

# TEHRAN TIMES



Iran worried  
about  
continuation  
of Turkey's  
presence  
in Syria

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## Sovereignty, territorial integrity sacred for every nation: Vietnamese ambassador

**INTERVIEW**  
By Ali Kushki

Annually, Vietnam marks its National Day on September 2nd. On the occasion, the Tehran Times has held an interview with Vietnamese Ambassador to Iran Nguyen Hong Thach, asking a number of questions on internal and external issues, including relations between Iran and Vietnam.

In what follows, a transcript of the interview has been given.

■ **Each year on September 2, Vietnam celebrates its National Day. Why is it marked?**

A. 71 year ago, on September 2, 1945, our beloved President Ho Chi Minh read the Declaration of Independence, announcing the birth of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. It is an event of great significance to our nation, marking the victory of our nearly-one-hundred-year struggle against the colonialism, opening a new era for Vietnam, an era of independence and freedom.

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## Leader urges beefing up military clout

**POLITICS** Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei paid a visit to an exhibition of the Iranian armed forces' achievements on Wednesday, where he underlined the need for shoring up the country's military clout.

Addressing Iranian Defense Ministry officials and experts during the visit, Ayatollah Khamenei said Iran has "an inalienable and absolute right" to boost its defensive and offensive power.

Deploing the global arrogance for lack of

morality, conscience, and humanity, the Supreme Leader saw it quite natural to develop defensive and offensive industries because security will not be achieved unless the global arrogance feels the country's might.

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## Hegemonic U.S. on relative wane both militarily and economically: professor

**INTERVIEW**  
By Javad Heirannia

**TEHRAN** — Nader Entessar, a professor of political science at South Alabama University, told the Tehran Times, "I think the relative decline of America's global hegemony has been the result of both emerging powers and domestic challenges that the United States had had to deal with over the past 40 years."

Entessar also said, "Both militarily and economically we have witnessed a relative decline in America's global hegemony."

Following is a transcript of the interview.  
■ **Some scholars such as Robert Keohane believe that the U.S. has seen a decline in its status as a global hegemony as of the 1970s. What is your stance in this regard?**

A: I agree with this assessment only if we

compare America's global supremacy between the end of World War II and the early 1970s. But even after the 1970s, America has remained the most significant hegemonic power in the world, although Washington's hegemony has been challenged by other emerging powers.

■ **How do you support your stance if you thinks the U.S. has experienced the decline?**

A: I think the relative decline of America's global hegemony has been the result of both emerging powers and domestic challenges that the United States had had to deal with over the past 40 years. However, it is important that to note that external and internal forces always interact with each other and influence each other. So, the line between domestic and external developments are not always clearly delineated.

■ **In what areas has the hegemonic**

**U.S. declined the most?**

A: Both militarily and economically we have witnessed a relative decline in America's global hegemony. But again, I would like to emphasize the word "relative" here. Today, as stated previously, the United States remains the only force that can carry its label of global hegemon.

■ **Do you see a link between the decline in the U.S. hegemonic power and the conflicts in the Middle East?**

A: If we apply the principles embodied in the global hegemonic stability theory to the current multiple crises in the Middle East, we can certainly argue that the vacuum created by the weakening of the global hegemon in the region has led to the decline of international order in the region. But the world has changed in the past 20-30 years, and the role that a hegemon once played in the region is not duplicable today.

## Iran, Russia to establish literary center

**CULTURE** **TEHRAN** — Iran and Russia will establish a literary center during the 29th Moscow International Book Fair, which will be held from September 7 to 11.

"The center will act as a bridge between the two countries, and writers, critics, researchers and literary figures are scheduled to attend the cultural meetings due to be held in the center," the deputy director of the Book City Institute, Ali-Asghar Mohammadkhani, said in a press release published on Wednesday.

He also added that a memorandum of understanding is due to be signed between Iran's Book City Institute and the Biblio-Globus Book Store in Moscow to boost bilateral cooperation.

Based on the agreement, the two organizations will be offering books from their respective countries to book reading customers at their venues.

Several meetings with Iranian literary figures have also been arranged during the fair, he added.

## Deputy foreign ministry says Iran welcomes ties with Latin America

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Majid Takht-Ravanchi has said the country welcomes further expansion of relations with Latin American nations.

Referring to the recent visit to six South American countries by Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, Takht-Ravanchi described it as fruitful, urging more politico-economic ties with the countries.

"Both sides (Iran and the six Latin countries) welcome expansion of ties. In fact, some of these countries have already taken necessary steps to guarantee further expansion of ties," he told the state-run Radio Javan on Wednesday.

"Some countries attempt to hamper both sides' efforts to strengthen political and economic ties," Takht-Ravanchi added.



Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad-Javad Zarif kicked off a round of visits to six Latin American countries on August 21. He was accompanied by a high-ranking politico-economic delegation comprising 120 businessmen and financial executives from

government and private sectors.

During the visits, Zarif said that Iran greatly values its relationship with Latin American nations, adding that the large politico-economic delegation accompanying him testifies to the significance that Iran attaches to ties with these countries.

Zarif's visit to the region, a tour that took him to Venezuela, Cuba, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Chile and Bolivia, ended on August 28. The visit seems to indicate a rekindling of relations between Iran and the region's countries.

Iran's willingness to expand economic relations with South American countries comes as the country seeks to take advantage of the economic potential provided by a nuclear deal that the Islamic Republic secured with six world powers in July 2015.



## Rouhani felicitates Malaysia, Kyrgyzstan on National Day

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Iranian President Hassan Rouhani sent separate messages to Malaysian King Abdul Halim of Kedah and Prime Minister Najib Razak and Kyrgyz President Almazbek Atambayev on the occasion of the countries' National Day.

In his message to the Malaysian king, Rouhani expressed hope for the expansion of relations between the two countries.

The ties have expanded in the post-JCPOA atmosphere, Rouhani said in his message to the Malaysian prime minister and expressed hope that the relations would be expanded by "political will" of the two countries' officials.

In the message to Kyrgyz president, Rouhani said, "I hope the friendly relations would be expanded within the framework of mutual interests."

On 31 August 1991, Kyrgyzstan declared independence from the Soviet Union.

Malaysia gained independence from the United Kingdom on 31 August 1957 and took the name the "Federation of Malaya". The name "Malaysia" was adopted in 1963 when the existing states of the Federation of Malaya, plus Singapore, North Borneo and Sarawak formed a new federation.

## Baku to host 2nd Iran Project expo in mid-Sept.

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — The Islamic Republic plans to hold the 2nd edition of its specialized exhibition, titled "Iran Project", in the capital of Azerbaijan Republic, Baku, from September 19 to 21, Mohammad-Ebrahim Naqizadeh, Iran's Commercial Attaché to Azerbaijan, announced. This exhibition would include various sections such as oil, gas, construction and industry.

IRNA reported. Underlining that Azerbaijan is now the twelfth largest importer of Iranian products which is an unprecedented record in Tehran-Baku trade history, Naqizadeh added that exports of Iranian services and products to Azerbaijan have soared at a time when the total volume of the imports of the neighboring states have suffered a significant decline due to economic crisis and falling oil prices.

The first edition of Iran Project, focusing on technical and engineering services in oil, gas, petrochemical, water and electricity sectors, was held in Baku in mid-November, 2015. The exhibition sought to boost the volume of non-oil export and easing trade between Iran and Azerbaijan.

## EU-Iran trade up 43% in H1: Eurostat

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — The desk European Union's trade with Iran amounted to €5.107 billion in the first half of 2016, a 43 percent rise year on year, based on the latest figures released by the European Union's statistics agency Eurostat.

Following the implementation of the nuclear deal in January and thanks to the rise in EU countries' purchase of oil from the Islamic Republic, trade between Iran and the EU rose 43 percent compared with €3.563 billion in first six months of 2015.

From January to June 2016, EU's exports to Iran increased by 13 percent and reached €3.565 billion, from €3.154 billion in the first half of 2015.

As reported in late May, EU's exports to Iran hit €1.602 billion in the first three months of the current year, which shows a 16-percent rise from €1.374 billion in the same period last year.

At the same time, EU's imports from the Islamic Republic increased 52 percent and stood at €396 million, while the amount was €260 million in the same period in 2015.

In mid-April, Iran and the EU issued a joint statement in Tehran setting the road map for cooperation. The statement was released by Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini who visited Iran along with seven European commissioners.

The two sides taking stock of their long standing relations, based upon mutual respect and interests, reiterated their intention to develop a broad and comprehensive agenda for bilateral cooperation.

## 6th intl. eco-friendly agriculture expo slated for December

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — The 6th International Exhibition of Agriculture, Organic, Herbal, Natural Products and Technologies with eco-friendly approaches will set to work on December 6, 2016.

The four-day exhibition which will be held in Tehran International Permanent Fairground is summed up by the slogan "new technologies, production boom, and export growth", the public relations director of the exhibition has said.

Amin Eftekhari noted that the exhibition is also an opportunity to indicate the liaison and mutual interests shared between agriculture sector and environment.

"Introducing eco-friendly technologies such as new devices for irrigation and pesticides and fertilizers with the minimal damage caused to soil and water are of the exhibition objectives," Eftekhari added.

Stating the significance of green brands associated with environmental conservation and sustainable business practices he highlighted that Iran needs to move towards green brands to be able to maintain its place in the export market and that the exhibition would open up an ideal opportunity for Iran to work towards this goal.

"Agriculture sector plays a key role in many countries' economic growth, therefore devising effective and coherent strategies to establish a correlation between the environment and agriculture is what this exhibition focuses on," Eftekhari explained.

Exchanging information and experience in the field of new agricultural technologies in the post-sanction era is another focus of attention at this exhibition, he suggested.

Eftekhari went on to say that workshops and professional meetings in attendance of experts, faculties, and researchers are also scheduled to be held on the sidelines of this event.



MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



**Combatant Clergy Association allies various groups on elections**

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — The spokesman of the Combatant Clergy Association has said the group works with numerous principlist groups to work out a unified front in next year's presidential elections.

Qolamreza Mesbahi Moqaddam also rejected allegations that they are considering Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, saying they are not caught up in a "drought of men," Mehr reported on Wednesday.



**Zarif to attend UN General Assembly**

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — The Iranian foreign minister will visit New York to attend the UN General Assembly which will commence on September 15.

Plans have been made for Mohammad Javad Zarif to meet some officials from other countries while there, Zarif's deputy Majid Takht Ravanchi told Radio Javan on Wednesday.

Answering the question if President Hassan Rouhani will also travel to New York, the Takht Ravanchi said, "We are examining the grounds in order to come up with the right decision."



**Bahonar: Ahmadinejad unlikely to run**

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — Mohammad Reza Bahonar, advisor to the Majlis speaker, has said Mahmud Ahmadinejad is unlikely to run for presidency next year.

Speaking to IRNA on Wednesday, he also said, "If things go so that Rouhani gets votes God willing everything will be over in the first round."



**Iraqi movement praises Iran's Soleimani**

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — The Gentlefolk of Islamic Resistance in Iraq secretary has praised Iran's Qassem Soleimani for efforts in liberating parts of Iraq from Daesh.

Akram al-Kabi, speaking to IRIB, said the popular mobilization in Iraq was formed under Soleimani and has found great favor with the Iraqi people.



**Saudi withholding Iranians' blood money: Iran Hajj official**

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — The head of Iran's Hajj and Pilgrimage Organization has said Saudi Arabia continues to withhold all cooperation toward compensating the victims of a deadly crush during Hajj pilgrimage rituals last year.

"Saudi Arabia refuses to offer the smallest amount of cooperation in this regard (providing compensation for the victims); and not only does it not pay any blood money, but also, interestingly, it has failed to turn over the bodies of martyrs from many countries other than the Islamic Republic," Saeed Ohadi told Fars in remarks published on Wednesday.

He also said the families of the victims are going to meet Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in near future.



**IRGC member killed in Syria**

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — The IRGC has lost another member in clashes with terrorists in Syria.

Ahmad Gholami who was on advisory mission to Syria was killed on Tuesday by Daesh terrorists, ISNA reported on Wednesday.

Gholami was one of the IRGC commanders during the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988).



**Iranian security Pokémon GO another dual national**

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — Iran's security forces have arrested a dual national with Iranian-American citizenship.

The Golestan Province branch of the IRGC announced on Wednesday that the person was arrested on charges of "cooperating with hostile governments, working against national security, and having ties with anti-revolution entities," and was given over to judicial authorities.

# Foreign Ministry reasons away spy in nuclear team claims

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — The Iranian Foreign Ministry has snubbed allegations by critics of the nuclear deal who keep saying there has been a spy in the country's nuclear negotiations team.

Deputy Foreign Minister Hamid Baidinejad tried to reason away the allegations as "hasty" and "misinformed" in a message he published on Telegram on Wednesday.

The allegations are made to imply that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is faulty in structure, the diplomat noted, adding, "This approach seems a bit naive since the process of the nuclear talks was more complicated than to allow a fault to the JCPOA even if such claims were true."

Numerous accounts emerged in Iran in the past few weeks over the arrest of one of the country's nuclear negotiators, one contradicting the other.

A recent such account was that the arrest is true and the arrestee is a dual citizen who, other than being active in economy in both the private and governmental sectors, was "the head of one of the key committees of the negotiation team and the representative of a financial organization in the team," Nasim Online news agency reported August 24.

"The claims more than anything point the finger of accusation at Iran's security organizations since the men-



Abdolrasoul Dorri Esfahani representing Iran in nuclear talks for banking

tioned person has worked for decades as Iran's representative in international legal disputes such as legal debates in The Hague over disputes over arms deals between Iran and the U.S., so all the while he has escaped the notice of security and intelligence organizations, which is a blatant insult to these organizations," Baidinejad states in his commentary.

He went on to note that Abdolrasoul Dorri Esfahani was the representative of the banking system in the nuclear team, adding that the Foreign Ministry had no

role in appointing representatives in the team.

"Tens of people from numerous organizations accompanied the Iranian nuclear negotiations team. Their qualification is not the province of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs... appointing the people is the duty of their respective organizations and, at critical times, the official security and intelligence organizations of the country."

On August 22, the Foreign Ministry said "the arrest of one of the members of the Committee on the Implementation

of the JCPOA is completely false," but on the same day, Deputy Editor of Fars news Agency for Research Yasser Jebrailli wrote on Telegram that the arrested man was named Abdolrasoul Dorri Esfahani, the banking head of the nuclear negotiation team who holds a second nationality of Britain. The journalist said Esfahani was arrested "on charges of espionage."

Nasim Online added that the man was charged, among other things, of "receiving money from American and British institutes in return for important financial and economic information of the Islamic Republic."

These come at a time when Esfahani spoke over the telephone with Bank Mardom website on August 24, calling the reports "laughable," and adding, "Now that I am speaking to you I am at the Central Bank and am not arrested."

In the meantime, Javad Karimi Qoddusi, a rightist MP, said the arrestee had been returned to Iran last week when he was accompanying Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif to Turkey without having set foot on the Turkish soil.

Qoddusi's remarks were refuted as "baseless claim, insubstantial, impertinent, sheer lie, and false statement," on August 24 by Foreign Ministry spokesman Qassem Bahrami.

Esfahani had in June introduced himself as banking and financial member to Iran's nuclear negotiation team.

## Leader urges beefing up military clout

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — Ayatollah Khamenei also referred to the Islamic Republic's strategic position and the sensitive conditions of the West Asia region as one more reason for the development of defensive and offensive capabilities of the country.

The Leader, however, underscored that Iran will not be seeking mass destruction weapons because "weapons of

mass destruction like chemical and nuclear weapons are banned based on ideological and religious foundations."

"Apart from these (WMDs), there are no restrictions in other areas on boosting the defense and military power and making progress in these fields is a duty," Ayatollah Khamenei added.

Back in March, too, the Leader underscored the need

for boosting Iran's military capabilities, warning that enemies are making use of every tool available to undermine the Islamic Republic.

Ayatollah Khamenei said at the time that if the Islamic establishment seeks technology and negotiations but lacks defense might, it will have to buckle in the face of any weak country posing threats.

## Iran worried about continuation of Turkey's presence in Syria

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi said on Wednesday that Iran is worried about continuation of Turkey's presence and military operation in Syria's soil.

"Fighting terrorism and making efforts to maintain stability and security in the region are unchangeable and important principles in the foreign policy of regional peace-seeking countries, however, the issue cannot and should not be an excuse for violating other countries' territorial integrity and carrying out military operation without permission of the central government (of Syria) and ignoring the country's national sovereignty," he said.

He added that any mechanism that does not respect

countries' "political sovereignty" and "legitimate power" while fighting terrorism is "unacceptable."

Qassemi also said that continuation of Turkey's military presence in Syria's soil will further complicate the regional situation.

"The Spreading of clashes in north of Syria will lead to an increase in the death toll of innocent civilians and it is essential for the Turkish army to immediately stop military actions in Syria," he said.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has vowed to press ahead with the military operation in northern Syria until the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and Kurdish Syrian fighters no longer pose a security threat to Ankara, according to AP.



## Sovereignty, territorial integrity sacred for every nation

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — Every year, we celebrate our Independence 'Nou Ruz' in order to honor generations of Vietnamese who sacrificed their lives for the nation's independence and freedom as well as to remind each Vietnamese of his/her responsibility to do utmost for the prosperity of the country. This year, the event's celebration is more significant as it's time for us to review achievements of the 30-year implementation of the "Doi Moi" or renovation policy.

**Now after 71 years from the Independence Day, how is Vietnam different from its past?**

A. This year, we commemorate 30 years of Doi Moi, a comprehensive socio-economic renovation policy started in 1986. During the period, we attained great achievements. Vietnam has emerged from socio-economic crisis, transforming from a less developed country into a middle-income developing country, speeding up the process of industrialization, modernization and international integration. Our economy has developed with high economic growth rate for the last 30 years. Today Vietnam enjoys the socio-political stability, enhanced security and national defense, and higher living standards. Vietnam has expanded and deepened its external relations, enhancing its prestige and position in the international arena.

**What is your assessment of current relations between Vietnam and Iran?**

A. I am delighted that the relationship between Vietnam and Iran for the last 43 years has been unceasingly increasing. Our two countries have always supported each other on international forums, and exchanged many delegations. Especially, last March President Truong Tan Sang paid a state visit to Iran. Leaders of both countries showed

determination to promote the bilateral co-operation to a higher level for the mutual benefits of the two nations. The target of \$2 billion in bilateral trade set by our leaders is not unreachable if we really endeavor. The joint trade promotion working group met in early last June, and discussed concrete measures to boost trade and investment cooperation. We are also glad to witness in recent years an increase in delegation exchanges, economic, cultural and tourism co-operation. However, much potential in the fields of economic and trade relations has not been exploited yet.

It must be emphasized that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) reached between Iran and the P5+1 countries, created new momentum for our two countries' cooperation. Sanctions have been removed, paving the way for the cooperative relations between Vietnam and Iran to take a leap in the near future.

**How do you see Vietnam's international engagement in the future?**

A. Since early 1990s, Vietnam has launched a foreign policy under the slogan "Vietnam wants to be friend with all countries in the international community, striving for peace, independence and development." Since then Vietnam has normalized relations with all its old foes, and established diplomatic relations with almost all big and small countries in the world. We maintain comprehensive, strategic and co-operative partnership with all five permanent members of the United Nation Security Council. Vietnam has taken part in different international and regional forums and organizations and being their active and responsible member. We also participate in many regional and international economic organizations. Therefore, international integration now



becomes the new motto of the Vietnam Diplomacy at international and regional level.

**What are some main challenges you are and will be grappling with in the future?**

A. Despite great achievements during the last 30 years of renovation, Vietnam is still facing many challenges in both internal and external affairs. Internally, we have to solve the issue of sustainable growth, green development and to ensure economic growth bring about social equality and protected environment. We have to control economic vulnerability against the world economy fluctuations, while taking advantage of the international integration.

Externally, though the extensive international integration is enabling us to develop faster, we have to deal, at the same time, with common global challenges of such as insecurity, terrorism, disparity between the rich and the poor, environment etc.

Especially, we are facing challenges to protection of sovereignty over our some islands. The Hoang Sa (Paracels) archipelago and some islands/rocks of our Truong Sa (Spratlys) archipelago, over which generations of Vietnamese have exercised the sovereignty, and administered in practice, were forcefully taken by the Chinese in the years of 1956, 1974 and 1988. We are resolved to use all peaceful means to take back these islands. Protecting sovereignty and territorial integrity is always sacred to every nation. Vietnam is not an exception.

Recently, the Permanent Court of Arbitration in La Hague ruled that the nine-dotted line claimed by the Chinese their "historical water" is invalid. This ruling is of great importance for the security in the South China Sea (East Sea in Vietnamese). Vietnam welcomes the ruling and calls on other sides to respect this objective and just ruling made by the PCA in order to maintain peace, security and stability in the region.



# Russia questions evidence of independent inspectors on Syria, UN fails to agree on any action

Calls have been made for sanctions against Syria following findings by a United Nations team that government forces twice used chemical weapons in the ongoing civil war.

The UN investigators also found evidence that the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group used mustard gas at least once in the conflict.

However, the UN Security Council failed during a closed-door session on Tuesday to agree on any action, with Russia questioning the evidence from the independent commission.

The international team of inspectors has determined that both the Syrian government and the ISIL were responsible for chemical attacks carried out in 2014 and 2015.

Vitaly Churkin, the Russian ambassador, said it was too early to consider implementing a September 2013 Security Council resolution authorizing sanctions that can be militarily enforced for any use of chemical weapons in Syria.

Russia has been a close ally of the Syrian government and President Bashar al-Assad since the crisis began there in 2011.

"Clearly there is a smoking gun. We know that chlorine most likely has been used - that was already the finding of the fact-finding mission before - but there are no fingerprints on the gun," Churkin said after the closed-door session.



"There is nobody to sanction in the report which has been issued," he said. "It contains no names, it contains no specifics ... If we are to be professional we need to question all the conclusions."

Churkin said, however, that he was pleased the report had confirmed the use of chemical weapons by the ISIL terrorist group.

#### ■ Syrian rejection

For his part, Bashar Jaafari, Syria's UN ambassador, also dismissed the report's

findings as biased.

"The conclusions contained in the report were totally based on statements made by witnesses presented by the terrorist armed groups," he said.

"Therefore, these conclusions lack any physical evidence."

Heading into the meeting, Samantha Power, the U.S. ambassador, called the report "a landmark" and said she expected a Security Council resolution "soon".

"It is the first official independent con-

firmation of what many of us ... have presented substantial evidence of for a long time, and that is a pattern of chemical weapons use by the Syrian regime," she said.

"It is incumbent on the council to act swiftly to show ... we were serious about there being meaningful accountability."

In September 2013, Syria accepted a Russian proposal to relinquish its chemical-weapons stockpile and join the Chemical Weapons Convention.

That averted a U.S. military strike in response to an alleged chemical weapons attack that killed hundreds in the Damascus suburb of Ghouta.

Russia has blocked sanctions and other council action against Assad's government.

However, it did support the establishment of the Joint Investigative Mechanism, charged with determining who was responsible for the attacks and paving the way for possible punishment.

The inspectors investigated nine cases in seven towns and determined that the Syrian government was responsible for two attacks involving chlorine gas and ISIL, which is already under UN sanctions, for one attack involving mustard gas.

They said three more attacks pointed towards government involvement but were not conclusive, and described three others as inconclusive.

(Source: agencies)

## Trump risks alienating voting blocs with wavering on immigration

Donald Trump delivers a high-stakes immigration speech on Wednesday in Phoenix amid intense confusion over the status of his vow to deport millions of undocumented immigrants, a potentially damaging impasse for a Republican nominee who risks alienating several voting blocs he needs to win in November.

The immigration speech will come hours after Trump plans to travel to Mexico to meet with that country's president, Enrique Peña Nieto. The trip was announced late on Tuesday.

The campaign has spent days dismissing questions about whether Trump's positions on immigration are shifting, instead emphasizing his commitment to securing the border with Mexico. But the scale and scope of potential deportations remain subjects of intense interest — and Trump is caught between appeasing his staunchest supporters or attempting to appeal to moderate Republicans and independent voters with a softer stance.

Questions about what would become of the estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants if Trump is elected president have gone largely unanswered by the candidate and his team in recent days. The campaign has suggested that Wednesday's speech will address those questions and concerns.

Trump has offered glimpses of his policy priorities even as he has skirted questions about their implementation. He remains publicly committed to building a massive wall along the United States-Mexico border, has extolled the need to crack down on those who overstay their visas and has proposed expanding the E-Verify program, used by employers to determine whether an immigrant is legally able to work in the country. The campaign has also said that Trump would prioritize the deportation of criminals, a policy that the Obama administration has also pursued.

Even with those broad priorities in place, it is unclear how many people would be subject to immediate deportation — all undocumented immigrants, all who have overstayed their visas or just those who have committed serious crimes.

The answers to those questions would define the mandate placed on security agencies such as Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

According to a study by the Migration Policy Institute, an estimated 690,000 undocumented immigrants have significant criminal histories — felony convictions or serious misdemeanors — that make them top priorities for deportation under current administration policy. The number of individuals prioritized for deportation would grow to about 5.5 million if visa overstays were included, according to some data, although those estimates are not considered very reliable.

Immigration reform has been at the center of Trump's brand since he announced his campaign, which he kicked off by railing against Mexican immigrants, whom he suggested were largely criminals and rapists. His controversial rhetoric delighted supporters and enraged critics, who accused him of bigotry. As the Republican primary contests unfolded, he vowed to kick out all of the nation's illegal immigrants and called for a "deportation force" to get the job done.

But since securing the GOP (Grand Old Party) presidential nomination this spring, Trump has had trouble shifting to an effective general-election strategy after dominating the primary race. And he has struggled to prove that he has a sufficient grasp of policy issues to implement his proposals if elected, a weakness that his Democratic rival, Hillary Clinton, has repeatedly sought to exploit.

His opaque responses to questions about the implementation of those plans — and about mass deportations in particular — have raised concerns among his most vocal supporters while fueling accusations of hypocrisy from his critics.

The candidate has received a deluge of conflicting advice and perspectives from advisers and supporters.

Trump's liberal critics, meanwhile, say anything short of a pathway to legalization for undocumented immigrants will effectively consign them to the status quo — unwilling to come forward because of the risk of being deported, and unable to fully assimilate into American life.

Some experts also say the nationalization of E-Verify technologies could push undocumented workers further into "shadow economies," leaving them vulnerable to abuse and unable to pay taxes on their labor.

(Source: The Washington Post)



## 60 U.S. lawmakers want planned arms sale to Saudi Arabia delayed

A bipartisan group of 60 American lawmakers has penned a letter to President Barack Obama seeking to delay the planned sale of \$1.15 billion in arms and other military gear to Saudi Arabia, according to a report.

The letter cites the growing number of civilian casualties in Yemen caused by the House of Saud regime's military aggression there.

"This military campaign has had a deeply troubling impact on civilians," lawmakers wrote in a draft obtained by the Foreign Policy magazine.

"Just in the last several days, a Saudi airstrike on a school in Yemen killed 10 children — some as young as 6 years old — and a Saudi airstrike on a [Médecins Sans Frontières] hospital in Yemen killed 11 people," the letter said.

Yemen has seen almost daily military attacks by the House of Saud regime since late March 2015. The offensive was launched to reinstate the resigned president, Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, who is a staunch ally of Riyadh, and to crush the Ansarullah (Houthi) movement.

The U.S. has backed the Saudi campaign in Yemen, providing training, intelligence and logistical support.

Early this month, the State Department approved the sale of more than 130 Abrams tanks, 20 armored recovery vehicles, hundreds of machine guns and other military equipment to Saudi Arabia. Congress has 30 days to approve or block the proposed sale.



"Any decision to sell more arms to Saudi Arabia should be given adequate time for full deliberation by Congress," the lawmakers wrote.

"We are concerned, however, that the timing of this notification during the August congressional recess could be interpreted to mean that Congress has little time to consider the arms deal when it returns from recess within the 30-day window established by law," they added.

In November last year, Washington approved a \$1.29 billion rearming program for Riyadh, including internationally-banned cluster bombs.

Human Rights Watch has uncovered evidence that the Saudi regime has used the American-made illegal munitions in the war.

The 18-month military campaign in Yemen has killed nearly 10,000 people, according to the United Nations. The conflict has allowed the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorists to deepen their foothold in the impoverished country.

(Source: Press TV)

## EU should end economic bans against Russia: Hollande

French President Francois Hollande has called for an end to European Union sanctions against Russia over the crisis in Ukraine amid growing dissent in the 28-nation bloc on the restrictive measures.

During his annual address to the French ambassadors at the Elysée Palace in Paris, Hollande, whose country was previously a staunch supporter of the anti-Moscow bans, described them as "an obstacle to many economic projects."

The French leader further said the crisis in Ukraine changed the relations between Russia and Europe and caused damage to both sides.

"The effects of the Ukraine crisis have to end in relation to Russia and the members of Europe. This situation is, to me, highly damaging because it comes with a high cost for those and other [actors], all actors," said Hollande.

He added that the removal of the sanctions is "in all of our interests to get out as fast and in the best way possible, of this type of relation."

"This has a high price and complicates the dialogue," the president stressed.

Hollande made the comments a day after German Chancellor Angela Merkel said she had "the very greatest interest in stopping sanctions" against the Kremlin.

Merkel also said her country, the biggest European economy, was ready to ask the EU to remove the bans against Russia if pro-Moscow forces operating in east Ukraine remain committed to peace.



The West's sanctions against Russia were initially introduced after the Black Sea Crimean Peninsula declared independence from Ukraine and voted for reunification with the Russian Federation in March 2014.

In June, EU officials said they would extend the sanctions to the end of January 2017.

Washington and its European allies accuse Moscow of destabilizing Ukraine. Moscow, however, rejects having a hand in the crisis gripping the Eastern European state.

Ukraine's eastern provinces of Donetsk and Luhansk have witnessed deadly clashes between pro-Moscow forces and the Ukrainian army since Kiev launched military operations in April 2014 to crush pro-Moscow protests there. The crisis has left around 9,400 people dead and over 22,000 others injured.

Kiev and pro-Russian forces signed two peace deals in Minsk, Belarus, in 2014, but the agreements have failed to contain the violence, with both sides trading accusations of breaking the truce.

(Source: AFP)

## Turkey denies reaching ceasefire with Kurdish forces

A Turkish minister has said that his country does "not accept: the United States claims that its military has reached a ceasefire deal with Kurdish fighters in northern Syria."

The statement came after U.S. officials said that Turkish-backed Syrian rebels and Kurdish forces had agreed on a temporary pause in fighting in northern Syria.

The U.S. has been warning the sides to focus on fighting the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group elements there.

"We do not accept in any circumstances ... a compromise or a ceasefire reached between Turkey and Kurdish elements," Omer Celik, European Union affairs minister, told the state-run Anadolu news agency in a live interview on Wednesday.

"The Turkish republic is a sovereign, legitimate state." U.S. officials had claimed on Tuesday they received assurance that all parties involved were going to stop shooting at each other and focus on the ISIL threat.

"It is a loose agreement for at least the next couple of days and we are hoping that will solidify," Colonel John Thomas, spokesman for the U.S. Central Command, was quoted as saying by AFP news agency.

Thomas said Turkey and Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), made up largely of Kurdish fighters from the People's Protection Units (YPG/Yekineyên Parastina Gel), had opened communications with the U.S. and between

each other "with the goal of limiting hostilities".

Thomas called the reported agreement between the two groups "encouraging".

The White House also praised the apparent halt in fighting between anti-ISIL forces in Syria.

"The U.S. welcomes the overnight calm between the Turkish military and other counter-ISIL forces in Syria," Josh Earnest, the White House spokesman, said on Tuesday.

"It continues to encourage these moves as a way to prevent further hostilities and loss of life between all counter-ISIL forces operating in the area."

Polat Can, the YPG representative to the global anti-ISIL coalition, also said the forces had reached a truce with Turkish-backed Syrian rebels.

"We have reached a temporary ceasefire between the Jarablus Military Council and the occupying Turkish army in the Jarablus area under the supervision of the global coalition," he said on Twitter.

Turkish forces launched last week a two-pronged operation in the town of Jarablus inside Syria against ISIL terrorists and the YPG, shelling more than a dozen targets.

The United States has long been trying to avert an escalation in violence between Turkish-backed so-called Free Syrian Army forces operating in and around Jarablus and YPG fighters in the same region.



Both sides are backed by the U.S. in their fight against ISIL, but Turkey, a key NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) ally, views the YPG as a threat because of its close links to the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK/Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê), which has been fighting Turkish forces for the past three decades.

On Monday, Turkish-backed Syrian rebels said they were advancing towards Manbij, a city on the West Bank of the Euphrates, captured earlier this month by Kurdish forces.

(Source: agencies)

## Turbulence forces emergency landing in Ireland; 16 injured

A United Airlines flight bound for London has made an emergency landing at Shannon Airport in Ireland after severe turbulence that left 16 passengers needing hospital treatment.

Airport officials said on Wednesday that 14 passengers and two members of the flight crew were transferred to University Hospital Limerick for treatment.

Officials say United Flight 880 arrived at Shannon Airport early on Wednesday morning. The flight originated in Houston and was supposed to land at London's Heathrow Airport.

United says "severe and unexpected turbulence" caused the flight diversion. The extent of injuries wasn't immediately known.

(Source: AP)



NEWS

## G20 summit reveals China's commitment to world economy

China will see the issuance of the first bonds denominated in Special Drawing Rights (SDR) on Wednesday in the country's interbank bond market.

Worth 500 million SDR units, the bonds issued by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, a unit of the World Bank, will be first SDR bonds issued for more than 30 years. They will provide a channel for foreign investors to increase RMB exposure and allow domestic investors to access foreign currencies within the domestic bond market.

Compared to bonds denominated in a single currency, SDR bonds face smaller exchange and interest rate risks. With the approach of RMB entry to the SDR basket in October, China has already started to update its foreign exchange reserves, international balance of payments and international investment positions in SDR.

SDR bonds will not only inject energy to the international monetary system, but are a way to open up the domestic market.



Li Huiyong, chief macro-economics analyst with Shenwan Hongyuan Securities, said that measures related to the SDR will increase the appeal of the Chinese market to foreign capital, attesting to China's G20 commitment to an "innovative, invigorated, interconnected and inclusive world economy".

"The more contribution China makes to the world economy, the greater its responsibility," said Li.

### Cultivating new growth engines

The global community expects China to take the lead in drawing the blueprint of world economic recovery at the upcoming G20 summit. The blueprint, with innovation as its focus, will help the world economy to emerge from recession, said Zhang Haibing.

With the aim of robust, balanced and sustainable growth, China wants G20 members to agree to avoid competitive devaluation of currencies.

The G20 finance ministers and central bank governors have also agreed to "use all policy tools -- monetary, fiscal and structural -- individually and collectively" to stimulate growth.

A report from the HSBC Global Research expects some medium term agenda to emerge, such as reforms of the global monetary system, green finance and infrastructure investment.

This year's G20 summit has an unprecedented emphasis on structural reform as a way to re-balance fiscal and monetary measures.

Huang Wei of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences believes China wants the G20 to agree on structural reform. G20 financial officials have already prioritized areas and come up with guiding principles for structural reform.

"Countries can choose from the priorities according to their own needs," Huang added. (Source: ChinaDaily)

## Nigeria falls into recession as economy shrinks 2%

Nigeria has officially entered a recession for the first time in more than two decades, according to figures released this morning that showed Africa's biggest economy had contracted for a second consecutive quarter.

Nigeria's gross domestic product contracted by 2.06 percent in the second quarter, the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said. GDP shrunk by 0.36 percent in the first quarter and economists had forecast the second quarter fall at closer to 1 percent, reports Maggie Fick, West Africa correspondent.

Amid low oil prices and slashed production due to a new insurgency in the Niger Delta, the country of 180m is in the throes of its worst economic crisis in decades. Muhammadu Buhari, the former military ruler who won elections last year, is facing growing pressure from critics who say his attempts to address the crisis are slow and faltering.

The latest figures do not come as a surprise. Central bank governor Godwin Emeziele warned in May that "recession was imminent".

Finance minister Kemi Adeosun told the Financial Times last month that the government did not dispute the IMF's latest forecast that the economy will contract by 1.8 percent this year. It had in April predicted growth of 2.3 percent for the year.

Still, the figures are disheartening. Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation, was one of the world's fastest growing economies during the oil boom, but now its economic travails are helping drag down forecasts for the continent.

Yemi Kale, head of the Nigeria Statistics Bureau tweeted: "Formal sector jobs have been declining consistently since Q3 2015 in line with general slowdown of economic activity".

Meanwhile, hope that a devaluation of the naira would lure foreign investors back have been dashed by an ongoing dollar shortage in the official and parallel markets—and the view held by many analysts, bankers and investors that the central bank is still not allowing the currency to float freely more than two months after removing a currency peg.

The naira is trading at a record low in both the official foreign exchange market and in the widely-used parallel one. It was trading as low as 418 to the dollar on the parallel market this week. Central bank dollar sales supported the naira's close at 305.50 on the interbank market on Tuesday, Reuters reported. (Source: Financial Times)

# German businesses blame U.S. for Iran trade disappointment

German companies hoped the opening of Iran's economy following the lifting of international sanctions in January would let them rekindle longstanding commercial ties and quickly strike gold.

Despite a jump in exports, the results have left Germans disappointed.

Soon after world powers last summer signed a deal to lift economic sanctions on the Islamic Republic in exchange for curbs on its nuclear program, German business delegations started visiting Iran. Even before sanctions were officially lifted in January, Germans sought local distributors and prepared to resume trade.

Other European delegations followed but expectations were particularly high that German-Iranian business ties would flourish. Some German firms never fully retreated from Iran, even when sanctions were toughest.

German multinationals including engineering conglomerate Siemens AG have announced plans for large industrial projects in Iran.

In the first six months of this year, German exports to Iran climbed 15%, to €1.13 billion (\$1.26 billion), according to the German Federal Statistical Office. Germany's worldwide exports during the period totaled €603.2 billion.

But many German business and government leaders had predicted the lifting of sanctions on Iran would trigger a bonanza for their industrial firms, which want to sell Iran equipment to help rebuild its aging infrastructure.

Disappointed Germans are now blaming the shortfall primarily on remaining U.S. prohibitions on some transactions with Iran.

"The development lags behind our expectations by far, because of the [U.S.] sanctions still in place," said Gregor Wolf, director of European and international affairs at the Federation of German Wholesale Foreign Trade and Services. "Companies are afraid of U.S. retaliation," he added.



Many Western financial institutions are hesitant about engaging with the Iranian market for fear of facing U.S. fines, Mr. Wolf said. That reticence complicates payments.

"Even though there is a positive influence from all the events since last year, the international money transfer [system] is not officially open yet," said Ashkan Pirayesh, an Iranian-German with German firm Richter Lighting Technologies GmbH, who participated in a German business delegation to Iran last September. Mr. Pirayesh said Richter is in the process of building a local office in Tehran but

was not yet exporting to Iran.

Despite the removal of many nuclear-related sanctions imposed by U.S., the European Union and United Nations, other U.S. sanctions on Iran persist, which blocks loans to the country by international banks with ties to the U.S., and consequently Iran's access to global markets.

"Monetary transactions with Iran have been severely penalized by the U.S.," said Ludovic Subran, chief economist at Euler Hermes Group, a German trade-insurance provider backed by Allianz SE. "Everyone is waiting for the Americans to take the first step."

Nevertheless, the payment situation has eased since last year, experts say. At that time, German firms active in Iran had to route payments through indirect channels such as the

United Arab Emirates or Turkey.

Now German companies have a few more options, said Amir Alizadeh, deputy managing director at the Tehran-based German-Iranian Chamber of Commerce.

Hamburg-based European-Iranian Trade Bank AG, which until January had been blocked by sanctions, is back in business and a conduit for German firms to receive payments, Mr. Alizadeh said. Some smaller banks with limited ties to the U.S. have also begun working with Iran, he said. The trade bank could not be reached for comment.

The German government in June settled a longstanding debt dispute with the Iranian government, handled through Euler Hermes, which reopened export-credit guarantees for companies that want to trade with Iran. This could pave the way for more German firms to establish business ties in coming months, Mr. Alizadeh said.

Some deals have taken time to conclude. Siemens in May signed agreements with Iran to modernize its energy infrastructure, including providing Iran with the technological know-how to build some gas turbines. Siemens also aims to develop Iran's wind-power capabilities and its railway sector.

A spokesperson for Siemens said the company's portfolio in Iran was "precisely aligned" to help the country achieve plans to increase steel and cement production, export cars and become a gas-and-electricity hub.

"Nevertheless, Iran is going to be an interesting market in the long term, especially for German exporters," Euler Hermes's Mr. Subran said. "In the best case, German exporters could double their exports in the coming years."

(Source: Wall Street Journal)

## Fed interest rate hike won't hurt Asian stocks, investors say

For some investors, talk of higher interest rates in the U.S. rumbling Asian equity markets is so 2013.

Three years ago, emerging market assets tanked after the U.S. Federal Reserve first broached its plan to begin tapering its asset purchases in a period described as a "taper tantrum." This time around, the Fed's clear signals of impending interest rate hikes have largely been shrugged off.

"In the normal run of things you might be thinking that a stronger U.S. dollar is not good news for this region," Graham Harman, senior investment strategist for Asia-Pacific at Russell Investments, told CNBC's "Street Signs" on Tuesday. Russell Investments had around \$242.26 billion under management at the end of March.

A stronger dollar generally would make it more difficult for many borrowers within Asia to service dollar-denominated debts. Additionally, a strengthening dollar also usually would indicate that funds were flowing out of the region as green-

back-denominated assets become more attractive.

But Harman noted that markets have been relatively sanguine.

"We have a situation where in a world of expensive developed markets, in a world where interest rates are sort of zero or negative across the developed world, Asia Pacific and emerging markets are one area where we have positive tailwinds, where inflation is enabling rates to continue to drop from high levels and where price-to-earnings ratios are probably at about a 30 percent discount to the developed world," Harman said. "That's a pretty good start in terms of the investment arithmetic."

Markets have begun pricing in a changing outlook for monetary policy following the Jackson Hole, Wyoming conclave for central bankers held last week.

At the meeting, Fed Chair Janet Yellen's speech opened the door to a September hike when she said the case for a rate

increase had strengthened in recent months. Until then, many market players had ruined chances that the Fed would hike this year or next.

Fed Vice Chair Stanley Fischer further pushed the Fed's September meeting into play when he said in a CNBC interview that Yellen's comments were consistent with a Fed that could hike rates at the Federal Open Market Committee meeting on September 20-21, and potentially a second time this year as well.

But those comments haven't had an adverse impact on markets. Stocks have remained steady while emerging market currencies have largely been on their best behavior.

The stability witnessed so far is in marked contrast to 2013, when \$14.1 billion exited emerging market equity funds, while \$14.04 billion said good-bye to the segment's bond funds, according to data from Barclays.

(Source: CNBC)

## UK house prices edge up in August, Nationwide says

House price growth picked up slightly in August, despite the Brexit vote, according to Nationwide building society.

The average price of a home rose 0.6 percent to £206,145 between July and August, according to the Nationwide house price index (pdf) — one of two major monthly surveys by UK mortgage lenders. This compares with a 0.5 percent monthly gain in June. The annual rate picked up to 5.6 percent from 5.2 percent.

Nationwide said both demand and supply had been weak, adding that the outlook for the housing market remained clouded. Recent figures from the Bank of England showed mortgage approvals fell to an 18-month low in July.

Robert Gardner, Nationwide's chief economist, said: "The pick-up in price growth is somewhat at odds with signs that housing market activity has slowed in recent months. New buyer inquiries have softened as a result of the introduction of additional stamp duty on second homes in April and the uncertainty surrounding the EU referendum. The number of mortgages approved for house purchase fell to an 18-month low in July."

"However, the decline in demand appears to have been matched by weakness on the supply side of the market. Surveyors report that instructions to sell have also declined and the stock of properties on the market remains close to 30-year lows.



This helps to explain why the pace of house price growth has remained broadly stable."

He said the outlook for the housing market depended to a large extent on what happens in the job market along with confidence among potential buyers. Business surveys suggest that the manufacturing, services and construction industries all slowed sharply in July, which if sustained is likely to have a negative impact on the labor market and consumer confidence.

The Bank of England's recent stimulus package, including an interest rate cut to a new record low of 0.25 percent on 4

August, should provide some support for households and the housing market. However, Gardner noted that the proportion of mortgage balances on variable rates was lower than average at present (45 percent versus an average of 60 percent since 2001) and the typical saving from a quarter-point cut in interest rates is about £15 a month.

The Bank's decision to buy an additional £60bn of UK government bonds will put downward pressure on long-term interest rates, which will, in turn, help to lower the cost of fixed rate mortgages, which have already declined to new all-time lows, he added.

Samuel Tombs, chief UK economist at Pantheon Macroeconomics, noted that the Nationwide data was "incongruous to all the other noises from the housing market". For instance, the net balance of surveyors reporting that prices increased over the previous three months slumped to +5 in July, from an average of +36 in the first half of 2016, according to the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. The Nationwide measure is based only on the lender's mortgage offers, so it is susceptible to sampling issues, he said.

Tombs said the annual growth rate on the Nationwide measure of house prices was not always an accurate guide to the official data. (Source: The Guardian)

NEWS IN BRIEF

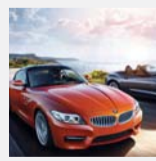


### Apple ordered by EU to repay \$14.5b in Irish tax breaks

EU says tax deal with Ireland allowed Apple to pay almost zero tax on European profits between 2003 and 2014.

The European Union's antitrust regulator has demanded that Ireland recoup roughly €13 billion (\$14.5 billion) of unpaid taxes accumulated over more than a decade by Apple Incorporation, a move that intensifies a feud between the EU and the U.S. over the bloc's tax probes into American companies.

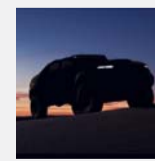
The size of the tax demand, which came in a formal decision issued Tuesday, risks further unsettling multinational companies, which face a broader international effort to curb aggressive tax avoidance.



### BMW working on the successor of the Z4 in collaboration with Toyota

It was already known that BMW was planning to end production of the Z4 at the Regensburg plant and now an online report has confirmed it. The second-generation BMW Z4, which was launched in 2009, was known for its sportier design. BMW has sold a total of 1.15 lakh units of the second-generation Z4. The Z4 will be succeeded with an all-new car that will be a result of a collaboration between BMW and Toyota.

The new sports car, which is reportedly named Z5, will arrive in 2019. The underpinnings of this car will also form the base of Toyota's new-generation car. Toyota is believed to revive the model name 'Supra' for the same. Test mules of this new-generation sports car have already been spotted in Sweden.



### General Motors reveals a Chevrolet Colorado Pickup that runs on hydrogen

General Motors released a teaser image on Tuesday of the hydrogen-powered pickup truck it is developing with the U.S. Army.

The fuel cell version of the Chevrolet Colorado compact pickup will be revealed at an October meeting of the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) in Washington, D.C.

G.M. is working with the Warren, Mich.-based U.S. Army Tank Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center (TARDEC) to advance its research into fuel cell stacks, which power vehicles by converting hydrogen to electricity, enabling them to travel longer distances than traditional battery-powered EVs.



# ACD summit in Tabriz underlines tourism boom across Asia

**TOURISM TEHRAN** — Over 20 desk ministers and high-ranking officials, who attended the 1st Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Ministerial Meeting on Tourism in the Iranian city of Tabriz on August 29 and 30, have unanimously proclaimed decision for widening multilateral cooperation in a bid to develop the industry across the continent.

In the final statement of the summit, the officials also stressed the need to devise procedures that will lead to sustainable growth in the sector among the member states.

Ecotourism, security measures, empowering local activists in tourism industry, eliminating poverty, ecosystem changes, and the share of global tourist arrivals were amongst the topics discussed during the two-day meeting.

Attendees from China, Thailand, Qatar, Singapore, Bangladesh and several other countries also approved to form several taskforces in order to scrutinize strategies that points to growing tourism industry and ease in tourist arrivals throughout Asia.

The Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization of Iran presided over the conference which was initiated by Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif during the 14th ACD Ministerial Meeting, which was held earlier in March in Bangkok.



High-ranking Asian officials come together during the 1st ACD Ministerial Meeting on Tourism at Kaya Laleh Park Hotel in northwestern Iranian city of Tabriz on August 30, 2016.

ACD was inaugurated in June 2002 in Cha-Am, Thailand, where 18 Asian foreign ministers met together for the first time. It aims to constitute the missing link in Asia by incorporating every Asian

country and building an Asian community without duplicating other organizations or creating a bloc against others.

The ACD members say 65 percent surge of Asian outbound tourists during the last dec-

ade as well as the continuance of its expansion during the coming years ahead along with an ever increasing 34 percent of international tourists to Asia have positioned the continent as the significant tourism market in the world.

## Central Bank to host handicraft exhibit

**HERITAGE TEHRAN** — A range of Iranian handicrafts will go on display during an exhibit, which will be held at the Central Bank of Iran from September 3 to 7, the Persian service of MNA reported on Tuesday.

The event is slated to feature metalwork, potteries, ceramics, glasswork, jewelry, kilims (flat tapestry-woven carpets) as well as artworks of marquetry, enamel and turquoise, and inlay by 12 artists and artisans who are

native to the provinces of Isfahan, East Azarbaijan, Alborz and Tehran.

The exhibit is part of the scheme that the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization initiated earlier in May to uphold artisans who are active in the sector by setting up temporary market stalls in some state-run institutes.

The Central Bank of Iran is located at No. 198, Mir-damad Blvd., northern Tehran.



PICTURE OF THE DAY © CHTN/Morteza Lotfollahi



Iran's Cultural Heritage Tourism and Handicrafts Organization Director Masud Soltanifar talks to Thai Minister of Tourism and Sports Kobkarn Wattanavrangkul on the sidelines of the 1st ACD Ministerial Meeting on Tourism in Tabriz, Iran on August 30, 2016.

## ICG says tourism bookings recover after Brexit wobble

Irish Continental Group said the Brexit vote "shock" had a brief impact on tourism bookings, but they have since recovered, as the ferry operator reported a 19.6 per cent increase in earnings for the first half.

Earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization (ebitda) rose to €30.5 million from €25.5 million for the same period last year as car carried on its ships increased 5.5 per cent and roll-on, roll-off (RoRo) freight volumes gained 5.6 per cent.

Container volumes shipped during the period rose 7.4 per cent, it said.

"The uncertainty arising from the result of the UK referendum on European Union membership held on 23 June 2016 had an initial negative impact on UK consumer demand," ICG said. "The demand situation seems to have settled now as the initial shock of the Referendum result has waned although the negative sterling impact on yields remains."

The company said the outlook for the remainder of the year "is for a continuation of the overall business momentum seen to date, with some easing in our tourism revenues, growth in our RoRo and LoLo (lift-on, lift-off) revenue and increased contribution" from charter-

ing ships to third parties.

Total revenues rose by 5.2 per cent on the year to €150 million, while basic earnings per share increased 32 per cent to 10.3 cents. ICG will pay out 3.82 cent dividend for the first half, up 5 per cent on its last interim dividend.

"These as strong numbers from ICG, albeit they required some discounting by ICG in the car market, and the business will of course be hit by sterling translation issues this year," said Stephen Furlong, an analyst with stockbroker Davy.

(Source: The Irish times)

## Adventure tourism brings thousands to Zambia

**TEHRAN (Press TV)** — Adventure tourism in Zambia, enthusiasts can do everything from rafting the 'Zambezi River' to bungee jumping at Victoria Falls.

Officials say Zambia has a well established reputation among adrena-

line junkies. Micro-lighting is one of several of extreme sports on offer at Victoria Falls.

Passengers can rest assured that in the unlikely event of engine failure the micro-light can safely glide and land.

Other activities at Victoria Falls

Bridge include abseiling and a 240-meter zip line from one end of the gorge to the bridge.

Victoria Falls is a major African extreme sport hub that is also a gateway to wildlife viewing in reserves and parks in the area.



An aerial view of Victoria Falls

## UNDER VISITORS' EYES

### Manouchehri House: A boutique hotel on the margins of desert

**TOURISM TEHRAN** — Once a traditional merchant edifice, the Manouchehri House has been a lavishly renovated boutique hotel in the oasis city of Kashan, sprawled on the margins of the central Iranian desert.

Fostered by a desire for design and yet a profound respect for its history, this private residence has been brought back to life with the latest in modern amenities and highest standards of historic preservation.



The Manouchehri House offers eight private guest rooms overlooking a relatively vast courtyard that features a reflecting pool flanked by gardens. Guests are welcomed with a refreshment in the lobby outfitted with traditional Iranian furnishings and showcasing an art gallery in the atrium above.

Kashan is internationally famous as a meeting point of traditional Persian architecture and craftsmanship.

The people in charge of the house say that their consistent dedication and passionate teamwork has made it an exemplar of success in restoration of historic houses.

In what follows, some comments posted to tripadvisor.com by visitors to the house has been given:

#### ■ "Everything is just right"

It's worth stopping in Kashan just to stay at the Manouchehri House. I stayed here with some friends for two nights in July. Everything about this place is just right.

The renovations have been carried out the highest standards, creating an atmosphere of relaxed elegance. We stayed in room 106, decorated in traditional style with a small balcony overlooking the central courtyard where fig and pomegranate trees surround the reflecting pool...

If you are travelling the road from Tehran to Isfahan, stop in Kashan, stay the night in the Manouchehri House, take a tour to the Fin Gardens and the bazaar. You'll thank me for the advice.

(Paraig from Dublin, Ireland, stayed July 2016)

#### ■ "Extraordinary well renovated old house"

At the end of our tour in Iran we finally had this nice charming hotel beautifully renovated, there is a garden and you can relax listening to the sound of water...

We had dinner and the food was excellent. In this kind of hotels all the rooms are placed around the garden and the pool, we even had a balcony.

(Momolacrevette from Lasne, Belgium, stayed May 2016)

#### ■ "Nice traditional hotel, helpful tour guide"

I contacted this hotel before our arrival to Iran and they offered us the airport pickup which was a relief because I was kind of nervous for that...

When we got to the hotel we were received nicely by the staff. The hotel was really nice with a peaceful environment and a nice traditional garden in the middle. Our room was clean and luxurious. Breakfast was also nice but with little options...

(Grace20 from Australia, stayed April 2016)

#### ■ "Traditional with modern conveniences"

A fantastic cozy hotel, beautiful traditional rooms and restaurant, outdoor cafe traditional style, great food, fabric weaving room tutored by the last remaining professionals in the field, great gift store, great staff, fantastic tour guides, private cinema

(Seti G. from New York, stayed November 2015)

## NOTABLES

### Lydia Maria Child: American abolitionist, women's rights activist

The youngest of seven children born to an abolitionist family in 1802, Lydia Maria Child spent her life advocating for the rights of slaves and women.

Given the title "The First Lady of the Republic" by admirers including abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison, Child's writings dispelled ideas that African-Americans were a lower class.

Her book *An Appeal in Favor of that Class of Americans Called Africans*, advocated education for African Americans and has often been cited as the first anti-slavery publication. She joined the American Anti-Slavery Society and she and her husband edited the *National Anti-Slavery Standard* from 1841-1844.

Child was also a founding member of the Massachusetts Women's Suffrage Association and authored *The History of the Conditions of Women in Various Ages and Nations*, a publication that went on to influence the next generation of suffragists.

In addition to her activist work, Child also founded the country's first children's magazine, *Juvenile Miscellany*, and wrote many volumes dedicated to domestic endeavors.

(Source: National Women's Hall of Fame)





## FEATURE

## Iraq's neglected children

UNICEF: 1 in 5 Iraqi children are currently at a "serious risk of death, injury, abduction and recruitment into armed groups"

Up to 50 per cent of Iraq's population is under 19 years old, according to the United Nations Development Program. The population is getting younger. Under 19s in Iraq, those born after 1997, would have been at most six when the U.S.-led coalition invaded the country, their earliest memories are clouded by war, violence and destruction. In the 13 years after the invasion, peace has been a word missing from the Iraqi vocabu-



lary. According to a study by the Lancet, approximately one million innocent Iraqi civilians have died as a direct consequence of the war. This violence is rapidly on the rise and the Iraqi Body Count states that civilian deaths have doubled year-on-year. Last month saw the largest act of terror in Baghdad since the start of the war, with over 300 innocent lives lost in one day. The significant impact this is having on Iraq's younger generation is sadly overlooked.

#### Need of humanitarian assistance

Iraq has a population of 33 million. Of these, according to a UNICEF report published last month, 3.6 million children, 1 in 5, are currently at a "serious risk of death, injury, abduction and recruitment into armed groups". A third of all of Iraq's children, 4.7 million, are currently in need of humanitarian assistance. That is not to mention the rest living in constant fear of unexpected bombings throughout the country, confining children to playing indoors. This continual interaction with violence has resulted in a limitation in their imagination. In the markets the majority of children's toys for sale are weapons; replica AK-47s or grenades. It is impossible in Iraq to walk more than five minutes without coming across an actual AK-47 or a poster showing someone carrying one, so it is unsurprising that children want to play with them. Ayman Al-Amiri, a 21-year-old photographer, recalled how on more than one occasion when he was 12 he would see dead bodies on his morning commute to school. He explained how after that moment all his future dreams ended and the fear of sectarianism entered into his mind for the first time. The question does arise; will such a pre-occupation with violence in childhood result in violent habits when older?

#### The impact of direct violence

The impact of direct violence on children as they grow up has been thoroughly documented in medical journals. A severe impact on long-term mental health has been highlighted secondary to violence, including post-traumatic stress disorder, victimisation, depression and bedwetting. Despite the known issues and the high demand for treating childhood psychiatric conditions, there is a severe lack of psychiatrists in Iraq with only nearly 100 qualified mental health doctors available in the country. This leaves limited hope for the future of the many children affected by violence.

In the 13 years since the fall of Saddam Hussein, Iraq has never passed through a period of prolonged peace. One doctor explained, since the U.S.-led invasion, "the majority of Iraqis have understood democracy as taking the law into your own hands." Therefore, minimal respect for law is noted within Iraq.

The new generation, since the U.S.-led invasion, have never lived through a system where respecting the law and the government exists. As these children grow into adults, Iraq is likely to fall into further anarchy.

#### Orphan Homes

One organization, The House of Hope, headed by Hisham Al-Dhahaby, has been set up to look after the orphans of Baghdad. Where most orphanages are called "Orphan Homes" in Baghdad, Al-Dhahaby refuses to call the children orphans, in order to fully integrate them into society and prevent a victim mentality.

Al-Dhahaby said his biggest fear about the children's future is "their preoccupation with violence and weapons scares me."

"Children are the weakest members of our society; they have been recruited by Al-Qaeda, ISIL and other groups to fight their wars. This is why we have to focus on the future of the country by focusing on our children," he explained using another acronym for Daesh.

Nelson Mandela once famously said: "There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children." Sadly, the children of Iraq are being neglected. Their potential is slowly being destroyed and Iraq is likely to see itself go through worse times before any kind of improvement occurs.

(Source: middleeastmonitor.com)

**Despite the known issues and the high demand for treating childhood psychiatric conditions, there is a severe lack of psychiatrists in Iraq with only nearly 100 qualified mental health doctors available in the country. This leaves limited hope for the future of the many children affected by violence.**

By Chris Patten

Britain's new Prime Minister, Theresa May, has a monumental task ahead of her: fulfilling British – or, more accurately, English and Welsh – voters' demand to "Brexit" the European Union, and managing the far-reaching consequences of that effort. Her challenge dwarfs those faced by her recent predecessors. But she may well be up to it.

No one should underestimate May. Like German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who has proved her mettle in successive crises, May has all the tools she needs to get things done. She is clever and tough, with little patience for nonsense. She has a strong sense of public service, and an equally strong set of values. She carries little ideological baggage, and is adept at staying in control, operating within self-imposed boundaries that keep her on familiar terrain.

May wins most of the battles she fights, and shows little mercy to those who have used underhanded tactics against her. Yet she has few known enemies within her party and is popular with its rank and file. It is a robust combination – one that she will need to use fully as she attempts to lead Britain out of the EU.

#### Brexit means Brexit

And make no mistake: Britain is on its way out. May has repeatedly stated that there can be no going back on the vote to leave, even though Scotland and Northern Ireland voted to stay. "Brexit means Brexit," she insists, with her ministers echoing her refrain.

But May has yet to elucidate precisely how she defines Brexit. That's the hard part.

Imagine if someone told you, "Breakfast means breakfast," and then headed off to prepare your meal. You would have little idea what you were actually going to eat. A Northern Irish "Ulster fry-up" – eggs, bacon, pork sausage, black pudding, potato and soda bread, and a fried tomato – with a cup of tea? Coffee and a pastry? Depending on your circumstances and preferences, you would probably feel very differently about the various possibilities.

The same goes for Brexit. Some are concerned primarily with stopping EU labor from entering the United Kingdom. Others are focused on maintain-

# May's Day

**The reality, so often ignored by the Brexiteers, is that the EU is not going to offer something for nothing.**



ing access to the single market. But, unlike a breakfast, Britain can't just demand everything on the menu.

The reality, so often ignored by the Brexiteers, is that the EU is not going to offer something for nothing. That is not because its leaders want to score points, or punish the UK for rejecting the EU (sometimes with inflammatory rhetoric, as when Britain's new foreign secretary, Boris Johnson, referred to its "Hitlerian imperialism"). Rather, as we British tend to forget, everyone – including the EU and each of its member states – has their own political or commercial interests, which they are committed to protect.

For May, a central challenge over

the next few months will be to determine what, realistically, Britain should be seeking when it begins the laborious negotiations on its relationship with Europe (and, on the trade front, with the world). Given the scope of the agenda (I can think of at least six major topics that will demand their own negotiations), the process could take several years. (My 11-year-old granddaughter could be starting university by the time they conclude!) Clear priorities will be essential to keep them from dragging on even longer.

The goal, of course, must be to strike a balance between ensuring access to the rest of Europe for British exporters of goods and services (especially finan-

**For May, a central challenge over the next few months will be to determine what, realistically, Britain should be seeking when it begins the laborious negotiations on its relationship with Europe**

## Will Egypt offer asylum to Gulen?

Egyptian politicians and media figures are calling on their government to grant political asylum to Fethullah Gulen and supporters of the Gulen movement.

The Turkish government accuses Gulen, a Turkish cleric who lives in the United States, of being behind the failed July 15 coup in Turkey, and is calling on American authorities to extradite him.

Egyptian parliamentarian Imad Mahrous recently presented a draft statement to his government proposing political asylum for Gulen. After discussions with a number of parliament members, he told Al-Monitor by phone, "The Egyptian government was not opposed to granting Gulen and his supporters political asylum."

#### The idea of hosting Gulen

He added that the idea of hosting Gulen will be accepted "not only among the official circles of the Egyptian government, but at the popular level as well, along with wide swaths of Egyptian society that believe him to be a modern man of faith who repudiates religious extremism and believes in the importance of dialogue and tolerance."

Turkey's Justice Ministry and Foreign Ministry have both officially requested Gulen's extradition from the United States. Gulen moved to the Poconos region of Pennsylvania in 1999. A number of his students followed him to the area.

Orhan Kaskin is a Turkish businessman residing in Egypt who founded a series of international schools affiliated with the Gulen movement inside Egypt. He dismisses the possibility that Gulen might relocate from his voluntary exile in Pennsylvania to anywhere else.

American authorities, according to Kaskin, "understand that the movement's activities are peaceful and undertaken in hundreds of countries around the world."

Kaskin, who has lived in Egypt since the early 2000s, said that many countries seek to host Gulen, despite the recent tensions.

Ishaq Inci, the chief editor of the Turkish publication Zaman Arabic, known for its ties to Gulen, said in a phone conversation with Al-Monitor that Gulenists "enjoy stability inside Egypt; we can safely move about, and we have found Egyptian officials welcoming of our presence on Egyptian territory." He added, "Presi-



dent Abdel Fattah al-Sisi is a respectable president who behaves like a true head of state in his foreign policies."

Inci, who resides in Egypt, said, "Thousands of Turks will flee from Turkish territory to escape the ongoing violations perpetrated by Erdogan's oppressive administration toward anyone who belongs to Gulen's movement."

Inci said the Gulen movement "has not suffered any constriction in its presence inside Egypt recently at the hands of Egyptian authorities, which confirms there are no ties between us and Erdogan." He anticipates that in the near term "many of the movement's followers will be transferred to Egypt, especially given the state of political and security stability in Egypt."

Gulen's movement may be benefiting from the political strains between Turkey and Egypt, according to Bashir Abdel-Fattah, a researcher at the Al-Ahram Center for Strategic Studies.

"Many high-ranking members of the Muslim Brotherhood have taken refuge in Turkey," and now many in Egypt wish to return the favor, he said. However, in his view Egypt's foreign policy with Turkey must transcend these political spats, particularly since Egypt's problem with Turkey is limited solely to the fact that Erdogan remains in power.

Abdel-Fattah also told Al-Monitor, "The security agreements that relate to extraditing suspects between Turkey and the United States prevent America from extraditing Gulen. The United States is unlikely to take this step in any event, because they view Gulen as being a more modern version of political Islam that can curb extreme elements on a religious level." (Source: Al Monitor)

## No, Donald Trump, America isn't a hellhole

Donald Trump has taken a strange turn lately. O.K., he has taken a lot of strange turns -- that's what happens when you nominate a short-attention-span candidate who knows nothing about policy and refuses to sit still for more than three minutes. But never mind what passes for Trumpian policy ideas. What's odd is the shift in what the problem is supposed to be.

When the Trump campaign started, it was, at least nominally, about economics. Foreigners are stealing your jobs, the candidate declared, both through unfair trade and by coming here as immigrants. And he would make America great again with punitive described as a terrifying crime wave.

That theme has continued in recent weeks, with Mr. Trump's "outreach" to minority voters. His notion of a pitch to these voters is to tell them how horrible their lives are, that they are facing "crime at levels that nobody has seen." Even "war zones," he says, are "safer than living in some of our inner cities."

Back when the Trump campaign was ostensibly about the loss of middle-class jobs, it was at least pretending to be about a real issue: Employment in manufacturing really is way down; real wages of blue-collar workers have fallen. You could say that Trumpism isn't the answer (it isn't), but not that the issue was a figment of the candidate's imagination.

#### Runaway crimes in U.S.

But when Mr. Trump portrays America's cities as hellholes of runaway crime and social collapse, what on earth is he talking about? Urban life is one of the things that has gone right with America. In fact, it has gone so right that those of us who remember the bad old days still find it hard to believe.

Let's talk specifically about violent crime. Consider, in particular, the murder rate, arguably the most solid indicator for long-run comparisons because there's no ambiguity about definitions.

Homicides did shoot up between the early 1960s and the 1980s, and images of a future dystopia — think "Escape From New York" (1981) or Blade Runner (1982) — became a staple of popular culture. Conservative writers assured us that soaring crime was the inevitable result of a collapse in traditional values and

cial services) and limiting the movement of EU citizens into Britain. The more the negotiators secure in one area, the more they will have to compromise elsewhere.

May will have to muster all of her considerable knowledge, skill, and political capital to negotiate a reasonable deal. But even if she succeeds, she may find that not just some people are dissatisfied — an unavoidable outcome — but that everyone is.

#### Brexit campaign

That would compound another major challenge facing May's government: narrowing the yawning divide in British society that the Brexit campaign exposed.

The Brexit vote was driven by the blue-collar workers of England's North and Midlands, who have long felt alienated from their political leaders, left behind by globalization, and marginalized by its perceived agent, the EU. Metropolitan England — especially London — may have benefited, but they did not.

Lacking faith in a Labour Party that is melting down under its left-wing leader Jeremy Corbyn, many members of this group fell prey to the populist promises of the Brexiteers. "We will reverse globalization," they declared. "We will turn away the migrants who are suppressing your wages, and redirect millions of pounds from the EU to public services." Brexit, they pledged, would return Britain to a safer and more prosperous past.

The promises were false. Globalization cannot be undone, and migration from the EU cannot be cut off. Any attempt to do so would devastate UK businesses. Even if a faltering economy leads to falling immigration, the workers who voted for Brexit will probably find, frustratingly, that low-paid jobs are still low paid, and that their public services are still under pressure. This is unlikely to boost social cohesion.

The Brexit vote has unleashed a storm of populist sentiment that will be difficult to control. Just as Donald Trump will not make his working-class constituents better off in the United States, Brexit will utterly fail to benefit those who chose it — no matter what it looks like. That is the one challenge that May, despite all of her assets, may not be able to overcome.

(Source: project-syndicate.org)



that things would get even worse unless those values were restored.

#### Crime has plunged

Basically, American cities are as safe as they've ever been. Nobody is completely sure why crime has plunged, but the point is that the nightmare landscape of the Republican candidate's rhetoric — call it Trump's hellhole? — bears no resemblance to reality.

And we're not just talking about statistics here; we're also talking about lived experience. Fear of crime hasn't disappeared from American life — today's New York is incredibly safe by historical standards, yet I still wouldn't walk around some areas at 3 a.m. But fear clearly plays a much diminished role now in daily life.

So what is all of this about? The same thing everything in the Trump campaign is about: race.

I used scare quotes when talking about Mr. Trump's racial "outreach" because it's clear that the real purpose of his vaguely conciliatory rhetoric is not so much to attract nonwhite voters as it is to reassure squeamish whites that he isn't as racist as he seems. But here's the thing: Even when he is trying to sound racially inclusive, his imagery is permeated by an "alt-right" sensibility that fundamentally sees nonwhites as subhuman.

Thus when he asks African-Americans, "What do you have to lose by trying something new, like Trump?" he betrays ignorance of the reality that most African-Americans work hard for a living and that there is a large black middle class. Oh, and 86 percent of nonelderly black adults have health insurance, up from 73 percent in 2010 than

(Source: The New York Times)



# IOC raises oil import from Iran to 5 MT for FY 2017

Indian Oil Corp, the nation's biggest oil firm, has raised crude oil import from Iran to four fold and has cleared most of the past payments as sanctions against the Persian Gulf nation were eased.

"We have contracted to import 5 million tons (MT) of crude oil from Iran in 2016-17, up from 1.2 MT," IOCBSE 0.22 percent Director (Finance) A K Sharma said here.

India has steadily raised crude oil imports from Iran after U.S. sanctions were lifted in January this year. Iran today is India's fourth biggest crude oil supplier.

Iran, which was India's second biggest supplier of crude oil after Saudi Arabia till 2010-11, had been relegated to 7th place in 2013-14 and 2014-15 out of the 50-odd nations India sources its crude oil from.

But with the lifting of sanctions in January this year, crude oil imports have steadily climbed. India imported 12.7 MT of crude oil in 2015-16, up from 11 MT in the previous two fiscals.



In April-June this year, India bought 5 MT of crude oil from Iran, making it the fourth largest supplier just a shade behind Venezuela which exported 5.2 MT. Iran had in 2009-10 supplied 21.2 MT

which came down to 18.5 MT in 2010-11 and to 18.1 MT in the year after.

Sharma said imports from Iran were going exactly in line with the plans. "Month-wise lifting is in line with the 5 MT

contracted volume," he said.

IOC Director (Refineries) Sanjiv Singh said the company had paid \$510 million out of the total outstanding of \$621 million due to Iran in past oil dues.

Sanctions had blocked payment routes and dues had accumulated over the past couple of years.

After accounting for the exchange variations, the total outstanding due is only \$55 million now, he said.

Iraq this year has overtaken Saudi Arabia as India's top oil exporter. It sold 11 MT of crude oil to India during April-June, higher than 10 MT sourced from Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia has been India's top supplier of crude oil - selling 35 MT of oil in 2014-15 and 40.04 MT in 2015-16.

During the first three months of current fiscal, India imported 53.2 MT of crude oil, 65 percent of which came from the volatile Middle East region. India imports about 80 percent of its oil needs.

(Source: The Economic Times)

## NEWS

### France plans tender for 3 GW of solar plants by 2020

France announced an upcoming tender for 3 gigawatts (GW) of solar power plants.

Energy Minister Segolene Royal put out a request for project proposals for solar farms, according to a statement on the ministry's website. It is seeking six projects with 500 megawatts (MW) of capacity apiece.

The solar farms will be built between 2017 and 2020. Winners of the tender will be paid a premium on top of their electricity sales revenue from the wholesale power market by the state. The support mechanism, known as "Additional Renumeration" was passed in May.

France has set a target to increase capacity from 6.7 GW to 10.2 GW by the end of 2018 and to 20.2 GW by 2023.

(Source: Bloomberg)

### Reforming the energy consumption patterns discussed in SUNA

The second session of the Working Group meeting on Article 5 of the law on Amending Article 61 regarding the regulation on reforming the consumption patterns was held in the Renewable Energy Organization of Iran with the presence of board of directors and the managing director of Renewable Energy Organization of Iran (SUNA), accompanied by the deputies, advisers and experts of this organization, secretary of Renewable Energy development staff, representatives of the ministry of the Interior (municipalities and VA's offices) and a representative from the environmental protection organization.

According to the report from the Public Relations of Renewable Energy Organization of Iran (SUNA), review and approval of the increasing coefficient for the base rate of guaranteed power purchase from waste incineration power plants of private sector, subject to Article 5 of the law on Amending Article 61 on regulation of reforming the consumption patterns was the agenda of the meeting. It was recommended that, for financing the waste incineration facilities by the private sector, 300 Rials in major cities and 150 Rials in other cities per kilogram will be supplied by municipalities and VA's offices. It was decided that in case of insufficient amount for making these types of power plants economical, the difference will be supplied through a recommendation by Minister of Energy and Minister of Interior, Deputy of Science and Technology Presidency and the head of Environmental Protection Organization.

(Source: SUNA)

## Iraq pledges to support an OPEC freeze deal, shifting its stance

Iraq would support a proposal for OPEC and other major oil producers to freeze output at talks in Algeria next month, Prime Minister Haidar Al-Abadi said in Baghdad.

The endorsement marks a slight shift by Al-Abadi, who was quoted by Reuters on August 23 saying that Iraq still hadn't raised production sufficiently. The country's deputy oil minister, Fayyad Al-Nima, said the following day that Iraq would support measures to establish fair crude prices.

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries will hold informal talks during an industry conference in Algiers in September, fanning specula-

tion the group could revive an initiative with non-members such as Russia to limit output. A previous attempt collapsed in April amid political tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

"Our opinion is to freeze output to support prices," Al-Abadi said. "The drop in oil prices is causing volatility and this is harming Iraq because our revenues are based on oil."

Iraq is the second-biggest member of OPEC, whose other major producers have signaled only qualified backing for an output accord.

#### Saudi, Iran

Saudi Arabian Energy Minister Khalid Al-Falih said August 26 that while a

freeze would be "positive" for market sentiment, no "intervention of significance" is required as global markets are rebalancing by themselves.

Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said that the country expects to recover its market share -- eroded during years of international sanctions -- as a condition of co-operating with OPEC, according to an August 26 report by news service Shana.

OPEC gave Iraq an exemption from the individual quotas imposed on members from 1998 as the country contended with years of sanctions and war. While Iraq has boosted output in recent years after signing deals with

international companies, its production was still below capacity in July, according to the International Energy Agency.

Iraq has shown more willingness to co-operate with OPEC as the plunge in oil prices -- down 50 percent since 2014 -- and the war battered its finances. The country has secured a \$5.3 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund to stabilize its reeling economy.

The nation's current expansion plans may be difficult to reconcile with a production freeze. Iraq told international oil companies to boost output after reversing previous instructions to cut investment, Iraq Oil Report said August 23.

(Source: Bloomberg)

#### PICTURE OF THE DAY SHANA/Nazila Haghghati



Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh (R) received Lebanese Minister of Industry Hussein al-Haj Hassan in his Tehran office on

## Lebanon eyes buying oil products from Iran

**ECONOMY TEHRAN** — Lebanon is interested in buying fuel oil and gas oil from Iran, Iranian Deputy Oil Minister for International Affairs and Trading Amirhossein Zamaninia was quoted by Shana as saying on Tuesday.

According to Shana, Zamaninia made the remarks on the sidelines of Lebanese Minister of Industry Hussein al-Haj Hassan's visit to Tehran and his meeting with Iran's oil minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh.

In his meeting with Hassan, Zanganeh noted that Iran is willing to cooperate with Lebanon in various fields, one of which could be oil and gas.

According to Tasnim news agency, the Lebanese minister visited Iran heading a 70-member high-ranking trade delegation to attend Iran-Lebanon Joint Economic Committee meeting in Tehran.

Iran-Lebanon Joint Economic Committee was launched in Iranian calendar year of 1391 (March 2012-March 2013) and has so far held six rounds of meetings.

## Oil slips on dollar strength, still set for monthly gain

Crude oil prices slid on Wednesday, pressured by a strong U.S. dollar and high stocks of physical oil, though prices remained on track for a monthly gain of more than 10 percent.

Brent crude oil futures were trading at \$48 per barrel at 0829 GMT (0429 ET), down 37 cents from the previous close, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures were down 21 cents at \$46.14.

Oil prices had rallied by more than 20 percent from the beginning of August on hopes that producers were reviving talks on a possible output freeze, setting prices on course for their largest monthly gains since April.

Analysts, however, said the focus had shifted to physical market fundamentals, which remained shaky.

"The market is getting tired of those headlines," Olivier Jakob, managing di-

rector of Swiss-based consultant Petro-Matrix, said of a potential production freeze.

"Fundamentally, there is not a lot to support oil because the stocks are still at very high levels," he said.

On Wednesday Saudi Arabian energy minister Khalid al-Falih said that the top crude exporter does not have a specific target figure for its oil production and that its output depends on the needs of its customers.

Yet high oil stocks could limit any quick recovery in prices. U.S. crude stocks rose by 942,000 barrels to 525.2 million barrels in the week to August 26, data from industry group the American Petroleum Institute showed on Tuesday. Official U.S. oil inventories data from the Energy Information Administration is due on Wednesday.

(Source: Reuters)

## Asia's July Iran oil imports rise 61% from a year ago

Imports of Iranian oil by four major buyers in Asia in July jumped 61.1 percent from a year earlier, marking the biggest percentage gain since April 2014, reflecting Tehran's moves to recoup market share, lost under international sanctions.

Iran is regaining market share at a faster pace than analysts had projected since sanctions were lifted in January, and Iran's senior government official said it sees its oil production at 4 million barrels per day by year-end.

The four countries, South Korea, Japan, China and India, imported 1.64 million barrels per day (bpd) in July, government and ship-tracking data showed.

Japan's trade ministry on Wednesday released official data showing its imports jumped 61.8 percent from



a year earlier to 256,651 bpd last month.

Imports by South Korea jumped more than fourfold last month, while India's imports more than doubled from a year ago.

(Source: Reuters)

## Exxon Mobil preparing to put Montana refinery on block: sources

Exxon Mobil Corp is in the first stages of seeking a potential buyer for its Billings, Montana, refinery, one of the company's only U.S. plants that is not integrated with its chemical operations, according to people familiar with the plans.

At least one potential bidder has already visited the 60,000 barrel-per-day (bpd) plant, according to two people, who spoke on the condition of anonymity. The refinery could fetch \$500 million to \$700 million, according to a person familiar with refinery valuations.

Exxon said it did not comment on rumors or speculation, adding it "regularly evaluates its global portfolio of businesses and opportunities for growth, restructuring or divestment, in accordance with the company's overall strategic business objectives."

They added that the company "remains committed to conducting business in Montana, as it has for more than 40 years."

Majors, including Chevron Corp and Exxon, have been shedding smaller refineries that are not integrated with their production or chemicals systems.

(Source: Reuters)

## Statoil to drill Norway's northernmost oil well next year

Oil firm Statoil will drill Norway's northernmost oil well next year in the Barents Sea, where it believes a significant oil discovery can be made, an executive said on Tuesday.

Statoil will drill the Korpjell prospect 418 km (260 miles) north of mainland Norway next year as part of its exploration campaign in the Norwegian Arctic in 2017.

"It is a high-impact well," Statoil's head of exploration, Tim Dodson, told Reuters on the sidelines of an oil conference in Stavanger, Norway.

Statoil defines a high-impact well as one that has the potential to provide a total of more than 250 million barrels of oil equivalent (boe) to Statoil and any partners, or 100 million boe net to Statoil alone.

Overall, Statoil will drill up to seven wells in the Norwegian Arctic next year and Dodson said two other prospects - Koigen Central and Gemini North - were also expected to be high-impact wells.

"We believe there are good prospects of finding oil in Korpjell," Dodson earlier told a news conference.

Statoil's Arctic prospects are spread out across the Barents Sea so they can test different geological structures for oil and gas deposits.

Unlike other Arctic regions, the part of the Barents Sea where oil companies can drill is free of ice and as shallow as the North Sea.

(Source: Reuters)



# Pars Diplomatic Real Estate

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**Apt. in Farmanieh**  
280 sq.m, 4 bdrs, fully furn, pool,  
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**Mr.Arvin: 09128103207**

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300 sq.m, 3 bdrs, furn, nice  
balcony opposite to garden,  
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1200 sq.m built up, 5 bdrs, garden,  
outdoor pool, Pkg, servant,  
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700 sq.m built up in 2200 sq.m land, 5  
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yard, Pkg, renovated, *Suitable for  
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furn, renovated, pool,  
nice garden, 8000 USD

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International Bldg., *Good For  
Companies*,

Price: reasonable

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\$40 per sq.m

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**Mr.Arvin: 09128103207**

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semi furn, *Good access for  
gust house*, 1600 USD

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**Apt. in Andarzgoo**  
1<sup>st</sup> Fl., 90 sq.m, 2 bdrs, fully furn,  
Pkg, nice & cozy, \$1200

**Ms.Diba: 09128103206**

**Apt. in Farmanieh**  
160 sq.m, 2 bdrs, furn, \$2300

**Mr.Arvin: 09128103207**

**Apt. in Elahieh**  
200 sq.m, 3 bdrs, fully furn,  
balcony, nice view, \$2300

**Mr.Arvin: 09128103207**

**Apt. in Qeytarieh**  
120 sq.m, 2 bdrs, furn,  
View of park, nice & cozy,  
International Bldg., 1200 USD

**Ms.Diba: 09128103206**

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130 sq.m, 2 bdrs, furn, \$1700

**Mr.Arvin: 09128103207**

مالکین محترم  
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# Mosquitoes can pass Zika to their offspring

Mosquito-borne viruses, like dengue and chikungunya, tend to come in seasonal waves, flaring up in the summer or wet seasons, and fading in the winter or dry seasons. Zika is expected to behave similarly, though hopefully future flare-ups will be less intense than the current epidemic as people in affected populations develop immunity.

One way these diseases can survive the winter, even as mosquito populations dip, is in eggs. There is evidence that dengue, West Nile, and chikungunya can be vertically transmitted—that is, mosquitoes can sometimes pass the viruses along to their offspring. A new study published in the American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene has found evidence that Zika can also be vertically transmitted.

Researchers from the University of Texas Medical Branch infected populations of *Aedes aegypti*, the main vector for Zika, and *Aedes albopictus*, which can also spread the virus, but is less likely to bite humans. They collected the infected females' eggs, raised them, and then tested the adult offspring for Zika. In the

*Aedes aegypti*, some of the offspring tested positive, at a rate of 1 Zika-infected mosquito per 290 offspring. (None of the *Aedes albopictus* offspring had Zika, but the researchers tested fewer of them, and it's possible they have a small enough vertical transmission rate that the study just didn't pick it up.)

### High rate

That's not a very high rate, but when you consider that the population of *Aedes aegypti* in Zika-infected areas likely numbers in the millions, it's not insignificant.

Vertical transmission is "not going to change the epidemiology very much," says Robert Tesh, a professor of pathology at UTMB. "I think what it means is it's a way for the virus to overwinter. Here in Galveston, it's still quite warm now. We have *aegypti*. In October it'll start to get cool. But their eggs survive the winter. In April or March it'll start to warm up again and we'll get rain. The containers where the eggs are will fill with water, and you'll have another generation of mosquitoes. If even just a few of those eggs are infected, when the larvae hatch, they're



also infected."

As my colleague Adrienne LaFrance has reported, *Aedes aegypti* are notoriously hardy mosquitoes. They can breed in the tiniest amounts of water, and their eggs can survive for more than a year. This research underscores that spraying for adult mosquitoes may not be enough to get Zika under control. Larvicides can help get the bugs before they can bite,

but Tesh says those "don't necessarily kill the eggs, because they're often in protected places, and the eggshell of the *Aedes* is quite resistant."

Genetically modified (GM) mosquitoes could help, since they reduce the population by breeding with wild mosquitoes to create offspring that can't survive to adulthood.

(Source: The Atlantic)

## NEWS

### Heart failure in the elderly set to triple by 2060



Heart failure in the elderly is set to triple by 2060, according to new data from the Age, Gene/Environment Susceptibility (AGES).

"Heart failure is a common condition worldwide and increases with age," said lead author Professor Ragnar Danielsen, a cardiologist at Landspítali University Hospital in Reykjavik, Iceland.

"Various disorders can cause heart failure, such as coronary heart disease, hypertension, obesity and diabetes. As these are more prevalent with age the consequence is an increased population of elderly who may develop heart failure."

The AGES-Reykjavik study began in 2002 as a collaboration between the National Institute on Aging in the United States and the Icelandic Heart Association. The current analysis included data from 5706 randomly selected elderly participants who represented the total population of Iceland. The investigators used official government data from Statistics Iceland on the current size, sex and age distribution of the national population and its predictions up to 2060.

Combining these data, the study assessed the prevalence of heart failure in the elderly population and sought to predict the number of elderly people likely to have heart failure in the future.

Participants' age ranged from 66 to 98 years, the mean age being 77 years, and 58% were men. The prevalence of heart failure was 3.7% in the sexes combined, but it was higher in men, 4.8%, compared to 2.8% in women. The prevalence of heart failure increased with age, from 1.9% in those 69 years of age or younger, to 6% in those 80 years of age and older.

The number of elderly people according to age groups was estimated for the coming decades in both men and women, until 2060.

(Source: EurekAlert)

## Scientists deliver opioid-like pain relief without addiction risk

Scientists have created a drug that, in rhesus monkeys, can provide the same pain relief as opioid drugs, without the risk of addiction or other side effects.

Because a monkey's brain is so similar to the human brain, the drug is "highly expected to work in humans," said Mei-Chuan Ko, a professor of physiology and pharmacology at Wake Forest University School of Medicine, Winston-Salem, N.C., who led the study. He said that studies on humans could start in less than two years.

The research team said the new drug may one day provide relief for people with chronic pain while also quelling the rising abuse of opioids, which now account for the majority of drug-overdose deaths in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Their work appears on August 29 in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

Opioids have been used for centuries to provide pain relief. They include heroin, morphine, codeine, and pre-

scription drugs such as Vicodin and OxyContin. They work by reducing the intensity of pain signals reaching the brain, primarily by interfering with neuron cell receptors known as opioid receptors. A primary target for opioid drugs is a particular receptor called the mu opioid peptide receptor (MOP).

### Highly addictive

Opioids are highly addictive, however, because these same opioid receptors that respond to pain signals also involved in regulating emotional impulses such as the desire for reward, euphoria and cravings.

Previous research has found that drugs that target another neuron receptor called the nociceptin-orphanin FQ peptide receptor (NOP) can block the addictive effects of opioids. So, Ko and his colleagues took a dual approach by creating a drug analog that could simultaneously target both the MOP and NOP brain receptors to produce opioid-like pain relief while reducing the risk of addiction.

Stephen Husbands, a professor of medical chem-

istry at the University of Bath in England, created the dual-receptor-binding drug, called BU08028. Ko's group tested this in monkeys and indeed found that it produced pain relief with no signs of being addictive. The monkeys did not self-administer the drug as they typically would with opioids or other addictive substances such as cocaine, Ko told Live Science.

The drug analog BU08028 also had no apparent side effects, Ko said. In contrast, opioids can cause respiratory failure and cardiac arrest, major causes of death from opioid use. Ko said that BU08028 did not cause such side effects in monkeys even at 10- to 30-times the dose needed to relieve pain.

"Non-human primates such as rhesus monkeys have similar physiological responses to opioid analgesics like humans," Ko told Live Science. "They serve a surrogate species for humans in the research and development of opioid-related compounds."

(Source: Live Science)

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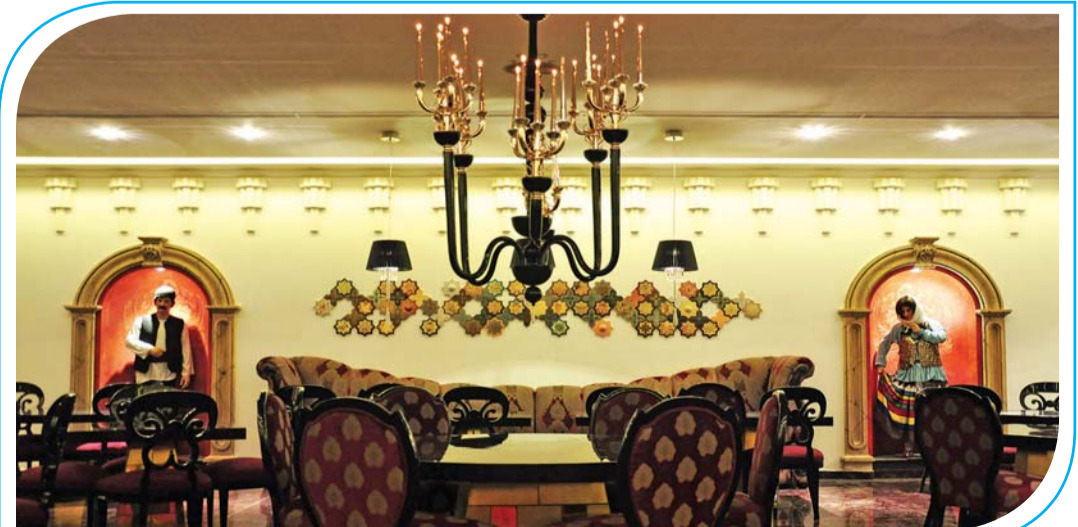
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PERSPECTIVE

**Sailors on the Ship Europa: No easy cruise ahead**

By Michael R. Czinkota

They say more marriages might survive if the couple realized that sometimes the better comes after the worse. Unfortunately, political partners tend to have little patience and loyalty. We have seen the referendum in Scotland that nearly tore the United Kingdom asunder. Now the British exit (BREXIT) from the European Union is rearranging the deck chairs on the ship Europa.



While sailors on the ship, marketers do not have the captain's power to change the game, but they can help to achieve a less painful adjustment by understanding and preparing for the major transformations and significant effects in marketing on both sides of the Atlantic.

Tinderboxes cannot only cause hot flames, but also carry the sparks for further conflicts. Even today, the confrontations in Syria or Turkey still reflect the inherent disharmony of the Sykes-Picot treaty, the century-old agreement between Britain and France which drew arbitrary borders for the Middle East. The accord weakened the Ottoman Empire as planned, yet caused enduring wars ever since.

Brexit is just as improvident—it reflects an unwillingness to accept large migration flows at present, a reluctance to cope with diversity in the long run, and an encouragement to others to demand special consideration. But who will be the beast of burden and at what price?

The economic relationship between the U.S. and Britain will weaken. The European Single Market (ESM) is single no more. The departure shifts the entire European unification from an outlook of optimism and growth to a fear of division. The value of the pound is likely to remain depressed as will the currency of other non-Euro countries. Relative salaries, housing prices, innovation and new ventures become less robust. The plans of many people to establish their life in Britain will change. Inward tourism may rise but outward travel will suffer.

The United Kingdom, now a new outsider, will need to seek new access accords. Yet how will America choose between Britain and the EU? The separation has likely predicted the death of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). Therefore marketers will encounter downward slides in terms of employment, human capital development, and global market success due to the missing British team member.

American outward Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) will change alongside. According to the OECD, Britain and America invested about 500 billion in each other. For the EU members, the UK market often represents the first true international exposure. American firms have regarded investment in Britain as a strategy to be safe and have an access to 27 other member states of the EU. Under Brexit, such rationale is no longer valid.

Marketers need to find ways that improve the future appeal of the UK. They must demonstrate that trade and investments are preferable ways to obtain goods and services than battles. As part of this process, marketers may shape relationships which are less traditionally organized but more individualistic and spontaneous. Also, highly emphasized marketing fundamentals such as competition, risk, profit, and ownership may have to be modified.

Relations between friends and adversaries do not require winners and losers. They can learn from each other, acknowledge and respect special needs, and make allowance for the human dimension. "We must lead toward a world that trades in freedom. And we must pursue all these goals with focus, patience and strength." These words of George W. Bush still ring. With more advanced resources, higher levels on the Maslow's hierarchy, and less pressure to accumulate goods, there must now be an increased search for the soul of marketing. Determining past wrongs and the inflicted cost on individuals and society enables curative marketers to play a new role in the development and improvement of relationships. We must find ways to help share the burden of others, yet they must share ours as well. Leadership is expensive. Those who now sit at the table cannot just drop crumbs, but must let others approach and take a seat.

It is said that the US and the UK are only separated by a common language. The near term future will see a separation of the two by treaty considerations, which due to Brexit, will emerge anew. Revision of past agreements will be quite onerous and lead to more restrictive negotiation outcomes. Bilateral discussions between the U.S. and the UK will focus on controversial fields such as norms and standards, chemicals and additives, and privacy.

Marketers can contribute to such future negotiations by providing real data which help negotiators understand the realities of market exchange. It will be up to marketers to embolden global openness, deep transparency, and suitable consumption in order to improve the cruise ahead towards a better human condition.

By Gareth Porter

The main criticism of US policy in Syria has long been that President Barack Obama should have used US military force or more aggressive arms aid to strengthen the armed opposition to Assad. The easy answer is that the whole idea that there was a viable non-extremist force to be strengthened is a myth – albeit one that certain political figures in London and Washington refuse to give up.

But the question that should have been debated is why the Obama administration acquiesced to its allies funding and supplying a group of unsavory sectarian armed groups to overthrow the Assad regime.

That US acquiescence is largely responsible for a horrible bloodletting that has now killed as many as 400,000 Syrians. Worse yet, there is still no way to end the war without the serious threat of sectarian retribution against the losers.

"The Obama administration bears responsibility for this atrocity, because it could have prevented Turkey, Qatar and Saudi Arabia from launching their foolishly adventurous war in Syria. None of them did so out of desperate need; it was a war of choice in every case. And each of the three states is part of the US security system in the Middle East, providing military bases to NATO or to the United States and depending on US support for its security.

But instead of insisting that those three Sunni allies reconsider their options, the Obama administration gave the green light at a conference in Riyadh at the end of March 2012 for proceeding with arming those who wanted to replace the regime, leaving the United States ostensibly free to be a peacemaker. As Hillary Clinton put it at the Riyadh conference: "Some will be able to do certain things, and others will do other things."

The policymakers responsible for Syria should have known that the seeds of violent sectarian conflict had already been planted in Syria by the early 1980s and that the present war was deeply infected by sectarianism from the beginning. They knew that the Assad regime ruled from the beginning with an iron hand primarily to protect the interests of the Alawites, but also to protect the Christian and Druze minorities against Sunni sectarianism.

The faction of the banned Muslim Brotherhood based in Hama adopted a decidedly sectarian line toward the Alawites, not only referring to the Ba'athist government as an "apostate regime" and sought its violent overthrow, but also demonstrated a readiness to kill Alawites, simply because they were not regarded as true believers in Islam.

After the initial failed armed struggle

**The real US Syria scandal: Supporting sectarian war**

against the regime, the organizers were forced into exile, but in 1979 an underground member of the Fighting Vanguard faction of the Brotherhood named Ibrahim al-Yousef, who had infiltrated the Syrian army artillery school in Aleppo, separated all the Alawite cadets from the non-Alawites and then shot 32 of them dead and wounded 54 before escaping.

In 1980, after the Brotherhood made an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Hafez al-Assad himself, the regime took swift and brutal retribution: the very next morning, be-



tween 600 and 1,000 Brotherhood prisoners were killed in their cells.

Sectarian violence in Syria reached its climax in 1982, when the Syrian army went into Hama to break the Brotherhood's control over the city. The operation began when Syrian army troops entered the city to get individuals on its list of Brotherhood members, but were mowed down by Brotherhood machine gunners. Thousands more regime troops were sent to the city, and the Brotherhood mobilized the entire Sunni population to fight. The mosques blared the message, "Rise up and drive the unbelievers from Hama," as Thomas L. Friedman recounted in 1989.

After encountering much stiffer guerrilla resistance than it expected in Hama, the Syrian army used heavy weaponry against the

areas of the city where the Brotherhood's military forces were concentrated. After the Brotherhood's resistance in the city was finally defeated the military completed the total destruction of three whole neighborhoods where the Brotherhood had been dominant, and the army continued to take retribution against families with ties to the organization. At least 5,000 Sunnis were killed; the Brotherhood itself claimed 20,000 dead.

The sectarian extremism expressed both by the Assad regime and by the Muslim Brotherhood 30 years earlier was bound to

be repeated in the conflict that began in 2011 – especially in the areas of Aleppo and Hama, where the armed opposition was especially strong. The initial slogans used by anti-Assad demonstrators were not sectarian, but that changed after the anti-Assad armed struggle was taken over by jihadists and Salafists. Turkey and Qatar, both of which supported the Brotherhood's exiled leaders, began funneling arms to the groups with the strongest commitment to a sectarian anti-Shiite and anti-Alawite viewpoint. A major recipient of Turkish funding and arms was Ahrar al-Sham, which shared its al-Qaeda ally al-Nusra Front's sectarian Sunni view of the Alawite minority. It considered the Alawites to be part of the Shiite enemy and therefore the object of a "holy war".

Another favorite of the US allies was Jaish

al-Islam, the Salafist organization in the Damascus suburbs whose former leader Zahran Alloush talked openly about cleansing Damascus of the Shiites and Alawites, both of whom he lumped together as "Majous" – the abusive term used for pre-Islamic non-Arabic people from Iran.

If there was any doubt that the anti-Alawite sectarianism of the past is still a major part of the thinking of the armed opposition, it should have been eliminated after what happened during the "Great Battle for Aleppo". The newly renamed al-Qaeda franchise Jabhat Fateh al Sham, which planned and led that offensive to break through Syrian government lines around Aleppo, named the offensive after Ibrahim al-Yousef, the Muslim Brotherhood officer who had carried out the cold-blooded murder of Alawite recruits at the artillery school in Aleppo in 1979. And as Syria expert Joshua Landis tweeted on 4 August, a video statement by a masked militant posted by the newly named al-Qaeda organization threatened to do the same thing to the Alawites in Aleppo after taking over the city.

Could senior Obama administration officials have been unaware that a war to overthrow Assad would inevitably become an enormous sectarian bloodbath? By August 2012 a US Defense Intelligence Agency report intelligence warned that "events are taking a clear sectarian direction," and that the "the Salafist[s], Muslim Brotherhood and AQI [al-Qaeda in Iraq]" were "the major forces driving the insurgency". Furthermore, the Obama administration already knew by then that the external Sunni sponsors of the war against Assad were channeling their money and arms to the most sectarian groups in the field.

But the administration did nothing to pressure its allies to stop it. In fact, it actually wove its own Syria policy around the externally fuelled war by overwhelmingly sectarian forces. And no one in the US political-media elite raised the issue.

It took a remarkable degree of denial and self-deception for the Obama administration to believe that it was somehow acting to rescue the Syrian people from the bloodletting when it was doing precisely the opposite.

No matter how brutal its rule and its war tactics have been, a war to overthrow the Assad regime could only plunge the country into a terrible sectarian bloodbath. And the consequences of the sectarian war will continue for years into the future. The Obama administration's failure to firmly reject that war should be viewed as one of the worst of the long parade of American transgressions in the Middle East.

**Led by China, G20 Must Reverse the Eclipse of Globalization**

By Dan Steinbock

As China assumes G20 leadership, the prospect of global "protectionism" is on the rise and the stakes could not be higher for cooperation and major structural reforms. Without continued investment and trade, secular stagnation in advanced economies and growth deceleration in emerging economies will continue to broaden.

Since 1980, global economic integration accelerated dramatically until the onset of the financial crisis in the fall of 2008. After years of secular stagnation in major advanced economies and deceleration of growth in large emerging economies, modest signs of recovery have prompted international observers' hope for the revival of globalization.

In the absence of broad policy acceleration following the G20 Summit in Hangzhou, China, such hopes may amount to hollow pipe dreams.

**Massive monetary stimulus, but no pickup in trade and investment**

At the peak of globalization, Baltic Dry Index (BDI) was often used as a broad barometer of international commodity trade and as a leading indicator since it seemed to reflect future economic growth. The index soared to a record high in May 2008 reaching 11,793 points. However, as the financial crisis spread in the advanced West, international trade collapsed in the emerging East. Barely half a year later, the BDI had plunged by 94 percent, to 663 points; lowest since 1986.

As China and other large emerging economies chose to support the ailing advanced economies through the G20 cooperation, major economies in North America and Europe pledged accelerated reforms in global governance, while launching massive fiscal stimulus and monetary easing. These factors caused the BDI to rise to 4,661 in 2009. But as promises of reforms were ignored and stimulus policies expired, the BDI bottomed out at 1043 in early 2011, coinciding with the European sovereign debt crisis.

In the past half decade, advanced economies have sustained a semblance of stability, but only by relying on historically ultra-low interest rates and massive injections of quantitative easing; today QE measures exceed \$12 trillion, some \$10 trillion in negative-yielding global bonds, and there have also been 660 interest rate cuts since the collapse of Lehman Brothers in 2008. Intriguingly, these huge shifts are not reflected by the BDI, which has continued to stagnate. It reached a historical low of 290 last February oscillating in upper-600 point range today – amid the global crisis levels.

Optimists argue that the index reflects poorly on globalization because it is a better indicator of international commodity trade than global economic integration. And yet, the indicators of global investment and trade herald even gloomier prospects.

**Eclipse of globalization**

Starting around 1870, capital and trade flows rapidly be-

came substantial, driven by falling transport costs. However, this first wave of globalization was reversed by a retreat into nationalism and protectionism between 1914 and 1945.

After World War II, trade barriers came down, and transport costs continued to fall, thanks to the U.S.-led Bretton Woods system. As foreign direct investment (FDI) and international trade returned to the pre-1914 levels, globalization was fueled by the "three glorious decades" of economic miracles in Western Europe followed by the rise of Japan. However, this second wave of globalization mostly benefited the advanced economies. It was their "golden era."

After 1980 many developing countries broke into world



markets for manufactured goods and services, while they were also able to attract foreign capital. This era of globalization peaked between China's membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001 and the onset of the global recession in 2008. It lent credibility to the idea that large emerging economies had become a central force in the global economy, even before the global crisis. So when the advanced West, led by the U.S., was swept by the Great Recession, large emerging economies (proxied by China) fueled the global economy, which was thus spared from a global depression.

As the G20 cooperation dimmed, so did global growth prospects, too. Before the global crisis, world investment soared to almost \$2 trillion. Despite new demographics, growth and productivity, global FDI flows rose to \$1.7 trillion in 2015; the highest level since the global crisis, yet well behind the record high a decade ago. That could undermine the investment needs and future of the Sustainable Development Goals and the ambitious Paris Agreement on climate change.

Unfortunately, the state of world trade is even worse. As the 18th report of the Global Trade Alert showed last year, world export volumes are not growing more slowly, but falling. Manufacturing prices were down almost 10 percent, whereas world export prices remained some 20 percent lower than their 2011 highs – not least because of trade restrictions imposed by certain G20 economies in key product categories.

At the same time, the third leg of globalization, global

migration, is plunging in developed regions, while stagnating in developing regions. Even worse, the 21st century has started with the greatest global forced displacement since the postwar era, with more than 65 million people displaced from their homes by conflict and persecution in 2015, according to the UN Refugee Agency.

In the past, world investment, trade and migration habitually picked up as recessions ended. Today, there will be no return to "business as usual." As a result, the stakes could not be higher for G20 cooperation today. Global economic integration is at crossroads.

**China and G20's historical moment**

The good news is that, between 2008 and 2013, as economic momentum shifted from the transatlantic axis to Asia, it led emerging Asia to add more to the global economy than the entirety of Germany. Indeed, Asia may have produced nearly another Germany in the past three years, despite China's growth deceleration.

Following the global crisis in 2009-10, half of global GDP growth could be attributed to China, although its GDP was less than 10 percent of the world total. A huge \$590 billion stimulus plan supported Chinese growth when the world economy needed it the most. But as that stimulus helped to keep many advanced, emerging and developing economies afloat, it cost China a massive debt burden that will take years to unwind.

Today, China accounts for 25 percent of world GDP growth, which is closer to its share in the world economy. Undoubtedly, China will do its share for global growth prospects, as evidenced by the massive One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative, which has potential to accelerate industrialization in multiple world regions, and the China-sponsored BRICS New Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, which seek to complement – not substitute – multilateral organizations, which are dominated by major advanced economies.

However, amid its rebalancing and deleveraging, China cannot do more. It is now the turn of the major advanced economies and other large emerging economies to execute their structural reforms. That's what their economies need to alleviate secular stagnation and deceleration, while supporting aging populations. That's also what G20 needs to restore acceptable levels of global economic integration.

In early July, G20 ministers reached a deal to cut global trade costs, reaffirmed commitment to reduce trade protectionism and set up a new global investment policy. Thanks to a series of deals in Shanghai, the prospects of de-globalization remain pressing but are no longer inevitable.

Following the G20 Summit in Hangzhou, what is needed is a multi-front attack on the global slump in investment and trade. Otherwise, the global forced displacement will get a lot worse, which would undermine the remaining global growth prospects and foster destabilization around the world.

(China-US Focus)



# New research examines how air pollution is melting Earth's Third Pole

The third-largest region of ice on the planet is located on the Tibetan Plateau and Himalaya-Hindu Kush mountains, also known as the Third Pole. As the polar regions, the glaciers in this third region are shrinking. The difference is that the Third Pole is especially vulnerable to pollution due to its close proximity to densely populated and industrialized regions. New research is shedding light on these effects and potential ways to mitigate the disappearance of glacial ice.

In Western China alone, which consists of 48,571 glaciers with an area of 51,840 sq km (20,015 sq miles), there has been an 18 percent decrease in its glaciers over the last 30-50 years according to a study by the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Institute of Tibetan Plateau Research.

This shrinkage is especially concerning since over a billion people in the region rely, some indirectly, on the melt water that feeds the region's waterways, such as the Indus River.

## Chemical process

In the new study funded by the National Natural Science Foundation of China and other institutions, researchers used a special chemical process to fingerprint the source and details of the



air pollution, which can be differentiated between South Asia and East Asia. Samples of black carbon (soot) were collected throughout the Third Pole, in the air and on the ground, to determine the type of burning that produced them and where

they came from.

Because black carbon is the most heavily light-absorbing component of particulate matter, it can cause temporary warming in the region by absorbing sunlight. In addition, when found atop

snow and ice it can darken surfaces, which leads to the absorption of sunlight (and heat), and thus faster melting.

For the Himalayas region, the researchers found evidence of the burning of both fossil fuels and biomass, which includes plants and animal dung, coming from northern India's Indo-Gangetic Plain.

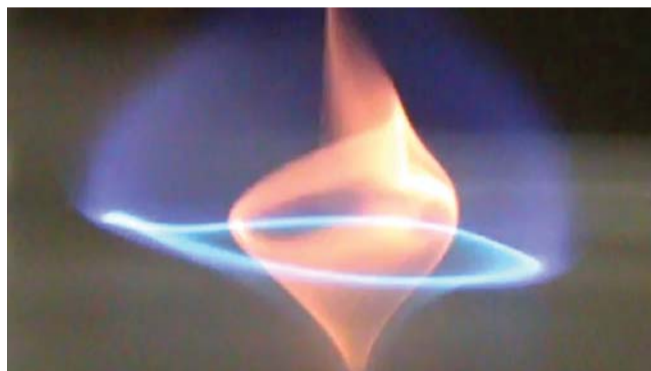
Black carbon from the northern Tibetan Plateau came mostly from fossil fuel burned in China. But the researchers discovered that black carbon in the central Tibetan Plateau came primarily from biomass; meaning the daily routine of burning yak dung for cooking and home heating contributed significantly to the region's air pollution.

The information is important for creating and adjusting policies that could cut pollution sources that directly affect melting ice. In the case of the Tibetan Plateau, substituting efficient stoves and clean energy sources for yak dung could slow the rate of glacial ice melt. Policies such as China's three-year moratorium on new coal mine approvals could also help reduce black carbon air pollution.

(Source: New Atlas)

**Black carbon from the northern Tibetan Plateau came mostly from fossil fuel burned in China. But the researchers discovered that black carbon in the central Tibetan Plateau came primarily from biomass.**

## New form of fire, inspired by bourbon, might help with oil spills



A small blue flame, circulating in a vortex called a fire whirl, could become an important tool in oil spill cleanup, according to the scientists who created it. And they give bourbon credit for inspiring the research.

Fire whirls, colloquially called firenadoes, look like tornadoes or wind devils, and they burn hotter than many other fires.

The results can be devastating in a city or a forest. So researchers have studied fire whirls with an eye to stopping or preventing them. Three scientists from the University of Maryland had a different idea.

Huahua Xiao, an assistant research scientist, who conducted experiments on fire whirls along with Michael J. Gollner and Elaine S. Oran, said, "We wanted to harness the power of fire whirls for good."

As for the bourbon, the research was prompted not by consumption of this particular kind of high-test, but by a video of flaming bourbon.

A spill from the Jim Beam factory on a pond in Kentucky caught fire in 2011, and a fire whirl formed spontaneously. Because fire whirls are relatively efficient in terms of how complete the combustion is, Dr. Xiao said, it seemed they might be useful in dealing with other kinds of spills,

creating less soot than other kinds of fires.

## Common experimental substance

The researchers didn't use bourbon in their experiment. Instead, they picked a more common experimental substance, n-heptane. It's an ingredient in some fuels used to test engine performance.

They poured it on water in a pan about 16 inches in diameter, and then ignited the fuel. They channeled air to produce a vortex. As they expected, a fire whirl about two feet high formed with a typical yellow and orange flame.

That little firenado soon changed, however, to a smaller, differently shaped, swirling blue flame, what Dr. Xiao calls a blue whirl. When the fuel was all burned, the blue whirl died out. In later experiments, the researchers placed a small tube underwater to feed more fuel to keep the blue whirl going.

Even though fire whirls are relatively efficient in burning fuel, they produce soot particles, which cause the flame to appear yellow. The blue flame, Dr. Xiao said, was even more efficient and soot-free. The researchers had similar results with crude oil.

(Source: The NYT)

## The Great Barrier Reef has been hiding another massive reef



For decades, scientists studying Australia's Great Barrier Reef have been stumped by hints of large geologic structures hiding in the deep waters nearby. But thanks to a recent seafloor mapping project by the Royal Australian Navy, they have finally discovered what has long been lying beneath the iconic reef: a deeper, massive reef.

"We've known about these geological structures in the northern Great Barrier Reef since the 1970s and 80s, but never before has the true nature of their shape, size and vast scale been revealed," Robin Beaman, a marine geologist at James Cook University, says in a statement.

The unusual, doughnut-shaped mounds have long puzzled researchers, but until now they have not had the equipment to study it properly. Using LiDAR, which uses lasers instead of radio waves to create radar images, naval aircraft scanned the waters around the Barrier Reef. In the process of creating the highest-resolution maps of the region to date, the scanners also revealed that the deep-sea reef stretches across more than 2,000 square miles, Daniel Oberhaus writes for Motherboard.

"That's three times the previously

estimated size, spanning from the Torres Strait to just north of Port Douglas," Queensland University of Technology researcher Mardi McNeil says in a statement. "They clearly form a significant inter-reef habitat, which covers an area greater than the adjacent coral reefs."

## Green algae

Unlike the more famous Great Barrier Reef, which is made up of coral, this new reef is formed from a common kind of green algae called Halimeda. When these algae die, they form small flakes of limestone that can quickly build up into massive structures called "bioherms," Bec Crew reports for ScienceAlert. While these organisms are fairly common in Australian waters, the newly-identified reef raises questions about how its ecosystem interacts with the shallower Barrier Reef, as well as how it is doing in the face of climate change.

"As a calcifying organism, Halimeda may be susceptible to ocean acidification and warming," Jody Webster, a climatologist and geologist at the University of Sydney, says in a statement. "Have the Halimeda bioherms been impacted, and if so to what extent?"

(Source: smithsonian.com)

## IME Ready to Launch Future Contracts and Deposit Certificate on "Bitumen"

**ECONOMY** Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) has expressed its readiness to launch future contracts and deposit certificate on "Asphalt" and "Bitumen".

Chief Executive of Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) Dr. Hamed Soltaninejad announced the above statement and said: "Future contracts and deposit certificate on 'bitumen' will be commissioned by IME in the 1st Intl. Conference of Iran Bitumen and Asphalt."

At the initiative taken by "Connection" Institute, the first day of this prestigious international conference was hosted by JEY Oil Company and Pasargad Oil Company at Parsian Azadi Hotel.

Senior official of IME was the first speaker who expounded on the programs of Iran Mercantile Exchange for commissioning future market on "bitumen" and said: "Bitumen Future Market will be launched with the aim of covering risk of market activists of this product for the development and promotion of transactions of this product in international arena."

He pointed to the variability of bitumen price at capital market and also the necessity of commissioning future contracts of this product and said: "Bitumen price fluctuates in a way that this market requires adopting risk management tool and said: "Strengthening capital market of this product is the most important factor in commissioning Bitumen Future Market."

Elsewhere in his remarks, he pointed to the challenges of warehousing in bitumen industry and said: "Presently, producers of bitumen offer their products in bulk form and effective steps should be provided for producers in order to export their products in line with observing requirements of international standards."

In the end, Chief Executive of Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) Dr. Hamed Soltaninejad pointed to the significance of participation of international players of bitumen in commissioning and developing future market of this product and said: "IME will welcome participation of international players of bitumen wholeheartedly."



## BSI Awarded with Top National Public Relations Badge in Banking Industry

**ECONOMY** In 7th ITEC Summit, special of managers and directors of exemplary large industrial and production companies across the country, Bank Saderat Iran (BSI) managed to win the top national public relations rank for 5th consecutive year as knowledge-based public relations in banking industry of the country.

At the threshold of 64th establishment anniversary of Bank Saderat Iran and 7th ITEC Summit, held on August in the presence of senior managers and directors of exemplary industrial and production units across the country, top national relations trophy was awarded to

Bank Saderat Iran in banking industry of the country.

As held at the initiative taken by the Cooperatives Chamber of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Secretariat of National Iranian Industries Development Company, ITEC was organized with the aim of supporting national production, removing production barriers, encouraging consumers to use Iranian products, etc.

ITEC was held in the presence of senior governmental officials including Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade Eng. Ne'matzadeh, exemplary entrepreneurs, successful managers and directors in private sector, etc.

Given the above issue, Public Relations Department of Bank Saderat Iran managed to play a leading role in banking industry of the country with producing news and reports, forging fair relationship with mass media and journalists for clarifying services in banking network of the country in the best form possible.

It should be noted that Ali Jahani was appointed as Manager of BSI Public Relations Department at the official directive issued by the Chief Executive of the bank Mr. Zera'ati during the Government Week and at the threshold of Islamic Banking Week.

## NEWS

### New research proves existence of Planet Nine

After Pluto deviated from the Solar System, astronomers continue to search for the planet that would fill its void. The search for the ninth planet in the solar system is still an ongoing process. Yet, new research further boosts the evidence of Planet Nine.

"If you want to put a number on it, I'd be somewhere like 80 percent sure that there's a Planet X out there," stated Scott Sheppard, lead author of the study and an astronomer from the Carnegie Institution for Science in a report by Space.com. "I don't think it's a slam dunk; it's not 100 percent, because it's such low-number statistics. But there are a lot of strange things that seem to be going on that would be explained quite well with there being some kind of massive planet out there."

Sheppard and Chadwick Trujillo of the Northern Arizona University presented their study, which was published in the Astronomical Journal. Their study detailed their observations on a few trans-Neptunian objects that lie in close proximity with our Solar System. The movements and location of these objects solidify studies that the ninth planet does exist.

"Objects found far beyond Neptune hold the key to unlocking our Solar System's origins and evolution. Though we believe there are thousands of these small objects, we haven't found very many of them yet, because they are so far away. The smaller objects can lead us to the much bigger planet we think exists out there. The more we discover, the better we will be able to understand what is going on in the outer Solar System," explained Sheppard.

Aside from the trans-Neptunian objects discovered, they also observed a dozen unknown bodies namely 2013 FE72, 2013 FT28, and 2014 SR349, which lie in the key orbital parameters.

(Source: Nature World News)



## Your dog understands what you're saying

Dog owners who like to talk to their beloved Fido can rest assured that their pooch may actually understand what they are trying to say, according to a new study.

Moreover, when dogs listen to someone talking, they may use brain regions that are equivalent to those that humans use to understand what others say, the researchers found.

In other words, the new study shows that the brain mechanisms involved in the process of understanding human speech are similar in dogs and humans, said study co-author Attila Andics, a neuroscientist at Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, Hungary. This means that the brain mechanisms involved in understanding human speech are not unique to humans, he told Live Science.

To convey information through speech, people use both words and intonation, which is the way a person's voice rises and falls to express an emotion or meaning, such as praise or disapproval. Similarly, to understand what someone is trying to say, people have to pay attention to both their words and their intonation.

In the study, the researchers wanted to see whether dogs also pay attention to both words and intonation when trying to understand what a human is trying to say to them.

To conduct the study, the researchers looked at 13 dogs. The researchers measured the dogs' brain activity with a brain scanner while the dogs listened to recordings of their trainers speaking different combinations of words and intonations.

The researchers found that the dogs paid attention to both the words and intonation when trying to understand human speech, just as humans do when they try to understand human speech. This finding means that dogs may understand both the words and the intonation that humans use when they talk to dogs, the researchers said.

(Source: Live Science)

## More tomatoes, faster: Accelerating tomato engineering

Tomatoes are already an ideal model species for plant research, but scientists at the Boyce Thompson Institute (BTI) just made them even more useful by cutting the time required to modify their genes by six weeks.

While looking for ways to make tomatoes and other crop plants more productive, BTI Assistant Professor Joyce Van Eck and former postdoctoral scientist Sarika Gupta developed a better method for "transforming" a tomato--a process that involves inserting DNA into the tomato genome and growing a new plant. By adding the plant hormone auxin to the medium that supports growth of tomato cells, they can speed up the plant's growth, ultimately accelerating the pace of their research. They describe this advance in a study published in Plant Cell, Tissue and Organ Culture.

Typically, transformation works by using a soil bacterium called Agrobacterium tumefaciens to insert a new segment of DNA into the cells of tomato seedling tissues. The transformed cells are transplanted onto plant regeneration medium, which contains nutrients and hormones that cause the tissue to grow into a tiny new plant.

These plantlets are then transferred to root induction medium where they grow roots, before being planted in soil and hardened in the greenhouse. In the new method, the Van Eck lab adds auxin to the regeneration and rooting media. The addition reduces the length of the procedure from 17 weeks to just 11.

(Source: EurekAlert)



NEWS IN BRIEF



Cooperatives showcasing achievements and potentials at Tehran exhibit

**SOCIETY TEHRAN** — An exhibition on achievements and potentials of cooperatives opened in Tehran on Tuesday.

The exhibition will last for four days with 50 pavilions of goods-producing, service producing and handicrafts sectors, IRIB reported.

The exhibition aims at promoting commercial and economic growth of the cooperatives, Peyman Babakhanlou who is in charge of organizing the exhibition said.

Cooperatives as the most important sector in Iran's economy are being presented in this exhibition in fields of industry, mining, commerce, agriculture, construction and tourism.

50 percent of the pavilions are allocated to the good-producing sector, 13 percent to the service-producing sector, 10 percent to distribution, 5 percent to handmade carpet, and 10 percent to handicrafts.



Vladimir Putin – not THAT Vladimir Putin – arrested at Florida supermarket

Vladimir Putin has been arrested at a Florida supermarket. No, not THAT Vladimir Putin.

Police in West Palm Beach say a 48-year-old man who shares the name of the Russian president was arrested at a Publix supermarket in the city's downtown on Aug. 21. Police say Putin was screaming at employees and refused to leave the store.

Records with the Palm Beach County sheriff's office show he's charged with trespassing and resisting an officer without violence.

Putin appeared in court Monday morning and was released on his own recognizance.

Court records do not list an address for him. Sheriff's Deputy Eric Davis says he didn't know if Putin had a lawyer.

(Source: Fox News)

LEARN ENGLISH

Being a Stay-at-Home Dad

Gladys: Hi, Dan. I'm surprised to see you here at the supermarket in the middle of the day.

Dan: Why?

Gladys: I thought you'd be working.

Dan: I am working. I'm a **stay-at-home dad** and I take care of the kids while my wife goes to work.

Gladys: Oh, did you get **laid off** from your job?

Dan: No, my wife works **full-time** out of the house and I work full-time at home.

Gladys: You mean that your wife is the **breadwinner** and you're a **househusband**?

Dan: If you want to **put it that way**, yes. I'm the **caretaker** for the kids during the day and I do the **household chores**.

Gladys: Oh, your wife must be a **feminist**.

Dan: No, my wife is just a modern woman with modern **sensibilities**.

Gladys: Well, I know that some families like to live **radical** lifestyles these days, changing up **gender roles**.

Dan: We don't think of it as radical. In fact, it's quite common **nowadays**.

Gladys: if you say so. Tell your wife I'd be happy to share my **recipes** with her when you go back to work and she's a housewife again.

Dan: [sigh]

(Source: eslpod.com)

Words & phrases

**stay-at-home-dad:** a dad who stays at home to look after their children instead of working outside the home

**lay off:** to stop annoying someone or hurting them

**full-time:** for all the hours of a week during which it is usual for people to work, study etc.

**breadwinner:** the member of a family who earns the money to support the others

**househusband:** a man who lives with a partner and carries out household duties traditionally done by a housewife rather than going out to work

**put it that way:** if you say it or explain it like that caretaker: someone who looks after other people, especially a teacher, parent, nurse etc.

**household chores:** the regular or daily light work of a household

**feminist:** someone who supports the idea that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men

**sensibilities:** the way that someone reacts to particular subjects or types of behavior

**radical:** radical ideas are very new and different, and are against what most people think or believe

**gender role:** a set of societal norms dictating the types of behaviors which are generally considered acceptable, appropriate, or desirable for people based on their actual or perceived sex

**nowadays:** now, compared with what happened in the past

**recipe:** a set of instructions for cooking a particular type of food

# 17th Royan Intl. Research Award kicks off in Tehran

**SOCIETY TEHRAN** — The 17th Royan Intl. Research Award got down to work in Tehran on Wednesday, ISNA news agency reported.

The award ceremony is being held concurrent with the 11th Royan Nursing and Midwifery Seminar, and Royan's two international congresses, namely the 17th Congress on Reproductive Biomedicine and 12th Congress on Stem Cell Biology and Technology.

The three-day events which last until Friday are being held with Iranian and foreign researchers in attendance and as speakers.

Researchers from the U.S., India, China, Australia, Italy, and England are attending the event.

Some 175 research projects from 36 countries have been submitted to Royan International Award. The U.S. with 24 projects, India with 23, China with 17, Iran with 17, Australia with 9, Canada with 8, Italy with 7, England with 7, Turkey with 6 and Egypt with 6 projects have participated in the event.

Royan Institute is an Iranian clinical, research and educational institute dedicated to biomedical, translational and clinical researches acting as a leader of stem cell research and also one of the best clinics for infertility treatment.



Royan International Research Award was founded by the late director of Royan Institute, Dr. Sa'eed Kazemi Ashtiani, with the aim of encouraging the researchers

and appreciation of their efforts. This annual award is a prize given to five prominent research projects in the field of Reproductive Biomedicine, Stem Cell

Biology and Technology and other related subjects. Each winner will be rewarded with a certificate, the symbol of Royan Award and the amount of \$5000.

## S. Korea, Iran agree to boost ICT cooperation

**SEOUL, (Yonhap)** — South Korea and Iran reached a revised memorandum of understanding (MOU) on Wednesday to expand cooperation between the two sides in the information and communications technology (ICT) sector, Seoul's science ministry said.

The revision was signed between Science, ICT and Future Planning Minister Choi Yang-hee and his counterpart, Mahmoud Mahmoud Vaezi, in Seoul, according to the Ministry of Science, ICT and Future Planning.

South Korea first signed the accord with Iran in 1990 before joining international sanctions against Tehran for its nuclear program.

The two ministers agreed over the need to restore a cooperation channel to promote partnerships in science and technology, officials said.

The ministry said it will reopen as soon as possible a joint science-technology committee that has been suspended since 2004.

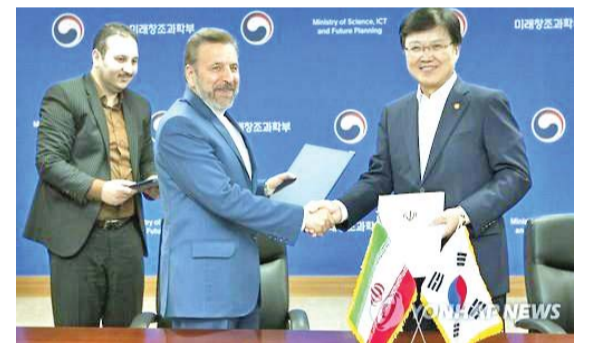
The ministry will try to actively use the partnership as an opportunity for South Korean advanced technology and ICT firms to tap into Iran, it added.

"I ask the Iranian government to largely support South Korean firms making inroads into Iran with a huge potential in the ICT Sector" Choi said.

Choi also urged the Iranian government to take follow-up measures on MOUs signed during President Park Geun-hye's landmark trip there in May.

The Electronics and Telecommunications Research Institute (ETRI) of South Korea inked an MOU with TEM Invest Co., a top Iranian firm specializing in ICT investment, on strategic partnerships. The Korea Research Institute of Bioscience and Biotechnology also agreed to push for joint research projects with the University of Tehran.

The Iranian minister is scheduled to visit the headquarters of major tech firms, including Samsung Electronics Co., during his trip, officials said.



Science, ICT and Future Planning Minister Choi Yang-hee (R) shakes hands with his Iranian counterpart, Mahmoud Mahmoud Vaezi, in Seoul on Aug. 31, 2016, to expand cooperation in the ICT sector.

Iran's ICT market was valued at US\$17.9 billion in 2014 and it's expected to grow to \$29.8 billion in 2020.

IN FOCUS Irma/Vahid Khademi



Heavy showers of rain and hail flooded pedestrian areas and streets in the northeastern city of Bojnourd on Tuesday.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Some 17,000 foreign nationals residing in Iran enroll for literacy

About 17,000 foreign nationals residing in Iran have enrolled for literacy schemes for the current school year starting on September 22, 2016, director of the Literacy Movement Organization of Iran has said. Last year some 24,900 foreign nationals took part in literacy courses, Ali Baqerzadeh said, Fars news agency reported on Saturday. This year 13,700 of the students are chosen by the Literacy Movement Organization and the rest by the United Nation Refugee Agency, he added.

حضور ۷۱ هزار اتباع خارجی ساکن ایران در برنامه‌های سوادآموزی

رئیس سازمان نهضت سوادآموزی از حضور ۱۷ هزار اتباع خارجی ساکن ایران در برنامه‌های سوادآموزی سال تحصیلی ۹۵-۹۶ خبر داد. علی باقرزاده در گفت‌وگو خبرگزاری اظهار داشت: در سال گذشته ۲۴ هزار و ۹۰۰ نفر از اتباع خارجی در برنامه‌های سوادآموزی شرکت داشتند. وی افزود: در سال جاری ۱۳ هزار و ۷۰۰ نفر از اتباع را سازمان نهضت سوادآموزی و بقیه را هم کمیساری عالی پناهندگان سازمان ملل متحد برای شرکت در برنامه‌های سوادآموزی در نظر گرفته است.

ENGLISH PROVERB

Look before you leap

- **Explanation:** consider possible consequences before taking action
- **For example:** If you're thinking of buying a house, my advice is, look before you leap.

PHRASAL VERB

Bang on about

- **Meaning:** to talk continuously about something in a boring way; go on
- **For example:** I wish he wouldn't keep banging on about politics.

ENGLISH IDIOM

All things to all people

- **Explanation:** if you are all things to all people, you please or satisfy everyone.
- **For example:** She's exhausted trying to be a good wife, a good mother and a good teacher, but she can't be all things to all people.



## Key ISIL leader killed in apparent U.S. strike in Syria

Russia claims it killed ISIL spokesman al-Adnani



The official said Adnani's roles as propaganda chief and director of external operations had become "indistinguishable" because the group uses its online messages to recruit fighters and provide instruction and inspiration for attacks.

ISIL's Amaq News Agency reported that Adnani was killed "while surveying the operations to repel the military campaigns against Aleppo." ISIL holds territory in the province of Aleppo, but not in the city where rebels are fighting Syrian government forces.

Amaq did not say how Adnani, born Taha Subhi Falaha in Syria's Idlib Province in 1977, was killed. ISIL published a eulogy dated Aug. 29 but gave no further details.

### ■ Russia claims it killed al-Adnani

Meanwhile, Russia's Defense Ministry says its airstrike killed the ISIL group's spokesman and chief strategist.

The Defense Ministry said in a statement on Wednesday that its intelligence has confirmed that a Russian airstrike on Aleppo province killed 40 ISIL terrorists, including spokesman Abu Mohammed al-Adnani.

### ■ Inroads into ISIL

Adnani was a Syrian from Binish in Idlib, southwest of Aleppo, who pledged allegiance to ISIL's predecessor, al-Qaeda, more than a decade ago and was once imprisoned by the U.S. forces in Iraq, according to the Brookings Institution.

He was from a well-to-do background but left Syria to travel to Iraq to fight U.S. forces there after its 2003 invasion, and only returned to his homeland after the start of his own war in 2011, a person who knew his family said.

He once taught theology and law in training camps, according to Brookings. A biography posted on militant websites

says he grew up with a "love of mosques" and was a prolific reader.

He had been the chief propagandist for the ultra-hardline extremist group since he declared in a June 2014 statement that it was establishing a modern-day caliphate spanning swaths of territory it had seized in Iraq and neighboring Syria.

Adnani had often been the face of the terrorist group, such as when he issued a message in May urging attacks on the United States and Europe during the holy month of Ramadan, and as in Sept. 2014 when he called on supporters to kill Westerners throughout the world.

Recent advances by the U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces, an alliance of Kurdish and Arab militias, and by Syrian rebels backed by Turkey, have made inroads into ISIL holdings in Aleppo province, cutting them off from the Turkish border and supply lines along it.

Iraqi army advances against the terrorist group meant Baghdad was on track to retake Mosul by the end of this year, the head of the U.S. military's Central Command General Joseph Votel said on Tuesday.

Among senior ISIL officials killed in air strikes this year are Abu Ali al-Anbari, Baghdadi's formal deputy, and the group's "minister of war," Abu Omar al-Shishani. Adnani had joined the group under its founder Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. There were conflicting reports earlier as to where and how Adnani died.

A senior Syrian rebel official said Adnani was most probably killed in the ISIL-held city of al-Bab in an air strike. Citing unconfirmed reports, he said Adnani was in the Aleppo region to raise morale in the face of mounting pressure.

ISIL's territory around Aleppo is of particular significance to the group because it is also the location of Dabiq, where an ISIL holds the last battle between Muslims and infidels will rage, heralding the end of time.

Iraq said in January that Adnani had been wounded in an air strike in the western province of Anbar and then moved to the northern city of Mosul, ISIL's capital in Iraq.

The United States designated him a "global terrorist" this year and said he was one of the first foreign fighters to oppose U.S.-led coalition forces in Iraq since 2003 before becoming spokesman of the terrorist group.

There was a \$5 million reward on his head under the U.S. "Rewards for Justice" program.

(Source: Reuters)

## U.S., India bolster ties, warn Pakistan over extremists

The United States and India urged Pakistan on Tuesday to do more to counter extremist groups operating from its soil as the world's two largest democracies announced measures to strengthen security and energy ties.

Speaking on a visit to New Delhi, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry declared that ties once clouded by suspicion had progressed "amazingly" in the last two years and echoed President Barack Obama's description of their relationship as "the defining partnership of the 21st century."

India and the United States have a common goal in creating a counterbalance to the rise of China and hold regular top-level dialogue in Delhi and Washington under a formal strategic partnership.

But a flare-up in violence in Kashmir meant that India's arch-rival Pakistan featured prominently in talks between Kerry and his counterpart, Sushma Swaraj.

After Foreign Minister Swaraj reiterated long-running accusations that Pakistan was "providing safe havens to terror groups," Kerry also urged Islamabad to do more to combat extremists operating from its territory.

He said it was vital that Islamabad moved to "deprive any group of sanctuary," highlighting the threat posed by Lashkar-e-Taiba, a Pakistan-based Kashmiri separatist group behind a string of

anti-Indian attacks.

"We will not and we cannot make distinctions between good and bad terrorists... Terrorism is terrorism," Kerry said at a press conference alongside Swaraj.

Kerry said the U.S. government "had conversations with all members of the region frankly about efforts they need to take against terrorism which comes out of their country", adding that he had personally raised the issue with Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

India has accused Pakistan of stoking a new bout of unrest in Kashmir, the troubled Himalayan region which has been divided between the two countries since independence in 1947 and is claimed in full by both.

Around 70 civilians have been killed since the beginning of last month in the aftermath of the Indian army's killing of a charismatic young separatist leader and a curfew remains in place in many parts of Kashmir.

Swaraj said there was "a meeting of minds" during her talks with Kerry on tackling the threats posed by extremists as she reiterated long-standing accusations that Pakistan was sponsoring "cross-border terrorism".

"We repeated our stand that Pakistan should stop providing safe havens to terror groups... We also agreed that

countries must not categorize terrorists as good or bad," said the Indian foreign minister.

Both sides said that there had been an agreement to step up cooperation on intelligence.

"We agree on additional measures to strengthen our counterterrorism," said Swaraj. "We will intensify intelligence sharing."

In an illustration of the burgeoning cooperation, Kerry announced plans to revive trilateral talks between India, Afghanistan and the United States.

He also said there had been an agreement "to move forward" on long-standing plans for six nuclear reactors which he said would provide electricity to tens of millions of people, without giving more details.

The deal involving U.S. giant Westinghouse has been held up in the past by concerns over an Indian law that would make U.S. companies liable for accidents at plants they helped build.

The start of Kerry's two-day visit came only hours after the two sides signed an agreement in Washington that allows access to each other's military bases for repairs and resupplies.

U.S. Defense Secretary Ashton Carter and his Indian counterpart Manohar Parrikar sealed the pact in efforts to



strengthen defense ties to counter concerns over China's growing military assertiveness.

Carter said the agreement would make joint operations between their militaries logistically easier and more efficient.

Washington has increasingly turned its focus to Asia as it tries to counter China's growing clout in the South China Sea, and is eager for India to play a greater role in a network of defense alliances.

The two sides are also keen to expand business ties, with the U.S. targeting an increase in two-way trade from \$100 billion to \$500 billion.

U.S. Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker, who is accompanying Kerry, praised recent reforms by the Indian government which has moved to ease caps on foreign direct investment in a range of business sectors.

(Source: AFP)

## Venezuela arrests opposition activists ahead of rally

Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro says several opposition activists accused of plotting violence during an anti-government rally scheduled for Thursday have been arrested.

Opposition leaders criticized Tuesday's arrests as intimidation, calling on sympathizers from across the country to march in the capital Caracas to push for a recall referendum against Maduro.

The forthcoming march follows months of tensions between Maduro and the opposition-controlled legislature, aggravated by high inflation, product shortages and a severe economic recession.

Maduro also called the scheduled rally a plot to stir up violence and set the stage for a coup.

"We must win the battle against the coup, before, during, and after the dates announced by these fascists," Maduro said.

"We've captured a group of people carrying important equipment, C4 explosives. We're trying to capture a number of them in real time. Whoever gets involved in a coup plot, or calls for violence, is going to jail, sir. Shriek, weep or scream, but you're going to jail."

Maduro also accused the United States of plotting against leftist governments in Latin America.

"The threat is coming directly from American imperialism," he said.

Intelligence agents raided opposition party Popular Will's offices on Tuesday and arrested long-time street activist Carlos Melo. Another Popular Will activist, Yon Goicoechea, was arrested on Monday on charges of carrying explosives.

A Popular Will leader, jailed former mayor Daniel Ceballos, was transferred to prison from house arrest

on Saturday. He was accused of trying to escape his home to plot violence during the march.

Opposition leaders have accused elections authorities of intentionally stalling the recall vote. Maduro's approval rating in July fell to a nine-month low of 21 percent, according to Datanalysis.

"We denounce the pathetic way in which the government is seeking to demobilize and intimidate the democratic leadership," said Jesus Torrealba, leader of the Democratic Unity coalition.

With Venezuela hit by shortages of food, medicine and basic goods, the opposition coalition behind the referendum, the Democratic Unity Roundtable, insists that getting rid of Maduro's socialist government is the only way out of the crisis.

(Source: agencies)

## NEWS

### May gathers British ministers to hear views on Brexit

British Prime Minister Theresa May told her top ministers on Wednesday they must deliver Brexit, and not entertain any idea of staying in the European Union by the "back door".

After a summer of political earthquakes followed by a few weeks of holiday calm, May gathered her cabinet team for the first time since she asked them to use the break to come up with options for Britain's future ties with the bloc after a divorce.

For many in the EU, it is not before time. They have given May breathing space to devise a negotiating stance before triggering the exit procedure, but are keen for Britain to begin the talks and end uncertainty that has hurt investment.

"We will have an update on Brexit; we'll be looking at the next steps that we need to take, and we'll also be looking at the opportunities that are now open to us as we forge a new role for the UK in the world," May told her cabinet, according to a statement.

"That means there's no second referendum; no attempts to sort of stay in the EU by the back door; that we're actually going to deliver on this."

May has said she will not trigger Article 50 of the EU's Lisbon treaty to start the exit procedure until next year so she has time to make sure she is winning the best deal for Britain, her spokesman said.

the initial shock of Britain's June 23 vote to leave the EU has waned, with signs of economic confidence rising.

May's aides say the former interior minister will be the ultimate arbiter of what proposals Britain takes to divorce negotiations with the European Union.

She will expect the cabinet to overcome any divisions on whether Britain should leave the EU's single market to ensure control over immigration, or find some kind of a compromise.

May has stacked her three ministries for Brexit, trade and foreign affairs with some of the most active campaigners for Britain to leave the EU.

But she has balanced them by appointing to vital positions lawmakers who campaigned for Britain to remain in the bloc, such as Philip Hammond at the finance ministry, or Treasury.

The Telegraph newspaper reported that the two sides have disagreed over Hammond's view that access to the single market could be maintained "on a sector-by-sector basis", with Britain retaining a favorable status for its big financial sector.

Asked whether that was Hammond's stance, the Treasury declined to comment.

If it was, that would go against so-called Brexit minister David Davis, who heads the new Department for Exiting the European Union, and trade minister Liam Fox. Citing senior government sources, the Telegraph said both believe Britain can only curb migration if the country leaves the single market.

On Tuesday, French President Francois Hollande seemed to back up that point, underlining that Britain could not opt in to certain parts of the single market without upholding the EU's four freedoms, including freedom of movement.

(Source: Reuters)

## North Korea executes vice premier in latest purge: S. Korea

North Korea has executed its vice premier for education and rebuked two high-ranking officials, South Korea said on Wednesday, which, if true, would mark a new series of measures by Leader Kim Jong Un to discipline top aides.

Kim took power in 2011 after the death of his father, Kim Jong Il, and his consolidation of power has included purges and executions of top officials, South Korean officials have said.

South Korea's Unification Ministry spokesman Jeong Joon-hee said the government had confirmed the execution of the education official, Kim Yong Jin, "through various channels" but declined to provide details.

Kim Yong Chol, the influential head of the North's United Front Department which handles inter-Korean relations, was made to undergo "revolutionary measures," Jeong told a briefing.

Another ruling party official in the propaganda department was also reprimanded, Jeong said.

It is difficult to independently verify news about top officials in the North or the inner circle around the leader. Some previous reports of executions and purges in the exclusive state have proven inaccurate.

Vice Premier Kim Yong Jin was executed for not keeping his posture upright at a public event, a South Korean government official later told Reuters. Kim Yong Chol was punished for his overbearing demeanor, the official added, but gave no details.

The execution, by firing squad, took place in July and Kim Yong Chol was re-educated at a rural farm for a month until mid-August, South Korea's Yonhap News Agency said.

The South's comments follow a news report on Tuesday that the North had executed two high-ranking officials for disobeying leader Kim Jong Un.

Kim Yong Jin was promoted to vice premier in 2012 after serving as education minister, according to a South Korean government database on key officials of the North.

Army general Kim Yong Chol headed the North Korean intelligence agency before taking his current position this year. News of the exclusive state's new purges comes after the South said North Korea's deputy ambassador in London had defected and arrived in the South with his family, dealing an embarrassing blow to Kim's regime.

North Korea rarely announces purges or executions, although state media confirmed the 2012 execution of Kim's uncle, Jang Song Thaek, widely considered the country's second most powerful man, for factionalism and crimes damaging to the economy.

A former defense minister, Hyun Yong Chol, is also believed to have been executed last year for treason, according to the South's spy agency.

(Source: Reuters)



TENNIS

## How Andy Murray can leapfrog Novak Djokovic in rankings to become world No 1

■ **First things first, how does the rankings system work?**

It calculates total points won from the past 19 tournaments over the previous year. Those tournaments include the four grand slams, eight mandatory ATP World Tour Masters 1000 tournaments, the World Tour Finals and the best six results from all ATP World Tour 500, ATP World Tour 250, ATP Challenger Tour and Futures Series tournaments.

■ **How far clear is Djokovic in rankings at present?**

Novak Djokovic was 5,535 points ahead of Murray heading into the final slam of the year at the US Open which got under way on Monday 29 August. Stan Wawrinka is a further 4,325 points off the British No 1 in third spot.

Men's world rankings - top five

- 1 Novak Djokovic Pts 14,840
- 2 Andy Murray 9,305
- 3 Stan Wawrinka 4,980
- 4 Roger Federer 4, 945
- 5 Rafael Nadal 4,850

■ **How many points do you earn for winning a grand slam?**



A whopping 2,000 with the finalist collecting 1,200 and semi-finalists 720 each. Masters 1000 events see the winner walk away with, not surprisingly, 1,000 points, the 500 Series victor 500 points and the 250 Series, er, 250 points. It really is as simple as that.

■ **Didn't Murray collect points for his Olympic gold medal?**

Unfortunately not. Ranking points were not available for the Games in Rio where they had been in previous Olympics from 2000 and 2012.

■ **So can Murray close the gap on Djokovic at US Open?**

Indeed he can. As Djokovic won in New York last year the Serbian cannot improve on the 2,000 points he earned from last year's tournament. An early exit, though, could see him lose nearly all of them. As Murray was blown away by Kevin Anderson in the fourth round in 2015 he can improve on his score by 1,820 points at one tournament alone.

■ **Where else can Murray eat into Djokovic's lead?**

At the end-of-season World Tour Finals at the O2 in London in mid November. Djokovic is again the defending champion so has 1,200 points to defend while Murray went out in the round robin stage collecting a lowly 200.

■ **What other major tournaments are coming up?**

There are only two Masters 1000 events left for the year - the Shanghai Masters and Paris Masters which both will take place in October. Murray lost out to eventual winner Djokovic in Shanghai at the semi-final stages last time out and can make up ground while Djokovic denied Murray of the Paris Masters title three weeks later.

■ **Who holds the record for most weeks at No 1?**

Roger Federer still holds the record for both the total of weeks at No 1 - 302 - and most consecutive weeks at No 1 - 237. Djokovic has spent the last 113 weeks in the No 1 spot and has totalled 214 weeks at the top of the rankings all in all.

■ **What Murray is saying about world No 1 status**

It's definitely a goal. It's something I spoke to my team about, something I chatted to Ivan about. I would love to get to No 1, for sure, and the way to do that is to show up every week and be focused on that event.

■ **Reasons to be hopeful for Murray**

Murray certain has the momentum and form to push Djokovic all the way for the top ranking. Defeat in the Cincinnati Masters final to Marin Cilic earlier this month saw his 22-match unbeaten run come to an end and was the first defeat witnessed by Ivan Lendl since he returned to Murray's corner for Queen's in June.

Djokovic has also been struggling with form and fitness and needed treatment on his right elbow during his spluttering US Open first round win over Jerzy Janowicz.

■ **Reasons for Murray to be fearful**

Djokovic suffered relatively early exits in two other events early this season (other than Wimbledon and Rio Olympics) - in the quarter-finals to Feliciano Lopez in Dubai and to Jiri Vesely in Monte Carlo only to respond by winning the following titles at Indian Wells and Madrid Masters.

His other loss came at the hands of Murray in the Rome Masters and the Serbian's response was to land a first French Open title.

Djokovic is master of the hard courts too and according to ATP Performance Zone has won 84 per cent of all matches on the surface - a greater ratio than the likes of Rod Laver, Jimmy Connors or Roger Federer.

(Source: Telegraph)

# Schürrie: 'So much fun to play with Aubameyang'

With a hand in both goals in Borussia Dortmund's 2-1 win over 1. FSV Mainz 05 followed up by a place in the Official Fantasy Bundesliga Team of the Week, Andre Schürrie could not have wished for a better start to his BVB career.

Reviewing events on Matchday 1, the 25-year-old Germany international midfielder revealed what it is like to play for Dortmund in front of the club's famous Yellow Wall and discussed his budding relationship with Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang...

■ **Question: Andre Schürrie, your Bundesliga debut for BVB was a runaway success - both for the team and for you personally.**

**Schürrie:** The win was the most important thing. We were missing a little something - we could have killed the game off with the goal-scoring chances we had early on. It went well for me personally: I got an assist, won the penalty [that led to the second goal]; I was also involved in a few promising moves and had a couple of decent shots on goal. I felt great, which is what matters most. We can expect good things with the quality we have going forward.

■ **Question: There were some extra celebrations from you in front of the Südtribüne at the end. What was that about?**

**Schürrie:** It was incredibly important to win the first game, especially for morale. We really wanted to win and that's what we were committed to doing, even though we knew it wouldn't be easy. It's only three-and-



a-half weeks since we all got together for the first time. Not everything is going to go as you'd like. At this stage, wins are the most important thing. You could see that in my celebrations.

■ **Question: How difficult was it to kick into gear in such high temperatures?**

**Schürrie:** It was brutal - you had to keep taking a breather. After every burst, you were gasping for air. It was so demanding. In that sense, we could

have done with our second goal coming sooner.

■ **Question: The interplay in attack between you, Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang and Ousmane Dembele is already looking good. How's it working out for you?**

**Schürrie:** I think you could see that we're always on the lookout for each other. It's so much fun when you've got a striker who's always looking to come from deep and is so quick - you're always looking to release him. It really

is great! He holds the ball up, too, so you can go in behind him. It's already pretty devastating, but if we have a bit more space in future and exploit our pace - something Ousmane [Dembele] also has... And then when Marco Reus comes back...

■ **Question: Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang scored a brace...**

**Schürrie:** He set me up for a goal in the Cup a few days ago, now I've laid on two for him - that's football.

(Source: Bundesliga)

## No signings needed before transfer deadline says Real's Perez



Real Madrid have no plans to make any more signings before the transfer deadline expires, president Florentino Perez said on Wednesday.

"We have a spectacular squad, impossible to improve, and a coach Zinedine Zidane, who has brought many things as a player and as a coach," Perez said at a news conference. "Real Madrid only thinks about improving, advancing and clinching more titles."

Spain forward Alvaro Morata is the only acquisition made by Real this summer.

The Champions League holders spent 30 million euros (25.44 million) to buy back Morata from Juventus, two years after selling the player to the Italian champions for 22 million euros.

La Liga rivals Barcelona have signed six players, including Spain forward Paco Alcacer from Valencia on Tuesday.

Real have not won La Liga since the 2011-12 campaign while Barca have dominated Spain's top flight, winning the league six times in the last eight seasons.

Despite the competition for playing time, with the club stocked with talent at every position, no player is expected to leave.

Spanish midfielder Isco ruled out a loan move on Wednesday, with former club Malaga and English Champions League side Tottenham reportedly interested in his services.

"I'm staying," Isco told reporters. Real beat Sevilla 3-2 in the UEFA Super Cup earlier this month and won 3-0 at Real Sociedad in their league opener before a 1-0 triumph at home to Celta Vigo.

"We have started the season in the best possible way," Perez said.

(Source: Reuters)

## IOC sanctions six Olympians for failing dope tests at Beijing Games



The International Olympic Committee said on Wednesday it had disqualified six sportspeople, including three Russian medalists, for failing doping tests at the Beijing 2008 Games.

The sanctions come amid a crackdown on Olympic athletes' use of banned performance-enhancing substances that has now spilled over to the Paralympics Games as well.

Controversies over doping overshadowed the build-up to this year's Rio Olympics and flared anew as U.S. and Australian competitors branded their Russian and Chinese rivals drug cheats.

In the latest move, the IOC disqualified Russian bronze-medalist weightlifter Nadezda Evstyukhina, silver-medalist weightlifter Marina Shainova, and Tatyana Firova, who finished second with teammates in the 4x400m track event.

The Russian Federation team was also disqualified from the women's 4x400m relay. All the sanctioned athletes were ordered to return any medals, pins or diplomas they had won in Beijing.

Bronze-medal-winning weightlifter Tigran Martirosyan of Armenia and fellow weightlifters Alexandru Dudozdoglo of Moldova and Intigam Zairov of Azerbaijan were also disqualified, the IOC said in a statement.

It called on sports federations to modify the results of the Beijing Games that were affected and consider what other steps they found appropriate.

The IOC stores athletes' samples for a decade to test with newer methods or for new substances, and has in the past stripped medal winners of their prizes.

(Source: Reuters)

## Swiss court holds fire on Russian paralympic athletes' Rio ban

Switzerland's highest court declined on Wednesday to issue a preliminary injunction that would have let Russian Paralympic athletes compete at the Rio Games next month, saying instead it will rule later on the team's ban due to state-sponsored doping.

Russia is appealing the Swiss-based International Paralympic Committee's decision this month to ban its athletes from the Sept. 7-18 competition.

After losing before the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne last week, Russia took its case to the Swiss Federal Court.

The tribunal decided that the

Russian delegation had not done enough to justify an immediate lifting of the ban on its athletes in Rio, a court statement said.

"The Russian Paralympic Committee would have needed to demonstrate it had fulfilled its obligations in upholding... anti-doping protocols, and that its interests in an immediate lifting of its suspension outweigh the International Paralympic Committee's interests in fighting doping and in the integrity of athletics. It did not succeed in this in any way," it said.

The court is limited to ruling on procedural matters.

(Source: Reuters)





# We respect Qatar football team, says Carlos Queiroz

**SPORTS** Iranian national football team's head coach Carlos Queiroz says that they respect Qatari football team in the 2018 FIFA World Cup qualifying tournament.

The Persians will play Qatar in the first game of 2018 World Cup qualification third round on September 1 while it has to face China five days later in Shenyang, more than 6,000 kilometer away.

"We know Qatar has prepared well for the competition. They take advantage of several good players and technical staff. We respect them. Qatar has also won the right to host World Cup 2022 as an Asian team and we have to praise them," Queiroz said.

"My men are committed to their country as they've proved in the past. I hope we can provide awesome moments for all our fans and to make them happy at the end of the match," the Portuguese coach added.

"Qatar match is part of our journey and we have a long way ahead of us. South Korea, Uzbekistan, China, and Syria are rivals in the competition as well," Queiroz said.

Iran captain Andranik Teymourian also stated that they will go to the game in order to take the three points.

"We're playing at home in front of our fans and I hope we take the three points to make a strong start. Unfortunately we didn't have enough preparatory games while our main players who plays in Europe joined us just two days before the game but we try our best to



make our fans happy," Teymourian said in the pre-match press conference on Wednesday.

"I'd like to thank the officials who prepared an exclusive flight to China for us. This will lower our travel fatigue so that we could make a faster recovery before playing

against China," Teymourian added.

SC Heerenveen striker Reza Ghoochannejhad believes that Qatar is a strong rival and Iran will not have an easy game against them.

"We have a tough game against Qatar

but we will try to win the game. The fans could help us beat them. The games are so close and we head to China just after the game against Qatar. We're now focusing on Qatar and after that we will see what happens in China," Ghoochannejhad said.

## Iran's Bank Sarmayeh wins Asian Men's Club Volleyball Championship

**SPORTS** the Iran's Bank Sarmayeh beat Qatari outfit Al Arabi 3-1 (24-26, 25-18, 25-16, 25-19) to win the 2016 Asian Men's Club Volleyball Championship in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on Wednesday.

The Iranian team has already defeated

China's Shanghai Golden (3-0), Kazakhstan's Altay VC (3-1), Malaysia (3-0), Hong Kong (3-0), Japan's Toyoda Gosei Trefuerza (3-1) and Taiwan Power (3-0) respectively in the previous matches.

Bank Sarmayeh will now represent Asia

at the FIVB Volleyball Men's Club World Championship.

The event which will be the 12th edition of its kind will be held in Betim and Belo Horizonte, Brazil, between October 17 and 23.



## Iran ready to shine with a balanced crew



Iran's 12-man roster for the 2016 FIBA Asia Challenge that will be played at home at the Azadi Sport Complex in Tehran from 9-18 September has been released, and it's a balanced crew ready to shine and defend their crown.

Veterans Hamed Haddadi, Arsalan Kazemi, Mohammad Jamshidi, Rouzbeh Arghavan and Oshin Sahakian lead the way for coach Dirk Bauermann's squad, who are hoping to cop their third straight championship in this biennial tournament. All five of those veterans also played two years ago in the FIBA Asia Cup in Wuhan, together with rising stars Behnam Yakhchali and Sajjad Mashayekhi, who are also present here in Tehran.

The rest of Team Melli's lineup is rounded out by Adnan Doraghi, Farid Aslani, Mohammad Hassanzadeh, Vahid Dalirzahan and Ali Allahverdi.

Iran are expected to be among the favorites in this competition, and they should be especially motivated after finishing third in the 2015 FIBA Asia Championship behind China and the Philippines and after going winless in the 2016 FIBA OQT.

In 2014, Iran went on an unbeaten run all the way to annexing their second FIBA Asia Cup in a row. They are, in fact, on a 14-game win streak in the tournament. The last game they lost in this competition was in the 2010 FIBA Asia Stankovic Cup when they were beaten by Jordan, 68-57, in the battle for fifth place.

Iran are looking to dominate here, especially in the paint, what with Haddadi, Kazemi and Sahakian all expected to perform at optimal level. And even without old reliables like Samad Nikkhah Bahrami, Hamed Afagh and Mahdi Kamrani, Team Melli should have more than enough firepower on the perimeter with Jamshidi, Yakhchali and Mashayekhi leading the charge.

Iran are in Group C with Iraq and Qatar. They will all advance to the second round, where they will play each team from Group D: Japan, Korea and Thailand.

The top five teams in the 2016 FIBA Asia Challenge will earn for their respective sub-zones an extra berth in the 2017 FIBA Asia Cup (formerly known as the FIBA Asia Championship).

(Source: FIBA)

## Iran ready to shine with a balanced crew



Iran blanks UAE 5-0 in AFC U-16 Women's Championship 2017 qualifier

Iran's national under-16 football team has sealed another dramatic victory at the preliminary round of Asian Football Confederation (AFC) U-16 Women's Championship 2017 Qualifiers, trouncing the United Arab Emirates contingent.

The Iranian juniors, who subdued Kyrgyzstan 9-0 in their second match of the event on August 29, routed their Emirati counterparts 5-0 in a Group C match played at the Bangabandhu National Stadium in the Bangladeshi capital city of Dhaka on Wednesday.

The Persians placed the United Arab Emirates goal under pressure since the start of the match, and forward Fatemeh Ghasemi netted the opener for the Iranian team in the 23rd minute.

Two minutes later, midfielder Roghayeh Jalal Nasab struck the second goal for Iran. Ghasemi scored a brace and tripled Iran's lead in the 37th minute, and the young Iranian sportswomen went into the breather with a three-goal lead. Iran's under-16 football outfit kept its

momentum after it returned to action. Ghasemi took advantage of a marvelous opportunity in the 83rd minute and put the ball into the back of the net to make it four for Iran.

In the third minute of time added-on, midfielder Marzieh Feizi tacked Iran's last goal to snatch a 5-0 win.

Iran's national under-16 football team is pitted against Chinese Taipei, Bangladesh, United Arab Emirates, Kyrgyzstan and Singapore in Group C of the AFC U-16 Women's Championship 2017 Qualifiers.

Thailand, Myanmar, Jordan, Guam and Laos form Group A. Group B consists of South Korea, India, the Philippines, Malaysia and Northern Mariana Islands.

Uzbekistan, Australia, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Palestine and Iraq are drawn in Group D.

Each group will play a one-round league. The winner from each group (total four teams) will qualify to the finals (eight teams in total).

If Thailand finish top of their group in the qualifiers, the second-placed team from the same group will also qualify to the final competition.

(Source: PressTV)



## Iran earns two bronze medals at IFMA Youth World Championships

Iranian Muaythai boxers have managed to take home two bronze medals at the 2016 edition of International Federation of Muaythai Amateur (IFMA) Youth World Championship in Thailand.

Arash Delikhoun slumped to his Russian opponent in a minus 60-kilogram contest fought in the Thai capital city of Bangkok, and picked up a bronze medal.

Mehdi Shamei also faced a representative from Estonia in the minus 80-kilogram, and lost the bout to earn a bronze.

The 2016 IFMA Muaythai Youth World Championship

started in Bangkok, Thailand, on August 24, and will wrap up on September 1.

Muaythai is a combat sport of Thailand, which uses stand-up striking along with various clinching techniques.

It includes combat on shins and is known as "the art of eight limbs."

Muaythai is characterized by the combined use of fists, elbows, knees, shins, being associated with a good physical preparation that makes a full-contact fighter very efficient.

(Source: PressTV)

## FOOTBALL

### Will 4,000 plus workers have died in Qatar before a ball being kicked in 2022?

By Shervin Gilani

In a Q&A style interview on 6th February 2016 with the Australian "The Saturdays Paper" Sharan Burrow, the General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), claimed that more than 1,400 workers had died building World Cup stadiums in Qatar.

The text below is not an opinion piece or commentary. It is simply dissecting her claim by virtue of a purely statistical analysis of facts.

**Sharan Burrow:** There are more than 1400 workers dead already among the million building the World Cup stadiums.

**Start of World Cup Stadiums Construction site:**

03 December 2013  
Number of calendar days to 6 February 2016: 795 days

Number of Fridays between 03.12.2014 & 06.02.2016: 115

Number of Working days (between 03.12.2014 & 06.02.2016): 680

1,400 / 680 = 2.05 dead person per day according to Sharan Burrow's false claim on 6th February 2016 (12 dead people every working week)

According to Sharan Burrow's claim (more than) 1,400 workers had died building World Cup Stadiums up to the date of her interview.

That works to an average of 2.05 dead person per day on World Cup Stadium construction sites up to 6 February 2016 when she made that claim

In other words, at least 12 workers should have died every working week since the start of all constructions including site offices.

It means every third or fourth week that number would be 13 dead workers during that week (based on the actual average of 2.05 people dying on every working day).

**Total Number of World Cup Construction sites workers:** 5,126

**Total Number of Dead Workers building World Cup Stadiums up to 6th February 2016 according to Sharan Burrow:** 1,400

**Percentage of workers who would have died building World Cup Stadiums up to 6th February 2016:** 27.31%

**Actual number of Work related fatalities amongst Workers building World Cup Stadiums up to 19th May 2016:** ZERO (0)

**Actual Percentage: 0%**

**Actual number of non-Work related fatalities amongst Workers building World Cup Stadiums up to 19th May 2016:** THREE (3)

**Actual Percentage: 0.058% (0.00058 or 0.58 dead person for every 1,000 workers or 1.16 dead person for every 2,000 workers)**

On the other hand, there were no reaction from Sharan Burrow and her organization when five UK immigrant workers died in a wall collapse at a recycling plant in Birmingham, England in July 2016.

According to BBC, the men, originally from Gambia, died when a 15ft wall of concrete and scrap metal fell on them as they worked.

And this is not the first time this has happened. On the evening of 5 February 2004 at Morecambe Bay in North West England at least 21 Chinese undocumented migrant labourers (salves) were drowned by an incoming tide after picking cockles off the Lancashire coast.

There are still some people and entities who are yet to lay down their arms after numerous failed attempts to get the world football governing body, FIFA to take the hosting right from the Persian Gulf state.

## Iran's Jamali nominated for Athlete of the Month

Mehdi Jamali, member of Iran football 7-a-side, has been short-listed for the Allianz Athlete of the Month poll for August 2016.

The public is now invited to vote for their winner via www.paralympic.org until September 6.

Jamali scored 12 goals overall at the 2016 International Federation for Cerebral Palsy Football (IFCPF) World Championships Qualification Tournament, helping Iran take the gold medal and secure their place for the 2017 World Championships.

Briton athlete Hannah Cockcroft, Turkey's goalballist Ekrem Gundogdu, and German athlete Heinrich Popow also are favorites to win the monthly award.

(Source: Tasnim)







### Poem of the day

For would the sun not wander  
away in every night?  
How could at ev'ry morning  
the world be lighted up?

Rumi

### Prayer Times

Noon:13:05 Evening: 7:50 Dawn: 5:10 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:37 (tomorrow)

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## NEWS IN BRIEF



### Parsa Piruzfar to perform "Matryoshka" in Tehran

**T E H R A N** — Parsa Piruzfar will stage the monologue "Matryoshka" based on eight selected short stories by Anton Chekhov in Tehran.

He plays the role of the sole character in the play, which will be performed at the Nazerzadeh Kermani Hall of the Iranshahr Theater Complex on September 5.

The play, which was performed in several cities of the U.S. and Canada earlier this year and in 2015, will remain on stage until October 7.



### Swedish trio Bazar Bla to give concert in Tehran

**T E H R A N** — The renowned Swedish trio Bazar Bla is scheduled to perform some of its latest compositions during a concert at Tehran's Niavaran Cultural Center on September 16.

The band features Johan Hedin on nyckelharpa (an ancient Swedish folk instrument), Bjorn Meyer on bass and bass Mandola, and Fredrik Gille on percussions.

Hermes Records, a Tehran-based recording label, is scheduled to release the trio's album "Twenty" soon to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the group, which had given performances in Iran in 2006 and 2011.

# Foundation established for Persian poet Bidel Dehlavi in Tehran

**T E H R A N** — A foundation named *d e s k* after Persian poet and Sufi Mirza Abdul-Qadir Bidel Dehlavi (1644-1721) was inaugurated in Tehran on Tuesday.

Bidel Dehlavi was born in Azimabad (present day Patna, India). He mostly wrote ghazals and quatrains in Persian and was the author of 16 books of poetry, which contain nearly 147,000 verses.

A number of literary figures including Academy of Persian Language and Literature director Gholam-Ali Haddad-Adel, chairman of the Leader's office Ayatollah Mohammad Mohammadi Golpayegani, ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) president Iftikhar Husain Arif and the Iranian Literature Center director Hadi Kiasari attended the ceremony.

Speaking at the ceremony, Golpayegani said that Bidel had never seen Iran, but during his time, Persian was the official language of his country.

He expressed hope that the sweet Persian language would find its real statue in the world.

Haddad-Adel said that he is happy the foundation has been established in Iran, calling it good news for the aficionados of Persian literature.

Kiasari also regarded Bidel as the greatest Persian literary figure beyond (our) borders.

The ceremony was closed with the unveiling of the logo of the foundation, which bears an inscription by master of calligraphy Gholamhossein Amirkhani and a symbol by calligrapher Hamid Ajami.

The idea to establish the foundation was proposed by literary scholars attending the international congress on Bidel organized by the Iranian Literature Center in 2011.



Calligraphers Gholamhossein Amirkhani (R) and Hamid Ajami unveil a logo for the Bidel Dehlavi Foundation in Tehran on August 30, 2016. (ANA/Majid Farahani)

The Bidel Dehlavi Foundation has been established to promote Persian language and literature in the international arena, while it also helps boost research related to the thoughts of and works by Bidel.

## "Hasti" wins award at Greek festival

**T E H R A N** — Iranian short film "Hasti" won the award for best screenplay at the 3rd Taratsa International Film Festival in Thessaloniki, Greece, the organizers announced on Tuesday.

"Hasti" written by director Kamal Parnak is about a little girl whose mother's death becomes the starting point of an inner journey, which leads

her to perceive the concept of death.

The award for best film went to "Getting Fat in a Healthy Way" by Kevork Aslanyan from Bulgaria while Gudmundur Arnar Gudmundsson from Iceland won best director award for his "Artun".

The award for best cinematographer was presented to Michal Dymek for his collaboration on "Adaptation" by Bartosz

Kruhlik from Poland, and the award for best editor went to Vincent Tricon for "Duo" by Claudia Bottino from France.

"In the DMZ (500m)" by South Korean director Hyung Jun Jeon received the audience award.

"A Moment" by Naqi Nemati and "The Snail" by Mohammad Torivian, both from Iran, were also screened in the official competition.



A poster for "Hasti"

### PICTURE OF THE DAY Tasnim/Mostafa Rudaki



Chilean filmmaker Miguel Littin and his wife, Elizabeth Menz, accept a lifetime achievement award and a plaque of honor presented by the Third Ammar International Popular Film Festival at the Ibn-e Sina Hall of the University of Tehran on August 30, 2016.

## Tehran short filmfest announces intl. lineup

**T E H R A N** — 100 movies by filmmakers from about 50 countries will be competing in the 33rd Tehran International Short Film Festival as announced by the organizers in their international lineup on Wednesday.

"Birds of Prey" by Aude Verbiguie from Belgium and "Returning" by Aliaksei Paluyan from Germany are among the films.

The lineup also includes "Clouds" by Diego Maclean and "The Sleepwalker" by Theodore Ushev, both from Canada, and "Anglers" by Yoann Garel and "White Tides" by Marie Fages, both from France.

The Iranian Youth Cinema Society (IYCS) is the main organizer of the festival, which will be held at Tehran's Charsu Cineplex from November 8 to 14.

## NEWS

### Chris Brown arrested for suspected assault at L.A. home

**LOS ANGELES (Reuters)** — Pop star Chris Brown was arrested on suspicion of assault with a deadly weapon on Tuesday after a daylong standoff at his Los Angeles home that began with a dawn 911 call from a woman, police said.

Brown, 27, denied any wrongdoing in posts on Instagram before he was taken into custody and said he had woken up to find police outside the property in the Tarzana neighborhood in Los Angeles' San Fernando Valley.

"He is being transported to robbery homicide, where he will be arrested for assault with a deadly weapon," Los Angeles Police Department's Lieutenant Chris Ramirez told reporters at a media conference outside Brown's home.

Brown was released on bail of \$250,000 bail late on Tuesday night, according to online county records.

Ramirez declined to elaborate on the charges against Brown, saying an investigation was still under way. The Los Angeles Times reported that the singer pointed a gun at a woman it identified as Baylee Curran.

Curren told the newspaper Brown threatened her when she was admiring diamond jewelry and told her and a friend to leave the house.

Police who responded to the 911 emergency call at about 3 a.m. (1000 GMT) on Tuesday spent hours surrounding the house before beginning a search of the sprawling premises.

During that search, TMZ posted a photo of Brown standing on the front porch with a police officer and his attorney, Mark Geragos. Geragos could not be reached by Reuters for comment.

"I don't sleep half the damn night I just wake up to all these ... helicopters, choppers is around, police out there at the gate," Brown said in a video he posted on Instagram showing police stationed outside the house.

### Selena Gomez to take career break after panic attacks

**NEW YORK (Reuters)** — Pop singer Selena Gomez said on Tuesday she was taking time out to deal with panic attacks and depression thought to be a side effect of her lupus disease.

Gomez, 24, issued the statement in the midst of her Revival world tour, and about a year after revealing that she had been diagnosed with lupus.

Lupus is an autoimmune disease that can damage any part of the body and affects some 1.5 million Americans, according to the Lupus Foundation of America.

It was not immediately clear when she would start her break or what would happen with the rest of her tour, mostly in Europe and South America, through the end of 2016.

"I've discovered that anxiety, panic attacks and depression can be side effects of lupus, which can present their own challenges," she said.

"I want to be proactive and focus on maintaining my health and happiness and have decided that the best way forward is to take some time off . . . I need to face this head on to ensure I am doing everything possible to be my best," the former Disney Channel star said.

### Adaptation of "The House of Bernarda Alba" to go on stage in Tehran

**T E H R A N** — Iranian director Fatemeh Radmanesh plans to stage a play based on Spanish dramatist Federico Garcia Lorca's "The House of Bernarda Alba".

The play titled "Virgins of Lemon Garden" will go on stage at Tehran's Theater House on September 4.

"The House of Bernarda Alba" tells the story of an elderly woman, Bernarda, whose husband has just died, and she asks her five daughters to go through an eight-year mourning period according to her family's tradition.

Mahnaz Ghamkhar, Marjan Zarei,



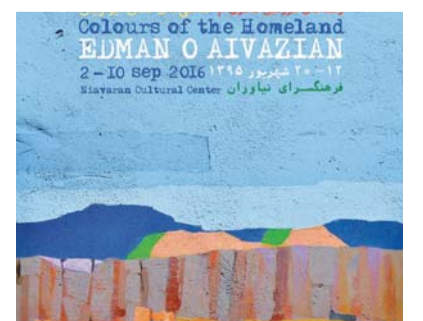
Fatemeh Neyshaburi and Roshanak Shahbazi are the main members of the cast for the play, which will be on stage until September 21.

### Tehran center to showcase paintings by Edman Aivazian

**T E H R A N** — An exhibition of paintings by the London-based Iranian-Armenian painter Edman Aivazian will be showcased at Tehran's Niavaran Cultural Center from September 2 to 10.

Some of Aivazian's calligraphy works and architectural designs will also be put on display at the exhibit entitled "Colors of the Homeland".

Aivazian, who attained his professional education in Europe, has a wide scope of interests in painting, graphic art, architecture and design.



He has made the interior designs for some Armenian churches and public and sacred buildings in Europe, the Near East and Iran.