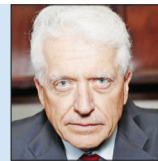




**Putin opposes military action against North Korea** **3**



**OPEC compliance with supply-cut deal increasing: Zanganeh** **4**



**Trump's stance toward JCPOA just rhetoric: Ex-Congressman** **7**



**Hamed Haddadi gives his shirt to rest home for disabled** **15**

# Syria breaks ISIL siege on Deir al-Zour

See page 3



## Iran: Coordination of military patrols with U.S. 'hilarious'

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — Iranian forces patrol the Persian Gulf in accordance with international regulations, the chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces has said, deriding the idea that such patrol operations or war games should be coordinated with U.S. warships coming from thousands of miles away. Addressing a conference on defense laws in Tehran on Tuesday, Major General Mohammad Hossein Baqeri took a swipe at the U.S. for dispatching its naval forces to the Persian Gulf from thousands of

miles away and trying to force other vessels to make arrangements with American warships when passing by. "The international maritime law has set regulations for territorial waters, high seas and littoral states, and we are patrolling the Persian Gulf in compliance with those legal norms," the top commander underlined. He also slammed as "bitter and hilarious" the notion held by the U.S. that Iran's patrol operations or military drills in the Persian Gulf should be coordinated with American warships in advance.

## Russia, Iran hold talks on Syria

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — Top Iranian security official Ali Shamkhani and Alexander Lavrentiev, President Putin's special envoy for Syria, held talks in Tehran on Tuesday on the latest developments in Syria. Shamkhani, secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, said

joint campaigns by Iran, Russia, Syria and resistance groups against terrorists in Syria have started paying dividends. The remarks by Shamkhani came as the Syrian army after three years succeeded to break a Daesh siege on the eastern town of Deir Ezzor. **→2**

## World's 5 major rising economies firmly back nuclear deal

*By staff and agencies*  
 The Leaders of Brazil, Russia, India, China and the South Africa issued a declaration on Monday at the ninth BRICS summit in China's port city of Xiamen, expressing their strong support for the 2015 nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). "We firmly support the Joint Com-

prehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on the Iranian nuclear issue and call upon all relevant parties to comply fully with their obligations and ensure full and effective implementation of the JCPOA to promote international and regional peace and stability," said part of the declaration published by BRICS Information Centre. **→2**



### ARTICLE

**Harun Yahya**  
 political analyst

## A letter to humanity

The Islamic world just celebrated Eid-Al Adha but what hit the headlines were not messages of happiness but bloodshed and oppression. Rohingya, Muslims who have been exposed to extensive torture and killing by some of the armed forces of Myanmar and extremist Buddhist groups, suffered a horrific massacre starting with an incident on August 25th when a small group of militants attacked government outposts and Myanmar's military retaliated in a disproportionate show of force.

According to the official reports, the number of martyrs were 3,000 between August 25-28. However, a more accurate and much higher toll was claimed by an ethnic anonymous Mro police officer, confirming the murder of at least 20,000 Rohingya from August 25th to 31st. Hence, tens of thousands fled to Bangladesh, where they spoke of that their villages being torched, women being raped and friends being massacred. Sadly, there is not one Rohingya left who hasn't lost at least one family member.

The stories of these persecuted people hurt one's conscience and compel him to remember how he should be grateful of what he has and not to complain about what he misses. As per a Rohingya eyewitness from Maungdaw Township, Myanmar army officers raided their village and began shooting at people's homes. He described the situation that resembled like horror movies with these horrifying words: "Government forces and the border guard police killed at least 11 people in my village. When they arrived they started shooting at everything that moved. Some soldiers then carried out arson attacks. Women and children were also among the dead... Even a baby wasn't spared."

On the other hand, Myanmar officials still justify their actions as Army Commander Secretary General Min Aung Hlaing upholds the notion that clearing the Rohingya villages is crucial to eliminate the small militant groups. **→13**

## Is Iran's environment chief seeing the bigger picture?

**By Maryam Oarehgozlou**

**TEHRAN** — Isa Kalantari, the new director of the Department of Environment, is now in charge of one of the most criticized and challenged organizations in the country.

The former agriculture minister (1989-98) seems to be fixated on water-related issues. Since his inauguration speech on August 14, Kalantari has, for several times, reiterated that water issues are the main priority for the department.

Kalantari has put sustainable development and safeguarding the environment on the spotlight ever since.

### Water rules

"Each country has their own environmental priorities. Ours is water," Kalantari told a press conference on Monday. "More than 70 percent of Iran's environmental problems are affected by water."

Further, to the journalists' surprise, Kalan-

tari noted that "we should not sacrifice water for protecting cheetahs, or plant species."

"Water issues seem to have no importance in the department of environment. Currently, we withdraw more than 110 percent of our renewable resources while it should be restricted to 40 percent. We are now using some 97 billion cubic meters of our 88 billion cubic meters of renewable water resources annually, while the number should be 60 billion cubic meters, tops," he regretted.

"No other countries, neither Middle Eastern nor North African, use more than 60 percent of their renewable water resources," Kalantari lamented, underscoring the fact that compared to water issues livelihood of the farmers or other environmental issues are of secondary or marginal importance. The issue of water is what decides the country's future, he added.

## Zarif: Iran made its way into regional security equations

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has said Iran has successfully managed to bring itself to the core of regional security equations.

"When I took office in the eleventh administration (August 2013 to August 2017), we were not given a place in any regional security negotiations. Today, however, Iran is a leg of any security talks in the region," he told

the Khabar Online in an interview published on Tuesday.

He also noted that the nuclear deal, internationally known as the JCPOA, has made Iran indelible. "America feels if it violates the deal, it will become isolated... Europe does not have to make a choice between Iran and America... and I think Europe's economy is great enough so that Americans cannot put it aside."

While Kalantari is making a valid point regarding water issues in the country, ignoring other aspects of the environment especially wildlife management would for sure inflict greater costs to the country in the long run.

On the face of it, there are plenty of reasons why we shouldn't bother to save endangered species. The most obvious is the staggering cost involved. One study in 2012, published in Science Magazine, estimated that it would cost \$76 billion a year to preserve threatened land animals. Saving all the endangered marine species might well cost far more. Why should we spend all that money on wildlife when we could spend it to stop people dying of starvation or disease?

Animals already play an important role in maintaining the delicate balance of life on earth in their respective ecosystems. Some might ask "why bother with conservation?" **→12**

"We need to prevent Iran from being economically eradicable from the global economy. Previously they used to think because we are an oil producer this was the case. However, they not only put us aside, oil prices also plunged in the meantime. So, what is important is to enter the global chain of value. So we have to strengthen our economic ties with European and industrially developed countries in order to create cohesion!" **→13**

## Myanmar's Suu Kyi under pressure as almost 125,000 Rohingya flee violence

Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi has come under pressure from countries with large Muslim populations including Bangladesh, Indonesia and Pakistan to halt violence against Rohingya Muslims after nearly 125,000 of them fled to Bangladesh.

Reuters reporters saw hundreds of exhausted Rohingyas arriving on boats near the village of Shamlapur in Bangladesh near the Myanmar border. The village, facing the Bay of Bengal, appears to have become the newest receiving point for the refugees after authorities cracked down on human traffickers in a different part of the Teknaf peninsula.

Indonesian foreign minister Retno Marsudi was due in the Bangladeshi capital, Dhaka, on Tuesday after meeting the Nobel peace laureate and army chief Min Aung Hlaing to urge that Myanmar halt the bloodshed.

"The security authorities need to immediately stop all forms of violence there and provide humanitarian assistance and development aid for the short and long term," Retno said after her meetings in the Myanmar capital.

The latest violence in Myanmar's northwestern Rakhine state began on Aug. 25, when Rohingya insurgents attacked dozens of police posts and an army base. The ensuing clashes and a military counter-offensive have killed at least 400 people and triggered the exodus of villagers to Bangladesh.

The treatment of Buddhist-majority Myanmar's roughly 1.1 million Muslim Rohingya is the biggest challenge facing Suu Kyi, who has been accused by Western critics of not speaking out for the minority that has long complained of persecution.

Myanmar says its security forces are fighting a legitimate campaign against "terrorists" responsible for a string of attacks on police posts and the army since last October.

Myanmar officials blamed Rohingya militants for the burning of homes and civilian deaths but rights monitors and Rohingya fleeing to neighboring Bangladesh say the Myanmar army is trying to force them out with a campaign of arson and killings. **→13**



## Iranian Ash festival wraps up

The 12th national festival on Ash — a traditional slow-cooked, thick soup made with chickpeas, beans, noodles, and fresh herbs, wrapped up on Sunday. The event has been held annually since 2005 in Zanjan, northwest Iran. This year it was held from August 30-September 3.

**MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS**



**Iran set to boost relations with Azerbaijan**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Mahmoud Vaezi, the presidential chief of staff, has said that Iran is determined to expand cooperation with the Republic of Azerbaijan.

In a telephone conversation with Azerbaijan's Economy Minister Shahin Mustafayev on Tuesday, Vaezi hailed the good progress in relations in the first 4-year term of Rouhani's presidency.

Vaezi also called for facilitating the implementation of joint projects and the recently reached agreements between the two countries.

Mustafayev, for his turn, praised the two countries' efforts in expanding bilateral ties.



**Tehran mayor to attend cabinet meeting on Wednesday**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Government spokesman Mohammad-Baqer Nobakht said on Tuesday that Mohammad-Ali Najafi, Tehran's new mayor, has been invited to take part in the cabinet meeting on Wednesday, Tasnim news agency reported.

Nobakht also expressed the hope that the mayor's presence in cabinet meetings would lead to fruitful cooperation between the administration and the municipality.

He also said the government has not yet decided on whether Najafi will be a permanent attendee of cabinet meetings, emphasizing that certain legal procedure must be taken for that to happen.



**Vatican foreign minister to visit Tehran**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Vatican's Foreign Minister Paul Gallagher will arrive in Tehran on Wednesday to hold talks with Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and other senior Iranian officials, IRIB news reported.

Mohammad Taher Rabbani, the Iranian Ambassador to the Vatican, said the three-day visit aims at deepening ties between the Islamic Republic and Vatican to achieve common goals.

Iran and Vatican have been closely cooperating in combat against violence and extremism, and promoting peace and justice, Rabbani said.

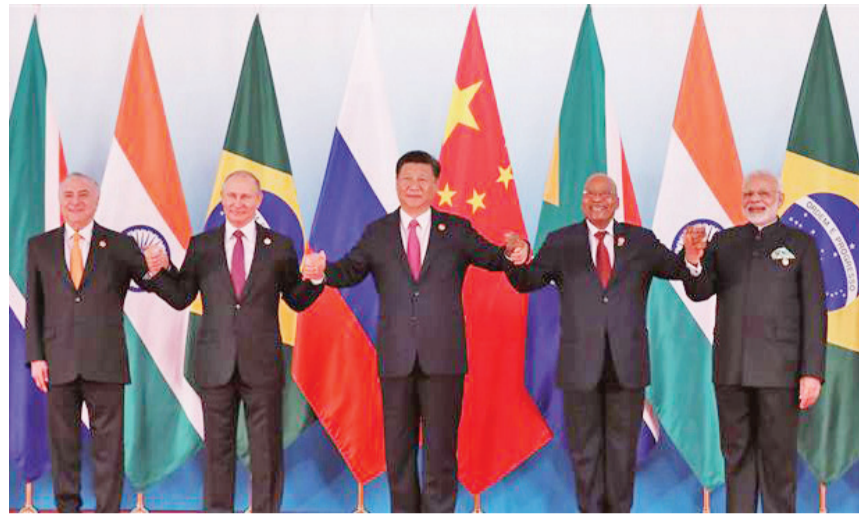
# World's 5 major rising economies firmly back Iran nuclear deal

**1 →** BRICS is the acronym for an association of five major emerging national economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

The BRICS members are all leading developing or newly industrialized countries, but they are distinguished by their large, sometimes fast-growing economies and significant influence on regional affairs.

**■ Mogherini, Amano discuss implementation of JCPOA**

European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini and Yukiya Amano, the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, also discussed the implementation of the JCPOA on the sidelines of Bled Strategic Forum in Slovenia on Monday.



The IAEA is tasked with monitoring Iran's compliance with the nuclear deal.

The UN atomic watchdog released a report on Thursday confirming once again that Iran has remained within key limits on its nuclear activities. The report was the third since the January inauguration of Donald Trump who during his election campaigns had promised to tear up the nuclear deal.

Mogherini has repeatedly announced the European Union's support for the JCPOA.

Iran, the European Union, Germany and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council including the United States signed the nuclear deal in July 2015. It went into effect in January 2016.

## Tehran, Moscow hold talks on Syria

**1 →** Shamkhani went on to say that it is essential that all countries and political groups to respect Syria's national sovereignty.

"All sides' commitment to an inter-Syrian solution and respect for the people's right to determine their destiny without any foreign interference will lay the ground to facilitate finding a way out of the crisis in the country," the security official noted.

Shamkhani also said that Iran prioritizes eradication of terrorism in the region, adding Iran's help in fighting terrorists is based on good intention and upon a request by the Syrian people and their legitimate government.

Elsewhere, he described terrorism as a "lethal virus" that entails "coordinated" and "joint" campaign to fight it.

Laurentiev highlighted the importance of settling the Syrian crisis through dialogue between the government and opposition groups.



Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Arab affairs Hossein Jaber Ansari also met separately with Lavrentiev on Tuesday. Jaber Ansari has been leading the Iranian team in the Astana talks on Syria which were brokered earlier this year by Tehran, Moscow and Ankara.

**■ Shamkhani congratulates Syria for breaking Daesh siege on Deir Ezzor**

On Tuesday, Shamkhani also congratulated Ali Mam-

louk, the Syrian security chief, for the success of the Syrian Army in breaking Daesh siege on Deir Ezzor.

"Consecutive victories in fight against Takfiri terrorism in Iraq and Syria and liberation of important and strategic regions heralds a bright future and security and stability in the region," Shamkhani said in a message to Mamlouk on Tuesday.

The liberation of Aleppo, Deir er-Zor, and the Iraqi cities of Mosul and Tal Afar will result in the end of Daesh, Shamkhani predicted.

"Real, active and close cooperation among Syria, Iraq, Iran and Russia along with Lebanon's Hezbollah has resulted in achievements in fight against terrorism and has foiled foreign plots... aimed at undermining stability in the region," the top security official noted.

He also said Iran will help the Syrian people in reconstructing their country.

## Zarif seeks practical steps to end 'inhuman violence' against Rohingya

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has said that the Islamic countries should take "practical steps" to end the "inhuman violence" against the minority Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar.

In separate phone conversations with Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavu-

soglu, Malaysian Foreign Minister Anifah Aman and Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi, Zarif expressed deep concern over the catastrophic situation of the Rohingya in Myanmar.

The latest violence in Myanmar's northwestern Rakhine state began on August 25, when Rohingya insurgents attacked dozens of police

posts and an army base. The ensuing clashes and a military counter-offensive have killed at least 400 people and triggered the exodus of villagers to Bangladesh, Reuters reported.

The Muslim community had already been under a military siege in Rakhine since October 2016.

Yanghee Lee, the UN special rapporteur

on human rights in Myanmar, said on Monday the situation in Rakhine state was "really grave".

Myanmar officials blamed Rohingya militants for the burning of homes and civilian deaths but rights monitors and Rohingya fleeing to neighboring Bangladesh say the Myanmar army is trying to force them out with a campaign of arson and killings.

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# Putin opposes military action against North Korea

Russia reserves right to cut further U.S. diplomatic mission: Putin

Imposing tougher sanctions on North Korea over its nuclear missile program would be counterproductive, and threats of military action could trigger "a global catastrophe", Russian President Vladimir Putin has said.

Putin, speaking on Tuesday after a BRICS summit in Xiamen, China, also criticized U.S. diplomacy in the crisis and renewed his call for talks, saying North Korea would not halt its missile testing program until it felt secure.

"Russia condemns North Korea's exercises; we consider that they are a provocation ... [But] ramping up military hysteria will lead to nothing good. It could lead to a global catastrophe," Putin said.

"There's no other path apart from a peaceful one."

Nikki Haley, the U.S. ambassador to the UN, said on Monday that North Korea's leadership is "begging for war" as she called on the body's Security Council to impose tougher measures against the country following its most powerful nuclear test to date.

The Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), the North's state-run agency, hailed Sunday's test, saying it "marked a very significant occasion in attaining the final goal of completing the state nuclear force".

Putin also criticized the United States, saying it was preposterous for Washington to ask for Moscow's help with Pyongyang after sanctioning Russian companies whom U.S. officials accused of violating North Korea sanctions.

"It's ridiculous to put us on the same [sanctions] list as North Korea and then ask for our help in imposing sanctions on North Korea," said Putin.

"This is being done by people who mix up Australia with Austria."

Putin was speaking after South Korea said an agreement with the US to scrap a weight limit on its warheads would help it respond to the North Korean threat after North Korea conducted its sixth and largest nuclear test.

## Russia & U.S.

Russia reserves the right to cut further the number of U.S. diplomatic staff in Moscow, Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Tuesday, in response to what he called Washington's "boorish" treatment of Russia's diplomatic mission on U.S. soil.

Speaking after U.S. officials ordered Russia to vacate diplomatic premises in several American cities, Putin said he would order the Russian foreign ministry to take legal action over alleged violations of Russia's property rights.

"That the Americans reduced the number of our diplomatic facilities - this is their right," Putin told a news conference in the Chinese city of Xiamen, where he was attending a summit of major emerging economies.

"The only thing is that it was done in such a clearly boorish manner. That does not reflect well on our American partners. But it's difficult to conduct a dialogue with people who confuse Austria and Australia. Nothing can be done about it. Probably such is the level of political culture of a certain part of the U.S. establishment."

"As for our buildings and facilities, this is an unprecedented thing," Putin said. "This is a clear violation of



Russia's property rights. Therefore, for a start, I will order the Foreign Ministry to go to court - and let's see just how efficient the much-praised U.S. judiciary is."

U.S. President Donald Trump took office in January, saying he wanted to improve ties with Russia. Putin also spoke favorably of Trump.

But relations have been damaged by accusations from U.S. intelligence officials that Russia sought to meddle in the presidential election. Russia has denied interfering in the vote.

Asked by a reporter if he was disappointed with Trump, Putin said: "Whether I am disappointed or not, your question sounds very naive - he is not my bride and, likewise, I am neither his bride nor bridegroom."

"We are both statesmen. Every nation has interests of its own. In his activities, Trump is guided by the national interests of his country, and I by the interests of mine."

"I greatly hope that we will be able, just as the current U.S. president said, to find some compromises while resolving bilateral and international problems ... taking into account our joint responsibility for international security."

## Ukraine

Putin said on Tuesday that any decision by the United States to supply defensive weapons to Ukraine would fuel the conflict in eastern Ukraine and possibly prompt pro-Russian separatists to expand their campaign there.

On a visit to Kiev last month, U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said he was actively reviewing sending lethal weapons to Ukraine to help it defend itself, an option that previous U.S. president Barack Obama vetoed.

Ukraine and Russia are at loggerheads over a war in eastern Ukraine between pro-Russian separatists and

Ukrainian government forces that has killed more than 10,000 people in three years. Kiev accuses Moscow of sending troops and heavy weapons to the region, which Russia denies.

Putin, answering a question after a BRICS summit in China about the possibility of the United States supplying Ukraine with heavy weapons, said it was for Washington to decide whom it sold or gave weapons to, but he warned against the move, something Kiev wants.

"The delivery of weapons to a conflict zone doesn't help peacekeeping efforts, but only worsens the situation," Putin told a news briefing.

"Such a decision would not change the situation but the number of casualties could increase."

In comments likely to be interpreted as a veiled threat, Putin suggested that pro-Russian separatists were likely to respond by expanding their own campaign.

"The self-declared (pro-Russian) republics (in eastern Ukraine) have enough weapons, including ones captured from the other side" said Putin.

"It's hard to imagine how the self-declared republics would respond. Perhaps they would deploy weapons to other conflict zones."

Putin also said Russia intended to draft a resolution for consideration in the United Nations Security Council, suggesting armed UN peacekeepers be deployed to eastern Ukraine to help protect ceasefire monitors from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) there.

"It would help resolve the problem in eastern Ukraine," said Putin, saying that a slew of preconditions would need to be met before any such deployment happened.

## South Korea seeks bigger warheads, North Korean ICBM reportedly on the move

South Korea said on Tuesday an agreement with the United States to scrap a weight limit on its warheads would help it respond to North Korea's nuclear and missile threat after it conducted its sixth and largest nuclear test two days ago.

South Korean officials believe more weapons tests by the reclusive state are possible, despite international outrage over Sunday's nuclear test and calls for more sanctions against it.

South Korea's Asia Business Daily, citing an unidentified source, reported that North Korea had been observed moving a rocket that appeared to be an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) towards its west coast.

The rocket started moving on Monday and was spotted moving only at night to avoid surveillance, the newspaper said.

South Korea's defense ministry, which warned on Monday that North Korea was ready to launch an ICBM at any time, said it was not able to confirm the report.

Analysts and South Korean policymakers believe North Korea may test another weapon on or around Sept. 9, when it celebrates its founding day.

North Korea's fifth nuclear test fell on that date last year, reflecting its tendency to conduct weapons tests on significant dates.

North Korea says it needs to develop its weapons to defend itself against what it sees as U.S. aggression.



South Korea, after weeks of rising tension, is talking to the United States about deploying aircraft carriers and strategic bombers to the Korean peninsula, and has been ramping up its own defenses.

U.S. President Donald Trump and his South Korean counterpart, Moon Jae-in, agreed on Monday to scrap a warhead weight limit on South Korea's missiles, South Korea's presidential office said, enabling it to strike North Korea with greater force in the event of war.

The White House said Trump gave "in-principle approval" to the move.

The United States and South Korea signed a pact in 1979, a year after the South successfully tested a ballistic missile, with

Washington expressing the need for limits on ballistic missile capability over concern that tests could undermine regional security.

South Korea and the United States are technically still at war with North Korea after the 1950-53 Korean conflict ended with a truce, not a peace treaty.

Both sides have thousands of rockets and artillery pieces aimed at each other across the world's most heavily armed border, but the North's rapid development of nuclear weapons and missiles has altered the balance, requiring a stronger response from South Korea, officials say.

"We believe the unlimited warhead payload will be useful in responding to North

Korea's nuclear and missile threats," South Korean Defence Ministry spokesman Moon Sang-gyun told a briefing.

Under current guidelines, last changed in 2012, South Korea can develop missiles up to a range of 800 km (500 miles) with a maximum payload of 500 kg (1,102 lb).

Most of North Korea's missiles are designed to carry payloads of 100-1,000 kg (220-2,205 lb), according to Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI), a U.S.-based think tank.

## 'Begging for war'

South Korea's navy held more exercises on Tuesday, a naval officer told a defense ministry briefing.

"Today's training is being held to prepare for maritime North Korean provocations, inspect our navy's readiness and to reaffirm our will to punish the enemy," the official said.

U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley said on Monday North Korean leader Kim Jong Un was "begging for war" and urged the 15-member Security Council to impose the "strongest possible" sanctions to deter him and shut down his trading partners.

Haley said the United States would circulate a new Security Council resolution on North Korea this week and wanted a vote on it on Monday.

Trump has repeatedly warned that "all options were on the table" regarding North Korea, including military options.

(Source: Reuters)

## Syria breaks ISIL siege on Dayr al-Zawr

Russian frigate fires Kalibr missiles at militants in Syria

Syrian army forces, backed by allied fighters from popular defense groups, have reached the eastern city of Dayr al-Zawr and broken a nearly three-year siege imposed by ISIL (Daesh) terrorists on pro-government areas there.

Syria's state-run television network reported that army and allied forces had advanced on the Brigade 137 base front on the western outskirts of the city, located 450 kilometers (280 miles) northeast of the capital Damascus on the shores of the Euphrates River, on Tuesday.

The move effectively breached the siege that Daesh militants had laid since January 2015.

Meanwhile, the so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) said government forces are dismantling mines around the Brigade 137 base.

The Britain-based monitoring group added that Daesh Takfiris are launching counterattacks in the area.

There are reports that fierce skirmishes are underway near the village of Jabra.

Earlier on Tuesday, Russia's Defense Ministry announced in a statement that one of its frigates in the Mediterranean had fired a salvo of Kalibr cruise missiles at a gathering of Daesh militants near Dayr al-Zawr.

Syrian troops and allied volunteer fighters had been advancing for months toward Dayr al-Zawr, the provincial capital city of the oil-rich province of the same name. Government forces are besieged in a handful of neighborhoods and a nearby airport.

Daesh militants overran large parts of Dayr al-Zawr Province, including its many oil fields, in mid-2014 as it seized areas in Syria and neighboring Iraq.

By early 2015, the Takfiri terrorists were in control of parts of Dayr al-Zawr city, and besieged the remaining parts of it under government control.

It is estimated that 100,000 people remain in government-held parts of the city.

The SOHR estimates that more than 10,000 people may live in the Daesh-held parts of the city.

## Russian frigate fires missiles at militants

A Russian frigate in the Mediterranean Sea has fired a salvo of Kalibr cruise missiles at militants near the western Syrian city of Dayr al-Zawr.

The frigate Admiral Essen of the Russian Black Sea fleet fired the missiles on Tuesday morning, a statement by the Russian Defense Ministry said.

The barrage destroyed a communications center, weapons depots, and a repair workshop used by the Daesh terrorists, the statement said.

The targeted militants were mainly from Russia and countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

"The missile strikes supported the advance of Syrian government forces, and have foiled the plans of the ISIL militants to regroup and strengthen terrorist positions near the city of Dayr al-Zawr," the statement said, using an English acronym to refer to Daesh.

## 'U.S.-led coalition hindering Dayr al-Zawr op.'

Separately, the operations command for allied forces in Syria says a U.S.-led coalition carrying out a bombardment campaign in the country is the main reason behind a delay in the recapture of Dayr al-Zawr.

The command orchestrates and coordinates the military efforts by the Syrian army and its allies against terrorists countrywide.

Syria's War Media on Tuesday cited the command as accusing the coalition of plotting against Syrian troops and intentionally bombing them to tilt the balance on the battleground in favor of terrorists.

The U.S.-led coalition, which launched its operations in Syria in 2015, says its goal is to bomb the Takfiri terrorist group of Daesh.

Over the past months, the coalition has reportedly transferred Daesh ringleaders to other locations for unidentified reasons, it said, adding that Daesh terrorists seized by the army had confessed to the alliance between the outfit and the US-led forces.

Last Friday, the so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights group said the US had conducted 10 airborne operations, transferring Daesh elements.

The most recent of the operations, it said, saw three helicopters carrying out an airlift in al-Sawh District in Dayr al-Zawr's western suburbs last Wednesday. Citing informed sources, the group said the US had been moving mercenaries as the Syrian army and their allies were closing in on Dayr al-Zawr.

Last week, the Russian Defense Ministry named Dayr al-Zawr as "the last stronghold of the international terrorists on Syrian soil."

Russia has been lending aerial support to Syria's military operations since September 2015. (Source: agencies)

## 14 civilians killed in U.S. airstrikes on Raqqah in Syria

The U.S.-led coalition allegedly battling terrorism in Syria has killed at least 14 civilians in airstrikes on Raqqah.

According to Syria's official news agency, SANA, U.S. warplanes carried out raids on the city's al-Naim region, claiming that they were targeting members of the Daesh terrorist group.

The raids also resulted in severe damage to civilians and the city's infrastructure.

Last month, Amnesty International released a report confirming that the U.S. operations in Raqqah were greatly endangering civilians.

Earlier in the month, the U.S.-led coalition acknowledged that it had killed almost 700 civilians since it commenced its aerial bombardment campaign three years ago.

The coalition has been conducting airstrikes against what are said to be Daesh targets inside Syria since September 2014 without any authorization from the Damascus government or a UN mandate. (Source: SANA)

## UN: Saudis 'should fund all humanitarian aid' in Yemen

Saudi Arabia alone should fund all steps to tackle widespread disease and hunger in war-torn Yemen, a top UN official has said.

Comments by David Beasley, Executive Director of the World Food Program (WFP), were unusually forthright for such a high-ranking UN official in criticizing one party in a conflict.

Calling for an end to the coalition's campaign, he accused the Saudi-led coalition of hampering the provision of aid.

"Saudi Arabia should fund 100 percent [of the needs] of the humanitarian crisis in Yemen," Beasley told Reuters news agency.

"Either stop the war or fund the crisis. Option three is, do

both of them."

Since March 2015, Yemen has been under military strikes by a Saudi Arabian-led coalition.

More than 12,000 people have been killed since the onset of the war, and much of the country's infrastructure, including hospitals, schools, and factories, has been ravaged.

Since fighting began, more than 10,000 people have been killed, and millions have been driven from their homes.

The country is also facing a health crisis, with more than 2,000 people having died from cholera since April, more than half a million people infected, and another 600,000 expected to contract the infection this year.

The kingdom has said that hundreds of millions of dollars



it pledged to humanitarian programs have benefited civilians on both sides of Yemen's conflict. (Source: Al Jazeera)

## Moody's cuts Oman banking outlook on weaker government support

The outlook for Oman's banking sector was cut to negative by Moody's Investors Service to reflect a reduction in the government's ability to support the country's banks, weaker economic growth and tightening liquidity.

"We expect a softening in Oman's operating environment, with fiscal consolidation amid prolonged oil price weakness weighing on economic growth," Moody's analyst Mik Kabeya said in a statement on Tuesday. "This will weigh on the credit growth which Moody's expects would fall to 5 percent in 2017 from 10.1 percent in 2016."

The change from stable comes after Moody's last month cut the rating of the sultanate to the second-lowest investment grade, saying its progress toward addressing structural vulnerabilities to a weak oil price environment has been more limited than expected. Oman has a sub-investment grade status at S&P Global Ratings.

A halving of crude prices since 2014 left Oman with a budget gap of almost 22 percent of economic output in 2016, according to the International Monetary Fund. The country posted a deficit of 2 billion rials (\$5.2 billion) in the first five months of the year, compared with 2.5 billion rials in the year-earlier period. Oman plans to raise about \$2 billion through debt sales this year for its 2018 budgetary needs, people familiar with the matter said last month.

### Bond issuance

"Funding and liquidity conditions will remain tight, as high domestic government borrowing limits funds available to lend to the wider economy," Moody's said. "However, the government's international bond issuance, slower credit growth and higher oil prices will moderate the pressure."

Slower economic growth will push problem loans to around 3 percent of gross loans this year and next, up from 2.1 percent at the end of March, Moody's said. The high concentration of loans to single borrowers and to the real estate sector are also a downside risk to asset quality.

Moody's also expects bank profitability to decline slightly. Net interest margins are likely to remain stable at around 2.4 percent as higher lending rates offset increasing funding costs, while loan loss provisioning will increase as problem loans rise.

Oman in August signed an agreement for \$3.5 billion in loans from Chinese financial institutions and in May raised \$2 billion through an Islamic bond sale, which lured orders for more than three times the issue size. (Source: Bloomberg)

## Strong activity in German services pushes up inflation

**BERLIN (Reuters)** — Germany's services enjoyed vibrant activity in August, pushing up price pressures in the sector and boosting overall private sector growth, a survey showed on Tuesday, suggesting that a solid upswing in Europe's biggest economy is set to continue.

Markit's final composite Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), which tracks the manufacturing and services sectors that account for more than two-thirds of the economy, rose to 55.8 from its ten-month low of 54.7 in July.

The reading was well above the 50 line that separates growth from contraction and came in slightly better than a preliminary estimate of 55.7 which was published last month.

The main support came from manufacturing where growth accelerated at the fastest pace since April, propelled by a sharp rise in output, new orders and export business.

In the services sector, business activity increased to reach a two-month high of 53.5 in August, with orders coming in at a faster pace. Service providers continued to hire new staff though job creation slowed to reach its slowest pace in more than a year.

In a sign that the upswing is pushing up inflation, cost pressures faced by German service providers increased. The rate of input price inflation picked up to reach a five-month high while prices charged by service providers accelerated at the fastest pace since March.

IHS Markit economist Trevor Balchin said that the survey data underlined the German economy's continued strength. IHS Markit had therefore raised its growth forecasts for 2017 and 2018 to 2.3 percent and 2.1 percent respectively.

The government predicts calendar-adjusted growth of 1.9 percent for 2017. That would be on a par with last year's performance, which was the strongest among the G7 group of the world's most industrialized countries.

## Euro zone business activity remained strong in August

**LONDON, (Reuters)** — Euro zone business activity remained robust in August and price pressures increased, according to a survey that suggested momentum would continue this month, likely bringing welcome news to policymakers.

IHS Markit's final composite Purchasing Managers' Index for the euro zone held steady at 55.7 in August, slightly below an earlier flash estimate of 55.8. It has been above the 50-mark that separates growth from contraction since mid-2013.

"The summer months have seen euro zone economic growth moderate only slightly from the rapid pace seen in the spring. The solid PMI readings for July and August set the scene for another strong GDP number for the third quarter," said Chris Williamson, chief business economist at IHS Markit.

Williamson said the PMI pointed to third quarter GDP expansion of 0.6 percent, matching second quarter growth and faster than the 0.4 percent predicted in a Reuters poll last month.

Forward-looking indicators imply there will be little slowdown this month with new orders, backlogs of work, employment and an expectation gauge remaining strong.

"There's good reason to be optimistic," Williamson said. The upbeat data came despite firms increasing prices at a faster rate - the output price index rose to 52.1 from 51.7.

August inflation nudged closer to the European Central Bank's target, registering 1.5 percent, official data showed last week.

# OPEC compliance with supply-cut deal increasing: Zanganeh

**ENERGY TEHRAN** — Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said that the OPEC member states' compliance with the agreement to reduce output has improved in recent months, Shana news agency reported.

The minister made the remarks addressing the reporters before his meeting with Brazilian Minister of Mines and Energy Fernando Coelho Filho in Tehran on Monday.

Under the agreement OPEC is curbing its collective oil production by about 1.2 million barrels per day (bpd), while Russia and some other non-OPEC producers are cutting a further 600,000 bpd until March 2018.

"I think the oil market is balanced. OPEC members' compliance with output cuts has not fallen in the last six months; it has increased," Zanganeh noted.

After his meeting with Filho, Zanganeh told the reporters that he has invited Brazilian oil companies to cooperate with Iranian oil sector.

"We invited directors of Petrobras (semi-public Brazilian multinational oil corporation) to Iran to negotiate on cooperation for development of Iran's South Pars oil layer and also their contribution in extraction of oil from Caspian Sea," the minister added.

Filho, for his part, referred to the intention of Brazilian oil industry's representatives for presence in Iran and said: "We will study Iran's request for receiving Brazilian technology and the ways to broaden the bilateral cooperation."

The Brazilian minister referred to the experience of



Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh (L) and Brazilian Minister of Mines and Energy Fernando Coelho Filho answering the questions of reporters after their meeting in Tehran on Monday

Petrobras in extracting oil from seven kilometers depth of waters and highlighted: "We enjoy high experience and technology in this field and hope that we could work here [in Iran] as well."

## TCCIMA hosts Confederation of Indian Industry's delegation

**ECONOMY TEHRAN** — Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) hosted a trade delegation from Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) on Tuesday morning, the portal of the Iranian private body reported.

In this regard, a meeting was held between TCCIMA Head Masoud Khansari, Indian Ambassador to Tehran Saurabh Kumar, and Co-Chairman of CII Nausad Forbes.

Emphasizing the two sides' efforts on exchanging investments during this meeting, Khansari said that Iran and India have suitable economic capacities for developing their ties, and their economic bonds should not accordingly be restricted merely to trading



goods. "To reach sustainable economic exchanges, investments should be made in both countries," he added.

Forbes, for his part, named the current difficulties in banking transactions between the two countries as the main impediment on the way of boosting their common economic ties. "May be we can increase Iran-India trade ties by establishing a bank focused on bilateral trade."

The Indian Ambassador to Tehran, for his turn, referred to Indian prime minister's visit to Tehran and his meeting with Iranian president in the preceding year saying that MOUs on some joint projects were inked last year and today we see Indians are making investments in Iran with an increasing trend.

## At BRICS, China's Xi takes on Trump's 'America First' Policy

Chinese President Xi Jinping told an international summit on Tuesday that although the global economy had improved, risk factors had also increased.

Addressing the "Dialogue of Emerging Market and Developing Countries", Xi appeared to rebuke the United States' recent resistance to international agreements - including the Paris climate accord.

He said emerging and developing markets had been the primary engine of global growth and that such countries needed to work closely to build an open world economy.

The leaders of BRICS states and other

developing countries are meeting in the southeastern Chinese city of Xiamen.

"Recently, the world economy has taken a turn for the better. International trade and investment has picked up," Xi said. "At the same time, we must take note that risk and uncertainty in the world economy are also increasing."

China used the meeting of the BRICS countries - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa - and other developing economies to stress the need to promote trade liberalization and an open world economy.

The summit has also given China, the host, its latest chance to position itself as a

bulwark of globalisation in the face of U.S. President Donald Trump's "America First" agenda.

"Multilateral trade negotiations make progress only with great difficulty and the implementation of the Paris Agreement has met with resistance," Xi said.

"Some countries have become more inward-looking, and their desire to participate in global development cooperation has decreased."

President Trump has called for improved terms for the United States in on-going North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) negotiations under threat

of leaving the pact, and has said he will withdraw his country from the Paris climate accord.

Xi said on Tuesday that China will contribute \$500 million for a South-South cooperation assistance fund to help other developing countries deal with famine, refugees, climate change and public health challenges.

The BRICS leaders are joined by observer nations Thailand, Mexico, Egypt, Guinea and Tajikistan, and officials will discuss a "BRICS Plus" plan to possibly expand the bloc to new members.

(Source: NDTV)

## New industrial policy poised to transform Iran's political economy

By Esfandiyar Batmanghelidj

This past summer, the Industrial Development and Renovation Organization of Iran (IDRO) concluded landmark agreements with French automaker Renault and transportation giant Alstom as well as Russian logistics company Transmashholding. Under each of these new deals, a foreign multinational corporation has agreed to establish a new joint-venture company in Iran in which it will be the majority shareholder. In the cases of Renault and Alstom, each will control 60% of their respective joint ventures. Russia's Transmashholding will own 80% of its new partnership; its higher shareholding perhaps explained by the fact that it is itself a state-owned enterprise.

In all of these deals, IDRO — which was established under the Shah in 1967 — will act as a relatively passive shareholder. This is because it is not an industrial company, but rather a holding company formed under the auspices of the Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade. This means that for the first time in post-revolutionary Iran, major industrial contracts are being concluded in which the foreign party not only enjoys control of its local entity but also avoids necessarily needing to partner with an Iranian firm from an operational standpoint. This shift, in which state ownership in Iran is transitioning from an emphasis on industrial operation to financial shareholding, is highly significant. It represents a dramatic innovation in the Iranian political economy and may act as one of the single most significant catalysts for Iran's ability to attract foreign direct investment in a world of globalized capital.

While Iran has long allowed foreign companies or investors to own up to 100% of an Iranian entity, in practice the provision did not extend to "national industries" outlined in Article 44 of the Islamic Republic Constitution, which include the energy sector, the automotive industry, mining and aviation, among others. Yet President Hassan Rouhani's administration has used its strong mandate for economic reform to interpret Article 44 more liberally.

Prior to the lifting of nuclear-related sanctions under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, multinational companies seeking to manufacture in Iran were effectively required to work with a local operating partner. The historical partnership between Peugeot and Iran Khodro as well as that between Siemens and MAPNA attest to this requirement of joint operation. In these ar-



(L to R) Thierry Bollore, deputy director of competitiveness at Renault; Mansour Moazami, chairman of the board of directors of IDRO Group; and Kouros Moshed Solouk, deputy director of the Iranian Automobile Importers Association shake hands as they attend a deal-signing ceremony in Tehran, Iran, Aug. 7, 2017.

rangements, the foreign company brought Iran technology and financing, and the local partner brought political support, facilities and labor. Iran's market is large enough such that foreign companies could be enticed to invest on these terms. As such, foreign direct investment accelerated beginning in the mid-1990s. But this model necessarily led foreign companies to treat Iran as a secondary market.

Indeed, because they did not enjoy outright control over their investments in Iran, foreign multinationals did not invest proactively. The automobiles, rolling stock, industrial machinery and other output from these manufacturing partnerships were typically one or two generations old. Subsequently, Iran struggled to export its manufactured output, being limited to only regional markets where buyers would accept the obsolete, if functional, vehicles and equipment. As it charted a new path for Iran's economy, the Rouhani administration sought to breach the limits of this approach. To encourage multinationals to treat Iran as a primary market, it was necessary to allow foreign control of the local entity and remove the requirement of an operating partnership with an Iranian industrial enterprise, whose contribution would always prove difficult to bring to a global standard. At the same time, given political constraints, totally eliminating the state's role remained impossible.

The new deals struck by IDRO show a new middle

way. IDRO's own company website outlines a progressive mission for state-owned enterprise — make "great efforts to privatize ... affiliated companies" in part by "promotion of local and foreign investment ... with minority holdings owned by IDRO [less than 50% of the shares]." Additionally, unlike the partnerships created with the new Iran Petroleum Contract, a partnership with IDRO does not require a multinational company to have an operational partner. Through these processes, IDRO in its own words intends to "lessen its role as a holding company" and "turn into an industrial development agency." With the conclusion of the Renault, Alstom and Transmashholding contracts, these pledges are no longer just wishful thinking. Instead, they represent a clear path for Iran's industrial policy.

Moreover, IDRO's stated focus on supporting development with a "particular emphasis on new, hi-tech and export-oriented industries" is also reflected in the recent contracts. In the case of Renault, the unprecedented deal includes stipulations that the company establish a research and development center in Iran and earmark 30% of output for export. In short, Renault will treat Iran as part of its global supply chain, defining a model of Iranian industrialization that treats globalization as a driver of revitalization rather than as a cause for resistance.

Despite these significant developments and the strong evidence for the transformation underway, critics of economic engagement with Iran use a dated and inaccurate vision of Iranian state enterprise in order to advocate against trade and investment. They also fail to contextualize state ownership in Iran within the larger global history of the country's political economy. The move from active operation to passive shareholding as the defining feature of state ownership is one that has been witnessed in each region in which globalization has taken hold. The vestiges of this transition remain; passive state ownership of major industrial companies remains very common globally, and perhaps especially in Europe. Tellingly, the French state owns 19.74% of Renault.

If anything, IDRO's recent successes are the harbinger of a potential transformation in Iran's political economy that needs to be recognized and nurtured. Both the country's leadership and its labor force deserve the opportunity to enact economic liberalization in measured steps and count upon foreign engagement and investment as key drivers of reform. (Source: Al-Monitor)

## Russia, Saudi Arabia discussed extending OPEC-led deal, no decision

**MOSCOW (Reuters)** — Russia and Saudi Arabia have discussed extending an oil output cut deal between OPEC and non-OPEC producers but no specific decisions have been made, the TASS news agency quoted Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak as saying on Tuesday.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and other producers led by Russia are cutting oil output until the end of March 2018. A committee of OPEC and non-OPEC nations recommended extending the curbs further if needed.

"We met in St. Petersburg and discussed such an option (with Saudi Arabia) - that it is possible within the framework of the signed agreements," TASS quoted Novak as saying.

"We are considering all kinds of options. We may consider the issue of extending (the OPEC-led deal) if need be."

The Interfax news agency quoted Novak as saying it was premature to talk



about the possible extension to the deal.

OPEC and other leading oil producers including Russia agreed at the end of last year to cut their combined oil production by almost 1.8 million barrels per day (bpd) to help rebalance the market amid weaker oil prices. Russia has

agreed to reduce its output by 300,000 bpd from the October level of 11.247 million bpd.

Russian oil output fell to a year-low of 10.91 million bpd in August from 10.95 million bpd in July, Energy Ministry data showed on Saturday.

## Oil supplies to North Korea could be cut as China looks to back even tougher sanctions

China is likely to support tougher sanctions against North Korea including cutting crude oil exports to the reclusive state after its latest nuclear test, according to Chinese diplomatic analysts.

Cutting oil exports would severely damage the country's economy as it needs the fuel for military and civilian use, but Beijing would not completely sever the energy exports to ensure the regime of its ally did not collapse, the experts said.

North Korea conducted its sixth nuclear test on Sunday, claiming it had detonated a hydrogen bomb.

The test overshadowed a summit of emerging market economies held in China and was viewed by analysts as a slap in the face for Beijing.

The test also prompted the United

Nations Security Council to discuss tougher measures against North Korea to rein in its nuclear weapons program.

Jia Qingguo, an international relations expert at Peking University, said Beijing should consider oil sanctions after the latest nuclear test.

"This act has hurt China's national interests and damaged regional stability," he said.

Wang Sheng, a professor who studies Korean affairs at Jilin University, said China would support tougher sanctions by the UN, including oil "because this is seemingly the only way to show pressure at this moment".

The New York Times, citing a senior official in the U.S. government, said Washington was pressing China and other members of the UN Security Council to cut oil and other fuel sup-

plies to North Korea.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in has also said it was time to discuss cutting off oil supplies to North Korea, the Yonhap News Agency reported.

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**Public Calls For Quality Evaluating Of Tender(One publish/Second Publish)**

**Two-Stage(Compressed)**

TENDER GUARANTEE		ESTIMATED VALUE (Rial)	DESCRIPTION	Tenders Portal Reg. No.on <a href="http://icts.mp.org.ir">http://icts.mp.org.ir</a>	TENDER NO. / INDENT NO	No
Euro	Rial					
64,460	2,256,000,000	46,800,000,000	High Speed Radial Bond Tools (RBT) for Well Logging Services	1/496/844	Indent No.: 43-22-9503848037 Tender No.: CGP/25-96/003	1
21,000	720,000,000	14,400,000,000	Gyroscopic Survey Tool (GYRO) with All Accessories for Well Logging Services	1/496/830	Indent No.: 43-22-9503848046 Tender No.: CGP/25-96/004	2

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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.

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Receiving of documents:  
Tenderers must 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, Ahwaz, IRAN.  
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Notices:  
1- Only the real or legal persons who apply to purchase and receive tender documents from foreign procurement department in due date will be known as tenderer from tender committee.  
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C) Delivery of call quality evaluating and envelopes suggestions:  
Tenderers shall submit the completed documents including qualification worksheets in form of software in CD/DVD and documentary along with envelopes Tender Guarantee (A) and technical (B) and financial (C) offers within 40 days from last day of document received deadline to the following address: Hall No.:107, 1th floor ,Tender Committee, Building operations, National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN. Tel No.: 061-34148205-6

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## Macron: Still the answer for France?

By Jessica Kolbe

From the west side of the Atlantic, France may appear to be experiencing a time of political calm. While President Donald Trump feeds news outlets a constant stream of staffing changes and political crises, President Emmanuel Macron offers relatively infrequent opportunities for breaking news. Stories on Macron rarely examine the inner workings of his administration, instead often highlighting flashy PR moments, like when he impersonates James Bond or welcomes celebrities like Rihanna to Paris. However, this disparity in news coverage is deceiving. Although France lacks the conspicuous chaos that characterizes the White House, cracks in Macron's shiny political exterior could be beginning to emerge. His short time in office has been characterized by public disagreements with his officials and popular backlash to his proposed policies, leaving Macron doubling down on his cabinet to salvage his public image and preserve his vision of the presidency. Macron entered office with a vision for a "Jupiterian" presidency, which exists above petty political squabbles, but it seems he has grossly underestimated the inherently conflictual nature of democracy.

For a man who was described as having "the stuff of presidents," Macron's meteoric rise to power seems like a natural progression in a lifetime of achievement. A former investment banker, Macron had a brief stint in politics under his predecessor, François Hollande, before his self-made political party, La République En Marche (LREM), brought him to the pinnacle of democratic politics — the presidency. He entered office with a healthy dose of narcissism fostered by years of prodigal success, and his perception of the French presidency reflects this. Macron balked at Hollande's humble aspiration to be a "normal president." His perceived notion of the way Hollande handled his time in office is inadequate for his own vision for the contemporary French presidency: a position meant to provide stability and leadership vis-à-vis reinvented democratic authority.

### ■ A "Jupiterian" president

To fulfill this role, Macron aspires to be a "Jupiterian" president, acting as a "remote, dignified figure" leading the state. As befits the Roman king of gods, this vision of leadership is characterized by strong, centralized power and a polished public image. Displaying a strong affinity for micromanagement, Macron exercises tight control over media appearances and presidential communications. If he is not speaking through the official government spokesperson, Christophe Castaner, he interacts with the press through carefully choreographed appearances and targeted speeches while reserving the right to remain silent. Macron notably declined to host a traditional Bastille Day news conference because his "complex thought process" would be too much for journalistic questioning. His desire for meticulous control of media content also extends to his ministers, who make rare public statements which are subject to Macron's pre-approval.

Faced with plummeting approval ratings and a growing list of critics, Macron's young Jupiterian presidency has descended into the earthly conflict of democratic politics.

Despite his best efforts, Macron's administration has been dragged into the political fray. Just a few months into his presidency, Macron had a very public dispute with the French Army's chief of staff, General Pierre de Villiers, over proposed defense budget cuts. De Villiers resigned after the spat, stating the diminished budget would not allow him "to guarantee the protection of France and the French people." Not one to tolerate insubordination, Macron responded with a clear message: "I am your boss." While Macron decried the indignity of this public budget dispute, the French media was less charitable to his reaction. One newspaper characterized his response as a "little authoritarian fit" which displayed his immaturity.

### ■ Macron's proposals

Discontent with Macron's proposals extend far beyond the Élysée. During his campaign, Macron committed to cut public spending by about \$71 billion (€60 billion) over five years to keep France within the EU's deficit limit. His ministers and local government officials are unlikely to thank him for their diminished budgets and strained resources. Macron also hopes to reform the labor code, le Code du Travail, a move that will enrage France's notoriously strike-prone labor unions. Even Macron's desire to elevate his wife, Brigitte Macron, to an official "first lady" position was immediately met by a popular petition that stopped the initiative in its tracks.

These blunders dragged Macron's presidency back down to Earth and the public has not been merciful. Although elected with 66 percent of the vote in May, an Ifop poll released in August shows Macron's approval rating dropped to 40 percent, a staggering drop over three months, while his disapproval rating has risen to 57 percent, up from 43 percent in July.

In the face of this momentous drop in popularity, Macron is struggling to regain traction and has threatened a cabinet shake-up if his ministers don't deliver. At a low-profile meeting with his cabinet in July, Macron reportedly warned that his ministers will have "disappeared" in six months if they hide behind the documents produced by their offices. His critiques reveal the burgeoning chaos that one former Hollande aide says characterizes all levels of the Macron government. Apparently, Macron's penchant for centralizing responsibilities has left him vulnerable to the very political turmoil he had hoped to avoid.

Faced with plummeting approval ratings and a growing list of critics, Macron's young Jupiterian presidency has descended into the earthly conflict of democratic politics. Containing turmoil within the government and recovering popularity while achieving meaningful political victories may prove to be a Sisyphean task. Now, the world must watch to see if this French Jupiter can rescale Mount Olympus or if he will simply fade into myth. If Macron expects to push through his economic and foreign policy agendas while retaining popular support, it would be wise for him to break his silence and bridge the chasm he has created with the public. The French people want an effective leader, not an aloof ruler.

(Source: *The National Interest*)

# A crime against humanity

The brutal, bloody, and ultimately pointless mistreatment of a Muslim minority shames Aung San Suu Kyi

The Rohingya are a Muslim people living in the north-west of predominantly Buddhist Myanmar, which borders mainly Muslim Bangladesh. In Myanmar they are seen as Muslims, and in Bangladesh as foreigners. Neither country claims or even wants them. Neither will allow them citizenship, though these families have lived in Burma for centuries at least. Now the military in Myanmar will not even tolerate their existence, and in recent weeks the almost genocidal pressure on their villages has greatly increased, sending tens of thousands trying to flee across a guarded border into an uncertain future. The army appears to be trying to starve out the population from areas where the armed resistance is most active, sending an unprecedented flood of refugees across the border. It has blocked UN agencies from delivering food, water or medicine to the affected areas, leaving an estimated 250,000 people without regular access to food.

There is very little for the refugees if they do get out alive. The Bangladeshi authorities are extremely reluctant to recognize that they are fleeing from persecution, even if local people have responded with great generosity.

For years Myanmar government forces have descended on villages to slaughter or drive out their inhabitants. Amnesty International has accused the regime of crimes against humanity. One of Myanmar's most influential Buddhist preachers, Ashin Wirathu, preaches



**For years Myanmar government forces have descended on villages to slaughter or drive out their inhabitants. Amnesty International has accused the regime of crimes against humanity.**

compassion towards mosquitoes but death for Muslims. Although he has served time in prison for earlier sermons, he is now more popular than ever, and widely believed to have the support of the army, which ruled the country openly

for years and is still a powerful force behind the scenes.

The persecution has, predictably, led to an armed resistance, which, just as predictably, has provoked greater repression and cruelty. The Buddha had

something to say about such chains of violence and revenge but it appears that the Myanmar's Buddhists would rather use chains as weapons, the way Hells Angels did, than be freed from them. This story would be tragic and an outrage to the conscience of the world if it ended there. But there is every chance it will not. There is no repression savage enough to empty the whole of Rakhine state of its inhabitants and finally crush the resistance. Neither can the armed resistance movement hope for any final victory. But it can hope to enlarge the scope of the conflict, and present it as a religious one in which Muslims are being persecuted for their faith. That is at least half true, but it is a destructive as well as a powerful narrative. There are already insurgencies of that sort — all of them building on existing ethnic divides and antagonisms — in many parts of south-east Asia, from Thailand to the Philippines.

There is a horrible irony in the involvement here of Aung San Suu Kyi, who appeared to be bringing to Myanmar the message of universal human rights — which would transcend or at least set limits to the brutalities of the old world. The Nobel prize winner, who appeared for decades as the epitome of principled and unflinching defense of human rights, now appears as the unfeeling figurehead of a vicious regime.

(Source: *The Guardian*)

## Trump's insubordination problem

By Rich Lowry

Donald Trump told us that he'd hire the best people. He didn't mention that he'd be unable to fire them.

The president is experiencing a bout of insubordination from his top officials the likes of which we haven't witnessed in the modern era. It's not unusual to have powerful officials at war among themselves, or in the presidential doghouse. It's downright bizarre to have them publicly undercut the president, without fear of consequence.

The new measure of power in Washington is how far you can go criticizing the president at whose pleasure you serve. The hangers-on and junior players must do it furtively and anonymously. Only a principal like Gary Cohn, Rex Tillerson or James Mattis can do it out in the open and get away with it.

First, it was chief economic adviser Cohn saying in an interview that the administration — i.e., Donald J. Trump — must do a better job denouncing hate groups. Then, it was Secretary of State Tillerson suggesting in a stunning interview with Chris Wallace of Fox News that the rest of the government speaks for American values, but not necessarily the president. Finally, Secretary of Defense Mattis contradicted without a moment's hesitation a Trump tweet saying we are done talking with North Korea.

In a more normal time, in a more normal administration, any of these would be a firing offense (although, in Mattis' defense, he more accurately stated official U.S. policy than the president did). Tillerson, in particular, should have been told before he was off the set of Fox News on Sunday that he was only going to be allowed to return to the seventh floor of the State Department to clean out his desk.

### ■ Precarious standing

The fact that this hasn't happened is an advertisement of Trump's precarious standing, broadcast by officials he himself selected for positions of significant power and prestige. A more typical scenario is that a president loses credibility in a foreign crisis when an adversary defies him, or in a domestic political confrontation when the opposition deals him a stinging defeat. Not at the hands



**A more typical scenario is that a president loses credibility in a foreign crisis when an adversary defies him, or in a domestic political confrontation when the opposition deals him a stinging defeat.**

of his own team.

This isn't the work of the deep state, career bureaucrats maneuvering or leaking from somewhere deep within the agencies. This is the shallow state, the very top layer of the government, operating in broad daylight, in fact wanting to be seen and heard differentiating themselves from the president of the United States.

Trump, of course, largely brought this on himself. He is reaping the rewards of his foolish public spat with Jeff Sessions and of his woeful Charlottesville remarks.

By publicly humiliating his own attorney general, Trump seemed to want to make him quit. When Sessions stayed put, Trump didn't take the next logical step of firing him because he didn't want to deal with the fallout. In the implicit showdown, Sessions had won. Not

only had Trump shown he was all bark and no bite, he had demonstrated his lack of loyalty to those working for him.

So why should those working for him fear him or be loyal to him? With his loss of moral legitimacy post-Charlottesville, the president is more dependent on the people around him than they are on him. Trump's debilitated state has a late-Nixon feel — when he is only seven months in.

Globalist Gary, as his Trumpist enemies style him, is invested with considerable market power, more than any political official besides the president himself. Tillerson is eminently replaceable, but his immediate sacking would be too destabilizing at a fragile moment. If Mattis were to leave, it would cause a freak-out on Capitol Hill and around the world. Never has a president had so many non-fireable subordinates.

### ■ President's minders

Mattis and Co. obviously consider themselves the president's minders more than his underlings. But the least they could do is not air this patronizing attitude. They are impressive and accomplished people, but no one elected any of them president of the United States. They don't do the country any favors by highlighting Trump's weakness and by making it obvious that the American government doesn't speak with one voice.

It should be up to chief of staff John Kelly to make it stop. What these officials are doing is much worse than a White House aide slipping into the Oval Office to leave a printed article from WorldNetDaily on a corner of the Resolute Desk. It's worse than Steve Bannon feverishly trying to undermine H.R. McMaster, which is simply staff-level intramural politics taken to another level.

This isn't "the system working," the cliché for how various other power centers have thwarted Trump in the early going. It's the system gone haywire and tottering on the brink of a more serious crisis.

Nothing good can come from top officials of the U.S. government making it obvious that they believe, to borrow Tillerson's phrase, that the president speaks for himself — and no one else.

(Source: *Politico*)

## What's next for the U.S. in Afghanistan?

By Quora Contributor

The American military effort in Afghanistan is now in its sixteenth year. To put that into context, a number of the soldiers, Marines, and airmen we will send into the Afghan theater two years from now will have been born after 9/11.

The American military initially entered Afghanistan with a lightweight force comprised of mostly Special Forces with the expressed intention of eliminating Al-Qaeda operatives operating inside of the country.

While we were able to do this very well, the larger issue is and always has been that Afghanistan has always been an ungovernable state. You can't remove a power broker like Al-Qaeda without replacing it with some form of government, and to date every government the American's have propped up inside of Afghanistan has been inherently corrupt.

A summary of what happens next is: American military resources are then largely pulled out of the country and into Iraq.

While focusing on Iraq, American forces continue to prop up a series of corrupt government leaders who have little or no ability to govern a number of villages and provinces across Afghanistan.

In the power vacuum we created and with our attention focused elsewhere, Al-Qaeda re-enters Afghanistan in force and begins flipping provinces back to their control.

President Obama assumes office in 2008 and quickly realizes the situation in Afghanistan is spiraling out of control. In 2009, at the urging of his military advisors, Obama begins pouring troops into the country.

Obama increases the American military footprint inside Afghanistan from around 30,000 when he assumes office to more than 100,000 troops at the peak in 2011.

The commanding officer in the Afghan theater, General McChrystal, is an advocate of COIN, or Counter-insurgency operations which involve clearing and holding territory. In the middle of the surge, McChrystal is unceremoniously

fired for bad mouthing the President to a Rolling Stone reporter who later wrote the now infamous article, *The Runaway General*.

The surge, while resulting in modest gains, is largely deemed a failure. President Obama, acutely aware of this failure, proceeds with large-scale troop drawdowns.

Today, neither President Trump nor his military advisors have articulated what they would consider victory in Afghanistan to look like, which is a pretty important thing to have clearly defined when you are creating a strategy for military operations. In terms of paths forwards, our options are limited and the potential outcomes of those paths are bleak.

In one path forward, we pull all American and allied troops out of Afghanistan. In doing this, Afghanistan once again becomes a safe haven for Al-Qaeda and terrorist groups as if we were never there at all.

In another path forward, America maintains a large-scale military presence in Afghanistan for decades to come

(not dissimilar to our military presence in countries like Japan, South Korea, or Germany). The key difference here is that overseas military presences are only considered acceptable by the larger American citizenry as long as our deployed forces aren't continuously blown apart by Improvised Explosive Devices. However, in order for that to happen, the country in which our forces are deployed needs a functioning government which is something Afghanistan will never have.

In a third, albeit unlikely path forward, traditional American military forces pull out of Afghanistan and are replaced with privately controlled security contractors. This is plan that has been proposed by the founder of Blackwater, Erik Prince. In such a scenario, you would likely see a dramatic uptick in incidents like the Nisour Square massacre. The likely long term effects of handing the country over to private security forces is a rapid acceleration in the number of terrorists and combatants who take up arms against America.

(Source: *Newsweek*)

# Trump's stance toward JCPOA just rhetoric: Ex-Congressman

By Javad Heirannia

**TEHRAN** — Former U.S. Congressman James Charles Slattery says «Trump's foreign policy is evolving. His team is working out what appears to be a policy that does not match the rhetoric of his campaign.»

“For example he has not walked away from the JCPOA and I don't think he will as long as Iran complies,” Slattery tells the Tehran Times in an exclusive interview.

The former congressman says “The IAEA maintains that Iran is complying and I expect Trump will recognize this.”

Following is the full text of the interview:

■ **The theoretical basis for Barack Obama's foreign policy was that the US didn't have the power and influence of the past; thus Washington had to be careful and selective in which problems it should interfere. Insisting on domestic policy, Trump was even tougher than Obama in the very first steps of his presidency. So how it came that suddenly Trump changed his isolationist stance for an interventionist one?**

A: In the new world order (since 1990s), the competition for more influence and power in both regional and international arenas has heavily increased. Isn't this worldwide competition a reason why the Middle East crises including in Syria, Yemen and Iraq have lasted so long? A reason for the presence of the US and Russia in the region? (However, Russians are more in Syria rather than anywhere else in the region.)



■ **We hear that the Middle East has turned into a competition field for regional and international powers; hence the hope for any peace deal hangs in balance. It is said that these so-called big powers, for the sake of their own interests (including arms sales), prefer the conflict management rather than conflict resolution. So, when does it happen to the Middle East to enjoy the blessing of the peace?**

A: Your questions are thoughtful. Since WW II the US has sought to protect its interest and allies around the world while preventing the spread of atheistic communism and brutal dictatorships like Hitler. The US has never had the resources to fight every bad regime in the world nor the interest.

Sometimes in my lifetime mistakes

were made defining interest and allies. I think of Vietnam. The US also made a mistake in thinking Saddam had weapons of mass destruction. He did not. But the removal of Saddam who was a brutal dictator greatly empowered Iran in the Middle East.

Trump's foreign policy is evolving. His team is working out what appears to be a policy that does not match the rhetoric of his campaign. For example he has not walked away from the JCPOA and I don't think he will as long as Iran complies. The IAEA maintains that Iran is complying and I expect Trump will recognize this.

I hope the JCPOA can be a stepping stone toward a much improved relationship between the US and Iran. It should be but hardliners in Iran and some folks in the US are reluctant to move in this di-

rection. I remain hopeful that if Iran complies with JCPOA both the US and Iran can learn how to cooperate on matters of common interest in the Middle East like defeat of ISIS and stability in Yemen Lebanon Syria and Iraq where religious minorities are protected.

We have other issues that can and must be discussed between Iran and US.

I hope Iranians never forget that in spite of US support for the Shah much of the US policy of the 50's 60's and 70's was driven by fear that Soviet Union would occupy Iran as it did following WW II

The US was determined to prevent the spread of atheistic communism. The US may have over reacted at times but in the end communism was defeated.

Americans have historically wanted to avoid foreign entanglements. This may be hard for you to believe. Trump gave voice to historic isolationism during campaign but is learning it is very hard to simply pull out of Afghanistan Iraq and other areas of ME without creating deadly chaos.

There are many common interests shared by US and Iran. Conversation and communication is essential to avoid an unnecessary war that would become a global tragedy.

But I know the IRGC in Iran and other hardliners do not want improved relations with the West and the US because they see improved relations with the West as a threat to the Islamic Revolution. I don't think this is necessarily true.

I also admit some US officials have not favored the JCPOA and further negotiations to address regional security issues for both countries.

## Will Trump remain in power till 2020?

By Ali Alemi

The anger and disapproval of American citizens continue with Donald Trump, President of the country. Donald Trump's irregularity and his unpredictable actions in the field of US domestic and foreign policy have led, along with disgruntled citizens, to many politicians in both the Democratic and Republican parties feeling scared about his presence at the head of political and executive equations. This feeling has shown itself in the remarks of many US officials in recent weeks.



On the other hand, Trump's recent confrontation with Charlottesville's events has created a wave of opposition against him. The support of the racist elites once again sparked protests throughout the United States and against the president. Interestingly, Trump's actions are also unpredictable for many of his entourage and companions! In other words, even those who went to the White House with Trump did not have confidence in their

job and political stability! The President of the United States has undergone extensive White House reform in recent days!

This administrative reform takes place seven months after Donald Trump gained power! Two weeks ago, he easily dismissed those who had lately been assigned to their new position and simply replaced them with new ones. Beyond that, Trump has dissolved several Advisory Councils that have established their own complicated mechanism! The charge of most of the dismissed people has been disagreement with his friends, especially his family members! These incidents indicate that even the administrative and bureaucratic rules do not have the power to curb Trump's wicked actions. The increasing power of maneuvering individuals such as Donald Trump's bridegroom in the White House office has led to deep dissatisfaction among members of his political team. Accordingly, we witness a new controversy and tension in this area every day.

The unpredictability and unconstitutionality of the US president has reduced the level of his commitment to international obligations. The president of the United States, not only in the field of domestic politics, but also in the field of foreign policy, has shown that he is not upright. He has withdrawn from the Paris agreement on climate change in spite of the opposition of the majority of the signatories. He also has withdrawn from the nuclear agreement between Iran and 5 + 1 now. During the recent telephone conversation between the US president and Australian Prime Minister, Trump explicitly stated that if he respected the commitments of the previous US government, he would be “crazy”! Similar statements show that the continuation of the US president's presence in generating power will be further controversy over the US CIA. It is not unreasonable that some American politicians believe in the removal of Donald Trump of power as the only way to restrain him.

After seven months of Trump's presence in the White House, the process of restraining Trump by American politicians has begun. As depicted, what happened to the internal and external developments of the US government in the last seven months is the unwillingness and desperation of Donald Trump. In such a situation, controlling the president looks very hard on the part for the country's politicians, including members of the House of Representatives, the Senate, and even the Republican Party leaders (whom Trump represented in the run-up to the elections). During the last year's presidential race in the United States, Trump also repeatedly reiterated his unwavering commitment to the Republican Party. He even warned Republican leaders that if they did not support him in the 2016 presidential election, he would run independently and would not step down of power. In other words, he is not responsible for the actions of the Republican leaders. In the meantime, there is essentially no power to control Trump's actions and behaviors.

The final point is that the unwillingness and lack of certainty of Trump is just a summary of US foreign policy and foreign policy. In the field of economics, Trump does not actually embrace the rules governing the domestic and international economy of America. He advocates “protectionism”. Protectionism is in the opposite direction to the current economic structure of the international system. Without regard to economic and administrative considerations, he intends to impose heavy customs tariff on imported goods from Europe and elsewhere in the world. A topic that has sparked anger of US business partners.

In such a situation, the Trump riddle has become more complicated not only for US citizens, but also for many American politicians. It should not be forgotten that Trump went to the White House based on Electoral votes, even though most US citizens opposed his presence at the White House. The same thing has added to the incidence of vulnerability of the president of the United States. Many US media, while referring to Trump's behavior in recent seven months, consider the only possible way for him to be impeached and dismissed by Congress. It is not unreasonable that the issue of impeachment of Trump is being considered by American analysts at home. It should be noted that polls conducted in recent weeks in the United States indicate that the popularity of the president has declined sharply, and most US citizens welcome Trump's impeachment and dismissal of power. In this case, the attention of senators and members of the House of Representatives has also been addressed. Anyhow we should be waiting for the fate of the controversial American president. Will he remain in power by 2020, or will he expect another fate?

In any case, Donald Trump must not be forgotten that he is having a hard time. Over the course of months or even weeks, there may be developments in US domestic policies that would not be beneficial to the president of the United States and his entourage. Obviously, as time passes, Donald Trump's vulnerability increases at the White House, and that the opponents of the president of the United States welcome with open arms. The main question here is whether Trump will remain in power by 2020 or not?

## Trump realized that his prior opinions did not suffice: Middle East Forum president

By Javad Heirannia

**TEHRAN** — Daniel Pipes, president of the Middle East Forum, says The specialists Trump relied on held very divergent points of view, some consistent with his own, other not, being from the foreign policy Establishment.

In an exclusive interview with the Tehran Times, Pipes also says “Seven months into his presidency, it appears those Establishment voices have prevailed; thus, the interventionism.”

Following is the full text of the interview:

■ **Why has Donald Trump changed his isolationist stance for an interventionist one?**

A: When he became president, Trump was a celebrity businessman with strong opinions but no in-depth knowledge of U.S. foreign policy. As president, he quickly faced decisions bearing major consequences (such as what to do with the JCPOA) and he realized that his prior opinions did not suffice as a basis for policy, that he had to rely on specialists. The specialists he relied on held very divergent points of view, some consistent with his own, other not, being from the foreign policy Establishment. Seven months into his presidency, it appears those Establishment voices have prevailed; thus, the interventionism.

■ **Is the Russo-American competition for influence, power, and arms sales the reason why Middle East crises (Syria, Iraq, Yemen) have lasted so long?**

A: No. It's a long-standing Middle Eastern habit to blame the region's problems on outside powers - Great Britain and France in the old days, the United States and Russia now, no doubt China in the future. But a closer look finds that outside powers are generally limited to exploiting opportunities that the people of the region make available.

Applying this pattern to the present: The crises in Libya, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan are all local in origin. In each case, internal differences - ethnic, tribal, religious, regional, ideological - caused ruptures that tore these countries apart, leading to an anarchy, that invited in both regional actors and great powers. Only when the Middle East puts its own house in order will outside intervention diminish.

■ **What needs to happen for the Middle East to enjoy the blessings of peace?**

A: That's a big question! The Middle East was a relatively quiet place in the Ottoman-Safavid period, before the challenge of modernity hit with full force, challenging everything from family relations to economic activity to



the nature of government. Modernity, especially starting with World War I, turned the region upside-down.

In many ways, the region is still working out the major changes of the World War I era (1911-25), including the collapse of the Ottoman and Qajar dynasties, Atatürk's and Reza Shah's secular legacies, the coming into existence of Libya, Lebanon, Israel, and Jordan, the setting of boundaries for Syria and Iraq, the absence of a sovereign Kurdistan, and the spread of Wahhabi doctrine.

Only when Middle Eastern states become fully democratic will the region enjoy the blessings of peace.

## The China-Russia Approach to the North Korean Crisis Who will set the negotiating table?

By Masoud Ghorbani

Not long ago, we witnessed the failure of the six-party nuclear talks between North Korea and the five countries of the United States, South Korea, Japan, Russia and China. Many East Asian analysts believe that the excesses of Washington and its regional allies played a significant role in defeating these talks. With the escalation of missile and nuclear crises in front of Pyongyang, the important question has been the mindset of international audiences: Who will ultimately set the table for new nuclear and missile talks in Pyongyang? What do we need to hold talks on the Korean Peninsula again?

The fact is that the United States is trying, like the time of the six-party talks over North Korea's nuclear program, to take the most important role in the negotiations, thereby managing its goals and interests on the Korean Peninsula and East Asia. However, if the United States is the negotiator of the negotiations, the result of these talks will not be better than the previous six-party talks! What is certain is that this time the table of talks must be made by other actors.

Actors who are more accurate about the nature of the US behavior in Korea. What is certain is that any level of US involvement in possible negotiations is to increase the likelihood of a failure in negotiations or resulting in incomplete conclusions. On the other hand, the two Democratic and Republican officials in the United States must answer a certain question: Why has Washington repeatedly prevented direct negotiations be-

tween the two peoples from resolving security crises in the Korean Peninsula in recent years? What do American officials have in their minds here? Is the United States concerned about direct talks between the two peoples and the lack of intervention in this equation?

The answer is yes. Washington seeks to include any kind of negotiation on the security of the Korean Peninsula in order to maintain its scope and power in that region. In such a situation, Russia and China need to play a more significant role in facing US interventionist policies in Korea. Moscow and Beijing should not forget that one of the main goals of the United States is to intervene directly on the equations of the Korean Peninsula, and thus putting the two countries of China and Russia under pressure.

The fact is that China and Russia have understood the implications of US involvement in the Korean Peninsula more than ever. Therefore, decoding Vladimir Putin's statements is not very difficult. Moscow and Beijing emphasized the importance of considering North Korea's concerns about its security and condemn these concerns as “justifiable,” while condemning North Korea for crossing the red line. The reality is that the scope of the United States interference in the peninsula of Korea is increasing day by day. In such a situation, Beijing and Moscow have understood correctly that the United States goal from the permanent military presence on the Korean Peninsula is to stand against Russia and China. This approach existed during Obama's



presidency, but was strengthened during the presidency of Trump and despite the presence of Republicans in the White House. In order to justify military intervention on the Korean Peninsula, Trump needs an insecure regional. In the meantime the president of the United States is concerned about North Korea's response to its threats. Trump finds that confronting Pyongyang will not be easy regarding North Korean military response to American threats. On the other hand, Trump has also found that Russia and China will not work with the United States at many points, especially at crucial levels, and will stand against Washington on the other front.

Eventually, Russia and China should put up the negotiating table between the two Koreas without interference from the United States as soon as possible. Now

the Korean Peninsula is pregnant with unpleasant developments. These developments have entered a new phase in the face of direct US intervention and South Korean compliance with Washington's policies. In the meanwhile, the best way to resolve the Korean crisis is to remove Washington from this equation and talk directly to the two Korean authorities. Nonetheless, Democrats and Republicans of the United States, both under different pretexts, have prevented the negotiations between Seoul and Pyongyang. Meanwhile, the efforts of countries such as China and Russia hasn't had any results so far. Therefore, it is necessary for China and Russia to take more serious actions in the face of US policies and, consequently, to stabilize the Korean Peninsula.

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## Benefits of adding salt to your shampoo

### 1. It promotes hair growth.

Sea salt is incredibly helpful for promoting hair growth. People suffering from hair loss are often advised to try sea salt treatment as it stimulates hair growth naturally. But, there is an easier way to use salt to promote hair growth. Here's how you can use it – wash your hair as you normally do and then take a tablespoon of sea salt and massage it on your scalp for 10 minutes. Wash your hair again. Repeat this procedure twice a week, and you will see results within a month.

### 2. It helps in treating the problem of dandruff.

Dandruff is nothing but small flakes of dead skin cells that form over the scalp and are usually caused due to lack of blood circulation. Sea salt has the ability to stimulate the circulation, which is essential for maintaining a healthy scalp and eliminating dandruff.

Divide your hair into several sections and then sprinkle some salt over your scalp. Start massaging your scalp with wet fingers for 10-15 minutes and then wash your hair as usual. Doing this will protect your scalp and prevent fungal growth.

### 3. It helps you get rid of oily hair and oily scalp.

Oily scalp and hair is a result of excessive secretion of the sebaceous glands. You can solve this problem by using salt. All you have to do is add two tablespoons of salt to your shampoo and mix it well. Wash your hair using this shampoo. Right after the first use, you will see a noticeable change in your hair. Your hair will become healthier and less oily.

## Other ways of using salt for skin

### 1. You can use it as a softening body scrub.

Salt works as a natural and gentle exfoliator that sloughs off the dead skin cells. It contains minerals that help in softening the skin and restoring the hydration. To use it as a body scrub, take 3-4 tablespoons of salt and add it to a half cup of coconut oil or olive oil. Mix both the ingredients



**Salt helps in cleansing the pores and balancing the production of oil. Thus, it prevents acne and breakouts.**

well until it a thick paste is formed. You can even add a few drops of your favorite essential oil to this mixture. Apply this scrub to your entire body and then scrub it gently using a loofah. You can even use your palm to massage gently. Wash it off with water and then apply a moisturizing lotion.

### 2. You can use it as a facial toner.

Salt helps in cleansing the pores and balancing the production of oil. Thus, it prevents acne and breakouts. To use it as a toner, take a tablespoon of oil and mix it with three ounces of warm water. Transfer the solution to a spray bottle and shake the bottle well.

Use it as a mist on clean and dry skin on a daily basis.

### 3. You can make a balancing face mask by adding salt to it.

A mixture of salt and honey can be used as a face mask. Both the ingredients have anti-inflammatory properties that help in soothing the skin and preventing acne and breakouts.

To use it as a face mask, take four teaspoons of raw honey and add two teaspoons of sea salt to it. Mix well

until it forms a spreadable paste. Wash your face, pat dry, and apply it evenly on your face and neck. Leave it for 10 minutes and then rinse it off with warm water.

### 4. You can use it as a bath soak.

Adding salt to your bath water can give you a really relaxing bath. It absorbs the dirt and toxins and deeply cleanses the skin. The mineral content in salt also helps in restoring the skin's protective barrier, thereby facilitating the hydration of the skin. It also helps in reducing water retention.

### 5. It can help you get rid of puffy eyes.

Take a tablespoon of salt and add it to 2 tablespoons of warm water. Soak cotton pads in this water and then place them over your eyes. Keep them on for 10-15 minutes. All the puffiness will be gone.

Apart from all these, you can use salt as a mouth freshener and as a teeth whitener. It is one of the best foot soaks and relieves aching feet in a jiffy.

So, what are you waiting for? Put salt in your shampoo and start including it in your skin care regimen. We promise you won't be disappointed.

(Source: stylecraze.com)

## Reverse plank exercise

Reverse plank is a great way to activate the core muscles

By Elizabeth Quinn

The reverse plank exercise is an often-overlooked exercise that is great for the core. It targets the posterior muscles (those along the backside of the body), but when done properly, it also engages the abdominal muscles. Although this exercise is most commonly seen in yoga classes, it's a nice addition to any basic core workout routine.

Don't forget: Your core is more than just your abdominal muscles.

It includes the hip abductors and adductors, the hip flexors and the lumbar spine. When done correctly, the reverse plank engages all of these muscles as well as the gluts and hamstrings for a challenging full core workout.

The reverse plank exercise can also be used as a rehab exercise to improve core and spinal stabilization.

### Learning the plank pose

Before you try a reverse plank, it may be helpful to learn the basics of a standard plank pose. A staple of Pilates practice, the plank is an excellent way to develop



core strength as well as overall flexibility. It most closely targets the abdominals and shoulders.

- Kneel on a mat or the floor, and walk your hands out in front of you. Extend your legs behind you, and place your forearms parallel to each other.

- Lift your belly up away from the floor as you extend your spine.

- Try to keep your shoulders from slumping by focusing on keeping them away from your ears.

- Keep your head in line with your spine.

- Hold your plank for ten breaths or 30 seconds. Eventually, work toward holding the plank for a full two minutes.

### How to do the reverse plank exercise

As for the reverse plank, it's just as its name suggests: the reverse of the plank pose.

- Sit on the floor with your legs extended in front of you.

- Place your palms, with fingers spread wide, on the floor slightly behind and outside your hips.

- Press into your palms, and lift your hips and torso toward the ceiling.

- Look up to the ceiling, point your toes, and keep your arms and legs straight.

- Keep your entire body strong, and form a straight line from your head to your heels.

- Squeeze your core and try to pull your belly button back toward your spine.

- If your hips sag or drop, lower yourself back to the floor.

### Goal of the reverse plank

To get the most benefit from the reverse plank, aim to maintain a straight line and hold for 20 to 30 seconds. You may need to begin by holding the position for only a few seconds as you build your strength.

And note that it's better to hold the correct position for a shorter time than to go for a longer time in an incorrect position.

(Source: verywell.com)

## Is it safe to eat the white stuff that oozes from cooked salmon?

We did a little digging to find out exactly what that weird gunk is—and how you can avoid it.

You just dropped \$15 on a beautiful piece of salmon, and after you throw it on the grill or slide it into the oven, a weird white substance starts oozing from the filet. And that leaves you with some questions: What is this white substance? Can you eat it? Is it safe? Are you going to die?!

First, some bad news—you are going to die, eventually. The good news is it won't be from the stuff sweating out of your salmon.

That white gunk seeping from your salmon is called albumin. It's a protein—not fat—that pushes to the surface of the fish when you heat it. According to America's Test Kitchen, albumin's moisture squeezes out, congeals, and turns white when the protein reaches a temperature of 140-150 degrees.

The best part? "There's nothing harmful in it," Donald Kramer, PhD, professor of seafood science at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, told America's Test Kitchen.

Yes, the white stuff is totally harmless. Chances are it still weirds you out a little bit, though, so before you start scheming, know that cooking salmon in a different manner won't prevent albumin from forming. There are a couple tricks you can use if you want to avoid it, however.

One option is to brine the fish. America's Test Kitchen recommends soaking the salmon in a standard brine—one tablespoon of salt per cup of water—for just 10 minutes before cooking. That should minimize the amount of albumin that forms on the surface of the fish.

You could also follow Martha Stewart's lead and try cooking the



fish at a low temperature. All you have to do is remove it from the heat when the center is partially opaque and allow it to continue cooking for a few minutes away from the heat. Just know that this solution isn't guaranteed to work (sorry, Martha!)

because, as America's Test Kitchen notes, there will always be a certain amount that leaks out—no matter what temperature you cook it at.

Guess we might be stuck with the stuff.

(Source: womansday.com)

## 7 tips for eating healthy when you can't count calories

Counting calories is one of the most reliable ways to maintain or lose weight. But it's not always easy to do when you're out and about or pressed for time — and there are plenty of situations (such as a dinner party at a friend's house) that just don't lend themselves well to a "strictly numbers" approach.

Here are some guidelines to follow when straight calorie counting is impractical.

### 1. Eat foods that are filling and low in calories.

That means, as often as possible, your meals and snacks should include whole grains, such as brown rice, whole-wheat bread, and oatmeal, as well as legumes, such as lentils and other beans. And don't forget to fill at least half your plate with fruits and vegetables.

### 2. When you eat meat, cut out fat and cut down portion sizes.

Choose lean cuts of meat and modest amounts — about 3½ or 4 ounces per serving (which is roughly the size of your palm).

### 3. Avoid fried foods.

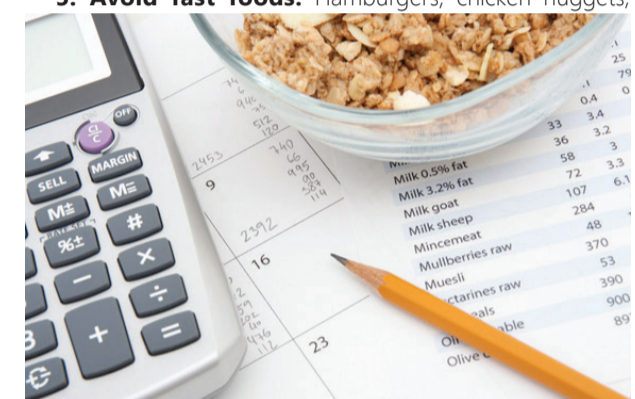
Frying foods adds fat and calories. For stovetop cooking, it's better either to stir-fry foods in a nonstick pan lightly coated with a cooking-oil spray or to braise them in broth or wine. Baking, broiling, and roasting are also great options — they add no extra fat to your meals.

### 4. Choose low-fat or nonfat dairy foods.

Milk, yogurt, and cheese are good sources of protein and calcium, but the whole-milk versions of these dairy products are very high in fat.

### 5. Avoid fast foods.

Hamburgers, chicken nuggets,



French fries, and other fast-food staples tend to promote weight gain for two reasons. First, they are high in fat, calories, or both. Second, the "value meals" available at many fast-food chains are often excessively large and tempt you to overeat.

### 6. Avoid high-calorie, low-nutrient snacks.

Chips and other deep-fried snacks are high in fat and therefore calories. But even snacks labeled "low-fat" are often high in calories because they contain large amounts of sugars and other carbohydrates.

### 7. Watch what you drink.

Regular sodas, fruit juices, and, especially, alcoholic beverages are high in calories.

(Source: health.harvard.edu)

## How to tell if you're deficient in these nutrients

A balanced diet can improve symptoms.

Here are some of the most common nutrients you may be lacking and how you can get your fill:

### 1. Vitamin D

A lack of vitamin D in adults can lead to osteomalacia, a condition in which bones begin to soften. It can also worsen osteoporosis, which leads to brittle bones. Because it's easy to overdose on vitamin D, ask your doctor to check your vitamin D levels with a simple blood test before taking vitamin D supplements.

Foods providing vitamin D: egg yolks, fortified cow's milk, fortified cereals, fatty fish.

### 2. Calcium

This mineral is widely recognized for its function in bone health. Lack of calcium can also lead to osteoporosis. The 2015 Dietary Guidelines recommends three servings of dairy — one of the top sources of calcium — each day. Alternative milk beverages such as hemp, almond, rice and coconut may be popular and tasty, but they don't count toward the daily recommended amount of dairy since they don't measure up nutritionally to cow's milk. Your doctor can help determine if you're not getting enough calcium, and a registered dietitian can help determine if you can get enough through food or if a supplement is necessary.

Foods providing calcium: dairy products, fish with soft bones, leafy green vegetables (like kale and broccoli), tofu made with calcium sulfate, beans.

### 3. Potassium

This mineral is an electrolyte that helps maintain water balance in your body. It also assists in muscle contractions, including maintaining a normal heartbeat. One of the reasons Americans may not be getting enough potassium is improper food choices. Foods that are high in calories, added sugar, saturated fat, sodium or all of the above tend to lack potassium. Also, certain diseases and medications can lead to a potassium deficiency. Symptoms that you're lacking this mineral include muscle cramps, weakness, nausea and abnormal heart rhythm. If you're concerned about your potassium levels, check with your doctor.

Foods providing potassium: dairy products, legumes, fruits, vegetables, potatoes, meats.

### 4. Iron

Iron is the key component of red blood cells, which carries oxygen to the cells in the body. A lack of iron leads to iron deficiency anemia, which can make you feel tired, irritable or depressed. Adolescent and premenopausal females have been found to lack iron, and pregnant women should get their iron levels checked regularly. When I was pregnant, my blood tests revealed that I was deficient — so much so that my doctor recommended I eat more iron-filled foods and take an iron supplement.

Foods providing iron: red meat, poultry, beans, lentils, leafy green vegetables.

(Source: usnews.com)

10 hot titles of IT world

By Alireza Khorasani

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

**1** The entry-level 64 GB model of the iPhone 8 is expected to come in at \$999 plus tax, a mid-tier 256 GB model at \$1099, and a top tier 512 GB of \$1199. 'iPhone 8' May Include Option to Activate Siri By Holding the Sleep/Wake Button. Some media said that iPhone X will be the official name of Apple's 10th anniversary.

**2** Alibaba stock has appreciated more than Amazon this year, and it is within striking distance of surpassing Amazon in terms of market cap. Amazon is up 30 percent this year while Alibaba's stock has nearly doubled as both companies race to a \$500 billion in value.

**3** Trump will decide soon whether to block a Chinese-backed private equity firm from buying a U.S. chip maker, highlighting diplomatic relations with China. The Committee on Foreign Investment in the U.S. has advised against allowing Canyon Bridge Capital Partners to buy Lattice Semiconductor.

**4** Thousands of files containing the private info of US military and intelligence personnel have been exposed online. The documents (which included a mixture of resumes and job applications) were found on a public Amazon Web Services server by cybersecurity firm UpGuard. The roughly 9,400 files contain the personal details of TigerSwan's prospective employees, some of who had applied for work as far back as 2008.

**5** A South Korean court rejected Qualcomm Inc's (QCOM.O) request to suspend an order by the country's antitrust agency to take corrective action on the way it licenses patents. In December, the Korea Fair Trade Commission (KFTC) fined Qualcomm 1.03 trillion won (\$912.34 million) for what it called unfair business practices in patent licensing and modem chip sales.

**6** Europe's top court will rule whether U.S. chipmaker Intel offered illegal rebates to squeeze out rivals in a judgment that could affect EU antitrust regulators' cases against Qualcomm and Alphabet's Google. The ruling by the Luxembourg-based Court of Justice of the European Union (ECJ) could also provide more clarity on whether rebates are anti-competitive by nature or whether enforcers need to prove the anti-competitive effect.

**7** Taxi drivers protesting the growth of mobile ride hailing applications such as Uber and Cabify blocked the main road to Chile's principal airport in capital Santiago, leading to one death and wreaking havoc on travelers' plans. Santiago-based LATAM Airlines, the region's biggest carrier, as well as budget carrier Sky suffered delays, local media reported.

**8** Samsung and Harman's AI speaker launching in 2018. Dinesh Paliwal, CEO of Harman International, told Korean media that a device was discussed behind closed doors in Berlin during the IFA 2017. According to Paliwal, the speaker would be better than Google Assistant and Amazon Alexa.

**9** We already knew that the Nokia 8 will be launched in the UK on September 13 and now you have the chance to book your unit. Carphone Warehouse has started accepting pre-orders for the phone at £500. The retailer is offering the silver and blue color options, and those pre-ordering will also get a free Nokia Steel smartwatch worth £120.

**10** Huawei officially confirms October 16 unveiling for Mate 10 series. Huawei has already confirmed the Mate 10 will come with a full-screen display, which is rumored to be 6-inch in size. The phone is also expected to sport a Leica-branded dual rear-camera setup.

Bitcoin price drops \$200 after new ruling from Chinese regulators

The price of bitcoin fell sharply after Chinese regulators announced a ban on organizations from raising funds using initial coin offerings (ICOs).

ICOs allow start-ups to raise investment by selling new cryptocurrencies, which are similar to bitcoin, in return for cash. However, the People's Bank of China says this practice, which has become popular around the world as well as in China, constitutes illegal fundraising.

Despite bitcoin's price falling, some expect this move to be shortlived.

"This type of news is 'universally' negative sentiment, within the crypto space, so we are not surprised to see a dip on all assets today," Fran Strajnar, co-founder and CEO of data and research company Brave New Coin, told CNBC via email.

While the ban on ICOs does not directly affect bitcoin, the news created negative market sentiment which is weighing on the prices of several virtual currencies, according to Charles Hayter, chief executive and founder of digital currency comparison website CryptoCompare.

Bitcoin's price fell from \$4,584 shortly before the announcement to around \$4,350 per bitcoin. The move by China is not the first time the country's regulators have attempted to crack down on the cryptocurrency space. (Source: CNBC)

Putin says the nation that leads in AI 'will be the ruler of the world'

By James Vincent

Russian president Vladimir Putin has joined the war of words concerning the international race to develop artificial intelligence. Speaking to students last Friday, Putin predicted that whichever country leads the way in AI research will come to dominate global affairs.

"Artificial intelligence is the future, not only for Russia, but for all humankind," said Putin, reports RT. "It comes with colossal opportunities, but also threats that are difficult to predict. Whoever becomes the leader in this sphere will become the ruler of the world."

The development of artificial intelligence has increasingly become a national security concern in recent years. It is China and the US (not Russia) which are seen as the two frontrunners, with China recently announcing its ambition to become the global leader in AI research by 2030. Many analysts warn that America is in danger of falling behind, especially as the Trump administration prepares to cut funding for basic science and technology research.



Although it's thought that artificial intelligence will help boost countries' economies in a number of areas, from heavy industry to medical research, AI technology will also be useful in warfare. Artificial intelligence can be used to

develop cyber weapons, and control autonomous tools like drone swarms — fleets of low-cost quadcopters with a shared 'brain' that can be used for surveillance as well as attacking opponents.

Both China and the US are currently researching this technology, and in his speech on Friday, Putin predicted that future wars would be fought by countries using drones. "When one party's drones are destroyed by drones of another, it will have no other choice but to surrender," said the Russian president, according to the Associated Press.

Recently, Elon Musk and 116 other technology leaders sent a petition to the United Nations calling for new regulations on how such AI weapons are developed. The group stated that the introduction of autonomous technology would be tantamount to a "third revolution in warfare," following the development of gunpowder and nuclear weapons.

An AI arms race doesn't necessarily have to be a winner-takes-all scenario, though. Putin noted that Russia did not want to see any one country "monopolize" the field, and said instead: "If we become leaders in this area, we will share this know-how with entire world, the same way we share our nuclear technologies today." (Source: theverge)

Alibaba launches 'smile to pay' facial recognition system

Redefining the term "happy meal", fast food fanatics in China now just need to flash their smiles to earn their dinner.

Alibaba's Ant Financial has teamed up with KFC in the eastern Chinese city of Hangzhou to debut its new "smile to pay" service.

The service allows customers to process their payment simply by smiling after placing their order at one of the fast food restaurant's self-serve screens.

A 3-D camera then scans the customer's face to verify their identity. An additional phone number verification

option is available for added security.

The technology is available to customers registered to the Alipay app — the mobile and online payment platform established in Hangzhou by Alibaba's founder Jack Ma.

The launch sits in line with Yum China's plans to attract a younger generation of customers.

Joey Wat, Yum China's president, said the store was aimed at "young, tech savvy consumers who are keen to embrace new tastes and innovations," according to Reuters.

(Source: TechWireAsia)



Elon Musk says global race for A.I. will be the most likely cause of World War III



Elon Musk has made an ominous warning about artificial intelligence (AI), suggesting it could be the cause of a third world war.

His comment was in response to Russian President Vladimir Putin who said Friday that the first global leader in AI would "become the ruler of the world."

"China, Russia, soon all countries will be strong computer science. Competition for AI superiority at national level most likely cause of WW3 imo (in my opinion)," the Tesla and SpaceX CEO tweeted Monday.

Putin said that the development of AI raises both "colossal opportunities" and "threats that are difficult to predict."

"Whoever becomes the leader in this sphere will become the ruler of the world," he said at a meeting with students on Friday.

The United States is generally considered to be the nation leading the charge towards AI currently, with tech giants like Google and Microsoft pouring large amounts of cash into research and development projects.

But last week, a report by Goldman Sachs found that China could have the AI capability to catch up with the U.S.

"We believe AI technology will become a priority on the government's agenda, and we expect further national/regional policy and funding support on AI to follow," the investment bank said.

Musk said that there was a possibility that war could be automated.

In response to one Twitter user, he said: "May be initiated not by the country leaders, but one of the AI's if it decides that a preemptive (sic) strike is the most probable path to victory". (Source: Reuters)

Uber rival Taxify expands into Western Europe



Ride-sharing challenger company Taxify is expanding into Western Europe in a bid to unseat Uber and bring greater competition to the market.

Taxify launched in London at 10:00 a.m. local time on Tuesday, September 5, and offered fares at a 50 percent discount for the rest of the month as it aims to steal a slice of Uber's dominance in the U.K. capital.

The Estonian start-up then plans to maintain prices at a discount to competitors by taking a lower commission: 15 percent compared with the 25-35 percent typically taken by other ride-sharing businesses.

"15 percent is enough to be a sustainable, profitable business in all markets," said Villig, who launched the business in Tallinn, Estonia, in 2013, and has since expanded into 19 countries across Central Europe and Africa. Currently the business serves 2.5 million customers.

Competitor Uber has faced widespread criticism for its poor working conditions and mistreatment of staff, which ultimately resulted in the resignation in June of its founder Travis Kalanick as CEO. He was replaced last week by ex-Expedia chief Dara Khosrowshahi.

Like Uber, Taxify's drivers are contractors who own their own vehicles and set their own hours, rather than being direct employees. However, Villig claims that offering drivers an alternative will allow "market forces" to play out and help drive up standards.

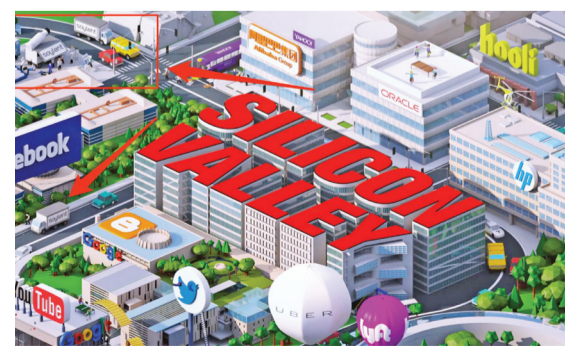
So far, 3,000 drivers in London have signed up to the Taxify platform, up to six-times as many as the number seen in Taxify's other launches to date. (Source: Mashable)

Consumer internet startups go mainstream outside of Silicon Valley

Silicon Valley has long been the center of the universe for tech companies that disrupt the status quo. But a confluence of trends — the geographic diffusion of engineering and product management talent, millennial purchasing power, and the rise of e-brands via social media — are creating new opportunities around the country.

In the past year, New York has reached a tipping point as consumer-facing startups proliferate and, similarly, Los Angeles is getting noticed for the success of Snap and Dollar Shave Club (among others).

Silicon Valley's absolute monopoly on tech talent is shifting as more college graduate engineers opt to live in urban areas near their alma maters, and tech giants from the San Francisco Bay Area are consequently expanding the size of their offices in these cities. In urban centers such as New York and LA we observe these "engineers without borders" are finding synergies with existing experts that have long driven innovation in consumer



brands, entertainment, and traditional media empires.

For example, by marrying Silicon Valley influenced engineering talent to New York's branding savvy, and its cumulative knowledge in media, finance, healthcare, trading and manufacturing, we're seeing — along with our friends and many long-time New York investors

like BoxGroup, First Round, General Catalyst, Greycroft, Lerer Ventures, Max Ventures and Union Square — the emergence of web and mobile-first vertical platforms and e-brands.

We believe the opportunity to cater to the new mass market, i.e. millennials globally (starting with 75 million in the US and 300 million in China), is enormous, and that's why GGV has made nine investments in the Big Apple in just the past year.

Los Angeles is taking advantage of tech-enabled entertainment, Seattle on Saas opportunities (thanks to Amazon, Microsoft, Expedia, Zillow, etc.), while the metropolises of the Midwest are ripe for bringing tech tools to bear on food tech opportunities. While Silicon Valley continues to dominate the tech zeitgeist, there are opportunities for investors and entrepreneurs who are willing to explore outside the Silicon Valley and the Bay Area. (Source: techcrunch)

# Insects can see the world in much finer resolution, say scientists

Insects have much better vision and can see in far greater detail than previously thought, a new study from the University of Sheffield has revealed.

Scientists have long believed insects would not see fine images. This is because their compound eyes typically consist of thousands of tiny lens-capped 'eye-units', which together should capture a low-resolution pixelated image of the surrounding world.

In contrast, the human eye has a single lens, which slims and bulges as it focuses objects of interests on a retinal light-sensor (photoreceptor) array; the megapixel "camera chip" inside the eye. By actively changing the lens shape, or accommodating, an object can be kept in sharp focus, whether close or far away. As the lens in the human eye is quite large and the retinal photoreceptor array underneath it is densely-

packed, the eye captures high-resolution images.

## ■ Insect compound eyes

However, researchers from the University of

Sheffield's Department of Biomedical Science with their Beijing, Cambridge and Lisbon collaborators have now discovered that insect compound eyes can also generate surprisingly high-resolution images, and that this has much to do with



**The new study, researchers say, changes our understanding of insect and human vision and could also be used in industry to improve robotic sensors.**

how the photoreceptor cells inside the compound eyes react to image motion.

Unlike in the human eye, the thousands of tiny lenses, which make the compound eye's characteristic net-like surface, do not move, or cannot accom-

modate. But the University of Sheffield researchers found that photoreceptor cells underneath the lenses, instead, move rapidly and automatically in and out of focus, as they sample an image of the world around them. This microscop-

ic light-sensor "twitching" is so fast that we cannot see it with our naked eye. To record these movements inside intact insect eyes during light stimulation, the researcher had to build a bespoke microscope with a high-speed camera system.

## ■ Hyperacute vision

Remarkably, they also found that the way insect compound eye samples an image (or takes a snapshot) is tuned to its natural visual behaviors. By combining their normal head/eye movements - as they view the world in saccadic bursts - with the resulting light-induced microscopic photoreceptor cell twitching, the insects, such as flies, can resolve the world in much finer detail than was predicted by their compound eye structure, giving them hyperacute vision.

The new study, published on September 5 in the journal *eLife*, changes our understanding of insect and human vision and could also be used in industry to improve robotic sensors.

Mikko Juusola, Professor of Systems Neuroscience at the University of Sheffield and lead author of the study, said: "From humans to insects, all animals with good vision, irrespective of their eye shape or design, see the world through fast saccadic eye movements and gaze fixations."

(Source: *EurekAlert*)

## Smartwatches, thanks to science, could soon track your every move

Imagine a record of your entire day; when you sit, stand, even when you brush your teeth. Sounds unnecessary perhaps, but scientists at the University of Sussex have invented an algorithm for your smartwatch that uses machine learning to keep track of your every move.

The researchers say that such a technology could be used in healthcare scenarios or for gathering data for consumer research.

Smartwatches are engineered to recognize a number of specific activities, but they have to be programmed into the technology. This new algorithm takes that functionality to the next level, enabling the technology to actually detect activities as they're happening.

## ■ Machine-learning approach

"Here we present a new machine-learning approach that detects new human activities as they happen in real time, and which outperforms competing approaches," says Dr. Hristijan Gjoreski of the University of Sussex.

Traditionally, he says, a smartwatch picks up on bursts of activity and then deduces what a person is up to. So, continuous steps imply a walk, but if a person stops momentarily, and then begins again, the technology clocks that as two separate walks as opposed to one that includes a short pause.

This new algorithm will track activity continuously, so it will be able to detect the nuances of transitions from one activity to the next, as well as track the activity itself.

With an interrupted walk — to follow that example — the



algorithm's machine learning would allow it to assume that a walk could continue following short pauses, and it would therefore hold onto data while it waits to determine if the walk will in fact keep going.

Dr. Daniel Roggen, head of the Sensor Research Technology Group at the University of Sussex, will speak about the technology today at the British Science Festival's event, "In the era of wearable technologies."

"Future smartwatches will be able to better analyze and understand our activities by automatically discovering when we engage in some new type of activity," Roggen says. "This new method for activity discovery paints a far richer, more accurate, picture of daily human life."

## ■ Daily human life

Of course, any product that can gather data on your entire day could have consequences for individual privacy; imagine helicopter parents forcing kids to wear a smartwatch with this technology, or employers having a new way to monitor productivity. It sounds pretty grim.

When applied to research, however, this algorithm could be helpful for monitoring the daily behavior of individuals and aid in diagnoses, or it could be used to help compile data for studies.

Research on the algorithm will be published at the International Symposium on Wearable Computers, which runs from September 11 to 15 in Maui.

(Source: *Inverse*)

## Official Praises BSI Salient Achievements in Eradication of Depravity

Representative of people of Chaharmahal-o Bakhtiari Province Mohammad Khaledi-Sardashti praised salient achievements of Bank Saderat Iran (BSI) for warding off and alleviating deprivation in this province, the Public Relations Dept. of the bank reported.

He, who is the member of Majlis Energy Commission, pointed to the key role of bank in boosting business

environment and economic sector of the country and said: "All banks in the country have had a very constructive role in realizing objectives of resistance economy."

With due observance to the said issue, BSI has paid 626 billion rials worth of loans and facilities to the industrial and production sector in line with creating stable and sustainable employment, he said, adding: "Giant

steps have been taken by Bank Saderat Iran in line with eradication of depravity and poverty in the country."

In the end, Representative of people of Chaharmahal-o Bakhtiari Province Mohammad Khaledi-Sardashti urged banks in the country to take giant strides with their active and constructive presence in line with removing production barriers facing industrial and production units.



## Exports and Bill L/C Issued in EDBI Up 85%: Report

The amount of export and bill Letter of Credit (L/C) issued in the Export Development Bank of Iran (EDBI) in the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year in 1396 (from March 21 to July 22) stood at approx. \$28 million, showing a considerable 85 percent growth as compared to the same period of last year, Public Relations Dept. of the bank reported.

Management Information Systems and Statistics Department of the bank provided a comprehensive report and

studied the previous four-month performance of various sectors of the bank as compared with the same period of last year.

The report put the balance of rials-based facilities of the bank in the current Iranian month of Tir at 32,165 billion rials, showing a considerable 37 percent (37%) growth as compared to the last year's corresponding period.

It should be noted that the balance of loans and facilities of the bank by the end of Iranian month of Tir stood at

180,384 billion rials.

The bank's paid facilities in rials and foreign currency since the beginning of the current year up to the end of Iranian month of Tir stood at 18,268 billion rials, showing a significant 34 and 40 percent increase as compared to the last year's corresponding period.

The report added: "Of total 10,130 billion rials loans and facilities granted by the bank, 6,679 billion rials (65.95) of which has been provided by the internal resources of the bank while 3,421 billion

rials of which (33.7%) has been provided out of rials-based depositing contract by the National Development Fund of Iran (NDFI).

It should be noted that the currency transfers issued by the bank in the first four months of the current year (from March 21 to July 22) exceeded 1,846 million dollar, showing a considerable 30 percent growth as compared to the last year's corresponding period, the Public Relations Dept. of the bank ended.

## KSC Export of Steel Products Exceeds 1.2m Tons in Current Year

Steel export in Khuzestan Steel Company (KSC) exceeded 1.2 million tons in the first half of the current Iranian calendar year in 1396 (from March 21 to Sept. 22), the Public Relations Dept. of the company reported.

It should be noted that Khuzestan Steel Company (KSC) is the largest exporter of quality steel in the country and holder of statue as exemplary industrial and production unit received in the past Iranian calendar year in 1395 (ended March 20, 2017).

Relying upon the assistance of the Almighty God and at the unsparing efforts and endeavors of all industrious laborers, KSC managed to register new record.

For his part, Mohammad-Hossein Emam Exports

Manager of the company in a press briefing said: "Under the auspices of hardworking manpower and laborers, the company managed to increase export volume of its steel products from 676,066 tons in the past year in 1395 to 1.2 million tons in the first half of the current Iranian calendar year in 1396 (started March 21, 2017)."

He seized this opportunity to felicitate the auspicious occasion of Eid al-Adha and Eid al-Ghadir Khumm and said: "This eye-catching success in selling products of the company is the result of unflinching and unsparing efforts of industrious staff and personnel of the company working in different units of the company and also manpower stationed in Bandar Imam Khomeini (RA)."

In the end, Mohammad-Hossein Emam Exports Manager of the company said: "It is hoped that all in-

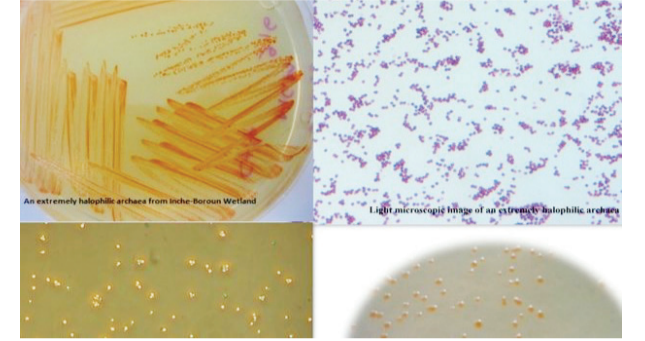


dustrious staff and personnel of the company will take giant strides in the current year in order to materialize most of its objectives."

## Iranian researchers discover new archaea species

Researchers in Iranian Biological Research Center have discovered and registered the 12th species of Archaea in IBRC's Microorganism Bank.

Concerning this new microorganism, Seyyed Abolhasan Shahzade Fazeli, the head of Iranian Biological Research Center said "isolation and maintenance of strains are among the important missions of Microorganism Bank of this center.



As a result of efforts made by this center, new microbial taxons have been discovered and introduced to the world."

He went on to add that a new archaeon was discovered thanks to studies conducted on the biodiversity of microorganisms in Mighan wetland. Mighan wetland which is located in Markazi Province, benefits from unique ecologic characteristics, therefore it is considered a valuable ecosystem for the IBRC's studies on microbial biodiversity.

## ■ Phylogenetic analysis

Fazeli pointed out that on the basis of phylogenetic analysis, and phenotypic and chemotaxonomic characteristics, this archaeon, named *Natrinema soli*, was proposed as a novel species of the family Natrilbaceae and it has been admitted by the International Journal of Systematic and Evolutionary Microbiology (IJSEM).

These species of microorganisms usually thrive in extreme acidic or alkaline environments such as hot springs, extremely salty lakes and environments, therefore their ability to withstand extreme conditions makes them valuable for producing enzymes and useful chemical compounds in different industries.

(Source: *mehrnews.com*)

## How to recycle plastic in space

Space travel favors light packers, since launching a single pound of stuff costs an eye-watering \$10,000. But NASA likes to be ready for anything, which is easier with more supplies. So what's an agency on a budget to do?

Next spring, the International Space Station will get a new piece of equipment designed to help tackle this problem. Called the Refabricator, it's a mini-fridge sized machine that can take a plastic component, melt it down, and print a new component out of the same plastic. It's the first machine to combine recycling and 3D printing into one device, even here on Earth.

But while its destination is the ISS, it's aimed at NASA's goal of going much farther. It takes just a few hours for a resupply mission to reach the space station, but NASA has its eyes set on the Moon and Mars. "That's a very different model," says Niki Werkheiser, who specializes in in-space manufacturing at NASA. New supplies would take weeks to reach the Moon and months to reach Mars—and that kind of transit time makes forgetting your keys very unappealing.

NASA has been intrigued by a 3D-printing "MacGyver box" as a solution to the hazards of an incomplete packing list for a long time. In 1999, the agency put a 3D printer on the so-called Vomit Comet, a parabolic flight that produces 25-second spurts of weightlessness to test how the process could be affected by gravity changes.

But at the time, Werkheiser said, patents covering 3D printing made doing things with the technology more complicated.

That meant the space station didn't get its first 3D printer until 2014. Its successor, the Additive Manufacturing Facility, was launched last year, also run by a commercial company, called Made in Space. The machine prints both for NASA and for customers on Earth.

(Source: *Newsweek*)

## Alcraft plans to create low-volume electric shooting brake of our dreams

The rapid development of electric powertrains has opened the door for new manufacturers to enter the game with new ideas about what constitutes a luxury car. Alcraft Motor Company, based in the UK, has announced plans to build a battery-powered shooting brake that blends big performance and luggage space in a (very, very) pretty package.

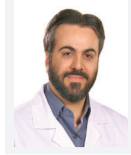
At the moment, the Alcraft GT is a speculative set of specifications rather than of a ready-to-run production vehicle. David Alcraft, founder and managing director of Alcraft, isn't courting the mass market with the car, but instead wants to develop a low-volume showcase of what can be done when old-fashioned British engineering meets modern powertrain and production techniques.

"We want to build a British car company which brings together traditional skills and high technology for the emerging low carbon car market," says Alcraft. "We're about combining great design, outstanding dynamics and the visceral thrill of electric powertrains to create products that are high in performance and desirability but very usable. We hope this will establish a niche for Alcraft Motor in Britain's renowned specialist low-volume car industry."

Rather than trying to please everybody with a conventional sedan or SUV design, the team at Alcraft has produced a stunning two-door estate, or shooting brake. The design is just a 33 percent scale model at the moment, but it shows plenty of promise. The nose has a similar look to that of the Lucid Air, while the squashed roofline and pumped wheel arches could have been lifted from the Aston Martin Vanquish Zagato Shooting Brake previewed earlier this year.

(Source: *New Atlas*)

Everything has a temperament



ARTICLE

By Seyed Mahdi Mirghazanfari, MD, PhD

Everything in this world including animals, plants and inanimate objects, seasons, climatic conditions, age, or gender have a temperament (Mizaj). It means that everything can be described regarding its warmth or humidity.

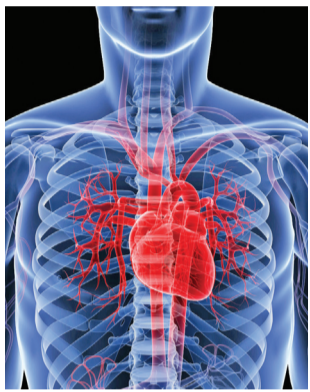
In previous articles, Mizaj, its kinds, importance in living a healthy life, ways to recognize one's distinguishing Mizaj and adopting the lifestyle that suits it were thoroughly discussed.

Knowing the temperament of whatever that exists around us and treating them in accordance with their Mizaj would benefit us by helping to maintain our health. Due to the fact that human body is a part of this world and is affected by it one cannot ignore the impacts of other phenomenon and objects in ensuring or restoring human health.

Organs's temperament

All organs and body tissues have a specific Mizaj.

**Heart:** The heart has a warm and dry temperament. The constant movement of the heart throughout one's life is a proof of its warmth. Consuming too much of food stuff with warm Mizaj such as pepper and spices would give the person palpitations. Having a fixed shape and being stiff and firm are the signs of the heart dryness.



**Brain:** The brain, command center for the human nervous system, is cold and wet. The brain is composed of water in addition to the squashy and soft gray and white matter. The brain is capable of transmitting great deal of signals without failing. The way the brain is operating and its shape all are defining its cold and wet Mizaj. Consuming too much dairy products such as yoghurt, water, and fruits and vegetables with high water content such as water melon, peach, or lettuce would increase coldness and humidity in the brain and result in sleepiness and impair its performance.

**Blood, liver, muscles:** These organs are warm and wet. They are pretty warm and flexible and in order to protect them, stay healthy, and keep on living one must consume meat, bread and fairly sweat food items which all have warm and wet Mizaj. However, overeating and consuming too much of the aforementioned food items would cause a build-up of waste materials in these organs which would manifest themselves by displaying symptoms of polycythemia, fatty liver disease, muscle stiffness and inflammation in muscles.

**Bones, teeth, fingernails, and hair:** They all have cold and dry Mizaj. They are firm and rigid and in order to protect and reinforce them and build strong bones and teeth one must consume food stuff with cold and dry Mizaj such as essential minerals (magnesium, calcium, zinc, iron, etc.). Such minerals are normally found in Kashk (dairy product made from drained yogurt), wheat and rice bran, almond, and barley. Therefore, due to their Mizaj, these organs are sensitive to coldness and dryness. Coldness and dryness could bring about pain in bones in cold weather, toothache by having something cold, and brittle and dry hair and nails.

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

LEARN ENGLISH

Daily Life - Opening a Bank Account

A: Next, please. May I help you, sir?  
 B: Hello, yes, I'd like to open a bank account.  
 A: Certainly, I can help you with that. What type of account would you like to open? A chequing or a savings account?  
 B: What features do they offer?  
 A: Well, if you just take a look here, see, with our **chequing account**, you can have unlimited daily transactions for a small monthly fee, and our **savings account** has a higher interest rate, but you must carry a minimum **balance** of \$ 10,000 dollars.  
 B: I see, well, I think I'm more interested in a chequing account; I like to have easy **access** to my money.  
 A: Alright, then, with this chequing account you'll be issued a **debit card** and a cheque book. Will you require **over draft** protection? There is an extra fee for that.  
 B: No, that won't be necessary.  
 A: In that case, **I'll get you** to fill out this paperwork; **I'll need your** social insurance number, and two pieces of government ID. **If you could just** sign here, and here, and here, we'll be all set. Would you like to make a **deposit** today?  
 B: Yes, I'd like to deposit one billion dollars.

Key Vocabulary

**feature:** interesting or important quality  
**chequing account:** a regular account for daily transactions  
**transaction:** an occurrence in which money is transferred from one person, or one account, to another  
**savings account:** an account for people to keep their money, usually offers a higher interest rate  
**balance:** the amount of money in a bank account  
**access:** a way to get to something  
**debit card:** a card for you to take money out of your bank account  
**overdraft:** taking out more money than what is available in the account  
**I'll get you:** a way to ask people to do things  
**I'll need your:** a way to request people to provide something  
**If you could just:** a polite way of asking people to do things  
**deposit:** an amount of money that is put in a bank account  
 (Source: irlanguage.com)

Eco-conscious campaigns in past week



• A number of environmental NGOs in Shiraz, southern Fars province, raised awareness about protection of the Asiatic cheetah among children through playing games including the famous 'snakes and ladders'.

The event was organized to mark the National Asiatic Cheetah Day, which falls on August 31. Iran is the last habitat of the endangered animal. It is now estimated that approximately 50 Asiatic cheetahs are living in the wild of Iran.



• Members of Paksazan Fars NGO in Fars province cleaned Tang-e Tizab, a tourist attraction near Sepidan city. With the help of locals they cleaned the roadside which was polluted with plastics and trashes to promote not dropping litter in the nature.



• At Nurabad city of Mamasani county, Fars province, members of Hamian-e Tabiat Zagros NGO watered saplings of ziziphus mucronata they had planted on the slopes of a hill.



• Shaghayegh-haye Vahshi Institute, northern Gilan province, led an expedition for members of branches of the Red Crescent Society from different provinces to Talesh County to get them acquainted with the Caspian Hyrcanian mixed forests. The ecoregion is an area of lush lowland and montane forests covering about 55,000 square

kilometers near the southern shores of the Caspian Sea.



• In Siahkal city, Gilan province, a group of environmental activists paid tribute to three forest rangers from Astara city who lost their lives when their car rolled over in Astara forest on July 20, 2017.



• In Karaj, northern Alborz province, an NGO named Intimate with the Earth, performed a theater on the theme of environment. They will perform the theater on Thursday and Friday evenings until the end of September.

Is Iran's environment chief seeing the bigger picture?

1 → We now realize that it is important to maintain the planet's biodiversity, that it is the richness of animal and plant life, its abundance and wild habitats that keeps us all healthy. The more species disappear, the more entire eco-systems become vulnerable and would eventually fall apart as the links in the food chains become broken. These benefits, which most of us take for granted, are called "ecosystem services".

Some of these services are obvious. For instance, there are plants and animals that we eat. Meanwhile, photosynthetic plankton in the sea, and green plants, provide us with the oxygen we breathe.

These are quite direct, but sometimes the services provided can be more subtle. Many of our crop plants rely on insects to produce seeds, and would not survive - let alone provide us with food - without them.

In 1997, ecologist Robert Costanza and his colleagues estimated that the biosphere provides services worth around \$33 trillion a year. For comparison, they noted that the entire global economy at the time produced around \$18 trillion a year.

Five years later, the team took the argument a step further by asking how much we would gain by conserving biodiversity. They concluded that the benefits would outweigh the costs by a factor of 100. In other words, conserving

nature is a staggeringly good investment.

By contrast, letting species decline and go extinct looks like a bad move. A 2010 study concluded that unchecked species loss would wipe 18% off global economic output by 2050.

**No environmental knowledge**  
 Over the course of the conference, Kalantari said that he doesn't have relevant expertise in environmental issues such as wildlife management on multiple occasions. "We are planning on outsourcing the work to specialists and experts in each sector," he said.

That Kalantari frankly acknowledges his professional incompetence in environmental issues can be interpreted in two different ways.

On one hand, one might wonder why someone who has no expert environmental knowledge must take over an environmental organization. On the other hand, his bravery, frankness, and honesty is admirable. However another question will arise here: who he is going to outsource the job to? Some argue that the experts Kalantari is speaking of are not trustworthy to get the job.

**Planted forest will replace the old-growth forest**

Commenting on dam building - what many experts believe to be the main culprit of total or partial dryness of many wetlands across the country,

Kalantari said that he does not object dam construction.

"Building dams could be both good and bad, I don't object dam construction in northern cities," he said.

In response to the journalists' protest saying that dam construction not only violates the water right of the wetlands and rivers but also results in large scale deforestation in precious Hircanian forest, Kalantari justified his claims by pledging to plant forests in the areas.

"Hircanian forest used to stretch over 2.3 million hectares of land in northern Iran while they have shrunk to 1.18 million hectares in the past 25-30 years," Kalantari said, stating, "We build dams but we also make the energy ministry to plant trees on 10 hectares of land for each one hectare of land being used for dam construction."

"This way within five years after finishing Shafaroud dam [Gilan province] which stretches over 60 hectares we have 600 hectares of planted forest in the area," he concluded.

But apparently the environment chief's lack of knowledge is what endangering what is left of centuries-old Hircanian forest. It is a common knowledge that a planted forest rarely replicates the biodiversity and complexity of a natural forest.

Because trees remove carbon dioxide from the air as they grow, tree planting

can be used as a geoengineering technique to remove CO2 from the atmosphere but normally reforestation is the commercial logging industry's answer to the large-scale destruction of old growth forests.

**Best case scenario**  
 Since the very first day of Kalantari's appointment as environment chief many voiced their concerns over his election believing that the former agriculture minister would treat the environment as a means of development. Moreover, being in favor of controversial genetically modified food, has made his opponents more concerned than ever.

But some other try to stay positive saying that Kalantari might be able to boost the Department of Environment's limited budget. Budget deficiency, is a great barrier to many conservation projects in one of the most important organizations of the country.

Besides, water shortage is certainly the country's undoing. After all, Kalantari's emphasis on water shortage and measures to address it might be a good thing as water is essential for all beings on earth. He might be seeing the bigger picture.

It is sure too soon to form an opinion about the newly appointed chief. We must wait and see if Kalantari chooses what's best for the environment or not.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Iranians donate \$25m in alms

Benevolent people across Iran donated one trillion rials (about \$25 million) in alms during the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year, began on March 21, 2017. The amount shows an increase of 15 percent in comparison to the same period last year, an official with the state-run Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation in charge of collecting donations said on Tuesday. Most of the sum was collected from Tehran, Khorasan Razavi, Khuzestan, Isfahan and Mazandaran provinces, Mehr quoted Abolqasem Rastegar as saying.

مردم ۱۰۰ میلیارد تومان صدقه دادند

مردم نیکوکار در چهار ماهه نخست امسال ۱۰۰ میلیارد تومان صدقه پرداخت کردند که این رقم نسبت به مدت مشابه سال گذشته ۱۵ درصد رشد داشته است. رستگار با بیان اینکه مردم نیکوکار ۱۰۰ میلیارد تومان صدقه در چهار ماهه نخست امسال پرداخت کردند ادامه داد: این رقم نسبت به مدت مشابه سال گذشته ۱۵ درصد رشد داشته است. رستگار با اشاره به اینکه رویکرد حوزه مشارکتهای مردمی در سال ۹۶ اجرای روشهای نوین در پرداخت صدقات و طرح اکرام ایتم و محسنین است گفت: سیاست کمیته امداد در جمع آوری صدقه روشهای غیر حضوری است تا منابع مالی حاصل از آن با کمترین هزینه و سریع ترین زمان ممکن برای نیازمندان هزینه شود.

ENGLISH PROVERB

Too much bed makes a dull head

**Explanation:** When you sleep too much, you are not able to think clearly.  
**For example:** try to wake up early in the morning. Too much bed makes a dull head!

PHRASAL VERB

Wise up

**Meaning:** stop being stupid  
**For example:** His supervisor told him to wise up and start following the rules or else he'd lose his job

ENGLISH IDIOM

Wait for the cat to jump

**Explanation:** delay taking action until you see how events will turn out.  
**For example:** Let's wait for the cat to jump before we decide

**I→** "Indonesia is taking the lead, and ultimately there is a possibility of ASEAN countries joining in," H.T. Imam, a political adviser to Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, told Reuters.

He was referring to the 10-member Association of South East Asian Nations that groups both Myanmar and Indonesia.

"If we can keep the pressure on Myanmar from ASEAN, from India as well, that will be good."

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi begins a visit to Myanmar later on Tuesday, during which he will meet top officials, including Suu Kyi.

"Modi is going there and our foreign secretary has already briefed the foreign secretary of India on this," said Imam. "If the international conscience is awakened that would put pressure on Myanmar."

Turkey called the violence against the Rohingya "genocide" and offered Bangladesh help with the refugee influx. Pakistan, home to a large Rohingya community, has expressed "deep anguish" and urged the world body, the Organization of Islamic Countries, to act.

---Escape from Myanmar

New arrivals and residents in Shamlapur said hundreds of boats had arrived on Monday and Tuesday with several thousand people, after a crackdown on traffickers at an island about 50 km (31 miles) south.

Reuters reporters saw men, women, children and their belongings, even live chickens, disembark from one boat.

"We fled to a hill when the shooting started. The army set fire to houses," said Salim Ullah, 28, a farmer from Myanmar's

## Myanmar's Suu Kyi under pressure as almost 125,000 Rohingya flee violence



village of Kyauk Pan Du, gripping a sack containing his few remaining belongings, as he gazed exhausted at the beach.

"We got on the boat at daybreak. I came with my mother, wife and two children. There were 40 people on a boat, including 25 women."

The latest estimate of the numbers who have crossed the border into Bangladesh since Aug. 25, based on calculations by U.N. workers in the south Asian country, is 123,600.

That takes to about 210,000 the number of Rohingya who have sought refuge in Bangladesh since October, when Rohingya insurgents staged much smaller attacks on security posts, triggering a

major Myanmar army counteroffensive and sending about 87,000 people fleeing into Bangladesh.

The new arrivals - many sick or wounded with burns or bullet wounds - have strained the resources of aid agencies and communities already helping hundreds of thousands of refugees from previous spasms of violence in Myanmar.

"One camp, Kutapalong, has reached full capacity," said Vivian Tan, the regional spokeswoman for the United Nations refugee agency, UNHCR.

"Nayapara saw several hundred people arrive in one day. This is stretching resources. We are doing what we can, but will need to seek more resources."

In Shamlapur, refugees said about 40 people were packed into the curved hulls of fishing vessels three meters (yards) long.

Fishermen were demanding payment of as much as 10,000 taka (\$124) for each adult, with Rohingyas who could not pay being detained, the refugees said.

Bangladesh pulled 53 dead from the Naf River separating it from Myanmar, and from the sea. Many more were suspected to have died on the journey.

Social worker Shahid Ullah said he feared another deadly capsizing was inevitable, given the monsoon season.

"If just one boat sinks, we will have 30 or 40 people dead."

(Source: Reuters)

## Merkel wants EU to rethink Turkish accession talks

German Chancellor Angela Merkel warned on Tuesday that Turkey was drifting away from the rule of law fast and vowed to push her EU partners to consider suspending or ending its accession talks at an October meeting.

Less than three weeks before an election, she vented her frustration with Turkey and spelled out her intentions clearly to the lower house of parliament after on Sunday sharpening her rhetoric and saying Turkey should not become an EU member.

Those comments, made in a televised debate with her Social Democrat (SPD) election rival, drew charges of populism from Ankara. It was the latest of a series of spats between Merkel and President Tayyip Erdogan over the last two years.

"Turkey is moving away from the path of the rule of law at a very fast speed," Merkel said, adding her government would do everything it could to secure the release of Germans detained in Turkey, who Berlin says are innocent.

Merkel said developments called for a rethink of Germany's and the EU's relations with Turkey.

"We will also - and I will suggest this takes place at the EU meeting in October - discuss future relations with Turkey, including the question of suspending or ending talks on accession," she said.

"I will push for a decisive stand ... But we need to coordinate and work with our partners," she said, adding that it would damage the EU if Erdogan saw member



states embroiled in an argument. "That would dramatically weaken Europe's position."

Meanwhile, the European Union (EU)'s foreign policy chief, Federica Mogherini, says the bloc will continue its membership talks with Turkey despite disagreements with Ankara on human rights issues.

"We are continuing to talk with Turkey," Mogherini told reporters in the northwestern Slovenian town of Bled, where she attended the 2017 Bled Strategic Forum, on Monday.

"We are not always agreeing on everything," she said, adding, "There are some issues - especially human rights, fundamental freedoms, the situation of journalists - that are taking our positions very much apart, but talks continue."

She said the future of the EU's relations with Turkey would, however, depend on how the talks proceed.

Addressing a panel of the forum later in the day, Mogherini described Turkey as "a key player in a region that is strategically important for us, the Middle East, the Mediterranean."

Turkey has been trying to accede to the EU since the late 1980s. Formal accession talks began in 2005. The EU has opened 16 out of the 35 chapters required for Turkey to join the 28-nation bloc, but only one of them has so far been concluded.

### A purge in Turkey, and a snag in Europe

The talks have effectively been halted since Turkey began a massive crackdown on supposed putschists following an abortive coup in 2016. The EU reacted strongly to Ankara's purging of thousands of people from organizations and institutions over alleged links to the coup attempt.

The European Parliament voted in favor of halting the membership talks with Turkey in November 2016 over Ankara's heavy-handed crackdown following the failed coup.

EU heavyweight Germany and Austria have also been outspoken critics of Ankara since the Turkish crackdown and have said the accession talks must end, angering Turkey.

In 2017, government-proposed reforms that turned Turkey's political system into a presidential one compounded the problem.

(Source: Reuters)

## The King of Cocaine? Alleged mafia drugs kingpin arrested in South America after 23 years on the run

An alleged mafia boss nicknamed "the King of Cocaine" has been captured in South America after 23 years on the run.

Rocco Morabito, who was wanted by Italian police for allegedly masterminding the trafficking of cocaine from Latin America to Europe, was arrested in a hotel in Uruguay.

He is considered to be one of Italy's five most dangerous fugitives and has been on the run from arrest since 1994.

During a search of his home in Uruguay, police found 13 mobile phones, which investigators said were used for drug deals, a 9mm pistol, ammunition, a hunting knife and 150 passport photos of himself in different guises.

Morabito, an alleged kingpin in the 'Ndrangheta mafia, is believed to have been living in Uruguay for around a decade under the alias Francisco Capeletto Souza. He had been able to obtain Bra-

zilian identity documents as well as the right to live in Uruguay.

His arrest was the result of a joint operation between police in South America and investigators in Calabria, the home of the much-feared 'Ndrangheta.

The organized crime network, which for years has been extending its reach from its home territory to other parts of the world, makes millions by smuggling cocaine into Europe, often via Italy. Italian police described Morabito as "one of the most important members of the 'Ndrangheta".

He was arrested in a hotel in Punta del Este, a tourist resort about 90 miles from the capital, Montevideo.

The arrest came "after months of intense international cooperation in intelligence matters," the Italian police said in a statement. His false identity was known



to Interpol and when he checked into the hotel, an alert was generated.

"He didn't put up any resistance," said Emilio Russo, an Italian officer involved in the investigation. "He tried to deny who he really was, but when put under pressure admitted to his real identity."

"We maintain that Morabito was still actively involved in criminality. He was not a former member of the 'Ndrangheta, he was still very much an active member."

His wife, a 54-year-old Angolan woman with a Portuguese passport, was also arrested. When police searched their home, also in Punta del Este, they found the 13 mobile phones and weapons, as well as a dozen credit cards. A Mercedes car was impounded.

Morabito is expected to be extradited back to Italy in the coming months, where he faces 30 years in prison for various crimes, including mafia association and drug trafficking.

(Source: Telegraph)

## New Qatar port aims to 'break shackles' of boycott

Qatar said Tuesday that a new \$7.4 billion port would help to "break the shackles" of a three-month-old boycott of the gas-rich emirate by Arab states led by Saudi Arabia.

The Hamad Port, which began operating in December, is a major hub for imports to Qatar, hit by a land and air embargo by some of its most powerful neighbors.

"This is a gateway to break the shackles imposed on Qatar," transport minister Jassim bin Saif Al-Sulaiti said in a speech during an inauguration ceremony for the port held Tuesday.

"Nothing can stop us and our ambition," he added. In a relatively rare public appearance since the onset

of the crisis, Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani attended the inauguration but did not speak.

On June 5, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Bahrain cut ties with Qatar, accusing it of bankrolling Islamist extremist groups and having close ties to Shiite Iran.

Qatar denies the charges.

Tuesday's hour-long ceremony, broadcast live on Qatari television stations, included a band, acrobats and fireworks.

The ostentatious display was a clear signal of defiance to Qatar's neighbors after their suspension of economic and diplomatic relations with Doha.

Hamad will be Qatar's largest container port and will provide commercial access to some 150 countries, according to official reports.

These include links to regional ports in Oman and Kuwait, and more distant ports of call from Turkey to India and Pakistan.

Qatar previously relied on neighbouring Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates for food imports.

But as part of the sanctions, Saudi Arabia sealed its land border with Qatar.

(Source: AFP)

## Zarif: Iran made its way into regional security equations

**I→** "We also need to preclude American efforts to disrupt the JCPOA on our account... Although America's hostility towards us did not lessen, their options were limited. The fact that while in the

past they imposed a new set of sanctions against us day in day out but now they are limited to a few channels" because the JCPOA has "created limits for them to vent their hostility," the chief diplomat noted.

Elsewhere, Zarif said although it may be thought he prioritizes improvement of ties with Europe over other areas of the world, his record shows he has paid more attention to neighboring countries.

"Less than 20 percent of my trips in the eleventh administrations were headed to Europe. This is while about 55 percent of my trips abroad were made to neighboring or Asian countries," he stressed.

## Israel launches war games simulating 'next confrontation with Hezbollah'

Israel announced that it launches large scale military exercises aimed at simulating "the next confrontation with Hezbollah."

According to the Israeli war ministry, the 10-day drills, the largest the Tel Aviv regime has held in almost 20 years, kick off on Tuesday.

Tens of thousands of troops are set to take part in the war games, which will also include aircraft, boats, and submarines.

Preparations for the exercise have been in place for over a year.

Last month, the secretary general of the Lebanese Hezbollah movement said Israel is not able to launch a new war on Lebanon, because it knows that Hezbollah is much more powerful than 2006 and any such war would cost Tel Aviv dearly.

Sayed Hassan Nasrallah made the remarks in a speech on the anniversary of Israel's defeat in the 33-day military onslaught against Lebanon back in the summer of 2006.

About 1,200 Lebanese, most of them civilians, lost their lives during Israel's 33-day war on Lebanon back in the summer of 2006.

According to the 629-page Winograd Report by the Israeli regime itself, Hezbollah fighters involved in defending Lebanon against the Israeli war defeated the enemy and Tel Aviv was compelled to withdraw without having achieved any of its objectives.

UN Security Council Resolution 1701, which brokered a ceasefire in the 2006 war, calls on Israel to respect Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

(Source: Press TV)

## A letter to humanity

**I→** His appalling comments indicate that he won't slow down his campaign, describing it as "unfinished business" going back to the time of WWII. Moreover, in a documentary by Channel 4 putting forth some of the realities in the country, we can see the same disturbing mindset in other state officials as they claim that there are no Rohingya in their country - neither now nor in history - and insist they are foreigners with no identities. A book handed out to the Channel 4 representative by government officials once more reveals how Myanmar looks at the 1.1 million Rohingya, who numbered about four million before the attacks. They do not even pronounce their name but rather refer to them as "R" word (the Rohingya people are beyond such a claim) and deny their existence in the area and evaluate it as "a political construct based on a myth".

However, history shows the story is the other way around. The established history of Arakan that goes back to 3 BC and Islamic faith reached Arakan on the 8th century AD through the Arab merchants. Following King Narameikla's conversion to Islam in the 15th century, the Arakan Islamic Kingdom was established and Islam has spread rapidly since then. In 1784, Burma invaded Arakan and inflicted torture on two ethnic groups: Rohingya Muslims and Buddhist Rakhine. The Arakan people who fled this tyranny took refuge in Bangladesh. Both groups co-existed in peace and tranquility until the 19th century. Later on, the Burmese government incited Buddhists against Muslims and in 1942 the first overt massacre, known as Karbalai Arakan, took place and the sequence of events we're all familiar with followed.

Following attacks that accelerated in 2012, thousands of Rohingya were tortured, burned alive or executed. Many had to escape due to the brutality Myanmar's forces and the Buddhists carried out. Only since October 2016, some 87,000 Rohingya fled to Bangladesh. Some used local boats to cross a stream to reach the Bangladeshi side of the border. Regrettably, these boats often capsized and many Rohingya lost their lives to this river trying to escape by running away from their homelands. The scale of the disaster in these latest occurrences are visible even in satellite images as Phil Robertson, deputy Asia director at Human Rights Watch, said, "This new satellite imagery shows the total destruction of a Muslim village, and prompts serious concerns that the level of destruction... may be far worse than originally thought."

These recent violent attacks prompted the UN and some countries to express their concern over the effects on civilians. Turkish President Erdogan took a strong stance against this savagery being imposed on Muslim minority by calling it a "genocide". He called on the international community to take action to help the Rohingya minority, saying the world was "blind and deaf" to their plight in a speech on August 28th.

One may wonder what lies behind the motives of Myanmar's military and extremist Buddhist groups to be able to act so heinously against these oppressed Muslims. Children are dying of hunger if not burned or shot; women and the elderly are summarily executed without any discrimination. They have no home and no place else to go to. The reason for this suffering and pain is the lack of leadership in the Islamic world. There are many solid steps to be taken to prevent this plight such as holding big, crowded rallies, cutting diplomatic ties with Myanmar's government or imposing sanctions on them, organizing meetings with leaders of the UN or other powerful states, informing the unaware of what is going on in this part of the world via social media or WhatsApp groups, writing articles in the mainstream media to voice their concerns, but none of them will be sufficient. What is necessary to end the spilling of the blood and to dry the tears of the eyes of the Rohingya is to pray for the unity of the Islamic world regardless of difference in opinions and focus on the teachings of the Qur'an. Let us join forces and not let any other genocide like Srebrenica or Rwanda take place.

## Messi's release clause in new Barcelona contract offer revealed

Lionel Messi's new contract offer from Barcelona includes a release clause of €300million.

Messi is weighing up a deal to take him to 2021, but is said to be considering his future after the Catalan giants suffered a difficult transfer window.

He has reportedly grown frustrated after pal Neymar was sold to PSG and Barca failed to land Philippe Coutinho.

The fee, at just over £276million in today's exchange, is huge for a 30-year-old, but perhaps not so outlandish given the fees for Kylian Mbappe and Neymar.

Manchester City have been frequently linked Messi given his relationship with ex-Barca boss Pep Guardiola, now at the Etihad.

However, Barcelona president Josep Maria Bartomeu believes the release clause is irrelevant anyway.

He told Sportes: "Barça will never make a player stay if he tells us that he wants to go, as it happens in other clubs in Europe."

"We have a way of being different from other clubs, we think the players are happy here to play and to perform."

"It is the same if the clause is 500, 600, 1,000 or 1,500, we can put the clause we want because if a player wants to leave, we will have to sit down and talk to him to see how we do."

"It is what we miss with Neymar, if he had done so, would have been better for everyone."

(Source: Mirror)

## Diego Simeone signs three-year Atletico Madrid deal

Atletico Madrid's coach Diego Simeone has renewed his contract until 2020, the club said on Tuesday.

The popular Argentine manager was appointed in 2011 and helped Atletico to win the league in 2014, as well as reaching two Champions League finals, both of which ended in defeats by rivals Real Madrid. He started his seventh campaign as Atletico manager this season, the coach in La Liga with the most time at the helm of his team, and only Arsene Wenger (at Arsenal) beats him in terms of elite European sides, said Atletico in a statement.

Simeone, who has won five trophies while Atletico coach, guiding them through arguably their most successful era, renewed his contract to 2020 in 2015, but agreed to a two-year reduction on that in September 2016.

(Source: Telegraph)

## Bolt enthused by Mourinho's impact on Man Utd

Manchester United fan, and athletics royalty, Usain Bolt is quietly confident that Jose Mourinho's men are on track for a Premier League title triumph this season.

The Red Devils are the only side with a 100 per cent record in England's top flight, having dispatched West Ham, Swansea City and Leicester City without conceding a single goal in 2017-18.

Romelu Lukaku has scored four goals in as many appearances after joining from Everton for £75million, helping to solve the chronic attacking woes that hampered Mourinho's men last term. Eight-time Olympic gold medalist Bolt took in United's 2-0 win over Leicester at Old Trafford last month after signing off from the track at the IAAF World Championships and he believes the biggest change at United has been mental reinforcement.

"We're looking pretty good, players are playing with confidence which is a key thing," Bolt told Omnisport at the opening of the new Hublot boutique in Kyoto, Japan.

"I saw the games and was very impressed with them, but for me I'm waiting for the next four games to say, 'alright, we're on track to winning the title'. So far, we look good."

Bolt is confident Mourinho remains the right man to restore former glories at Old Trafford and hailed the impact Lukaku has had on their attacking fortunes.

He added: "I said it last year - last year we just couldn't score and that was our biggest issue."

"We played well, we defended well, but we couldn't score goals and this season we don't have that problem."

"I've told people that as long as we start scoring we're going to do great, so that's a good thing and I'm very impressed."

"I told people here that I was happy when Mourinho came on board."

(Source: Soccerway)

## FIFA probing Dele Alli's controversial gesture during England's win over Slovakia

FIFA are 'gathering evidence' on Dele Alli's middle finger gesture during England's 2-1 win over Slovakia at Wembley.

World football's governing body, who sanction World Cup qualifiers, have launched a probe into the match, surrounding the gesture made by Alli. The Tottenham midfielder was seen on television making the gesture during the second half, but he insists it was towards former Spurs teammate Kyle Walker as a joke.

If Alli were found to have given referee Clement Turpin the finger he could be in trouble with FIFA.

However, he quickly attempted to end the controversy, tweeting that it was aimed at 'good friend' Walker.

"Just to clarify, the gesture tonight was a joke between me and my good friend Kyle Walker!" he wrote.

"Apologies for any offence caused! Great win Znite!"

Alli appeared to be angered by a challenge in the 76th minute at Wembley. However, even if the gesture is deemed as a joke with a friend he could be mentioned in the referee's report.

The laws of football say a player can be shown a red card if they "use offensive or insulting or abusive language and/or gestures". That means Alli could still face a ban if the incident is reviewed by FIFA.

When England manager Gareth Southgate was asked about immediately after the game, he said: "I didn't know about it until you told me just now."

"We will have a look at it in the next couple of days."

(Source: Daily Star)

# Federer and Nadal move within sight of landmark meeting

Roger Federer crushed Germany's Philipp Kohlschreiber 6-4 6-2 7-5 to ease into the quarter-finals of the U.S. Open and remain on a collision course for a semi-final showdown with Rafa Nadal.

The elegant Swiss maestro and the muscular Spaniard have played for titles on French Open clay, Wimbledon's manicured lawns and in Australian heat and while no trophy would be on the line, a New York meeting would still have the Big Apple buzzing.

One of sport's great rivalries, Federer and Nadal have clashed 37 times over the years but never stood across from each other on Flushing Meadows' hardcourts.

Standing between Federer and a semi-final berth is towering Argentine Juan Martin del Potro, who beat the former world number one in the 2009 final to lift his only grand slam title.

Nadal kept up his end of the bargain with a straight sets win over Ukraine's Alexandr Dolgoplov earlier on Monday. He will need to get past 19-year-old Russian Andrey Rublev.

"I think it would mean a lot to both of us," said Federer during his post-match television interview. "I think it would be good for tennis, good for the game, but we'll see if we get there."

"There is Rublev on his side, a great, young, up-and-coming player I love to see play and Del Potro, he had an epic today."

After two marathon five-setters to open his U.S. Open account, Federer sprinted past veteran Spaniard Feliciano Lopez in just 77 minutes in the third round and dismissed Kohlschreiber in one hour, 49 minutes without facing a break point.

Unbeaten by the German in 11 matches prior to Monday's clash, Federer started quietly and was content to feel out his opponent but it was not long until he turned up the pressure and broke his opponent with a thundering



forehand before wrapping up the first set.

With the match on serve at 2-1, razor sharp Federer tore through six successive games to take the second set and go 1-0 up in the third.

With Kohlschreiber on the ropes, the 36-year-old Swiss seemed to ease up but he took the decisive break at 6-5 before closing out the match with a classic forehand winner.

If there was one worry about the Swiss in the one-sided contest, it was the sight of him leaving the court before the

start of the third set to receive treatment on a back that had given him problems in the run-up to the grand slam.

Federer, however, downplayed the timeout, declaring himself 100 percent healthy and ready to go.

"I just felt something, sort of my muscle being tight at the back," explained Federer. "I just wanted to get it done really quickly after the set break."

"It was more precaution. It's all good. No problems there. I'm not worried about it."

(Source: Reuters)

## Barcelona will be better without Neymar, insists chief Josep Maria Bartomeu

Barcelona chief Josep Maria Bartomeu believes his side will be better this season despite losing star player Neymar to PSG.

Neymar's £198million move to PSG came as a surprise to Barcelona and forced the Spanish giants into scrambling for replacements.

They tried and failed to sign Philippe Coutinho from Liverpool and were linked with a deadline day move for Angel Di Maria but the deal failed to materialise.

Barca did however manage to land Ousmane Dembele from Borussia Dortmund for £96m to fill the void left by Neymar and Bartomeu believes his side will be better due to the club's summer acquisitions.

Bartomeu said: "It's better. Better on the right flank and in midfield. We can counter-attack and with Paulinho we've got a lot of strength. And up front we have players like [Gerard] Deulofeu and Dembele."

The sale of the Brazilian superstar has broken up the famous front three of Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and Neymar but Bartomeu said it was not a bad move 'to end the strength of the trident'.

"It's been really good but it's had consequences," he said. "It's an opportunity to play a return to collective football in midfield, which is traditionally Barca's strength."

"His exit allows us to strengthen the

(Source: Daily Mail)



## Werner earns top billing as Germany striker

Germany striker Timo Werner's enviable scoring record after only eight internationals has earned him a starting spot in attack with fellow forward Mario Gomez bowing to the talented 21-year-old less than a year before the World Cup.

Werner burst onto the international scene in the past year and has so far netted six times for Germany, including three at the Confederations Cup this summer, where he was joint top scorer.

The RB Leipzig forward, whose speed and versatility up front has given Germany far more options, has muscled his way into the team and his two goals in their 6-0 rout of Norway on Monday further tightened his hold on the spot.

"He will dominate the attack for Germany for the next 10 years," the 32-year-old Gomez, who has himself scored a highly respectable 31 goals in 71 matches, told reporters after also getting onto the scoresheet against Norway.

"It is likely he will do the same in Europe if he continues like that. He is level-headed and does a fantastic job. We need someone like Timo in such a form if we want to be world champions."

(Source: Reuters)



## Man City stadium broken into by YouTuber in concerning security breach

A group of urban free climbers have recorded themselves breaking into Manchester City's Etihad Stadium and climbing all the way onto the roof, before being led away by a police officer, in a worrying breach of security.

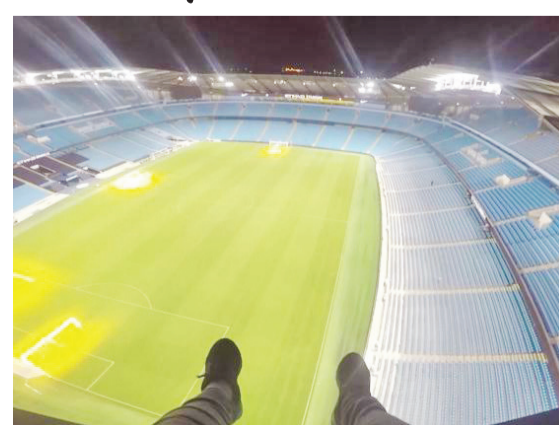
Free climber Ally Law has over 130k subscribers on YouTube, and has previously climbed the likes of Blackpool Tower, the Stealth rollercoaster at Thorpe Park and a huge abandoned gas tower in London.

His last video sees him breaking into City's ground with a group of friends, before making it all the way onto the roof of the 55k-capacity stadium.

He records himself dangling his legs off the very edge of the roof in one stomach-churning moment, only to be accosted by an armed police officer who tells them that a helicopter is on its way to pick them up.

The group decides to leave with the officer, with Law now claiming that City have informed him that they are now taking legal action against him and his friends.

He also alleges that the officer in the video threatened



to "smash their faces in" if they ever return to the stadium after hours.

This is not the first time security flaws at some of the

biggest stadiums around the country have been exposed by YouTubers.

In December, after successfully making his way undetected into the Emirates, a YouTuber named DyingLama was able to access the stands, pitch and roof of the 60,000 capacity stadium.

He then repeated the feat the following day at the London Stadium after spontaneously trying his luck at the West Ham ground.

And in June this year, Manchester United condemned the actions of four "stupid and irresponsible" fans who illegally broke into Old Trafford.

The four young men were all free runners and gained access in the middle of the night, with the city still on high alert following the Manchester terror attacks.

Footage showed the free runners climbing onto the Old Trafford roof, running across the pitch and sit in the dugout - all without being challenged by security.

(Source: Independent)

# Para archer Zahra Nemati has Olympic dreams once again

**S P O R T S** Iranian para archer Zahra Nemati is determined to participate in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics once again.

Nemati is the first Iranian woman to win an Olympic or Paralympic gold medal at London 2012.

She also made history by securing a spot for Iran not only at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games, but Olympics as well.

"My goal is to make the Olympic team for the second time. I know I have a difficult task ahead of me but will do my best to make my dream come true," Nemati told Paralympic.ir.

"I have recovered from the hand injury and I want to have a good performance in the upcoming events," she added.

Nemati is preparing for the World Archery Para Championships which will take place in Beijing, China from Sept. 12 to 17.

"I did well in the World Ranking Tournament in Czech Republic in July and I am ready to partake in the World Archery Para Championships. I cannot promise of winning the medal but can promise to do my best," the Iran's flag-bearer in the 2016 Olympic Games stated.

At London 2012, Nemati set a Paralympic record and won the gold medal in the women's individual recurve W1/W2. She also claimed a bronze medal in the women's team recurve open.

At Rio 2016, the para archer also seized the women's individual recurve open title.



## Nazari Afshar to bid farewell to Iran national volleyball team



**S P O R T S** Iranian outside hitter Farhad Nazari Afshar will bid farewell to national duty after the FIVB World Grand Champions Cup on Tuesday.

The 33-year-old player will be participating in the 2017 FIVB Volleyball Men's World Grand Champions Cup in Japan as his last international tournament.

The tournament will bring six teams in Nagoya and Osaka namely, Japan, Iran, the U.S., Brazil, Italy and France

together from September 12 to 17.

Iran will open the campaign with a match against Italy.

Nazari Afshar won the silver medal with Iran national team in the 2010 Asian Games in Guangzhou and claimed two AVC Cup gold medals in Nakhon Ratchasima (2008) and Urmia (2010).

"I think it's time to go. I helped the team whenever they needed me. We have some young players who we think can develop," Nazari Afshar said.

## Iran's NPC president to attend IPC General Assembly



**S P O R T S** Iranian National Paralympic Committee (NPC) President Mahmoud Khosravi Vafa left Tehran on Monday to participate at this week's IPC General Assembly in Abu Dhabi, UAE.

Khosravi Vafa is accompanied by Iran's NPC Secretary General Masoud Ashrafi in the elections.

The 18th IPC General Assembly and Conference will begin on Tuesday (5 September) and conclude on Friday (8 September) with the election of a new IPC Govern-

ing Board and successor to Sir Philip Craven who has led the organization since 2001.

Nearly 330 representatives from 167 IPC member organizations, (made up of 144 National Paralympic Committees, 15 International Federations, 4 Regional Organizations and 4 International Organizations of Sport for the Disabled), the most ever to attend an IPC General Assembly, plus the Americas Paralympic Committee, will be in the UAE capital for what promises to be a historic few days for the Paralympic Movement.

## Hamed Haddadi gives his shirt to rest home for disabled

**S P O R T S** Iranian basketball national team captain Hamed Haddadi dedicated his shirt to Shahid Fayyazbakhsh Rest Home for Disabled on Monday.

The former Memphis Grizzlies center traveled to Mashhad, northeast of Iran, to give his shirt to the rest home. Haddadi was named the Most Valuable Player at

the 2017 FIBA Asia Cup in August and he dedicated his autographed shirt at that competition to the Shahid Fayyazbakhsh Rest Home for Disabled.

They will auction off the jersey to raise fund for the disabled persons at the Shahid Fayyazbakhsh rest home.

Iran finished in second place at the 2017 FIBA Asia Cup after being defeated by Australia.



Orthodoxy and Sport, appealing to the youth to eschew alcohol and drugs, and organizing various physical activity events like wall-to-wall fist fighting, wrestling and boxing tournaments. Similar events have been characterized as football hooligan activity in some UK media reports in recent months.

"It has nothing to do with hooliganism," Nosov added. "It's tradition, a way of life. After each fight, we hug each other, gather together, have a friendly chat and drink tea."

"What I want is for any fan, hooligan or ultra, who likes to show how bad he is on a street, to come and show what he's worth on the real ring. Instead of de-

stroying pubs and restaurants and disturbing people, step into the ring and prove what you can do in a fair fight against fellow fans from all over the world.

"Everything will be fair, we'll have regulations, different weight classes, and referees -- all that is needed to stage a real tournament. Of course, it's not for professional boxers, but I know there are a lot of good amateurs in Britain, Italy, South America, so it has to be a great event which will attract interest in every part of the world."

The tournament -- for which a venue is yet to be confirmed -- is highly unlikely to get recognition and the official blessing of FIFA, but in Russia, it has even been backed in Kremlin.

"Russia would be a pioneer in a new sport," Igor Lebedev, who serves as a deputy speaker of the State Duma, wrote earlier this year in an article headlined "Want to take hooligans away from the streets? Give them a ring!" on his personal website.

"Fights between fan groups from different countries could draw huge crowds in attendance."

The 2018 World Cup will take place from June 14 to July 15 across 11 Russian cities. The registration for the boxing tournament is planned to open closer to the turn of the year.

(Source: Soccernet)

## Iranian umpire recipient of US John T. McGovern Award

Iranian tennis referee Ali Nili, the Gold Badge ATP umpire, has received the US John T. McGovern Umpires Award.

The umpires, including Nili, were honored by the 2017 US Open Umpire Awards at the US Open (August 28- September 10).

The Iranian referee was among the five recipients of the major award.

Only those umpires who have at least ten years of umpiring in their record can be qualified for receiving the John T. McGovern Umpires Award.

Iran's Nili, 39, is also the first gold badge chair umpire in Asia. He is the first man in Iran's tennis history who has experienced umpiring the Grand Slam singles final held in 2015 between Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic.

Additionally, tennis scoring system which can live record the scores of the players in the international competitions has been designed by the famous Iranian tennis umpire.

In a piece, appeared on the US Open website on September 4, Erin Maher has described Iran's Nili as the one 'has continually worked his way up through events, delivering the highest quality of officiating and serving as a role model to his colleagues.

'He has been chair umpire for many prestigious tournaments, including the 2015 Wimbledon men's final and the 2016 US Open men's championship,' Maher wrote.

(Source: Irna)

## Iran to play Thailand at Volleyball Women's World Championship Qualification opener

Iran will kick off the 2018 FIVB Volleyball Women's World Championship qualification with a match against powerhouse Thailand.

The competition will take place at the Sports Center Gymnasium in Nakhon Pathom, Thailand from Sept. 20 to 24.

Iran will play the host on Sept. 20.

World No.10 South Korea, Asian silver medalists Thailand, DPR Korea, Vietnam and Iran will take part in the single round-robin competition in Pool B, with only the two best-ranked teams making the cut for the next year's World Championship Finals in Japan.

(Source: asianvolleyball)

## Brazil police probe suspected vote-buying for 2016 Olympics

**RIO DE JANEIRO (Reuters)** — Brazil's federal police on Tuesday said they raided the home of Carlos Arthur Nuzman, the national Olympic committee's president, to probe a suspected international vote-buying scheme to secure Rio de Janeiro's selection as the host of the 2016 Games.

Police were also serving two arrest warrants and conducting search and seizure operations as part of the investigation started nine months ago in cooperation with French authorities, a police statement said.

French newspaper Le Monde in March said a company linked to Brazilian businessman Arthur Cesar de Menezes Soares Filho paid \$1.5 million to Papa Massata Diack, son of Lamine Diack who was then International Association of Athletics Federations president, three days before the 2009 IOC vote to choose the host city for the 2016 Games.

Rio lost the first vote to Madrid but bounced back to win the nomination on a third ballot, by 66 votes to 32.

After the publication of the Le Monde report, the IOC said it had started investigating the allegations, and a Rio 2016 Games spokesman said the 2009 IOC vote was clean.

On Tuesday, a spokesman for the Rio Olympics declined to comment on the federal police statement.

An IOC media representative said, "The IOC has learned about these circumstances from the media and is making every effort to get the full information."

"It is in the highest interests of the IOC to get clarification on this matter," the representative added.

## Mbappe to PSG named worst-value deal, Liverpool's Salah snoop the best bargain

Kylian Mbappe's move from Paris Saint-Germain has been named the worst-value deal of the transfer window, while Mohamed Salah's switch to Liverpool is the best bargain.

The CIES Football Observatory has released analysis on the deals conducted in the last window, which found PSG got the worst value of transfers in Europe's top-five leagues in landing Mbappe from Monaco in an initial loan that they will make permanent for €180million.

Their algorithm, which "scientifically estimates fair transfer values" rated Mbappe, 18, to be worth €92.6m, meaning PSG will overpay by €87.4m in the deal, once add-ons have been taken into account. Liverpool, meanwhile, landed the best bargain, according to the Observatory, with Salah bought from Roma for a cool €50m despite being valued at €69.4m.

Other teams guilty of overpaying were Barcelona and Manchester City. The analysis showed Ousmane Dembele, whose total cost could reach €147m, was added for a fee that was €51.2m higher than a fair value of €95.8m.

City, meanwhile, splashed out €57.5m on Benjamin Mendy, who was listed as a €28.5m talent.

Pep Guardiola's side were also on the wrong end of another deal. Of the sides to land the best bargains after Liverpool's move to add Salah, Sevilla's signing of Nolito from City for €10m -- when he had been valued at €27.4m -- came in second.

Chelsea's €39m move for Antonio Rudiger, who was rated as a €54.2m player, was third-most shrewd addition.

(Source: Four Four Two)

## Mourinho wants more from Mkhitarjan - sources

Jose Mourinho has challenged Henrikh Mkhitarjan to become the creative force in Manchester United's Premier League title bid, with sources telling ESPN FC that the manager believes the Armenia international must do more in games against

the club's top six rivals.

Mkhitarjan, 28, overcame a difficult start at United last season following his transfer from Borussia Dortmund to play a key role in the team's successful Europa League campaign.

The midfielder scored six goals as United won the trophy for the first time, including one in the 2-0 victory against Ajax in the final.

But despite Mkhitarjan starting this season in the first-team as United moved

top of the table with three successive wins, Mourinho still harbours doubts over the player's ability to influence games against the likes of Manchester City, Liverpool and Chelsea.

(Source: ESPN)

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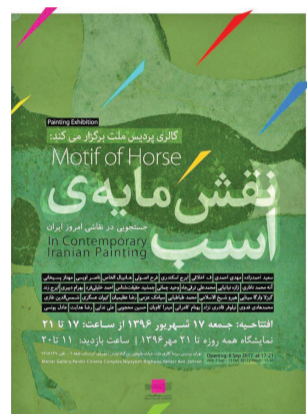
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NEWS IN BRIEF

Exhibit to spotlight horse motifs in contemporary Iranian painting

TEHRAN — The gallery of Tehran's Mellat Cinema Complex will showcase paintings featuring horse motifs in an exhibition, which will open on Friday.



Works by 31 Iranian artists, including Hanibal Alkhas, Iraj Eskandari, Farah Osuli, Nasser Ovisi, Iraj Zand, Mahnaz Pesikhani, Nilfar Qaderinejad and Hossein Mahjubi have been selected for the exhibition, which will run until October 13.

In a press release published on Tuesday, the gallery wrote, "With reference to epic collections in Persian classical literature, you will see paintings featuring numerous examples of riders with beautiful horses."

"Horses still appear on canvases from Iranian artists and using horse motifs has not been shelved in contemporary Iranian painting."

"Weavers of Imagination" to compete in two intl. festivals

TEHRAN — Iranian documentary filmmaker Mohammad-Sadeq Jafari's "Weavers of Imagination" will be screened at two international festivals in Morocco and Romania, Iran's Documentary and Experimental Film Center (DEFC) announced on Tuesday.



A scene from "Weavers of Imagination"

The film will first go on screen at the Ouarzazate International Film Festival, which will be held in the Moroccan city from September 18 to 23.

"Weavers of Imagination" has also been selected for the 5th Zlatna International Ethnographic Film Festival, which will run in the Romanian city from September 22 to 24.

A DEFC production, "Weavers of Imagination" tells the story of several blind carpet weavers who spend happy times when they get together.

Making movies gets more frightening with age, Judi Dench says

VENICE (Reuters) — Making movies gets more terrifying the older you get, British actress Judi Dench said on Monday, a day after her latest royal comedy drama "Victoria & Abdul" premiered at the Venice film festival.

Dench, who won an Oscar for her role in "Shakespeare in Love" and was nominated for Academy Awards six other times, said unlike in theater, where you can adjust with each performance, in films you get only one chance.

"It's always challenging, I am always frightened, always frightened," the 82-year-old actress told Reuters in an interview. "I get more frightened the older I get."

"It's like having a huge bank of buttons and you chose to press so many in order to do what the writer and director wants you to do, and then when you see it, you think 'oh no, I could have done that better!'"

Dench began her career in theater, followed by numerous TV roles, but still recalls how during a film audition she was told she would never make a movie "because you have everything wrong with your face."

But the turning-point came in 1997 when she was cast as Queen Victoria in "Mrs Brown", the first time she played the late British monarch. She stepped back into the queen's shoes for "Victoria & Abdul", which screened in the out-of-competition section in Venice.

"It's like coming back to meet an old friend," she said.

While "Mrs Brown" explored Queen Victoria's relationship with her servant John Brown, Stephen Frears' new comedy drama is based on her subsequent unlikely friendship with Indian clerk Abdul Kazim who was sent to England to present her with a gold coin.

Franco-Iranian production "Birds" landing on stage in Kashan

TEHRAN — The French theater company La Nef - Manufacture d'utopies and the Fanous Art and Culture House from Iran have teamed up to stage a musical play based Persian poet Farid ud-Din Attar's allegorical masterpiece "The Conference of the Birds".

La Nef - Manufacture d'utopies president Jean-Louis Heckel, and Neda Shahrokhi and Yasaman Khajei will direct the play titled "Birds" at the Kashan Theater House in the central Iranian city of Kashan on Thursday.

"The play was staged in several performances in France last summer," Shahrokhi told the Persian service of Honaronline on Tuesday.

"Attar's 'The Conference of the Birds' is familiar to most French people and they warmly received the play," added Shahrokhi who directed a modern adaptation of Euripides' Greek tragedy "Medea" at Ecole de Theatre Point Fixe in Paris in March 2016.

"Birds" is mostly based on form and some puppets will also be used in the play that will feature a fusion of Iranian and Western music and some videos.

Shahrokhi said that "Birds" is one of the few plays that can be considered a real joint production and added, "The directors come from different cultures and consequently, they each have their own ideology."

"In that play, two different cultures and views are linked to each other based on a mutual understanding of Attar's masterpiece."

Pegah Ebrahimi, Ava Tadayyon, Elmira Ashofteh, Nik Saghari and Arefeh Sadeq-Mohammadi are the



Thespian acts in a scene from "Birds" performed in Paris in summer 2016. (Fanous/Reza Fattahi)

cast members, and pianist Mahya Hamed, violinist Sia Mohammadi and percussionist Kiana Sharifi will perform live based on a composition by Enayat Moshiri.

Iranian films to go on screen at Adelaide festival



Sudabeh Beizai in a scene from "A Man of Integrity"

TEHRAN — Three Iranian films will go on screen at the Adelaide Film Festival, which will be held in the Australian city from October 5 to 15.

"A Man of Integrity" by Mohammad Rasoulof will be screened in the official competition while "Retouch" by Kaveh Mazaheri and "Achieve" by Mohammadreza Minapur will compete in the short film section.

"A Man of Integrity" is about a gold-

fish farmer who is battling corporate oppression in northern Iran.

"Retouch" is about a young woman whose husband is trapped under a barbell during a workout, but she declines to save him and, consequently, he dies.

"Achieve" tells the story of an Afghan couple who want to cross Iran's borders and immigrate to Europe though numerous problems stand in their way.

Memoirs of Iranian interrogator at Iraqi prisoners' camp published



Former interrogation officer Moretza Bashiri speaks during the unveiling ceremony of "The Officers with Red Boots", his memories of Iraqi prisoners of war in Iran, at the Art Bureau in Tehran on September 4, 2017. (Mehr/Maryam Kamyab)

TEHRAN — A memoirs of an Iranian interrogation officer from a camp of Iraqi prisoners of war has been published in a book by Suresh-Mehr in Tehran.

"The Officers with Red Boots" was unveiled at the Art Bureau in Tehran during a ceremony, which was attended by the interrogation officer, Morteza Bashiri, writer Fatemeh Behbudi and a number of cultural figures.

Art Bureau director Mohsen Momeni-Sharif compared the book to a com-

pelleng detective story and expressed his hope that the book would be the beginning of a new direction in the genre of literature that had flourished following the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war, which is called the Sacred Defense in Iran.

"We treated the Iraqi prisoners in a way that they felt at ease around of us," Bashiri said.

"Sometimes, we talked with some of them all through the night without using any pressure," he stated.

Majid Majidi to direct another film set in India

MUMBAI (FirstPost) — After his maiden project "Beyond the Clouds" which is set in India, Iranian filmmaker Majid Majidi will be back in India soon to start working on his second film set in the country. The project is titled "Gold Mine".

The Oscar-nominated director says "the ambience of India" and "wonderful relationship between humans and nature" inspired him to shoot his next film in India. The project will go on floors next year.

"The ambience of India is magical and incomparable... there exists a wonderful relationship between humans and nature. The undying spirit of people and their hope for life, in spite of all hardships, is unbelievable," Majidi said in a statement.

"All these inspire me to shoot my next film in India as well and be the narrator of this effort of men, women and children whose love for life encourages them to stay strong and rise over and above any hurdles that come in their path," he added.

Majidi says he has always "believed that India has so many stories to tell with



Iranian filmmaker Majid Majidi at CST in Mumbai.

its myriad of cultures and people from different milieu".

With the film, he will be collaborating with producers Shareen Mantri Kedia and Kishor Arora for the second time, under

their banner of Namah Pictures.

"I am going to collaborate on this film like my previous film with Shareen and Kishor at Namah pictures who are very professional in their approach," he said.

"Hitman's Bodyguard" leads slowest Labor Day weekend in about two years

LOS ANGELES (Variety.com) — A disastrous domestic summer box office is ending on a low note.

Without any fresh competition in wide release, "Hitman's Bodyguard" appears to be the holiday weekend's movie of choice. The Lionsgate release with Ryan Reynolds and Samuel L. Jackson at the center should earn \$13.4 million from 3,370 locations over the four-day weekend. Its seemingly imminent win would make "Hitman's Bodyguard" the only flick this summer to retain the top spot on the domestic box office charts for three consecutive weekends. "Dunkirk," "Wonder Woman," and "Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2" each stayed first for two frames.

But while the action comedy is certainly profitable at this point, its threepeat is less due to the movie's over-

whelming popularity, and more attributable to the lack of alternatives. This -- the first Labor Day weekend in recent history without a new wide release -- is tracking to have the lowest four-day total for the holiday in nearly two decades. The 28 movies currently in release are tracking to bring in about \$95.5 million, according to ComScore. Not since 1998 has the Labor Day domestic box office dropped below a \$100 million four-day total. The last time there were no wide releases over Labor Day weekend was in 1992.

Of the weekend's medium-sized launches, Sony's re-release of "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" is faring best. The 40th anniversary theatrical event is set to take in \$2.3 million for the four-day holiday weekend from 901

locations. Meanwhile, TWC's long-delayed release "Tulip Fever" is not finding its audience. The historical drama starring Alicia Vikander is expected to earn \$1.4 million from 765 locations.

A unique collaboration between Marvel Television and ABC Studios brought "Marvel's Inhumans" to 393 Imax screens in North America, where it is expected to earn \$1.5 million. And Pantellion's "Do It Like an Hombre" is looking at about \$1.4 million for the four days at 382 locations.

Otherwise, "Annabelle: Creation" should remain in the two slot for Warner Bros. The horror sequel has an estimated three-day tally of \$7.3 million from 3,358 locations, and is tracking for \$9.3 million with the extended holiday.