

TEHRAN TIMES

Iranian, Turkish diplomats meet to move closer to a solution for Syrian crisis

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Tehran-Moscow ties beyond counterterrorism campaign: Shamkhani 'Iran-Russia-Syria triangle has grounded the U.S. in Syria'

POLITICS TEHRAN — The Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) Secretary has characterized relations between Tehran and Moscow as one much beyond the counterterrorism campaign, wide enough to cover other areas, as well.

"Relations between Iran and Russia which benefit the national interests of both and are within a strategic framework are not limited to fighting terrorism only and include wider dimensions," ISNA quoted Ali Shamkhani as having said on Tuesday.

Providing crucial military backup to President Bashar al-Assad against the foreign-backed militancy, Tehran and Moscow have solidified their alliance with Tehran allowing Russian fighters and bombers flying from an air base in western Iran to conduct airstrikes in Syria.

Last week, long-range Russian Tupolev-22M3 bombers and Sukhoi-34 fighter bombers took off from Nojeh air base in Iran to launch air strikes against armed groups in Syria, a move Shamkhani described as "strategic" under which the two "share their facilities and capacities" in their fight on terrorism. → 2

Govt. renews loyalty to Imam Khomeini, insists on resistance economy

POLITICS TEHRAN — President Hassan Rouhani said on Tuesday that his government's will and determination is to follow the path of Imam Khomeini, the

founder of the Islamic Republic. "Today, the government seeks to prove that the path of Imam can help the people achieve their goals and victory," he said at a ceremony

held for renewing allegiance to Imam Khomeini. He said that Imam Khomeini showed the path of managing the Islamic government in the complicated contemporary world.



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Cuba sees Iran an important economic partner

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iran is a significant economic partner for Cuba and economic ties should be expanded between the two countries, said Cuban Minister of Foreign Trade and Foreign Investment Rodrigo Malmierca Diaz.

He made the remarks in the inaugural ceremony of Iran-Cuba Economic Forum in Havana on Monday, IRNA reported.

"We should also take advantage of Iran's potentiality for our presence in the Asian markets," the minister further noted.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif began his first Latin American visit Monday in Havana, where he met with Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez in an effort to improve bilateral economic relations, Fox News reported.

"Your visit expresses the high level of our bilateral relations," the Cuban foreign minister said.

Zarif continued his tour with arriving in Nicaragua on Tuesday. Ecuador, Chile, Bolivia and Venezuela will be his next destinations.

On his Latin American tour, the Iranian foreign minister is being accompanied by 120 businessmen seeking investment and cooperation opportunities to boost several Iranian industries, especially the oil industry.

Iranian Artists Forum to review Peter Brook's films

ART TEHRAN — Five movies by the prominent English theater and film director Peter Brook will be reviewed at the Iranian Artists Forum in Tehran during a six-day program, which will begin this evening.



"Moderato Cantabile" (1960), "Lord of the Flies" (1963), "King Lear" (1971), "The Mahabharata" (1989) and "The Tragedy of Hamlet" (2002) will be screened during the program.

"King Lear" will be reviewed by filmmaker Mohammadreza Aslani and translator Sudabeh Fazaeli, who is also an expert on English literature, today at 5:30 p.m. while "Moderato Cantabile" will be discussed by Saeid Nuri on Thursday.

The review session for "The Mahabharata" has been set for Friday.

Mohsen Azarm will conduct the review session for "Lord of the Flies" on Saturday and Ramtin Shahbazi will assess "The Tragedy of Hamlet" on Sunday.

In addition, the Iranian Artists Forum in collaboration with Tehran's Book House will organize a review for Brook's writing oeuvre on Monday.

Six-monthly report on JCPOA drafted: MP

POLITICS TEHRAN — Hossein Naghavi Hosseini, spokesman for the Iranian Parliament National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, said on Tuesday that the framework for the six-monthly report on the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action has been devised.

"The general framework of the report, the introduction to it, and its topics have been set,"



Naghavi Hosseini told Mehr news agency.

The sanctions, fulfillment of the commitments by Iran and the 5+1 group, and violations of the JCPOA during the implementation process are the most important parts of the report, he explained.

Iran and the 5+1 group (the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia plus Germany) finalized the text of the JCPOA in Vienna on July 2015. The deal took effect in January 2016.

Cesarean delivery down 7% in 2 years: health minister

SOCIETY TEHRAN — The rate of cesarean delivery operation has decreased by seven percent in Iran since the enactment of the healthcare reform plan on May 4, 2014, Health Minister Hassan Qazizadeh-Hashemi said on Monday.

Promoting natural birth is one of the objectives of Iran's healthcare reform plan which proved to be successful, Qazizadeh-Hashemi noted, Tasnim reported.

Setting up 21 air medical units nationwide, producing 70 percent of the drugs domestically, building some 5,000 hospital beds annually, and decreasing the costs of



medical equipment by 42 percent since the beginning of the current administration are of the Health Ministry's achievement so far,

he explained.

Some 6,000 specialist are now working in underprivileged areas of the country, he said, adding, ensuring fairness in giving healthcare services to all the people, increasing the quality of the services and supporting the patients financially are of the main objectives of Iran's healthcare reform plan.

The healthcare reform plan aim at decreasing the out-of-pocket expenses for the patients, promoting natural birth, and supporting underprivileged patients suffering from rare or incurable diseases.

Iran's non-oil trade exceeds \$35.8b in 5 months

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iran's non-oil trade during the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-August 21, 2016) amounted to \$35.817 billion, according to the Iran Customs Administration.

The country's non-oil exports totaled \$19.108 billion, a 10.22 percent rise compared to the

same period in the previous year. Meanwhile, \$16.709 billion of non-oil goods were imported, showing 2.85 percent decline year on year.

Main exported items included gas condensate, worth \$3.27 billion, and liquefied gas, worth \$1.94 billion.

Rice and corn were the two main imported items, valued at \$476 million and \$417 million re-

spectively.

China topped the list of Iranian non-oil goods importers with \$3.405 billion of import. The United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Turkey and South Korea ranked next.

Meanwhile, China was the leading exporter of non-oil goods to Iran with \$3.863 billion of export. The United Arab Emirates, South Korea, and Turkey ranked next.

Iran's non-oil trade hit \$83 billion in the past Iranian calendar year, which ended on March 19, 2016.

Iran exported \$42.415 billion of non-oil goods while imported \$41.499 billion of non-oil goods, showing 16.11 percent decrease in exports and 22.53 percent decline in imports when compared to its previous year.

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MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Cleric renews caution against WWW

IT POLITICS TEHRAN — "I cried when I heard a report about the cyberspace and the status of the youth amid the anti-cultural onslaught," Ayatollah Nasser Makarem Shirazi told ICT Minister Mahmud Vaezi in a meeting in Qum on Tuesday.

"It is necessary to create a national information network on the cyberspace," the senior cleric stressed, Mehr reported.

"People nowadays can join Telegram and provide it with their personal information. Accessing the information, Telegram will be able to render many events, such as the enemy did in the 2009 sedition by enforcing people with their objections."



Security forces arrest, summon 450 social page administrators

IT POLITICS TEHRAN — Iran's security forces have arrested or summoned some 450 administrators of social web pages, Geradab website reported on Tuesday.

The administrators' activities included ethical issues, illegal modeling, or slandering people's religious beliefs, the report said.

The people used to work in social media such as Telegram, WhatsApp, or Instagram, the report said, adding they had "targeted the foundation of the family."



Big deeds find enemies, Hassan Khomeini tells government

IT POLITICS TEHRAN — Great achievements always find enemies, Hassan Khomeini told the government cabinet members as they visited Imam Khomeini's holy shrine on Tuesday on the first day of the Government Week.

"Be the man of the battleground and pay for your deeds," he told President Hassan Rouhani and his ministers and deputies, Jamaran website reported.



Yemeni negotiator lauds Iran's backing for Supreme Political Council

IT POLITICS TEHRAN — Head of a Yemeni delegation in UN-sponsored peace talks in Kuwait has praised Iran for endorsing the establishment of Yemen's Supreme Political Council.

Speaking to Tasnim on Tuesday, Mohammad Abdul-Salam, spokesman for the Ansarullah movement and head of Yemen's delegation in the Kuwait negotiations, stressed the need for a political solution to the conflicts in Yemen.

He called for efforts to organize "national institutions" to address the humanitarian and economic challenges caused by enemies and their mercenaries.



Iranian envoy, Turkish CHP chief hold talks

IT POLITICS TEHRAN — The Iranian Ambassador to Ankara, Mohammad Ebrahim Taherian, and Turkish Republican People's Party (CHP) leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu held talks on Monday on a range of issues, including ways to boost relations between the two neighboring countries.

The Iranian diplomat pointed to a recent failed coup attempt in Turkey and congratulated the Turkish people on their victory against the coup plotters, Fars reported. Kilicdaroglu said his party is keen to enhance ties between the two sides.



Some MPs to sue government over new oil contract model

IT POLITICS TEHRAN — A number of Iranian MPs have decided to sue the government before the Court of Administrative Justice for the newly introduced Iran Petroleum Contract (IPC) model, SHANA reported on Tuesday.

Announcing the news, MP Hosseinali Haji-Dehghan said the decision was made after the lawmakers were disappointed with the approval of the IPC model by a parliamentary group in charge of verifying new legislations against the Constitution.

Iranian, Turkish diplomats meet to move closer to a solution for Syrian crisis

IT POLITICS TEHRAN — Days after Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu's surprise visit to Tehran, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Hossein Jaber Ansari sat down with his Turkish counterpart Omid Yalcin in Ankara in a bid to forge a closer understanding on the future of Syria.

Nothing has been revealed on the content of the meeting.

The meeting comes after Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif held key talks with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Prime Minister Binali Yildirim in Ankara on August 12, pledging to fight terrorism.

Writing on his telegram, Jaber Ansari said negotiations with Yalcin "lasted for four hours".

The meeting also comes one week after Jaber Ansari's meeting with his Russian counterpart Mikhail Bogdanov in Tehran, where they hoped intensive negotiations



Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Hossein Jaber Ansari

between Iran, Russia, and Turkey would help set the stage for a peaceful Syria.

Lately, Turkey has appeared increasingly open to a peaceful solution to the Syrian crisis, weeks after President Erdogan paid a formal visit to Russia, ushering in a thaw in turbulent relations between the two countries after a Russian fighter was down by the Turkish air force in November 2015.

"Turning a new page in Syria without losing time is vital with a model in which Iran, Russia, United States and even some Persian Gulf countries and Saudi Arabia play role. We have expressed the most current information and works on the issue [with the opposition leaders]," Yildirim told reporters, speaking after the cabinet meeting in the capital Ankara on August 23, according to Hürriyet Daily News.

The premier also said the formation of a government that would represent all Syrians as it was before the civil war was key to the future of Syria.

Russian use of air base drives wedge among MPs, Majlis and defense ministry

IT POLITICS TEHRAN — Russia's use of an air base in Iran to launch airstrikes on terrorist strongholds in Syria has resulted in what it seems to be an 'authority debate' among the parliament and defense ministry.

Last week a squadron of Russian Tupolev-22M3 bombers and Sukhoi-34 fighter bombers took off from the Nojeh air base in Hamadan, western Iran, to conduct operations in Syria.

The deployment made Russia the first foreign power since World War Two using the Iranian soil against enemies in a third country.

Disagreements surfaced over the issue as the Russian defense ministry formally confirmed the cooperation, just to be objected to by some Iranian parliamentarians.

The most vehement criticism was levelled by parliamentarian Heshmatollah Falahatpisheh who said it had breached Article 146 of the Constitution.

"The establishment of any type of [foreign] military base in the country, even for peaceful purposes, is forbidden," he said.

Article 146 of the Constitution forbids "the establishment of any kind of foreign military base in Iran, even for peaceful purposes."

The member of the parliamentary National Security and Foreign Policy Committee also appeared tough on the collaboration, warning that Moscow has a "turbulent foreign policy" and its own "strategic and foreign policy considerations."

The remarks drew reactions from top lawmakers and the defense minister.

Alaeddin Boroujerdi, the chairman of the parlia-

mentary security body, said that the Supreme National Security Council had approved the Russian use of the base in Hamadan. "It does not contradict the Constitution because the Hamadan air base has neither become Russia's air base nor have the fighter jets been stationed there," Boroujerdi remarked.

He also said the Nojeh air base serves only to accommodate Russian bombers for refueling.

Parliament Speaker Ali Larjani also dismissed the criticism, saying, "Under Article 146 of the Constitution, the establishment of any foreign military base inside the country is forbidden, and it is worth mentioning that Iran has not given such a base to any country."

Also, Defense Minister Hossein Dehqan rejected the debate, considering it out of the parliament's discretion to enter into the debate, to which Larjani responded.

"I should remind the defense minister that he did not talk about the Majlis (parliament) the right way and he'd better observe the etiquette in such issues."

While Article 146 allows no permanent or temporary establishment of military bases in the Iranian territory, it allows for deployment of foreign forces depending on approval of the SNSC, giving the leeway to the body to act differently just in case.



Defense Minister Hossein Dehqan

Reportedly, the parliament had demanded an approval by the body before the decision has been taken.

In reply, Dehqan wrote to Larjani, explaining that he had not meant to play down the status of the parliament. "I did not mean to play down the prestige and status of either the Majlis or the representatives. I meant taking the decision would not need a ratification by the Majlis.

The disagreements have to do more with different possible interpretations of the constitutional article, which distinguishes deployment from establishment.

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Govt. renews loyalty to Imam Khomeini, insists on resistance economy

I → Rouhani also said that the government seeks to implement policies of the resistance economy and take actions in line with improving economy and solve economic problems such as unemployment.

He also said all the sanctions have been annulled and the "walls of sanctions" against Iran been "demolished".

"Today, the path to do economic activities is ready and the government, undoubtedly, will achieve its goals."

Iran and the 5+1 group - the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia plus Germany - finalized the text of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in Vienna on 14 July 2015.

On 20 July 2015, the UN Security

Council turned the JCPOA into an international law by endorsing a resolution, setting the stage for the lifting of the Security Council sanctions against Iran.

The nuclear agreement went into effect in January 2016.

Tehran-Moscow ties beyond counterterrorism campaign: Shamkhani



I → The former Iranian defense minister saw the alliance as a counterbalance against Washington delaying game in Syria to have the final say.

"Close coordination among Iran, Syria, and Russia in conducting recent operations against takfiri terrorists in Syria came as a blow to the U.S.'s delaying strategy to impose its will in security equations in Syria," he said.

Contrary to what the U.S. and its allies would expect, the tripartite front has proven very effective by "inflicting

decisive blows from air and ground on takfiri terrorists in Syria," Shamkhani explained.

Over the past months, the Syrian army has been gaining ground with Aleppo becoming the focus of fighting, now a battlefield fought by a number of groups. It has left thousands of civilians and non-civilians killed and thousands more injured.

Shamkhani expressed hope for an end to the atrocities after Tehran took the initiative to play a more direct role by leaving its air base open to Russia.

Russia says future use of Iran air base depends on Syria circumstances



Staff & agencies Major-General Igor Konashenkov, a Russian Defence Ministry spokesman, said in a statement that Russian aircraft operating from an Iranian air base to conduct strikes in Syria had completed their tasks, but left open the possibility of using the Hamadan base again if circumstances warranted.

"Further use of the Hamadan air base in the Islamic Republic of Iran by the Russian Aerospace Forces will be carried out on the basis of mutual agreements to fight terrorism and depending on the prevailing circumstances in Syria," Reuters

quoted Konashenkov as saying.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi said on Monday that Russia has now stopped using the air base. "Now, the deployment is temporarily finished and Russia's use of the base has ended," Qassemi said, adding, "Russia has no base in Iran."

Last week long-range Russian Tupolev-22M3 bombers and Sukhoi-34 fighter bombers used the air base to launch air strikes against Daesh and al-Nusra strongholds in Syria.

This was the first time a foreign power used an Iranian base since World War II.

Boko Haram: 'Senior fighters killed' in Nigeria raid

The leader of the Boko Haram group is believed to be fatally wounded in an air strike carried out by the Nigerian military in the country's northeast, according to a news-media report citing senior official sources.

The report said a number of fighters were targeted last week in the Sambisa Forest near Gambaru in Borno state, near the border with Cameroon.

"Their leader, so-called 'Abubakar Shekau', is believed to be fatally wounded on his shoulders," said the statement released on Tuesday by Colonel Sani Kukashaka Usman, army spokesman.

Usman also said three Boko Haram commanders - Abubakar Mubi, Malam Nuhu and Malam Hamman - were confirmed dead and several others wounded.

There was no immediate reaction from Boko Haram to the government's claims.

Al Jazeera's Ahmed Idris, reporting from Abuja, said the air strike was launched when fighters had gathered for "some sort of a ceremony".

"The attack happened on Friday on Shekau's camp. We know that the Chibok girls are held at the Shekau camp. Nigeria's army says it is doing everything possible to rescue them."

The group kidnapped 270 schoolgirls in April 2014 and security sources believe it is holding some of them in Sambisa forest.

The Nigerian claim comes as John Kerry, the United States secretary of state, visits the country for talks expected



to focus on the fight against Boko Haram, which launched an uprising in 2009.

In recent months, Nigerian forces, with the support of regional troops, have recaptured large expanses of territory lost to the fighters.

Shekau's fate has been the subject of speculation recently amid claims he had been replaced by Sheikh Abu Musab al-Barnawi, the group's former spokesman.

Barnawi's appointment was announced in a magazine issued by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group, to which Boko Haram pledged allegiance in March last year.

But only a week later, Shekau surfaced in a video posted on social media, ridiculing suggestions of his death and looking more composed and energetic than in previous appearances.

The Nigerian military has reported Shekau's death in the past, only to have a man purporting to be him surface later, apparently unharmed, in video statements.

Boko Haram, which seeks to impose a strict Islamic law in Nigeria's mainly Muslim north, has killed about 20,000 people and forced at least 2.6 million others to flee their homes since 2009.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

France: Nicolas Sarkozy to run for president again

Nicolas Sarkozy has launched a bid to win back the French presidency, announcing he will seek his party's nomination to run in next year's election.

The 61-year-old conservative's plan became apparent on Monday.

"I have decided to be a candidate in the 2017 presidential election," Sarkozy wrote in a new book, *Tout pour la France* (All for France), due out this week.

"France demands that you give her your all. I feel I have the strength to lead the fight at such a turbulent moment in our history," he wrote in an extract seen by AFP news agency, alluding to the attacks that have rocked the country since January 2015.

"The next five years will be filled with danger but also with hope."

In 2012, Sarkozy ended a five-year term mired in unpopularity, had made no secret of his ambition to reconquer the top office.

----- Major challenges

Sarkozy's aides told AFP he was expected to step down as the leader of the center-right Republicans to focus on his bid.

Party primaries take place on November 20 and 27.

Sarkozy's first campaign stop will be on Thursday at Chateaufort, near the southern French city of Avignon.

Sarkozy itemized major challenges in the years ahead, including strengthening respect for "French identity", restoring lost competitiveness and enforcing state authority.

On the economic front, he pledged to reduce payroll charges, scale back unemployment payments for those who have been jobless for more than one year and slash income tax by 10 percent.

On immigration, he proposed "suspending" the right



of family members to join a migrating relative in France.

"The big problem with our immigration policy is firstly that of numbers," he said.

Sarkozy's announcement coincides with a resurgent debate on the place of Islam in French society, encapsulated in the row over the Islamic burkini swimsuit.

He said France's "principal battle" was over how "to defend our lifestyle without being tempted to cut ourselves off from the rest of the world".

The opposition leader, who has repeatedly dismissed Socialist President Francois Hollande as weak, said he would also restore authority in neighborhoods where he said "minorities are successfully blackmailing the current authorities".

Sarkozy was defeated in his bid for re-election in 2012 after conducting a campaign seen by many in his own camp as too right-wing.

Sarkozy becomes the 13th person to put their name forward for the French presidency, a job that has sweeping powers.

He faces several challengers within conservative

ranks.

His chief rival, Alain Juppe, the former premier and Bordeaux mayor, is seen as a moderate and is the favorite to win the party's nod.

But Juppe's lead in opinion polls has shrunk in recent weeks as Sarkozy steps up his rhetoric on conservative Muslims and immigration following the July 14 lorry attack in Nice.

Sarkozy has already won the support of a Republican heavyweight, Christian Estrosi, who is president of the southern region that includes Marseille.

"He is the best candidate," Estrosi told the *Journal de Dimanche*.

If Sarkozy wins, he could face a rematch against Hollande, who has said he too has the "desire" for a second term.

But opinion polls overwhelmingly show the French wanting neither man as their leader.

Hollande has even surpassed Sarkozy to become the most unpopular president in post-war France.

Sarkozy would also face far-right National Front leader Marine Le Pen, who is tipped to make it to a second round of voting.

His reputation remains tainted by two major inquiries, into alleged influence-peddling and into suspected illegal funding of his 2012 election campaign.

But true to his famous self-belief, these scandals have failed to dent his ambition of returning to the Elysee Palace.

Hollande, on a trip to southern Italy for talks with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Matteo Renzi, the Italian prime minister, declined to comment on Sarkozy's bid, or on another challenge for the presidency launched by left-wing Socialist Arnaud Montebourg.

(Source: AFP)

Turkey backtracks on 'child suicide bomber' statement

Turkey's Prime Minister Binali Yildirim says authorities are in no position to verify whether a child suicide bomber was responsible for a blast that killed at least 54 people on Saturday, reversing an earlier assertion by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

"We are not in a position to verify anything about who the perpetrator was - if it was a child, an adult, or for which organization," Yildirim told reporters in Ankara on Monday, referring to the suicide attack at a wedding in the city of Gaziantep.

"We do not have a clue about who the perpetrators behind the attack were," he added. "Early information on who did the attack, in what organization's name, is unfortunately not right," he said.

Erdogan had said on Sunday that a child suicide bomber aged "between 12 and 14" was responsible for the attack, and that the bombing in Gaziantep had

been "perpetrated by Daesh (Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant/ISIL)".

It was not immediately known what new evidence had prompted Yildirim to backtrack so completely on the president's earlier assertions.

Earlier on Monday, the Turkish daily *Hurriyet*, citing security officials who examined CCTV footage from the area of the attack, said the suspected child suicide bomber was accompanied to the scene of the attack by two adults.

The two adults "fled in a vehicle just before the blast", *Hurriyet* reported.

A Turkish security official told the Reuters news agency on Monday that they were investigating the possibility that adult fighters could have placed the explosives on the child without his or her knowledge, and detonated the device remotely, or that a mentally disabled child was duped into carrying the device, a tactic seen elsewhere in the region.

"It could be that someone was loaded with explosives without even being aware of it and it may have been detonated remotely," the official said, adding that a search was under way for suspects who may have played a reconnaissance role.

The *Hurriyet* daily said that DNA tests were under way to ascertain the identity and nationality of the bomber.

The device used in Saturday's bombing, which contained scraps of metal, was the same type used in 2015 attacks on a peace rally in Ankara and on the border district of Suruc, Turkish media also reported on Monday, citing security sources.

Both the Ankara and Suruc attacks were blamed on ISIL, reinforcing the suspicion that the armed group was also behind the Gaziantep bombing, the official said.

The group has targeted Kurdish gatherings in Turkey for more than a year. The Ankara bombing was the deadliest of its

kind in Turkey, killing more than 100 people.

Meanwhile, three more people receiving treatment at hospitals after the attack in Gaziantep died from their wounds in the early hours of Monday.

A total of 66 wounded are still receiving treatment at hospitals in the province, with 14 in a critical condition.

"Daesh should be completely cleansed from our borders and we are ready to do what it takes for that," Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said at a news conference in Ankara.

Cavusoglu said Turkey, a member of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) and the United States-led coalition against ISIL, had become the "No.1 target" for ISIL fighters because of its work to stop recruits travelling through Turkey across its over 800km border into Syria to join the armed group.

(Source: agencies)

Syrian government, Kurds reach truce in Hassakeh

Syrian state media says a cease-fire between government and Kurdish forces in Hassakeh has gone into effect, six days after fierce clashes erupted between the two sides over control of the northern Syrian city.

It says the cease-fire went into effect at 2 p.m. (1100 GMT) on Tuesday.

The Kurdish Hawar News Agency says government forces and pro-government militias have agreed to withdraw from Hassakeh and leave it in under the control of the local Kurdish police force, the Asayish, as part of the terms of the cease-fire.

The statement from Syrian state media does not mention any withdrawals. It says the two sides had agreed to evacuate the injured and exchange detainees.

Government and Kurdish forces have shared control of Hassakeh since the early years of the Syrian war.

(Source: AP)

Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Qatar escalate Syria war by backing militants: Syria UN envoy

Syria's envoy to the United Nations says the House of Saud regime, Turkey, and Qatar provide financial and military support for the Takfiri militant groups in his country.

Speaking at a press conference in New York on Monday, Bashar al-Jaafari said that the governments in Riyadh, Ankara and Doha claim to be supporting the Syrian people even as they escalate the violent conflict in Syria.

The senior Syrian diplomat said the severe financial sanctions imposed on Syria have gravely affected all economic sectors and households, and the ongoing airstrikes by the United States-led military coalitions against purported Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) positions have incurred more than one billion dollars in damage to civilian infrastructure in the country.

Jaafari said the aircraft belonging to the U.S.-led coalition bombed and destroyed the 1,000-megawatt thermal plant in the strategic northwestern city of Aleppo, located 355 kilometers (220 miles) north of the capital, Damascus, last October.

The Syrian UN ambassador went on to say that foreign-sponsored Takfiri terrorist groups started destroying historical monuments and looting factories and industrial workshops in Aleppo one and a half years after the outbreak of the Syrian crisis, and continue to target residential neighborhoods with mortar shells and rockets.

Jaafari further condemned attempts by some international parties to conceal the atrocities being committed by terrorist outfits in Syria.

Syria has been gripped by foreign-backed militancy since March 2011. UN Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura estimates that over 400,000 people have been killed in the conflict.

Back in 2014, the UN said it would no more update its official death toll for Syria.

(Source: Press TV)

U.S. delegation in Turkey to discuss evidence on Gulen

A delegation with the United States Department of Justice has arrived in Ankara to hold talks over Turkey's request for extradition of a Muslim leader accused of masterminding a coup attempt last month, according to two senior Turkish officials.

The development marks the first concrete and public sign of progress in Turkey's efforts to get self-exiled Fethullah Gulen, the Pennsylvania-based Turkish-born religious leader and businessman, returned to the country.

Turkey says that Gulen's supporters within the army carried out the failed coup of July 15, claiming that they have been running "a parallel state" within the civilian and military bureaucracy, and following their own agenda. However, Gulen denies the claims.

Both officials told Al Jazeera that the U.S. delegation would hold technical meetings with their counterparts in the Turkish Ministry of Justice and discuss the evidence presented to the U.S. on Gulen's involvement in the attempted coup and other illegal activities.

The delegation arrived in Ankara on August 22 and meetings are scheduled for August 23 and 24.

Turkey formally asked for the arrest of Gulen in the US last week.

Gulen has had court cases pending against him for several years and Turkey has been demanding his extradition well before the failed coup.

Following the July 15 incident, more court cases have been opened targeting him.

"We would like Gulen to be returned to Turkish justice, considering all the legal proceedings against him and the extradition treaty between Turkey and the US. We see any step towards this goal positively," a senior Turkish official told Al Jazeera.

Yasin Aktay, the deputy chairman of the ruling Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi/AKP), told Al Jazeera that during the meetings, the U.S. delegation was expected to seek clarifications on the evidence presented by Turkey to the U.S. concerning Gulen's network.

"It is bizarre for us that they [the U.S.] have not been convinced, considering the scope of evidence we presented to them. Even this meeting should not have been necessary," Aktay said.

"The testimony of the suspects who were arrested red-handed and documents we gave them are clear. If you add the statements of Gulen regarding the goal of his organizational movement, we believe there is nothing to question. Strong American intelligence should be well aware of who he really is."

(Source: Al Jazeera)

Saudi child recruiter for ISIL killed in Iraq: report

A Saudi Arabian operative who recruited children for the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group in Iraq has reportedly been killed in the northern city of Mosul.

The Almasalah news website reported the development on Monday, citing a local source in Nineveh Province, where Mosul is the capital.

The source, who was speaking on condition of anonymity, said the Saudi ISIL operative killed was nicknamed 'Abu

Wathbah al-Saudi.' The source said he was killed by unknown gunmen as he was leaving a shop in the city center.

The source added that most of the terrorist group's commanders are these days being targeted by unidentified armed men as the Iraqi army has been entering the province. He did not elaborate.

The northern and western parts of Iraq have been plagued by gruesome violence ever since ISIL terrorists

mounted a large-scale offensive in June 2014.

Iraqi army units and volunteer forces known as Popular Mobilization Units (al-Hashd al-Sha'abi) have been fighting the terrorists.

The group also has a presence in neighboring Syria, where Syrian government forces are pushing it out of much of the areas it has overrun.

(Source: Press TV)

NEWS

Value added tax, duties bring \$39.5b revenue for Iran since March

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iran has earned 1.4 quadrillion rials (about \$39.525 billion) income from collecting value added taxes as well as duties since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20), ISNA quoted Kamel Taqavinejad, the head of Iranian National Tax Administration (INTA), as saying on Tuesday.



At the time being, tax incomes account for seven percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) and also pay 50 percent of the government's expenses, the official announced.

Iran's direct tax income reached 275 trillion rials (about \$7.77 billion) in the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-July 21), ISNA quoted Taqavinejad as saying on Sunday.

According to the official, the raised amount registers a 29 percent increase, compared to the collected tax income in the same period last year.

President Hassan Rouhani's economic strategy is to significantly reduce the government's dependency on oil and instead collect tax more systematically.

Asia stocks edge up amid Fed lull, oil slips

Asia shares inched up on Tuesday while oil fell for a second session as investors awaited clues on whether the Federal Reserve will raise U.S. interest rates this year.

European equities markets also looked set for a modest start, with Eurostoxx 50 futures STXEc1 ahead by 0.4 percent. EMini futures for the S&P 500 ESC1 were flat.

MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan added 0.3 percent in slow trade. South Korea Australia and Shanghai all gained.

Japan's Nikkei went the other way and eased 0.6 percent as the yen ground higher on the dollar.

A survey of Japanese manufacturing activity showed signs of steadying in August as output rose for the first time in six months, but the improvement was marginal and had little impact on stocks.

The IHS Markit/Nikkei Japan Flash PMI rose to 49.6 in August from a final 49.3 in July. More flash surveys are due from Europe and the United States later in the day.

The whole world seems to have hushed ahead of comments from Fed Chair Janet Yellen at the central bank's annual meeting in Jackson Hole on Friday. Investors still doubt the stars will align for a hike anytime soon, so a hawkish tone from Yellen would challenge that equanimity.

"Ever so slowly, the market does seem to be reluctantly acknowledging the chorus of senior Fed speakers who have suggested recently that a 2016 rate hike is still quite probable and September is 'live,'" wrote analysts at ANZ in a note.

In commodity markets, oil remained under pressure after shedding 3 percent on Monday.

Prices retreated from two-month highs on worries about burgeoning Chinese fuel exports, more Iraqi and Nigerian crude shipments and a rising U.S. oil rig count.

Biotech stocks received a boost from Pfizer's \$14 billion acquisition of cancer drug maker Medivation, which jumped nearly 20 percent.

Of the 479 companies in the S&P 500 that have reported earnings, 71 percent have topped expectations, according to Thomson Reuters data. Earnings are currently showing a decline of 2.3 percent for the quarter.

In forex markets, the dollar slipped 0.15 percent to 94.381 against a basket of currencies. The index fell about 1.3 percent last week on what traders perceived as mixed signals from Fed officials. (Source: Reuters)

Euro zone business growth stable in August; no Brexit hit yet

Euro zone private business activity was stable in August, albeit at a muted level, but factories possibly face a tougher September as new order growth stumbled, a survey showed on Tuesday.

Muddying the outlook for the coming months is the United Kingdom's vote in late June to leave the European Union, although so far the economic repercussions seem to have been confined to Britain, not its main trading partner.

"Policymakers will be quite encouraged that it is moving in a positive direction. It looks cautiously optimistic for the region in the face of the Brexit threat," said Chris Williamson, Markit's chief economist.

Markit's flash composite Purchasing Managers' Index edged up to a seven-month high of 53.3 from July's 53.2, where any reading above 50 indicates growth. A Reuters poll of economists had predicted a slight dip to 53.1.

Williamson said the PMI pointed to GDP expanding 0.3 percent this quarter, matching a Reuters poll earlier this month that showed the euro zone economic outlook stable but lackluster, about half the speed at the start of the year.

Pressure remains on the European Central Bank to announce more easing as it has so far been unsuccessful in getting inflation anywhere close to its 2 percent target ceiling.

But there is little confidence amongst economists about just how much firepower the ECB has left.

Of some concern, having only trimmed their prices in July, firms returned to deeper discounting this month. The output price index fell to 49.5 from 49.8. (Source: Reuters)

Iran's July crude steel output up 6.2% yr/yr: WSA

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iran produced 1.351 million tons of crude steel in July 2016, with 6.2 percent rise from 1.273 million tons in the same month in the previous year, the World Steel Association (WSA) reported.

According to the WSA's latest report, the country stood at the 14th place among top world's steel producers in July, falling from its rank of 13th in the two past months.

With producing 66.807 million tons, 8.886 million tons and 8.082 million tons of steel, China, Japan and India took the first, second and third places, respectively, in the seventh month of 2016.

Iran produced 10.101 million tons of crude steel in the first seven months of 2016, showing 4.7 percent growth from 9.645 million tons in the same period of time in the previous year.

The country's steel production stood at 16.110 million tons in 2015, indicating 1.4 percent fall from 2014.

As a major steel producer in the region, Iran boosted its steel mills across the country in recent years, as central Isfahan and southwestern Khuzestan provinces



remain the major steel producers. According to WSA, Iran was the biggest producer of crude steel in the Middle East in 2013. The country's rank was 14th in the world in 2014.

Japan August manufacturing output rises for first time in six months: flash PMI

Japanese manufacturing activity showed signs of steadying in August as output rose for the first time in six months, in a tentative sign that the economy may be recovering from a slump earlier this year, a private survey showed on Tuesday.

The IHS Markit/Nikkei Japan Flash Manufacturing Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) edged up to 49.6 in August from a final 49.3 in July on a seasonally adjusted basis.

The headline index remained below the 50 threshold that separates contraction from expansion for the sixth month, but the rate of decline was slight.

The index for output rose to a preliminary 50.6 from 49.4 in the previous month. While marginal, that would indicate the first increase since February if confirmed in revised data.

"Encouragingly, output expanded for the first time in six months, while companies also saw softer reductions in total new work and export sales," Annabel

Fiddes, an economist at IHS Markit said.

However, new orders and export orders still declined at a significant rate, forcing Japanese manufacturers to cut prices of their goods at the sharpest pace since October 2012 to attract new business.

Japan's economic growth stalled in the second quarter as consumer spending slowed and exports contracted due to weak external demand and the impact of a stronger yen.

The cabinet this month announced an economic package with 13.5 trillion yen (\$133.96 billion) in fiscal measures, hoping it would help the economy deflect external headwinds and sustain a moderate recovery.

The package focuses heavily on building new infrastructure, which could support capital expenditure and factory output next year, once various construction projects get under way, some economists say.

(Source: Reuters)

Gold price rally still to peak, as global economic worries continue

The current rise in the price of gold is yet to peak, according to analysts, after jumping 26 percent in the first half.

The spot gold price surged from a six-year low of \$1,060.2 per ounce at the start of the year to \$1,320.6 by June 30, amid fears over Brexit, delays in interest rate rises in the United States and rate cuts by global central banks, amid the ongoing global economic slowdown.

The price has been swinging between \$1,320 and \$1,360 over the past couple of months, compared with its historic high of \$1,900 in August 2011.

"We are quite optimistic on the gold price over the next six months and the coming year.

"[Gold] is just waiting for the next catalyst or piece of bad economic data to come out," said Robin Tsui, vice president and gold exchange traded funds (ETFs) specialist at State Street Global Advisor (SSGA).

Tsui now expects the yellow metal to reach \$1,400 to \$1,450 by the end of this year, as most of the uncertainties in the first half, the catalyst for the safe-haven gold, still remain unresolved.

There could be some indication on US interest rates at the end of the week from Fed chairman Janet Yellen.

But the current negative-yield environment lowers the cost of holding gold and the UK continues to put pressure on economic growth after the Brexit vote, both of which could increase the gold price further.

"UK interest rates have been cut to 0.25 percent, but they could be slashed further to zero percent...the gold price is really driven by fundamentals," Tsui said.

The US presidential election in November is another unpredictable factor, and a win by Donald Trump might add more worries, pushing the price higher, Tsui added.

(Source: South China Morning Post)

China a booster, not a burden, for world economy

China and its role in avoiding the "new mediocre" that threatens the global economy are again in the spotlight as the country prepares to hold the 11th G20 summit in Hangzhou.

Recent news about China's economy has not all been good. Economic growth has slowed, and expansion in retail sales, industrial output and investment have decelerated.

For those who cannot see the forest for the trees, pessimism and worries may persist about the state and future of the Chinese economy. Some have even pointed to China as a potential burden on the global economic recovery.

The anxiety is understandable, given the huge role China plays in the world economy. The slowing Chinese economy contributed over a quarter of global economic growth and added an equivalent of the Swedish economy in 2015. Any faltering of the second-largest economy would ripple throughout the world.

However, if one looks a bit deeper, it is clear the transforming Chinese economy will only improve the lackluster global situation.

Sure, the slowdown may linger, at least for the near future, as it will take time to digest the legacy of a long economic boom. And China, the largest developing and most populous country, has to strike a balance between remaking the economy and securing growth to create jobs.

From slashing industrial overcapacity to shutting down polluting factories, the short-term effects of China's efforts to nurture consumer-driven growth and reduce reliance on investment, low-end exports and energy consumption will be felt acutely.

In addition, new problems, such as high debt levels, indus-



trial overcapacity, environmental degradation and sluggish global demand, mean the economy must be directed along a more sustainable path.

However, global investors are poised to reap gains from a more robust market.

As David Dollar, a senior research fellow at the Brookings Institution, put it, China's continued strong growth in recent years, despite slowed investment, was achieved thanks to increasing consumption.

China's economic growth is entering a positive cycle, as domestic consumption grows due to rising wages, leading to the expansion of services, which generate more jobs and higher spending power, said the former official of the World Bank.

For China's massive economy, the transition to a service and consumption-driven economy, accompanied by an improved social security system, will unleash huge demand and business opportunities.

From Uzbek cotton to Chilean wines, from Brazilian soy-

beans to Ecuadorian seafood, from Japanese robots to American movies, more and more countries are discovering the growing market for their exports as China's 1.3 billion people become more prosperous and start to consume more.

As China transitions from being the world's workshop to an influential global consumer of goods and services, its economy will boost developing and developed countries alike.

The transition is already under way, with the service sector expanding 7.5 percent in the first half of 2016, accounting for 54.1 percent of the overall economy, up 1.8 percentage points from a year earlier.

In 2015, consumption accounted for over 66 percent of China's gross domestic product, up 15.4 percentage points from 2014.

As heavy industry and traditional manufacturing wrestle with slowing demand overseas and overcapacity at home, new engines are humming: social media, cinemas, travel and R&D are driving consumption, services and the high-tech sector.

Growing demand from Chinese consumers is set to continue, bringing more services, imports and new investment opportunities for the world economy.

China's economic transition will continue and will be positive overall for the global economy, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said in a report earlier in August.

"Many countries could only dream of achieving growth rates that China has and is likely to achieve, which also reflects positively on the reforms that Chinese policymakers have undertaken," said James Daniel, the IMF mission chief for China.

(Source: Xinhua)

NEWS IN BRIEF



European shares gain, UK homebuilders rally for 2nd day

European shares advanced on Tuesday, with builder Persimmon leading the market higher following a solid update and miners recovering after sharp declines in the previous session.

Persimmon rose 4 percent after Britain's second largest house builder said its reservation rate had risen an annual 17 percent since the start of July, shrugging off the impact of the Brexit vote, which some fellow builders have warned could slow the property market.

UniCredit also rose nearly 4 percent after sources told Reuters that the chief executive of Poland's biggest insurer PZU was flying to Milan this week for talks with UniCredit.



Egypt plans to end fuel subsidies within three years

Egypt plans to end fuel subsidies within three years and is aiming to increase fuel prices to 65 percent of their actual cost during the 2016/17 fiscal year, two government sources told Reuters on Tuesday.

Struggling to revive its economy after an uprising in 2011 shook investor confidence and drove tourists and foreign investors away, Egypt has been trying to cut spending on subsidies because they eat into its state budget.

Egypt has reached a staff level agreement with the International Monetary Fund for a \$12 billion three-year loan program which is subject to final approval by the IMF executive committee.



Russia, Iraq agree on Russian meat, dairy exports

Russia's agricultural watchdog Rosselkhoznadzor and the Iraqi Agriculture Ministry's animal health department have agreed on certificates for Russian dairy and finished meat product, beef and poultry exports to Iraq, Rosselkhoznadzor said Monday.

The two sides also agreed to sign a technical protocol governing the delivery of pathological material samples gathered from birds and animals in Iraq to ARRIAH facilities, where diagnosing work would be carried out. Rosselkhoznadzor was then invited to attend a seminar on containing bird flu due to be held in Baghdad.

Drones: A history of flying robots

In the 20th Century, military research precipitated many widely used technological innovations. Surveillance satellites enabled the GPS-system, and defense researchers developed the information swapping protocols that are fundamental to the Internet. UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles) fall into a similar category. Designed initially for reconnaissance purposes, their para-military and commercial development was often out of sight of the public.

As the technology becomes more advanced and costs fall, civilian day-to-day uses of UAVs are developing rapidly. At the same time, military drone activity has caused public outcry. The potential for photo journalism from the air rather than a long lens also raises concerns about privacy.

■ Military UAVs - from the Civil War to the Middle East conflicts

The Oxford English Dictionary describes drones as 'a remote-less controlled piloted aircraft or missile'. Understood in such sense, drones came into first use after World War II when unmanned jets, such as the Ryan Firebee (a documentary about the Firebee and the use of early drones in the Vietnam War), started field operation.

Since then, the number of drones in military use increased substantially enough that the New York Time decided to refer to it as a new paradigm for warfare.

But the story of military drones or unmanned combat aerial vehicles (UCAV) is probably as long as the history of aircrafts. Military leaders always dreamed of reaching



their enemies from distance, especially when there was a real opportunity (e.g. from a drone airport in Wales or a comfy control centers) of avoiding human casualties. As might be expected, the U.S. military sector led in these types of engagements and was the first to apply the idea of aerial military surveillance (as far as in during the Civil War), but other countries are also following.

Interestingly, even before the Wright brothers taught the fledgling aviation world the secrets of controlled flight, also other attempts of unmanned combat vehicles existed - an interesting example are balloons, which were used with various results by the Austrian army in an attack on Venice in 1849 and the Japanese forces in the Fu-go bombings in 1945.

■ Civilian UAVs - a promise for public application of unmanned aircrafts?

The public perception of most of the UAV applications is still mainly associated with military use, but many seem to forget that one of the founding fathers of the idea of remotely controlled vehicles was the genial civil inventor - Nicola Tesla. In fact, Tesla was the first to patent a remote-control for unmanned vehicles (which he described as 'teleautomation'), becoming one of the foundational principles for today's UAV's.

However, when speaking about UAVs dedicated for civil use, it is important to distinguish between the large,

civil vehicles that might one day carry passengers without onboard human supervision, regular UAVs of similar size as those used in the military and much smaller systems, including increasingly popular quadcopters.

Bringing to an end an almost 90-years old tradition of planes piloted by humans; or introducing quadcopters patrolling city streets would be a big step forward. Fair to say, this would be a complex and publicly sensitive topic challenging many technological, legislative and social prejudices.

For regular size UAVs some of the most popular emerging applications include conservations and wildlife measurement or agriculture and aerial photography.

■ DIY drones - a toy, a useful support system or a tool for unregulated surveillance?

On another end of the spectrum of the 'drone discussion' are machines which are considered to be man-portable and relatively affordable, e.g. radio-controlled (RC) planes or simple, small UAVs (sUAV).

Their size and portability becomes an appealing feature for police forces and fire services to study whether their adoption might be feasible for their own aerial surveillance purposes. The technology itself has proven to be used in diverse capacities, often from an unexpected angle (as this video shot of Warsaw riots shows).

(Source: nesta.org.uk)



Winston Churchill watches launch of a De Havilland Queen Bee drone 1941.

The robots are coming, welcome them

Is it time to bow to our robot overlords? Last week analysts at Morgan Stanley, using data from an Oxford University study, predicted that nearly half of U.S. jobs will be replaced by robots over the next two decades. Ouch. Maybe we should build a wall.

Cars that drive themselves? Waiters you don't need to pay (or tip)? Self-folding clothes? Are we headed toward a post-job future? Signs are certainly there. Abundant Robotics, a company spun from the same Stanford Research Institute that brought us the mouse and networked computing, has begun testing a robot that picks apples. Red Delicious, not iPhones. Napa Valley vineyards are using vision systems to sort grapes.

According to a 2013 Stanford University study, some manufacturing robots now cost the equivalent of about \$4 an hour—and they keep getting cheaper and better. This month scientists at MIT have sampled a silicon chip-based LIDAR—light detection and ranging—like radar but much higher resolution, though it covers a shorter distance.

The Tesla Model S currently uses one radar sensor and one front-facing camera as vision for its Autopilot.

Neither, sadly, picked out a white tractor trailer against a bright sky before a May 7 collision that killed a Tesla driver. LIDAR would. Current LIDAR can cost up to \$70,000. The new chip? Maybe \$10. At that price, they'll probably be standard in every new car, "self-driving" or not.

And now we have thinking robots. Editors at the Associated Press claim robots write thousands of articles a year for them. So it's over? The robots win? This certainly fits a certain world view for a bigger welfare state and universal basic income and other services to coddle displaced workers. See the May 26 Fortune magazine article "What Governments Can Do When Robots Take Our Jobs."

Technology always creates more jobs than it destroys. JFK worried how to "maintain full employment at a time when automation . . . is replacing men." Employment was 55 million in 1962. It's 144 million today. We've come a long way.

Even Chinese workers shouldn't fear robots. The coming global demand for manufactured goods will swamp a robot-deprived manufacturing economy. Robots will solve China's looming logistic problems.

(Source: The Wall Street Journal)



Don't believe the fears that machines will put humans out of work. Technology creates more jobs than it destroys.

U.S. ready to hand over control of the Internet naming system

The United States will officially relinquish its authority over the internet's naming system on October 1 to a California-based non-profit comprised of government and technology stakeholders.

Over 33,000 emails have been exchanged and more than 800 hours have been spent in meetings discussing the transition, according to ICANN, the group that will officially oversee the domain name system.

■ Why is the government stepping aside?

The U.S. Commerce Department's National Telecommunications & Information Administration has authority over the domain name system but has mostly let ICANN run the show since 1998.

The decision to give ICANN the keys to the kingdom has been the plan all along. In a 1998 policy statement, the NTIA said it was committed to a transition that would let the private sector take over management of the domain name system.

(Source: NBC News)

Do gadgets embrace best tech for travel photography, video?

It's terrific that most of us now carry a telephone that takes photographs sharp enough and large enough to appear on billboards. But seriously, how often are you going to do that?

The truth is there are still plenty of things your smartphone camera cannot do by itself. Most don't have the depth and flexibility of a wide-angle shot, the convenience of a zoom that isn't just digitally resampling the image to look bigger, lighting that isn't the same as what your car headlights pro-

duce, the ability to better control video shake, being able to easily mount your phone on a tripod, and the technology to greatly improve the sound in video.

While smartphone engineers have their own priorities — building the smallest features possible for the largest number of customers — there is no shortage of companies making accessories to help users who are a little more serious about photography and videography on the road.

(Source: San Francisco Chronicle)

Facebook launches Lifestage app for school teens

By Zoe Kleinman

Facebook has launched a new social media app aimed at school teenagers.

Members of Lifestage, currently only available on Apple devices in the U.S., upload pictures and videos based around feelings, likes and dislikes. These are then turned into video profiles.

All posts are public and there are no options to restrict viewing. The idea is to connect members of the same school, its creator said.

One expert told the BBC the lack of privacy settings was a concern. School members can view each other's profiles once the individual school has registered 20 members or more.

Users aged more than 21 are only able to view their own profiles, reports the Tech Crunch website.

However the app warns that it cannot guarantee whether all its users are genuine.

"We can't confirm that people who claim to go to a certain school actually go to that school. All videos you upload to your profile are fully public content," it says.

Lifestage has no messaging functionality but users can display contact details from other sites such as Snapchat and Instagram.

The app currently has a 2.5 star rating on the iTunes store with comments describing it as "kinda sorta creepy" and "confusing".

According to statistics website Statista only 8% of Facebook's U.S. users are aged 13-19.

It has been designed by Facebook product manager Michael Sayman, who is 19 years old.

In a Facebook post he wrote that the app was based around the original social network's early days.

"Back in 2004, Facebook was all about 'who I am'. I could post my relationship status. I could share what my favorite music was. And it was all about expressing myself" he said.

"Today as Facebook has grown into so much more, we see the opportunity to explore that concept of 'who I am' once again, but for Generation Z in 2016."

■ Pushing boundaries

Dr Bernie Hogan from the Oxford Internet Institute told the BBC the app's lack of privacy settings could prove unpopular.

"The lack of privacy settings on this app in its current state is indicative of Facebook ideology - which is to stay open and connected as much as possible," he said.

"From their point of view that's a great idea but sometimes being so open can get in the way of getting connected. They already know this as people become reluctant to share things online if they have to share them with everyone."

"It seems yet again that they are trying to push the boundaries of what we think is appropriate to share online and then walking back when they face public criticism."

APPLIED SCIENCE

Viewing the Earth from space celebrates 70 years

In 1946, the advent of rocket technology from World War II enabled humanity to surpass balloon-borne heights and cross into space for the first time.

By the 1960s, Earth-monitoring satellites were placed to track weather and other transient phenomena.

By traveling to greater distances, an entire hemisphere of Earth could be photographed at once.

Traveling to the Moon enabled the first color photo of Earth seen rising over the limb of our natural satellite while departing under just the right lighting conditions enabled the first color photo of the fully illuminated Earth to be taken.

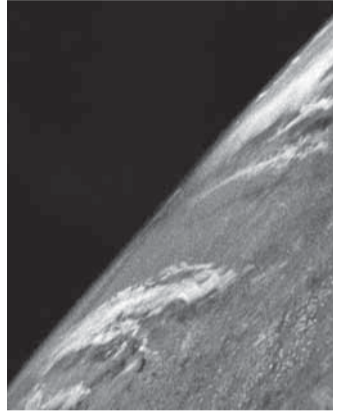
Since then, other spacecraft have imaged the Earth and Moon together, such as Voyager 1 in 1977.

Earth and the Moon have also been seen from Mars, thanks to Mars Global Surveyor in 2003. And from Mercury, thanks to the Messenger spacecraft in 2010.

Earth has also been spectacularly viewed from Saturn, thanks to Cassini.

Numerous satellites in low-Earth and geosynchronous orbits view Earth continuously today, enabling the creation of the highest-resolution, full-coverage photos ever.

(Source: forbes.com)



The first photograph of the Earth from space, taken in 1946 from a V2 rocket. Image credit: U.S. Army / White Sands Missile Range / Applied Physics Laboratory.

If the age of self-driving cars is upon us, what's keeping them off the roads?

Sitting in the passenger seat of Google's self driving car is a less bizarre experience than sitting in the driving seat, but it's still unsettling.

It's partly unsettling because it's hard not to feel a flicker of anxiety when you look over and notice that the person driving the car hasn't got their hands on the wheel, even as you head towards a red light on a corner with a huge truck bearing down on you.

It's partly because the software that drives the car isn't exactly ready for production yet, so every now and again something weird happens — a jerky overtake, a slight hesitation to squeeze through into an adjacent lane, or, as happened once, the car declaring for no obvious reason that "a slight hiccup" had occurred and that it was going to pull over.

And it's partly because the future has come a lot sooner than anyone really thought. Even if Google takes far longer to start selling cars than it thinks it will (and senior figures in X tell me that they're confident something will hit the market before 2020), this technology is going to hit the real world somewhere soon, and it's going to change everything.

Uber agrees. The taxi company on Thursday announced the latest phase of its own self-driving tests, putting its prototype cars on the roads of Pittsburgh for real riders to hail them for the first time. They aren't quite self-driving — they still have a human driver for backup — but they're the next step for the company's drive to replace its "driver-partners" (Uber is notoriously reluctant to grant Uber drivers full employment rights) with a fully automated fleet.

(Source: The Guardian)



A self-driving Ford Fusion hybrid car is test driven in Pittsburgh. Photograph: Jared Wickerham/AP

IN THE NEWS

Deal puts Microsoft apps on Lenovo smartphones

Microsoft apps such as Office and Skype will be installed on Lenovo mobile devices powered by Android software under the terms of a collaboration announced late Monday.

The U.S. technology giant and the Chinese computer titan said they were "deepening their strategic relationship" with a move that could add to the ranks of people using Microsoft programs as services hosted in the internet cloud.

"The marriage of Microsoft's apps and Lenovo's Android-based devices will enable customers around the world to be more productive, more connected and achieve even more," Microsoft corporate vice president Nick Parker said in a statement.

Lenovo is expected to ship millions of Android-powered devices in the next several years.

The deal includes cross-licensing that will allow patented Microsoft technology to be used in Lenovo and Motorola devices, according to the companies.

"Our collaboration with Microsoft will create new opportunities for our customers to take advantage of some of Microsoft's most popular apps," said Lenovo leader of corporate alliances Christian Eigen. Microsoft and leading Android smartphone maker Samsung announced a deal last year to bring the U.S. company's software to smartphone and tablets made by the South Korean firm.

(Source: AFP)



FEATURE
What Republican
turncoats forget

By Stephen Moore

I asked a successful businessman the other day what he thought about Donald Trump. He turned his thumb down. Wow. Are you going to vote for Hillary? I asked with trepidation. "Of course not," he replied almost insulted by the question. "I understand the concept of a binary decision."

I got a similar response when I asked oil magnate T. Boone Pickens whether he would vote for Mr. Trump. He looked at me with a quizzical look on his face and replied: "Well, who else is there to vote for?"



Right. Who else is there? Yet amazingly a caucus of lifelong Republican politicians in Washington are announcing to the world with defiance and self-righteousness that they will vote for Hillary Clinton.

They are mostly former Romney and Bush operatives. They lost and now they want people to believe that their anti-Trumpism is an act of heroism and principle. They ingratiate themselves to The New York Times, The Washington Post and Team Clinton — the sworn enemies of free markets and conservative values.

Somehow this doesn't offend their moral compass. I certainly don't mean to disparage conservatives who say they won't vote for Mr. Trump. One's vote is a matter of personal conscience. But to actively support Hillary is to put the other team's jersey on and then run a lap around the stadium.

It's worth examining the case of the Republicans for Hillary, because none of the arguments make much sense.

Political geniuses

First, many say that Trump can't win — it's hopeless. These are the same political geniuses who a year ago assured us that Mr. Trump could never win a primary (he won most of them), then that he couldn't win 50 percent of the vote (he did), then that he couldn't win 50 percent outside of New York (he did), then they said he couldn't win a majority of the delegates (he did) ... on every occasion the Trump haters were wrong. How about a little humility since they are batting 0.00.

The "Trump can't win" mantra isn't just wrong, it's subversive. Of course, he can win. He is running against Hillary Clinton for goodness sakes. So why do they say this? Because the never Trumpers want Trump to lose because he is to the political class (Republicans and Democrats) the disruptor that Uber is to taxicab drivers.

The "Trump can't win" mantra isn't just wrong, it's subversive. Of course, he can win. He is running against Hillary Clinton for goodness sakes. So why do they say this? Because the never Trumpers want Trump to lose because he is to the political class (Republicans and Democrats) the disruptor that Uber is to taxicab drivers.

Second is the complaint by some economists that Mr. Trump can't be supported because he is not for free trade. Longtime Washington insider Vin Weber reportedly recently said: "The world economic order and the Republican Party" would be "all in shambles" if Mr. Trump wins. "I think markets would collapse."

Really? Hillary Clinton flip flops every day on free trade, so why is it that only Mr. Trump would cause a recession? He doesn't get that the Trump movement is a revolt against the world order.

Mr. Trump is calling for the biggest tax cut since Ronald Reagan. He is for regulatory relief and school choice. Mr. Trump wants to kill Obamacare. Mr. Trump wants a pro-America drilling policy on energy. Hillary wants to soak the rich, increase the debt, stop energy development, expand entitlements and double down on Obamacare. How is this a difficult choice for a free marketeer?

Third, the Trump haters say we must throw Mr. Trump over the bus in order to save the Senate and House majorities.

This is a foolhardy strategy because one can't win without the other. As economist Donald Luskin puts it in his historical analysis of presidential races and Senate gains: "It is clear from history that the House and the Senate always move in the same party direction as the White House, and with the same magnitude. That means the presidential candidate is like a boat that congressional candidates are riding on. It's really stupid to torpedo that boat."

Finally, there is the view expressed by Bret Stephens, my former colleague at The Wall Street Journal, who wants to "make sure Trump is the biggest loser in presidential history" so that we can "rebuild the conservative movement."

Bret, if Obama/Hillary win a third straight presidential race, there won't be a conservative movement left to rebuild. The Republicans will move to the left. Worse, for President Obama to win effectively a third term will be a voter validation of all of the destructive policies of the last eight years.

Do the "never Trumpers" want to facilitate that? Do they want to hand the left its greatest victory for liberal governance of all time? If they do, they, not Trump, are the unforgivable betrayers of conservative principles.

(Source: The Washington Times)

Theresa May has left Britain's police demoralized and angry. Now we just don't trust her

By Chris Hobbs

The legacy left by Theresa May from her years as Home Secretary could be summed up by a recent tweet from a despairing sergeant. He was expected to police 300 square miles of English countryside and coastline under his watch, its population temporarily swollen by hundreds of thousands of tourists, with six constables operating from three widely-spaced police stations that had escaped closure.

Five years ago, twice that number of officers would have been regarded as the bare minimum strength to operate with any degree of safety.

Anyone with policing experience reading that tweet would have had the same thoughts going through their heads.

What if there were a major public order incident such as a large pub fight? What would officers do if there was a Nice-style truck attack, mowing down pedestrians along a resort promenade or a high street?

How many would die in the 30-45 minute interval before the force's armed response unit arrived — and what of the ethics of leaving the general public to desperately dial 999, little knowing that there was no unit available to come to their aid?

Off-quoted mantra

May's oft-quoted mantra that crime is down and police reform is working brings at best cynical laughter from hard-pressed officers.

If the aim of government policy was to divorce the police from the public, then the closure of hundreds of police stations, which ripped police from the heart of their communities, would have been an essential part of the blueprint.

Figures obtained from all forces under the Freedom of Information Act by a former officer place the figure at 650 stations, custody suites and front counters closed, with another 125 earmarked for closure.

Of the major forces, West Midlands Police has only 10 front desks remaining open from the 44 that existed in 2010, while the Met's closure of 65 police stations, almost half the total in London six years ago, included some in the heart of areas troubled by gang crime.

Few members of the public would accept that police "surgeries" held a couple of mornings a week in the local Tesco are an adequate replacement.



In 2010, officers of all ranks were braced for cuts. What they were not prepared for was the level of bile directed against the entire police service from the very minister officers looked to for backing and support.

Theresa May's "courageous" annual speech to the Police Federation inevitably dwelt on police transgressions, some of which had taken place before many serving officers had been born.

High-crime areas

May's implication that the police has a problem with racism, often linked to stop and search, were particularly galling to officers toiling in high-crime inner city areas.

As the number of stop and searches in London plummeted, so did the number of arrests resulting from those stop and searches, by 1,000 a month.

The result, as predicted by front line officers, is an increase in the number of people injured by stabbings and shootings, which has in turn seen the Met's Commissioner Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe "flip flop" over stop and search, having previously been critical of his own officers.

The question is whether the genie can be put back into the bottle, given the numbers of young men who now "carry"

as a matter of course.

The increasing difficulties faced by police can be illustrated by three key factors.

First is the increasing incidence of attacks on front line officers who are now frequently patrolling alone with back-up further away than in the past.

Second is the rising number of officers reporting sick, which is in turn a good indicator of overwork and stress.

Linked to this is the staggering statistic that as police have to cover more shifts to make up the shortfall in their numbers, they are owed 407,698 rest days, equivalent to 1,117 years.

A serious worry

It's a serious worry to officers that the tide of criticism of the police by leading politicians, sections of the media and activists such as the Black Lives Matter movement increases the risk of reprisal against police on the streets.

Then, there is the shadow of terrorism. Even the number of terrorist incidents has increased across Europe, the number of police firearms officers fell by almost 1,300 on Theresa May's watch.

Only with the second Paris attack in

November last year did the government panic and order the training of more armed police.

These however will not be in place until April 2017, with some forces having difficulty in finding volunteers due to fears of the consequences should those officers have to pull the trigger.

Now officers of all ranks are wondering whether, in appointing Amber Rudd as the new Home Secretary, Theresa May has chosen a successor in her own image.

Rudd urgently needs to restore the trust of the rank and file officers in herself, the Home Office and government.

She needs to avoid focusing solely on police transgressions and concentrate on highlighting the hundreds of acts of kindness, bravery and compassion performed by officers on a daily basis. She also needs to acknowledge that police reform is not working and crime is not down.

Numerous surveys show police morale at an all-time low, with many experienced officers actively looking to leave the service.

On the plus side, however, long suffering front-line officers can point to the fact that despite constant denigration, they still retain a public trust rating of around 66 percent: some three times that of politicians and twice that of journalists.

(Source: The Telegraph)

May's implication that the police has a problem with racism, often linked to stop and search, were particularly galling to officers toiling in high-crime inner city areas.

Why America's leadership fails

By David Brooks

We've clearly had a failure of leadership in this country. The political system is not working as it should. Big problems are not being addressed.

But what's the nature of that failure? The leading theory is that it's the corruption: There is so much money flowing through Washington that the special interests get what they want and everyone else gets the shaft. Another theory has to do with insularity: The elites spend so much time within the Acela corridor that they don't have a clue about what is going on beyond it.

There's merit in both theories. But I'd point to something deeper: Over the past few decades, thousands of good people have gone into public service, but they have found themselves enmeshed in a system that drains them of their sense of vocation.

Let's start with a refresher on the difference between a vocation and a career. A career is something you choose; a vocation is something you are called to.

A person choosing a career asks, How can I get the best job or win the most elections? A person summoned by a vocation asks, How can my existing abilities be put in service of the greatest common good?

A career is a job you do as long as the benefits outweigh the costs; a vocation involves falling in love with something, having a conviction about it and making it part of your personal identity.

Setbacks and humiliations

A vocation involves promises to some ideal, it reveals itself in a sense of enjoyment as you undertake its tasks and it can't be easily quit when setbacks and humiliations occur. As others have noted, it involves a double negative — you can't not do this thing.

It's easy to be cynical, but I really do think most people entered public life with this sense of idealistic calling. When you spend time around government officials you are constantly struck by the fact that they are more impressive in private than in public.

Somewhere at the base of their personal story you usually find an earnest desire to serve some vulnerable group.

The fact is, political lives are simply not that glamor-



ous or powerful or fun.

Most politicians wouldn't put up with all the fundraising, the stupid partisan games, unless they were driven at some level by the right reasons.

But over the years, many get swallowed by the system: all the calculating consultants; the ephemeral spin of the media cycle; the endless meetings with supplicants; the constant grind of public criticism; the way campaigning swallows time so they get to spend less time thinking about policy; the way service to a partisan team eclipses service to the cause that brought them into this

People who operate a career mindset, on the other hand, often put self-preservation above all. Nothing gets done because everybody's doing the same old safe rigid thing.

in the first place.

For example, Hillary Clinton seems to have been first inspired by a desire to serve children, but over the decades walls of hard-shell combativeness formed.

Mitt Romney seems to be an exceptionally fine person, but when he was campaigning his true nature was often hidden under a film of political formulas.

As the poet David Whyte once put it, "Work, like marriage, is a place you can lose yourself more easily perhaps than finding yourself ... losing all sense of our own voice, our own contributions and conversation."

It plays out differently in different cases. But a careerist mentality often replaces the vocation mentality. The careerist mentality frequently makes politicians timid, driven more by fear of failure than by any positive ideal.

Short-term calculation

Such people are besieged by the short-term calculations and often forget about their animating vision and long-term ideal. They rationalize that, since the opposition is so evil, anything that serves their career serves the country. This is not just bad for the people involved but for the system itself.

People with a vocation mind-set have their eyes fixed on the long game. They are willing to throw themselves toward their goals imaginatively, boldly and remorselessly.

I do think there's often an arc to vocation. People start with something outside themselves. Then, in the scramble to get established, the ambition of self takes over.

But then at some point people realize the essential falseness of all that and they try to reconnect with their original animating ideals.

And so I think it possible to imagine a revival of vocation.

If Clinton is elected, maybe even she can remind us that we've all developed these bad habits, that most of us secretly detest the game we're in and the way we are playing it.

It would be an act of amazing bravery if she could lead people to strip away all the careerist defense mechanisms and remember their original vows and passions.

(Source: The NYT)

Iran's power generation capacity to reach 80,000 MW

ECONOMY TEHRAN — With 12 new power plant construction projects inaugurated in the Government Week (August 23-29), Iran's nominal electricity generation capacity will reach 80,000 megawatts (MW) in near future, Mehr news agency reported on Monday.

According to the report, the total generation capacity of the inaugurated projects will be 6,084 MW with a 178.337 trillion rials (about \$5 billion) finance.

However, one of the goals of the country's electricity industry within the framework of the sixth Five-Year National Development Plan (2016-2021) is to boost electricity generation to more than 100,000 MW.

During the current Iranian calendar year of 1395 (started on March 20, 2016) with the operation of 10 new power plants, the country's electricity production capacity has reached 74,000 MW, Mehr reported.

In line with starting the new power plant projects, three new thermal plants with a total capacity of 3,460 MW will be also inaugurated and start operating in the Iranian calendar month of Shahrivar (August 22-September 21).

During the mentioned period, 22 renewable energy projects (solar and wind power) will also become operational across the country.

Earlier in July, Mohammad Sadeqzadeh, the



managing director of Renewable Energy Organization of Iran, Known as SUNA, announced that the Islamic Republic will add renewable energy plants with the total generation capacity of 100 MW by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2017).

Oil prices fall as analysts say market still oversupplied

Oil prices fell over one percent on Tuesday, with Goldman Sachs warning that August's price rally had been overdone and that a proposed oil production freeze at current near-record levels would not help rein in an over-supplied market.

International Brent crude oil futures were trading at \$48.54 per barrel at 0235 GMT (1035 ET), down 62 cents, or 1.26 percent, from their last close.

U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude was down 76 cents, or 1.6 percent, at \$46.65 per barrel.

Analysts said the falls were a result

of an overdone price rally this month which lifted crude by over 20 percent between the beginning of the month and late last week.

Since then, prices have fallen back by more than 3.5 percent.

"While oil prices have rebounded sharply since August 1, we believe this move has not been driven by incrementally better oil fundamentals, but instead by headlines around a potential output freeze as well as a sharp weakening of the dollar (and exacerbated by a sharp reversal in net speculative positions)," Goldman Sachs said.

The bank said a proposal by members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and other producers like Russia to freeze output at current levels "would leave production at record highs" and therefore do little to bring supply and demand back into balance.

Goldman also said the likelihood of a deal "may not be high" due to disputes between OPEC members Saudi Arabia and Iran as well as uncertainty over non-OPEC producing giant Russia's willingness to cooperate.

The bank said it expected crude oil

prices of between \$45 and \$50 per barrel "through next summer", but warned that "a sustainable pick-up in disrupted production would lead us to lower our oil price forecast with WTI prices ... to average \$45 per barrel".

French bank BNP Paribas said that "the narrative of a rapid re-balancing of the oil market has ... met a few stumbling blocks" as "some of Q2's disrupted supply returned, OPEC's collective output rose, and U.S. shale oil is being spared the dramatic year-on-year declines forecast earlier in the year".

(Source: Reuters)

NEWS

Iran, Pakistan have potential to expand energy ties: official

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iran and Pakistan can expand their bilateral cooperation in the energy sector, Mehdi Jahangiri, the vice chairman of Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCI-MA), was quoted by Shana as saying on Tuesday.

According to Shana, Jahangiri made the remarks in Iran-Pakistan Economic Forum in Tehran.

Underscoring the great potentials for economic cooperation between the two countries, Jahangiri noted that the volume of trade between Iran and Pakistan should grow by 20 percent annually. "One way to boost economic and trade transactions is through commute of trade delegations," he said.

The vice chairman also pointed to the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline and noted that the project has been prolonged since 2012 and both sides should try to complete the project as soon as possible.

Along with energy, the two countries could also cooperate in the fields of transportation, banking and electricity, and lowering the tariffs could help enhancing the process to a great extent, he added.

Earlier this year, in a meeting with Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, president Rouhani stressed that the value of trade between the two countries should reach to \$5 billion.

Britain's National Grid to recoup 95 million pounds of power contract costs

Britain's National Grid will be able to recoup 95 million pounds of the 113 million it has awarded to two companies to provide back-up emergency power for winter 2016/17, regulator Ofgem said on Tuesday.

The so-called "black start" contracts pay power companies to keep plants ready to come back online without start-up power from the grid if there is a national power outage.

Britain's electricity production fell to its lowest level in more than 20 years in 2015, with several loss-making coal plants closing in recent years.

National Grid has a range of measures to incentive plants to be available during times of high demand and regulator Ofgem sets how much National Grid can spend on these.

On Tuesday Ofgem said the 54 million pound contract awarded to SSE's Fiddler's Ferry coal plant this year met its criteria and could be recovered.

(Source: Reuters)

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4 teas to try this morning and why they're good for you

By Niamh ODonoghue

Out of habit the first thing I do in the morning is boil the kettle and make myself a cup of gorgeous, milky tea (please don't pass judgment on my weak tea choice), and while it's very comforting and helps me to wake up, it doesn't have too many positive benefits for my body (black tea contains the highest level of caffeine; from 40-60 mg per cup). If you're like me and want to try and kick the caffeine, here are five comforting cups of tea to try out this week (warning: just don't dip digestives in them). Tea is the second largest beverage consumed in the world, with water being the most consumed beverage.

Green tea

An old classic, green tea is great for flushing your body of toxins and bacteria, it helps to increase your energy levels, aids fat loss, and even improves brain function. Green tea can be a bit bland, however, but I like to add a squeeze of honey to kill my sugar craving. Green tea



contains 20-40mg of caffeine.

White tea

Unlike green and black teas, white tea undergoes the least amount of processing and is produced by only skilled tea-

makers. White tea tends to have a delicate aroma and light, pure taste. White tea is packed with anti-aging properties and can help to protect skin and keep it looking youthful.

Chamomile tea

This is one of my personal favorite alternatives to black tea. Chamomile tea is a daisy-like herb based tea that's known for its medicinal and natural remedies. If I find that I'm having a stressful week I'll drink this tea as the aroma is calming, relaxing and it helps to soothe anxiety. Chamomile is also great if you feel like you're coming down with a cold or flu.

Oolong tea

Oolong tea is the most diverse type of tea. Similar to green tea, there are loads of different varieties with different strengths, tastes and aromas. With that being said it does contain high levels of caffeine – similar to black tea – so if you're looking for an alternative to black tea I would avoid drinking oolong tea as a substitute. However, this is a good option if you're on a budget because the tea's strength means that the leaves can be used again and again before they're disposed of.

(Source: image.ie)

HAVE YOUR HERB Rosemary



Native to the Mediterranean region, rosemary is one of the most commonly found herbs in a spice rack, and for good reason – not only does it have a wonderful taste and aroma, but also a wealth of beneficial health effects if regularly added to our diet.

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- Pain relief
- Anti-inflammatory qualities
- Detoxify the body
- Skin health and prevent premature aging

Sleep

One in five Americans sleeps less than six hours a night—a trend that can have serious personal health consequences. Sleep deprivation increases the risk for a number of chronic health problems, including obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. If you have trouble sleeping, the following strategies can help you get more sleep.

Check for underlying causes

Some conditions or medications may be interfering with your sleep patterns. Treating a condition or adjusting a medication may be all it takes to restore better sleep.

Practice good sleep hygiene

Use your bed for sleep and sex only, block as much noise and light as possible, go to bed and wake at the same times each day, and get out of bed if you haven't fallen asleep within 20 minutes.

Nap if needed

If you like to nap, get your daytime shut-eye in mid-day. Naps late in the day can interfere with sleep later. If your problem is difficulty getting to sleep at night, then not napping can make you sleepier at bedtime and more likely to stay asleep.

Exercise earlier, not later

Exercise stimulates the body and brain, so make sure you finish exercising at least three hours before turning in.

Watch your diet

Stay away from foods that cause heartburn. Ban caffeine-rich food and drinks (chocolate, tea, coffee, soda) at least six hours before bedtime. Don't drink alcohol for at least two hours before bed.

See a sleep specialist

If your own efforts aren't working, you'll want the help of a sleep professional to both diagnose your problem and propose behavioral and possibly drug treatments.

(Source: health.harvard.edu)

'Business diet' a bad deal for the heart

Unhealthy eating on the road linked with early signs of artery clogging, study says

By Alan Mozes

The typical "social business diet" -- heavy on red meats, sweet drinks, processed snacks -- takes a toll on the heart, a new study finds.

In the go-go world of business meetings and nonstop travel, healthy home-cooked meals often give way to unhealthy fare consumed on the road. This ups the risk for atherosclerosis, a slow but steady clogging of the arteries, the researchers say.

"We found that more than other diets, the 'social business eating pattern' specifically raises the risk for developing atherosclerosis disease," said study author Dr. Valentin Fuster. He's a professor of cardiology at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York City.

With its emphasis on eating out, and snacking on the run, this style of eating is even worse than the so-called Western diet, the researchers found.

"This business diet is really very bad," he added. "It hits the arteries hard, and strongly contributes to cardiovascular disease risk, the world's number one killer."

According to the American Heart Association, atherosclerosis results from the buildup of plaque in the arteries, which raises the risk for blood clots, heart disease, heart attack and stroke. Cardiovascular disease causes more than 17 million deaths worldwide each year.

To lower risk, the heart association rec-

ommends minimizing intake of red meat and sweets and emphasizing consumption of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, skinless chicken and fish, and nuts.

For this study, Fuster's team looked at the heart impact of three eating plans: the so-called Mediterranean diet, the contemporary Western diet and the social-business diet. The Mediterranean style of eating is rich in fruits and vegetables, whole grains, legumes and nuts. Western diets are high in red and processed meats, butter, high-fat dairy products and refined grains.

To see how each of these diets stacked up against arterial clogging risk, investigators assessed the nutritional habits of more than 4,000 Spaniards, aged 40 to 54. All appeared to be healthy with no outward signs of heart disease.

Dietary analyses revealed that roughly 40 percent followed a Mediterranean diet, while another 40 percent followed a Western diet. About 20 percent consumed the social-business diet.

Imaging and ultra-sound tests were conducted to look for early signs of arterial clogging. The tests revealed that those who followed a social-business diet had a "significantly worse cardiovascular risk profile" and a notably higher risk for atherosclerosis.

This was true even after accounting for age, exercise habits, smoking history and



other influential factors, the researchers said.

The finding "underscores the importance of developing healthful dietary habits for people with a busy and fast-paced life," said Dr. Frank Hu, co-author of an accompanying journal editorial. Hu is a professor of nutrition and epidemiology at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health in Boston.

His advice? "Pay attention to the quality of foods when eating out," he said. Avoid fast foods; drink water instead of sugary drinks; carry a bag of nuts as snacks, he suggested.

"Try to plan healthy meals or foods ahead of time," Hu said, "and fit healthy

habits -- eating, sleep and exercise -- into a busy life."

Nutrition expert Lona Sandon said the findings point to a need for "a cultural shift."

"Business does not have to be done around a 12 oz. steak and booze," said Sandon, an assistant professor of clinical nutrition at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas.

"High-powered lunches and dinners have long been associated with unhealthy eating patterns," she noted. But "there are plenty of healthy options for those on the move these days."

(Source: webmd.com)

How long will you live? Look to your parents

Lower risk of dying from heart disease if mom and dad lived past 70, study suggests

By Randy Dotina

Children of long-lived parents are less likely than others to die from heart disease in their 70s, new British research suggests.

"We found that for each parent that lived beyond 70 years of age, the participants had a 20 percent lower chance of dying from heart disease," said study co-author Luke Pilling, a research fellow in epidemiology and public health at the University of Exeter Medical School.

Specifically, the children of longer-lived parents had lower rates of vascular disease, heart failure, stroke, high blood pressure and high cholesterol, the study found.

The findings aren't an excuse to turn into a binge-eating couch potato if your mother and father reached their 80s or 90s. Nor are they a sign that those whose parents died early should just give up.

On the contrary, your decisions about your health can reverse trends toward the illnesses highlighted in the study, Pilling said.

"Though people with longer-lived parents are more likely to live longer themselves, there are lots of ways for those with shorter-lived parents to improve their health. People can really take their health into their own hands," he noted.

Indeed, the correlation between the lifespans of parents and children is actually fairly weak, said Kaare Chris-

tensen, a professor of epidemiology with the University of Southern Denmark. As a result, he said, "there is a lot of room for improvement."

It's known that parents who live a long time are more likely to have kids who live a long time, but Pilling and his colleagues wanted to learn more about this connection -- such as why some people develop heart conditions in their 60s and others don't.

"We aimed to find the factors that influence the health and lifespan of offspring -- the ones that are transferred from their parents," Pilling said.

The researchers tracked more than 186,000 British people, aged 55 to 73. All of their parents were dead. The subjects were recruited between 2006 and 2010, and about 4,700 died over the course of eight years.

The link between long-lived parents and heart-healthier offspring held even after the researchers adjusted their statistics for factors such as education, age, weight and physical activity. According to the study, some researchers have made similar connections in the past, but they looked at smaller groups of people.

The study has some weaknesses. For one, participants weren't followed beyond age 80. Still, Christensen praised the research as "an important and well-performed study."

How might genetics explain the lower risk of heart

disease in kids of longer-lived parents? Your genetic inheritance from your parents seems to affect blood pressure, cholesterol levels, tobacco addiction and levels of obesity in the participants, Pilling said.

"These are all factors that affect risk of heart disease," he said. "We did find some clues that there might also be other pathways to longer life, such as through better repair of damage to DNA." However, more research is needed to figure that out, he said.

What should you take away from this study? "If you have a parent who died young, it is always good if it can be determined why he or she died very early and whether there is an inheritable disease for which there are treatments," Christensen said.

But in general, he said, people whose parents died very early are "not generally doomed." That's because of the "low correlation" between the lifespans of parents and their kids.

And don't think you can slough off just because your mother and father lived beyond 70.

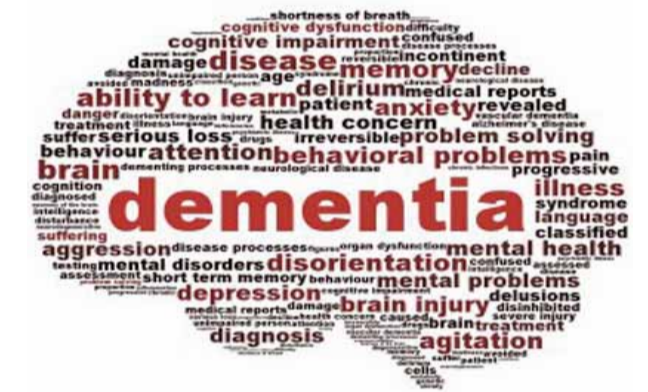
"Living past 70 is what by far the majority of people do already, so this is not really impressive in itself," Christensen said. "Secondly, it's just providing you with slightly better odds, and this could partly also be due to the fact that healthy life also tends to cluster in families."

(Source: WebMD)

AT A GLANCE

Dementia

What is dementia?



Dementia is a loose term used to describe different degenerative disorders that trigger a gradual loss of brain function - thinking, remembering and reasoning.

Is it the same as Alzheimer's?

Alzheimer's is the most common form of dementia, accounting for around 62 per cent of all diagnosed cases.

Who gets it?

In most people, symptoms first appear in their mid-60s. An estimated 850,000 people in the UK have dementia, with the number set to rise to more than a million by 2025.

Is there a cure?

The disease is progressive and currently incurable, though there are treatments to reduce the symptoms. In the end it robs the sufferer of the ability to carry out the simplest tasks.

What causes it?

The causes are still not completely understood. Scientists believe genetic, lifestyle and environmental factors all play a role.

(Source: telegraph.co.uk)

NEWS

Clear the air: learn how often to change furnace filters

By Dan Chiras

A furnace filter removes dust, dander and other large particulates from the air in our homes when either the furnace or central air conditioner is running, as the two systems share common ductwork for air distribution. Particulate buildup reduces a filter's effectiveness and makes the fan work harder, shortening its life span. Both the furnace and air conditioner will operate less efficiently and may require more frequent servicing if the filter is too clogged.

The frequency at which you should change your furnace filter depends on the number of people who live in the home; how many furry pets reside indoors; the presence of smoke from tobacco, woodstoves or other sources; how dusty the environment is; the type of furnace filter; and the thickness of the filter.

If you have multiple fur-shedding pets, you live along a dusty road, or several smokers live in the residence, count on changing a 1-inch or 2-inch air filter every month. You'll likely need to replace a 4-inch filter every two months and a 5-inch filter every three months.

If you have one pet, your home experiences only moderate dust accumulation, or no more than one smoker lives in the residence, filter replacement can shift to two, four and six months, respectively.

If the air in your home is mostly free of dust and completely free of pet dander and smoke, you can replace your filter just once per year.

(Source: motherearthnews.com)

Yemen demonstrations: For democracy, against Saudi Arabia

By Hamidreza Gholamzadeh

An interview of one of Iranian domestic news websites with a former IRGC commander who used to be on mission in Syria absorbed the attention of some foreign media. Mohammad Ali Falaki had shared with Mashregh News his experience in war in Syria and had talked about the strategy of Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps. One part of his comments which has been interesting to foreign media was where he speaks of a strategy of IRGC in forming a 'liberation army' in the region which according to him is now active in Syria, Iraq and Yemen. Al Jazeera, for instance, had considered it an official announcement that Iran is going to have its boots on the ground in these three countries and this presence would be a military one.

What General Falaki has described is the same advisory mission Iran has long been pursuing in Syria and Iraq at the request of the legitimate governments of those countries. What he has elaborated is that the Revolutionary Guards is focusing on mobilization of forces in their own country or region. The so-called Liberation Army, according to Falaki, is under command of legendary Major General Qassem Soleimani and is currently present in three fronts of Syria, Iraq and Yemen where the two formers are fighting terrorists and the latter is engaged in a futile aggression launched by Saudi Arabia.

What the once IRGC commander has elaborated and the foreign media ignored is that Iran has always asserted that it supports legitimate governments in the volatile region and supports any true measures taken to maintain stability and eradicate terrorism and violence in west of Asia. On the other hand, the presence is advisory and at the request of officials democratically elected by the people of those countries. Moreover, what IRGC and its command over the Liberation Army is seeking is to help people of those countries stand on their own in fight against terrorism and foreign intervention. It can be compared to US program spending \$500 million for training so-called moderate fighters in Syria – who later turned into terrorists or were immediately defeated by them – with the very significant difference that Iran is doing it legally in cooperation with the local governments and with respect for those nations and the US did it regardless of the people and governments of target countries.

In other words, while the West is abusing instability of the region to follow its own interests under the pretext of war on terrorism, Iran not only is 'really' fighting terrorists, but also is following its principle policy of supporting and contributing to democracy and nation's will in countries suffering instability and insecurity. This difference in discourse and policy of Iran and US is the reason why Tehran could easily play a role in Yemen and Washington didn't have enough pretext



to intervene. Iran has always affirmed that it supports what the people of a country really want; the very same solution is what Iran has offered and supported for Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and even Palestine.

While on one side of the story Iran has been supporting Houthis – inaccurately considered and depicted as Shia by western media – and revolutionary people in Yemen, Saudi Arabia – with the green light of the United States and western states – launched a regrettable war on the poor country. Riyadh claimed that it supports former president of the country Mansour Hadi and as one of rare countries in the world which have had no elections in their history and women are still deprived of basic rights such as driving cars, announced that its massive bombardment of civilian areas in Yemen is for returning democracy to the country by reinstating Mansour Hadi. Hadi, fugitive former president of Yemen, came to power after revolutions in region arrived in Yemen and toppled longstanding President Ali Abdullah Saleh. Mansour Hadi who had took power within agreement with Houthis and revolutionary forces to form a transitional government, refused to leave the position and stirred public anger and ended up in taking refuge in Saudi Arabia.

Saudi efforts to form an international or a regional alliance proved futile within last 16 months and many countries denied being part of the coalition and some left it after

unfair, brutal attacks on civilians took many casualties and world public opinion raised pressure on human catastrophe in Yemen. The situation in Yemen is terrible enough to force the United Nations to report on child killings and put the name of Saudi Arabia among child-killing regimes. The fact, however, was embarrassingly erased with political and financial pressure of Riyadh on the UN and Secretary General Ban Ki-moon officially announced that Saudi Arabia was removed from the report due to the pressures and threats to cut its funding for UN.

An airstrike on a hospital run by Médecins Sans Frontières, or Doctors Without Borders, caused more public anger and scandal for Saudis. Many western people across the world are questioning their governments in the United States, the Britain and France over massive arms sales to Riyadh. Oxfam has reported that the UK arms sales to Saudi Arabia were in violation of Britain's national, regional and international arms transfer obligations under three different regulations including the Arms Trade Treaty, which the United Kingdom has strongly supported.

These and many other issues such as use of illegal weapons by the Saudis and Riyadh's incapability to achieve its objectives in Yemen, have turned it into a terrible quagmire for the Arab country. Latest developments in Yemen are a turning the situation into a new chapter which proves Iran's

policy and has forced US to withdraw from its stance. On Thursday August 18, Yemen announced formation of High Political Council as the parliament of the country and on the day after, a senior official described that the political council was responsible to form government in order to run political, military, security, economic, administrative, social and other affairs of the country. The government comprises 10 members half of whom are from Houthis and other half are made up by forces loyal to ousted president Abdullah Saleh. So far, the announcement received mixed reactions as a UN chief advisor criticized the move as hindering negotiations, and some approved of it.

Yet, what happened in Sanaa on Saturday seems to be a game-changer as tens of thousands of Yemenis poured to the streets to support the Council. The massive rallies witnessed Saudi jetfighters maneuvering overhead the crowds and targeted outskirts of the city to terrify the demonstrators; but the population in return condemned Saudi aggression and shouted unity with the High Political Council.

As Tehran had repeatedly emphasized that its support for Houthis and revolutionary forces was due to their popularity among nation and the support in fact goes to the people, the huge turnout of people from all walks of life was a proof that the Council benefits from public support and receives legitimacy from nation. On the other hand, while US has been sort of forced into supporting Saudis as its ally in the region and had done it in the minimum ways including advisories and refueling assistances, they sharply reduced the number of American forces assigned to 'Joint Combined Planning Cell' on last weekend from 45 staff to less than five people according to US Navy spokesman in Bahrain Lieutenant Ian McConaughy quoted as saying to Reuters.

Yemen is another sample showing who is truly seeking democracy, peace and stability in the region and who is supporting dictators and terrorist groups in the region. As Iran's insistence on remaining of Assad in power in Syria to avoid a power vacuum and on people's role in determining their own destiny proved later to be the right policy to avoid another Libya in region, the emphasis on political solution for Yemen and people's role is another right policy in a volatile region which desires peace and stability. Yemenis showed that they consider no place for Mansour Hadi in the politics of their country and rejected Saudi claims for reinstating him.

The only way to bring the humanitarian crisis in Yemen to an end is the United States, western countries and other Arab states in the region convince Saudi Arabia to leave Yemen and stop fanning the flames of war and aggression in Yemen and elsewhere. Otherwise, Riyadh would either suffer serious internal problems and lose its weight in region or will act irrationally and get the situation in western Asia even worse than the current turmoil.

NEWS

UK-Saudi Arms Deal Violates Britain-Backed Int'l Treaty, Fuels Yemeni Conflict - Oxfam

The UK deal with Saudi Arabia on selling weapons to Riyadh violates the international Arms Trade Treaty and fuels the war in Yemen, prominent international organization Oxfam said in a statement on Tuesday.

Oxfam said it had received a legal opinion the UK arms sales to Saudi Arabia were in violation of Britain's national, regional and international arms transfer obligations under three different regulations including the Arms Trade Treaty, which the United Kingdom has strongly supported.



"UK arms and military support are fuelling a brutal war in Yemen, harming the very people the Arms Trade Treaty is designed to protect. Schools, hospitals and homes have been bombed in contravention of the rules of war," Oxfam quoted its Deputy Chief Executive Penny Lawrence as saying in the statement.

According to the statement, the UK government is "in denial and disarray" over selling arms to Riyadh while the Saudi-led coalition carries out airstrikes in Yemen.

"It has misled its own parliament about its oversight of arms sales and its international credibility is in jeopardy as it commits to action on paper but does the opposite in reality. How can the Government insist that others abide by a treaty it helped set up if it flagrantly ignores it?" the statement reads.

The charity called on the UK government to suspend existing arms export licenses to Riyadh "until it can be certain there is no risk that any arms will be used by the Saudi military to commit breaches of international humanitarian and human rights law in Yemen."

The Oxfam statement is set to be presented at the second Conference of State Parties to the treaty in Geneva later on Tuesday.

Yemen has been engulfed in a military conflict between the government headed by Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi and Houthi rebels, the country's main opposition force. Since March 2015, the Saudi-led coalition has been carrying out airstrikes against the Houthis at Hadi's request.

According to UN data, the majority of the 3,700 civilian deaths over the course of the conflict have been caused by the Saudi-led coalition airstrikes.

(Sputnik)

World seeking power shift towards Iran-Russia alliance

By Lachin Rezaian
Fmr. US Army PsyOp officer

TEHRAN, Aug. 23 (MNA) — A former US army psychological operation officer and counter-terrorism analyst calls Iran-Russia cooperation plan to save Syria the greatest thing that has happened to the world in over 25 years.

Scott Bennett asserted that Iran-Russia cooperation to fight terrorist extremists would not allow the reckless wars of American imperialism to spread any further, and gloriously China is also coming along side Iran and Russia in full agreement and assistance in this effort.

The world is becoming aware of its mistakes towards the Middle East, with "Turkey's President Erdogan seems to have come to understand that the power shift away from the US influence and towards the Russian-Iran-China alliance is something that he must adapt to," Bennett said in an exclusive interview with Mehr News Agency:

How do you evaluate Iran-Russia cooperation on regional issues, including Syria and Yemen?

Without a doubt, the Iran-Russian alliance and cooperation on regional issues is perhaps the greatest thing that has happened to the world in over 25 years. The great powers of Russian and Iran coming together is a true sign of hope for an end to terrorism, an increase in regional stability, and a peaceful future.

It saddens and disgusts me beyond words when I consider the destruction, death, misery and anger which the United States arrogantly and foolishly unleashed upon humanity in its Middle East wars in Iraq, Libya, and now Syria. We now know after fifteen years of research that the attacks of September 11, 2001 were NOT the work of Osama Bin Laden or Saudi Arabian hijackers, but instead was a "false flag attack" that certain traitors in the American intelligence agencies, the White House, Israel, and Saudi Arabia conducted. They did this using sophisticated technology, hologram imagery, missiles, and psychological warfare techniques. The American media was also complicit in this false attack. The reason for doing it of course was to unleash and American led war on the Middle East to disintegrate the Muslim regimes and replace them. Sadly, instead of moderate and productive



new regimes to rule, the American interventions have unleashed savage Takfiri Wahhabi monsters that rape, destroy, and ruin everything they touch. Worst of all, the moderate people in the Middle East have been forced to flee their homelands, and now are being driven into Europe where increased tensions and outrage and cultural conflicts are causing all kinds of new problems.

With Russia and Iran coming together in agreement to fight terrorist extremists, they are sending a message to the world that they will not allow the reckless wars of American imperialism to spread any further, and gloriously China is also coming along side Iran and Russia in full agreement and assistance in this effort. So now the only countries that remain to come along side in agreement are the countries of Europe. Which I anticipate coming very soon as they begin to see the damage the US has done to them through these terrible policies.

What do you think about the deployment of Russian long-range bombers to be taken off from Hamadan air base in Iran and to carry out airstrikes against targets belonging to the ISIL and Jabhat al-Nusra terrorist groups?

The Russian long range bombers and the base being set up for them in Iran is a strategic victory for peace, because it not only allows the bombing runs against ISIL Takfiri terrorists, but it also shows the world that Russia and Iran are in alliance, and no nation will attack Iran without attacking Russia. This effectively sets up a

protective barrier for Iran against any attacks by Israel or the US.

Interestingly, Turkey's President Erdogan seems to have come to understand that the power shift away from the US influence and towards the Russian-Iran-China alliance is something that he must adapt to. We see Erdogan adapting Turkey by divorcing itself slowly from NATO and the US, and trying to mend its relationships with Russia and Iran. Interestingly the coup attempt in Turkey may have been created by Erdogan himself, and self-inflicted in order to create the excuse for Erdogan to separate. It makes perfect sense, and the incompetence and failure of the coup, and the instant counter-response and ending of the coup by Erdogan suggests that it was really an artificially generated psychological operation, and not a real event. But if it was a real event, then Erdogan has also blamed the US openly for supporting the coup against him, and possibly financing and planning it with the help of NATO and the CIA. Time will tell.

How do you think about Iran's role in resolving regional issues? Why Iran is an integral part of any resolution to the regional issues?

Iran shares a common culture, history, language, and identity with the various peoples of the Middle East, and has also been a great nation since biblical times. Iran has grown through history for thousands of years, and this gives it great respect and identity among other nations and cultures. It is this honor and

respect which gives Iran its security and confidence and humility when dealing with immature and childish nations and agendas that may soon pass into oblivion by their own hand.

What destructive states of the region, including Saudi Arabia and its allies, seek through establishing instability, war and tensions in the region?

The instability of the region was triggered by the United States and Israel and Great Britain originally invading Iraq, then creating civil war there, and spreading the fires of rebellion through the CIA operation known as "The Arab Spring". The plan was to trigger revolutions, and hope that miraculously Democracy and law and order would spring up and take over, but instead the opposite occurred. In the vacuum of authoritarian power and absolute dictatorship rule, many of the peoples in the region fell into religious fanaticism and cult like delusion, and sought to use their new freedom to destroy the rest of civilization and replace it with Wahhabi Salafi laws, rules, and culture. Since the rest of the world is not open to this Wahhabi ideology, and in fact views it as mentally deranged and politically suicidal, this has created an endless conflict.

The hope is that with Russian-Iran-China drawing a line in the sand, the U.S. and NATO will pause and give careful consideration to what Vladimir Putin originally said at the United Nations... "Do you realize what you have done?"

Hopefully, they will, and a new agenda for peace and stability in the world will take precedence over democracy and capitalism. Time will tell.

Dr. Scott Bennett, formerly of the US Army 11th Psychological Operations Battalion, attempted to blow the whistle by contacting the commercially-controlled media and writing to US politicians after being sacked from his job as terrorist finance investigator after he proved too zealous at the job. He also tried to expose Union Bank of Switzerland for financing terrorism (Al Qaeda, Benghazi, ISIL) through the US and Allies, Saudi, Qatar, Turkey, Israel back in 2012; then thrown in prison for it. Bennett had a background in advertising, before being fast tracked into the US military PSYOPS division, receiving a Direct Commission as an Officer, and held a Top Secret/Sensitive Compartmentalized Information (TS/SCI) security clearance.

Pro-nuclear countries making slower progress on climate targets

A strong national commitment to nuclear energy goes hand in hand with weak performance on climate change targets, researchers at the University of Sussex and the Vienna School of International Studies have found.

A new study of European countries, published in the journal *Climate Policy*, shows that the most progress towards reducing carbon emissions and increasing renewable energy sources -- as set out in the EU's 2020 Strategy -- has been made by nations without nuclear energy or with plans to reduce it.

Conversely, pro-nuclear countries have been slower to implement wind, solar and hydropower technologies and to tackle emissions.

While it's difficult to show a causal link, the researchers say the study casts significant doubts on nuclear energy as the answer to combating climate change.

Professor Andy Stirling, Professor of Science and Technology Policy at the University of Sussex, said: "Looked at on its own, nuclear power is sometimes noisily propounded as an attractive response to climate change. Yet if alternative options are rigorously compared, questions are raised about cost-effectiveness, timeliness, safety and security."

"Looking in detail at historic trends and current patterns in Europe, this paper substantiates further doubts.



"By suppressing better ways to meet climate goals, evidence suggests entrenched commitments to nuclear power may actually be counterproductive."

They found that Group 1 countries had reduced their emissions by an average of six percent since 2005 and had increased renewable energy sources to

26 percent.

Group 2 countries, meanwhile, fared even better on emissions reductions, which were down 11 percent. They grew renewable energy to 19 percent.

However, Group 3 countries only managed a modest 16 percent renewables share and emissions on

average actually went up (by three percent).

The UK is a mixed picture. Emissions have been reduced by 16 percent, bucking the trend of other pro-nuclear countries. However, only five percent of its energy comes from renewables, which is among the lowest in Europe, pipped only by Luxembourg, Malta and the Netherlands.

■ Nuclear power plants

The team say that the gigantic investments of time, money and expertise in nuclear power plants, such as the proposed Hinkley Point C in the UK, can create dependency and 'lock-in' -- a sense of 'no turning back' in the nation's psyche.

Technological innovation then becomes about seeking 'conservative' inventions - that is new technologies that preserve the existing system. This is, inevitably, at the expense of more radical technologies, such as wind or solar.

Professor Benjamin Sovacool, Professor of Energy Policy and Director of the Sussex Energy Group at the University of Sussex, said: The "analysis shows that nuclear power is not like other energy systems. It has a unique set of risks, political, technical and otherwise, that must be perpetually managed.

(Source: EurekAlert)

Pro-nuclear countries have been slower to implement wind, solar and hydropower technologies and to tackle emissions, researchers say.

A widening 80 mile crack is threatening one of Antarctica's biggest ice shelves

For some time, scientists who focus on Antarctica have been watching the progression of a large crack in one of the world's great ice shelves -- Larsen C, the most northern major ice shelf of the Antarctic peninsula and the fourth largest Antarctic ice shelf overall.

Larsen C, according to the British Antarctic Survey, is "slightly smaller than Scotland." It's called an ice "shelf" because the entirety of this country-sized area is covered by 350-meter-thick ice that is floating on top of deep ocean waters.

The crack in Larsen C grew around 30 kilometers (18.6 miles) in length between 2011 and 2015. And as it grew, also became wider -- by 2015, yawning some 200 meters in length. Since then, growth has only continued -- and now, a team of researchers monitoring Larsen C say that with the intense winter polar night over Antarctica coming to an end, they've been able to catch a glimpse of what happened to the crack during the time when it could not be observed by satellite.

The rift had grown another 22 kilometers (13.67 miles) since it was last observed in March 2016, and has widened to about 350 meters, report researchers from Project MIDAS, a British Antarctic Survey funded collaboration of researchers from Swansea and Aberystwyth Universities in Wales and other institutions. The full length of the rift is now 130 km, or over 80 miles.

■ A matter of time

What this means is that it may be only a matter of time before we see the loss of an enormous chunk of Larsen C -- a historic event that would bring to mind the losses of the Larsen A ice shelf in 1995 and the sudden breakup of Larsen B in 2002. When that last event



happened, the National Snow and Ice Data Center remarked that Earth had lost a major feature that had "likely existed since the end of the last major glaciation 12,000 years ago."

"We previously showed that this will remove between nine and twelve percent of the ice shelf area and leave the ice front at its most retreated position ever," write Adrian Luckman, Daniela Jansen, Martin O'Leary and members of the Project MIDAS team. The "trajectory of the rift now implies that the higher of these two estimates is more likely."

The amount of ice that could be lost would be around 6,000 square kilometers, or 2,316 square miles -- nearly the size of Delaware, said O'Leary, a glaciologist at Swansea University and one of the team's members, by email.

So in sum, we're talking about a possible ice island in the Southern Ocean that is as large as one of the smallest U.S. states. Moreover, researchers studying the widening crack in a 2015 paper -- many of whom overlap with the MIDAS team -- predict that after the loss of this ice, the remaining shelf could be unstable and continue to lose more mass.

(Source: The Washington Post)

Song found to somehow protect babies from high temperatures

Two scientists from Deakin University in Australia discovered that Australian zebra finches sing unique calls to their eggs when it's hot out. What's more, birds that were incubated and raised at high temperatures grew more slowly if they had been exposed to these "incubation calls," an adaptation that later led to higher reproductive success. The researchers believe their study provides some insight into how these birds might respond to climate change.

These findings show, for the first time, that parent birds can communicate environmental conditions to their babies before they hatch, said Joseph Woodgate, a behavioral ecologist at Queen Mary University of London who has previously worked with both researchers.

The scientists behind the study began investigating after they noticed Australian zebra finches making an unusual call in the wild.

"It sounds really different from other types of calls they do," said Mylene M. Mariette, who researches the evolution of parental care and is an author of the paper. "It's quite high-pitched and fast."

Dr. Mariette and Katherine Buchanan, a professor of life sciences, studied more than 120 finches in aviaries and found that parents only performed incubation calls when their eggs were within five days of expected hatching and the maximum daily temperature exceeded 78 degrees Fahrenheit.

■ Incubation calls

The researchers then incubated eggs at a high temperature and played recordings of either the incubation calls or other nonspecific calls. Among 130 nestlings, they found that the birds that heard the incubation calls grew more



slowly when raised in hot conditions.

In adulthood, females that followed this growth pattern produced more babies. Birds that received the incubation call also chose to breed in warmer nests as adults, suggesting a preference for higher temperatures.

Next, the researchers hope to pinpoint the biological process underlying these effects, and to understand why staying smaller for longer is an advantage in the heat. It could be because smaller birds can dispel body heat more easily or because growing too quickly in a stressful, hot environment brings too much damage to the body.

Either way, the findings show that the birds "actually have a mechanism to prepare their offspring for high temperatures," Dr. Mariette said. Still, that doesn't mean the finches would be able to cope with rapid and extreme changes that could come with climate change -- so far, she and Dr. Buchanan have only studied a normal range of temperatures.

The "question becomes whether or not that environmental change can outpace their capacity to be flexible," said Sharon Lynn, a biology professor at Wooster University who studies stress and reproduction in birds.

(Source: The NYT)

NASA reestablishes contact with long lost spacecraft after two years of silence

NASA has reestablished contact with its STEREO-B spacecraft, nearly two years after losing communication with the vehicle. The space agency has been trying to get in contact with the spacecraft since October 1st, 2014, when the last signal from STEREO-B was received on Earth. Finally on Sunday, NASA was able to pick up a signal from the vehicle using the Deep Space Network, or DSN -- an international network of large radio antennas used for communicating with spacecraft.

STEREO-B is one of two spacecraft that make up NASA's Solar Terrestrial Relations Observatory (STEREO). The goal of the program is to study the Sun and better understand its behavior. Specifically, STEREO aims to figure out the origins of coronal mass ejections -- massive explosions of charged particles that sometimes shoot out from the Sun. These plasma bursts travel all the way to Earth and collide with our planet's magnetic field, creating powerful geomagnetic storms that can damage communications satellites and mess with our planet's power grid.

-----Heliocentric orbits

To study these solar outbursts, NASA launched STEREO-A and STEREO-B in 2006. Both spacecraft were in-



serted into heliocentric orbits; STEREO-A positioned itself "ahead" of Earth, while STEREO-B fell "behind" Earth. These positions allowed the spacecraft to get even more views of the Sun that we can't get from Earth. The two vehicles have since drifted farther apart from their orbits, though, and will continue to do so while in space.

But STEREO-B has been offline for the past two years, after NASA reset the spacecraft on purpose in 2014. Prior to the reset, both STEREO-A and STEREO-B had

moved to the far side of the Sun, making communication with the vehicles difficult. In order to send signals to Earth, the spacecraft had to point their antennas a lot closer to the Sun, which increased the risk of the antennas getting overheated. So NASA had decided to angle the antennas away from the Sun and put the STEREO spacecraft into a year-long safe mode until they could safely communicate with Earth again. To prepare for this, NASA put the two vehicles through a series of tests and resets to see if they would be ready for the repositioning and hibernation. STEREO-A performed just fine, but STEREO-B failed to send signals back to Earth after one of the planned resets.

NASA has tried establishing communication with STEREO-B ever since. Recently, the space agency has tried using the DSN every month to pick up signals from the spacecraft, and the efforts finally proved fruitful this past weekend when contact with STEREO-B was established at 06:27 PM. ET on August 21st. The mission team plans to continue communicating with the spacecraft to figure out what kind of shape it's in and regain attitude control.

(Source: The Verge)

NEWS

Jellyfish power new energy-efficient laser

A laser that uses glowing green proteins found in jellyfish has been unveiled by researchers in the UK and Germany.

The new device, which falls into the polariton family of lasers, uses less energy than conventional lasers. The work was published in *Science Advances*.

The word laser was originally an acronym for "light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation" as the most familiar type of lasers, such as those in DVD players or laser pointers, generate light using -- you guessed it -- stimulated emission of radiation.

They do this by "pumping" atoms with energy which propels electrons into a higher-energy, excited state.

When the electrons relax into their lower energy orbit, they spit out a photon -- the wavelength of which depends on the state of the excited electron's energy.

A pair of mirrors reflect the photons back and forth through the atoms. That can trigger even more electrons to excite and relax, releasing more photons of the same wavelength.

But for the past couple of decades researchers have been experimenting with a different type of laser, one that uses quantum phenomena called polaritons.

Polaritons are quasiparticles -- part matter and part light -- inside minuscule cavities inside a solid material that can conduct electricity under some circumstances (called a semiconductor).

As polaritons decay, they emit photons as laser light. These devices use less energy than many conventional lasers, but there's a catch -- the early ones needed to be very cold to work. We're talking only 10 °C above absolute zero, or around -263 °C.

(Source: Cosmos Magazine)



There's an important reason why there are tiny holes in airplane windows

You don't have to be an aeronautical engineer to know that an airplane cabin is pressurized to keep us from passing out as we soar through the skies, 11,000 meters (36,000 feet) above sea level.

It also stands to reason that -- to keep that pressure contained -- the cabin can't have any holes in it. So why, you might be wondering, is there a scary-looking small hole in every airplane window? Well, in short, despite what it seems, it's there for your safety.

According to Mark Vanhoenacker, a British Airways pilot who reports about aviation for Slate, these tiny window holes are actually called "bleed holes", and they're wedged between two other panes of acrylic material, meaning that when you look through an airplane window, you're actually peering through three different panes.

The first of these panes -- the one you can touch and dirty up with fingerprints -- is called a scratch pane. The middle pane is the one with the bleed hole, and the whole system is completed by the outer pane -- the most important one, since it protects you from the pressure difference outside.

While both the outer and middle panes have the power to resist the pressure from outside the plane, the brunt of the work falls on the outer window because it's the final barrier between you and the clouds.

To make you a happy little traveler, the cabin of an airplane creates pressure by pumping in conditioned air that mimics the air pressure you're used to feeling on the ground. By doing so, you can survive the trip without passing out or suffering from hypoxia -- a condition with fatal complications that arises from a lack of oxygen.

But, as you reach higher and higher elevations in your comfortably pressurized cabin, the air outside the plane becomes thinner, containing less oxygen and pressure.

It's kind of hard to imagine this shift in pressure (unless you're a mountain climber), but using numbers seems to make it a bit easier.

(Source: Business Insider)

How scientists measure Louisiana's flooding from space

Intense rainfall is causing widespread and disastrous flooding in parts of Louisiana, and new measurements from a NASA satellite illustrate just how much precipitation has accumulated in this region of the Southern United States.

The animation depicts rainfall totals every 3 hours over a 72-hour span, from August 12 to 14. Some areas received more than 20 inches (50.8 centimeters) of rain over those three days.

Rain totals in southern Louisiana were at least 600 percent over normal levels over a seven-day period, according to the Lower Mississippi River Forecast Center of the U.S. National Weather Service.

Data collected from the Integrated Multi-Satellite Retrievals for GPM (IMERG), a product of the Global Precipitation Measurement (GPM) mission, offers essential rainfall observations for NASA, the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency and five other national and international partners.

NASA noted that their observed totals are regional and remotely sensed, according to the Earth Observatory. As such, rainfall accumulations could be much higher when measured from the ground.

(Source: The CSM)

NEWS IN BRIEF



Iranian drug lord captured with 800 tons of narcotics

SOCIAL TEHRAN — Iranian drug lord was arrested with 800 tons of narcotics, Sistan-Baluchestan province's police chief Hassan Rahimi said on Monday.

The drug lord has been committing his criminal activities since 1992 both in Iran and across the borders, Nasim news agency quoted Rahimi as saying.

More than 300 other dealers who were following his lead are also arrested, he said, adding that the drug lord was also collaborating with 11 other drug trafficking organizations in Iran.

He was living in Iran and commuted between Kerman and Sistan-Baluchestan provinces, he added.

Not only did he smuggled drug into the country he was also engaged in drug trafficking across the borders to Afghanistan and Pakistan and using a port in Pakistan he would smuggled it to other countries, Rahimi explained.



Iran's health ministry in talks to import Russian helicopters

MOSCOW (Sputnik) — The Russian holding, Russian Helicopters, is in talks with Iran on the deliveries of Ansat and Ka-226T light multirole helicopters for the Islamic republic's health ministry, the company's press service said Tuesday.

"Russian Helicopters is in talks to supply Ansat and Ka-226T light helicopters in the interest of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education of Iran. According to our estimates, Iran's need for light Russian helicopters is in the order of 60 vehicles," Deputy CEO Alexander Shcherbinin said.

Shcherbinin, in charge of marketing and business development, said the helicopters were designed for air medical services and added that talks are underway to provide assembly services in addition to supplies.

Traffic police to crack down on reckless intercity bus drivers

Accidents claimed over 280,000 lives over past decade: Police chief

SOCIAL TEHRAN — Traffic police is planning to enforce more stringent rules on careless intercity bus drivers as accidents and fatalities have reached alarming levels. By installing monitoring devices on the roads the buses will be controlled online from a one-kilometer distance so that the police can have access to all their information via GPS including their speed which help them in better regulating the bus drivers' driving behavior, Mehr news agency quoted the traffic police chief Taqi Mehri as saying on Tuesday.

The scheme, called "Sepah-Tan", is implemented on a test trial on the linking roads to Tehran, Mashhad, Qom and Isfahan, Mehri said adding, it will be implemented on all buses travelling on the roads by the end of the current year (March 21, 2017) and hopefully result in a decrease in the number of accidents.

Currently there are 300 speed control cameras on the roads which will grow to almost double by the end of the summer (September 21), he added.

Over the past five month falling on March 20 to August 21, 2016 some 47 bus accidents took place, Mehri pointed stating, the number suggests a 55 per-



cent decrease in the number of the accidents and 22 percent decrease in the number of fatalities compared to the same period last year.

16,500 traffic related death reported last year

Mehri lamented that last year (March 21, 2015 to March 19, 2016) some 16,500 died

in motor vehicle accidents; "in other words some 45 individuals died a day in accidents".

By going through the records of the past years traffic accidents believed to claim 280,000 lives over the past 10 years, so the issue is of national importance, he highlighted.

He went on to say that since the month

of Shahrivar is the last month of summer and the roads are the busiest over this month the number of the accidents will increase drastically, so the police must be harder on the drivers by imposing stricter rules.

Over the past month of Shahrivar (August 23 to September 22, 2015) more than 1,700 individual died in the accidents which is a big number, he regretted.

Speeding is leading cause of accidents

Mehri warned that speeding is the main cause of accidents which leads to death.

It is best for the drivers to consider the time they spend on the road to get to their final destination as part of their trip and try to drive safe, he added.

Police will definitely respond to those who violate traffic rules, he pointed, warning, "We will impound cars whose drivers commit two traffic violations which can cause car accidents for 72 hours."

Road fatalities drop by 4.8%

On the bright side road fatalities dropped by 4.8 percent over the first for month of the current year falling on March 20 to July 21, 2016 compared to the same period last year, Mehri said.

Tokyo Olympic medals to be made from e-waste

Organizers of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics are hoping to source the gold, silver and bronze needed to make medals for the games by tapping the country's "urban mine" -- made up of millions of discarded smartphones and other small consumer electronics.

Such electronic waste contains enough precious metals to produce all the medals for the Olympic and Paralympic Games to be held in Japan's capital four years from now, according to a group of Olympic organizers, government officials and company executives that discussed the proposal in June.

For the 2012 London Olympics, 9.6kg of gold, 1,210kg of silver and 700kg of copper -- the primary component of bronze -- were used to produce medals. In comparison, the amount of precious metals recovered from discarded small consumer electronics in Japan in 2014 included 143kg of gold, 1,566kg of silver and 1,112 tons of copper.

While Japan is poor in natural resources, its "mine" of gold and silver contained in small consumer electron-

ics is equivalent to 16% and 22% of the world's total reserves, respectively -- surpassing the reserves of any natural resources-abundant nation.

Olympic host cities usually procure metal for medals largely by asking mining companies to donate them.

The idea of using recycled electronics was discussed at a June 10 meeting in Tokyo to consider "cooperation proposals for the Tokyo 2020 operation plan" with an eye toward a "sustainable future." Participants included officials of the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic organizing committee, the Ministry of the Environment and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, as well as executives from mobile phone company NTT DoCoMo, precious metals company Tanaka Kikinzoku Kogyo, and recycling companies.

Collection challenge

One challenge is the fact that Japan has not fully implemented a system for collecting discarded consumer electronics. While about 650,000 tons of small electronics and electric home appliances are discarded in Japan

every year, it is estimated that less than 100,000 tons is collected under a system based on the small home appliance recycling law, which came into force in 2013. The Environment Ministry has called on municipalities to target collecting 1kg of small consumer electronics per person per year, but many municipalities have fallen short of collecting even 100 grams per person.

In addition, much of the metal that is recovered is already being reused to make new electronics. Silver, in particular, faces a tight supply-demand balance, making it uncertain whether enough can be obtained to produce the Olympic medals.

By raising public awareness, the amount of electronic waste that is collected and recycled could be increased. Recycling is already widespread in Japan for many products, including milk cartons and plastic bottle caps, thanks to the efforts and cooperation of environmentally conscious consumers.

(Source: asia.nikkei.com)

LEARN ENGLISH

Solving a Mystery

Jane: You have to watch this movie. It's so good!

Hercule: I'm not really into mysteries.

Jane: But this is a really good whodunit.

Hercule: I prefer action movies.

Jane: Listen, the movie gives you plenty of clues, and the detective follows hunch after hunch, lead after lead, but the movie is full of red herrings. Everybody seems to have an alibi and the witnesses aren't reliable.

Hercule: I don't know. It seems kind of confusing to me. I don't really want to use my brain when I'm watching a movie.

Jane: But that's the fun part of it. The true identity of the victim is a mystery, the suspects all have skeletons in their closets, and the detective isn't what he seems.

Hercule: Yeah, well...

Jane: And just when you think you're getting to the bottom of it, the rug gets pulled out from under you. It keeps you guessing until the very end. Hey, where are you going?

Hercule: I'm going to find an action movie where all my brain has to do is handle the sensory overload!

(Source: eslpod.com)

Words & phrases

mystery: an event, situation etc. that people do not understand or cannot explain because they do not know enough about it

whodunit: a book, film etc. about a murder case, in which you do not find out who killed the person until the end

clue: an object or piece of information that helps someone solve a crime or mystery

detective: a police officer whose job is to discover information about crimes and catch criminals

hunch: if you have a hunch that something is true or will happen, you feel that it is true or will happen; guess

lead: a piece of information that may help you to solve a crime or mystery; clue

red herring: a fact or idea that is not important but is introduced to take your attention away from the points that are important

alibi: something that proves that someone was not where a crime happened and therefore could not have done it

witness: someone who sees a crime or an accident and can describe what happened

victim: someone who has been attacked, robbed, or murdered

suspect: someone who is thought to be guilty of a crime

a skeleton in one's closet: an embarrassing or unpleasant secret about something that happened to you in the past

get to the bottom of something: to find out the cause of a problem or situation

rug gets pulled out from under someone: to suddenly take away something that someone was depending on to achieve what they wanted

keep someone guessing: make someone continue guessing about something

sensory overload: a condition of receiving too much information or stimulation via visual or audio sources; overstimulation of one or more senses

IN FOCUS Tehran Times/ Abolfazl Arab-Javadi



Duck and duckling breeding in Varamin, southeast of Tehran, accounts for 70 percent of the country's total production.



ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Smugglers holding 284kg of narcotics arrested

Four smugglers have got caught while trying to trade some 284 kilograms of drugs in Yazd province, Mehr reported on Thursday.

Police force was informed through its sources that some smugglers are intended to trade a substantial amount of drug, Yazd province anti-narcotics police chief said.

Observing the drug dealers, police succeeded in finding their hideout and raiding them while trying to trade the cargo, Mohammad-Hossein Sotudehnia explained.

قاچاقچیان با ۲۸۴ کیلو موادمخدر دستگیر شدند

به گزارش روز پنجشنبه ی خبرگزاری مهر چهار نفر از سوداگران مرگ حین مبادله ۲۸۴ کیلو موادمخدر در استان یزد دستگیر شدند.

رئیس پلیس مبارزه با مواد مخدر استان یزد، گفت: ماموران پلیس با انجام کار اطلاعاتی از خبری پیرامون اینکه قاچاقچیان قصد جابجایی و مبادله یک محموله سنگین موادمخدر را دارند مطلع شدند.

محمدحسین ستوده نیا توضیح داد: ماموران ضمن رصد فعالیت سوداگران مرگ مخفیگاه آنها را شناسایی و هنگامی که قاچاقچیان قصد مبادله محموله مواد را داشتند آنها را دستگیر کردند.

ENGLISH PROVERB

Let the chips fall where they may

Explanation: let something happen regardless of the consequences and no matter what happens
For example: I'm going to tell Ellen the truth about her husband, let the chips fall where they may.

PHRASAL VERB

Back out

Meaning: to fail or to decide not to do something that you had promised to do
For example: After you've signed the contract, it will be impossible to back out.

ENGLISH IDIOM

All brawn and no brain

Explanation: someone who is physically very strong but not very intelligent is said to be all brawn and no brain.
For example: He's an impressive player to watch, but he's all brawn and no brain.



Without earth no birth!

Turkey has launched separate artillery strikes on Kurdish and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group positions in northern Syria.

The Turkish army shelled on Monday ISIL targets near the border town of Jarablus, as well as Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG/Yekîneyên Parastina Gel) positions north of the nearby city of Manbij.

The YPG targets were hit 20 times, while the cross-border attack on ISIL was still ongoing, a Turkish official told the Reuters news agency.

The attacks inside Syria followed Ankara's vow to push ISIL, from its border with Syria.

Ankara has also spoken out against the advance of the United States-backed Syrian-Kurdish YPG fighters, seeing them as an extension of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK/Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê), which has been fighting for Kurdish autonomy in southeastern Turkey since the 1980s.

The YPG, or the People's Protection Units, currently controls swaths of territory along the northeastern border with Turkey - from the towns of Hasaka to Afrin - while its political wing, the Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD/Partiya Yekîtiya Demokrat), claims an autonomous region now

Turkish military strikes YPG and ISIL targets in Syria

U.S., EU consider YPG as one of their most effective allies in ISIL fight



called Rojava.

The Kurdish group makes up a significant portion of the U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), a Kurdish and

Arab alliance fighting ISIL in Syria. The U.S. and European Union consider the YPG as one of their most effective allies in the fight against ISIL.

(Source: agencies)

Earlier this month, YPG forces backed by air raids from a U.S.-led anti-ISIL coalition, ousted ISIL terrorists from Manbij.

But Turkey views the Kurdish presence in northern Syria as an unacceptable "red line" and wants the Free Syrian Army (FSA), another opposition group, to take over areas once controlled by ISIL in the border regions.

On Sunday, it was reported that the FSA was planning to attack the ISIL-controlled region of Jarablus from inside Turkey to prevent any Kurdish efforts to control the area.

A rebel official, who declined to be identified, told Reuters that hundreds of FSA and opposition fighters were expected to launch an assault on Jarablus from inside Turkey in the next few days.

On Monday, a Turkish official also told Reuters that "the fundamental aim in the latest operation [of the strikes on Jarablus and Manbij] is to open a corridor for moderate rebels".

Syria's complex, multi-sided war has created a patchwork of areas across the country controlled by the government, rebels, Kurdish forces or ISIL.

Turkey also shelled YPG positions in northern Syria in February, demanding that the group withdraw from areas it had captured.

Top diplomats from Japan, China, S. Korea start meeting



Foreign ministers of Japan, China and South Korea have kicked off a meeting in the Japanese capital to discuss their commonalities and differences amid boiling territorial disputes and problems with North Korea.

The meeting started on Tuesday at a Tokyo hotel as Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, China's Wang Yi and South Korea's Yun Byung-se met for dinner.

The three, who are expected to start formal talks on Wednesday, shook hands and smiled for cameras before their meal but did not talk to the media. Japanese officials described the meeting as "extremely important," with Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga saying the three countries that play major roles in the region can use the meeting to "exchange opinions frankly."

Tensions between Japan and China spiked this month over a long-running dispute on uninhabited islets called the Senkaku in Japan and the Diaoyu in China in the East China Sea.

An unnamed Japanese Foreign Ministry official said Tokyo will use the meeting to clearly convey its message about the disputed islands.

"We will deliver Japan's thinking directly and clearly ... It is important for us to send our message firmly," said the official.

Tokyo also has periodic tensions with Seoul over the legacy of Japan's wartime aggression, while China has repeatedly criticized a plan by South Korea for the deployment of a United States anti-missile system.

China is expected to raise the issue of U.S. Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system, which South Korea plans to deploy in the face of alleged threat from North Korea.

Japan and South Korea will also press Beijing on the hot issue of North Korea's missile and nuclear development. The two believe that China can do more by piling up economic pressure on Pyongyang to prevent it from further provocations.

The meeting is the first since March last year and the top diplomats are expected to prepare the ground for a summit later this year. Leaders of the three countries met in South Korea in November last year.

(Source: agencies)

Bahrain bars rights activist from leaving country



Bahraini authorities have prevented a human rights activist from traveling abroad in an attempt to keep the international community in the dark about its human rights record.

Enas Oun, who is the head of the Monitoring and Documentation Department at the Bahrain Center for Human Rights (BCHR), was stopped at the Bahrain International Airport on Monday morning as she was on her way to a human rights workshop in Tunisia, Arabic-language Lu-alua television network reported.

Authorities told her that she could not travel abroad based on an order issued by the so-called Criminal Investigation Department the previous day.

Bahrain has been heavily cracking down on political dissent for almost five and a half years.

On August 18, Bahraini officials handed down a three-year prison sentence to human rights activist Ghada Jamshir.

Last month, Bahraini officials prevented more than 16 human rights activists from attending the 32nd session of the Human Rights Council, which took place in the Swiss city of Geneva from June 13 to July 8.

Separately, a Bahraini court sentenced

Shia Muslim eulogist Abdullah Sabah on charges of "holding unlawful gatherings" in the northwestern village of Diraz, situated about 12 kilometers (seven miles) west of the capital, Manama.

Bahraini authorities have either arrested or summoned more than a dozen Shia clerics over the past few weeks.

The Manama regime has recently banned congregational on Friday prayers in the country as well.

Bahraini Shia clerics have condemned the ban as a part of "systematic suppression of Bahraini Shia Muslims."

Anti-regime protesters have staged numerous demonstrations in Bahrain on an almost daily basis since February 14, 2011, calling on the House of Khalifah regime to relinquish power.

Troops from the House of Saud regime and the United Arab Emirates — themselves repressive Arab regimes — were deployed to the country in March that year to assist the Manama government in its crackdown on peaceful and pro-democracy rallies.

Scores of people have been killed and hundreds of others injured or arrested in Manama's crackdown on the anti-regime activists. (Source: Press TV)

Trump more psychopathic than Hitler, Oxford study finds

The United States presidential hopeful Donald Trump has more psychopathic traits than Adolf Hitler, a researcher at Oxford University has found.

Psychologist Dr. Kevin Dutton has ranked the psychopathic traits of the Republican candidate and various historical figures using a standard psychometric tool — the Psychopathic Personality Inventory — Revised (PPI-R).

Experts suggested likely scores against a series of questions. Trump scored 171, two points more than Hitler.

Saddam Hussein topped the list, scoring 189, while Democratic presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton received a score of 152, putting her in the top 20 percent.

Margaret Thatcher scored 136 points, and Elizabeth I was put at 130.

Dutton says the test scores people on eight traits that contribute to a psychopathic character. They are fearlessness, cold-heartedness, egocentricity, ruthlessness, self-confidence, charisma, dishonesty and deficits in empathy and conscience.

"Some of those traits, such as fearlessness or stress



immunity, can be positive. Others, such as blame externalization or being unconcerned about the future, are more likely to be negative. One, cold-heartedness, can contribute to good and bad leadership," Dutton told the Telegraph.

"Both great and terrible leaders score higher than the

general population for psychopathic traits, but it is the mix of those traits that determines success.

"For example, someone who scores highly for being influential, fearless and cold hearted could be a decisive leader who can make dispassionate decisions. If those traits are accompanied by a high score on blaming others, they might be a genocidal demagogue," he said.

Trump outstripped Hitler on factors such as social influence and fearlessness dominance, while the Nazi dictator scored higher on the Machiavellian egocentricity and cold-heartedness.

While ranking lower than her rival overall, Clinton far exceeded Roman emperor Nero on traits such as "Machiavellian egocentricity."

"It is interesting that these scores reflect both the praise and the criticism that Trump and Clinton receive. In the end, while both score relatively highly, it will be up to voters to decide on whether their mix of positive and negative traits should send them to the Oval Office." (Source: RT)

Bangkok blast trial begins with many suspects at large

Two Chinese nationals have gone on trial for their alleged roles in a deadly bombing at a Bangkok shrine one year ago, but more than a dozen suspects allegedly involved in the incident remain at large.

The trial, which started on Tuesday at a military court in Bangkok, has been adjourned to September 15 and is expected to last more than a year.

It is taking place just days after a wave of unexplained explosions hit Thailand's resort areas, killing at least four people and wounding 35 others, including tour-

ists. The August 2015 bombing - the worst assault of its kind in Thailand's recent history - killed 20 people and wounded more than 100 others. The motive of the attack remains unclear.

The attack, which was carried out with a small but powerful bomb packed with ball bearings, targeted the Erawan shrine in the heart of Bangkok's shopping district.

The Hindu shrine is popular among ethnic Chinese visitors, who made up a majority of the dead with five from Ma-

laysia, five from China and two from Hong Kong.

Members of China's Muslim minority Uighur population, Yusuf Mieraili and Bilal Mohammed, have been charged with involvement.

Analysts have largely coalesced around the theory that the shrine bombing was in revenge for the Thai military government's forcible return of 109 Uighurs to China weeks earlier.

Thai authorities insist the bombing was carried out by a people-smuggling gang angered by

policing successes against human trafficking.

The Uighur minority say they face cultural and religious repression in their homeland of Xinjiang in northwest China, and many are believed to have fled the region in recent years.

The military government's deportations led to international condemnation and violent protests outside Thailand's diplomatic missions in Turkey, which has given refuge to many of the Turkic-speaking group. (Source: agencies)

NEWS

France, Germany press for EU encryption law after attacks

France and Germany said they want to compel operators of mobile messaging services to allow access to encrypted content to aid terrorism investigations, joining forces after a series of deadly attacks in both countries.

French intelligence services, on high alert since attackers killed scores of civilians in Paris in November and in Nice in July, are struggling to intercept messages from militants.

Many of the groups now favor encrypted messaging services over mainstream social media, with the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group a big user of such apps, investigators in several countries have said.

French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve said the European Commission should draft a law obliging operators to cooperate in judicial investigations into tracking down terrorists.

Cazeneuve singled out the app operated by Telegram, which he said did not cooperate with governments, adding that legislation should target both EU and non-EU companies. A spokesman for Telegram did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Telegram, founded by Russian Pavel Durov in 2013 and incorporated in several jurisdictions, promotes itself as ultra-secure because it encrypts all data from the start of transmission to the finish.

A number of other services, including Facebook Inc's (FB.O) WhatsApp, say they have similar capabilities.

Cazeneuve's initiative, which he hinted at earlier this month, has come under fire from privacy and digital experts, who warned against opening "backdoors" that would let governments read content.

France and Germany - where nerves are equally raw following a wave of attacks on civilians this summer, including two claimed by ISIL - are also seeking closer links between the continent's databases of personal information.

That would cover data on visas, potential militant threats within the border-free Schengen area, refugees and airline passengers, German Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere said.

(Source: Reuters)

Turkey recalls its ambassador from Vienna after rows

Ankara has recalled its ambassador to Vienna, Mehmet Hasan Gogus, "for consultations and to revise relations," Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said.

Cavusoglu said the move came after the Austrian authorities did not allow Turkish citizens to hold anti-coup demonstrations in the country but allowed a march in favor of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK/Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê) on Aug. 21.

Cavusoglu said Ankara had complained to Austria over "trying to give us freedom of assembly lessons, while at the same time not allowing even a peaceful march [in support of Turkish democracy]."

"We saw that they gave permission to demonstrate in Vienna to the PKK and its supporters. We cannot remain insensitive to this attitude supporting terrorism," he said.

Tensions between Austria - home to around 300,000 people of Turkish origin - and Turkey were raised last month when the mayor of Wiener Neustadt, around 50 kilometers south of Vienna, called for the removal of Turkish flags hung by residents celebrating the defeat of the July 15 coup attempt.

Austrian Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz had also spoken out against "importing political conflict to Austria" following demonstrations in support of Turkish democracy.

Cavusoglu accused Austria of being "against some terror organizations" while "supporting terror organizations attacking Turkey."

He did not give further details on the steps to be taken, but warned: "We will approach them in the way they approach us."

Just like Turkey, the European Union and United States also designate the PKK as a terrorist organization.

On Aug. 3, Austrian Chancellor Christian Kern described accession talks with Turkey as a "diplomatic fiction" and said he wanted EU leaders to reconsider their approach with regard to Ankara. Later, Kern criticized anti-coup protests by Turks in Austria and called them "radical."

Cavusoglu had at the time slammed the Austrian chancellor's remarks, describing Austria as the "capital of radical racism." (Source: Hurriyet)

Kerry says hopes talks with Russia on Syria 'nearing the end'

The United States Secretary of State John Kerry said talks between the United States and Russia on military cooperation in the fight against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group in Syria were nearing an end, with technical teams meeting this week to discuss details.

"We are in indeed engaged currently in ongoing conversations, and it is my hope that we are reaching the end of those discussions one way or another," Kerry told a news conference during a visit to Kenya.

"In the next days our team will meet this week, and depending on where those discussions go, it is very possible, very likely, that Foreign Minister (Sergei) Lavrov and I would meet," he said.

"But that decision has to be made on the basis of where we are in the next couple of days."

Kerry said the "Syrian travesty" had gone on for too long and it was imperative that powers supporting the Syrian regime, - Russia and Iran - and those backing the opposition - the United States and its Middle East partners - came together to end the fighting.

Kerry's proposal would have Washington and Moscow share intelligence to coordinate air strikes against the al-Qaeda-affiliated al-Nusra Front and prohibit the Syrian air force from attacking moderate rebel groups. (Source: Reuters)

PARALYMPICS

Russia fail in appeal to overturn ban on athletes at Rio Paralympics

Russia has failed in an appeal against its exclusion from the Rio Paralympic Games.

The Russian Paralympic Committee (RPC) challenged its suspension, which was imposed by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) on August 7 in the wake of a damning report into the country's state-run doping programme.



However, the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) found that the decision was justified, meaning Russia will not be represented in the upcoming Games at Rio 2016.

CAS said in a statement: 'The Court of Arbitration for Sport has dismissed the appeal filed by the Russian Paralympic Committee against the decision rendered by governing board of the International Paralympic Committee on 7 August 2016.'

'As a consequence, the IPC decision is confirmed.' IPC president Sir Philip Craven had described a 'medals over morals mentality that disgusts me' when he initially announced that the entire Russian team would be banned from the Paralympics, which runs from September 7-18.

'The complete corruption of the anti-doping system is contrary to the rules and strikes at the very heart of the spirit of Paralympic sport,' Craven added at the time. 'It shows a blatant disregard for the health and well-being of athletes and, quite simply, has no place in Paralympic sport.'

'Their thirst for glory at all costs has severely damaged the integrity and image of all sports, and has certainly resulted in a devastating outcome for the Russian Paralympic Committee and Para athletes.'

CAS upheld the IPC's blanket ban, ruling that the RPC had failed to provide any evidence which challenged the facts of the initial decision.

The CAS statement continued: 'Following revelations related to the doping system in Russia, the IPC governing board suspended the RPC from IPC membership due to its alleged inability to fulfil its responsibilities and obligations to comply with the IPC anti-doping code and the world anti-doping code.'

'The CAS panel in charge of this matter found that the IPC did not violate any procedural rule in dealing with the disciplinary process leading to the RPC's suspension and that the decision to ban the RPC was made in accordance with the IPC rules and was proportionate in the circumstances.'

'The panel also noted that the RPC did not file any evidence contradicting the facts on which the IPC decision was based.'

Craven's International Olympic Committee (IOC) counterpart Thomas Bach decided against such a tough stance, describing it as 'the nuclear option', and Russia were able to send 278 athletes to Brazil for the Olympics after individual federations were left to rule on eligibility.

The Paralympics' later start date also gave the IPC more time than the IOC to digest Richard McLaren's landmark report for the World Anti-Doping Agency.

McLaren was able to reveal even more cases from Paralympic sport than he listed in his preliminary report, and once the IPC had examined the Canadian's evidence, it was able to see that positive drug tests by 11 Russian athletes were covered up by the Moscow anti-doping laboratory at the behest of the Russian ministry of sport between 2012-15.

A further 18 samples were tampered with at the 2014 Winter Paralympics in Sochi, where Russia won almost half of the gold medals on offer.

Craven said McLaren had made it clear that more cases are likely to be unearthed, prompting the IPC to reanalyse every sample from a Russian athlete at the Sochi Games.

(Source: DailyMail)

Dortmund know how to treat Gotze - Ballack

Former Germany international Michael Ballack believes Borussia Dortmund are better placed to handle Mario Gotze than Bayern Munich.

Gotze won two Bundesliga titles and the DFB-Pokal during four years at Dortmund, before departing for fierce rivals Bayern in 2013.

Despite lifting three more league titles and two Pokals during his stay at Allianz Arena, Gotze struggled for regular playing time under Pep Guardiola and his return to Dortmund was confirmed earlier in the transfer window.

And Ballack, who spent four years at Bayern between 2002 and 2006, winning three successive Bundesligas, feels Dortmund are more likely to make the most of Gotze's considerable talent.

'I can't judge that move, just like most of us can't. He grew up in Dortmund and he is for sure one of the most gifted players we have at the moment,' Ballack told Omnisport.

'There are a few players like him who know what to do in every situation, just like he does. If he is able to perform on his highest level there are few others who are able to always make the right move like he does. But he has to feel good and he has to bring it.'

'That he was not able to do so in the recent past, neither at Bayern nor the national team, is probably for many different reasons.'

'Maybe it was trust, there were a lot of speculations, but I think Dortmund knows best how to treat him. Three years have passed, he has developed, his personality changed.'

'But I think Dortmund knows how to handle the situation. If it is the best option for him to already return to Dortmund, I don't know. But he made the step and we have to accept that.'

'It is a top club, and he has to give us all the remaining answers on the pitch.'

(Source: Goal)

Rio 2016: The greatest show on Earth in stats

The flame went out on the 2016 Olympics in Rio on Sunday, bringing to an end 16 remarkable days of sporting action.

More than 10,000 athletes, representing 207 nations, competed in 31 sports in Brazil, with 306 sets of medals awarded over the course of the Games.

Records were broken, history was made, legends confirmed and superstars born.

BBC Sport looks at the key stats to emerge from the event:

USA retain top spot

For the second successive Games, and the 17th time overall, the United States topped the medal table with 43 golds.

The nation's overall medal total of 116 is their highest since 1984, when they claimed 174 on home turf in Los Angeles.

The US were dominant in athletics, winning 31 medals (13 of which were gold) - 20 more than second-placed Jamaica, who won six golds.

The nation also ruled in the pool, winning 33 of the 104 medals awarded, which is 32%. Of these medals, 16 were gold. Their nearest rivals, Australia, won 10 swimming medals (three gold).

The USA's Rio tally helped them achieve two notable historical milestones as they passed 1,000 golds and 2,500 Olympic medals overall. They have extended their sizable lead at the top of the all-time Olympic medal table.

Three nations won their first ever Olympic medal - Fiji (in the first ever Olympic men's rugby sevens), Jordan (Ahmad Abughaush in the men's -68kg taekwondo) and debutants Kosovo (Majlinda Kelmendi in the women's -52kg judo).

US trio top the medal charts

The USA also dominated the podium for multiple-medal winning athletes as Michael Phelps once again shone and fellow swimmer Katie Ledecky and gymnast Simone Biles enhanced their global reputation.

In his fifth Games, Phelps took his personal medal tally to 28 (23 golds, three silvers and two bronzes) courtesy of another stunning display in the pool.

Ledecky, 19, followed up her solitary gold in London in 2012 with four more, along with a silver, as she dominated the women's freestyle events.

In her Olympic debut, 19-year-old Biles added to her remarkable international medal haul with four golds and a bronze.

Lightning Bolt strikes again

In his final Games, Jamaica's Usain Bolt confirmed his status as the greatest sprinter of all time, winning three more golds to achieve an unprecedented Olympic 'triple triple' in the 100m, 200m and 4x100m relay.

Bolt's haul of nine golds is the joint highest among Olympic athletics, putting him equal with USA sprinter and long jump-



City of Los Angeles declares Aug. 24 as 'Kobe Bryant Day'

Los Angeles city leaders have declared this Wednesday as "Kobe Bryant Day," honoring the Los Angeles Lakers icon who played 20 seasons in purple and gold before retiring in April.

The honor, which was announced in a statement Monday, falls on a day that commemorates the two jersey numbers that Bryant wore during his Lakers career: 8 and 24.

Bryant, who won five championships among numerous other accolades, also will be honored for philanthropy work.

"Among his astonishing list of accomplishments, Kobe Bryant's 20-year career with the Los Angeles Lakers ranks him No. 1 all-time for NBA players who played for a single franchise, and 'Kobe Bryant Day' is the City of Los Angeles' way of thanking him for his single-minded dedication to excellence, the fans and the entire City and



region of Los Angeles," L.A. City Councilman Jos Huizar said in a statement.

"For 20 years, we were all the beneficiaries of Kobe's incredible talent and legendary work ethic, and on 8-24 we'll gather to say, 'Thank you, Mamba!'"

Bryant will be honored at Los Angeles City Hall.

(Source: ABC)

Mourinho reveals he turned down offers from Italy and Spain before joining United

Jose Mourinho has revealed that he rejected job opportunities in Spain and Italy to stay in the Premier League and take charge of Manchester United.

The Portuguese believes the competitive nature of English football is more demanding and exciting than leagues where a few clubs are dominant.

Mourinho told Gazetta Sport 'I had the opportunity to go to Italy or Spain as I had in the past but the Premier League is special.'

'In some countries, the big clubs always want to be the best and leave the others behind, getting smaller.'

'In England, the opposite occurs. Here, they want all of the clubs in the league to be competitive.'

Mourinho has started impressively as Manchester United boss, securing two wins in the Premier League in his first two matches.

Although he targets a victory every game, he also recognises that is an unre-



alistic expectation.

'Sometimes, I'm a little stupid in setting goals, the dumbest thing of all is perhaps wanting to win every game and every competition because it is impossible.'

'What we are going to do is start by playing to win each time we are on the field and in the end, we will see where that takes us.'

(Source: DailyMail)

Ryan Lochte: Speedo and Ralph Lauren among four to end sponsorship

Four sponsors have dropped disgraced US Olympic swimmer Ryan Lochte, including swimwear manufacturer Speedo and fashion label Ralph Lauren.

They were followed by announcements from skin care firm Syneron-Candela and Japanese mattress maker Airweave.

It comes after Lochte lied about being robbed at gunpoint by a policeman after a night out during the Rio Olympics.

Lochte, a 12-time Olympic medalist, has earned millions of dollars through endorsements.

Speedo, the biggest sponsor of the four, said: "We cannot condone behaviour that is counter to the values this brand has long stood for."

Lochte, aged 32, said he respected Speedo's decision, and thanked the company.

"I am grateful for the opportunities that our partnership has afforded me over the years," he said.

Speaking on US talk show Today, Lochte said: "I made a mistake and I definitely learned from this. They put on a great Games... and my immature, intoxicated behaviour tarnished that a little."

Ralph Lauren, which has removed some of Lochte's images from its website, said its sponsorship of the swimmer had

been only for the Rio Olympics and would not be renewed.

Ralph Lauren and Airweave both stressed that they would continue their support of the US Olympic and Paralympic teams.

Syneron-Candela said: "We hold our employees to high standards, and we expect the same of our business partners."

Speedo said it would donate a \$50,000 portion of Lochte's sponsorship fee to the charity Save The Children's Brazilian operation.

The value of Lochte's Speedo sponsorship has not been disclosed. The contract reportedly expires this year after 10 years.

The US business magazine Forbes calculated that in the year of the 2012 London Olympics, Lochte earned about \$2m in sponsorships from companies such as Gillette, Nissan, AT&T and Gatorade.

Lochte's performance at Rio did not reach the heights of his London triumph, but Forbes estimated his endorsements would still have been between \$1m-\$2m.

Disdain

The saga started when Lochte and three team-mates returned to the Olympic village after a late night out in Rio.

They tried, unsuccessfully, to use the locked toilet at a

garage and urinated outside instead.

After first claiming that he and his three team-mates had been robbed by bogus policemen, Lochte backtracked and admitted he had, while still drunk, "left details out" and "over-exaggerated some parts of the story".

Despite the evidence against him, including CCTV footage, he has however denied that he actually lied in his initial account to Brazilian police.

Lochte's behaviour has been met with disdain in the US and he has been widely pilloried in the US media.

On 19 August the New York Post carried a front-page headline describing him as the "Ugly American", along with the slogan "Liar, Liar, Speedo on fire".

Lochte is one of the most successful swimmers in history, with 12 Olympic medals, and he once had his own reality television show in the US.

In Rio, he swam in two events, winning a gold medal in the 4x200m freestyle relay along with team-mate Jack Conger.

"We appreciate his many achievements and hope he moves forward and learns from this experience," Speedo said of Lochte.

(Source: BBC)

Leader thanks Iran's Olympic squad

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei welcomed Iranian athletes and coaches returning home from the Rio 2016 Olympic Games, appreciating their efforts to bring joy to the Iranian nation.

In a message released on Tuesday, the Leader praised all members of the Iranian Olympic delegation, including sportswomen who competed in the games while wearing Hijab.

Ayatollah Khamenei's message reads:

In the Name of God

To the sports delegation returning from the Olympics: to the champions who brought joy to the nation by winning medals; to the heroes who were deprived of what they deserved due to unfair refereeing; to the athletes whose lack of success makes their efforts and endeavors no less valuable; to the sportswomen who demonstrated to everyone the proud symbol of Iranian women's attire; to the brave lady who shone at the forefront of the (Iranian Olympic) squad in full Hijab; and to the coaches and the country's veteran athletes; welcome back and I thank you all. We appreciate you.

Seyed Ali Khamenei

Shahrivar 2, 1395

(August 23, 2016)

Iran finished 25th in Rio 2016 Olympics with 8 medals (three gold, one silver and four bronze).

(Source: Tasnim)



Shahram Mahmoudi satisfied with Iran volleyball performance at Olympics

SPORTS Iranian opposite hitter Shahram Mahmoudi believes that Iran volleyball team has done a good job finishing in fifth place in the Olympic Games since they experienced the competition for the first time.

Iran advanced to the quarters as the fourth team but failed to book a place in the semis, suffering a 3-0 defeat against Italy.

"I think we have to be happy because of the results we earned in the Olympics. A lot of people think maybe I want to make excuse but I have to say Olympics was different from all previous competitions we took part," he said.

"We lost to Italy in quarter-final since they are more experienced than we are. We could not defeat them and we should accept reality as it is," he added.

Hitting back at critics, Mahmoudi said, "I think Iran national volleyball team did a good job in the Olympics. Many of the current players will likely withdraw from the national duty and the young players replace them."

"We are satisfied with the way we played at Olympics and did our best to make Iranian people happy," Mahmoudi concluded.

The opposite hitter had already said he will retire from the national duty after the Olympics.



AFC President praises Iranian Rio 2016 match officials

Shaikh Salman Bin Ibrahim Al Khalifa, the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) President, has praised the Asian match officials at the Rio Olympic Games 2016 and, in particular, referee Alireza Faghani and his assistants Reza Sokhandan and Mohammadreza Mansouri - from the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Faghani made history by becoming the first Asian referee to be in charge of the men's Olympic football final - in which the hosts Brazil beat Germany in a penalty shoot-out. Faghani was also the referee of last year's FIFA Club World Cup final.

Shaikh Salman has personally written to Faghani and his colleagues from the Islamic Republic of Iran to congratulate them on their historic achievement at the Rio Olympics. "Your appointment was the culmination of years of hard work and dedication to your career. It was well deserved and you represented Asia wonderfully well," the AFC President wrote.

Faghani's appointment to the final capped an excellent



tournament for Asian match officials in which DPR Korea referee Ri Hyang-ok was in control of the women's semi-final between Canada and Germany. Ri was joined in the semi-final by assistant referees, compatriot Hong Kum-nyo and Australian Allyson Flynn.

Shaikh Salman said: "In the AFC's Vision and Mission there was a clear objective for Asia to improve performances on the world stage. This applied not only to players and teams but also referees and it is a great testimony to the refereeing standards on the continent that Alireza Faghani was appointed to the final.

"I am also delighted for Ri Hyang-ok and they have now set the benchmark for all our officials and will be an inspiration for both men and women match officials in the years to come.

"I am sure one day that we will have an Asian referee in a FIFA World Cup final and that will be a tribute to the legacy of these referees and also to all those working so hard to raise the standards of match officials.

"On behalf of the AFC, I congratulate all those officials who worked so hard to reach the Olympic Games and, again, I praise them for the way that they have represented their colleagues in Asia in such an outstanding manner."

(Source: AFC)

Ajax's Jasper Cillessen can fight to be Barcelona No. 1 - Ronald de Boer



Ronald de Boer says Ajax goalkeeper Jasper Cillessen can compete with Marc-Andre ter Stegen for a starting place at Barcelona if the Netherlands international completes a move to the Camp Nou.

El Mundo Deportivo has reported that, with the Catalan giants set to allow Claudio Bravo to join Manchester City, 27-year-old Cillessen will arrive in Barcelona by Friday to sign a five-year contract and provide competition for ter Stegen.

Former Ajax and Barcelona midfielder De Boer, now working as assistant manager for the Dutch club's reserve side, told AS: "Cillessen is not a newcomer. He has been playing for some time at the top level and I'm certain he will battle hard with ter Stegen to play."

Ronald's twin brother Frank de Boer, now at Inter Milan, started Cillessen in 33 Eredivisie games at Ajax last season.

"My brother would say that he [Cillessen] is quiet, very hard working and doesn't

generate problems," De Boer said. "He thought he was the whole package and that he can be a goalkeeper for many years.

"I'm convinced my brother thinks that Barca are doing the right thing by signing him."

Cillessen arrived to the Dutch giants five years ago and is under contract with Ajax for another two seasons, but De Boer says Barca's offer has come at the right time.

"He will learn a lot at Barcelona and will be able to continue to develop," he said. "At 27, he is at an age where goalkeepers must showcase all that they have learned up to now.

"I like the way he reacts on the pitch. He is solid and convincing. He is good with his feet, something which is complicated."

Cillessen is expected to start in Ajax's Champions League qualifier against FC Rostov on Wednesday.

(Source: ESPN)

United ready to accept £2million transfer fee for unwanted Schweinsteiger



Manchester United are willing to accept just £2million in order to part with Bastian Schweinsteiger.

The German midfielder, 32, has no future at Old Trafford under Jose Mourinho.

Schweinsteiger has been told he can depart just a year after being taken to the club by former boss Louis van Gaal in a £7million deal.

The ex-Bayern Munich star has been training with the kids at United's Carrington training ground, but will not even play reserve team football, as Mourinho doesn't want him blocking the development of the club's Under-23 players.

Now United are ready to cut their losses on Schweinsteiger.

The club are ready to accept a nominal fee reports Bild, in a bid to get his £190,000-a-week wages off their pay roll and would have to pay off the German as well, given that he hasn't asked for a transfer.

Schweinsteiger's huge salary is a stum-

bling block for both European and MLS clubs, particularly given his injury problems in recent years and the perception that his powers have greatly diminished.

However, Italian champions Juventus continue to be mooted as a potential destination - if they miss out on chief transfer target Blaise Matuidi. Juve and United have been in almost constant contact during the summer, having negotiated Paul Pogba's world record £89million move to Old Trafford.

Celtic boss Brendan Rodgers this week played down suggestions that he could make a move for the World Cup winner.

After being reminded of a number of experienced players - including Schweinsteiger - had been linked with a move to Parkhead, Rodgers declared: "I can get you a marquee signing but they've got to be able to press and they've got to be able to run."

(Source: Mirror)

FOOTBALL

Celtic fans raise more than £100,000 for Palestinian charities after flag protest

Celtic fans have raised more than £100,000 for Palestinian charities in an attempt to match an impending Uefa fine for displaying Palestinian flags at a match against an Israeli team.

European football's governing body began disciplinary proceedings against the Glasgow club last week after a number of fans displayed the flags during their 5-2 home victory against Hapoel Be'er Sheva in a Champions League qualifier.

The return leg is due to be played in Israel on Tuesday night.

The Green Brigade group of supporters set up an appeal on the gofundme website on Sunday to match the anticipated fine, and donations passed £80,000 on Tuesday morning.

The fans are raising money for Medical Aid Palestine, which delivers health and medical care to those "worst affected by conflict, occupation and displacement", and the Lajee Centre, a cultural and sports project for children in Aida refugee camp, in Bethlehem.

The appeal read: "At the Champions League match with Hapoel Be'er Sheva on 17 August 2016, the Green Brigade and fans throughout Celtic Park flew the flag for Palestine. This act of solidarity has earned Celtic respect and acclaim throughout the world. It has also attracted a disciplinary charge from Uefa, which deems the Palestinian flag to be an 'illicit banner'."

"In response to this petty and politically partisan act by European football's governing body, we are determined to make a positive contribution to the game and today launch a campaign to #matchthefineforpalestine."

The statement said the money raised would help buy football kit and equipment to enable the refugee camp to have a team, which would be called Aida Celtic, in the Bethlehem youth league.

Celtic face their ninth Uefa punishment for supporter behaviour in five years when the case is heard on 22 September. Two years ago the club was fined more than £15,000 after a Palestinian flag was displayed at a Champions League qualifier against KR Reykjavik.

Uefa rules forbid the use of "gestures, words, objects or any other means to transmit any message that is not fit for a sports event, particularly messages that are of a political, ideological, religious, offensive or provocative nature".

(Source: Guardian)

Rostov v Ajax background

Rostov have an away goal in their favour as they host Ajax with the score at 1-1 following the first leg of their UEFA Champions League play-off tie in Amsterdam.

UEFA Champions League debutants Rostov and four-time European Cup winners Ajax go head-to-head in the return leg of their play-off with the tie finely poised at 1-1.

Previous meetings

- The first leg in the Netherlands was Rostov's first competitive encounter with Dutch opponents.

- In that game, Davy Klaassen's 38th-minute penalty cancelled out Christian Noboa's opener for Rostov as the sides drew 1-1.

- Prior to the first leg, Ajax had lost all four of their matches against Russian teams. They went down 3-1 at home and 1-0 away to Spartak Moskva in a 1997/98 UEFA Cup quarter-final and succumbed 1-0 in Amsterdam and 3-0 in Moscow to the same club in a 2010/11 UEFA Europa League round of 16 tie.

Match background

- Ajax eliminated PAOK 3-2 on aggregate to reach the play-offs, Klaassen's 88th-minute strike in the second leg in Greece proving decisive.

- Ajax knocked out Dynamo Kyiv in their only previous UEFA Champions League play-off tie, in 2010/11.

- Rostov accounted for seasoned European contenders Anderlecht in the third qualifying round, triumphing 4-2 on aggregate.

- This is Rostov's first UEFA Champions League campaign; they reached the UEFA Europa League play-offs last season, losing 2-0 on aggregate to Trabzonspor.

Team and coach links

- Ajax defender Heiko Westermann played twice for Germany against Russia in 2010 FIFA World Cup qualifying; his team won 2-1 at home and 1-0 in Moscow.

- In February 2012, Ajax's Lasse Schöne played for Denmark in a 2-0 friendly loss to Russia.

- Ajax's Jasper Cillessen and Rostov's Noboa met in May 2014, when the Netherlands drew 1-1 in a friendly against Ecuador.

Coach profiles

- Peter Bosz took charge of Ajax this summer following a spell in Israel with Maccabi Tel-Aviv. Capped eight times by the Netherlands, the midfielder spent the best years of his career with Ajax's rivals Feyenoord. He coached a number of Dutch clubs, turning heads with a major overhaul of Vitesse from June 2013 to January 2016.

- Dimitri Kirichenko is in caretaker command at Rostov following the departure of his former coach Kurban Berdiyev, who the 39-year-old served as assistant from 2014 to 2016. Former Rostov forward Kirichenko - capped on 12 occasions by Russia - helped Berdiyev lead the southern club to a second-place league finish last season.

(Source: UEFA)





Poem of the day

Of what use will be a dish of roses to thee?
Take a leaf from my rose-garden.
A flower endures but five or six days
But this rose-garden is always delightful.

Sadi

Prayer Times

Noon:13:07 Evening: 20:01 Dawn: 5:02 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:31 (tomorrow)

NEWS

“Beetroot in Tehran” to go on screen in Vienna

T A R T TEHRAN — “Rote Ruben in Teheran” (Beetroot in Tehran), a documentary by the Vienna-based Iranian filmmaker and psychiatrist Houchang Allahyar, will go on screen at the Studio am Spittelberg in Vienna on September 2.



“Beetroot in Tehran” is about a father and son who go on a journey to Iran. For the father it is a return after more than 40 years, for the son, who grew up in Austria, it is a new experience.

Father and son react in very different ways to Iranian society, traditions and family. They speak especially to female Iranian actors and filmmakers, and ask about their role in Iranian society.

While everything is new for the son, the father is confronted with memories of his past in Iran.

“Das Persische Krokodil” (The Persian Crocodile) and “Der Letzte Tanz” (The Last Dance) are among Allahyar’s other productions.

Vienna, Tehran book fairs to exchange stands

C U L T U R E TEHRAN — The Vienna International Book Fair -- Buch Wien and the Tehran International Book Fair will exchange stands.



“This is the first time a European country dedicates a pavilion to an Islamic country,” Iran’s Cultural Attaché in Vienna Mohammadreza Vasfi said in a press release published on Tuesday.

Buch Wien will take place at Messezentrum Wien (Vienna Exhibition Center) from November 9 to 13.

The Tehran International Book Fair is organized during May every year.

Busan festival to hold Abbas Kiarostami retrospective

T A R T TEHRAN — A retrospective of works by Iranian filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami will be held at the forthcoming Busan International Film Festival (BIFF) running from October 6 to 15.

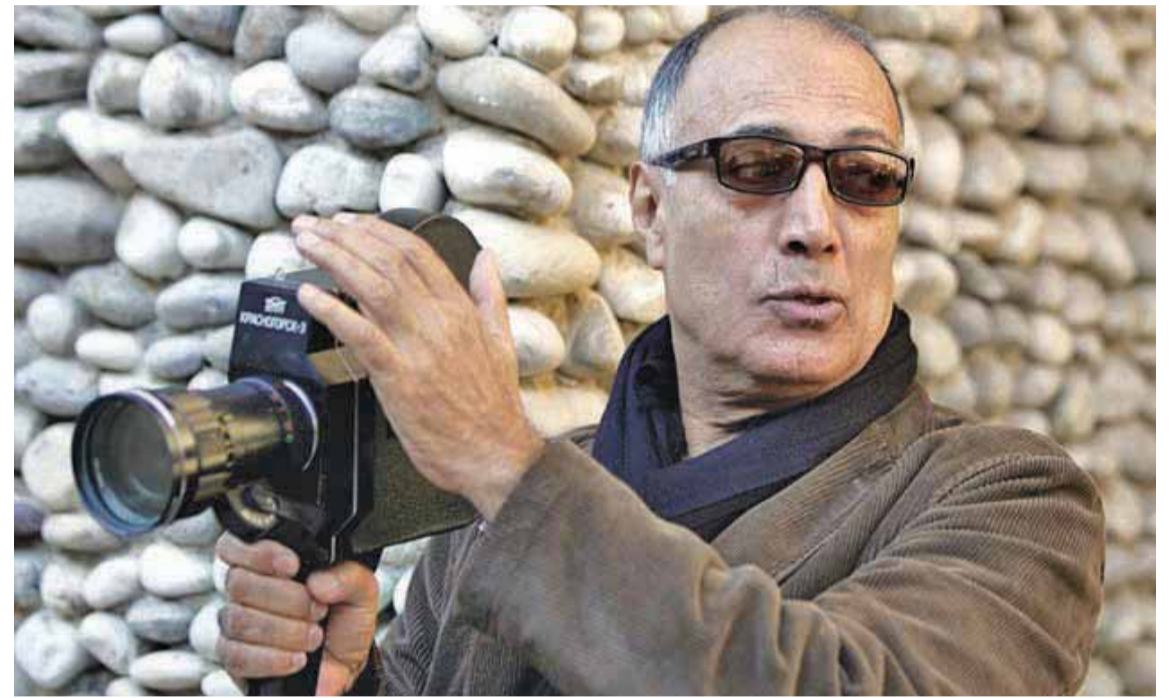
A selection of nine films including “Where Is the Friend’s Home?” (1987), “Life Goes On” (1992) and “Under the Olive Trees” (1994) will be shown during the retrospective.

The retrospective will be accompanied by a forum on his life and works in which his son, Ahmad, will participate along with other Iranian filmmakers attending the festival this year.

The Palme d’Or winning director of “Taste of Cherry”, who passed away on July 4, had a “close relationship” with BIFF, executive programmer Kim Ji-seok told Screen Daily on Monday.

“He came to the festival several times, the first being for our second edition in 1997. He was head of the New Currents jury in 2005 and the dean of the Asian Film Academy in 2010. After we opened the Busan Cinema Center, he came and held a workshop that was open to the general public, Kiarostami’s Film School,” said Kim.

“From the outside, he looked like a solemn philosopher, but actually when you talked with him he was like a warm neighborhood uncle. I remember how much he loved the galbi and bulgogi [two kinds of Korean barbecue] here and sent several gifts over the years including originals of his photographs, a



photograph collection and, for some reason, a cardigan to me,” added Kim.

In addition, Abbas Kiarostami will be named Asian

Filmmaker of the Year at the festival and his son Ahmad will accept the award on his behalf at the BIFF opening ceremony on October 6.

Iranian stage director Yaser Khaseb to hold workshop in Turkey

T A R T TEHRAN — Yaser Khaseb, the director of the Iranian theater troupe Crazy Body, is scheduled to hold an eight-day workshop in Izmir from September 4 to 11.

The workshop entitled “Body: Mold of the Soul” will be organized by Tiyatro Medresesi, an international center for dramatic arts in the Turkish city.

The aim of the workshop is to increase the power, and understanding the activity and capabilities of the actor’s body.

In addition, Khaseb’s troupe is scheduled to perform a play



titled “Mysterious Gift” tonight at MonoFest’16, a monodrama festival organized by Tiyatro Medresesi.

“Mysterious Gift” is the story of birth to death of a human being.

“Kiss the Lovely Face of God” appears in Azerbaijani

C U L T U R E TEHRAN — Renowned Iranian author Mostafa Mastur’s novel “Kiss the Lovely Face of God” has been translated into Azerbaijani.

The book has been published as part of “Luminous Signatures”, an ATV Book series in Azerbaijan.

The book series has been initiated by the Independent Television and Radio Company of Azerbaijan to publish works from contemporary world literature in Azerbaijani.

The book has been translated by Ariz Tarverdiyev, who has previously translated Mastur’s “Bone of a pig, Hands of a Leper”.



“Kiss the Lovely Face of God”, which poses a question about man and his faith in God, has been translated into English, Italian, Russian, Indonesian, Arabic and several other languages.

PICTURE OF THE DAY

© Mehr/Hossein Razaqnejad



Virtuoso string instrumentalist Hossein Alizadeh performs during a ceremony at the Imam Ali (AS) Religious Arts Museum in Tehran on August 22, 2016 to celebrate his 65th birthday. The director of the Art and Cultural Organization of Tehran Municipality, Mahmud Salahi (C), and master calligrapher Gholamhossein Amirkhani are also seen in the photo.

Nazi-looted “Adam” and “Eve” paintings to stay in California

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A judge has ruled in favor of a Southern California museum in its 10-year legal battle over the ownership of two German Renaissance masterpieces that were seized by the Nazis in World War II.

U.S. District Court Judge John F. Walter ruled last week that Pasadena’s Norton Simon Museum, where the paintings “Adam” and “Eve” have been for more than 30 years, is the rightful owner of the two life-size oil-on-panel paintings.

The museum called the decision mindful of “the facts and law at the heart of the dispute,” the Los Angeles Times reported

Monday.

Marei von Saher alleged that the paintings were seized from her father-in-law, Dutch Jewish art dealer Jacques Goudstikker, after his family fled Holland during the Holocaust.

The Norton Simon countered that it legally acquired the works in the 1970s from the descendant of Russian aristocrats who had them wrongly taken by the Soviet Union in the 1920s.

Lucas Cranach the Elder painted the works in around 1530. In 1971, they were acquired by the museum for \$800,000, the equivalent of about \$4.8 million today. They

were appraised at \$24 million in 2006.

Depicting mankind in the ominous moment before the biblical Fall, the painting’s ownership battle, too, points to a period in human history fraught with uncertainty: a 20th-century Europe ravaged by war.

The dispute is one of many to emerge in recent years involving precious art looted by the Nazis.

The judge said that because Goudstikker’s art dealership decided not to seek restitution for the works after the war, his family thereby abandoned their claim to the art.

“Starless Dreams” up for review at German film week

T A R T TEHRAN — Iranian director Mehrdad Oskui’s “Starless Dreams” is the lone Iranian entry to the Dokfilmwoche, the Documentary Week in Kreuzberg, Germany.

The documentary shows young women in an Iranian juvenile detention center reflecting on the crimes they have committed and the harsh circumstances that have shaped their lives.

“No Home Movie” a French-Belgian 2015 documentary film by Chantal Akerman, “Battles” by Isabelle Tollenaere from Belgium, “Eva” by Melanie Jilg from Germany and “White Coal” by Georg Tiller from Austria are among other participating films.

The festival will be running from September 1 to 7.

NEWS IN BRIEF



Iranian movies to compete in French festival

C U L T U R E TEHRAN — Three Iranian movies will be screened in various sections of the 15th Silhouette Festival, which will be held in Paris from August 26 to September 3.

“Lay My Bed in the Room” by Amir Tudehrusta will compete in the short film section while “The Rock” by Hamid Jafari will be screened in the documentary section. “Changeover” by Mehdi Alibeigi will be shown in the animation section.

World’s largest indoor theme park to open in Dubai

DUBAI (Reuters) — The world’s largest indoor theme park is set to open in Dubai this month to lure back some of the tourists and residents who often flee abroad during the scorching desert summer.

In a sandy suburb beyond Dubai’s concrete jungle and pockets of artificially green spaces, IMG Worlds of Adventure’s boxy exterior belies a 140,000-square meter (1.5 million-square foot) air-conditioned cathedral of entertainment teeming with animatronic dinosaurs, roller coasters, Marvel superheroes and Cartoon Network characters.

Zombies pop out from dark corners of a haunted house and the Velociraptor coaster throttles passengers within a misty simulated rain forest dubbed the Lost Valley.

As it stands now, stir-crazy families in Dubai - a tourism and financial hub which already boasts the world’s tallest building - have few places to stretch their legs beyond expensive malls while temperatures outside can approach 50 degrees Celsius (122 Fahrenheit).

Even an indoor ski slope, complete with real-life penguins, has not been enough to stanch the exodus that leaves roads and public spaces eerily quiet through the hot months.

“Dubai still suffers from a certain amount of seasonality during the June, July, August period,” Lennard Otto, CEO of the new \$1 billion attraction, told Reuters.

“We will hopefully drive tourism in those periods to make Dubai an all-year-round destination,” he said, ahead of the theme park’s Aug. 31 opening.

“Obviously, Ms. von Saher is disappointed with the court’s decision,” representatives from her legal firm, who plan to appeal the decision, said in a statement to the Times.

They also criticized a legal motion exchanged with them by the museum’s legal team, presenting evidence that von Saher’s father was a member of the Nazi Party.

“Using this information in an attempt to discredit Ms. von Saher is nothing more than a distasteful device to evade responsibility for refusing to retribute artworks that were indisputably stolen from her husband’s family,” the attorneys said.