

Zarif: If U.S. wants new nuclear concessions, we do, too **2**

Iran unveils 2000km-range missile system **2**

Kurdish referendum is wrong and very dangerous: professor **7**

Master of Persian miniature Mahmud Farshchian honored **16**

'No permission needed to boost missiles'



Leader: Educated Americans ashamed of Trump

POLITICS TEHRAN — The Leader of the Islamic Revolution has censured U.S. President Donald Trump's latest hostile comments against the Iranian nation at the UN as "ugly", "foolish" and "sheer lies", noting "educated Americans are ashamed of having such a president." Ayatollah Ali Khamenei made the comments in a meeting with members of the Assembly of Experts in Tehran on Thursday.

"That foolish, extremely ugly and hideous speech by the American president, his gangster and cowboy language fraught with sheer lies, stems from their fury, frustration and light-headedness," the Leader remarked. Ayatollah Khamenei said that Washington's anger is also rooted in its failure to advance its agenda in the West Asia region, where Iran has played an influential, dignified and successful role. **->2**

Iran inks banking deals worth €1.5b with Europe

ECONOMY TEHRAN — The first deal was signed in Vienna by Oberbank's CEO and Chairman of the Board Franz Gasselsberger and representatives of 14 Iranian banks, IRNA reported.

As per the agreement, the Austrian bank will finance a variety of infrastructure and production projects in Iran. **->4**

Tillerson: Iran complying with nuclear deal

POLITICS TEHRAN — U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson met on Thursday with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, along with chief diplomats whose countries are signatory to the July 2015 nuclear agreement on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York.

Speaking to press after the meeting, Tillerson said that the United States is not disputing that Iran is in technical compliance with the nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

However, Tillerson said the White House is now turning its back on the deal because of "political aspects." **->13**

German arms manufacturer to stop selling guns to Israel

Under pressure from rights activists, German weapons manufacturer Heckler & Koch says it will end its sales to war zones or the parties that are corrupt and breach democratic standards, including the regimes in Israel and the House of Saud regime.

The company announced its new policy in its most recent annual report, stating that it will now only sell to "green countries" and those that met Transparency International's corruption perceptions index as well as the Economist Intelligence Unit's democracy index.

The bans list also includes Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Malaysia, Indonesia or any African countries.

Both Israel and the Saudi regime have a history of breaching the territorial integrity of different countries and massacre of innocent civilians.

In its latest acts of aggression, Tel Aviv has waged three wars on the Gaza Strip since 2008, including one in 2014, which left more than 2,200 Palestinians dead.

The House of Saud regime has been engaged in a bloody war in Yemen, which has killed more than 12,000 deaths since March 2015. Much of Yemen's infrastructure, including hospitals, schools and factories, has been reduced to rubble due to the war.

Veteran anti-arms-trade campaigner Jurgen Grasslin told Radio Sputnik that "Heckler & Koch has been exporting arms since 1955 to nearly every crisis or war area worldwide. Nearly 2 million people are killed and more than 5 million injured by H&K weapons around the world, and one person gets killed by Heckler & Koch bullet every 13 minutes."

When asked by Sputnik about the possible reasons for the company's surprise decision, he said that the company has been under strong pressure from the peace movement in Germany and that its image has been "so terrible" that it finally decided to stop selling arms to problem countries. (Source: Press TV)

Full eradication of ISIL in 3 months: Maj. Gen. Soleimani

MNA — The commander of Iran's Quds forces fighting with ISIL terrorists in Iraq and Syria vowed the full eradication of the ISIL by the next three months.

"Iran's Leader, and the selfless youth are the keys to the success against the plots laid by enemies," asserted Major General Qassem Soleimani, the Commander of IRGC Quds Force, on Thursday.

"When the logic of your opponent is that killing you is a religious mandate and the more they kill you the closer they get to heaven, in such a

situation, diplomatic efforts are meaningless," highlighted the Iranian commander, referring to the ideology of Takfirist terrorists like ISIL. "When the opponent does not see a difference between armed warriors and defenseless civilians, however innocent the killed are, the only way left to encounter them is war."

The Iranian senior commander reiterated that the ulterior goal of the creators of the ISIL was to eliminate Iran and in such an equation Iran could not wait for the destruction of Iraq and Syria to let the ISIL

stage war against Iran.

"I have said before, we will take revenge from the ISIL for all the youth of us killed by them, and the elimination of the ISIL is certain by three months later," articulated the Iranian formidable warrior.

"We continuously land our blows on the body of the ISIL, and soon, the Muslims of the region will celebrate the end of this cancer tumor created by US and Israel," stated the commander.

"This victory solely belongs to the governments, nations, and Leaders of Iran, Iraq, and

'Public are not environmentally conscious or they wouldn't harm it'

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
By Maryam Qarehgozlou

TEHRAN — Imagine you are sitting in a sunlit nice area while having lunch but wherever you look there are piles of trash strewn around.

This is not very uncommon, many of the main attractions are now filled with garbage left by people who were having a day off and trying to relax in the nature.

Anzali Lagoon, called Mordab-e Anzali in Persian, is a coastal lagoon, in the Caspian Sea near Bandar-e Anzali, a harbor town, in the northern Iranian province of Gilan.

One of the tourist attractions in the area is the breakwater built at the lagoon. Once you walk along the breakwater you find yourself surrounded by water. However there are no trash cans across the breakwater; instead pile of litter is strewn all over the place.

On September 16, a group of environmental lovers gathered together to clean up the breakwater. They were told to throw the trash they collect into a huge white trash can placed at the furthest edge of the breakwater.

The cleaning up process was hard and time consuming regarding the hot and humid weather but the crowd finally

managed to clean up the area from the trash. After finishing up the job, while they were taking pictures and having fun all of a sudden someone jumped out of the big white trash can.

To everyone's surprise Masoud Nikdel, an Iranian artist and environmentalist, walked out of the trash can. They crowd realized that they were throwing their trash at Nikdel who was sitting in the can under pile of garbage.

An artists with environmental concerns

Nikdel, 37, is a designer, sculptor, and lecturer who lives in the city of Mashhad, northeastern Khorasan Razavi province. **->12**



Syria and all the young warriors at resistance fronts, and with the Divine auspices we will soon witness this great victory," reassured General Soleimani.

Iranians rally against Trump's hate speech

POLITICS TEHRAN — On Friday, Iranian people in over 1,000 cities staged protest rallies to condemn the recent anti-Iran remarks by U.S. President Donald Trump at the United Nations.

"We strongly condemn the cheap, stupid and disgusting remarks by the ignorant U.S. president, Donald Trump, against the holy religious system in Islamic Iran and want the honorable Iranian officials to confront the inhuman tricks of the Great Satan, America, comprehensively," the final statement issued at the end of the rallies said.



MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Cleric calls Trump 'weak-minded', 'bad-tempered', 'deceitful liar'

POLITICS TEHRAN — Tehran's Friday prayer preacher Kazem Seddiqi on Friday lambasted the U.S. government for anti-Iran rhetoric, saying such behavior manifests the true face of that "corrupt regime".

In reference to President Trump's speech at the UN General Assembly during which he attacked Iran, Seddiqi said the U.S. president is a "weak-minded, unreasonable, warlike, bad-tempered, deceitful liar".

He also said Trump "is a loser whose nation hates him."



IRGC to launch military drills in northwestern Iran

POLITICS TEHRAN — Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Ground Forces Brigadier General Mohammad Pakpour on Friday announced that his forces will start defense-security drills in the northwestern parts of Iran on Saturday.

"During the two-day war games, the elite armored, airborne, artillery, commando and drone units will display the preparedness, might and strength of the Guards' Ground Forces in safeguarding and protecting the Islamic Iran's borders," Pakpour said.

He added that the drills will be organized by the IRGC's Hamzeh Seyed al-Shohada base in northwestern Iran.



U.S. not caring what other countries say: Nikki Haley

POLITICS TEHRAN — U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley on Thursday dismissed other countries' opinion about whether the U.S. should stay in the nuclear deal or not, saying, "It has never moved the U.S. to care about what other countries say."

"Those countries don't have Iranians saying 'death to America,'" said Haley during a press briefing on Thursday. "They're not saying 'death to Germany'. They're not saying all of those things."

She also said Iran is working with other countries that may also want the same thing.



Russian diplomat dismisses Trump's claims about nuclear deal

POLITICS TEHRAN — Russian Ambassador to Tehran Levan Dzhangaryan on Friday rejected the U.S. president's remarks against the Iran nuclear deal, saying Moscow will support Iran's stance. "Iran has been in full compliance with its obligations under the nuclear deal," Dzhangaryan was quoted by IRNA as saying.

Iran and six world powers in 2015 signed the nuclear agreement, also known as the JCPOA.

Despite frequent confirmations by the international nuclear watchdog of Iran's commitment to the agreement, Washington has repeatedly vowed to pull back from the deal.

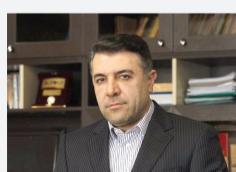


Iran nuclear deal to remain: Georgian envoy

POLITICS TEHRAN — The Iran nuclear deal is an international agreement that is good for all the parties and will be preserved, Georgia's envoy to Tehran has predicted in reaction to U.S. President Donald Trump's claims.

Speaking to IRNA on Friday, Loseb Chakhvashvili said that the reports by the International Atomic Energy Agency verifying Iran's compliance with the agreement are of high significance.

"The IAEA has always published positive reports on Iran's nuclear activities, so, the international community would be on Iran's side."



'Washington threatens to exit nuclear deal to gain leverage'

POLITICS TEHRAN — Morad Enadi, a political commentator, said on Friday that the U.S. government is seeking to gain leverage by threatening to pull out of the Iran nuclear deal.

In an interview with Mehr news agency, Enadi said the U.S. government, by imposing new sanctions, is trying to show that the nuclear deal is useless.

"It seems that threatening to exit BARJAM (nuclear deal) is more like a tactical move than a serious and operational decision," he said.

Zarif: If U.S. wants new nuclear concessions, we do, too

POLITICS TEHRAN — Iran's **d e s k** foreign minister rejected on Thursday any new negotiation with the United States over extending the length or conditions of the 2015 nuclear accord, saying that Iran would talk about changing the accord only if every concession it made — including giving up nuclear fuel — were reconsidered.

In an interview with the New York Times, the foreign minister, Mohammad Javad Zarif, said that would mean Iran would retake possession of the stockpile of nuclear fuel it shipped to Russia when the accord took effect.

"Are you prepared to return to us 10 tons of enriched uranium?," Mr. Zarif said of the relinquished stockpile — one of Iran's biggest concessions — about 98 percent of the country's nuclear fuel holdings.

Mr. Zarif, who was educated in the United States, spoke with reporters, columnists and editorial writers for The New York Times, a day after he conferred privately with counterparts from the six countries that negotiated the deal with Iran — Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia and the United States — on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly meetings in New York.

It was the first time Mr. Zarif had met with Secretary of State Rex W. Tillerson, who has said the United States wants to "revisit" what he described as flaws in the accord even as he acknowledged Iran is abiding by its terms.

Mr. Zarif, who negotiated details of the Iran accord with then-Secretary of State John Kerry, dismissed the Trump administration as "seriously ill-informed" about the limits on Iran contained in the deal.

He described President Trump's speech to the United Nations on Tuesday, in which Mr. Trump called the nuclear accord a one-sided embarrassment to the United States that he may abandon, as "absurd."

What the administration really wanted, Mr. Zarif said, was to keep the Iranian concessions while trying to extract more from Iran — but with no new concessions from the United States or other parties. That kind of position, he said, contradicted the premise of any negotiated deal.

"By definition, a deal is not perfect,



"Are you prepared to return to us 10 tons of enriched uranium?," Mr. Zarif said of the relinquished stockpile — one of Iran's biggest concessions — about 98 percent of the country's nuclear fuel holdings.

because in any deal you have to give and take," he said. "Otherwise you won't have a deal."

He further dismissed the idea of an addendum to the agreement to address the Trump administration's objections, an idea that American officials say has been floated within the administration as a possible diplomatic way forward.

"Why should we discuss an addendum?," Mr. Zarif said. "If you want to have an addendum, there has to be an addendum on everything."

Mr. Trump has strongly hinted he is prepared to "de-certify" Iran's compliance with the deal, even while Mr. Tillerson, speaking to reporters after his encounter with Mr. Zarif on Wednesday evening, acknowledged that Iran is in "technical compliance."

Under an American law, a decertification

would not terminate the deal, unless Congress voted to reimpose nuclear-related economic sanctions against Iran — which would violate the terms of the accord.

The White House has been divided about how to proceed against Iran, with Mr. Tillerson arguing that to tear up the Obama-era agreement would alienate allies and empower Iran to resume production of nuclear fuel.

Nonetheless, both Mr. Trump and Mr. Tillerson contend that Iran has violated the "spirit" of the nuclear accord by continuing to sponsor groups that the United States regards as terrorist organizations, supporting President Bashar al-Assad in Syria and pursuing cyber attacks against Iran's Sunni Arab neighbors and the United States.

Mr. Zarif said those complaints were all beyond the scope of the agreement struck

Zarif says the Trump administration is "seriously ill-informed" about the limits on Iran contained in the deal.

Rouhani: Iran not seeking permission to boost missile capability

POLITICS TEHRAN — On Friday, President Hassan **d e s k** Rouhani insisted on Tehran's long-held position that Iran will not seek any country's permission to develop its missile capability for defensive purposes.

"We will strengthen our missile capabilities... We will not seek permission from anyone to defend our country," Rouhani said in a military parade marking the beginning of Saddam Hussein's invasion of Iran on September 22, 1980.

He added, "We will increase our defensive and military power as much as we deem necessary for deterrence."

During the military parade Iran also showcased a new ballistic missile with a range of 2,000 kilometers capable

of carrying several warheads.

Rouhani also reiterated that Iran's military capability is only meant to protect national dignity and ensure peace.

"Forever our weapons are for defending our country and regional nations in the face of aggressions by bullying powers and terrorism," Rouhani insisted.

He also said Tehran would never use its military power to attack other nations.

The president also expressed Tehran's support for the regional nations who have been subjected to violence and injustice, saying Iran was ready to "defend the innocent people of Yemen, Syria and Palestine".

Iran will not also waver in its genuine fight against terrorism, the president remarked.

He also denounced the "blood-sucking Zionist regime" of Israel as a "cancerous tumor" that has been involved in the acts of aggression against the regional nations for seven decades, Tasnim reported.

He further described this year's UN General Assembly in New York as a clear indicator of the vicious nature of the U.S. and Israeli leaders.

"The U.S. and the Quds occupier regime were the only two voices which were different from the rest of the world."

Zarif holds high-profile meetings in New York

Iranian, Iraqi and Turkish foreign ministers urge countermeasures against Kurdish referendum

POLITICS TEHRAN — During his **d e s k** trip to New York, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has met with several high-profile officials from around the world to discuss bilateral and international issues, including the international nuclear agreement, also known as the JCPOA.

On Friday, Zarif ran into European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini while the two were passing one of the corridors of the official headquarters of the United Nations, and talked for a few minutes, ISNA reported.

The two had already held a meeting on the implementation process of the JCPOA, during which Mogherini reiterated the EU's continued support for the international agreement.

Iran and six world powers, including Russia, China, the U.S., Britain, France and Germany, reached the 159-page nuclear

agreement in July 2015. The deal went into force in January 2016.

Zarif, who is in New York for the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly, also held separate meetings with his Chinese, Canadian, Australian, Slovenian, Danish, Algerian, Belarusian and Norwegian counterparts during which bilateral relations as well as regional and international issues, including the nuclear accord, were discussed.

Zarif also held talks with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi. The main focus of the meeting was improving the situation for Myanmar and Syrian refugees.

Iran urges cooperation, dialogue among Asian countries

On Thursday, Zarif attended the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) meeting to take over the annual presidency of the body. The meeting was attended by the ministers and high-ranking officials of the

member states of the ACD.

Iran firmly believes that the ACD should enhance cooperation among its member states to address the current challenges more seriously, he said in the meeting.

Iran to assist Syrian nation in reconstructing their country

He also attended a high-level meeting on the Syrian crisis, held on the sidelines of the UN meeting.

Zarif said Iran will assist the Syrian nation in reconstructing their country after the war, in the same way that it contributed to the delivery of humanitarian aid to the Arab state amid the crisis.

What matters now is trying to restore political calm to Syria and devising plans for its reconstruction, the Iranian minister added, urging the international community to support Syria's reconstruction.

Iran, Iraq, Turkey urge action against Kurdish referendum

On Wednesday, Zarif and his Iraqi and Turkish counterparts held a meeting in New York about the Kurdistan region's bid for holding an independence referendum, stressing the need for considering coordinated countermeasures in this regard.

After the meeting, the three foreign ministers issued a statement saying constructive dialogue within the framework of the Iraqi constitution is the only way forward to address the issues between Baghdad and Erbil.

They also underlined the importance of support by Turkey and Iran to resolve the issue.

They further emphasized that the planned referendum is unconstitutional and runs the risk of provoking new conflicts in the region, and agreed to consider taking counter-measures in coordination.

Iran unveils new 2000km-range missile

POLITICS TEHRAN — The Iranian military on Friday displayed a new ballistic missile with a range of 2,000 kilometers (about 1,250 miles). The missile was unveiled at a military parade in southern Tehran.

The new missile is called Khorramshahr — the name of a city in southern Iran which was occupied by the invading Saddam Hussein Army in the autumn of 1980.

Amir Ali Hajizadeh, commander of

the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Aerospace Force, said the missile can carry multiple warheads.

"The peculiarities of this missile is that instead of carrying one warhead it can hit several targets with several warheads," Hajizadeh told reporters on the sidelines of the parade marking the start of Iraq's invasion of Iran on September 22, 1980.

"The missile is able to carry warheads up to 1,800 kilometers," Hajizadeh added.

Trump imposes new sanctions N. Korea; Kim says he will 'tame the mentally deranged U.S. dotard with fire'

N. Korea could test hydrogen bomb over Pacific Ocean: FM

The United States President Donald Trump on Thursday announced new financial sanctions targeting North Korea as his administration seeks to build international support for more aggressively confronting the rogue nation, whose escalating nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities have reached what U.S. officials consider a crisis point.

The new penalties seek to leverage the dominance of the U.S. financial system by forcing nations, foreign companies and individuals to choose whether to do business with the United States or the comparatively tiny economy of North Korea. U.S. officials acknowledged that like other sanctions, these may not deter North Korean Leader Kim Jong Un's drive to threaten the United States with a nuclear weapon, but is aimed at slowing him down.

Kim on Thursday reacted angrily to Trump's remarks and actions this week, calling the president a "mentally deranged U.S. dotard" and Trump's earlier speech at the United Nations "unprecedentedly rude nonsense." Kim said that he was now thinking hard about how to respond.

"I will make the man holding the prerogative of the supreme command in the U.S. pay dearly for his speech," Kim said in a statement released by the official Korean Central News Agency, which also published a photo of the North Korean leader sitting at his desk holding a piece of paper. "I am now thinking hard about what response he could have expected when he allowed such eccentric words to trip off his tongue. Whatever Trump might have expected, he will face results beyond his expectation," Kim said, saying that he would "tame" Trump "with fire."

"North Korea's nuclear program is a grave threat to peace and security in our world, and it is unacceptable that others financially support this criminal, rogue regime," Trump said in brief public remarks during a meeting with the leaders of South Korea and Japan to discuss strategy to confront Pyongyang.

He added that the United States continues to seek a "complete denuclearization of North Korea."

Significantly, Trump also said that Chinese President Xi Jinping had ordered Chinese banks to cease conducting business with North Korean entities. Trump praised Xi, calling the move "very bold" and "somewhat unexpected."

All UN sanctions have to be accept-



able to China, which holds veto power. China's recent willingness to punish its fellow communist state signals strong disapproval of North Korea's international provocations, but China and fellow UN Security Council member Russia have also opposed some of the toughest economic measures that could be applied, such as banking restrictions that would affect Chinese and other financial institutions.

"We continue to call on all responsible nations to enforce and implement sanctions," Trump said.

Trump's announcement came as he has sought to rally international support for confronting Pyongyang during four days of meetings at the UN General Assembly. In a speech to the world body on Tuesday, Trump threatened to "totally destroy" the North if necessary and referred derisively to Kim as "Rocket Man." But the president and his aides have emphasized that they are continuing to do what they can to put economic and diplomatic pressure on North Korea to avoid a military conflict.

"We don't want war," the U.S. UN Ambassador Nikki Haley told reporters. "At the same time, we're not going to run scared. If for any reason North Korea attacks the United States or our allies, we're going to respond."

The new executive order signals the U.S. willingness to take a more aggressive approach to cutting off world trade with North Korea, even if other countries such as China aren't willing partners in sanctions, because it would allow the United States to economically punish businesses anywhere in the world.

A White House fact sheet said that under the executive order, airplanes or ships that have visited North Korea will be banned for 180 days from visiting the United States, a move to crack down on illicit trade.

"This significantly expands Treasury's authority to target those who enable this regime ... wherever they are located," Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said.

U.S. officials say there is still time and room for diplomacy if North Korea shows that talking could be productive. Other countries, including China and Russia, are pressing Washington to make a greater effort toward talks and an eventual bargain that could buy Kim out of his weapons without toppling his regime.

The shape of a possible deal has been evident for years, but Kim has raised the stakes, and perhaps the price, with his rapid development toward the capability to launch a nuclear-equipped intercontinental ballistic missile at the U.S. territory.

Asked why North Korea might entertain such an international deal when Trump appears poised to undermine a similar one with Iran, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said a North Korea deal would be designed very differently.

In recent weeks, the Security Council has approved two rounds of economic sanctions against North Korea but also left room for further penalties. For example, the sanctions put limits on the nation's oil imports but did not impose a full embargo, as the United States has suggested it supports. The Trump administration has signaled it also wants a full ban on the practice of sending North Korean workers

abroad for payments that largely go to the government in Pyongyang.

"We are witnessing a very dangerous confrontation spiral," Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said in a speech to the United Nations, filling in for President Vladimir Putin, who skipped the forum. "We resolutely condemn the nuclear missile adventures of Pyongyang in violation of Security Council resolutions. But military hysteria is not just an impasse; it's disaster ... There is no alternative to political and diplomatic ways of settling the nuclear situation on the Korean Peninsula." Trump said the United States had been working on the North Korea problem for 25 years, but he asserted that previous administrations had "done nothing, which is why we are in the problem we are in today."

N. Korea could test hydrogen bomb over Pacific Ocean: FM

Meantime, North Korean foreign minister has warned that the country could test a powerful nuclear weapon over the Pacific Ocean in response to Trump's threats of military action.

Ri Yong Ho spoke to reporters in New York shortly after North Korean leader Kim made an unprecedented televised statement, accusing Trump of being "mentally deranged."

Ri told reporters in New York that Pyongyang could launch a nuclear missile test in response. "This could probably mean the strongest hydrogen bomb test over the Pacific Ocean. Regarding which measures to take, I don't really know since it is what Kim Jong Un does," said Ri.



Japan's defense minister Itsunori Onodera said the country must ready itself for the sudden escalation in tensions and be prepared for a missile launch.

In response, Trump said on Twitter: "Kim Jong Un of North Korea, who is obviously a madman who doesn't mind killing or starving his people, will be tested like never before!"

(Source: agencies)

Bangladesh PM wants Rohingya safe zones in Myanmar

Bangladesh's prime minister has accused Myanmar of ethnic cleansing of its Rohingya people and urged the country to allow the return of "hungry, distressed and hopeless" refugees.

Sheikh Hasina told the United Nations General Assembly on Thursday that Bangladesh was sheltering more than 800,000 Rohingya, of whom 430,000 had arrived in the past three weeks.

She called for safe zones to be created under UN supervision in Myanmar's Rakhine state.

"We are horrified to see that the Myanmar authorities are laying landmines along their stretch of the border to prevent the Rohingya from returning to Myanmar," Hasina said.

"These people must be able to return to their homeland in safety, security and dignity."

More than half of the displaced Rohingya are living in makeshift camps with little access to shelter, food, clean water and sanitation, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

On Tuesday, Marzuki Darusman, the head of the UN Fact-Finding Mission, said they were seeking access to Myanmar to investigate allegations of mass killings and torture.

Children make up about 60 percent of more than 420,000 people who have poured in to Bangladesh. They have seen family members killed and homes set

on fire. They have known fear and terror. And they have endured dangerous journeys through forests and on rickety boats.

Sometimes they have done it alone. UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund is a United Nations) has so far counted more than 1,400 children who have crossed the border with neither parent.

The Aid Agency Save the Children warns that more than 600,000 Rohingya children could be in Bangladesh by the end of the year. Many of them will probably be orphans who will need urgent assistance.

(Source: agencies)

Macron signs French labor reform decrees

French President Emmanuel Macron formally signed five decrees overhauling France's labor rules on Friday, the first major economic reforms since he took power in May.

The new rules, discussed at length in advance with unions, will cap payouts on dismissals that are judged unfair, while also giving companies greater freedom to hire and fire employees and to agree working conditions.

Macron said that the decrees would become law in the coming days, although they do not take effect in practice until further decrees spelling out finer details are signed before the end of the year.

Leaders and members of labor unions opposed to the reform - not all unions are totally opposed - marched through cities across France on Thursday in protest, albeit in much lower numbers than similar protests a week earlier.

The changes to the labor code are the first in a number of reforms Macron has promised with the aim of reinvigorating the economy and bringing down unemployment. There are also plans to amend the unemployment benefits and pension systems, changes that are likely to provoke much more popular unrest.



French farmers block Champs-Elysees in protest at labor reforms

Meantime, French farmers have blocked the famous Champs-Elysees Avenue in the French capital in protest at the government's labor reforms.

Protesters poured hay along the busy avenue to stop morning traffic from pass-

ing on Friday in protest at French President Emanuel Macron's reforms.

Demonstrators brandished placards reading, "Macron is killing farmers." Dozens of armed police were deployed to the scene and put up metal barriers to contain the protest.

Nationwide rallies had been held against the reforms on Thursday.

(Source: agencies)

Israeli rockets hit near airport in Syria capital: report

Israeli warplanes have reportedly targeted the airport in Syria's capital, Damascus, with two rockets, in a new act of aggression against the Arab country.

Lebanese TV station al-Mayadeen reported that the rockets, which were fired from outside the Syrian border, struck near the Damascus airport in the early hours on Friday, without elaborating.

Over the past few years, the Israeli military has launched sporadic attacks against various targets on Syrian soil, in assaults slammed by Syria as attempts to boost the terror groups wreaking havoc on the country.

On September 7, at least two Syrian soldiers were killed after Israeli fighter jets targeted an army position in the west-central province of Hama, just days after the Syrian army broke the siege imposed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group on the eastern city of Dayr al-Zawr.

The Syrian army says two soldiers have been killed as one of its position in Hama Province came under attack by Israeli warplanes.

The Syrian army said the Israeli act of aggression affirms the direct support provided by the Israeli entity "to ISIL and other terrorist outfits."

Following the missile attack, the Syrian Foreign Ministry wrote to the United Nations, calling on the world body to denounce Israel's repeated acts of aggression against the country.

The ministry further urged prompt international action to stop such Israeli attacks before they further undermine the country's ongoing fight against terrorist groups.

(Source: Press TV)

'Indian shooting' kills six Pakistanis across border

Indian military shooting across the de-facto border has killed at least six Pakistani civilians, Pakistan's military says.

At least 26 people were also wounded in the exchange of fire, which targeted Pkistan's Chappar, Harpal and Charwa sectors, the Pakistani military said in a statement on Friday.

Skirmishes across the Line of Control (LoC), the de-facto border between India and Pakistan, have become increasingly common in the last year, despite a 2003 ceasefire agreement.

The sectors reportedly targeted in the violence, which broke out on Thursday, fall in the Pakistani province of Punjab, parts of which are separated from Indian-administered Kashmir by a separate de-facto border known as the Working Boundary.

Pakistan's military said a senior officer contacted his Indian counterpart via a telephone hotline to lodge a protest against the violence.

Separately, the Pakistani Foreign office summoned the Indian high commissioner to lodge a protest over the violence, according to a statement.

Footage released by the Pakistani military showed several seriously wounded civilians being treated for their injuries. At least one had a leg amputated.

Major-General Azhar Naveed, a senior Pakistani military in charge of the country's border forces in the area, visited the sectors where the violence took place on Friday.

The South Asian neighbors have fought two of their three wars since gaining independence from the British over the disputed Himalayan territory.

India and Pakistan both claim Kashmir in full but administer separate parts of it, divided by the LoC.

Tensions between them have been especially high since last July, when Indian security forces killed a young Kashmiri separatist commander, prompting months of street protests.

The ensuring Indian security forces crackdown has seen more than 100 protesters killed and frequent violence in Indian-administered Kashmir.

On Thursday, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Pakistan's prime minister, told the United Nations General Assembly that India had violated the 2003 ceasefire agreement at least 600 times this year.

"If India does venture across the LoC, or acts upon its doctrine of 'limited' war against Pakistan, it will evoke a strong and matching response," he said.

Abbasi called for a UN investigation into the Indian security forces' practices in Kashmir, accusing them of committing "war crimes".

In a separate meeting with Antonio Guterres, the UN secretary-general, on Thursday, Abbasi sought the appointment of a special UN envoy on the Kashmir conflict.

(Source: agencies)

London: Police charge teen over Parsons Green attack

British police have charged an 18-year-old man with attempted murder and causing an explosion over last week's bomb attack on the London Underground.

The Metropolitan Police force on Friday said Ahmed Hassan of Sunbury, Surrey, will appear in court later the same day, accused of planting the bomb at Parsons Green station a week ago.

Hassan is accused of attempting to "murder persons traveling on a District Line train" on September 15, and of using a chemical compound known as TATP (Triacetone Triperoxide) to cause an explosion likely to endanger life, police said.

Hassan was arrested on Saturday at the port of Dover, departure point for ferries to France.

After his arrest, police searched the suburban Surrey home of a couple who had fostered more than 200 children, including refugees from the Middle East.

Thirty people were injured when the homemade bomb - hidden in a plastic bucket that was placed in a plastic supermarket bag - partly detonated at the height of the morning rush hour.

The attack led to a huge hunt for the perpetrators and prompted officials to briefly raise the national terrorism threat to the highest level, "critical".

London police chief Cressida Dick said on Friday that the "very dangerous" bomb was packed with shrapnel and the carnage could have been much worse.

Three other male suspects - aged 17, 25 and 30 - remain in custody over the attack, but have not been charged.

(Source: Reuters)

Britain will meet its Brexit financial obligations: minister

Britain will meet its financial obligations when it leaves the European Union, transport minister Chris Grayling said on Friday, hours before Prime Minister Theresa May makes a high-stakes speech to reset Brexit talks.

May, weakened after losing her Conservative Party's majority in a June election, is hoping to move talks forward with the EU in a speech in Florence, Italy, on Friday. According to Grayling, the speech will set out the principles of a future relationship.

"It's not about the specific purpose of where we might end up at that point in the negotiations ... what she is doing is setting out today the principles of a future relationship, she is talking about how we move the negotiations forward," Grayling told BBC radio.

Asked whether reports that Britain will offer a financial settlement to the EU are correct, Grayling said: "We are a nation that meets its obligations. Of course we absolutely accept that Britain has obligations ... but what we are looking to do though, is not simply today to start talking about the nuts and bolts of negotiation." (Source: Reuters)

EU officials praise China's Belt and Road Initiative

China's Belt and Road Initiative, if linking up with trans-European networks, will offer new opportunities for both European and Chinese companies, senior European Union (EU) officials told Xinhua on Wednesday at a reception to mark China's 68th National Day, which falls on Oct 1.

"Belt and Road is of course a very important initiative, and we see how it has developed over the last couple of years. It has a much wider approach now in terms of the modes of transport it covers, but also in terms of the countries it covers," said Gunnar Wiegand, managing director of Asia and the Pacific at European External Action Service (EEAS), the EU's diplomatic service.

The Belt and Road Initiative was proposed by China in 2013 and aims to build a trade and infrastructure network connecting Asia with Europe and Africa along ancient trade routes.

Wiegand said European countries had been doing trade this way for centuries.

"But there are many new investment possibilities for European companies not only in China, but also in Asia," he said, adding that the initiative also provided opportunities for Chinese investors.

To this end, Wiegand said the EU and China needed to make sure the initiative was linking up with the Trans-European networks, which have been established over the years.

Meanwhile, Vice President of the European Parliament Dimitrios Papadimoulis praised the Belt and Road initiative, saying it was positive for both sides.

The Greek legislator added that his homeland could be "the gate of Chinese economy to Europe."

When it comes to the EU's concern over the initiative, Papadopoulos said, "Of course there are problems, there are issues and there are distances between us, but the only solution to those problems is dialogue and the investment is in our mutual interests."

"China and the European Union are, and will be, two pillars of stability in the globe," he said.

(Source: China Daily)

New inflation forces keep central bankers up at night: ECB

FRANKFURT (Reuters) — A weakening link between prices and growth could make it more costly and difficult for central banks to control inflation, leaving policymakers with a serious problem, European Central Bank Vice President Vitor Constancio said on Friday.

New research also shows that exchange rate fluctuations may have a smaller impact on prices than in the past, suggesting that the euro's recent rally could be a more modest drag on prices than now expected, Constancio said in a largely academic speech.

With major economies enjoying a relatively long period of healthy expansion, policymakers have been puzzled by paltry wage growth, which has kept a lid on inflation and force central banks to provide stimulus much longer than they expected.

Indeed, having already bought over 2 trillion euros' worth of bonds to depress borrowing costs, the ECB will debate next month whether to curb stimulus given 17 consecutive quarters of growth, accepting that it will simply take longer to raise inflation.

"The apparent disconnect between inflation and economic slack seems to have made interpreting and controlling inflation dynamics more difficult, with significant consequences for the conduct of monetary policy," Constancio said at a conference.

"From a policymaker's perspective, such an apparent breakdown is serious," he said, arguing that fighting high inflation would have a bigger drag on the real economy, while a fight against low inflation would test the limits of policy tools, given the massive stimulus required.

In challenging another accepted relationship - that between exchange rates and inflation - Constancio said that fresh research also showed a weakening link.

"This insight is especially relevant for the euro area, as it suggests that the recent euro appreciation may have a more limited dampening effect on inflation than what would be implied by historical averages," Constancio said.

With the euro EUR= up almost 14 percent against the euro this year, the ECB this month cut some of its inflation projections, arguing that the currency would weigh on the price of imported goods, keeping price growth down.

Iran's crude steel output grows 15.7% in 8 months: WSA

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iran's production of crude steel stood at 13.44 million tons in the first eight months of 2017, registering a 15.7 percent growth in comparison with the same period in 2016, according to the latest report published by the World Steel Association (WSA).

The country's production of crude steel stood at 11.62 million tons from January August 2016, the same report confirmed.

According to a January report published by the WSA, Iran produced 17.89 million tons of crude steel in 2016, registering an 11 percent growth compared to the figure in 2015.

The country's crude steel output stood at 18.466 million tons in the past Iranian calendar year 1395 (ended on March 20), showing 11 percent rise from 16.656 million tons in 1394.

Iran exported 5.5 million tons of crude steel in the past year, with 27 percent in-



crease from the figure of its preceding year.

Iranian Steel Manufacturers Association's Secretary Rasoul Khalifeh-Soltan believes that while the country's steel in-

dustry's growth has been 5.7 percent on average in the recent years, the figure can reach 10 percent this year, given the promising condition the sector enjoys at present.

North Korea nerves knock dollar against yen

LONDON (Reuters) — The dollar buckled against the yen on Friday as tensions simmered on the Korean peninsula, though the sharp divergence between U.S. and Japanese monetary policy kept the greenback on track for a winning week against the yen.

North Korea said on Friday it might test a hydrogen bomb over the Pacific Ocean after U.S. President Donald Trump threatened to destroy the reclusive country, with leader Kim Jong Un promising to make a "mentally deranged" Trump pay dearly for his comments.

The dollar dropped as much as 0.8 percent to 111.65 yen in Asian trade, before recovering to trade down around

0.4 percent at 112 yen as traders arrived at their desks in New York.

The yen tends to benefit during times of crisis due to Japan's net creditor nation status, and the expectation that Japanese investors would repatriate assets.

For the week, the dollar was still up more than 1 percent against the yen, having scaled a two-month peak of 112.725 after the U.S. Federal Reserve signalled that it was still on track to raise interest rates by the end of the year, and after the Bank of Japan maintained its bond-buying pledge.

"Threats of an H-bomb test in the Pacific Ocean from North Korea brought an usual knee-jerk reaction across mar-

kets overnight," said Saxo Bank's head of currency strategy, John Hardy, in London.

"The U.S. dollar rally on the back of Wednesday's Federal Open Market Committee meeting entirely failed to follow through, and euro/dollar and sterling/dollar have erased most of the downside, keeping patient dollar bears in business," he added.

The dollar index, which tracks the U.S. unit against a basket of six major rivals, fell 0.3 percent to 92.024, but it was still slightly higher on the week and was well above its more than 2-1/2 year trough of 91.011 marked on Sept. 8.

It surged to its strongest in 15 days on Wednesday, but has since slipped

around 1 percent.

"Even if the Federal Reserve were able to deliver on a December rate rise, there is so much uncertainty about what the FOMC will look like in six months' time... that any projections for three further rate rises in 2018 have to be treated with a huge amount of caution," said CMC Markets analyst Michael Hewson.

The euro inched up 0.2 percent to \$1.1962, with traders not seeing Sunday's German elections as a risk. Chancellor Angela Merkel is widely expected to win a fourth term in power.

Sterling was trading water against the dollar, with a key speech on Brexit by Prime Minister Theresa May later in the day in focus for traders.

Iran inks banking deals worth €1.5b with Europe

1 → In another meeting on Thursday, Denmark's Export Credit Agency (EKF) signed an agreement with the Organization for Investment, Economic and Technical Assistance of Iran (OIETAI).

The deal was signed by the director of OIETAI, Mohammad Khazaie, and the CEO of EKF Anette Eberhard in Vienna.

During the meeting, Khazaie said "Iran is interested in cooperation with Denmark in different areas like water resources management,

renewable energies as well as environment."

During the visit of Iranian banking delegation to Austria, another €500-million deal was signed with Denmark's Danske Bank.

Although Iranian banks have already signed a €8 billion deal with South Korea and a total of \$35 billion worth of deals with Chinese counterparts, the new deals were first banking agreements Iran has had with European banks since 2002.



Russia steps in to prevent 'domino effect' in its banking sector

Russia's central bank has been forced to rescue two major lenders in less than a month, intensifying concerns among global investors that a systemic banking crisis could be in the offing.

The Russian government's latest rescue of a major bank was confirmed on Thursday, when the Central Bank of Russia (CBR) said it had nationalized the country's 12th largest lender in terms of assets, B&N Bank.

Last month, the CBR stepped in to launch one of the largest bank rescues in Russia's history when Otkritie Bank required a bailout to help plug a \$7 billion hole in its balance sheet.

***'Domino effect averted'

Russia's central bank moved to dismiss intensifying concerns that a brewing systemic crisis could be forthcoming on Thursday, as it said its second major bank nationalization in three weeks had prevented a "domino effect"

in the country's ailing banking sector.

"We realized that it's better to isolate a bit more so that the domino effect does not arise, and according to the results of this work the domino effect is excluded, there is no risk of this," Vasily Pozdyshev, deputy governor at the CBR, told a press conference as reported by state media.

B&N Bank requires an estimated capitalization of around \$4.3 billion to \$6 billion, according to Pozdyshev, an amount approximately equivalent to 25 percent of the lender's balance sheet.

The failure of two major lenders in relatively quick succession has fueled anxiety over the health of Russia's banking sector, which has been hampered by an economic slowdown and Western sanctions in recent years.

In 2014, Russian regulators were jolted into action after a dramatic slump in oil prices as well as tough international

sanctions for its annexation of Crimea and Russia's perceived role in destabilizing eastern Ukraine.

The CBR has been attempting to clean up the banking sector since 2013, shutting down scores of banks that it believed represented a risk to the system.

Russia's central bank has reportedly now closed more than a third of the country's banks - approximately 300 lenders - in the last three years as it sought to eradicate undercapitalized institutions.

■ 'Stronger and cleaner banking sector'

Oleg Kouzmin, chief Russian economist at investment bank Renaissance Capital, told CNBC on Friday that he could not foresee any signs of a looming systemic banking crisis.

Instead, he argued the last two cases of big banks being nationalized in Rus-

sia could imply the CBR is completing the task of cleaning up the country's banking sector.

"In the short-term, we could see certain negative spill-over effects, namely certain confidence issues, complicating business environment for mid/small and non-state banks," Kouzmin said via email.

"However, the recent efforts show that the CBR is gradually moving closer to the end of the banking sector reform (and) supervision reform. As soon as the process is completed, Russia ultimately gets stronger and cleaner banking sector," he added.

Russia's Credit Bank of Moscow, which was recently named by the CBR in a list of systemically important banks, told Reuters on Wednesday that it did not see a risk of direct losses in the wake of B&N Bank's bailout.

(Source: CNBC)

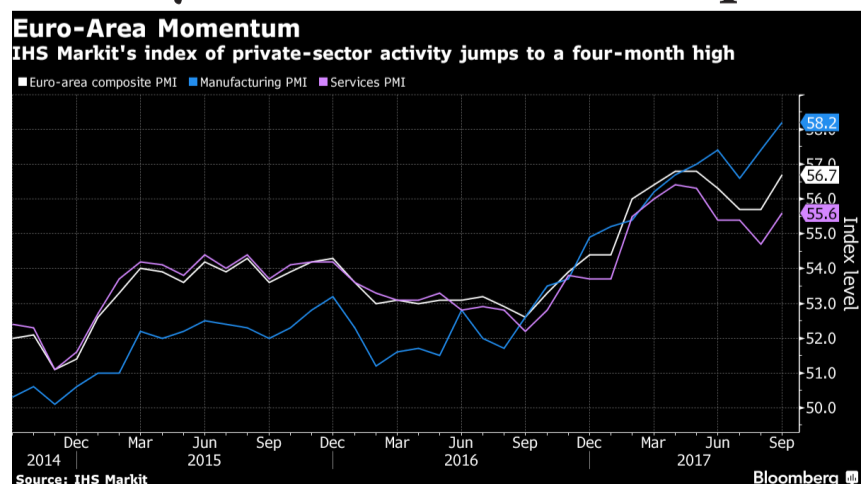
Euro-area economy is on track for best quarter since 2015

The euro-area economy may have grown at the fastest pace in more than two years in the third quarter after an unexpected upturn in September.

IHS Markit's index of private-sector activity jumped to a four-month high of 56.7 from 55.7 in August. Economists expected a reading of 55.6. Both services and manufacturing strengthened, with a gauge for the latter reaching a level not seen in more than six years.

Markit said the economy showed a "burst of activity" in September and its surveys point to economic growth of 0.7 percent over the quarter. That would be the fastest since the start of 2015. Some companies raised concerns about the strength of the euro, but Markit said the currency appears so far to have had "only a modest impact on exports."

At Barclays, economist Apolline Menut said the PMI surveys marked a "solid end to the quarter." She expects economic growth of 0.5 percent this quar-



ter and next as domestic demand offsets a moderation in net trade, though there's a chance it could be stronger.

Separate reports on Friday showed improvements in both Germany and France this month, with the PMI for

both nations hitting the highest in more than six years. Markit said Germany, the eurozone's biggest economy, is in "rude health."

The latest positive readings keep the 19-nation region on track for its best

year since at least 2010. The euro rose on Friday and was up 0.4 percent to \$1.1989 as of 10:34 a.m. in London. It's near the highest since early 2015.

The economy's outlook got another upgrade this month in Bloomberg's latest economic survey. Gross domestic product is now forecast to rise 2.1 percent this year, up 0.1 percentage point compared with August. That's the eighth positive reassessment in the past year.

The European Central Bank also raised its forecasts this month, to 2.2 percent. ECB President Mario Draghi said at the time that the expansion "continues to be solid and broad-based across countries and sectors."

Against that backdrop, policy makers have begun a debate on how to slow the monthly asset purchases they've used to help support the economy in recent years.

(Source: Bloomberg)

OPEC and Russia stay focused on cuts as oil market improves

OPEC and Russia said they were about halfway toward clearing a global oil glut and urged fellow producers to stay focused and finish the job.

The market has markedly improved since the last time ministers from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and their allies met, said Kuwait's Oil Minister Issam Almarzooq. Battered stockpiles of fuel have been "massively drained" and the producers have implemented more than 100 percent of their agreed cuts, according to OPEC Secretary-General Mohammad Barkindo.

"We are on the right track and there is now more light at the end of the tunnel," Almarzooq said at the opening session of ministerial talks in Vienna on Friday. There's been a "huge drop" in inventories of 170 million barrels this year, but they need to be reduced further and "this is not the time to take our foot off the accelerator."

OPEC and its allies, who together pump more than half the world's oil, have several reasons to hold a steady course. Brent crude, the international benchmark, closed at \$56.43 a barrel on Thursday, the highest level since February and an increase of more than 25 percent since June. Nine months into their agreement, implementation of the pledged 1.8 million barrels a day of production cuts remains high. Still, the group has yet to find an answer to the problem of rising U.S. shale output, which has undermined their efforts.

Ministers gathering in the Austrian capital at times made conflicting statements, but broadly signaled that they didn't see the need for concrete steps to address perceived shortcomings in their agreement, notably that the cuts may end too early. While their accord has shown signs of success in recent months, the market could return to surplus next year if the group allows the deal to expire at the end of March.



"We need not only to keep the pace and go on with our coordinated efforts in full, but also need to work out a strategy for the future," Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak said Friday. It's too early for concrete discussions on extending the cuts, he told reporters on Thursday.

As U.S. shale oil continues to thrive and seasonal demand wanes, the surplus that has weighed on markets for three years could return. If OPEC doesn't extend the

supply curbs, the market will return to oversupply again, forecasts from the International Energy Agency indicate.

"OPEC members are trying to target a figure of close to \$60 a barrel. We're not too far away from that," Nigerian Minister of State for Petroleum Emmanuel Ibe Kachikwu said in an interview with Bloomberg television in Vienna before the meeting. "If we get to March and find that there's a need to do more, I think we will."

(Source: Bloomberg)

Oil prices mixed ahead of OPEC meeting on supply cut extension

Oil prices were mixed in early Asian trade on Friday as the market waited to see whether major oil producers would extend supply cuts beyond March at a meeting in Vienna later in the day.

International benchmark Brent crude futures were at \$56.35 a barrel at 0249 GMT, down 8 cents, or 0.1 percent, from their last close.

U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures were up 5 cents, or 0.1 percent, at \$50.60 per barrel.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and other producers are set to meet in Vienna at 0800 GMT on Friday to discuss a possible extension of an oil supply cut deal to prop up prices.

Goldman Sachs said that talks over extending cuts are "noteworthy but premature," adding "we believe it is unlikely that committee will recommend extension of cuts this week."

Michael McCarthy, chief market strategist at CMC Markets in Sydney, predicted there will be "strong rhetoric but whether or not they will be able to boost oil prices from current high levels is another question."

There will be some focus on whether Nigeria and Libya, who have been exempt from the curbs, will join any future cuts. The two OPEC members have both been invited to the meeting.

"The market is still split as to whether the meeting will bring fresh supply cuts to the table," ANZ bank said in a note.

"With U.S. stockpiles remaining elevated, a firm signal about lower supply is likely needed for price momentum to remain positive."

OPEC and some non-OPEC producers including Russia first agreed in November last year to cut their output by around 1.8 million barrels per day (bpd) to clear global oversupply and support prices.

Despite their concerted efforts - the



oil cartel extended their supply cuts until the end of March - prices have remained depressed amid increasing U.S. oil production.

The Energy Information Administration

(EIA) reported on Wednesday that U.S. crude production reached 9.51 million bpd in the week ended Sept.15, up from 8.78 million bpd a week ago.

(Source: Reuters)

Investors seeking green assets make companies cleaner

Growing investor appetite for low-carbon assets is pushing companies to hasten their transition to clean energy, but not nearly fast enough.

About 68 percent of global investors intend to increase green investments and one-in-two companies has a strategy to reduce their environmental impact, according to a survey commissioned by HSBC Plc published Sept. 12. However, only 43 percent of companies disclose their plans and 56 percent of investors say current disclosure levels are "highly inadequate," the survey shows.

"The global transition to a low-carbon, clean energy economy is now firmly underway, yet companies and their investors are clearly traveling at different speeds," said Daniel Klier, HSBC's group head of strategy and global head of sustainable finance. "If we are to direct the world's capital towards low-carbon investment opportunities then we need to break through the barriers currently inhibiting its flows."

When asked what would goad them to be more transparent, most companies said they lack any clear competitive advantage from doing so, particularly regarding cost of funding. Only 66 percent of the investors surveyed hold green bonds, which isn't surprising given that total outstanding issuance is relatively small at \$232.2 billion in July, according to the report.

The report estimates that about \$90 trillion of investment is needed in new green infrastructure over the next 15 years. In 2016, \$22.9 trillion of assets were managed under responsible investment strategies, a 25 percent increase from 2014.

The survey was conducted by East & Partners over the four weeks through July 11. They interviewed finance and investment chiefs at 507 companies and 497 investment houses across Europe, the Americas, Asia and the Middle East.

(Source: Bloomberg)

S.Korean fuel oil exports to China rise, dent shipments from Singapore

Two South Korean refiners are exporting excess cargoes of residual fuel oil to nearby China, displacing some Singaporean sales of the commodity which can be used in ships and power stations, three trade sources said.

Scheduled maintenance work at S-Oil Corp's Onsan plant in September and a fire at GS Caltex's Yeosu refinery in August has curbed the facilities' capacity to refine residual fuel oil into other products, meaning they have been shipping excess cargoes to China, the sources said. They declined to be identified as they were not authorized to speak with media.

S-Oil did not respond to a request for comment, while a GS Caltex spokesman declined to comment.

The sources estimate GS Caltex, the nation's No.2 refiner, has exported between 100,000 and 200,000 tonnes of residual fuel oil as a result of the fire, mostly to China.

S-Oil, the country's third-biggest refiner, is estimated to have exported 120,000 tonnes of 380-cantistoke fuel oil into China in September for use as a marine fuel through three 40,000 ton cargoes.

That has pushed out some exports from Singapore, the sources said.

(Source: Reuters)

Stormy weather exposes shortcomings of world's oil refineries

Hurricane Harvey's crippling impact on U.S. oil refinery operations this month and the challenge buyers faced in filling the gap in gasoline supplies has exposed a shortage of spare refining capacity around the globe.

Nearly a quarter of U.S. refining capacity was knocked out by the storm this month, driving U.S. gasoline prices to two-year highs above \$2 a gallon. Many plants are still struggling to resume normal operations, prompting other refineries around the world to crank up output to fill the gap.

Global refining is considered to be running at its maximum when capacity utilization is 85.5 percent, the highest level reached in the modern era, BP's head of refining economics Richard de Caux said.

Today the utilization level is 83 percent, he told the Platts Refining Summit in Brussels, suggesting a very slim buffer. "The spare capacity is not really there," said Dario Scaffardi, general manager of Italian refiner Saras. "In as much as consumption worldwide is growing, refinery capacity is not long at all."

Spare capacity is needed to meet demand when refineries undergo maintenance or face unexpected outages. Too much in reserve is costly for refiners. But Hurricane Harvey has shown the world may not have enough.

Consultant JBC Energy said refiners could process 83 million bpd of crude by the end of 2017. In 2016, BP data showed processing at roughly 80.6 million bpd.

Energy consultancy FGE estimates spare global refining capacity, based on official or nameplate numbers, stands at 14 million bpd, down from 18 million bpd earlier this decade.

But nameplate figures can be misleading, as they are based on capacity of a refinery when built or refurbished. Many cannot match those levels due to years of underinvestment. So actual



spare capacity may only be a fraction of that 14 million bpd.

For example, Venezuela's four refineries have run at record lows this year as they lack spare parts. Plants in Mexico, Brazil and Nigeria have also suffered poor investment for years.

At the same time, demand for oil and its products is climbing, led by China and India, and more developed economies.

"What we have is good demand growth and, ... whilst there are long lists of refinery projects, not many of them are coming through," said Steve Sawyer, FGE's head of refining.

Throw Hurricane Harvey into the mix and the shortage in spare capacity becomes increasingly apparent.

"Are we going to assume Venezuelan refinery utilization rates will suddenly jump?" Energy Aspects said. "Or are we going to rely on Nigeria's dilapidated refineries to fill the gap? None of this capacity is available to the current market."

"The only country with truly spare refining capacity is China, where environmental restrictions have capped runs," the consultancy said in a note.

As a result, Morgan Stanley predicts a "silver age" of profits to the end of the

decade for refiners as margins rise.

"Refining cycles are historically short and volatile, but there is more visibility than usual, and we expect this strength to continue," the bank said in a note.


It forecast oil refining capacity would increase by 700,000 to 800,000 bpd in 2018, but would be outpaced by demand for oil products rising by 1.4 million bpd.

"Refinery crude intake probably needs to increase by (roughly) 1.1 million bpd. Hence, global refining utilization is set to stay high in 2018, which will underpin margins again next year," the bank said.

It forecast BP's Refining Marker Margin, a benchmark proxy for profits, would rise from \$12.8 a barrel in 2017 to \$16 a barrel in 2020.

A move to make shippers to use fuel with less sulfur from 2020 will offer further opportunities for refiners to boost margins by supplying more low-sulfur distillates.

"With product demand and refining margins this strong, the world needs more refining capacity not less," said Neveyn Nah, oil products analyst at Energy Aspects in Singapore. (Source: Reuters)



N.I.O.C
1396.2879



National Iranian Drilling Company

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

Two-Stage(compresed)

TENDER GUARANTEE		ESTIMATED VALUE (Rial)	DESCRIPTION	Tenders Portal Reg. No.on http://iets.mp.org.ir	TENDER NO. / INDEMENT NO	No
Euro	Rial					
168, 360	6,640,000,000	266,000,000,000	DOWNHOLE MOTORS	1/501/285	Indent No.: 43-22-9604748001 Tender No.: CGP/25-96/007	1

Brief discription of subject:
National Iranian Drilling Company (NIDC) address pasdaran Blev., Airport Saqare, Ahvaz, Iran hereby intends to purchase its requirements from qualified and interested tenderers through Two-stage public tender (semi-pressed) 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.
Receiving of documents:
Tenderers must be obtain the quality evaluation documents along with tender documents maximum 10 days after the date of second publication in person at the following address: Sector Tenders, Foreign Procurement of Capital Goods dept., end of the workshop No. 8, Karoon Industrial Area, Ahvaz, IRAN.
Tel No.: 061-34142387

Notices:
1- Only the real or legal persons who apply to purchase and recieve tender ducments from foreign procurment department in due date will be known as tenderer from tender committee.
2- The capacity of referrals in the field of supply tenders, according to the National Iranian Drilling Company Technical Committee, is equal to 4 current and active contracts.

C) Delivery of call quality evaluating :
Tenderers shall submit the completed documents including qualifaicon worksheets in form of software in CD/DVD and documentary within 14 days from last day of document recived deadline to the following address: Hall No.:107, 1th floor ,Tender Committee, Building operations, National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahvaz, IRAN. Tel No.: 061-34148205~6

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:
This duration should be valid for 90 days and extendable maximum For one time in initial credit amount.
More on this & other tenders is accessible by click on WWW.NIDC.IR
Foreign Procurement Dept
National Iranian Drilling Company
تهران تایمز : نوبت اول ۹۶/۷/۱ نوبت دوم ۹۶/۷/۲

Refugees' fate in limbo as Iraqi Kurdistan referendum nears

By Dilshad Hama Khidhir

With the referendum on independence in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq scheduled for Sept. 25, the fate of the large number of displaced Iraqis and Syrian refugees in the region is unknown.

On Aug. 31, Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi announced the liberation of Tal Afar and Ninevah province, which was preceded by the liberation of the city of Mosul on July 10. But are the hundreds of thousands who fled from the Islamic State (ISIS) to the displacement camps in the Kurdistan Region going home anytime soon?

According to official data from these camps, as of Aug. 10, there was a population movement from/to the displacement camps and residents' original areas in Ninevah province.

Karzan Noori, the head of the Erbil office of BCF, a nongovernmental organization that oversees the management of 15 camps for displaced Iraqis and Syrian refugees within Erbil province, told Al-Monitor that while there is widespread willingness among the displaced to return to their original areas, little has been done, especially on the part of the Iraqi government, to facilitate their return. He said, "The concerned Iraqi government bodies have done almost nothing in the newly liberated areas to ensure the safety and security of returnee families, provide public service and reconstruct the collapsed infrastructure."

Muslih Irwani, the chair of the Center for Peace and Human Security at the American University of Kurdistan in Dahuk, said that while the displaced enjoy security in the Kurdistan Region, a similar level of security is far from being achieved currently in the areas they originate from. He told Al-Monitor, "There are many security issues, tension and conflict in the areas recently taken back from IS."

With a population of just over 5 million, Iraqi Kurdistan has been hosting more than 1.4 million displaced Iraqis and Syrian refugees who fled their homes as a result of the fighting that has been raging in the region since 2011. The Christian minority, which has been living in central and northern Iraq for two millennia, was among the first wave of displacement in the region. However, the ISIS assault on Iraq that started in 2014 touched almost all communities in Iraqi society, forcing hundreds of thousands to leave their ancestral home and seek refuge in the Kurdistan Region and the peshmerga-controlled disputed areas.

The military operation to retake the city of Mosul, which started on Oct. 17, 2016, resulted in a massive exodus of civilians fleeing death and destruction in the war-torn areas in Mosul and the surrounding towns and villages toward safe shelters located between the cities of Erbil and Mosul. According to UNHCR data, the number of displaced people from Mosul currently stands at just over 830,000. According to data obtained by Al-Monitor from BCF staff, more than 150,000 people stay in five large camps located on the outskirts of the Erbil governorate.

■ Fragile socio-economic situation

According to the World Bank, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) has had to deal with the massive increase in the population while grappling with the economic crisis that hit the region in early 2014. In addition, the already fragile socio-economic situation of Iraqi Kurdistan worsened due to the Iraqi central government's decision to halt all fiscal transfers from Baghdad to Erbil in February 2014. These developments have forced the KRG to depend entirely on revenues from oil exports, which have plummeted since 2014, to pay its large number of government employees.

While the 720,000 government employees in the Kurdistan Region have been receiving less than half of their monthly salaries since the end of 2015, community-based humanitarian initiatives have been supporting the official efforts with generous contributions by local private companies and individuals.

Realistic and long-term policy rearrangements in Iraqi Kurdistan, both nationally and globally, are needed. Whether the large displaced and refugee populations will stay in the Kurdistan Region or return home — given land claims, nationalistic concerns, integration and social cohesion — is of paramount importance. The outcome of the referendum on independence may bear an immediate effect on the fate of the current humanitarian situation in Iraqi Kurdistan. Although it may be too soon to predict the fate of the Iraqi displaced population following a yes vote, it is highly likely that their continued presence could turn into a new source of tension between the Iraqi government and the Kurdistan Region.

The possible demographic impact of displaced Iraqi Arabs in the Kurdistan Region has been described as a "time bomb" by some Kurdish nationalists. This may partly explain the growing tendency toward independence over the last few years following the influx of displaced Iraqis into the region.

While Sunni Arabs make up the majority of the displaced in the Kurdistan Region — some of whom originate from the disputed areas between Baghdad and Erbil — the majority of Syrian refugees are ethnic Kurds from northern Syria. According to Irwani, evidence-based research indicates that "IDPs [internally displaced people] are less accepted than refugees by the host communities."

In case Iraqi Kurdistan opts for independence, the large number of displaced Iraqis will become refugees overnight, adding another source of tension to the already troubled relationship between Erbil and Baghdad. Al-Monitor tried to obtain the opinion of a number of Kurdish officials on this issue, but they refused to comment, saying the issue is "too politically sensitive" at this particular time.

Over the last few years, the Kurdistan Region of Iraq has been a safe haven for the displaced and refugees and maintained stable intercommunity relations. However, the outcome of the referendum may have implications on the fate of this safe sanctuary.

(Source: Al Monitor)

Is Trump about to repeat George W Bush's worst mistake?

In 2003, the United States initiated perhaps the greatest strategic disaster in U.S. history by diverting attention from a necessary war in Afghanistan to an unnecessary war in Iraq. The Iraq war resulted in hundreds of thousands dead and wounded, untold economic catastrophe, states in the Middle East in complete ruin, and the rise of ISIS — all while the effort to go after terrorists in Afghanistan languished.

President Donald Trump's first speech before the United Nations General Assembly on Tuesday made clear that Trump wants to take America down a similar path by diverting much-needed attention from North Korea to starting an unnecessary conflict with Iran.

If the United States and the world cannot convince Trump to support the Iran nuclear deal and instead focus on real problems, America may once again plunge into a violent disaster in the Middle East, and in the process damage efforts to deal with a country that already has nuclear weapons.

The threat from North Korea is real, and Trump used his speech to outline the need for an international pressure campaign against Kim Jong-un. There is little disagreement on the need for a tough stance against North Korea, as evidenced by the UN Security Council's recent unanimous vote to impose new sanctions.

But Trump is having a difficult time implementing a coherent strategy on North Korea. He has picked a fight with America's South Korean ally, whose support is essential. He frequently hurls hyperbolic rhetoric, raising the chances of miscalculation that could lead to conflict. And he talks as though war is inevitable, a theme he reiterated before the world's leaders when he said, "Rocket Man [Kim Jong-un] is on a suicide mission for himself and his regime."

■ Diplomatic deal

Significant challenges remain in dealing with North Korea, even if Trump can get his own act together. China is unwilling to apply maximum pressure on North Korea for fear Pyongyang will collapse. Enforcing sanctions elsewhere is often like putting fingers in a



In 2002, Bush used his UN speech to argue for action against Iraq. Let's hope Trump's first UN speech isn't the opening salvo in a preventable war with Iran

dam full of leaks. It's unclear what kind of a diplomatic deal the United States wants with North Korea. And little seems capable of convincing Kim Jong-un that he will be safe without nuclear weapons.

With obstacles this great, Trump should be providing leadership in pursuing an effective international strategy to deter North Korea, reassure U.S. allies, add sanctions pressure, and engage in real diplomacy.

Instead, Trump is looking to rip up the Iran nuclear deal. If he succeeds in doing so, he will help turn Iran into the next North Korea and ratchet up the chances of conflict.

The deal prevents Iran from getting a nuclear weapon for years. UN inspectors have verified that Iran is complying with the terms of the deal. Even Trump's administration has certified twice that Iran is living up to its end of the bargain. Moreover, the world backs the deal, with Russia, China

and Europe all helping to enforce it.

If an Iran-style nuclear deal had been on the table at any point with North Korea, the United States would have jumped at the opportunity (and in fact came very close to making the Agreed Framework deal with North Korea work in the 1990s). Tearing up the Iran deal would be the strategic equivalent of shooting oneself in the foot.

But that's exactly what Trump seems to want. In his UN speech, Trump placed the Iran nuclear deal in his sights: "The Iran deal was one of the worst and most one-sided transactions the United States has ever entered into. Frankly, that deal is an embarrassment to the United States, and I don't think you've heard the last of it. Believe me." Recent reports back up this message that Trump intends to rip up the deal, and the U.S. ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley, almost said as much in a recent speech on Iran.

It's hard to overstate the potential disaster of destroying the Iran deal. The

partners that helped make the Iran deal happen — Europe, China, Russia — would leave the U.S. behind and continue doing business with Iran, making impossible any renewal of international pressure.

In fact, withdrawing from the Iran nuclear deal would undermine Trump's efforts to convince the world that he is looking for a diplomatic solution with North Korea: if Trump is willing to rip up the deal, why should anyone believe he's willing to deal with North Korea? And why would North Korea deal with Trump if he doesn't live up to U.S. commitments?

In 2002, less than a year after invading Afghanistan, President George W Bush used his speech before the UN general assembly to make the case to the world for action against Iraq. Let's hope, when history looks back on Trump's first UN speech, it's not viewed as the opening salvo in a completely preventable war with Iran.

(Source: The Guardian)

Poor Bangladesh suffers from Rohingya flight from Burma

By Alyssa Ayres

Although the tragedy of the Rohingya people has been unfolding for decades, the latest exodus of refugees to Bangladesh, fleeing violence in the Rakhine state of Myanmar, has become front-page news due to the sheer scale of the trauma.

The UN's International Organization for Migration (IOM) puts the figure at 415,000 Rohingya who have fled their homes for Bangladesh in just the past three weeks.

While struggling with its own development needs, Bangladesh is providing the last place of refuge for a stateless people often called "the most persecuted minority" in the world.

To put the past month's developments into historical perspective, Bangladesh — in the southernmost tip of the country, south of a port city named Cox's Bazaar — began hosting Rohingya refugees in the 1970s. The first wave of around 200,000 refugees came in 1978. A second wave of around 250,000 fled Myanmar for Bangladesh in 1991–92.

■ Repatriation phase

Although the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and international aid groups provided assistance for the refugees, Bangladesh long sought for the refugees to repatriate to Myanmar, rather than become permanent residents. A repatriation phase in the late 1990s saw some 230,000 Rohingya return to Myanmar.

But in the summer of 2012, renewed religious violence in Myanmar's Rakhine state resulted in another influx to Bangladesh. Some Rohingya also attempted to reach Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand that summer, tragically, by boat.

Bangladesh is a poor country by any measure.



Using International Monetary Fund gross domestic product per capita data (purchasing power parity), it ranks among the poorest fifty countries in the world, illustrated by this chart. For this reason, Dhaka for years feared that the existence of refugee camps and settlements served as a "pull factor," bringing more Rohingya to already-stressed Bangladesh.

■ Welcoming host

In the summer of 2012, Bangladesh prohibited three international aid organizations from assisting Rohingya who were not officially registered as refugees. In other words, Bangladesh has not always been a welcoming host.

The problem has always been that however bad conditions may be in Bangladeshi refugee camps or makeshift settlements, the Rohingya are running from worse, often forced to leave whatever they possess behind, likely forever, and trudge for miles through mud and across a river to reach refuge in Bangladesh.

That's the backdrop for the events since August 25.

The 'new' Saudi Arabia is still a dungeon

Once again, news from Saudi Arabia points toward the old thinking and not the modern society promised by the new crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman. Despite the lofty rhetoric of the crown prince's "Vision 2030" declaration, he increasingly resembles an earlier generation of leaders with authoritarian methods.

Saudi Arabia has been, and seems determined to remain, a dungeon for those who want to practice free speech. The latest evidence is a wide-ranging crackdown on influential clerics, activists, journalists and writers who have been jailed with hardly any public explanation. A Sept. 12 statement by the government's new security agency, set up in July by King Salman bin Abdul Aziz, hinted darkly that the arrests were caused by "foreign parties" that were trying to hurt "the security

of the kingdom and its interests, methodology, capabilities and social peace in order to stir up sedition and prejudice national unity. They were neutralized."

This vague language masks the fact that many of those arrested were relatively outspoken online, not secret agents plotting against the kingdom. The exact number of arrests is unknown, but some reports say in the dozens. According to Reuters, the roundups included three clerics who are outside the official religious establishment but have large online followings: Salman al-Awdah, Awad al-Qarni and Ali al-Omary. They have previously criticized the government but have recently stayed quiet or failed to publicly back Saudi policies, including the blockade against Qatar. Human Rights Watch says that Saudi authorities impris-

oned Awdah from 1994 to 1999; since 2011, he "has advocated greater democracy and social tolerance." Qarni, who has more than 2 million Twitter followers, was banned from tweeting by a court in March that convicted him of jeopardizing public order. He announced the ban on Twitter.

■ Internal dissatisfaction

The latest crackdown may reflect Saudi nervousness over any internal dissatisfaction with the kingdom's blockade of Qatar. Some reports say those arrested may have simply failed to speak up loudly enough in support of official Saudi policies. What better way to make the point than to throw them in jail? Writers and activists are also being hauled into prison.

The leaders of Saudi Arabia and its conservative religious establishment are

wandering in some earlier century. How to explain the punishment of a severe lashing to blogger Raif Badawi, who has been jailed since 2012 following his online appeal for a more liberal and secular society? His sentence was 10 years in prison and 1,000 lashes, of which he has been given 50, simply for speaking out. How to explain the recent call by the Saudi authorities on the population to use a phone app to inform on anyone who may be considered subversive? This is how Stalin would have used Twitter.

It is easy to issue fancy blueprints for reform, as the crown prince has done. Building a modern, healthy society is a lot harder. It requires, among other things, actions to guarantee basic rights, including the speech of people you don't agree with.

(Source: The Washington Post)

Kurdish referendum for independence is wrong and very dangerous: professor

By Javad Heirannia

Professor Farhang Jahanpour, a member of Kellogg College at the University of Oxford, says "despite the strong affection and admiration that I feel towards the long-suffering Kurds, I believe that the plan to hold a referendum for independence in Iraq is wrong and potentially very dangerous."

The former lecturer at the University of Cambridge also says "The Israelis believe that the independence of the Kurds as another non-Arab group, especially if they can turn them against Iran, would be helpful to them."

Following is the full text of the interview:

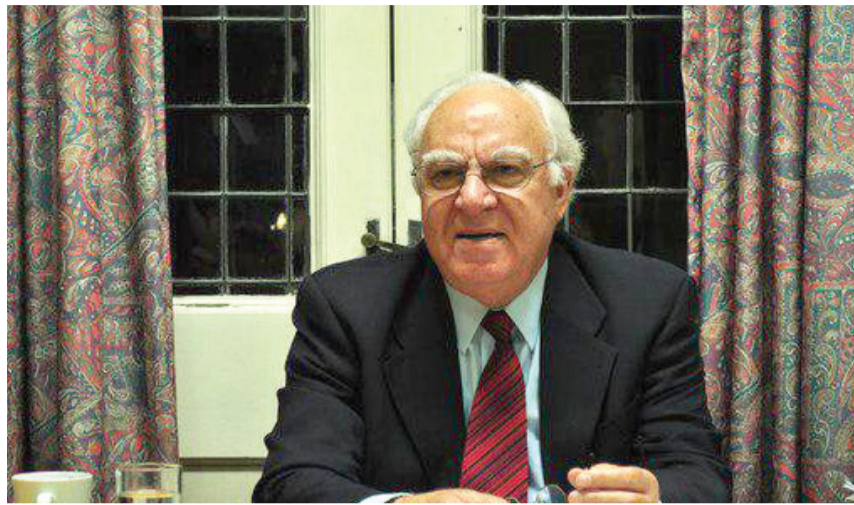
■ A Kurdish Referendum is to be held on September 25 despite the opposition of some Kurdish movements such as the Gorran Movement. What is your view about the referendum?

A: First of all, it should be pointed out that the Kurds, as the descendants of the Medes, are an ancient Iranian people who have shared the Iranian plateau with the Persians and other Iranian ethnic groups that have lived together in this part of the world for millennia. They have deep-rooted ethnic, linguistic and cultural ties with all Iranians and, therefore, what happens to the Kurds anywhere is a matter of profound interest and concern for all Iranians.

While the Kurds have always regarded Iran as their home and have been regarded by Iranians as the members of the same family, in the rest of the region the Kurds have always experienced hardship and discrimination. As a result of decades-long conflict in Turkey, especially since 1978, at least 40,000 Kurds have been killed and many Kurdish towns and villages have been destroyed. In Iraq, Saddam Hussein subjected the Kurds to chemical attacks in Halabja in 1988, as the result of which about 5,000 Kurds were killed and up to 10,000 were injured. Due to all those bitter experiences, the Kurds have always looked for greater freedom and independence.

It is not the first time that the Kurds have dreamed of independence. During the First World War, trying to weaken the Ottoman Empire, Western powers promised the Kurds independence, in the same way that they also promised all Arabs independence, but following the Treaty of Lausanne (1923) Kurdish independence or autonomy was completely forgotten, and the Arabs were also divided as protectorates and colonies between various European powers.

In 1961, Mustafa Barzani, the father of Massoud Barzani, the current president of the Iraqi Kurdistan, started a rebellion under the slogan "autonomy for Kurdistan, democracy for Iraq", but he failed to achieve either



The Iraqi Kurds were given a degree of autonomy in 1980s as the result of the no-fly zone, and after US invasion of Iraq a referendum was held in 2005 with 98% of the eligible voters supporting the region's autonomy. Therefore, the longing for independence or at least full autonomy goes back a long way among the Iraqi Kurds.

■ Do you think that Kurdish independence in northern Iraq is possible or even desirable?

A: The Kurdish leaders stress that the referendum is only for Kurdish independence in Northern Iraq and does not affect other Kurds elsewhere, and secondly that they do not intend to act upon it immediately. However, despite the strong affection and admiration that I feel towards the long-suffering Kurds, I believe that the plan to hold a referendum for independence in Iraq is wrong and potentially very dangerous, for a number of reasons:

1- The Kurds are not a unified ethno-linguistic or religious group. Nowadays, the Kurds have three distinct dialects, Kurmanji, Sorani and Pahlawani. Several million Kurds also speak a non-Kurdish language, namely Zaza-Gorani. Some of these languages are written in Roman script, and others in Arabic script. The speakers of these different dialects often find it difficult to communicate with other Kurds.

2- Today, the Kurdish area of northern Iraq, known as the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG), is riven by a split between a Western region dominated by the party of President Massoud Barzani, the leader of the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP); and

an eastern region where the party of former Iraqi president, Jalal Talabani, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), holds sway. The KDP is based in Erbil, and the PUK in Sulaymaniyah. These two parties fought a civil war in the 1990s. Then there is the PKK, which is regarded as a terrorist organization by Turkey and the United States. Recently there have also emerged some Islamist and terrorist groups that complicate the matter further.

3- Two of the most important Kurdish groups the PUK and the Gorran Movement have criticized the decision by the KDP and they have signed a deal to join forces to form an alliance to deal with the Kurdish issue not only in Kurdistan, but in their relations with Baghdad. The PUK-Gorran bloc, with 30 seats in the Iraqi parliament, is larger than the KDP's, which has 28 parliamentarians.

4- As part of their attempts to partition and weaken the Middle East, the Israelis have been trying to use the Kurds in their conflict against Iran, without much success. The Israelis believe that the independence of the Kurds as another non-Arab group, especially if they can turn them against Iran, would be helpful to them. Recently, the New Yorker magazine alleged that Israeli intelligence and military forces were active in Kurdish areas of Iran, Syria and Iraq, running secret operations that could destabilize the entire region. The Kurds should not allow themselves to be used as pawns by others to pursue their own agendas against regional states.

5- The referendum has brought practically all the global and regional powers, including the United States, Britain, France,

Germany, the EU, Iran, Turkey and Iraq, together in opposition to the independence.

6- Above all, the Iraqi Kurds have to live with their neighbours, especially with Iraq. The Iraqi prime minister has strongly opposed the referendum, describing it as "playing with fire". On 19th September, the Iraqi Supreme Court ordered the referendum to be halted.

Therefore, in the face of divisions at home and almost unanimous opposition by all powers to the referendum, it will be wrong and potentially very dangerous to go ahead with it.

■ The US and UK have objected to the referendum. Are these two countries against the separation of Kurdish Regional Government from Iraq or do they think that the timing isn't quite appropriate? What exactly is their objection based on?

A: There are some reports that indicate that the United States and the UK are opposed to the timing of the referendum, in view of the fact that the war against ISIS is not yet over, and also the situation in Iraq is too fragile for such a major upheaval. Therefore, they have advised patience, but their long-term goal is not very clear. Another major conflict in the Middle East would complicate the already tense situation in the region.

■ How will Turkey react to the KRG referendum? Will it lead to a clash between Ankara and KRG?

A: Turkey has indicated that it is strongly opposed to Kurdish independence in Iraq, because it may also give rise to the idea of Kurdish independence in Turkey. Turkish intelligence chief Hakan Fidan and Iranian Al Quds force Commander Qassem Soleimani have warned the Kurds on visits to Iraqi Kurdistan to back away from the referendum. I hope that the issue will not end up in a military conflict and that the Kurds could be persuaded to give up the plan for referendum. When governments see that a section of their population is unhappy, instead of resorting to force they should try to get closer to them and resolve the sources of their grievances.

■ What would be an alternative to a referendum for the Kurds?

A: At the moment, the Kurds seem to have the best of all worlds. They have a large degree of autonomy and the Kurdish region is living in peace. The answer to their problem is greater autonomy at home and greater democracy in the country as a whole. Under a democracy, different groups with their different languages, faiths and cultures can live in peace and work for the common good. This will ensure their wellbeing, as well as serving the interests of the whole country.

As part of their attempts to partition and weaken the Middle East, the Israelis have been trying to use the Kurds in their conflict against Iran, without much success.

Iran's tourism industry flourishing

By Maryam Azish

MNA – Iran is a country with high potential in tourism industry and since historic nuclear deal reached between Iran and the 5+1 group of countries in 2015, also known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) geared up to make its mark in the industry.

Iran is located in an area where threats are rampant around the country. Opposite to what many believe, Iran is actually very stable in an area that is representative of instability.

At present the Iranian government is planning to attract more tourists which the initiative would create a huge number of jobs and produce around billions of dollars for the country.

World's cheapest tourist destination:

At the time being another key point that adds to Iran's advantage in this industry must be assessed- Iran is the world's cheapest tourist destination. This fact has been reported by the World Economic Forum (WEF) who has assessed nearly 141 countries, PressTV wrote.

Statistics show that Iran is currently ranked 15th in terms of tourist attractions in the world. A series of hurdles such as sanctions and propaganda by the west, especially in the media, has prevented Iran's tourism industry from flourishing.

From this 1.5 billion dollar industry, Iran has only been able to obtain 7.5 million dollars and therefore has ranked 35th in this respect. In addition to economic issues, one of the essential factors that have led to the number of tourists is safety. The idea that foreign tourists visit an area where safety is guaranteed is impossible.

Attractions of Iran's tourism industry are drawing a stronger attention now that the country has opened its doors in light of the removal of economic sanctions last month.

Iran is making a fresh pitch for tourists with the recent lifting of economic sanctions providing an opportunity to cash in.

Tourists, and the healthy revenues they could generate, are among the huge economic changes stemming from the nuclear deal, AFP wrote.

Ski resorts, UNESCO-listed world heritage sites and deserts combine with cities steeped in Middle Eastern grandeur and tradition, adds the report.

A tourism push was launched after President Hassan Rouhani came to power in 2013.

Iranian officials have already said that about five million foreign travelers visited Iran in 2014, and that the country aims to attract 20 million tourists, spending \$30 billion, by 2025.

Entry procedures have been simplified, meaning visitors



from only 11 countries are not eligible for a visa on arrival.

The United States, Britain, Canada and France top the exclusion list but some people will not be put off by the restrictions.

According to the New York Times, there has been a surge in bookings for Iran trips by American tourists.

Tour operators say the demand has been so acute that they are racing to add new departures and selling them in record time, it reported.

Iran hosts some of the world's oldest cultural monuments, including 19 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, and its varied terrain ranges from desert locales to ski resorts.

A tourism adventure to Iran could all start right in capital Tehran and with skiing if you are visiting the country during winters. The city's Tochal ski resort is one of several close to the capital.

Most tourists will then make trips to Isfahan, Shiraz and Yazd, cities which are internationally known to be much more beautiful and relaxed than Tehran, AFP's report added.

Among the popular sites in Isfahan is Imam Square, second in size only to Tiananmen Square in Beijing, but with water fountains and impressive architecture the Iranian site is much more attractive.

For President Rouhani, tourism offers a way to offset falling oil prices that have slashed government income. It comes as tourists shun many parts of the Middle East because of war and a recent wave of terrorist attacks in countries including Egypt and Tunisia, the report added.

Iran's tourism industry has been identified for a third straight year to have the most affordable prices in the world for foreign visitors.

The price competitiveness of countries in the WEF's "Travel

and Tourism Competitiveness Index 2017" were measured by comparing costs relating to travel to and from a destination (travel costs including ticket prices, taxes, fuel rates, etc) and those relating to prices within the tourism destination (ground costs including hotel prices, service rates, food prices, etc).

Iran was also given a ranking of 38 in terms of cultural resources – the number of World Heritage natural sites, total known species, total protected areas and attractiveness of natural assets.

The WEF report showed that Iran's overall travel and tourism competitiveness ranking had improved by four points over the past two years, PressTV wrote.

It identified Iran as the 93rd country with the appropriate set of factors and policies that enable the sustainable development of the travel and tourism sector.

Those factors, it said, include business environment, safety and security, health and hygiene, human resources and the labor market as well as its readiness in terms of information and communication technology (ICT).

An American media says while some Western firms fear President Trump could yet torpedo the nuclear deal, Iran's tourism industry is booming.

More than 6 million people visited Iran in the year ending March 2017, up 50% on the previous year and three times the number in 2009, according to official data.

The surge in visitors follows the 2015 nuclear deal between Tehran and world powers that resulted in many sanctions being lifted early the following year, CNN reported.

European airlines such as British Airways and Lufthansa (DLAKY) resumed direct flights to the country, and Iranian authorities relaxed visa requirements. And as more people arrive, demand for accommodation is skyrocketing.

That's creating opportunities for local entrepreneurs and foreign businesses. France's Accor (ACCYY) was the first chain to open in Iran in 2015. It now operates two hotels there.

Spain's Melia (SMIZF) will open its first hotel next year. Rotana of the United Arab Emirates also has one hotel in the pipeline for early next year and plans three more by 2020.

EasyHotel, a UK-based budget chain, is reported to have signed a deal in July to deliver 500 rooms. It did not respond to a request for comment.

Many of the new visitors are young backpackers from Europe and Asia, drawn by Iran's history and culture. The most popular destinations include the ancient cities of Esfahan and Shiraz. It's also home to Persepolis, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Comprehensive approaches to build "Peace Governance" at the WARP summit

By Hamid Gholamzadeh

"Establishing collaborative governance" for peace-building has been discussed with world leaders at the 3rd Annual Commemoration of the World Alliance Religions' Peace (WARP) Summit held by Heavenly Culture, World Peace, Restoration of Light (HWPL) under the UN ECOSOC in Seoul, Republic of Korea. On the third day of the summit, September 19th, sessions were held to focus on the region and sector-based peace projects.

At the Region-Specific Discussion for the Implementation of the Declaration of Peace and Cessation of War (DPCW), experts in various fields such as government officials, civil society leaders, and media discussed how implement the peace projects in each region.

At the 3rd International Religious Leaders' Conference, around 300 religious leaders who worked for interfaith dialogues gathered to promote harmony of religions. The participants shared the progress reports of interfaith meetings through HWPL's WARP offices aiming to enhance mutual understanding and develop peacebuilding by religious leaders.

Rev. Acharya Prem Shankaranand Tirth, Hindu High Priest of Shree Geeta Ashram of Delhi, emphasized the value and importance of the interfaith dialogue based on the scriptures by mentioning, "The WARP Office taught us how to make religions one. The true discussion for harmony is not just comparing the knowledge of each other but it is a discussion in finding one complete truth."

In addition, Mr. Man Hee Lee, Chairman of HWPL, stressed on the role of the religious leaders in the current global situation and the importance of their mission for world peace. He urged religious leaders to take the lead in realizing religious reconciliation and religious peace through communication. "Religious leaders have to become the just and righteous scale measuring all religious scriptures. They gather all religious scriptures and work to define the trustworthy scripture with a legitimate standard at the WARP Office. Everything that religious leaders discuss must clearly be based on what is written in the scripture, which



Commemorative photograph of Chairman of HWPL and Chairwoman of IWPG, and the key speakers at 3rd International Religious Leaders' Conference

needs to be comprehensively analyzed and studied for the true alliance of religions."

At the Region-Specific Discussion for the Implementation of the Declaration of Peace and Cessation of War (DPCW), experts in various fields such as government officials, civil society leaders, and media discussed how implement the peace projects in each region.

The participants conceived peace projects in accordance with local conditions, such as implementing peace education and cultural programs, activating 'Legislate Peace' campaigns which are supportive signing campaigns for the DPCW, establishing a peace network, and setting up a road map for peace policy during the roundtable discussion by country or continent. Also, they wrote proposals and signed agreements to implement the

At the 3rd International Religious Leaders' Conference, around 300 religious leaders who worked for interfaith dialogues gathered to promote harmony of religions.

projects systematically in their country. The DPCW, drafted by HWPL advocating international cooperation for global peace, appealed to the participants in terms of inventing peace-specific policy making in countries for the legal foundation to promote peace. "The DPCW serves as a framework of a robust, global infrastructure built by sovereign states on a foundation of tolerance, mutual understanding, and dialogue developed to resist conflict. I believe that we will be able to find out ways to cooperate together with all stakeholders to work toward promoting peace in each of our respective country," said H.E. Chin Malin, Undersecretary of State of Ministry of Justice.

Representatives of women's organizations carrying out active peace movement from 53 countries shared the role of women leaders in the enactment of the effective international law for peace and the importance of networking for urging the DPCW in cooperation with International Women's Peace Group (IWPG) at 2017 IWPG Network Forum.

Ms. Nam Hee Kim, Chairwoman of IWPG, said "Let us all support the implementation of an international law in order to protect our children from the suffering caused by violence and aggression and instead nurture them in an environment of peace. Peace education should start from within the family. We should become the mothers who can proudly say that we work hard to inherit the world of peace," urging for the power of the world's 3.6 billion women in achieving world peace and their role in each field for the purpose of international law enactment.

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10 natural home remedies for colds

By Chrystal Johnson

Do you know that there are effective natural home remedies for colds? Read on to learn about them.

Treating a common cold can be extremely difficult, especially if you have small children. Your family could spend hundreds or even thousands of dollars each year on doctor's visits and cold medications, but the fact of the matter is there is no scientific cure for a common cold.

Some experts believe that over-the-counter medications can be dangerous when given to children, especially if they are under the age of two, and some popular commercial medications like Tylenol contain acetaminophen, which can cause liver damage or failure if taken in high doses.

Here are ten natural home remedies for colds that are known to be effective in treating the common cold:

1. Vitamin C

Vitamin C is one of the most effective natural home remedies for colds because it increases the production of white blood cells, and can also help prevent the multiplication of viruses while reducing mucus and inflammation in the nasal passages.

You can take vitamin C in a pill form, but other foods that are surprisingly packed full of vitamin C include oranges, cauliflower, lemons, broccoli, strawberries, cabbage, peaches, kiwi, tomatoes, and parsley.

2. Tea

As many mothers probably already know, the key to curing any type of cold is to drink lots of fluid. Of course this can come in the form of water or juice, but tea is a hot liquid that can help prevent the drying of your child's throat and nose. Drinking tea is also another popular, natural home remedy for treating flu because it can help prevent dehydration as well.

Chamomile and green tea specifically can be extremely effective in treating a cold because like other teas they act as an antioxidant which can help remove any toxins in the body as well as bacterial infections.

3. Garlic

Garlic contains antiseptic properties that could help protect the immune system against a common cold, and scientific studies have shown that the allocine contained in garlic can also act as a stimulator of white blood cells. The oil in garlic also helps open up the respiratory



NATURAL REMEDIES to Help You Get Over Colds Fast

passages, and if taken in soup form it can help flush out all the toxins in your child's system and also bring down a fever as well.

Boil three to six cloves of chopped garlic in a cup of water, and have your child drink the liquid in a soup form and drink it two to three times a day. (If your child isn't a fan of garlic soup you could even try dropping three to five drops of garlic oil into their food or drink).

4. Salt water gargle

Forcing your child to gargle with warm salt water may be a daunting task, but it can actually help remove any bacteria from your child's mouth and throat. Mix about ¼ to ½ of a teaspoon of Real salt into an 8-ounce glass of warm water, and stir until all of the salt is dissolved before gargling.

5. Pepper

If your child has a runny or stuffed up nose, eating pepper with a meal, gargling pepper in hot water, or even simply smelling pepper can help break apart any congestion in your child's lungs or sinuses. Pepper

The allocine contained in garlic can also act as a stimulator of white blood cells. The oil in garlic also helps open up the respiratory passages, and if taken in soup form it can help flush out all the toxins in your child's system and also bring down a fever as well.

can help break up congestion effectively thanks to its capsaicin components which are known to thin mucus, and they are also effective in helping getting rid of the germs in the nasal passages as well.

6. Ginger

Eating ginger raw or drinking ginger tea are both popular natural home remedies for colds that are known to help treat the symptoms of a common cold. Take about ten grams of ginger and cut it up into small pieces before boiling it in a cup of water, and then have your child drink the mixture at least two times a day.

7. Honey

Because honey has been used as a cold fighter for years, it may not come as a surprise to some that honey can be effective in shortening the lifespan of a cold. Experts have found that buckwheat honey can help treat a cough because it coats and soothes an irritated throat, and other researchers have found that it can also help sick children sleep better at night as well. However, if you have a child who is under the age of one do not give them any honey as it could lead to botulism.

8. Cinnamon

Cinnamon is known to help ease the pain of a dry or sore throat, and it is praised by "naturalists" because of its effective healing properties. You can try boiling one teaspoon of powdered cinnamon in a glass of water, and then mixing it with some pepper powder and honey for extra effect. Or you can add a little extra cinnamon it to your child's food.

9. Chicken soup

It's no wonder that chicken soup has been one of the most cherished home remedies for colds. Chicken soup is packed full of nutrients and vitamins that are essential when treating a common cold. Scientific studies have shown that it can actually thin mucus secretions, and the carbohydrates from the broth and noodles can help maintain your child's energy level as well.

10. Sleep

Even if you're eating and drinking all of the right things, and taking the right supplements, you're not going to feel better without enough sleep. Make sure you sleep as much as you can when you're feeling under the weather, and you'll hopefully be feeling better in no time at all!

(Source: happy-mothering.com)

Quirky habits that prove you're smarter than everyone else



Intelligence is difficult to define—psychologists have been arguing about it for years. According to Cornell professor Robert J. Sternberg, PhD, intelligence is the ability «to learn from experience, adapt to new situations, understand and handle abstract concepts, and use knowledge to manipulate one's environment.» Skills like perception, learning, memory, reasoning, and problem-solving facilitate these abilities. To that end, certain habits may be evidence you've got these skills. For example, you'd think someone who was intelligent would be organized and have everything in their work space arranged neatly—but that's not the case. In an experiment from the University of Minnesota, people in a messy setting came up with more creative ideas than those in a neat space. «Disorderly environments seem to inspire breaking free of tradition, which can produce fresh insights.» says study author Kathleen Vohs, PhD. «Orderly environments, in contrast, encourage convention and playing it safe.» Creativity is one of the traits that smarter people tend to possess—and so conversely, it may actually lead to messiness, adds Jonathan Wai, PhD, a research scientist at the Duke University Talent Identification Program (TIP). «I'd guess that it's not messiness that helps creativity, but creativity which may create messiness,» he says. «Such people tend to get lost in thought focusing on a problem or issue, and cleanliness becomes of less importance than focusing on the problem at hand.»

You like cold showers

You may have heard of the trend of taking cold showers or swimming in cold water to give your body an energizing jolt. Although there isn't a ton of scientific info on this yet, the authors of one study from Finland, where winter swimming is common, note «adaptation to cold water was associated with a significant decrease in tension and fatigue, and an improvement in mood and memory.» These are all things that can boost brain function and productivity. In addition, stepping out of your comfort zone and getting up the courage to turn the knob down might inspire you for the rest of your day, according to a New York Times article on cold showers. So if you've joined the Polar Bear Club, your habit may be giving your brain a burst of energy every day.

You doodle

Another habit of smart people is doodling—so if you enjoy this pastime, it may mean you're intelligent, too. According to Sunni Brown, author of The Doodle Revolution, it's a thinking tool that can affect the processing of information and problem-solving. This notion is backed up by scientific research—a study from the U.K. found that people were able to recall 29 percent more information if they were doodling. Scribbling mindlessly has a benefit for memory, and also gives the brain a visual way to express concepts and emotions. Dr. Wai has a theory as to why: «Perhaps it's not the actual act of doodling, but the act of taking a break of any kind that matters,» he says. «For example, the idea that your mind works unconsciously in the background even when you aren't overtly focusing on a problem.»

You criticize yourself

We tend to think that intelligent people are confident—why wouldn't they be, when they're so smart? But research suggests that might not be the case. In a landmark 1999 study from Cornell University, scientists found that incompetent people couldn't recognize their own incompetence, which led to inflated self-assessments. This has become known as the Dunning-Kruger effect. «For poor performers to recognize their ineptitude would require them to possess the very expertise they lack,» study author David Dunning, PhD, recently wrote in the Pacific Standard. «To know how skilled or unskilled you are at using the rules of grammar, for instance, you must have a good working knowledge of those rules, an impossibility among the incompetent. Poor performers,» he adds, «fail to see the flaws in their thinking or the answers they lack.» The study also found that highly competent people tended to underestimate their abilities. Smarties can recognize when they don't know something—in fact, they know just how much more knowledge is out there. Instead of being overconfident, they tend to be self-critical. Here's why it's counterproductive to call your kid «smart.»

You daydream

Although scientists have previously thought mind-wandering negatively affected the brain's performance, new research suggests that may not be the case. A study from the University of California found that when given a demanding task, participants who took a break for undemanding tasks fared better at the original assignment. The researchers theorize that giving the brain an «incubation period,» by allowing it to wander during a mindless task, boosts problem-solving and creativity. Like doodling, this is «related to that working on a problem in the back of your mind even when you aren't directly thinking about it,» Dr. Wai says. «Some stories of scientific discovery have mentioned the importance of stepping away from the problem, getting a change of scenery, and how that can help your mind encounter different ways of viewing a problem and potentially enhance creativity.» So if daydreaming is one of your habits, you may have higher creative and problem-solving skills. Here are more things that all highly creative people do.

You talk to yourself

You may think that mumbling to yourself makes you seem crazy, but in reality, it might be a sign of higher thinking, memory, and perception skills. In a study from the University of Wisconsin and the University of Pennsylvania, researchers asked participants to remember and find objects. They were better able to recall the list of items to look for if they had said the names of the objects out loud. «Language is not just a system of communication, but I'm arguing that it can augment perception, augment thinking,» study author Gary Lupyan, PhD, told Live Science. By vocalizing the names of familiar objects, «you're activating visual properties in the brain to help you find them.»

(Source: rd.com)

Home remedies to get rid of under eye wrinkles

There are various homemade remedies that can help reduce wrinkles. Here are a few remedies that help in reducing the effect of old age on eyes. Since the area near and around eyes is sensitive, it is advisable to first check on a small area before applying anything to the entire surface.

Grape seed oil

Grape seed oil has skin moisturizing and nourishing properties. It is especially effective for repair of the skin around the eyes and in the repair of stretch marks. This natural ingredient helps to combat wrinkles and rejuvenate the skin. Grape seed oil is rich in antioxidants such as proanthocyanidins, which help in reversing the damages of skin aging. That is why many women use grape seed oil for wrinkles. If applied on dry skin, it keeps the skin hydrated, and as everybody knows, hydrated skin is less likely to get fine lines and wrinkles than a dry one. Buy from Amazon for discounts and free shipping

Vitamin E

Vitamin E can also help reduce and avoid under eye wrinkle. Vitamin E is an antioxidant and the oil is very thick, so it hydrates dry skin very well. Vitamin E will penetrate your skin with powerful antioxidants and will lubricate the delicate eye area, help wrinkles appear less noticeable, and help prevent the formation of new wrinkles. Each night before going to bed, squeeze the liquid



out from the vitamin E capsule and smear it under your eyes where you notice the wrinkles. Using the grape or pineapple during the day and vitamin E at night will show faster results. Buy from Amazon for discounts and free shipping

Coconut Oil

Coconut oil works wonders for wrinkles and wrinkle prevention. Massaging coconut oil into the area of your skin that is wrinkled, under the eye, will help. After using coconut oil for a week, you will begin to see results. Continue using coconut oil on a daily basis to prevent under eye wrinkles from coming back

in the future. Buy from Amazon for discounts and free shipping

Avocados

Avocados are great for your skin. It decreases under eye wrinkles very effectively. Take some mashed avocado and apply it around your eyes. As the natural oil contained in the avocado helps turn on your skin's natural oil production, the skin looks younger and more attractive. Buy from Amazon for discounts and free shipping

Cucumber

You may use cucumber to deal with your wrinkled eye. This is one of the most

Dehydrated skin dries out, making it more prone to wrinkles. Water hydrates the skin, keeping it soft, supple, and younger looking for long.

effective natural home remedies not just for under eye wrinkles but for crow's feet. Put cucumber slices on your eyes. The cucumber slices will reduce the eye wrinkles, fine lines, and puffiness so your eyes feel reenergized afterwards. Buy from Amazon for discounts and free shipping

Lemon Juice

You can also use lemon juice for reducing wrinkles around the eyes. Dip a cotton ball in lemon juice and apply around your eyes twice daily morning and at night. Make sure you do not get the lemon juice in your eyes. After a few weeks, you will find a noticeable reduction in wrinkles. Buy from Amazon for discounts and free shipping

Castor Oil

Castor oil is one of the oldest known wrinkle treatments. It helps to heal under eye wrinkles. Apply and massage a few drops of castor oil to your under eye area at night after cleansing your face. This will keep skin smooth and supple and reduce signs of aging. You should repeat this treatment 1 to 2 times per week after eye wrinkles have diminished to keep under eye wrinkles from redeveloping. Buy from Amazon for discounts and free shipping

These are just a few of the useful remedies that help to remove under eye wrinkles. You may try the above-mentioned natural home remedies for wrinkles and keep watching your under eye wrinkles and lines vanish.

(Source: herbalremedies.knoji.com)

Science says burning sage can clean the air and improve your health

By Nancy Collins

Whether the season is summer, spring, fall or winter, it is a good idea to clean the air in your home regularly to get rid of germs and all the other unhealthy things you don't want your family to breathe in. One great way of cleaning the air around you is by burning sage. This practice has been around for hundreds of years, but many people have discounted it in the past as an old wife's tale. However, recent research has proven that you can clear bacteria from the air by burning sage herb.

How burning sage herb works

Research has proven that burning sage removes a whopping 94% of bacteria in the air. When the researchers tested the air a day later, it was still clean. The best method for this is called "smudging." You take a bunch of dried sage, twist it into a stick shape, then light one end of the "stick" on fire and then blow it out. The resulting smoke "smudges" the air in the room and the properties in the smoke kill most of the existing bacteria in the air. White sage is preferred and you can find sage burners for burning it.

Unlike chemical air "purifiers" that only mask the smells in the air, sage is 100% natural and will not cause allergic reactions for people with scent sensitivities. It also smells great! The research found that the smoke needs



about an hour to cleanse the air. So make sure you burn enough sage a couple to last that long. Though you can buy ready-made sage sticks, some people prefer to grow their own herbs for this practice. If you have the room to grow your own, try it out.

The importance of clean air

There are many reasons why people are concerned about the air quality in their homes. The primary reason is health related. Poor air quality can cause:

- Asthma
- Coughing
- Respiratory infections
- Headaches

- Dizziness
- Fatigue
- Lung cancer
- Heart problems

Don't panic just yet! The chronic health issues mentioned happen as a result of long term exposure to polluted air. But, some of the health issues you or your family are currently experiencing could be a result of the poor air quality in your home. Burning sage is a cost effective and natural way to clean the air and put your worries to rest.

Where can I find a sage stick?

You should be able to find them at your local natural food store or essential oils store. If both places don't carry them, the staff should know where you can buy them.

How much dried sage should I have to try this?

You will need about a fistful of sage to try the smudging method. Think of it as 2 servings of spaghetti and measure it the same way with your hand.

Is it safe for my kids and pets?

Burning sage herb is safe for both kids and pets. Your pet may not appreciate being in the same room since their sense of smell is much more heightened than ours, but it will not harm them.

(Source: lifehack.org)

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 Apple's iPhone 8 sees muted launch in Asia. Hundreds of people usually gather at Apple's Sydney city store with queues winding down the town's main street, George Street, when there is a new product release. But there were fewer than 30 people lining up before the store opened on Friday, according to a Reuters witness.

2 National Bank of Canada, the country's sixth largest lender, said that a website glitch earlier this week may have exposed personal information of about 400 customers. National Bank said human error in setting up the form was the reason for the glitch and that it was offering free credit monitoring to affected customers.

3 Shares in Taiwanese technology company HTC Corp rose 9.96 pct in early trading on Friday. HTC Corp announced that Alphabet Inc's Google would pay \$1.1 billion for the division at HTC that develops the U.S. firm's Pixel smartphones.

4 The Australian government has resumed the use of Chinese-built drones in non-classified situations, the country's defense minister said. Australia's defense forces had put on hold its deployment of China-made drones while it reviewed cybersecurity, following in the steps of the United States, Defence Minister Marise Payne said on the sidelines of an event in Washington.

5 HTC U11 Plus rumored for November with 6-inch 18:9 bezel-less screen. The U11 Plus will have a 5.99-inch panel made by JDI, with 1,440x2,880 resolution. The phone will be powered by the Snapdragon 835, still Qualcomm's No.1 chipset, aided by 4 or 6GB of RAM and 64 or 128GB of UFS 2.1 storage, depending on which model you choose.

6 Moto G5S Plus lands in the US on September 29, pre-orders are live for \$229.99. If you want 4GB and 64GB, respectively, you'll have to pay \$299.99. Note however that these prices are in fact special pre-order offers valid only until September 28.

7 Report suggests iPhone X production hasn't even begun yet. Apple will start pre-orders for the iPhone X on October 27 and expects to start shipping on November 3 but that may change. According to a chip analyst with Raymond James Apple hasn't begun mass production of the iPhone X. He says units will start coming off the production lines in mid-October and likely ramp up into the final quarter of the year.

8 BlackBerry Keyone Black Edition reaches Canada next week. The Keyone Black Edition will be priced at CAD 799 unlocked, and should be available from Amazon, Walmart, and Staples, among other places. Compared to the silver/black Keyone that was initially announced in February at MWC, the Black Edition has more RAM and internal storage: 4GB and 64GB, respectively.

9 Amazon said to be working on its first wearable device, Alexa powered smartglasses. The glasses will need to pair with a smartphone, and a bone-conduction system, will allow users of the device to hear audio without wearing headphones.

10 Microsoft's Outlook for mobiles has just been updated with a new, important feature that will allow users to sync all Office365 shared calendars to their smartphones for any permission level, including view, edit, or delegate.

US allies accuse NSA of manipulating encryption standards

The US National Security Agency (NSA) is in the global bad books again after allegations surfaced suggesting it was trying to manipulate international encryption standards. Reuters reports that it has seen interviews and emails from experts in countries including Germany, Japan and Israel expressing concern that the NSA has been pushing two particular encryption techniques not because they are secure, but because the agency knows how to break them.

The NSA has been gunning for two techniques, known as Simon and Speck, to be included in the International Organization of Standards (ISO). Following the accusations the agency, which says it "firmly believes" the techniques are secure, has agreed to drop all but the most powerful (and therefore less vulnerable) versions of Simon and Speck, but the issue has fostered significant mistrust and suspicion among countries which are supposed to be allies. Speaking to Reuters, Israeli ISO delegate Orr Dunkelman, a computer science professor at the University of Haifa, said, "I don't trust the designers. There are quite a lot of people in NSA who think their job is to subvert standards. My job is to secure standards."

Fears that the NSA were pursuing a "back door" into coded transmissions stem largely from NSA documents disclosed by Edward Snowden, showing that that agency had previously promoted technology it could penetrate. According to the reports, budget documents sought funding to "insert vulnerabilities into commercial encryption systems". The NSA, of course doesn't confirm the authenticity of these documents.

(Source: Engadget)

Facebook bans Rohingya group's posts as minority faces 'ethnic cleansing'

By Julia Carrie Wong

The decision, which the company said was made after an internal assessment of the group, came shortly before activists began complaining that the company was censoring posts about the brutal military campaign against Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar. The Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (Arsa) was placed on Facebook's "dangerous organization" list in recent weeks, a Facebook spokesperson confirmed. The company's community standards ban posts by or in support of such organizations, which it defines as groups engaged in terrorism, organized violence or crime, mass murder, or organized hate.

Facebook refused to comment on whether any of the other groups involved in the conflict that has seen more than 400,000 Rohingya flee the country have been designated as dangerous, or had accounts or posts deleted.

Myanmar's military, which the top United Nations human rights official has accused of engaging in a "textbook example of ethnic cleansing", has a verified Facebook page with 2.6m followers. The government has numerous other official pages as well, and human rights observers have raised concerns that posts by Aung San Suu Kyi, the country's de facto leader and a Nobel peace prize recipient, are stoking anti-Rohingya fervor.



Facebook's decision was welcomed by Aung San Suu Kyi's spokesman, Zaw Htay, who shared a message from Facebook regarding the designation on his own Facebook page on 26 August. Htay's post urging his followers to report pro-Arsa content to Facebook was shared nearly 7,000 times.

Arsa emerged last October and calls itself a freedom fighter organization on behalf of the approximately 1.1m Rohingya living in Rakhine.

Arsa claimed on Twitter that the at-

tacks were a "legitimate step" to defend the rights of Rohingya against repression by the Myanmar military. But the attacks triggered "clearance operations" by the Burmese army that have resulted in a refugee crisis.

Facebook's acknowledgment that it banned Arsa comes amid criticism from Rohingya refugees, journalists, and observers that the company is censoring reports of human rights violations against the minority group.

"I believe [Facebook] is trying to sup-

press freedom [of] expression and dissent by colluding with the genocidaires in Myanmar regime," the activist and journalist Mohammad Anwar told the Guardian. Anwar, whose allegations of censorship were first reported by the Daily Beast, shared screenshots of numerous posts that had been removed by Facebook for violating community standards. Several of the posts comprised only text, he said, and described military operations against Rohingya villages in Rakhine.

The Kuala Lumpur-based journalist, who works for the site RohingyaBlogger.com, said that his reports come from a network of 45 correspondents and citizen journalists in Rakhine.

Facebook said some of Anwar's posts had been deleted in error but that the mistakes were not the result of moderators confusing support for the Rohingya with support for Arsa.

Several Rohingya Facebook users complained to the Guardian that the censorship continued.

Mohammed Rafique, a Rohingya activist based in Ireland, told the Guardian that he was temporarily banned from Facebook on 28 August for posting "photos and videos of torture and killings in the Rohingya villages" on his Facebook page.

(Source: Guardian)

Huawei launches NR based interoperability testing to verify 5G

Huawei — in association with Intel — has launched 3GPP 5G New Radio (NR) based Interoperability Development Testing (IODT) to verify the 5G technologies.

Based on Huawei's 5G base station prototype and Intel's 3rd Generation 5G Mobile Trial Platform (MTP), both companies will jointly verify the performance of key 5G NR technologies in sub-6GHz including C-Band, mmWave and mobility.

Huawei and Intel will conduct testing in real mobile, over the air environments directly connecting Huawei's infrastructure and Intel's terminal platform.

C-Band, as one of the first converged 5G spectrum, will provide basic coverage and bandwidth for 5G. C-Band will also serve as one of the world's first com-



mercialized 5G frequency bands.

"Huawei is committed to driving the development and commercial deployment of 5G technologies. In the IMT-2020 field tests in Beijing, Huawei has demonstrated

its competency and leadership in C-Band, mmWave, and downlink and uplink decoupling 5G technology," said Yang Chaobin, president of 5G Product Line at Huawei.

Intel has partnered with leading technology players in the Chinese 5G industry to accelerate 5G R&D tests and commercialization. Globally, telecom operators are expected to start 5G services in 2020 and China will be one of the key countries in terms of 5G adoption, according to GSMA.

"Based on the latest 5G NR technologies, this interoperability test with Huawei will drive unified 5G standards and the industrial ecosystem in China and across the globe," said Asha Keddy, vice president in the Communication and Devices Group at Intel.

(Source: telecomlead)

Google agrees to buy part of HTC for \$1.1 billion

Alphabet subsidiary Google announced on Thursday that it signed a \$1.1 billion cooperation agreement with Taiwanese smartphone maker HTC to bolster its smartphone and emerging hardware business.

Under the agreement, Google will acquire a team of approximately 2,000 HTC employees, many of whom have worked with the company on its Pixel smartphone. As part of the transaction, HTC will receive \$1.1 billion in cash.

Separately, Google will also receive a non-exclusive license for HTC intellectual property.

The move formalizes a long-awaited tie-up that could further Google's ambitions in the mobile phone and virtual reality industries

and may rescue HTC's flagging business.

"This agreement is a brilliant next step in our longstanding partnership, enabling Google to supercharge their hardware business while ensuring continued innovation within our HTC smartphone and VIVE virtual reality businesses," Cher Wang, chairwoman and CEO at HTC, said in a prepared statement.

In a blog post, Google Senior Vice President of Hardware Rick Osterloh said the agreement will help the tech giant innovate its family of Made by Google products.

The deal is subject to regulatory approvals and customary closing conditions. It is expected to close by early 2018.

(Source: CNBC)

Judge rules against Qualcomm twice in its patent battles against Apple

Judge Gonzalo P. Curiel of the United States District Court for the Southern District of California, rejected Qualcomm's request for a preliminary injunction. Qualcomm was hoping that the court would force manufacturers of the Apple iPhone and Apple iPad to pay the chip maker royalties for the use of certain Qualcomm patents. These standard essential patents are supposed to be licensed using fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory terms (FRAND). Contract manufacturers like Compal Electronics Inc., Foxconn Technology Group, Pegatron Corp. and Wistron Corp. have stopped paying Qualcomm royalties at Apple's request, with Apple complaining that Qualcomm failed to use FRAND to determine its royalties structure.

The legal battle between Apple

and Qualcomm also deals with royalty rebate payments that Qualcomm was supposed to make to Apple. The former stopped cutting these checks in September 2016, which obviously raised Apple's ire. Apple has sued Qualcomm over the royalties the chip maker is asking for, citing violation of anti-trust laws, U.S. patent law, and Qualcomm's failure to ask for reasonable royalties for its standard essential patents.

Besides ruling today against Qualcomm's request for a preliminary injunction, Judge Curiel also ruled against Qualcomm's request for a preliminary injunction that would have blocked Apple from suing Qualcomm over the same issues, but in different jurisdictions.

(Source: AppleInsider)

HPE to cut about 5,000 jobs



Before the year is up, HPE will begin cutting about 10 percent of its global workforce, Bloomberg reports, citing unnamed sources familiar with the matter. That amounts to about 5,000 employees out of its staff of 50,000.

HPE did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The company has been slimming down with multiple rounds of layoffs since it split with HP and CEO Meg Whitman took the helm in 2015.

Earlier this month, HPE announced it had completed the sale of its software business.

After reporting strong third quarter financial results, CEO Meg Whitman said on a conference call this month that HPE is becoming "a smaller organization with fewer lines of business and clear strategic priorities." She added, "We have the opportunity to create an internal structure and operating model that is simpler, nimbler and faster."

(Source: Bloomberg)

Baidu announces \$1.5B autonomous driving fund



Chinese search engine giant Baidu is stepping up its involvement in the self-driving vehicles space with a new, \$1.5 billion fund. Called the Apollo Fund, named after its open-source autonomous driving platform, Baidu plans to invest the fund in 100 autonomous driving projects in the next three years, the company announced.

Baidu also released the latest version of its autonomous driving platform, Apollo 1.5, with five new core capabilities: its new obstacle perception capability enables vehicles to identify obstacles both during the day and at night. It also has new route planning capabilities, cloud simulation, HD maps, and end-to-end deep learning.

First announced in April, the Apollo platform has 70 partners so far. More than 1,300 companies have downloaded Apollo source code, Baidu says, and nearly 100 companies have applied for open data via the Apollo website.

(Source: zdnet)

Instagram's face filters are now available during your livestreams



The face filters that Instagram swiped from Snapchat are now available on Instagram Live. Starting today, you can add filters before your Live feed airs or during with options that include various crowns and animal ears as well as pilot getup and nerd glasses. Also, for the next week, a sunglasses filter will be available only through live video and it allows users to tap on the glasses to change what scenery is reflected off of them.

It was only a matter of time before Instagram worked filters into its live video feature. Facebook Live has had them for some time and Instagram introduced filters for photos and videos earlier this year.

To use the feature, tap the face icon on the bottom right of the screen. Then scroll through the selection and tap whichever filter you want to try on. Face filters for live video start rolling out now and should reach all users over the next few weeks.

(Source: Instagram)

World's first 'molecular robot' may help build new drugs

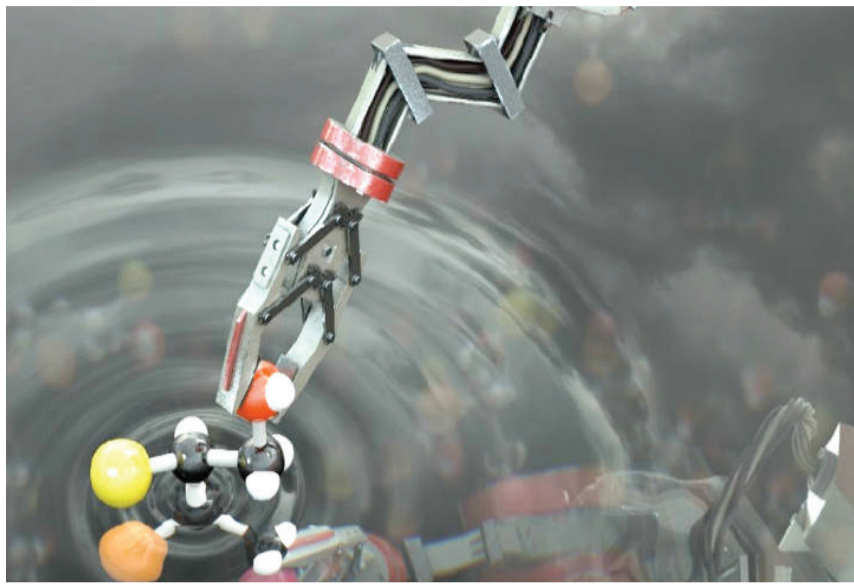
Scientists have created the world's first 'molecular robot' – millionths of a millimeter in size – that can be used to build molecules and may help discover novel drugs. The tiny robots developed by researchers at the University of Manchester in the UK can be programmed to move and build molecular cargo using a tiny robotic arm.

Each individual robot is capable of manipulating a single molecule and is made up of just 150 carbon, hydrogen, oxygen and nitrogen atoms. To put that size into context, a billion of these robots piled on top of each other would still only be the same size as a single grain of salt.

The robots operate by carrying out chemical reactions in special solutions which can then be controlled and programmed by scientists to perform the basic tasks. In the future such robots could be used for medical purposes, advanced manufacturing processes and even building molecular factories and assembly lines.

■ Made up of atoms

"All matter is made up of atoms and these are the basic building blocks that form molecules. Our robot is literally a molecular robot constructed of atoms just like you can build a very



The "robots are assembled and operated using chemistry. This is the science of how atoms and molecules react with each other and how larger molecules are constructed from smaller ones," said Leigh.

simple robot out of Lego bricks," said David Leigh.

The "robot then responds to a

series of simple commands that are programmed with chemical inputs by a scientist," said Leigh.

"Just like the robot in the factory, our molecular version can be programmed to position and rivet components in different ways to build different products, just on a much smaller scale at a molecular level," he added.

The benefit of having machinery that is so small is it massively reduces demand for materials, can accelerate and improve drug discovery, dramatically reduce power requirements and rapidly increase the miniaturization of other products.

■ Tiny machine

Whilst building and operating such tiny machine is extremely complex, the techniques used by the team are based on simple chemical processes.

The "robots are assembled and operated using chemistry. This is the science of how atoms and molecules react with each other and how larger molecules are constructed from smaller ones," said Leigh.

"Once the nano-robots have been constructed, they are operated by scientists by adding chemical inputs which tell the robots what to do and when, just like a computer program," he said. The research was published in the journal Nature.

(Source: Indian Express)

Size does matter when it comes to animal extinction risk

The smallest and largest of animals are the most vulnerable to extinction risk, a study of 27,000 vertebrate species revealed. The research also showed there are species being overlooked in terms of conservation efforts.

An increasing number of the world's animals faces extinction risk but findings of a new research have revealed that the threat tends to be worst for the biggest and smallest creatures.

In a new study published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences on Tuesday, Sept. 19, researchers examined more than 27,000 vertebrate species based on their body mass. Of the species whose size data are available, researchers found that 17 percent face threats of extinction.

■ Similar threats

Studies on birds and mammals showed that animals with larger bodies are more likely to face extinction, but the new study revealed that animals on the small ends of the scale face similar threats as well.

"Surprisingly, we found that not only the largest of all vertebrate animal species are most threatened, but the very tiniest ones are also highly threatened



with extinction," said study researcher Bill Ripple of Oregon State University.

"I think, for the smallest species, first of all we need to bring higher awareness to them, because the larger ones get a lot of attention, but the smaller ones get very little."

■ Non-Mammals Overlooked by Protection Efforts

The research, which evaluated birds,

reptiles, mammals, amphibians, bony fishes, and cartilaginous fishes (such as sharks and rays), also revealed that there are species overlooked in terms of conservation efforts.

Big and well-known mammals such as rhinos, whales, elephants and lions, have long been the targets of protection efforts but other large-bodied non-mammal animals such as the Somali ostrich,

Komodo dragon, whale sharks, and the Atlantic sturgeon also need conservation efforts.

Researchers said that different conservation strategies are needed to address the threats posed to the largest and smallest of animals.

The heavyweights are primarily threatened by hunting, while the featherweights are threatened by logging and pollution.

■ The smallest creatures

Researchers said that the smallest creatures tend to have restricted geographic ranges, considered to be a crucial factor that can predict extinction risk, making the smallest species vulnerable to the effects of habitat degradation.

"Our results offer insight into halting the ongoing wave of vertebrate extinctions by revealing the vulnerability of large and small taxa, and identifying size-specific threats," the researchers wrote in their study.

"Without intervention, anthropogenic activities will soon precipitate a double truncation of the size distribution of the world's vertebrates, fundamentally reordering the structure of life on our planet."

(Source: techtimes.com)

New study says a fast radio burst happens every second in the universe

When astronomers first noted the detection of a Fast Radio Burst (FRB) in 2007 (aka. the Lorimer Burst), they were both astounded and intrigued. This high-energy burst of radio pulses, which lasted only a few milliseconds, appeared to be coming from outside of our galaxy. Since that time, astronomers have found evidence of many FRBs in previously-recorded data, and are still speculated as to what causes them.

Thanks to subsequent discoveries and research, astronomers now know that FRBs are far more common than previously thought. In fact, according to a new study by a team of researchers from the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics (CfA), FRBs may occur once every second within the observable Universe. If true, FRBs could be a powerful tool for researching the origins and evolution of the cosmos.

The study, titled "A Fast Radio Burst Occurs Every Second throughout the Observable Universe", recently appeared in The Astrophysical Journal Letters. The study was led by Anastasia Fialkov, a postdoc researcher and Fellow at the CfA's Institute for Theory and Computa-

tion (ITC). She was joined by Professor Abraham Loeb, the director of the ITC and the Frank B. Baird, Jr. Professor of Science at Harvard.

■ Mystery discovered

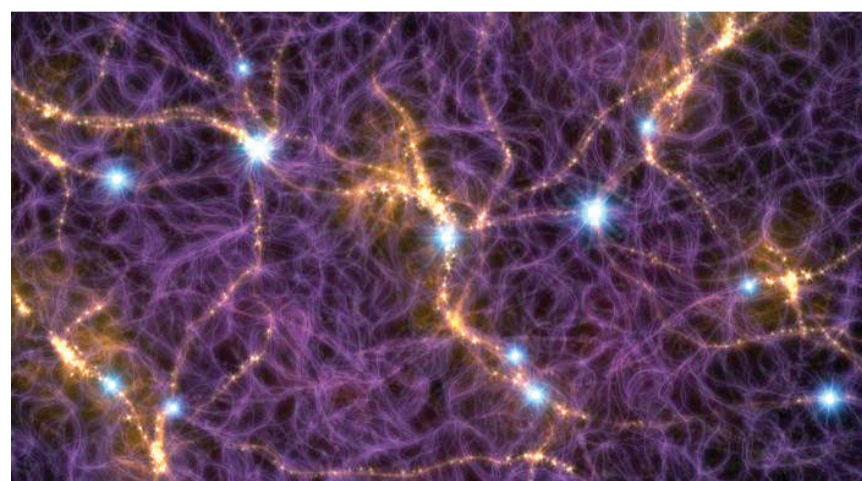
As noted, FRBs have remained something of a mystery since they were first discovered. Not only do their causes remain unknown, but much about their true is still not understood. As Fialkov told Universe Today via email:

"FRBs (or fast radio bursts) are astrophysical signals of an undetermined nature. The observed bursts are short (or millisecond duration), bright pulses in the radio part of the electromagnetic spectrum (at GHz frequencies). Only 24 bursts have been observed so far and we still do not know for sure which physical processes trigger them.

The most plausible explanation is that they are launched by rotating magnetized neutron stars. However, this theory is to be confirmed."

■ Multiple telescopes

For the sake of their study, Fialkov and Loeb relied on observations made by multiple telescopes of the repeating fast radio burst known as FRB 121102.



This FRB was first observed in 2012 by researchers using the Arecibo radio telescope in Puerto Rico, and has since been confirmed to be coming from a galaxy located 3 billion light years away in the direction of the Auriga constellation.

Since it was discovered, additional bursts have been detected coming from its location, making FRB 121102 the only known example of a repeating FRB. This repetitive nature has also allowed astron-

omers to conduct more detailed studies of it than any other FRB. As Professor Loeb told Universe Today via email, these and other reasons made it an ideal target for their study.

"FRB121102 is the only FRB for which a host galaxy and a distance were identified. It is also the only repeating FRB source from which we detected hundreds of FRBs by now.

(Source: Universe Today)

Hubble just spotted a bizarre new object in our Solar System

Astronomers recently spotted two space rocks behaving strangely. As the asteroids orbited each other, both of them appeared to be shedding material just like a comet does — observations revealed a coma around the objects as well as a long tail of material.

The group have identified this weird system, called 288P, as the "first known binary asteroid also classified as a comet." There are a few select examples of single asteroids shedding water and dust and leaving behind a comet-like tail, but it's the first time two of these objects were seen orbiting each other.



288P was first discovered in November 2006 by the astronomical survey Spacewatch. At the time, it was thought to be an asteroid and called Asteroid 300163 (2006VW139). In 2011, the Pan-STARRS telescope spotted cometary activity and the object was renamed 288P.

Astronomers didn't know that 288P was two objects until the Hubble Space Telescope observed it in September 2016, though the team suggested it could be two objects in November 2015.

From the objects' orbit, astronomers could see that 288P originally came from the asteroid belt.

Astronomers expect that in the asteroid belt, water ice can only exist for billions of years if it is protected by a covering of dust, perhaps a few meters thick. But 288P sheds water ice as it approaches the sun, indicating that the dust layer is eroded or lost.

This artist's impression shows the binary main-belt comet 288P. From a distance the comet-like features of the system can clearly be seen: among them, the bright coma surrounding both components of the system and the long tail of dust and water pointing away from the sun.

(Source: Seeker)

Plant-eating dinosaurs may have dined on crustaceans, study says

Think dinosaurs didn't mix things up at mealtime? Think again. Researchers studying fossilized dinosaur feces from about 75 million years ago have discovered that at least some plant-eating dinosaurs also snacked on shellfish.

The discovery of crustacean remains in the droppings, described in Scientific Reports, reveals that large herbivorous dinosaurs such as hadrosaurs may have had far more complex eating habits than we usually give them credit for.

"We need to refine our presumptions about dinosaur diets," said lead author Karen Chin, a paleontologist at the University of Colorado in Boulder.

Scientists studying the creatures of the lost world, ultimately annihilated by an asteroid some 66 million years ago, typically look at the bones these animals left behind. But though bones reveal much about an animal's shape, they reveal only so much about how an animal actually interacted with its environment — for example, how it fit into its ecosystem's complex food web.

In the rare event that it happens to be deposited in the right environmental conditions to become a fossil (at which point it's called a coprolite), it can reveal much about what a dinosaur was actually eating.

"Direct evidence for diet in the fossil record is very rare," Chin said. "We are usually forced to rely simply on the bones, so we study the teeth and the jaw and other aspects of functional morphology. So when we find coprolites like these ... they do provide a different perspective on the diet."

These particular coprolites were discovered in southern Utah at the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument's Kaiparowits Formation. They were dark — a sign that they had been filled with rotting wood — and were marked by backfilled dung-beetle tunnels.

The researchers could tell that the wood had been rotting before the animals ate it because it was so fragmented.

(Source: The LAT)

Your cotton swabs are polluting the ocean and ruining this seahorse's home

Wildlife photographer Justin Hofman was visiting Sumbawa — an island in the middle of the Lesser Sunda Indonesian island chain — on a group snorkeling expedition last November when he spotted a seahorse making its way through the waters.

The "tide was changing and the seahorse must have been right on the edge of this tideline," he tells Newsweek. "And as we were out there more and more all of this junk started to come to through."

At first there was natural stuff—seagrass, little pieces of wood—but then the man-made detritus started to float by. Hofman spotted small pieces of plastic and then bigger pieces of plastic. Finally, there was raw sewage.

Indonesian currents are famously strong, so the garbage could have come from a nearby town or even have been brought in with the tide from 5,000 miles away. And because plastics don't break down, it's possible the garbage has been floating around in the waters for years.

He snapped a bunch of photos with his Sony camera, though not as many as he'd usually take. Hofman was eager to get away from the scene because by then the "water started to smell like shit."

Among the photos he managed to get was one of a seahorse clasped around a cotton swab, which he recently posted on Instagram. The image is a finalist for the 53rd annual Wildlife Photographer of the Year Award; the winner will be announced on October 17.

(Source: Newsweek)

IKCO and Mercedes Benz Trucks Sign & Wholesale Joint Venture Agreement

Iran's largest vehicle manufacturer, Iran Khodro Industrial Group (IKCO) and Germany's Truck manufacturer, Mercedes-Benz Trucks, have signed a contract to establish a wholesale joint venture company for commercial vehicles sales and after-sales services in the Iranian market.

The contract was signed on Tuesday, Sept 12th between Iran Khodro

Diesel (IKD), representing IKCO, and Mercedes-Benz Trucks in Wörth, Germany.

The signing ceremony was attended by Iran's Ambassador to Germany, Dr. Ali Majedi, Iran's Deputy Minister for Industry, Mohsen Salehi-Nia and IKCO CEO, Hashem Yekehzare as well as a number of high-ranking managers of the two Iranian and German

companies.

The wholesale joint venture will have the exclusive privilege of selling Mercedes-Benz trucks and vans in the Iranian market.

Currently both companies are working to set up a production joint-venture agreement for Mercedes-Benz Trucks with the objective to sign this agreement within the

next coming months. The current and future generations of Actros Trucks will be the main products of this future company.

Mercedes Benz is the first leading brand in commercial vehicles in the world. The company's decision to set up a joint venture with IKCO shows that Iran is a market with potential growth for commercial vehicles.

Clean air starts with us: Tehran mayor

SOCIETY TEHRAN — "If we need clean air as Tehran citizens, we should start with ourselves," Tehran Mayor Mohammad Ali Najafi said.

"Citizens can walk for short distances and in this way they can do exercise as well," he proposed.

He made the remarks during his symbolic walking in central Tehran accompanied by members of Tehran City Council on the occasion of the World Car Free Day on Friday.



He said that the municipality plans to develop public transportation in Tehran, however there are some financial restrictions.

"The commuters at Tehran's subway face problems during rush hours each morning and evening, so we plan to increase the number of wagons in the near future," he explained.

Najafi said that 1,000 wagons will be added soon to Tehran's subway fleet.

The Tehran metro has five active lines with nearly 200 kilometers of track carrying hundreds of thousands of passengers per day.

He also explained about plans to improve bus transport services, saying that the municipality will import new buses from Hungary in the next three months.

He stressed the importance of Tehran's vehicle inspection system and its effects on air pollution monitoring.

The World Car Free Day, which is celebrated on September 22, encourages motorists to give up their cars for a day.

The event promotes improvement of mass transit, cycling and walking, and the development of communities where jobs are closer to home and where shopping is within walking distance.

Iranian research center develops solar chemical reactor

ENVIRONMENT TEHRAN — The Iranian Research Organization for Science and Technology succeeded in designing and developing a solar chemical reactor.

Replacing fossil fuels with a clean and sustainable energy source is the greatest challenge of our generation. Concentrated solar energy can be harnessed to drive a wide range of chemical reactions, including renewable fuels production.

Recent understanding as to the negative environmental effects from fossil fuels has rekindled interest in renewable energy research. In order to utilize concentrated solar energy for fuels production, materials of construction, reactor designs, and fuel production cycles must be investigated and optimized.

It is possible to use solar light to directly drive industrial chemical reactions and applications, eliminating the need to burn fossil fuels for energy.

'Public are not environmentally conscious or they wouldn't harm it'



I → Nikdel's name is synonymous with performances addressing detrimental effects of human interferences with the environment. He is an innovative artist with environmental concerns. He is tirelessly trying to make people aware of the environmental damages they are causing either intentionally or unintentionally through his radical performances.

The "crisis experience" is one of his most remembered performances in 2015. In an attempt to show his concerns over water crisis, sympathize with the Earth and caution the public against what is happening to it Nikdel covered himself in mud and sat motionless on the stairways of Milad Tower, Tehran, for three straight hours.

His latest performance called "out of sight but alongside" in January 2016.

He tied some trash, mostly empty bottles, to himself using ropes and dragged them while walking on the streets of the capital intending to warn people how the trash we produce does not vanish off the face of the earth but merely hides in the landfill and finally drags down our poor and helpless environment.

In another performance he gave in the same year called "my city is my clothes" while walking in the streets he gradually filled his white clothes, covered with a plastic layer, with cigarette butts thrown away on the street to convey a message to the people: "What I'm wearing is a part of my city. My city is my clothes."

His latest performance, what he himself calls "not brutal, but foolish", was staged at breakwater in Anzali lagoon.



He said that the performance was intended to make people aware of the adverse effects of throwing out trash in the environment.

"Where you throw away your trash could a habitat for species, you may not know that but they exist but you invade their lives," Nikdel said.

He tried to shock people who were throwing trash at him unknowingly to make them more environmentally conscious.

In his description of his performance he said that: "I was living in my own peaceful world, but I don't know when and where the smelly unpleasant trash came from and drag me into annihilation, they didn't know I existed."

Public do not know about the environment

"Do we really know what happens

when we dump our trash? Where do they end up? What do they do to the Earth? And how do they throw Earth out of balance?" Nikdel wonders.

"Why the public are not aware of it? When someone doesn't know about something they cannot be held accountable for it," he highlighted.

Nikdel went on to explain that "I don't blame people who were throwing trash at me, they didn't know I were there, if they knew I were there or even a cat were inside the big white trash can, would they still throw their trash at it, of course not; and this was my purpose of the performance."

"We don't give much information about the environment to the public and the children and we expect them to do the right thing, this is a big mistake," he lamented.

Tehran welcomes autumn with rangers at schools, pollution monitoring plan

ENVIRONMENT TEHRAN — Tehran's Department of Environment has two programs for this autumn, one of which is the presence of rangers on the first day of academic year at schools and the other is the monitoring of pollutant sources.

"The Department of Environment plans to introduce students with their environmental and ecological problems through the presence of rangers at schools," the chief of Tehran's Department of Environment Mohammad-Hossein Bazgir said.

"Having knowledge about environment, students can help us to solve ecological problems," he explained.

He said that the department has several meetings with schoolmasters as well as officials of the Ministry of Education to increase knowledge of students about environment in Tehran in the current academic year.

He said that students are to attend courses on environmental protection to become more aware of ecological concerns in the city. About 13 million students are to start the new school year across Iran today.

Pollution sources monitoring Meanwhile, Tehran's Department of Environment will



A ranger holding a sapling poses for photo with schoolchildren in a school in Tehran on September 23, 2016

begin a new plan for monitoring sources of pollution in the city, Bazgir announced.

"We have recognized some 1,600 places in Tehran including industrial, service or medical centers, which are sources of pollution and we are planning to control their pollution by the next two months," he announced.

In autumn and winter strong winds from the western

and southern belts of Tehran blow pollution from industrial factories to the center, which become captured by the mountain range in the north and east in what some refer to as a "gas chamber".

While air pollution exists throughout the year, the situation is exacerbated in the winter months, when temperatures close to the ground are colder than those above. This restricts the natural flow of air distribution, locking harmful pollutants in a position to be inhaled by the general public.

Tehran's pollution issue is provoked primarily by the millions of cars on the roads, poor quality of petrol, and industrial pollution from factories surrounding the city. The more than 3 million cars and motorcycles overburdening Tehran's streets in stifling daily traffic, burn low standard fuel that contributes to more than 80% of the pollutants in the air.

Further, hefty energy subsidies have promoted over consumption at a low cost amongst the public. Locals blame the government for continuing to expand car manufacturing industries instead of taking stricter measures to put the one million outdated cars off the streets.

Children's hospital patients swim with dolphins: 'It makes you forget what's going on'

Dolphins proved to be the perfect therapists for the day when young patients from a San Diego children's hospital had the chance to swim with the mammals.

"It makes you forget what's going on and it just brings you into playful childhood that you have in your heart and in your mind," 14-year-old Juliana Abraham, who is battling a brain tumor at the Rady Children's Hospital, told KFMB. "It gives

you a giddy feeling. It's nice."

Abraham was one of the seven patients invited to participate in the Dolphin Interaction Program — or DIP — at Sea-World earlier this week.

The patients, all having suffered trauma in their earlier years, had the chance to meet the dolphins up close and personal, as long as the visit was approved by a doctor.

Carlos Delgado, of the Rady Children's Hospital, told InsideEdition.com the experience seems to have a healing effect on their patients.

"Our kids get anxiety leading up to it," Delgado explained. "But once they do it, they say this was the best experience ever. They forget their chemo and their experiences at the hospital."

The program was first introduced to

the children's hospital by a dolphin trainer who was treated at the facility for cancer as a child.

This year, Delgado said that trainer, who was treated for diabetes at the facility, was able to lead their session this year.

"One of the kids even said to the trainer, 'You were like me, and I want to be a trainer,'" Delgado recalled.

(Source: Inside Edition)

LEARN ENGLISH

Where are you from?

A: **Where to**, miss?

B: Hi! Crenshaw and Hawthorne, at the Holiday Inn that is on that corner.

A: Sure thing. So, where are you **flying in from**?

B: From China.

A: Really? You don't look very Chinese to me, **if you don't mind me saying so**.

B: It's fine. I am actually from Mexico. I was in China on a business trip, visiting some local companies that manufacture bathroom products.

A: Wow sounds interesting! Excuse me if I am being a bit **nosy** but, how old are you?

B: Don't you know it's rude to ask a lady her age?

A: **Don't get me wrong!** It's just that you seem so young and already doing business **overseas!**

B: Well thank you! **In that case**, I am 26 years old, and what about yourself?

A: I am 40 years old and was **born and raised** here in the **good old U.S of A**, although I have some Colombian heritage.

B: Really? That's great! Do you speak some Spanish?

A: Uh... yeah... of course!

B: Que bien! Entonces podemos hablar en espanol!

Key vocabulary

where to: where would you like to go

if you don't mind me saying so: a polite phrase to use where you are saying something sensitive

fly in from: arrive

nosy: too interested in others' private matters

don't get me wrong: do not misunderstand me

overseas: in foreign countries

in that case: because of that

to be born and raised: to live in a place your whole life

the good old U.S of A: the United States

Supplementary vocabulary

mind your own business: that subject is too personal (impolite)

that's personal: phrase you use when you don't want to answer a question

TMI: too much information

personal: about a person's private thoughts, feelings, etc.

snoop: to look for private information about someone

(Source: irlanguage.com)

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Iran, Latvia discuss closer scientific, technological co-op

The Latvian foreign ministry's state secretary on a working visit to Tehran discussed closer bilateral scientific and technological cooperation with Iranian officials, IRNA reported on Tuesday.

As part of his visit, Andrejs Pildegovics held talks with the Iranian deputy science minister for international affairs, Hossein Salar-Amoli. The two sides negotiated the possibility of signing memorandums of understanding between the ministries of education of both countries with the view to expanding cooperation between Latvian and Iranian higher education institutions.

Initiating student exchange programs, offering scholarships, designing courses on Islamic arts and studying Iran are of the other fields Iran and Latvia are interested to work on.

همکاری های علمی فناوری ایران و لتونی افزایش می یابد

به گزارش روز سه شنبه ایرنا قائم مقام وزیر امور خارجه لتونی در سفر به تهران بر تمایل و آمادگی دو کشور برای توسعه همکاری های علمی و فناوری تاکید کرد.

اندری پیلد گوویچ در دیدار با حسین سالیارامولی قائم مقام وزیر علوم، تحقیقات و فناوری در امور بین الملل از امکان امضای تفاهم نامه همکاری های علمی میان وزارت آموزش و پرورش دو کشور و توسعه همکاری در حوزه ی آموزش عالی سخن گفتند.

همچنین از اعزام دانشجویان مقاطع تحصیلات تکمیلی برای دوره های کوتاه مدت، اعطای بورس به دانشجویان، توسعه همکاری در حوزه های ایران شناسی، هنر اسلامی، زبان و ادبیات فارسی به عنوان حوزه های همکاری دو کشور یاد شد.

ENGLISH PROVERB

Appearances can be deceiving

Explanation: appearances do not always convey accurate information

For example: That house sure looks beautiful on the outside, but appearances can be deceiving. What did the inspector say about the foundation?

PHRASAL VERB

Draw on/upon something

Meaning: to use information, experience, knowledge etc. for a particular purpose

For example: His work draws heavily on learning theories of the 1980s.

ENGLISH IDIOM

Better still/worse still

Explanation: this expression is used to emphasize that although something is good, bad, etc., something else makes it even better, worse, etc.

For example: Not only did he get a great offer, but better still, a house and car come with the job.

Hundreds protest amid Spain crackdown on Catalan referendum

Hundreds of pro-independence supporters in Catalonia are protesting outside a courthouse to demand the release of regional government officials arrested in a crackdown by Spanish authorities over a planned secession referendum.

The protest on Friday in the north-eastern Catalan town of Hospitalet de Llobregat is an extension of another started on Thursday outside the Catalan judiciary headquarters in nearby Barcelona that attracted thousands. A pro-independence group says that about 2,500 supporters were attending the protest in Hospitalet.

Many of the demonstrators in Barcelona had slept overnight near the judiciary building in tents or hammocks strung up between lampposts.

The Catalan National Assembly civic group has called for the protests to continue until the near dozen officials detained Wednesday are released.

Spain's central government says the planned Oct. 1 referendum is illegal.

Spain's interior ministry said on Friday it was sending more state police to Catalonia to maintain order and make sure the banned referendum on independence does not take place.

Catalonia has its own police called Mossos d'Esquadra, though the state police Guardia Civil has quarters throughout the region and often works alongside them.

The interior ministry has not disclosed how many more police officers it is sending to the region but Spanish media said between 3,000 and 4,000



had already arrived or were on their way. They would join the roughly 5,000 state police normally stationed in Catalonia and around 17,000 Mossos officers.

"They will be tasked with surveillance of public space and maintaining order and they will act in case the illegal referendum is maintained," the interior ministry said in a statement.

They will act as a backup for the Mossos, who will remain in charge, it added.

Some are billeted in three ferries rented by the Spanish government and moored in the harbors of Barcelona and Tarragona because of both a shortage of temporary housing and to avoid clashes between protesters and police forces.

The interior ministry has told police in Catalonia they will not be able to take time off between Sept. 20 and Oct. 5.

The Catalan government earlier this week accused the Spanish authorities of

effectively taking over its administration after state police raided its offices and arrested officials, and the finance ministry took control of the local finance department.

The Catalan regional leader Carles Puigdemont on Thursday said he would press on with the referendum, flouting a court ban, as tens of thousands gathered for a second day on the streets of Barcelona demanding the right to vote.

(Source: Agencies)

Tillerson: Iran complying with nuclear deal

Tillerson nevertheless described the meeting as "a good opportunity to meet, shake hands" and added "the tone was very matter-of-fact."

He said he and Zarif "didn't throw shoes at one another" at their first meeting, but added that it isn't clear whether they will be able to agree on the future of the nuclear deal.

Detailing U.S. President Donald Trump's claims that Iran is "destabilizing" the region, Tillerson said Trump's statement addresses Iran's support for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad as well as non-nuclear ballistic missiles, which Tillerson claimed "threaten U.S. national security."

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, speaking at a press conference following his speech at the UN, said that a U.S. betrayal of the deal will make future negotiations impossible.

"We held negotiations for many years on the agreement... but today the Americans talk of leaving the deal. So why should negotiations on other issues be held [with the U.S.]?" Rouhani said, adding that further negotiations would be a "waste of time," given this history.

Rouhani said that by turning their backs on the deal, the U.S. will "discredit itself globally," and lose the trust of the international community to make negotiations in the future.

Following the meeting, Zarif said that there seemed to be a consensus that it is necessary for all signatories to respect the deal and remain committed to it. "The U.S. is detached from the realities of the international community," he said.

The Trump administration has been calling for a re-

negotiation of the JCPOA, a request strongly refused by all other parties.

Federica Mogherini, the European Union foreign policy chief, agreed with the Iranian diplomat in saying that "there is no need to renegotiate" the nuclear agreement. Mogherini said that all parties in the meeting agreed that Iran is in compliance with the deal.

Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said that his country is "extremely concerned" by the recent statements of the Trump administration regarding the JCPOA. French President Emmanuel Macron praised the JCPOA as "an agreement that's essential to peace."

Even conservative British Prime Minister Theresa May gave a strong backing to the deal, saying Britain is "determined to continue it."

Somalia chides its regions for cutting ties with Qatar

Somalia's government has rebuked its three semi-autonomous regions for cutting ties with Qatar, saying it was determined to stay neutral in the Persian Gulf state's dispute with other Arab states.

The region of Galmudug issued a statement on Wednesday saying it stood with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the House of Saud regime in the regional dispute, following similar declarations last month by the regions of Puntland and Hirshabelle.

Somalia's federal government responded on Thursday by saying only it had the authority to speak on foreign affairs.

The House of Saud regime, the UAE, Bahrain, and Egypt cut political and trade ties with Qatar on June 5, accusing it of "supporting terrorism", a charge that Qatar vehemently denies.

The spat over this crisis in volatile but strategically located Somalia illustrated how far the political ripples from the Gulf dispute have spread.

Somalia's open stance is important for Qatar - Somalia's airspace remains open for Qatar Airways, a critical lifeline

amid the blockade.

Persian Gulf's Arab states have meanwhile been pouring resources into the semi-autonomous regions.

Somalia's position also underlines its delicate position - dependent on trade from the Saudi regime, but increasingly close to Turkey, which is backing Qatar in the dispute.

The Saudi regime is Somalia's top export partner, and the UAE supplies the Horn of Africa country with key imports from electronics to building materials.

Turkey has poured in more than \$1bn in aid into the country since President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's visit to Somalia in 2011 and is expected to open a military base in the capital Mogadishu this month.

"The cabinet reaffirms the federal government's decision in June ... that Somalia is neutral about the conflict of Gulf countries," read a statement issued by the office of Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khairre.

The statement called on "the conflict be solved brotherly, peacefully and diplomatically."

(Source: Reuters)

Odinga: Kenya's presidential vote results 'manipulated'

Kenya's opposition leader Raila Odinga has labelled the result of last month's annulled presidential election an "injustice".

On September 1, Kenya's Supreme Court nullified the result of the August 8 presidential vote that declared incumbent President Uhuru Kenyatta the winner.

Speaking to Al Jazeera's UpFront program, Odinga said he was the winner of the elections, and the results were "just manipulated".

"I know I won the elections," the Leader of Kenya's National Super Alliance (NASA) told UpFront host Mehdi Hasan.

"What the [Supreme] court did was the right thing," he added, referring to the Kenyan Supreme Court's decision to nullify the election results and call fresh elections, based on irregularities in the voting process.

Odinga also commented on a recent tweet by Kenya's Deputy President William Ruto, which asked: "For how long will one man, unable to win elections, continue to blackmail 45m Kenyans using threats of violence, chaos, bloodshed & anarchy?"

"Ruto basically suffers from amnesia,"

(Source: Al Jazeera)

said Odinga.

"In 2007, he was with me. He was in the front line fighting against the rigging of the election," he added.

"Mr. Ruto lives in denial. Because he himself has witnessed election rigging first hand."

Odinga was also asked to comment on international observers, like Ghanaian President John Mahama, who initially stated that the elections were credible.

"President John Mahama did not disclose that he had a conflict of interest," said Odinga. "He's a friend of President Uhuru Kenyatta."

"We were very disappointed with the position taken by the international observers; it really brought to question the role of international observation of elections," he added.

Responding to concerns that there would be increased violence and protests if he lost the repeat elections, Odinga said: "We are not people who want to see violence on the streets."

"If I lose elections fairly, I will accept and tell my supporters we lost fairly," he said.

Iraqi army, allies further advance in offensive to retake ISIL-held Hawijah

Iraqi government forces have recaptured more than a dozen other villages near Hawijah as they successfully carry out the second phase of a joint operation with allied fighters from the Popular Mobilization Units (PMU/Hashd al-Sha'abi) to push the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) Takfiri terrorists out of the strategic town in the country's oil-rich northern province of Kirkuk.

The media bureau of the Joint Operations Command (JOC) announced in a statement on Friday that units of the 9th Armored Division as well as the 2nd and 11th brigades of the PMU, had established full control over 19 villages, including Dumat Aziz, Arab Lok, Tal Ghazal, Khadhrah, Aziz Obeid, al-Hadiqah?, Eastern Mandian, Western Mandian and Tal al-Matar, Arabic-language Shafaaq news agency reported.

Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi announced the launch of the operation to retake Hawijah early on Thursday.



Hawijah is one of the four Iraqi towns still controlled by ISIL. The other three towns of al-Qa'im, located

nearly 400 kilometers northwest of Baghdad near the Syrian border, Anah and Rawa are in Anbar province.

PMU forces retake four villages in Anbar

Elsewhere in the vast western province of Anbar bordering Syria, pro-government PMU fighters won back four villages east of al-Shirqat town in the central province of Salahuddin (Saladin Governorate).

The media bureau of the volunteer fighters named the villages as Kharabah, Asayah, al-Aklyyah and al-Khazrah.

On August 31, Iraq's prime minister said the city of Tal Afar and the entire Nineveh province had been purged of ISIL Takfiri terrorists.

The recapture of Tal Afar was made possible with the help of Iraqi army soldiers, Federal Police Force, Counter-Terrorism Service (CTS), PMU fighters and the Interior Ministry's elite rapid response forces, Abadi added.

(Source: Press TV)

Trudeau tells UN Canada has failed indigenous people

Declaring that Canada is "no land of wonders", Prime Minister Justin Trudeau told the United Nations that his country was working to address failures in the treatment of its indigenous people.

Trudeau used his speech to the UN General Assembly on Thursday to frankly acknowledge the dark history of Canada's colonization as one of "humiliation, neglect and abuse" and promised to do more to help the nation's 1.4 million aboriginal people.

"We know that the world expects Canada to strictly adhere to international human rights standards," said Trudeau, who has put reconciliation with First Nations at the top of his reform agenda. "That is what we expect of ourselves, too."

"Canada is no land of wonders where hardships that you know do not exist," said the prime minister, whose country consistently ranks among the world's highest in living standards. "Canada remains a work in progress."

Two years after his election, many say Trudeau is not doing enough to help indigenous Canadians, who make up about four percent of the population and face higher levels of poverty and violence and shorter life expectancies.

Canada's national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women has been hit by resignations and complaints it is progressing too slowly.

For decades, the Canadian government, working with the Catholic Church, took First Nations children from their parents and put them in residential schools to strip them of their culture and language. Thousands of children died in these institutions - the last of which closed in 1996 - and many suffered physical and sexual abuse.

Many aboriginal communities do not have access to safe drinking water, and suicides have plagued several isolated communities.

Acknowledging Canada's attempt to force assimilation through residential schooling and other repressive policies, Trudeau called the living conditions aboriginals face "the legacy of colonialism in Canada."

Trudeau promised to move forward with a review of federal laws and policy and to support indigenous self-determination.

Asked by reporters why he used an international stage to discuss a domestic issue, Trudeau said he wanted to highlight what can be done without telling other leaders how to tackle their own mistakes.

"This is something that is universal and important," Trudeau said.

Trudeau recently reshuffled his cabinet to put more emphasis on helping aboriginal people, splitting the federal indigenous and northern affairs ministry in two.

(Source: agencies)

Search effort continues for Mexico quake survivors

Mexico's search-and-rescue operation is focusing on 10 buildings where authorities hope to find survivors from Tuesday's 7.1 earthquake.

At least 273 people died, and 2,000 people were injured when buildings collapsed due to the tremors; about 50 people have been pulled out alive from under the rubble so far.

The majority of deaths, 137, were in Mexico City. By Thursday, news of the miraculous rescue of a schoolgirl trapped in the rubble of a school in the Mexican capital had become a symbol of hope.

News media, officials and volunteer rescuers all repeated the story of "Frida Sofia", but she never existed, Mexican navy officials later said.

"We want to emphasize that we have no knowledge about the report that emerged with the name of a girl," Angel Enrique Sarmiento, navy's assistant secretary, said on Thursday.

In fact, he said, the only trace rescuers had were images from a camera lowered into the rubble of the Enrique Rebsamen School that showed blood tracks where an injured person apparently dragged him or herself.

Sarmiento said the only person still listed as missing was a school employee.

Several dead people have been removed from the rubble of the school, and it could have been their fingers rescuers thought they saw move.

Mexico City's government said about 60 people had been pulled out alive from under the rubble.

(Source: agencies)

Hundreds protest police shooting of black man in St. Louis, U.S.

who returned as chief of Breitbart News last month after leaving President Donald Trump's administration.

Bannon is scheduled to appear at the "Put America First Rally" sponsored by Phyllis Schlafly's Eagles, a spinoff of the conservative think tank Eagle Forum. A spokeswoman for Phyllis Schlafly's Eagles said the rally was planned long before the recent spate of protests. Schlafly, a conservative icon, died last year at age 92.

Stockley killed Smith in 2011 after a police chase. Stockley testified he shot Smith in self-defense. Prosecutors alleged that Stockley planted the gun found in Smith's car. Judge Timothy Wilson ruled prosecutors didn't prove murder beyond a reasonable doubt.

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported that there have been more fatal police shootings in St. Louis so far in 2017 than in any year for a decade, even with three months remaining until year's end. Police have fatally shot eight people so far this year, up from five in all of 2016. Police say all of those shot by officers were armed.

Police Lt. Col. Rochelle Jones attributed the rise in police shootings to the rise in violent crime. But the Rev. Phillip Duvall, who has been active in recent protests, said the data suggests police are "not being too cautious."

(Source: TIME)

Ronaldo, Messi and Neymar up for 2017 Best FIFA Men's Player award

Cristiano Ronaldo could be named Best FIFA Men's Player for the second year running after being included the final shortlist for the 2017 award along with Lionel Messi and Neymar.

The trio had been named in an initial 24-man list of nominees last month and will now battle it out for the prize when it is handed out at the Best FIFA Football Awards ceremony on Oct. 23 in London. The award, which covers the period of Nov. 20, 2016, to July 2, 2017, is voted for by national team coaches, captains, selected media and fans.

Real Madrid star Ronaldo won the inaugural award last year and is favourite to claim the accolade next month after a year that saw him help Madrid to a third Champions League crown in four seasons and a first La Liga title in five years, as well as the FIFA Club World Cup. The Portugal captain scored twice as Madrid beat Juventus 4-1 in the Champions League final, while also finishing top scorer in the competition with 12 goals.

Ronaldo faces competition from long-time rival Lionel Messi, who finished up as La Liga's top scorer with 37 goals — 12 ahead of Ronaldo — and helped Barcelona to Copa del Rey success in what was a largely disappointing season for the club.

Neymar, who finished third in the 2015 Ballon d'Or voting, is also in contention. The Brazil forward became the world's most expensive player this summer when he left Barcelona for Paris Saint-Germain in a €222 million deal.

(Source: ESPN)

Shanghai Shenhua slam 'misleading' French media over Tevez interview

Shanghai Shenhua claim that a recent Carlos Tevez interview with a French media outlet was "taken grossly out of context" after the Argentinian was quoted as saying Chinese players were not "technically skilled".

Tevez has endured an underwhelming start to life in the Chinese Super League and was recently criticised for being overweight by his coach Wu Jingui.

His stay seemed to take another twist on Thursday when he was quoted blasting the standard of football in China, saying that the nation will not be able to compete globally "even in 50 years". But his club have leapt to the defense of Tevez, insisting that his comments have been blown out of proportion and "distorted". "The language used by the French media is misleading and cynical, which distorted the meaning of Tevez's words," Shanghai Shenhua said in a media release.

"Tevez said he had not watched the video footage of the interview and its subtitles yet, but the headline led us to believe that the interview are being exaggerated and blown out of proportion. "Tevez's comments were taken grossly out of context. He has clarified to the club that he has no intention of disparaging Chinese football and Chinese players."

"Tevez was just attempting to paint a realistic picture of the current state of Chinese football. He also hopes for a better future for Chinese football."

(Source: Goal)

Liverpool and Manchester United given Moscow warning

Liverpool and Manchester United fans have been told there will be a "visible police presence" in Moscow next week.

The Premier League clubs both have Champions League group matches in the Russian capital.

A combined total of 2,000 fans will make the 3,200-mile round trip from the north-west with Liverpool playing Spartak Moscow on Tuesday and United taking on CSKA Moscow a day later. United have told fans "not to wear club colors" or "walk around Moscow alone". Liverpool say the Russian authorities are aware the two clubs are in Moscow at the same time so a visible police presence can be expected "wherever groups of Liverpool and Manchester United fans congregate, including at your accommodation". Liverpool opened their campaign with a draw against Sevilla at Anfield on 13 September, whilst United defeated FC Basel at Old Trafford. Russian hooligans attacked England fans in Marseille at the 2016 European Championship.

(Source: BBC)

Swiss club president attacks TV commentator after match

FC Sion president Christian Constantin physically attacked a television commentator following a league match on Thursday, then said he had "sorted out" a difference between the pair.

Part of the attack was caught on camera and showed commentator Rolf Fringer, already on the ground, being slapped on the head by the 60-year-old Constantin, shortly after Sion's 2-1 win at Lugano. Soon afterwards, Constantin told cable broadcaster Teleclub that Fringer, a former coach of the Swiss national side, had criticized him and treated him badly earlier in the week. "Now, I've sorted that out," Constantin said. "I grabbed him and I kicked him in the backside."

"When you are attacked, you have to defend yourself!" The Swiss Football League confirmed it would open disciplinary proceedings into the incident. "As the television pictures show, Sion president Christian Constantin was involved in a physical altercation with Teleclub football expert Rolf Fringer. Constantin confirmed the incident in a television interview," the SFL said in a statement. Earlier in the week, Fringer had criticized Constantin's leadership of the club, describing it as "ridiculous".

Fringer, whose has also coached a number of clubs including Greek side PAOK, said he was hit in the face and tripped over the camera when he tried to escape.

"I'm still shocked," he said. "You just don't imagine something like that happening."

Tensions with North Korea, China hurt ticket sales for South Korean Olympics: organizer

South Korea's political tensions with North Korea and China are depressing ticket sales for the 2018 Winter Olympics in the South Korean city of Pyeongchang, leaving hundreds of thousands of tickets unsold, the organizer said on Friday.

France said on Thursday its Winter Olympics team will not travel to South Korea if security cannot be guaranteed, as tensions escalate over North Korea's nuclear programme following its sixth and largest nuclear test on Sept. 3.

Hurting ticket sales in China, Beijing has banned group tours to South Korea following Seoul's decision to deploy a U.S. anti-missile system to counter North Korean threats. Beijing says the system's powerful radar is a threat to its security.

"The political issues are having an impact on ticket sales," said Eom Chan-wang, director general of marketing bureau at the Pyeongchang Organizing Committee for the 2018 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

"China, which represents the biggest market, barely bought tickets so far," he said in an interview with Reuters on Friday.

The Games are to be held in February, 2018, but as of Sept. 18, only 312,000 tickets were sold, about 29.2 percent of its targeted sales of 1.07 million tickets.

Some 191,000 tickets were sold overseas, 59.7 percent of the target sales of 320,000 tickets. Organizers aim to sell 750,000 tickets at home, but so far only



120,000 tickets were sold or 16 percent of the target.

However, Games organizers expected sales to rise in China, once people are allowed to directly buy tickets online from Oct. 16, instead of going through "authorized ticket resellers".

"There will be no problems with selling all of the tickets, but the biggest task is how many celebrities and VIPs will come from overseas to boom up the event, which will be affected by the geopolitical situation," said Eom.

He said the government was trying to encourage North Korean athletes to participate in the Games to ensure safety during the event.

"President (Moon Jae-in) is strongly committed to make the Olympics a peaceful Olympics," he said.

"South Koreans don't take the North Korean matter seriously, unlike those who live overseas. Foreigners are concerned South Korea is a dangerous place, but it is very peaceful here."

The U.N. Secretary General has warned against "sleepwalking" into a war on the Korean peninsula, after U.S. President Donald Trump said North Korea would be destroyed if it threatens the United States and its allies. The North in response said it may test a hydrogen bomb over the Pacific Ocean.

A Gallup Korea poll earlier this month

found 58 percent of South Koreans said they don't think another war will break out on the Korean peninsula, the second-highest percentage since the survey first began in 1992.

Eom expected South Koreans to rush to buy tickets as the Games near, as they did at previous international events in South Korea.

A corruption scandal in South Korea involving former President Park Geun-hye and large businesses including Samsung has also dented the image of the Games, which were also implicated in the scandal, said Eom.

However, the organizing committee aims to break even or make a profit on the Games, by raising more money from public corporations and the government, Eom said.

The committee has raised 940.5 billion won (\$829.97 million) so far in domestic sponsorship from companies including Samsung Electronics and Hyundai Motor, slightly exceeding its target of 940 billion won.

The committee aims to raise an additional 150 billion won from several public corporations including Korea Electric Power Corp and casino operator Kwangwon land to reduce an expected shortfall of 300 billion won.

An additional government budget and lottery sales will also help the committee break even, he added.

(Source: Reuters)

Zidane will not 'go crazy' despite Real Madrid slump



Real Madrid boss Zinedine Zidane insists he is not going to go crazy despite acknowledging a poor start to the season that has left them trailing Barcelona by seven points.

The Spanish and European champions suffered a shock 1-0 defeat to Real Betis on Wednesday, with a stoppage-time header from Antonio Sanabria ruining Cristiano Ronaldo's return to domestic action after suspension.

Madrid failed to score for the first time since April 2016, ending a run of 73 consecutive games with a goal, but Zidane refuses to panic ahead of Saturday's LaLiga match away at Alaves.

Though already adrift of table-topping Barcelona, having failed to win at home in the league this season, Zidane has total faith that goals and positive results will return.

"I don't think there is any concrete explanation," Zidane said of Madrid's slump ahead of the Alaves trip, which Toni Kroos will miss with a view to bringing him back against Borussia Dortmund on Tuesday.

"Sometimes you just have lots of

chances and the ball just doesn't go in. We haven't been able to score goals and that has been the problem, but I'm not worried.

"We analyze of course — that is our job to try to improve things — but the most important thing is to make chances.

I would be more worried if we hadn't made chances.

"With the players we have got, if we are having chances the ball will go in and I hope it will on Saturday.

"Remember we scored three at San Sebastian [against Real Sociedad] just three days before Betis. It was a game where we played really well and won.

So what changed? I try to stay the same each time — if we win, we get three points, but I am not going to go crazy if we lose.

"We have a game on Saturday, a game in the Champions League, then another game [against Espanyol on October 1].

We have a lot of matches, so luckily we can change things very quickly and that is what we are going to do."

(Source: Four Four Two)

Neymar out of PSG squad following Edinson Cavani bust-up



Neymar has been left out of Paris Saint-Germain's squad for their Ligue 1 clash with Montpellier this weekend.

The Samba sensation was involved in a bust-up with Edinson Cavani over which of them took a penalty in the 2-0 win over Lyon last weekend.

Cavani saw his effort saved by keeper Anthony Lopes, with Neymar walking away shaking his head in disgust.

Boss Unai Emery later refused to reveal who was his first-choice spot-kick taker. Neymar then reportedly apologized to the Uruguayan striker and the rest of his team-mates over the row.

Now, according to reports in France, he has been ruled out of the Montpellier clash with a minor foot injury — despite training yesterday.

Cavani and Neymar were both snapped on the PSG training paddock as the feuding South American duo tried to put their differences behind them.

Emery tried to play down the pair's problems.

The Spaniard said: "The two players who will be taking the penalties are Cavani and Neymar."

"(That is) because they're capable of assuming this responsibility, but other

players can take them.

"During training we practice penalties because when the decisive moment arrives and we can win a title with penalties, we will need more than two.

"Last year, the penalty taker was Cavani, this year with the arrival of Neymar there are two. Who is number one and who is number two, I will make that decision."

The £198million man unfollowed Cavani on Instagram — fanning the flames from the fall-out.

But L'Equipe report that the former Barcelona ace issued a groveling apology to his team-mates at training on Wednesday, with countryman and skipper Thiago Silva acting as translator.

Dani Alves was at the heart of the row when he took the ball away from Cavani — PSG's top scorer with seven goals — and handed it to his compatriot.

But the veteran right-back, who joined the French giants on a free this summer, reportedly took both players out for dinner this week in a bid to have them bury the hatchet.

It is believed the clear-the-air talks during the meal are what prompted Neymar, 25, into a groveling apology.

(Source: The Sun)

IOC says no doubts about Korea Games amid French unease

Olympics organizers sought on Friday to ease French concerns about next year's winter Games in South Korea, saying the safety of athletes was their priority and nations in the region had no doubts that the event would go ahead.

With tensions on the Korean peninsula rising, France on Thursday became the first nation to publicly raise the possibility of skipping the Feb. 9-25 Pyeongchang Olympics on security grounds.

North Korea, which conducted a sixth nuclear test on Sept. 3 to global condemnation, said on Friday it might test a hydrogen bomb over the Pacific Ocean after U.S. President Donald Trump threatened to destroy the reclusive country.

"We are monitoring the situation on the Korean peninsula and the region very closely," an International Olympic Committee spokesman said.

"Athletes' safety and security are of course a primary concern for the IOC. This is why even in the past few days at the United Nations we continue to be in touch with the heads of state concerned."

"In none of the discussions, has anybody expressed any doubt about the Olympic Games 2018," the spokesman said, adding that preparations for the Games remained on track.

The multi-billion dollar Pyeongchang Olympics will be held just 80 km (50 miles) from the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea, the world's most heavily armed border.

MONITORING DEVELOPMENTS

France's Sports Minister Laura Flessel had said on Thursday if the crisis deepened and athletes' security could not be assured, "the French Olympics team will stay at home."

"We're not there yet," she added, just a week after the IOC awarded the 2024 summer Olympics to Paris.

Other Winter sports powerhouses said they were monitoring developments but had no plans to miss the Olympics.

"Waiving participation of the Swiss team is at the moment not under discussion," one of its Olympic commit-

tee officials told Reuters.

The U.S. Olympic committee said it was working with authorities to ensure the safety of its delegation, while Russia said security was each host country's responsibility and China's foreign ministry said it was not aware of any plans for the its Olympic team to not attend.

Sweden also had no plans to stay away. "I cannot really see it (a situation of not going)," Swedish Olympic council CEO Peter Reinebo told news agency TT.

"It would take an overall assessment of the IOC and the local organizing committee, an international decision by the United Nations or a strong general counsel from the Swedish authorities. But none of those (conditions) exists at the moment. We are completely focused on going."

North and South Korea remain technically at war after their 1950-53 conflict ended with a truce and not a peace treaty.

(Source: Reuters)

Esteghlal linked with Fatih Terim



S P O R T S Iranian popular football team Esteghlal have opened negotiations over hiring Fatih Terim as their new head coach, however the Blues have other options on their list.

Esteghlal parted company with Alireza Mansourian after a string of dire results this season in Iran Professional League.

Under guidance of Mansourian, Esteghlal sit rock bottom of the table with five points from seven matches.

As long as Esteghlal are searching for a replacement for Mansourian, Mick McDermott will take charge of the team.

The Tehran based football club have negotiated with Terim in the last few days but the former Turkey national football team coach has not answered yet, haberler reported.

The Turkish media reported that Esteghlal have other options for the vacant job because the team's officials are under pressure from the fans.

Former Bayer Leverkusen coach Christoph Daum is among the candidates to be appointed as Esteghlal coach.

German Turkish head coach Engin Firat is also reportedly a nominee to take charge of the team. Firat has worked in three Iranian clubs, namely Sepahan, Saipa and Gostaresh.

Local media reports suggest that Brazilian coach Sergio Ricardo de Paiva Farias, who won the AFC Champions League title with Pohang Steelers in 2009, and Italian Walter Zenga are on the list.

According to the sources close to club, the new head coach of Esteghlal will be named on Saturday.

Mick McDermott appointed interim Esteghlal coach



S P O R T S Esteghlal assistant coach Michael "Mick" McDermott has been appointed as interim head coach of the Iranian club.

The 43-year-old coach replaced Alireza Mansourian in the Iranian popular football team. McDermott will head Esteghlal in the match against Sepidrood Rasht.

Mansourian stepped down as his role on Wednesday after disappointing results in Iran Professional League.

McDermott began his work in Iran as fitness coach in Team Melli in 2011, but after one year joined Al Nasr of the UAE as an assistant coach.

The Northern Irish coach returned to Iran in 2016 as Esteghlal assistant.

Iran lose to S. Korea at FIVB Women's World Championship Asian qualifier



S P O R T S Iran suffered their third loss at the FIVB Volleyball Women's World Championship Japan 2018 Asian Qualifiers, being defeated by South Korea on Friday.

The Iranian team lost to their Korean rivals in straight sets (25-16, 25-18, 25-20) in Nakhon Pathom, Thailand. Iran had previously lost to host Thailand and North Korea. The Persians will face

Vietnam on Sunday. A total of 24 teams will contest the next year's FIVB Women's World Championship Finals in Japan from September 30 to October 21, 2018. The teams which have already qualified for the top-flight championship included host Japan, defending world champions the U.S., Russia, Serbia, Turkey, Italy, Azerbaijan, Germany, the Netherlands, Bulgaria and Brazil.

Iran, Russia discuss sports relations

Iranian envoy to Russia Mehdi Sanaie and Russian Sports Minister Pavel Kolobkov in a meeting discussed developing sport cooperation between the two countries and also on Iran's attendance in the 2018 FIFA World Cup.

Sanaie pointed to Iranian Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Masoud Soltanifar's upcoming trip to Russia in mid-October.

He also referred to Iranian and Russian ministers' meeting as an important step in promoting cooperation.

Kolobkov also congratulated Iran's advancement to FIFA 2018, Sanaie said in a Telegram message.

During the meeting, both sides reviewed ways to



implement sports agreements between Iran and Russia.

The 2018 FIFA World Cup will be the 21st FIFA World Cup, a quadrennial international football tournament contested by men's national teams of the member-associations of FIFA.

It is scheduled to take place in Russia on June 14-July 15, 2018, after the country was awarded the hosting rights on December 2, 2010.

This will be the first World Cup held in Europe since 2006; all but one of the stadium venues are in European Russia, west of the Ural Mountains to keep travel time manageable.

(Source: Irna)

Facebook and Amazon will bid for Premier League rights

Manchester United chief Ed Woodward expects Facebook and Amazon to "enter the mix" when the next Premier League TV rights deal is negotiated later this year.

Earlier this month, Facebook failed with a £445m bid for digital rights in the Indian Premier League auction.

Amazon paid £37m to live stream the 10 Thursday night NFL games this season. Woodward said: "Absolutely I think they will enter the mix and we would welcome the interest."

In the long-term deal they announced earlier this month, the Football League said that from next season major broadcast partner Sky, plus the clubs them-



selves could live stream any midweek match.

On an investors' conference call to talk through United's latest annual results, executive vice-chairman Woodward was

asked what plans the Premier League and Uefa had to maximize income from live streaming of games.

He said: "Anecdotally there was strong interest in the last cycle.

"We are hearing it round the Premier League table now and from a European perspective as well in terms of the Champions League rights and Europa (League)."

Woodward said it was difficult to gauge the extent of the sums available as there was no direct comparison in football.

However, he said he had heard of "very big numbers" being offered for IPL

and noted "with interest" Major League Soccer's 22-match deal with Facebook for the 2017 regular season campaign.

He said: "We are going to see an increasing engagement from these organisations and it is going to be increasingly important to digitally engage with fans."

"We think we can be complimentary to partners like this."

The Premier League are due to send tender documents out for their next rights cycle, which runs from 2019-2022.

The current domestic and overseas broadcast deals are worth a combined total of £8.3bn.

(Source: BBC)

Conte thanks Costa after Chelsea exit agreed

Antonio Conte has thanked Diego Costa after the Chelsea forward's January move to Atletico Madrid was confirmed.

Chelsea and Atletico agreed a deal, estimated to be worth up to €60million, on Thursday, which is set to go through in full when a medical has been passed and personal terms are agreed. Conte and Costa, who has been at Stamford Bridge since 2014, were involved in a major feud after the Chelsea boss made it clear the striker would not be part of his plans for 2017-18 despite winning the Premier League last season.

Atletico were under a transfer ban in the most recent window meaning there was no urgency to wrap up a deal, but now an

agreement is in place Conte is keen to move on.

"We want to thank him for what he did with this club," Conte said ahead of Saturday's Premier League match away to Stoke City. "We wish him all the best for the future. I don't forget that we won together last season. I repeat, for sure, we want to thank him for his effort last season with us, but not only last season but in the period he played for Chelsea."

Conte did not want to get drawn into how bad his relationship with Costa, who was AWOL for the start of the season, had become and insisted the Chelsea squad were never distracted by the saga. "I think my team always focused on our work on the pitch,"

said the Italian. "This is very important. We have to continue what we did in the past, we were very focused only on our own work and this is the right way if you want to build something important. "Now it [how bad the Costa relationship got] is not important, I'm not interested to continue talking about this issue."

"I'm working with my players and very happy to work with these players."

"I repeat, I'm not interested to talk about the past. The past is not important, for every coach and every single player the past stays there."

(Source: Mirror)

Para shooter Javanmardi to make long-awaited debut

Rio gold medalists Sareh Javanmardi will participate in the World Shooting Para Sport World Cup.

More than 100 athletes from around 20 countries returned to the shooting range for the third World Shooting Para Sport World Cup of the year from Friday in Osijek, Croatia.

Javanmardi will make a long-awaited season debut since making history at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games.

The 32-year-old became Iran's first female Paralympic champion in shooting Para sport when she bagged two gold medals in the P2 (women's 10m air pistol SH1) and P4 (mixed 50m pistol SH1) – both events which she will compete in Osijek.

(Source: Paralympic.org)

Nigerian winger Bassey joins Paykan

Ezekiel Bassey joined Iranian top flight football club Paykan on Wednesday.

The 20-year-old winger has penned a one-year contract with Paykan for an undisclosed fee.

Bassey has joined Paykan on loan from Nigerian football club Enyimba.

He started his playing career with his homeland Akwa United in 2013.

Ezekiel Bassey has also been a member of Barcelona B.

He is reunited with his countryman Kenneth Ikechukwu in the Tehran-based club.

(Source: Tasnim)

Iranian freestylers rank 2nd in World Military Championships

The national Iranian freestyle wrestling team has finished as the overall vice champion of the 32nd edition of the World Military Wrestling Championship in Lithuania.

The Russian freestyle wrestling team was named the top-ranked squad.

The Persians claimed the second place with 50 points. Azerbaijani freestyle wrestlers finished third in the overall medal table, having grabbed a gold, a silver and four bronze medals.

Alireza Karimi defeated a representative from South Korea, and snatched a gold medal for Iran in the final bout of the 86-kilogram weight category.

Reza Afzali also stood on the bronze podium in the 74-kilogram class.

Hossein Shahbazi clinched the bronze medal in the 97-kilogram weight section.

Amin Taheri also added a bronze to Iran's tally at the sporting event in the 125-kilogram weight division.

The 32nd edition of the World Military Wrestling Championship kicked off in Klaipeda, Lithuania, on September 18, and will finish on September 25, 2017.

The tournament has reportedly brought together 241 athletes from 22 countries, including Albania, Azerbaijan, Belarus, China, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, Russia, South Korea, Ukraine and the United States.

(Source: Press TV)

Volleyball chief Davarzani renews Tokyo promises

Islamic Republic of Iran Volleyball Federation President Mohammad Reza Davarzani recently met the IVF Board of Administration Members, urging them to work harder to fulfil their Olympic dreams at the new cycle.

Davarzani, himself Deputy Minister of Youth and Sports Ministry of Iran, called all the IRIVF Board members for a half-season meeting to review all the tournaments with the ups and downs Iran had faced.

Davarzani reminded them of the tough calendar on the first half season and went through all the youth, junior, and U23, senior men and senior women's volleyball tournaments as well as beach volleyball competitions.

He also took the World League tournament this year for the meeting into consideration and shared his plans for next year and the provisions have to be made for better records.

He found the youth and younger generations important and said: "Iran Volleyball Federation should continue finding the new talents." He also reminded them of the talent finding and Education committees to play important roles in this part.

"We will try to make our plans come true. Volleyball must turn into a number one family sport in Iran," he insisted.

The head of "Iran League Department" reported him that the plans for the new season will make the matches more attractive and fresher.

As the women's volleyball has hardly received much sponsors during the League, President Davarzani said that he accepted a 50% discount from sponsors to support and encourage Iranian women's volleyball clubs.

He asked all attendants to follow the rules, be fair to all volleyball talents and let them grow in a good environment without any unpleasant feelings.

(Source: asianvolleyball)

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■ Managing Director: Ali Asgari
■ Editor-in-Chief: Mohammad Ghaderi

» Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 — 88808895
editor@tehrantimes.com
» Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000
» Advertisements Dept.: Telefax: (+98 21) 43051450
» Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807
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No. 18, Bimeh Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran
P.O. Box: 14155-4843
Zip Code: 1599814713



NEWS IN BRIEF



“Simulation” to compete in Polish festival

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian director Abed Abest's debut film “Simulation” will go on screen at the 7th Ars Independent Festival, which will be held in Katowice, Poland from September 26 to October 1.

The film is about three bored young men who decide to pay a visit to an older man they only know vaguely, but the old man turns a gun on them as he thinks they've come to burgle him.

WHAT'S IN ART GALLERIES

Painting

■ Farda Gallery is hosting an exhibition of paintings by late Iranian painter Mansur Qandriz.

The exhibit will be running until October 5 at the gallery, which can be found at 2 Araabi Alley, Hosseini St., off Karim Khan Ave.

■ Shokuh Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Hadi Mojahed.

The exhibit will run until September 27 at the gallery located at 19 Amir Nuri Alley, North Salimi St. near Andarzgu Blvd.

■ Paintings by Mehdi Saburmanesh are on display in an exhibition at Golestan Gallery.

The exhibition will be running until September 27 at the gallery located at 34 Kamasai St. in the Darus neighborhood.

■ A collection of paintings by Seraj Barseghian is on display in an exhibition at Atbin Gallery.

The exhibit entitled “The Eighth Element” will run until October 3 at the gallery that can be found at 42 Khakzad Alley, Vali-e Asr Ave near

■ A collection of paintings by Milad Musavi is on display in an exhibition at Dastan Basement Gallery.

The exhibit will run until October 6 at the gallery, which can be found at 6 Bidar St., off

Multimedia

■ Farnam Farshad is showcasing his latest paintings and sculptures in an exhibition at Negar Gallery.

The exhibit titled “Imagination of Light and Shadow” runs until September 27 at the gallery located at 33 Delaram Alley, East Roshanai St. in the Qeitarieh

neighborhood.

Don't judge me by sales, says Prada's CEO and creative director

MILAN (Reuters) — Prada's chief executive and creative director Miuccia Prada said on Thursday she did not want to be judged by sales but that her designs offered ideas to women of how to be strong and combative.

“I don't want to be judged by sales, this is my love ... my life and my job (are) more important,” Prada told reporters at the end of the show highlighting her spring-summer 2018 collection.

The Italian fashion house this month reported a sharp drop in profits and a 5.5 percent fall in revenues in the first half of the year, saying it would take longer than expected to complete an ongoing revival of the company.

The Milan-based but Hong-Kong listed luxury group on Thursday showcased dark colors and looks dominated by sleeveless and long double-breasted male jackets. Femininity was there too, with striped blouses, damasqued fabrics and kitten-heeled shoes.

The highly-respected designer said she was “a bit angry” about women's condition in society and that women should be stronger in order to improve their role and “go further”.

“More than rebellion it's about women being strong. There is still so much against us so we need a lot of cleverness, intelligence and strength,” she said.

Master of Persian miniature
Mahmud Farshchian honored

A R T TEHRAN — Master of Persian miniature Mahmud Farshchian was honored for his lifetime achievements during a ceremony held at Tehran's Vahdat Hall on Thursday.

Speaking at the ceremony, Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Abbas Salehi called Farshchian an icon of contemporary Iranian art and said, “Farshchian blends poetry and pictures to produce his works.”

“He has actually brought images and words closer to one another. He showed how one can have roots in tradition but create modern symbols, and make them tangible for the visitors,” he added.

Cultural activist Ahmad Masjed-Jamei, who is also a member of the Tehran City Council said, “Farshchian actually directs art to create a single tableau.”

“His paintings on religious themes have helped elevate the level of religious art,” he noted.

Calligrapher Yadollah Kaboli, who has collaborated with Farshchian on several projects, said that the miniature paintings created by great Iranian artists show an unmatched beauty of God.

“Farshchian is the national artist of Iran, a spiritual artist with a global reputation, who has brought national pride for his country for over half a century,” he stated.

The ceremony was followed by unveiling books by Farshchian and several famous calligraphers, which have been published by the Gooya House of Culture and Art.

The Divan of Hafez inscribed by calligrapher Rasul Moradi decorated with miniature paintings by Farshchian as well as the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam by calligrapher Amir-Ahmad Falsafi also bearing the paintings of Farshchian were among the books unveiled at the ceremony.

A book containing copies of recent works by Farshchian was also included.



Mahmud Farshchian (3rd left) and a number of guests unveil several books bearing his miniature paintings during a ceremony at Tehran's Vahdat Hall on September 21, 2017. (Tasnim/Hamed Malekpur)

Farshchian was born in Isfahan, a city renowned for its art and skilled artists, and studied painting under the supervision of Haj Mirza Aqa Emami and Isa Bahadori. He later traveled to Europe where he studied painting and conducted research in museums for several years.

Farshchian's masterpieces have been hosted by

numerous museums and exhibitions worldwide. He is recognized as the most important modernizing influence in the field of miniatures. His name has been registered on Britain's list of 2000 Outstanding Intellectuals of the 21st century and collectors feel it a great honor to possess one of his creations.

Parisian exhibition displays “Tehran by Smartphone”

A R T TEHRAN — An exhibition of mobile phone photographs displaying scenes of ordinary life in the metropolis of Tehran opened at the Iranian Cultural Center in Paris on Friday.

The photos taken by 27 professional Iranian photographers have been selected by curator Majid Saeidi for the exhibition “Tehran by Smartphone” (Teheran sur Smartphone), the center has announced.

Among the photographers are Fatemeh Behbudi, Majid Hamedhaqdoost, Abolfazl Salmanzadeh, Maryam Rahmani, Samad Alizadeh, Ali Kazemi and Saba Taherian.

The exhibition is part of the 16th Week of Foreign Cultures – Ficep, which highlights various street performances around the world this year.

Artists from 30 countries are also



A poster for “Tehran by Smartphone” showcasing their works in various media at the event, which will run until September 30.

Stills of films on Iran-Iraq war showcased at Tehran museum

A R T TEHRAN — The Film Museum of Iran is displaying a selection of stills from movies on the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war to commemorate the anniversary of the war.

Photos by seven photographers, including Mitra Mahaseni, Babak Borzuyeh, Amir-Hossein Shojaei, Habib Majidi and Hamid Jaanipur, have been selected for the collection.

The weeklong exhibit showcases stills from Ebrahim Hatamikia's “Minu Watchtower”, Rasul Mollaqaolipur's “Journey to Chazzabeh” and Mohammad-Ali Bashe Ahangar's “The Queen”.

Photos from Masud Naqashzadeh's “The Child and the Angel” and Narges Abyar's “Track 143” are also on display at the showcase.

The exhibit was previously displayed under the title “The Third Day” to



A visitor poses during an exhibition of stills from Iranian war films at the Film Museum of Iran in late May 2017. (Tasnim/Vahid Ahmadi)

commemorate the liberation of the city of Khorramshahr in late May for one week.

Filmmaker Hassan Naqashi on Slemani festival jury

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian documentary filmmaker Hassan Naqashi has been selected for the jury of the 2nd Slemani International Film Festival, which will be held in the Iraqi city of Sulaymaniyah from October 1 to 7.

Other members of the panel are Japanese director Takayuki Yoshida, Kyrgyz film critic Gulbara Tolomushova, New Zealander actress Rachel and Syrian screenwriter Said Mahmoud.

Naqashi's credits include “Persian Tree”, “Mashya and Mashyana”, “Ardeshir's Legacy” and “Mehra”, which are mostly on Iranian culture and myths.



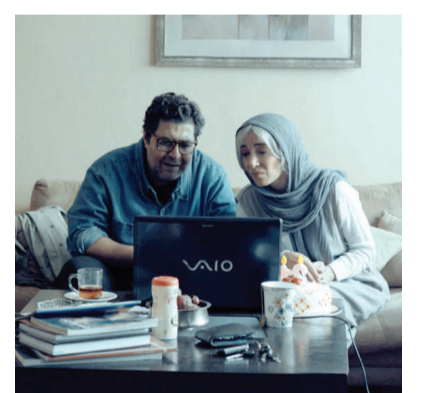
Mill Valley festival to screen two short films from Iran

A R T TEHRAN — Two Iranian short films, “Lunch Time” by Alireza Qasemi and “Not Yet” by Aryan Vazir-Daftari, will go on screen at the Mill Valley Film Festival in California during October.

The shorts will go on screen in the 5@5 section of the festival, announced the organizers of the festival, which will be held from October 5 to 15.

“Not Yet” is about a middle-aged couple who try to celebrate their expatriate young daughter's birthday via Skype.

“Lunch Time” tells the story of a 16-year-old girl, who deals with the harsh bureaucracy to fulfill her responsibility of having to identify the body of her mother.



A scene from the film “Not Yet” by Aryan Vazir-Daftari

Ai Wei-Wei critical of China at opening of Swiss exhibit

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (Reuters) — Ai Wei-Wei denounced China's crackdown on lawyers and free speech on Wednesday but saw little hope that the upcoming Communist Party Congress would lead to more freedoms.

The Chinese dissident artist spoke while inaugurating an exhibit in the Swiss city of Lausanne that includes some of his political works symbolizing repression.

“They are not accepting what we call common values such as democracy and freedom of speech and the freedom of religious practice and independence of the press or independence of a judicial system or people having the right to vote,” Ai told a news conference.

“China has been booming and become very powerful in the economic sense but at the same time it doesn't trust its own people,” he said. “After 60 or 70 years in power, still its own people are not trusted to have a chance to vote.”

Asked about the five-yearly leadership reshuffle of the ruling Communist Party set to begin on Oct. 18, Ai said: “You have a party that functions more like a family. It doesn't matter how many meetings they



Chinese artist and free-speech advocate Ai Weiwei signs his book ahead of an exhibition titled “Ai Weiwei: By the way, it's always the others” at the Musee Cantonal des Beaux Arts in Lausanne, Switzerland September 20 2017. (Reuters/Pierre Albouy)

have, it's always closed-door.

“So there's no trust remaining in society.”

Human Rights Watch said on Wednesday that China has launched more rigorous investigations into rights lawyers and law

firms that take on politically sensitive issues.

Ai, who lives in Berlin but returns to China regularly, voiced concern about two friends who are human rights lawyers “ruthlessly put in jail” for five and 10 years, respectively.

“So the danger is there but I have no fear for myself because I have been through everything and what I have done is not for myself. It's for my father's generation and my son's generation,” the 60-year-old said.

The exhibit entitled “It's Always the Others”, on view at the Cantonal Fine Arts Museum in Lausanne until Jan. 28, brings together 46 works made in wood, jade, porcelain, bamboo, and silk, along with photographs and videos.

“Dragon in Progress”, a 50-metre-long bamboo and silk kite hung from the ceiling, transforms a traditional symbol of Chinese imperial power with quotes from imprisoned or exiled activists including Nelson Mandela, Edward Snowden and Ai.

A marble sculpture, “Surveillance Camera with Plinth”, depicts a camera set up outside his Beijing studio.

“I'm a free man, that means I can go and come back. Which is fine. They kept their promise, they didn't touch me.”

“But of course when a state is not really ruled by law you can see that anything still can happen at any moment because it's unpredictable, you're not protected by law.”