

Mideast vulnerable to oil slump, only Iran shows resilient growth

As OPEC prepares to meet at the end of the month, there has been a role reversal among the cartel's heavyweights.

Saudi Arabia and arch-rival Iran are among producer countries discussing terms of a supply deal that could, if they can pull it off, be the first output cut since the financial crisis.

By agreeing to even engage in such discussions to reverse a pump-at-max strategy of the last two years, some oil industry analysts say Saudi Arabia has already buckled as the oil price plunge creates economic havoc.

The relative strength of their economies is laid bare in a new report from energy consultancy Wood Mackenzie, which highlights Saudi Arabia's vulnerability. Despite its tendency to laud its huge fiscal buffers and low debt levels, the kingdom, which is the world's largest crude exporter, is among the most oil-dependent nations in the Middle East.

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Zarif: Iran has options if nuclear deal fails

All sides should stay committed to nuclear deal: Russian envoy

POLITICS TEHRAN — Against a backdrop of Donald Trump's election as U.S. president, the Russian Ambassador to Tehran has underscored that all sides to the deal should keep their side of the bargain.

"We hope commitments in the JCPOA are implemented and hope all sides, including the U.S., remains committed (to the deal)," Levan Dzhabagaryan told the Tehran Times on Thursday on the sidelines of the 22nd international press exhibition in Tehran.

Championed by the outgoing Obama administration, the deal granted Iran sanctions reliefs in exchange for it scaling down its nuclear program.

On Tuesday, Republican U.S. presidential candidate Donald Trump won a race against Democrat Hillary Clinton, becoming the 45th U.S. president.

With unpredictable Trump expected to take office on January 20, 2017, there are fears he may put the nuclear deal reached between Iran and world powers in July 2015 on shaky ground.

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Protests against Donald Trump's win turn violent

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ARTICLE By Mahmood Khaghani Oil expert

The art of the deal

The deal between Iran and 5+1 (the United States, Britain, Germany, France, Russia and China) meant to convince Iran to pursue its peaceful nuclear program, in exchange, for 5+1 lifting, from Iranian points of view unjustified, economic sanctions. EU governments were and are at the front of the line to restore and develop business relationship as usual with an Iran with a large economy capacity as well as with young and growing population.

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Iran's 7.5-month car output up 30.9% yr/yr

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iranian car makers manufactured 753,580 vehicles since the beginning of current Iranian calendar year by the end of the first half of the eighth calendar month of Aban (March 20-November 5), showing 30.9 percent rise compared to the same period of time in the preceding year, Tasnim news agency reported on Friday.



Given that Iran has so far achieved 99 percent of its targets set for car manufacturing in the current calendar year, the country's goals in this due will be materialized completely by the yearend (March 20, 2017), according to Amir-Hossein Qanati, the spokesman of Iran's Auto Policy-Making Council.

Iran is scheduled to manufacture 1.35 million of cars by the end of the current calendar year, Deputy Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade Mohsen Salehinia announced in early April. As Salehinia underlined, the government seeks to improve the quality as well as the quantity of the domestically produced cars on the way to boost their exports.

Lionel Messi deserves Ballon d'Or over Ronaldo: Ali Daei

SPORTS Iran legend Ali Daei says that Lionel Messi is the best player of the football history. Daei, who is head coach of Iran's Naft Tehran football team at the moment, believes that Barcelona striker should win Ballon d'Or.



"I have never seen anyone like Messi. Antoine Griezmann also is a good player but Messi is the best. I like Cristiano Ronaldo as well but I think the Portuguese player takes advantage of his physical fitness. I also think Grizmann is more creative than Ronaldo and he has room to improve," Daei said.

but due to man marking system in modern football, I think Messi is a better player than him. Modern football differs in many respects from football in the past," former Team Melli captain added.

"Diego Maradona is one of the best players in the world

"In my opinion, Messi deserves to win Ballon d'Or," Daei concluded.

PERSPECTIVE By Ali Kushki Head of the Politics Desk of the TehranTimes

A critical thought into 22nd press exhibition in Tehran

The 22nd International Press Exhibition wrapped up on Friday in Tehran, the largest annual press festival in Iran with a miscellany of media from dailies and periodicals through news agencies to tabloids in attendance.

Upwards of 900 media outlets attended, showcasing front pages in 620 booths and pavilions, a 30 percent jump as compared to the previous year's event, according to formal statistics.

While the very act of staging the exhibition is commendable, a critical appraisal which situates cultural events like this latest one within a broader social fabric will steer us toward a more authentic take on the true mission of media.

One which characterizes journalists and journalism as 'soldiers of democracy' not manipulators of hypocrisy and as bulwarks of freedom of expression not mouthpieces who serve manipulators and demagogues.

Over the past 22 years, Iranian media outlets have mushroomed, with an immense number of papers being doled out on a diverse range of issues.

But it remains open to question whether two decades of practicing what I wish to call 'quantitism' has brought us more enlightened minds and less biased thoughts, necessary for a society to become a beacon of rationalism.

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Iran's Deputy Culture Minister for Press Affairs Hossein Entezami (R) and Azerbaijan's Press Council Chairman Aflatun Amashov sign a MOU.

Iran, Azerbaijan sign MOU on media co-op

CULTURE TEHRAN — A memorandum of understanding (MOU) has been signed between Iran and Azerbaijan to extend media cooperation.

The MOU was inked by Iran's Deputy Culture Minister for Press Affairs Hossein Entezami and Azerbaijan's Press Council Chairman Aflatun Amashov, the Persian service of

MNA reported on Friday.

Based on the MOU, the two sides have agreed to expand bilateral cooperation between two countries' press and media for three years.

Tehran hosted representatives of over 900 news organizations and media for the 22nd Press exhibition over the last week.

'Public accountability helps government realize environmental sustainability'

By Maryam Qarehgozlou TEHRAN — Public accountability will help the government in realizing the goal of environmental sustainability, director for environment and sustainable development of Tehran's Municipality said.

So far some non-governmental and other public-led groups have attempted to attract public attention to the environmental issues but none has ever established a structured approach towards the matter, Mohammad-Mehdi Golmakani told the Tehran Times.

So the municipality have tried to make the public to participate in activities which set the scene for sustainable environmental man-

agement by setting up centers in each 354 neighborhoods of Tehran, Golmakani said, adding, so far some 15,000 Tahanerans have joined the centers.

The public themselves run these centers and the members will involve in activities in five groups of biodiversity, clean water, clean energy, clean Erath, and clean air, he explained.

"The movement has started since the beginning of the current year (March 20, 2016) and we are trying to help these groups to share their information and measures they have taken so far to help resolve environmental issues on social Medias," he added.

He further pointed out that

"what we are seeking most is to make people feel responsible for the environment for example by trying to use water more atten-

tively to address water crisis and encouraging them to use public transportation and carpooling to help reduce air pollution."

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MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Tehran cleric to Trump: Do not play with fire

POLITICS TEHRAN — "I should tell the upstart president of America that if you go on the same path as your predecessors, you will end up like them," the interim Friday preacher of Tehran said.

"Do not repeat their mistakes. They were so arrogant... Playing with Iran means playing with fire," Ayatollah Ahmad Khatami said.

Blasting Donald Trump for calling Iranians terrorist, the ayatollah called on him to apologize and said the Iranian nation will stand to the last drop of their blood.



Haddad Adel: Principlists to announce electoral plan soon

POLITICS TEHRAN — A prominent political and cultural figure has said principlists will soon announce their plan for the next year's presidential election.

Speaking to Fars on Friday, Qolamali Haddad Adel said principlists are approaching the presidency campaign with the policy to name only one candidate.

Haddad Adel added the principlists are also making efforts to reach unity among themselves.



Son of kidnapped diplomat urges action under Michel Aoun

POLITICS TEHRAN — The son of one of four Iranian diplomats, who were kidnapped in Lebanon by Israel in 1982, has called on the Iranian government to pursue the case of his father and three colleagues now that Michel Aoun has taken over Lebanese president.

Speaking to ISNA on Friday, Raed Mousavi expressed pity that "while officials are sensitive to the country's territorial integrity, they do little about the kidnapped diplomats."



Iraq arrests 36 Iranian pilgrims who didn't carry visa

POLITICS TEHRAN — Iran's deputy foreign minister for consular affairs on Friday said thirty-six Iranian pilgrims have been arrested in Iraq for entering the country without a visa.

Hassan Qashqavi said the 36 had been arrested in the previous 48 hours, Tasnim reported.

So far one and half million visas have been issued for Iranians to visit Iraq to observe Arbreen, he added.

He said it is predicted the number of visas issued for Iranians reaches 3 million by the day of Arbreen, November 20.



UK trade envoy: Britain remains committed to nuclear deal

POLITICS TEHRAN — The British trade envoy to Iran has said London remains committed to JCPOA should Donald Trump act in a hostile manner.

In an interview with IRNA on Friday, Lord Norman Lamont said, "I would not jump to conclusion too quickly. I am not entirely convinced that Mr. Trump is as hostile to the JCPOA as some of his remarks have indicated."

Trump once even said he made money enforcing the deal, Lamont pointed out.



Hungary says ready for nuclear cooperation with Iran

POLITICS TEHRAN — The Hungarian National Assembly speaker said on Thursday that Hungary is ready to cooperate with Iran on nuclear industry.

Laszlo Kover in his meeting with Governor General of Isfahan province Rasoul Zargarpour said Iran should seize the opportunities created in the post-sanctions era and develop its ties with the world, ISNA reported.

Elsewhere in his remarks, he underlined that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action has greatly contributed to Iran's tourism.

Salehi meets Polish president

POLITICS TEHRAN — Ali Akbar Salehi, director of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), met on Thursday with Polish President Andrzej Duda.

During the meeting, Salehi expressed hope for developing cooperation between Iran and Poland on peaceful employment of nuclear energy.

President Duda also hailed Salehi's visit to Warsaw and voiced his country's willingness to develop ties with Iran, so that the two countries can expand political, economic and cultural relations.

Salehi arrived in Warsaw on Monday to discuss possible nuclear cooperation with the East European country and also to pave the way for bilateral ties.

Salehi also paid a visit to the country's national center for nuclear research and discussed possibilities of cooperation in production of radiomedicine as well as carrying out research in this field.



Iran's nuclear chief Ali Akbar Salehi (R) shakes hands with Polish President Andrzej Duda on Thursday in Poland.

The Polish nuclear center also produces high-temperature reactor (HTR).

Heading a nuclear entourage to Poland, he also met with Polish First Deputy Prime Minister Piotr Tadeusz Glinski.

During the meeting, both sides emphasized that trade and cultural relations should be boosted.

Iran has been trying to develop stronger nuclear and economic ties with foreign countries after it signed a nuclear agreement with six world powers including Russia, China, France, Britain, the U.S. and Germany.

The nuclear deal, also called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), went into effect in January as was planned, in order to resolve a long running dispute over Iran's peaceful nuclear program.

The deal ended decades of economic sanctions that were imposed on Iran in exchange for restrictions on its nuclear program.

EU: JCPOA is multilateral deal that she is tasked to guarantee its full implementation

POLITICS EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said on Wednesday that the JCPOA, the official name for the nuclear deal between Iran and great powers, is a "multilateral agreement" and that she is tasked to guarantee its full implementation.

Republican Donald Trump, who unexpectedly won the U.S. presidency on Tuesday, had argued during his campaigns that he would renegotiate the nuclear deal if he was elected president.

"The Iranian deal, the nuclear deal, is not a bilateral agreement between the U.S. and Iran," she said in an interview with CNN.

"It's a multilateral agreement that we have negotiated. I have a personal, direct responsibility as, still, the chair of the joint commission that supervises the implementation of the agreement, so guarantee that it is fully implemented by all sides - all sides - and this is enshrined in a UN Security Council resolution, actually more than one," she added.

She said, "So it is not a bilateral or unilateral is-



"The Iranian deal, the nuclear deal, is not a bilateral agreement between the U.S. and Iran."

sue. It is a multilateral agreement in the framework of the UN."

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Thurs-

day that Iran wants all parties to stick to the international nuclear deal but has options if that does not happen.

"Of course Iran's options are not limited but our hope and our desire and our preference is for the full implementation of the nuclear agreement, which is not bilateral for one side to be able to scrap," Zarif asserted Zarif in a news conference in Bratislava after meeting his Slovak counterpart Miroslav Lajcak.

Also on Wednesday Zarif said Trump must stick to international agreements including the nuclear deal which was reached in July 2015 and took effect in January 2016.

President Hassan Rouhani also said on Wednesday that the election of Trump will have no effect on Iran's behavior.

The nuclear agreement that was signed between Iran, and six great powers - China, Russia, the U.S, Britain, France, and Germany - in July 2015 went into effect in January.

According to the JCPOA, Iran is tasked to limit its nuclear activities and instead sanctions against the country are removed.

Iran, Czech discuss nuclear cooperation

POLITICS TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and Lubomir Zaoralek, the foreign minister of Czech, held a meeting in Prague on Friday and discussed nuclear cooperation.

During a press conference, Zarif called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action "a reasonable agreement, good for everybody."

"That's our preference... (but it) doesn't mean we do not have other options," AP quoted Zarif as saying.

On the nuclear cooperation, Zaoralek said, "It's a promising field. There's an interest on both sides to cooperate."

Zarif also met separately with Chair of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic Jan Hamacek on Friday, during which he said that Iranian Majlis Speaker Ali Larijani plans to visit Prague in January.



Zarif says ties with Slovakia growing

Zarif said on Thursday that relations between Iran and Slovakia are growing and called for boosting cooperation in various areas.

During a meeting with Slovakian President Andrej Kiska in Bratislava, Zarif said that grounds for joint investment are provided.

He also said that the European Union should play more active role in helping settle crises in the Middle East region. Elsewhere, he called for speeding up efforts to send humanitarian aid to Syrian and Yemeni people.

Kiska said that Iran plays a "valuable" role in helping stabilize the Middle East region.

He also said that Iran-EU relations are on the right path and added that Slovakia is willing to expand ties.

Zarif met separately with Slovakian Foreign Minister Miroslav Lajcak on Thursday.

The officials discussed bilateral relations and also international issues.

The Iranian foreign minister also held a meeting with Slovakian Prime Minister Robert Fico on Thursday.

Zarif: Iran has options if nuclear deal fails

Iran wants all parties to stick to an international nuclear deal but has options if that does not happen, its foreign minister said on Thursday after the U.S. election victory of Donald Trump, who has vowed to pull out of the pact.

"Of course Iran's options are not limited but our hope and our desire and our preference is for the full implementation of the nuclear agreement, which is not bilateral for one side to be able to scrap," Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said.

The accord removed sanctions in return for Iran reducing the number of its uranium-enrichment centrifuges by two-thirds, reducing its enriched uranium stockpile.

"Our strong preference as a party that has remained fully committed and implemented its side of the bargain (...) is for every member and participant and for international community to continue to remain committed to the agreement," Zarif told a news conference in Bratislava after meeting his Slovak counterpart Miroslav Lajcak.

"But it doesn't mean we don't have other options if the USA unwisely decides to move away from its obligations under the agreement," he said when asked whether Tehran would accelerate its enrichment if the Trump administration ditched the deal.

When asked whether he hoped for a similarly good working relationship with Trump's future secretary of state as he had with the outgoing John Kerry, Zarif said it would not be necessary.

"We had a long nuclear negotiation be-

tween Iran and the United States. I do not expect another negotiation, certainly not on the nuclear issue, but nor on any other subjects so that I would need to establish a same type of contact with the new secretary of state, whoever that may be," he said.

Former U.S. House of Representatives speaker Newt Gingrich - who has said he would renegotiate the nuclear deal with Iran, has been floated as a potential secretary of state under Trump, political sources said.

(Source: Reuters)

All sides should stay committed to nuclear deal: Russian envoy

➔ A businessman-turned-politician who has never held public office, Trump called the nuclear pact a "disaster" and "the worst deal ever negotiated" during his campaign and said it could lead to a "nuclear holocaust," raising the prospect the U.S. would pull out of the pact.

He also had been quoted as having said that he would "rip up" the pact although he toned down his rhetoric later on, noting he had never said he would

"rip up" the deal but "police that contract so tough they don't have a chance..."

Reacting to Trump's election, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, during a visit to Romania on Wednesday, said, "Every U.S. president has to understand the realities of today's world. The most important thing is that the future U.S. president sticks to agreements, to engagements undertaken."

A critical thought into 22nd press exhibition in Tehran

➔ I wonder if Iranian media outlets have collectively paddled toward the goal ever! At least they have failed to inject doses of moderation which is the essence of sound judgment.

Not only is this lack of moderation easily noticed in the paradoxical headlines of papers and new agencies, but also it has crept into the deepest layers of the Iranian consciousness.

A textbook example of such either-or framework of thinking, all fueled by Iranian media, is the continuous debate of the nuclear deal reached between Iran and

six world powers in July 2015.

On Thursday, I was fortunate enough to watch a live debate at the Tehran Times' pavilion on the deal, known as BARJAM in Iran and JCPOA in the international arena.

One of the speakers was simply reductionist, narrowing down the pact to a betrayal to Iran's future as he saw 'every single nut and bolt' of the nuclear program taken away.

The other, while ruling out the legitimacy and rationality of assessing the deal from a critical perspective, launched a

strong defense of the deal.

This mutually exclusive analysis of the issue was once more reflected at the end of the debate when the people gathering there started to comment wildly, with virtually no one taking the middle way.

As of the nuclear deal, media outlets inside the country have been and continue to bifurcate the Iranian society over the deal, each trying to court support for their skewed, distorted reading of the deal.

This could have been prevented only

by journalists whose minds had not been adulterated by political partisanship, which has bred prejudice and hatred in the Iranian society. Time is intrinsically progressive, but it doesn't mean that qualitative and quantitative changes are brought about automatically.

For the Iranian media to introduce themselves as harbingers of change in their immediate context, they simply need to take the middle way. Otherwise, press exhibitions like the one finished yesterday would be less effective even if staged on a daily basis.



Protests against Donald Trump's win turn violent

Trump praises protesters' 'passion' after calling them 'unfair'

Protests in the United States against Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump's election victory have turned violent as demonstrators take to the streets for a second day.

Thousands of protesters threw objects at police in Portland, Oregon, and damaged a car park, the Portland Police Department said on Twitter.

Some protesters sprayed graffiti on cars and buildings and destroyed shop windows, local media in Portland reported.

"Many in the crowd are trying to get anarchist groups to stop destroying property, anarchists refusing. Others encouraged to leave area," the department said on Twitter after declaring the demonstration a riot.

As thousands of people marched, some vandalized shop windows, lit fire-crackers and set waste bins on fire.

An estimated 4,000 protesters chanted "We reject the president-elect!" with some throwing objects at police, prompting several arrests.

On the East Coast, protests occurred in Washington DC, Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York, while on the West Coast demonstrators rallied in Los Angeles, San Francisco and Oakland in California besides Portland.

Dozens in Minneapolis marched on to Interstate 94, blocking traffic in both directions for at least an hour as police stood by.

A smaller band of demonstrators briefly halted traffic on a busy Los Angeles freeway before police cleared them off.

At least 35 protesters were arrested in downtown Los Angeles after blocking traffic and sitting in the street, local media said. A smaller band of demonstrators briefly halted traffic on a busy Los Angeles



freeway before police cleared them. Baltimore police reported about 600 people marched through the downtown Inner Harbor area, with some blocking roadways by sitting in the street.

Two people were arrested, police said. In Denver, a crowd that media estimated to number about 3,000 gathered on the grounds of the Colorado state capitol and marched through downtown in one of the largest of Thursday's events.

Hundreds also demonstrated in Dallas.

Thursday's gatherings were generally smaller in scale and less intense than Wednesday's, and teenagers and young adults again dominated the racially mixed crowds.

"Just had a very open and successful presidential election. Now professional protesters, incited by the media, are protesting. Very unfair!" Trump said on Twitter on Thursday night.

Police pitched special security barricades around two Trump marquee properties that have become focal points of the protests - his newly opened Pennsylvania Avenue Hotel in Washington DC and Trump Tower, where he lives in Manhattan.

In the nation's capital, about 100 protesters marched from the White House, where Trump had his first transition meeting with President Barack Obama on Thursday, to the Trump International Hotel several blocks away.

At least 200 people rallied there after dark, many of them chanting "No hate! No fear! Immigrants are welcome here!" and carrying signs with such slogans as "Impeach Trump" and "Not my president".

In San Francisco, more than 1,000 high school students walked out of classes on Thursday morning to march through the financial district carrying rainbow flags representing the lesbian, gay, bisexual

and transgender communities, Mexican flags, and signs decrying Trump.

Trump supporters say the protesters are not respecting the democratic process.

As of Thursday, Hillary Clinton, the Democratic Party candidate, was leading Trump in votes nationwide 47.7 percent to 47.5 percent, but Trump secured victory in the Electoral College.

■ Trump praises protesters

Meanwhile, U.S. President-elect Donald Trump on Friday praised demonstrators for being passionate about their country, just hours after he accused them of being "professional protesters" incited by the media.

"Love the fact that the small groups of protesters last night have passion for our great country. We will all come together and be proud!" Trump tweeted early on Friday.

More anti-Trump demonstrations were planned for the weekend. Trump takes office on Jan. 20, succeeding President Barack Obama.

Thursday's gatherings were generally smaller in scale and less intense than Wednesday's, and teenagers and young adults again dominated the racially mixed crowds.

Republican National Committee Chairman Reince Priebus on Friday acknowledged the tight race with Clinton, but said anti-Trump protesters had to accept the election results. He pointed to Trump's call for unity and meeting with Obama and Republican leaders as reasons for reassurance.

"Everyone needs to just take a deep breath, take the weekend ... count our blessings, and let's come back Monday," Priebus said.

(Source: agencies)

British royals' visit may 'whitewash' Manama crimes: Opposition member

A Bahraini opposition leader has warned that a recent visit by a British royal couple to Bahrain could serve to "whitewash" an ongoing brutal crackdown by the Manama regime on political dissent.

Ebrahim Sharif, of the opposition Waad Party, said on Friday that he hoped Prince Charles and his wife, who recently visited Bahrain, advised the Bahraini leadership to respect human rights.

"The government may listen" to Manama's British ally, he said.

Sharif said Bahrain's opposition wanted freedom, constitutional monarchy, and proportional representation in the government, adding that the opposition was "flexible and realistic" in its demands.

The Prince of Wales and his wife, the Duchess of Cornwall, ended a seven-day tour of Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Oman on Friday.

During the stay in Bahrain, Prince Charles opened a permanent British mil-

itary base in the Persian Gulf tiny states.

The visit came amid continued human rights abuses by regime officials there.

People in Bahrain have been protesting against the House of Khalifah regime since early 2011. The protesters say they will continue to protest until their demands for the establishment of a democratic government are met.

Bahraini regime forces have been carrying out a brutal crackdown on the anti-regime protesters with help from Saudi and Emirati forces.

Many prominent opposition leaders are languishing in jails, and scores of protesters have been killed and many others gone missing since the beginning of the regime crackdown.

There has been much international outcry from rights groups over the regime's brutal crackdown.

Bahrain is a close regional ally of Britain and the United States.

(Source: Press TV)

Turkey detains chairman of opposition Cumhuriyet daily, paper says

Turkish police detained the chairman of opposition newspaper Cumhuriyet at Istanbul's main airport on Friday, less than a week after nine of its executives and journalists were formally arrested, the paper said.

Authorities had ordered the paper's editor and senior staff be held in jail pending trial over the secularist newspaper's alleged support for a coup attempt on July 15.

Chairman Akin Atalay was detained at the city's Ataturk Airport on his return from Germany after an arrest warrant was issued for him, Cumhuriyet said.

Since the failed putsch, more than 110,000 judges, teachers, police and civil servants have been suspended or dismissed and 36,000 formally arrested in a crackdown that President Tayyip Erdogan's critics say is quashing legitimate opposition.

Under the state of emergency de-

clared after the coup attempt, police can detain suspects for up to 30 days before a court must decide whether to issue a formal arrest warrant pending trial.

Turkey has also closed more than 130 media outlets since July, raising concerns among its Western allies about deteriorating press freedoms.

Cumhuriyet's previous editor, Can Dundar, was jailed last year for publishing state secrets involving Turkey's support for Syrian rebels. He was later released and is now overseas to avoid arrest.

State-run media said on Thursday prosecutors were seeking life sentences for nine staff of pro-Kurdish newspaper Ozgur Gundem, including prize-winning novelist Asli Erdogan, on a charge of membership of a terrorist organization.

(Source: Reuters)

Taliban storm German consulate in Afghan city, four killed

Taliban militants stormed the German consulate in the northern Afghan city of Mazar-i-Sharif, ramming its outer wall with a truck bomb before battling security forces in a late-night attack that killed at least four people, officials said.

The explosion, triggered by a suicide bomber, caused extensive damage to the building and shattered windows as far as 5 km (3 miles) away, a NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) spokesman said. A local doctor said the blast and subsequent firefight also wounded 120 people.

No consular staff were among the victims, but Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier said Germany would review its lead role in the international mission in northern Afghanistan, where violence has escalated sharply during 2016.

Thursday's attack also underlines one of the tougher foreign policy challenges facing the United States President-elect Donald Trump when he takes office in January. U.S. combat operations against the Taliban largely ended in 2014, but thousands of its soldiers remain in Afghanistan as part of the NATO-led Resolute Support mission. The Taliban said the attack was in retaliation for NATO air strikes against a village near the northern city of Kunduz last week in which more than 30 people, many of them children, were killed.

Heavily armed fighters, including suicide bombers, had been sent "with a mission to destroy the German consulate general and kill whoever they found there", the extremist militant movement's spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, said by telephone.

Taliban forces came close to over-running Kunduz last month, a year after briefly capturing it in their biggest



success in Afghanistan's 15-year-long war.

■ Huge blast

The NATO spokesman said at least one vehicle packed with explosives was rammed into the high outer wall surrounding the consulate, but authorities were investigating if a second car had been involved.

"The extent of damage to the city is huge," said Abdul Razaq Qaderi, deputy police chief of Balkh province. "This kind of an attack, bringing a truck full of explosives and blowing it up in the city, had never happened before." "The city is still recovering from the shock." Noor Mohammad Faiz, the head doctor in Mazar-i-Sharif hospital, said four bodies and 120 wounded, most hurt by flying glass, had been brought to the hospital.

Qaderi said German troops had shot two men on motorcycles who did not comply with orders to stop. German Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen said that incident was being investigated.

Foreign Minister Steinmeier said six people were killed. All German consular employees were safe and uninjured, he added. After coordinating the response on Thursday, the government's crisis task force was meeting again Friday

and would review Germany's role in the Afghan mission.

"It was only possible to defeat the attackers and beat them back after fighting that occurred at the compound and in the building," Steinmeier said.

Germany, which heads Resolute Support in northern Afghanistan, has about 850 soldiers at a base on the outskirts of Mazar-i-Sharif, with another 1,000 troops coming from 20 partner countries.

■ Into the early hours

The explosion occurred about an hour before midnight local time, a spokesman for the German military joint forces command in Potsdam said.

Witnesses reported sporadic gunfire from around the consulate and said the blast had shattered windows in a wide area around the compound.

"It was a prepared attack for which we made all arrangements," the Taliban's Mujahid said. "First a suicide bomber driving an explosives-laden vehicle rammed the main building of the consulate and that enabled other fighters to move in and kill all the foreigners there."

He said dozens of German soldiers and intelligence personnel were killed in the attack. The Taliban often exaggerate casualties caused by its operations.

After Afghan Special Forces, German security personnel and NATO's quick reaction protection force intervened, fighting was over by the early hours of the morning, said Sayed Kamal Sadat, police chief of Balkh.

At least one suspect was arrested from the area of explosion, officials said.

The heavily protected consulate is in a large building close to the Blue Mosque in the center of Mazar-i-Sharif, where the Indian consulate was also attacked by militant gunmen earlier this year.

(Source: Reuters)

ISIL executes scores, stockpiles chemicals in Mosul: UN

Iraqi troops preparing for advance toward Mosul airport

A United Nations official says the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorists are stockpiling ammonia and sulfur in civilian areas, possibly for use as chemical weapons, in Mosul amid an Iraqi army operation to retake the city.

UN human rights spokeswoman Ravina Shamdasani said on Friday that the ISIL had executed scores of more people around Mosul this week. They included 20 civilians shot dead for leaking information and one man for using a mobile phone.



Iraqi troops found a mass grave with over 100 bodies in the nearby town of Hammam al-Alil earlier this week.

Shamdasani said the mass grave is one of several ISIL killing grounds, citing information gleaned from sources on the ground including a man who played dead during a mass execution.

According to Shamdasani, teenagers or young boys with explosive belts are being deployed in the alleys of Old Mosul, while abducted women are being "distributed" to accompany ISIL convoys.

The battle to retake Mosul, the Takfiri group's last major bastion in Iraq, is now in its fourth week.

Shamdasani said ISIL had announced that it had beheaded six of its own terrorists for deserting the battlefield near Mosul.

On Friday, troops of Iraq's elite Counter-Terrorism Service resumed their offensive on the streets of Mosul after several days of relative quiet.

One commander said his forces have begun the attack on Arbajiyah and clashes were ongoing after the first row of buildings in the area was seized. Troops were also to begin another attack to retake the Karkukli neighborhood.

Iraqi forces launched the huge offensive to retake Mosul on October 17, with federal and regional forces closing in on the city from three sides.

Pro-government paramilitaries later began an advance on the town of Tal Afar, which commands the city's western approaches, with the goal of cutting the Takfiri terrorists off from territory they control in neighboring Syria.

■ Advance toward Mosul airport

Meanwhile, Iraqi security forces are preparing to advance towards Mosul International Airport on the southern outskirts of the northern city, the last ISIL bastion in the country.

Iraqi Lieutenant-Colonel Dhiya Mizhir said that the target of the fresh operations is an area overlooking the airport, which has been made unusable by ISIL terrorists.

"We need to put wider pressure on the enemy in different areas," said Iraqi police commander, Major-General Thamer al-Husseini, adding that the operations would resume within two days.

Mosul fell to the ISIL terrorist group in 2014, the year the terror outfit began its campaign of death and destruction in Iraq.

On October 17, the Iraqi army, volunteer Shia and Sunni fighters as well as Kurdish Peshmerga forces launched a long-awaited offensive to liberate Mosul.

Iraqi troops have so far entered several neighborhoods in eastern Mosul. They have announced plans to resume their advance from the north, up the western bank of the Tigris River.

Latest satellite images released by Texas-based intelligence company, Stratfor, showed foreign-backed terrorists had dug trenches in the runways and demolished buildings to have better sight and to prevent the advance of the Iraqi forces.

Separately on Thursday, a military statement said that the Iraqi soldiers had targeted two villages on the edge of the ancient Assyrian city of Nimrud.

The army's 9th Armored Division recaptured the village of Abbas Rajab, situated four kilometers east of Nimrud, and raised the Iraqi national flag there. Mosul residents reported militant fire in the Zahra district in eastern Mosul on Thursday. The area has been the scene of heavy clashes over the past week.

"They (ISIL terrorists) were bombarding the Zahra neighborhood where the Iraqi forces are. The warplanes hit back with small rockets and destroyed the mortar and killed three of them," a Zahra resident told Reuters.

A senior officer of the Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Service said the area was fully under control.

"I'm very happy. I can't believe that we're over this terrible nightmare," said another Zahra resident, adding that although he had returned to the district, he was still "frightened that Daesh (ISIL) might return."

Iraqi forces are now involved in clean-up operations in the liberated areas.

(Source: agencies)

Derik governor dies after attack in Turkey's Mardin

Turkey's state-run news agency says an official has died of wounds sustained in an attack on a government building in southeastern Turkey.

The Anadolu Agency said Fatih Safturk, the district governor of the town of Derik, died in a hospital on Friday.

Safturk and two others were wounded on Thursday when assailants attacked his office, near the border with Syria, with an improvised explosive device.

Several others were wounded in the Derik attack.

Security forces launched an operation to catch the assailants, state news said, without providing details.

Authorities have blamed the attack on the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party, (PKK/Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê).

(Source: Al Jazeera)

'Over €1.4b in foreign investment approved in post-sanctions era'

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iran has approved 27 foreign investment projects to the tune of €1.4 billion since the implementation of the nuclear deal in January 2016, Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Mohammadreza Nematzadeh said Thursday.



Referring to the issue of Donald Trump's win in the U.S. presidential election, he emphasized that the deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA, has been endorsed by the Islamic Republic and five countries other than the U.S. and has also been approved by the United Nations, so political changes in America cannot affect its implementation.

Iranian Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs Ali Tayyebnia said in May that as of the implementation of the nuclear deal, great opportunities and special incentives have been created in Iran to attract foreign investors.

According to the economy minister, foreigners are presently capable of making investments in projects up to 100 percent in various sectors, including production, transportation, telecommunication, services, power, construction and health, and they can also possess land pieces in Iran.

Euro heads for worst week in a year on increased political risks

The euro headed for its worst week in a year as Donald Trump's win in the U.S. presidential race stirred up investor concern over populist outcomes in European votes.

Markets in the euro region potentially have turbulent period ahead with an Italian constitutional referendum in December and elections in France, Germany and the Netherlands next year that may kick out ruling parties or coalitions and overturn economic policies.

That's led to a flight to the Swiss franc as a safe haven, causing the currency to rise to the highest versus the euro since June on Friday. The single currency is on track for a 2.4 percent drop against the dollar since last Friday and set for its worst week versus the pound since July.

"The euro is under pressure because of focus on the near-term political events," said George Boele, a currency strategist at ABN Amro Bank in Amsterdam. "The Trump victory has resulted in concerns that we could see similar outcomes in the elections in Europe."

The euro weakened 0.1 percent to \$1.0879 as of 11:03 a.m. London time. The Swiss franc appreciated 0.2 percent to 1.07287 per euro and earlier touched 1.07103, its strongest level since June.

A jump by the franc on Wednesday following the U.S. result would have been even higher if it wasn't for the SNB's intolerance of franc volatility, according to strategists at Banco Bilbao Vizcaya Argentaria SA and UBS Group AG's wealth management unit. The SNB could intervene further "if upward pressure on the Swiss franc becomes too large," Boele said.

(Source: Bloomberg)

Mideast vulnerable to oil slump, only Iran shows resilient growth

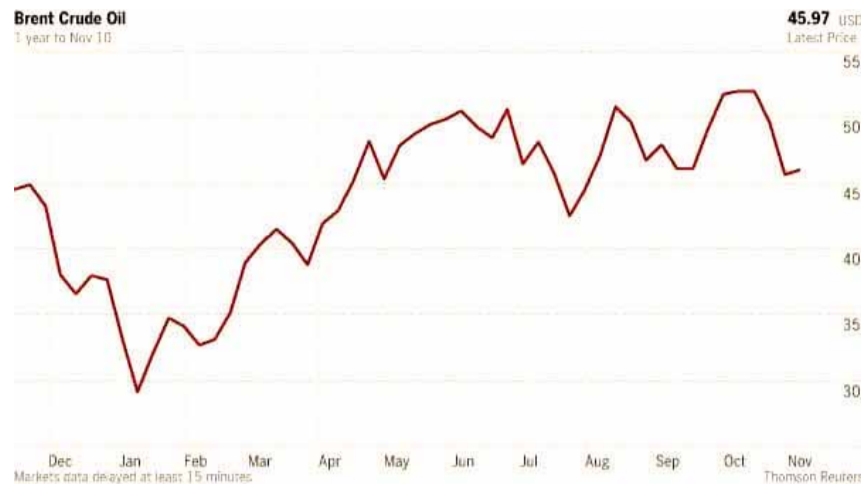
The kingdom's gross domestic product will slow from an annual average of 5 percent in the five years to 2015 to 1.9 percent by 2020, underlining the depth of the slowdown.

The report analyses the economies of Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar and Iran.

The protracted oil price slump has created a ballooning budget deficit and a currency collapse, forcing Saudi Arabia to slash spending, implement austerity measures and raise its international debt to fill a gaping hole in its public finances.

Iraq, which has been at war with Isis militants, will see its average annual growth rate slow from 5.6 percent between 2011 and 2015 to 2.8 percent in 2016-2020. Persian Gulf economy Kuwait will weaken from 3.1 percent to 2.5 percent over the same period, while the UAE can expect a similar fall from 4.8 percent to 3.1 percent, Wood Mackenzie says.

Iran, however, is the only country that will buck the trend, accelerating to an average of 4 percent to 2020, according to the consultancy.



ing to the consultancy. Its GDP has been held back by years of western sanctions against its economy.

Saudi Arabia endured the largest fall in oil revenues as a proportion of total government revenues when oil prices slumped, and it is depleting its cash reserves at a rapid pace. Iran's dependence on oil, meanwhile, is the lowest of all five of the Middle Eastern economies.

All major oil-producing economies are running fiscal deficits, with Saudi Arabia's among the largest at 20 percent of GDP, according to Wood Mackenzie. The IMF offers a slightly different view with a forecast of 13 percent. It believes the majority of cuts to government expenditure have already taken place.

The Saudi currency has come under heavy pressure from speculators betting that the kingdom will be forced to revalue the riyal — which is pegged to the

U.S. dollar — while the domestic stock market has tumbled this year as investors fear that diminished oil revenues may push the economy into recession.

The kingdom is able to access debt markets — it recently raised \$17.5bn at its debut sovereign bond sale — and it has a financial cushion that is not available to others such as Iraq. But there is a renewed urgency in Riyadh of the need to reduce the economy's dependency on oil.

Wood Mackenzie estimates that Saudi Arabia needs an oil price of \$92 a barrel to balance its budget this year — a stark indication of the challenge facing the kingdom in the current oil price environment. Kuwait has the lowest fiscal break-even of \$57 a barrel.

Oil prices are currently trading around \$46 a barrel and the failure to put in place a deal that was agreed in Algiers in September would bring more pain for producer nations. "The consequences are clear and the experience of the past two years has been noted," said Mohammed Barkindo, the secretary-general of Opec said on Tuesday.

(Source: Financial Times)

Romania voices interest in Iranian market

Romanian Prime Minister Dacian Cioloș met on Wednesday with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, discussing new ways to relaunch the sectoral cooperation, with a focus on investments, transport, energy, agriculture, scientific research, and education.

According to a Government release, Prime Minister Dacian Cioloș welcomed on Wednesday Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif who was on an official visit to Romania, at the invitation of his Romanian counterpart Lazar Comanescu.

"Prime Minister Dacian Cioloș and Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif hailed the intensification over the past year of the high level bilateral contacts, carried out both in Tehran and in Bucharest, following the signing of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action between Iran and



the international community, represented by the E3+3 Group and IAEA. The talks were aimed at new ways to

relaunch the sectoral cooperation, with a focus on investments, transport, energy, agriculture, scientific research and education," the release reads.

Moreover, PM Cioloș voiced Romania's interest in the Iranian agricultural market, wishing to strengthen the cooperation in the rail, sea and port transport area, as well as the availability of supporting Iran's connection to the Central and Eastern European energy market.

In turn, the Iranian foreign minister thanked for the contacts established on the occasion of the visit in Bucharest, both on a political level and by the members of the delegation which accompanied him, representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Mines, and businessmen.

(Source: actmedia.eu)

Bonds tumble by \$1t this week as Trump seen game changer

More than \$1 trillion has been wiped off the value of bonds around the world this week as U.S. President-elect Donald Trump's policies are seen boosting spending and quickening inflation.

The capitalization of a global bond market index slid by \$450 billion Thursday, a fourth day of declines that pushed the week's total above \$1 trillion for only the second time in two decades, Bank of America Merrill Lynch data show. Global stocks gained \$1.3 trillion in the same period. Yields on U.S. 30-year bonds, which are more sensitive than shorter maturities to the outlook for inflation, jumped the most this week since January 2009.

European government bonds extended their selloff Friday, with the yield on Italian 30-year bonds reaching the most since July 2015, while benchmark German 10-year bonds declined for a fifth consecutive day, pushing the yield to the highest since February.

"We do view the election of Donald Trump as a game changer," said Adam Donaldson, head of debt research at Sydney-based Commonwealth Bank of Australia. "The strong bias toward fiscal expansion and inflationary policy represents a stark change to the malaise of recent years. This opens the door for the Fed to hike in December, but also more quickly in 2017 and 2018 than

previously expected."

The market value of Bank of America's Global Broad Market Index, which tracks more than 24,000 bonds around the world, has slumped by \$1.14 trillion this week to \$48.1 trillion. The only previous week it fell by more than \$1 trillion was in June 2013, when the Federal Reserve under Chairman Ben Bernanke was threatening to reduce debt purchases, leading to a bond selloff that became known as the "Taper Tantrum."

The benchmark U.S. 10-year note yield has jumped 37 basis points this week, while that on the 30-year climbed 39 basis points through Thursday. The 10-year yield will rise to 2.50 percent in the first half of 2017, Com-

monwealth Bank predicts, compared with the close on Thursday of 2.15 percent. Treasuries are closed worldwide Friday for U.S. Veterans' Day.

What promised to be a bumper year for bonds is in danger of evaporating. U.S. government securities handed investors a loss of 2.9 percent this week, paring this year's gain to 6.3 percent, according to the Bloomberg Barclays Global Aggregate Treasuries Total Return Index. There's an 80 percent chance the Fed will increase rates at its Dec. 13-14 meeting, up from 76 percent odds at the end of last week, according to data compiled by Bloomberg based on futures.

(Source: Bloomberg)

Japan Display in talks for \$704m bailout from INCJ

Japan Display Inc. is in advanced talks to receive a bailout amount of about 75 billion yen (\$704.49 million) from Innovation Network Corp of Japan (INCJ), a government-backed fund and the display maker's largest shareholder, the Wall Street Journal reported on Thursday.

The two companies are looking at options including the issuance of subordinated bonds by Japan Display to INCJ, the Journal reported, citing people with knowledge of the matter.

INCJ owns a 35.58 percent stake in Japan Display, according to Thomson Reuters data.

Japan Display's banks also are considering additional support for the company, the Journal reported. No final decision has been made yet, according to the report.

INCJ was not immediately available for comment and Japan Display could not be immediately reached.

Japan Display said on Wednesday it was slashing 30 percent of its workforce, or 4,700 jobs, to improve profitability but added that concerns about its cash position have eased as it is seeing strong demand for its screens from Chinese smartphone makers.

(Source: Reuters)

Tender Announcement

Long-term Lease Contract for the Operation of the Container Terminal II of Shahid Rajaei Port



With a view to promote quality and efficiency of its services, increase volume throughput of the cargo and container and gain an increased and sustainable share of domestic, regional and international market, Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) is planning to hold the tender for the operation of Container terminal II of Shahid Rajaei port located in Hormozgan Province in the form of a lease contract with the following conditions:

1. Duration of the contract shall be 10 years with fixed and variable rental
2. The properties and equipment of container terminal II shall remain under the ownership of the Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO). The operator shall procure the complementary equipment.

The operator shall be selected from qualified domestic and international companies. The selected company shall have sufficient experience in management and operation of container terminal conforming to the international standards and meeting the operational requirements of Bandar Shahid Rajaei port. Details and conditions as well as qualification criteria (technical and financial) shall be notified in the subsequent announcements in the near future.

In operation and management of Shahid Rajaei Port and its container terminals, PMO always puts emphasis on providing services to its customers including shipping lines, cargo owners, forwarders and logistic firms on a non-exclusive and non-discriminatory basis. Accordingly, the proposals to be received from the bidders whose scope of work might render to monopolistic services and adverse effects on container throughput of the Shahid Rajaei Port will be addressed with the special considerations by the PMO.

The tender shall be held in two phases. In the first phase, the public announcement of which will be published shortly, the interested companies are requested to furnish their technical and financial information. On the basis of the qualification criteria of the PMO, a shortlist of the qualified companies will be provided. In the second phase, qualified companies will be asked to give their proposal (technical and financial) and finally the company giving the best proposal to the PMO will be awarded with the contract.

The tender process shall commence on early **December 2016**. More information will be posted at PMO website (www.pmo.ir) and National Database of Iran Tender Information (<http://iets.mnorg.ir>).

PICTURE OF THE DAY Portal of ICCIMA



Iran-Slovakia trade meeting held in Bratislava

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iran and Slovakia held a trade meeting in Bratislava on Thursday to discuss ways to expand bilateral economic cooperation.

A 30-member Iranian delegation comprised of Iranian businessmen, headed by the ICCIMA chairman Gholam-Hossein Shafeie traveled to the eastern European country to explore avenues of expanding trade ties with their Slovakian counterparts, the portal of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) reported.

As reported, the delegation was accompanied by Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, who made a speech in the meeting.

Before the meeting, Zarif discussed bilateral relations with Slovakian President Andrej Kiska and Foreign Minister Miroslav Lajcak.

Tehran to host the next Russian-Iranian economic committee meeting

Tehran will host the next Russian-Iranian intergovernmental commission on trade and economic cooperation on December 13, Iran's Deputy Oil Minister Amir Zamaninia said Thursday.

"We are prepared as of today to hold a workshop [for Russian energy companies] in Tehran to go over the financial model, technical model of a new contract.

"We can hold it as early as you are prepared... And then engage in a discussion of coming up with an agreement," Zamaninia added.

"We hope that by the second half of December, we are ready to sign major agreements with these six Russian companies," Zamaninia said during the Russia-Iranian energy forum, specifying that the companies interested in exploring Iran's energy reserves are Gazprom, Rosneft, LUKoil, Gazpromneft, Tatneft, Zarubezhneft.

Iran is willing to sign new agree-



ments with Russian energy companies by mid-December

The Russian Energy Ministry expects detailed discussions of oil and gas co-

operation with Iran at next month's intergovernmental commission, Deputy Minister of Energy Kirill Molodtsov said Thursday.

"We expect from the December event, among other things... a discussion of detailed points of contact between the interests of Russian and Iranian oil and gas companies," Molodtsov said at a Russian-Iranian energy forum.

"Today's event... is primarily a preparation for the forthcoming intergovernmental commission... with the aim of a detailed and comprehensive study and convergence of the government and business officials' positions," Molodtsov added. He stressed that Russian companies, Rosneft, Gazprom Neft, Zarubezhneft, Gazprom and LUKoil among them, are interested in onshore and offshore hydrocarbon exploration, development and production projects in Iran.

(Source: Sputnik)

More than 2m Japan retail power users switch to new entrants

Seven months into Japan's power market shake-up aimed at boosting choice and energy security, more than two million retail electricity users switched to new power providers, monthly data by the national grid monitor showed on Friday.

In October, a little more than 200,000 Japanese retail power users made the switch, according to the data issued by Organization for Cross-regional Coordination of Transmission Operators, Japan (OCCTO).

More than half of the switches were in the home turfs of Tokyo Electric Power (Tepco), operator of the wrecked Fukushima power station, the data showed, accounting for nearly five percent of its retail customers, the data showed.

A price war has broken out among hundreds of companies that were allowed to sell electricity in Japan's \$70 billion retail market from April, challenging its old monopolies. (Source: Reuters)

Islamic Development Bank offers \$500m for TAPI pipeline

The Islamic Development Bank (IDB) – an international Islamic financial institution based in Saudi Arabia – has offered \$500 million in loans finance the Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India (Tapi) gas pipeline project, which will meet growing energy needs of three countries, an official says.

Turkmenistan will contribute 85 percent of the pipeline cost estimated at \$10 billion whereas Afghanistan, Pakistan and India will have a five percent share each in investments. This cost is in addition to the \$15 billion capital injection required for developing a gas field from where Turkmenistan will supply gas to the three countries.

Four countries ink deal for \$10 billion TAPI gas pipeline project Of the 85 percent cost, Turkmenistan will provide 51 percent of funds and the remaining 34 percent will be arranged by different financiers. "The three gas consumers could also enhance their investment share if desired," the official said.

The field development work has been awarded to a consortium of Japanese companies, which will explore gas against a service fee and will not have any shareholding in the field.

Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India have already signed an initial investment agreement for the Tapi gas pipeline in a bid to kick off work, update feasibility study and finalize a pipeline route in conflict-stricken Afghanistan.

Leaders of the four countries performed the ground-breaking of the project in December last year, which would help ease energy deficit in South Asia.

(Source: The Express Tribune)

Iraq backtracks on oilfield auction as prices doom budget

The Iraqi authorities are postponing bidding on 12 oil fields, back-tracking on an October auction announcement, and indicating that plans to change production contracts will be reviewed again.

In October, the Iraqi Oil Ministry suggested that there would be a shift from the traditional service contracts for large Iraqi oil fields—largely due to depressed oil prices and the government's inability to balance its budget while paying a fixed price per barrel of produced oil.

At the same time, the Ministry announced an auction for 12 oil fields in three provinces—Basra, Misan and Central.

According to the Ministry, contractual terms will now be reviewed again.

"[The] Ministry of Oil announces that there are essential changes in the previous

announcement, where some of the fields mentioned in the said announcement will be developed by the national efforts of [the] Ministry of Oil, in addition to new fields [that] will be added to this project," a Ministry announcement read. "Therefore, [the] Ministry of Oil will iterate its announcement of this project by mid-2017."

The postponement is of an action that had already pre-qualified 19 bidders from over 10 countries. The deal at that time was that the bidders would be able to negotiate new contract terms.

The big picture here is that Iraq is struggling to make ends meet while funding a war against the Islamic State (ISIS). The current service contracts the country has with large oil players developing fields in the south—the key oil area in Iraq—are too expensive. From the Iraqi govern-



ment's point of view, these contracts are forcing the state to foot the bill in the form of repaying development costs to oil companies while oil prices are persistently low.

As of yet, there is no indication of what

new contract models may entail in the run-up to the government's plans to announce the new auction date by the middle of next year.

(Source: oilprice.com)



AMENDMENT OF INVITATION FOR SUBMISSION OF PREQUALIFICATION BIDS

Tender no. 95/1003
(Project Type EPCF)

On the basis of Clause (C) defined in item 12 of the Operational Regulations of Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI) Tendering Laws and Regulations circulars 100/50252 dated 23/08/09 and 100/135946 dated 12/11/2009 issued by the offices of the Presidential Deputy of Strategic Planning and Control, The Khuzestan Water and Waste Water Company proposes to tender the project below on an EPCF (Engineering, Procurement, Construction and installation and Finance) basis to Bidders with the required qualifications and with sufficiently open capacity as follows:

Tender no.	Title of Tender	Specialization Required (Having at least one of the requirements below)	Location of Document Sales	Duration For Procurement of Bidding Documents	Date and Place for Opening of Tenders
95/1003	The Construction of the Primary Module for Urban Wastewater Treatment Plants in the Cities of Shosh, Andimeshk, Izeh, Behbahan and Bostan On an EPCF Basis	1- Bidders with a number one ranking of EPC in Water, specializing in Water and Waste Water 2. Bidders with a number one ranking in Water, conditional to the introducing of a Consulting Engineer with the same ranking in Water Engineering specializing in Water and Waste water Installations (in the form of public joint ventures)	Anhar Jonoob	Until 27/Nov/2016	At 10 o'clock in the morning on 03/Jan/2017

Criteria For The Evaluation Of Prequalification Bids

In addition to the criterion defined in the Prequalification documents of the aforementioned tender, and with due regards to the fact that the estimated project costs exceed that of Bidders with a number one ranking in the required specializations, all participants in the Bid must

have the following conditions:

1- The Bidder's company must be registered in the IRI National Tendering Data Base i.e. <http://iets.mporg.ir> and that of the Presidential deputy for Strategic Planning and Control's data base i.e. <http://tec.mporg.ir>.

2- The having of an Open Capacity in the First Class ranking of the specialization(s) required
3- The execution and implementation of at least one similar project within the past five years with a total cost of at least one third of the current project's estimated project costs updated on the basis of current global inflation indices.

Meanwhile the contractors shall provide an agreement with foreign funder to supply 85 percent of the project funding requirements.

Address and Location for Purchasing Of Prequalification Bidding Documents

Anhar Jonoob Consulting Company no. 1075 -11th floor, Apartment 1103 Vali-e-Asr Ave. Before Sayee Park opposite the Filling Station Shahab Building, Tehran

Tel: +98-(0) 21-88701438 and 88727855

Anhar Jonoob Consulting Company no. 98th West Mihan Street at the end of Phase II, Kianpars area Ahwaz, Khuzestan

Tel: +98-(0)61- 33914548

The final date for the submission of completed Prequalification Bid documents will be before nine o'clock in the morning on the day of opening of Tenders.

Address and Location for the Submission of Prequalification Bidding Documents

Security and Confidential Matters Secretariat's Offices -Fifth Floor -The Khuzestan Water and Waste Water Company – 1st square -Kianpars –Ahwaz

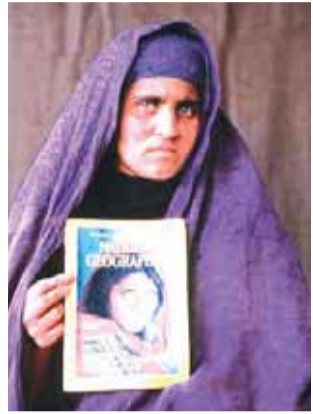
The Prequalification Bids submitted will be opened in the Contractual Department of the Ahwaz Water and Waste Water Company in presence of the Bidders.

Electronic Address of Tender: Main Client www.abfakhz.ir and IRI National Tendering Data Base <http://iets.mporg.ir>

Public Relations and Education Department
Of
The Khuzestan Water and Waste Water Company

Doors slam shut for Afghan refugees

Pakistan is turning them back. Thousands who spent their life savings on a bid to resettle in Europe are being told it's time to head home. Inside Afghanistan, tens of thousands have become internally displaced in recent months as fighting between the Taliban and government security forces rages in several provinces. The refugee crisis could reach unprecedented numbers, with as many as 1.5 million returning home, many involuntarily, by the end of the year, according to humanitarian organizations.



Sharbat Gula

Yet, there is no plan to adequately address this humanitarian emergency. Its scale and the international community's dismissive attitude toward the plight of vulnerable Afghans is shameful. Pakistan, home to 1.3 million registered Afghan refugees and some 700,000 undocumented Afghans, has begun to crack down on those refugees living in the country without permission. By the end of this year, as many as 360,000 could be forced to return to Afghanistan,

if current rates hold, according to the United Nations refugee agency. This year's number of returnees is about four times higher than last year's.

Among those caught in Pakistan's toughening stance is Sharbat Gula, the subject of a famous photo that was published on a cover of National Geographic magazine in 1985. That photo was taken at a refugee camp in Pakistan when she was about 12. Ms. Gula, now in her 40s, was recently arrested and deported back to Afghanistan because she had been living in Pakistan without legitimate papers.

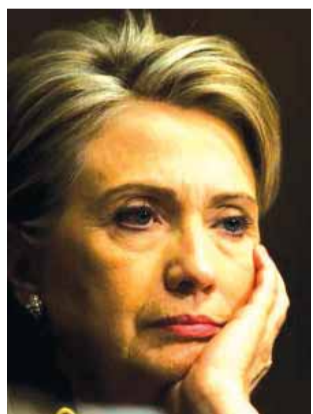
As Afghans become ever more hopeless about the future of their country, a rising number have set out on long and perilous journeys to Europe. Last year, 213,000 Afghans made it to Europe, where leaders have been grappling with the even larger influx of Syrians. While Syrians are not being forced to return home, European leaders last month struck a deal with the government of Afghanistan to establish a mechanism for the return of tens of thousands of Afghans who have failed to get asylum or legal residency in Europe. Under the deal, the Afghan government agreed to accept even citizens who fear for their safety if they were to return home.

Those who go back home, often having spent all their money on smugglers, face grinding poverty and violence. Within the country, about 221,000 Afghans fled their homes between January and August, according to the United Nations. For many, the only option is to pitch a tent in one of the country's bulging and poorly serviced refugee camps.

The United Nations refugee agency has been making desperate pleas to donors for more assistance as winter approaches. Last month, it said it needed \$181 million to cover basic operations in the months ahead. Fulfilling that need immediately is the least the international community can do. Beyond that, it will need to rethink its long-term approach to Afghan refugees and how to resettle more abroad in the years ahead. (Source: NYT)

A farewell to Hillary Clinton

To the victor, the spoils — and in the current media landscape, most of the attention. In the first hours after her defeat, Hillary Clinton avoided the media, while Donald Trump paraded his family and friends in triumph. But Clinton deserves a farewell lap, if not of victory, then at least of valiant effort.



At 69, and with two failed races for the White House behind her, this is probably the end of her career. What she memorably called "that highest, hardest glass ceiling" remains unbroken. Other countries have found it much easier to elect a female leader, but for America, it remains out of reach. Clinton, whatever one may think of her politics, was incredibly well-qualified, perhaps the most qualified candidate, of either gender, that America

will see for some time. And yet she lost. Some ceilings are just too high.

Yet Clinton ought to be proud of what she has achieved, and what her climb through the rough-and-tumble of U.S. politics means for women and girls around the world. Female role-models at that level are hard to come by, and there will be many in America and around the world who, while they disagree with her, would have relished the chance to look at their daughters and say: "Yes, you can." As with Barack Obama, her victory would have meant something beyond U.S. shores.

Yet a majority of Americans did not feel that way. Trump won and won convincingly. He tapped into something that both politicians and the mainstream media missed; an emotion, an anger, a raw desire for something different. Facing Hillary Clinton, in every way the quintessential political operative, was always going to give him an advantage. Much of Trump's strongest support came from areas that have been hurt badly by the economic slowdown and decades of underinvestment. For them, Clinton represented a system that had already destroyed their communities.

Such analysis, however, must wait for another day. Democrats will have months and years to lick their wounds. Today, Clinton deserves a moment to recall what she achieved, not what she has lost. (Source: The National)

Trump's victory ushers in dangerous instability

By Roland Nelles

With Donald Trump's victory, the world is entering a new and dangerous phase of instability. To fulfill his campaign promises, he will need partners. But there is no indication that the president-elect is interested in constructive solutions.

It really happened. He did it. Donald Trump proved all experts wrong. All of the allegedly certain predictions that he could not become a president of the United States have been reduced to absurdity. A man who insults foreigners, women and people with disabilities, who preaches hate and snubs America's most important partners, will run the most powerful country on Earth. It is a political catastrophe.

Crude populism has triumphed over reason. Trump's success is a shock for all those who had counted on the political wisdom of American voters. The real-estate tycoon promised the Americans a fundamental political shift and a majority — even if slim — have followed his promises. The American voters have opted for change, though no one knows what it will look like. Given Trump's Islamophobic, nationalistic, hateful statements during the election campaign, only one thing can be said for sure: It won't be good.

Trump scored points with hateful slogans against the so-called political establishment and the media. He won over a white middle class that has been destabilized by globalization. "I alone can fix it" was the motto of his campaign. It's an arrogant phrase, an empty promise. What is certain is that Trump on his own will not be able to solve the problems faced by America and those of a highly complex world. Those who believe he will have only themselves to blame.

■ The world enters a new phase

A president who wants to make the lives of his citizens better and more secure must seek reconciliation and dialogue with other states and cultures. He needs partners. None of this seems to interest Trump. Trump is a destroyer, a divider. An examination of his biography and of his election campaign shows that he is not interested in constructive solutions, he isn't looking for reconciliation, he only wants to egoistically and self-righteously impose his and his supporters' nationalist interests.

The world, and America, is now threatened by a



What is certain is that Trump on his own will not be able to solve the problems faced by America and those of a highly complex world.

dangerous phase of instability: Donald Trump wants to make America "great" again. If one believes his pronouncements, he will proceed ruthlessly: He wants to throw 11 million migrants out of the country, renegotiate all major trade agreements and make important allies like Germany pay for U.S. military protection. That will trigger significant conflict, incite new rivalries and spur new crises.

The most important question is now: Will the American system of "checks and balances" between the institutions manage to prevent a man who speaks like an autocrat from governing like one? Is it even possible to

control Trump with a Republican Congress?

America's democracy now faces a significant test: It is to be feared that Trump will do everything he can to checkmate his opponents. He threatened journalists who were critical of him during his campaign. His followers yelled "lock her up" in reference to his opponent Hillary Clinton. Such rhetoric leaves marks, even if he struck a more conciliatory note in his acceptance speech.

Of course hope remains that the political system is strong enough to restrain a president with absolutist fantasies. But there are no guarantees.

(Source: Spiegel)

U.S. order to evacuate dependents worries Turks

By Pinar Tremblay

The U.S. State Department has ordered the families of its consulate staff in Istanbul to leave the country. Now, Turks fear for the worst.

In an Oct. 29 order, the U.S. government cited the increasing possibility of terror attacks against U.S. citizens in Istanbul. The State Department has frequently issued short-term travel alerts to its citizens in Turkey in the past two years, but those typically involved visits to southeast Turkey and near the Syrian border. The new order applies specifically to diplomatic families in Istanbul.

The order noted that the consulate will remain open and fully functional. It did not apply to other posts, although the U.S. Consulate in Adana Province issued a warning Nov. 4 that terror organizations in the city might target U.S. citizens and warned them to be vigilant.

The pro-government media reported the news of the Istanbul consulate warning briefly and calmly. Members of the Turkish public, however — particularly middle- and upper-middle-class Turks — were not so calm. To gauge reactions, Al-Monitor informally surveyed groups of college-educated Istanbul residents and monitored social media sites such as Twitter and Eksi Sozluk. The responses fall into two basic categories. The first was the "sour grape" group, which expressed bitter anger over the U.S. decision to save only its own personnel's families. The group suggested the move might be an omen to impending U.S.-led chaos in Turkey. Some went so far as to suggest that the United States will be responsible for any terror attacks that might take place in Turkey as the consulate families are evacuated.

The second group worried that the Americans would alert and protect their own, but leave the Turks in the dark. Some joked, asking if Americans would take them along, while others asked what would become of those left behind.

■ Evacuations are complex

Evacuations are complex. In March, the Department of Defense ordered its personnel's dependents to leave Turkey. Departures of family members, sometimes with their pets, is a cumbersome arrangement, not to be undertaken lightly.

Al-Monitor spoke with a former



A protester holds a Turkish flag under a sign for the U.S. Consulate in Istanbul

State Department official who asked to remain anonymous. The official explained that decisions of this scale are never haphazard. He refrained from detailing the specific causes for evacuation, but noted such decisions "are always based on a serious security threat — not [just] the usual chatter that is picked up by security services."

"It means that a threat to attack Americans has progressed from the typical boasting, posturing and threatening to actual planning. It does not necessarily mean that a specific terrorist plan was discovered, but rather that a credible risk exists from terrorists, in this case probably [the Islamic State (ISIL)], which has the means and the intention of carrying out an attack. The U.S. government, via the State Department, always attempts to advise U.S. citizens living and traveling abroad of heightened security risks," he said.

■ The Vienna Convention

So, is this warning and others part of a greater plan to hurt Turkey? The former State Department official answered Al-Monitor's questions in detail: "Such precautions do not happen in a vacuum. Under the terms of the Vienna Convention, responsibility for security of embassies and consulates

rests solely with the host country. U.S. Embassy personnel and host country government officials work closely together on a daily basis to share information and discuss potential security threats. The decision to evacuate the families of consular personnel is almost always taken with the full knowledge, advice and cooperation of the host nation's Ministry of Foreign Affairs."

Al-Monitor asked if evacuating family members from foreign missions is common practice. "Such an action is rare. The only other recent case I can think of is the Congo. It is expensive, certainly several hundred thousand dollars, to get the family members and enough of their personal belongings to live on indefinitely out of the country, and probably a million dollars a month to support them until their eventual return," he said.

"On a human level, an evacuation causes an extraordinary amount of disruption in the lives of embassy and consulate families. Many have school-age children who now must be taken out of school in the host country and placed in new schools in the middle of the school year in the United States. Many spouses work in the host country, and those jobs and incomes are lost, perhaps permanently. The fi-

The Turkish government does not want, or is simply unable, to seriously tackle the growing security deficit. Even the declared state of emergency and increasing militarization has not been able to prevent the drastic rise in terrorism or organized crime.

ancial support provided by the State Department for separate housing [normally somewhere in the United States] and per diem [expenses] only covers a fraction of the actual cost of maintaining a second, separate household in the United States for the families, so significant financial hardship is always involved. The decision to evacuate is never a "political message."

What these warnings tell us is that the Turkish government does not want, or is simply unable, to seriously tackle the growing security deficit. Even the declared state of emergency and increasing militarization has not been able to prevent the drastic rise in terrorism or organized crime.

Quality of life has decreased significantly in the last couple of years in Turkey, particularly as a result of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's adventurist policies in Syria. This is obvious from the changes in hazardous duty pay percentages calculated by the State Department for its Foreign Service personnel. Personnel in Turkey didn't receive hazard pay until September 2015, when those serving in the southeastern border province of Gaziantep were added. But since April 3, workers in several Turkish cities have been added, including Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir.

It is not just the data applicable to the U.S. Department of State or the Department of Defense that indicate there is a growing security problem in Turkey. The number of applications for asylum to various Western countries has skyrocketed in the last year. Applications to Germany from Turkish citizens have doubled.

Given the growing unrest in Turkey, it is safe to predict that ordered departures from U.S. and other countries' missions will only increase in the coming months. Erdogan's lack of concern about U.S. actions can be predicted from what he said Oct. 14 about capital punishment: "I will approve the death penalty; the West cannot comment." On Nov. 6, he ridiculed the German press for calling him a dictator, adding that he didn't care. It seems the feeling is mutual, that the West does not care for Erdogan. In other words, the importance of Western views for Turkish policymakers is decreasing as security deteriorates and foreign missions and globally connected Turks leave the country.

(Source: Al Monitor)

By Maryam Azish

Iran, Belgium ties at a new turning point

The July 2015 Vienna Agreement and its implementation in January 2016 raised hopes in the Islamic Republic of Iran that there would be an urgent influx of foreign investment which would soon enhance the economic situation in that country.

The implementation of the historic nuclear deal known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) has paved the ground for luring more foreign investment and a large number of foreign companies from different countries, European in particular, have voiced the willingness to made investment in Iran.

Iranian officials are facilitating the investment process in Iran aimed at attracting more investors because they believe that luring the domestic and foreign investments is considered as key for settling the country's economic problems.

In an indication of fostering ties between Iran and the Europe, Belgian Minister-President of Flanders Geert Bourgeois heading a delegation traveled to Iran late October to amend cooperation between the two countries.

While in Iran, Bourgeois held talks with Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade Mohammad Reza Nematzadeh and took part in Iran-Belgium Trade conference attended by 200 representatives of 140 Belgian firms in Tehran.

■ Good Conditions for Trade Transactions

In a meeting with Belgian visiting minister, Nematzadeh said post-sanction era has created a proper conditions for

development in Iran, the imports and exports activities in particular.

He also underscored that the two countries should focus on the long-term strategic cooperation, stressing the Iranian producers and industrialists are ready to employ the technical capabilities of the Belgian companies.

Emphasizing the need for removing the obstacles hindering expansion of cooperation, he said the Belgian side should facilitate trade exchange and develop banking cooperation to ease activities of their tradespersons.

For his part, Bourgeois said that 140 trade officials from the Belgian companies have accompanied him during the Tehran visit which is an indication of Belgium's enthusiasm to broaden ties with Iran in different arenas.

Brussels, he said, attaches great importance to improving inter-banking relations as one of the Belgian banks has started cooperation with the Iranian banks.

■ Iran-Belgium Banking Cooperation:

Speaking in Iran-Belgium Trade Conference, Bourgeois announced that despite some problems remaining in financial cooperation and investment in Iran, two Belgian banks have expressed readiness in this regard.

Bourgeois said that no contract has yet been inked between the countries but it is hoped that trade ties will be sus-



tainable and long-term.

Bourgeois had earlier said on October 30 that Belgian trade office could be opened in Iran.

Speaking in same gathering, Deputy Minister of Industry, Mine and trade Mojtaba Khosro Taj underscored that Iran-Belgium trade exchange hit 300-400 million dollars per year and attempts should be made to boost the figure to over \$1b.

■ Cooperation with Iran Valuable:

Meanwhile, Managing Director of Flanders Investment and Trade Claire Tillekaerts said in Iran-Belgium Trade Conference that cooperation with Tehran is valuable for Brussels, adding Iran enjoys a suitable scientific capability and prestigious researches have been done in the Islamic Republic.

Tillekaerts expressed interest to develop cooperation in infrastructural, medical, clean technologies and tourism fields.

Touching upon the good relations between Iran and Belgium, saying that the trip aimed at bolstering economic cooperation which experienced fall due to the imposed sanctions on Iran.

■ Iran-Belgium Sign MoU on Trade Ties:

Iran and three economic regions of Belgium inked a MoU in Tehran on trade cooperation.

The MoU aims to broaden scientific, technological and infrastructural cooperation between Iranian and Belgian firms.

The MoU has made a framework on developing investment and trade cooperation between the two countries.

■ New Chapter in Bilateral Cooperation:

Back in August, President of the Senate of Belgium Christine Defraigne and her accompanying delegation traveled to Tehran for talks on expansion of bilateral relations with senior Iranian officials including Majlis Speaker Ali Larijani, President Hassan Rouhani, Expediency Council Chairman Ayatollah Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, Head of the Strategic Research Center of the Expediency Council Ali-Akbar Velayati, Presidential advisor and Head of the Woman and Family Affairs Center Shahindokht Molaverdi and Senior International Affairs Advisor of the Judiciary Chief and Secretary of the Human Rights Headquarters.

In a meeting with Defraigne, Larijani underscored that Iran and Belgium enjoy long-standing diplomatic ties and the two countries have had trade cooperation too, adding the visit of Belgian parliamentary delegation to Iran has opened a new chapter in bilateral cooperation.

The two sides also underlined expansion of parliamentary relations, activation of friendship group and establishment of

foreign policy commissions, regional situation and menace of terrorism.

Defraigne said that the two countries have had long-standing ties in different fields of culture, economy and politics and now considering new situation the two states favor expansion of relations, adding the international cooperation is necessary for anti-terror fight ad in this concern constant exchange of information is very important.

She maintained that public diplomacy coupled with parliamentary diplomacy could have good function and Belgium intends to develop such relations.

■ Iran Willing to Develop Ties with EU

Talking to Defraigne, President Rouhani said Iran is ready to expand international, regional and bilateral cooperation with the European Union (EU) countries, including Belgium.

Referring to the positive role the EU played during the nuclear talks that led to July deal, Rouhani described the nuclear agreement as the start not the end of the way.

On Iran-Belgium relations, Rouhani said the opportunities created in the post sanctions era should be taken to develop bilateral cooperation in trade and economic fields.

There is no hindrance to widen Tehran-Brussels ties, said Rouhani, adding the two can plan for joint economic activities in the entire region.

Iran welcomes Belgian investors, entrepreneurs and private sectors for cooperation in the post sanctions conditions, he added.

For her part, the Belgian official said her country is willing to open new chapter in its relations with Iran.

Referring to Iran as a country that ensures security in the region, Defraigne appreciated Iran's stance on fight with terrorism.

Defraigne also urged all sides to nuclear talks with Iran to do their best for removal of obstacles on the way of execution of JCPOA.

Defraigne called for expansion of Tehran-Brussels relations in all areas particularly pharmaceutical, medical and space.

All countries should be bound to their obligations to international agreements and Brussels will remind US officials that they should be committed to the nuclear deal with Iran, the official added.

Belgium will do its best to remove obstacles on the way of execution of JCPOA, Defraigne said.

Undoubtedly, the atmosphere created after the JCPOA is a good opportunity for the country's exporters and producers to cooperate with foreign companies and the reputable brands.

Nobody can deny the positive effects created by the nuclear deal because it has provided safer and more secure ground for foreign countries to engage with in Iran, the Belgium in particular.



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How to be optimistic about everything

By Laura Schwecherl

When challenges come our way, it may be easy to succumb to negative thoughts. But look on the bright side—optimistic thinking isn't just in our heads. Thinking positively can also boost our physical and mental health.

■ The power of positive: the need-to-know

Optimistic thinkers tend to anticipate the best possible outcome in any situation. (For instance: "I may have totaled my car, but thank goodness for insurance!") And research suggests seeing the glass half-full is good for our health, career, and love life. Studies have found self-reported optimism predicts lower rates of mortality and cancer, and better cardiovascular health and immune function. Other research has found the benefits of positive thinking are especially pronounced in low-income countries. One study even suggests optimism helps women battle breast cancer. And elderly people who hold positive stereotypes about old age generally recover better from disability than those who think negatively.

Some psychologists think optimists tend to be healthier because they cope better when they can't meet their goals. It's also possible that people who think positively attribute less significance to stressful events.

But the benefits of optimism go beyond a clean bill of health. Forget the raving resume—there may be a connection between positive thinking and landing a stellar job. Optimists also have a better chance of securing a stable, loving relationship. Still, thinking positively may be easier said than done.



Some experts argue defensive pessimism—“hope for the best, prepare for the worst”—helps people respond to certain threats and may even reduce anxiety.

■ Every little thing is gonna be all right: your action plan

While some psychologists think we can learn to be optimists, other experts believe optimism is a personality trait we're born with. And other factors, like socioeconomic status and cultural background, may have a role in our ability to think positively. Several studies have found a relationship between pessimism and lower economic status—though it's unclear whether low socioeconomic status causes people to be more pessimistic or it's other way around. Cultural differences may also come into play. Studies suggest West-

ern cultures tend to anticipate more positive events than Eastern cultures do. Some psychologists suggest that's because Westerners focus more on self-enhancement and see themselves more positively than Easterners.

But before becoming Mr. or Ms. "Everything-Is-Awesome," know that being too optimistic can have a downside. Expecting the best in every situation may lead to failed expectations. Some experts argue defensive pessimism—"hope for the best, prepare for the worst"—helps people respond to certain threats and may even reduce anxiety.

■ Here are some quick tips on how

to start seeing the glass half-full:

- Find the good. Even in less-than-great situations, there's a way to find something positive. It may be hard to see at first, but try looking closer! (For instance: "I may be completely lost, but the view from here sure is pretty.")

- Write it down. At the end of the day, write down a few good things that happened, like finishing a big report at work or getting an email from an old friend. The habit makes it easier to appreciate the positive parts of life.

- Speak with success. Sometimes it's not the specific situation that determines a good or bad mood, but how we talk about it. (For example: "The exam may have been super hard, but telling friends we tried our best may cheer us up.")

- Forget the green-eyed monster. It's easy to compare ourselves to others and become envious of what you don't have. Instead, try to appreciate the good qualities and remember what you're grateful for.

- Take control. Science has shown people feel more optimistic about situations they can control. So take a seat behind the driver's wheel and remember choices like working out more and eating healthfully are (almost always) yours!

- Smile! Grin at this: In one study, participants who held a pen in their mouth (causing them to use their smiling muscles) perceived cartoons to be funnier than those without the pen. So not only are smiles contagious, they may actually make situations seem better.

- Stay balanced. Life isn't all good, all the time, so don't worry if those positive thoughts don't flow freely. Staying realistic is also important to help manage anxiety and boost productivity. (Source: greatist.com)

5 ways to de-stress and help your heart

Constant stress — whether from a traffic-choked daily commute, unhappy marriage, or heavy workload — can have real physical effects on the body. It has been linked to a wide range of health issues, including mood, sleep, and appetite problems — and yes, even heart disease.



Doctors don't know exactly how chronic stress affects the heart. Most likely, stress triggers inflammation, a known instigator of heart disease, but that hasn't been proven. "I think the conventional opinion is that stress is bad for your heart, but the data are much murkier," says Dr. Deepak Bhatt, director of the Integrated Interventional Cardiovascular Program at Brigham and Women's Hospital.

Yet stress may influence heart disease in more subtle ways. "Stress does cause some people to act in ways that increase their risk for heart disease," Dr. Bhatt says. For example, when stressed, people often eat unhealthy food and don't have the energy or time to exercise. Stress can also lead us into other heart-damaging behaviors, such as smoking and drinking too much alcohol.

Breaking the connection requires both learning to deal with stress and managing unhealthy habits. These five simple tips can help you do just that.

1 Stay positive. Laughter has been found to lower levels of stress hormones, reduce inflammation in the arteries, and increase "good" HDL cholesterol.

2 Meditate. This practice of inward-focused thought and deep breathing has been shown to reduce heart disease risk factors such as high blood pressure. Meditation's close relatives, yoga and prayer, can also relax the mind and body.

3 Exercise. Every time you are physically active, whether you take a walk or play tennis, your body releases mood-boosting chemicals called endorphins. Exercising not only melts away stress, it also protects against heart disease by lowering your blood pressure, strengthening your heart muscle, and helping you maintain a healthy weight.

4 Unplug. It's impossible to escape stress when it follows you everywhere. Cut the cord. Avoid emails and TV news. Take time each day — even if it's for just 10 or 15 minutes — to escape from the world.

5 Find ways to take the edge off your stress. Simple things, like a warm bath, listening to music, or spending time on a favorite hobby, can give you a much-needed break from the stressors in your life.

Stress doesn't have to ruin your life or your health. To learn more about how stress affects your heart, health and well-being, and what to do about it, buy Stress Management, a Special Health Report from Harvard Medical School.

(Source: health.harvard.edu)

Flavored e-cigarettes produce 'unacceptably dangerous' levels of cancer-causing toxins, study finds

A review by Public Health England concluded vaping is much safer than smoking and could help people quit

By Ian Johnston

Smoking flavoured e-cigarettes can produce "unacceptably dangerous" levels of formaldehyde and other carcinogenic compounds, according to a new study.

Researchers at the Desert Research Institute in Nevada found that toxic aldehydes formed when the flavored liquid was rapidly heated to create vapor.

E-cigarettes are currently sold in thousands of different flavors, with some sweet varieties thought to be particularly appealing to children.

One of the scientists, Professor Andrey Khylstov, said: "How these flavoring compounds in e-cigarette liquids affect the chemical composition and toxicity of the vapor that e-cigarettes produce is practically unknown.

"Our results show that production of toxic aldehydes is exponentially dependent on the concentration of fla-

vorating compounds."

The scientists tested five different flavors and three kinds of e-cigarette, a cartomizer and two types of clearomizers, they reported in the journal Environmental Science & Technology.

"One puff of any of the flavored e-liquids that we tested exposes the smoker to unacceptably dangerous levels of these aldehydes, most of which originates from thermal decomposition of the flavoring compounds," said Professor Khylstov.

"These results demonstrate the need for further, thorough investigations of the effects of flavoring additives on the formation of aldehydes and other toxic compounds in e-cigarette vapors."

The researchers tested different concentrations of flavored and unflavored e-cigarette liquids.

In all the experiments, the flavored e-cigarettes produced higher levels of aldehydes than the limit for hazardous chemical exposure set by the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists. The higher

the level of flavor, the larger amounts of aldehydes were produced.

Professor Vera Samburova, who also took part in the study, said: "To determine the specific role of the flavoring compounds we fixed all important parameters that could affect aldehyde production and varied only the type and concentration of flavors."

A review by Public Health England earlier this year found that e-cigarettes were 95 per cent less harmful than tobacco, suggesting they could be prescribed to smokers to help them quit.

But some experts have suggested this idea could be premature.

In August, Professor Charalambos Viachopoulos, of Athens University, warned that while e-cigarettes are "less harmful than traditional cigarettes ... they are not harmless".

"There could be long term heart dangers. They are far more dangerous than people realize."

(Source: The Independent)

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10 hot titles of IT world

By Alireza Khorasani

Here are high rated IT titles in the world that reviewed by savvy tech users:

1 Very interesting Apple CEO Tim Cook reaction to Donald Trump's victory by a sentence from Martin Luther King: "If you can't fly, then run. If you can't run, then walk. If you can't walk, then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward."

he added that we only do great work and improve the world by moving forward.

2 Snapchat's Sunglasses with a video camera embedded is selling on ebay \$600 to as high as \$980.

The company selling it via a single vending machine in Venice. Priced at \$129.99, buyers used the credit card reader on the machine to make their purchases and there is a limit of two glasses per customer.

3 The founder and CEO of Alibaba said President Trump must work with China in tech section.

Jack Ma warns of 'disaster' if President Trump doesn't work with China.

4 WhatsApp has started turning on two-step verification in its beta releases for both Android and Windows Phone. On Android, this feature is live in version 2.16.341 and above (maybe even earlier). On the Windows side, you'll see it if you're using WhatsApp 2.16.280 or newer.

5 Russia is filtered LinkedIn web site. A Moscow court has ruled the social network is in violation of local data collection regulations.

As the New York Times reports, a local court in Moscow has ruled that LinkedIn is not in compliance with with the country's data protection rules.

6 Soccer may use video replays to help with concussions.

As soon as next season, doctors could be allowed to watch video replays and stop a match if necessary. At its annual meeting in March, the International Football Association Board (IFAB) will decide whether a doctor on the touchline will be able to review video replays.

7 Scientists developed a USB stick that can perform an HIV test.

Scientists at the Imperial College London developed a device with the help of medical testing company DNA Electronics that detects HIV levels in the bloodstream and creates a signal that can be read using a computer or handheld gadget.

8 Europe has ruled that e-books can be lent out just like their physical counterparts. That is, as noticed by Ars Technica, one copy can be "checked out" by one person at a time. After the lending period expires, that user can no longer use the book and it goes to the next person who wants it.

9 The HTC Bolt - an un-Google'd Pixel XL with extra stuff like waterproofing and fancy new headphones, dashes to Sprint.

Phone is carved out of aluminum using the HTC 10 design, but at a larger scale - the screen is 5.5" with QHD resolution.

10 We will see 2 curved model of Galaxy 8 in 2017. Samsung may enlarge the Galaxy S8 screen, in an effort to accommodate former Note 7 fans.

There was a rumor a few days ago that Samsung will go edge-to-edge with its Galaxy S8 displays, raising some eyebrows with claims that there will be two models, with 5.7" and 6.2" panels.

According to Evan Blass, the two Galaxy S8 variants will ship as SM-G950 and SM-G955, and now a report coming out of Korea says they will both feature a curved display.

\$10,000 Sony FS7 II video camera

Sony FS7 is one of the most popular semi-professional video cameras on the market. It is popular among indie filmmakers and YouTube content creators for its high quality video, feature set, compact design, and affordable pricing compared to professional video cameras.

Sony has now launched a successor in the form of the FS7 II, which will be sold alongside the older model. Most of the changes on the new model won't seem like much on paper but they are all carefully selected design changes based on user feedback that should make the lives of the person operating the camera easier.



First of all, the FS7 II gets a electronic variable ND filter. You can adjust the camera's electronic ND filter within its 2-7 stop range smoothly even while shooting or just stick it into Auto mode to let it do its thing. You can also assign any three values to pre-set buttons to quickly switch to them.

Next, the camera features a lever lock type E-mount that allows you to unmount the lens by turning the lens collar instead of the lens itself which prevents having to remove the lens support rig and saves time. The FS7 II also uses tool-less design for attaching and adjusting the viewfinder and hand grip. Durable square section rods and lever-clamps on the LCD and camera body allow moving the viewfinder back and forth without changing height.

The FS7 II will also be available in a kit lens package with a new 18-110mm E-mount Super 35mm lens. The lens uses Sony's Smooth Motion Optics, which is optimized for motion image capture, and takes care of issues such as lens ramping, lens breathing, optical axis shift and not being able to maintain focus while zooming. The FS7 II also supports the XQD card format and Sony is launching the industry's first 256GB XQD card alongside the camera. The FS7 II will be available in January 2017 for \$10,000 body-only and \$13,000 with the 18-110mm lens (Source: Sony)

What are Trump's technology policy plans?

By Steven J. Vaughan-Nichols

Trump won with "big" ideas and few, if any, details. Here's what little we know about his technology policy plans.

First, Trump had little to say about technology policies. His immigration policy of mass deportations and building a wall to keep out Mexicans appealed to his rural base, but it didn't say anything to Silicon Valley.

Indeed, Silicon Valley largely supported Hillary Clinton and hates the idea of a Trump presidency. The one exception, venture capitalist, Peter Thiel, is now poised to become a member of Trump's inner circle.

Trump hates the one employment policy that does matter to tech companies: H-1B visas. These are often used to bring engineers and scientists into the US. Trump attacked H-1Bs during the campaign. He called guest workers cheap substitutes for American labor. At the same time, he wants to "select immigrants based on their likelihood of success in the US, and their ability to be financially self-sufficient," while turning "off the jobs and benefits magnet".

Bottom line, if your business depends on tech employees from outside the country, start looking for employees born in the US.

Of course, finding those employees won't be easy. Twenty percent of all US jobs require knowledge in at least one STEM (science, technology, engineering or mathematics) field. But America isn't producing enough workers to keep up with the demand.

Trump doesn't believe it: "We graduate two times more Americans with STEM degrees each year than find STEM jobs, yet as much as two-thirds of entry-level hiring for IT jobs is accomplished through the H1B program." I have been to numerous technology conferences this year. At every single one, every last company was looking for staffers.

On a higher level, the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation, a nonpartisan think tank, notes that the US has been lagging behind other countries



In a campaign speech, Trump made this explicit when he said, "I will use every lawful presidential power to remedy trade disputes, including the application of tariffs." This, in turn, would raise the prices of not just Apple products but those from Chinese-based companies such as Lenovo, Huawei, and Xiaomi.

in both pure and pragmatic technology research. "In fact, federal funding for R&D as a share of GDP in 2016 will be the lowest it has been since the Russians launched Sputnik, almost 50 years ago."

On the subject of space exploration, he has no plans for NASA. Trump also has no position on promoting US federal research. He also has no policies on technology transfer, start-up and small business support, or patent reform.

As for taxes, Trump plans to reduce the corporate tax rate to 15 percent from 35 percent. He has, of course, many other tax changes in mind. He claims that these changes will create 25 million more jobs. How he can reconcile this with the Republican promise of a balanced federal budget remains an open question.

Trump also wants all online retailers to collect sales tax. How this would be done remains an unanswered question.

Trump in his 100-Day Action Plan to Make

America Great Again is going to be radically changing our international trade agreements. These include withdrawing from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), renegotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and declaring China a currency manipulator. What will all this mean?

If your company, Apple, for example, relies on Chinese manufacturing or sales, you could be in a world of hurt. A trade war with China is a real possibility.

In a campaign speech, Trump made this explicit when he said, "I will use every lawful presidential power to remedy trade disputes, including the application of tariffs." This, in turn, would raise the prices of not just Apple products but those from Chinese-based companies such as Lenovo, Huawei, and Xiaomi.

How much? Trump said during the campaign he would slap a 45 percent tariff on Chinese goods and a 35 percent tax on Mexican imports. Those countries,

in return, would retaliate with their own tariffs. This could bring international trade to a grinding halt.

In connection with Chinese manufacturing, Trump attacked Apple several times during his campaign. "We're going to get Apple to build their damn computers and things in this country instead of in other countries," Trump said in speech. A completely American-made iPhone would cost about \$100 more.

As for the internet, Trump opposes the FCC's Open Internet Order. Curiously, he dislikes it on the grounds that he seems to think it represents a top-down power grab that's anti-net neutrality. The truth is that this ruling, which regulates Internet Service Providers as utilities, is pro-net neutrality.

Trump, however, is not the most technically adept person on the planet. His cybersecurity policies are weak and "dangerously vague". His 10-year old son knows computers; Trump, not so much.

He, or his organization, also doesn't know much about email. His company runs on horribly insecure email servers.

Of course, as the email shenanigans of Clinton, the Bushes, indeed every president back to and including Reagan has played games with email. Knowing your way around email is not a job skill required in the Oval Office even if it is everywhere else.

It's safe to presume that since Trump presents himself as a law-and-order and homeland security president, he'll be in favor in weakening encryption and invading privacy. For example, he was all in favor of the court order calling for Apple to facilitate access to the San Bernardino shooter's encrypted iPhone.

That said, we honestly don't know his internet privacy and security positions. He barely touched on the issues during the campaign. Privacy and cyber-security aren't mentioned at all on his website's positions pages.

What it comes down to is we've elected a pig in a poke. We really have very little idea what he'll do. The only thing it's safe to predict is there will be economic trade disruptions that will impact technology imports and exports. Other than that, we're just going to have wait and see. (Source: zdnet)

Peter Thiel to enter Trump inner circle as tech adviser

Silicon Valley investor Peter Thiel is a contrarian no longer.

The only tech angel to publicly sing the praises of Donald Trump during the presidential campaign, Thiel is set to reap big dividends for his views. Thiel told The New York Times on Wednesday that he will have the president-elect's ear on matters of technology and innovation at least as an informal adviser.

Trump's win on Election Day surprised both presidential campaigns and the country as a whole. The vast majority of polls and predictions showed Clinton easily winning the presidency. Silicon Valley and many of its top executives were vocal supporters of Clinton, who aligned with business and social issues generally backed by Silicon Valley as a whole.

Thiel was one of the few in the tech industry to defy the trend and support Trump, including with a \$1.25 million pledge to the campaign.



Thiel, a billionaire, Facebook board member and PayPal co-founder, made his fortune backing internet

staples such as Facebook when those companies were mere startups with big dreams.

His support of Trump earned him a prime speaking slot at the Republican National Convention, where he said Trump would be the right person to bring Silicon Valley's level of success to the US as a whole. In that speech, Thiel conjured up a golden age when innovation and opportunity existed throughout the United States and not just in a West Coast tech hub, an era when the US was preparing to send a man to the moon and "the future felt limitless."

Thiel also gave a pro-Trump speech October 31, reiterating his support for the Republican presidential candidate and arguing the nominee had tapped into a wellspring of discontent across the country.

"What Trump represents isn't crazy," Thiel during that speech. "It isn't going away." (Source: cnet)

Quick Charge 4.0 may provide up to 28W of power, smartly

Growth in battery capacity seems to have stalled but one thing keeps growing - the rate at which batteries charge. Qualcomm is rumored to introduce Quick Charge 4.0 soon which will push a whopping 28W of power to supported phones.

For comparison, current Quick Charge 3.0 tops out at 18W, Huawei's Super Charge is faster at 22.5W, Oppo's VOOC is at 20W. Google is reportedly considering pushing manufacturers to adopt the Power Delivery standard for phones that use USB Type-C - Google's own Pixel phones support it, but they top out at 18W (technically, the standard can do up to 100W, but actually doing it on a phone will be tricky).

Quick Charge 4.0 is said to offer charging at either 5V (4.7A to 5.6A) or

9V (at 3A). There's no mention of 12V or 20V options which may be a good thing - charging at a high voltage is the easy way to up the power, but down-converting that to a voltage a lithium battery can accept creates a lot of heat.

You can look at Huawei's Super Charge and Oppo's VOOC - they stick to a low voltage (5V) and use a high current (up to 5A). Super Charge can even drop below 5V to remove the need for voltage conversion and the heat that comes with it.

Quick Charge 4.0 is said to feature INOV (Intelligent Negotiation of Optimum Voltage), which should deliver the best voltage for the battery. QC 3.0 can go between 3.6V to 20V in 0.2V steps, INOV will presumably improve on that.

(Source: fudzilla)

Send and request money with your voice

Can you believe it's taken this long for probably the world's largest Internet payment platform to meet up with arguably the most popular intelligent personal assistant, and enable very simple voice commands for quickly sending and receiving e-money?

Well, it's good to see Siri support officially offered to PayPal customers, and better late than never, right? Besides, Apple will still hold bragging rights over rival AI services like Amazon's Alexa, Microsoft's Cortana or the newly released Google Assistant, none of which allows users of Android, Windows or Echo devices to magically make payments by uttering a few words.

"Hey Siri, send Bill \$50 using

PayPal." That's all you need to say starting today, November 10, after you download the free iOS app on iPhones and iPads running the latest platform build. Of course, it doesn't have to be \$50, and Bill isn't the only one that could use a little financial relief for the painful recent election loss.

You can even ask for some holiday dough via voice (in case you weren't already ashamed of still living off your parents), and Siri will take PayPal directives in no less than 30 countries and a variety of languages, including Australia, Canada (English and French), China, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Thailand, UK, and United Arab Emirates (Arabic).

(Source: pocketnow)

Nikon announces D5600 entry-level DSLR

Just under two years after releasing its first touchscreen camera - the D5500 - Nikon is announcing its successor.

The D5600 builds upon the D5500 with Nikon's SnapBridge which keeps the camera constantly connected to a smartphone through low energy Bluetooth. The touchscreen interface now has a virtual Fn button, which gives quick access to key features like the Auto ISO. Nikon's "frame advance

bar" interface allows you to view photos quickly on the touchscreen by dragging your finger - you can even lock the zoom for all images so you can pixel peep right on the screen.

Otherwise the Nikon D5600 is mostly a replica of its predecessor - it uses the same EXPEED 4 processor, a familiar 24MP APS-C sensor, the same 3.2" 1M dot tilt-swivel screen, the same 100 - 25,600 ISO range and

even the same body.

There's no word on pricing or availability yet.

(Source: Nikon)



Why seabirds love to gobble plastic floating in the ocean

Imagine you're passing a fast-food restaurant and you smell hamburger on the grill. You're hungry, so you pull in and eat one ... and the foam box it comes in.

That's apparently what's happening with some oceanic birds. And now scientists think they know why.

The fact that sea animals and birds eat floating plastic has long puzzled biologists. Their best guess was that it looks like food. But the new evidence suggests that for a lot of birds, plastic actually smells like food.

It all comes down to a common kind of algae floating in the ocean. The algae is food for tiny animals such as krill — otherwise known as zooplankton. When the krill gobble up the algae, the algae emit a chemical called dimethyl sulfide.

Biologist Matthew Savoca says it stinks up the place. It's actually a chemical scream. As he describes it, the "algae are sort of crying out, saying 'Oh my gosh, we're being eaten and can someone please help me!'"

That might sound ridiculous but, in fact, help does come — in the form of birds. When seabirds like shearwaters smell that chemical, they know it means tasty krill are in the water. "Think of it as like a dinner bell," Savoca says. "So if we heard a dinner bell ringing, the dinner bell would signify where we could find food."



Marine ecologist Chelsea Rochman at the University of Toronto says that, obviously, eating plastic isn't good for the birds — it's made with some harmful chemicals that aren't meant to be eaten.

Stinky algae

Savoca and his team at the University of California, Davis, wondered if birds were accidentally eating plastic because there

was stinky algae living on it. So they put plastic out to float around in the ocean. Then they took it to the university's food and wine laboratories — this is Northern

California, after all.

"Sure enough," Savoca says, "all this plastic reeked of that sulfur compound, likely due to the algae that coated it when it was out at sea."

So the algae cling to the plastic, and when the krill eat them, the algae scream — chemically, that is. The birds smell it and that's their "foraging cue." They scoop up the krill and the plastic.

Harmful chemicals

Marine ecologist Chelsea Rochman at the University of Toronto says that, obviously, eating plastic isn't good for the birds — it's made with some harmful chemicals that aren't meant to be eaten. But the plastic also picks up other chemicals in the ocean that make it even nastier.

"Plastic is a sponge for a lot of the chemicals that are in oil and the chemicals that are washing off from different sources, like pesticides and flame retardants and other industrial pollutants," Rochman says.

Poisoning birds is a problem. But Rochman and Savoca say biologists suspect that other marine animals, such as fish, also could be eating the plastic for the same reason — and that could have consequences not just for fish, but for people who eat them, as well.

(Source: npr.org)

Climate change is changing nature, scientists say



Life on Earth has already been fundamentally altered by global warming, affecting the genes of plants and animals and altering every ecosystem on the planet, according to a major review of the scientific literature.

A paper in the leading journal Science warned the changes were so dramatic — and potentially dangerous — that scientists might be forced to intervene in some cases to create "human-assisted evolution."

One of the main concerns about climate change is it will seriously damage food production, particularly in places prone to flooding and drought, leading to mass famines and the forced migration of climate refugees.

The researchers found that 82 percent of the natural ecological processes that support healthy ecosystems on land and sea had been affected in a way that had not been expected "for decades".

The average global temperature has risen by one degree Celsius since the 1880s, as humans have pumped greenhouse gases from fossil fuels into the atmosphere.

The researchers said this had "already had broad and worrying impacts on natural systems, with accumulating consequences for people."

Impacts of climate change

"Minimizing the impacts of climate

change on core ecological processes must now be a key policy priority for all nations," they wrote in the paper.

"It is now up to national governments to make good on the promises they made in Paris (at last year's climate summit) through regular tightening of emission targets, and also to recognize the importance of healthy ecosystems in times of unprecedented change.

"Time is running out for a globally synchronized response to climate change that integrates adequate protection of biodiversity and ecosystem services."

Many species are shifting towards the poles as the world warms, while others are seeking higher ground.

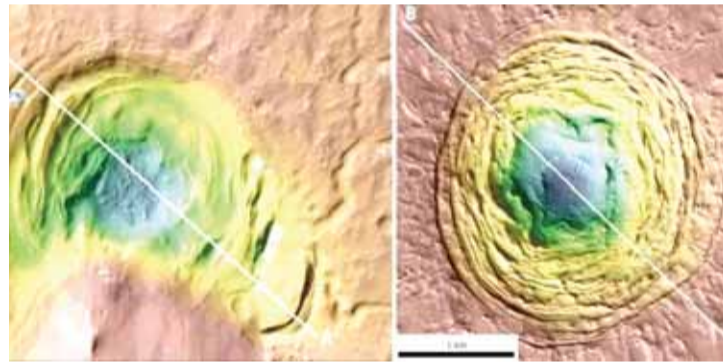
Marine species have expanded into areas that were usually too cold at a rate of 72km per decade, while land species have done so at 6km per decade, the paper said.

Other creatures are changing shape, with many getting smaller as a higher surface-area-to-body-mass ratio makes it easier to stay cool.

For example, six species of woodland salamander in the Appalachian Mountains have undergone an average eight percent reduction in body size over the past 50 years.

(Source: The Independent)

Scientists have spotted a strange 'funnel' on Mars



Scientists have analyzed a strange depression on the surface Mars, and say it could be the perfect place to search for signs of life, because it could contain three key ingredients for life: water, heat, and nutrients.

The funnel-shaped structure looks like the ancient 'ice cauldrons' we have on Earth that formed when volcanoes erupted under the ice sheets of Iceland and Greenland. If the same process occurred on Mars, it could have left behind a warm, nutrient-rich environment.

"We were drawn to this site because it looked like it could host some of the key ingredients for habitability — water, heat and nutrients," said lead researcher Joseph Levy, from the University of Texas.

The funnel is located inside a crater on the edge of the Hellas Planitia region in the southern hemisphere of Mars.

Big crater

The Hellas Planitia basin is actually just one big crater itself — the largest visible impact crater ever found in the Solar System, in fact — but it's pocked with many smaller craters, which suggests that it's a very old formation on the Red Planet.

The funnel was first detected by Levy back in 2009, because of strange crack-like features photographed by NASA's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter.

He then found a similar structure in

the Galaxias Fossae region of Mars, located in another giant basin called the Utopia Planitia.

"These landforms caught our eye because they're weird looking," says Levy. "They're concentrically fractured so they look like a bulls-eye. That can be a very diagnostic pattern you see in Earth materials."

Analyzing funnels

It wasn't until this year that Levy had the data to actually analyze the funnels properly, and thanks to new stereoscopic photographs — which allow researchers to extract three-dimensional information from two-dimensional image — his team could map out what they would look like below the surface.

"That surprised us, and led to a lot of thinking about whether it meant there was melting concentrated in the center that removed ice and allowed stuff to pour in from the sides," says Levy.

"Or if you had an impact crater, did you start with a much smaller crater in the past, and by sublimating away ice, you've expanded the apparent size of the crater."

Next, the researchers run a number of formation scenarios for the two funnels, and say the most likely result is that they formed in different ways to arrive at the same funnel shape.

(Source: ScienceAlert)

When will a volcano erupt?

Scientists studying Uturuncu, a dormant volcano in Bolivia, have discovered evidence that violent volcanic eruptions may owe their origins to incredibly water-rich magma, far below Earth's surface.

According to the researchers, who published their findings in the journal Earth and Planetary Science Letters, they started their search by analyzing rocks ejected by Uturuncu about 500,000 years ago.

Scientists have known for a while about a density "anomaly" 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) underneath Uturuncu that slows seismic waves in the region and conducts electricity, unlike the ordinary magma that surrounds it.

So the researchers subjected the erupted rocks to the same pressure and heat that would be present underneath a volcano, and added various amounts of water until they could replicate the anomaly.

Electrical properties

The team found that if the rocks had an 8 to 10 percent water content, they matched the electrical properties of the subterranean anomaly.

From that, they calculated that enough water is hidden in these magma bodies that, if it could be chemically



extracted, it would produce a lake.

There's no body of water down there. Instead, the water molecules are bonded to different kinds of minerals, much like water is bonded to quartz to make an opal, a semi-precious gemstone. Nobody would attempt to drink an opal, but it would look very different if water weren't hidden in its chemistry.

Similarly, an enormous volume of water is bound up in the minerals of the magma underneath Uturuncu.

That much water destabilizes the magma chamber beneath the volcano, say the researchers, which can lead to explosive results.

"Silicate melt can only dissolve water at high pressure; at lower pressure this water comes out of the solution and forms bubbles," explained Dr. Blundy.

In other words, as the magma rises toward the surface of the Earth, it is under less and less pressure. Once the magma gets high enough, the water escapes from its chemical bonds as high-pressure steam.

Bubbles are pockets of gas escaping from a liquid, and anyone who has ever shaken a bottle of soda before opening it knows that even a small amount of escaping gas can force a lot of that liquid out in an unexpectedly violent way.

On a geological scale, a volume of water the size of a Great Lake can provide enough bubble pressure for a massive explosive eruption.

Similar water-rich magmas are likely responsible for volcanic activity at countless other subduction zone volcanoes, all around the Pacific Ocean's "Ring of Fire" and beyond.

(Source: The CSM)

Smallest magnifying glass makes it possible to see chemical bonds between atoms

For centuries, scientists believed that light, like all waves, couldn't be focused down smaller than its wavelength, just under a millionth of a meter. Now, researchers led by the University of Cambridge have created the world's smallest magnifying glass, which focuses light a billion times more tightly, down to the scale of single atoms.

In collaboration with colleagues from Spain, the team used highly conductive gold nanoparticles to make the world's tiniest optical cavity, so small that only a single molecule can fit within it. The cavity — called a 'pico-cavity' by the researchers — consists of a bump in a gold nanostructure the size of a single atom, and confines light to less than a billionth of a meter.

The results, reported in the journal Science, open up new ways to study the interaction of light and matter, including the possibility of making the molecules in the cavity undergo new sorts of chemical reactions, which could enable the development of entirely new types of sensors.

According to the researchers, building nanostructures with single atom control was extremely challenging. "We had to cool our samples to -260°C in order to freeze the scurrying gold atoms," said Felix Benz, lead author of the study. The researchers shone laser light on the sample to build the pico-cavities, allowing them to watch single atom movement in real time.

"Our models suggested that individual atoms sticking out might act as tiny lightning rods, but focusing light instead of electricity," said Professor Javier Aizpurua from the Center for Materials Physics in San Sebastian, who led the theoretical section of this work.

(Source: EurekAlert)

Golden eagles back from the brink as numbers soar to highest level since surveys began

Golden eagles are out of danger for the first time since national surveys began, after a count found there are now more than 500 breeding pairs in Scotland.

The bird's status has been changed to 'favorable' from 'unfavorable' after a rise of 15 percent from 442 pairs in the last survey in 2003 to 508 today.

The most recent recovery takes the population to numbers which have not been seen since pesticides wiped out hundreds of birds in the 1960s.

Golden eagles are regarded by many people as Scotland's national bird and it is likely that Scotland is now home to the entire UK population, following reports earlier this year that England's only resident golden eagle had died.

The recovery is the result of increased monitoring and satellite tagging of eagles and stronger sanctions against wildlife crime.

The "sight of a golden eagle soaring in the sky above is an awe-inspiring part of our natural heritage, and this increase in numbers of golden eagle pairs is great news," said Duncan Orr-Ewing, Head of Species and Land Management at RSPB Scotland.

"Across many parts of Scotland there's been a very welcome turnaround in how people respect these magnificent birds, part of a more enlightened public attitude towards birds of prey."

"However, the continued absence of golden eagles in some areas of eastern Scotland remains a real cause for concern and suggests that much more work needs to be done."

(Source: The Telegraph)

AI will either save civilization, or destroy it

Artificial intelligence (AI) is either going to be really great, or it will ruin our civilization. Like many things these days, there is nothing in between.

When Cambridge professor Stephen Hawking addressed the gathering at the opening of the Leverhulme Center for the Future of Intelligence, most knew what to expect. When he is not discussing black holes he has gone out of his way to warn about the perils of artificial intelligence. He is blunt. AI is the amplification of the human brain and history shows, we humans rarely default to prudence.

Facebook (FB), with its 1.6 billion strong community, has tremendous power over the words and images its members consume. In an effort to rid itself of bias, human curation was recently replaced with AI algorithms. As the algorithms learned behaviors, they slowly stripped member Newsfeeds of dissenting points of view. This increased engagement while reinforcing biases, the direct opposite of the original intent. An Oxford study called the process "ideological segregation".

Predictive policing AI algorithms have also been showing up all over the country to fight crime. Modelled after earthquake science, they work by turning the city into a digital grid. Software tracks where crimes have been committed in the past, such as liquor stores and subways. Police are then deployed to those areas based on risk values. As more data is gathered, the system is refined and police resources are better allocated. The software is cost effective, yet there is concern that the algorithms seem to be profiling groups along socioeconomic and racial lines.

Hawking likes to make the case that history is mainly about the recording of human stupidity.

(Source: Yahoo Finance Contributors)

Iran eyes to build hospital in Azerbaijan

Iran intends to build a hospital in Azerbaijan, Iranian Ambassador to Azerbaijan Javad Jahangirzadeh told reporters in Baku on November 10.



He said that the hospital will be built on the initiative of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Iran, as well as governor of Tabriz city.

At the same time, the ambassador noted that the groundbreaking ceremony of the joint Azerbaijani-Iranian pharmaceutical plant will be held in two weeks.

"Azerbaijan and Iran have no problems in economic or political spheres," the ambassador said. "This is also confirmed by the mutual visits of the heads of the two states: Iranian and Azerbaijani presidents have held seven meetings in three years, which is unique for the Caspian region."

"Both countries plan to implement a number of projects, but this requires time," he noted. "We hope that joint projects will contribute to the further development of relations between our countries."

Jahangirzadeh also recalled that Urmia province governor is expected to visit Azerbaijan in the next month, and the country's Economy Minister Shahin Mustafayev will visit Iran before late 2016.

Baku is hosting the "Investment opportunities of Azerbaijan and Iran" conference. Over a hundred businessmen from the both sides operating in spheres of transport, energy, industry, health care, finance, ICT and tourism are taking part in the event.

The trade turnover between Azerbaijan and Iran amounted to \$137.65 million in January-September 2016, more than \$102 million of which fell on the import of Iranian goods, according to the State Customs Committee of Azerbaijan.

(Source: Trend)

LEARN ENGLISH

Types of Humor

Kyle: Are you watching that **sitcom** again? It's so stupid. There's nothing **witty** or original about the **humor**.

Paulina: I don't need highbrow jokes. I enjoy all kinds of **comedy**.

Kyle: You mean you like **screwball** and **slapstick** humor.

Paulina: Yes, so?

Kyle: So? It's so **juvenile**.

Paulina: I know that it's hard for people like you who like **satire** to appreciate the more **wacky** kinds of humor, but you might try **getting off your high horse** once in a while.

Kyle: I'm not **snooty**. I'm just **discriminating**. I like comedians with a **dry sense of humor** like that **self-deprecating** guy on that show I watch.

Paulina: That show is a **snooze fest**. That guy **bores me to death**.

Kyle: And this show **does it for you**?

Paulina: You bet.

Kyle: **There's no accounting for taste!**

(Source: eslpod.com)

Words & phrases

sitcom: situation comedy; a funny television program in which the same characters appear in different situations each week

witty: using words in a clever and amusing way

humor: the ability or tendency to think that things are funny, or funny things you say that show you have this ability

highbrow joke: a highbrow joke is very serious and may be difficult to understand

comedy: entertainment that is intended to make people laugh

screwball: a film or television program that is funny because crazy things happen

slapstick: humorous acting in which the performers fall over, throw things at each other etc.

juvenile: silly and typical of a child rather than an adult - used to show disapproval; childish

satire: the use of humor, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule in a film, play or novel to expose and criticize people's stupidity or vices, particularly in the context of contemporary politics and other topical issues

wacky: silly in an exciting or amusing way, crazy
get off your high horse: used to tell someone to, or suggest that someone should stop behaving in a superior manner

snooty: rude and unfriendly, because you think you are better than other people; snotty

discriminate: to recognize a difference between things; differentiate

dry sense of humor: the act of deliberately displaying a lack of or no emotion, commonly as a form of comedic delivery to contrast with the ridiculousness of the subject matter

self-deprecating: trying to make your own abilities or achievements seem unimportant

snooze fest: extremely boring
bore someone to death: make them very bored

do it for someone: used to say that something will be enough or be acceptable

there is no accounting for taste: said when it is difficult to explain why different people like different things, especially things that you do not like

Some 400,000 Iranians with disabilities issued with Intl. Classification of Functioning

SOCIETY TEHRAN — Some 400,000 Iranians with disabilities are issued with the International Classification of Functioning (ICF), a framework approved by the World Health Assembly for describing and organizing information on functioning and disability.

Anoushirvan Mohseni-Bandpey, the director of Iran's Welfare Organization said out of 1.2 million people with disabilities under the coverage of the organization, 400,000 can benefit the ICF on international scale as it outlines the kind of disability they are dealing with and their medical history comprehensively.

For instance, it can be of practical use to those athletes participating in Paralympic Games, Mohseni-Bandpey told the Tehran Times on Monday.

He went on to say that the Welfare Organization is committed to providing all the 1.2 million people with disabilities with ICF by the middle of the



Mohseni-Bandpey says that the Welfare Organization is committed to providing all the 1.2 million people with disabilities with ICF by the middle of the next Iranian calendar year (falling on September 2017).

next Iranian calendar year (falling on September 2017).

On the subject of creating job opportunities for people with disabilities he explained that "we have generated some 45,000 jobs last year 60 percent of which pertained to people with disabilities and we hope to be able to do the same thing in the current year."

ICF was officially endorsed by the World Health Organization in 2001.

The aims of the ICF are to provide a scientific basis for understanding and studying health and health-related states, outcomes, determinants, and changes in health status and functioning; establish a common language for describing health and health-related states in order to improve communication between different users, such as health care workers, researchers, policy-makers and the public, including people with disabilities; permit comparison of data across countries, health care disciplines, services and time; and provide a systematic coding scheme for health information systems.

Paris climate deal thrown into uncertainty by U.S. election result

Just days after the historic Paris agreement officially came into force, climate denier Donald Trump's victory has thrown the global deal into uncertainty and raised fears that the U.S. will reverse the ambitious environmental course charted under Barack Obama.

International environmental groups meeting at the UN climate talks in Morocco said it would be a catastrophe if Trump acted on his pledge to withdraw the U.S. from the deal, which took 20 years to negotiate, and to open up public land for coal, oil and gas extraction.

Trump has called climate change a "hoax", placing him virtually alone among world leaders on the validity of the science. The real estate magnate has promised to embark upon a four-year process of withdrawing the U.S. from the Paris deal and has targeted the "billions and billion and billions" given to UN climate programs and clean energy development.

Domestically, Trump has promised to reboot America's ailing coal industry, as well as expand gas and oil drilling, despite the fact that the growth of natural gas use has caused the downturn in coal.

He also plans to scrap Obama's signature Clean Power plan, which is the main policy designed to lower U.S. emissions.

Recent analysis by Lux Research estimated that a Trump presidency would raise U.S. greenhouse gas output by 16% by the end of his second term, should he get one, compared to a Hillary Clinton administration. Such a shift could prove key in not only pushing the world towards dangerous climate change but also dissuading other nations from making the required cuts in emissions.

"The new president must protect the people he serves from climate chaos. No personal belief or political affiliation can change the stark truth that every new oil well and pipeline pushes us all closer to catastrophe. The administration has moral and legal obligations to meet international commitments," said May Boeve, head of climate campaign group 350.org. Christian Aid warned that any attempts by Trump to ditch the Paris deal would be an act of "economic self-sabotage".

"The global transition to a zero-carbon economy will not be held up by one man. The rest of the world will not risk a global climate catastrophe because of one man's opposition," said Mohamed Adow, Christian Aid's international climate lead spokesman.

In the US, shellshocked environmentalists pledged to step up their opposition to Trump. "Greenpeace and millions of people around the world have all the power we need to combat climate change and create a just world for everyone," said



Annie Leonard, executive director of Greenpeace US. "Let's use this moment to reenergize the fight for the climate and the fight for human rights around the world."

Ségolène Royale, the French environment minister who helped negotiate the Paris accord, told journalists in Marrakech that the U.S. could not withdraw from the treaty easily. "The Paris agreement prohibits any exit for a period of three years, plus a year-long notice period, so there will be four stable years," she said.

"We must be extremely attentive and responsive to each time there is an attempt made to weaken this agreement," she said on French radio.

"There is no possible turning back in the negotiation on what was agreed in Paris ... we can only advance," said Salaheddine Mezouar, foreign minister of Morocco, which is hosting the latest round of climate talks.

Major countries meeting in Marrakech were slow to respond to Trump's win but small island states threatened with annihilation if temperatures are not held to 2C urged him to take responsibility for the whole world.

"I expect [Trump] will realise that climate change is a threat to his people and to whole countries which share seas with the U.S. including my own ... I look forward to watching Mr Trump live up to his responsibility to protect his people, and others around the world," said Hilda Heine, president of the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

"One of the many challenges Trump's administration will now confront is climate change. Last month, for the first time, renewables like wind and solar surpassed fossil fuels in [new] electricity generation globally and that number is expected to climb. America has led this technological transformation and can continue to create jobs and opportunity in this area," said Thorig Ibrahim, energy minister for the Maldives and chair of the Alliance of Small Island States (Aosis).

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Iran, Poland sign MOU to enhance health co-op

The Iranian health minister inked a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with his Polish counterpart in Poland on Tuesday, IRNA news agency reported.

Hassan Qazizadeh-Hashemi and Konstany Radziwitt signed the MOU to foster cooperation in healthcare, pharmaceuticals, medical equipment, teaching and research programs.

Qazizadeh-Hashemi was also scheduled to pay a visit to the Bioton Co., a Polish company which produce insulin, and attend a conference on investment opportunities along with the companies from both Poland and Iran.

امضا یادداشت تفاهم همکاری در حوزه سلامت بین ایران و لهستان

به گزارش خبرگزاری ایرنا وزرای بهداشت جمهوری اسلامی ایران و لهستان روز پنجشنبه در محل وزارت بهداشت لهستان تفاهم نامه ای را امضا کردند.

این تفاهم نامه به منظور گسترش همکاریهای بهداشتی درمانی، دارو و تجهیزات پزشکی، آموزش، تحقیقات و علوم پزشکی به امضای «حسن قاضی زاده هاشمی» وزیر بهداشت کشورمان و «کنستانتی رادوییت» وزیر بهداشت لهستان رسید.

قاضی زاده هاشمی همچنین قرار است تا از کارخانه تولید انسولین بیوتون لهستان بازدید کند و همچنین در همایش فرصتهای سرمایه گذاری که شرکت های دو کشور حضور دارند شرکت خواهد کرد.

ENGLISH PROVERB

Prevention is better than cure

■ **Explanation:** it is better to try to keep a bad thing from happening than it is to fix the bad thing once it has happened

■ **For example:** If we spend more money on education, so that children learn to be responsible citizens, we won't have to spend so much money on prisons. Prevention is better than cure.

PHRASAL VERB

Botch up

■ **Meaning:** to do something badly, because you have been careless or because you do not have the skill to do it properly

■ **For example:** The builders really botched up our patio.

ENGLISH IDIOM

Back to the salt mines

■ **Explanation:** saying that you have to go back to the salt mines is a humorous way of talking about returning to work, usually with some reluctance

■ **For example:** We get two days off at Christmas and then it's back to the salt mines!

Russia finds signs of militant gas attacks in Syria

Syria complains of terrorist handlers to UN

The Russian military chemical warfare defense unit has found signs of the use of chemical agents by militants against the northwestern Syrian city of Aleppo.

Russia's Defense Ministry said in a statement on Friday that forces with the Russian Radiological, Chemical, and Biological Defense unit found the evidence in the 1070 district of the Syrian city of Aleppo.

The experts "found evidence of chemical weapon use by terrorists against the civilian population and Syrian servicemen" in the form of un-exploded shells bearing chlorine and white phosphorus, it said.

A recent chemical attack on the area killed two people and injured dozens of others.

Aleppo has been divided over the past four years between government forces in the west and foreign-backed militants in the east, making it a front-line battleground.

Back in September, the Russian military had warned that terrorist groups might start deploying chemical agents against the city's government-controlled areas.

On September 16, at least eight people, including five civilians, suffered breathing difficulties after the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorists fired mortar shells containing toxic gases in the towns of Harbal and Um Hosh, north of Aleppo.

Also on Friday, United Nations human rights spokeswoman Ravina Shamdasani said that the Takfiri terrorist group of ISIL was reportedly stockpiling ammonia and sulfur agents in civilian areas in the northern Iraq city of Mosul possibly for use as chemical weapons.

Late last month, at least three dozen



people were reportedly affected after foreign-sponsored Takfiri militants launched a barrage of shells loaded with poisonous gas against two government-held residential neighborhoods in Aleppo.

The Syrian government turned over its entire chemical stockpile under a deal negotiated by Russia and the United States back in 2013. The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) has overseen operations to remove the government chemical arsenal from Syria.

The deal came after hundreds of people were killed in an August 2013 chemical attack in the Ghouta suburb of Damascus. The Syrian government agreed to turn over its arsenal of chemicals despite denying any role in the Ghouta attack.

■ Syria complains to UN

Meanwhile, Syria has written to the UN on the crimes perpetrated against the country by the terror groups backed by Israel, the House of Saud regime, Turkey and Qatar, saying terrorism would only be eradicated if those countries dropped their support for the militants.

Syria's Foreign and Expatriates Ministry recounted the atrocities of the foreign-sponsored militants in two letters sent to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and the world body's Security Council, the official Syrian Arab News Agency reported.

On the back of foreign support, Takfiri terrorists recently killed 17 people and injured 27 women and children in a single day in Syria, the letters read.

The letters further said the bloodshed did

not move the terror supporters, who "boast of their civilization and respect for human rights," to offer as much as an apology.

In another act of violence, Saudi-backed Jaish al-Islam (Brigade of Islam) terrorist outfit shelled the countryside of the capital Damascus, killing one and injuring three others, according to the letters.

The letters further said the regime in Israel is an ally of Jabhat Fateh al-Sham (Front for the Conquest of the Levant), formerly known as al-Nusra Front (Jabhat al-Nu?ra), the second most brutal Takfiri terrorist group ravaging Syria after ISIL.

The alliance, the letters said, came to light after Israeli forces struck the Haddar town on the Syrian side of the Tel Aviv-occupied Golan Heights, killing nine civilians.

The Turkish-backed Nour al-Din al-Zenki Movement (Harakat Nour al-Din al-Zenki) Takfiri group along with other terrorist outfits, which are all allied with Jabhat Fateh al-Sham, hit Aleppo University's campus housing displaced people and students, killing six people and injuring 20 others.

The Syrian ministry also said Jaish al-Fatah (Jaf/Army of Conquest) terrorists have been besieging the towns of al-Fou'a and Kafarya in the western Syria Idlib Province for more than two years.

The letters concluded by asserting that the terrorist killing machine would only grind to a halt if Riyadh, Tel Aviv, Ankara and Doha dropped their support for it.

Since 2011, Syria has found itself in the clutches of implacable foreign-backed militancy, which has killed hundreds of thousands and displaced millions throughout the country.

(Source: agencies)

The art of the deal

→ In fact the result of US presidential election means majority of USA people are sick and tired of US government foreign-policy that may have been very much noticed particularly by US citizen in relation to USA anti Iran and what was declared by President Bush "regime change". It is also in my view unfair to compare in any way President elect Trump with any other past or present presidents of other courtiers as few mainstream publication in USA have attempted to do so. In fact it seems that we are now witnessing a new era not only in USA, but also in EU and perhaps in Middle East of new approach and respect for prioritizing democratic values & stability which may result in more trust in international relationships.

■ USA relationship with Dictators:

We need to be realistic about what Presidential Candidates say during their election campaign and what they will do when they are sitting on President's Chair. Let me remind what before taking office, President Obama said with regard to USA allied who are regarded as royals and dictators, for their repression policies against their own people in relation to their reliance on the U.S. military for their security. In Chicago, in 2002, at a public meeting Obama said "You want a fight, President Bush? Let's fight to make sure our so-called allies in the Middle East—the Saudis and the Egyptians—stop oppressing their own people and suppressing dissent and tolerating corruption and inequality." When, he took the Chair of USA President according to President elect Trump with financial support of Saudis and their allied ISIS was created that now USA needs to change its policies in this regard. Saudi's also financed and led campaigns in USA and globally to derail new Western government foreign policies in relation to Iran's newly elected administration and as result tensions increased during and after US-EU (5+1) administrations decisive decision in opening a dialogue with Iran.

■ New US administration and the commodity markets and oil in particular?

It is obvious that unexpected USA election has caused global uncertainty that what a circumstances for taking decisions Trump victory would create for policymakers not only in EU but everywhere particularly within OPEC.

Currently WTI is below 50\$/b at an average of \$43.37/b. President elect Trump victory could be followed by a rapprochement with Russia, and lifting of Treasury sanctions on the Kremlin that may improve investment in Russian energy industry. At the same time as it was discussed during Berlin Summit EU may insist on investment in Iran energy industry and opposes Trump's views on the Iranian nuclear deal. However, observers are of the view that Trump's victory has created a situation that increases volatility in the oil market.

■ Trump's foreign policy?

The Persian Gulf states, all are now struggling with plunging oil prices, are worried about what newly elect President of USA policy may be with regard to Iran as his foreign policy has not yet been well defined. They managed to mend their relationship with Democrats in USA and financially supported Hillary Clinton's campaign and are very concern about America's growing energy independence, which may enable President elect Trump to fulfil his election campaign as stated above and withdraw from US customised anti Iran policies. He has already made it clear that the U.S. government under his presidency will have no commitment to provide military security for their undemocratic and dictatorship rulings. However, this should be taken into account that President elect Trump is a business man who has been involved with noticeable



transactions with Saudi ruling families, such as a deal in which he sold a mega-yacht to Prince Alwaleed bin Talal bin Abdulaziz, who has a large stake in the Plaza Hotel, bought from Trump.

■ Trump won't rip up Iran deal:

Walid Phares, one of Trump's top foreign policy advisers, recently made a comment that represented a change with regard to views and comments made by other Trump advisers and the president-elect himself. He highlighted that there are persisting confusion over what the outlined of a Trump administration's foreign policy may look like on Iran.

Speaking to BBC Radio on Thursday 10th Nov. 2016, Walid Phares said the nuclear deal, which Trump has railed against and vowed to dismantle, would instead be renegotiated with Tehran. According to CNN, he said: "Ripping up is maybe a too strong of word, he's gonna take that agreement, it's been done before in international context, and then review it," he added: "He will take the agreement, review it, send it to Congress, demand from the Iranians to restore a few issues or change a few issues, and there will be a discussion. It could be a tense discussion."

■ What will President Trump mean for Iran?

To analysis what will be newly elected USA president plan for business relationship with Iran I exchanged views with Chris Cook a senior research fellow at University College London, he told me that in his view as intuition early this year that Donald Trump was likely to become US President was confirmed by the UK referendum Brexit decision in May this year to leave the European Union. Both of these major political surprises had the same root cause, which is the concentration of wealth due to automation and globalisation. Only 60 people now possess as much wealth as over 50% of the global population, who are increasingly unhappy with those they hold responsible.

Firstly, any US President is restricted in what he can achieve: firstly by the US legislature, secondly by a powerful executive branch and thirdly by a Central Bank (the Federal Reserve Bank) which is ruled not by the interests of the US but by the interests of global finance capital.

Secondly, many commentators are worried about Trump's rationality and his finger on the nuclear button. Chris Cook is further of the opinion that he is not in the least worried because Trump is - like President Putin - a pragmatic businessman who is aware that global nuclear war is bad for business, and also understands that no-one undertakes suicide bombing for profit.

Finally, President-Elect Trump is not motivated by religion, by ideology or even by money. He is a business man and real estate developer motivated by ego and by the need to be seen to win.

■ The Art of the Deal:

Trump's 1987 book The Art of the Deal is a combination of a business book and memoirs. His approach to business - and hence to negotiation - is the precise opposite of that in

Iran. Whereas Iranians are among the toughest negotiators in the world, in Chris Cook experience once an agreement is reached it tends to be honoured.

For Trump this is not the case - his companies have defaulted on their obligations (gone bankrupt) no less than five times, and he is notorious for the ruthless way in which he deals with suppliers and other counter-parties. Trump trusts no-one and therefore it is unwise for Iran, EU and others to trust him. Now that he leads USA, which issues the global reserve currency (dollars) then non-performance of obligations is a matter of choice, because dollars may always be printed to meet obligations.

The question is what kind of policies could Iran consider in dealing with President elect Trump that firstly he as a business man might become interested and accept, and secondly, is likely to honour any agreements even in the medium term in response to events?

■ The Art of Winning:

According to Chris Cook suggestions the best way to deal with the US led by President elect Trump must be to create economic relationships which represent a 'Win' for both the US and Iran. This can never be the case for any purchase of equipment or technology from the US which is financed by dollar debt or (as with recent proposed aircraft deals) by leases payable in dollars, since the dollars printed by the US do not represent value, but merely a claim over value manufactured by the US banking system.

The solution is evident in the new wave of swap transactions now under way - as Chris Cook and his colleagues at Petro Scotland have advocated for years which is announced recently by NIGC Managing Director that Turkmen gas supplied (through a private sector initiative) to Iran is being exchanged for a supply of Iranian gas to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

So, if Iran were to propose to the US a swap of the use of US technology & hardware against Iranian energy flow this would create a Win/Win solution. The key is the issuance by Iran of promises (credits) returnable in payment for Iranian oil, gas or electricity. Any US company supplying Iran with technology would know that even if it is illegal to receive Iranian physical energy, or impossible to be paid through the US dollar clearing system, they would nevertheless be able to exchange Iran's energy credits for goods and services from international companies who could themselves use these energy credits to pay for Iranian energy supply.

■ Energy Diplomacy=Energy Cooperation:

Chris Cook believes that the UK Brexit vote and the accession of President Trump to power destroy the old ideological certainties of Left (Public) and Right (Private). He says that constructive engagement with the US and the EU is possible, but not within the failed commodity market paradigm which led to this global economic and political turning point.

At recent EU- Iran Oil, Gas & Energy Berlin Summit in my presentation in association with Chris Cook, we offered a window of opportunity that has opened for a new services market paradigm based upon energy co-operation and the principle of resource resilience - that is to say that for any given use of energy as a service - transport, heat/cooling, or power the use of finite resources such as oil, gas and water will be minimised.

This approach of course is not an alternative to the existing dollar economy, but it is complementary to it and enables the kind of mutually beneficial (Win/Win) relationship which is necessary for Iran in its new policy to engage safely with President elect Trump.

Hollande seeks clarity from Trump in a Friday phone call

French President Francois Hollande said on Friday that he hoped the United States President-elect Donald Trump would clarify his position on issues including conflicts in Syria and Ukraine and Iran's nuclear deal when the two men talk by phone later in the day.

"My duty is to make sure we have the best possible relations with the United States, but a relation that is based on frankness and clarity," Hollande told France 2 television.

(Source: Reuters)

Abbas says he knows who 'killed' Arafat

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas says he knows who was behind the mysterious death of Yasser Arafat, the former leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

"You ask me who killed him, I know, but my testimony alone is not enough," Abbas said addressing thousands of mourners in the occupied West Bank city of Ramallah as they marked 12th anniversary of Arafat's death.

"I do not want to mention names, because these names do not deserve to be remembered," he said.

He did say, however, that an inquiry was seeking to identify Arafat's killers.

"A commission of inquiry is digging into that, but you'll find out at the earliest opportunity and be amazed when you know who did it," he said intriguingly.

Arafat, who led an armed struggle against Israel in the late 1960s, died of unknown causes at a hospital near the French capital, Paris, on November 11, 2004. He was 75.

In 2012, Arafat's widow, Suha, filed a legal complaint in France, claiming that her husband had been assassinated while staying at the Mercy military hospital near Paris in 2004. He had been moved to the hospital the previous month for diarrhea and vomiting.

According to French doctors, he died of a massive stroke, although the origin of his illness was unknown.

Arafat's tomb in Ramallah was opened the same year so that three teams of French, Swiss, and Russian investigators could collect samples for investigation.

A subsequent French investigation found no proof of poisoning. However, separate probes from Swiss and Russian experts found that Arafat had been poisoned to death with polonium. Many Palestinians believe that Israel poisoned Arafat. However, Abbas and his longtime rival Mohammed Dahlan have both accused each other of complicity in Arafat's death in the past.

(Source: Press TV)

Hamas urges Trump to drop Israel support

The political bureau chief of the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas has called upon the United States President-elect Donald Trump to withdraw the longstanding American support for Israel, stating that the Tel Aviv regime is a "burden" for Washington.

"Now is the time to acknowledge that Israel has become a burden on you [the U.S.]... We call on you to deal fairly with the Palestinians and end your policy of overlooking Israel's perpetual crimes," Khaled Meshaal said in a speech delivered via video conference at a rally in Turkey's most populous city of Istanbul.

"It would be wrong of Trump to give the green light to Israel to do as it pleases in Palestine... We urge him to reconsider his country's policy of unqualified bias toward Israel," Meshaal added.

The Hamas leader noted that "there can be no stability in the [Middle East] region without recognizing the rights of Palestine." Earlier, Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri had asked Trump to "bring justice to the Palestinians."

"The Palestinian people are not very much concerned about the changes in American policies towards the Palestinian cause because such a policy is constant and is based on bias in favor of the Israeli occupation. However, we urge the American president to re-evaluate this policy and to work on bringing justice to the Palestinians," he commented.

(Source: Press TV)

Calexit: California mulls becoming own nation in wake of Trump presidency

The Golden State could become the Golden Nation if an independence referendum gets passed. Emboldened by California's strong economy and high population, the so-called "Calexit" could gain traction following the election of Donald Trump.

California could become an independent country in 2019 when voters hit the polls again. The Yes California Independence Campaign believes that "being a US state is no longer serving California's best interests" and thinks that California would be better suited making its own immigration laws.

While many states, like Texas, have toyed with secession in the past, California's potential Calexit has something unique: money. Iranian-American entrepreneur, Shervin Pishevar, executive chairman of Hyperloop One, has voiced his support for Calexit. On Tuesday, he tweeted that in the case of a Trump win he would be "announcing and funding a legitimate campaign for California to become its own nation."

Now Pishevar is willing to put his money where his mouth is. He has resigned from his position as a member of the Fulbright Scholarship board, citing an inability to work with Trump. In addition, his call for the nation of New California was heard by other Silicon Valley hot-shots like Marc Hemeon, a former Google designer and CEO of Design Inc; Cheezburger founder Ben Huh; and Path founder Dave Morin.

(Source: RT)

S. Korea beat Canada 2-0 in football friendly

(Yonhap) -- South Korea beat Canada 2-0 in a men's football friendly match on Friday.

First-half goals from Kim Bo-kyung and Lee Jeong-hyeop led South Korea past Canada at Cheonan Baekseok Stadium in Cheonan, some 90 kilometers south of Seoul. This was the first time the two countries faced each other since 2002.

The victory improved South Korea's overall head-to-head record to two wins, one draw, and two losses.

South Korea, 44th in the latest FIFA rankings, invited No. 110 Canada to tune up their preparations for a crucial World Cup qualifier against Uzbekistan in Seoul next Tuesday. South Korea and Uzbekistan are in Group A of the final Asian qualifying round for the 2018 FIFA World Cup, along with Iran, Syria, Qatar and China.

South Korea are currently third in the group with seven points, two points behind No. 2 Uzbekistan. Iran are the group leaders with 10 points. Only the top two teams in the six-nation group will earn automatic berths in the World Cup in Russia, while the third seed needs to go through the playoffs.

With key players like Son Heung-min and Ki Sung-yueng held out of the starting lineup, South Korea head coach Uli Stielike fielded those who hadn't started in previous matches.

Former Cardiff City midfielder Kim Bo-kyung put South Korea on the board just 10 minutes after the kickoff. Nam Tae-hee fed a through ball to Kim, who finished with his left foot in the box to beat Canadian goalkeeper Simon Thomas.

Right back Kim Chang-soo's strike was saved by Thomas in the 22nd minute, but South Korea doubled the lead three minutes later with Lee Jeong-hyeop's goal. Taking advantage of poor clearance from Canadian captain David Edgar in the box, Lee blasted a right-footed shot to bag his fifth international goal.

Canada fought back with Marcel De Jong's free kick in the 31st, only to be denied by South Korean goalkeeper and captain Kwoun Sun-tae. Fraser Aird's left-footed shot after a corner kick in the 37th went over the net.

In this friendly, teams could substitute up to six players. Both South Korea and Canada replaced three players each to start the second half.

Koo, who came on for his FC Augsburg club mate Ji Dong-won, fired a left-footed shot in the 51st to open South Korea's attack in the second half. A header from Hong Jeong-ho, who replaced Kim Kee-hee on defense, went over the net six minutes later.

Canada made their fourth substitution in the 62nd when Carl Hayworth, the youngest player on the squad at age 18, came on for Karl Ouimette. South Korea followed the move three minutes later as Hwang Hee-chan, the 20-year-old forward for FC Red Bull Salzburg, replaced Nam.

In the 70th, left back Yun Suk-young, another second-half substitute, penetrated into Canada's box and found Kim Bo-kyung, but the midfielder's shot was parried away by new goalkeeper Jayson Leutwiler.

Canada, coached by Michael Findlay, had another promising opportunity to cut the deficit in the 79th, but Marcus Haber's header off a Maxime Tissot cross hit the crossbar.

South Korea made their final substitution in the 80th as towering striker Kim Shin-wook came on for Lee Jeong-hyeop. Koo then fired a right-footed shot in the 83rd, but was stopped by Leutwiler.

South Korea kept knocking on the door during three minutes of stoppage time, but failed to add goals in front of 18,920 fans at the stadium.

Klose: I've always been interested in tactics

Miroslav Klose has revealed he always thought about going into coaching. The 38-year-old – the all-time leading marksman for Germany and at the FIFA World Cup™, with 71 and 16 goals respectively – hung up his boots earlier this year, having last played for Lazio, and was recently made part of Joachim Low's backroom staff.

"I've thought about it for a long time," said Klose. "During my playing days, I was always thinking about tactics and playing styles. Now I've decided to get a new view on football as a possible coach in the future. «I'm really happy to be again a part of this big family, and to have the chance to work here. How many people get the chance to work with a national team straight away? To have the chance to work with a World Cup-winning coach is special, and not everybody gets that opportunity. I want to soak up as much as possible that will help me in the future. «I've been accepted wonderfully into the coaching team. They integrated with me from the first second and it's a big honour for me.» Klose's first appearance on the Germany bench in a coaching capacity will come away to San Marino on Friday in Russia 2018 qualifying.

«We're happy to have Miroslav Klose with us," said Low. "He is a role model for the younger players and he can be a big help with the offensive side of things. Positioning and movement. He can analyse our attackers and offer them some tips."

Low then joked: "And before someone asks, if anyone gets injured, Miro can still play!"

Germany lead Group C in European qualifying, two points above Azerbaijan and five clear of third-placed Northern Ireland. San Marino are bottom on zero points.

The Germans have played the Sammarinese twice, winning 13-0 away and 6-0 at home, both in UEFA EURO 2008 qualifying. Klose scored twice in the first game.

The aerial specialist is one of only three players to have scored three or more goals at three World Cups, along with compatriot Jurgen Klinsmann and Brazil's Ronaldo.

(Source: FIFA)

Argentina avoid crisis talk after Brazil beating as media lament 'catastrophe'

The Argentina coach, Edgardo Bauza, was unbowed after a 3-0 World Cup qualifying loss to Brazil and a fourth game without a win on Thursday, but promised his misfiring team still have qualification for the 2018 finals in Russia in their own hands.

"We still have a lot to do before the qualifiers end," he said after Brazil's easy victory in Belo Horizonte. "We know that classification still depends on what we do. The game against Colombia will be different."

Argentina take on Colombia, the third-placed side, next week and are now sixth in the 10-team South American group on 16 points after 11 games, with only the top four automatically qualifying for Russia while the fifth-placed side faces a play-off with the Oceania winners. Bauza is likely to be heavily scrutinised after recording just one win in his five games in charge while his players will also face questions after they were outshone by Brazil's three goalscorers Neymar, Philippe Coutinho and Paulinho.

Lionel Messi returned from three games out injured but was largely anonymous and there was little of note from strikers Gonzalo Higuain or Angel Di Maria. Sergio Agüero replaced Enzo Pérez at half-time, but with Brazil dominant in the second period he had little chance to change the game. "When they hit us hard we struggled to recover," Messi said. "We are more than aware that we have to change a lot. Of all the bad points, the good one is that we depend on ourselves but we can't be giving away any more points."

The Argentina sports newspaper Olé called the performance a "catastrophe" and, in a headline, classed the side's current predicament as "Russian Roulette". Argentina have won the World Cup twice and reached the final of their last three major tournaments but not won a senior title since the 1990s. Their next two games are against Colombia on Tuesday and then next March against the Copa América champions Chile, who are fifth in the table on 17 points.

Messi had begun the game with a lot of style at the Mineirão stadium and caused trouble for his marker, Fernandinho. The Manchester City midfielder was tricked by



Messi and picked up a yellow card after a cynical foul on the Argentina forward. But as Paulinho and Renato Augusto helped out with defending, the only opportunities Messi had were from free-kicks around the penalty box.

The Brazil coach, Tite, explained the strategy designed to make Messi feel so uncomfortable in his return after three games. "We forced our way into the Argentina half more to the left so Messi wouldn't be immediately near the ball, since he was on the right," Tite said. "When he was forced

to move it became better for us because that other side was already crowded."

Assessing Brazil's strengths, Tite said Neymar played well because he was playing box-to-box with the same quality. "One of the biggest lies in football is that if you mark you will not have the energy to do well up front," Tite said. "That is not the case."

Liverpool's in-form Coutinho added: "Today we imposed ourselves, the fans helped from the first minute and we leave here very happy."

Brazil now lead the South American

qualifying table with 24 points from 11 matches. Their supporters were delighted to win in the stadium of their most humiliating defeat. "If Neymar had played here in that game against Germany in the 2014 World Cup [when he was injured], we wouldn't have lost 7-1," said Eric Angelo, a Brazilian fan who watched Thursday's match and was also at his team's humiliating defeat here two years ago. "We would have had more confidence and maybe given the Germans a challenge."

(Source: Guardian)

Man United's Bastian Schweinsteiger invited to join Stuttgart by Grosskreutz



Kevin Grosskreutz has told former Germany teammate and Manchester United midfielder Bastian Schweinsteiger to join him at Stuttgart in January.

Schweinsteiger has been frozen out at United by Jose Mourinho, having yet to make a first-team appearance for the Premier League club this season.

Grosskreutz, meanwhile, is currently playing for German second-tier side Stuttgart, joining the club in January from Galatasaray.

"He's going through a difficult situation right now," Grosskreutz told Bild of Schweinsteiger. "But he's joining with it really well. He's invited to join VfB this winter. We'd all be happy."

Grosskreutz said after Germany's

triumphant 2014 World Cup campaign that he and Schweinsteiger, who has since retired from international football, had become close.

"We became friends during this tournament. He helped me from day one," Grosskreutz said after the tournament.

Former Bayern Munich midfielder Schweinsteiger is under contract at Old Trafford until 2018 and is reported to be due to earn around €20 million for the remainder of his deal.

Major League Soccer commissioner Don Garber has said Schweinsteiger would be welcomed "with open arms" in the United States, while U.S. coach Jurgen Klinsmann has said his arrival in the country would be "a great thing."

(Source: ESPN)

World number one might be a step too far, says Wawrinka



A lack of year round consistency is likely to ensure that three-times grand slam champion Stan Wawrinka does not topple Britain's Andy Murray from the top of the rankings, the Swiss has said.

Murray recently ended Novak Djokovic's 122-week spell as world number one but might still need to win the final ATP tournament of the year in London to ensure he finishes the year at the top of the rankings.

Wawrinka, who won his third grand slam title by beating Djokovic at the U.S. Open this year, has been drawn in the same group as Murray at the ATP Finals, but feels he does not have the consistency to leap to the top of the rankings.

"I don't think so. Right now I'm 31," the world number three Wawrinka told Sky Sports when asked whether he could be-

come the top ranked player. "I know I can beat every player, I need to do it more often in the year if I want to think about that, but so far I'm way off that."

Wawrinka expected the 29-year-old Scot, who won Wimbledon and his second Olympic gold medal as well as six other titles this year, would handle the pressure of being number one and was the man to beat at the O2 Arena in south-east London.

"The ranking never lies. He's been winning a lot this year, more than any other player, so he deserves to be number one," Wawrinka added. "He did really well with the pressure... so he knows how to deal with it. 'I'm sure he would love to win the world ATP title here in London."

(Source: Reuters)

National Olympic bodies to get more than \$500 million

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) will distribute more than \$500 million to national bodies over the next few years, it announced on Thursday.

The IOC said the amount was an increase from the \$439 million dispersed over the 2013-16 period.

The funds, officially known as the Olympic Solidarity 2017-2020 Quadrennial Plan, represent a share of the broadcast revenue from the 2016 Rio Summer Games and 2018 PyeongChang Winter Games.

"This increase shows that the athletes remain at the

heart of all our activity," said Pere Miró, Deputy Director General for Relations with the Olympic Movement and Director of Olympic Solidarity.

The program's aim is to assist National Olympic Committees with athlete development, training of coaches and sports administrators, and to promote Olympic values.

Two new programs have also been proposed -- Refugee Athlete Support and Athletes' Career Transition.

(Source: Reuters)



Iran has talented players at every level, says Dirk Bauermann

SPORTS Iran national basketball desk team head coach Dirk Bauermann says Iranian players are talented enough to play in Euro League one day.

The 58-year-old German coach, who accepted Iran job in July 2015, has led the Asian giant to FIBA Asia Championship third place and FIBA Asia Challenge gold medal.

Tehran Times: How is the level of Iranian basketball compare to world's top such as NBA and Euro League?

The NBA has the most talented players in the world while I think in Euro League you can see the best team basketball performances. Obviously Asian basketball and Iranian basketball are little bit behind but our job is to narrow the gap, in order to do that we have to educate the coaches and improve our players. The harder we work, the quicker we'll be able to narrow the gap.

It is a process and it will take time, I believe it is a 10-year process to be at the level of European teams so we need to be patient.

Tehran Times: Can our talented players to play in Europe or even in NBA?

Iran has a lot of talented players at every level, U-16, U-18, and U-19 while the national team players are talented as well and I think some of them are definitely good enough to play in Europe one day but the key is to put into work. I think as a young player the first thing is that you need to have goal and then you have to put into work so if you do that then good things



will happen.

Tehran Times: Is Iran the best team in Asia?

I think we are one of the top three teams in Asia. Philippines, China and obviously we are at the top while now Aus-

tralia and New Zealand have joined FIBA Asia which makes it more difficult but we are right at the time.

Iran thrashes Papua New Guinea in a friendly



SPORTS The Iranian national desk football team defeated Papua New Guinea as part of preparation for the match against Syria in the 2018 World Cup qualifier.

Team Melli handed Papua New Guinea an 8-1 thrashing at the Shah Alam Stadium in Malaysia. Iran will face Syria on November 15.

Carlos Queiroz's team had been scheduled to meet Thailand but the match was cancelled due to death of the

country's King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

Soon after, Iran Football Federation announced that Team Melli will play Iraq but the match was also called off after its counterpart changed the place of the match from Tehran to Abu Dhabi.

PNG head Coach, Flemming Serritslev, has also worked in Iran as technical director of Mes Kerman. Team Melli, who has moved up to 27th in recently FIFA rankings, sits top of Group A with 10 points.

Iran edges Nigeria at U-19 Football Tournament



SPORTS Iran defeated Nigeria 1-0 in the U-19 Football Tournament 2016 in South Korea on Wednesday.

Reza Shekari scored Iran's sole goal in the 78th minute.

Amirhossein Peyrovani's boys had lost to South Korea 3-1 in their opening match.

Iran will face England on Saturday in its last match.

The tournament has brought four

teams namely, South Korea, Iran, Nigeria and England together.

The four-a-side competition is part of the teams' preparation for the FIFA U-20 World Cup Korea Republic 2017.

Iran has already booked a place in the competition along with Japan, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam after advancing to the AFC U-19 Championship semi-final in Bahrain.

Legia Warsaw fans banned for Dortmund trip

Legia Warsaw have been fined 80,000 euros (68,894 pound) for crowd disturbances and their supporters banned from the club's next Champions League game at Borussia Dortmund on Nov. 22, UEFA said on Friday.

The incidents occurred during the 5-1 defeat at Real Madrid on Oct. 18. European soccer's ruling body UEFA added that the Polish team's fans were also provisionally banned for two more away matches in European competition, deferring that additional sanction for a probationary period of one year.



Legia supporters were involved in clashes with police outside the Bernabeu stadium last month and the reverse fixture on Nov. 2 was played behind closed doors because of previous crowd disturbances. It was the fourth time they had to play behind closed doors in Europe following three punishments in the Europa League since 2013.

Legia are bottom of Champions League Group F with one point from four matches, nine points behind leaders Dortmund.

(Source: Reuters)

Bayern winger Coman ruled out for two months

Bayern Munich winger Kingsley Coman is facing eight weeks on the sidelines after injuring his knee and ankle while training with France this week.

"Coman will be out for two months," Bayern said in a statement on Friday after the 20-year-old suffered a torn capsule in his left ankle and torn ligaments in his knee.

He was injured while preparing for France's World Cup qualifier against Sweden on Friday.

There was some good news, though, for Bundesliga leaders Bayern who are chasing a record-extending fifth consecutive title.

Spain defender Javi Martinez has made a quicker recovery than expected and is set to return to training next week following the adductor muscle injury he sustained early last month.

"It is even possible he will be at the disposal of coach Carlo Ancelotti for the



match at (Borussia) Dortmund on Nov. 19," Bayern said.

The Bavarians lead the Bundesliga on goal difference from promoted RB Leipzig after 10 games.

Bayern have also secured a spot in the Champions League knockout stage with two group matches to spare.

(Source: Reuters)

Iran kicks off women's volleyball super league

The 15th Iranian Women's Super League will kick off on November 24, with eight teams taking part in the tournament. The drawing of lots for the competition was held at the Iran Volleyball Federation office and was divided into preliminary pools.

Four teams of Tehran Gas, Islamic Azad University, Tehran Saipa and Sarmayeh Bank are from the capital city, while Tehran and the other four are from the other cities including Urmia Shahrdari, Tabriz Shahrdari, Fars, Isfahan Zob Ahan.

Sarmayeh are one more team added to the new season as the last one kicked off with seven teams. This newly-founded team claimed the gold medal in the men's category for their first ever appearance of the league last year and formed their women's team this year.

Coached by Ms. Sima Seddighi, Tehran emerged as the women's champions last year while Islamic Azad University and



Isfahan Zob Ahan finished second and third respectively.

Zob Ahan are the most honorable team of the league with five titles, four silver and one bronze medals. From 2005 up to 2009, Zob Ahan have been the dominant champions of Iran for five consecutive years.

(Source: asianvolleyball.net)

Javanmardi hungry for more success

Two Rio 2016 competitions, two golds. That was the perfect outcome of Sareh Javanmardidodmani's second Paralympic Games and the crowning achievement of the Iranian's already unparalleled ascent to the top of the pistol shooting world.

Yet, whoever watched the world champion, multiple world record holder and newly minted two-time Paralympic champion closely after her last triumph in P4 (50m pistol mixed SH1) saw two things. One - the amount of energy those victories must have cost her and two - the pressure finally lifted off her shoulders.

Javanmardidodmani put the gun down and breathed in deeply. Her face breaking into a faint smile, she shook her head as if in disbelief. Moments later, she fell to her knees with tears in her eyes and buried her face in her hands, seemingly still unable to believe what she had just achieved.

"Yes, I was definitely more emotional after my victory in the P4 than after the P2," Javanmardidodmani confirmed.

"The simple reason is that the P4 gold had always been one of the biggest goals I had had for my career. I had trained so hard for it over the last couple of months and had so much wished for a good result in Rio. But then the competition itself was not easy for me. So I just felt a lot of relief and joy in those moments."

In hindsight, the Iranian's earlier win in P2 (women's 10 m air pistol SH1), the discipline in which she started to excel quickly after she had arrived on the shooting scene in 2008, almost pales in comparison to that emotional triumph in the P4. After all, the world champion and world record holder Javanmardidodmani had been one to watch in P2 heading into Rio 2016.

"I did notice that my contenders were under a lot of stress as well and that for them, it was a difficult job to having to beat Sareh Javanmardidodmani," she said.

Still, the biggest pressure weighed on Javanmardidodmani herself, given those highly successful golden years the 31-year-old had in between London 2012 and Rio.

"I was tense and it was not easy to mentally adapt to the situation, particularly since you know that these are the Paralympic Games. Given my successes in the past, everyone expected me to automatically perform well and on top of that, I had my personal ambitions to deal with. When I was not able to show my best performance in the qualification round, I was a bit worried how things would work out."

Javanmardidodmani said that her faith helped her to regain her calm and confidence. "But I also want to thank my friends and my coach for their help in those difficult situations," she said.

So what can be next in a career that slowly exhausts all superlatives?

"Improving my world records was not my primary concern in Rio," Javanmardidodmani said. "But I will train even harder and I will improve them in other Championships and the next Paralympic Games. I know it will happen."

The 2017 season will begin with a World Cup in Al Ain, United Arab Emirates, on 19-28 February.

(Source: Paralympic.org)

Karim Ansarifard on Feyenoord's radar

Dutch professional football club Feyenoord Rotterdam has shown interest in signing Panionios striker Karim Ansarifard.

The Iranian striker's contract will expire at the end of the season but the Greek club is interested in extending his contract.

The scouts of the Dutch club were at the Nea Smyrni Stadium to watch the Panionios match against Paok, where the 26-year-old player scored the only goal of the match.

Ansarifard has been also linked with Seria A teams, Olympique de Marseille, PAOK and AEK.

The international striker joined Greek Superleague club Panionios from Osasuna in 2015.

(Source: Tasnim)

Sharapova to resume as U.N. goodwill ambassador in April

Maria Sharapova will be allowed to resume her role as a United Nations (UN) goodwill ambassador when her drug suspension ends in April, the body said on Thursday.

Five-times grand slam champion Sharapova became an ambassador for the UN Development Programme (UNDP) in 2007, but was dropped in March after admitting she had used the banned substance meldonium.

The United States-based Russian was originally banished from the sport for two years, a suspension that was later cut to 15 months.

She will return to action in time to contest three of the four grand slams next year, missing only the Australian Open.

"The UNDP is glad to learn that Maria Sharapova can return to the sport she loves sooner than expected and we will lift the suspension of her role as our goodwill ambassador once the reduced ban expires," the UN said in a statement.

The UNDP works to tackle inequality and poverty.

(Source: Reuters)



Poem of the day

Remember God so much that you are forgotten.
Let the caller and the called disappear;
be lost in the Call.

Rumi

Prayer Times

Noon: 11:49 Evening: 17:19 Dawn: 5:12 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:38 (tomorrow)

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NEWS IN BRIEF



Tehran center to commemorate Henry Corbin

T A R T TEHRAN — The Society of Cultural Works and Luminaries in Tehran plans to pay tribute to the late French Orientalist Henry Corbin during a meeting on November 14.

Corbin (1903-1978) was a French philosopher, theologian and professor of Islamic Studies. He was the author of "En Islam Iranien" (Islam in Iran).

The society is located at No. 71, Bashiri St., Vali-e Asr Ave.

WHAT'S IN ART GALLERIES

Painting

■ An exhibition of paintings by Gandom Amiri is underway at Vista Gallery.

The exhibit entitled "Remove" runs until November 22 at the gallery located at No. 11, 12th Alley, Mir Emad St.

■ Paintings by Vali Mohammadi are on display in an exhibition at Gallery No. 26.

The exhibit entitled "Myths Today" will be running until November 23 at the gallery that can be found at 26 Salmanpur-Zahir St., in the East Farmanieh neighborhood.

■ Atashzad Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Ahmad Shuli and Afshin Bayanati.

The exhibit named "Familiar Faces" will run until November 20 at the gallery located at 23 North Abbaspur (Tavanir) St., near Vanak Sq.

Photo

■ A collection of photographs by Bahar Reisfiruz is currently on display at Sayeh Gallery.

The exhibition named "Asesekwaah" will run until November 16 at the gallery located at 3 Aqakhani Alley, Omidvar St. in the Niavaran neighborhood.

Sculpture

■ Sculptures by Isa Chulandim are on display in an exhibition at Sohrab Gallery 2.

The exhibit will be running until November 16 at the gallery located at 11 Kachui St., off Evin St.

■ Aran Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of sculptures by Behdad Lahuti.

The exhibit named "It Is Fall" runs until December 5 at the gallery, which can be found at No. 5 Lolagar St., Neauphle Le Chateau St.

J.K. Rowling hopes Potter fans embrace "Fantastic Beasts" movie

NEW YORK (Reuters) — A nervous J.K. Rowling said on Thursday she hoped fans would like her new wizarding movie "Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them," even though it does not feature beloved characters like Harry Potter and his Hogwarts friends.

Speaking ahead of Thursday's New York premiere of the first of five planned "Harry Potter" spin-off films, the British author hinted that familiar names would appear in future "Fantastic Beasts" movies.

"We have done the very best job that we can. I have told a story I really wanted to tell. I hope that people love it," Rowling told a news conference.

"It's true that Harry is not in the movie, because he's not born yet, but this (film) is very much of that world. There are characters you will learn more about," she added.

"Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them" takes place 70 years before the events in the first Harry Potter books and features a new cast of characters with magical powers. Set in 1926, it centers on Newt Scamander, a "magizoologist" who arrives in New York with a case full of strange creatures that quickly escape.

No reviews have yet been published. The Warner Bros film arrives nine years after the last of Rowling's seven Harry Potter books was published and five years after the last of the movies that made \$7 billion at the global box office.

Rowling said she was aware of the hunger for more Harry Potter stories, but said she was done with the boy wizard.

"I had some ideas about Newt (Scamander) and I was intrigued by Newt, and when I was asked 'will you write more?', at the back of my mind was Newt," she said.

Homayun Shajarian to reprise father's works with National Orchestra

T A R T TEHRAN — The conductor Ferdun Shahbazian of Iran's National Orchestra, Fereidun Shahbazian, has said that vocalist Homayun Shajarian, the son of Iranian music legend Mohammadreza Shajarian, will join the orchestra to redo some of the works his father who is battling cancer.

"I did my best works with Mohammadreza Shajarian," Shahbazian told the Persian service of MNA.

"Due to the fact that Mohammadreza Shajarian is currently unable to perform in a concert, I plan to invite his son, Homayun, to join us to perform my works that his father had previously performed," he added.

"It is a great honor to have him in our first concert that will be organized under the new management," mentioned Shahbazian, who took the helm at the orchestra in late September.

He said that the first orchestral works performed by Mohammadreza Shajarian were composed by him.

"I am very sorry that we don't have Mohammadreza Shajarian on the stage... we should pray that he soon recovers," he said.

Shahbazian succeeded Farhad Fakhreddini who founded the orchestra in 1998.

After founding the National Orchestra, Fakhreddini, 80, attracted a huge number of musicians, including Mohammadreza Shajarian, to collaborate with the orchestra.



Legendary vocalist Mohammadreza Shajarian gives his son, Hamyoun, a hag as he plants a kiss on father's hand in an undated photo. (ISNA/Mona Hubefekr)

Photographer Saleh Tasbih reflects personal perception of cancer at Tehran exhibit

T A R T TEHRAN — Artist Saleh Tasbihi is displaying his personal perception of cancer in a collection of photos and installation works in his new exhibit.

Entitled "Carcinoma", the collection goes far from a photo exhibit and tries to reveal hidden aspects of man.

"The exhibit is an effort to showcase my personal experience. I, like many other

people, was in close contact with a patient who was suffering from cancer and had witnessed the pain, fears and hopes and the process of treatment," Tasbihi told the Persian service of ISNA on Friday.

"I believe nothing as strong as art can encourage people to sympathize, especially in the contemporary world of today, in which people are drowning in a numb and indifferent life due to the

bombardment of photos and media," he said.

Tasbihi added, "The main focus of my collection is photography. We have seen many who have taken photos of their relatives and friends who are suffering from different diseases, but I did not see photos alone as sufficient.

"So I decided to make combinations and made use of installations, boxes, texts

and light to display my new collection.

"In this collection I have intended to encourage visitors toward more sympathy for those who are suffering from cancer," he concluded.

The exhibit, which opened in Tehran's Tarrahan Azad Gallery on Friday, will be running until November 23 at the gallery that can be found at 5 Salmas Square, off Fatemi St.

PICTURE OF THE DAY

IRNA/Ehsan Naderipur



A man holds a picture of Turan Mirhadi during the funeral of the veteran scholar of children's literature at the courtyard of the Iranian Artists Forum in Tehran on November 11, 2016. Mirhadi, 89, who was also the co-founder of the Children's Book Council, died last Tuesday after she went into a coma following a stroke.

Leonard Cohen, rock music's poetic visionary, dies at age 82

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) — Leonard Cohen, rock music's man of letters whose songs fused religious imagery with themes of redemption, earning him critical and popular acclaim, has died at age 82, a statement on his Facebook page said.

"It is with profound sorrow we report that legendary poet, songwriter and artist, Leonard Cohen has passed away," a statement on the Facebook page said. "We have lost one of music's most revered and prolific visionaries."

The statement did not provide further details on Cohen's death, and representatives for the singer could not be reached immediately for comment. It said a memorial was planned in Los Angeles, where Cohen had lived for many years.

"R.I.P. Leonard Cohen," singer-songwriter Carole King said on Twitter.

Singer Roseanne Cash echoed the lyrics from Cohen's song "Anthem" when she said in a tweet: "Leonard Cohen is dead. There's a crack in everything. No light yet."

Cohen, a native of Quebec, was already a celebrated poet and novelist when he moved to New York in 1966 at age 31 to break into the music business.

Before long, critics were comparing him to Bob Dylan for the lyrical force of his songwriting.

Although he influenced many musicians and won many honors, including induction into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and the Order of Canada, Cohen rarely made the pop music charts with his sometimes moody folk-rock.

Brad Pitt back on red carpet for "Allied" after cleared of abuse allegations

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) — Brad Pitt took to the red carpet at a fan event for his latest film "Allied" in Los Angeles on Wednesday, hours after he was cleared of child abuse allegations and applied for shared custody of his children with Angelina Jolie.

Pitt, 52, had kept a low profile after the Hollywood power couple, dubbed Brangelina, split suddenly in September following an incident on a private plane in which Pitt was reported to have lost his temper in front of one or more of the children.

But Pitt resumed press obligations this week for espionage war thriller "Allied". On Wednesday he attended a fan event alongside his co-star Marion Cotillard and director Robert Zemeckis, answering a few questions during a

Facebook live stream hosted by movie studio Paramount Pictures.

"I don't know much about the espionage world and what it took to get behind enemy lines and to plant your characters, so that was really interesting," Pitt said of the film, which will be in theaters on Nov. 23.

The actor plays Canadian army officer Max Vatan, who goes undercover in Casablanca during World War Two, paired up with Cotillard's lively French spy Marianne Beausejour, to assassinate a German Nazi ambassador.

While the pair flawlessly play a happily wedded couple during their undercover stint, they soon find themselves falling in love for real. But Marianne's alliances are called into question.

Iranian illustrators shortlisted for Nami Concur 2017

T A R T TEHRAN — 11 Iranian illustrators are seen on the final shortlist of the Nami Concur 2017, the Nami Island International Children's Book Festival held in South Korea.

Reza Dalvand, Rashin Khairieh, Majid Zakeri, Fereshteh Najafi, Nushin Safakhu and Reyhaneh Kashanian are among the nominees in the shortlist, the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (IIDCYA) has announced in a press release published on Friday.

The final winners will be announced in February 2017.

The festival aims to encourage artists' creativity and contribute to the advancement of the quality of picture book illustrations. It is organized every 2 years by Nami Island, the official sponsor of IBBY Hans Christian Andersen Awards.

The first concur in 2013 received 619 entries from 42 countries and the second concur in 2015 received 1330 entries from 76 countries.