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## Official: Undersea pipeline can bring cheaper gas to India from Iran

A 1,300-km undersea pipeline from Iran, avoiding Pakistani waters, can bring natural gas from the Persian Gulf to India at rates less than the price of LNG available in the spot market, proponents of the pipeline said on Tuesday.

Releasing a study on the Iran-India gas pipeline, former oil secretary T.N.R. Rao said natural gas imported through the over \$4 billion line would cost \$5-5.50 per million British thermal unit at the Indian coast, cheaper than the rate at which some of the domestic fields supply gas, PTI reported.

Liquefied natural gas (LNG) imported through ships costs about \$7.50 per mmbtu.

Rao, who is the chairman of the advisory board of South Asia Gas Enterprise Pvt. Ltd. (SAGE) — the firm wanting to lay the undersea line — said the pipeline can first travel to Oman, and then onwards to Portbandar in Gujarat.

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### World's five major rising economies back Iran deal

REUTERS

The world's five major rising economies have expressed support for the 2015 nuclear agreement between Iran and the P5+1 group of countries, urging all parties to live up to their commitments under the deal.

In a joint statement issued during their latest summit in the Chinese city of Xiamen on Monday, the BRICS countries — Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa — defended the accord, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) amid attempts by the United States to undermine it.

"We firmly support the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action 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," part of the statement read, Xinhua reported.

Separately on Monday, the European Union (EU)'s foreign policy chief, Federica Mogherini, met with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)'s Director General Yukiya Amano on the sidelines of the Bled Strategic Forum in Slovenia, where she discussed the implementation of the JCPOA, among other topics.

Mogherini has repeatedly stressed that the JCPOA is a multilateral deal and that no party can singularly make decisions on behalf of others. She has been particularly expressive in recent months as Washington — a party to the deal that seems to want to withdraw — has stepped up rhetoric and action against

the deal.

And the IAEA, which has been tasked with monitoring Iranian compliance with the deal, recently came under pressure by the US to request access to Iranian military sites, in what the US thought would undermine the deal. The IAEA has rejected that demand.

Despite repeated IAEA reports verifying full Iranian compliance, the administration of US President Donald Trump has sought to portray Iran as being in violation of the accord.

The IAEA most recently verified Iranian adherence to its commitments on Thursday, shortly after US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley traveled to Vienna to press the agency to request access to Iran's military sites.

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### Crisis looms as nearly 125,000 refugees flood into Bangladesh

Nearly 125,000 mostly Rohingya refugees have entered Bangladesh since a fresh upsurge of violence in Myanmar on August 25, the United Nations said on Tuesday, as fears grow of a humanitarian crisis in the overstretched camps.

The UN said 123,600 had crossed the border in the past 11 days from Myanmar's violence-ravaged Rakhine state. Their arrival has raised fears of a fresh humanitarian disaster as already crowded camps in Bangladesh — home to around 400,000 Rohingya refugees before the latest crisis — struggle to cope with the influx, AFP reported.

Many are sleeping in the open air and are in dire need of food and water after walking for days to reach safety, the UN's main coordinator in Bangladesh said in a report.

"There is an urgent need for emergency shelters and land to build these shelters on," said Vivian Tan, the spokeswoman for the UN refugee agency.

Thousands lined a major highway near the border, blocking traffic, while others crammed into small shops and huts to shelter from the monsoon rains.

"We walked for three days to reach Bangladesh... Both (my daughters) are now suffering from high fever and coughing," Rozina Khatun, a Rohingya from Myanmar, said.

At a nearby clinic run by Doctors without Borders, scores of people lined up with bullet wounds and deep scars apparently left by machetes.

Bangladesh rights campaigner Nur Khan Liton said a "massive humanitarian crisis" was unfolding. The Muslim Rohingya are seen as illegal immigrants in mainly Buddhist Myanmar and have suffered decades of persecution, according to rights groups.

Bangladesh border officials say those fleeing also face the risk of landmines on the frontier.

On Tuesday, two Rohingya children were injured by an apparent landmine blast as they tried to flee unrest in Myanmar, border guard commander Manzurul Hasan Khan said.

A Rohingya woman had a leg blown off in the same area on Monday and guards said two more explosions were heard later Tuesday.

Khan said many Rohingya were also entering Bangladesh with bullet wounds, although it was impossible to say how these were sustained as media access to the worst-hit parts of Myanmar's neighboring Rakhine is limited.

Rakhine has been a crucible of religious violence since 2012, when riots erupted. Scores of Rohingya were killed and tens of thousands of people — most of them from the Muslim minority — were forced into displacement camps.

### South Korean Navy holds live-fire drills in warning to North

With Seoul expecting another North Korean missile test, South Korean warships conducted live-fire exercises at sea on Tuesday.

The test on Tuesday, which North Korea said was a hydrogen bomb, was a huge advance in the North's push for nuclear-tipped missiles capable of hitting the United States. It has also resulted in South Korea boosting its own military capabilities. Washington and Seoul agreed to lift restrictions on South Korean missiles they'd previously agreed upon, according to the South Korean presidential office, allowing Seoul to improve its pre-emptive strike capabilities against the North, AP wrote.

The Korean Peninsula has been in a technical state of war since the Korean War ended in an armistice in 1953. The near-constant unease has worsened in recent months as North Korea has displayed rapid improvement in its weapons capabilities, testing intercontinental ballistic missiles and a string of other missiles.

South Korean ships including a 2,500-ton frigate, a 1,000-ton patrol ship and 400-ton guided-missile vessels participated in the drills, the Defense Ministry said. It plans more naval drills in its southern seas through Saturday. On Monday, Seoul used F-15 fighter jets and land-based ballistic missiles to simulate an attack on North Korea's nuclear test site to "strongly warn" the North over the recent detonation.

The UN Security Council held its second emergency meeting about North Korea on

Monday, with US Ambassador Nikki Haley saying the North's actions show that leader Kim Jong-un is "begging for war."

"Enough is enough. War is never something the United States wants. We don't want it now. But our country's patience is not unlimited," Haley said.



Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday condemned North Korea's nuclear test but also warned against using military force against the country, calling it a "road to nowhere" that could lead to a "global catastrophe."

"Whipping up military hysteria makes absolutely no sense in this situation," Putin said in a news conference in China. He stopped short of expressing willingness to impose more sanctions on North Korea, saying Moscow views them as "useless and ineffective."

US President Donald Trump, asked in Washington if he would attack North Korea, said, "We'll see."

In tweets earlier this week, Trump threatened to halt all trade with countries

### Syrian troops breach three-year Daesh siege on eastern city

Syrian government troops and allied forces reached the eastern city of Deir ez-Zor on Tuesday, breaching a nearly three-year Daesh siege on government-held areas of the city near the Iraqi border, Syrian state TV and a monitoring group said.

The TV said troops advancing from the west reached the western outskirts of the city and broke the siege after Daesh defenses collapsed, AP reported.

Breaching the siege on Deir ez-Zor, which has been divided between a Daesh and a government-held part since 2015, marks another triumph for President Bashar Assad, whose forces have been advancing on several fronts against Daesh and other terror groups over the past year.



AFP

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights also said advancing troops and those defending the city have met.

The latest developments mark a strategic and symbolic defeat for Daesh, which last month lost its hold over Iraq's second largest city of Mosul and is under attack by a coalition of US-backed forces in its self-proclaimed capital of Raqqa, northwest of Deir ez-Zor.

Syrian troops and allied militiamen, backed by Russia's air force, have for months been advancing toward Deir ez-Zor, the provincial capital of the oil-rich province by the same name. The breach is expected to end a nightmare siege for tens of thousands of people trapped in a handful of neighborhoods controlled by the government and a nearby airport.

Russia's Defense Ministry said Tuesday that a Russian warship in the Mediterranean fired cruise missiles toward Daesh terror group targets in Deir ez-Zor Province.

A Russian frigate in the Mediterranean Sea fired the missiles early Tuesday on Daesh targets near the city. The Defense Ministry said it targeted a fortified area around the town of Al-Shola, where most of the terrorists are believed to hail from Russia and former Soviet republics.

The ministry said its drone footage showed that the missile strikes there destroyed a communications center, command centers, ammunition depots, and a repair shop for armored vehicles and killed an unspecified number of terrorists.

Tuesday's breakthrough came after government forces dismantled mines around a besieged government-held airbase, known as Brigade 137.

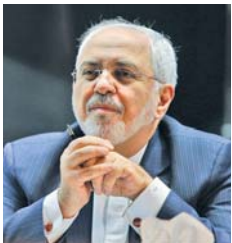
Tuesday's firing of cruise missiles came a day after the Russian Defense Ministry said two Russian troops were killed in shelling in Syria's east.

The two men died when a convoy escorting Russian cease-fire monitoring staff came under mortar fire outside the city of Deir ez-Zor.

Zarif: Saudi policy shift will draw Iran's positive reaction

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif expressed the hope that Saudi Arabia will soon come to the realization that all neighbors around the Persian Gulf need to work in cooperation, saying that such a shift would definitely draw a positive reaction from Iran.

Saudi authorities ought to come to the conclusion, sooner rather than later, that not only for Saudi Arabia, but also for all other countries in the Persian Gulf region, there is no other option than joint cooperation, Zarif said in an interview with Khabaronline.



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The top Iranian diplomat also said he did not see a clear or definite prospect yet for a change in relations with Saudi Arabia, but emphasized that a shift in the kingdom's policies would be welcomed by Iran.

In a sign of thaw in relations between Tehran and Riyadh, the two countries have decided to send diplomatic delegations to visit their embassies.

On Sunday, Iran confirmed a report that a Saudi Arabian delegation will travel to Tehran, less than two years after the kingdom unilaterally ruptured its relations with the Islamic Republic.

"The Saudi delegation simply comes to visit diplomatic buildings because the buildings have been empty after the two countries broke off relations. At the same time, we will visit our buildings in Saudi Arabia," Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi said.

"This is a bilateral agreement under which Iranian and Saudi delegations will travel to each other's countries to visit their diplomatic sites in Riyadh and Tehran," he said, explaining that a date for the Iranian delegation's visit has not yet been set.

The kingdom broke off its ties in January 2016 in protest against demonstrations in front of its diplomatic premises in Tehran and Mashhad, which were held against Saudi Arabia's execution of the leading Shia cleric, Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr.

World's five major rising...

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Mogherini said last Monday that "compliance with the deal is certified by the IAEA and by the Joint Commission I chair... not by one single individual country," in a thinly-veiled rejection of US attempts.

The JCPOA was reached between Iran and the P5+1 countries — namely the US, Russia, China, France, Britain, and Germany — in July 2015 and took effect in January 2016.

Under the deal, Iran undertook to put limitations on its nuclear program in exchange for the termination of all nuclear-related sanctions against Tehran.



Shamkhani: Iran-Russia-Syria cooperation yielding 'valuable results'

Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) Ali Shamkhani said the strategic cooperation between Iran, Syria, Russia and the resistance front in genuine fight against terrorism is yielding "valuable results."

Shamkhani made the remarks in a meeting with Russia's special envoy on Syria, Alexander Lavrentiev, in Tehran on Tuesday, IRNA reported.

Iran's top security official also hailed recent advances of the Syrian Army and allied forces against foreign-backed terrorists in Deir ez-Zor.

Syrian Army forces, backed by allied fighters from popular defense groups, reached Deir ez-Zor on Tuesday and broke a nearly three-year siege imposed by Daesh terrorists on pro-government areas there.

Shamkhani stressed the need for all countries and groups to respect Syria's national sovereignty and said all parties' commitment to a Syrian-Syrian solution and the people's self-determination right will pave the ground for ending the crisis.

He added that Iran's top priority in the region is to establish stability and security and completely eliminate terrorism.

Lavrentiev highlighted the decisive role of Iran, Russia, and Syria in the fight against



Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Ali Shamkhani (R) talks with Russia's special envoy on Syria Alexander Lavrentiev in Tehran on September 5, 2017.

terrorism, saying that Moscow is still committed to military measures against terrorism and all groups which do not respect a political solution in Syria.

The Russian official's visit to Tehran comes on the threshold

of the next round of negotiations between representatives from the Syrian government and foreign-sponsored armed opposition besides delegates from Iran, Russia, and Turkey as mediators on September 14-

15 in Kazakhstan's capital of Astana.

Astana has hosted five rounds of peace talks for Syria since January. The negotiations are aimed at bringing an end to the foreign-backed militancy in the

violence-battered Arab country, which began in March 2011.

Russia and Iran are the main international backers of the Syrian government in its battle against foreign-backed terrorists.

Top commander: Calls for Iran naval coordination with US laughable

The chairman of the Chiefs of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces described as "laughable" calls by the United States that Iran coordinate its naval activities in the Persian Gulf with American forces there.

Major General Mohammad Baqeri said on Tuesday that arrogant powers had recently made a hype over Iranian vessels sailing to some one hundred meters of US warships in the Persian Gulf waters.

Based on coastal rules, he said, Iran has rights over territory in the Persian Gulf and will defend its interests there, Press TV reported.

"Unfortunately, a country from the other side of the world... assumes special rights [for itself] in the Persian Gulf and says 'Iran should coordinate with us if it wants to approach us,' which is precisely [an instance of] excessive demand," Major General Baqeri said.

The top Iranian commander suggested



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that the foreign forces in the region would take no responsibility to safeguard Iranian interests and should expect no coordination from Iran, either.

"Coordination with American aircraft carriers is a laughable matter for Iran. If terrorists conduct some kind of an attack against Iranian oil rigs in the Persian

Gulf, will foreign aircraft carriers be answerable?"

He said Iran coordinates its activities regarding aerial borders with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), adding the air defense would immediately issue warnings if an aircraft violates the country's airspace.

Major General Baqeri said arrogant powers also raised a hue and cry about Iranian warnings to intruding American aircraft. He said that was the least they had to expect. "Let enemies know that a warning to an intruding aircraft is Iran's smallest warning."

US officials sometimes claim that Iranian naval forces initiate "unsafe" or "unprofessional" encounters with American forces in the waters of the Persian Gulf. Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), however, says its forces conduct regular patrolling missions in the Persian Gulf and do nothing unprofessional.

Iran, Azerbaijan call for promoting ties

Ranking officials from Iran and Azerbaijan called for plans to promote cooperation between the two neighbors and accelerate the implementation of joint projects.

In a telephone conversation on Tuesday, Mahmoud Vaezi, the Iranian president's Chief of Staff, and Azerbaijan's Minister of Economic Development Shahin Mustafayev explored avenues for the enhancement of Tehran-Baku relations during President Hassan Rouhani's second term, Tasnim News Agency reported.

Stressing the need for the finalization of bilateral agreements between the two neighbors and for the immediate implementation of joint projects, Vaezi said the two countries should find new grounds to promote cooperation.

The Azerbaijani minister expressed Baku's determination to define new joint projects with Iran and keep working in cooperation like in the past four years.

Iran and Azerbaijan have accelerated efforts in recent years to forge closer partnership in various areas.

In February 2016, Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev paid an official visit to Tehran, during which the two sides signed eleven memorandums of understanding and agreements to promote mutual cooperation in a range of fields.

A worsening water crisis in Gorgan Gulf

Iran's Gorgan Gulf, in the north-eastern province of Golestan, is facing severe drought due to the drying up of the Caspian Sea at Gaz Port region, gathering of running wastewater on the port's beach, and blockage of the canal between Ashuradeh Island and Miankaleh Peninsula.

Photos published by IRNA on Monday showed several people holding placards that read, "Save the Gorgan Gulf."

According to naturalhistorymag.com, threatened by pollution and climate change, the future of the Earth's largest inland body of water, the Caspian Sea, is in the hands of five bordering nations — Iran, Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan.

Warning on Environment

Iran has been battling drought for years because of declining rainfall, rising temperatures, inefficient



IRNA

farming practices, excessive consumption in metropolises, and poor management of resources.

Addressing his first press conference on the environment in Tehran on Monday, the head of the Department of the Environment (DOE), Isa Kalantari, emphasized that the water crisis in Iran is serious.

After his reelection in May to serve a second four-year term,

President Hassan Rouhani appointed Kalantari as the head of the DOE to tackle environmental crises. He replaced Massoumeh Ebtekar.

Energy officials say Iran's annual water deficit is about 5.7 billion cubic meters, which they hope to compensate by 2022, when the Sixth Five-Year Economic Development Plan (2017-22) is expected to end.



globalresearch.ca

## UN: Failure to investigate violations in Yemen war 'shameful'

The UN human rights chief described as "shameful" the reticence of the international community to investigate violations in the conflict in Yemen.

The failure to seek justice for victims was "contributing to the continuing horror", Zeid Ra'ad al-Husseini said, BBC wrote.

His comments came after the release of a report that said almost every rule of modern warfare was being flouted.

It found that civilians were targeted in airstrikes, prohibited weapons used and children recruited as soldiers.

The UN said at least 5,144 civilians have been killed — a quarter of them children — since March 2015, when a Saudi-led coalition began its war against Yemen.

The conflict has also left 20.7 million people in need of some kind of humanitarian assistance, created the largest food security emergency in the world, and led to a cholera outbreak that is believed to have affected 600,000 people since April.

The new report published in Geneva on Tuesday found that human rights violations and abuses were continuing unabated in Yemen, with civilians suffering deeply the consequences of an "entirely manmade catastrophe".

In many cases, it states, information obtained by UN officials suggested that civilians "may have been directly targeted, or that operations were conducted heedless of their impact on civilians without regard to the principles of distinction, proportionality and precautions in attack".

In some cases, it appeared that "no actions were taken to mitigate the impact of operations on civilians."

Saudi-led coalition airstrikes — supported by the United States and United Kingdom — continued to be the leading cause of the 13,893 civilian casualties documented, reportedly killing 3,233 people.

The strikes targeted markets, hospitals, schools, residential areas and infrastructure, as well as funeral gatherings and civilian boats, the report said.

There was no immediate comment from the coalition, but it has repeatedly denied that its airstrikes have intentionally targeted civilians.

## Kenya's Odinga rejects vote rerun date without 'guarantees'

Kenyan opposition leader Raila Odinga said on Tuesday his coalition would not participate in the rerun of a presidential election proposed for October 17 unless it is given "legal and constitutional" guarantees.

Incumbent President Uhuru Kenyatta responded by saying there was nowhere in law that required the electoral body to consult Odinga, Reuters wrote.

The opposition also said it is planning to file dozens of challenges to results from races lower down the ticket, including legislative and local seats.

Odinga's conditions for participating in the repeat presidential election include the removal of six officials at the election board. He wants criminal investigations to be opened against them.

"You cannot do a mistake twice and expect to get different results," Odinga told reporters. "A number of the officials of the commission should be sent home, some of them should be investigated for the heinous crimes they committed."

Kenya's Supreme Court ordered on Friday that the August 8 vote be rerun within 60 days, saying Kenyatta's victory by 1.4 million votes was undermined by irregularities in the process. Kenyatta was not accused of any wrongdoing.

The ruling, the first time in Africa that a court had overturned the reelection of a sitting president, was hailed by Odinga supporters as "historic."

Analysts have said it is likely to lead to some short-term volatility in East Africa's biggest economy, but could build confidence in institutions longer-term.

On Monday, the election board said it would hold new elections on October 17.

But Odinga said he wanted elections held on October 24 or 31 instead.

"There will be no elections on the seventeenth of October until the conditions that we have spelt out in the statement are met," he said.

Kenyatta rebuffed Odinga's demands to the commission on the setting of the election date.

"There is no legal requirement that Raila be consulted. I was neither consulted. Kenya doesn't belong to one man," he said in a statement sent by his office. Odinga has lost the last three presidential elections.

Each time, he has said the vote was rigged against him. The opposition also plans to lodge 62 court cases contesting governorship, lawmaker, and local seats, spokeswoman Kathleen Openda said.

At least 33 court cases were filed contesting election results before the presidential election was annulled, said Andrew Limo, spokesman for the election board. Others had been filed since but he did not have the updated figure.

Limo said the numbers had not yet reached the same level as during the 2013 elections, when the board received challenges to 189 results.



Kenyan opposition leader Raila Odinga, of the National Super Alliance (NASA) coalition, speaks during a church service inside the St. Stephen's cathedral in Nairobi, Kenya, on September 3, 2017.

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## OPINION

### Turkey should adopt policies to rectify its political failures

By Hossein Ziaei

When Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan made remarks against Germany's three main political parties ahead of the country's parliamentary elections scheduled for September 24, he could have never imagined that Ankara would have to pay a heavy price for his remarks.

During a speech in August, Erdogan branded Chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic Union, the Social Democrats and the Greens as enemies of Turkey and urged his countrymen in Germany to punish the parties by refusing to vote in their favor.

His remarks fueled tensions between Germany and Turkey which began to rise after last year's failed coup in the Eurasian nation.

The comments drew a swift rebuke from Chancellor Angela Merkel who promised in Sunday's live televised debate to try to end Turkey's EU accession talks.

Merkel also pledged to talk to EU partners about a joint position to end these accession talks.

It seems that Merkel, who has been Germany's chancellor since 2005, seeks to take reciprocal measures against Erdogan. This comes as the Turkish president continues to suffer political setbacks on the international stage.

The major defeats of the Daesh terror group in Iraq and Syria have shattered Erdogan's dream to reestablish the Ottoman Empire.

Likewise, Turkey's support for Qatar amid Doha's dispute with four Arab nations, including Saudi Arabia, has pushed the Arab world to distance itself from Ankara.

Furthermore, Turkey's ties with the US have been strained over Washington's support for Kurdish militants in Syria and its refusal to hand over Turkey's opposition leader Fethullah Gulen.

Presently, Turkey's 40-year dream of joining the European family has suffered a severe blow.

To sum up, Turkey's foreign policy has plunged into turmoil. On the one hand, Ankara is losing the trust of the US and the Arab nations. On the other hand, it is grappling with reciprocal measures of the European Union.

Such approaches indicate that Turkey is experiencing a period of political isolation.

Turkey should take a lesson from its political failures and rectify them by adopting rational and realistic policies, particularly toward its neighbors.

## Israeli forces evict Palestinian family from home of 53 years

Israeli forces evicted a Palestinian family from their home of 53 years in the occupied Beit-ul-Moqaddas.

The Shamasna family was evicted from its home on Tuesday, Press TV reported.

The eviction marked the first forced displacement in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of Beit-ul-Moqaddas since 2009.

"What greater injustice is there than this?" asked Fahamiya Shamasna.

The Palestinian family had for years been fighting a court battle against claimants who took advantage of a controversial law that allows Israelis to take control of property believed to have been owned by Jews before 1948.



english.wafa.ps

The Israeli anti-occupation NGO Peace Now said in a statement that the eviction was part of a larger project of establishing Israeli settlements in Sheikh Jarrah.

"The eviction of the Shamasna family, who resided in the house since 1964, is not only brutal but it is also indicating a dangerous trend that could threaten a future compromise in Beit-ul-Moqaddas," the statement read.

### Clashes near Nablus

Additionally on Tuesday, Israeli forces clashed with the Palestinians in a refugee camp east of the West Bank city of Nablus, arresting 14 Palestinians and injuring two.

The Israeli forces used tear gas and ammunition to disperse the Palestinians. Israeli authorities regularly carry out demolitions of Palestinian houses, claiming that they are built illegally.

International bodies and rights groups say Israel's sustained demolitions of Palestinian homes are an attempt to uproot Palestinians from their native territories and grab more land for the expansion of illegal settlements.

## Qatar says new port will help circumvent Arab sanctions

Qatar inaugurated a new \$7.4 billion port along its Persian Gulf coast on Tuesday that officials said would become a regional transport hub and help shield its economy against sanctions enforced by neighboring Arab states.

The Hamad port, 40 kilometers south of Doha, is one of the largest such facilities in the Middle East, Reuters reported.

Since Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates severed ties with Qatar in June, the port has been receiving large quantities of food and building materials for construction projects including stadiums for the 2022 soccer World Cup.



dohanews.co

The isolation of Qatar over Doha's alleged support for terrorists has raised concerns that projects could be delayed if supplies from the Far East and South Asia are choked.

But officials on Tuesday said Hamad port would allow Qatar to get around the sanctions by importing goods directly from countries such as China and Oman instead of through a ma-

nor reexport hub in Dubai.

"The port... will break the shackles of any restrictions imposed on our economy. We are not giving up on our hopes and ambitions," Qatari Transport Minister Jassim bin Saif al-Sulaiti said at a ceremony held in a dome-shaped tent on the docks of Hamad port.

Fireworks exploded above the port on Tuesday as officials delivered speeches praising Qatar's 37-year-old Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani for weathering the "siege."

Closure of the Saudi border with Qatar and disruption to shipping routes via the UAE slashed Qatar's imports by over a third from year-earlier

levels in June and July. Institutions in Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain have begun pulling money out of Qatari banks, threatening their balance sheets.

Qatar has expanded shipping routes to India, Oman, Turkey and Pakistan and announced plans to raise its liquefied natural gas (LNG) output by 30 percent in an apparent effort to prepare for greater economic independence in the long term.

Hamad port spans 26 square kilometers and will have a capacity of 7.5 million containers a year with terminals built to receive livestock, cereals, vehicles and coastguard vessels, Sulaiti said.

SPECIAL NEWS

Domestic Economy Desk

## Alstom to invest €1.2b in Iran's railway industry

Alstom Company of France voiced readiness to help Iran develop its railway system through investments worth €1.2 billion for manufacturing wagon cars, the company's representative in Iran Vincent Douriet said.



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Speaking in a meeting with Governor General of Markazi Province Mahmoud Zamani Qomi in the central city of Arak, Douriet further said that the cooperation contract is to be signed by the Industrial Development and Renovation Organization (IDRO), Trans Russ Company and France's Alstom to manufacture passenger wagons, metro carriages and spare parts in Arak Pars Wagon complex, reported IRNA.

Arak Pars Wagon Company was founded in 1975 and is the largest manufacturer of locomotive, cargo and passenger wagons and metro carriages in the Middle East.

In relevant remarks in late July, former minister of industry, mine and trade Mohammadreza Nematzadeh announced Paris has concluded a contract with Tehran to develop Iran's railway system.

"The agreement was signed to contribute to investment, technology transfer, production and export, and the maximum use of domestic capabilities," Nematzadeh said.

He said that it is estimated that 1,000 train cars will be manufactured with the participation of French Alstom company and with regard to their main share in this agreement.

"We also desire exporting the cars in addition to meeting domestic needs," Nematzadeh said.

He added that the joint agreement to manufacture suburban and regional metro trains was signed between IDRO, Alstom, and Iranian Rail Industries Development Co (IRICO) with shares 20, 60, and 20 percent shares in the agreement, respectively.

Alstom, which is a French multinational company, operating worldwide in rail transport markets, is active in the fields of passenger transportation, signaling and locomotives, with products, including suburban, regional and metro trains.

## French companies to partake in IRAN PLAST expo

French companies will for the first time attend IRAN PLAST exhibition in Tehran which will be held from September 24 to 27.

The IRAN PLAST exhibition offers an excellent opportunity to meet key players in Iran's plastics processing sector; this is why a France pavilion is being organized at the expo for the first time by Business France, the national agency supporting the internationalization of the French economy in partnership with UCAPLAST (Union des syndicats des PME du caoutchouc et de la plasturgie), according to an email sent to Iran Daily.

Iran, thanks to its petrochemicals industry, has the advantage of low cost access to raw materials to develop the plastics processing industry. The availability of significant amounts of raw materials and polymerized products is the keystone of this sector, within which National Petrochemical Company (NPC) plays a prominent role. Despite a slowdown in industrial production over the last two years, the agri-foodstuffs and automotive industries plus those of the construction sector are expected to continue to drive demand, which is estimated to be, on average, 18 kg per inhabitant per year in Iran.

This growth is particularly strong in the area of food packaging and PET bottling. Current needs of Iranian companies are above all in technical, industrial and financial partnerships in the automotive sector (60 percent), agro-foodstuffs packaging (25 percent) and other industries (15 percent).

These are all good reasons why French companies should take advantage of the opening up of the country to offer innovative know-how and products, and to meet, swap ideas and negotiate with future Iranian partners or clients.

French plastics processing is a growth sector. Sales (€29.7 billion in 2016) grew three times faster on average than those for manufacturing as a whole. It concerns over 100 sectors that produce or use plastic. France's position as a major global plastics market is stable, being ranked 6th in terms of sales.

French plastics processing industry is characterized amongst other things by its dynamic investment in R&D — plastics specialists have been reinvesting in innovation since 2014 and the creation of the CTI (Centre Technique Industriel) is contributing to R&D efforts in the sector.

Internationally, French plastics processing saw a sharp upswing in 2015 and 2016, with growth rates of +5 percent and +6.5 percent respectively. Most of this growth came from the EU, but performance was also strong in Africa and Asia.

# Russian firms submit plans to develop Iran oilfields

Russian energy companies Zarubezhneft, Gazprom Neft and Lukoil have submitted plans to National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) to develop oilfields in Iran.

Representatives of Zarubezhneft outlined plans to increase the recovery rate of oil from the Aban and West Paydar fields, Iran's Oil Ministry announced, Press TV reported.

A memorandum of understanding on Zarubezhneft's study of the two fields, which are shared with Iraq, was signed on July 22, 2016.

The Russian company signed another MoU with National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC) in July this year to conduct technical studies on Shadegan and Rag Sefid fields.

Rag Sefid was discovered in 1964 and is estimated to hold 16.5 billion barrels of reserves. Production from Shadegan, near Ahvaz, started in 1988 and the field is currently producing 70,000 barrels of oil a day.

Last month, Turkey's Unit International signed a \$7-billion agreement with Zarubezhneft and Iran's Ghadir Investment Holding to explore oil and natural gas development opportunities in Iran.

Russian companies have signed a record number of oil and gas contracts with Iran since the lifting of sanctions on the Islamic Republic in early 2016.

Gazprom Neft has also submitted a plan to develop Changouleh and Chesmeh Khosh fields under an MoU signed with



IRNA

NIOC in December last year. Located 80km northwest of Dehloran city, Changouleh oilfield is situated in the

northwestern part of the North Dezful basin in the Lorestan Province. Lukoil and Indonesia's Pertamina in-

dividually proposed plans to develop the Bangestan reservoir of the Mansouri oilfield southeast of Ahvaz.

## Zanganeh hails convergence among oil producers

Iran's oil minister said cooperation with non-OPEC members, especially Russia, and OPEC members' adherence to an agreement to cut oil output is helping the market stabilize.

members have undertaken to trim oil supplies by 1.2 million barrels per day, with non-OPEC members cutting a further 600,000 barrels. "Cooperation of non-OPEC

He made the remarks before a meeting in Tehran with Brazil's Minister of Mines and Energy Fernando Coelho Filho as he welcomed the participation of Brazilians in Iran's oil and gas projects



SHANA

Shana quoted Bijan Namdar Zanganeh as saying, "I see the oil market balanced. The compliance of the OPEC members is in good shape and the convergence of the members regarding the agreement to cut supplies in the past six months has not declined; it has increased."

Russia has been key to the agreement under which OPEC countries, in particular Russia, is good in the deal to reduce oil supply, and I think the market is moving toward stability," Zanganeh said.

The minister said Iran welcomes the cooperation of all non-OPEC producers, citing Brazil which he saw unlikely to join the output cut agreement under current circumstances.

"However, they have not expressed interest up to this moment because, like us, they are a capital absorbing country and want to raise funds in their oil and gas industry," Zanganeh said.

"The Brazilians seem to seek cooperation with Iran in the refining sector," he added.

## Iran, India seem to be parting ways on Farzad B

Iran's Oil Ministry has begun preliminary talks with the Indians to develop Farzad B but negotiations also continue with the Indians who have long coveted the giant gas field.

According to Press TV, National Iranian Oil Company's Director of Integrated Planning Karim Zobeidi further said, "For the development of the Farzad B field, we are pursuing three separate paths in parallel, but none of the options is definite yet."

The third path is the implementation of a development study plan in cooperation with a foreign consultant and Iran's Petropars company, the official elaborated.

Zobeidi said negotiations with the Indians have not achieved satisfactory results but they have not stopped either and that Iran was pursuing preliminary talks with a Russian company as the second path.

"Along these two routes, the study of the development of Farzad A and B and the feasibility of the injection of gas from these fields into Aghajari (oilfield) in cooperation with a foreign consultant and Petropars company is in progress," he added.

Indian companies discovered the Farzad B gas field in Iran in 2008 and have bid several times for development rights. The Indians were supposed to develop the field after its exploration, but they stopped their activities after the West intensified sanctions on the Islamic Republic in 2012.

With the lifting of the sanctions, India once again called for the development of Farzad B by ONGC Videsh which is the overseas investment arm of the country's biggest energy exploration firm.

Based on the agreement, the Indians were first to submit a technical plan and then a financial proposal for the development of the field, but Iran did not agree with the financial proposals put forward.

In the absence of an agreement between Iran and India, the development plan for Farzad B will be put to international tender.

In May, Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh announced that Iran had signed a basic agreement with Russia's energy giant Gazprom on the development of Farzad B.

## Official: Undersea pipeline can bring cheaper gas to India from Iran

From Page 1

"The cost of landed gas through an undersea pipeline will be at least \$2 cheaper than importing LNG, saving about \$1 billion annually," the study said.

SAGE wants the government to support the pipeline and help buyers enter into contract.

The pipeline is planned to carry 31.5 million standard cubic meters gas per day and will be built in two years from the date of necessary approvals and a gas sale and purchase agreement (GSPA) being signed.

The subsea pipeline is being seen as an alternative to the on-land Iran-Pakistan-India pipeline. New Delhi has not been participating in talks on the 1,036-

km Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline since 2007 citing security and commercial concerns but has never officially pulled out of the \$7.6 billion project.

Under the proposal being discussed, SAGE will lay the 1,300-km pipeline bypassing the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of Pakistan.

Any company wanting to buy gas from Iran can use the pipeline for rent, its Director Subhodh Kumar Jain said.

"SAGE will not be buying gas from Iran. It will lead an international consortium for building the pipeline," he said.

Chabahar Port or Kuh-e-Mubarak could serve as the origin of the pipeline that may terminate near

Porbandar in Gujarat. It can then be connected to India's national gas grid.

Rao said gas from other nations can also be sourced through the pipeline.

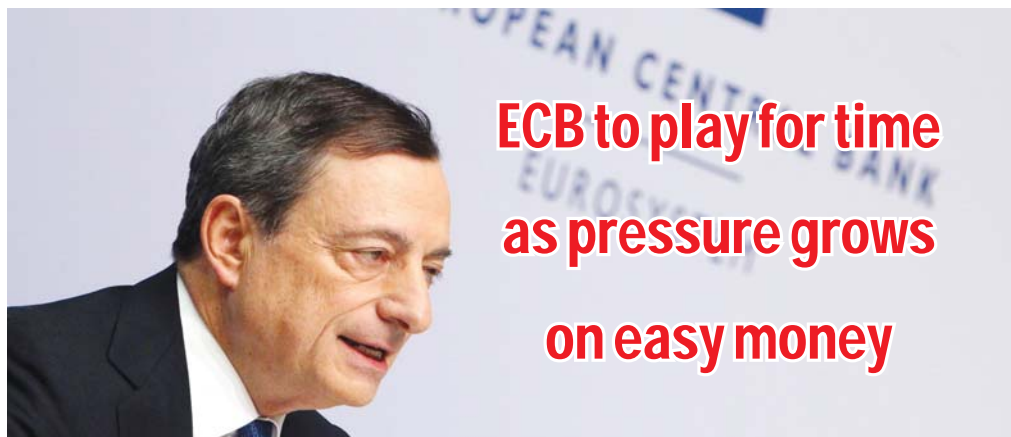
Turkmenistan has a pipeline supplying gas to Iran in the north. Iran can use the Turkmen gas for its own use and supply and equivalent volumes to India from its offshore fields, he said.

Also, gas from Qatar can be pumped into the proposed pipeline.

Jain said fertilizer and power sector can be main users of the Iranian gas. "Landed price of gas in India would be competitive to spot LNG price," he said.

Chinese services sector expands

Chinese services sector expanded at a faster clip in August as new business orders picked up, pointing to renewed strength in a key part of the world's second-largest economy.



ECB President Mario Draghi

The European Central Bank (ECB) will prefer to play for time and seek to calm financial markets than sketch out the exit from its easy-money policy at its Thursday meeting, analysts agree.

Conflicting pressures are squeezing the ECB: A stronger euro and still-sluggish inflation could justify prolonging its 'quantitative easing' bond-buying program, but it is approaching the legal limits of the scheme and may be forced to wind it down, AFP wrote.

Economist Carsten Brzeski of ING-DiBa bank said, "The big question for this week's meeting is whether (ECB President Mario) Draghi will shed some light on the ECB's game plan for tapering, or winding down its quantitative easing QE program."

Draghi deliberately left the date of the decision vague after the last meeting, promising an update in the "autumn" — which most analysts have taken to mean September or October.

Along with low interest rates and cheap loans to banks, the ECB's €60 billion (\$71.5 billion) of bond purchases per month are designed to encourage growth in the 19-nation eurozone, pushing inflation towards its target of just below two percent.

Data that will feed into the ECB staff's September forecasts for the coming years have yet to show price growth on track.

The projections will reflect the accelerating economic growth of 0.6 percent seen in the single currency area between April and June.

But August figures from statistics agency Eurostat showed inflation at 1.5 percent, well short of the central bank's goal.

Meanwhile, the 'core' measure highlighted by ECB policymakers, which excludes volatile food and energy prices, reached just 1.2 percent.

One reason is that the euro has appreciated against other currencies as the recovery gathers pace, braking price growth as imports become cheaper.

Economist Marco Valli of UniCredit said, "Nevertheless, euro strength is unlikely to derail the eurozone recovery, leaving the ECB on track for a tapering announcement relatively soon."

Why now?

"Regardless of the exact timing of the announcement, what really matters is the final outcome," Valli added. "Expect the ECB to reduce stimulus next year, but in a very gradual and open-ended fashion."

Following July's meeting of the governing council, Draghi emphasized the need to be "persistent and patient" in the face of unresponsive inflation, suggesting that an end to QE will be drawn out.

Policymakers still see slack in the eurozone economy, and have pointed to slow wage growth linked to still-high unemployment and underemployment in some member countries as the biggest factor holding back inflation.

Prolonging the ECB's intervention could support growth and inflation for longer, making a withdrawal without major upsets more certain.

But the bank is running up against the limits set in its own rules and insisted on by European and German courts, which bar it from buying more than 3.3 percent of any one country's debt.

Coveted German bonds have also become scarce on the market, making it difficult for the ECB to buy in proportion to the 'capital key', or the share of its capital contributed by each eurozone nation.

"Technical constraints are already biting, and will get worse," said Valli.

"Due to bond scarcity, some kind of tapering in 2018 is unavoidable," ING's Brzeski agreed.

Policymakers would look for a way to make tapering as painless as possible for the economy, he added.

Almost 80 percent of respondents in a Bloomberg News survey of economists agreed that the ECB would reduce its monthly purchases from January.

A large majority of analysts also expect the bank to announce only one tapering 'step' at a time, leaving its options open to boost QE again if the impact on the economy and the inflation outlook is too severe.

For September, though, "we expect that Thursday's meeting will again be about what Draghi did not say, rather than what he did", Brzeski said, leaving central bank watchers to sift the president's words for hints about the decision day.

Main Indices of TSE

Index	Value	Change	Percent
Total Index	83733.5	2522.5	3.11
Industry Index	72761.3	2306.2	3.29
Free Float Index	91441.6	3826	4.27
First Market Index	58600.8	2388.7	4.21
Second Market Index	182894.4	2030.5	1.14

Overall Index details on 20170905

First	83478.9	Change end of year(%)	919.04%
High	83764.1	Historical highest	89500.6 (20140105)
Low	83460.6	Historical lowest	100 (1369/1/6)
Close	83733.5	Base Value	100 (1369/1/6)
Change	2522.5		

Industry Index details on 20170905

First	72510.2	Change end of year(%)	1034.32%
Max Value	72790.8	Historical highest	75181.9 (20140105)
Max Value	70278.2	Historical lowest	1226.8 (1377/8/25)
Closing	72761.3	Base Value	
Closing	2306.2		

Free Float Index details on 20170905

First	91361.7	Change end of year(%)	
Max Value	89665	Historical highest	105040 (20140105)
Max Value	89154.9	Historical lowest	
Closing	91441.6	Base Value	
Closing	3826		

Main Board Index details on 20170905

First	58358.1	Change end of year(%)	787.77%
Max Value	58611.1	Historical highest	67441.4 (20140105)
Max Value	56380.7	Historical lowest	
Closing	58600.8	Base Value	4740.4 (1381/6/2)
Closing	2388.7		

Secondary Index details on 20170905

First	182782.9	Change end of year(%)	1317.58%
Max Value	183024.2	Historical highest	181353 (20170522)
Max Value	177894	Historical lowest	
Closing	182894.4	Base Value	4740.4 (1381/6/2)
Closing	2235.2		

African countries hope to attract more Chinese investment

Delegates from African countries are hoping to attract more Chinese investment at the ongoing 11th China-Northeast Asia Expo in Changchun, capital of northeastern Jilin Province.

Representatives from Ethiopia, Kenya, Zambia and Mozambique presented a variety of collaborative projects at the expo, ranging from grain and dairy processing, light manufacturing, to machinery and construction, in the hope of finding Chinese counterparts to invest in their countries, Xinhua reported.

Sisay Tesfaye Zelek, from the Ethiopian Investment Commission, said Ethiopia has set up a one-stop service system to simplify the approval process for business licenses for overseas enterprises.

"Eligible companies will get their business license approved in a day," Zelek said.

Over the past decade China has become an important investor in Africa, with a total investment of more than \$100 billion, ranging from infrastructure, mining and telecommunications to agriculture and manufacturing.



knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu

Chinese companies have been involved in the manufacturing of auto parts, food and electronic products in Kenya, and the country hopes Chinese companies will expand their presence into the processing of agricultural products and light manufacturing, according to Susan Njoba from Kenya Investment Authority.

"Our data showed Chinese-invested projects generate more job opportunities than companies from other countries," Njoba said.

A McKinsey report indicated Sino-African relations witnessed remarkable growth over the past decade, with bilateral trade up 20 percent and direct investment rising 40 percent annually.

Statistics from China's Ministry of Commerce showed trade between China and African countries reached \$85.3 billion in the first half of 2017, while China's non-financial investment in Africa surged 22 percent to \$1.6 billion during the same period.

China and African countries are highly complementary in resources and technology and new cooperation platforms such as the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation have injected impetus into bilateral economic collaboration, according to Chen Zhou, vice chairman of China Council for the Promotion of International Trade.

Zhang Yuzhong, an official from China Investment Promotion Agency, said, "We can also work to maximize the synergy between China's Belt and Road Initiative and Africa's industrialization strategy to benefit businesses from both sides."

The 11th China-Northeast Asia Expo, which runs from Sept. 1 to 5, serves as a platform for regional cooperation in Northeast Asia and beyond.

The expo has representatives from China, Russia, Mongolia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea and Japan, as well as attracting global dignitaries and enterprises in pursuit of economic and regional cooperation.

Since the expo started in 2005, it has produced trade deals valued at more than \$8 billion.

British retail sales rebound in August

Retail sales rebounded last month despite shoppers facing pressure from higher inflation, according to an industry report.

The British Retail Consortium, working with consultancy KPMG, said like-for-like sales rose 1.3 percent in August, against a 0.9 percent fall for the same month in 2016, according to BBC.

Sales of autumn fashion ranges and back-to-school kit were big contributors to the rise, it said.

But the body warned belt-tightening by consumers was still a risk.

Household finances have been squeezed by tepid wage growth and higher inflation, leading to an expansion of credit and a decline in savings.

The cost of living held steady at 2.6 percent in July,

as a drop in fuel prices offset the rising cost of food, clothing and household goods. Wages are growing at a slower 2.1 percent rate.

Despite the sales improvement, the BRC's Chief Executive Helen Dickinson was worried about the months ahead.

She said: "These figures tell a less positive story about the health of consumer spending than it might seem at first glance."

In food, total sales remained robust, easing back by 0.2 percent points to 3.2 percent for the three months to August, but remained above the annual average of 2.7 percent.

Online non-food sales continued to motor ahead in August, expanding by 11 percent compared to 8.8 percent for the same month last year.



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Major Currencies

Currency	To USD	Currency	To USD
Turkish Lira	0.2901	Chinese Yuan	0.1526
Euro	1.1884	UAE Dirham	0.2722
British Pound	1.2941	Kuwaiti Dinar	3.3145
Australian Dollar	0.7978	Iraqi Dinar	0.0008
Japanese 100 Yen	0.0091	Saudi Riyal	0.2666

Major Commodities

Crude Oil	\$47.81	Silver	\$17.97
Gold	\$1336.70	Platinum	\$1008.20
Copper	\$3.17	Wheat	\$443.75

The Scottish government is planning to introduce a deposit return scheme for bottles and cans. Customers would pay a surcharge when purchasing bottles or cans, which will be refunded when they return them.

## Iran-Vietnam cultural commonalities help forge ties: Envoy

Cultural, climatic and anthropological commonalities between Iran and Vietnam will promote mutual relations, observed the Vietnamese ambassador to Iran.

Nguyen Hong Thach made the remarks during a visit to Gorgan in the northern province of Golestan, IRNA reported.



us.123rf.com

He said Iranian museums depict the country's rich civilization.

Pointing to Gorgan Handicrafts Museum, he said Vietnamese artists will perform a puppet show in Gorgan soon.

The Vietnamese ambassador was in Gorgan to attend a cultural festival in Golestan Province.

## Northern lights linked to North Sea whale strandings

Large solar storms, responsible for the northern lights, may have played a role in the strandings of 29 sperm whales in the North Sea early in 2016.

A new study said these geomagnetic disruptions may have confused the whales' ability to navigate, diverting them into the shallow waters, BBC reported.



REUTERS

Trapped and lost, the whales died on European beaches, attempting to escape.

The research was published recently in the International Journal of Astrobiology.

Researchers have been puzzled by the losses as autopsies showed that the animals were mainly well fed, young and disease-free.

The 29 strandings generated a great deal of public interest and a large number of theories among scientists.

These ranged from poisoning, to climatic changes driving prey into the North Sea which the large cetaceans followed to their doom.

Sperm whales live in deep, warm-to-temperate waters all around the world. Many groups live around the Azores in the eastern Atlantic.

When they are between 10 and 15 years old, young males head north towards the polar region, attracted by the huge quantities of squid found in the colder waters.

Their journey sometimes takes them up along the west coasts of the UK and Ireland and into the Norwegian sea. They normally return by the same route.

# Climate-smart agriculture urgently needed in Africa

Africa contributes only four percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, while six of the 10 most affected countries by climate change are in Africa, warns a major agricultural research for development partnership, while stressing the urgent need to scale up climate-smart agriculture, improve forestry and transform the productivity of water use.

Elwyn Grainger-Jones, executive director of the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) System Organization, analyzed the impact of this staggering fact, which is based on the AAA Initiative report (Initiative for the Adaptation of Africa Agriculture to Climate Change), as well as the needed solutions, IPS reported.

The increasing occurrence and severity of weather events such as droughts and floods, high heat and cold stress, will impact agriculture in Africa, threatening regional food systems, explained Grainger-Jones.

Smallholder farmers and those who primarily draw



PROTUS ONYANGO/IPS

their incomes from agriculture value chains will be affected, which will in turn threaten the region's food security, added the executive director of this partnership comprising 15 independent, non-profit research organizations, home to over 8,000 scientists, researchers and technicians.

"Agriculture and our global food systems, however, contribute up to 29 percent of

greenhouse gas emissions which needs to urgently be addressed," Grainger-Jones underlined.

He further explained that CGIAR is helping the developing world to harness an environmental transformation, to drastically cut the environmental footprint of the food system, including climate emissions, land degradation, water, land pollution and food

waste.

Grainger-Jones added that CGIAR is leading a major effort to develop and scale up climate-smart agriculture, to improve forestry practices and governance, and to transform the productivity of water use.

"We're also working to apply relevant new science to develop a new suite of tools and approaches to transform

agricultural systems — ranging from policy advice on nutrition and market development, new tools to harness satellite based information and forecasting and new approaches to landscape-level planning."

According to Grainger-Jones, there is an urgent need to adapt agriculture — which feeds this chronically food insecure region and forms the backbone of its economy — to extreme weather conditions.

Asked what are the most urgent priorities now and in the medium- and long-term, he explained that climate risks to crops, livestock and fisheries are expected to increase in the coming decades, particularly in low-income countries where adaptive capacity is weaker.

Impacts on agriculture threaten both food security and agriculture's pivotal role in rural livelihoods and broad-based development, added Grainger-Jones.

Drought and advancing desertification have been aggravating the growing water scarcity challenges.

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در مناطق شمالی تهران نیازمندیم

بهترین مشاوره، برترین سرویس، بالاترین رضایت

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و مستغلات شما را جهت اجاره به سفار تخانه‌ها و شرکت‌های خارجی نیازمندیم

مالکین محترم  
ساختمان در دست در مناطق شمال تهران  
جهت اجاره به یک سفار تخانه  
و کمپانی‌های خارجی نیازمندیم

Rapid weight change
Young gymnasts, figure skaters and wrestlers who try to quickly shed pounds by fasting or restricting fluids may be endangering their health, pediatricians warned.

Researchers build first functional vascularized lung scaffold

Researchers at Columbia University have become the first to successfully bioengineer a functional vascularized lung scaffold to treat disease.

The scaffold allows the removal of the pulmonary epithelium while maintaining the viability and function of the vascular network and the lung matrix, UPI reported.

The study, published in Science Advances, aimed to overcome the issue of finding new ways to promote lung repair and increase the number of donor lungs to treat end-stage lung disease.

End-stage lung disease is the third leading cause of death worldwide, accounting for 400,000 deaths per year in the US alone.

The lung has more than 40 different types of cells and the total surface area between the airway and the vasculature is about the size of a tennis court, making previous efforts to bioengineer functional lungs from fully decellularized or synthetic scaffolds that lack functional vasculature more difficult.

The team at Columbia University report they are the first to successfully bioengineer a functional lung with perfusable and healthy vasculature in an ex vivo rodent lung.

The approach allows for the removal of pulmonary epithelium while still maintaining the viability and function of the vascular network and lung matrix.

Gordana Vunjak-Novakovic, a pioneer in tissue engineering who directs the Laboratory for Stem Cells



verywell.com

and Tissue Engineering at Columbia, said, "We developed a radically new approach to bioengineering of the lung."

"We reasoned that an ideal lung scaffold would need to have perfusable and healthy vasculature, and so we developed a method that maintains fully functional lung vasculature while we remove defective epithelial lining of the airways and replace it with healthy therapeutic cells."

"This ability to selectively treat the pulmonary epithelium is important, as most lung conditions are diseases of the epithelium."

Researchers developed an airway-specific method to remove the pulmonary epithelium while still preserving the lung vasculature, matrix and other supporting cell types such as fibroblasts, myocytes, chondrocytes and pericytes.

They ventilated the lungs following lung cannulation in a rodent lung and perfused them on an ex vivo lung perfusion system, or EVLP.

Researchers then used a mild detergent solution to remove epithelial cells, while protecting the vasculature by circulating a perfusate containing electrolytes and energy substrates at

the same time.

Vunjak-Novakovic said, "This is a major step forward in bioengineering lungs."

"The creation of de-epithelialized whole lungs with functional vasculature may open new frontiers in lung bioengineering and regenerative medicine."

"This project could not have been successfully completed without the interdisciplinary effort that made us step out from our zone of comfort, and try novel approaches in collaboration with bioengineers, clinical scientists and stem cell scientists."

Antibacterial scrubs don't help nurses kill germs

Special antibacterial scrubs for nurses don't fend off germs any better than traditional nursing garb, a new study found.

Quoting lead study author Dr. Deverick Anderson, UPI wrote, "Healthcare providers must understand that they can become contaminated by their patients and the environment near patients."



blog.healthjobs.com

"Although not effective, we looked to eliminate this risk for contamination by changing the material of nurses' scrubs."

Anderson directs the Duke University Medical Center's for Antimicrobial Stewardship and Infection Prevention.

For the study, researchers tracked 40 nurses who wore three types of scrubs over three 12-hour shifts in which they monitored one or two patients each in medical or surgical intensive care units.

The scrub types included: A traditional cotton-polyester blend; one treated with silver-alloy inside fibers; and one treated to kill bacteria.

The investigators monitored germs by taking cultures from the clothing worn by the nurses, and also from patients and the hospital environment around the nurses — including bed rails, beds and supply carts.

The findings showed that the scrubs were contaminated at the same level regardless of type, and that new contamination moved in during one-third of shifts.

A germ known as Staphylococcus aureus was transmitted most often.

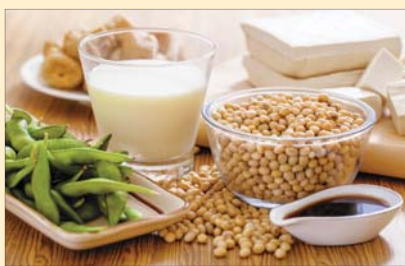
Anderson said, "There is no such thing as a sterile environment. Bacteria and pathogens will always be in the environment."

"Hospitals need to create and use protocols for improved cleaning of the healthcare environment and patients and family members should feel empowered to ask health care providers if they are doing everything they can to keep their loved one from being exposed to bacteria in the environment."

The researchers suggested that the scrubs may have failed to keep germs at bay because their antibacterial properties weren't strong enough to combat persistent exposure to germs over short periods of time.

The study was published in the journal Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology.

Funding was provided by the US National Institutes of Health and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



independent.co.uk

Is cutting soya from diet secret to good health?

We all know sugar is the devil and must be purged from our bodies, supermarket shelves and planet Earth as a whole, but if certain health professionals are to be believed, there could be a new public health enemy number one.

And it'll probably come as a surprise to you. It's soya, independent.co.uk reported.

Soya beans are legumes found in miso, edamame and of course soya milk.

Soya is also used to bulk out many processed foods such as burgers, sausages and lasagna, allowing manufacturers to claim high protein contents.

It's found in about 60 to 70 percent of supermarket products and is widely used in fast food eateries.

Soya is a good source of fiber and protein, so why are people increasingly cutting it out?

Once you remove soy, you realize you're eating no processed foods. [It] seems like, that's really easy to cut that out, but then you realize, there's soy in everything.

The health-conscious among us are used to checking nutrition labels to assess protein, fat, carbs and sugar content, but soya is an ingredient not many of us think to look for.

Many argue that we should though.

Soya can act like estrogen which makes it harder to lose weight, if that's what you're trying to do — high levels of estrogen can cause bloating and water retention.

There's also the fact of the matter that by giving up soya, you'll be cutting out the vast majority of processed foods (and a lot of sugar as a result).

A lot of supposedly healthy

snacks (as well as obviously unhealthy ones) contain soya, so you'll find you have a lot less on which to snack.

Cutting soya out could have quick results too.

Nutritionist Rhiannon Lambert explained that soy certainly does have health benefits.

"Soy is very controversial and depending who you ask you may get different answer but from a nutritional perspective, soy has some great benefits."

"Whole soy beans contain so much nutrition and they have to be eaten cooked, except the immature soybean which is called edamame."

"The downside is that they can contain some phytates which block some nutritional absorption but they are also linked to lowering the bad cholesterol."

Lambert pointed out that in Asia, people have been eating soya for years and they have one of the healthiest aging populations in the world.

"Basically for every study that shows harm from soya or hormonal disruption, there is also a study showing benefits."

"Personally, sticking to fermented soy products like miso and some tasty edamame beans shouldn't cause a problem to the body and there is no need to cut it out."

As with everything, moderation is key. Having tofu a couple of times a week isn't going to do anything drastic to your health.

Lambert said, "The jury is still out there on the effects soy can have on the endocrine function and the heavily processed soy milks on the market."

"I would always see a registered nutritionist or dietitian before cutting out a food group."

Prostate cancer test saves lives, risks remain

Men who get a controversial blood test that looks for signs of prostate cancer appear to have a reduced risk of death from the malignancy, according to a new analysis by an international group of researchers.

The analysis re-examined data from two earlier studies that had led experts to recommend against routine use of the test, which measures levels of prostate-specific antigen (PSA), according to Reuters.com.

Ruth Etzioni, who is the senior author of the analysis from the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle, Washington, said, "The trials taken together indicate there is an important benefit."

A flaw of the earlier trials is that some men who were assigned to a no-screening group actually did get the PSA test on their own, making it difficult to identify differences between the screening group and the no-screening group.

The unclear results — and the risk that the blood tests could lead to unnecessary biopsies and treatments — led the government-backed US Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) to recommend against PSA screening.

The new analysis attempts to clear up the confusion by reexamining the data in computer models, to account for the men who got PSA tests when they

weren't supposed to.

Etzioni's team compared men in the two trials based on the intensity of screening they received.

In one of the trials, PSA testing was tied to a 25 percent to 31 percent reduced risk of

death from prostate cancer, according to the American Cancer Society, but most men with the slow-growing cancer won't die from it.

As a result, it's often reasonable to monitor prostate cancers instead of treating

them.

Dr. Otis Brawley, chief medical officer of the American Cancer Society, said, "This finding confirms or reinforces what everybody has been moving to over the last five to eight years."

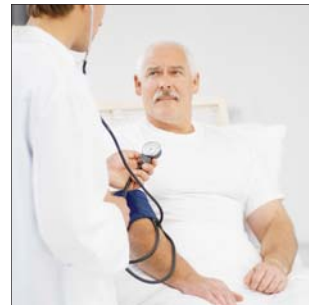
"There is some benefit to prostate cancer screening and there are some harms associated with it."

Brawley, who wasn't involved in the new analysis, said that the benefits of screening are becoming more apparent as doctors move away from aggressively treating all prostate cancers and instead decide to monitor the many that will likely never advance and cause death.

In an editorial published with the new analysis, Dr. Andrew Vickers of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York City identified ways to help ensure the benefits of prostate cancer screening outweigh the harms.

For example, he advises shared decision-making between doctors and patients, carefully selecting which men to biopsy and not screening elderly men, who are unlikely to benefit.

Vickers said, "The controversy about PSA-based screening should no longer be whether it can do well but whether we can change our behavior so that it does more good than harm."



ehow-blog.com

death from prostate cancer, the researchers reported in the Annals of Internal Medicine.

In the other trial, PSA testing was tied to a 27 percent to 32 percent reduced risk of death from prostate cancer, they found.

Etzioni said that the new results don't mean all men should be screened for prostate cancer.

In the US, about one in seven men will be diagnosed

them, since the side effects of treatment — which can include incontinence and impotence — may be more harmful than helpful.

In a proposed update to its recommendation, the USPSTF suggested that men aged between 55 and 69 should be able to decide if they want PSA testing based on a discussion with their doctors about the possible benefits and risks,

such as biopsies and unneeded

The name of Iranian scientist Masoud Farzaneh Dehkordi has been enlisted in the Canadian Academy of Engineering list on June 26, 2017.

### Researchers use optical surface to cool water without electricity

Researchers at Stanford University have shown that without electricity, a system involving high-tech mirror-like optical surfaces can cool flowing water to a temperature below that of the surrounding air.

Since 2013, Shanhui Fan, professor of electrical engineering, and his students and research associates have employed the roof of the Packard Electrical Engineering Building at Stanford as a testbed for the optical surface that could be the future of lower-energy air conditioning and refrigeration, according to news.xinhuanet.com.

Their work published in 2014 first showed the cooling capabilities of the optical surface on its own.

Their new research, published in British Journal Nature Energy, built on their previous work with what they call "radiative sky cooling" but takes it to the next level.

Aaswath Raman, one of Fan's former research associates and co-lead author of the latest paper, said, "It provides for the first time a high-fidelity technology demonstration of how you can use radiative sky cooling to passively cool a fluid and, in doing so, connect it with cooling systems to save electricity."

Radiative sky cooling is a natural process resulting from the moments of molecules releasing heat, such as the heat that comes off a road as it cools after sunset.

This phenomenon is particularly noticeable on a cloudless night because, without clouds, the heat can more easily make it through Earth's atmosphere, all the way to the vast, cool reaches of space.

Fan, who is senior author of the paper, explained, "If you have something that is very cold — like space — and you can dissipate heat into it, then you can do cooling without any electricity or work. The heat just flows.

"For this reason, the amount of heat flow off the Earth that goes to the universe is enormous."

Human bodies release heat through radiative cooling to both the sky and our surroundings, but radiative sky cooling isn't going to live up to its name on a hot, sunny day, as the sunlight warms us more than radiative sky cooling will cool us.

To overcome this problem, the team's surface uses a multilayer optical film that reflects about 97 percent of the sunlight while simultaneously being able to emit the surface's thermal energy through the atmosphere.

Without heat from sunlight, the radiative sky cooling effect can enable cooling below the air temperature on a sunny day.

Eli Goldstein, Fan's another former research associate, said, "With this technology, we're no longer limited by what the air temperature is.

"We're limited by something much colder: The sky and space."

In the experiments published in 2014, small wafers about eight inches, or 20 centimeters, in diameter were used to show how the multilayer optical surface itself cooled. For the new paper, the researchers created a system where panels covered in the specialized optical surfaces sat atop pipes of running water.

The panels were slightly more than two feet, or about 61 centimeters, in length on each side.

With the water moving at a relatively fast rate, the team found the panels were able to consistently reduce the temperature of the water 3°C to 5°C below ambient air temperature over a period of three days.

Fan, Raman and Goldstein have founded SkyCool Systems, a company working on further testing and commercializing the technology, possibly by making their panels integrate easily with standard air conditioning and refrigeration systems.



## How brains learn to recognize faces

Scientists have long deemed the ability to recognize faces innate for people and other primates — something our brains just know how to do immediately from birth.

However, the findings of a new Harvard Medical School study published in the journal Nature Neuroscience, cast doubt on this longstanding view, sciencedaily.com wrote.

Working with macaques temporarily deprived of seeing faces while growing up, a Harvard Medical School team led by neurobiologists Margaret Livingstone, Michael Arcaro, and Peter Schade has found that regions of the brain that are key to facial recognition form only through experience and are absent in primates who don't encounter faces while growing up.

The finding, the researchers said, sheds light on a range of neuro-developmental conditions, including those in which people can't distinguish between different faces or autism, marked by aversion to looking at faces. Most importantly, however, the

study underscores the critical formative role of early experiences on normal sensory and cognitive development, the scientists said.

Livingstone, the Takeda Professor of Neurobiology at Harvard Medical School, explained that macaques — a close evolutionary relative to humans and a model system for studying human brain development — form clusters of neurons responsible for recognizing faces in an area of the brain called the superior temporal sulcus by 200 days of age.

The relative location of these brain regions, or patches, are similar across primate species.

She said, "That knowledge, combined with the fact that infants seem to preferentially track faces early in development, led to the longstanding belief that facial recognition must be inborn."

However, both humans and primates also develop areas in the brain that respond to visual stimuli they haven't encountered for as long during evolution,

including buildings and text.

The latter observation puts a serious wrench in the theory that facial recognition is inborn.

To better understand the basis for facial recognition, Livingstone, along with postdoctoral fellow Arcaro and research assistant Schade, raised two groups of macaques.

The first one, the control group, had a typical upbringing, spending time in early infancy with their mothers and then with other juvenile macaques, as well as with human handlers.

The other group grew up raised by humans who bottle-fed them, played with and cuddled them — all while the humans wore welding masks.

For the first year of their lives, the macaques never saw a face — human or otherwise.

At the end of the trial, all macaques were put in social groups with fellow macaques and allowed to see both human and primate faces.

When both groups of macaques were 200 days old, the researchers used

functional MRI to look at brain images measuring the presence of facial recognition patches and other specialized areas, such as those responsible for recognizing hands, objects, scenes and bodies.

The macaques who had typical upbringing had consistent 'recognition' areas in their brains for each of these categories.

Those who'd grown up never seeing faces had developed areas of the brain associated with all categories except faces.

Next, the researchers showed both groups images of humans or primates. As expected, the control group preferentially gazed at the faces in those images.

In contrast, the macaques raised without facial exposure looked preferentially at the hands.

The hand domain in their brains, Livingstone said, was disproportionately large compared to the other domains.

The findings suggested that sensory deprivation has a selective effect on the way the brain wires itself.

Livingstone added, "The brain seems to become very good at recognizing things that an individual sees often and poor at recognizing things that it never or rarely sees."

"What you look at is what you end up 'installing' in the brain's machinery to be able to recognize."

Normal development of these brain regions could be key to explaining a wide variety of disorders.

One such disorder is developmental prosopagnosia — a condition in which people are born with the inability to recognize familiar faces, even their own, due to the failure of the brain's facial recognition machinery to develop properly.

Likewise, Livingstone said, some of the social deficits that develop in people with autism spectrum disorders may be a side effect stemming from the lack of experiences that involve looking at faces, which children with these disorders tend to avoid.

The findings suggest that interventions to encourage early exposure to faces may assuage the social deficits that stem from lack of such experiences during early development.

### Stellar corpse sheds light on origin of cosmic rays

The origin of cosmic rays, high-energy particles from outer space constantly impacting on Earth, is among the most challenging open questions in astrophysics.

Now new research published in the journal Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society sheds new light on the origin of those energetic particles, according to phys.org.

Discovered more than 100 years ago and considered a potential health risk to airplane crews and astronauts, cosmic rays are believed to be produced by shock waves — for example, those resulting from supernova explosions.

The most energetic cosmic rays streaking across the Universe carry 10 to 100 million times the energy generated by particle colliders such as the Large Hadron Collider at CERN.

The Crab Nebula, the remnant of a supernova explosion that was observed almost 1,000 years ago in 1054 CE, is one of the best-studied objects in the history of astronomy and a known source of cosmic rays.

It emits radiation across the entire electromagnetic spectrum, from gamma rays, ultraviolet and visible light, to infrared and radio waves.

Most of what we see comes from very energetic particles (electrons), and astrophysicists can construct detailed models to try to reproduce the radiation that these particles emit.

The new study, by Federico Fraschetti at the University of

Arizona, the US, and Martin Pohl at the University of Potsdam, Germany, revealed that the electromagnetic radiation streaming from the Crab Nebula may originate in a different way than scientists have traditionally thought: The entire zoo of radiation can potentially be unified and arise from a single population of electrons, a hypothesis previously deemed impossible.



This composite image of the Crab Nebula was assembled with arbitrary color scaling by combining data from five telescopes spanning nearly the entire electromagnetic spectrum.

According to the generally accepted model, once the particles reach a shock boundary, they bounce back and forth many times due to the magnetic turbulence.

During this process they gain energy — in a similar way to a tennis ball being bounced between two rackets that are steadily moving nearer to each other — and are pushed closer and closer to the speed of light.

Such a model follows an idea introduced by the Italian physicist

Enrico Fermi in 1949. Federico, a staff scientist at the University of Arizona's Departments of Planetary Sciences, Astronomy and Physics, said, "The current models do not include what happens when the particles reach their highest energy."

"Only if we include a different process of acceleration, in which the number of higher energy particles decreases faster than at lower energy, can we explain the entire electromagnetic spectrum we see."

"This tells us that while the shock wave is the source of the acceleration of the particles, the mechanisms must be different."

Coauthor Martin Pohl added, "The new result represents an important advance for our understanding of particle acceleration in cosmic objects, and helps to decipher the origin of the energetic particles that are found almost everywhere in the Universe."

The authors concluded that a better understanding is needed of how particles are accelerated in cosmic sources, and how the acceleration works when the energy of the particles becomes very large.

Several NASA missions, including ACE, STEREO and WIND, are dedicated to studying the similar properties of shocks caused by plasma explosions on the surface of the Sun as they travel to Earth and so may add vital insights into these effects in the near future.

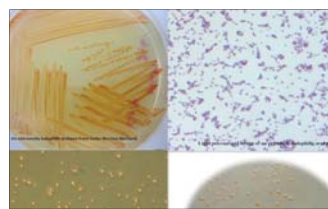
### Iranian researchers find new archaea species

Iranian researchers discovered the 12th species of Archaea. They registered the new archaea species with the Iranian Biological Research Center Microorganism Bank.

Quoting Abolhasan Shahzadeh Fazeli, the head of Iranian Biological Research Center (IBRC), Mehr News Agency wrote, "Isolation and maintenance of strains are among the important missions of Microorganism Bank of this center."

"Through efforts of this center, new microbial taxons were discovered and introduced to the world."

He added that a new archaeon was discovered thanks



en.mehnews.com

to studies conducted on the biodiversity of microorganisms in Mighan Wetland.

Mighan Wetland, located in Markazi Province, benefits from unique ecologic characteristics and is therefore

considered a valuable ecosystem for the IBRC's studies on microbial biodiversity.

Fazeli said, "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 Natrilabaceae.

"This archaeon has been admitted by the International Journal of Systematic and Evolutionary Microbiology (IJSEM)."

These species of microorganisms usually thrive in extreme acidic or alkali 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.

### SpaceX tests first stage of 'world's most powerful rocket'

SpaceX has completed testing of all three first-stage cores on its Falcon Heavy rocket.

The company is preparing for the rocket's first flight test, scheduled for early November, UPI reported.

The aerospace company announced, "Falcon Heavy's 3 first stage cores have all completed testing at our rocket development facility in McGregor, TX."

"SpaceX touts the Falcon Heavy as the world's most powerful rocket."

"Falcon Heavy can lift more than twice the payload of the next closest operational vehicle, the Delta IV Heavy, at one-third the cost."

SpaceX expects the Falcon Heavy



An artistic renderings imagines the Falcon Heavy rocket in liftoff. The world's most powerful rocket is set to conduct its first test flight in November.

to eventually ferry crew and cargo between Earth and Mars.

The Falcon Heavy is essentially a trio of Falcon 9 cores bound together.

The three rocket engines can generate five million pounds of thrust at liftoff — equivalent to eighteen 747 aircraft.

SpaceX announced, "Only the Saturn V moon rocket, last flown in 1973, delivered more payload to orbit."

According to Fortune, one of the three cores included in the tests had previously powered a Falcon 9 rocket on a space station resupply mission.

SpaceX remains committed to reusability as a strategy for dramatically reducing costs. The company launched and landed a reusable rocket for the first time this year. All totaled, the company has executed controlled landings of 15 first-stage rockets.



Three 24-hour bookstores are opened in China this year thanks to the local government's supports against the dismay atmosphere for the bookshop industry in recent decades due to Internet sale.



IBRAHEEM ABU MUSTAFA/REUTERS

# Save the Children warns of unlivable conditions in Gaza

There are more than one million children living in the Gaza Strip

One million children are suffering from 'unlivable' conditions in the Gaza Strip, according to Save the Children — an international charity that promotes children's rights and provides aid worldwide.

In a report, Aljazeera quoted a statement by the group on Tuesday as saying: "One million children in Gaza are living in dire conditions. Save the Children considers Gaza to be unlivable now."

According to the charity, "60 percent of the sea around Gaza is contaminated with untreated sewage and over 90 percent of water sources [are] too contaminated for human consumption."

The besieged Palestinian territory, where more than two million people live, has also been suffering from an energy crisis since mid-April due to a dispute over taxes between Hamas, which rules the enclave, and the occupied West Bank-based Palestinian Authority — the party of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

Gaza has also been under a tight Israeli blockade for a decade and residents have been subjected to persistent blackouts.

The continuing electricity crisis and environmental crisis has left the more than one million children in Gaza unable 'to sleep, study or play', Save the Children said.

According to the charity, more than 740 schools are struggling to function without electricity and most families receive only two to four hours of electricity each day.

The UN found in 2012, that if nothing was done to ease the blockade on Gaza, life would become 'unlivable' by 2020.

But following the release of a UN report in July that found that living conditions had worsened since the blockade began, the international body's humanitarian coordinator for the occupied territories said that point "of unlivability [had] been passed quite a long time ago".

Save the Children's Caroline Anning told Aljazeera that the "situation in Gaza is a growing humanitarian crisis".

She added that the situation "is getting worse every day".

Save the Children called on Israel to "lift the Gaza blockade and for Palestinian and Israeli authorities to provide basic services", adding that lack of such services

are contributing to growing mental health issues in the enclave.

Save the Children's Country Director for the occupied Palestinian Territories Jennifer Moorhead said in a statement, "Gaza children are already suffering through a 10-year blockade and the constant threat of conflict."

"Living without access to basic services like electricity is affecting their family life and mental well-being."

"We're seeing increased levels of anxiety, aggression and mood swings."

Hamas has run Gaza since 2007 when it seized the territory from Abbas' Fatah movement in a dispute over parliamentary elections won by Hamas the previous year.

Multiple attempts at reconciliation between Hamas and Fatah have failed, but the Palestinian Authority has continued to pay Israel for some of the electricity delivered to the enclave.

Israel has launched three offensives on Gaza since 2008, in which thousands of Palestinians were killed.

Severe damage to Gaza's already weak infrastructure has contributed to the current humanitarian crisis.

## Robots: A solution to declining, aging populations?

Are humanoid robots or androids a solution to declining and aging populations? Given the prospects of demographic decline and population aging coupled with growing opposition to immigration, countries are increasingly turning to and investing in advanced robotics and androids to address shrinking workforces and rising numbers of elderly.

Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, for example, has called for a more rapid development of advanced robotics. He believes that robotics "could help the country overcome the handicap of a fast-aging populace and a declining workforce and to help the country to use robotics from large-scale factories to every corner of our economy and society", IPS wrote.

More than 80 countries, representing 46 percent of world population, are experiencing fertility below the replacement level of about two births per woman. In many of those countries, including Canada, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Italy, South Korea, Spain and the United Kingdom, fertility levels have remained below replacement for several decades.

Largely as a consequence of sustained levels low fertility about 50 countries or areas are projected to have smaller populations by midcentury. Some of those countries, including Bulgaria, Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Ukraine, will likely see their populations decline by more than 15 percent by midcentury.

In addition, many countries are also experiencing rapid population aging. Due to low fertility rates and increased longevity, population age structures are becoming older than ever before.

The median age of developed countries, for example, is now more than 40 years, an increase of 13 years since 1950.

By midcentury, the median age of about a dozen countries will be 50 years or more, including Japan (53 years), Spain (52), Italy (51) and Germany (50).

Also, in some countries, such as Greece Italy, Japan, Portugal and Spain, one in three people is expected to be 65 years and older by 2050.



HUMANROBO

Consequently, potential support ratios in those countries are projected to decline to less than two people in the working ages 15 to 64 years per one elderly person aged 65 years and older.

At the same time that many countries are facing demographic decline and population aging, opposition to immigration is increasing among most migrant-receiving countries.

Opinion surveys report that majorities in dozens of countries, including Germany, Russia, South Africa, Turkey and the United States, consider immigration to have a "very or fairly negative impact".

In addition to rising public opposition to immigration, governments in a growing number of countries are tightening border controls, erecting fences, walls and barricades, and adopting policies to significantly restrict immigration.

Facing declining and aging populations coupled with resistance to immigration, countries are increasingly turning to and investing in advanced robotic technology to meet their labor needs and also increase productivity, reduce labor costs and improve goods and services.

Recent examples of robotic technology include: A self-driving pizza delivery car; a robotic bricklayer that can lay 1,000 standard bricks in one hour, which typically takes two men about a day; and a robotic barista that can serve 120 coffees in an hour.

High robot-to-worker ratios are found in South Korea, Japan and Germany. While more than half of the top 10 countries in robot-to-worker ratios belong to the European Union, 75 percent of the world's robots are geographically concentrated in five countries: China, Germany, Japan, South Korea and the United States.

The International Federation of Robotics forecasts that the number of industrial robots deployed worldwide will increase to around 2.6 million by 2019, which is nearly a doubling since 2015.

Advances in robot technology and artificial intelligence are contributing to the humanization of robots and the emergence of androids that look, move and act like a human being, even having a human-like body with a flesh-like appearance.

In addition to being a solution to shrinking workforces, some believe that androids will be able to provide valuable services, including being personal companions for the growing numbers of elderly living alone, providing a platform for basic healthcare services and doing the dirty, dangerous and difficult work that many eschew.

Although still under development, first stage androids are becoming more apparent in warehouses, retail stores, reception/information centers, hospitals, military installations, industrial parks and television.

Several years ago, scientists in Japan developed the world's first news-reading android that not only had perfect language skills, but also possessed a sense of humor. Another recent example is an android developed at a research institute in Singapore that works as a university receptionist.

In the past the possibility of androids existing within human societies was limited mainly to science-fiction writers, moviemakers and futurists. More recently, scientists, innovators and industrial leaders are addressing the emergence of the transformative era of humanoid robots with artificial intelligence.

The benefits and advantages of androids or human-like robots are widely recognized by governments, businesses, the military and research centers.

## South Korean male infertility up

Male infertility in South Korea rose dramatically in the past five years due to people getting married late, heavy workloads and stress, a local report said Tuesday.

The number of male infertility cases surged 55 percent to 61,903 last year from 39,933 in 2011, according to the report by the Health Insurance Review and Assessment Service (HIRA), Yonhap reported.

Female infertility, meanwhile, increased a mere three percent to 157,207 from 153,048 during the same time span.

Infertility is defined by the inability to have a baby despite trying in the past year.

Doctors attribute the rising male infertility numbers to the recent trend of people tying the knot much later in life compared to the past and various stress caused by long work hours, which is common in South Korea.



YONHAP

Another reason is a growing number of men consulting doctors in recent years unlike in the past when mostly only women saw doctors for infertility treatments, they said.

Kim Dae-geun of Cha Hospital said, "Married couples tend to visit hospitals together these days unlike in the past when infertility was seen as the problem for the women alone."

## Specialized farmers' cooperatives to promote modern agriculture in China

China has 1.93 million specialized farmers' cooperatives with over 100 million rural households participating, according to the State Administration for Industry and Commerce.

The specialized cooperatives have gained popularity with participating farmers accounting for 46.8 percent of Chinese rural households, said Ye Zhenqin, vice minister of agriculture, at a seminar on the Law on Farmers' Specialized Cooperatives, which has been in effect for 10 years, Xinhua wrote.

Since the law took effect in 2007, it has played an important role in fattening rural wallets, promoting new agricultural management systems, and boosting modern agriculture, Zhenqin said.

Through specialized cooperatives, farmers engaged in the same kind of agricultural production are able to pool



IPP REVIEW

resources and increase productivity.

So far this year, the central and local governments have pumped 4.8 billion yuan (\$736 million) into supporting farmers' cooperatives to strengthen their competitiveness and help them withstand risks, he added.

He said the government will further unveil policies to support cooperatives in terms of infrastructure construction, financing, insurance, marketing and personnel training.

## How Egypt is promoting education for Syrian refugees

General Administration for Community Participation affiliated with the Education Ministry organized orientation lectures for Egyptian and Syrian students and their parents at one of the schools in the 6th of October Educational Administration in Giza Governorate.

The lectures were part of the 'Education in a Safe Environment' project under the auspices of the Plan International organization and in coordination with the Canadian Embassy, al-monitor.com wrote.

These efforts aim at supporting Syrian students, setting the stage for their education and offering them and their parents' social and psychological support in addition to economic aid. The project encourages communication between Syrian students and their Egyptian peers in Egyptian schools.

In 2012, during his opening speech at the 138th session of the Arab Foreign Ministers Council in Cairo, former president Mohammed Morsi announced that Syrian students would be charged the same school fees as Egyptian students at public schools. Previously, foreign students had paid higher fees.

According to the estimates of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in 2015, Egypt recorded the

highest school enrollment rate for Syrian refugee children, at about 85 percent, amounting to 39,314 Syrian students.

Bakawi Mustafa, director general of the 6th of October Educational Administration, told Al-Monitor, "My educational administration has the largest number of Syrian students in Egyptian schools in the whole country because many Syrians live in 6th of October City in Giza. Their numbers are not known precisely but are estimated at around 5,000 students."

He noted that awareness "is essential, through [orientation] lectures for integration and creating a spirit of harmony among Syrian and Egyptian students. These lectures also aim at highlighting the nature of curricula in Egypt so that Syrian students can understand them, as school education differs between Egypt and Syria."

Mustafa added, "The Ministry [of Education] gives us the freedom to coordinate with civil society organizations to offer financial and psychological support to Syrian students to eliminate the differences among them or with Egyptian students."

The Egyptian government represented by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of International Cooperation held a meeting in 2015 with four international parties

— the Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Plan International Egypt, Car Association and Save the Children. The meeting was held within the scope of the work of the Higher Coordination Committee of the 'Education in a Safe Environment' project in order to meet the pressing educational needs of Syrian students.

Imad al-Wassimi, the head of the Public Education Sector at the Ministry of Education, said during his speech at the 2015 meeting that the ministry wants to work with civil society groups as main partners to promote the educational process in Egypt.

He pointed to the efforts the ministry is making to integrate Syrian students in schools and make them feel that Egypt is their second home.

Plan International Egypt had announced in a press statement in June 2016 that 'Education in a Safe Environment' will be implemented over two years with the aim of giving about 28,900 Syrian and Egyptian children between the ages of four and 14 the right to education. Around 14 percent of targeted children are Syrians in 40 schools, including 25 public schools and 15 private ones. The project is implemented in the Cairo, Giza, Alexandria, Qalyubia and Damietta governorates.

## UFOs spotted flying over a UK city



captured on mobile phone cameras, you only have to search YouTube to find them, but very few that need further investigation once you know what you are looking for."

The two video clips, which were filmed in different parts of the city and on separate days, appeared to have captured the same lights.

In the first video, filmed over Kingswood by 18-year-old Kieran Welford, three lights can be seen moving at slow-speed in a horizontal direction.

In the second clip, filmed a few days before by Fishponds resident Dean Williams, a small, white light is visible against the black of the night sky.

But given the poor quality of the footage, Mark admitted it was difficult to say with any certainty what the UFOs were.

"When I try to enlarge the object, it just becomes a ball of light," he added.

"It could be a Chinese lantern or maybe a satellite."

Alien hunters have captured what appears to be UFOs flying over a UK city. Eerie footage showed mysterious lights blinking in the night sky over Bristol.

Some people believe this is evidence an alien invasion is imminent, but experts have another theory, according to mirror.co.uk.

The UFOs are likely to have been man-made satellites orbiting the Earth or Chinese lanterns, a paranormal investigator has claimed.

Video footage captured by

residents in Kingswood and Fishponds of mysterious lights zooming across the night sky prompted some to think an alien invasion was imminent.

But experts at the Bristol Society for Paranormal Research Investigation, who have analyzed the two clips, rejected the claims.

Mark Davey, of the BSPRI, told the Bristol Post: "I have studied both clips and they are unidentified flying objects... but are also likely to have a plausible explanation.

"There are many causes for

UFO sightings including meteorological weather conditions, Chinese lanterns, and helium balloons, balloons with led lights attached, drones, helium kites, and remote controlled blimps with lights, aircraft and even luminescing owls.

"By far, one of the most common misidentifications for UFOs are astronomical, including satellites (ISS), satellites in decaying orbits, meteors, fireballs, stars and planets.

"There are now thousands of reported UFO sightings

GETTY

A petition to ban 'cruel' donkey rides from a traditional English seaside resort has gained more than 110,000 signatures in just six days.

Supporters say the animals endure unnecessary suffering as they are forced to walk up and down seafronts carrying children in hot weather with no rest, dailymail.co.uk wrote.

The petition was set up by a woman known as 'Kirsty D' who visited Clevedon, Somerset, on a hot day.

It called on the local council to ban the rides on Salt house Fields, a public park on the seafront.

It read: "Seaside donkey rides have been around for years, and when I was a small child, I liked to ride on a donkey but I wasn't old enough to realize how cruel and unnecessary they are.

"The weather was hot, and there was one donkey being walked up and down, carrying a child.

"Imagine yourself walking all day in the hot sun carrying a child, and only being allowed to stop and rest when someone else lets you.

"That's what these poor donkeys have to

## Petition to ban 'cruel' donkey rides gets 110,000 backers



SWNS

endure. "I think it's time to call it a day on donkey rides, and let them live their lives in peace and not be forced for our entertainment."

The petition, which is now closed, gained 110,439 signatures, 18,407 of which come from the UK.

But Matt Taylor, who has been running donkey rides at Clevedon for more than 20 years, insisted his animals were treated well.

He said he is licensed by North Somerset Council and has to meet strict criteria to operate the rides.

Taylor owns 12 donkeys and uses eight for rides while the other four are retired.

"We tend to use three or four donkeys each day for the rides at Clevedon," he said. "Different donkeys work on different days. We don't operate on sand, purely on the grass at Salt house Fields.

"Donkey rides are very much a British tradition and the seaside donkeys are loved by millions of people.

"We never use a bit on the donkeys. If they didn't want to do it they wouldn't."

The donkeys are rested at a field in Portbury during the winter, and visitors and villagers often stop to feed and stroke them.

Donkey rides have been running in Clevedon's Salt house Fields for many decades and in neighboring Weston-super-Mare since 1886.

North Somerset Council spokesman Nick Yates said: "We license this activity...

"The welfare of the animals is, of course, extremely important — the donkeys are checked by a vet and are subject to regular visits by the RSPCA."

## Schoolgirl pulls legendary 'Excalibur' from lake where King Arthur threw it

Long live Mathilda Jones — after finding a huge 'Excalibur' sword in the lake from the legend of King Arthur, she is technically the new Queen of England, right?

The seven-year-old schoolgirl was paddling in Dozmary Pool in Cornwall with her family recently when she saw something metallic in the water, metro.co.uk wrote.

Dad Paul, who had been telling his daughters about the legend of 'Arthur and Excalibur' as they were traveling to the lake, first assumed it would be a bit of old fencing.

However, when he reached down, he realized Mathilda had discovered something much more regal — a four-foot sword.

Paul, who lives with his family in Doncaster, said: "It was a blistering hot day and Mathilda asked if we could go for a paddle.

"She was only waist deep when she said she could see a



SWNS

sword."

He added that the weapon is four feet long, 'exactly Mathilda's height'.

Sadly, Mathilda probably won't be heading to Buckingham Palace to claim the crown just yet, as Paul is fairly certain the sword is an old film property.

### The legend of Excalibur

The legend of King Arthur tells the tale of his sword Excalibur, the holder of which is the true king (or queen) of Britain.



The sword was given to him by the mythical 'Lady of the Lake', bringing him good fortune and incredible combat skills.

After he lost the sword in the Battle of Camlann, Arthur was mortally injured, and upon his death a knight (either Sir Griflet or Sir Bedivere) hurled it into the lake. However, before it touched the surface a woman's hand reached out of the water to grasp it.

The Lady of the Lake is said to have held the sword below Dozmary Pool, where Mathilda and her family were visiting, until the next person worthy of the British throne finds it.

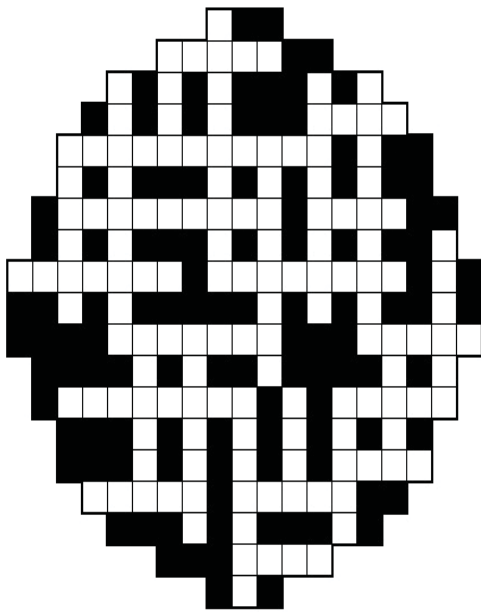
In some retellings of the legend, Excalibur is the same sword a young Arthur pulled from the stone to be crowned king.

## PICTURE OF THE DAY



The winners of the full beard freestyle award at the 2017 World Beard and Moustache Championships, Texas, the US. SUZANNE CORDEIRO/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

## Global Word-Fit



- 4 letters**  
APIA  
CHAD  
OHIO  
PERU  
SUVA  
UTAH

- PRAIA**  
SPAIN

- 6 letters**  
AUSTIN  
TAIPEI  
UGANDA

- 5 letters**  
ARUBA  
EGYPT  
GHANA  
MACAU  
MIAMI

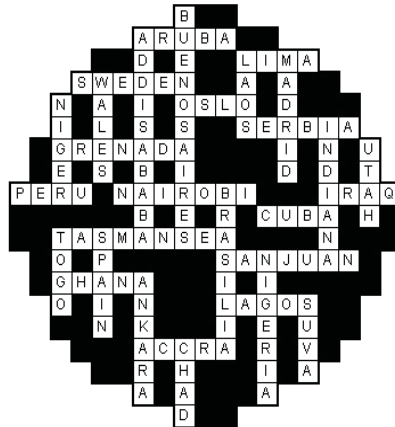
- 7 letters**  
AUGUSTA  
BEIJING  
URUGUAY  
YUCATAN

- 8 letters**  
HONDURAS  
PARAGUAY  
SRI LANKA  
TRINIDAD

- 9 letters**  
ARGENTINA  
MAURITIUS  
MILWAUKEE  
SANTORINI

- 11 letters**  
AFGHANISTAN

## Yesterday's solution



## Sudoku

Sudoku was inspired by the table devised by Iranian mathematician Khwarazmi. Fill 9x9 grid with digits so that each column, each row and each of the nine 3x3 sub-grids that compose the grid, contains all of the digits from 1 to 9.

2		3						8
8							5	
	7				6	2		
	5			2	1			
	3							9
			3	8				4
		6	9					2
		7						3
9							6	7
7	5	9	8	3	1	2	4	6
3	1	6	2	6	4	7	8	5
4	2	8	5	7	6	6	1	3
4	5	4	7	6	8	3	1	2
2	6	9	1	4	5	6	8	3
6	9	8	6	7	2	1	3	8
3	9	3	2	9	6	4	8	5
1	7	5	8	4	2	9	3	6
8	6	4	2	9	3	3	5	7
2	9	8	6	4	7	1	3	5



## Federer, Nadal one step from landmark US Open meeting

Rafael Nadal plays the backhand shot against Ukraine's Alexandr Dolgopolov in the US Open fourth round in New York on September 4, 2017. CLIVE BRUNSKILL/GETTY IMAGES

World number one Rafael Nadal dispatched Alexandr Dolgopolov 6-2, 6-4, 6-1 with a powerful display to reach the US Open quarterfinals in just one hour 41 minutes on Monday.

Meanwhile, Roger Federer crushed Germany's Philipp Kohlschreiber 6-4, 6-2, 7-5 to ease into the quarterfinals and remain on a collision course for a semifinal showdown with Nadal, Reuters reported.

The 28-year-old Ukrainian looked helpless against the Spaniard's dominant serve, which was boosted by courts made faster due to sunny conditions at the Arthur Ashe Stadium.

"I think I played a solid match. I played without making many mistakes," Nadal told the crowd in an on-court interview.

Next up for the top seed is a first meeting with 19-year-old Russian Andrey Rublev who beat Belgian ninth seed David Goffin.

Nadal dominated all facets of Monday's match, never dropping a service game and committing only 11 unforced errors while racking up 23

winners and breaking Dolgopolov six times.

The onslaught was too much for the unseeded Dolgopolov, who was never comfortable enough to unleash his unconventional game that features unexpected drop shots and bold net approaches.

### 'It would be good for the game'

The muscular Spaniard and the elegant Swiss maestro 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 semifinal 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.

"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."

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."

## Joshua to fight Pulev in October

Anthony Joshua's IBF and WBA heavyweight title defense against Kubrat Pulev was confirmed for Cardiff's Principality Stadium on October 28.

The fight between the 27-year-old and his Bulgarian mandatory challenger has been under negotiation since early August when his first-choice opponent Wladimir Klitschko announced his retirement, PA Sport reported.

A rematch with Klitschko would have been scheduled for November 11 in Las Vegas, which could have hosted Joshua-Pulev.

The favored venue of Cardiff instead means the champion will likely fight under the closed roof before pursuing his US debut in 2018.

There had also been suggestions the WBA could strip Joshua of their title amid their preference for him to fight Luis Ortiz, but with the Cuban likely to challenge WBC champion Deontay Wilder, Joshua's path appears clear.

Joshua said, "October 28 can't come soon enough, I have been eager to get back in the ring since Wembley and now we are confirmed and ready."

"I'll be locked away focusing on fight number 20 for the next eight weeks. I am excited to experience the atmosphere in a sold out Principality Stadium and aim to give the fans a spectacular night."

The 36-year-old Pulev, who lost his previous world heavyweight title fight against Klitschko inside five

rounds, said, "We will not hug and hold, we will not run. We will stand and fight."

"His style fits mine perfectly and in boxing, styles make fights. My preparation will be very intense and I will be perfectly ready when I enter the ring so that he will have no chance to beat me."

Joshua's promoter, Eddie Hearn of Matchroom, had applied for a license to promote in Nevada in his anticipation of a rematch with Klitschko, but he said, "I'm delighted that we will be in Cardiff at the magnificent Principality Stadium for the next step of the AJ journey."

"Nearly 80,000 will gather on October 28 to create another unforgettable night of boxing."



ANDREW COULDRIDGE/ACTION IMAGES



Germany's players celebrate Mesut Ozil's opening goal in the 6-0 victory over Norway in Stuttgart, Germany, on September 4, 2017. AFP

## I found 'enjoyment' again, says Low after thrashing of Norway

Germany coach Joachim Low admitted his side's 6-0 victory over Norway allowed him to find enjoyment in football again after the shameful scenes in Prague last week.

In his pre-match news conference, an angry Low condemned the "deeply despicable" behavior of some of the German fans during Friday's win over the Czech Republic when a minute's silence was interrupted and there were reports of Nazi-era chants being made, ESPN reported.

Returning to play on home soil for the first time in three months proved to be a different story as the host raced into a 4-0 lead before halftime with goals from Mesut Ozil, Julian Draxler and two from Timo Werner, on his return to his home city of Stutt-

gart. Substitutes Leon Goretzka and Mario Gomez completed the rout in the second half to maintain the Germans' 100 percent record in Group C of their World Cup qualifying campaign and put a smile back on Low's face.

"It was a lot of fun to play here in Stuttgart, the mood was great. That shows the beauty of football," Low said after the match.

"After the Czech Republic game, we said there must be another spirit in this team again and we have made good progress against Norway."

"It was the first home game for a long time and before the game it felt that the spectators were 'hot' to see the team and we then did our part

with nice goals." RB Leipzig forward Werner, back in front of a familiar crowd having started his career at Stuttgart, was delighted to have put on a show.

"We were different from the emotionality and attitude of the Czech Republic. We took it seriously from the first minute and did not stop," he said after taking his tally to six goals in eight appearances.

"I am glad that I now play regularly in the national team. To experience this in my home is very special and means a lot to me and I am extremely happy that I was so well received."

"Thanks to the fans, they have supported me so much."

Norway coach Lars Lagerback admitted the world champion exposed every weakness.

"Germany is a fantastic team, definitely one of the best in the world, they have made it very difficult for us," he said.

"When you don't have a 100 percent team performance it's hard against such a team."

## Barca president plays down Messi exit fears

Barcelona president Josep Maria Bartomeu told Diario Sport that Lionel Messi's contract renewal is effectively already signed and rejected fears a club could trigger the €300 million buy-out clause in the new deal.

Bartomeu said the extension - officially announced by the club in July - is missing only "the official photograph and the protocol of the signature" as he sought to play down fears that the 30-year-old could walk away from the Camp Nou, ESPN reported.

Former Barca presidential candidate Agusti Benedito launched a no-confidence vote against him on Friday, suggesting, among other things, that Messi could leave for free when the current deal expires in the summer due to the board's continued mismanagement of the club.

Bartomeu, though, said the extension is "all agreed and signed," adding, "There are three contracts."

"One with the Messi Foundation, which is signed with the president of the Foundation and the player's brother. There's an image

rights contract with Messi, which his father has signed, who is the administrator of his company, and the employment contract, which his father has signed, who has the power to do so."

Asked what is needed it for it to be rubber-stamped, Bartomeu has now said, "Just that Leo arrives and we have the official photograph and the protocol of the signature."

Even if he does sign, Messi's buyout clause will be just €300 million, which does not appear prohibitive after Paris Saint-Germain paid out €222 million to trigger Neymar's buyout clause at Barca this summer.



GETTY IMAGES

Bartomeu, though, does not fear another Neymar situation, saying, "Not with Leo's commitment to the club... Barca will never make a play-

er stay if he tells us he wants to leave, as happens at other clubs in Europe. We have a different way of being to other clubs."

Neymar's exit had a big impact on the club, especially on their summer transfer dealings, but Bartomeu insisted it was an opportunity for Barca to move back toward its traditional models of possession-based football, moving on from the dependency on the MSN attack - consisting of Messi, Luis Suarez and Neymar - of the last three years.

"[The MSN attack] has been really good but it's had consequences and this is an opportunity to make a return to collective football in midfield, which is traditionally Barca's strength," he said.

PSG is now subject to a UEFA investigation

after breaking the world transfer record to sign Neymar and then bringing in Kylian Mbappe from Monaco on a loan deal that is set to cost the club €80 million next summer.

"There's an inflated transfer market that doesn't come from football but from elsewhere," Bartomeu said. "Our decision [to counter that] has been to improve the academy, increase revenue and to work with UEFA, FIFA and the ECA [European Club Association] so that Financial Fair Play is applied with force and there's a limit on transfers."

"Something has to be done. It can't be the case that there's money that comes from outside of football and pumped into the industry."

Asked if he was referring to PSG's Qatari ownership, he responded, "Yes. And Abu Dhabi [Manchester City are owned by the Abu Dhabi United Group], two countries that have clubs."

"If Bayern, [Manchester] United, [Real] Madrid or Arsenal buy a player, you know [the money] comes from football. But these two clubs distort the market."

## Art & Culture

### Toronto-bound films look at survival — in war, chaos, social strife

The race for the Oscars heats up this week at the Toronto International Film Festival, where a raft of films will focus on survival in dark times, with mounting political, religious and racial tensions around the world.

More than 300 feature and short films from 74 countries will be screened at the 42nd TIFF — the biggest film fest in North America — which opens Thursday and runs through September 17, AFP reported.

The event is often seen as a way for Oscar-conscious studios to generate buzz about their movies, with hundreds of filmmakers and actors to hit the red carpet in Canada's largest city.

Toronto is however facing increasing competition from other events for the best films and brightest stars.

"This year's big theme is survival," said the festival's Chief Executive Piers Handling.



ALBERTO E. RODRIGUEZ/GETTY IMAGES

From climate change and overpopulation to terrorism and fringe right-wing groups in America, Handling said, people worldwide are facing "an atmosphere of great uncertainty and a real fear about certain issues".

"I think it's a very unsettling time for many of us," he said, explaining that the films on offer would run the gamut of emotions.

"Some of the films are absolutely uplifting, showing that individually or collectively (you can overcome) if you harness your resources and work together. But of course, not all of the films have a happy ending," he said.

Handling highlighted "The Mountain Between Us", starring Idris Elba and Kate Winslet as two strangers fighting to stay alive after a plane crash in the wilderness, or "Stronger" about the 2013 Boston Marathon attack, starring Jake Gyllenhaal, as examples of films showing individuals trying to survive.

By contrast, American director Alexander Payne offers up a quirky solution to the issue of human consumption rapidly exhausting Earth's resources.

His science fiction social satire "Downsizing", about a man who chooses to shrink himself to simplify his life, stars Matt Damon.

Other featured films, meanwhile, chronicle efforts to live on in times of war and chaos.

Among those expected to generate buzz are the Winston Churchill biopic "Darkest Hour" starring Gary Oldman, Angelina Jolie's Cambodian genocide drama "First They Killed My Father" and "Kings", based on the 1992 Los Angeles race riots, starring Daniel Craig and Halle Berry.

#### Contenders

In past years, films such as "Spotlight", "12 Years a Slave", and "Slumdog Millionaire" went on from winning the Toronto festival's audience prize for best picture to take the top honor at the Oscars.

Last year, the musical "La La Land" won the prize and took home six Oscars including best actress and best director — but not the top prize, despite the shocking mix-up with "Moonlight" at the end of the gala.

Many of the films being positioned for accolades this year will have already premiered at the Venice, New York or Telluride film festivals before they are screened in Toronto.

"The fall season is very crowded," Handling said, with the festivals all held within a short span of time.

They include "Battle of the Sexes" with Emma Stone and Steve Carell as tennis stars Billie Jean King and Bobby Riggs, "Mother!" starring Jennifer Lawrence and George Clooney's Coen brothers-scripted "Suburbicon".

But Handling insists Toronto continues to be the launching pad for Oscar contenders. "I think Toronto is still seen as the key place to amplify films going into awards season. Films may premiere in Venice or Telluride but the amplification actually happens here in Toronto," he said.

Notably among the hundreds of guests expected to grace the red carpet in Toronto are Clooney, Stone, Lawrence, Elba, Damon, Nicole Kidman, Jessica Chastain and Liam Neeson.

The festival will also host intimate talks with Jolie, Javier Bardem, Gael Garcia Bernal and Helen Mirren.

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## 'Appendix' wins Montreal Best Screenplay award

Art & Culture Desk

Iranian film 'Appendix', directed by Hossein Namazi, won the Best Screenplay award at the 41st Montreal World Film Festival which was held in Canada from August 24 to September 4. Produced by Maqsood Jabbari, this was the first presence of the Iranian flick in an international filmfest, Mehr News Agency reported.

The flick was first screened at the 36th Fajr International Film Festival in Tehran from April 21 to 28, 2017.

Founded in 1977, the Canadian event is one of the country's oldest international film festivals and the only competitive one in North America accredited by the Fédération Internationale des Associations de Producteurs de Films (FIAPF).

The public festival is held annually in late August in the city of Montreal in Quebec.

Farabi Cinema Foundation, as an international film distributor, pitted 'Appendix' as well as 'Yeva', a joint Irano-Armenian production, directed by Anahid Abad in the Focus on World Cinema (features and Shorts) non-competition section of the Canada-based festival.

'Under the Smoky Roof' by Pouran Derakhshandeh was the other Iranian representative in the Focus on World Cinema section.



mehnews.com

## Iranian animation enters 2017 Asia Pacific Screen Awards



Iranian animated movie 'Release from Heaven', directed by Ali Noori Oskouei, will be screened at the 11th Asia Pacific Screen Awards (APSA) in Australia.

Set in a war-torn country, 'Release from Heaven' is the story of a female writer and teacher who has to accompany two of her students on a life changing journey, Mehr News Agency reported.

The 76-minute animated film is written by Majid Asoodegan and coproduced by Ali Noori Oskouei and Vahid Ollaei.

'Release from Heaven' has so far won a number of international awards including the grand prize for best animation film at Seoul International Cartoon and Animation Festival in South Korea in July, best feature animation at the summer edition of Hong Kong International Film Festival during March 19-April 5,

and best animation at the Animation Day of the 70th Cannes Film Festival.

The Asia Pacific Screen Awards (APSA) collaborates with UNESCO and FIAPF-International Federation of Film Producers Associations to present films, actors, directors and cultures of the Asia-Pacific region to a global audience.

In APSA's previous edition, 'Starless Dream' by Mehrdad Oskouei won the award for the best documentary feature film, while the award for outstanding achievement in film in the Asia Pacific region was presented to the Iranian producer Manouchehr Mohammadi. The festival's grand prix for best film had gone to Asghar Farhadi's 'A Separation' in 2011.

The APSA's 11th edition will open in Brisbane, Australia, on November 23, 2017.



MARYAM KAMYAB/mehnews.com

Tehran Mayor Mohammad-Ali Najafi (C) reopened Ali Akbar San'ati Museum, which is named after late Iranian painter and sculptor (1916-2006), in a ceremony in Tehran on September 5, 2017. The museum is home to close to 6,000 paintings and over 1,000 sculptures by San'ati.

### Iran movies to hit Aussie silver screen

Iranian short films 'Retouch' by Kaveh Mazaheri and 'Achieve' by Mohammadreza Minapour will take part in Adelaide Film Festival (AFF), which is scheduled for October 5-15.

The two short films are to be screened in the competition section of the festival, IRNA reported.

The AFF is an international film festival held over two weeks in mid-October, in Adelaide, South Australia.

It has a strong focus on local South Australian and Australian produced content, with the Adelaide Film Festival Investment Fund (AFFIF) established to fund investment of \$1 million per festival in Australian films.



#### Weather



34 16

Arak



29 28

Astara



32 14

Birjand



36 19

Qazvin



35 20

Mashhad

36<sup>^</sup>  
v23

Tehran



30 16

Kabul



11 6

Minsk



16 7

Stockholm



34 18

Tashkent



32 23

Tripoli