

5 Malaysian companies eager to invest in Iran's oil industry

12 Iran's online census: Participation beat expectations

15 Iran's Soltani wins silver at IWF Youth World Weightlifting Championships

16 "The Salesman" wins Silver Hugo Special Jury Prize at Chicago festival

# TEHRAN TIMES



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## S. Arabia encourages terror by funding madrassas: former congressman

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW  
By M.A. Saki

TEHRAN — Former U.S. congressman James Charles Slattery says Saudi Arabia is funding hardline religious seminaries, known as madrasa, that "encourage terrorism". "Some Saudis continue to indirectly and directly fund activities in the land of Islam through Madrasas schools that encourage terrorism," Charles Slattery told the Tehran Times in an exclusive interview.

Charles Slattery said these Saudi-funded religious seminaries brainwash young Sunnis.

"I am fearful that millions of young Sunni Moslems are being misinformed in these Madrasas schools that are largely funded with money from Saudi," the former congressman lamented.

■ 'Americans raising questions about ties with Saudi kingdom'

The former Democratic congressman also said more and more U.S. citizens are raising questions about relationship with the Saudi kingdom, especially as Saudi Arabia is funding activities that germinate terrorism. The former legislator said questioning ties with the kingdom is gaining more weight as the ice between Iran and the U.S. seems to be thawing.



See page 2

الصحة الإسلامية لن تتوقف  
العراق: معاً لتحقيق الوحدة ودحر التكفير والبرهاب  
Islamic Awakening is non-stop  
Iraq: public will - power to fulfill unity And to annihilate Takfir and terrorism

## Saudis' true intentions revealed, Velayati says

■ POLITICS TEHRAN — Ali Akbar Velayati, the senior foreign policy advisor to the Leader, said on Saturday that Saudi Arabia's true intentions in the Middle East region have been disclosed.

Saudi Arabia has been backing governments which have caused crises in the region, Velayati said during a speech at the Islamic Awakening Supreme Council meeting in Baghdad.

Velayati was addressing the conference as the Iraqi security forces have launched an intensive attack against Daesh militants in Mosul. The operation, started on October 17, is being carried out by the Iraqi army along with Kurdish forces and the popular mobilization forces.

See page 2

## Bahrain to auction Shia bloc's assets

Bahrainis voice solidarity Sheikh Qassim

A court in Bahrain has ruled that the assets belonging to the al-Wefaq opposition group, which was the largest parliamentary group in the country before being banned and dissolved, be auctioned off.

A judicial source said on Saturday that the bloc's assets were to go under the hammer on October 26 after a verdict by an administrative court sanctioned the move two days earlier.

The properties include the group's building headquarters outside the capital and two other offices in Shia villages, the source said.

The group held the largest number of seats at the legislature before it was dissolved by the Manama regime in July.

Before banning the group, the ruling regime had, among other things, accused it of "harboring terrorism," inciting violence, and encouraging demonstrations. Al-Wefaq denied the accusations and the United Nations blasted the Bahraini regime's move to ban it.

On Monday, the Bahraini court that has the ultimate say in appeal requests in the country ordered a retrial of distinguished Shia opposition cleric Sheikh Ali Salman, who used to lead al-Wefaq.

Salman was arrested in December 2014 for backing reforms in the country through peaceful means. He was then sentenced on June 16, 2015 to four years in prison at a trial, which charged him with "publicly insulting the Interior Ministry" and "publicly inciting others to disobey the law" through his speeches. Britain-based rights body Amnesty International described that trial as "unfair."

After appealing the verdict, the Supreme Court of Appeal increased Salman's prison sentence to nine years in May on charges of inciting violence and calling for anti-regime demonstrations.

Bahrain, a close ally of the United States in the Persian Gulf region, has been witnessing almost daily protests against the ruling House of Khalifah dynasty since mid-February 2011.

Manama's heavy-handed crackdown on demonstrations, aided by the House of Saud regime and the Emirates, has left scores of people dead and hundreds of others injured.

■ Solidarity with Sheikh Qassim

Meanwhile, hundreds of Bahrainis have held a fresh protest in support of senior Shia cleric Sheikh Isa Qassim and to condemn the Manama regime's heavy-handed crackdown on dissent. ➔13

## Iran unveils new home-made radars

■ POLITICS TEHRAN — Iran's Defense Ministry has unveiled new aerial navigation and tracking systems, including two military radars, Mehr news agency reported.

The military products were exhibited at a ceremony in the southwestern city of Shiraz on Saturday, attended by Defense Minister Brigadier General Hossein Dehqan.

Standing out among the items, dubbed Me'raj 4, is a

ground radar equipped with state-of-the-art electronic warfare systems capable of tracing 200 targets simultaneously.

The other one, Matla'-ol-Fajr 3, can detect targets within a range of 500 kilometers.

"The radar system monitors, discovers and traces flying objects in ranges up to 500km using a two dimensional spectrum analyzer," Dehqan said.

During the ceremony, a

DME system, a distance measuring radio used in civil airports, was unveiled, as well.

Dehqan also unveiled a radar system for measuring fluid level at storage tanks in oil refineries and petrochemical plants.

"We used to import this production from foreign countries, but now, we're able to produce it domestically," he said, putting it on a par with the most advanced ones manufactured by

foreign companies.

Iran has made great achievements in recent years in its defense sector and has been able to produce military equipment and systems domestically.

The Islamic Republic has repeatedly assured other countries that its military might is merely used for its deterrent effect, and has reassured regional nations that it poses no threat to other countries.

## "Muhammad (S)" to hit Turkish theaters October 28

■ ART TEHRAN — "Muhammad (S), the Messenger of God", Majid Majidi's epic about the childhood of the Prophet of Islam (S), will hit Turkish theaters on October 28, the Istanbul-based newspaper Daily Sabah announced last week.

Co-written by Majidi and Kambuzia Partovi, the film portrays the life of Muhammad (S) until he was 13 years old along with the religious and social atmosphere in Mecca at the time.

The 39th Montreal World Film Festival opened with the world premiere of the

movie in May 2015.

Sareh Bayat, Mohsen Tanabandeh, Rana Azadivar, Alireza Shojanuri and Mina Sadati star in the film.

Renowned international craftsmen and artists such as editor Roberto Perpignani, special effects designer Scott E. Anderson, makeup designer Gianetto De Rossi and Indian composer A. R. Rahman have collaborated with Majidi in the production.

With a budget of over \$50 million, the 171-minute movie is the most expensive film ever made in Iran in five years.



"Muhammad (S), the Messenger of God" was Iran's submission to the best foreign language film category at the 88th Academy Awards.

## Ambassadors' wives join "I'm Lake Urmia" campaign

■ SOCIETY TEHRAN — Wives of 12 ambassadors to Iran joined "I'm Lake Urmia" campaign, which aims to collect one million signatures required by the United Nation to help restore the lake, Mehr news agency reported.

The campaign was launched in late August in the platform of social media.

Last weekend a group of ambassadors' wives from Malaysia, New Zealand, Hungary, China, Aljazeera, Tunisia, India, Indonesia, Cuba, the Philippines, Czech Republic, and Sierra Leone took a trip to



the lake and joined the campaign to announce their support for the lake.

The trip was co-organized by Lake Urmia restoration program, Depart-

ment of Environment, and Foreign Ministry, to improve interaction with countries worldwide, using other countries' experience, attracting tourist, and raise funds to save the lake.

Lake Urmia in northwestern Iran was once the largest lake in the Middle East and the sixth-largest saltwater lake on Earth with a surface area of approximately 5,200 square kilometers. The lake has shrunk to 10 percent of its former size mostly due to damming of the rivers that flow into it and pumping of groundwater from the area.

## Iran, Brazil to hold joint economic committee meeting

■ ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iran-Brazil joint economic committee meeting is due to be held by the end of the current Iranian calendar month (November 20) in Brazil, ISNA reported on Saturday.

Accordingly, Iranian Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Ali Tayyebnia, who is also co-chairman of the committee, will visit the South American country to attend the event.

Last November, in a meeting with the Minister of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade of Brazil, who had traveled to Tehran at the head of an economic delegation, Tayyebnia said "We try to boost the level of economic exchanges between the two countries to \$5 billion a year."

Noting that Iran's Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs is responsible for the Joint Economic Committee between the two countries, Tayyebnia called for preparation of a road map to enrich the achievements of the committee.

The Iranian minister also underscored development of banking and insurance relations as priority for increasing the volume of trade exchange and cooperation between the two countries.

He went on mentioning basic agreements on customs cooperation and avoidance of double taxation in addition to encouraging and supporting foreign investment between the two countries as other prerequisites for the development of bilateral relations.

## Iran's 9-month crude steel output up 8% yr/yr: WSA

■ ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iran produced 13.210 million tons of crude steel in the first nine months of 2016, with 8 percent rise from 12.231 million tons in the same period last year, the World Steel Association (WSA) reported.

It is while the world's steel production fell 0.5 percent to 1.197 billion tons in the mentioned time compared to 1.203 billion tons in the first nine months of 2015.

The WSA's latest report also put Iran's crude steel output at 1.588 million tons in September 2016, showing 18.8 percent growth from 1.337 million tons in September 2015.

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

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

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

## Iran loses to India in the Kabaddi World Cup final

■ SPORTS — Iran finished in second place after losing to powerhouse India 38-29 in the Kabaddi World Cup final on Saturday.

Seven-time defending champions Indians proved their supremacy after trailing 12-18 at the half-time.

Star raider Ajay Thakur emerged as the key player for the team as he guided team to this scintillating win with his crucial 12 points. Although Iranian skipper Meraj Sheykh gave a tough fight with his 5 points, but couldn't take his team to be at the winning side.

Speaking after the victory, Ajay declared, "India is always number one in kabaddi." He added, "This is the most wonderful moment of my career."

SPSEZ Chief Named Economic Elite of Islamic World

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:

(021) 430 51 603-4





**MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS**



**Tehran unwavering in backing oppressed nations: Shamkhani**

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council has underlined that the Islamic Republic has an unwavering policy to back the oppressed people in the Middle East region.

The support will cover oppressed nations, including those of Iraq, Yemen, and Palestine, Ali Shamkhani told reporters in Tehran on Friday.

The Islamic Republic feels no fear in declaring its direct support for those oppressed governments and nations, the security official further reiterated.



**Iran brings technicians back home from Kirkuk**

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — Iranian engineers and technicians, who have been working in the Iraqi Kirkuk city, have returned home after four of their colleagues were killed by Daesh on Friday.

The Iranian Consulate in Sulaymaniyah announced late Friday that all Iranian technicians and workers based in the Iraqi governorates of Kirkuk and Nineveh were taken to Iran, IRNA reported.

Four Iranian technicians were killed and four others were injured in the Daesh attack on a power station in Kirkuk.



**Mexican senators meet Iranian labor minister**

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — A group of Mexican senators on Saturday met with Iran's Minister of Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare Ali Rabiee in Tehran.

During the meeting, Rabiee underscored 100 years of relations between Iran and Mexico, emphasizing strong parliamentary ties and the role of parliamentary diplomacy in developing ties between the two countries, ISNA reported.

He hoped that the head of the Mexican Senate's Foreign Relations Committee Gabriela Cuevas would take a trip to Iran.



**Iranian ambassador to Damascus returns home**

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — Iranian Ambassador to Damascus Mohammad Reza Sheibani has returned home after a five-year service in Syria.

According to ILNA, he arrived in Tehran on Friday, bearing with him the title of "The Defendant of the Shrine".

The Iranian charge d'affaire is now heading the embassy. He will handle the issues until a new ambassador is appointed.

Who will replace Sheibani is not still clear to media.



**Indonesia, Sri Lanka presidents scheduled for visits to Iran**

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — Presidents of Sri Lanka and Indonesia will visit Iran on separate trips in the next few months.

Sri Lanka's Maithripala Sirisena is scheduled for a visit to Tehran late November or early December, Mehr reported on Saturday.

In the meantime, Indonesian President Joko Widodo will visit Iran in January 2017.

Presidents of Finland and Bosnia and Herzegovina are also reportedly scheduled for trips to Tehran during autumn or winter.



**'Facilities in place for 800,000 Arbaeen pilgrims everyday'**

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — Facilities will be provided to 800,000 Iranian pilgrims inside Iraq each day during the Arbaeen mourning period (centering on November 20), an official said.

Akbar Kazemi, deputy director of the center for reconstruction of holy shrines in Iraq, told IRNA on Saturday that the facilities will be provided in and around the cities of Karbala, Najaf, Samarra and Kazemineh.

He said Iranians as well as non-Iranians are welcome to use the facilities.

# Rouhani defends cabinet reshuffle, raps media for unwarranted hullabaloo

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — President Hassan Rouhani has launched a strong defense of his controversial cabinet reshuffle, calling on media outlets to put aside what he called "childish quarrels."

Rouhani was making the comments on Saturday in Tehran in a seminar held to mark National Day of Village and Nomads.

"The country's goal is development and transcendence, and the government's goal is to be at the service of the society and people. To achieve the goal, sometimes a manager has to be kept and sometimes changed," he said.

In a cabinet reshuffle last week, President Rouhani agreed with the resignation of Culture Minister Ali Jannati, and reportedly dismissed sports and education ministers.

Although the cabinet changes were expected, it stirred a lengthy debate in Iranian media outlets.

Some went to the extreme, particularly in discussing the current status of culture in the county, citing reasons for why Jannati should have stepped down much sooner.

"Our media should avoid lies, accusations, division, and unwarranted factionalism," the president emphasized.

The cabinet revamp, some people familiar with the issue say, is part of the



President Hassan Rouhani addresses seminar on National Day of Village and Nomads on Saturday in Tehran.

strategy pursued by the government to get rid of opponents' criticism as the next year's presidential election, due May, draws near.

Regardless of how logical the decision may be, what the Iranians now expect of the Rouhani administration is a better economic performance, the govern-

**"Unemployment is the biggest problem for the country in the years to come."**

ment's Achilles heel.

Ever since Rouhani took office in 2013, he succeeded close the nuclear dossier, championing a deal with the West.

At the back of the deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, Iran is increasingly re-engaging with the global community.

This provides Rouhani a unique opportunity to grease the wheels of the Iranian economy and create job opportunities, what he has at nauseam cited as the cabinet's all-time priority.

"Today, unemployment is a national-wide challenge and from the first day of the eleventh government, I have been telling to the country's authorities as well as in my speeches that unemployment is the biggest problem for the country in the years to come."

There is domestic voices against engaging with the world, seeing it a return to old days when Iran was a dependent, consumer country.

On Friday, interim Friday Prayer preacher of Tehran Ayatollah Kazem Seddiqi said re-engagement with the global community will catapult the country into the Qajar and Pahlavi dynasties when Iran was extremely backward and dependent.

## Saudis' true intentions revealed, Velayati says

➔ "They [Saudis] are not sincere in their fights (against terrorism); they turn blind eye to events while the Syrian people are fighting terrorists and the popular mobilization forces are cooperating (with the army) in liberating Mosul."

Velayati, a veteran politician who held the post of foreign minister from 1981 to 1997, also said it is absolutely necessary to block all the ways to Daesh militants who are fleeing from Mosul.

"In this situation, the most important point is that the terrorists do not be given the opportunity to move from Mosul to other regions."

Pointing to the Yemeni war, Velayati said, "It has been over one year and a half that the Saudis are bombarding Yemen; however, the Yemenis have not abandoned resistance. We are witnessing many crimes in this country which are being committed by Saudi Arabia."

Elsewhere, Velayati

said that the Takfiri movement seeks to derail the Islamic Awakening from its rightful path.

He added, "All Muslims are duty bound to counter Takfiris' destructive ideology and make efforts to root it out."

The Takfiris and

**Velayati says, "All Muslims are duty bound to counter Takfiris' destructive ideology and make efforts to root it out."**

Zionists seek to disintegrate the regional countries and gain interests from the conflicts in the region, he pointed out.

■ **'Backing legal governments is Iran policy'**

Talking to reporters before the meeting, Velayati said it is Iran's unchangeable policy to provide advisory help to the legal governments in the region upon request.

He added that the Islamic Republic has stood by the regional people in fighting terrorists over the last five years.

## Dialogue is only remedy to Islamic world crises: envoy



**Islam is the religion of dialogue and enjoys a great civilization.**

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — Iranian Ambassador to Russia Mehdi Sanaei has said that "dialogue" is the only way to solve problems in the Middle East.

"Islam is the religion of dialogue and enjoys a great civilization and the solution to the current problems in the Islamic world is dialogue," he told an international conference on proximity of religions on Friday.

He called the conference an "important" and "effective" step given the current regional situation.

He said the conference is a step to boost unity among the Muslims.

Sanaei also pointed to capacities of

the World Forum for Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought and the Russian Council of Muftis, saying the two bodies can expand cooperation.

The WFPST as well as Tehran's Ecumenical Society is a forum that was established on October 1990 by order of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei for the reconciliation between different Islamic schools and branches.

The Russian Council of Muftis is a religious group representing the Muslim community of Russia. It was founded on July 2, 1996. The chairman of the council is the spiritual leader of the Muslims of Russia.

## Interior Ministry says ready for e-voting



**POLITICS TEHRAN** — The Interior Ministry said on Saturday that it has provided the necessary facilities for electronic voting in the forthcoming presidential and parliamentary elections.

"A bill was proposed to Majlis two years ago, but since electoral policies were drafted in the Expediency Council, the bill was withdrawn to be reviewed and modified to meet the concerns of the council," Deputy Interior Minister Mohammad Hossein Moqimi told ISNA.

Moqimi further said, "The bill was finalized and then was submitted to the Rouhani administration. It is now being reviewed in the related commission, and will be proposed to the Majlis after final approval."

Elsewhere in his remarks, the deputy interior minister referred to the Supreme Leader's election guidelines

regarding the use of modern technologies to maximize transparency.

"Of the 25 stages of every election, 23 are carried out using machines and electronic devices, and the only two stages that are carried out manually are casting of ballots and counting of votes," Moqimi explained.

He noted that these two stages were carried out electronically in 15 polling stations during the parliamentary elections in Feb. 2016 and the results were confirmed by the Guardian Council.

Back in July, the Rouhani administration wrote to the Guardian Council proposing electronic voting in the next year's presidential and council elections.

Iran plans to hold its upcoming presidential election in May 2017, a vote in which President Hassan Rouhani may seek a second term.

## S. Arabia encourages terror by funding madrassas: former congressman

➔ "As relations improve between Iran and U.S. I believe there will be more questions asked about Saudi relationship with the U.S. and the funding of activities that assist terrorists."

Charles Slattery, who served in the House of Representatives from 1983 to 1995 representing Kansas's 2nd congressional district as a Democrat, added, "I reject the often repeated statement that Iran is biggest exporter of terrorism. Smart people in U.S. are beginning to understand this point."

This is true that Iran is helping Shiites in the Middle East but Saudi Arabia is funding mosques, including those in the Balk region, that preach Wahabbism.

"I understand Iran supports Hezbollah and Shiite minorities in the Middle East but this pales in importance to the Saudi efforts made to support Madrassa schools and Whabbis mosques in Islamic countries and the Balkans."

■ **'Iran-U.S. engagement hinges on full implementation of nuclear deal'**

Iran and great powers struck a landmark deal on Tehran's nuclear program in July 2015. The deal went into effect in January.

Charles Slattery said if the deal is implemented fully it will affect the quality of Washington's ties with Riyadh.

"The next chapter in U.S.-Iran relations and U.S.-Saudi relations will depend on the fair implementation of the JCPOA. The implementation must be complete on both sides. It must be a win-win and I think it will be," he noted.

According to the nuclear deal, officially called the

**"Saudis support Whabbis mosques in Islamic countries and the Balkans."**

Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Iran slows down its nuclear activities and instead economic and financial restrictions on the country are removed.

"If all goes well with the JCPOA it will hopefully lay the foundation for further improvement in U.S.-Iran relations."

Saudi Arabia did every effort to kill the nuclear deal. Since the conclusion of the nuclear deal the Saudi monarchy has intensified its hostile acts against Iran.

"This (nuclear deal) will reduce influence of Saudis in the U.S. They understand this and are responding by hiring lobbyists in DC."

■ **'Iran and U.S. must be patient'**

The former congressman believes that Iran and the United States must be patient to see the fruits of the nuclear agreement.

"I believe much progress has been made but more is needed. Both sides must be patient," the former legislator suggested.



# Iraqi army drives ISIL from Christian region near Mosul

## Abadi urges Ankara, Riyadh to avoid meddling in Iraq affairs

Iraqi forces make fresh advances as they engage in a sixth day of operations to retake the city of Mosul from the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group a day after the group's surprise attack on the oil-rich Kirkuk.

Iraqi army troops on Saturday stormed into a Christian region that has been under ISIL control since 2014.

The advance took place as United States Defense Secretary Ash Carter arrived on a visit to Baghdad to meet Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi.

From the terrorist group's last stronghold, there are disturbing reports that ISIL terrorists have executed hundreds of civilians, including women and children.

Clashes resumed on Saturday in Kirkuk between the terrorists and Iraqi security forces. The al-Sumaria TV network said nine ISIL terrorists had been killed in fresh fighting.

The Takfiri group infiltrated Kirkuk on Friday in an attempt to open a new front and divert Iraqi troops from the most important battle underway in Mosul, located 178 km away from Kirkuk.

The offensive prompted Baghdad to send reinforcements. On Saturday, special military units were hunting down some of the terrorists who stormed public buildings in the early hours of Friday.

"We have 46 dead and 133 wounded, most of them members of the security services, as result of the clashes with Daesh (ISIL)," an Interior Ministry official told the AFP news agency.

The official said at least 25 ISIL attackers had been killed and several others wounded, including a Libyan believed to be among the raid's masterminds.

In the ongoing battle for Mosul, troops entered the Keremles district of the Qayyarah town and liberated two nearby villages.

ISIL terrorists launched a bombing attack on the al-Hamdaniya town, also known as Qaraqosh, as troops moved to wrest its control from the terrorists. The terrorists also blew up the Nineveh Oberoi Hotel, one of the province's biggest hotels.

Iraqi troops managed to liberate Hamdaniya's central area, including its hospital, raising the national flag atop



its buildings and retaking the province's al-Askariyah district, Prime Minister Abadi said.

Iraqi Parliament Speaker Salim Abdulah al-Jabouri also said Iraqi forces had raided the Safinah village in Nineveh's al-Shourah district. The village is situated parallel to the Tigris River, and is of much strategic importance.

Intense fighting broke out near the village of Tel Al-Samen south of Mosul. ISIL terrorists continue to occupy nearby villages, while improvised explosive devices hamper the army's progress.

Officials said Iraqi troops are now turning their attention to recapturing Hammam al-Alil, close to Tel Al-Samen.

### ISIL executes 285 people

As the army advances gained momentum, the terrorists were reported to have executed around 285 people, including women and children, in and around Mosul.

Various sources said the group carried out the executions through Thursday and Friday. The terrorist group, they said,

used bulldozers to dump the bodies in mass graves.

United Nations spokeswoman Ravina Shamdasani said on Friday that ISIL terrorists have taken 550 families from villages around Mosul and are holding them close to Takfiri locations in the Iraqi city, probably as human shields.

Iraqi forces also liberated the sulphur factory south of Mosul, a day after ISIL terrorists set it on fire releasing toxic smoke over the area. Two people reportedly died as a result of poisoning by the toxic chemical.

### 'Stop meddling in Iraq affairs'

Meanwhile, Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi has called on Turkey and the House of Saud regime to stop interfering in the domestic affairs of his country, which is engaged in a campaign against the ISIL terrorist group.

"We want the good of Saudi Arabia and Turkey provided that they do not interfere in the domestic affairs of our country," he told a forum of Muslim scholars and politicians in Baghdad on

Saturday.

The opening of the 9th session of the Supreme Council of the World Assembly of Islamic Awakening in the Iraqi capital coincided with the country's ongoing push to retake its second city of Mosul from ISIL terrorists.

Turkey is adamantly insisting that it wants to play a military role in the Mosul recapture despite Iraq's opposition, triggering a serious diplomatic row between the two neighbors.

Ankara has deployed troops to a base near Mosul, claiming that they were there to train Kurdish militants for the battle against ISIL. Abadi said Turkey had sent troops without the Iraqi government's request, adding Ankara is not battling ISIL but is trying to expand its outreach. Ankara, he said, did not help Baghdad when it was requested.

In the run-up to the Mosul operation, the House of Saud regime replaced its ambassador to Baghdad, who had repeatedly drawn the ire of Iraqi leaders for his meddling remarks. The kingdom downgraded its representation to the chargé d'affaires level.

Without naming any country, Prime Minister Abadi said there are countries that support terrorism for their own benefits while others are seeking to sow sectarian discord.

"Daesh (ISIL) did not come to existence overnight. Certain sides used to support the group," he said.

Takfiri terrorists, he said, do not distinguish between Shia and Sunni Muslims or abide by any principles, adding they are trying to sow sectarian divisions.

Abadi said Iraq is capable enough to counter ISIL and terrorism, calling on the country to remain united. "We will hopefully fight and defeat the Takfiri terrorism," the prime minister added.

Iraqi Parliament Speaker al-Jabouri, who is a Sunni Muslim, accused terrorists of attempting to spread their radical ideas in the name of religion.

He called for a meeting with the participation of Iraq, Turkey and the House of Saud regime to address their disputes, saying Muslim countries must take measures to counter terrorism.

(Source: agencies)

## Russian helicopter crash kills 19 in Siberia

Nineteen people died when a helicopter carrying oil and gas field workers crashed in a remote area of Siberia in bad weather, Russian investigators said on Saturday.

The Mi-8 helicopter carrying 22 people including three crew crashed on Friday night in the far-northern Yamalo-Nenetsky region some 2,400 kilometers (1,500 miles) northeast of Moscow, investigators said.

Photos published by the emergencies ministry showed the helicopter broken into pieces and lying on snowy moorland close to woods.

Fog and poor visibility had hindered the search for the crash site, as well as the rescue operation, according to the local emergencies ministry.

Russia's civil aviation authority said that "based on preliminary data, the incident could be linked to unfavorable weather conditions" with low cloud, falling snow and gusty winds.

It said a special commission would assess the crew's actions as they made the decision to fly in adverse

weather.

The victims died from multiple injuries at the scene, while three injured were taken to hospital, said a statement by the Investigative Committee, which probes major incidents.

Russian President Vladimir Putin expressed his condolences to the relatives and loved ones of the victims, his spokesman Dmitry Peskov told Russian news agencies.

The helicopter was flying from an oil and gas field in the Siberian region of Krasnoyarsk to the small settlement of Urengoi when it crashed on Friday between 1400 and 1500 GMT around 45 kilometers from Urengoi, investigators said.

Due to poor weather, rescuers in a helicopter only located the stricken aircraft some seven hours after the crash.

The survivors were all passengers on the helicopter, the civil aviation authority said. They suffered serious but non-life-threatening injuries, Russian state television re-

ported.

The helicopter was transporting workers from a sub-contractor of Russian oil giant Rosneft, TASS state news agency reported. Rosneft's French first vice president Eric Liron travelled to the scene, the company said, quoted by TASS.

The region's governor Dmitry Kobylkin announced a day of mourning on Saturday with flags lowered and entertainment events cancelled, calling the accident a source of "great sorrow for all of us."

The Investigative Committee said that the crash could have been caused by a violation of flight safety regulations, a mechanical problem or difficult weather conditions.

A criminal probe had been launched to investigate possible violations, it added.

A similar helicopter crash outside the western Siberian town of Igarka last year claimed 15 lives.

(Source: AFP)

## Afghan Taliban envoys in Pakistan to discuss possible peace talks: official

A delegation from the Taliban's political office visited Pakistan over the weekend, senior officials said on Saturday, for discussions that could include the latest informal effort to restart talks to end Afghanistan's long war.

The visit comes days after Taliban sources said they had held informal meetings with Afghan and the United States officials in Qatar, the first direct meetings in more than a year after a fledgling process to halt the 15-year-old conflict collapsed.

Taliban sources said Mullah Abdul Manan - brother of the late Taliban founder Mullah Omar - met with U.S. and Afghan officials but there was no breakthrough toward restarting formal talks.

The Taliban delegation will brief Pakistani security agencies on the Qatar meetings - which did not include Pakistani representatives - and complain about the recent arrests of some of its senior commanders in Pakistan, a senior member based in Doha said.

Political office representatives Shahabuddin Dilawar, Jan Mohammad and



Abdul Salam Hanafi travelled from Qatar and some other joined them in Pakistan, the official said.

Another Taliban member based in Afghanistan said the delegation had held one round of talks and would stay for few more days.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid confirmed a delegation was visiting Pakistan but would not comment on the Qa-

tar talks, which he has denied took place.

"The delegation was sent to discuss some major issues with Pakistani leadership including the arrests of Afghan refugees and their repatriation to Afghanistan," Mujahid said.

Pakistan's Foreign Ministry spokesman said he had no information about any Taliban visit.

The Doha-based Taliban official said

Pakistan was taken into confidence about the Qatar meetings, but they now believe Pakistan recently arrested some senior Taliban commanders to senior commanders to show their displeasure at being left out.

Another Taliban member said a few days ago Pakistani security agencies had raided a madrassa in Quetta and arrested another Taliban commander, Mullah Abdul Samad Sani.

"We don't know what's going on but this is second time during the past two months that Pakistani authorities raided a madrassa in Quetta to arrest senior Taliban member," the Quetta-based Taliban said.

Pakistan hosted the first and only round of official peace negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban insurgents to end a war that kills and maims thousands annually.

A planned second round of talks was called off after news broke that founder Mullah Omar had been dead for more than two years, sending the insurgent leadership into turmoil. (Source: AP)

## Egyptian court confirms 20-year-prison sentence on Morsi

An Egyptian court confirmed a 20-year prison sentence against former President Mohamed Morsi on Saturday, judicial sources told Reuters.

It is the first final verdict against Morsi on charges arising from the killing of protesters during demonstrations in 2012.

Morsi, Egypt's first democratically elected president, faces charges in other cases including leaking secrets to Qatar, conspiring with the Palestinian militant group Hamas to destabilize Egypt, and organizing a jail break during the 2011 uprising against Hosni Mubarak.

(Source: Reuters)

## China slams 'provocative' U.S. sail-by in South China Sea

China has slammed the United States for sailing a warship near disputed territory in the South China Sea, saying the move was a "serious illegal act" and "deliberately provocative".

In a statement on its website late on Friday night, the country's defense ministry said two Chinese naval vessels warned off a U.S. ship after it entered "Chinese territorial waters" near the Paracel Islands, known as Xisha in Chinese.

China controls all of the islands, which are also claimed by Vietnam and Taiwan.

The ship's "entrance into China's territorial waters is a serious illegal act and a deliberately provocative act," it said, adding that the ministry had made "solemn representations" to Washington.

In a separate online statement, the foreign ministry said the action had "seriously violated China's sovereignty and security interests, and had seriously broken relevant Chinese law and international law."

The Pentagon said on Friday it had sent the destroyer USS Decatur close to the Paracel Islands, but that the ship had not passed within the 12 nautical mile zone that international law defines as territorial waters.

The ships transited the area in "a routine, lawful manner without ship escorts and without incident," a spokesman said. The maneuver was the third South China Sea "freedom of navigation" operation conducted this year by the U.S., which has repeatedly stressed it will ignore China's "excessive" maritime claims.

Friday's operation was the first since a tribunal at the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague in July ruled there was no legal basis to China's claims to nearly all of the sea -- a verdict Beijing dismissed vehemently.

China that month held a week of military drills around the Paracels in the northern part of the South China Sea, during which other ships were prohibited from entering the waters.

Several other nations across the region including the Philippines and Vietnam have rival claims to various parts of the South China Sea.

The United States action came as Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte wrapped up a four-day state visit to China, where he pledged to increase cooperation with Beijing, while at the same time slamming his country's long-time ally Washington.

In a joint statement at the end of his trip, the Chinese and Philippine leaders pledged to resume talks over their own territorial dispute in the South China Sea. (Source: AFP)

## Cameroon train crash: Scores killed, hundreds injured

At least 55 people were killed and nearly 600 injured when an overloaded passenger train travelling between Cameroon's two largest cities derailed and overturned.

Transport Minister Edgar Alain Mebe Ngo'o said Friday's accident took place near the central town of Eseka - 120km west of the capital Yaounde - as the train travelled to the economic hub of Douala.

"The cause of the accident is not yet clear," said the minister, via state broadcaster CRTV, adding that several of the injured were in very serious condition.

Updating an earlier toll, Ngo'o said 55 people had been confirmed dead and a further 575 were injured in the incident - several in very serious condition.

Rail officials said the train had been carrying 1,300 passengers, instead of the usual 600. The collapse of a bridge along the main highway between the capital and Douala had prompted more people to undertake the journey by rail.

Passenger Joel Bineli told Reuters news agency he saw three dismembered bodies on the tracks at the accident site.

Photos posted on social media purporting to have been taken at the scene showed several wagons overturned on a slope beside the tracks.

"There was a loud noise. I looked back and the wagons behind us left the rails and started rolling over and over. There was a lot of smoke," said a Reuters journalist travelling on the train.

He added that prior to the train's departure from Yaounde, a railway employee said eight additional wagons had been added to the normally nine-wagon train in order to accommodate extra passengers.

It remains unclear whether that played a role in the accident.

"Intervention and security teams have been mobilized," the rail company Camrail said.

The route is one of the busiest in the country with trains to Chad and the Central African Republic also using the axis, which has a poor safety record.

In 2014, Cameroon began building its first highway between the two towns, but the work is not due to be completed until 2018. (Source: agencies)



## Malaysian companies eager to invest in Iran's oil industry

**ECONOMY TEHRAN** — Malaysian companies are eager for making investment in Iran's oil industry, Shana quoted Iran's Oil Minister Bijan Zanganeh as saying.

Zanganeh made the remarks after receiving Malaysia's Minister for International Trade and Industry in his Tehran office on Saturday.



"Iran welcomes investment by Petronas, which has a long history of cooperating with Iran's oil industry, and other Malaysian companies as well," he said.

Regarding the small companies willing to enter Iran's market, Zanganeh emphasized that such companies must have enough credibility and prove their financial capability.

Further the Iranian minister touched upon the subject of purchasing Iran's oil and oil products by Malaysians and said "This matter was discussed during our meeting and we suggested to start with short-term cooperation for now and expand it in the future."

According to Zanganeh, the two sides agreed for their companies to hold more talks and explore and study further in this regard.

## Iran's longest power transmission line to come online today

**ECONOMY TEHRAN** — The manager of power transmission projects of Iran's Thermal Power Plants Holding (TPPH) announced that Shazand-Gotvand 400-KV power transmission line, the country's longest line, will come online today, Tasnim news agency reported.

According to Mehran Golabkesh, the 322-kilometer power transmission line will be inaugurated on the sidelines of President Hassan Rouhani's visit to the southwestern Khuzestan province.

The official noted that 850 power towers have been installed along this line and the total cost of the project is estimated to be 1.1 trillion rials (about \$31 million).

## EU-Canada trade deal in crisis as Canadian min. walks out

A landmark trade deal between the European Union and Canada is in meltdown, after Canada's trade minister walked out of talks with the Belgian regional parliament that has been blocking the deal.

The Canadian trade minister, Chrystia Freeland, was on the verge of tears on Friday as she announced the "end and the failure" of talks with the Walloon government.

However the head of the European parliament said late on Friday he would hold emergency talks in a bid to save the deal.

Leaving the Élysée, the home of the Walloon government in Namur, Freeland said: "It seems obvious that the EU is now not capable of having an international agreement, even with a country that shares European values such as Canada, even with a country that is so kind and patient."

"Canada is disappointed. I am personally very disappointed. I have worked very very hard. We have decided to go home. I am truly very, very sad."

(Source: The Guardian)

# South Pars platform 20 to be loaded tomorrow

**ECONOMY TEHRAN** — Platform 20 of Iran's South Pars gas field (in The Persian Gulf) will be loaded at Khorramshahr yard tomorrow for delivery to its designated offshore spot, Shana news agency reported quoting Alireza Ebadi, the operator of South Pars phases 20 and 21 of development.

It is the second and last platform of the mentioned phases and has the capacity of producing one billion cubic feet (around 28.3 million cubic meters) of gas per day.

Platform 21, the first platform of the mentioned phases, was installed on July 29 and will start operation by the end of current Iranian calendar month (November 20), according to Ebadi.



The official said that putting platforms 20 and 21 into operation will add two billion cubic feet (around 57 million cubic meters) of gas per day to the output of South Pars.

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.

The field is divided into 24 standard phases, of which phases 1-10, 12, 15 and 16 are fully operational. Each standard phase is projected to produce 50 million cubic meters of gas per day. Phases 17 and 18 as well as 19 are operating at half capacity.

## IMF anticipates 4.5% GDP growth for Iran in 2016

**ECONOMY TEHRAN** — The International Monetary Fund (IMF), in its latest report titled Regional Economic Outlook: Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan, and Pakistan (MENAP), predicted a 4.5 percent real GDP growth for the Islamic Republic of Iran in 2016.

According to the report, Iran will experience a 4.1 percent GDP growth in 2017, while the country's consumer price inflation will stand at 7.4 percent in 2016 and 7.2 percent in 2017.

Current account balance in Iran will hit 4.2 percent of GDP in 2016 and 3.3 percent of GDP in the year after.

For MENAP oil exporters, IMF foresees 4.7 percent inflation in 2016 and 4.2 percent one in 2017. The anticipated figures are 7.4 percent and 9.8 percent

in 2016 and 2017, respectively, for MENAP oil importers.

Current account balance in MENAP oil exporting countries will reach -4.4 percent in 2016 and -1.8 percent in 2017. For MENAP oil importers, the factor will be at -4.8 percent in 2016 and -4.7 percent in 2017.

Real GDP growth for MENAP oil exporters will stand at 3.3 percent in 2016 and 2.9 percent in the following year. The figures will be 3.6 percent and 4.2 percent for MENAP oil importers in 2016 and 2017, respectively.

Based on the report, oil prices remain the key driver of the outlook for MENAP oil exporters given their high dependence on hydrocarbon budget revenues and exports.

## Annual caviar output in Iran anticipated to reach 3 tons

**ECONOMY TEHRAN** — The annual production of caviar in Iran is anticipated to reach three tons in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2017), according to Hossein-Ali Abdolhai, deputy head of Iran Fisheries Organization.

The official said that the mentioned amount, if achieved, equals the figure planned for this year, IRIB news reported.

Abdolhai also said that Iran produced 2.2 tons of caviar in the past calendar year.

Iran has started caviar exports to some European countries after removal of sanctions against the country, he noted.

The Sixth Five-Year National Development Plan (2016-2021) has envisaged the annual output of 100 tons caviar, the official said, adding that this objective is achievable.

Iran's exports of caviar rose to worth \$1.7 million showing 183.3 percent increase in the past Iranian calendar year.

The country exported more than one tons of the product, i.e., 65 percent of the total produced amount domestically in the past year, to eight different countries namely Japan, Germany, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, Italy, Belgium, South Korea, and Norway.

The exported volume registered 46 percent growth in weight year on year.

## Armenia-Iran gas deal 'planned'

Armenia plans to increase imports of natural gas from neighboring Iran and will sign a relevant agreement with the Islamic Republic soon, a senior Armenian official said on Friday.

Armenia currently imports up to 500 million cubic meters of Iranian gas annually through a pipeline built in 2008. By comparison, Russian gas supplies to the South Caucasus country total around two billion cubic meters.

The Iranian gas has until now been for-

mally purchased by a state-owned Armenian thermal-power plant. The plant pays for it with electricity delivered to Iran.

According to Artashes Tumanian, the Armenian ambassador to Iran, Yerevan offered recently to buy additional volumes of Iranian gas, some of which could be re-exported to Georgia. The Iranian side accepted the proposal, he said.

"Appropriate documents are being prepared and projects drawn up right now and I think that unless something extraordinary

happens, the deal will be signed," Tumanian said. He declined to specify possible dates for its signing.

In what was clearly a related development, the Armenian government announced in August that it will set up an energy firm tasked with importing Iranian gas. It said nothing about import volumes. The announcement came shortly after then Energy Minister Levon Yolian's visit to Tehran.

Tumanian insisted that Russia will not object to the planned Armenian-Iranian

deal because it "does not run counter to anybody's interests." "Documents are close to being agreed upon, and I see no obstacles on either side," he said.

Even before Yerevan moved to boost Iranian gas imports, the existing Armenian-Iranian swap arrangement was due to be expanded dramatically after the construction of a third power transmission line connecting the two neighboring states. Work on the \$120 million line is slated for completion in 2019. (Source: asbarez.com)

## Russia's rising oil-output forecasts give leverage in OPEC Talks

As Russia gets ready for talks on cooperation with OPEC on Monday, it's using the playbooks of Iran, Iraq and Venezuela to gain leverage.

Just days before Energy Minister Alexander Novak heads to Vienna for discussions that could include output curbs, Russian officials emphasized the nation's ability to keep increasing record output to even loftier heights. They were echoing several other OPEC member that claim the group is underestimating their own production -- a strategy that could secure them advantageous terms in any supply deal.

"What most OPEC countries do ahead

of any OPEC meetings is to talk up their own production prospects so that when they make any concessions, those concessions are not necessarily as big as they might have been," James Henderson, senior research fellow at the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, said by phone. "I suspect Russia is playing the same game."

After reaching a surprise agreement on the first production cuts in eight years last month, OPEC is now trying to establish which members will reduce output, and by how much. Russia, which is vying with Saudi Arabia for the title of the world's largest oil producer, has pledged

cooperation, but President Vladimir Putin has sent mixed messages over whether he's willing to lower the nation's output, or simply freeze at September's post-Soviet record. These details, due to be finalized by OPEC's Nov. 30 meeting, will determine whether the deal can finally end three years of oversupply.

### ■ New optimism

The latest draft of Russia's energy strategy published recently on the ministry's website included for the first time this year an "optimistic" scenario. This estimate sees annual oil production potentially rising from 534.1 million tons last year to 555

million metric tons, or 11.1 million barrels a day, by 2020 and stabilizing through to 2035. It compares with the existing "conservative" outlook for production of 548 million tons in 2020 declining to 490 million tons by 2030.

Igor Sechin, a close adviser of Putin and chief executive officer of Russia's largest oil producer Rosneft PJSC, went several steps further on Oct. 20, saying Russia has the capacity to add as much as 200 million tons of annual production capacity, or 4 million barrels a day, by 2045 should the global market need it.

(Source: Bloomberg)

### Request for Quotation

### External Auditing Service

#### ■ Introduction:

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) is an independent, humanitarian non-governmental organization which provides assistance, protection and durable solutions to refugees and internally displaced persons worldwide. More detailed information can be found at [www.nrc.no](http://www.nrc.no)

#### ■ Audit:

NRC projects are funded through different sources and donors, which have several sorts of concerns about different (but convergent) sets of issues and expect NRC to report in accordance to a certain level of international standards, including (but not limited to) ISA 700-706 and other best practice criteria.

NRC is now seeking an independent external auditing service to provide an evaluation and analysis on its current activities and especially focus on the risk of fraud, material misstatement due to fraud, cut-off costs, tax issues and local legislation, existence of cash and other relevant areas as per auditor's evaluation. In particular, the selected auditor(s) shall (provide information to be used to) assess the risk of material misstatement of the financial information, design further audit procedures in response to the assessed risks, and evaluate whether detected misstatements are material, individual or in the aggregate. The interested parties can seek and receive the terms of reference for this audit plan by contacting the NRC Logistics Unit in Tehran from Sunday to Thursday at [pafa@nrc.no](mailto:pafa@nrc.no)

#### ■ General information:

Costs incurred by the bidder in preparing and submitting the proposal will not be reimbursed. NRC shall only contact the selected qualified candidates. The proposals should be submitted in ENGLISH only. The final report(s) should be submitted in English and Farsi.

The interested applicants must, after carefully reading through the terms of reference, submit final proposals including background experience, technical, financial, reporting aspects as well as timeline of the activities and reporting of this audit scheme by 16:00 hrs of 31 October 2016 to NRC Logistics Unit via email at [pafa@nrc.no](mailto:pafa@nrc.no) OR by mail to #26, 6<sup>th</sup> Narenjestan St. Pasdaran St. Tehran.



## U.S. auto sales in Oct. expected to drop 7%

U.S. auto sales are forecast to drop more than 7 percent in October from the same period in 2015, the sixth monthly decline so far this year, as automakers offer steep discounts and adjust production to manage inventories, J.D. Power and LMC Automotive said on Friday.

The two auto industry consultants said October U.S. new vehicle sales will number 1.347 million, down 7.3 percent from 1.453 million units a year earlier. The seasonally adjusted annualized rate for October will be 17.7 million vehicles, down from 18.1 million on the same basis a year earlier. This October has two fewer auto sales days than October of 2015.

The U.S. auto industry has experienced several years of robust sales and has not experienced six months of declines since before the Great Recession.

"Although automotive sales are expected to remain near the all-time high, they are still expected to contract slightly this year, as well as in 2017," Jeff Schuster, LMC Automotive's senior vice president of forecasting said in a statement.

He said that over the rest of this year and 2017, nearly a third of all vehicles in the market will either be new models or redesigned versions, which "will test the discipline of the industry for the first time since 2009."

"So far, automakers are adjusting production levels to manage inventory," Schuster said. (Source: Fortune)

## AT&T agrees in principle to buy Time Warner for \$85b

AT&T Inc (T.N) has reached an agreement in principle to buy Time Warner Inc (TWX.N) for about \$85 billion, sources said on Friday, paving the way for what would be the biggest deal in the world this year, giving the telecom company control of cable TV channels HBO and CNN, film studio Warner Bros and other coveted media assets.

The deal, which has been agreed on most terms and could be announced as early as Sunday, would be one of the largest in recent years in the sector as telecommunications companies look to combine content and distribution to capture customers replacing traditional pay-TV packages with more streamlined offerings and online delivery.

AT&T, which sells wireless phone and broadband services, has already made moves to turn itself into a media powerhouse, buying satellite TV provider DirecTV last year for \$48.5 billion.

It also in 2014 entered a joint venture, Otter Media, with the Chernin Group to invest in media businesses, and has rolled out video streaming services.

AT&T will pay \$110 per Time Warner share in cash and stock, or about \$85 billion overall, sources told Reuters. It will need to line up financing to pay for the deal, since it only has \$7.2 billion in cash on hand. This could put pressure on its credit rating as it already has \$120 billion in net debt as of June 30, according to Moody's. (Source: Reuters)



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## Trump threatens law, order, democracy

Throughout this campaign, Donald Trump has fashioned himself as the "law and order" candidate. In Las Vegas last Wednesday night, in his third and final presidential debate with Hillary Clinton, he showed himself to be an agent of lawlessness and disorder.

Asked by moderator Chris Wallace whether he would concede the election in the event he loses, Trump confirmed the fears he has sown for weeks. "I will look at it at the time," he said. "I will keep you in suspense."

It is tempting to view this statement in the context of Trump's long history of reckless utterances. But his refusal to abide by an election result is of a very specific, and disqualifying, character. It strikes at the heart of American democracy. Neither the nation's

government nor its politics can function if losing presidential candidates do not concede defeat and facilitate the peaceful transfer of power.

Trump's statement was, as Clinton said, "horrifying." But it was not entirely anomalous. At the previous presidential debate, in St. Louis, Trump vowed to try to jail his opponent if he wins. That statement, too, was profoundly anti-democratic and disqualifying.

There are ample reasons to doubt Trump's competence and temperament, chief among them his campaign itself. But Trump has now made it clear that even his commitment to democratic norms, process and standards cannot be assumed.

He promises to impose law and order by subverting the rule of law and jettisoning any sense of order. The coming weeks could be a dangerous time for American democracy.

(Source: Bloomberg)

**Neither the nation's government nor its politics can function if losing presidential candidates do not concede defeat and facilitate the peaceful transfer of power.**

# Has Duterte really ditched the U.S. for Beijing's embrace?

Philippines president cements 'pivot to China' on trip but his ministers deny a breakup with the U.S., leaving some to wonder if he can be trusted

By Tom Phillips

The Philippines' president, Rodrigo Duterte, jetted into Beijing last week telling journalists "only China can help us" – and help it did.

The 71-year-old populist was set to return from his four-day state visit on Friday having secured a reported \$13.5bn (£11bn) in deals and a lucrative new alliance with the Asian giant.

"It has the potential to be [a turning point in Philippine history]," one Manila broadsheet said of Duterte's "pivot to China" after he delighted an audience of Communist party grandees in the Great Hall of the People by declaring his "separation" from the United States and new allegiance to Beijing.

On the surface, Duterte's visit represents a resounding diplomatic success for both sides after years of toxic relations thanks to the tussle over disputed territories in the South China Sea.

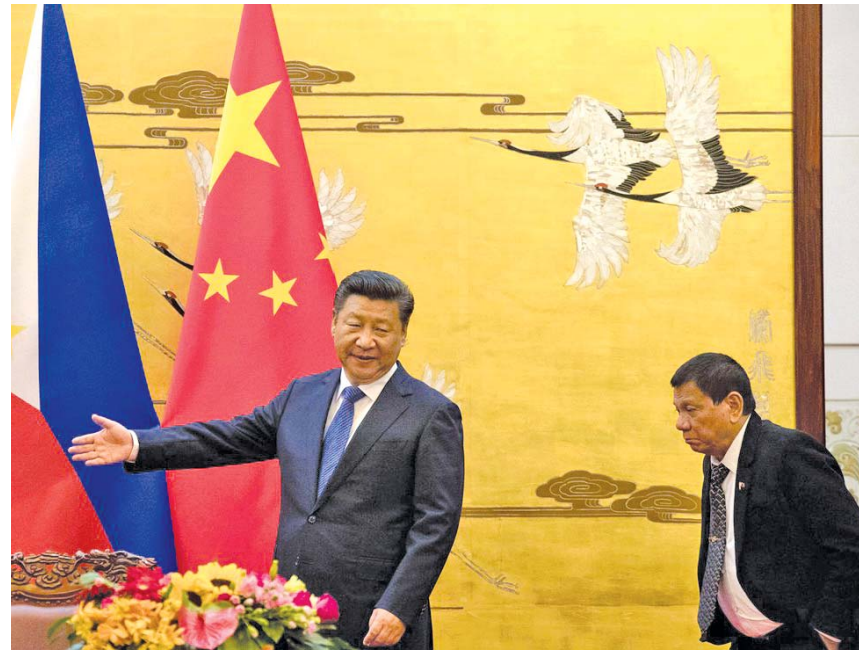
For the Chinese leader, Xi Jinping, who is about to complete four years in power, it was a rare foreign policy triumph following a series of setbacks, including South Korea's decision to deploy the U.S. Thaad missile defense system and a humiliating rebuke from an international tribunal over its claims in the South China Sea.

### Pivot to Asia

By seducing Washington's best friend in south-east Asia, Xi, at a stroke, undermined one of the key planks of Barack Obama's foreign policy – the "pivot to Asia" bid to counter Beijing's influence in the region.

"This was a huge strategic coup for the Chinese," said Richard Javad Heydari, a Manila-based foreign affairs expert and author.

Shi Yinhong, an international relations professor and government adviser



**In Washington, officials share the view that the unpredictable Philippine leader could easily pivot back to the U.S. if he believes it better serves his interests.**

from China's Renmin University, said Beijing believed improving previously frosty relations with Manila would boost its regional standing and, eventually, "weaken America's strategic position in the western Pacific."

Yet, in order to secure the collaboration of a key U.S. ally, China had promised only limited economic assistance and select political favors that did not involve making a single concession over its territorial claims, Shi pointed out. "It's a good deal for China"

For Duterte, whose country has missed

out on Beijing's regional munificence as a result of the South China Sea feud, there was a prize too.

Reports in his country's media suggested he and Xi sealed 13 agreements and memorandums of understanding during the visit, with China offering \$6bn in soft government loans, \$3bn in credit from Chinese banks and a 100m yuan (£12m) contribution to Manila's war on drugs.

But as the Philippine leader flew home to trumpet his achievements, many questions remained. Would he really break off ties

with the U.S., for years one of his country's closest allies? If so, at what cost? And how might Washington react to Duterte's public rejection of its friendship?

"He still could change his words in the future," said Shi. "Now he is in Beijing and he is speaking words to a Chinese audience ... But after Beijing he will be in Tokyo. I think what he will say in Tokyo will naturally be somewhat different from what he said in Beijing. Philippines-American relations have been damaged, of course. But still, this is only the beginning. In the future nothing is certain."

In Washington, officials share the view that the unpredictable Philippine leader could easily pivot back to the U.S. if he believes it better serves his interests.

"There is no question that Duterte is ... trying to play the well-worn game of playing us off against the Chinese," one official told Reuters.

Indeed, just hours after Duterte announced his breakup with America, his trade minister Ramon Lopez denied such a split would occur. "Let me clarify. The president did not talk about separation," he told CNN Philippines, adding: "We definitely won't stop the trade and investment activities with the west, specifically the U.S."

While Duterte has vowed to end joint maritime patrols in the South China Sea and called for U.S. Special Forces to leave the southern island of Mindanao, no concrete steps appear to have been taken to realize them.

Even so, the swiftness and venom with which Duterte has spurned his country's most powerful ally – he has repeatedly called Barack Obama a "son of a w\*\*\*e" – has caused alarm in the Philippines, both on the streets and the corridors of power.

→13

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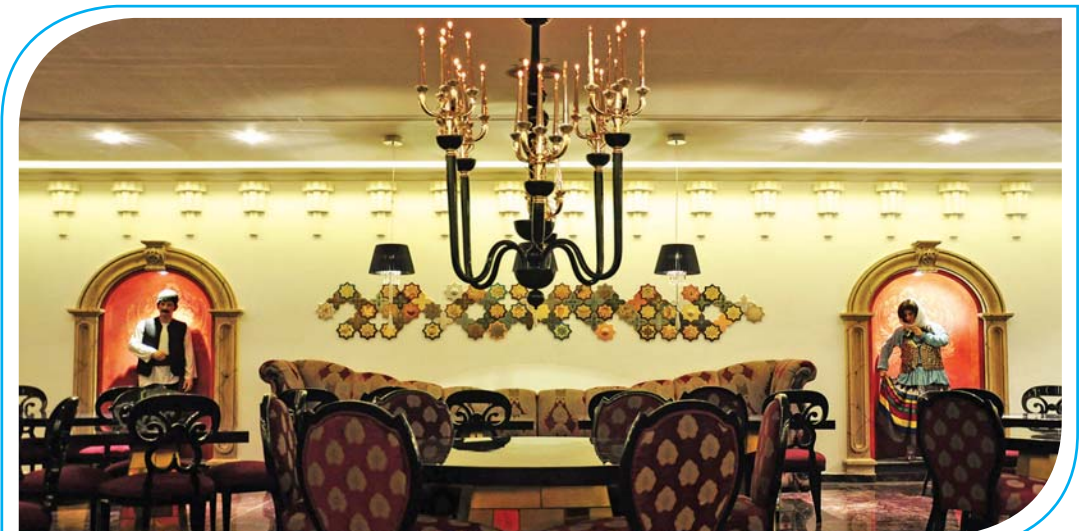


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# Iran, Thailand Set for 'New Page' in Ties

By Maryam Azish

After the implementation of Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Iran has prepared many opportunities for starting a new chapter in foreign relations and South-East Asian nations which are ardent for further collaboration with the Islamic Republic.

Thanks to removal of the anti-Iran sanctions in January 2016, the obstacles on the way of Iran's ties with other countries, particularly in the Southeast Asia region, have been eliminated.

Iran also believes that expansion of cooperation with the countries in the Southeast Asia is pivotal for the future of the country's economy.

In an indication of the great significance Tehran gives to promote its relations with that region in all aspects, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani started a three-nation tour of Southeast Asia on October 5, which took him to Vietnam, Malaysia and finally Thai-

**In a meeting with Thai Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-o-cha, President Rouhani said that Tehran and Bangkok governments are determined to open 'new chapter' in ties.**

land.

During Rouhani's two-day stay in Hanoi, two agreements on cooperation were linked by the two countries' officials.

Also in Malaysia as the second destination of his Asian tour, Rouhani and the Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak stressed importance of boosting mutual ties in the political, cultural, scientific and economic arenas.

After arriving in Bangkok, the Iranian President and the senior Thai officials held talks on different issues, voicing readiness to open a fresh chapter in mutual cooperation.

The Iranian President, during his address to the second Summit of the Asia Cooperation

Dialogue (ACD) in Bangkok, stressed that Asia's power is dependent on self-confidence and a shared will for convergence.

#### ■ New Chapter of Ties

In a meeting with Thai Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-o-cha, President Rouhani said that Tehran and Bangkok governments are determined to open 'new chapter' in ties.

Citing Thailand as Iran's economic communication bridge in east of Asia, Iranian president also indicated resolve of the two governments to help access of one another to the markets of east, west and central Asia to Europe, adding the governments of the two countries are fully determined to expand close relations in politi-



**Addressing the second Summit of ACD in Bangkok, Iranian President said that Asia's power depends on self-confidence and a shared will for convergence.**



**Iran is an integral part of Asia and a gateway that connects East to West, President Rouhani said.**

cal, economic, cultural and scientific arenas.

Describing the Islamic Republic of Iran as the most secure country in the region with transport facility to regional market of 400 million people, he added the country could serve as a gate for trade of East Asia and Thailand with the central Asia, the Caucasus and Europe as well.

Describing terrorism, violence and extremism as the global dilemma, Iranian president call for expansion of cooperation among all countries to tackle terrorism.

Meanwhile, Chan-o-cha said that the Thai government is determined to amend close relations with Iran, adding Thai companies are fully ready to cooperate with the Iranian firms.

Chan-o-cha also called for implementation of all agreements inked between the two countries, expressing hope that cooperation on science and culture would develop in parallel with economic cooperation.

#### ■ Shared Will for Convergence:

Addressing the second Summit of ACD in Bangkok, Iranian President said that Asia's power depends on self-confidence and a shared will for convergence.

"We must open our markets, engage in greater economic interaction, start domestic structural reform, move towards greater transparency and engage in extensive coordination on setting policy; and by doing so, take long strides to improve the quality of life for our citizens and elevate the standing of Asia on the

world stage,' President Rouhani said.

He reiterated that today, all acknowledge that no global issues could be addressed without close cooperation of Asian powers.

In recent years, the Southeast Asia has been experiencing constant progress and the entire world, including Western nations are seeking to secure their foothold in East and Southeast Asia.

Given the fact that attention to the East is among the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei's strategic policies, Iran should not stay behind in amending relations with Southeast Asia.

Asia plays a pivotal role in global efforts aimed at resolving such major issues as climate change, environmental crisis, social problems, including refugees, illiteracy and poverty; and the role of Asian states in promoting collective security is indispensable,' Rouhani has said.

Citing the long and rich history of Asian civilizations as a priceless heritage, President Rouhani said greater contact and cohesion between our nations translates into greater cultural growth, which is vital for the long term security and stability of the continent.

Iran is an integral part of Asia and a gateway that connects East to West, President Rouhani said, adding: "We have our roots in Asia and our history, culture and arts have been shaped by this ancient continent. We are committed to remain with Asia and continue to define our identity as Asians."

By Mina Ahmadi

Following the disastrous coup attempt in Libya, the people of this volatile oil-rich North African country have a significant challenge in front of them.

Recently, Libyan former members of the General National Council's (GNC) have attempted a coup against the UN-sponsored coalition Government of National Accord (GNA) which is facing its most serious crisis since its creation with strong international support, late last year.

According to the Guardian, Tripoli militias seized key state buildings and a TV station and pledged they were ready to fight to take power.

After capturing the central Rixos hotel, home of the government's state council assembly, the plotters issued a televised statement declaring the coup a "historic initiative to rescue Libya".

This is while the GNA's presidency issued a counter-statement calling on its forces to arrest the coup leaders.

The coup was led by the former prime minister of the national salvation government, Khalifa al-Ghwell, who had to step down after the establishment of GNA and the arrival of its officials in the capital in March.

Ghwell along with his supporters have called other powers in the country to join him and to create a national unity government accusing the Presidency Council of negative impact on the national unity and said that all the officials appointed by the Presidential Council were dismissed.

As of writing this article, the whereabouts of the GNA's seven-strong presidency, led by Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj, remains unclear amid reports that they have fled to neighboring Tunisia.

The coup, according to the British daily, took place after militias affiliated with the Tripoli-based Dawn Coalition confronted the GNA forces around the Rixos, forcing the latter to pull back late afternoon without violence.

The fate of the coup will likely depend on the loyalty of dozens of militia groups that control Tripoli, and who have been engaged in battles throughout the capital city for several weeks.

The UN, with strong Western backing, wants the GNA to remain a "unity government," in a bid to bring Libya's factions together in the effort to defeat Daesh and

# Militia Attempt Coup in Tripoli

**The coup was led by the former national salvation government PM Khalifa al-Ghwell, who had to step down after the establishment of GNA and the arrival of its officials in the capital in March.**



contain the mass migration of refugees to Europe.

The oil-rich North African country has had two rival governments since 2014, when Ghwell and his self-proclaimed government seized control of the capital Tripoli with the support of militia groups, forcing the internationally-recognized government GNA to move to the country's remote eastern city of Tobruk.

However, they achieved a consensus on forming Libya's Government of National Accord (GNA).

However, the GNA, which formed last December after months of UN-brokered talks in Tunisia and Morocco in a bid to restore

order in the oil-rich nation, has so far failed to win mass support or the backing of the elected Libyan parliament in the eastern city of Tobruk. This is while pro-GNA forces have also been engaged in a five-month battle, backed by US airstrikes, to recapture the coastal town of Sirte from Daesh terrorists.

#### ■ UN Condemnation

The United Nations has condemned an attempted coup in Libya that has seen a rival administration capture key government buildings, as both rebels and officials scrambled to win the support of Tripoli's powerful militias.

The UN envoy Martin Kobler said: "I condemn the attempt to seize the headquarters

of the high council of state. Such actions ... will generate further disorder and insecurity and must end for the sake of the Libyan people."

#### ■ Humanitarian Crisis

On August 20, the United Nations voiced concern about the alarming conditions of well over two million Libyans, who need humanitarian aid due to the militancy in the North African country.

"More than 2.4 million people in Libya are in need of humanitarian assistance," said Kobler.

"They lack medicines, vaccinations and suffer from poor hospitalization services. Almost 300,000 children are out of schools and almost 350,000 Libyans are displaced within the country," he further said.

The UN official also noted the predicament of over 270,000 refugees, who are stranded in Libya after fleeing their home countries.

"The humanitarian needs created by the crisis in Libya are enormous and this should

serve as an incentive for us to do our utmost to give hope to the people, particularly those in urgent need of humanitarian assistance," he added.

Libya has been struggling to contain the militants who have been expanding their presence in the country following the overthrow and death of longtime dictator Muammar Gaddafi in 2011. He was toppled by British and French military invasion on the country for which a UK Parliament's Foreign Policy Committee report has recently criticized David Cameron for misjudging the situation in Libya. The report however shows that Britain and France 'deliberately' overestimated Gaddafi's threats in order to follow their own agenda for attacking Libya.

Analysts also believe that the move could spark an all-out war in Tripoli and endanger the lives and properties of people as well as the Libyan capital's infrastructures.

Taking advantage of the chaos in Libya, the Daesh Takfiri terrorist group also could take control of the northern port city of Sirte in June 2015, nearly four months after it declared presence in the city and undoubtedly the attempted coup threatens to deepen troubles for the conflict-hit African nation.

**UK Parliament's Foreign Policy Committee report shows that Britain and France 'deliberately' overestimated Gaddafi's threats in order to follow their own agenda for attacking Libya and leaving country in turmoil.**



**Libya has been struggling to contain the militants who have been expanding their presence in the country following the overthrow and death of longtime dictator Muammar Gaddafi in 2011.**



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# 6 simple steps for a healthier day

By Lisa Lillien

Living a healthy lifestyle doesn't have to be hard! Small changes can have big results. I'm Hungry Girl, and I've got six simple steps for a healthier day.

## ■ Eat breakfast

If you haven't heard that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, you've probably been oversleeping! Seriously though, almost everyone has heard this, but not everyone eats a morning meal.

When you wake up from a night of sleep, your body needs fuel after the long fast. And several studies tie the importance of eating breakfast to weight loss. The National Weight Control Registry—the largest database of people who have lost weight and kept it off for a long period of time—tracks several of their "losers'" habits. One of them is eating breakfast.

If you tend to skip the morning meal due to lack of time, make overnight oats the night before; then just grab and go in the a.m.!

## ■ Meal plan

If you go into your day with a set food strategy, you'll be less likely to make impulsive (a.k.a. unhealthy) decisions! No stopping at the drive-thru for you.

Plan and prepare healthy meals at home, as opposed to rolling the dice with the mystery ingredients and calorie counts of takeout meals. Brown bagging your lunch is super smart! Over the weekend, plan out all your meals for the week ahead.

Write down the ingredients you'll need, and then hit the grocery store to

stock up. Check out my supermarket list for recommendations to add to your shopping cart. Healthy and stress-free eating ahead.

weight loss! Fruits and vegetables are both great sources of fiber. And since they're low in calories, they're must-haves at all your meals.

effective. But if you spend hours each day sitting in your car or behind a desk, it can seem hard to get in a walk. Just look for opportunities to get in some extra steps here and there, and you'll find ways to build walking into your day-to-day routine.

I coined the term Housewalking as an easy way to get in those steps! I'm obsessed with my Fitbit, and I think everyone should have a pedometer. Invest in one, and keep yourself accountable. Small actions like parking a bit further away from the store and taking the stairs instead of the elevator add up and make a difference! Plus, it's kind of like a game: How many steps can you rack up in a day?

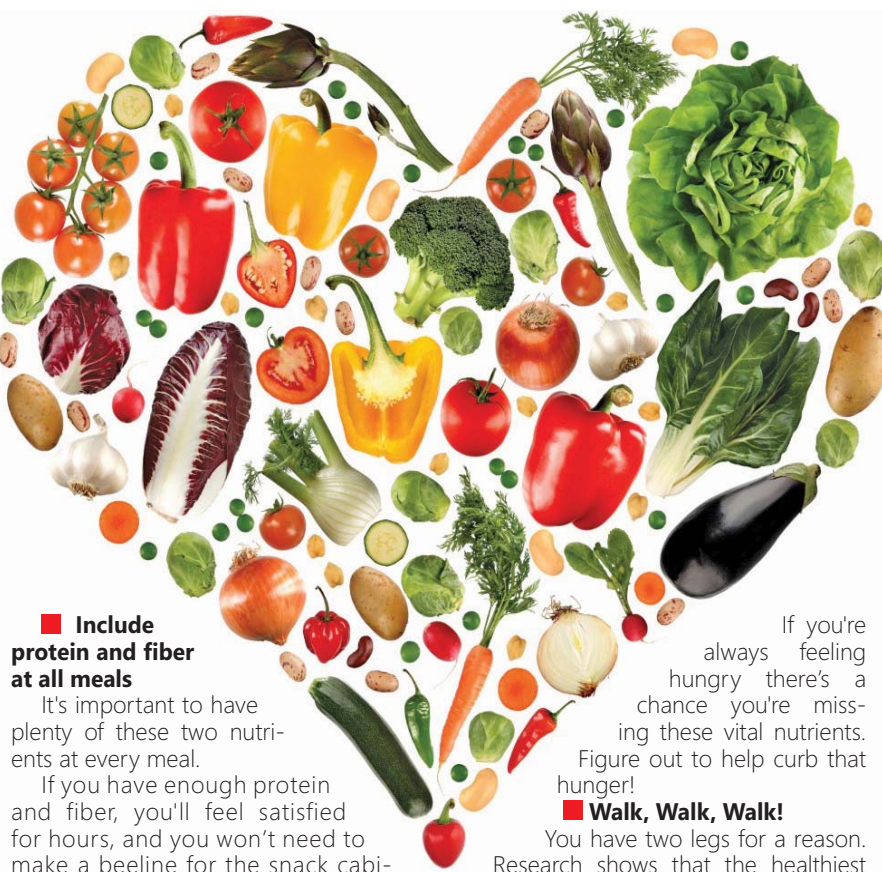
## ■ Stay hydrated

Sometimes, I feel like I want to eat everything in sight. But then after drinking a glass of water that feeling subsides. I find water very helpful in managing my weight, and research supports this idea. Drinking 16 ounces of water before meals has actually been shown to help with weight loss. Besides, your cells need H<sub>2</sub>O to function properly! If you find it difficult to stay hydrated throughout the day, check out my tips on how to increase your water intake.

## ■ Pack emergency snacks

Hunger can strike when you least expect it! And those are the times when bad food decisions are most likely to be made. Avoid this diet trap like a boy scout would: Be prepared. I have snacks at my desk, in my car, and in my purse. All my bases are covered! I go for snacks that contain protein and/or fiber, so they'll truly put an end to my hunger.

(Source: verywell.com)



## ■ Include protein and fiber at all meals

It's important to have plenty of these two nutrients at every meal.

If you have enough protein and fiber, you'll feel satisfied for hours, and you won't need to make a beeline for the snack cabinet minutes after you finish eating.

Recent research supports the idea that protein is strongly tied to feeling full. Similar studies show fiber contributes to a reduced appetite, which can lead to

If you're always feeling hungry there's a chance you're missing these vital nutrients. Figure out to help curb that hunger!

## ■ Walk, Walk, Walk!

You have two legs for a reason. Research shows that the healthiest countries have one thing in common: walking. The folks in these places, like Denmark and Japan, walk way more than the average American.

This simple act is easy to do and very

## The 10-minute core-blasting Pilates workout

At first glance, a Pilates studio might look like a medieval torture chamber, with strange straps and metal springs hanging from padded platforms called a "reformer." In reality, Pilates is a form of exercise that aims to develop flexibility, good posture, strength, and balance all at the same time.

In the early 20th century, Joseph Pilates invented the series of movements to help English veterans recover from injuries sustained during World War I. Since then, Pilates has been the go-to regimen for anyone interested in working on strength, grace, and of course, a solid core.

While some Pilates classes utilize special machines, mat sequences only require your bodyweight, so they're easy to replicate at home and still reap the same benefit

### 1. Pilates curl



Lie faceup with knees bent, feet flat on the floor, and arms at sides. Exhale, curling chin to chest and bringing shoulders completely off mat. Hold for 1 breath, then lower back down slowly. Lift from breastbone to engage abs and avoid crunching neck.

### 2. The hundred

Lie faceup and bring knees in toward chest. Lift head, neck, and shoulders off mat and stretch hands by sides with palms facing floor. Extend legs to a 45-degree angle with heels together and toes apart (the Pilates stance). Pump arms up and down while breathing in and out



through the nose for 5 counts each. Repeat for 10 sets.

### 3. Roll-up

Lie faceup with arms extended toward ceiling. Exhale, curl chin to chest, and roll up to sitting position with arms reaching toward feet. Exhale and reverse to roll down one vertebrae at a time. Move slowly and smoothly with no forward lunging or jerking.

### 4. Rolling like a ball

Sit on mat with knees drawn toward chest and arms wrapped around legs. Rock back to tailbone with feet hovering a few inches above mat. Inhale, rolling back to shoulder blades then exhale to roll forward to balanced starting position. Use abs to control momentum and pause before feet touch mat.

### 5. Single-leg stretch



Lie faceup on mat with knees drawn toward chest, hips parallel to floor in tabletop position. Exhale to lift head, neck, and shoulders off mat. At the same time, extend left leg straight to a 45-degree angle and draw right knee toward chest. Grab right knee with left hand and right ankle with right hand. Switch legs on the inhale, pulse for 1 beat, and switch legs again on exhale, keeping shoulders off mat and core engaged throughout.

### 7. Crisscross

Lie faceup on mat, hands behind neck and elbows wide. Lift head, neck, and shoulders off mat. Bring left arm pit to right knee and extend left leg to high diagonal. Twist to the other side and switch legs, bringing right arm pit to left knee and extending right leg.

### 8. Teaser



Lie faceup and hug knees to chest. Reach arms directly overhead and extend both legs to high diagonal. Stretch arms back toward ears then shift them toward toes, rolling up to a seated V position. Keep arms and legs at a 45-degree angle to mat. From this position, lower and raise legs for 3 to 5 reps. Roll spine to mat one vertebrae at a time, then lower legs to return to starting position.

(Source: greatist.com)

## NEWS

### Over 10,000 cases of Behcet's disease detected in Iran

**T I MEDICINE TEHRAN** — More than 10,000 Iranians are infected by Behcet's disease, the head of the Iranian Rheumatology Association announced on Thursday.

The non-contagious disease, Behcet's disease, is considered more prevalent in the areas surrounding the old silk trading routes in the Middle East and in Central Asia and thus, it is sometimes known as Silk Road Disease, IRNA quoted Ahmadreza Jamshidi as saying.

The cause of Behcet's disease is unknown, Jamshidi said, but the condition probably results from a combination of genetic and environmental factors, most of which have not been identified.

On the sidelines of Iran's 2nd international conference on rheumatology Jamshidi added Behcet's disease, also called Behcet's syndrome, is a rare disorder causes "blood vessel inflammation" throughout your body.

The disease can lead to numerous signs and symptoms that may seem unrelated at first, including canker sores or mouths sores, eye inflammation, skin rashes and lesions, and genital sores.

In some people, the disease also results in arthritis (swollen, painful, stiff joints), skin problems, and inflammation of the digestive tract, brain, and spinal cord.

Women and men are equally susceptible to the disease, Jamshidi explained, while the disease tends to develop more in people in their 20s and 30s, children can, too, contract it.

Although there is no cure for Behcet's disease, people usually can control the symptoms with proper medication, rest, exercise, and a healthy lifestyle.

Jamshidi named Iran as one of the world's leading countries in diagnosis, treatment and research for Behcet's disease and said rheumatology research center of the University of Tehran Medical Sciences has conducted an extensive research on the disease and its treatment.

The rheumatology center, he noted has cared for about 8,000 people with Behcet's disease, many of them from neighboring countries.

The 2nd international conference on rheumatology, held October 19-21 in National Library and Archives Organization of Iran, aimed at presenting the latest in rheumatology and related fields of science.



## Apple cider

Apple cider vinegar is a staple of many people's homes and is used for a wide variety of household applications from cooking to being used as a hair product. Apple cider vinegar is made from apples and contains healthy probiotic enzymes. It has around 5 percent acidity which makes it a favorite for making salad dressings or using as a facial toner. Here is a list of its benefits:

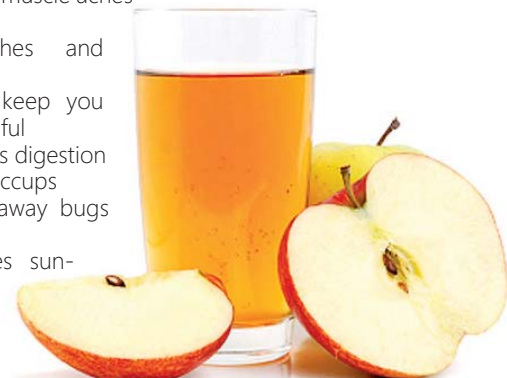
- Soothes and relieving dry throats
- Cleaning toxins from the body
- Maintaining healthy skin
- Helps with weight loss and weight control
- Promotes a healthy immune system
- Relieves hiccups
- Fights yeast infections
- Relieves muscle aches

and pains

- Soothes and cleans skin
- Helps keep you looking youthful

- Improves digestion
- Stops Hiccups
- Keeps away bugs and fleas

- Soothes sunburns
- Makes hair shiny



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IN THE NEWS

**£200 hotel voucher for best tip on travelling in Iran**

**T**OURISM TEHRAN — Travelers to Iran would have a chance of winning a £200 hotel voucher for tips on specific places and experiences during their stay in the ancient country.

The Guardian has issued a public call, inviting tourists who have been either on a guided cultural tour of the country's cities, skiing or hiking trips, or the sole travels to Iran to try their luck at earning a £200 voucher from uk.hotels.com if they share their tips on the ancient land.



Nature lovers trek on the Valley of Stars on the vast Iranian Qeshm Island in the Persian Gulf in an undated photo.

"Iran is no longer forbidden territory for Western travelers and offers amazingly varied scenery, history and culture. We want to hear about the country's splendors – you may have relatives in the country and have been taken to various sights or you may have been on a guided hiking and cultural trip," the daily announced on Wednesday.

The paper clearly specifies that is looking for tips on specific places and experiences rather than whole regions or cities, saying "so tell us about the great places you've stayed at and visited with as much detail as you can (including website and prices etc., if possible) in around 100 words."

Contributors are welcomed if add a photo but however it is the text which will be judged and chosen by Tom Hall of the Lonely Planet, a famous travel website.

According to the Guardian, a collection of best tips will appear in print in next weekend's Travel section and the winner will receive a £200 hotel voucher from UK.hotels.com, allowing him or her to stay in more than 260,000 places worldwide.

The submissions will be accepted until Wednesday, October 26, 10 a.m. GMT.

"Iran is being turned into a major tourism destination for European travelers," said Elzbieta Bienkowska, the European Union commissioner for industry and entrepreneurship, during her Tehran visit last week.

Iran expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous natural beauties and tourist sites, 21 of which have been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list, after implementation of the nuclear deal in January 2016.

About sixteen million tourists have visited the country over the past three years, fetching nearly \$24 billion in revenues, according to formal statistics by Iran's Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization.

NOTABLES

**Epicurus, the ancient Greek philosopher**

Epicurus, (born 341BC, Samos, Greece—died 270, Athens) was a Greek philosopher, author of an ethical philosophy of simple pleasure, friendship, and retirement. He founded schools of philosophy that survived directly from the 4th century BC until the 4th century CE.

Epicurus was born on the island of Samos of Athenian parents who had gone there as military settlers. According to his own report, Epicurus began his study of philosophy at the age of 14. One account has him turning to philosophy when his schoolmaster could not explain the concept of chaos in Hesiod, an early Greek philosophical poet.

His first master is said to have been the Platonist Pamphilus of Samos. Much more significant, however, is the report that Epicurus was for three years (327–324) a student in the Ionian city of Teos, where his teacher was Nausiphanes, a disciple of the naturalistic philosopher Democritus. It may have been from this source that Epicurus' atomistic theory came, which he used not as a means of studying physics but as the basis for a philosophical system that ultimately sought ethical ends.

In various places Epicurus met the disciples who were destined to follow him to Athens and to become of great significance as vehicles through whom the Epicurean school would achieve its mature development.

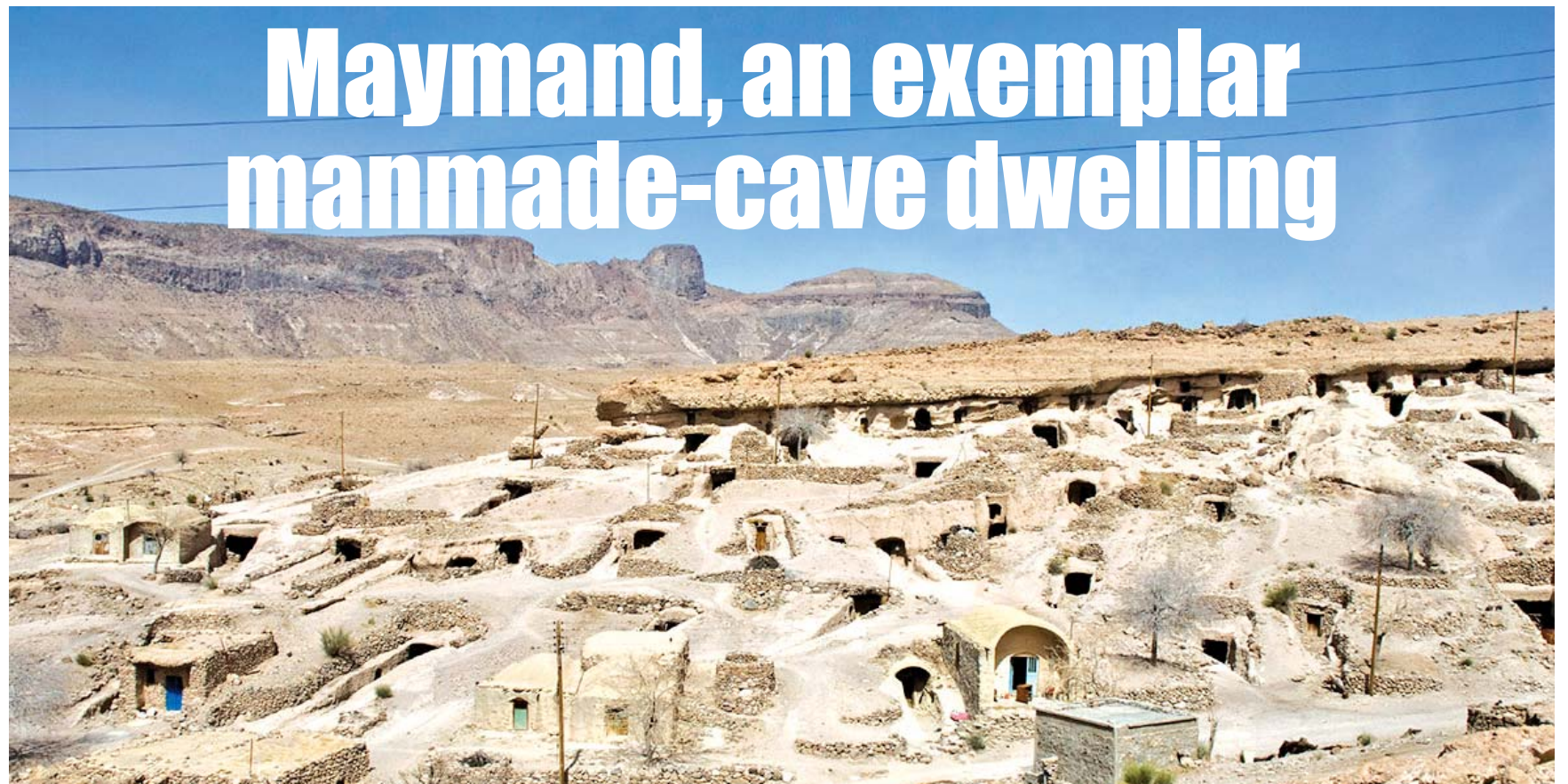
Apart from his two years in Athens, Epicurus spent the first 35 years of his life in Asia. This need not mean, however, that he developed an aversion to the literary circles in Athens. Instead, his Asiatic ties, which he continued to cultivate intensely all his life (including two or three actual journeys to Asia Minor) seem to have been reflected mainly in his choice of words and style and, more significantly, in the ecumenical scope of his philosophy.

On the day in his 72nd year that Epicurus died painfully of prostatitis.

Many of Epicurus' methods made him comparable to a religious figure. The breadth of his appeal in Rome during the 1st century BC is indicated by the fact that the poet-philosopher Lucretius based his work on Epicurus (Lucretius in fact held Epicurus in reverential awe), by the references to his thought by the statesman-moralist Cicero, and by the detailing by the biographer Plutarch of how Cassius soothed the mind of Brutus with his Epicurean ideas. Epicurus' atomistic theory was revived in the 17th century by Pierre Gassendi, a French philosopher-scientist.

(Source: Encyclopedia Britannica)

**Maymand, an exemplar manmade-cave dwelling**



A view of Maymand village in southern Iran. It embraces an exemplar system of manmade-cave dwelling, believed to cope with the harsh climate.

**T**OURISM TEHRAN — Thousands of years before Persepolis - the magnificent Achaemenid ceremonial capital - was made in southern Iran in the fifth and fourth centuries BC, residents of its eastward village named Maymand carved out rocky hillsides to take refuge from harsh climate of the Iranian Plateau.

The cultural landscape of Maymand has been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list since 2015. It is an exemplar system of manmade cave dwelling that is believed to be practiced in the region to cope with its harsh climate.

Maymand is situated near Shah-re Babak in the southeastern Kerman Province. Its self-contained, semi-arid area is

sprawled at the end of a south-facing valley at the southern extremity of Iran's central mountains.

Sandwiched between a desert and a mountain, Maymand has cold winters and exceedingly hot summers yet abundant with mulberry and blackberry trees. Living conditions in the village are considered as severe due to the aridity of the land, high temperature in summertime and very cold winters.

It is believed to be one of human's primary residences in the country as its history stretches far back in time to about 10,000 years ago. Some of its natural and manmade caves are still used for housing and shelter.

The houses in the continually inhabit-

ed village are carved like caverns inside the mountain. The internal spaces have corridors and pillars featuring a rural architecture. The houses are situated in four or five stories, one on top of the other.

According to the narratives, the early residents did not use hammer and chisel, but rather a type of local, pointed stone which was hard enough to carve images onto the rocks. This method of carving is still practiced in the region. Some of stone engravings in the village date back to 10,000 years ago.

The majority of inhabitants are semi-nomadic shepherds. They raise their animals on mountain pastures, living in temporary settlements in spring and autumn.

The community has a strong bond with the natural environment that is expressed in social practices, cultural ceremonies and religious beliefs.

The local dialect contains words from the ancient Sassanid and Pahlavi languages. The dialect has been barely changed due to the remoteness of the village.

The area is also home to various animals such as snakes, lizards, hedgehogs, deer, leopards, wolves, foxes and also birds of prey.

There are few seasonal springs around the village which contribute to the flourishing of agriculture in the area. In such an arid climate, residents have to collect every drop of water to make a living as their ancestors did.

**Japan still a developing nation in tourism: JTA chief**

Despite the visitor boom, Japan is still an "undeveloped country" when it comes to tourism, Japan Tourism Agency chief Akihiko Tamura said Friday.

Inbound tourism rose around 30 percent annually from 2011 to 2015, according to agency data. But the revenue represents a mere 0.5 percent of GDP, according to a recent report by McKinsey & Co.

During a public-private workshop at the World Fo-

rum on Sport and Culture in Tokyo, Tamura said Japan has a long way to go if it wants to make tourism one of its core industries.

"We all have to get together to cooperate to think of ways to attract more foreign visitors and make them want to stay longer and spend more," Tamura said during the session on the future of Japanese tourism.

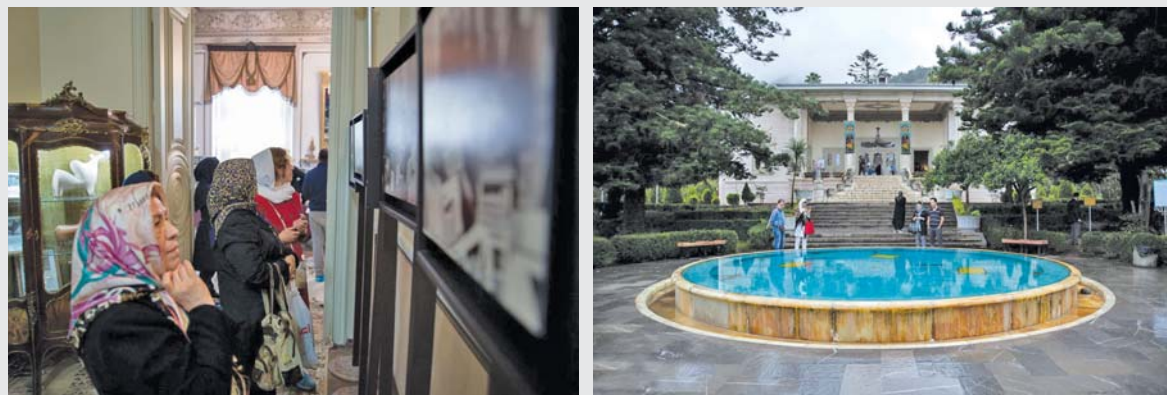
"Tourism is something like a composite art. Public

and private sectors must cooperate together to make an all-out effort. Otherwise, we won't be reaching the set target," he added.

The government is aiming to reel in 40 million tourists a year by 2020. But Japan didn't start paying attention to foreign travelers until around 2000 because it was focusing solely on domestic needs, Tamura said.

(Source: The Japan Times)

PICTURE OF THE DAY © TEHRAN TIMES/Amirali Razaqa



A combination photo shows visitors to the Pahlavi-era Ramsar royal palace located in the northern Iranian city of Ramsar on October 20, 2016.

**Malaysians encouraged to invest in Indonesian tourism**

Indonesia is looking to Malaysia for more investment in tourism. Local businesspeople have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with their counterparts in the neighboring country to intensify communication and meetings to foster more investment in tourism and other sectors.

Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Kadin) vice chairman for international relations, Shinta W. Kamdani, said Malaysia could run sustainable tourism businesses in the country to attract more tourists.

"We can learn from Malaysia about building sustainable tourism. Malaysia has about 27 million foreign tourists every year, but Indonesia only 10 million, even though we're much bigger in size," she said on the sidelines of the signing ceremony for the MoU between Kadin and Malaysia's External Trade Development Corporation (Matrade) in Kuala Lumpur on Thursday.

Tourism to Indonesia is still concentrated on the island of Bali, which accounted for more than 30 percent of the 10.41 million foreign tourists last year.

To spread investment more evenly, the government has designated 10 "new Balis" to be developed by 2019.

(Source: Jakarta Post)

**Egypt's tourism industry is still reeling but hope is on the horizon**

Political upheaval, air crashes and fears over security at ancient sites have devastated the country's tourism industry – but the return of flights from the UK to Luxor is a welcome step towards recovery.

At 9.30am in Luxor's Valley of the Kings, the sun is high in the sky and inside the famed 63 tombs it's starting to get humid. This should be peak time for visitors, but there are few footprints in the dust leading to each tomb. About 50 tourists stroll in and out of the tombs, or fan themselves in the shade. "This is about as busy as it gets," said Aamer Ibrahim, a Luxor native who has worked in tourism all his professional life. He gestured at a spot about 200 metres from the entrance to the tomb of Ramses IV. "People used to have to queue – the line

would stretch to there."

There is a guilty, selfish pleasure in standing alone in the tomb of Tutankhamun, or having the stars and hieroglyphs in the tomb of Ramses IV almost to myself. But for an industry reliant on £100 (£9) entry tickets to the Valley of the Kings (plus extra to see Tutankhamun's mummy and gilded sarcophagus), this is a disaster. Egyptian tourism is heavily pegged to its political fortunes.

Critics say that until Egypt is truly transparent about the reasons behind the Metrojet crash, as well as the crash of EgyptAir flight 804 in May this year, tourists won't return with confidence.

A ban on direct flights from the UK to Sharm el-Sheikh remains, but there is no ban on visiting the area – for now tourists



Colossi of Ramses II at the entrance to Luxor Temple

have to fly there via Cairo. And Heathrow recently reinstated a direct EgyptAir flight to Luxor.

"The good news for us, regarding the resumption of direct flights to Luxor, is that it sends a good, calming message to potential travellers that the situation is stable

and improving," said John Telfer of Explore Worldwide. The company has seen a 75% reduction in bookings to Egypt since 2011, with this year's figures a 20% drop on the already low booking figures of 2015. "The question [everyone is asking] is, is Egypt stable? This is why the Luxor flight is good news for the industry as a whole."

At the Sonesta St George in Luxor, once visited by former president Hosni Mubarak, lines of sun loungers await bronzed guests and rows of empty tables fill the restaurants during what should be the start of high season.

At the famed Winter Palace, formerly the home of the Egyptian royal family, ornate gold-and-glass chandeliers hang over empty brocade sofas, awaiting visitors.

(Source: The Guardian)



# Airbus announces plan for a vertical takeoff plane by 2020

Airbus has announced its plans enter the vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) aircraft market by 2020, showcasing a bold new design for a plane being created under the name Vahana.

Vahana marks the first major venture of A<sup>3</sup> (which Airbus pronounces as A-cubed). It's the Silicon Valley outpost of the European aerospace giant.

In a Medium post, A<sup>3</sup> CEO Rodin Lysaoff describes a plane built for a single passenger that "doesn't need a runway, is self-piloted, and can automatically detect and avoid obstacles and other aircraft."

Airbus has already completed the design, which looks like helicopter chopped in half with eight rotors on two wings. The wings could tilt, allowing for the plane to move around both vertically and horizontally.

While Lysaoff promises "many critical subsystems" have been developed or procured, much of the crucial work for the plane is incomplete. Chief among these concerns is energy — specifically, the batteries that will power Vahana in the air.

## Self-piloting software

Airbus then to develop the self-piloting software, as well as avoidance technology for a self-piloted plane in crowd-



ed airspace.

Lysaoff has told the Airbus Group in-house magazine Forum that these technologies "are most of the way there," and

hopes to get a prototype off the ground by 2017 with something sellable by 2020.

One thing Airbus does not believe it will have to worry about is a mar-

**Airbus has already completed the design, which looks like helicopter chopped in half with eight rotors on two wings. The wings could tilt, allowing for the plane to move around both vertically and horizontally.**

ket. Uber has declared its interest in the VTOL market, and Airbus believes that they can supply the tech while the ride-sharing service provides the customers. "

You quickly realize that the potential demand corresponds to about 100 times the yearly production of Airbus Helicopters," says Jörg Müller from the Airbus Group's corporate development department, speaking to Forum. "This would only require replacing one out of a hundred ground taxis."

Airbus is also working on a larger flying vehicle deemed CityAirbus that could transport multiple people.

"Customers use an app to book a seat on a CityAirbus, proceed to the nearest helipad, and climb aboard to be whisked away to their destination," Forum says. The company imagines that the "sharing economy principle" would make these flights affordable. There is no set timeline for CityAirbus.

Between the two projects, Airbus Group is aggressively taking on VTOL travel. "I'm no big fan of Star Wars," says CEO Tom Enders, "but it's not crazy to imagine that one day our big cities will have flying cars making their way along roads in the sky."

(Source: Popular Mechanics)

## Schiaparelli Mars lander may have exploded on impact, ESA says

Instead of drifting gently onto Mars' surface, the Schiaparelli Mars lander hit the planet hard — and possibly exploded. That's the word from the European Space Agency (ESA), which says new images taken by NASA show the possible crash site.

"Estimates are that Schiaparelli dropped from a height of between 2 and 4 kilometers, therefore impacting at a considerable speed, greater than 300 km/h [186 mph]. The relatively large size of the feature would then arise from disturbed surface material. It is also possible that the lander exploded on impact, as its thruster propellant tanks were likely still full."

That sequence of events followed the lander's largely trouble-free approach to the Martian surface, a trip that was be-

ing widely watched on Wednesday, when the craft lost contact with the ESA and its Mars mothership, the Trace Gas Orbiter, just before its touchdown.

## Orbital insertion

It's believed that the Schiaparelli craft successfully navigated its orbital insertion burn and deployed its parachute as planned. But things went awry in the final phase of its landing, as the lander's nine thrusters turned off too early to ease the craft onto the surface.

NASA's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter captured images of the likely crash site as part of a plan to document and collect data about the lander's arrival to Mars. The new features were easily evident when compared to another image of the same area that was taken in May.

The "area indicated with a black outline is enlarged at right. The bright spot near the lower edge of the enlargement is interpreted as likely to be the lander's parachute, which was deployed and then released during the descent through the Martian atmosphere.

The "larger dark spot near the upper edge of the enlargement was likely formed by the Schiaparelli lander. The spot is elliptical, about 50 by 130 feet (15 by 40 meters) in size, and is probably too large to have been made by the impact of the heat shield."

Despite the loss of its lander, the ESA still has a working science mission in Mars orbit, as the Trace Gas Orbiter will devote itself to studying methane on the Red Planet.

## Mars's surface

"Any methane that makes it to Mars' surface would get obliterated by ultraviolet light after a few hundred years. But a few years ago, astronomers looking at infrared images found that methane was released from certain locations on the planet, and that it mostly happened during the warm summer months. In 2013, NASA's Curiosity rover also detected bursts of methane. So, scientists reason, something is actively releasing methane.

It could be some chemical reaction happening underground — like water reacting with a certain kind of rock, or an underground volcanic process. But it could also be a sign of microbes that lived, or live, deep underground.

(Source: npr.org)

## Groundbreaking adhesive tape will repel any liquid you can think of

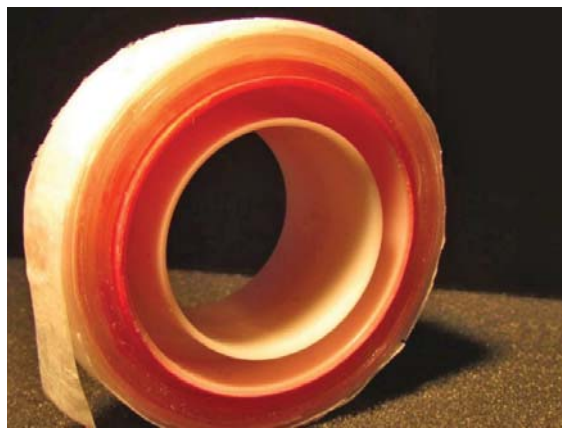
How well do you know your superomniphobic materials? If you're like most people, the possible answers are "not very well" and "I think I missed the class where they taught us what a superomniphobic material is."

A "superomniphobic material is a material that is extremely repellent to virtually any liquid," Arun Kota, assistant professor of mechanical engineering at Colorado State University, explained to Digital Trends.

"That could be an acid or base, an organic liquid or an aqueous liquid, a food-grade liquid, a solvent, whatever you can think of. Whatever you choose, chances are that the surface can repel it. Think about the kind of Teflon nonstick frying pans we use at home, but multiplied by around one thousand times. That's how nonstick we're talking!"

Professor Kota has been investigating these kind of superomniphobic materials for around a decade. However, recently his Kota Lab at Colorado State made an important breakthrough in the form of a Scotch Tape-style adhesive which is able to act in this way.

"Up until now, the issue with superomniphobic surfaces is that the ways in which people make them required the use of harsh toxic chemicals, or fancy fabri-



cation methods involving clean rooms," Kota continued.

"These were things which required a lot of skill to make or a lot of expensive equipment. Where our research is different is that it takes the same surfaces, but turns it into a freestanding tape. Anyone wanting to impart a superomniphobic property to a surface can take our tape, cut it to any size they want, and stick it to that

surface."

## Myriad applications

Kota said that there are myriad applications. It could, for example, be used to produce self-cleaning materials, to aid with drag reduction, help with liquid waste minimization, and far more. "Anywhere you don't want liquids to stick to a solid it could be extremely useful," Kota said.

So when will this wonder tape be available on the market? Kota said that he would consider licensing the technology or even manufacturing it himself. There's one problem that still needs to be overcome, however.

The "major obstacle that needs to be overcome before this can be commercialized is the mechanical durability," he concluded. "Everyone working in this field right now is struggling with the same problem.

To put it very simply, while this tape can repel liquid extremely well, if you take a piece of piece of sandpaper and cause an abrasion you will lose some of the functionality. The grand challenge now is to come up with a mechanically durable superomniphobic surface. That's where our focus has to be."

(Source: Digital Trends)

## The tiny genetic tweak that helped snakes lose their legs

What does it take to turn a lizard into a snake?

Turns out you don't need a wand and a lesson at Hogwarts, just a tiny genetic tweak. By making a simple switch more than 100 million years ago, ancient burrowing lizards became slithery and legless, giving rise to the first snakes.

That's according to studies published in the journals Current Biology and Cell this week. The first, by University of Florida researchers Francisca Leal and Martin J. Cohn, traces the particular molecular mechanism

that prevents snake embryos from developing limbs. The second, based out of the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab, tested that mechanism by implanting it in a genetically modified mouse. The same simple genetic tweak can turn a mouse into a snake (or something snakelike), too.

The story of the first study begins in 1999, in the United Kingdom, where Cohn was a postdoctoral fellow researching this topic. He was particularly interested in a gene called sonic hedgehog (named by the father of a comic book fan), which is

known to play a vital role in the differentiation and growth of body parts.

## Primitive snakes

The trouble was that Cohn didn't have any snakes himself, so he found himself traveling all over the country to pick up newly laid python eggs from various labs. (Pythons are more "primitive" snakes and are closer to their legged relatives than more recently evolved snakes like cobras.)

"Often it was the next day before I got them back to the lab to study them," Cohn said. By that point, he couldn't find any ev-

idence of sonic hedgehog being expressed in the tiny "limb buds," or incipient limbs, that form in snake embryos where legs should be.

Fast forward 17 years. Cohn is a developmental biology professor and able to provide his students with all the snake eggs they need. He and his students also have at their disposal the entire sequenced genomes of several snake and lizard species, something that evolutionary developmental biologists like himself could only dream of in the 1990s.

(Source: The Washington Post)

## French Investment Bank Director General Meets BIM Chief Executive

Director General of French Public Investment Bank Nicolas Dufour met and held talks with Ali Ashraf-Afkhami Chairman of the Board of Directors and Managing Director of Bank of Industry & Mine (BIM).

The meeting also was attended by Paul Francois Fournier Deputy Director General of French Investment Bank for Innovation Affairs, Benjamin Richard Financing Affairs Director and Pedro Novo Special Advisor to the Chairman of the Board and Financing Affairs Director, based on which, the two sides explored avenues

for broadening and enhancing cooperation in banking and economic fields.

In a session held at venue of the bank, head of Economic Section of French Embassy to Tehran, Mathew Broshen, Commercial Attaché of the embassy and Roman Krawall expressed their vehement interest for enhancing bilateral cooperation with the bank in related matters and proposed that a midterm credit line, worth about €100 million, will be earmarked for financing Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) to the

Bank of Industry & Mine (BIM).

It is worth mentioning the French Public Investment Company is busy active in France with the aim of financing projects in public sector and also supporting startups especially small- and medium-sized enterprises.

The French bank has 43 regional offices and has employed 2,540 skilled and the most experienced laborers who are offering quality banking services to applicants as a top European investment company in France.

## Scientists think they've cracked the Bermuda Triangle mystery through cloud shapes

At first glance, this seems like a story that perfectly encapsulates the Friday vibe. However, the above video shows screenshots of some truly bizarre clouds above the Bermuda Triangle in the North Atlantic Ocean. The clouds are being linked by MSN as a possible explanation for the area's happenings. The mythical area of doom, which extends from Miami to Puerto Rico to Bermuda Island, has been the subject of much lore involving hundreds of wrecked ships and planes. History feeds the legend, although some remain skeptical that the area holds any significance.

The hexagonal holes in the clouds depicted in the video join the other floated reasons (including the Gulf stream, wonky compass behavior, and violent weather) for the area's reputation. Most recently, bursting methane pockets within the ocean surfaced as a possible explanation too, but the clouds may provide a better clue. MSN quotes Dr. Steve Miller, a meteorologist from Colorado State University: "You don't typically see straight edges with clouds. Most of the time, clouds are random in their distribution."

No one's quite sure why these clouds have been observed over Bermuda Island or how long they've been occurring. But the holes are rather wide — anywhere from 20 to 55 miles across — and are fueling 170 mph winds near sea level, which are essentially creating microbursts that are bad news.

If you've never had the pleasure of enduring a microburst (I have), they're similar to tornadoes in terms of destruction, but they're more localized in nature. Essentially, a storm system can send down a powerful downdraft that "explodes" on contact with the ground and sends out straight-line winds within a square mile or two.

(Source: aol.com)

## 423-million-year-old fish fossil sheds light on evolution of animals' jaws

A 423-million-year-old fossil is rewriting the history of how jaws evolved, according to a team of Swedish and Chinese researchers who published their findings Friday in the journal Science.

The fossil was discovered in China's Yunnan Province and belonged to Qilinyu rostrata — a bottom-dwelling, armored fish that belongs a prehistoric class known as placoderms. Although scientists have believed placoderms to be an evolutionary dead end, this fossil's jaw bones suggest the fish could have played a key role in vertebrate evolution.

"Anything from a human being to a cod has recognizably the same set of bones in the head," study coauthor Per Ahlberg, a paleontologist at Uppsala University in Sweden, told Science News. "Where did these bony jaws come from?"

Early vertebrates appeared more than half a billion years ago, equipped with sucker-like mouths, not jaws. Scientists had observed a jaw-like structure in early placoderms, but their jaws were so different from modern ones that for many years scientists concluded that bony fish and the rest of modern jaw users could not have evolved from them.

Early placoderm jaws "look like sheet metal cutters," Dr. Ahlberg told Science News. "They're these horrible bony blades that slice together ... the established view is that placoderms had evolved independently and that our jaw bones must have a separate origin."

However, the discovery of a Qilinyu fossil and Entelognathus primordialialis, another placoderm genus discovered in 2013, may have created the missing evolutionary links between the three bones first found in bony fish and the "sheet metal cutters" of the early placoderms.

(Source: The CSM)

## The possible ninth planet could explain a tilt in the Sun

Ideas about a possible ninth planet have been kicking around since shortly after we discovered the eighth in 1846. But so far, all that we've come up with is Pluto and a handful of other objects orbiting out in the Kuiper Belt. And these dwarf planets simply don't have the mass to have a significant gravitational influence on our Solar System.

But our inability to find anything big beyond the known planets may just have been because we weren't thinking radically enough. One of the people responsible for the discovery of a number of Kuiper Belt Objects noticed an odd alignment in their orbits. When running models of how that oddity could be produced, he and his team found that a large planet with an extreme orbit would work.

Calling it Planet 9, they suggested it could be over 10 times Earth's mass and so far out it takes 20,000 years to complete one orbit. Planet 9, they speculated, has a lopsided orbit that's tilted relative to the other planets and much closer to the Sun on one side.

Unfortunately, there's no observational evidence of its existence yet. But the people behind the first announcement found another way to provide evidence that Planet 9 might be out there: they tested whether it could explain an odd tilt in the Sun's axis of rotation.

(Source: Ars Technica)



## Life expectancy increased in Iran: WHO

**SOCIETY TEHRAN** — According to the figures released by World Health Organization (WHO) Iran's life expectancy rose to 74 last year from 72 in 2011, ISNA reported on Saturday.

In respect of infants' mortality rate in the last Iranian calendar year (March 2015-March 2016) the number of deaths of children less than 5 years has decreased compared to the past decades and accordingly life expectancy increased.



The indices from 2011 indicated that life expectancy increased from 72 to 73 in 2013. The chief reasons behind such an increase are decrease in infants' mortality rate, sufficiently widespread health care coverage, promoted literacy rate, and creating health care facilities in rural areas.

Based on the numbers announced by WHO the infant mortality rate for children below age 5 in 2012 and 2013 were 18 and 17 deaths per 1,000 live births respectively and the rate for children below age one were 15 and 14 deaths per 1,000 live births over the same period.

In 2013, some 98 percent of the infants were given vaccination for diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus (DPT), tuberculosis, poliomyelitis, and hepatitis.

## LEARN ENGLISH

### Getting in to See a Busy Doctor

Monique: Ugh!

Jurgen: What's the matter?

Monique: My **GP** referred me to a **specialist** for my back problems, but she doesn't have any **openings** for eight weeks! I'm **waitlisted** in case there's a **cancellation**, but if there isn't one, I'll have to **endure** this pain for at least another eight weeks.

Jurgen: Can't you just go see another specialist?

Monique: I could, but my GP says that she's the best in the business. In the meantime, I'll try to see a **physical therapist** about my neck. It's **flaring up** again.

Jurgen: At least you'll get some **relief**.

Monique: Maybe. I have to call back tomorrow morning to see if she can **fit me in**. She's really **booked up**, too. While I'm waiting, I guess I could try to see the **podiatrist** about my feet.

Jurgen: You're having feet problems, too?

Monique: Yeah, my whole body is **falling apart**. I think I'm nearly past my **expiration date**!

(Source: eslpod.com)

**GP:** general practitioner; a doctor who is trained in general medicine and treats people in a particular area or town

**specialist:** a doctor who knows more about one particular type of illness or treatment than other doctors

**opening:** a time to set an appointment

**waitlist:** to place on a list of people who have asked for something but who must wait before they can have it

**cancellation:** an appointment that becomes available because someone decides not to do what they have arranged

**endure:** to be in a difficult or painful situation for a long time without complaining

**physical therapist:** a therapist who treats a disease or an injury of the muscles or joints with massage, exercises, heat, etc.

**flare up:** a situation in which someone suddenly has problems because of a disease or illness after not having any problems for a long time

**relief:** when something reduces someone's pain or unhappy feelings

**fit somebody in:** to manage to do something or see someone, even though you have a lot of other things to do; squeeze somebody in

**be booked up:** if someone is booked up, they are extremely busy and have arranged a lot of things they must do

**podiatrist:** a doctor who takes care of people's feet and treats foot diseases

**fall apart:** (of a person) lose one's capacity to cope with pain

**expiration date:** the date after which something is not safe to eat or can no longer be used



Without water, everything withers

# Iran's online census: Participation beat expectations

**SOCIETY TEHRAN** — Some 46.4 percent of Iranians, constituting more than 11 million families, went for online census which started on September 24 nationwide, IRNA news agency reported.

The online census was very well received as the Statistical Center of Iran had expected some 8.881 million families to participate considering the number of people who have access to the internet but the final results went beyond expectations.

As announced by the center, 11,067,137 families representing 37,171,307 individuals participated in the online census.

Regarding the extent of participation Semnan province with 80 percent of its population filling out the online questionnaire came in first with some 173,500 families accounting for 540,500 individuals taking part in the census, secretary for Semnan province census headquarters Reza Abdollahzadeh said



on Saturday.

Abdollahzadeh went on to say that with regards to the proportion of the population of Semnan province to the whole country's the province has the highest level of participation and Bushehr province also

holds the second place right after Semnan with 73.55 percent participation.

The first phase of the national census over which data was collected online by referring to a website was held nationwide from September 24 to October 15 but

got extended twice for six more days until October 21.

In the second phase which started on October 21 surveyors are visiting the rest of the households door-to-door to fill out forms for those who did not use the website.

Over the last national census some 65,000 census takers across the nation had to go door to door to collect information while the number have decreased to 25,000 this year owing to the online services.

The new online data gathering system is both time and cost efficient. The users who had provided their information using the web-based services are given a tracking code which are supposed to keep to give to the surveyors in the second phase.

The census is being conducted every five years in Iran. The first nationwide census was held in 1956. This is the first time Iran is using online services to collect information.

## Police: Man thanks trooper in letter after speeding ticket

**EWING TOWNSHIP, N.J. (AP)** — New Jersey State Police say the general manager of a company that operates radio stations complimented a trooper in a letter after he was ticketed for speeding.

The agency wrote on its Facebook page Thursday that Dave Coskey praised the trooper's attitude after he was pulled over on the Garden State Parkway on Sunday.

Coskey says Trooper 7515 could've given him the ticket and walked away,

but instead explained that they're trying to save lives, not just hand out tickets.

Coskey says the trooper told him they want people to slow down because there have been some deadly accidents recently on that section of the parkway.

The former head of marketing for the Borgata casino and the NBA's Philadelphia 76ers says the trooper then escorted him off the shoulder and back onto the roadway.

## 94-year-old who has been fire chief since 1953 is retiring

A Pennsylvania fire chief is announcing his retirement just ahead of his 95th birthday.

J. Edward Hutchinson — affectionately known as "Hutch" — has served more than six decades as Greensburg's fire chief but has decided not to run for a 22nd term.

The Pittsburgh Tribune-Review reports the fire department will now search for another leader for the first time since 1953.

Hutchinson says 63 years is "a long

friggin' time" and he now must pass the torch on to someone new. He's believed to be the longest-serving active chief in the state.

There has been only one interruption in his service to the department: a four-year hiatus when he served during World War II.

Hutchinson says he wants to ride off into the sunset on a horse like John Wayne.

(Source: Yahoo News)

## IN FOCUS Tehran Times/Farhad Safari



Farmers in Anbough village, northern Gilan province, have harvested some 1,450 tons of pomegranate from 220 gardens stretching over 155 hectares of land.

## Peanut butter vandal mistakes gathering for Trump rally

Disorderly conduct charges are pending against a woman who authorities say smeared peanut butter on 30 vehicles outside a gathering in central Wisconsin that she mistakenly thought was a Donald Trump rally.

WSAW-TV reports that investigators say the Monday night conservation group meeting in Amherst had nothing to do with politics.

Authorities say the 32-year-old woman was drunk when she entered the meeting and began yelling about how she hates Trump. She departed when asked to leave, but authorities say she then used peanut butter to draw symbols and write on vehicles outside. An incident report said the woman's blood-alcohol content was 0.218, about 2½ times the state's legal limit for driving.

She is free on bond.

Amherst is 115 miles north of Madison.

(Source: Fox News)

## SPSEZ Chief Named Economic Elite of Islamic World

In a prestigious ceremony held in Malaysia, *South Pars Special Economic Zone (SPSEZ) Chief Executive Mehdi Yousefi* was introduced as one of economic elites in Islamic world and received a Plaque of Honor and statue from the Malaysian Minister of Economy.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Islamic World Trade and Investment Conference (2016), which is regarded as the most prestigious economic event (special of Muslims in Islamic World) kicked off its work in *Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia* in the presence of outstanding economic figures of Islamic world with the aim of showcasing the latest capabilities and potentials of Muslim states in world and also exploring strategies for promoting and enhancing investment in these countries.

This prestigious conference is held every year by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in the presence of scholars and thinkers of Islamic world, in which, successful economic models and strategies for boosting investment in these Muslim countries are discussed.

It should be noted that Islamic World Trade and Investment Conference is the most effective and powerful events which paves suitable way for broadening cooperation between Islamic countries and also creates an appropriate chance for promoting and expanding influence of public and private sectors in Islamic countries.

For his part, *South Pars Special Economic Zone (SPSEZ)*



Chief Executive Mehdi Yousefi expounded on the economic model based on "resistance economy" doctrine as proposed by the supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Malaysia Marzieh Afkham was the special guest in this prestigious conference. Also, the conference was attended by top scholars, scientists and economists of many Muslim countries.

The senior executive official of the company pointed to the significant and progressive developments in the field of production and export in the region as one of the main reasons of his selection for this title and said: "The company owes its achievements in the region to the unsparring efforts of the Oil Ministry and National Iranian Oil Company (NOIC) and also private companies based in the region."



# Yemeni forces hit military convoy in Saudi Arabia

Yemeni forces have targeted a convoy of the House of Saud regime military forces and Saudi mercenaries in Saudi Arabia's southwest with a rocket.

The retaliatory rocket attack was carried out against the convoy by Yemen's army and fighters of the Ansarullah (Houthi) movement in the al-Khazra' district of Saudi Arabia's Najran region on Friday, Yemen's al-Masirah television said.

The report said the attack killed and injured a large number of the Saudi forces and mercenaries.

About 10,000 Yemenis have been killed since the regime in Riyadh launched its deadly campaign against Yemen in March 2015. The military aggression was meant to reinstall Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, a staunch ally of Riyadh who has resigned as Yemen's president.



A 72-hour ceasefire went into effect in Yemen shortly before Wednesday midnight to allow aid to reach the families trapped in towns and villages cut off by months of Saudi bombing.

The Saudi military has repeatedly violated the ceasefire, however.

On Saturday, Saudi jets hit the al-Matun district in the northwestern Yemeni province of Jawf, killing one Yemeni civilian.

The House of Saud regime launched rocket attacks against several areas in the Yemeni province of Sa'ada on Friday. According to al-Masirah, the rockets hit residential areas in the Shada district.

On Thursday, six people were killed in airstrikes by Saudi warplanes on Sa'ada and the province of Amran.

(Source: Press TV)

## Senior Egyptian military official shot dead in Cairo

A senior Egyptian army officer was shot dead outside his home in a Cairo suburb, AFP news agency reported, citing a military official and a relative.

Brigadier General Adel Ragaei, who commanded an armored division deployed in the Sinai, died in a hail of bullets on Saturday, as he left his home in the Obour City suburb, according to his sister-in-law Huda Zein Elabedine.

Fighters in Egypt have killed hundreds of policemen and soldiers, mostly in the Sinai Peninsula, but such attacks on senior officers are rare.

"At 6am (04:00 GMT) they killed him. I can't tell you if it was six or 12 bullets. It was before he could get into his car," AFP quoted Elabedine as saying.

A military official told AFP that the officer had indeed been "martyred", but he did not provide further details.

According to media sources close to Al Jazeera, Ragaei oversaw the destruction and flooding of tunnels that ran into the Gaza Strip under the Rafah border, which provided a lifeline for residents of the besieged territory.

An armed group called Liwa al-Thawra

claimed the attack, in a message posted on Twitter, AFP reported, but the message has yet to be independently verified.

The largest Arab country is currently battling several armed groups mainly concentrated in the Sinai Peninsula and which gained pace after the military coup that ousted Mohamed Morsi, the country's first democratically elected president.

The campaign, which has included the Egyptian branch of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group, has killed hundreds of soldiers and police.

One group, which calls itself the Hasam Movement, has claimed several attacks in or near Cairo, including the assassination of a police officer and the attempted killing of a senior prosecutor.

The attacks have dented the recovery of tourism after a 2011 uprising drove away tourists, a major source of hard currency.

Import-dependent Egypt is facing a shortage of foreign exchange that has stifled business activity and hit confidence in the economy.

(Source: agencies)

## Malawi's Peter Mutharika dismisses ill health rumors

Malawi's President Peter Mutharika, 76, has dismissed rumors of ill health after being away from the country for a month, saying doctors told him his vital organs are like those of a 30-year-old.

Mutharika flew to New York in mid-September to give a speech at the United Nations General Assembly later that month, but there had been no sight of him until his return on Sunday, prompting widespread speculation that he was critically ill or even dead.

Speaking for the first time after his extended trip to the United States, Mutharika said on Friday he was in "excellent health".

"I am not sick. I am still alive and I have more than nine lives," he told reporters jokingly. Mutharika entered the press conference in the administrative capital Lilongwe waving both hands to an audience of media, cabinet ministers, supporters and diplomats.

Last on Sunday, when he disembarked from his plane from the United States, his right arm appeared stiff and he instead used his left arm to wave and to shake hands with officials, rais-

ing more speculation among Malawians who are scrutinizing every detail for clues about his health.

He told the press conference he was unable to use his right hand then because of "slight rheumatism". Mutharika said if he was sick, he would have been "crazy" to leave the U.S. and fly home.

When Mutharika extended his stay in the U.S. for two weeks after the UN gathering, his office condemned rumors that he was critically ill as "baseless, malicious and sickening".

It threatened legal action against anyone responsible for "damaging rumor-mongering".

Politicians in Malawi have called on Mutharika to disclose all expenses incurred on his tour, including those of his entourage, as well as explain what critics called his "absence without leave".

But the president refused to discuss the money spent on his trip, saying he does not have to explain "every minute of what I am doing".

Mutharika, a former lawyer, was elected in 2014 for a five-year term.

(Source: agencies)

## Clinton makes a pitch for a mandate and senate control

Hillary Clinton entered the final phase of her campaign on Friday, working to ensure a victory that is decisive enough to earn a mandate for her presidency and a surge of voters to help Democrats win congressional races.

Emerging from a nine-day absence from the trail, Clinton seized on the momentum of her performance in the final presidential debate, choosing Ohio — a battleground state where she has struggled the most against Donald J. Trump — as her first stop on a four-day swing. With new polls showing Clinton closing in on Trump in the state, her campaign is glimpsing the opportunity for a clean sweep of traditional swing states.

Reminding voters of Trump's refusal in Wednesday's debate to say definitively he would accept the outcome on Election Day, Clinton said that as secretary of state she had visited countries whose leaders jailed political opponents and invalidated elections they did not win. "We know in our country the difference between leadership and dictatorship," she said.

She also portrayed herself as a candidate who could attract independent, undecided and even Republican voters unhappy with Trump's campaign.

Her stop in Ohio marked the start of a rare multiday tour of swing states as the Clinton campaign revved up its efforts to decisively defeat Trump on Nov. 8, including releasing a powerful minute-long ad featuring Khizr Khan, the father of a Muslim American soldier killed in Iraq. The ad featuring Khan, who was attacked by Trump after he spoke at the Democratic convention, will run in Ohio, Florida, Pennsylvania and North Carolina, as well as other crucial states.

With Clinton holding a healthy lead in most national polls, Democrats have turned their focus to trying to ensure victory by as large a margin as possible, deploying Michelle Obama in Arizona and President Obama in Florida. The larger the victory, the less Trump and his supporters can claim foul play, Clinton's allies said.

A month ago, Ohio seemed to be aligning as a Trump stronghold, as its large bloc of white working-class voters responded to Trump's economic populism and America-first message. But the state is now back in play, with a poll from Suffolk University in Boston showing a tied race.

Elsewhere, Trump's Ohio director cut ties recently with the state's Republican chairman, Matt Borges, over Borges's sharply worded public doubts about Trump.

Ohio is not essential to Clinton's road to the White House. She could lose it and still romp through the Electoral College given her dominance in other swing states like Virginia, Pennsylvania and Colorado, according to polls.

Trump spent the day hoppedotching to rallies in North Carolina and Pennsylvania, a state where Clinton has built a formidable lead. While he projected a subdued confidence at a rally in Fletcher, N.C., he also seemed to prepare for at least the possibility of an Election Day loss.

At his rally in Fletcher, he offered a slightly more restrained version of his typically freewheeling speech, largely hewing to his prepared remarks.

Gone were his complaints of a "rigged" and "stolen" election — they have drawn condemnation by Democrats and Republicans alike — and he did not, as he has recently, try to counter accusations from the 10 women who have come forward to accuse him of inappropriate sexual advances.

The Trump campaign has said that it plans to increase Trump's schedule in the final weeks, potentially holding as many as six rallies a day. Trump explained that he wanted to have no regrets, should he lose.

Trump's team increasingly views North Carolina as a state that is critical to a victory in November, along with others like Florida, Ohio and Pennsylvania. Trump's running mate, Gov. Mike Pence of Indiana, visited the same town just last week.

## Clinton TV ad hits Trump hard; he promises an all-out effort

While Clinton unveiled an emotional television ad featuring the parents of a slain Muslim American Army captain, Trump assured supporters he would have no regrets if he loses the presidential election because he was going all out in the final weeks of the campaign.

Clinton's new ad features Khizr Khan, whom Trump assailed after Khan spoke at the Democratic National Convention. In the 60-second ad, which Clinton's campaign said was airing in seven battleground states, Khan retells how his son, Capt. Humayun Khan, died in Iraq seeking to protect his U.S. military unit from a suicide bomber.

"Mr. Trump, would my son have a place in your America?" the father asks, tearing up as the ad fades to black.

Trump and Clinton remained sharply at odds over his unprecedented assertion in the final debate on Wednesday that he may not concede if he loses.

Trump has said he's merely reserving the right to contest the results if the outcome is unclear or questionable. Underpinning his threat is his contention — presented with no evidence — that the election is "rigged" against him and may be soiled by widespread voter fraud. He's urged supporters to "monitor" polling places for potential shenanigans.

Fanning those flames, Russia's government has asked Oklahoma and two other states to allow Russian officials to be present at polling stations on Election Day, to study the "U.S. experience in organization of voting process." Allegations by the U.S. government that Russia is trying to influence the election by hacking Democratic groups has fed a Clinton camp claim that Russian President Vladimir Putin is siding with Trump.

The Oklahoma secretary of state's office said on Friday it had denied the Russian request, in line with state law. At the White House, press secretary Josh Earnest said it was unclear what Moscow was trying to do.

(Source: agencies)

## Has Duterte really ditched the U.S. for Beijing's embrace?

6 → "What is unfolding before us must be considered a national tragedy," the country's former foreign minister, Albert del Rosario, said in a scathing statement released on Friday.

"Did the Chinese give [Duterte] too much Maotai?" one commentator wrote in the Philippine Star, referring to the luxury Chinese liquor with which politicians have traditionally plied their guests.

Joseph Franco, a Philippines specialist from Singapore's Nanyang Technological University, said Duterte's "wild and crazy statements" had also left many within the

political and military establishment on edge.

Franco, who used to work for the chief of staff of the Philippines armed forces, said officials were desperately trying to understand "where does the hyperbole and rhetoric end and where does the policy begin?"

"I know people who are at their wits end, frankly, within the foreign ministry and the army."

Heydarian said the security establishment was "a little bit jittery already" and cautioned Duterte against alienating it further.

Full-spectrum American support

"The Philippine military is very close to America and relies on full-spectrum American support — logistics, intelligence, finance and training — so I don't think the military will be happy with severance of ties with the U.S. in favour of China," he said.

The military is "influential in the sense that they can get rid of any president at some point in time," Heydarian added. "The Philippines is a country where coup d'états have not been very uncommon."

Shi Yinong, the Chinese foreign

policy scholar, said Duterte's rapprochement with Beijing was likely to "stimulate further the pro-American forces in the Philippines to undermine his domestic position".

He added that Chinese leaders would be weighing up how much faith they could place in a special relationship with someone he described as "generally a very, very volatile guy".

Asked if Beijing trusted Duterte, the academic replied: "This is international politics. There is no baseline trust. How can anyone trust this guy?"

(Source: The Guardian)

## Hackers cripple U.S. internet in wide-scale cyber attack

Several of the world's best-known websites were inaccessible across parts of the United States on Friday after hackers unleashed a series of attacks on a company that acts as a switchboard for the internet.

The attacks affected access to Twitter, Paypal, Spotify and other customers of the infrastructure company in New Hampshire called Dyn, which processes large volumes of internet traffic.

The attackers used hundreds of thousands of internet-connected devices that had previously been infected with a malicious code that allowed them to cause outages.

"The complexity of the attacks is what's making it very challenging for us," Dyn's chief strategy officer, Kyle York, told Reuters news agency.

York said that at least some of the malicious traffic was coming from connected devices, including webcams and digital video recorders that had been infected with control software named Mirai.

Security researchers have previously raised concerns that such connected devices, sometimes referred to as the Internet of Things, lack proper security.

The Mirai code was dumped on the internet about a month ago, and criminal groups are now charging to employ it in cyber-attacks, said Allison Nixon, director of security research at Flashpoint, which was helping Dyn analyze the attack.

The Department of Homeland Security last week issued a warning about attacks from the Internet of Things, following the release of the code for Mirai.

On Friday, Dyn said in a statement that it had resolved one morning attack, which disrupted operations for about two hours, but disclosed a second a few hours later that was causing further disruptions. By Friday evening, it was fighting a third.

Attacking a large domain name service provider like Dyn can create massive disruptions because such firms are responsible for forwarding large volumes of internet traffic.

The disruptions come at a time of unprecedented fears about cyber threats in the United States, where hackers have breached political organizations and election agencies.

The U.S. government has formally accused Russia of conducting cyber-attacks against U.S. political organizations during the campaign for the November 8 presidential election, including hacking of Democratic Party emails.

(Source: agencies)

## Police uncover London Underground bomb plot

A terrorist plot to target the London Underground has been foiled after police found what they suspect to be a viable bomb on a tube train, planted by a terrorist planning further attacks.

A 19-year-old man was arrested by armed counter-terrorism officers, a day after the suspect device was found on board a train near the O2 center.

On Friday it emerged that security officials had contacted the Ministry of Defense (MoD) after the find, to warn serving military personnel, and the threat level for transport in London had been raised to severe to reflect that an attack was highly likely.

In a note the MoD had told personnel: "It remains possible that the perpetrator may attempt to place further devices."

British Transport Police confirmed that they had increased security arrangements because of the discovery and would be stepping up patrols.

The discovery of the suspect device and the subsequent arrest came 11 years after the 7/7 bombings when the London transport network was targeted in a terrorist attack that killed 52 passengers.

Details of the suspected plot emerged in the memo sent to serving military personnel, forwarding a warning from the security agency that monitors terrorist threat levels.

The memo said the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre "has raised the threat level for transport in London to severe: an attack is highly likely".

It said: "This increase is in response to the discovery of a suspected viable improvised explosive device (IED) on a London Underground train yesterday".

"It is unknown who placed the device and what their motivation was. Therefore it remains possible that the perpetrator may attempt to place further devices. The threat level will continue to be reviewed as further information is received."

It is understood the threat level for transport outside London remains unchanged at moderate.

(Source: Daily Telegraph)

## Bahrain to auction Shia bloc's assets

→ Bahraini regime forces fired tear gas at the protesters who took to the streets of the northwestern village of Diraz, located about 12 kilometers west of the capital Manama, on Friday.

They were carrying photos of the cleric during the demonstration in Diraz, which is also Qassim's hometown.

The demonstrators also slammed Manama's decision to impose a ban on holding Friday prayers in the village, condemning the House of Khalifah regime for its persecution of the Shia community.

On June 20, Bahraini authorities stripped the 79-year-old cleric of his citizenship, less than a week after suspending the al-Wefaq National Islamic Society, the country's main opposition bloc, and dissolving the Islamic Enlightenment Institution founded by Qassim, and the opposition al-Risala Islamic Association.

Bahrain, a tiny Persian Gulf island nation, has seen a wave of anti-regime protests since mid-February 2011. Scores of people have been killed and hundreds of others wounded or detained in Manama's ongoing crackdown.

Troops from the House of Saud regime and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) were deployed in March that year to assist Manama in crushing the protests.

(Source: agencies)



## US Grand Prix could go to other circuits despite worries over falling crowds

The United States Grand Prix has had 10 homes, more than any other grand prix, and according to Formula One's new owners, Liberty Media, that number is about to increase.

There is talk of another race – perhaps two, with Los Angeles, Las Vegas and New Jersey among the possibilities. The US, remember, staged three races in 1982, in Detroit, Las Vegas and Long Beach, California.



Before this weekend's grand prix, Bobby Epstein, the chairman and co-founder of the Circuit of the Americas (Cota), is as excited as everyone else about the changing world of Formula One but he has mixed feelings about the prospect of more races in the United States.

The Cota facility is one of the most popular on the F1 schedule, an exhilarating circuit for drivers and race fans. And, in true American style, it is more than that.

It is a show, a spectacle, and this year it is more of a festival than ever, with a greater number and wider variety of attractions, including themed restaurants, jugglers, body painting and much more music, with the highlight a Taylor Swift concert.

Crowds have been falling since the race was first held here in 2012, and last year's event was badly hit by rain – 25 inches of it in a week – though that helped create arguably the best race of the season.

So Cota has responded by reducing prices and offering more. But Epstein says: "If we have more races here we will be competing for a limited base of fans, and we could be weaker for a number of years. Five or 10 years down the road we would build a bigger audience overall. But there could be some pain first."

Epstein, who is impressed by the way Melbourne and Montreal promote their race weekends, added: "We are competing for the entertainment dollar. Promoters have to become more creative. I would like to see more money spent on promoting the sport. I think fees should be lower so we can lower the ticket prices."

He would also like to see more cars on the grid and, most of all, an American driver. "Having an American driver would be huge. We can always be welcoming but there's no substitute for the home town hero. People connect with personalities."

At least the Americans have their own team this year. Gene Haas, who made his millions in machine tools, is the founder of the Haas team which has made an impressive debut this year. "From the standpoint of Formula One, being a global product, it's important to be in the United States. You've got 340 million wealthy consumers, and there are a lot of F1 fans in the US," he says.

"We'd love to have F1 better accepted here and we'd love to have another race here. We'd like to see more races in our time zone. We've got South America, central America, Canada and the United States. Between us we could easily stage half a dozen races. It would be better for transportation too."

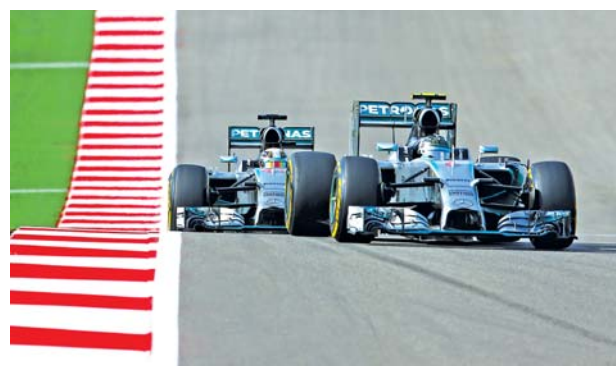
He adds: "There are a lot of possibilities here. We know how to put on a show, as Austin has proved. And I'd like to see more shows here. I think Las Vegas would be a natural."

There are those who argue that America is too big and too insular to properly embrace the complexities of Formula One. In 1991, when Ayrton Senna and Alain Prost were in their pomp, the Phoenix Gazette reported with some relish that a local ostrich festival had attracted a bigger crowd. But we are living in a fast-changing world.

There are Americans who will never be global. A few years ago this correspondent remembers being with the Red Bull driver Mark Webber when someone said to him: "Are you really Australian? Your English is so good!" Yet a year later, a couple of locals could be discussing the complexities of the various tyres, and if you understand tyre rubbers, you understand everything. "This year we are making a statement to reach a new audience," says Epstein. "We are looking not only to keep the existing fanbase happy but also to bring in some younger folks who have never been exposed to this event. It's F1 and more, and if people realise that, they will come back in numbers." Ten venues that have hosted the US Grand Prix.

- Sebring, Florida (First race: 1959) 1 race
- Riverside, California (First race: 1960) 1 race
- Watkins Glen (First race: 1961) 20 races
- Long Beach, California (First race: 1976) 8 races
- Caesars Palace, Las Vegas (First race: 1981) 2 races
- Detroit (First race: 1982) 7 races
- Dallas (First race: 1984) 1 race
- Phoenix (First race: 1989) 3 races
- Indianapolis (First race: 2000) 8 races
- Austin (First race: 2012) 4 races

(Source: Guardian)



# Mourinho looking for winning return to Stamford Bridge

Stamford Bridge feels like home for Jose Mourinho, but Sunday will see the Manchester United boss take a seat in the away dugout for the first time in the Premier League.

Mourinho is the most successful manager in Chelsea's history, but his second spell with the Blues ended in ignominy. The Portuguese coach had lost just one of his first 97 home league games at Chelsea, but tasted defeat four times in his final eight matches during a tortuous run in 2015 that ended in his dismissal.

And the now United manager has admitted that he's not looking forward to returning to his old stomping ground after losing that winning edge.

"When I played there with Inter (Milan), I had never lost a match at Stamford Bridge because I had that home record," said Mourinho, referring to a European game against Chelsea in 2010, which Jose's Italian side won 1-0. "Now I've lost a few matches at the Bridge. Last season I lost two or three matches at the Bridge, so I cannot use the same words, because now I've lost there."

"I knew that working in England and staying in the Premier League, that sooner or later I had to play against Chelsea and go to Stamford Bridge. The computer has decided it is to go now and here we go."

Heading into the weekend, Mourinho's United (4-2-2) go into Sunday's game two points behind their hosts after a solid yet unspectacular start under their new boss. But the Red Devils should have plenty of confidence after their 4-1 rout of Fenerbahce in the Europa League on Thursday.

Chelsea (5-1-2), in contrast, had midweek off, although manager Antonio Conte is not happy about having to look for positives from his team's lack of European action.

"I don't want this type of advantage," Conte said. "This means you don't play in the Champions League or Europa League. I think Chelsea must play during the week (in) this type of tournament. Chelsea, this season, can't do this. This is not an advantage."

"Manchester United played (Thursday) and I watched the game. I saw maybe four players who will probably start on Sunday. When you have this possibility to play Champions League or Europa League, you can give the chance also to other players who every day in training work very hard."

The Blues will be boosted by the return of captain, leader and legend John Terry, who has shaken off an ankle injury to be fully available for Sunday's game. Fellow defenders Kurt Zouma and Branislav Ivanovic are both unavailable



due to injury, but Conte will be reticent to rush back his captain into the injury depleted back-line because of a recent successful switch in system.

Chelsea have racked up consecutive clean sheets (against Hull City and Leicester City) using a three-at-the-back of Gary Cahill and Cesar Azpilicueta either side of sweeper David Luiz. It will be fascinating to see whether Conte sticks with that system, which he has preferred for so much of his career, against an attack of the calibre of United's.

And if he does stick with the new shape, then where - if at all - does John Terry fit in? Terry lacks the pace to play in either of the wide roles, so David Luiz would presumably have to vacate the central role in which he has looked so assured.

It's a selection dilemma without an obvious answer, but

it isn't just the defence where Chelsea are short on options with Cesc Fabregas ruled out and Brazilian duo Willian and Oscar both doubts in midfield.

Manchester United have concerns over the fitness of Chris Smalling, but Mourinho may be tempted to introduce Michael Carrick for a rare league start after the veteran excelled against Fenerbahce at the base of a midfield that has lacked a positionally-disciplined anchor.

Avoid defeat and Chelsea would set a new unbeaten run against United of eight games.

The Red Devils have lost more Premier League games (16) against the Stamford Bridge outfit than against any other club.

(Source: AP)

## Kuznetsova wins in Moscow to claim last WTA Finals berth

Russia's Svetlana Kuznetsova raced to a 6-2 6-1 victory over Australian Daria Gavrilova to defend her Kremlin Cup title in Moscow on Saturday and secure a place at the season-ending WTA Finals.

Kuznetsova was broken in her first service game to fall 2-0 behind but the 31-year-old broke back immediately to claim the first of 10 straight games as she roared to victory in 73 minutes against the world number 37.

The Russian had to win to qualify for Singapore and her victory represents heartbreak for Briton Johanna Konta, who held the final spot for the Singapore event but will now drop down to first alternate after even taking part in a glitzy draw ceremony on Friday.

Kuznetsova, a twice grand slam champion, must now rush to Singapore for her first round robin match in the White Group against defending champion Agnieszka Radwanska at the Singapore Indoor Stadium on Monday.

Czech Karolina Pliskova and Spanish French Open champion Garbine Muguruza are the other two players in the group.

Action starts in the Red Group on Sunday when Romania's Simona Halep faces American Madison Keys before German world number one



Angelique Kerber takes on Slovakia's Dominika Cibulkova.

The top two players from each pool advance to the semi-finals.

Kuznetsova will be making her sixth appearance at the year-ending tournament and will be looking to advance from the round robin stage for a first time.

Despite the disappointment of missing out on qualifying for the WTA Finals, Konta picked up the tour's Most Improved Player Award on Friday in recognition of her climb from 147th in the world in mid-2015 to number 10 in the latest rankings.

The 25-year-old Briton also claimed her maiden WTA Tour title at the Stanford Classic in June.

(Source: Reuters)

## Radwanska hoping for luck and pluck in WTA Finals defense

Agnieszka Radwanska returns to the scene of her greatest triumph next week when she opens the defense of her WTA Finals title and the 27-year-old Pole is the first to admit that luck can be as important as skill to emerge victorious in Singapore.

Radwanska became the first player in the history of the elite eight-woman tournament to lose two of her three round robin matches before claiming the title after she made the most of her good fortune to secure a surprise victory.

Seeded fifth, Radwanska lost to Maria Sharapova and Flavia Pennetta and looked all but out of the tournament before a straight-sets win over Simona Halep sneaked her through to the semi-finals with a 1-2 record on sets won.

The Pole then displayed all of her usual resilience to rally past Spaniard Garbine Muguruza in three sets before she held off Petra Kvitova to claim the title with a 6-2 4-6 6-3 victory. "I definitely had couple of great matches," she told reporters on Saturday as she recalled last year's triumph.

"Obviously not the great start but I think it's a tournament that you can come back and a tournament that you don't need to win every match just to win the title," the world number three added.

"There is always the hope. A little bit of luck as well. Depends of the other scores in the group and then you can still win it. So I think that's what I actually proved last year."

Radwanska admits that she loves the



unpredictable nature a tournament involving the top eight players of the season can provide, despite the absence of world number two Serena Williams for a second straight year due to injury.

"Every year is a bit different. I think it's always very interesting because pretty much every match is 50/50 and you are really going to see good tennis," she added.

"But of course what's different? I'm just getting older and older and still glad I can qualify for another year here."

Williams' long reign as world number one was ended this year by Germany's Angelique Kerber, who won the Australian and U.S. Opens with her solid baseline game and also claimed an Olympic silver medal and reached the Wimbledon final.

(Source: Reuters)

## Sevilla can join Atletico in challenging Real and Barca, says Simeone



Sevilla are among the top four sides in Spain and can realistically challenge historical heavyweights Barcelona and Real Madrid for trophies, Atletico Madrid coach Diego Simeone said on Saturday.

La Liga leaders Atletico travel to third-placed Sevilla on Sunday in the first ever meeting between Simeone and Jorge Sampaoli, two Argentine coaches who have transformed soccer in their own way.

Simeone broke the Real/Barcas stranglehold on La Liga by leading Atletico to a first title for 18 years in 2014 while Sampaoli guided Chile to their first major trophy at the 2015 Copa America win.

Sampaoli has also made an impression on Sevilla since succeeding triple Europa League winner Unai Emery, transforming them into a breathtaking attacking force and overseeing their third best start to a season this century.

"I see Sevilla and us as part of an excellent foursome, fighting with hope and enthusiasm to compete against Real Madrid and Barcelona," Simeone told a news conference on Saturday.

"They keep growing year after year, winning trophies, competing well and they have made a brilliant start. They have a competitive style of play, a clear and brave tactic designed by their coach to press a lot and attack down the wings.

That makes them dangerous."

Simeone and Sampaoli's paths have not crossed on a pitch but the two coaches were both interviewed for the Universidad de Chile job in 2010.

Sampaoli was appointed by the Santiago club and oversaw a treble of the league title, domestic cup and Copa Sudamericana.

"We've never faced each other and we don't have a tight relationship but there is a lot of respect here for what he has achieved in making Atletico one of the best teams in Europe," Sampaoli said of Simeone.

A Sevilla midfielder before joining Atletico in 1994, Simeone has never lost to his former club as a coach, winning six games and drawing five in the league and King's Cup.

(Source: Reuters)



# Iran's Soltani wins silver at IWF Youth World Weightlifting Championships

**SPORTS** Hossein Soltani of Iran **d e s k** claimed a silver medal in the men's 69kg event at the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) Youth World Weightlifting Championships on Saturday.

Soltani won the overall silver with a 295kg finish after lifting 131kg in snatch and 164kg in clean and jerk.

Clarence Cummings Jr won the gold medal with a total of 317kg.

The 16-year-old American lifted 182kg in the clean and jerk at the SPICE Arena in Penang, Malaysia to erase his own 180kg record set at the 2016 Junior World Weightlifting Championships in Tbilisi, Georgia, in June. The junior world meet is an Under-20 competition.

He also swept the gold in the snatch with a 135kg lift.

Ferhat Yazici of Turkey took the bronze with 291kg.

Iran has sent a full squad of eight men to the event.

The competition is being held in Penang, Malaysia from October 19 to 25.



## Farhad Kazemi steps down as Iran's Siah Jamegan coach



Farhad Kazemi stepped down as head coach of Iranian northeastern city of Mashhad's Siah Jamegan football team.

Siah Jamegan was defeated against Sepahan 2-1 in round ninth of Iran Professional League (IPL) and the coach announced his resignation after the match.

Kazemi replaced Rasoul Khatibi at the

Mashhad-base team in September 2015. Siah Jamegan is currently in the 13th place of Iran Professional League (IPL) with nine points from nine matches.

Kazemi started his coaching career as coach Bahman in 1995 and has also worked at Pas, Abou Moslem, Sepahan, Rah Ahan, Gostaresh and Paykan.

(Source: Tasnim)

## Sardar Azmoun on Olympique Marseille's radar



Olympique Marseille sent two scouts to Olimp 2 Stadium to watch Rostov striker Sardar Azmoun.

Azmoun, dubbed Iranian Lionel Messi, played 74 minutes against Atletico Madrid in the UEFA Champions League group stage, where the Russian outfit suffered a 1-0 home defeat.

A Russian site has reported that the French

club officials have negotiated with Rostov.

"I didn't know the Olympique Marseille's representatives were attending the match and I understood that after the game," Azmoun said.

"I am fully committed to Rostov and my only goal is to help them win the matches. I don't know what's going to happen."

(Source: Tasnim)

## Iran team earns 2nd straight win in 3x3 FISU World University League 2016

Iranian basketball players have achieved their second victory in the preliminary round of the 3x3 Fédération Internationale du Sport Universitaire (FISU) World University League 2016 in China, overcoming opponents from the United States of America.

The Payame Noor University outfit, which is representing the Islamic Republic of Iran in the three-day tournament in the southeastern Chinese city of Xiamen, defeated Indiana University side 21-15 on Friday.

Earlier in the day, the Iranian team had pulled off a 16-9 victory over South Africa's University of Johannesburg to start off its campaign at the event.

Payame Noor University players' consecutive Friday victories assured them a spot among the top eight teams.

The Iranians are scheduled to meet Serbian counterparts from the University of Kragujevac in their third pre-



liminary match on Saturday.

The 3x3 FISU World University League 2016 started

in Xiamen, China, on October 21 and will conclude on October 23, 2016.

A total of 32 teams – 16 teams of each gender – from 23 countries, including Argentina, Canada, China, Iran, Italy, Macau, South Africa, Switzerland, Thailand, Uganda and Venezuela, are representing five continents in the tournament.

The 3x3 (pronounced three on three) basketball is a form of the game played with three players on each side and one hoop.

The basketball discipline is currently being promoted and structured by the Fédération Internationale de Basketball Amateur (FIBA), and the highest profile tournament for national 3x3 teams is the FIBA 3x3 World Championships.

(Source: PressTV)

## World Cup-winning coach Lippi appointed China manager

World Cup-winning manager Marcello Lippi has been named as coach of China's national team, the Chinese Football Association (CFA) said on its website on Saturday.

The Italian replaced Gao Hongbo, who resigned this month after a 2-0 defeat in Uzbekistan dealt a further blow to the country's slim hopes of qualifying for the 2018 World Cup.

"The Chinese Football Association decided to appoint Mr. Lippi as coach of China's men's national team following amicable negotiations," read a short statement on the website.

No details of the contract were revealed but Lippi will be introduced to the media at a news conference in Beijing on Friday.

The 68-year-old, who won the World Cup with Italy in 2006, enjoyed a successful three-year spell with Guangzhou Evergrande, winning the Chinese League title three times and the Asian Champions League in 2013.

Lippi had been linked with a return to Guangzhou but the Chinese champions cleared the way for him to take the national team job when the club announced on Saturday they had agreed to terminate a contract signed early last month.

He will be China's third coach this year after Gao and Frenchman Alain Perrin, who was sacked in January, as the CFA bids to fulfill the ambition of President Xi Jinping for the country to qualify for the World Cup finals for a second time.

Lippi's first match in charge will be the World Cup qualifier against Qatar in Kunming on Nov. 15 but he will have his work cut out to resurrect their campaign.

The loss to Uzbekistan left China bottom of the six-team Asian Group A with one draw and three defeats after four of 10 matches in the round.

The top two qualify directly for Russia in

2018 with the third-placed side offered a passage to the finals via two playoffs.

At Evergrande, Lippi was handed a huge budget to bring in big-name European and Brazilian players, an option clearly not open to him with the national team.

Finding players to bolster China's goal tally - they have scored just two in their first four matches of this round of qualifying - will be a major challenge.

Of the top 13 goalscorers in the Chinese Super League going into this weekend's round of matches, only one - Shanghai SIPG's Wu Lei - was Chinese.

(Source: Reuters)

## Cristiano Ronaldo injury helped Portugal win Euro 2016 - Eric Abidal

Portugal benefited from Cristiano Ronaldo's injury during the European Championship final this summer, says former France international Eric Abidal.

Ronaldo went down with a knee issue early in the match, leaving his Portugal teammates without their captain and star player against hosts France. However, Fabio Santos' men managed to overcome the absence and win the match through an Eder strike in extra-time.

And Abidal says Ronaldo's exit relieved the team of having to play a supporting role for the three-time Ballon d'Or winner on such a big occasion.



"Ronaldo was out because he was injured -- it was a problem for France and an advantage for Portugal," Abidal told Grup 14 on Friday.

"Portugal were more relaxed without Ronaldo. The players there normally play for Ronaldo, but without him the team spirit is different, there was no stress."

"But for France, it was a shock because Ronaldo is not on the pitch. We have to fight more."

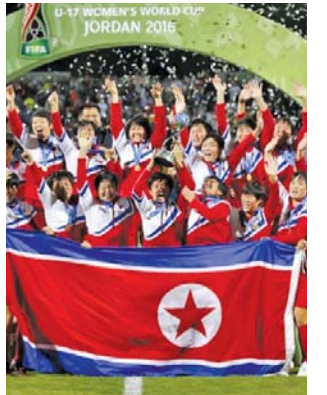
"Look who scored the goal for Portugal, some guy from the back [of the pecking order] who had never played before."

(Source: ESPN)

## DPR Korea win FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup 2016

Amman: DPR Korea have won the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup for a second time, edging out Japan 5-4 on penalties after an enthralling goalless draw in Amman. Rio Kanekatsu was the only player of the ten to miss, blasting her spot kick high and wide, which allowed Kim Pom-ui to slot home the winner and regain a trophy the North Koreans first won eight years ago in New Zealand.

Finals are often tense, insipid affairs but this was anything but, and the high-energy, high-quality football on show provided a fantastic advert for this tournament and women's football. The pace was frenetic from the word go, with openings at either end and Japan in particular producing superb, flowing moves that thrilled the noisy crowd.



It was one such passage of play that gave the Little Nadeshiko their first clear chance of the match on 10 minutes, when a slick exchange down the left ended with play being switched to the lively Takarada on the right. The Japan No7 met the ball first time at the edge of the box and saw her shot take a deflection off Pak Hye-gyong, but instead of wrong-footing Ok Kum-ju that touch diverted the ball safely into the keeper's arms.

Naoki Kusunose's team remained on top, though, and saw an even better opportunity go begging ten minutes later. Hana Takahashi was the guilty party, scuffing wide of the far post with the goal at her mercy after Ok had only been able to parry Fuka Nagano's 25-yard free-kick.

DPR Korea's goal was living a charmed life at this stage and they were fortunate again soon after, when Hinata Miyazawa cut in from the left and rattled the face of the bar with a ferociously struck long-range effort.

Lady Luck was soon smiling on Japan too, though, with two major let-offs for Momoko Tanaka either side of half-time. First, the Japan keeper came for and missed a long ball from Pyon Un-gyong, and emerged unscathed only when Ri Hae-yeon's glancing header drifted just wide of the right-hand post. Then, early in the second period, she dropped the ball at the feet of Sung Hyang-sim and was saved only by a miraculous saving tackle by Reina Wakisaka, who slid to divert the resulting goal-bound shot behind for a corner.

At the other end, Ok was looking considerably more dependable for the Koreans, and she twice came to her side's rescue as the second half wore on, producing fine saves to deny Oto Kanno and Saori Takarada. The result was that penalties were required to settle the outcome and DPR Korea held their nerve, converting all five of their spot-kicks to leave poor Kanekatsu as the unfortunate villain.

### ■ Sin Jong-bok, DPR Korea coach

"No words can express my feelings at winning this tournament. I had great trust in my players and I know that they picked up wonderful experience over the course of this competition. Japan are one of the top teams in the world and playing against such a top-level team meant the game was extremely competitive. We'd had experience of playing against Japan before in the AFC U-16 Women's Championship final and the level of play in this game was much higher. Even though they lost, the Japanese team played to a very high level and I commend them for that. But we managed to get the win and I think mental strength was our major strength. Japan's technical level is higher than ours, I admit that, and they missed some golden opportunities. But they have some weaknesses too and we were able to capitalise on those. Our team play and mental strength was what helped us win this tournament."

### ■ Naoki Kusunose, Japan coach

"Despite the result, I must say that the performance of my players was very satisfying. Of course there were some mistakes, but I really believed we would score, especially as we got closer to the end of the game. The team tried many different ways to break through but DPR Korea played very well and we must acknowledge their good performance. It's a tough experience but this will make my players stronger for their next tournament. Unfortunately we came up just short, but I think this generation offers great hope for the future and we want to keep on improving our football in Japan. We entered the game with confidence but we respected DPR Korea, and I think the game was of a good level. We missed a lot of chances but I know my players tried very hard and I have no regrets. As for the penalty miss, I would stress that the result is always the head coach's responsibility. These things happen in football and, as I said, I take responsibility for the outcome."

(Source: AFC)

## Gerrard hints at LA Galaxy exit

Steven Gerrard has hinted in an Instagram post that he may be leaving LA Galaxy.

He posted a picture of himself in Galaxy kit, accompanying it with the words: "Living in Los Angeles and playing for the great Galaxy supporters has been a privilege. You have made this place feel like home to me."

"This city and this club will always hold a special place in my heart. Thank you."

Some have immediately speculated that Gerrard's message means he will be leaving MLS imminently - and potentially returning to Liverpool to join Jurgen Klopp's staff.

The 36-year-old joined the Galaxy last July after a 17-year career on Anfield.

(Source: Eurosport)





### Poem of the day

The sunlight splits when entering the windows of the house.  
This multiplicity exists in the cluster of grapes.  
*Rumi*

### Prayer Times

Noon: 11:49 Evening: 17:37 Dawn: 4:55 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:19 (tomorrow)

Managing Director: Ali Asgari  
Editor-in-Chief: Hassan Lasjerdi  
Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 editor@tehrantimes.com  
Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000  
Advertisements Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051450 ads@tehrantimes.com  
Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807  
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## NEWS IN BRIEF



### "A Few Cubic Meters of Love" best film at Tajik festival

**T A R T** TEHRAN — "A Few Cubic Meters of Love" by Tehran-based Afghan director Jamshid Mahmudi has won the best film award at the 7th Didor International Film Festival in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

The film, which was directed in Iran in 2014, tells the story of Afghan asylum seekers who live with their families in old shipping containers and work illegally in a small factory in the outskirts of Tehran. Saber, a young Iranian worker, secretly meets Marona, daughter of Abdossalam, an Afghan worker. A love story unfolds.

Iranian actor Reza Kianian was a member of the jury of the festival, which was held from October 16 to 20.



### Iranian films to compete in Estonian festival

**T A R T** TEHRAN — Three Iranian films will be screened at the 20th Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival, which will be held in the Estonian capital from November 11 to 27.

Mehrdad Oskui's acclaimed documentary "Starless Dreams", Narges Abyar's drama "Breath" and Navid Danesh's "Duet" are scheduled to compete in the festival.

## Tehran Intl. Short Film Festival announces Islam competition lineup

**T A R T** TEHRAN — Eleven films from Iranian and foreign filmmakers will be screened at the 33rd Tehran International Short Film Festival in a section dedicated to movies about Islam.

"The Past" by Wathab Alsagar and "The Photo" by Baqer Alrabi, both from Iraq, "That's Mine" by Maryam Kashkulinia from Iran and "The Safe Territory" by Luca Innocenti from Italy are among the movies selected for the section entitled "Films about Islam".

The Iranian Youth Cinema Society (IYCS) is the main organizer of the festival, which will be held at Tehran's Charsu Cineplex from November 8 to 14.

## Bob Dylan removes mention of Nobel prize from website

**NEW YORK (The Guardian)** — It took Bob Dylan the best part of a week to acknowledge that he had been awarded the Nobel prize in literature, and even then only in the most dismissive way: an update to a page on his website plugging a new collection of his lyrics. But now it appears even that paltry nod went too far for the mercurial music legend.

The simple words "winner of the Nobel prize in literature", which appeared on the page for The Lyrics: 1961-2012, have now been removed. Bob Dylan, Nobel laureate, is once again plain Bob Dylan.

That single sentence was the sole public recognition Dylan had given to the prestigious award, announced last week in Stockholm. According to Sara Danius, the Nobel academy's permanent secretary, attempts had been made to contact Dylan about the award via close associates of his, but he had kept silent.

Dylan, though clearly aware and proud of his monumental legacy — recent years have seen a succession of releases of archive material under the umbrella title of "the Bootleg Series", in which he has deluged fans with unreleased material and opened up his working methods to scrutiny — has always stepped away from attempts to corral him into being something he does not want to be.

In 1965, at the height of his fevered elevation from singer to spokesman for a generation, he was asked at a San Francisco press conference whether he thought of himself primarily as a singer or a poet. "Oh, I think of myself more as a song and dance man, y'know?" he replied.

In July 1966, following a motorcycle crash at the peak of his fame, Dylan disappeared from public view. Though it was claimed he had broken several vertebrae, he was never treated in hospital, and he later admitted in his autobiography, Chronicles: "I had been in a motorcycle accident and I'd been hurt, but I recovered. Truth was that I wanted to get out of the rat race."

Whether the latest twist in the Dylan-Nobel saga is the result of an administrative foul-up or a deliberate choice is unknown — stars' websites are usually run with extremely limited input from their notional owners, and it's entirely possible Dylan never knew either that his site had made reference to the prize or removed it. Though it is, of course, less likely that his manager, Jeff Rosen, would be unaware.

# "The Salesman" wins Silver Hugo Special Jury Prize at Chicago festival

**T A R T** TEHRAN — Oscar-winning Iranian director Asghar Farhadi's acclaimed drama "The Salesman" won a Silver Hugo Special Jury Prize at the 52nd Chicago International Film Festival, the organizers announced on Friday night.

The movie is about Emad and Rana who move into a new flat in the center of Tehran. An incident linked to the previous tenant dramatically changes the young couple's life.

It is Iran's submission to the 89th Academy Awards in the best foreign language film category.

The Gold Hugo for Best Film went to "Sieranevada" by Romanian filmmaker Cristi Puiu who also received the Silver Hugo Best Director.

Adrian Titieni was presented the Silver Hugo Best Actor for his role in "Graduation", a joint production of France and Romania directed by Cristian Mungiu who also won the Silver Plaque for best screenwriter.

The Silver Hugo Best Actress went to Rebecca Hall for her role in "Christine", the American-British biographical film directed by Antonio Campos.

The festival continues through October 27, with several films yet to be screened.



Taraneh Alidusti acts in a scene from "The Salesman".

## Albanian festival to pay homage to Abbas Kiarostami

**T A R T** TEHRAN — The Tirana International Film Festival (TIFF) in Albania will commemorate Iranian filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami (1940-2016) in a special program dedicated to screening a number of his films, the organizers have announced.

"Close-Up", "Taste of Cherry", "The Report", "The Wind Will Carry Us", "Through Olive Trees", "24 Frames" and

"Take Me Home" are scheduled to be screened in the program.

In addition, the documentary "76 Minutes and 15 Seconds with Kiarostami", a montage film made by Kiarostami's close friend and collaborator Seifollah Samadian is due to be screened at the festival, which will be held from November 3 to 11. The title of the film refers to the duration of Kiarostami's life, 76 years and 15 days.

Also included is the documentary "Kiarostami, A Report" by Bahman Maqsdulu to be shown in this section.

Samadian and Maqsdulu are planning to attend the screenings of the documentaries, which will be followed by review sessions.

The festival will also screen "Atusa's Laughter" by Iranian director Alireza Farid in the official competition.



### PICTURE OF THE DAY Honaronline/Bahareh Asadi



The new conductor of Iran's National Orchestra, Fereidun Shahbazian, conducts the orchestra during a rehearsal at Tehran's Rudaki Hall on October 22, 2016. Earlier in September, he succeeded Farhad Fakhreddini who founded the orchestra in 1998.

## New posthumous Prince albums to include unreleased music

**NEW YORK (Reuters)** — Fans of the late singer Prince will get new music from the artist, as two new albums will feature previously unreleased and unheard tracks from the artist's vault of recordings.

"Prince 4Ever", available to U.S. audiences on Nov. 22, will feature "Moonbeam Levels", originally recorded by Prince in 1982, Warner Bros Records and NPG Records said Friday.

The record will include a selection of Prince's greatest hits such as "Kiss", "When Doves Cry" and "Purple Rain", and will come with a booklet featuring never-seen photos of the artist taken by acclaimed photographer Herb Ritts.

The album is the first posthumous release since Prince's sudden death in April at age 57 at his Paisley Park, Minnesota estate.

An all-star roster of artists including Stevie Wonder and Chaka Khan came together last week in Minnesota to perform a tribute concert to the late artist.

In early 2017, a new remastered and remixed version of Prince's 1984 record "Purple Rain", which was agreed with the artist before his death, will be released, featuring old and new songs. No further details were given yet on this album.

Prince notably blended elements of jazz, funk, R&B, disco and rock in a prolific output of more than 30 albums that have sold over 36 million copies in the United States alone since 1978.

He was also known as fiercely determined to maintain creative control over his music, famously changing his name to an unpronounceable symbol for several years during a bitter contract battle with Warner Bros.

The value of his musical legacy, including an extensive cache of unreleased recordings said to be locked in a vault, has been estimated by some to exceed a \$500 million, when factoring in future royalties, retail sales and commercial rights.

## U.N. appoints Wonder Woman as honorary ambassador amid outcry

**NEW YORK (Reuters)** — The United Nations named comic-book superhero Wonder Woman as an honorary ambassador to fight for gender equality on Friday, amid criticism that the scantily clad fictional character was an inappropriate choice.

U.N. officials at a ceremony formalizing the appointment said Wonder Woman is known for her commitment to justice, peace and equality.

"Wonder Woman is an icon," said U.N. Under-Secretary-General Cristina Gallach. "We are very pleased that this character will help us reach new audiences with essential messages of our empowerment and equality."

U.N. officials have said they hoped the selection of a comic-book hero and movie character would appeal to younger women in its campaign for women's empowerment, and the slogan of the campaign says: "Think of all the wonders we can do."

## Donald Glover to play young Lando in "Star Wars" Han Solo film

**NEW YORK (Reuters)** — Actor and singer Donald Glover will be playing Lando Calrissian in the young Han Solo spin-off film from the "Star Wars" universe, Walt Disney Co and Lucasfilm said on Friday.

Glover, 33, creator and lead star of FX's new dramedy "Atlanta", will play the role made famous by Billy Dee Williams in the original "Star Wars" films, 1980's "The Empire Strikes Back" and 1983's "Return of the Jedi."

The still-untitled film, scheduled for release in May 2018, will see Calrissian "in his formative years as a scoundrel on the rise in the galaxy's underworld," Lucasfilm said in a statement on Starwars.com.

Not much else is known about the plot or other casting of the film, which will explore a separate part of the "Star Wars" universe created by George Lucas.

Calrissian, the ruler of Cloud City, famously betrayed Han Solo and Princess Leia in "The Empire Strikes Back", before redeeming himself to the Rebel Alliance in "Return of the Jedi."

Wonder Woman, a DC Comics Inc. heroine, first appeared in 1942, fighting villains, rescuing victims and unearthing diabolical plots.

On hand was actress Lynda Carter, who played Wonder Woman in a television series in the 1970s, and actress Gal Gadot, who will play Wonder Woman in a movie to be released next year.

"I couldn't think of a more perfect role for her," said Carter, saying the character shows women can be "smart and beautiful and strong and wise and kind and brave."

But the selection has been met with opposition, and nearly 1,000 people signed an online petition asking U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to reconsider the choice.

Several dozen U.N. employees, one holding a sign saying "Women deserve a real ambassador", staged a silent protest in the U.N.'s visitor's lobby as the ceremony was held.