of wrinkles that seem to have popped up overnight, keep an eye on these six numbers to help maintain a healthy heart! (Source: lifehack.org)

High CRP levels are often associated with conditions like diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease. A blood draw and lab test can check your CRP levels. A normal, healthy CRP level should fall below 1.0 mg/dl; a number above 3.0 mg/dl can indicate risk for heart disease.

Reasons you should not wear high heels anymore

If you're a woman, you've likely worn high heels at some point in your life. They are sexy after all, accentuating every definition in your legs. Maybe you wear heels every day... Maybe you won't after you read this article.

Women have approximately four times as many foot issues as men, according to the College of Podiatry — something podiatrists contribute to the wearing of high heels. Accordingly, a 2014 survey by The American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) found that nearly half of all women (49 percent) wear high heels. Not surprisingly, the majority of heel wearers (71 percent) reported that the shoes hurt their feet.

High heels can throw your body alignment out of whack. "Your feet are the foundation for your entire body, and when you walk in heels, you change your center of balance," says Emily Splchal, DPM, podiatrist, human movement specialist, and author of *Everyday Is Your Runway: A Shoe Lover's Guide to Healthy Feet & Legs*. When you slip into a pair of high heels, Dr. Splchal says, your feet slide forward into the shoe. "The increased weight on the balls of your feet causes your pelvis to tilt forward," she explains. To compensate, you lean backwards, increasing the arch in your lower back, which puts a strain on your lumbar spine, hips and knees. The higher the heels, the greater the strain.

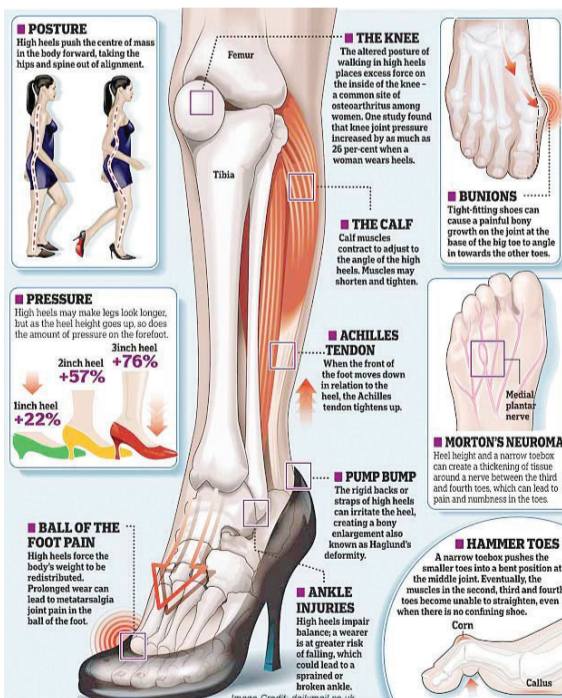
There may be several reasons to wear high heels. There are several more reasons not to:

High heels alter the anatomy of the calf muscles and tendons

A 2010 British study revealed that wearing high heels on a daily basis results in stiffer Achilles tendons and calf muscles that are about 13 percent shorter than normal. It's not the overall size of the calf that changes, but the length of the muscle fibers. According to NPR, study author and physiologist Marco Narici compares the effect to muscle atrophy that strikes people confined to their beds for a long time. Bed rest keeps muscles in a fixed position, causing some muscle fibers to become shorter.

Walking is dangerous

A woman's body will attempt to compensate for the off-kilter balance heels cause by flexing or forward bending the hips and spine. In order to maintain balance, the calf, hip, and back muscles become tense. This makes for excess muscle fatigue and strain.



Don't forget to take into account that walking in high heels is actually uncomfortable. If you are going to be walking long distances, it would be advised to substitute with a pair of flats.

Injuries are more likely

An October 2013 study in the *International Journal of Biomedical Engineering and Technology* found that jogging in 2 3/4 inch heels increases lateral movement of the knees (toward and away from each other), which could contribute to arthritis.

Not to mention other injury that is generally sustained due to tripping or getting a heel caught in a groove in the ground. This can cause sprained or broken ankles and other likely injuries.

The simple truth is they are impractical.

High heels info

It's already obvious that heels are not good for your health. Try driving or running, period. A good note of reminder is that while nobody wants to be paranoid,

we all need to look out for our own safety. If you find yourself in a risky situation, you may need to make a quick exit. Running in heels is really not an option. It's not safe and it's not easy. It may be safer to swap to flats when in a situation that may require you to use your feet at full functionality.

Other health issues

Regularly wearing high heels can cause other foot problems like bunions, hammertoes and nerve damage. "High heels don't promote proper foot posture," says Phillip Vasyli, a podiatrist and founder of Vionic, a brand of biomechanically correct shoes with built-in orthotics, according to a report from the Dr. Oz Show in 2013.

Anatomical changes

Daily high heel use over a number of years is said to actually lead to changes in your anatomy. Teetering on stilettos puts undue stress on the back and knees as the weight of body shifts forward. Additionally, calf muscles can shorten and tendons may thicken. Spondylolisthesis, or the slippage of one vertebra forward over another, frequently occurs as a result of wearing high heels, especially in the lumbar region of the spine where the body's weight is concentrated.

Foraminal stenosis

Foraminal stenosis is a spinal nerve condition that can occur when anatomical abnormalities block or reduce space in one or more foramina. Foraminal stenosis in the lower back can cause symptoms of shooting pain, in addition to numbness, tingling, muscle weakness, spasms, cramping and pain that radiates through the buttocks and down the legs. Sciatica, caused by the compression of the sciatic nerve, is a term that is often associated with this particular set of lower body symptoms.

Finally – incessantly wearing high heels can cause Haglund's deformity

High heels can cause Haglund's deformity

Otherwise known as "pump bump", that occurs when straps of high heeled shoes dig into the tissue around the Achilles tendon. Haglund's deformity is also known as the Mollusca Deformity and is a bony enlargement on the back of the heel that most often leads to painful bursitis, which is an inflammation of the bursa (a fluid filled sac between the tendon and the bone).

(Source: consumerhealthdigest.com)

Ankle sprain - topic overview

What is an ankle sprain?

Most people have twisted an ankle at some point in their life. But if your ankle gets swollen and painful after you twist it, you have most likely sprained it. This means you have stretched and possibly torn the ligaments in your ankle.

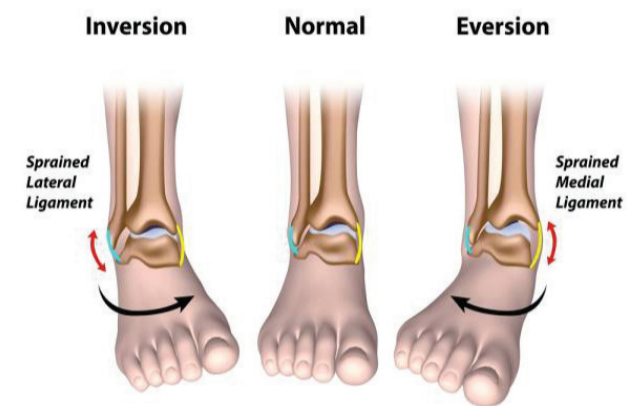
Even though ankle sprains camera.gif are common, they are not always minor injuries. Some people with repeated or severe sprains can develop long-term joint pain and weakness. Treating a sprained ankle can help prevent ongoing ankle problems.

What causes ankle sprains?

Most types of ankle sprains camera.gif happen when you make a rapid shifting movement with your foot planted, such as when you play soccer or get tackled in football. Often the ankle rolls outward and the foot turns inward. This causes the ligaments on the outside of the ankle to stretch and tear. Less often, the ankle rolls inward and the foot turns outward. This damages the ligaments on the inside of the ankle.

An ankle sprain can range from mild to severe, depending on how badly the ligament is damaged and how many ligaments are injured. With a mild sprain, the ankle may be tender, swollen, and stiff. But it usually feels stable, and you can walk with little pain. A more serious sprain might include bruising and tenderness around the ankle, and walking is painful. In a severe ankle sprain, the ankle is unstable and may feel "wobbly." You can't walk, because the ankle gives out and may be very painful.

Ankle Sprains



What are the symptoms?

With most sprains, you feel pain right away at the site of the tear. Often the ankle starts to swell immediately and may bruise camera.gif. The ankle area is usually tender to touch, and it hurts to move it.

In more severe sprains, you may hear and/or feel something tear, along with a pop or snap. You will probably have extreme pain at first and will not be able to walk or even put weight on your foot. Usually, the more pain and swelling you have, the more severe your ankle sprain is and the longer it will take to heal.

How is an ankle sprain diagnosed?

Your doctor will ask you how the injury occurred and if you have hurt your ankle before. He or she will check your foot and ankle, your lower leg, and even your knee to see if you are hurt anywhere else.

In some cases, the doctor may order X-rays to be sure there is not a broken bone in the ankle or the foot.

For at least the first 24 to 72 hours after the ankle sprain or until the swelling goes down, apply an ice pack for 10 to 20 minutes every hour or two during the day.

How is it treated?

In many cases you can first use the RICE approach to treat your ankle:

- Rest. You may need to use crutches until you can walk without pain.

• Ice. For at least the first 24 to 72 hours or until the swelling goes down, apply an ice pack for 10 to 20 minutes every hour or two during the day. Always keep a thin cloth between the ice and your skin, and press the ice pack firmly against all the curves of the affected area.

- Compression. An elastic compression wrap, such as an ACE bandage, will help reduce swelling. You wear it for the first 24 to 36 hours. Compression wraps do not offer protection. So you also need a brace to protect your ankle if you try to put weight on it.

- Elevation. Raise your ankle above the level of your heart for 2 to 3 hours a day if possible. This helps to reduce swelling and bruising.

If you are not taking any prescription pain relievers, you may want to take an over-the-counter pain reliever such as ibuprofen or naproxen to reduce pain and swelling.

Proper treatment and rehabilitation (rehab) exercises are very important for ankle sprains. If an ankle sprain does not heal right, the joint may become unstable and may develop chronic pain. This can make your ankle weak and more likely to be reinjured. Before you return to sports and other activities that put stress on your ankle, it's a good idea to wait until you can hop on your ankle with no pain. Taping your ankle or wearing a brace during exercise can help protect your ankle. Wearing hiking boots or other high-top, lace-up shoes for support may also help. But use caution. Don't force your foot into a boot if you feel a lot of pain or discomfort.

If your ankle is still unstable after rehab, or if the ligament damage is severe, your doctor may recommend surgery to repair the torn ligaments.

(Source: webmd.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 Amid growing concern/speculation/hysteria that Kaspersky Lab products could be tied to the Russian government, retailer Best Buy has stopped selling its antivirus. Minnesota's StarTribune first reported the move, citing a source who said that the company felt there are "too many unanswered questions" after conducting its own investigation.

2 Ellen L. Weintraub, a member of the Federal Elections Commission, has submitted a vote on re-vamping disclaimer rules around political ads on the internet following Facebook's admission that Russia bought \$100,000 worth of ads on the social network to influence the US presidential election last year.

3 Touch ID won't be part of the redesigned iPhone that Apple introduces next week, according to The Wall Street Journal.

Rumors that Apple will ditch the fingerprint sensor, which it first popularized on smartphones in 2013, have been popping up for months now. Bloomberg said in July that Apple was hoping to replace the fingerprint sensor with facial recognition, but it wasn't a sure thing just yet.

4 Deere is purchasing Blue River Technology, a Californian startup that makes machine learning tools for agriculture. The acquisition (via Quartz) is worth \$305 million, and is part of the tractor company's multi-decade quest to automate farming. In the case of Blue River, what it's buying is cutting-edge machine vision tools that help farmers scan fields, assess crops, and get rid of weeds — all at the same time.

5 Bernstein analyst Tony Sacconaghi says it would be worrisome if Apple's iPhone 8 faces long delays.

Anything from one to three weeks is normal, but if Apple can't ship orders placed in September until 2018, then that's bad news.

Sacconaghi is specifically concerned that consumers would buy other devices instead of the iPhone.

6 Sony unveils its 'true 4K' projector that costs just \$5,000.

But \$25,000 buys a compact projector with a laser light source.

Sony's SXRD technology brings every one of the promised 4K (4,096 x 2,160) pixels but until now have been incredibly pricey.

7 The UN wants all drones registered in a global database

The United Nations' aviation agency, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), plans to support a single worldwide drone registry. This singular ledger would be easier for law enforcement to sift through than each country's individual UAV ledger.

8 Volvo has just acquired the app-based valet service Luxe, which let users coordinate a driver to park, wash and refuel their car. But the Swedish automaker didn't pick it up just to convenience its customers -- it wants Luxe's technology and engineers, too.

9 The European Union's defense ministers held a cyber wargame to test their response to coordinated physical and social media attacks. Given the unrest stirred up by misinformation campaigns and hacking efforts, the time is ripe to prepare against such simultaneous warfare.

The simulated scenario saw hackers disable an EU naval mission in the Mediterranean while discrediting the EU's efforts on social media to spike unrest and protests.

10 Porsche InnoDrive moves cruise control forward and through the curves.

Panamera and Cayenne to offer the next-gen system. Originally developed as a way to improve fuel efficiency, InnoDrive is kind of a sport-focused cruise control designed for twisty B-roads rather than highway backups.

Equifax tries to explain its response to a massive security breach

A day after announcing that hackers stole personal information tied to 143 million people in the US, Equifax's response to the breach has come under scrutiny. Language on the website where people could find out if they were affected seemed to say that by signing up they would waive any right to join a class action suit against the company -- something New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman said is "unacceptable and unenforceable." The company has since explained it does not apply to the data breach at all, but that hasn't stopped misinformation from spreading.

Of course, considering the extent of what has leaked and the number of people affected, a hyperbolic reaction to anything surrounding this incident is understandable. A group claiming to be the hackers behind the theft has threatened to release it unless paid a ransom, but there's no confirmation yet that they actually have anything. As far as how it happened, one analyst told the New York Post that Equifax attributed the hack to the exploitation of a flaw in the Apache STRUTS system.

Credit reporting firm Equifax says data breach could potentially affect 143 million US consumers.

The breach was discovered July 29 and personal data including birth dates, credit card numbers and more were obtained in the breach.

Three Equifax executives sold shares in the company days after the breach was discovered.

(Source: engadget)

VR will be an essential part of retail's future

By Kimberly Cooper

The evolution of retail might not seem like the usual fodder for scripted drama, but the recent lineup of PBS's Masterpiece Theatre has proven that department store displays, annual sales reports and brand recognition can make for must-watch TV. Shows like Mr. Selfridge and The Paradise expose viewers to the exciting early days of retail, revealing how modern shopping experiences first took shape.

Nowadays, the retail industry is at another crossroads. This time, however, it's not surrounding daring fashions or limited choices; it's the advent of virtual reality commerce taking hold, and brands looking to grow sales and increase brand loyalty in the future should take note. VR commerce utilizes virtual reality, head-mounted displays (HMD), and smartphones/computers to both enhance and drive the shopping experience. It allows retailers to immerse consumers in custom-created worlds, marrying traditional online shopping elements with 3D experiences to increase consumer engagement. From home décor to apparel, major brands have already taken note of this retail revolution and are offering VR commerce options alongside tried-and-true techniques.

Buy+ may not be a household name yet, but with Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba at its helm, this virtual reality shopping experience has already re-



vealed the potential of VR commerce. An hour after it launched in honor of Singles' Day, 30,000 people had already engaged with the platform. Just one week later, and that figure increased to a whopping eight million users. These numbers demonstrate public willingness to explore VR commerce, and the seamless shopping experience achieved when a customer straps on a HMD (even one made of cardboard) truly cements its place in the retail landscape.

While Alibaba is known chiefly as an

online retailer, brick-and-mortar brands are also riding the VR commerce wave. Swedish home goods giant Ikea recently unveiled its online virtual reality destination in Australia, which allows customers to experience in-store floor sets as if they were there, as well as make purchases and have them delivered. Similarly, home improvement emporium Lowe's is dipping its toe in the virtual waters with its Holoroom, which allows customers to fill rooms set to their home's dimensions with Lowe's products. Once customers

don an Oculus HMD, they can shop the Lowe's inventory to decorate each room, seeing first-hand what the finished product will look like.

While VR shopping experiences thrust consumers into new worlds, AR provides a stepping-stone of sorts by enhancing the world shoppers already live in. Utilizing the built-in cameras most smartphones are equipped with, and the familiar point and touch mechanic even the most bashful selfie-taker intuitively knows, AR allows shoppers to discover new products and learn more about ones they are already familiar with.

For the most part, when consumers walk into a retail establishment, they are faced with plentiful options, but not enough information to make informed purchasing decisions. Several brands have already recognized this issue and are implementing AR technologies to curb confusion and encourage sales.

Perhaps more than any other factor, the widespread adoption of smartphones has fueled immersive shopping trends. 77 percent of Americans tote these mini-computers around on a daily basis, and with the AR/VR/360-degree support most modern mobile devices offer, it's no wonder the eagerness to try out new retail experiences has grown. In fact, according to recent study by L.E.K. Consulting, 70 percent of those surveyed were strongly interested in virtual shopping.

(Source: venturebeat)

George Orwell's 'Animal Farm' will soon be a video game

George Orwell pretty much invented the dystopian future genre, with novels like 1984 and Animal Farm still finding relevance and new readers today. The latter novel, however, is set to become an indie video game. The team includes gaming veterans who have worked on I Am Bread, Fable, The Witcher 3, and Everybody's Gone to the Rapture, and will have the support of George Orwell's estate. "Our our motley crew of multi-award winning game creators came together from various companies to create this one game together," developer Imre Jele said in an email to Engadget.

The game is being planned as narrative-heavy management game. The adventure-tycoon hybrid will put you right into Manor Farm as one of the animals before the revolution, with a story that follows the journey of the farm itself. You'll make both story decisions and choices on how to run the farm that will fit in

the overall tale. "Our story and play mechanics will be about our deeply rooted, collective desires for liberty, equality and fraternity that are overshadowed by the absolute corruptive effect of power over individuals," said Jele.

The adaptation is in the early stages of development, but Jele says he's been thinking about making it for decades. "When we started this process in earnest, I found game design notes from the 1990s," he told us. The team opted for a hybrid of genres to show that the story of Animal Farm isn't only about the fate of Boxer and the other specific characters, "but also about the everyday choices Napoleon and the other animals make to run the farm," said Jele. "There are pivotal moments of history hidden in the mundane."

It's hard not to make a political statement with a game based on a socially-aware novel. "Over the last decade,



we've started to see some governments use language eerily similar to oppressive regimes of the past," Jele said. "I can't help feeling personally challenged to create a game adaptation of Animal Farm, as I myself grew up under a communist regime."

(Source: Polygon)

IBM is installing a Watson AI lab at MIT

Both MIT and IBM are leaders in the field of Artificial Intelligence and now they're teaming up. IBM announced on Thursday that it had reached a 10-year research partnership agreement with the university worth nearly a quarter of a billion dollars. That investment will see more than 100 researchers from both organizations collaborating to advance four key focus areas within the AI field.

Those focal areas include deep-learning algorithms that can help neural networks move from single-use applications to more generalized performance. Not only will this make AI systems more ver-

satile, it will improve their transparency as well, enabling them to explain how they reached the answer they did.

The IBM-MIT partnership will also study the intersection between machine learning and quantum computing. Interestingly, this focal area will aid both fields, with AI helping to identify and characterize quantum devices and with quantum computers helping to optimize machine learning methodologies.

The MIT lab will also collaborate extensively with the IBM Watson Health and Security office in nearby Cambridge,



Massachusetts, to further develop applications in the existing AI healthcare and cybersecurity fields. But those aren't the

only commercial fields being investigated, researchers will also look into the "economic implications of AI and investigate how AI can improve prosperity," according to an IBM press release.

This isn't the first time that these organizations have worked together. Just last year, IBM and the MIT Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences began orchestrating a machine vision study. What's more, IBM has also teamed with MIT's Broad Institute and Harvard for a multi-year study of AI's effects on Genomics.

(Source: MIT Watson Lab)

Self-driving cars must have technology to prevent use in terror

Self-driving vehicles will need to be equipped with cybersecurity technology to prevent them from being used in terrorist attacks, according to legislation passed by the US House of Representatives on Wednesday.

With substantial bipartisan support in a voice vote, the House approved the so-called Self Drive Act, which seeks to speed the introduction of self-driving vehicles on US roads by streamlining the regulatory process.

A new law does not appear to be imminent, however, as corresponding legislation is yet to be introduced in the Senate.

Recent terror attacks in Charlottesville, London, Nice and elsewhere have involved vehicles being driven into crowds.

Under the House bill, self-driving or autonomous vehicles would need to be equipped with defenses against hacking, "unauthorized intrusions and false and spurious



messages or vehicle control commands".

Proponents of autonomous vehicles say they will reduce highway deaths, provide greater mobility for seniors and disabled people and cut fuel consumption.

Apple moves to ward Western Digital off control of Toshiba chips

Apple Inc has sought to stop Western Digital Corp from taking control of Toshiba Corp's chip business by threatening not to buy its products in the future, people with knowledge of the deal said.

Apple, which uses Toshiba's NAND flash memory chips in its iPhones, is concerned about losing pricing power if Western Digital is running the operation, the sources said.

However, if Western Digital remains a minority investor in the business, Apple, a

top customer for Toshiba chips, is offering around 50 billion yen (\$460 million) to a group including the U.S. firm to help finance a bid, one source said.

Western Digital, which jointly invests in Toshiba's key chip plant, is leading a \$17.18 billion bid for the chip business, sources familiar with the talks have said.

Sources said earlier in the week that Western Digital offered to step back from the consortium's financing in return for a stronger position in their joint venture,

and was roping in Apple for funding.

Toshiba executives, fearing that Western Digital was angling to eventually take over the chip business, are demanding that the U.S. company promise to limit the size of its stake in the company, sources said, requesting anonymity as talks were confidential.

Toshiba's board is now aiming to reach a final agreement with the consortium by Wednesday, sources have said.

(Source: Reuters)



China to ban petrol and diesel cars

China is joining France and Britain in announcing plans to end sales of petrol and diesel cars.

China's industry ministry is developing a timetable to end production and sale of traditional fuel cars and will promote development of electric technology, state media on Sunday cited a Cabinet official as saying.

The reports gave no possible target date, but Beijing is stepping up pressure on automakers to accelerate development of electrics.

Global industry

China is the biggest auto market by number of vehicles sold, giving any policy changes outsized importance for the global industry.

A deputy industry minister, Xin Guobin, said at an auto industry forum on Saturday his ministry has begun "research on formulating a timetable to stop production and sales of traditional energy vehicles," according to the Xinhua News Agency and the Communist Party newspaper People's Daily.

France and Britain announced in July they will stop sales of petrol and diesel automobiles by 2040 as part of efforts to reduce pollution and carbon emissions that contribute to global warming.

Communist leaders also want to curb China's growing appetite for



imported oil and see electric cars as a promising industry in which their country can take an early lead.

China passed the United States last year as the biggest electric car mar-

ket. Sales of electrics and petrol-electric hybrids rose 50 percent over 2015 to 336,000 vehicles, or 40 percent of global demand. U.S. sales totaled 159,620.

Beijing has supported electric development with billions of dollars in research subsidies and incentives to buyers, but is switching to a quota system that will shift the financial burden to automakers.

The reports of Xin's comments in the eastern city of Tianjin gave no other details about electric car policy but cited him as saying Beijing plans to "elevate new energy vehicles to a new strategic level."

Beijing has supported electric development with billions of dollars in research subsidies and incentives to buyers, but is switching to a quota system that will shift the financial burden to automakers.

Hybrid petrol-electric cars

Under the proposed quotas, electric and hybrid petrol-electric vehicles would have to make up 8 percent of each automaker's output next year, 10 percent in 2019 and 12 percent in 2020. Automakers that fail to meet their target could buy credits from competitors that have a surplus.

Chinese automaker BYD Auto, a unit of battery maker BYD Ltd, is the world's biggest electric vehicle maker by number of units sold. It sells petrol-electric hybrid sedans and SUVs in China and markets all-electric taxis and buses in the United States, Europe and Latin America as well as in China.

Volvo Cars, owned by China's Geely Holding Group, announced plans this year to make electric cars in China for global sale starting in 2019.

(Source: The Independent)

Climate change threatens one third of all parasites by 2070

Climate change could cause the extinction of a third of all parasites by the year 2070. It may not sound so bad, but parasites are actually important members of the Earth's ecosystem.

Parasites don't normally have good reputations, but a new study findings remind us that they are also important members of the ecosystem. As it turns out, parasites are actually some of the Earth's most threatened life forms as a result of climate change.

The study published in the journal Science Advances was completed with the help of the U.S. National Parasite Collection, as well as specialized databases of ticks, fleas, bee mites, and feather mites. What's more, 17 researchers from eight countries spent years tracking down different parasite specimens in order to understand the species' habitat and needs.

Parasite species

By using climate forecasts to determine how the 457 parasite species will react to the changing climate, researchers found they are evidently among the most threatened life forms on Earth with regards to climate change, even more so than their hosts. In fact, models show that about a third of parasites could go extinct by 2070 from the effects of habitat loss



alone, with the more conservative models showing instead a 5 to 10 percent loss.

Parasites don't often have good reputations as they are often responsible for diseases and infections. By definition, parasites are organisms that live and thrive at the expense of its host. But did you know that

they are also important members of the ecosystem?

As small as they are and despite their negative reputations, parasites actually contribute to keeping wildlife populations in check, and in providing a large percentage of food chain links. Many para-

sites have complex life cycles that require being passed from one host to another. Because of this, having strong populations of parasites are often indicators of a healthy ecosystem.

Diversity of animals

"It means the system has a diversity of animals in it and that conditions have been consistent long enough for these complex associations to develop," said Anna J. Phillips of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History.

What's more, a wide range of parasites in an ecosystem means that they could compete with one another, therefore slowing down the spread of diseases. Without them, the ecosystem could be seriously affected.

Unfortunately, because of their bad reputation, they are often overlooked in studies regarding climate change and its impacts. It is only now that we see that they, too, are affected by the climate crisis. Because of the current study, scientists can look further into the implications of changing parasite populations. This is especially important as it could also lead to the thriving of other, possibly more invasive parasites as a result of the lack of competition. (Source: Tech Times)

Directors of Mazandaran Province's WWCO Praised as "Exemplary Managers"

Senior managers and directors of Amol, Savadkouh, Qaemshahr and Behshahr water and wastewater companies in Mazandaran Province were appreciated as "exemplary managers", the Public Relations Dept. of Mazandaran Province Water and Wastewater Company (WWCO) reported.

An excerpt of salient activities and performances of the company was

reported to the noble nation of this province during the Government Week.

For this purpose, Seyyed Ja'far Rasouli Deputy Governor General and Special Governor of Amol Sub-Province introduced Eng. Esmaeil Salehi Manager of Amol Water and Wastewater Department as an exemplary manager in the year named after "Resistance Economy,

Production and Job Creation" and also implementation of a plan to Honor Clientele.

In the same direction, Mohammad-Reza Mansourian Governor of North Savadkouh also named Mohammad-Vali Manafpour the Manager of Savadkouh Water and Wastewater Department as exemplary manager and expressed his special thanks to him for

materializing most objectives of the department.

It should be noted that Seyyed Khaled Sajjadi Governor of Behshahr also introduced Eng. Nasser Abdi Manager of Behshahr Water and Wastewater Department as exemplary manager in materializing most objectives of resistance economy, the Public Relations Dept. ended.

Bank Mellat Takes Giant Strides in Offering Marriage Loan to Young Couples

Since the beginning of marriage loan taskforce scheme in the country, Bank Mellat has thus far offered 34,500 marriage loans to applicants, the Public Relations Dept. of the bank reported.

According to the statistics of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), Bank Mellat has offered approx. 34,500 marriage loans to the young couples since Marriage

Loan Scheme up to Sept. 20, 2017.

However, giant strides have been taken in this field.

According to the estimates, the bank is going to offer marriage loans to 75,000 young couples in coming years, the Public Relations Dept. of the bank ended.



SINA BANK Renders Quality Banking Services to Clients Using "Code Bank" System

Fast and easy access to the information of account would be possible using SINA Bank's coded name, the Public Relations Dept. of the bank reported.

Given the above issue, SINA Bank has offered "Code Bank" System to its clients in order to develop e-banking services and also to facilitate banking services.

Customers of the bank can receive

information related to their accounts through SMS as online in their mobile phone using "Code Bank" system.

Moreover taking advantage of benefits such as speed and high precision in presenting information, customers of the bank can be responded round-the-clock (24-hr) coupled with saving time and energy.

Remembering codes and executive orders for various operations has been cited as one of the main problems facing customers in fulfilling their banking operations through SMS.

To solve this problem, SINA Bank has launched "Code Bank" System within the framework of a software package, so that customers can get easy access

to the information of their account, the report added.

It should be noted that IOS version of this software is accessible through the website of the bank addressed at: www.sinabank.ir and the android version of the system will be provided in very near future, the Public Relations Dept. of the bank ended.

Scientists find space dust in white cliffs of Dover

Space dust has been found in the white cliffs of Dover, with scientists hoping it will provide clues about our early Solar System.

Researchers at Imperial College London said the fossilized remains of cosmic dust could also allow scientists to locate water-rich asteroids, improving future prospects of space travel.

The "iconic white cliffs of Dover are an important source of fossilized creatures that help us to determine the changes and upheavals the planet has undergone many millions of years ago," said Martin Suttle, lead author and a research postgraduate from Imperial's Department of Earth Science and Engineering.

"It is so exciting because we've now discovered that fossilized space dust is entombed alongside these creatures, which can also provide us with information about what was happening in our Solar System at the time."

The same team of researchers also reported in a separate study revealing they'd discovered a way for determining if cosmic dust was clay rich.

Clay can only form if water is present, so researchers said a method for determining clay content could act like a "cosmic diving rod" for determining the presence of water-rich asteroids in our Solar System.

Dr. Matt Genge, lead author from the College's Department of Earth Science and Engineering, said: "In the distant future, asteroids could provide human space explorers with valuable stop offs during long voyages."

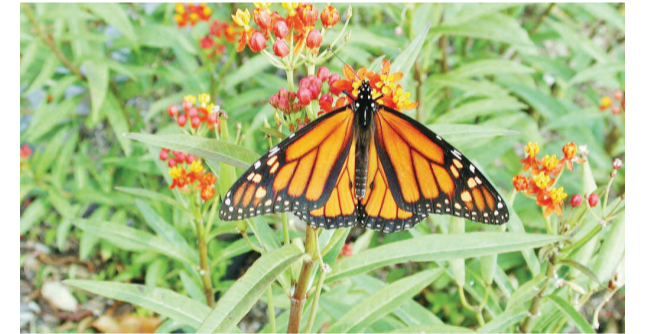
"Being able to source water is vital because it can be used to drink, to make oxygen and even fuel to power spacecraft. (Source: IBT)

Monarch butterflies disappearing from western North America

Monarch butterfly populations from western North America have declined far more dramatically than was previously known and face a greater risk of extinction than eastern monarchs, according to a new study in the journal Biological Conservation.

"Western monarchs are faring worse than their eastern counterparts," said Cheryl Schultz, an associate professor at Washington State University Vancouver and lead author of the study. "In the 1980s, 10 million monarchs spent the winter in coastal California. Today there are barely 300,000."

Schultz adds, "This study doesn't just show that there are fewer monarchs now than 35 years ago. It also tells us that, if things stay the same, western monarchs probably won't be around as we know them in another 35 years."



Like eastern monarchs, which overwinter in Mexico, western monarchs have a spectacular migration. They overwinter in forested groves along coastal California, then fan out in the spring to lay their eggs on milkweed and drink nectar from flowers in Arizona, California, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Utah. They return to their coastal overwintering sites in the fall.

In the 1990s, residents of coastal California became alarmed that a once common butterfly seemed to be disappearing. The Biological Conservation study indicates that those concerns were justified. The researchers combined data from hundreds of volunteers who have participated in the Xerces Society's Western Monarch Thanksgiving Count since 1997 with earlier monarch counts conducted by amateur and professional butterfly enthusiasts in the 1980's and early 1990's. They then predicted the monarch population's risk of extinction over the next several decades. (Source: WSU News)

Scientists closing in on warm caves under Antarctica which could support secret life

Australian scientists investigating ice caves under Antarctica's glaciers say they are so warm they could support animals and plants.

Around Mount Erebus, an active volcano on Ross Island in Antarctica, steam has hollowed out extensive cave systems.

Dr. Ceridwen Fraser from the ANU Fenner School of Environment and Society says forensic analyses of soil samples from these caves have revealed intriguing traces of DNA from algae, mosses and small animals.

"You could wear a T-shirt in there and be pretty comfortable. There's light near the cave mouths, and light filters deeper into some caves where the overlying ice is thin."

Most of the DNA found in the caves is similar to DNA from plants and animals found elsewhere in Antarctica but not all could be fully identified.

The "results from this study give us a tantalizing glimpse of what might live beneath the ice in Antarctica - there might even be new species of animals and plants," she says.

Co-researcher Professor Craig Cary, from the University of Waikato in New Zealand, says previous research found that diverse bacterial and fungal communities lived in Antarctica's volcanic caves. (Source: Business Insider)

Kazakhstan to reintroduce wild tigers after 70-year absence

Wild tigers are to be reintroduced to Kazakhstan 70 years after they became extinct in the country.

The animals will be reintroduced in the Ili-Balkhash region in a project that involves the creation of a nature reserve and the restoration of a forest that is part of the animal's historical range.



If successful, Kazakhstan will be the first country in the world to bring wild tigers back to an entire region where they have been extinct for nearly half a century. Previous relocation projects have only been considered in existing tiger habitats, such as in reserves in India.

Poaching and habitat loss has decimated the wildlife on which wild tigers once fed, including the kulan, or wild donkey, and bactrian deer, both native to central Asia. The animals will be reintroduced to the nature reserve to provide enough food for the tigers when they are relocated from elsewhere in Asia.

The project, which is being supported by WWF, is likely to take many years. The landscape has to be prepared and the wildlife they feed on reintroduced before the first tigers are brought in in 2025 at the earliest.

Igor Chestin, the director of WWF-Russia said: "Thanks to years of close collaboration between Kazakhstan and Russian conservation experts, we have now identified the best possible territory in Ili-Balkhash for the restoration of a thriving wild tiger population."

"Our continued cooperation will be key in the successful creation of a new reserve, the restoration of rare native species and, in a few years' time, achieving an unprecedented trans-boundary relocation of wild tigers to central Asia."

Since the beginning of the 20th century, wild tigers have lost more than 90% of their historical range, including in central Asia (modern Turkey and Iran to north-west China). Wild tigers completely disappeared from Kazakhstan in the 1940s due to poaching and the loss of territory, WWF said.

There were thought to be about 100,000 wild tigers at the beginning of the 20th century. Now there are about 3,900, but it is hoped the Kazakhstan project will play a key role in increasing tiger range and populations.

Askar Myrzakhmetov, the minister of agriculture, said: "Kazakhstan is moving along the path of green development. We are honored to be the first country in central Asia to implement such an important and large-scale project, that not only will bring wild tigers back to their ancestral home but also protect the unique ecosystem of the Ili-Balkhash region." Ekaterina Vorobyeva, the director of WWF-Russia's Central Asia program, said there was hard work ahead to make the area ready. "That means tackling poaching and illegal activities, having well-trained and equipped rangers, thriving prey populations and engaged local communities."

(Source: The Guardian)

LEARN ENGLISH

New Guy In Town V

A: What the heck is going on! Did you see that? What was that thing?

B: I don't know! I'm just glad we **made it out!** Look, there is a police car! Help! Help! Please stop!

C: Howdy man. What seems to be the problem? Is this man bothering you?

A: Officer, officer, there is, like, a witch **creature** back there! We tied her up but she **broke free**, and she was about to have us for dinner!

C: Okay, calm down, calm down. **Lemme** see your eyes please. Have you been drinking tonight, son?

B: We are telling the truth! She's in there! We **suspected** her of being a **kidnapper** or **rapist** but it turns out she's an alien or something.

C: Okay, calm down, calm down. Lemme see your eyes please...

B: Ugg! Seriously! Are you gonna help us or not?

C: Okay, let's go **have a look**, shall we? Hello? Is anyone in here?

A: Be careful! She might be hiding!

C: It's perfectly safe... there isn't anyone...

Key vocabulary

heck: hell in a more polite form

make it out: able to escape or flee

creature: a living thing

break free: get out of something

lemme: let me

suspect: regard someone as a criminal or to be guilty

kidnapper: the kind of criminal that catches someone and asks the family for money

rapist: the kind of criminal who forces someone to have sex

have a look: take a glance

Supplementary vocabulary

larceny: act of stealing something

homicide: the act of killing another person

wanna: want to

gonna: going to

DUI: abbreviation for driving under the influence, to drive while being intoxicated

(Source: irlanguage.com)

NGOs can help improve literacy: education minister

SOCIETY TEHRAN — Iranian **d e s k** NGOs should play a more efficient role in helping the Literacy Movement Organization to improve the rate of literacy in the country, Education Minister Mohammad Bat'haee said on Sunday.

The state-run Literacy Movement Organization of Iran should benefit from supports of the private sector and non-government organization, ISNA quoted the minister as saying on Sunday.

He made the remarks at a press conference held on the occasion of International Literacy Day, September 8, which is celebrated annually worldwide by the United Nations.

"Unfortunately, there are still illiterate people in Iran. Although the illiteracy rate has declined to 10 percent among individuals over six years old in Iran, but [having] even a single illiterate person in the society is high," he said.



Literacy is not only reading and writing but it is an ability, which develop relation skills, he explained.

"The only solution to decrease the rate

of illiteracy is practical planning for different regions," he said.

Bat'haee went on to say that traditional methods cannot solve the illiteracy

problem and a flexible program should be developed for the problem.

The rate of literacy among Iranians between 10-49 years of age has increased to 94.7 percent last year from 92.4 percent in 2011, according to the head of the Literacy Movement Organization Ali Baqerzadeh.

A report published by UNESCO in 2015 says the global literacy rate was 86.3 percent.

International Literacy Day is an opportunity for governments, civil society and stakeholders to highlight improvements in world literacy rates, and reflect on the world's remaining literacy challenges.

The issue of literacy is a key component of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The theme of this year's International Literacy Day was 'Literacy in a Digital World'.

Trained shepherds, dogs minimize human-carnivore conflicts

By Farnaz Heidari

Dr. Igor Khorozyan is well known for his works on large mammalian carnivores and wildlife assessment.

He and his Iranian colleagues tried to study individual leopard attacks on sheep and goats in 34 villages near Golestan National Park.

They obtained and analyzed data on 39 attacks and evaluated the effects of shepherds and dogs on livestock depredation by leopards in north-eastern Iran.

Tehran Times had an interview with Dr. Khorozyan to discuss some of the latest issues in this field.

Below are excerpts from the interview.

■ The current status of dogs (feral, stray and livestock guarding dogs) in Iran has raised some concerns among conservation biologists. Why is that?

A: Our research is related to livestock guarding dogs, not feral or stray ones. There are two categories of dogs dealing with livestock: guarding dogs and herding dogs.

Guarding dogs like Kangals or German shepherds are able to detect and successfully deter predators from livestock. Herding dogs like collies are used to move livestock and keep them in a group.

Both guarding and herding dogs require careful training since the early days of a pup's life and untrained dogs can create lots of problems, also for conservation.

Some dogs may attack livestock and other animals, the others hunt wild animals and some even may attack

humans. It is well known that getting killed by dogs is one of the most important mortality factors for critically endangered Asiatic cheetahs which survive today only in Iran.

Wildlife hunting can be an everyday pastime for dogs which are not properly fed by owners and need to find food elsewhere.

A serious conservation issue that we found in our research is that guarding dogs in villages around Golestan National Park cannot protect sheep and goats from leopards efficiently. As a result, leopards keep on killing livestock and die from human persecution. The presence of dogs near sheep and goats is not a guarantee of safety and dogs themselves can often be killed by leopards. Cattle usually graze on their own, without shepherds or dogs, what also may increase vulnerability of cattle to leopard attacks.

Regarding feral or stray dogs, they can be even more dangerous than wild predators because they do not avoid humans and may openly exert aggressive actions towards people, pets and livestock. Importantly, stray and feral dogs may transmit diseases dangerous for humans and domestic animals like rabies, canine distemper, parasites and others.

■ Why dogs are among the most preferred prey species for leopards? What dangers can it bring?

A: Yes, leopards like to eat dogs and in some areas, like agricultural lands in southern India, dogs become the main prey for leopards. Leopards are tempted to kill



medium-sized or small dogs as they are easy to catch, and their barking and nervous behavior may even provoke leopards for attacks.

In Golestan, the situation is different as leopards frequently kill dogs, but consume them quite rarely. It means that dogs are killed more in retaliatory attacks rather than as prey.

■ Would you please tell me about the importance of shepherd and guarding dog assessment in Golestan National Park?

A: Our team works in Golestan for many years and considers this national park as a model for leopard conservation in all Iran and even in the Middle East.

Please read the full text of the interview on the Tehran Times website.

Cycling group promotes protecting water resources in Iran

ENVIRONMENT Nafas, an Iranian **d e s k** eco-conscious cycling group, pedaled from Gorgan Gulf - the largest Gulf in the Caspian Sea in northern Iran - to Lake Urmia, northwest of the country, with the aim of raising awareness about protection of seas, lakes and freshwater.

Cyclists Hadi Bayazi and Ahmad Soltani began their tour on August 31 and ended on September 9, Bayazi told the Tehran Times.

Gorgan Gulf covers an area of about 400 square kilometers. In recent years, it has been facing severe drought due to the drying up of the Caspian Sea.

Its maximum depth is 4 meters and this depth increases from west to east till the southern side of Ashoura Deh peninsula.

In the western part its salinity is more than salinity of the Caspian Sea because of its reducing depth and increase of evaporation.

Generally the water entrance capacity is less than its exit and its water shortage is supplemented by the Caspian Sea.

Lake Urmia, which has been shrinking substantially since 2000s, was once the sixth largest saltwater lake on Earth.

The decline is generally blamed on a combination of drought, increased water diversion for irrigated agriculture within the lake's watershed.

The lake used to a natural habitat for migratory birds, and a tourist attraction as it is believed to have some therapeutic properties and healing effects.



ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

پرونده خطوط ۷، ۶ و ۸ مترو، سال آینده بسته خواهد شد

مدیر عامل شرکت متروی تهران گفت: پرونده خطوط ۶، ۷ و ۸ مترو قبل از شهریور سال بسته خواهد شد.

به گزارش باشگاه خبرنگاران جوان هابیل درویش بیان داشت: امسال ۲۴ ایستگاه مترو را افتتاح کرده ایم و بیش از ۱۰۰ کیلومتر و تونل ساخته شده است.

درویش ادامه داد: امسال بیش از ۶ هزار میلیارد تومان توسط شهرداری تهران در پروژه‌های مترو هزینه شده است.

مدیر عامل شرکت مترو تهران با اشاره به اینکه به‌زودی ۱۰۰ کیلومتر مترو در شهر تهران به بهره‌برداری می‌رسد، تصریح کرد: برای پروژه خط ۹ و ۱۰ نیز مطالعاتی در حال انجام است.

ENGLISH PROVERB

A miss is as good as a mile

■ **Explanation**: almost having done something is the same as not having done it at all, since in both cases the thing does not get done

■ **For example**: We only missed the train by one minute? Well, a miss is as good as a mile.

PHRASAL VERB

Doss around/about

■ **Meaning**: to spend your time in a lazy way, doing very little

■ **For example**: We just dossed around all day Saturday.

ENGLISH IDIOM

Bet your bottom dollar

■ **Explanation**: if you bet your bottom dollar on something, you are absolutely certain of it

■ **For example**: Jack is very punctual. You can bet your bottom dollar he'll be here at 9 o'clock on the dot.

Critics circle Aung San Suu Kyi over Rohingya crisis

1→ More than 400,000 people have signed an online petition calling for Aung San Suu Kyi to be stripped of her accolade, accusing her of doing "virtually nothing to stop this crime against humanity in her country".

"The... [prize is] only to be given to 'people who have given their utmost to international brotherhood and sisterhood.' These peaceful values need to be nurtured by the laureates of the Nobel Peace Prize, including Aung San Suu Kyi, until their last days," the change.org petition reads.

"When a laureate cannot maintain peace, then for the sake of peace itself the prize needs to be returned or confiscated by the Nobel Peace Prize Committee."

Malala Yousafzai

Malala Yousafzai, a Pakistani Nobel Peace laureate, has condemned Aung San Suu Kyi's apparent inaction in response to the emerging crisis in Myanmar.

"Every time I see the news, my heart breaks at the suffering of the Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar," Yousafzai, who famously survived being shot in the head by the Taliban, tweeted on September 3.

Yousafzai, 20, called on the international community to provide sanctuary for those fleeing the violence.

"Other countries, including my own country Pakistan, should follow Bangladesh's example and give food, shelter and access to education to Rohingya families fleeing violence and terror," she wrote.

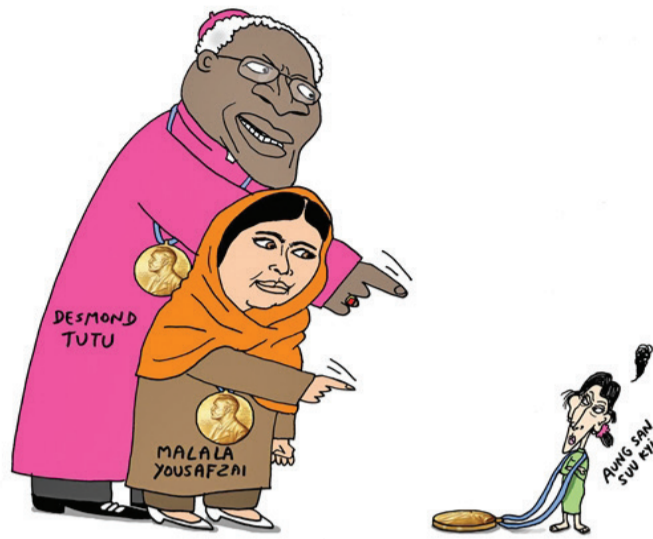
"Over the last several years I have repeatedly condemned this tragic and shameful treatment. I am still waiting for my fellow Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi to do the same."

Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the 1984 recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize for his role in ending South Africa's policy of apartheid, has also called on Aung San Suu Kyi to end the Rohingya's suffering.

Denouncing the "unfolding horror," the 85-year-old implored his "dearly beloved younger sister" to intervene in the crisis and "guide your people back towards the path of righteousness again," in an open letter published on September 7.

"If the political price of your ascension to the highest office in Myanmar is your silence, the price is surely too steep," he wrote.



"A country that is not at peace with itself, that fails to acknowledge and protect the dignity and worth of all its people, is not a free country. It is incongruous for a symbol of righteousness to lead such a country; it is adding to our pain."

Antonio Guterres

Antonio Guterres, the United Nations secretary-general, has appealed to Myanmar's officials in a bid to end the ongoing crisis.

Guterres expressed concern that continued disruption could descend into a "humanitarian catastrophe with implications for peace and security that could continue to expand beyond Myanmar's borders" in a letter sent to the UN Security Council.

Although he has not directly criticize Aung San Suu Kyi, the secretary-general condemned Myanmar's leaders.

"I appeal to all, all authorities in Myanmar, civilian authorities and military authorities, to indeed put an end to this violence that, in my opinion, is creating a situation that can destabilize the region," he told reporters on September 5.

"The grievances and unresolved plight of the Rohingya have festered for far too long."

Recep Tayyip Erdogan

Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Turkey's president, has claimed he will press world leaders to help Myanmar's Rohingya who he said are facing a genocide.

Turkey will raise the issue at the UN General Assembly meeting in New York this month - which will run from September 12 to September 25 - according to

Erdogan.

"You watched the situation that Myanmar and Muslims are in ... You saw how villages have been burnt ... Humanity remained silent to the massacre in Myanmar," he said on September 4.

Erdogan refrained from openly criticizing Aung San Suu Kyi directly, but reportedly told her in a September 5 phone call that the violence perpetrated against Myanmar's Rohingya population was a violation of human rights.

During the discussion, he made clear that the Muslim world was deeply concerned about the situation, according to the Reuters news agency.

Turkey has agreed with Myanmar the right to provide aid to the country's northwestern region, where the Rohingya crisis is most acute.

Approximately 1,000 tons of food, clothes and medicine were delivered to Rakhine state on September 6.

Peter Popham

Peter Popham, biographer of two books about the life and work of Kyi, has called on Aung San Suu Kyi to resign.

Citing her decision in December 2011 to abide by Myanmar's constitution, which provides the army a "right to take over all powers of government whenever they feel it's necessary", Popham labelled her situation "desperate" in an opinion piece published by The Independent on September 8.

"Instead of challenging the military, she is now its poodle, its patsy, its flak-catcher in chief. Senior general Min Aung Hlaing - responsible for operations

against the Rohingya - is off the hook," he wrote.

"As Burma's de facto ruler, Suu Kyi bears ultimate responsibility for this grotesque over-reaction. As the most admired and famous Burmese person in the world, she owed the world an explanation for it. But her response has been lamentable ... [giving] No indication at all that she shares in or even understands the outside world's indignation."

"She has only one possible recourse: accept that in December 2011 she made a fatal error, and call it a day. The world would understand."

Boris Johnson

Boris Johnson, the UK's foreign secretary, has decried Myanmar's treatment of its Rohingya population, claiming it is "besmirching the reputation of Burma".

The UK hopes Kyi will now use her "remarkable qualities" to end the crisis, Johnson said in a statement on September 2.

"Aung San Suu Kyi is rightly regarded as one of the most inspiring figures of our age," he said. "I hope she can now use all her remarkable qualities to unite her country, to stop the violence and to end the prejudice that afflicts both Muslims and other communities."

Tirana Hassan

Tirana Hassan, Amnesty International's crisis response director, has been a vocal critic of Myanmar's actions near the nation's border with Bangladesh.

Though not explicitly referencing Aung San Suu Kyi, Hassan has called on the nation's leaders to end the suffering, and expressed the importance of a swift resolution to the situation.

"Rakhine state is on the precipice of a humanitarian disaster. Nothing can justify denying life-saving aid to desperate people," she said on September 4.

"By blocking access for humanitarian organizations, Myanmar's authorities have put tens of thousands of people at risk and shown a callous disregard for human life."

Hassan has also openly lamented the reported use of antipersonnel landmines on the nation's border with Bangladesh, which Amnesty International claims are being used by Myanmar's security forces to target those escaping the country.

"Authorities must immediately end this abhorrent practice against people who are already fleeing persecution," she said. (Source: Al Jazeera)

The trail of Riyadh in the incident of 9/11

7→ Today, the real actors of the incident must be held accountable for the September 11 incident. We are reminded that when Bush and Tony Blair were attacked by journalists and public opinion about the reasons for the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, they addressed 11 sep incident.

3 years ago, more than 1,000 experts signed a letter, underpinning the US government's official narrative of the September 11 events, called for an independent investigation into this issue. There has been no such independent research so far, because US intelligence agencies prevent the media and the public from accessing information behind the scenes. An interesting point is that Democrat members do not speak about the September 11 incident.

Many American citizens thought that Obama's presidency would reveal a new dimension to the September 11, 2001 incident. However, Obama and the Democrats of America, like the Republicans, prevented the investigation of independent institutions and experts. More importantly, despite proving the role of Saudi Arabia in the September 11, 2001 incident, Obama refused to condemn Riyadh for this incident. This issue continues during the Trump presidency. Trump knows well that Saudi Arabia was involved in the September 11 incident. However, the president of the United States would prefer not to say anything!

The questions and ambiguities of the American citizens are rising over the September 11 incident. This is despite the fact that the US government and its security agencies are not answering these questions. Some of these questions include: Why did the United States not allow the independent bodies to investigate the September 11, 2001 incident? Why do not American officials condemn Riyadh in this regard, despite evidence of Saudi Arabia's role in the September 11 incident? What is the reason behind the common silence of the two Democratic and Republican parties in the September 11 incident? What has been the relationship between the Bush administration's neoconservatives and the culprits of September 11, 2001? Why did the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq happen after the September 11, 2001 incident? Has the Bush administration made its decision before the September 11, 2001 incident? These are questions that American officials do not basically want to answer! Obviously, over time, the secret dimensions of the September 11, 2001 incident are further identified. The American public is now awaiting the response of the Trump government to the New York Post.

Eventually, the September 11, 2001 incident and the silence of US government and security institutions against Saudi Arabia are a big scandal for Washington. We should not forget that in the near future, the role of the government and US security agencies will be further identified in the event of September 11, 2001. An issue that will lead to the anger of the public opinion of the world from the United States.

Why Serbia must recognize Kosovo's independence

8→ The EU should condition funds provided to Kosovo and Serbia through its Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance Program. "No progress, no chapters" would be the guiding principle, linking progress in the Kosovo-Serbia dialogue to Serbia's EU aspirations.

Mediators need an end game to their diplomacy. The Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Martti Ahtisaari, who served as UN special envoy from 2005 to 2008, knew the outcome of his efforts before taking the job.

Today's mediators need strategic and moral clarity. A new format could galvanize negotiations. The EU should appoint an international heavyweight as special envoy. Wolfgang Schauble, Germany's finance minister, has clout and negotiating experience. He would be formidable in this role. Given her overall experience and work in the Balkans as U.S. secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice would be ideal as the U.S. special representative.

Dialogue cannot be open-ended. Mediators should set a deadline of 18 months. The clock would start ticking when the dialogue is upgraded and relaunched.

The people of Kosovo and Serbia must be kept informed. The Kosovo and Serbia delegations could include a "unity team," comprised of major political parties and civil society representatives.

A deal won't be easy. There is a plethora of bilateral issues to be addressed. There are up to 1,500 missing persons from the war. A Regional Commission for Facts about War Crimes could help assuage the families of victims. An estimated \$1.5 billion in Kosovo pension funds and a \$600,000 privatization fund were seized by Serbia. In turn, Serbia wants to recover the value of its investments in Kosovo. A compensation plan is needed. Kosovo needs a comprehensive plan to integrate Kosovo Serbs, while providing local autonomy to enhance minority rights.

International system

Lack of progress has a negative impact in both Kosovo and Serbia. Failure to fully integrate into the international system undermines Kosovo's economy, which suffers from 30 percent unemployment and even higher youth unemployment. Lack of economic development has fueled an underground economy.

Serbia is stigmatized by its genocidal practices during the 1990s. It remains a borderline failed state, caught between its dark history, European aspirations and Russia's nefarious influence. Absent economic reforms, Serbia has become a hub for organized crime and all sorts of trafficking. North Kosovo is run by a criminal gang under Belgrade's control. A mutually symbiotic relationship exists between gangs in North Kosovo and their mafia counterparts in Serbia and the region.

Serbia wants to gain EU membership as soon as it normalizes relations with Kosovo. Would Euro-Atlantic integration solve Serbia's problems with Kosovo? Can Serbia deliver Russia's agreement for Kosovo to join the UN? Would Serbia block Kosovo's EU membership once it becomes an EU member?

Globalists in the Trump administration can achieve a foreign policy success by engaging in the Kosovo Serbia dialogue. An agreement between Kosovo and Serbia would stabilize a strategically important region in Europe, reaffirm the importance of trans-Atlantic cooperation, and underline Washington's indispensable diplomatic role. (Source: The Washington times)

North Korea's Kim Jong Un fetes nuclear scientists, holds celebration bash

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un hosted a massive celebration to congratulate his nuclear scientists and technicians who steered the country's sixth and largest nuclear test a week ago, its official news agency said on Sunday.

The United States and its allies had been bracing for another long-range missile launch in time for the 69th anniversary of North Korea's founding on Saturday, but no fresh provocations were spotted while the North held numerous events to mark the holiday.

Throughout last week, South Korean officials had warned the North could launch another intercontinental ballistic missile in defiance of UN sanctions and amid an escalating standoff with the United States.

Washington told the UN Security Council on Friday to call a meeting on Monday to vote on a draft resolution establishing additional sanctions on North Korea for its missile and nuclear program.

Japanese Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera said it was vital to put pressure on North Korea through additional sanctions, including blocking or slowing its fuel supplies.

"If we put firm pressure on North Korea such that it realizes it cannot develop missiles, it will accept dialogue and we can progress with diplomatic efforts," Onodera told public broadcaster NHK on Sunday. "Unless we firmly apply pressure, North Korea will not change its direction."

KCNA said Kim threw a banquet to laud the nuclear scientists and other top military and party officials who contributed to the nuclear bomb test last Sunday, topped with an art performance and a photo session

with the leader himself.

KCNA did not specify when the banquet had been held, but analysts said it had likely been on Saturday.

Photos released on Sunday by KCNA showed the young leader breaking into a broad smile at the People's Theater with two prominent scientists: Ri Hong Sop, head of North Korea's Nuclear Weapons Institute, and Hong Sung Mu, deputy director of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea's munitions industry department.

Ri and Hong have played vital roles in the North's nuclear program, appearing at close distance to Kim during field inspections and weapons tests, including the latest nuclear test. Ri is a former director of Yongbyon Nuclear Research Center, North Korea's main nuclear facility north of Pyongyang, where Hong also worked as a chief engineer.

North Korea had said the latest test was an advanced hydrogen bomb. There was no independent confirmation but some Western experts said there was enough strong evidence to suggest the reclusive state has either developed a hydrogen bomb or was getting very close.

KCNA said on Sunday the scientists and technicians "brought the great auspicious event of the national history, an extra-large event through the perfect success in the test of H-bomb".

Kim praised the developers in his own remarks as "taking the lead" in attaining the "final goal of completing the state nuclear force" in line with his parallel pursuit of nuclear and economic development.

"The recent test of the H-bomb is the great victory



won by the Korean people at the cost of their blood while tightening their belts in the arduous period," Kim was quoted as saying.

Ri and Hong's roles have also been noted overseas, prompting the United Nations, the United States or South Korea to blacklist them.

Aside from the elite, rank-and-file North Koreans also commemorated the anniversary on Saturday by visiting the Kumsusan Palace of the Sun, which houses the embalmed bodies of founding father Kim Il Sung and his son and successor Kim Jong Il. (Source: AP)

Irma: Could you resist remembering 9/11?

1→ and by unsettling world efforts to ensure an oasis of peace in a restive Middle East that had come in the form of a nuclear deal with Tehran.

Now forth comes Irma, striking round the same spot as Katrina. What other hidden miseries is this one going to reveal? Who suffered \$10 billion damage in 9/11 and who did over \$100 billion in Katrina? Who did Bush nab and what replaced that person? An Islamic State? What is the business that Islamic State goes about? What remains where it treads?

Various sides may have their varying interpretations and claims of who has suffered from the 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, and IS. The prospect of summing

these claims up toward a human understanding of who did wrong and who was wronged may look dim under a haze of complicated interrelations. But what remains is the bodies of people that lost their lives to, in, or around these landmark phenomena. From those who jumped from the Twin Towers to the people of New Orleans that had been long buried under the capitalist arrangement of their environment, to an Iranian fighter recently beheaded by IS, whom the Iranian Leader called "a proof put before the world's eye", there is a thread that runs through: a ghastly denial of the right of others to live; the idea of human beings as disposables.

The best of the world's "nation is under attack," the best that constitutes the not-so-privileged 99 percent. This nation scatters in geography from concentration camps in North Korea, to ideologically-developed dungeons in Myanmar, to the American coasts, living one day under huge tides of an ignorant capitalist system, and another day against sweeping winds that strip them of the little they already have to expose their sheer deprivation.

The world we live in is affected by some severe case of hemorrhage, discharging burnt, beaten, or beheaded bodies of people caught in a whirlwind of clashing interests, if I may, rather than

clash of civilizations.

Let us not get caught in the banality of seeking a ready-made remedy. The smallest step to be taken is for man (the 99 percent) to realize that, no matter how they put it, all the ones in power say can be boiled down to: In you I see my interests. How would you like to pay? Through tax or at gunpoint? I have arranged every option on the table. Make your choice!

Record has shown whether you pay by tax or at gunpoint has a direct relation to your geographical whereabouts. As far as taxation reaches, you will meet a tall, white gentleman. If not, a tall, dark stranger!

Hickey resigns from IOC executive amid tickets scandal

Ireland's former Olympic chief Pat Hickey has resigned from the International Olympic Committee's executive board after becoming embroiled in a ticket-selling scandal at last year's Rio Games.



Hickey, 72, was arrested by Brazilian police during the Games and held in jail. He was eventually released on bail after the Association of National Olympic Committees loaned him the money to allow him to return to Ireland.

He has maintained he is innocent of all charges. "Patrick Hickey has informed the IOC of his resignation as a member of the IOC Executive Board with immediate effect," an IOC spokesperson said in a statement ahead of its session in Lima this week.

"In his resignation letter, Mr Hickey emphasized that we want to protect the IOC and to ensure that the interests of the National Olympic Committees are represented on the Executive Board.

"He also reiterated his innocence in respect of all charges and confirmed that he hopes to exercise his functions as an IOC member in the future."

His seat on the board will now be filled by an election during the session in the Peruvian capital.

Hickey, the former top European official at the IOC, was charged by Brazilian investigators over an alleged scheme to sell Rio Games tickets illegally.

Hickey's trial has been set for late November, Irish media reported last week.

(Source: Reuters)

Ronaldo and Real Madrid arrogance motivate Barcelona star Lionel Messi

Lionel Messi and his Barcelona teammates have been galvanized by Real Madrid's triumphalism.

Real stormed to La Liga and Champions League glory last term.

And bigwigs at the Bernabeu have been confident that another successful campaign is on the cards.

Cristiano Ronaldo has also been telling teammates that he's eyeing individual honors this season at Messi's expense.

However, according to Spanish news outlet Diario Gol, Barca have been growing increasingly convinced that Real are not as invincible as they'd like to believe.

The Catalans had a tumultuous summer and lost Neymar to Paris St-Germain for an eye-watering £199m.

Ernesto Valverde also failed to sign Liverpool star Philippe Coutinho.

But despite their summer woes, Barca are bouncing back and Diario Gol say Messi has been motivated by Ronaldo's arrogance.

They smashed city rivals Espanyol 5-0 last night and the Argentine superstar bagged a hat-trick.

Luis Suarez and Gerard Pique also found the net.

In contrast, Real are stuttering following last season's stunning exploits.

Real could only manage an underwhelming 1-1 draw with Levante at the Bernabeu.

Ivan Lopez, who is commonly known as Lvi, grabbed the opener for the visitors.

But Lucas secured an equalizer before half-time after Levante goalkeeper parried Sergio Ramos' header into the forward's path.

Real huffed and puffed in the second-half but couldn't find a crucial second goal.

The La Liga giants also had Marcelo sent off in the closing minutes for lashing out at Levante defender Jefferson Lerma.

(Source: Star)

Hingis and Murray win U.S. Open mixed doubles title

Switzerland's Martina Hingis and Britain's Jamie Murray fought off a match point to defeat Chan Hao-ching and Michael Venus 6-1 4-6 (10-8) to claim the U.S. Open mixed doubles title on Saturday.

The top-seeded partnership, which won their first tournament together at Wimbledon in July, pushed their team record to an unblemished 10-0 with the win over the number three seed.

Hingis, a former world number one singles player who won the U.S. Open title 20 years ago, praised her partner, who is the brother of world number two Andy Murray.

"He's a great partner to have. His wingspan as you saw at the end," she said, referring to Murray's reaching overhead smash that ended the tight super-tiebreaker to cap off the contest.

Murray said his younger brother, who withdrew from the tournament with a hip injury, congratulated him after the match.

"He texted me and said well done," he told reporters.

It is Hingis' second U.S. Open mixed doubles crown in three years and seventh mixed title overall.

Murray also won a mixed title at Wimbledon in 2007.

The tournament was the first for the partnership of Chan and Venus, who needed three sets to win all six of their matches leading up to the final.

(Source: Eurosport)

Putin Pitchside: Russian president kicks off longest World Cup Trophy Tour in history in Moscow

Russian President Vladimir Putin was on hand to kick off the FIFA World Cup Trophy Tour across Russia at the newly-renovated Luzhniki Stadium in Moscow on Saturday.

The tour is the longest in history and will see the trophy venture to 24 Russian cities from Vladivostok in Russia's Far East to Kaliningrad, the country's most westerly city, over 123 days, as well as visiting 50 countries globally ahead of the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia.

The mammoth trophy tour will end in the city where it began – Moscow – on June 7, exactly one week before the beginning of the tournament, having also visited each of the 11 tournament host cities.

Ahead of the kickoff, 1,500 youngsters took part in an on-pitch masterclass under the watchful eye of current and former Russia internationals, including Roman Shirokov, Roman Zobnin, and Aleksey Smertin.

Next summer's Russia 2018 tournament mascot, Zabivaka the Wolf, was also on hand to observe the matches at the event, which coincided with celebrations to mark Moscow's 870th anniversary, recognized from September 1-10.

Putin joined FIFA President Gianni Infantino in inspecting Luzhniki's hallowed turf – on which the opening game and final of next year's tournament will be played – before addressing the crowd.

"Football will always be the main sport in Russia," Putin said, choosing to herald Russia's past great players such as Lev Yashin.

"I am sure our national team will please the fans in the upcoming World Cup," he added.

Then it was the turn of Infantino to address the crowd. Following the 2017 FIFA Confederation Cup held in Russia over the summer, Infantino heaped praise on Russia's organization in holding the event.

"Spasibo (Thank you), dobro pozhalovat (welcome). This Confederations Cup... has been a great success," Infantino said back then, practicing his Russian.

"If this is what a problematic tournament looks like, then I hope there are many problematic tournaments, because it went very well," Infantino said at the tour-



ment's closing press conference in St. Petersburg.

At the World Cup trophy kick off tour, it seemed Infantino's impression and expectations had grown, as he took to the stage next to the Luzhniki pitch.

"Dorogie Druzya (dear friends)," Infantino addressed the ground, again choosing to employ his Russian skills.

"(I will say) to people of the world, I tell them – Come to Russia! Enjoy Russia, and celebrate the World Cup," he added.

Putin and Infantino were joined by former France forward David Trezeguet and Brazilian strike legend Bebeto, both of whom won the World Cup – in 1998 and 1994 respectively.

Trezeguet, who was making his first visit to Moscow,

was victorious with his national team at their home France '98 World Cup, and described his impressions of the stadium as "exceptional."

"As regards the stadium, it is fantastic, being on the pitch really brought it home today. As for my impressions, I have very vivid memories 1998 and 2000, and of course it fills you with great memories of returning to the stadium," he said.

Trezeguet and Bebeto were also given the chance to reenact lifting the World Cup trophy as they had done in celebrating their respective national teams' victories.

The 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia will be held in 12 stadiums across 11 Russian cities from June 14 to July 15.

(Source: RT Sport)

Mourinho reveals why it will take three summers to rebuild Manchester United

Jose Mourinho has outlined the scale of the overhaul he believed was necessary when he arrived at Manchester United in May 2016.

The Portuguese boss has overseen a dramatic transformation in the playing staff since then, with this summer's arrivals of Victor Lindelof, Nemanja Matijic and Romelu Lukaku meaning he is getting ever closer to managing a truly 'Mourinho' side.

However, the Portuguese believes it will take a full THREE summers for him to truly 'rebuild' the team, following the struggles of the immediate post-Sir Alex Ferguson years.

In an interview with the Sunday Times, Mourinho explains exactly how bad he believed the situation to be when he first took charge at Old Trafford.

"There was an evolution in the other clubs; there was no evolution in this club.

"In all the areas that make a team successful, I think we stopped in time.

When I say 'the club', I say the football team and what surrounds the football team was in trouble, big trouble.

"Not the club at all, because the club is much more than the results... Manchester United as a club will never be in trouble."

That initial assessment perhaps explains why Mourinho believes the job of rebuilding and reshaping the United team will require a full three years, the exact length of his contract.

Mourinho is confident that three years is "the correct timing to put the football team on the right track".

"Three summers are the period because it's the summer where you design the future of your squad. In January you get a specific player who is in the end of his contract, you can get him in better conditions or it's an emergency buy.

"But the design, the architecture of the future of your team is made in the summer.

(Source: Mirror)



Neymar no longer playing with the best at PSG, claims Wenger

Many football stars aspire to play alongside the best talent in the world but Neymar "decided to go the other way", according to Arsene Wenger.

Paris Saint-Germain pulled off a stunning coup by luring Neymar from Barcelona for a world-record €222million in August.

He has been joined by Kylian Mbappe at Parc des Princes, having sacrificed the chance to continue his fruitful partnership with Lionel Messi and Luis Suarez in attack at Camp Nou.

Arsenal manager Wenger, speaking to beIN SPORTS, acknowledged his surprise that a global talent in the prime of his career would choose to leave the LaLiga giants.

"Neymar never expressed exactly in his statement the reasons of his move, because there is always a huge desire for the players to play with the best players," he said.

"He decided to go the other way, so that is... for financial reasons, or for reasons that he thinks Paris Saint-Ger-

main is tomorrow's club and will take over from Real Madrid and Barcelona, or for individual reasons, such as maybe he wants to become the player that the team turns around, and to be acknowledged as the best player in the world."

Wenger also reiterated his belief in the extraordinary promise of Mbappe, who will make his loan switch from Monaco to the capital club permanent next year.

"I think he is exceptionally intelligent, he has an exceptional character, and exceptional belief," he said.

"I say to my friends, 'Mbappe is the new Pele'."

"He can become the best player in the world, because he as well has the charisma, the character, the belief.

"You never think you're speaking to an 18-year-old when you speak to him. He always gives you the impression when he gets the ball that something special can happen."

(Source: Soccerway)



Unseeded American Sloane Stephens wins US Open for first major title

Sloane Stephens' epic comeback is complete.

Stephens, who has jumped more than 900 spots in the world rankings in a month, is now a grand slam champion, winning the US Open 6-3, 6-0 against No. 15 seed and fellow American Madison Keys at Arthur Ashe Stadium in Flushing, New York.

This was only the seventh time in the Open Era, and the second time at the US Open, that two first-time finalists have faced off in a grand slam final. This also was the first all-American US Open final since 2002, when Serena Williams defeated Venus Williams. Stephens is the first American woman other than the Williams sisters to win a grand slam title in 15 years.

The 24-year-old Stephens, unseeded and ranked 83rd, is the third player

to win the US Open ranked outside the top 10 since computer rankings began in November 1975. The others were unranked Kim Clijsters in 2009 and No. 26 Flavia Pennetta in 2015.

When it was over, the two Americans shared a long embrace on the court. After Stephens celebrated with her support group, including her mother, Sybil Smith, she returned to the court and sat next to Keys, whom Stephens calls her best friend on the WTA tour.

"Honestly I wouldn't have wanted to play anyone else," Stephens said. "For us both to be here is such a special moment. I told her I wish there could be a draw, because I wish we could have both won. I think that if it was the other way around she would do the same for me. I'm going to support her no matter what,

and I know she's going to support me no matter what. To stand with her today is incredible. That's what real friendship is."

None of this looked possible earlier this summer.

Stephens, who had been sidelined for 11 months after a foot injury and underwent surgery in January, made her comeback at Wimbledon and entered this summer's US Open Series ranked 957th. But she's been on a tear in the North American events, reaching the semifinals in Toronto and Cincinnati.

"I had surgery January 23," Stephens said. "If someone told me then that I'd win the US Open, it's impossible; I would say 'It's absolutely impossible.' My journey to get here, coming back, just being able to keep it all together and have such a great team behind me — this journey's

been incredible. And I honestly wouldn't change it for the world."

With the win, Stephens is projected to rise to No. 17. She also nets a hefty payday: \$3.7 million. Her career earnings heading into this tournament were \$4,519,709, with \$310,546 coming this year.

"That's a lot of money," a visibly surprised Stephens said, as Keys jokingly tried to take the check.

Keys, 22, is projected to move up to No. 12 by reaching the final.

"Sloane is truly one of my favorite people, and to get to play her was really special," Keys said. "Obviously, I didn't play my best tennis today and was disappointed, but Sloane, being the great friend that she was, was very supportive. If there's someone I have to lose to today, I'm glad it's her."

(Source: CNN)

Flowers are part of Iranians' daily life: Carlos Queiroz

SPORTS Iran national football team head coach Carlos Queiroz says that flowers are an integrated part of Persians' daily life.

Queiroz's seven-year tenure with Team Melli has been successful on the field and now the Portuguese says he is happy to live in Tehran in an interview with Diário de Notícias.

"Iran is covered by deserts, but it is the country of flowers as well. People give each other flowers when they meet together. No one goes to other people's houses without flowers and there are flowers everywhere for sale. Flowers are part of daily life of Iranian people," Queiroz said.

"My neighbors give me flowers and I found a bunch of flowers in my hotel's courtyard after returning to my house. I am a happy person living in Tehran and announced that for so many times," the former Real Madrid coach added.

Asked if he would consider to leave Iran, Queiroz said, "I had several offers from Algeria, South Africa and Qatar. Some Chinese and European clubs showed interest in signing me as well but they didn't attract me," the Team Melli coach added.

"After the 2018 World Cup in Russia there is one thing I have to do: a serious thinking about my life. Up to now, football forced my family dedicate themselves to following me. I am going fishing [Laughs]," Queiroz said.



Iran beaten by China at CFA International Women's Youth Football

SPORTS Iran suffered a heavy 8-0 loss to host China at the 2017 CFA International Women's Youth Football Tournament opener on Sunday.

The Iranian team will face Japan on Tuesday and meet the U.S. on Thursday.

The tournament is being held in Duyun, China from Sept. 10-14.

The tournament will mark just the second meeting between Iran and the U.S. in women's soccer.

The first was April 2016 when the countries met at

the U-16 level. The U.S. won that historic match, 6-0 in Italy.

Japan are the most successful side in AFC Women's U-19 Championship history, having won the tournament four times in eight attempts, while China PR claimed their sole title in Malaysia in 2006.

Iran qualified for the continental U-19 Finals for the first time in 2015, while the United States have been crowned World Champions on three occasions at U-20 level, most recently in 2012.



We can win it, insists Persepolis' Taremi

Abu Dhabi: Mehdi Taremi believes a never-say-die attitude can help Persepolis achieve their goal of becoming the first side from the Islamic Republic of Iran to lift the AFC Champions League.

Persepolis came from two goals down to draw 2-2 with Saudi Arabia's Al Ahli in the first leg of the quarter-final just under three weeks ago, and go into the second leg at Abu Dhabi's Mohammed Bin Zayed Stadium on Tuesday looking to continue their fine run on the continent.

The Iranian champions will be spurred by the fact that they also drew the first leg with Lekhwiya in the Round of 16, before a 1-0 victory saw them progress to the last eight for the first time.

"From the very first game I have said that we are here to win the competition and that we will fight to the very end," said Persepolis' six-goal top scorer Taremi.

"It's going to be difficult but I can guarantee that we are not going to quit easily and we're not going to get beaten easily."

"We will fight until the very end and I'm very hopeful



that we can achieve our goal."

Taremi, who was among the key players as Iran qualified so impressively for their second successive FIFA World Cup, has been instrumental in his club side's improvement on the continent.

After drawing with Al Hilal in their Group D opener, Taremi bagged a late brace to help his side to a 3-2 win over Al Wahda, before a treble against the same opposition in Persepolis'

final group outing confirmed their passage to the last 16.

"The game against Al Wahda was my favourite because I scored a hat-trick; this was very memorable for me although all the games have been great," added Taremi.

The striker's six goals have him joint second in the scoring charts behind Al Ain's Omar Abdulrahman and Hulk of Shanghai SIPG, although he has failed to find the back of the net since the group stage after drawing blanks in his past three games.

Without his goals, though, Persepolis showed the fighting spirit Taremi has highlighted as Shojae Khalilzadeh and Godwin Mensha struck in the final 20 minutes of the first leg with the Jeddah-based club to secure a 2-2 draw.

"In the first leg the conditions in Oman were very hot so it felt like we were the visitors as we were not used to playing in that temperature," said Taremi.

"But I'm now going to do my absolute best to make sure I can score in the second leg against Al Ahli."

(Source: AFC)

Sprinter Kiryu offers Japan 2020 hopes by dipping under 10

TOKYO (Reuters) - Yoshihide Kiryu gave Japan's burgeoning sprint reputation another hefty boost when he became only the second Asian-born athlete to run under 10 seconds for the 100 metres on Saturday.

The 21-year-old, who won a 4x100m relay silver at the Rio Olympics and a bronze at the World Championships last month, ran 9.98 at an intercollegiate meet in Fukui to become the first Japanese to dip under the barrier.

"I'm thrilled to have done it in my last 100 race of the season," Kiryu told the Kyodo news agency. "I'd been stuck for four years and I managed to rewrite my own record at last."

"I'm on the starting block of the world now that I've run a nine. I'm so grateful to my coach and trainer. It still hasn't sunk in yet."

China's Su Bingtian was the first Asian-born athlete to run under 10 seconds when he clocked 9.99 in Oregon in May 2015, while the Asian record of 9.91 is owned by Nigerian-born Qatari Femi Ogunode.

Kiryu ran a wind-assisted 9.87 as a

teenager at the Texas relays in March 2015 but his previous best legal run was the 10.01 he ran as a schoolboy in 2013 and again last year.

"Everyone remembers the first person to do anything," he added.

"Even though I never said it, ever since I ran the 10.01 in high school, I wanted to be the first to do it. I don't think I would have been able to do it if I didn't believe it."

Japan's growing strength in sprinting is such that Kiryu failed to make team for the individual event at last month's World Championships in London after finishing fourth in the trials.

With the Tokyo Olympics only three years away, Japan Association of Athletics Federations head of development Koji Ito said he thought Kiryu's breakthrough could prove a watershed for the country's sprinters.

"It was more about pride than technique, I felt," said Ito, whose 1998 Japanese record of 10.00 seconds Kiryu bettered on Saturday.

"Only when you run a nine have you earned the right to talk about being able to compete on the world stage. I think



we're going to see more of them to come."

Ryota Yamagata, another member of the relay team in Rio and London, also suggested Kiryu's run would inspire his fellow Japanese sprinters.

"It kind of stings that he beat me to it,

but hopefully I can rewrite the next Japan record," he told Kyodo.

Recently retired Jamaican Usain Bolt holds the world record for the blue ribbon sprint with the 9.58 seconds he ran at the Berlin World Championships in 2009.

Chelsea urge supporters to stop anti-Semitic songs as

Chelsea have ordered their own supporters to stop singing new song about Alvaro Morata because of its anti-Semitic content.

Morata, the club's £75million record signing from Real Madrid, scored his third goal in as many games as the Premier League champions won 2-1 at Leicester.

The Spain international has made a fabulous start to his new career and was hailed by the travelling fans but the terrace chant which taunts London rivals Tottenham

with the Y-word has not gone down well.

Chelsea owner Roman Abramovich is the chairman of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia and the Premier League champions moved swiftly to make their feelings known after the game.

A Chelsea spokesman said: "The club and the players appreciate the fans' passionate support away from home, of course, but the language in that song is not acceptable at all."

"I've spoken to Alvaro about it. Alvaro does not want to be connected with that particular song in any way and both the player and club request the supporters stop singing it with immediate effect."

Morata opened the scoring at Leicester with a header just before half-time.

N'Golo Kante made it 2-0 after the interval and Jamie Vardy pulled one back from the penalty spot.

(source: Daily Mail)

Iranian athletes get two bronzes in Karate Premier League

Iranian karate practitioners have managed to collect two bronze medals at the Karate 1 - Premier League Halle/Leipzig 2017 in Germany.

Amir Mehdizadeh participated in the men's minus 60-kilogram kumite competitions on Sunday, and trounced his Russian opponent Vladimir Kalashnikov 6-0 in his last contest to bag the bronze.

The 28-year-old Iranian karateka had defeated Italian contestant Mattia Pampaloni 3-0 in the preliminary round.

Mehdizadeh then overcame Egyptian karateka Salama Malek 2-1 and Uzbek competitor Sadriiddin Saymatov 3-1. Mehdizadeh drew level with a representative from Italy and progressed to the semi-final round.

He, however, lost his semi-final showdown 0-4 to Douglas Brose of Brazil.

Later on Sunday, Saeed Ahmadi overwhelmed Jordan Thomas of Germany 6-0, and received the bronze medal in the men's minus 67-kilogram kumite division.

The Karate 1 - Premier League Halle/Leipzig 2017 started in Germany on September 8 and will finish on September 10.

The tournament has reportedly brought together a total of 1,384 male and female karate practitioners from 87 countries.

(Source: Press TV)

Russia vs. Iran to be played at Kazan Arena

The Russian national football team will host Iran at Kazan Arena in a friendly match in October.

The game has been scheduled for October 10 at the 45,000-seater Kazan Arena.

Iran football team, which hold the 24th place in the FIFA World Rankings list, have qualified for the 2018 FIFA World Cup.

Team Melli will also play a friendly with Togo six days before the match.

The news about the talks on holding a friendly football match between the Russian and Iranian teams was first voiced in July by Russian Deputy Prime Minister Vitaly Mutko, who also holds the post of the RFU president.

Russia, headed by Stanislav Cherchesov, ranked 62nd in FIFA World Rankings, played a friendly match against Iran in Abu Dhabi, the UAE in February 2011, 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).

(Source: Tasnim)

Ma Ning to officiate Al Ahli vs. Persepolis in ACL quarters

Ma Ning from China has been named as referee of Saudi Arabia's Al Ahli and Persepolis of Iran match in second leg of the AFC Champions League quarter-final.

The match will take place in Abu Dhabi, the UAE on Tuesday.

Persepolis was held to a 2-2 draw by Al Ahli three weeks ago in Muscat, Oman.

Ma Ning is a Chinese football referee, who has been a full international referee for FIFA since 2011.

Ma Ning will be assisted by his countryman while a fourth official is from Sri Lanka.

(Source:the-afc)

Iranian freestylers win two medals at Cadet World Championships

Two Iranian freestyle wrestlers claimed a silver and a bronze medal at the Cadet World Championships at Athens, Greece on Saturday.

Abbas Ali Foroutan lost to Alan Bagaev from Russia in the final match of the 85kg.

Gavin Hoffman from USA and Ukraine's Danylo Stasiuk won bronze medals.

In the 69kg weight class, Mohammad Ashghar Nokhodi defeated Japanese Masaki Sato 5-2 in the bronze medal match.

Gold medal went to William Lewan from USA, who defeated Azerbaijan's Daud Ibragimov 3-1.

The Cadet World Championship is a yearly event where the best Greco-Roman, Freestyle and Women wrestlers in the world aged 16 and 17 years old compete.

The championships has brought more than 100 wrestlers from Iran, the US, Russia, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Georgia and other countries together at the Ano Liosia Olympic Hall in Athens, Greece.

(Source: Tasnim)

Jepkosgei smashes 10 km road world record

Kenya's Joyciline Jepkosgei broke her own 10 km road world record in Prague on Saturday, becoming the first woman to run the distance under 30 minutes off the track.

The 23-year-old ran 29 minutes 43 seconds at the Birell Prague Grand Prix to eclipse her previous record of 30:04 set in the Czech capital in April.

"I'm so happy, I thank God for making me the winner today and... (breaking) the world record," Jepkosgei told Czech Television.

The current women's 10,000m world record is 29:17.45, a record which Ethiopia's Almaz Ayana set at the 2016 Rio Olympics.

Track and road racing records are kept separately by the IAAF, the world's governing body.

Jepkosgei has now broken five records this year, having set new marks for the 10km, 15km, 20km and half-marathon at the Sportissimo Prague Half Marathon on April 1.

(Source: Reuters)

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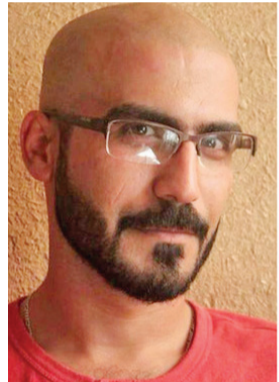


NEWS IN BRIEF

Belal Taheri selected for jury of Veterans Film Festival

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian filmmaker Belal Taheri has been selected for the jury of the Veterans Film Festival (VFF), which will be held in Sydney, Australia from October 18 to 22.

Taheri is also the director of the Cineport International Media, which is active in the international distribution of feature, documentary and short films.



Other members of the panel are former Chief of Australia's Army Peter Leahy and Australian historian and documentarian Jonathan King.

The Veterans Film Festival screens films from around the world, which explore real or fictional stories about war and its impact on society.

NEWS IN BRIEF



"The Hair" to compete in Heart of Gold festival

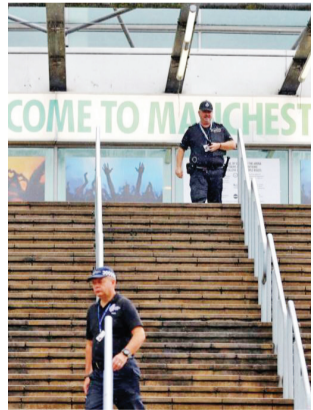
A R T TEHRAN — Iranian director Babak Habibifar's movie "The Hair" will go on screen at the 10th Heart of Gold International Short Film Festival, which will be held in Gympie, Australia from October 5 to 8.

The film is about a young woman, who is trying to earn some money in a short time.

Habibifar's other short movie "The Fish and I" won the Artistic Director's Award of the festival in 2015.

Manchester concert venue shattered by bomb attack to reopen

LONDON (Reuters) — The Manchester music venue where a suicide bomber killed 22 people as they left an Ariana Grande concert in May will reopen on Saturday for the first time since the attack.



Police officers stand at one of the entrances to the Manchester Arena in Manchester, Britain September 9, 2017. (Reuters/Phil Noble)

A benefit concert entitled "We Are Manchester" will raise money for a charitable trust in charge of establishing a permanent memorial in the northern English city.

The victims of the May 22 attack at the Manchester Arena included many young girls, who make up a large part of U.S. singer Grande's fan base. The youngest, Saffie Rousso, was aged eight.

Parents who had come to pick up their children after the show were also among those killed in the attack carried out by Salman Abedi.

"May's events will never be forgotten, but they will not stop us, or Mancunian music fans, from coming together to enjoy live music," James Allen, the venue's general manager, said in a statement.

The line-up for Saturday's concert, which was sold out, included Noel Gallagher, formerly of Oasis, one of the most successful bands to emerge from Manchester.

Also performing will be local poet Tony Walsh, known as Longfella, who moved crowds to tears at a vigil in central Manchester the day after the attack with his poem "This Is The Place" which celebrates the spirit of the city.

Grande will not take part, having performed at a previous benefit concert, "One Love Manchester", which raised funds for victims. The June 4 concert, which took place at a cricket ground in Manchester, also featured artists including Justin Bieber, Coldplay, Miley Cyrus and Pharrell Williams.

Venice Orizzonti honors "No Date, No Signature" director, actor

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian drama "No Date, No Signature" won two top awards in the Orizzonti (Horizons) section at the 74th Venice International Film Festival in the Italian city on Saturday.

The film brought Bahadur Zohabi the best director award and its star Navid Mohammadzadeh was selected as best actor in this category, which had the renowned Iranian filmmaker Rakhshan Bani-Etemad on its panel.

"No Date, No Signature" is about Dr. Nariman, a forensic pathologist who has a car accident with a motorcyclist and injures his 8-year-old son. He offers to take the child to a clinic nearby, but the father refuses his help and money. The next morning, in the hospital where he works, Dr. Nariman finds out that the little boy has been brought for an autopsy after a suspicious death.

"I was raised within a culture whose people have a nice idea that if you pray for someone, God will smile at you and answer the prayer," Jalilvand said.

"So, I request that you pray for me that I would not fall into vanity after receiving this great present and I would remember that cinema is slated to make me a better man rather than a good filmmaker," he added.

In his acceptance speech, Mohammadzadeh said, "I was so pleased that I have received this award for Iranian cinema."

"I am also happy this year's jury has one of the best filmmakers of the history of Iranian cinema. My family and being an Iranian are the most important things I have," he stated.

"Nico, 1988", a production of Italy and Belgium directed by Susanna Nicchiarelli was picked as best film in the Orizzonti section, which is dedicated to films that represent the latest aesthetic and expressive trends in international cinema.

The award for best actress went to Lina Lashin for her role in "Les Bienheureux" by Sofia Djama from France, Belgium and Qatar.

The French-U.S. joint production "Caniba" by Véréna Paravel and Lucien Castaing-Taylor received the special jury prize.

The Orizzonti award for best screenwriter was presented to Dominique Welinski and René Ballesteros for their collaboration on "Los Versos del Olvido" by Alireza Khatami from France, Germany, the Netherlands and Chile.

In the official competition, the Golden



Navid Mohammadzadeh poses with the Orizzonti Award for Best Actor for his role in "No Date, No Signature" at the award winners photocall during the 74th Venice Film Festival at Sala Casino in Venice, Italy on September 9, 2017.

Lion for best film went to "The Shape of Water" by Guillermo del Toro from the U.S. Samuel Maoz' "Foxtrot" produced by Israel, Germany, France and Switzerland won the Grand Jury Prize and the Silver Lion for Best Director was awarded to Xavier Legrand for the film "Jusqu'à la Garde" from France.

Iranian artist returns award over disrespect in Italy's visa section



The combination photo shows Iranian graphic designer Turaj Saberivand and an A' Design Award.

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian graphic designer Turaj Saberivand has returned the A' Design Award that he won at an Italian contest in May after he failed to get a visa for Italy to attend the award ceremony of the event due to disrespect in the visa section of the Italian Embassy in Tehran.

The organizers of the A' Design Award and Competition biennial, which is held in the Italian city of Milan, had sent the award to Saberivand through the mail, but he sent the award back to the Italian Embassy in Tehran "as a sign of protest" against "the disrespectful process" of granting a visa at the embassy, the Persian service of ISNA reported on Sunday.

In an article earlier published by the Persian daily Sharq, Saberivand also wrote

that the Italian Embassy in Tehran on its bulletin board has asked visa applicants to register online.

"My frequent references to the embassy's website to register were in vain and the only practical way to get a visa was to enter into talks with agents who acted as intermediaries between visa applicants and the embassy," Saberivand said.

He added that mismanagement at the embassy has resulted in "the illegal and disrespectful phenomenon" that "refutes diplomatic principles."

Saberivand won the A' Design Award in the Graphics and Visual Communication Design Category for a logo that he designed for the tenth edition of the International Brand Conference Corporate Identity in Iran.

"Before the Flood" opens Intl. Green Film Festival in Tehran



A R T TEHRAN — The 6th International Green Film Festival opened at Tehran's Felestin Cinema on Saturday with the screening of "Before the Flood", a 2016 documentary about climate change by American director Fisher Stevens.

The new director of Iran's Department of Environment, Isa Kalantari, and Vice President for Women and Family Affairs Masumeh Ebtekar attended an opening ceremony for the event.

"The Department of Environment should not restrict its duties to preserving the water resources," the secretary of the festival, Farhad Tohidi, said at the ceremony.

"Wildlife is also an important environmental issue," he added. "We cannot consider an ideal

environment without having clean jungles or even without Iranian cheetahs," he noted.

Tohidi also expressed his hope that the new chief of the Department of Environment could help the festival raise people's awareness of the environment through cinema and art.

The organizers have also arranged an exhibition of the visual arts, which opened on the sidelines of the festival.

The exhibit features artworks such as photos, posters, illustrations, caricatures and video arts by artists from 48 countries, including China, Mexico, France and Russia.

Iran's Department of Environment is the main organizer of the festival, which will run in several other Iranian cities until September 15.

Del Toro's fairy tale wins top prize at Venice Film Festival

VENICE (Reuters) — Mexican director Guillermo del Toro's "The Shape of Water", a dark fairy tale in which a mute cleaning lady falls in love with

an aquatic creature, won the Golden Lion award for best film at the Venice Film Festival on Saturday.

The film beat contenders including George Clooney's "Suburbicon" and Alexander Payne's "Downsizing" at the end of a 10-day, high-quality and star-studded movie marathon that critics said showed Venice was now on an equal footing with the widely revered Cannes film festival.

"As a Mexican, I want to say this is a first for a Mexican storyteller so I want to dedicate and give the prize to every young Mexican film-maker or Latin American film-maker that is dreaming to do something in the fantastic genre, as a fairytale, as a parable, and is faced with a lot of people saying it can't be done. It can," del Toro said.

The runner-up Grand Jury prize went to family tragedy "Foxtrot" by Israel's Samuel Maoz, while France's Xavier Legrand was picked as best director for his divorce drama "Jusqu'à la Garde" (Custody).

Charlotte Rampling received the best actress award for her performance in Italian film "Hannah", while Palestinian Kamel El Basha took the best actor prize for his role in "The Insult".

The award ceremony brings down the curtain on the Venice festival, the world's oldest, which is seen as a launching pad for the industry's award season.

Movie-makers will be hoping for a replay of the success



Director Guillermo Del Toro holds the Golden Lion award for the best movie "The shape of water" during the awards ceremony at the 74th Venice Film Festival in Venice, Italy September 9, 2017. (Reuters/Alessandro Bianchi)

of films such as musical "La La Land", clergy sex-abuse drama "Spotlight", space movie "Gravity" and backstage comedy "Birdman", which all won Academy Awards after premiering in Venice.

"This is an incredible day for Mexican film, for Mexican storytellers. The three amigos have now conquered the Lido, with Alfonso Cuarón (Gravity) and Alejandro Inarritu (Birdman) both going on to Oscar gold after dominating Venice," said Ariston Anderson, a film critic at Hollywood

Reporter. "While there's no sure bet at this stage, there couldn't be a better start for del Toro's road to Oscar gold. And it will be very interesting to see what happens in March at the Academy Awards if he can continue the trend of Venice picking Oscar winners," she said.

The big disappointment of the night was "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri," starring Frances McDormand, which only won the award for best screenplay.

The film, a portrayal of vengeance in small-town America, was acclaimed by critics in Venice as a prime Oscar contender.

For all the quality of the Venice film fest, this year on its 74th edition, critics said there was no clear outstanding movie.

"My thoughts after having viewed the lineup are the same, a lot of strong Oscar contenders but no clear-cut winner, unfortunately, as we had in previous years at the festival," Anderson said.

Still, she said Venice - which not too long ago was seen as being doomed in the face of strong competition from Cannes and Toronto - had once again shown its appeal.

"Because of recent successes, we're seeing more big studio films shift over to Venice for their international launches, so it will be interesting to see if this trend will continue over the next few years."