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TEHRAN TIMES

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Saudis escaping regional realities: ambassador

No foreign country has right to participate in liberation of Mosul, Iran says

POLITICS TEHRAN — Ali d e s k Akbar Velayati, the senior foreign policy advisor to the Leader, said on Wednesday that no country, except Iraq, has the right to participate in the military operations to liberate Mosul from ISIS.



After a meeting with Fernando José Marroni de Abreu, the Brazilian deputy foreign minister for Africa and Middle East, Velayati said Iran is not "directly involved" in the Mosul operation.

He said that Iran has just provided Iraq with advisory help upon the Baghdad government's request.

"There are some countries that sent forces to Iraq without the country's permission which is against the international law and the Islamic Republic of Iran is not involved in the issue of liberating Mosul, except advisory help upon the Iraqi government's request," Velayati stated.

The Iraqi army and its allied Kurdish forces launched a massive assault against Daesh on Monday.

Tehran shrugs off U.S. statement on persons convicted of espionage charges

POLITICS TEHRAN — The d e s k Iranian Foreign Ministry on Wednesday shrugged off remarks by a U.S. official in regard to jail sentences against six persons in Iran on espionage charges, saying



Iran does not value such "interfering" remarks.

On Tuesday, Tehran's prosecutor announced that Siamak Namazi, an Iranian-American businessman, Baqer Namazi, his father, and four others have each been given 10 years in prison for espionage.

Mark C. Toner, a deputy U.S. State Department spokesman, expressed concerns over the arrested U.S. citizens.

"We join recent calls by international organizations and UN human rights experts for the immediate release of all U.S. citizens unjustly detained in Iran, including Siamak and Baqer Namazi, so that they can return to their families," Toner said.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi said linking rulings against "the culprits and foreign spies" is an example of "useless effort to influence the international cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran."

Leader: Enemy not enamoured of knowledgeable Iran

See page 2



Former congressman: Trump's bigotry, dishonesty make him unfit to be president

By Javad Heirannia

TEHRAN - Meldon Edises Levine, a former Democratic congressman from California, says Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump "cannot escape who he is".

In an exclusive interview with the Tehran Times, Edises Levine says, "Donald Trump's bigotry, dishonesty, and misogyny make him unfit to be president."



Following is the text of the interview:
■ What is your prediction of the U.S. presidential election?

A: I believe Hillary Clinton will be elected President of the United States. Donald Trump's bigotry, dishonesty, and misogyny make him unfit to be President and the majority of Americans have come to that conclusion, based solely upon Mr. Trump's own statements and actions.

■ Why does Trump still remain

as a competitor despite many pressures and disclosures against him? And, basically what groups are going to vote for him?

A: Many Americans are in difficult economic straits. Their incomes have not kept up with inflation. Many have lost jobs, due to a variety of factors and have not been able to find work which enables them to maintain their prior standards of living. →13

Iranian animations win awards at Australian festival

A R T TEHRAN — d e s k Two Iranian animated films, both directed by Mona Shahi, won awards at the Veterans Film Festival (VFF), which was held in Canberra, Australia from October 13 to 15.

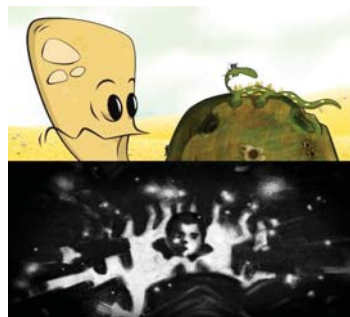
"The Little Boy" won the Red Poppy Award for best animation.

The movie is about the residents of a city who evacuate their hometown upon repeated warnings by

the army about the danger of a time bomb. However, a little orphan boy disregards the calls as he wants to finish doing something.

Amir-Hossein Jalili won the the Red Poppy Award for best composer for his collaboration on Shahi's another animation "The Red Line".

The film is about a turtle and a salamander who are friends in a war zone, but after the war they are sep-



arated by a red line as the border.

"Hyena Road" by Paul Gross from Canada received the Red Poppy Award for best international feature film while "The Carter" by David Bradbury won the award for best Australian feature film.

The Veterans Film Festival is an annual event, dedicated to sharing stories that explore real or imagined perspectives, in and out of war.

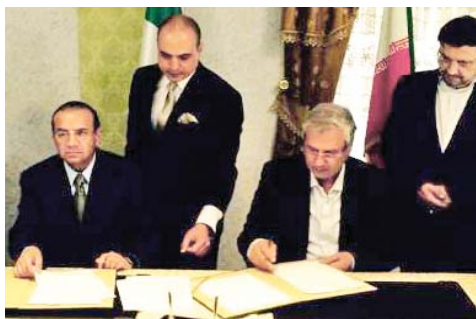
Iran, Mexico ink joint action plan on labor affairs

SOCIETY TEHRAN — Iran and Mexico d e s k signed a joint plan of action on labor affairs, IRNA news agency reported on Wednesday.

Mexican Secretary of Labor and Social Welfare Alfonso Navarrete Prida and the visiting Iranian Labor and Social Welfare Minister Ali Rabiei signed the document on Tuesday.

The two ministers discussed cooperation on labor related affairs such as occupation, social security, vocational education, social pathology, and other related issues.

Mentioning Iran's positive experience in both political and business issues in the post-sanction era, Rabiei reflected Iranian officials' tendency



for establishing good relations and cementing ties particularly economic and commercial ones with Mexico.

Prida, for his part, expressed his country's readiness for cultivating closer relations with Iran and called on recognizing exact fields of interest for facilitating cooperation by the end of the year.

The Iranian labor minister is also scheduled to visit Mexican Secretary of Economy Ildefonso Guajardo Villarrea, Secretary of Energy Pedro Joaquín Coldwell, and Social Security Institute Director Mikel Andoni Arriola Penalosa.

According to IRNA, Iran exported some \$10.7 million of goods to Mexico in the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year, started on March 20, while imported around \$200,000 of goods from Mexico in the same period.

Iran's economy has beat expectations: IMF

The head of the International Monetary Fund in the Mideast said Iran's economy has beat expectations by growing by 4.5 percent this year.

The Islamic Republic could keep that pace if it can "move on addressing some of the other restraints in their economy."

Chief among them is modernizing both its banking system and its manufacturing industry, both of which were affected by sanctions, Masood Ahmed told The Associated Press on Tuesday.

Iran's economy has charged ahead through boosting oil production close to levels seen before Western nations imposed economic sanctions over its nuclear program. Iran will have to modernize both its banking system and its manufacturing industry, as well as allow more foreign direct investment in the country, to continue that growth.

"The big challenge for Iran is can you sustain that 4-, 5-percent growth over the medium term or is it just a one-time increase you get?" Ahmed asked. "They can, but they have to move on addressing some of the other constraints in their economy"

He also said that Mideast countries are making efforts to cope with low oil prices, though more needs to be done.

Oil-producing countries "still have some way to go" in reforming the government sector and cutting spending, he noted.

(Source: AP)

Malaysian trade delegation due in Tehran on Oct. 22

ECONOMY TEHRAN — A Malaysian trade delegation headed by Mustapa Mohamed, the country's minister for international trade and industry, will visit Tehran on October 22 to attend a joint business forum, Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture announced.

Representatives of renowned companies and senior businessmen and entrepreneurs will accompany the country's minister in his visit.

The delegation is going to hold talks with Iranian counterparts in order to negotiate joint cooperation and investment opportunities in various fields.

Some of the areas of interest for the Malaysian company representatives include coffee, tea, cocoa, dairy products, oil and gas, renewable energies, engineering, shipbuilding and offshore oil and gas rigs, power generation, smart network control systems, e-commerce, etc.

Syria's anti-terror fight in Aleppo aimed at defending civilians: Assad

Syria's President Bashar al-Assad says purging terrorists from the northwestern city of Aleppo is the only lawful way for the Syrian government to protect the civilian population in the embattled city.

Assad made the remarks in an interview with Swiss SRF 1 TV channel which was conducted on Tuesday and posted on its website the following day.

"That's our mission, according to the constitution and the law, that we have to protect people, that we have to get rid of those terrorists from Aleppo. This is how we can protect the civilians," he said.

President Assad further noted that it is not possible to protect civilians while they are being killed and remain under the full control of militants.

"How can you protect them while they are under the control of terrorists? Is it our role to sit aside and watch if that's how we can protect the Syrian people? We need to attack the terrorists, that's self-evident," he added. →13

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TEHRAN TIMES



→ See page 12

The Tehran Times new pocket-sized glossary is now available on the market. The reader-friendly is a rich source of the most common journalistic terminology collected by the daily's retired staff.

It can benefit a wide range of tastes from students to professional journalists. Persian equivalents have been given for all entries, including idioms and expressions. The glossary also includes example sentences for entries the authors thought it would be a bit difficult to learn.

For more information contact:

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MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



'Iran not worried about Arbaeen security'

TT POLITICS TEHRAN — There is no special worry about the security of the upcoming Arbaeen pilgrimage to Karbala, Iraq, an Iranian foreign ministry official told ISNA on Wednesday.

"Fortunately we have been able to work better than last year on the issue," said Hassan Qashqavi, who is the chairman of the Arbaeen staff for political and consular affairs.

He also stated that it is impossible for people to make the pilgrimage without a visa this year.

Arbaeen, marking 40 days of mourning for Imam Hussein (AS), will be held on November 20.



Fighter jets pound mock targets with advanced missiles

TT POLITICS TEHRAN — The Iranian Air Force warplanes smashed simulated enemy targets by using optimized missiles with a high precision on the last day of Fadaeeyan-e Harim-e Velayat-6 drills on Wednesday.

The F5, Mig-29 and Sa'egeh fighter jets fired air-to-ground missiles against the specified targets after tracing them during the war games in the central province of Isfahan, Fars reported.

Also, the strategic Sukhoi 24 jets targeted simulated enemy positions with optimized Kh-29 and Kh-25 missiles.



Tehran advises nationals against unnecessary trips to Turkey

TT POLITICS TEHRAN — The Iranian embassy in Ankara has advised Iranian nationals to cancel unnecessary trips to neighboring Turkey.

The warning comes in the wake of an announcement by the National Intelligence Organization of Turkey expressing suspicion that terrorist acts have been plotted in the country, ISNA reported on Wednesday.

The embassy has also advised Iranians in Turkey to avoid crowded places.

A suicide bomb attack in Istanbul in March claimed three lives, including one Iranian.



Iran appoints new charge d'affaires to Argentina

TT POLITICS TEHRAN — Mohammad Farhad Coleini was appointed as Iran's new charge d'affaires to Buenos Aires, Argentina, on Wednesday.

Coleini, top expert on strategic issues, served as Iran's ambassador to Armenia before, IRNA reported.

Relations between Iran and Argentina have developed dramatically in various cultural, economic and sports areas and it is expected the newly-appointed diplomat take initiatives to help develop political cooperation with the Buenos Aires government.

Coleini will replace Ahmad Reza Kheirmand.



Iranian warships dock in Azerbaijan

TT POLITICS TEHRAN — A flotilla of the Iranian warships arrived in the Republic of Azerbaijan's territorial waters and berthed at the port city of Baku on Wednesday.

A welcoming ceremony was held in the Azeri capital upon the arrival of the fleet with some senior commanders of the Azerbaijani navy and some officials in attendance, Tasnim reported.

The commander of the flotilla said his forces have arrived in Baku to convey Iran's message of peace and friendship to all Caspian Sea littoral states.



Cabinet reshuffle was a public demand: Aref

TT POLITICS TEHRAN — Mohammad Reza Aref, head of the parliamentary Hope faction, said on Wednesday that reshuffle in the cabinet was demanded by the public.

"Although the changes came a couple of months late, we have to thank the government," he told reporters, according to ILNA.

"The new ministers will have to make plans for five years," he underlined.

Aref added that the Hope faction does not intend to propose any candidates for ministerial posts to President Hassan Rouhani.

Leader: Enemy not enamored of knowledgeable Iran

TT POLITICS TEHRAN — Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has underlined the importance of honoring academic elites, saying a main goal of enemies is to stymie the amazing scientific progress of Iran.

"If they fail to materialize the goal (to bring Iran's scientific progress to a halt), they try to derail it, and if failed, they invest on defaming it and polluting it..." Leader said, addressing thousands of academically gifted students on Wednesday.

The Supreme Leader hailed the country's highly-talented students as "God's precious gifts," saying for Iran to develop into an advanced country, the way should be paved for the talented to play their role.

"By relying on the elites and in the light of nurturing a young and industrious generation, the great Iran will turn into an advanced, powerful, and honorable which will raise the flag of the modern Islamic civilization."

The goal would not be achieved unless the country's officials identify and grow gifted students, the Leader reminded.

"The officials' responsibility in relation to these God's precious gifts is to take care of them and try to spot and nurture more elites."

However, the talented also have to shoulder their responsibilities which equals to a best possible use of their talents,



ents, Ayatollah Khamenei pointed out.

"The elites also are responsible in relation to the gift, and should thank God for this through their responsibly and use of the talent and ability in the right direction."

The Leader also brought to the fore the importance of an accelerated technological and scientific progress in his remarks, listing such guidelines as "supporting knowledge-based companies," "developing the companies both qualitatively and

quantitatively," and "engaging them in the country's main sectors and plans."

Ayatollah Khamenei proposed as one way to back such knowledge-based start-ups the use of technological items manufactured by them.

"The needs of state organizations should be met by the products of knowledge-based companies"

All these will help reach global standards such as "scientific progress, power, and wealth," and contribute to a society filled with "faith, spirituality, and honor," the Leader concluded.

Leader says, "By relying on the elites and in the light of nurturing a young and industrious generation, the great Iran will turn into an advanced, powerful, and honorable which will raise the flag of the modern Islamic civilization."

Culture minister submits resignation letter to president

TT POLITICS TEHRAN — In a letter to the president posted on IRNA website Ali Jannati officially resigned from his post as minister of culture and Islamic guidance.

Earlier reports carried by ISNA news agency said the three ministers of sports, education, and culture had resigned and their portfolios are now run by acting ministers.

The news came after days of rumor and speculation over the fate of Jannati, Education Minister Ali-Asghar Fani, and Sports and Youth Minister Mahmoud Goudarzi.

The source said the deputies of the three ministers have been chosen by the Rouhani Administration to replace them and hold offices for three months until the president names new ministers for approval by Majlis.



Ali-Asghar Fani

"Abbas Salehi has been appointed to replace Ali Jannati as the head of the culture ministry," said the source.

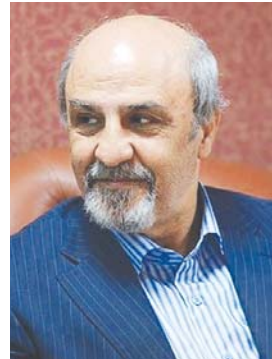
Over the past three years, culture has been one of the main battlegrounds



Ali Jannati

between rightists and President Hassan Rouhani, a self-described moderate.

Mehr news agency also quoted an unnamed source on Tuesday as saying, "Cabinet reshuffle is in the offing." The



Mahmoud Goudarzi

source said ministries of sports, culture, and education would likely undergo changes.

"There is however a possibility that replaced ministers will be appointed to other positions in the government," the source said. According to Fars, Jannati and Goudarzi handed in their resignations on Tuesday.

On Tuesday, ISNA quoted an insider who said Fani has also "submitted his resignation to the President Hassan Rouhani" during the cabinet meeting.

A few hours before rumors of Fani's resignation came up, a motion for his impeachment was submitted to the Majlis presiding board on Tuesday by 45 signatures.

The motion was dropped soon after the news of his resignation was confirmed.

Tehran urges all sides to respect Yemeni truce

TT POLITICS TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi on Tuesday called on all sides, especially the Saudi Arabian-led coalition, to respect truce in Yemen.

He also urged the sides to let delivery of humanitarian aid to the war stricken Yemenis.

Describing the humanitarian situation in Yemen as "catastrophic," he highlighted the need that all sides make efforts to prolong the truce and end the war.

The UN Special Envoy for Yemen Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed announced on Monday a plan for the resump-



tion of a comprehensive cessation of hostilities in the war-torn Yemen and announced a 72-hour truce that

was supposed to start on Wednesday.

Ould Cheikh Ahmed welcomed the restoration of the cessation of hostilities, "which will spare the Yemeni people further bloodshed and will allow for the expanded delivery of humanitarian assistance."

He also called on all Yemeni parties, the regional countries, and the international community at large to encourage full respect for the cessation of hostilities and to ensure that the truce leads to a permanent and lasting end to the conflict, UN News Center reported on Monday.

Saudis escaping regional realities: ambassador

TT POLITICS TEHRAN — Hamid Baeedinejad, Iran's ambassador to the UK, has said Saudi Arabia is refusing to admit the realities of the Middle East geopolitics and Iran's historic regional role.

In his telegram channel, he criticized Saudis' action in making its allies to either select Tehran or Riyadh for cooperation.

"If Saudis admit the current reality and Iran's regional role, the tension between

the two countries will be eased and both countries' political capacities for cooperation can help boost regional peace and security," Baeedinejad noted.

Saudi Arabia severed diplomatic ties with Iran as Riyadh's diplomatic posts in Tehran and Mashhad were attacked in public mobs, following the Saudi execution of Shia cleric Nimr al-Nimr in January.

In the current year Iran also did not



bi added.

Also, APS uses a firewall to survive incoming threats, he said.

The designing team have been inspired by APS used by different armies, yet the output is a copy of none.

"We have been inspired by a number of systems but the designing is quite domestic," Aaboutalebi explained.

The unveiled active protection system can be mounted on armored personnel carriers and tanks. It has been deployed on Zulfiqar tanks and filed-tested successfully.

In addition to a Doppler radar, Iran has tested out an engineering model of a fuzzy logic-based active protection model.

Both models use four countermeasure pods with sensors detecting threats over 360 degrees, Aaboutalebi explained.

On if the system will be deployed on other armored vehicles and tanks, Aaboutalebi said maybe "Karar" tanks are the next machines to be equipped with the system.

Iran has been developing and upgrading advanced home-grown battle tanks such as Zulfiqar (the legendary sword of Ali, the first Shiite Imam) and Karar (striker).

Zulfiqar, already introduced in three versions, has undergone considerable upgrades, including its fire system control and the autoloader.

Iraqi forces advance towards Mosul amid ISIL resistance

U.S.: ISIL may launch chemical attacks

Fighting has entered the third day as coalition forces focused efforts on the town of Hamdaniya as they march towards Mosul, the second largest Iraqi city and the last major of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group's stronghold in the country.

Explosives and booby traps laid down by ISIL terrorist group slowed down the Iraqi offensive in recent days, despite air support from the United States-led coalition.

ISIL snipers posed danger to Iraqi forces trying to advance towards Mosul as the coalition air strikes pounded Hamdaniya.

The Iraqi army said that it had to destroy five cars being driven by ISIL suicide bombers during their advance.

"The Iraqi army, not the Peshmerga, are trying to advance into [Hamdaniya]. They tried to storm the area yesterday, but were forced to retreat," Al Jazeera's Zeina Khodr, reporting from Khazir near the frontline, said.

"What we saw on the first day of the offensive - with Peshmerga forces taking the lead, clearing ground, and taking villages - that was easy, even though ISIL put up a fight," she said. "It was easy because [those areas] were depopulated. Hamdaniya is more difficult. It is a built-up area with civilians inside."

"If [the Iraqi forces] take over Hamdaniya, they will be at the gates of Mosul itself," she added.

Before ISIL's takeover in 2014, Hamdaniya's population stood at 50,000. Although most civilians fled at the time, a few thousand people are believed to reside in the town.

The Iraqi offensive to retake Mosul began on the first day with the taking of nine villages, mostly by Kurdish Peshmerga forces.

Iraqi commanders maintain that progress continues to be made as their forces push from two main fronts, namely, the south, where government troops are moving up towards Mosul, and the east and north, from where their Kurdish allies are advancing.

Late on Tuesday, the Popular Mobilization Force (PMF/Al-Hashd Al-Sha'abi), said it would back Iraqi government forces advancing toward Tal Afar, about 55km west of Mosul.

Taking Tal Afar would effectively cut



Iraqi commanders maintain that progress continues to be made as their forces push from two main fronts, namely, the south, where government troops are moving up towards Mosul, and the east and north, from where their Kurdish allies are advancing.

off the escape route for fighters wanting to head into neighboring Syria, but it could also hamper the escape of civilians from the area of Mosul, a Sunni-majority city.

ISIL terrorists are believed to be vastly outnumbered, with the U.S. military calculating up to 4,500 fighters in and around Mosul, compared with an estimated 30,000 Iraqi army troops, Kurdish Peshmerga fighters and Sunni tribal forces.

Iraqi forces have significant ground to cover before reaching the boundaries of the city, which ISIL is defending with berms, bombs and burning oil trenches.

The so-called U.S.-led coalition said air strikes destroyed 52 targets on the first day of the operation.

"Early indications are that Iraqi forces have met their objectives so far, and that they are ahead of schedule for this first day," Peter Cook, the Pentagon press secretary, said.

Most of the coalition's support has come in the shape of air strikes and training, but U.S., British and French Special Forces are also on the ground to advise local troops.

Mosul is Iraq's second-largest city and the United Nations fears that up to a million people could be forced from their

homes by the fighting, with 700,000 of them in need of shelter.

Iraqi government troops, together with Sunni fighters and Shia forces from Popular Mobilization Units, and Kurdish Peshmerga fighters, are involved in a massive offensive to liberate Mosul.

Iraqi Sunni fighters is a coalition between tribal Sheikhs that united to maintain stability in their communities against the ISIL.

The People's Mobilization, is an Iraqi state-sponsored umbrella organization composed of some 40 militias, including mainly Shia Muslim groups, Sunni Muslim, Christian, and Yazidi groups. People's Mobilization was formed for deployment against the ISIL. The organization was formed by uniting existing militias under the "People's Mobilization Committee" of the Iraqi Ministry of Interior in June 2014.

Peshmergas are the military forces of the autonomous region of Iraqi Kurdistan. Peshmerga means "one who confronts death" or "one who faces death".

The Takfiri ISIL terrorist group unleashed its campaign of death and destruction against the country in 2014, seizing the northern city of Mosul and declaring it as its so-called self-claimed headquarters. A large and multi-faceted operation is due to liberate the city.

■ U.S. officials: ISIL may launch chemical attacks during Mosul op.

Meantime U.S. officials say the ISIL Takfiri terrorist group may resort to launching chemical attacks in the fight to hold its grip on Mosul.

Speaking to Reuters on condition of anonymity, multiple American sources said on Tuesday that attacks involving chemical agents are possible, given the terrorist group's previous record of such attempts.

The unnamed U.S. officials cautioned of possible use of chemical weapons by ISIL, yet arguing that the group has limited capability in this regard.

The official added that the U.S. forces found a sulfur mustard agent on ISIL munitions fragments on October 5.

According to the U.S. officials, The Takfiri group has so far failed to reach the know-how to build chemical weapons with significantly lethal effects.

(Source: agencies)

Burundi leader signs decree to quit the International Criminal Court



President Pierre Nkurunziza signed a decree for Burundi to quit the International Criminal Court (ICC), after parliament voted overwhelmingly last week to remove the country from the court's jurisdiction.

The move is unprecedented in a continent whose leaders often complain that the court disproportionately targets Africans.

On Oct. 12, only two lawmakers voted in favor of staying under the jurisdiction of the Dutch-based ICC, while 94 voted against and 14 abstained.

In April, the ICC opened a preliminary investigation into Burundi, focusing on killings, imprisonment, torture, rape and other sexual violence, as well as enforced disappearances.

Burundi's government was infuriated last month by a United Nations report that named officials accused of orchestrating the torture and killing political opponents.

Since then, Bujumbura has banned three UN investigators from its territory and condemned a UN decision to set up a commission of inquiry to probe the violence, which began last year after Nkurunziza decided to seek a third term in office.

Opponents said his candidacy vi-

olated the constitution and a peace agreement that ended a civil war in 2005. The opposition mostly boycotted the polls and Nkurunziza won a third term.

The ICC said in April that political violence had killed about 450 people and forced hundreds of thousands to flee.

Earlier on Tuesday, the head of its governing body, Sidiki Kaba, said he was concerned that would undermine "efforts towards the objective of universality" and called on Burundi to "engage in a dialogue".

Since it was set up under the 1998 Rome Statute, the court based in The Hague has focused on prosecuting such politically-motivated crimes as genocide and crimes against humanity.

Most of its investigations and indictments have been of Africans, stirring criticism from many governments on the continent.

Nine out of 10 situations under investigation by ICC prosecutors are African. All five verdicts have dealt with African suspects from Congo, Central African Republic and Mali.

The decree signed by Nkurunziza, published in the presidency's website, said the decision would "come into immediate effect".

(Source: Reuters)

Strikes in DR Congo over president's poll delay



Strikes have reportedly been staged in the capital of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in protest at a controversial plan by President Joseph Kabila to continue to stay in power despite the end of his constitutionally-allowed term.

According to the AFP, roads in the northern parts of Kinshasa were totally deserted and most shops were closed at 9:00 am local time (0800 GMT) on Wednesday. They would have typically been bustling ahead of the work and school day. The up-market Gombe district was also unusually quiet.

The strikes were meant to protest a deal between the government and "fringe opposition" groups that allows Kabila to continue to rule the country until April 2018 by delaying presidential elections originally scheduled for this year.

The major opposition groups had earlier called for action to protest the deal, which was signed on Tuesday as part of "national dialog" initiated by the government in an attempt to reduce tensions over his controversial plans to stay in power for longer.

April 2018 will be more than a year after Kabila's mandate expires accord-

ing to the constitution.

The biggest opposition party, the Union for Democracy and Social Progress, UDPS, had boycotted the so-called national dialog and asked for protests to give Kabila a "yellow card".

The deal "unilaterally imposes Mr. Kabila at the head of the government in flagrant violation of the constitution, which sets the end of his mandate at December 20," the secretary general of the UDPS, Jean Marc Kabund, said on Wednesday.

Last month, protests against moves to delay the presidential election resulted in at least 50 deaths.

Kabila first took office in 2001; and in 2006, a new constitutional provision limited the presidency to a two-term limit that expires in December.

European Union foreign ministers on Monday said the bloc was "deeply concerned by the political situation" in DR Congo, saying that a "dialogue must lead to the holding of presidential and legislative elections as soon as possible in 2017."

Political tension has gripped the country since Kabila's disputed re-election in November 2011.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

Clinton makes new push to win the House

Democratic campaign leaders are moving to nationalize close House races in hopes that Donald Trump's struggles and President Obama's popularity will pay dividends down the ballot on Nov. 8.

The Democrats' campaign arm has launched a new co-ordinated effort with Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign that will shift millions of dollars to traditionally red states, where party leaders are hoping to upset House GOP (Grand Old Party) incumbents.

Obama this week cut his first ads promoting down-ballot Democrats, including for former Rep. Brad Schneider, who's vying to pick off Rep. Bob Dold (R-Ill.) in a Chicago suburb where Obama won in 2012 by more than 16 points.

First Lady Michelle Obama is poised to use her star power for Clinton this week in Arizona, a GOP stronghold where House Democrats are fighting to retain an open seat and defeat a vulnerable Republican.

And the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) is amplifying its efforts this week to tie vulnerable Republicans to their presidential nominee, who has now been accused of sexual misconduct by about a dozen women. Democrats are singling out Reps. Will Hurd (R-Texas), Erik Paulsen (R-Minn.) and Cresent Hardy (R-Nev.) for refusing to disavow Trump.

House Democrats also see outreach opportunities in Wednesday's final presidential debate, a format in which Clinton has generally outperformed Trump.

Rep. Xavier Becerra (Calif.), chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, on Tuesday called Trump an "unhinged" candidate. He said Trump will energize Latino voters and be crucial up and down the ballot in a number of battleground states, including Nevada, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico and Virginia.

GOP campaign officials argue that savvy voters will be able to distinguish down-ballot Republicans from the top of the ticket.

What's clear three weeks out from the election is that Democrats are on offense.

Hoping to expand the battleground, the House Majority PAC, which works to help Democrats retake the lower chamber, launched a series of ads this week targeting not only toss-up races, but also second-tier seats thought to be safely Republican just a few months ago, including those held by Reps. David Valadao (Calif) and Lee Zeldin (N.Y.).

Robby Mook, Clinton's campaign manager, laid out the expanded outreach effort on Monday, indicating that the campaign intends to shift \$6 million for direct mail and digital ads designed to boost turnout in the battleground states of Florida, Iowa, Nevada, New Hampshire, Ohio and Pennsylvania - all spots where Democrats will need gains in order to have any shot at retaking the House.

The Clinton camp is also providing hundreds of thousands of dollars to defeat freshman GOP Rep. Bruce Poliquin in Maine and lend a boost to Rep. Brad Ashford, a vulnerable Democrat in Nebraska.

While Trump has been downright toxic for some down-ballot Republicans, Democratic candidates are showing no qualms about appearing alongside President Obama or the Clintons.

Tuesday saw Obama appear in his first down-ballot TV and radio ads of the cycle. He cut a minute-long radio ad for Democrat Catherine Cortez Masto in Nevada, who's running to replace retiring Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid.

With Gallup putting Obama's approval rating at 54 percent, expect the popular, two-term president to be utilized in more congressional ads in the coming weeks.

Hillary and Bill Clinton are getting involved, too. At a Miami rally focused on climate change last week, the Democratic nominee stumped with Rep. Patrick Murphy (D-Fla.), who's running to unseat incumbent Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.). And Hillary Clinton recently appeared with retired Orlando Police Chief Val Demings, who's heavily favored to win in Florida's redrawn 10th District.

Former President Bill Clinton, meanwhile, lent a hand to two Democratic House hopefuls in the Sunshine State: former Gov. Charlie Crist in St. Petersburg and state Sen. Darren Soto in Orlando.

In general, GOP campaign ads have been much more localized.

The NRCC (National Republican Congressional Committee) on Tuesday launched a pair of TV spots in the Sacramento market that made no mention of either Clinton or Trump.

The first ad linked vulnerable Rep. Ami Bera (D-Calif) to a campaign finance scandal that landed his 83-year-old father in prison. The second touts the "strong, effective leadership" from Bera's GOP opponent, Sacramento County Sheriff Scott Jones. A slew of other NRCC ads launched on Tuesday also don't refer to the two party nominees.

But there are exceptions to the rule. Republicans have attempted to link a handful of Democratic candidates to Clinton: Emily Cain, who's looking to oust Poliquin in northern Maine; Kim Meyers, who's vying to replace retiring GOP Rep. Richard Hanna in New York; and vulnerable incumbent Rep. Rick Nolan (D-Minn.).

Democrats face an enormous climb in their quest to retake the House, needing to flip 30 seats from the Republicans' historic majority. Top election handicappers have all put the likely Democratic gains in the range of 10 to 20 seats.

But the party remains hopeful that Trump's candidacy will both energize Democrats and dishearten Republicans, giving Hillary Clinton a commanding enough victory to pull other candidates on her coattails. In 2008, Obama's dominant 7-point win over Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) was accompanied by a 21-seat gain for Democrats in the House. Four years later, Obama defeated Romney by roughly 4 points, and Democrats netted eight House seats.

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) has said for weeks that if the election were held "today," Democrats would win back the Speaker's gavel.

Providing further signs she's on the offensive, Pelosi has scheduled a press conference in the Capitol for Wednesday.

(Source: The Hill)

Kish Island hosting IRANIMEX 2016

THE ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — The 18th International Marine **d e s k** Industries Conference and Offshore Technological Exhibition of Iran (IRANIMEX 2016) started operation on Iranian southern island of Kish on Tuesday.

Some 260 Iranian companies and 110 foreign ones, from different countries namely Romania, Turkey, Russia, Singapore, France, Italy, Greece, the United Arab Emirates, the Netherlands, China, Belgium, Norway, Germany, England, Australia, Croatia, Estonia, Serbia, Portugal, Spain, India, South Korea, and Ukraine, are taking part in the four-day event.

The exhibition, organized by the Iranian Association of Naval Architecture and Maritime Engineering in collaboration with other national marine organizations, industries and businesses, majorly seeks to showcase latest Iranian marine products to the attendees.

China's economy grows steadily at annual rate of 6.7%

China's economy grew at an annual rate of 6.7 percent in the three months to September, government data showed, a sign that growth is stabilizing.

The figure was the same rate as the previous two quarters, and was in line with forecasts.

The spell of stability will reassure investors after China's markets and currency crises earlier this year sparked fears of a further slowdown.

China's economic performance has a big knock-on impact around the world.

Full year growth for 2016 is still likely to be weaker than last year's, which was already the slowest in 25 years.

"The general performance was better than expected," the National Bureau of Statistics said in a statement when releasing the data on Wednesday.

The figure is in line with Beijing's growth target of 6.5 percent-7 percent for the year. *(Source: BBC)*

Germany said to shut door on Brexit back channels in blow to May

German Chancellor Angela Merkel's government is battering down the hatches for the coming Brexit talks, instructing officials to avoid any back-door contacts that could hand the U.K. an advantage.

Merkel's chancellery is receiving U.K. diplomats but politely refusing to grant the U.K. any favors in advance of the official negotiations, according to two people familiar with the matter. Officials at some ministries have been instructed to shun official contacts with U.K. counterparts that could reveal negotiating positions, another person said.

The German message in private is the same as in public: that discussions can't start until Britain presents its opening gambit after triggering Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty, the three people said. All asked not to be identified discussing private government matters.

The unbending German line underscores Merkel's focus on maintaining a united EU front against the U.K., even at the risk of curbing economic ties. The stance of Europe's key player and leader of its biggest economy suggests that some of the most fervent advocates of Brexit have miscalculated in counting on Germany to give the U.K. what it wants to ease exports of everything from cars to chocolate.

Merkel's office had no immediate comment when contacted by e-mail and phone. Steffen Seibert, her chief spokesman, told reporters last week that "the chancellor has been consistent on one core message in recent months: Full participation in the EU's single market means that the country that wants this participation must fully accept free movement -- the so-called four freedoms."

Last week, amid concern that the U.K. has been putting out feelers to the German auto and pharmaceutical industries, Merkel called on Germany's leading business groups to support her stance that Britain can't expect full market access if it restricts immigration from the EU. Negotiations will become "extraordinarily complicated" if "everybody does what they want," she said.

"We're waiting for the U.K. to trigger its exit from the European Union first," Merkel said during a party meeting last weekend.

■ Cherry-Picking

That's the public red line agreed by Merkel and other EU leaders after the Brexit referendum in June, along with an official ban on letting the U.K. cherry-pick economic advantages without accepting the EU's free movement of goods, services, capital and people.

The refusal to grant the U.K. early talks means Prime Minister Theresa May's announcement that she will trigger the withdrawal by April may end up reducing her leverage in the negotiations. Had she kept other governments guessing about her favored timing and eventual deal, May might have seen European unity begin to crumble as leaders lost patience and started to offer some signals about where they might compromise.

Officials in Berlin say that Germany must now put the interests of the remaining 27-member EU ahead of Britain's. That includes rejecting U.K. attempts to float any kind of transitional deal on post-Brexit relations, one of the people said.

■ Brexit Taskforce

While holding off the U.K., Germany is making its own preparations. A Brexit task force based at the Foreign Ministry in Berlin has drawn up a list of several hundred possible topics to be tackled, from climate change to finance, the person said.

As she seeks to keep control, Merkel may be able to count on a precedent: German industry groups backed her push for economic sanctions against Russia during the Ukraine crisis, accepting the chancellor's argument that defending European values trumps restrictions on trade. As for German lawmakers, her government says they'll have a consultative role during the Brexit talks but won't be given a vote on the outcome. *(Source: Bloomberg)*

Vision 2025 to facilitate reaching ECO targets: Iranian fin. min.

THE ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Address- **d e s k** ing the 7th meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Council of Heads of Customs Administration (CHCA) in Tehran on Wednesday, the Iranian Finance Minister Ali Tayyebnia expressed hope that the preparation of the formulation of a new ECO Vision for the period 2016-2025 would ease reaching the organization targets, IRIB news reported.

"Expansion of trade relations among regional countries and worldwide as well as developing projects in transportation, agriculture, energy, general services, infrastructure and etc. have been among the primary agreements made by ECO members and implementing such projects demands executing regulations thoroughly and avoiding restrictive rules," Tayyebnia said.

"ECO members, regarding their geographical adjacency, have a high capacity to improve trade ties among themselves,"



he said, "via improving infrastructure in transportation sector, easing customs regulations, coordinating trade documents, and making their domestic regulations transparent."

"If so, goods can be transported with a higher pace and their final prices would decrease," he added.

The Iranian minister hoped that ECO could reach its pre-set goals via taking ad-

Iran Hospitex being held in Tehran

THE ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — The **d e s k** 2nd International Exhibition of Hospital Building, Infrastructure, Installation, Equipment, and Related Industries (Iran Hospitex) was inaugurated the Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds on Tuesday, IRIB news reported.

Some 90 Iranian and 7 foreign companies from Germany, Spain, England,

Italy, Turkey, China, France, and Oman are presenting their recent products in Hospitex.

Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), Iran International Exhibitions Company, and Sepantas Kish Exhibition Consulting Company are the organizers of this exhibition.

The exhibition will wrap up on Friday.

Iran eyes Philippine's bananas, plans to invest in infra, energy sectors

The Islamic Republic of Iran is planning to import more bananas and explore areas of investment and cooperation in infrastructure and energy in the Philippines, the Philippine's Department of Finance (DOF) said on Wednesday.

In a statement, the DOF said Iran was keen on fostering better economic relations with the country.

"In the Iranian private sector, for example regarding bananas, there are some big companies that said we still need more bananas from the Philippines," the department quoted Iranian Ambassador to Manila Mohammad Tanhaei as telling Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez in a courtesy call on October 14.

DOF said Filipino banana producers used to export 30 percent of their produce to Iran.

However, the past UN trade restrictions imposed on Iran led to a decline in Philippine banana shipments to that country.

"The recent lifting of the trade sanctions could mean Iran might once again be one of the Philippines' largest markets for its fresh banana exports," DOF said.

The ambassador also said Iranian companies are in-



terested in investing in the Philippines, particularly in infrastructure, power transmission, and water purification projects.

Tanhaei added that the government of Iran has expressed interest in working with the Philippines' energy sector, particularly in the fields of oil exploration and the petroleum product trade.

Aside from buying Philippine bananas and exploring

investments in infrastructure and energy, the ambassador also proposed the establishment of Iranian banks in the country and for the Land Bank of the Philippines to do the same in Iran.

Dominguez told Tanhaei he will look into his proposal on the establishment of Land Bank branches in Iran for the benefit of overseas Filipinos in the Middle Eastern country.

The ambassador also said he wanted to strengthen connections between Iran's and the Philippines' central banks "to pave the way for Iranian investors to start doing business in the Philippines."

He informed Dominguez that a deputy minister of Iran's Finance Ministry would be visiting the country in the first week of November to discuss with Philippine officials a framework of cooperation between Manila and Tehran.

Tanhaei said he is going to invite the head of Iran's Central Bank to visit the Philippines to discuss issues on banking cooperation with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

(Source: GMA news online)

South Africa inflation moves outside target band in Sept.

South Africa's inflation accelerated to above the upper end of the central bank's target band in September, climbing less than expected and reinforcing policy makers decision to keep the benchmark rate unchanged since March.

The rate climbed to 6.1 percent from 5.9 percent a month earlier, Statistics South Africa said in a report released Wednesday in the capital, Pretoria. The median estimate of 21 economist's surveyed by Bloomberg was for 6.2 percent. Prices rose 0.2 percent in the month.

The Reserve Bank has left its key rate unchanged at its past three

meetings to help support an economy forecast to expand at 0.4 percent this year, the slowest pace since a 2009 recession, even as it projected a temporary acceleration in inflation due primarily to low base effects from a year earlier. The bank had raised borrowing costs by 2 percentage points to 7 percent since January 2014 to limit price growth to within its 3 percent to 6 percent target band.

The Reserve Bank anticipates inflation to return to within the target by the second quarter of 2017. It briefly dipped within the band in July and August.

(Source: Bloomberg)

UK unemployment rate holds steady

The U.K.'s unemployment rate held steady in the three months to August, official data showed, suggesting the labor market was largely unaffected by Britain's June decision to leave the European Union.

The unemployment rate in the three months to August stood at 4.9 percent, unchanged from the preceding period, the Office for National Statistics said. This was in line with the expectations of analysts polled by The Wall Street Journal.

Employment rose to a joint-record high of 74.5 percent. Supported by strong labor figures, wages also continued to grow, rising by 2.3 percent in the three month period.

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(Source: Wall Street Journal)



Starbucks names China CEO

Starbucks Corp (SBUX.O) on Wednesday named its first chief executive officer for China and said it plans to more than double its store count in that country to 5,000 by 2021.

The world's biggest coffee chain promoted Belinda Wong to the title of CEO of Starbucks China. Wong, who had been president of that operation, will continue to report to John Culver, group president of Starbucks Global Retail.

Among other things, Wong will oversee the opening of Starbucks' first international Roastery and Reserve Tasting Room in Shanghai in 2017.



Dollar recedes from seven-month peak, lifts oil

The U.S. dollar fell from a seven-month peak on Wednesday, combining with signs of an easing supply glut to help lift oil prices back towards a one-year high.

A weaker dollar boosts oil, which gained around 1 percent on Wednesday, since it makes fuel cheaper for countries using other currencies.

The bounce in commodity prices has helped bolster inflation expectations in the euro zone, nudging the bloc's bond yields further away from the record lows struck after Britain voted to leave the European Union in June.



IMF downplays inflationary risk as Egypt seeks to finalize loan

Egypt is unlikely to see a jump in inflation from measures to ease a foreign-exchange shortage because import prices already reflect the black market rate, a senior International Monetary Fund official said.

Egyptian officials are widely expected to devalue the pound and cut energy subsidies to secure a \$12 billion IMF loan, needed to fund an economic overhaul they hope will attract foreign investment to Egypt's ailing economy. But with core inflation — a key gauge of price increases for non-volatile consumer goods — at the highest level since 2009, some analyst are warning of a public backlash if they force prices up further.

Platform 17B to add 14.5mcm/d of gas to South Pars output

By Mahnaz Abdi

BANDAR ABBAS — Platform 17B of Iran's South Pars gas field (in the Persian Gulf), which was loaded at Bandar Abbas yard on Tuesday, will produce 500 million cubic feet (around 14.5 million cubic meters) of gas per day.

The 2,300-ton structure, the last platform of South Pars phases 17 and 18 of development, is scheduled to be installed on its designated offshore spot on November 10, and once starting operation it will complete development of the mentioned phases.

Phases 17 and 18 are set to produce 56.6 million cubic meters of sweet gas, 75,000 barrels of gas condensate and 400 tons of sulfur per day in addition to one million tons of ethane and 1.05 million tons of propane and butane per annum.

South Pars gas field, which Iran shares with Qatar in the Persian Gulf, is estimated to contain a significant amount of natural gas, accounting for about eight percent of the world's reserves, and approximately 18 billion barrels of condensate.

■ '70% Iranian equipment used in platform 17B'

Some 70 percent of the equipment applied for constructing platform 17B have been domestically manufactured and just those equipment that manufacturing them required some high technology have been imported, Mohammad Meshkinfam, the managing director of Pars Oil and Gas Company (POGC) told the Tehran Times in a press conference in Bandar Abbas on Tuesday after loading the platform.

He also put the average application of domestically manufactured equipment in development of South Pars at 60 percent.

The official further said that construction of platform 17B has taken 31 months and announced that the platform will start operation within 45 days after being installed.

Meshkinfam put the cost of constructing each platform of South Pars gas field at \$150 million.

■ '\$85b required for development of South Pars'

Elsewhere in his remarks, the POGC managing director said that completing all development phases of South Pars, except for phase 11, requires \$81 billion investment and \$4 billion is required for development



Platform 17B of Iran's South Pars gas field was loaded at Bandar Abbas yard on Tuesday for delivery to its designated offshore spot. (Photo: SHANA/Reza Rostami)

of phase 11.

He also announced that by the next five years pressure drop control is necessary to be launched in South Pars, "In this regard, such control will be launched first in phase 11 and then it will be applied in the other phases."

■ 'Iran to reach Qatar by March 2017'

Meshkinfam also announced that Iran's production of gas from South Pars will reach 500 million cubic meters per day (mcm/d) by the end of autumn and it will reach 540 mcm/d by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2017).

Qatar's production from the field is 600 mcm/d and given the shut downs in Qataris operations, Iran's output from the joint field will equal that of Qatar by the end of current calendar year, the official announced,

while saying that if the objective won't achieved by the yearend, it will surely come true in the next spring.

■ 'South Pars to yield 30,000bpd of oil'

Addressing the same press conference, Gholamreza Manouchehri, the deputy managing director of National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) for development and engineering affairs, said that Iranian Oil Ministry is determined to start production of 30,000 barrels per day (bpd) of oil from South Pars field (which has also oil deposit) by the end of the current calendar year.

The official also said that Iran plans to raise the figure to 200,000 bpd by the next 20 years.

He said the project for production of oil from South Pars will be offered on tender to the foreign companies in the framework of Iran's new model of oil contracts known as IPC (Integrated Petroleum Contact).

Iran's year to date electricity generation up over 1% y/y

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iran's year to date electricity generation increased by 1.15 percent compared to the same period last year, IRIB news reported on Wednesday citing Energy Ministry's portal (known as PAVEN).

According to the report, the country has produced about 185,494 giga-

watt hours (GWh) of electricity as from the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20).

Of the total power generation during the mentioned time span, 172,775 GWh was generated in thermal plants and 10,089 GWh was the output from hydroelectric units.

During this period, the output of

thermal power plants increased by 0.71 percent compared to the same period last year and the output of hydroelectric plants also grew by 7.02 percent.

Earlier in August Mehr news agency reported that 12 new power plant construction projects were inaugurated during the Government Week (August 23-29) and with those plants

added to the network, Iran's nominal electricity generation capacity is going to reach 80,000 megawatts (MW) in near future,

The country plans to boost its electricity generation capacity to more than 100,000 MW within the framework of the sixth Five-Year National Development Plan (2016-2021).

PICTURE OF THE DAY SHANA/Reza Rostami



Launched on October 18, the distillation unit of Persian Gulf Star Refinery in Iranian southern city of Bandar Abbas, processes 120,000 barrels of gas condensate per day to produce gasoline, gasoil, liquefied petroleum gas and kerosene with Euro-4 standards.

Oil rises as Chinese output drops, U.S. inventories shrink

Oil rose by around one percent on Wednesday, boosted by evidence of declining production in China and falling U.S. inventories, while an upbeat OPEC statement on its planned output cut also supported the market.

A slightly weaker dollar reinforced the strength in oil as well, traders said, as it makes fuel purchases cheaper for countries using other currencies, potentially spurring demand.

Benchmark Brent crude futures were at \$52.42 a barrel, up 74 cents on the day by

0922 GMT, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude oil futures were up 73 cents at \$51.02 a barrel.

Saudi Arabian Energy Minister Khalid al-Falih said on Wednesday that oil markets were at the end of a considerable downturn as fundamentals were improving and supply and demand were rebalancing.

He called on non-OPEC producers to help stabilize the market saying their role was as critical as the role of OPEC members.

"Market forces are clearly working after

a testing period of sub-\$30 oil prices... Oil demand is expanding at a healthy rate despite slower global growth," he said.

As the world's largest exporters prepare to discuss the first cut in output in eight years next month, the pressure of persistently low oil prices on higher-cost producers is becoming apparent.

China's crude output fell 9.8 percent to 3.89 million bpd, to near its lowest in six years in the second-biggest year-on-year decline on record.

"The fall in Chinese crude oil produc-

tion is probably attributable to the low price level, which makes parts of production unprofitable. This makes it all the harder to understand why OPEC is talking prices up with its current debate about production cuts, and is thus helping precisely those oil producers it would ideally like to force out of the market," Commerzbank analysts.

Adding to the support to crude prices from lower output, refining rates in the world's largest commodities consumer rose last month.

(Source: Reuters)

Venezuela replaces OPEC governor amid push for oil deal

Venezuela has tapped its vice-minister for hydrocarbons to be the South American country's new governor to OPEC, as the recession-hit country pushes for a deal to push up oil prices.

Angel Gonzalez has replaced former governor Ivan Orellana in Vienna, according to the website of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

It was not immediately clear when the change occurred and why Orellana was replaced. It was also unclear who would replace Gonzalez, a geophysical engineer who has worked in Venezuela's oil sector for decades.

Venezuela's Oil Ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Price hawk Venezuela for months has been seeking a deal to support oil prices as it wrestles with a deep economic crisis that has food running short and inflation in triple digits.

(Source: Reuters)

Some Japan trading houses eye resuming Iran oil imports: sources

Japanese traders including Marubeni Corp and Sumitomo Corp that stopped buying Iranian oil during western sanctions are looking to resume imports, potentially by year-end, industry sources said.

Conservative Japanese firms have so far held off taking Iranian crude due to a lack of internationally acceptable insurance coverage, but are looking at ways of using cover provided by the Japanese government, the sources said.

The traders seeking to restart purchases together imported around 50,000 barrels per day (bpd) of Iranian oil before sanctions were imposed and renewed purchases would give a boost to Tehran's aim of increasing its exports to four million bpd.

Other Asian buyers have stepped up purchases of Iranian oil since sanctions were lifted in January, with Iranian imports to Asia, excluding Japan, jumping to 1.60 million bpd in August, up 92 percent on a year ago.

Buyers have taken advantage of a scheme put together by ship owners to plug a shortfall in insurance cover due to ongoing restrictions on U.S.-domiciled reinsurers, but Japanese firms have been reluctant to take part.

Trading houses have been waiting for private shipping insurance to return to full coverage, which could come as early as this year. But some traders now hope to piggyback on a Japanese government scheme that has been providing ongoing cover for so-called "essential" imports of Iranian oil throughout the sanctions.

The government-cover enabled refiners and trading houses such as Mitsubishi Corp and Toyota Tsusho to import Iranian oil even after the sanctions were imposed in 2012.

"One solution would be to co-load oil with other buyers," said a source with a trading house. Oil loaded on vessels already covered by the government scheme would also be fully insured, they said.

Earlier this month, Mitsui & Co resumed taking Iranian oil for the first time since at least 2012, co-loading Iranian condensate with a major Japanese refiner on a tanker, a source familiar with the shipping schedule said. Mitsui declined to comment.

Marubeni, which bought Iranian crude, condensate, naphtha and fuel oil until 2012, confirmed it had been working to restart purchases. A company source told Reuters it hoped to resume imports by the end of the year.

Sumitomo, which bought liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) from Iran before the sanctions, was also looking to buy Iranian oil and LPG as long as prices were competitive, an industry source close to the matter said. The company declined to comment.

Itochu Corp said it was considering resuming imports of Iranian oil, while trading house Kanematsu Corp which last bought Iran crude in 2010, is also looking to resume purchases at an early date, but has not yet lined up any customers, a company source told Reuters.

(Source: Reuters)

Saudi Arabia says many nations will join OPEC output cuts

Many nations are willing to join OPEC in cutting production to secure a continued improvement in oil prices, said Saudi Arabia's Minister of Energy and Industry Khalid Al-Falih.

The minister didn't name any countries in his speech at the Oil and Money conference in London Wednesday, saying only that negotiations will continue until the scheduled Nov. 30 meeting of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries in Vienna. So far, only Russia has said it's considering an output freeze or a reduction, while other non-OPEC producers that cooperated with past supply curbs, including Mexico and Norway, said they won't cut.

Al-Falih painted an upbeat picture, telling a packed audience that included the chief executive officers of Exxon Mobil Corp., Chevron Corp. and Total SA that the oil market is "clearly rebalancing," bringing the industry to the end of a "considerable downturn." U.S. crude inventories are declining and supply and demand are coming back into line, he said.

Oil has fluctuated near \$50 a barrel amid uncertainty about whether OPEC will be able to implement an accord to reduce supply when its members at an official meeting in November. A committee will meet later this month to try and resolve differences in the group over how much individual countries should pump. There's no possibility that Russia will pull out of its agreement to cooperate, OPEC Secretary-General Mohammed Barkindo said Tuesday.

Oil producing countries can secure a "healthy" price increase with a small percentage output cut, Al-Falih said. Crude futures extended gains after the minister's comments, with West Texas Intermediate advancing 1.4 percent to \$51 on the New York Mercantile exchange at 9:52 a.m. London time.

The consensus among executives, traders and officials gathered at the annual Oil and Money conference in London on Tuesday was that the world should get used to oil prices between \$50 and \$60. Falling costs in America's shale fields will counteract OPEC's renewed commitment to supply management, keeping a lid on prices, they said.

(Source: Bloomberg)

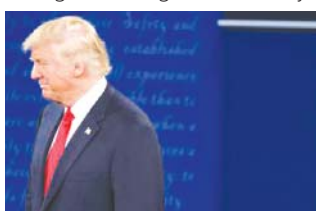


Poll suggests voters would be leaning Republican with another candidate

By Mona Chalabi

Findings from George Washington University show more U.S. voters trust Republicans to handle top issues including the economy and national security.

More U.S. voters trust the Republican Party to handle the issues they care about, according to a poll released by George Washington University on Monday.



When asked about specific candidates, however, the same voters were more likely to say they trusted Hillary Clinton, the Democratic nominee for president.

The findings suggest that the Republican Party might have been well ahead in the race for the White House in 2016, had Donald Trump not been their candidate.

The GWU poll asked 1,000 registered and likely voters what they felt was "the most important issue that the next president should be focused on." "The economy" was selected by 23% of respondents, followed by "dysfunction in government" (14%) and foreign threats (13%). Jobs and healthcare were both chosen by 10% of respondents. By a clear margin, the voters were more likely to trust the Republican Party on the economy, taxes and jobs.

But when asked about which candidate they were more confident would address the issues, voters were more likely to choose Clinton than Trump. Candidates are not the only ones who think strategically: the GWU poll shows voters do too. Only 29% of Clinton supporters say their vote is about stopping Trump from getting the White House; 43% of Trump supporters say their vote is a defensive vote against Clinton.

National polling averages show that Clinton's lead has widened since the start of October. Democratic political strategists have suggested that is due to falling support for Trump among women, college-educated white people and independents.

Republican analysis of the George Washington poll can only be described as deeply pessimistic. It claims that Trump's "campaign tactics have created a picture of almost certain defeat in November", and adds that "the silver lining of this personality driven campaign is that it is his name and brand that are suffering and not Republicans overall".

The title of the Republican paper? "Breaking up is hard to do". It starts by quoting the 1962 Neil Sedaka song of the same name.

(Source: The Guardian)

Turkey hasn't given up on role in Mosul battle

By Semih Idiz

The bombastic tone Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan employs with regard to developments in the Middle East has pushed Turkey into the background both militarily and politically in Iraq and Syria.

We're seeing this sidelining again in the operation to liberate Mosul from the Islamic State. Erdogan is fuming even harder now that it is clear that Turkey is not part of the Mosul operation despite having declared its desire to join it.

"They say we should not enter Mosul. How can we not? I have a 350-kilometer [215-mile] border [with Iraq]. Those who have nothing to do with the region are there because Baghdad supposedly invited them. Did Saddam [Hussein] invite them 14 years ago? But they still came," Erdogan said angrily while addressing the International Istanbul Law Congress on Oct. 17.

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi repeated only hours before the official launch of the Mosul operation, "Turkish forces will not be allowed to participate in the liberation of Mosul under any circumstances." Washington has backed Abadi, saying any foreign troops in Iraq should be there with Baghdad's permission.

"We won't be responsible for the consequences emerging from an operation that excludes Turkey. Turkey will participate both in the operation and the talks later. It is not possible for us to stay out of this," Erdogan added.

■ This deployment is an occupation

He also stressed that Turkey would not evacuate the Bashiqa camp near Mosul. Turkish troops deployed in the camp are training Kurdish peshmerga forces and other anti-ISIL fighters. Iraq has complained to the United Nations that this deployment is an occupation.

Erdogan did not spell out, however, how he plans to ensure that Turkey will be part of the Mosul operation. Addressing the public in the central Anatolian city of Konya last week, he said, "If the coalition does not want Turkey in the operation against Mosul, Turkey will ac-



Erdogan is fuming even harder now that it is clear that Turkey is not part of the Mosul operation despite having declared its desire to join it.

tivate its plan B and plan C." He did not elaborate further.

With regard to Bashiqa, Murat Yetkin, the well-connected editor-in-chief of Hurriyet Daily News, suggested it is not difficult for Erdogan to sound defiant on this topic. "He knows, as the commander in chief of the Turkish military, that the understanding already reached with the Americans is for the Turkish soldiers to stay in Bashiqa and to not move a meter out of it," Yetkin said.

The United States has been exhorting Ankara and Baghdad to work out their differences through direct talks. A Western diplomat who spoke to Al-Monitor on condition of anonymity due to his sensitive position said that if Ankara joined the coalition under rules set by Baghdad, the move would be welcomed.

"Mosul is not going to be an easy operation and could last well into spring. There is room for every military contribution against ISIL," said the diplomat. He explained that a political contribution by Turkey could also be valuable, given its influence over Iraqi Sunnis, in trying to stabilize Mosul after ISIL is defeated.

"If Turkey gives any indication, however, that its intention in joining the coal-

ition is to promote a different agenda, this would be counterproductive," the diplomat added.

Turkey has also been cautioning Baghdad and its allies against tampering with the demography of Mosul, which is predominantly Sunni. This stance may have been taken as reflecting Ankara's pro-Sunni foreign policy under Erdogan and the ruling Justice and Development Party, but there is truth in the warning.

■ Key to the future of Iraq

Yetkin pointed out that the Mosul operation will be key to the future of Iraq, Syria and the entire Middle East. "The last three decades show that if Western-supported governments in the region fail to fight corruption and religious sectarianism, new and more radical terrorist movements emerge. That should be a lesson for both the United States and Iraq after taking Mosul from ISIL," he argued.

This concern notwithstanding, the start of the Mosul operation without Turkey has put matters in better focus for Ankara, not just with regard to Iraq and Syria, but also the Middle East generally.

With the United States propping up the Abadi government in Iraq and Russia

doing the same for the regime of President Bashar al-Assad in Syria, Turkey will have to look ahead and recalibrate its policies accordingly, rather than pursuing plans that have proven to be unrealistic and left it in the cold.

At the start of the Arab Spring, Ankara had been sure that developments were going to make it the principal regional player. Today, however, Erdogan's main rivals or enemies in the region, from Assad in Syria to President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi in Egypt, remain in power and continue to consolidate their positions with U.S. and Russian help.

Turkish reliance on Moscow, following the reconciliation between the two countries after ties hit rock bottom when Turkey downed a Russian fighter jet last November, also appears misplaced in the broader picture.

Pro-government commentators are pushing the line that ties with Russia will counterbalance U.S. policies in the region that are contrary to Turkey's interests. Erdogan supporters are also angry with Washington for not immediately extraditing cleric Fethullah Gulen, the alleged mastermind of the failed coup attempt.

→13

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‘Brexit good for UK in long run’

INTERVIEW

By Parnaz Talebi

Former World Bank staff believes that the fall in Pound's value during the recent days has nothing to do with Brexit and that leaving the EU would prove beneficial for UK in the long run.

Peter Koenig, economist and geopolitical analyst, has answered the questions of Tehran Times correspondent on drop in Pound value, Brexit and its impacts.

Here is the full text of this interview:

■ **Just a few days after Theresa May's announcement of March (2017) as time to (start proceedings to) implement Brexit, the Pound dropped to lowest value in 31 years; no time before, even when Brexit was voted for, such a drop had happened. Why now this drop has occurred?**

This, in my opinion, has nothing to do with the impact of BREXIT on the British or European, or even world economy. First, let's put the drop of the Pound in the context of the western monetary system. The West is living in an economy where the currency, i.e. the monetary system makes the economy, not the other way around as it should be – where the economy makes the monetary system. The western monetary system is entirely controlled by the US dollar. And it is in private hands, like the FED (the Federal Reserve Bank is completely private, but acts as the US Central Bank) and the key Wall Street banks, led by

and recovery of the Pound is pure and simple speculation. Speculation by banks that use the pretext of BREXIT – and mind you, this is most likely not the last time – to make a quick profit, probably in the hundreds of millions, if not billions – in 15 minutes – why not? The system allows it, so it's legal.

■ **Does it mean that the world has just realized that UK is really separating from the EU? Not at all. Ever since the results of the 23 June referendum was known, the world has realized that against all 'establishment' predictions, a majority of British citizens has expressed its displeasure with Brussels and decided they wanted to exit the orbit of this neoliberal dictatorship which has done away with most – and I mean most – of EU member countries' sovereignty. This is even worse for those 19 countries which are part of the Eurozone.**

For many it came as a surprise. But the 'paid' western mainstream media (msm), immediately had a Plan "B", namely to demonize all those who voted 'leave', i.e. for BREXIT and to start a media campaign of fear mongering – fear for 'what may happen in the future - it will be horrible for the UK, they better think about it again.' There were immediately people collecting signatures to repeat the referendum in the hope that the media could do a better job in convincing the people a second time around to stay with this abusive system, called the EU. Fortunately, that didn't fly, and Teresa May has clearly said there will



I could even imagine – don't really know, but could imagine – that the Bank of England is behind this massive quick-drop, to make a quick profit – or in other words to recover some of the billions the Bank of England has already and will be putting into the 'system' to stabilize the English Pound.

Goldman Sachs.

We are living in an economy where since the banking deregulation in the 1990s, money has absolutely no backing, not gold, not the economic output of a country or a region – nothing but thin air, as money is made by a mouse click on a computer by a private bank. In the US 97% of all money is made by private banks as debt. In Europe it's not much different.

This system is perfect for speculation. You invent an event – and use that event in the media to justify a fall in the stock market, or in this case a currency.

In the case of the British Pound, it was not even necessary to invent an event – there is BREXIT, and BREXIT will last for a long time, perhaps even more than the statutory limit of 2 years, as everything is negotiable, especially between the UK and the EU.

So, last Friday, the value of the Pound dropped by 6% in a few seconds - of which it recovered at least 5% in less than an hour. This, in my opinion, has nothing to do with the wild guesses of some media pundits, saying it was a 'Fat Finger, i.e. a 'mistake', or a case of 'liquidity sales'. It has equally nothing to do with the British or EU economy now, and how BREXIT may affect these economies in the future. Nobody can quite predict dynamics of such future developments. But according to many renowned economists, internal British economists, as well as international economists, BREXIT will actually be good for the UK in the long run.

So, from my point of view, this drop

be no second referendum.

Nevertheless, the EU top US vassals, like France and German and others had at the time started seeking 'dialogues' with then PM Cameron, to look for options to avoid BREXIT – or to make it a BREXIT 'light-light', so as not to impact on the 'established order'. Even US Secretary of State Kerry had to bring his unsolicited opinion (most US opinions are unsolicited but they come anyway and if not accepted, they come by sledgehammer), jetting immediately to London to talk to Cameron to discuss the means there are to avoid or eternally delay BREXIT. One way would have been having to ratify the plebiscite decision by Parliament. This option, however, was ruled out fairly early on, by Cameron's successor, Teresa May.

However, fear-mongering continues. And fear-mongering by the media of course also gives 'legal' grounds in the western speculative pyramid monetary system, to gamble with the country's currency, as we have seen just a few days ago – and this will not be the last we've seen.

■ **According to economics, is this drop natural and justifiable or just a media hype? is it something lasting?**

In my opinion, this has nothing to do with economics, as most likely Britain's economy will do better outside the EU than inside. But again, the BREXIT event is now used by those who control the major media (six Anglo-Zionist Media giants control 90% of the western media) for fear-mongering - you may call it indeed 'media hype', but with a special



The West is living in an economy where the currency, i.e. the monetary system makes the economy, not the other way around as it should be – where the economy makes the monetary system.

purpose, namely to discourage others from exiting the EU, and to give banks a lead for speculations, and I mean massive speculations. Such massive speculations as we have seen last Friday can make hundreds of millions or even billions for banks who coordinate their efforts to drop the pound within seconds – and then, at a certain point they repurchase the currency to drive its value back up again.

I could even imagine – don't really know, but could imagine – that the Bank of England is behind this massive quick-drop, to make a quick profit – or in other words to recover some of the billions the Bank of England has already and will be putting into the 'system' to stabilize the English Pound. – Why not, after all, in the Western monetary system, money is made of thin air, but to maintain a certain balance you recover some of what others have already taken out as speculative profit.

■ **Shall we expect more and serious turmoil after March 2017 when Brexit is happened?**

There may be many more 'turmoil' before and after March 2017, if and when the BREXIT process will begin, as is now forecast by PM Teresa May. But, be also prepared, after having screamed 'wolf' a few times, people may not react anymore. So the speculators have to invent new games, and inventive they are. They could easily use BREXIT to speculate against any other currency, even the Euro, as long as it still exists. The BIS itself – the Bank for International Settlement, also called the Central Bank of all central banks, could also clandestinely intervene on behalf of those who control it.

■ **Does this pound value collapse have any impact on the EU and its economy?**

Only to the extent the western system actually allows it. At one point those who control and benefit from the system may stop the speculation, as it drives down too far the economies they use to usurp Europe and the world. They, the masters of the monetary system, will seek a certain balance, of course always in their favor, but avoiding an entire system's collapse. – Because, as it looks today from the point of view of serious analysts, BREXIT by itself will most likely not have negative long-term impacts either on the EU or the UK, safe for more restrictions in

the free move of the labor market which in time will automatically regulate itself. To the contrary, the UK in the long run is poised to benefit from being a sovereign nation again. It may negotiate freely, without imposed rules and restrictions by Brussels, access to new markets around the world, including within the EU. Of course, speculators and western media pundits will do everything to prove the contrary, no matter how unsubstantiated their claims are.

As long as people listen to and go along with the western media, without asking any questions, because 'they know what they are talking about' (that's unfortunately the way the current lethargic Occident functions), so long will they try to bring the system down – just a bit more, god forbid, not totally – hoping they can prevent others from deciding likewise to take back their sovereignty and independence from the nefarious Brussels bureaucracy.

■ **How do you think it would affect (North) Ireland and Scotland's consideration of remaining in the EU?**

That is a good question. My first guess is that both of these UK Commonwealth 'provinces' are weary of being part of the UK and would like to take this opportunity to separate from the UK. One way would be attempting to stay in the EU while the UK exits. Of course, none of them has yet seriously considered the conditions of entering independently the EU and what it would mean for them. Or maybe they have; and that's why the voices of 'separation' and becoming independent EU members have calmed down lately. This process, in my opinion, is still wide open. It may lean one way or another. Once the BREXIT process starts, presumably in March 2017, trilateral talks between the UK, Northern Ireland and Scotland may also become more visible. Surely they have started already. This process may last, according to Article 50 of the EU regulations, up to 24 months, and possibly longer if there is serious ground for longer negotiations.

Peter Koenig is an economist and geopolitical analyst. He is also a former World Bank staff and worked extensively around the world in the fields of environment and water resources. He is also a co-author of The World Order and Revolution! - Essays from the Resistance.



The 'paid' western mainstream media immediately had a Plan B, namely to demonize all those who voted 'leave', i.e. for BREXIT and to start a media campaign of fear mongering – fear for 'what may happen in the future - it will be horrible for the UK, they better think about it again.'

Iran-Malaysia Ties Eyeing Considerable Boosting

By Maryam Azish

The situation following implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) has paved the way for developing ties with a large number of countries, Malaysia in particular as a major and advanced Islamic state in South-East Asia.

As long as Iran's foreign policy attaches great significance to Asian states, South-East Asian nation in particular, the Islamic Republic is fully determined to strengthen strategic co-operation with the region.

Last week, Iranian President Hassan arrived in Kuala Lumpur to promote relations and discuss ways improving ties with the Muslim country leading a high ranking political and economic delegation on the second leg of his regional tour to South-East Asian nations which has already taken him to Vietnam.

While leaving Tehran for Hanoi, Rouhani said the Malaysia visit aims to repair the bilateral ties, which have unfortunately suffered a decline in recent years.



While in Malaysia, President Rouhani held talks with a number of high-ranking Malaysian officials including Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak, Parliament Speaker Pandikar Amin Mulia and a number of academics, intellectuals and media leaders in this Muslim country.

Revival of Iran- Malaysia Bilateral Ties

President Rouhani in a joint press conference with Razak called for revival of bilateral ties between Iran and the South-east Asia nation.

Thanks to the opportunities have been created in Iran following the post-sanctions era, Rouhani underscored that Tehran and Kuala Lumpur plan to revitalize ties to the previous level and after that double the level of cooperation.

Referring the scientific, technological, academic and tourism potential, Iranian president stressed that Iran welcomes Malaysian companies which are active in the fields of oil, gas and petrochemicals as well as the Halal food industry.

Describing terrorism as a common threat, he called for unity among various followers of Islamic sects and urged all countries to do their best to tackle terrorism and extremism.

Boosting Banking Ties

Meanwhile, the Malaysian prime minister stressed immediate action to boost bilateral banking cooperation, urging for the two countries' central banks immediate action to find mechanisms for shortening the time needed for banking transactions.

Referring to dimming bilateral economic cooperation between Tehran and Kuala Lumpur in the time Iran was under sanctions, Razak said that the country's minister of Agriculture and Agro-based Industries will visit Iran in the near future to explore ways of developing mutual cooperation.

He added Malaysia is interested in Iran's oil and gas sector, auto industry and road construction while it seeks to cooperate with the Islamic Republic in field of tourism.

The Malaysian minister also called for further cooperation among the Islamic countries for establishment of peace and stability in the Islamic World.

Fostering Parliamentary Cooperation

In a meeting with Mulia, President Rouhani called for developing bilateral ties and regional issues.

Back in August, Mulia in a meeting with his Iranian counterpart Ali Larijani in Tehran said the Islamic Republic plays a pivotal role in the region, adding Malaysian government would pave the ground for improving trade cooperation with Iran.

Larijani, for his part, said Iran and Malaysia have very similar views on the ongoing crises in the Middle East, particularly terrorism, adding the two sides believed that regional crises have caused many problems for the security of Muslim countries.

Pointing to the two sides' talks about ways to improve parliamentary and economic relations, Larijani said Iran attaches great importance to bolstering ties with Malaysia as an important Muslim country.

Iran's Leading Role in Region

Addressing a group of Malaysian academics, intellectuals and media leaders in Kuala Lumpur, President Rouhani said Middle East could have faced with a major war if the Islamic Republic of Iran had not helped to deal with the regional crises.

Without the Islamic Republic's help, President Rouhani said, the region would have faced with the big government of Daesh in Syria and Iraq instead of the Daesh terrorist group.

The president said tackling Takfiri terrorism, effective assistance to the establishment of peace and ceasefire, expanding humanitarian aid to the people, non-disintegration of the countries, not changing the geographical borders, and relying on the ballot box and sovereignty of the people in control of their own countries are Iran's main regional policies.

He warned that the regional war could have turned into an international one, urging the Islamic world to help in this respect.

Citing terrorism as a dilemma in the region, President Rouhani underscored that the Takfiri terrorists should be uprooted in the whole region.

'We should not allow the killing and slaughtering of people to continue in the region and the disaster should be prevented,' he said.

Commenting on the necessity of establishing peace and ceasefire in Yemen and Syria, he called for extending humanitarian assistance to the war-hit people as soon as possible.

He also added that the western countries are trying to dominate the world in technological and scientific arenas.

As long as Iran and Malaysia have always enjoy amicable and growing relations, the visit would pave the way for more flourishing relations between the two countries.

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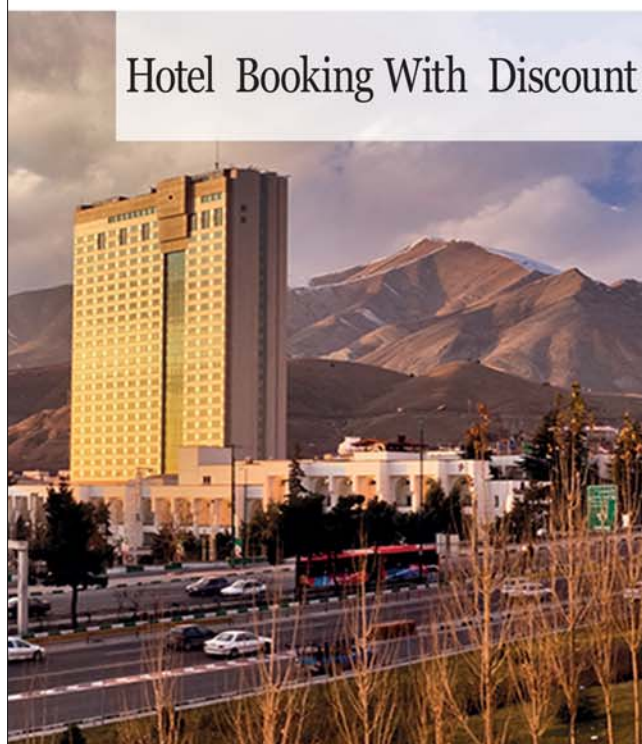
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UNESCO adopts anti-Israel resolution on al-Aqsa Mosque

UN agency passes resolution that criticizes Israeli policies around al-Aqsa Mosque compound in occupied East Jerusalem.

Palestinian leaders have welcomed a decision by the United Nations cultural agency to adopt a resolution on occupied East Jerusalem that sharply criticizes Israeli policies around the al-Aqsa Mosque compound, while Israel says it ignores Jewish ties to the key holy site.



A view of al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied East Jerusalem with Qubbat al-Sakhrah (the Dome of the Rock) on the left

A spokesman for Paris-based UNESCO said on Tuesday that the resolution, which caused Israel to suspend its co-operation with the agency, was adopted without a new vote after being approved at the committee stage last week.

Palestine's deputy ambassador to UNESCO, Mounir Anastas, told reporters the resolution "reminds Israel that they are the occupying power in East Jerusalem and it asks them to stop all their violations", including archaeological excavations around religious sites. The UNESCO resolution also condemned Israel for restricting Muslim access to the site, and for aggression by Israeli police and soldiers, while also recognizing Israel as the occupying power. The resolution was submitted by Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Qatar and Sudan - and was originally passed with 24 votes in favor, six against, and 26 abstentions.

Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, said in a statement on Thursday that UNESCO had lost its legitimacy by adopting this resolution. (Source: Aljazeera)

Iran becoming a major destination for European tourists: EU official

TOURISM TEHRAN — The European Union desk commissioner for industry and entrepreneurship said on Tuesday that Iran is being turned into a major tourism destination for European travelers.

Although some sticking points, such as investment problems, still remain with the EU side, but "The EU in collaboration with the United Nations World Tourism Organization and other global establishments tries to overcome the barriers," said Elzbieta Bienkowska, in a meeting with Masoud Soltanifar who presides over the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicraft Organization of Iran.

Soltanifar, for his part, underscored the importance of enhancing bilateral cooperation while putting forward working out on a memorandum of understanding in tourism grounds, a proposal that was warmly welcomed by Bienkowska as well.

"Time is ripe for European investors and companies who are willing to enter Iranian market," Soltanifar remarked, calling Iran a "countrywide museum", which boasts numerous historic places, scenic yet very diverse natural beauties with a history that stretches 10,000 years back in time.

Bienkowska referred to the measures taken by Iran regarding visa issuance as 'very effective and important'.

In July, Iran increased its visa on arrival extension from 1 month to 3 months.

For the time being, citizens of 190 countries can obtain visa on arrival at the country's airports with one-month validation.

The EU official also separately met with Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif on the same day during which she attached great importance to deepening collaboration in tourism sector, adding that the EU seeks to establish long-term cooperation with Iran in various spheres.



Iran's Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicraft Organization Director Masoud Soltanifar (L) presents a gift to Elzbieta Bienkowska, the European Union commissioner for industry and entrepreneurship, during their meeting in Tehran on October 18, 2016.

The Iranian officials turned the spotlight on capacities that lie beyond Iranian and EU's private and public sectors, meanwhile they stressed the need to seize the opportunity created with the implementation of the JCPOA.

Foreign tourist arrivals in Iran has been more than double that of the global average since the imple-

mentation of the JCPOA, Soltanifar announced earlier this month.

In a recent move, Iran has also offered to grant years of tax exemption to both domestic and foreign businesses and individuals as an incentive for ramping up investments in its tourism sector.

Culture, history, landscape, and people amongst compelling reasons for traveling to Iran

Iran tourism for women: Safe or not safe

By Justine Oliver

With sanctions on Iran being relaxed and airlines including British Airways reintroducing direct flights to Tehran, Iran is once again attracting foreign businesses and travelers. Having just returned from a one-month self-drive tour of the country, I can assure you the destination has much to offer.

Business, culture, history, landscape, food and the people are just some of the compelling reasons to travel to Iran, but one of the main barriers to visiting the country for many people is often their colleagues and friends asking 'is it really safe to travel there?'

Western media often portrays Iran negatively. There is a widespread misunderstanding about the true nature and safety of the country, which is tainted by the reputation of some of its more politically unstable neighbors.

That's why people are often stunned when they are told Iran, with the exception of a few locations, is considered a low-risk country and a safe destination to visit. As a travel security consultant, specializing in women travelers, here are my top 10 tips to ensure visitors have a safe and fascinating trip to Iran.

■ Crime

Crime rates are low in Iran and many women travel to the country alone without facing any issues. As with travel to any destination, you should always take basic, common-sense precautions, such as not visiting isolated places after dark or finding yourself alone with men you don't know. The rates of petty crime such as bag snatching and pick-pocketing are far lower than in Western countries and serious crime against foreigners is even more rare.

■ Cultural differences

The main danger for women travelers is falling foul of cultural sensibilities. The country is Islamic and as a woman you are restricted in



An undated picture shows a cluster of foreign tourists pose for a photo during their visit to the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS) in the northeastern Iranian city of Mashhad. Women are clad in chadors, a shapeless gown that covers their entire body, to respect the required dress code for female pilgrims.

ently making eye contact with people you are not engaged in conversation with. Touching, patting on the back, shaking hands with males and other physical contact is not advisable.

■ Clothing

It is very important to adhere to the strict dress code by wearing the 'Hijab'.

The word hijab can mean both 'headscarf' and 'modest dress', but in Iran it means that your hair and body should be totally covered and your upper body covering should not be too tight fitting and should hang low enough to cover your bottom. Iranian women are roughly divided into two groups with more religious women tending to wear the 'chador' meaning 'tent', a shapeless black gown that covers their entire body. The other group wears bright colors, and usually a 'manteau', or thigh-length, light-weight coat over jeans. Testing the limits of what is allowed seems to be an Iranian sport, particularly in Tehran, but the Islamic police do patrol the streets and pull people in for inappropriate dress.

Each city seems to have different standards and in more religious cities like Qom you will not feel comfortable in your brightly-colored manteau and will want to wear neck-to-ankle loose-fitting black garments, as well as socks if you are wearing sandals. Follow the guidance of local people. It is better to be more conservative and for locals to tell you that you can shed layers rather than for them to signal for you to cover up.

■ Covering your hair

No one veils their face Iran, but every woman past puberty must cover their hair and décolletage. In reality, every town and city follows these rules to a greater or lesser degree.

In Tehran you will see some women with most of their hair uncovered and their head-scarves

just pinned to the back of their heads, whereas in Tabriz, no one will have any hair showing at all.

Take some hairpins to help keep your veil in place and be sure to remember it every time you leave your hotel room and leave your hotel room for breakfast.

■ Eating and drinking

One of the things women dislike about travelling on their own is eating alone. Iranians are so friendly and joyful that it is unlikely that you will have to endure much solitary dining.

Always look both ways even on one-way streets, especially when you near the pavement again. You may find it easier to 'tag' onto a local and cross in time with them.

Due to social constraints, men are unlikely to approach you but it is very likely that Iranian women, in groups or with their family, will invite you to dine with them. Don't be surprised if they pay for your meal even if you have declined to join them!

■ Public transport and gender separation

Public transport is safe to use but aside from the Tehran Metro, it is probably not the ideal mode of transport for a business traveler.

The Tehran metro is cheap, clean, air-conditioned and easy to navigate. At the front and rear of each train are women-only carriages.

These were implemented for gentlemanly reasons rather than being sexist or discriminatory and

can provide a less crowded and more comfortable experience, particularly during the rush-hour crush in the central carriages. Women may enter other carriages alone or with male colleagues.

Other modes of public transport also feature women-only sections and separation may be enforced on some buses.

■ Swimming

The majority of hotel pools are not segregated, so unfortunately women cannot use them or even sit by them even if wearing the hijab.

There are some segregated beaches, where the female swimming section is screened off, but these are few and far between.

■ Road traffic incidents

The main roads in Iran are very good quality, but driving standards are poor. Always check that your vehicle has working seat belts and sit in the back. Drivers will attempt to drive as quickly as they can; ask them to slow down if you are concerned and feign motion sickness if you are making no headway.

Cities are safe to walk around and often you will be in the shade of trees, even in cities, however crossing roads can be daunting, even at official crossings. Always look both ways even on one-way streets, especially when you near the pavement again. You may find it easier to 'tag' onto a local and cross in time with them. Even while safely sticking to the pavement, be aware of scooters travelling from both directions.

■ Conclusion

Iran is a fantastic country to visit. Certain nationalities still have visa complications and journalists or those involved in human rights can face greater risks, but for the average traveler, a wonderful trip awaits.

Justine Oliver is an independent travel security specialist with extensive global expertise, who specializes in solo female travel. For the last 16 years she has advised multi-nationals, NGOs, media organizations, educational establishments, companies and individuals how to operate safely abroad.

(source: eTN: Global Travel & Tourism News)

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Western media often portrays Iran negatively. There is a widespread misunderstanding about the true nature and safety of the country.

terms of your dress and behavior.

The risks to women are two-fold; the religious authorities and attracting male attention unintentionally. The latter is much less likely than in other Muslim countries such as Egypt and Pakistan, where it is not unusual to feel harassed by unwanted male attention. Iranians are incredibly friendly and welcoming, but are also very respectful of your personal space. You are extremely unlikely to be groped in Iran.

When making friends in Iran, which you surely will as Iranians are some of the friendliest people on earth, you need to be careful of making Western-style eye contact with men in the group as you will cause them to feel uncomfortable or worse, they may take your eye contact as an invitation.

Wearing sunglasses can help avoid inadver-

Have type 2 diabetes? Try walking after eating

For people with type 2 diabetes, a short walk after eating may help lower blood sugar levels more than exercising at other times of the day, a new study shows.

A measurement of blood sugar called postprandial glycemia, which has been linked with heart disease risk, averaged 12 percent lower when study participants took a walk after eating, compared with those who exercised at other times. The largest drop in postprandial glycemia, 22 percent, was achieved by walking after dinner, the study authors found.

"If you have type 2 diabetes, there is a guideline to be active for at least 150 minutes a week," said study author Andrew Reynolds, a researcher at the University of Otago, in New Zealand.

But, he added, the "benefits we observed due to physical activity after meals suggest that current guidelines should be amended to specify after-meal activity, particularly when meals contain a substantial amount of carbohydrates," he said.

■ Walking as daily routine

"Consider walking after you eat as part of your daily routine," he added.



"If you have type 2 diabetes, there is a guideline to be active for at least 150 minutes a week," said study author Andrew Reynolds, a researcher at the University of Otago, in New Zealand.

When glaciers transform into deadly 150-mph avalanches

On the morning of September 20, 2002, the Kolka Glacier sat in a gently sloping valley on the Russia-Georgia border. The glacier had a history of unusually fast surges, which — for the ponderous ice flows that cover 10 percent of Earth's land surface — meant it sometimes lurched several dozen feet forward in one day. When an American scientific satellite, Landsat 7, passed overhead and imaged it around noon, Kolka seemed unsteady but unremarkable.

At 08:08 PM., it became remarkable. More than three-quarters of the entire glacier, a goliath chunk of ice more than 1.5 miles long, broke off from the rest of the formation and detached from the soil below. It thundered down the side of the Kolka valley, 130 million cubic meters of ice and rock, accelerating as its own meltwater slicked its path. Within minutes it was traveling 150 miles per hour. A scientific account of the cataclysm says that the detached section then "literally flew" over another glacial bed and ricocheted into a turn.

Now an avalanche of snow, ice, and rock, it approached the village of Nizhnyi Karmadon. There was nothing its inhabitants could do. By 08:13 PM., it entered and overwhelmed the town, killing more than 100 people, including a famous Russian actor named Sergei Bodrov, Jr. The ice kept going. A minute later, it snapped

a set of telephone lines downhill. Finally, at 08:15, it came to rest in the Karmadon valley below. In six and a half minutes, it traveled 11 miles.

■ Pyroclastic flow

Experts had never seen a glacier move like Kolka before. It seemed like the icy equivalent of a pyroclastic flow of hot gas and rock that gushed out of Vesuvius and flattened Pompeii. Most incredibly of all, Kolka had achieved high speeds on a surface that was inclined an average of only six degrees above the horizontal.

"You're not talking about a glacier that fell off a mountain peak," says Stephen Evans, a professor of geological engineering at the University of Waterloo. He studied the Kolka site in person soon after the event. "I walked up (the hillside) without breaking a sweat. Six degrees is almost flat for all intents and purposes."

Evans and a number of other researchers proposed that the Kolka detachment and avalanche represented a previously unknown form of glacial movement. Most glaciers advance at a dawdling pace, sliding about 10 meters (32 feet) forward per year. At times, though, glaciers can surge for weeks at a time, moving 10 meters per day. Then they usually return to baseline advancement.

However, one U.S. diabetes specialist offered a caveat on that advice.

Exercise is indeed part of good management and care for those with type 2 diabetes, said Dr. Joel Zonszein, director of the Clinical Diabetes Center at Montefiore Medical Center in New York City.

But, he urged caution about the benefits of exercising right after meals.

Because heart disease is common among those with type 2 diabetes, "we need to be careful in encouraging exercise after a meal, as the demands on the heart increase with meals," he explained. "This is especially important in people with heart disease, as diversion of blood from the coronary or carotid arteries to the gut is not always best for these patients."

In the study, Reynolds and colleagues had 41 people with type 2 diabetes walk a total of 150 minutes a week. In the first phase of the study, participants walked for 30 minutes daily whenever they wanted. In the second phase, 30 days after the first phase, participants were told to take a 10-minute walk no later than five minutes after each meal. During both phases, blood sugar was monitored. Walking after meals lowered blood sugar levels more effectively among the participants, the study found.

■ Controlling blood sugar

Improvements in controlling blood sugar with exercise have been shown by many trials, Zonszein noted, but exercise and good lifestyle are often not enough.

"In type 2 diabetes, a combination of good lifestyles and proper medications is important for successful outcomes," he said.

In a second study in the same issue of the journal, British researchers analyzed the findings of 23 studies on the relationship between physical activity and incidence of type 2 diabetes. In all, these studies included more than 1.2 million people. Among these participants, more than 82,000 developed type 2 diabetes, the researchers reported.

(Source: HealthDay News)



Nobody could study any other incidence of this new type of glacier movement, though. Kolka was the only scientifically documented cataclysm of its type, the only glacier-debris flow ever to be researched on-site by glaciologists, and the only sudden collapse ever to be observed before and after by satellite.

(Source: The Atlantic)

Bacteria in our mouths may hold clues about why people get migraines

Caterina Cestarelli doesn't always know what will trigger an excruciating migraine. Sometimes it's skimping on sleep or missing a meal. Other times it's smelling a powerful perfume.

Whatever the trigger, it usually leads to the same place: Her tiny New York City bedroom, with lights off and blinds drawn, as she waits for the painful throbbing, waves of nausea and distorted vision to subside.

Scientists and doctors still don't fully understand why people get migraines and what sets them off. Around 38 million people in the U.S. suffer from migraines, each with their own mix of triggers and symptoms.

Our microbiomes, it turns out, may hold some of the clues, according to researchers at University of California, San Diego's School of Medicine.

■ Migraine headaches

People who get migraine headaches have significantly more nitrate-reducing microbes in their mouths and guts compared to people who don't get migraines, the team found in a study published Tuesday in the journal mSystems.

This finding marks a small but important step toward understanding migraines, and the researchers said they plan to expand on the study in future research.

"We think it will be possible to ... classify different migraine sufferers' status based on these bacteria," Antonio Gonzalez, the study's lead author and a programmer analyst at UC San Diego, told Mashable.

By classifying migraine types, scientists could better understand how to prevent or treat different triggers, he said.

For the study, Gonzalez and his col-

league Embriette Hyde used publicly available data from the American Gut Project, which is run out of Northwestern University's Knight Lab.

They looked at 172 oral samples and nearly 2,000 fecal samples from healthy participants, who had previously filled out surveys indicating whether they suffered from migraines.

Second, Gonzalez and Hyde used a bioinformatic tool called PICRUST to study the gene content of the oral and fecal bacteria. From there, they looked specifically for genes that are reducers of nitrates, nitrites and nitric oxide.

■ Certain medicines

Nitrates are commonly found in green leafy vegetables, processed meats and certain medicines. For some migraine sufferers, these foods can trigger severe headaches, although for other people

they're not a trigger.

Nitrates are reduced to nitrites by bacteria found in a person's mouth. The nitrites can be further converted into nitric oxide when circulating in the blood, which can improve blood flow and reduce blood pressure.

In the oral samples, the researchers found "significantly more abundant" genes that reduce nitrates, nitrites and nitric oxide in migraineurs — people who suffer from migraines — compared to non-migraineurs.

Gonzalez and Hyde said they next plan to study large groups of migraine sufferers to determine how strong the connection is between people's oral bacteria and their migraines — and whether that has any bearing on how frequently or severely these headaches occur.

(Source: Mashable)

Scientists discover how to turn CO2 into ethanol

Scientists at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee have discovered a chemical reaction to turn CO2 into ethanol, potentially creating a new technology to help avert climate change. Their findings were published in the journal ChemistrySelect.



The researchers were attempting to find a series of chemical reactions that could turn CO2 into a useful fuel, when they realized the first step in their process managed to do it all by itself. The reaction turns CO2 into ethanol, which could in turn be used to power generators and vehicles.

The tech involves a new combination of copper and carbon arranged into nanospikes on a silicon surface. The nanotechnology allows the reactions to be very precise, with very few contaminants.

"By using common materials, but arranging them with nanotechnology, we figured out how to limit the side reactions and end up with the one thing that we want," said Adam Rondinone.

This process has several advantages when compared to other methods of converting CO2 into fuel. The reaction uses common materials like copper and carbon, and it converts the CO2 into ethanol, which is already widely used as a fuel.

Perhaps most importantly, it works at room temperature, which means that it can be started and stopped easily and with little energy cost. This means that this conversion process could be used as temporary energy storage during a lull in renewable energy generation, smoothing out fluctuations in a renewable energy grid.

A "process like this would allow you to consume extra electricity when it's available to make and store as ethanol," said Rondinone. The researchers plan to further study this process and try and make it more efficient. If they're successful, we just might see large-scale carbon capture using this technique in the near future. (Source: Popular Mechanics)

Study: Natural IVF cycles have some significant disadvantages

Some women trying to conceive are opting for something called "natural" in vitro fertilization (IVF).

CBS2's Dr. Max Gomez reports natural IVF means retrieving an egg from a woman during her normal cycle, without the stimulation of extra fertility drugs.

Those drugs, however, mean that on average, a woman produces 12 times as many eggs per cycle, improving the odds of getting pregnant.

Dr. Richard Scott, the clinical and scientific director of Reproductive Medicine Associates of New Jersey, conducted a study to determine if those eggs are truly as healthy. Scott compared nearly 400 naturally produced egg cycles versus 1,800 similar patients. The babies born either way were just as healthy, but natural IVF cycles had some significant disadvantages.

"Far inferior in terms of delivery rates because you get fewer opportunities per treatment cycle. That costs more money, it wastes time, enormous psychological burden for the patients, so giving a medication, the same stuff their body uses, just in a little higher content, allows to get multiple eggs to get more delivery rates," Scott explained.

Laura Davis' first IVF attempt was a so-called "natural" cycle. She turned to IVF after two ectopic pregnancies left her with damaged fallopian tubes.

"I was eager to try the natural study in attempts to have a child as natural as possible," Davis said.

Many women go the natural route because of the belief that eggs produced with the aid of fertility drugs may be inferior.

(Source: cbslocal.com)

Ocean warning for Pacific's Melanesia

Marine ecosystems in one of the Pacific's most vulnerable regions face decline unless they are better managed, a WWF report warned Tuesday.

The report described the ocean as the lifeblood of Melanesia -- a vast Pacific swathe comprising Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, New Caledonia, Vanuatu and Fiji.

But it said a range of factors including overfishing, population growth and climate change were damaging the oceans and could have a major impact on the region's economic prospects.

The "physical and chemical conditions in the ocean are changing faster than at any other point in history," it said.

"And there is a strong chance that the declining ocean assets of the Melanesian region will constrain options for future generations."

The report estimated that Melanesia generated about US\$5.4 billion a year from the ocean, largely from fisheries and tourism.

The report's lead author, University of Queensland climate specialist Ove Hoegh-Guldberg, said Melanesia could no longer take the health of its oceans for granted.

"There is no doubt the ocean has delivered the majority of food, livelihoods and economic activity for Melanesia for a very long time," he said. (Source: AFP)

The tiny, faraway object that NASA's New Horizons spacecraft will fly by in 2019 is even redder than Pluto, new observations by the Hubble Space Telescope suggest.

The New Horizons team used Hubble to study 11 objects in the Kuiper Belt, the realm of frigid bodies beyond Neptune's orbit whose most famous resident is Pluto. One of those 11 is 2014 MU69, which New Horizons will zoom past on Jan. 1, 2019.

It turns out that 2014 MU69 "is even redder than Pluto, though not quite as red as Mars," Amanda Zangari, a New Horizons post-doctoral researcher from the Southwest Research Institute in Boulder, Colorado, said on Oct. 18 during a news conference at a joint meeting of the American Astronomical Society Division for Planetary Sciences and the European Planetary Science Congress in Pasadena, California.

While astronomers have yet to pin down 2014 MU69's size, they believe that it's just 13 to 25 miles (21 to 40 kilometers) wide. 2014 MU69 is now the smallest Kuiper Belt object (KBO) whose color has been measured, Zangari said.

■ Primordial objects

Knowing that 2014 MU69 is reddish does more than



just jazz up visualizations of the 2019 flyby, during which New Horizons will zoom within 1,860 miles (3,000 km) of the body's surface. This information strongly suggests that 2014 MU69 is part of the Kuiper Belt's "cold classical" region, which harbors primordial objects that have changed little since the dawn of the Solar System nearly 4.6 billion years ago, Zangari said.

Free tuberculosis testing at Tehran subway

ITSOCIETY TEHRAN — Temporary units which test for tuberculosis (TB) free of charge are set up at three stations of Tehran subway, IRIB reported on Tuesday.

The units are designed to heighten public awareness with experts explaining TB risk factors, its diagnosis, prevention and reasons for developing such a disease using brochures.

The scheme is co-planned by Tehran subway company department for social and cultural affairs and western Tehran healthcare center.

The units will offer free of charge services for three days at Shahid Beheshti, Sharif University, and Sadeqiyeh stations.

Earth on track for its warmest year on record after hottest September in 136 years

Last month was the warmest September the world has seen since modern records began 136 years ago, according to new figures from NASA.

However the US agency added that the difference between it and the previous record in September 2014 was just 0.004 degrees Celsius, making the result a statistical tie.

It was 0.91 degrees warmer than the average temperature for the month between 1951 and 1980.

The figures mean 11 of the past 12 months have set new records for highest average temperature.

However, NASA said it had now established that June this year was not a record, as it previously said.

Additional temperature readings from Antarctica showed it was actually the third warmest June, behind last year and 1998.

This year is on track to be the warmest on record.

The NASA figures are calculated using publicly available information from about 6,300 weather stations around the world, including ships and buoys that measure the temperature of the sea. *(Source: Independent)*

LEARN ENGLISH

Using Electronics on Airplanes

Flight attendant: I'm sorry, sir, but all passengers need to turn off their **portable electronic devices** for **takeoff**, so you'll need to turn off your laptop.

Alec: I just need to finish one last email.

Flight attendant: Sir, we can't take off until you turn that computer off.

Alec: Fine. It's off. Why all the **fuss**, anyway?

Flight attendant: It is **regulations**. **Signals emitted** by electronics may **interfere with** the plane's **communication systems** or **navigation**.

Alec: All right.

Flight attendant: Sir, you'll also need to turn off your tablet computer and your cell phone. Those are also considered portable electronic devices.

Alec: You've got to be kidding me. You mean I have to sit here **twiddling my thumbs** while I wait for the plane to take off? I thought the **FAA eased up** on those regulations.

Flight attendant: I'm afraid not, sir. Please **power down** all of your devices so we can proceed with takeoff.

Alec: Okay, fine. What am I supposed to do until we get the **all clear** to use our electronics again?

Flight attendant: Perhaps you could read a magazine.

Alec: That's what I was doing on my tablet before you made me turn it off.

Flight attendant: Perhaps you could **take a flying leap** out the window.

Alec: What did you say?

Flight attendant: I said, "Look at that luggage **heap** out the window."

(Source: eslpd.com)

Words & phrases

portable electronic device: a device that is capable of storing, processing, or transmitting information including: personal digital assistants (PDA) smartphones

takeoff: the time when a plane leaves the ground and begins to fly

fuss: anxious behavior or activity that is usually about unimportant things

regulation: an official rule or order

signal: a series of light waves, sound waves etc. that carry an image, sound, or message, for example in radio or television

emit: to send out gas, heat, light, sound etc.

interfere with: if something interferes with a radio or television broadcast, it spoils the sound or picture that you receive

communication system: a system or facility for transferring data between persons and equipment

navigation: the science or job of planning which way you need to go when you are travelling from one place to another

twiddle your thumbs: to do nothing while you are waiting for something to happen

FAA: Federal Aviation Administration; a US government organization which is responsible for making sure that aircraft and airports are safe for people to use

ease up on: to improve or get less

power down: to shut down (a computer system) in a methodical way, concluding by switching the power off

all clear: official permission to begin doing something

take a flying leap: used to tell someone who is being irritating or annoying to go away

heap: a lot of something

Iran, Luxembourg to broaden ICT cooperation

ITSOCIETY TEHRAN — Iran and

Luxembourg reached an agreement on enhancing cooperation and embarking on a joint venture in information and communications technology, IRIB reported on Tuesday.

Iranian Communication and Information Technology Minister Mahmoud Vaezi made the remarks in Tehran following a meeting with Deputy Prime Minister of Luxembourg Etienne Schneider.

Vaezi further explained that "We are going to talk through and exchange views on all future cooperation on ICT over a joint committee which will be set up tomorrow (Wednesday)."

"We have also considered the possibility of joint research projects and student exchange programs with the Luxembourg delegation," the Iranian minister said.

Schneider, for his part, emphasized the great potential of the young well-ed-



10 countries with the most natural resources

Natural resources, or commodities, are the raw inputs that are used to manufacture and produce all of the products in the world. Commodities themselves, which include those extracted from the earth and those that have yet to be extracted, are worth trillions of dollars. Here are the top 10 countries with the most natural resources, the resources they have and their total estimated value.

10: Venezuela

This South American country has an estimated \$14.3 trillion worth of natural resources. The country's main resources are iron, natural gas and oil. This country ranks eighth in the world for natural gas reserves, accounting for 2.7% of the global supply, and ranks sixth in oil reserves, accounting for 7.4% of the global supply. Venezuela is about the same size as Texas.

9: Iraq

Number nine on the list is Iraq, which holds an estimated \$15.9 trillion worth of natural resources. The country has 9% of the total world's oil deposits, accounting for most of its resources. Iraq is also among the top countries for reserves of phosphate rock. This country is about the same size as California.

8: Australia

Australia, with \$19.9 trillion in natural resources, comes in at number eight on the list. Australia is known for its large reserves of coal, timber, copper and iron ore. But the country also is the leader for two important metals: gold and uranium. As for the precious metal

gold, Australia has the world's largest supply and meets 14.3% of global demand. As for uranium, about 46% of the global supply comes from Australia. The country is about 80% the size of the United States.

7: Brazil

The seventh-ranked country in terms of total natural resources is Brazil. This country, only a little smaller than the United States, is estimated to have \$21.8 trillion in commodities. Brazil has large deposits of gold and uranium and is the world's second-largest producer of iron. While the country also has sizable oil deposits, its most valuable natural resource is timber. About 12.3% of the world's timber supply comes from Brazil.

6: China

China is number six on the list. The country has an estimated \$23 trillion worth of natural resources, 90% of which are coal and rare earth metals. However, timber is another major natural resource of China. The country has a land area roughly equal to the United States.

5: Iran

With \$27.3 trillion in natural resources, Iran is the fifth country on the list. The country's main natural resources are oil and natural gas. Iran has about 10% of the world's oil supply and 16% of the world's natural gas supply, and is about the same size as Alaska.

4: Canada

Fourth on the list of countries with the most natural resources is Canada. Overall, the country has an esti-

mated \$33.2 trillion worth of commodities. Canada has 17.8% of the world's oil supply, which is the highest after Saudi Arabia. It also has the world's second-largest reserves of uranium and is the third-largest timber producer worldwide. It also has large reserves of natural gas and phosphate. Canada is about the same size as the United States.

3: Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia has 20% of the world's oil reserves, the fifth-largest natural gas reserves and large amounts of timber. Overall, the country has about \$34.4 trillion worth of natural resources. Saudi Arabia is about the size of Alaska.

2: The United States of America

With about \$45 trillion in natural resources, the U.S. is number two on the list. The U.S. has over 31% of the world's coal, but also has large amounts of timber. A total of 89% of the country's natural resources are from coal and timber, but it also has sizable deposits of natural gas, oil, gold and copper.

1: Russia

Russia is number one on the list by far. Its total estimated natural resources are worth \$75 trillion. The country has many different natural resources, but its main deposits include coal, oil, natural gas, gold and timber. The country also has the second-largest supply of rare earth metals in the world. Russia is about twice as large as the United States.

(Source: Investopedia)

IN FOCUS 📷 Tehran Times/Mojtaba Heidari



A group of young veterinarians voluntarily travels to remote rural areas nationwide, providing free of charge healthcare services and medications to the livestock.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → €

Male-female birth ratio in Iran on the rise

The male-female birth ratio has increased since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year, March 20, up to now, the National Organization for Civil Registration announced on Wednesday.

So far, some 650,728 infants have been born, of which 333,172 are boy babies and 317,556 are girl babies, Nasim news agency reported.

The number of infants born in urban areas is 507,567, while some 143,161 babies were born in rural districts.

On the other hand, the number of deaths reported in the same period totals 155,261, including 822,088 men and 729,073 women.

ENGLISH PROVERB

One man's meat is another man's poison

■ **Explanation:** people don't always like the same things

■ **For example:** Fred: What do you mean you don't like French fries? They're the best food in the world!
Alan: One man's meat is another man's poison.

PHRASAL VERB

Blurt something out

■ **Meaning:** to say something suddenly and without thinking especially if you shouldn't, usually because you are nervous or excited

■ **For example:** Peter blurted the news out before we could stop him.

ENGLISH IDIOM

A rude awakening

■ **Explanation:** if you get a rude awakening, you are forced to accept the unpleasant truth or reality; very unpleasant surprise

■ **For example:** Confident that he would win, he had a rude awakening on election day.

All parties must respect Yemen ceasefire: Russia, UN

Russia and the United Nations have emphasized the need for all concerned parties in Yemen to abide by an UN-brokered ceasefire, which is scheduled to take effect as of Thursday.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Gennady Gatilov and the United Nations Special Envoy for Yemen Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, made the comments in a Tuesday meeting in Moscow, the TASS news agency quoted the Russian Foreign Ministry as saying.

The two sides also called for efforts to improve the humanitarian situation in Yemen and facilitate the resumption of negotiations on the conflict. Previous talks did not bring about any more than agreements on prisoner exchange.

"The two diplomats discussed in detail the prospects for a political and diplomatic settlement in Yemen and the role of the UN and its Security Council in supporting peace efforts in light of the ceasefire announced by the special en-



voy the day before, which comes into effect overnight to October 20."

The UN envoy announced the truce

on Monday, saying it would take effect at 23:59 local time on Wednesday. The official noted that assurances had been

received from all Yemeni parties engaged in the conflict, and that the given time period was subject to renewal.

On Wednesday, Yemen's Supreme Political Council, the top governing body, welcomed the ceasefire, while demanding that the Saudi invaders end military attacks and lift the curbs on air, sea and land transport.

The Houthi-run council announced "positive engagement" with the ceasefire plan, saying Yemen needed an immediate, lasting and comprehensive truce without conditions.

Heavily backed by Saudi airpower, gunmen loyal to Yemen's former government, have been fighting against the Houthi Ansarullah and allied army forces to restore ex-president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi.

The Saudi military campaign, which started in March 2015, has killed at least 10,100 people. The regime has a long record of truce violations during the war.

(Source: Press TV)

Philippine police van rams into crowd of anti-U.S. protesters

A police van rammed into a crowd of anti-American demonstrators on Wednesday during a rally outside the United States Embassy in the Philippines.

At least three student activists were taken to hospital after being hit by the van.

The protest, which called for the removal of U.S. troops from the country, comes amid strained relations between Washington and Manila.

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has in recent months called U.S. President Barack Obama a "son of a whore" and told him to "go to hell" while hinting he may scale down U.S. relations in favor of stronger ties with China.

Wednesday's protest is a cause Duterte has backed himself, saying in September that the American forces presented a target for an Islamist group notorious for beheading Westerners.

Video from The Associated Press showed a crowd of around 1,000 demonstrators clashing with riot police outside the embassy building in the Philippine capital.

A police van was seen reversing wildly at speed through the crowd before changing direction and driving forward through the throng. At least one person was run over, although they appeared to be not seriously injured.

The demonstrators hurled red paint at officers car-

rying shields and at the U.S. government seal outside the embassy compound. Twenty three were arrested, according to the AP.

"There was absolutely no justification for it," protest leader Renato Reyes told the AP. "Even as the president vowed an independent foreign policy, Philippine police forces still act as running dogs of the U.S."

While the clashes raged, Philippine President Duterte was on a visit to China. He has vowed that the long-running territorial dispute over the South China Sea will not stop his country doing trade with Beijing.

(Source: NBC News)

Hong Kong: Tensions flare over pro-freedom politicians

Dozens of pro-Beijing politicians have staged a walk-out from the Hong Kong legislature to stall the swearing in of two pro-independence legislators in the Chinese-administered city.

The topic of independence has long been taboo in the former British colony, now governed under the "one country, two systems" principle since its return to China in 1997.

The government failed in an unprecedented legal attempt on Tuesday to halt the swearing-in of the two.

The politicians marched out of the legislative chamber, leaving Chinese and Hong Kong flags in their place, to deprive it of a quorum.

It is unclear when swearing-in will take place.

Al Jazeera's Sarah Clarke, reporting from the Legislative Council in Hong Kong, said: "In an unprecedented move, Hong Kong's Chief Executive C Y Leung has intervened in this whole process. He's trying to get two of the pro-democracy candidates disqualified from parliament."

"Leung's case is being mounted on the grounds that he believes last week's oath-taking was invalid and disrespectful to Hong Kong's basic law."

The government will formally challenge the decision of legislative authorities to allow Baggio Leung, 30, and Yau Wai-ching, 25, to retake their oaths in the High Court next month.

Yau and Leung sparked outrage among Hong Kong's pro-Beijing establishment when their first oaths were rejected by legislative officials last week.

Then they pledged allegiance to the "Hong Kong nation" and displayed a banner declaring that "Hong Kong is not China", using language some legislators portrayed as derogatory Japanese slang.

The pair are part of a new generation of Hong Kong activists determined to force issues of self-determination and independence on to the mainstream political agenda.

A judicial review will take place on November 3.

Outside, hundreds of pro-Beijing protesters thronged the grounds of the legislature, some carrying placards of the pair dressed in Japanese army uniforms that denounced them as "traitors" and "dogs".

Others chanted that the pair must step down to protect China's "dignity".

The judicial review looms amid an unprecedented constitutional battle in the free-wheeling global financial hub, testing its rule of law and the separation of powers between the government and legislative branch.

Some senior judges and government officials fear privately that the issue could force Beijing to invoke rarely used powers to re-interpret Hong Kong's mini-constitution, or push through new laws.

(Source: Reuters)

Ecuador admits cutting WikiLeaks Assange's internet

Ecuador's government acknowledged on Tuesday it had partly restricted internet access for Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, who has lived in the South American country's British embassy since mid-2012.

WikiLeaks said Assange lost connectivity on Sunday, sparking speculation that Ecuador might have been pressured by the United States due to the group's publication of hacked material linked to U.S. Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton.

Ecuador's government said WikiLeaks' decision to publish documents affecting the U.S. election was entirely its own responsibility, and the country did not want to meddle in election processes or favor any candidate.

"In that respect, Ecuador, exercising its sovereign right, has temporarily restricted access to part of its communications systems in its UK Embassy," it said in a statement. "Ecuador does not cede to pressures from other countries."

The United States denied charges from WikiLeaks that Washington asked Ecuador to cut Assange's internet connection.

"While our concerns about WikiLeaks are long-standing, any suggestion that Secretary Kerry or the State Department

were involved in shutting down WikiLeaks is false," State Department spokesman John Kirby said.

"Reports that Secretary Kerry had conversations with Ecuadorian officials about this are simply untrue. Period."

The State Department also denied a WikiLeaks tweet alleging that "multiple U.S. sources tell us John Kerry asked Ecuador to stop Assange from publishing Clinton docs during FARC peace negotiations" - a conversation alleged to have taken place on the sidelines of the Colombia-FARC peace agreement signing on September 26.

Assange was granted asylum by Ecuador after a British court ordered his extradition to Sweden to face questioning in a sexual molestation case involving two female supporters.

WikiLeaks said it activated "contingency plans" after Assange's cut-off, and Ecuador said that its action did not stop the group continuing "journalistic activities".

Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa has long backed Assange's right to free speech and has also supported Clinton publicly. "For the good of the United States and the world ... I would like Hillary to win," he told broadcaster Russia Today last month.

(Source: agencies)

Former congressman: Trump's bigotry, dishonesty make him unfit to be president



They feel the U.S. government has let them down. They are looking for almost any change and they cling to the hope that Donald Trump, having been uninvolved with government previously and having asserted that he has been a successful businessman, can turn things around and improve their economic conditions - even though his economic and tax proposals will hurt lower income Americans and further advantage the wealthiest Americans.

■ **Trump blames the media for a coordinated action against him. How much has the media been able to distort his personality?**

A: The media has only reported on Mr. Trump's own statements and actions. They have not distorted his personality but rather have reported on who he is and what he has said and one. It is Donald Trump's own con-

"I do not believe that Mr. Trump can now convince the majority of Americans that he is temperamentally fit to govern our country," Meldon Edises Levine says.

Turkey hasn't given up on role in Mosul battle



Ersin Ramoglu, a commentator from the pro-government newspaper Sabah, wrote that Turks are angry with the West and have a special hatred for the United States, "which put a stick in the spokes of Turkey's wheel as it was growing and developing." He argued that Turkey will have its revenge on the United States by developing ties with Russia. Maintaining that the United States was trying to control the world by grabbing the energy

resources of the Middle East, Ramoglu wrote, "Our leader spoiled this plan by reconciling with [President Vladimir] Putin."

Those who support this view disregard the fact that Moscow put a spoke in the wheels of Ankara's plans for Syria by supporting Assad, Erdogan's regional archenemy, and that it is also at odds with Ankara on issues of importance to Turkey ranging from Cyprus to the Crimean Peninsula and the question of the Armenian genocide.

The bottom line, however, is that many unknowns remain in Iraq and Syria, where developments will determine if, when and how a role comes up for Turkey despite the verbal sparring witnessed recently between Ankara and Baghdad.

Nihat Ali Ozcan, a political and military analyst from the Ankara-based Economic Policy Research Foundation, said it is not possible to say what shape things will take in Iraq and Syria, where the actors are many and not limited to

the United States and Russia, or Abadi and Assad.

"It is therefore not possible to say if Turkey's current approach is sustainable or not, because much will depend on developments in the field," Ozcan told Al-Monitor. "If, however, Abadi and Assad, or at least their regimes, end up consolidating their positions, then it is clear that Turkey will have to opt for policy revisions," he added.

(Source: Al Monitor)

Trump's appeal for poll monitors draws tepid response from some supporters

Arabic billboard mocks Trump's anti-Muslims rhetoric

While the United States Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump often rails against a "rigged" election on Twitter and at rallies nationwide, he goes a few steps further in Pennsylvania, a state crucial to the Republican's fading chances to win the White House.

Here, he has made direct appeals since August to recruit voters as poll monitors on Election Day and has pointed specifically at Philadelphia as a city beset by voter fraud.

Despite offering little evidence for any of his claims, his "rigged" election message is resonating with his followers in this traditional battleground state where Democratic rival Hillary Clinton has opened up a wide lead. But his calls for poll watchers on Nov. 8 is drawing a mix of confusion, concern and tepid support.

In some cases, Trump's talk of fraud appears to have made some of his own followers more resigned to an election loss, even though independent studies show U.S. voting chicanery is exceptionally rare and certainly never on a national scale.

Since Aug. 8, when Trump first urged supporters in the state to "watch other polling places and make sure that it is 100-percent fine," civil rights groups have expressed fears that some supporters will take the idea too far by forming roaming, vigilante-style crowds intimidating voters.

There are official channels to monitor elections. Pennsylvania has a system that allows campaigns and political parties to designate official poll monitors, who are allowed into the polling places and can register official complaints if they think someone isn't a valid voter.

A form on the Trump campaign's website asks voters to help Trump "stop crooked Hillary from rigging this election" by becoming a volunteer Trump election observer.

But in an example of the Trump campaign's near non-existent effort to organize field operations in key swing states, there is little evidence that the recruitment drive is translating into legions of officially sanctioned volunteers. Repeated inquiries from Reuters about efforts to staff polling places went unanswered by his campaign.

The rules allow each candidate and the state parties to name monitors. With federal and local candidates both on the November ballot, there could be dozens of watchers in a single precinct. But those familiar with past elections say rarely does that happen. Instead, campaigns tend to focus on only the most fought over swing districts.

Some Trump supporters are branching out on their own.

On Oct. 1, Trump told a largely white rally of supporters in Manheim in central Pennsylvania that they should go to neighborhoods other than their own on Election Day and "watch".

In Mechanicsburg, an overwhelmingly Republican borough of nearly 9,000 people, realtor Steve Johansen helped to set up a Trump field office in a skating rink, but he has no plans to monitor any polling places.

■ **Arabic billboard: 'Donald Trump can't read this, but he is scared of it anyway'**

Meantime, a billboard in the U.S. state of Michigan has ridiculed Trump, taking a swipe at his xenophobic rhetoric about Muslims and immigration.

The hoarding appears alongside a Michigan highway, saying in white Arabic text on a black background, "Donald Trump can't read this, but he is scared of it anyway."

The advert, which was paid for by a super PAC opposed to Trump's candidacy, is placed on Interstate 94, an area that has a high concentration of Arab-American residents.

"We came up with it because we believe that Donald Trump's hateful rhetoric is not based on reality. It's based on fear," said Melissa Harris, the anti-Trump PAC spokeswoman. "And we think that irrational fear is what's driving his anti-immigrant message."

The billboard is to stay up in the swing state through Election Day on November 8.

(Source: agencies)

Syria's anti-terror fight in Aleppo aimed at defending civilians: Assad



Aleppo, Syria's second largest city, remains divided between government forces in the west and foreign-backed terrorists in the east, making it a frontline battleground.

On September 22, Syria announced the start of a new military operation in Aleppo aimed at driving out the terrorists occupying the eastern part of the strategic city.

The Syrian army campaign came three days after a week-long truce, brokered by Russia and the US, came to an end across the Arab country.

Damascus refused to extend the deal after an airstrike by a US-led coalition targeted Syrian troops, killing over 80 of them near the eastern city of Dayr al-Zawr.

On Tuesday, Moscow announced that the Syrian and Russian air forces had stopped their anti-terror air raids in Aleppo ahead of an eight-hour "humanitarian pause" in Aleppo scheduled for October 20.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov hailed the halt as a "manifestation of goodwill by the Russian military."

Syria has been gripped by foreign-sponsored militancy since March 2011. Moscow has been conducting airstrikes against Daesh and other terrorist groups in Syria at the Damascus government's request since last September.

The US-led coalition has also been purporting to hit Daesh positions in Syria since September 2014, but is has failed to accomplish its announced objectives. The bombing campaign has neither a UN mandate nor the permission of the Syrian government.

(Source: SANA)

Gianni Infantino and Fifa seem to have a new plan: to kill the World Cup

By Marina Hyde

Some movies are so bad they kill more than themselves. Sometimes, they kill a series. As George Clooney wryly (and rightly) observed after *Batman & Robin*: “I think we might have killed the franchise.” Occasionally, a movie is such a disaster it kills an entire genre. The monstrous excesses of *Cleopatra* fatally wounded the swords-and-sandals epic genre, and the flop of *The Fall of the Roman Empire* a year later finished it off so thoroughly that it didn’t return for decades. Heaven’s Gate is famously the film that didn’t just collapse a



studio (United Artists), but made big-budget westerns a no-go. Some have even accused Michael Cimino’s epic of killing the 1970s, an amusingly outlandish charge for which we’ll just have to coin the term epochicide.

Much less amusingly, alas, we must return once more to Fifa, and inquire: franchise killer or genre killer? In which metaphorical category would you place president Gianni Infantino’s plan for a 48-team World Cup?

Chances are you’d hoped Fifa would have spent their latest conclave in rigorous self-examination, what with some former executives still being on the run from the FBI, others awaiting extradition proceedings, and the entire organisation still a global byword for hideous greed and corruption. But so what? At last week’s meeting of Infantino’s expanded Fifa Council – the world’s best attended displacement activity – there was instead much discussion of the proposal to bulk up football’s flagship tournament to 40 or 48 teams. Look, it may not be the Fifa reform you want, but for Infantino it’s the Fifa reform you need.

Of course, those who still feel that the World Cup’s expansion from 16 to 32 teams between 1982 and 1998 denuded the competition of a certain high-end glamour may already be opening the pedal bin marked “genre killer”. Others may wish for more information. Should Fifa go for the 48-team option, then, there is clearly much debate as to how the tournament would be constructed and located, but the idea of two concurrent group stages is fairly unavoidable. If only 16 progress to the knockout stages, as now, the tournament will comprise 88 games. If 32 go through, the World Cup will run to 104 games.

If there is anyone bar an army of Swiss bank managers who honestly regards this as a plan that will improve the tournament, I am sure Infantino would love to hear from them. Meanwhile, he is forced to rely on his own justifications, and it is fair to say these tend toward the bogging.

Indeed, to hear Gianni talk is to feel that in many ways the very notion of sport of itself is holding the World Cup back. What is sport, if not exclusionary in the most outmoded sort of way? Infantino was at pains to stress that qualifying for a World Cup induced “football euphoria” in the countries that do, and to that end was obviously to be encouraged. Not qualifying, he said, was awful for a country, and turned its football clubs into “a disaster”.

Mmm. This is starting to feel slightly like the sort of World Cup my mother might design: one where everyone can join in and win a prize. Bless her – she’s an extremely kind person – but no. The further we go down this route, the closer we get to the idea that it is not the winning, but the qualifying. And at some point the very notion of sporting competition itself becomes a barrier to the ultimate aim, which is a suspiciously lucrative stripe of inclusivity. We might as well start radically mitigating the upset people feel when one team has to lose a football match.

Were we in the realms of fiction, justice would prevail. You may have seen the South Park episode where Steven Spielberg and George Lucas are ultimately arrested for raping their own creation in the unspeakable *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*. (Furthermore, at the very moment the police apprehend him, Lucas is engaged in the metaphorical raping of *Star Wars*, via the actual rape of a Stormtrooper.) The pair protest loudly about how much money this stuff makes at the box office. Indeed, some of the smaller nations – forgive me – the smaller characters, such as Butters think there is nothing wrong with it. But as all right-thinking moviegoers know, there is something very wrong indeed with *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*. Though not quite as much – amazingly – as there is with a 48-team World Cup.

Football Manager ahead of the game

Further laurels for the creators of *Football Manager*, who are the latest entity in British public life to hint at more sophisticated Brexit thinking than Liam Fox.

In a fascinating interview with the *Daily Telegraph*, Sports Interactive’s boss Miles Jacobson revealed that next year’s 17th iteration of the game will include three different Brexit scenarios and timetables, of which hard Brexit will obviously most affect gameplay. According to Jacobson, the creators “have included every possible outcome in the game, using artificial intelligence and percentage chances to make every game different ... If people think the outcome is bleak, this is what I believe will happen.” As he points out: “Preparing for the Brexit aspect of the new game has taken a lot of research, too: a lot of reading, a lot of talking to politicians and people in football.”

This feels confusing. As the victorious Brexiters have spent much of the last three months telling us all, preparing for Brexit was the job of their Whitehall predecessors. Their failure to do it means that those now in charge of leading the process have to make terrifyingly empty speeches once a week, until some sort of clue is got. For a video game to appear ahead of them on this front is another one for the notional committee on unpatriotic activities, which we can only hope will be convened IRL without delay.

(Source: Guardian)



Antoine Griezmann: I am close to Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo’s level

Antoine Griezmann exclusively told Eurosport France that he feels he is close to the level of Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo.

After a transformative season with club and country, Atletico Madrid superstar Griezmann revealed to Eurosport’s Martin Mosnier how Diego Simeone has completely transformed his game and that he feels he is close to the level of Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo.

Do you feel you’re on the same level as Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo?

No, but I feel I am close; I am missing the trophies that they have won, though. My aim with Atletico is to go as far as possible, and to improve on what I achieved last year. In that respect, I feel that I am on the right track. For the first time in my career, I have scored six goals in September – before I had one or two goals at that stage of the season but I need to continue like this.

How does it make you feel when Diego Simeone compares you to Messi and Ronaldo?

I feel proud. Simeone inspires his players and he motivates me. I am delighted to think that my coach feels that I can reach that level.

What changes has Simeone made to your game?

Simeone has completely transformed me as a player, with him as my coach, I learn something every day – either tactically or technically. I play more centrally now but he has also developed me physically too – I run more. All of that has

helped me score more goals.

What about the Ballon d’Or? Should you be in the top three this year?

I’m not going to bed thinking about the Ballon d’Or – it is journalists who vote. I just try to do my best and score as many goals as possible.

Barcelona and Real are deemed ‘bigger’ clubs. Does playing for Atletico hold you back?

Barcelona and Real are bigger clubs commercially but what interests me is what happens on the field. We compete with those clubs every season – last year we were level on points with Barcelona with two games to go and made the Champions League final. A club’s ‘name’ does not interest me.

At the end of 2015, there were doubts whether you should start for France. Have you answered those criticisms?

I was not scoring many goals then so it was difficult. However, the coach kept his confidence in me and my team-mates did too. I trusted my game and my work.

When France lost to Germany at the World Cup, you were in tears and were comforted by your team-mates. However, after the final of Euro 2016, it was you who lifted your team-mates. What changed?

The World Cup was my first tournament – everything was new; we were a new, young squad. That quarter-final loss was a huge disappointment – we knew they were strong from set-pieces and conceded from a free-kick. However, that experience brought the squad together. At the Euros, I watched Portugal lift the trophy but thought, “next time, that will be me.”

What has changed in that last two years?

At the Euros I wanted to show everyone that our journey was not finished. I am sure we will lift a big trophy.

After the Euros, do you feel more pressure?

There has been more attention paid to me but I do not feel more pressure. It is important to have fun.

(Source: Eurosport)

Duty calls for combative Lewis Hamilton

Lewis Hamilton will be starring in the next “Call of Duty” video game due out in November but the Formula One world champion has a real and more immediate fight on his hands in Texas this weekend.

The Mercedes driver, returning to the U.S. Grand Prix circuit where last year he won his third title, told 3.8 million followers on Twitter that he would be a character in the “Infinite Warfare” edition.

Hamilton, 33 points behind German team mate Nico Rosberg with four rounds remaining, is determined to give it his best shot on the track as well - even if it is looking an increasingly long one.

The Briton knows the odds are now stacked against him winning a fourth title this season, given that even winning all the remaining races will not be enough if Rosberg finishes second every time.

But the same bad luck that saw him retire with an engine failure while leading in Malaysia this month can also strike elsewhere.

“We’ve got four races left to make the most of it and that’s exactly what I plan to do. It’s just about hitting every race weekend as hard as I can, going all out for every win and seeing what happens from there,” said Hamilton.

“I’ll be holding nothing back out there.

“I’ve got some great memories from Austin, with three wins from four races and, of course, the title win last year. That was one of the highlights of my career, no doubt.

“It’s almost like the American fans have adopted me as their own, so I’ll try to channel all of that positive energy into this weekend.”

STRONG SUPPORT

Hamilton could do with some of that after a negative Japanese Grand Prix in which he seemed determined to take on all-comers.

At Suzuka two weeks ago, he was criticised for playing with Snapchat on his phone during the main Thursday news conference and then walked out of a team media briefing after hitting out at “disrespectful” criticism of his behaviour by journalists.

If Hamilton hopes for a return to form in Texas, Rosberg has unfinished business to deal with as he charts his way - one race at

a time - towards a first title.

His mistake in Austin last October, while leading the race, gifted the title to Hamilton in bitter circumstances.

Rosberg went off to console himself after the race by belting out Bon Jovi’s “Living on a Prayer” at a team karaoke night.

It seemed to do the trick, the German reeling off seven wins in a row on the back of the Texas defeat and returning a year later much more than “half way there” and searching for his 10th victory of the season.

Last year this race obviously didn’t work out so great for me, so I’m looking forward to getting back out there and doing my best to get it right this time,” said Rosberg.

Red Bull, the only team other than Mercedes to have won races this season with Australian Daniel Ricciardo and Dutch teenager Max Verstappen, will also be hoping to get in the mix as will Ferrari’s Sebastian Vettel and Kimi Raikkonen.

With no U.S. driver on the grid, the U.S.-owned Haas team will be making a first home appearance while Force India’s Mexican Sergio Perez can count on strong support from across the border.

(Source: Reuters)



Zidane admits his midfield changes put Real off-balance

Real Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane admitted he had taken risks with his starting lineup after his side’s helterskelter 5-1 Champions League Group F win at home to group outsiders Legia Warsaw on Tuesday evening.

Madrid were always likely to take the three points in a strange game at the Estadio Santiago Bernabeu -- with Gareth Bale, Marco Asensio, Lucas Vazquez, Alvaro Morata and a Tomasz Jodlowski own goal on their side of the scoresheet, and Miroslav Radovic’s penalty counting as the consolation for the visitors.

The first half especially was a shootout with both sides taking turns to attack, and the Polish visitors finding it surprisingly easily to breach Madrid’s porous midfield, striking a post at 0-0 and later testing home keeper Keylor Navas on more than one occasion.

The Los Blancos coach told a news conference afterwards that his decision to play attack-minded Asensio and James Rodriguez in a three-man midfield had affected the balance of his side.

“The good thing is that we made many chances to score and scored five goals,” Zidane said. “I am happy with the attacking performances. We played a very offensive XI and that meant more risks.

“Defensively, the balance of the team was not perfect sometimes. They did not really make chances, but were able to counter-attack easily sometimes.

“But that was the option taken and we played a bit more attacking today. Sunday will be another game and a different team.”

Cristiano Ronaldo had two assists but did not join in on the scoring fun, having nine shots in total but just two on target in another frustrating display.

The Portuguese superstar has now scored just one of Madrid’s past 13 goals in all competitions, but Zidane said he was not concerned, pointing out CR7 had provided the pass for Asensio and Morata’s goals tonight.

“I did not say anything special to Cristiano after the game,” he said. “Sometimes we expect a lot from him. In a game like this we want him to score three or four times. But he provided two assists, even if he did not score today. I also like that.

That is part of his game too.

“It is true we expect more from him as he is Cristiano, and he knows that. He scored on Saturday, and he will score next weekend I hope.”

With three young Spaniards on the scoresheet in Asensio, Morata and Lucas Vazquez, local reporters pressed Zidane on whether they would get more chances to start games in the future, but the Frenchman responded by pointing to his “BBC” strikeforce of Ronaldo, Bale and Karim Benzema.

“The [young Spaniards] did very well, not just in the game today, but with their work all week,” Zidane said. “We will have many games and all players will get chances. But I am happy with what the three up front are doing.”

Borussia Dortmund’s 2-1 win at Sporting Lisbon in the night’s other Group F encounter means that Madrid and Dortmund remain locked at the top of the group on seven points from their first three outings. Asked if the group was now a two-horse race, Zidane said he expected it would be until the Bundesliga side came to Madrid on Dec. 7.

“It seems that way, at least until we play them at the Bernabeu,” the Frenchman said.

(Source: Soccernet)



Iran's Kianoush Rostami's 2012 Olympic bronze upgraded

IT SPORTS Kianoush Rostami's bronze medal in the 2012 Olympics was upgraded to silver after Apts Aukhadov has been stripped of his silver medal due to doping.

The Russian weightlifter sample's tested positive for steroids.

Aukhadov, second in the men's -85kg event in London, tested positive for turinabol and drostanolone, the International Olympic Committee said.

His medal will be reassigned to Iran's Rostami, who finished third with a total of 380kg.

Rostami won a gold medal at the Rio Olympics for a total of 396kg, beating his world record by

one kilogram.

Aukhadov was caught when the IOC retested samples from the 2008 and 2012 Olympics using new analysis methods.

Tarek Yehia of Egypt should rise from fourth to the bronze medal position after managing 375kg.

The IOC has reported a total of 98 positive cases from recent retests of samples from the two Games in Beijing and London.

At least six of those cases came in one weightlifting event, the men's -94kg category at London 2012.

As a result, the gold medal was passed to Iran's Saeid Mohammadpour, who was originally fifth.



Iran wins gold in Regu event at Thailand King's Cup

Iran finished in first place in Regu event in the 31st King's Cup Sepak Takraw World Championship 2016.

The Iranian team beat Cambodia 2-1 in the final match. Iran Hoop Takraw team had also won a bronze medal on Tuesday.

The King's Cup Sepak Takraw World Championship is held annually by The Takraw Association of Thailand (TAT).

It is the biggest Sepak Takraw tournament which hosts a total of 10 events for men and women.

The tournament brought 34 countries together in Bangkok, Thailand. Iran, Malaysia, South Korea, Singapore, India, Vietnam, USA, Australia, Thailand, Germany and France were among the participating teams.

(Source: Tasnim)

Fenerbahce's team plane makes emergency landing in Budapest

The team plane of Turkish football club Fenerbahce made an emergency landing in Budapest on Wednesday as pilots reported a loss of cabin pressure due to a crack in the cockpit window, a spokesman for Budapest Airport said.

Fenerbahce's private chartered aircraft from the airline Borajet was en route from Istanbul for Thursday's Europa League game against Manchester United.

"The plane made a perfect and

safe landing in Budapest at 1215 p.m....after pilots reported a loss of cabin pressure," spokesman Mihaly Hardy told Reuters.

Hardy said another plane was on its way to Budapest from Istanbul

to pick up the team and fly them to Manchester later on Wednesday.

Fenerbahce said on its club Twitter account that a bird had hit the cockpit windshield.

(Source: Reuters)

AFC U-19 Championship - MD3: Group C preview



Qatar coach Oscar Moreno is gearing up for what promises to be an intriguing encounter against Group C joint-leaders Japan in their AFC U-19 Championship Bahrain 2016 match on Thursday.

Although the defending champions are unbeaten in this year's tournament so far, just like their next opponents, Moreno is keen to avoid any slip ups going into the final group game at Bahrain National Stadium.

Qatar drew 1-1 with the Islamic Republic of Iran in their opening match, following it up with a late Abdulrasheed Umaru winner to beat Yemen 1-0 on Monday despite struggling to finish off chances throughout the game.

"I'm not happy with the efficiency from our attackers but the important thing is that we are creating chances," said Moreno.

"I full trust in our three strikers, Abdulrasheed, Hassan (Ahmad) Palang and Sayed (Issa) and if they keep on working, the goals will come.

"Japan are a different opponent to the teams we've faced so far, they have another style of play that makes their senior team one of the favourites to win the Asian Cup.

"We will try to make them uncomfortable on the pitch and make sure they don't have as much possession as they'd like.

"It will be a nice game despite the pressure because both teams are playing for qualification".

Meanwhile, Japan, who have finished runners-up on six different occasions but have never won the tournament, are keen to recover from a gritty goalless draw against the IR Iran on Monday.

"Of course we wanted to win and get

three points against Iran but we're okay with a draw" said coach Atsushi Uchiyama.

"We knew it was going to be a tough game but before the tournament began, I was predicting that we would need to play all three games to decide who would qualify from this group.

"This game against Qatar will be decisive so I need to decide which are the best eleven players for my team, taking into consideration the conditions and fatigue. I am open to changing some players".

On Thursday's simultaneous kickoff, IR Iran take on Yemen who have nothing to play for but pride following their elimination on Monday.

Amir Peiravani's men are still in contention, but know that only a win will do after two consecutive draws against leaders Qatar and Japan.

"The match between us and Yemen is a new start," said the IR Iran coach.

"I don't want to think about Japan anymore now that match is finished. My players will just concentrate on this match with Yemen and hope to win and qualify."

Opponents Yemen impressed on Monday against Qatar but came away empty-handed after conceding a late goal.

Coach Mohammed Al Nufayis proud of his charges and hopes they will finally open their account against IR Iran after failing to register any goals in the losses to Japan and Qatar.

"I'm proud that my team is one of the 16 best teams in Asia," said the Yemen coach.

"Hopefully they will score and get a goal tomorrow. I know they will perform even better than they have in our previous two games".

(Source: AFC)

Lippi set to coach China national team: report



Former World Cup-winning coach Marcello Lippi is being tipped to take over as coach of China after being offered the job following the resignation of Gao Hongbo, reports said Wednesday.

"Lippi, coach of China," ran the headline on the front page of Italy's second most popular sports daily Corriere dello Sport.

It claimed the Italian maestro was "inclined to accept the offer" and added: "In the coming days, the former Italy coach will travel to Beijing to pore over the details of the Chinese football association's offer."

However, the China Football Association's Huang Shiwei told AFP the selection process for a new coach was continuing.

"Only 2 things I can tell you now. Firstly, we have accepted Gao Hongbo's resignation. Secondly, for the coach candidate of the national football team, we are doing relevant selection work and our selection has not been finished," he said.

Former China coach Gao resigned on October 11 following a 2-0 World Cup qualifying defeat to Uzbekistan.

The result left China's chances of qualifying for the 2018 World Cup in Russia looking slim.

Sitting a lowly 78th in FIFA's rankings, China have claimed just one point from four games and dropped to bottom place in a Group A which includes Iran, Uzbekistan, South Korea, Syria and Qatar.

Lippi, who steered Italy to their fourth and most recent World Cup triumph in 2006, is not new to working in China.

The 68-year-old coached Chinese top flight side Guangzhou Evergrande to three consecutive Super League titles between 2012 and 2014.

Corriere dello Sport said last month Lippi was set to return to the club on a three-year deal worth 20m euros net per season -- a salary that would have put Pep Guardiola's world-beating 17.7m euro (pound sterling15m) annual salary at Manchester City in the shade.

But the Chinese football federation may be about to capture Lippi at a time when they are looking to make huge strides forward in the game.

Often a source of national embarrassment, improving the level of football at club and national level has been one of the priorities of China President Xi Jinping.

Even before taking office, Xi underlined his ambitions for Chinese football in 2011: to qualify for the World Cup, to host the event and to one day win it.

China have qualified only once for the World Cup, quietly departing the 2002 edition without scoring a goal.

Last year officials declared football a compulsory part of the national curriculum, with pledges to open 20,000 football-themed schools by 2017 with the aim of producing more than 100,000 players.

There has also been a splurge of Chinese investment in some of Europe's top clubs -- Inter Milan, Manchester City, Aston Villa, Espanyol and Atletico Madrid to name but a few -- and some of the sport's top stars have been lured to China.

(Source: AFP)

Rooney expects big things of 'fantastic' United

Captain Wayne Rooney says there is enough talent in the "fantastic" Manchester United squad to launch a serious challenge for the Premier League title despite a mixed start to the campaign.

United, who last won the league in 2013, have displayed flashes of brilliance under Jose Mourinho but their erratic performances have threatened to undermine the Portuguese manager's maiden campaign at Old Trafford.

"I do think we'll be challenging this season -- we've still got that belief and it is even stronger after working with this manager and the players over the last few months," Rooney told British media.

After suffering back-to-back defeats last month, a five-game unbeaten run in all competitions has raised spirits as seventh-placed United held rivals Liverpool to a 0-0 draw on Monday to maintain a five-point gap behind leaders Manchester City.

"I think we've got a fantastic squad that is ready and capable of challenging. I'm sure over the next few weeks or couple of months we will have our way of playing, and it will be his (Mourinho's) way of playing.

"It is a different way of playing, but if you're an individual you should learn what the manager wants. As a team, it's going to take a little bit longer. We knew it was going to take a bit of time," Rooney added.

Following his world record move to United in August, midfielder Paul Pogba has yet to live up to his hefty price tag but Rooney is confident that once the Frenchman adapts to the rigours of English football, he will be well worth the outlay.

"Paul is a fantastic player, I think he is working hard and he is doing well," the England international added of the former Juventus star.

"It is a different league to what he's been used to -- he didn't really play last time when he was here so this is all new. He is a fantastic player and he will shine for us this season there is no doubt."

United host Turkish side Fenerbahce in the Europa League on Thursday before travelling to face Mourinho's former club Chelsea in the Premier League on Sunday.

(Source: Reuters)

Claudio Ranieri 'very angry' despite Leicester's Champions League success

Leicester boss Claudio Ranieri insisted he was still angry with his side despite the Foxes taking a giant step towards the Champions League knockout stages.

Riyad Mahrez's winner sealed a 1-0 victory over FC Copenhagen to maintain their 100 per cent record in Europe and keep them top of Group G.

They are five points clear and will reach the last 16 with victory in Copenhagen on Nov. 2 having already beaten Club Brugge and Porto.

Leicester have more points, nine, in the Champions League than they do in the Premier League, eight, and Ranieri admitted he is unhappy they are so inconsistent.

"It's unbelievable. It's Leicester," he said. "I'm very proud. For one side, I'm very proud. For the other side, when I think of the Premier League, I'm very, very angry. But it's OK, because also in my career this has happened.

"When for the first time you go and play in a big competition, you lose something when you go back in your league. This is normal, but we want to change this.

"It's just psychological. Because when we play in the Champions League, all the specials are switched on. You're very, very smart, focused in every situation. You pay this, you spend a lot of energy, mental energy, in the Champions League.

"When you come back a little more down, it's normal. But we want to change this mood now, because the Premier League is now important. The Premier League is our priority.

"But of course also Champions League because now, in one month, three matches, we're in or out. We are in a good position. Our destiny is in our hands. We want to continue this way.

"We are the record team [the only side who have played three and won all three Champions League games so far]. We have to stay calm now and change our mentality in the Premier League because Crystal Palace is another tough, tough, tough match."

Mahrez's first-half winner had Leicester in control and Islam Slimani was denied a second when his header was ruled out for offside but the Foxes needed a wonder save from Kasper Schmeichel to bank the points.

The goalkeeper produced a wonderful one-handed stop in the 89th minute to deny Andreas Cornelius and earn praise from Ranieri.

"Thank you to Kasper, thank you to all my players. Because in every high ball, Copenhagen are very, very strong. Now I'm already thinking about what happens when we go to Copenhagen," he added.

Defeat was Copenhagen's first since May but boss Stale Solbakken, who saw Cornelius head wide in the first half, believes they can gain revenge in two weeks.

"I can live with that. Now we can start counting again," said the former Wolves manager. "That doesn't bother me. The only thing I'm disappointed with is the result.

"They had two to three chances and we had two or three big chances. We lost concentration one time and that cost us the game.

"I'm very, very satisfied with the players. Now we've met the two favourites in the group away and it was very, very close in both games. The players have a good feeling we can beat them at Parken in 14 days."

(Source: ESPN)

Born in Bradford, England in 1937, Hockney studied at the Royal College of Art from 1957-62. He cemented his reputation with the "Young Contemporaries" exhibition in London in 1960, before moving to Los Angeles in 1974.