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# TEHRAN TIMES



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## German foreign minister sees troubled times with Trump

**BERLIN (AFP)** — Germany's foreign minister on Sunday predicted turbulent times ahead for the world following Donald Trump's accession to power in the United States.

"With the election of Donald Trump, the world of the 20th century has definitely been overtaken," Frank-Walter Steinmeier wrote in a commentary published in the Bild am Sonntag newspaper.

Steinmeier, 60, has emerged in recent months as the German government's most strident detractor of Trump.

He had warned a day after Trump's shock election in November that relations would become "more difficult".

In his article on Sunday, Steinmeier warned that the world was headed "for turbulent times."

"In these times of fresh global disorder this will go further...there is a lot at stake."

But Steinmeier said he would seek dialogue with the Trump administration and outline "our position, our values and our interests."

He said he was "certain to find interlocutors in Washington who know that big countries also needs partners."

# We are ready' for any eventuality: Salehi



Tehran Times/Hossein Esmaili

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## Non-oil exports up over 8% in 10 months

**ECONOMY TEHRAN** — Iran's desk non-oil exports during the first ten months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2016-January 20, 2017) reached \$35.270 billion registering an 8.37 percent rise compared to the same period last year, IRNA reported on Sunday.

Based on the latest data released by the country's customs administration, some \$34.982 billion worth of goods were also imported to the country in the said period to mark a 3.21 percent rise year on year.

Considering the value of commodities exchanged, Iran's 10-month trade balance was positive with the value of exports exceeding that of imports by \$288 million.

The released data also indicates that the country's total foreign trade stood at \$70.252 billion experiencing a 5.8 percent increase on year.

As for the volume, in the mentioned period the Islamic Republic has exported 102.43 million tons of non-oil commodities and imported 27.555 million tons of non-oil goods.

Gas condensate was the top commodity in the country's non-oil export list with an export value of \$6.26 billion, accounting for 17.08 percent of the total 10-month non-oil exports value. →4

## Plasco still in smoke

By Marjan Golpira

**TEHRAN** — Just three days after the collapse of one of the most iconic buildings in Tehran, Plasco, smoke is still rising from the building and filling the air in the downtown area of the city.

Police forces have blocked off the area so that emergency crew carry on their job of removing the rubble and searching for people, mostly firemen who are trapped under the debris.

At this point it is perhaps safe to say that workers are looking for bodies underneath rubble as the chance of surviving has fast diminished.

In the midst of huge and heavy machineries and trucks, a couple of cranes were prominent, lifting debris from the pile of destruction and dumping it into large truck beds.

Water was being continuously sprayed on debris from three points, south, east, and west, to cool down the heat and fire, allowing the workers push and lift rubble.

Thick smoke giving off smell of burnt plastic material, had made breathing quite difficult, not to mention that it has also blocked the view of the surrounding.

Many workers had ordinary masks on to prevent respiratory problems, wondering if they really could keep lungs healthy after inhalation of all that smoke for a longer duration of time.

Three heavy steel safe lock boxes, disfigured and beaten and pulled from rubble, were lying around.

The adjacent building still had manikins at its window display, a sign that there was once life and shopping in the unrecognizable location.

Getting access to the building site is an unimaginable task but once you are in the very first thing jumping at you is a fallen building with massive amount of rubble, which resembles pretty much a war zone.

Emergency workers from fire department, municipality, Red Crescent Society and other organizations are working round the clock to bring the bodies out of tons of dust and heavy metals.

Around 25 people, including 15 firemen, are reported missing along with a number of shop keepers of the building, not to mention the passersby. →13

## Dolphins, the most appreciated marine mammals in Persian Gulf

**INTERVIEW**  
By Farnaz Heidari

The dolphins are highly social, intelligent animals. They form close, cooperative "friendships" with each other, and some individuals will even seek out human contact.

They are of the order Odontoceti and, unlike the whales have numerous teeth (up to 260), which are all alike and grow only once.

On the same subject the Tehran Times conducted an interview with Dr. Ada Natoli, project director of UAE dolphin project. UAE dolphin project is an initiative project that provides first scientific information for at least a small area or the coastal waters in UAE. The project raises public awareness among the local communities and the Persian Gulf countries.

Ada is a specialist in population genetics with a passionate interest in conservation of species. Her main interests are investigating the evolution-

ary mechanisms generating population structure, and supporting conservation and management programs. She is a member of the IUCN SSC Cetacean Specialist Group and she has participated to the International Whaling Commission as member of the Italian delegation and invited participant. She is involved in the conservation of cetaceans in the ACCOBAMS area.

[The IUCN SSC (Species Survival Commission) is a special commission operated by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. The commission's "major role is to provide information to IUCN on biodiversity conservation, the inherent value of species, their role in ecosystem health and functioning, the provision of ecosystem services, and their support to human livelihoods.]

[ACCOBAMS, the Agreement on the Conservation of cetaceans in the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area is 'a

cooperative tool for the conservation of marine biodiversity in the Mediterranean and Black Seas']

**How did UAE dolphin project first spark your interest?**

A: The UAE dolphin project initiative stems from my personal scientific background and the realization that very little information is available about whales and dolphins in the [Persian] Gulf and in the UAE. No dedicated survey on coastal dolphins to assess their status has ever been conducted in UAE or in other regions of the [Persian] Gulf. Especially considering the dramatic change that the coastal areas have experienced in the past decades, there is an increasing necessity to gather scientific baseline information on the local species that can support their conservation and the conservation of the whole marine environment. Species can disappear unnoticed from a region if nothing is known about them. →12

## Le Figaro: Iran, an original destination for French travelers in 2017

**TOURISM TEHRAN** — A year after the implementation of Iran's historic nuclear deal, the country is a widening source of charm for the French as both travelers and tour operators focus on its natural and cultural richness, Le Figaro reported on Jan. 20.

"Iran offers its visitors an original destination for lovers of skiing and sunbathing, on the beaches of the Persian Gulf and the Caspian Sea. It also attracts those in love with culture, art and history."

In April 2016, Air France reopened its Par-

is-Tehran route. And more and more agencies are adding Iran to their destinations. With around 600 customers in 2016, Intermedes is the leader in cultural travel sales in the country. The tour operator offers around twenty Iranian tours.

"The country is still very preserved, and it is a new destination, for frequent travelers," notes its marketing director, Patricia Doria, adding that departures are almost complete for next spring.

Le Figaro says that without forgetting the modern capital, Tehran, three places seem unavoidable to visitors: Shiraz, the city of poets and

gardens; the ruins of Persepolis, a unique and monumental archaeological site; and the splendid and much appreciated Isfahan.

In the wake of the nuclear deal in January 2016, Iran expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots, including 21 ones that have been placed on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Iran has launched extensive plans to bolster its tourism sector. Under the 2025 Tourism Vision plan, Iran is expecting to increase the number of tourism arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million by 2025.



Tehran Times/Ahmad Dabbaghian

## Caspian Sea landscapes drag bird buffs

Migratory birds fly over a wetland in the northern province of Golestan neighboring the Caspian Sea, on January 18, 2017.

Every Year, the rich landscapes of the south Caspian Sea drags hundreds of birdwatchers, backpackers, and bird buffs.

As per a two-week scheme, teams of environmental activists and rangers took a comprehensive census of the birds across the province.

The mid-winter population of the migratory birds is estimated to exceed over a million in the whole sandy shorelines of the sea that adds up to 700km.

## Ministers positive on OPEC, non-OPEC oil output cuts

Energy ministers from OPEC and non-OPEC countries meeting in Vienna on Sunday have struck a positive note regarding their agreement to cut oil output as a committee set to monitor compliance with the deal meets for the first time.

"I am satisfied, I am optimistic and, as I said, the markets are on their way to rebalance and it's happening," Saudi energy minister Khalid al-Falih said.

Compliance with the agreement, which calls for cuts to begin this month, had been "fantastic," he said.

Kuwaiti oil minister Essam al-Marzouq, who chairs the five-member compliance committee, said it would examine how to best monitor compliance and what level of compliance would be acceptable. The other members of the committee represent Algeria, Venezuela, Russia and Oman.

Producers also agreed to form a technical committee to assist the five-member monitoring committee.

**Next meet after March 17 in Kuwait**  
A committee set up to monitor oil output cuts by OPEC and non-OPEC producers will meet next after March 17 in Kuwait, Al-Marzouq told reporters following the committee's first meeting in Vienna on Sunday.

A third meeting of the monitoring committee will be held ahead of OPEC's May meeting, Al-Marzouq said.

A deal reached on December 10 between members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and non-OPEC producers marked the first such pact since 2001. Under it, producers will lower output by nearly 1.8 million barrels per day (bpd) aiming to ease a global glut that has weighed on oil prices for more than two years.

"Usually non-OPEC would raise their production to compensate for voluntary cuts by OPEC. Now, we are seeing voluntary cuts by both sides," Falih said.

Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak on Sunday also said he was satisfied with the level of compliance shown.

Russia has cut its oil output by around 100,000 bpd, Novak told Russia's TASS news agency. Novak added Russian oil production has averaged around 11.15 million bpd this month.

(Source: Reuters)



**MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS**



**Zarif thanks countries for sympathizing with Iran over Plasco incident**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — The Iranian foreign desk minister has expressed thanks to all the countries that expressed sympathy with the Islamic Republic over the collapse of the Plasco building in downtown Tehran on Thursday that led to the deaths of a number of firefighters. "Today we mourn the loss of our brave firefighters, and pray for them and their families. Appreciate sympathies from across the globe," Mohammad Javad Zarif said in a message posted on his Twitter account on Saturday.



**Advisor warns of 'terrorists turning into politicians' in Syria**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — A special aide to Iran's parliament speaker has warned against plans to turn terrorists in Syria into politicians as the Damascus government and the opposition groups are going to sit for talks in Astana, Kazakhstan, on Monday. "The Kazakhstan meeting initiative is remarkable, but in Syria's political solutions, yesterday's terrorists should not turn into today's politicians," Hossein Amir Abdollahian said in a meeting on Saturday with Syria's ambassador to Iran, Tasnim reported.



**'241 Iranian entities still under sanctions'**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — The secretary general of the Islamic Coalition Party on Sunday said 241 Iranian people and organizations are still under sanctions. "In a report by the Foreign Ministry it is said that sanctions on 241 Iranian people and organizations will remain in place at most seven years and then they will be excluded from the lists of sanctions by Europe, America, and the United Nations," Mohammad Nabi Habibi said. Habibi also said that banking sanctions are a clear sign of the violation of the JCPOA, the official name for the nuclear deal.



**Tehran, Rome agree on sharing technological expertise**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Iran and Italy have agreed on boosting cooperation in the form of technology transfer, a senior industrial official announced on Sunday. Iran has launched a joint project with Italy and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) for the purpose, Managing Director of Iran's Industry Property Office Seyed Mehdi Mirsalehi said, ISNA reported. Mirsalehi explained that the project aims to support small- and medium-sized industries of Iran in the form of technology transfer from Italy to Iran.



**Baeedinejad: Nixing nuclear deal no easy job**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — The Iranian desk ambassador to London said on Saturday that the nuclear deal is an internationally-endorsed agreement which cannot be easily violated or nixed by U.S. President Donald Trump. "They know that the agreement is the result of very hard negotiations and is not a mutual agreement but a multilateral understanding approved by the UN Security Council," Hamid Baeedinejad, who used to be a member of Iran's nuclear negotiating team, told a meeting in London, Fars reported.



**Plasco disaster dominates Majlis sessions**

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Tehran representatives in the Majlis sat down on Sunday to discuss the recent disaster at the Plasco building. Mohammad Reza Aref told the meeting that the incident has set off "the alarm" for Tehran and the whole country, IRIB reported. Elsewhere, the Urban Development Committee of the Majlis convened a meeting to discuss the same topic. The meeting was attended by representatives from Interior Ministry, rescue and relief organizations, Tehran Municipality, Army, IRGC, police, urban development organizations, etc.

# 'We are ready' for any eventuality, Salehi asserts

## Iran says will 'act appropriately' if Trump violates nuclear deal

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Ali Akbar Salehi, the desk director of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, has said that Iran will "act appropriately" if U.S. President Donald Trump "tear up" the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the official name for the nuclear deal. Trump swore in as the 45th president of the U.S. in Washington D.C. on Friday. "We can very easily snap back and go back ... not only to where we were, but a much higher position technologically speaking," he told CBCNews in an interview published on Saturday. "I don't want to see that day. I don't want to make a decision in that course, but we are prepared," he said. Salehi said Iran is reserving judgment on the new U.S. president. But if he does, as he vowed, "tear up" the nuclear deal, it could quickly ramp that program back up.

He said that he watched the inauguration with the expectation that Trump would mention Iran or its nuclear deal. But he did not raise either.

Salehi viewed the absence of a mention of Iran in Trump's inaugural speech as "positive".

In a speech in March to a conference of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) in Washington Trump said that his "number one priority is to dismantle the disastrous deal with Iran". However, he later backed down from his rhetoric saying it was difficult to violate a deal which has been approved by the UN Security Council.

The nuclear deal was reached between Iran and the 5+1 group (U.S., Britain, France, China, Russia and Germany) in July 2015 and went into effect in January 2016.

**'Against rationality'** Salehi also dismissed the new U.S. administration's intention to develop a "state of the art" missile defense system to stave off attacks from North Korea and Iran.

That intention was announced on the White House website, within minutes of Trump's inauguration.

"The United States — it's more than 10,000 miles [16,000 kilometers] away from Iran, and we have never intended to manufacture missiles that would go that far," Salehi remarked.

It is a "politicized" decision that is "against all rationality," he added.

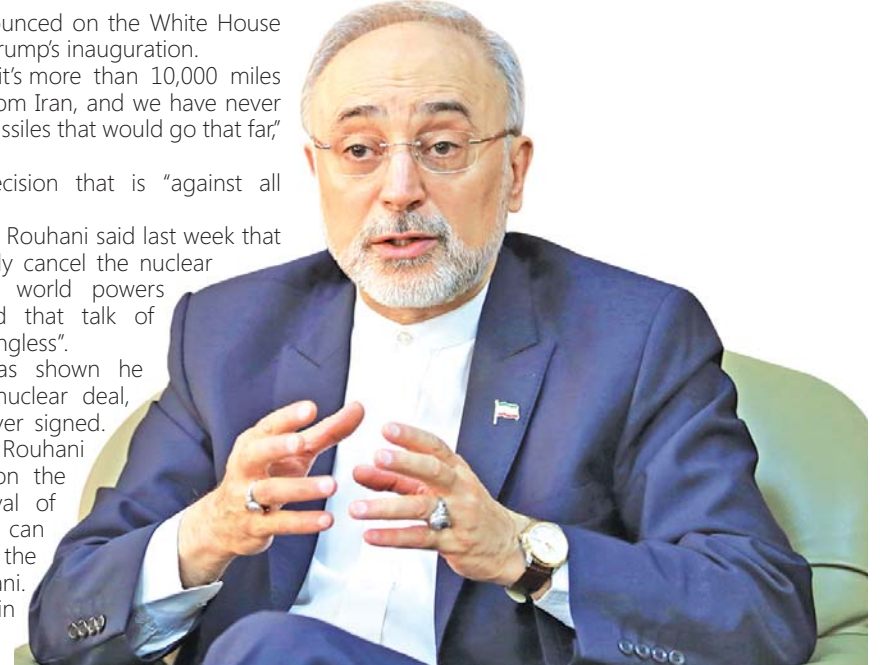
Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said last week that Trump could not unilaterally cancel the nuclear deal Tehran signed with world powers including Washington and that talk of renegotiating it was "meaningless".

"The president-elect has shown he is not happy about the nuclear deal, calling it the worst deal ever signed. This is only empty talk," Rouhani told a news conference on the anniversary of the removal of sanctions. "I don't think he can do much when he goes to the White House," added Rouhani.

Writing an article in the Guardian last week, Federica Mogherini, the European Union foreign policy chief who is tasked to monitor the implementation of the nuclear deal, said the nuclear accord now belongs to the entire international community as it has been confirmed by the UN Security Council.

President Obama, who officially left the office on Friday, warned on Jan. 16 that unraveling the agreement would bring "much worse" consequences. "The Iran deal must be measured against the alternatives," Obama said in a statement, the Washington Times reported.

He added, "The United States must remember that this agreement was the result of years of work, and



represents an agreement between the world's major powers — not simply the United States and Iran."

**'Trump is bluffing'** "From the very beginning, America's policies towards Iran have been hostile," an attendant told CNN at the Friday prayers.

"It makes no difference which president is in power," he added. "Whoever is in power will have that same outlook on Iran, which is a pity."

Some of those attending Friday prayers said they believe Trump is bluffing. "This new president Trump, he is making a lot of promises, but I am sure he will not stick with them."

## Troika meet in Astana ahead of inter-Syrian talks

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Top desk diplomats from Iran, Russia, and Turkey sat down together in Astana one day before the start of inter-Syrian talks, for a last-moment reviewing of negotiation axes.

Prior to the trilateral meeting, the Iranian delegation had met Turkish and Russian counterparts two and three times, respectively.

In addition to the diplomatic delegations, the two-day Astana peace talks, starting on Monday, will be attended by other groups, including representatives of the Syrian government, rebel groups, and UN mediator for Syria Staffan de Mistura.

Also, the U.S. ambassador to Kazakhstan will be reportedly participating in the



Iranian, Russian, and Turkish diplomatic delegations meet in Astana on Jan. 22.

negotiations at the invitation of Kazakhstan after previous UN-brokered peace talks failed to end the crisis.

The negotiations will be the first one Now after years of failed democracy,

Moscow says it wants to advance peace by dealing directly with rebels fighting on the ground. It says the aim of the talks, is to consolidate the ceasefire, according to Reuters.

Unlike previous talks, Turkey is directly involved in the new peace drive, a positive signal after years of pursuing a hostile approach toward the Syrian government.

The regional initiative is expected to end a half decade of bloodshed in Syria, a battleground fought by many armed groups.

The war has left more than 250,000 people dead, hundreds of thousands injured, and millions displaced.

Also, it has hit the country's infrastructural facilities, making any reconstruction effort costly.

## Syrian PM says terrorists should pick between 'withdrawal' and 'death'

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Amid mediation efforts in Astana to work out a solution to the Syrian crisis, Prime Minister Emad Khamis has said no peace accord will endure in the country unless terrorists either "withdraw" or are "killed."

"Foreign terrorists have to pick between withdrawal and being killed," Khamis was quoted by the IRIB as saying on Sunday.

However, "The Syrian government welcomes those opponents who think of a return to the country with open arms."

The Syrian official emphasized political dialogue with the opponents, but emerged pessimistic toward the Astana peace talks.

"Negotiations won't certainly bear fruit as long as terrorists are in Syria."

Brokered by three countries of Iran, Russia, and Turkey in December 2016, the Astana talks, due to start on Jan. 23, aim to lay the groundwork for more intra-Syrian negotiations.

The delegation of rebels that will attend the talks with the Syrian government represents only part of the moderate opposition that has fought Assad in a loose alliance known as the Free Syrian Army, according to Reuters.

Most are from groups fighting in northern Syria with the backing of Turkey. Other rebel groups seen closer to the United States and Saudi Arabia have been left out.

Commenting on the talks, Khamis underscored that

consolidating the Turkey-Russia-declared ceasefire and "withdrawal of terrorists from Syria are part of the Astana talks."

The ceasefire has been in force since late December. While delegations from Iran, Russia, and Turkey are involved in the negotiations, Khamis stressed that the negotiations will be intra-Syrian.

"The Astana talks will be intra-Syrian because the Syrian nation won't allow foreign countries to decide their fate."

The Syrian government has announced from the outset that all negotiations weather held inside or outside the country should be intra-Syrian, he added.

He also touched upon Syria's redlines in the negotiations, saying Damascus won't back away from its principles already known to all sides in the previous negotiations.

The negotiations don't mean Syria will stop fighting terrorism, Khamis pointed out, explaining, "We don't compromise with the terrorists who have committed crimes in Syria, and believe no peace treaty will endure as long as they are in Syria."

In making the comments he was referring to foreign-backed terrorists, particularly those sponsored and armed by "Turkey and Saudi Arabia."

People familiar with the talks doubt if the Astana negotiations will result in any tangible outcome.

In a recent interview with BBC, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov stated that any deals on Syria are un-



Syrian Prime Minister Emad Khamis

likely to be reached at the upcoming Astana talks on the Syrian crisis settlement, as too many parties are involved in the process.

The negotiations also showed widening gap between Iran and Russia, both supporting President Bashar al-Assad, over the participation of the U.S. in the negotiations.

Russia has announced the difference is complicating the talks, saying, "It is obvious that without the United States it is impossible to resolve the Syrian issue."

## Iran to build infrastructure to produce stable isotopes

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Ali Akbar Salehi, the desk director of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, has said that Iran and Russia will cooperate in building infrastructure to produce stable isotopes at the Fordo facility.

"Two years ago in Russia, we signed an agreement to cooperate on producing nuclear fuel in addition to signing an agreement to build two nuclear facilities. The negotiations continued for two years during which we discussed details of cooperation in producing fuel,"

he told IRIB in an interview published on Sunday.

He said that producing fuel is a very "sensitive" and "complicated" process and it is essential to cooperate with the countries which are forerunner in this field.

Russia has promised to cooperate with Iran in producing nuclear fuel, he added.

Commenting on U.S. President Donald Trump's position on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, Salehi said that it is too soon to judge and Iran waits to see the U.S. behavior in honoring its

commitment to the deal.

He said that Iran will not initiate a violation of the JCPOA, however if the accord is annulled Tehran will increase uranium enrichment capacity to 100,000 SWU in a year.

Iran and the six major powers finalized the text of the JCPOA in July 2015 which took effect in January 2016.

In a speech in March to a conference of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) in Washington Trump said that his "number one priority is to dismantle the disastrous deal with

Iran". However, he later backed down from his rhetoric saying it was difficult to violate a deal which has been approved by the UN Security Council.

EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said on November 9 that the JCPOA is a "multilateral agreement" and that she is tasked to guarantee its full implementation.

EU foreign ministers also issued a statement on November 14 reiterating the 28-nation bloc's "resolute" commitment to the implementation of the nuclear agreement.



# Syria talks set to begin in Astana as ceasefire holds

Key players in Syria foreign instigated conflict are due to meet on Monday in Astana to begin talks aimed at consolidating a nationwide ceasefire and potentially paving the way towards a political settlement.

The talks, organized by Russia, Turkey and Iran, come weeks into a countrywide ceasefire brokered by Moscow and Ankara that has largely held despite incidents of violence across the country.

The negotiations, expected to last several days, will bring together representatives from the armed opposition, along with delegates from the Syrian government, Russia, Turkey, Iran and the United Nations, and are to be followed by a UN-mediated meeting in Geneva on February 8.

The talks mark the most serious effort in months to put an end to nearly six years of foreign backed war in Syria, which have left much of the country in ruins, killed nearly half a million people, and displaced half of the population.

It is important to underline that this time Syrian opposition will be represented by the forces which fight in Syria, not just by political figures who mainly reside abroad and are detached from the reality on the ground.

The opposition has said that its sole focus will be to shore up a nationwide ceasefire, while Bashar al-Assad, the Syrian president, has said he believes the talks will lead to local "reconciliation" deals with rebels.

Russia, whose military intervention was vital in turning the tide of the war in Assad's favor, initiated the latest diplomatic process shortly after its air force helped the Syrian government and allied Iran-backed fighters win a major victory in retaking east Aleppo last month, the opposition's biggest defeat of the war.

It also had help from Iran, another key Damascus ally, and Turkey, which has been a strong supporter of the opposition but has steadily shifted its priorities in Syria away from an Assad-centric focus towards preventing the creation of an autonomous Kurdish state along its border and combating the spillover of violence into Turkey.

## Turkey: No resolution without Assad

On Friday, the Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Mehmet Simsek said that Turkey could no longer insist on a resolution of the conflict in Syria without the involvement of Assad.

"The facts on the ground have changed dramatically, so Turkey can no longer insist on a settlement without Assad, it's not realistic," Simsek told a panel on Syria and Iraq at the World Economic Forum in Davos.



And while representatives of the incoming Trump administration have been invited to attend the talks, the United States state department said on Saturday it will not send a delegation from Washington to attend Syrian peace talks in the Kazakh capital but that the U.S. ambassador to Kazakhstan, George Krol, would attend the Russian-led talks as an observer.

The Syrian opposition announced that it will be sending a "military delegation" led by Mohammed Alloush, the leader of Jaysh al-Islam (Army of Islam), and delegates from factions under the Free Syrian Army umbrella.

In contrast to last year's UN-brokered peace talks in Geneva when the opposition was represented by the High Negotiations Committee, mainly made up of Syrian leaders living in exile, analysts say Astana's military delegation "gives the talks more chances for success".

Damascus has reached a series of local truce agreements over the past year, in which rebels - the

government refers to them as "terrorists" - agree to lay down heavy weapons and evacuate areas after years of bombardment and siege.

Thousands of civilians have been forced to leave their home towns after similar deals were made in places such as east Aleppo, Daraya, Moadamiyeh and al-Waer, which some rights groups have called a "crime against humanity".

In the latest of such truce deals, rebel groups and government representatives agreed to a new ceasefire in Wadi Barada, a strategic area in the Damascus suburbs, in which the evacuation of fighters and civilians is expected to follow.

Rebels accuse the government and its backers of using the deals as a deliberate strategy of displacement and demographic change.

But as Russia takes control of the diplomatic process in Syria, analysts expect local truces to accelerate.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

## Pope Francis warns against populism, citing Hitler

Pope Francis on Saturday warned against populism, saying it could lead to the election of "saviors" like Adolf Hitler.

In an hour-long interview with Spanish newspaper El Pais conducted as the new United States President Donald Trump was being sworn in as U.S. president, the pontiff also condemned the idea of using walls and barbed wire to keep out foreigners, among them refugees and migrants.

"Of course crises provoke fears and worries," he said, but added that for him "the example of populism in the European sense of the word is Germany in 1933".

The pope added: "Germany ... was looking for a leader, someone who would give her back her identity and there was a little man named Adolf Hitler who said 'I can do it'".

"Hitler did not steal power," the pope said. "He was elected by his people and then he destroyed his people."

The Germans at that time also wanted to protect themselves with "walls and barbed wire so that others cannot take away their identity", he said.

"The case of Germany is classic," he said, adding that Hitler gave them a "deformed identity and we know what it produced."

Pope Francis however underscored that it was too early to pass judgment on Trump.

"Let's see. Let's see what he does and then we will evaluate," he said.

In February, the pontiff in another apparent warning to Trump, said: "A person who thinks only about building walls - wherever they may be - and not building bridges, is not Christian ... I'd just say that this man is not Christian if he said it this way."

## Populist surge, far-right governments may change the EU

Populist parties are on the rise across Europe.

Unemployment and austerity, the arrival of record numbers of refugees and migrants in France, Belgium and Germany have left voters disillusioned with conventional parties and led to a rise of Islamophobic sentiment and anti-refugee views.

In Germany, far-right leaders met at



a conference amid protests a day earlier.

French far-right Leader Marine Le Pen told several hundred supporters in the German city of Koblenz that Britain's vote last year to leave the European Union would set in train a "domino effect".

A day after Trump took office in the U.S., Le Pen said his inauguration speech included "accents in common" with the message of reclaiming national sovereignty by the far-right leaders.

"2016 was the year the Anglo-Saxon world woke up. I am sure 2017 will be the year the people of continental Europe wake up," she said to loud applause.

Le Pen - head of the anti-European Union, anti-immigrant National Front (FN) and seen by pollsters as highly likely to make a two-person runoff vote for the French presidency in May - has marked out Europe as a major plank in her program.

More than 3,000 demonstrators gathered to protest the Koblenz conference, while some staged a sit-in outside the hall.

Also in attendance was Dutch hardliner Geert Wilders, who used the platform to repeat Islamophobic rhetoric, the central theme of policies that have pushed his Party for Freedom to the front in the polls in the run-up to elections in March.

The leaders of Europe's established parties were "promoting our Islamization", Wilders said in a speech.

European women were now "frightened of showing their blonde hair", the Dutch politician said, addressing the enthusiastic audience in German.

(Source: agencies)

## Women's anti-Trump march on Washington draws massive crowds

Hundreds of thousands of people poured into the United States capital on Saturday to march in opposition to President Donald Trump, a day after the Republican took office, as sister demonstrations took place in cities across Africa, Asia and Europe.

Women and men of all ages took to the streets of Washington, DC, rallying around issues like women's rights, reproductive rights and immigration.

The march was supposed to be along the National Mall, the stretch of parkland that runs from Congress to the White House. But it spilled onto Pennsylvania Avenue, the street where the new president and property tycoon now lives, and where his Washington-based hotel is.

Protesters held signs like "Women's rights are human rights", "Break down walls, don't build them", and "Hell hath no fury as a nasty woman scorned", referencing the time Trump called his opponent, Hillary Clinton, a "nasty woman" during a debate.

Sophie Walker, the leader of the Women's Equality party, told Al Jazeera that protesters had gathered in a show of unity.

Many participants wore knitted pink cat-eared "pussy" hats, a reference to Trump's admission to having committed sexual assault in a video that was made public weeks before the election.

In that video, Trump said he grabbed women by the genitals without their consent, sparking outrage.

The protest illustrated the depth of the anger in a deeply divided country that is still recovering from the scarring 2016 election campaign season.

Although authorities in Washington, DC, do not release crowd counts, organizers told AFP news agency they estimated turnout at one million - quadrupling initial expectations - with huge crowds joining sister marches around the country.

More than half a million people also took to the streets of Los Angeles, according to police there, and a similar number gathered in New York. Other marches took place in Chicago, Dallas, San Francisco, Denver, St Louis and elsewhere.

Trump has drawn the ire of liberals, leftists and other progressives for sexist comments and xenophobic language, while many abroad are worried over



his inaugural vow on Friday to put "America First" in his decision-making.

## Global protests

Meantime, demonstrations against Trump's discriminatory rhetoric were also held in Australia, Britain, Germany, Japan and France, and others.

In Kenya, hundreds of protesters in Nairobi's Karura Forest waved placards and sang American protest songs.

In Sydney, Australia's biggest city, about 3,000 men and women gathered for a rally in Hyde Park before marching on the US consulate downtown, while organizers said 5,000 people rallied in Melbourne.

In Japan, hundreds of people joined protests in Tokyo, including many American expatriates.

Protest organizers in Britain said more than 100,000 packed London's Trafalgar Square, chanting "dump Trump" and waving banners demanding equal rights.

Around 2,000 people marched in Vienna, according to estimates by the police and organizers, but sub-zero temperatures quickly thinned the crowd to a couple of hundred.

In Stockholm, the Swedish capital, several thousand people gathered to express support for women's rights and human rights, and in solidarity with the demonstrations in the U.S.

They marched to the U.S. embassy, some carrying placards that read "Tiny hands off the nukes", "When they go low, we go high", and "Love not hate makes America great".

A recent poll by ABC News/Washington Post found that just 40 percent of Americans approved of Trump, the lowest popularity rating of any incoming president since the 1970s.

(Source: agencies)

## Car bomb explodes in central Tripoli, near Italy embassy: security official

A car bomb exploded late on Saturday close to the recently re-opened Italian embassy in the Libyan capital, a security official said.

It was not clear who was responsible for the blast. Two charred bodies were recovered from the car, according to a statement on a social media page run by a local branch of the Red Crescent, but the identity of the occupants was unknown.

Some vehicles parked nearby were also hit, but damage from the blast, which could be heard at least a kilometer away, was limited.

The security official, who did not want to be named, said it appeared that explosives had been planted in the car.

The blast occurred next to the Ministry of Planning and near the Egyptian embassy, which is closed. The Italian embassy is some 350 meters away.

A Reuters reporter at the scene said roads had been cordoned off near the site of the blast, and dozens of security officials and vehicles had been deployed in the area. The wreckage of the car that exploded was quickly removed.

Italy became the first Western country to reopen its embassy in Tripoli earlier this month. Most countries closed their embassies here in 2014 and early 2015 after heavy fighting and attacks in the city.

Tripoli is home to a large number of rival militias, some of which oppose the United Nations-backed Government of National Accord (GNA) that Italy has strongly supported.

The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group is known to have sleeper cells in Tripoli, and it has claimed attacks there in the past, including against embassies.

The GNA backed a recent seven-month campaign to oust ISIL from its former North African stronghold of Sirte, about 450 km (280 miles) east of Tripoli.

The re-opening of the Italian embassy drew protests from factions in eastern Libya who oppose the GNA and are aligned with a rival government based there.

(Source: Reuters)

## Lebanese soldiers thwart suicide bombing in Beirut café

Authorities in Lebanon say they have thwarted a suicide bombing in one of the busiest neighborhoods of the capital, Beirut.

Lebanon's National News Agency said the would-be attacker was wearing an explosive belt under his jacket, as he intended to blow himself up inside a Costa coffee shop on Hamra Street on Saturday evening.

Saad Hariri, Lebanon's prime minister, congratulated security forces on their successful operation in a tweet: "Our unity protects the nation and the people," he said.

The Daily Star newspaper reported that the café was filled with people socializing when the soldiers arrested the man at around 11pm local time. Security sources told the paper the suspect was beaten up by soldiers during the arrest.

He was taken to a nearby hospital for treatment before interrogation, it added.

Al Jazeera's Intiaz Tyab, reporting from Beirut, said security services identified the suspect as a man in his 20s from Sidon in the country's south.

Lebanon has been hit by a string of bomb attacks in recent years, with some linked to the ongoing war in neighboring Syria.

In June 2016, the army said it had arrested supporters from a local affiliate of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group, planning attacks against busy areas.

The Hamra neighborhood, a district known for shopping and nightlife, has not previously been hit by an attack.

Some of the deadliest blasts have targeted neighborhoods sympathetic to the powerful Shia Hezbollah resistance movement, which is fighting alongside the Syrian government.

(Source: agencies)

## Four killed in U.S. drone strikes in Yemen

Separate United States drone attacks have killed four people in the southwestern Yemeni province of Bayda.

Yemeni security sources, who were speaking on condition of anonymity, said the first drone strike hit a vehicle carrying three people, purported to be al-Qaeda suspects, in Sawma'ah district in the province on Saturday.

A day earlier, another drone attack had purportedly killed a local military instructor for the terrorist group in the same province. Among the fatalities of the Saturday attack was Abu Anis al-Abi, identified as an area field commander.

The al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) has taken advantage of the chaos and breakdown of security in Yemen to tighten its grip on the southern and southeastern parts of the country.

The U.S. carries out drone attacks in Yemen and several other countries, claiming to be targeting al-Qaeda elements; but, local sources say civilians have been the main victims of the attacks.

Last week, American intelligence officials said as many as 117 civilians had been killed in at least 526 drone strikes conducted during former U.S. president Barack Obama's terms in office. The attacks had been carried out in Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, Libya and elsewhere.

The drone strikes in Yemen continue alongside the Saudi military aggression against the impoverished conflict-ridden country.

The House of Saud regime has been incessantly pounding Yemen since March 2015 in an unsuccessful attempt to reinstate a former government. The United Nations recently said that about 10,000 had been killed in the war.

(Source: Press TV)



JUMP

**Non-oil exports up over 8% in 10 months**

Liquefied natural gas (LNG) came in second followed by low-density oils, associated petroleum gas (APG) and hydrocarbon gas liquids and finally liquefied propane.

China, UAE, Iraq, Turkey and South Korea were the main importers of goods from Iran during the mentioned period.

Corn, soybeans, CKD parts for passenger cars, and motor vehicles were among the most imported commodities and China, UAE, South Korea, Turkey and Germany were the major exporters of products to the Islamic Republic during the ten-month time.

**BAIEX 2017 to open in Tehran today**

**ECONOMY TEHRAN** — The eighth edition of International Bitumen, Asphalt, Insulation and Related Machinery Exhibition of Iran (BAIEX 2017) will open at the Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds today.

Aiming for expansion of exports markets and technology transfer, the four-day event will host over 100 domestic and foreign companies active in fields like bitumen and Polymer asphalt, bitumen and asphalt spreading machines and equipment and road construction machinery and etc.

Turkey, Germany, China and New Zealand are among the countries to participate in this year's exhibit.

**CBI's 9-month loans to economic sector up 43.5% on year**

**ECONOMY TEHRAN** — The Central Bank of Iran (CBI) provided domestic economic sectors with above 3.82 trillion rials (about \$100 million) of loans during the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (ending December 20, 2016), which shows a 43.5 percent increase compared to the same time span in the preceding year, IRNA reported on Sunday.

According to the report released by CBI, the offered facilities increased 1.15 trillion rials (about \$30.1 million) during the nine-month period this year from the same time in the previous year.

Working capital loans paid to different economic sectors was 2.45 trillion rials (about \$64.1 million) accounting for 64.1 percent of the total provided facilities in the said period, registering a 46.1 percent increase from the previous year.

**NDF to receive 30% of Iran's oil revenue**

**ECONOMY TEHRAN** — Iran will allocate 30% of its oil revenue to the National Development Fund (NDF), Mohammad-Mehdi Mofatteh, the spokesman for the parliament (Majlis) ad hoc budget review committee, said after a meeting of the committee on Saturday.

"In today meeting, attended by Oil Minister Bijan Zanganeh, the previous 20 percent share of the NDF from the

country's oil revenue was decided to be increased to 30 percent", Shana reported Mofatteh as saying.

Oil income has a share of 1.1 quadrillion rials (about \$28.7 billion) in the draft of national budget bill for the coming Iranian calendar year (which starts on March 21, 2017), a 48 percent rise year on year.

The proposed national budget is about 10.849 quadrillion rials (about



\$283.6 billion), an 11 percent rise year on year.

The draft estimates crude oil exports at about 2.42 million barrels per day.

Iran, currently the third OPEC producer, has been ramping up oil production to reclaim its market share after the lifting of sanctions in last January.

**Iran eyes automotive plant in Oman's Duqm**

Iran and Oman are continuing their talks to set up an auto manufacturing plant in Oman's Duqm, according to a top official.

Tehran plans to build the plant in Duqm economic zone, Iran's Charge d'Affairs in Oman Mohammad Totontchi, was quoted as saying in an Oman Tribune re-

port. The official added that both the countries will take steps to boost trade relations and Tehran will hold a large exhibition in Muscat from January 23 to 27.

Trade between Iran and Oman saw a 35 per cent increase in volume in 2016 and the trade exchange value

between the countries has reached \$1.35 billion last year.

More than 90 Iranian companies active in various fields, including food and auto industries, will present their products in Iran's exhibition in the sultanate, added the report.

(Source: Trade Arabia)

**Trump, Turkey and the Theresa trade: market questions this week**

Here are the market-related questions FT reporters will be examining this week, the first in which a Nato-ambivalent son of a New York property baron will command the world's most powerful political office.

**Will the Trump-trades persist with the president in power?**

The post-election story in markets has largely been about what campaign promises turned into reality could do to a US economy already several years into a recovery. The possibility of tax cuts, higher inflation and appointees to a Federal Reserve more inclined to raise interest rates has led to higher bond yields, a stronger dollar and record highs for stock market indices.

Disappointment may follow, if legislation fails to appear with the same frequency as presidential tweets.

**What's a fair wage, copper?**

The eyes of the metals industry will be on Chile next week when a new pay deal will be put to workers at Escondida, the world's biggest copper mine. They have already rejected an initial offer from operator BHP Billiton and now wait to see the final proposal. That will be delivered on Monday with a vote scheduled for the following day.

In the first nine months of 2016, Escondida produced 750,000 tons of copper, so the impact of a strike would reverberate, say analysts.

"The effects of a prolonged strike at Escondida on the copper price will probably be significant, with prices possibly reaching above \$6,000 tons were a disruption to materialize," said JPMorgan. Copper closed at about \$5,750 on Friday.

**Will Turkey's central bank raise rates?**

Tuesday's central bank's meeting takes place against the backdrop of political pressure, with Turkish president Recep Erdogan wanting CBT governor Murat Cetinkaya to cut interest rates to support an economy rocked by violence.

However, analysts have been hollering for the opposite action, some even suggesting the precipitous fall in the Turkish lira demanded an unscheduled meeting of policymakers.

Indeed, although it got a boost Friday, the lira remains the currency market's worst performing currency of the year, down 7 per cent, and nearly 20 per cent below its level of three months ago. The lira's fall is fuelling inflation, damaging consumer and investor confidence and hobbling an economy once seen as a

star in the emerging market firmament.

The bank has been taking a series of unconventional measures to staunch the flow, auctioning currency swaps, but to little effect, with the lira at one point another 3 per cent weaker last week.

**Is there more sterling volatility to come?**

The answer is probably yes, but not to the same extent as last week when pre-speech briefing sent the pound down far enough that it then rebounded 3 per cent in one day, after Theresa May set out her principles for negotiating Brexit.

Tuesday sees the Supreme Court hand down its decision on whether the High Court was right to rule that the government had to consult parliament before sending the formal Article 50 letter, which triggers the UK's two-year exit from the EU. (Source: Financial Times)



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## 4th Iranian Auto Industry International Conference, a Giant Stride Taken in Intl. Arena

The ending months of the current Iranian calendar year 1395 (to end March 19, 2017) have arrived and now, all industrialists and industrial activists in auto industry of the country as well as foreign companies are vehemently waiting for the 4th Iranian Auto Industry International Conference which will be held in very near future. However, the 4th Iranian Auto Industry Intl. Conference can be considered as a shop-window of latest achievements of auto industry in Iran. Generally speaking, latest achievements and high potentials and capabilities of Iranian auto industry will be showcased in this prestigious event. It can be said that this prestigious Conference has turned into a golden opportunity for both domestic and foreign automakers and part manufacturers.

It should be noted that the 1st Iranian Auto Industry International Conference was held in Dec. 2013 with the aim of introducing the achievements of country's auto industry in international arenas. In a nutshell, the first edition of this Conference may be called as the outset of a grand and prestigious event. In addition, the 2nd edition of this prestigious Conference was held in Dec. 2014 with the motto entitled "Determination of Strategy of Iranian Auto Industry". After introducing the potentials and achievements of this industry in 2013, the defined strategy could pave suitable way for the attraction of international capitals. High-ranking authorities and officials in world's auto industry attended the 2nd Iranian Auto Industry International Conference who were representatives of more than 30 countries in world. The significance of auto industry in Iran was so important to foreign parties that even the chairman of International Auto Association was one of the key speakers in this prestigious Conference.

But the 3rd Iranian Auto Industry International Conference was held in March 2016 which was held after signing and sealing nuclear deal entitled "Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)".

The 3rd Iranian Auto Industry International Conference was the most important and prestigious international event, held after signing and sealing nuclear deal between Iran and world's six major powers, which was highly welcomed by foreign countries. However, the 3rd edition of Iranian Auto Industry Conference had major differences with the two previous Conferences, because, an exhibition of achievements and capabilities of Iranian auto industry was held at Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds simultaneous with organizing the Conference. Broadly speaking, the 3rd edition of Iranian Auto Industry International Conference was also highly welcomed by both visitors and foreign guests. The 3rd edition of the Conference was held with the aim of forging competitiveness and

establishing international cooperation at environment after the nuclear deal inked between Iran and world's six major powers. The 3rd Iranian Auto Industry Intl. Conference was held in the presence of 350 foreign exhibitors within the framework of 121 auto and part-manufacturing companies as well as related industries, showing a rosy and bright future for Iranian auto industry.

After the implementation of Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the official title of nuclear deal, Iran Khodro Industrial Group (IKCO), as the first and largest auto manufacturing company in the Middle East region, was the first company in the country that could conclude one of the most successful and important contracts in all-time history of Iranian auto industry with prestigious French "Peugeot" Company.

A Glance at 4th Iranian Auto Industry International Conference

The 4th Iranian Auto Industry International Conference has been put at the focal attention of industrialists in the country especially in recent years. This time, the 4th Iranian Auto Industry Intl. Conference is going to be held on Feb. 12-13, 2017 at Tehran's Milad Tower Intl. Conferences Center. The motto of 4th edition of Iranian Auto Industry Intl. Conference is as follows: "Sales and After-Sales Services". This motto has been compiled according to the requirements of auto industry in Iran and a number of 45 top domestic and foreign speakers will address the issue in this prestigious Conference.

Moreover, a number of 18 expert-level sessions will be held on the sidelines of 4th Iranian Auto Industry Intl. Conference. After a landmark nuclear deal inked between Iran and P5+1 (the five permanent members of UN Security Council plus Germany), golden opportunity was created for Iranian auto industry in international level in a way that Iran managed to manufacture 1.3 million light and heavy vehicles. However, statistics put Iran's car output (light- and heavy vehicles) after the implementation of JCPOA at 1.3 million. However, giant strides were taken in Iranian auto industry especially after the implementation of Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).



At this juncture, Iranian auto industry should make all its utmost effort to increase quality of its products, observing requirements of international standards, in the field of sales and after-sales services.

To learn more about the 4th edition of Iranian Auto Industry Intl. Conference, our correspondent has conducted an interview with Dr. Amir-Hassan Kakaei Faculty Member of Iran University of Science and Technology (IUST) which comes as follows:

In the beginning, he said that positive steps have been taken in Iranian auto industry especially in the past three years and currently, these constructive steps and plans are underway. But the motto of "Sales and After-Sales Services" at the 4th edition of Iranian Auto Industry Intl. Conference means that country's auto industry intends to establish more cooperation and interaction with customers in the best form possible.

The 4th Iranian Auto Industry Intl. Conference can be considered as a bridge for promoting interaction and cooperation in international arena. In fact, the 4th edition of the Conference is regarded as a type of annual work report of automakers to the noble nation of the country as well, he main-

tained.

He, who is an expert in auto industry, added: "Giant steps should be taken in the field of sales and after-sales services."

Elsewhere in his remarks, he pointed to the key role of private sector in auto industry and said: "Private sector is considered as a driving force in automotive industry of the country, so that private sector can materialize most objectives of this industry in the best form possible."

"I am of the opinion that the 4th edition of Iranian Auto Industry Intl. Conference can establish a very intimate and affable relationship between public and private auto manufacturers," he emphasized.

It should be noted that objectives of the previous three conferences had been compiled according to the condition of auto industry and political atmosphere in the country, he said, adding: "Some part of objectives of the previous three Conferences have been materialized, the most important of which are as follows: reestablishing international relationship between country's auto industry and the outside world and/or transferring technical know-how and technology, etc."

But sometimes, activities conducted in Iran's auto industry are not notified to the noble people of the country appropriately, so that the 4th edition of Iranian Auto Industry Intl. Conference may be termed as suitable bedrock for dissemination of relevant information services, he ended.

Impacts of Organizing 4th Iranian Auto Industry Intl. Conference

Eng. Davood Mirkhani Rashti Advisor to the Iranian Auto Manufacturers' Association was the other speaker who pointed to the achievements of this prestigious Conference held in the past three years and said: "Attracting foreign investors and establishing new international relations were the main objectives followed up in the previous three editions of the Conference, so that auto manufacturers were empowered to overcome sanctions imposed on the country vigorously."

After the implementation of Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the official title of the nuclear deal, rosy and bright future opened for

the country in international arena, he said, adding: "Some of these objectives have been materialized but some others have not."

He pointed to the Sales and After-Sales Services which is followed up strictly at the 4th edition of Iranian Auto Industry International Conference and said: "This Conference can improve and strengthen sales and after-sales services in auto industry of the country significantly."

Paying Due Attention to Part Manufacturers

According to the statistics released by organizers in this regard, more than 1,600 domestic and foreign guests will take part in 4th Iranian Auto Industry International Conference. Moreover, over 500-minute exclusive interviews will be conducted with foreign parties on the sidelines of this Conference. Major part of these interviews will focus on sales and after-sales services. However, key role of parts manufacturers cannot be ignored in this regard.

Eng. Mohammad-Reza Najafimanesh Member of Board of Directors of Iranian Parts Manufacturers' Association announced the above statement and said: "The 4th edition of Iranian Auto Industry International Conference will concentrate on sales and after-sales services, so that effective measures have been taken in this field."

Parts manufacturers will be put at the focal attention seriously at this edition of Conference, he said, adding: "Sales and after-sales services will be meaningless without cooperation and interaction of parts manufacturers."

"I am of the opinion that the 4th edition of Iranian Auto Industry International Conference will produce positive and constructive results as compared to its previous editions," he maintained.

Turning to the achievements obtained in the previous three editions of the Conference, he said: "I believe that intelligent and wise steps were taken in the previous three editions of the Conference, because, JCPOA had yet to be finalized."

Presence of foreign companies even in sanctions period had positive message, showing that foreigners had high tendency to penetrate into Iranian lucrative market, he maintained.

As a matter of fact, more wise and logical steps had been taken in the previous three editions of the Conference, the official emphasized.

Considering the widespread participation of outstanding foreign car manufacturers such as PSA (Peugeot - Citroen), Renault, Nissan, SCANIA and domestic auto manufacturers such as IKCO and SAIPA, it seems that the 4th Iranian Auto Industry International Conference can play an active role for promoting Iranian auto industry in international arenas like its previous three editions.



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## In Nigeria, planting a future amid war

By Adrian Ouvre

Communities displaced by Boko Haram are planning for the future, but they need help.

This week's military airstrike on a community of displaced people in Nigeria killed at least 70 civilians and aid workers and injured more than 100 others, according to aid groups. It was a gut-wrenching reminder that the years-long conflict and desperate humanitarian situation here is far from over.

Across the northeast part of the country, 8.5 million people are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance and 1.6 million people are still internally displaced. More than 5 million are unsure where their next meal will come from, while 450,000 children—and counting—are severely malnourished.



This week, I visited Dikwa and Ngala, two outlying districts in the northeastern Borno state—the epicenter of Boko Haram's insurgency—where Mercy Corps plans to expand our response to the crisis. None of the displaced families we spoke to have any immediate plans to return home. Dikwa and Ngala are hosting up to 70,000 displaced people

each. The people are anxious to go home, especially ahead of the upcoming planting season, but are afraid. While the main towns in these districts are secured, outside of the safe zones, rural areas are lawless and off-limits. Even leaving the town perimeter to forage for firewood can get you killed.

Even in these dire conditions, there is some hope. According to United Nations data, the number of people receiving food in northeast Nigeria grew by 250 percent in the past five months; thanks to the International Committee of the Red Cross, Médecins Sans Frontières and other humanitarian organizations, some 2 million people are able to stave off hunger. But people here are still at rock bottom.

### Humanitarian agencies

In Borno, only a minority of displaced families are lucky enough to have tents provided by humanitarian agencies. The majority lives with impoverished members of the host community or in makeshift shelters built of straw mats, metal sheeting, mud and sticks, or in abandoned buildings that are missing roofs, doors and windows. Markets are starting to function in some of these secured areas, but no one has money, so vendors have no incentive to bring in their goods.

In southern Borno, Mercy Corps is helping 130,000 people through various types of assistance, including providing food vouchers to stimulate these markets, and getting cash into people's hands in order to encourage traders to bring their goods. We hope to expand this approach to Dikwa as soon as possible.

At this time of year, farmers in Borno are normally planning for the planting season. With rains coming in late May or June, land preparation must start as early as March. As a result of the continued violence, many farmers across the state have not been able to reach the land where they have cultivated food for years. This year, again, they may miss the harvest.

In both Dikwa and Ngala, however, there may be opportunities for kick-starting at least some agricultural production. We saw land that can be used for cultivation, including many hectares within the secure perimeters of the towns and with access to irrigation. Dikwa is famous across Nigeria for its onions, as well as rice and grains. There is enough land to put hundreds of people to work. The farmers who own the land just need assistance buying pumps for irrigation, seeds, tools, plows and other tools.

Whether it is providing food or distributing seeds for farmers to grow their own, this assistance cannot happen without significant and ongoing support from the international community. Response to the crisis is drastically underfunded and the world needs to step up. The United Nations has launched a \$1 billion funding appeal for Nigeria in 2017; at the end of February, a donor conference in Oslo, Norway, will try to mobilize support for this overlooked crisis.

Everyone should work with extreme urgency to ensure there is enough basic aid—food, clean water, hygiene services, shelter—for the millions of people still depending on it to survive. Simultaneously, we must take advantage of opportunities to stimulate local markets, switching to cash over direct aid wherever feasible, and providing income-generating opportunities, such as helping people cultivate crops, re-stock their herds and jump-start small businesses. Young people especially need both employment opportunities and a stake in their communities' future. In areas like this, affected by prolonged conflict, humanitarian aid must combine emergency relief with investment in social and economic recovery at the earliest possible stage.

The people I met this week in Dikwa and Ngala have faced unimaginable loss and devastation, but I witnessed an overwhelming will and desire from them to be the agents of their own recovery and get back on their feet. They don't just want humanitarian handouts. Instead, with our strategic support they can survive this crisis, return to peace, build better lives and transform their communities. But we must start that process now.

(Source: Newsweek)

# Theresa May's 'Global Britain' is baloney

By Roger Cohen

So Theresa May, the British prime minister who was not elected to her post, wants to create something called "Global Britain." She thought about alternative branding — "Parochial Britain" — but was advised it was unsexy.

She wants to achieve this by taking Britain out of the European Union, out of a single market of a half-billion people and into a new "embrace" of the world — excluding, of course, Spaniards, the French, Germans, Italians, Swedes and their ilk.

The prime minister is so keen on the idea that she used the word "global" 17 times in her speech last Tuesday setting out her Brexit plans.

Madam, thou doth protest too much.

The Onion's headline was: "May to European Union: Drop Dead. May to World: We Love You." Actually, that was not in The Onion but should have been.

I wonder if May, who studied geography at Oxford University, has ever taken a stroll round London, that inward-looking city where you never hear a foreign tongue. After 43 years in what is now called the European Union, the British capital has become insufferably insular. Its cuisine lacks variety. Its financial institutions have no international heft. Its skyline speaks of stunted ambition. Its culture is provincial, its theater hidebound and its worldview small-minded.

No wonder May felt she had to take London global.

And Britain as a whole! For 43 years the country has been a member of an introverted, stifling little entity called the European Union that has just concluded a free trade deal with Canada, has dozens of multilateral and bilateral trade agreements, boasts the United States as its top trading partner, takes some 44 percent of British exports, and accounts for 22 percent of world economic output.

How could Britain possibly be global



**The vote for Brexit was in fact the moment Britain turned its back on the world.**

within this straitjacket?

### The June 23 referendum

No, it had to get out of Europe to go global (and make sure its citizens could no longer work in Europe!) The June 23 referendum, May insisted, was "the moment we chose to build a truly global Britain."

I know this is a political moment when black equals white, no means yes, two plus two equals five, and post-truth is the phrase du jour. Still, this was a Trump-size whopper from May. She had obviously been steeped in Orwell before her oration.

The vote for Brexit was in fact the moment Britain turned its back on the world, succumbing to pettiness, anti-

immigrant bigotry, lying politicians, self-delusion and vapid promises of restored glory.

"Global Britain" is a specious branding effort designed to mask an expensive mistake, opposed by 48 percent of voters.

Now, a memory stirs. May at the Conservative Party Conference last October saying this: "But if you believe you're a citizen of the world, you're a citizen of nowhere. You don't understand what the very word 'citizenship' means."

So much for May and her global baloney: She doesn't like people who move from country to country, who may feel allegiance to more than one, and who have concluded that the most useful form

of citizenship these days is one dedicated not only to the well-being of a Berkshire parish, say, but to the planet.

Global Britain without global citizens, please!

There was at least one honest sentence in her speech: "Brexit must mean control of the number of people who come to Britain from Europe." That, you see, is what it was all about: too many Poles and Romanians doing jobs nobody else wants.

May rambled. She does not want the single market (because it entails free movement of EU citizens). But, oh, maybe she wants bits of it. Like for the export of cars or freedom to provide financial services across borders. May has already had to make promises to Nissan to stop the Japanese automaker from getting out of Sunderland. She's terrified financial institutions will quit the City en masse.

Her comeuppance awaits in the form of Angela Merkel, the German chancellor, who knows global baloney when she sees it. You don't have your cake and eat it in negotiations with Merkel.

I write as President-elect Donald Trump is about to become President Trump. Nobody really has any idea of what will happen after that.

May seems to see Trump as her global ace in the hole, her counterweight to the European Union. She has been making nice to him. Her government has voiced extraordinary public criticism of Secretary of State John Kerry's speech on Israel-Palestine, and largely shunned a Middle East conference in Paris the Trump team opposed. In her speech, May pointedly remarked that Britain was not "at the back of the queue" for a trade deal with the United States, as President Obama warned, but at the front in the hour of Trump.

Global Britain! Make America Great Again! As Orwell is said to have observed, "In a time of universal deceit, telling the truth is a revolutionary act."

(Source: The NYT)

## The enduring dignity of Barack Obama



Posterity will pass fuller and fairer judgment on the presidency of Barack Obama than is possible today, but on one issue the verdict is already clear: personal integrity. In an especially hostile political environment, Obama was civil and decent, and he served with honor and dignity. Partisanship should not prevent Republicans from acknowledging these truths.

Like his predecessor, George W. Bush, Obama leaves the White House untroubled by scandal. That's not something to take for granted. An honest leader is essential not only to the functioning of democracy, but also to the public's faith in it. A president who lies can weaken public trust in government institutions, as Richard Nixon's cover-up of the Watergate break-in demonstrated.

It's unfortunate that Obama was never able to use his personal integrity to transcend the partisan rancor in Washington, and indeed, his penchant for attacking Republicans

made it worse.

It's imperative that the public hold the next occupant of the office to the highest ethical standards. President Donald Trump's refusal to more fully disengage from his company -- merely handing it over to his sons does not pass muster -- is unacceptable. If he fails to reverse this decision, he risks dragging the country into a legal battle that could test the Constitution.

Trump has rarely shied away from a fight and more than his fortune and reputation are at stake. If he insists on holding onto his company, Congress should insist it be led and overseen by people from outside the Trump family.

The U.S. faces many challenges at home and around the world. Obama ensured that the whiff of corruption, which can be a major distraction for a president, never approached 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. The public should expect no less.

(Source: Bloomberg)

## President Trump at the CIA was appalling



By Colbert I. King

As a State Department special agent assigned to the U.S. Embassy in West Germany during the Cold War, as one of three regional security officers responsible for personnel and physical security of U.S. diplomatic missions in West Germany, and West Berlin, I had the privilege of working closely with American intelligence services on critical and extremely sensitive issues.

I also had the benefit of relying on intelligence resources during my work domestically in Washington. The Central Intelligence Agency was then, and I believe is now, absolutely essential to U.S. national security and foreign policy.

That's what drew me to watch President Donald Trump's visit to CIA headquarters on Saturday. His history of lambasting and denigrating the intelligence community while president-elect — going so far as to accuse intelligence officials of being behind a Nazi-like smear campaign against him — argued for him making an early

goodwill visit with the men and women who courageously do jobs that few could ever imagine having, let alone performing.

President Trump at the CIA was appalling.

The sacrifices he talked about were his own: mistreatment by the "dishonest" media; self-glorification ("Trust me, I'm like a smart person"); the size of his inaugural crowd ("It looked like a million, a million and a half people" on the Mall) (which isn't true); his narcissistic boasting of being on the cover of Time magazine.

Unfocused, except on himself. Untruthful, except perhaps acknowledging where he was. And completely at sea as to why on earth he was there. Except to fish for compliments, and the kind of admiration he craves like an attention-starved child. And maybe to draw attention away from the massive Women's March on Washington crowd dominating our nation's capital.

For hubris, Trump keeps trumping himself.

(Source: The Washington Post)

## Violent extremism and the challenges it presents

By Yury Fedotov

Violent extremism today presents a chilling challenge to the world's prison correction communities.

Anis Amri, shot dead before Christmas by Italian police after killing 12 people in the Berlin terrorist attack, was radicalized in prison. His story follows a shocking trajectory that enables murderous terrorism due to the incitement and recruitment of vulnerable prisoners.

Cases such as Amri's show that, today, for the small minority, prisons have become the first step towards committing horrific acts of mayhem and destruction.

How can we get this minority back on the rehabilitation path and defeat the violent extremists. While no quick remedy exists, there are approaches that can make prisoners less susceptible.

Extremist recruiters are adept at spotting fragile inmates open to joining extremist causes and who can be convinced to commit terrorist acts upon release. Using the tedium of prison life, they exploit hatred and frustration and bend inmates towards a shared ideological commitment to using violence.

Prisons may not help by exerting their own coercive pressures encouraging prisoners to join groups due to violence, threatening behavior, overcrowding and poor management.

Based on the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's assessments in a recent publication on managing violent extremist prisoners, there are three crucial areas requiring intervention: prison staff training, risk management, and rehabilitation efforts.

Prison staff, including its management, must protect, maintain and uphold the dignity of inmates. Every staff member should receive specialist training on working with violent extremist prisoners.

Professionalism, ethics, as well as support for staff coping with stress are at the center of this work. Sufficient staff need to be employed and trained to safeguard everyone's security.



**INTERVIEW**  
By Marjohn Sheikhi

# Former CIA officer: U.S. to abandon Assad ouster under Trump

**I believe Trump will be seeking to finish the fighting and disengage rather than continue the armed conflict.**

Former CIA officer Philip Giraldi in an interview with Tehran Times said the incoming president Trump will not support Obama's ouster policy for Assad and will be eager to back an option that will let U.S. withdraw from the region.

With Astana talks on the Syrian situation aimed at achieving a political solution to the six-year conflict in the Arab country, officials in Iran, Russia and Turkey have been busy holding last minute talks either in face-to-face meetings or by phone.

The United Nations has also confirmed attendance in the talks, led by diplomat Ramzy Ramzy and accompanied by Chief of the Mediation Support Unit Robert Dann.

The Astana meeting gains special magnitude in the wake of recent developments in Syria, most notably the liberation of Aleppo by the Syrian Army back in December, and the inclusion of Turkey, this time as the guarantor of the ceasefire, and not as an advocate of toppling President Bashar Assad – an option that Turkish President Erdogan had been pursuing vehemently as his Syria policy.

Meanwhile, there are specula-

tions that the incoming Trump administration has also received an invitation to the talks, although Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has voiced his objection to the inclusion of the U.S. in the course of negotiations. Trump's presidential campaigns on regional policies marked a stark contrast to the Obama administration policy which sought regime change in Syria as the only way to settle the conflict. It remains to be seen if incoming President Trump will respond positively to the invitation and if he will keep his presidential vows in regard to Middle Eastern affairs.

In an exclusive interview with Mehr News Agency, former CIA counter-terrorism specialist and military intelligence officer Philip Giraldi expressed optimism over the conclusion of the Astana talks,

adding "it is clear that the Syrian government and its allies have the upper hand militarily and it will now be necessary to confirm that the government will not be replaced in the near term while also drawing up zones of responsibility for the parties in the conflict as part of a cease fire and disarmament agreement."

"Once the government and opposition are operating in and confined to their established zones it will be possible to discuss issues like amnesty and political reconciliation, both of which will have to take place," he added.

Giraldi assessed the role and impact of each participating side on the process of the negotiations, adding "the shift by Turkey in no longer demanding the ouster of al-Assad has been critical as it has severely limited direct support of the insurgents, but the role of Iran, Turkey and Russia as guarantors of the process is absolutely essential."

He went on to add, "it has always been clear that Syria will need a local solution and Turkey and Iran presenting a unified front alongside the Syrian government makes a successful outcome much more likely."

Besides Russia, Iran and Turkey, what other countries may participate in the Astana meeting and what message would their presence in the talks convey?

Giraldi found it likely that the U.S. represented by incoming president Donald Trump would participate in the Astana talks. He maintained that in this case, the presence of Trump administration in the meeting will signal that "Trump will be abandoning the Obama policy of ouster for al-Assad and will seek to stabilize the situation, which Iran and Russia have been working to do for the



**The shift by Turkey in no longer demanding the ouster of al-Assad has severely limited direct support of the insurgents.**

past two years."

"I do not believe that Trump and his advisers wish to continue the current policy and will be eager to support an option that will permit U.S. to focus on destroying ISIL and withdrawing from the region," he further stressed. "Trump will not support the Obama policy and has no interest in removing al-Assad."

"I do not expect Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf States to participate even if they were to be invited and will not willingly cooperate with what is decided," he added.

"Syria will be for the foreseeable future a state in reconstruction, much like neighboring Iraq has been," Giraldi predicted for Syria in the wake of a positive outcome of the Astana talks. "It will need considerable outside resources, which, in normal circumstances could be

coming from the Saudis and Gulf States, so the question becomes to what extent will those governments go along with a solution for Syria that leaves the government in place and gives to Iran a major role in the settlement process."

"I suspect there will be serious problems and also Israel will be seeking to disrupt any settlement that leaves Syria intact as its desire is to see Syria broken up into tribal and ethnic groupings much as has happened in Iraq," he said, but went on to dismiss the notion that the U.S. under the presidency of Donald Trump would back these disintegrating policies.

"I do not think the United States will give in to the demands of the Saudis or Israelis, however, as I believe that Trump will be seeking to finish the fighting and disengage

rather than continue the armed conflict," he said.

The Astana talks are slated for January 23 and 24 in the Kazakh capital city where representatives of the Syrian government and the opposition groups that have not been blacklisted in the UN as terrorists will sit down at the negotiating table to arrive at a political solution and sustainable peace and stability in the country. Iran, Russia and Turkey as well as a delegate from the United Nations will observe the meeting.

The Astana meeting will also prepare for Geneva talks resumption on February 8.

Philip Giraldi is a former CIA counter-terrorism specialist and military intelligence officer who served eighteen years overseas in Turkey, Italy, Germany, and Spain. He is a recognized authority on international security and counterterrorism issues. Giraldi is currently President of San Marco International, a consulting firm that specializes in international security management and risk assessment.

**I suspect Israel will be seeking to disrupt any settlement that leaves Syria intact as its desire is to see Syria broken up into tribal and ethnic groupings.**



**Turkey and Iran presenting a unified front alongside the Syrian government makes a successful outcome much more likely.**

By Bill Van Auken

## Joint Russian, Turkish bombing campaign in Syria deepens NATO crisis

The launching of coordinated air strikes by Russian and Turkish warplanes against Islamic State (ISIS) targets in northern Syria Wednesday has further exposed the crisis gripping Washington's intervention in the war-ravaged Middle Eastern country, as well as the deepening contradictions plaguing the NATO alliance on the eve of Donald Trump's inauguration as U.S. president.

The bombing campaign struck targets around the Syrian town of al-Bab, the scene of bloody fighting between Turkish troops and ISIS militants over the past several weeks.

From a political standpoint, the joint action by Russia and Turkey, a member of the NATO alliance for the past 65 years, is unprecedented. It stands in stark contradiction to the anti-Moscow campaign being waged by Washington and its principal NATO allies, which has seen the cutting off of military-to-military ties, the imposition of sanctions, and the increasingly provocative deployment of thousands of U.S. and other NATO troops on Russia's western borders. Just last week, the U.S. sent 3,000 soldiers into Poland, backed by tanks and artillery, while hundreds more U.S. Marines have been dispatched to Norway.

Turkey's collaboration with Russia represents a further challenge to the US-led alliance under conditions in which Trump has severely rattled its European members with recent statements describing NATO as "obsolete" and charging its members with not "taking care of terror" and not "paying what they're supposed to pay."

The joint air attack was carried out under the terms of a memorandum reached between the Russian and Turkish militaries the previous week, according to the Russian Defense Ministry.

The document, signed on January 12, was designed to prevent "incidents" between Turkish and Russian warplanes, as well as to prepare "joint operations ... in Syria to de-



**Relations grew closer in the wake of the abortive July 2016 military coup, which the government of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan blamed on the U.S. and its allies.**

stroy international terrorist groups," Lt. Gen. Sergei Rudoskoy said in a statement.

Russian-Turkish relations reached their nadir in November 2015 when Turkish fighter jets ambushed and shot down a Russian warplane carrying out airstrikes against Islamist fighters near the border between Turkey and Syria. The incident brought Turkey, and with it NATO, to the brink of war with nuclear-armed Russia. At that point, Turkey was serving as the main conduit for foreign fighters, weapons and other resources being poured into Syria to wage the US-orchestrated war for regime change, while Russia was intervening to prop up its principal Middle East ally, the government of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

In June of last year, Ankara sought to mend its relations with Moscow, which had retaliated for the shoot-down with economic sanctions. Relations grew closer in the wake of the abortive July 2016 military coup, which the government of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan blamed on the U.S. and its allies.

The turning point in bilateral relations between Turkey and Russia came at the end of last year, with the Russian-backed Syrian army's routing of the Western-backed, Al Qaeda-linked militias in their last urban stronghold of eastern Aleppo. Turkey joined with Russia in brokering a withdrawal of the last "rebels" from the area and a nationwide ceasefire, which continues to prevail in much of the country.

Washington was pointedly excluded from the negotiations surrounding both Aleppo and the ceasefire. Only at the last moment has Moscow invited the incoming Trump administration—over the objection of Syria's other major ally, Iran—to participate in talks aimed at reaching a political settlement over the six-year-old war that are to convene in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan, next week.

The joint Russian-Turkish airstrikes around al-Bab came in the wake of bitter protests by the Turkish government over the refusal of the U.S. military to provide similar air support for Ankara's troops in

the area. The Pentagon's reluctance stemmed from the conflicting aims pursued by Turkey, which sent its troops into Syria last August in what the Erdogan government dubbed "Operation Euphrates Shield."

Ostensibly directed against ISIS, Ankara's primary target was really the Syrian Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD) and its military wing, the People's Protection Unit (YPG). The Turkish government views these groups as affiliates of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), against which it has waged a protracted counterinsurgency campaign within Turkey itself. The offensive against ISIS-controlled al-Bab is aimed principally at preventing it from falling to the YPG and at blocking the linking up of eastern and western Kurdish enclaves along Turkey's border.

For its part, Washington has utilized the YPG as its principal proxy ground force in the U.S. attack on ISIS, sending in U.S. special forces troops to arm, train and direct these Kurdish fighters.

The U.S. refusal to back Turkish forces around al-Bab with airstrikes

**Washington was pointedly excluded from the negotiations surrounding both Aleppo and the ceasefire. Only at the last moment has Moscow invited the incoming Trump administration**

led to angry denunciations of Washington by the Turkish president, who charged that the U.S. was supporting "terrorists" instead of its NATO ally. Ankara also began delaying approval for U.S. flights out of the strategic Incirlik air base in southern Turkey and threatened to deny Washington and its allies access to the base altogether.

It was likely these threats, combined with the Turkish-Russian agreement to conduct joint strikes, that led the Pentagon to reverse its previous refusal to support Turkish forces and launch limited bombing runs around al-Bab as well this week.

This crowded and geostrategically tense battlefield is likely to grow even more dangerous following Trump's ascension to the White House.



**The joint Russian-Turkish airstrikes around al-Bab came in the wake of bitter protests by the Turkish government over the refusal of the U.S. military to provide similar air support for Ankara's troops in the area.**

Trump has reportedly called for the Pentagon to come up with proposals to deal a decisive defeat to ISIS in Syria and Iraq within 90 days. Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said on Wednesday that he would "present options to accelerate the campaign" against ISIS to retired general James Mattis, Trump's incoming defense secretary.

Citing unnamed Pentagon officials, CNN reports that "The Defense Department is prepared to provide the new administration with military options to accelerate the war against ISIS in Syria that could send additional U.S. troops into direct combat."

"One option would put hundreds, if not thousands, of additional U.S. troops into a combat role as part of the fight to take Raqqa," the Islamic State's Syrian "capital," according to the television news network. "... in the coming months, the Pentagon could put several U.S. brigade-sized combat teams on the ground, each team perhaps as many as 4,000 troops."

Plans are also reportedly being drawn up to escalate military provocations against Iran, which Mattis, in testimony before the Senate, described as the "biggest destabilizing force in the Middle East," adding that the Trump administration must "checkmate Iran's goal for regional hegemony."

There is every indication, Trump's rhetoric about improving relations with Moscow notwithstanding, that U.S. imperialism is preparing for another eruption of militarism in the Middle East that will pose an ever greater threat of spilling over into a new world war.

(Source: Global Research)



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# The cost of clutter

How clutter affects your time, money, and stress

By Elizabeth Scott

Clutter—most of us have a little of it here or there. In fact, many of us have more than just a little. Over a third of readers avoid going home because of the overwhelming mess—and don't know where to begin cleaning. (In contrast, less than 10 percent say their homes are clutter-free.) How is all this mess affecting us?

**Time**

People often think of clutter as an energy drain, but it also drains us of our time.

How? People in cluttered homes spend extra time, virtually every day, looking for lost items, such as keys, money, shoes, tools, etc. Even when we're looking right at the lost item, it becomes difficult to see when surrounded by clutter. And the extra time it takes to search through the mess adds up quickly.

**Money**

When we don't have financial papers organized, bills can get lost, causing us to accrue late fees. Replacing lost items and buying duplicates of those we didn't realize we already had can also carry a cost that adds up quickly.

**Stress**

The most obvious toll that clutter takes is added stress on one's life. Here are some examples of stress clutter can cause:

- Having guests over becomes an embarrassment or an event that takes all-day preparation.
- Each room carries visual reminders of all the work that needs to be done in the way of cleaning.
- Using your home for activities like scrapbooking or yoga becomes difficult or impossible without taking significant time to clear the space.
- According to the principles of Feng Shui, clutter drains you of your positive energy—you can actually feel it!
- A cluttered home, rather than a haven from stress, is a big stressor in itself and intensifies the frustration and exhaustion that an already-stressed person feels.

**A realistic level of clutter**

For most of us, especially for parents of small children, it's not realistic to maintain a home in perfect order every moment of each day.

While it's inspirational to thumb through catalogs that show beautifully furnished rooms or walk through a wonderfully un-cluttered model home, holding oneself to such high standards of neatness may not only be unrealistic, but it can also cause additional stress. For example, if you find yourself nagging or resenting other family members for the minor messes that they make to the point that it strains family harmony, you may need to relax your standards.



People often think of clutter as an energy drain, but it also drains us of our time.

But knowing the toll that clutter takes, how much clutter is too much? While we know that piles of clutter can cause stress and a perfect home may be unrealistic for some people, the level of tolerable clutter may vary from person to person. Here are some guidelines to follow to help you decide where you should draw the line on clutter:

- Company. Do you like to have your home neat enough to have drop-in company? Are you happy to be company-ready after 15 minutes of cleaning?
- Organization. Is your home organized enough that you can generally find everything you're looking for without having to search?
- Stress level. Can you truly relax in your home or is it an energy drain?

**Cull the clutter**

There are many books and even websites dedicated to helping you declutter your home, but there are some basic steps that work well:

- Go room by room and divide your things into four boxes: things to donate, things to throw away, things to keep, and things to store. If you don't need it or love it, consider getting rid of it.
- Go through your box of things to keep and find a place for everything. Make it a logical place that's in the same area where it'll need to be used. For example, keep keys by the door.
- Finish one room before moving on to the next.

This can all be done in a day, or can be spread out over several weeks in 30-minute increments, if you work

quickly. If you can only do it in «baby steps.» Flylady.net has a good system that can help.

**Organize what's left**

As you find places for what you're keeping, be sure that you're storing things in a way that makes sense and looks nice. For example, kids' toys can be stored very neatly in tubs, which provide quick cleanup and keep toy clutter out of sight. Getting drawer organizers for your bathrooms and kitchen can keep drawers from overflowing with extra items. Having a filing system for papers makes it easy to put them away and find them when you need them. Putting a little extra effort into organizing your things now will save you time in cleaning up and maintaining order for years to come.

**Create beauty**

Once you have your home decluttered and organized, you can add a few nice touches that can make your home the ideal haven for you to relax.

I strongly recommend that you have a system in place for playing music, as it carries such amazing relaxation benefits. You may also want to have some aromatherapy candles or diffusers out. Home spa supplies are a must for the bathroom and a soothing bedroom can help with sleep. Finally, I would recommend that you create a small space for yourself to use while journaling or for meditation—it may become your favorite part of your home.

**Create positive Chi**

You may also want to learn to incorporate some of the principles of

Feng Shui, the ancient art of placement, to decorate your home in a way that will reduce daily stress and may help you build the type of life you want.

Getting your home more organized feels great. However, just as it takes effort to maintain weight loss over time, a clean house takes a little ongoing effort as well. Fortunately, this effort can be minimized with the help of expert advice. The following are some of the best bits of advice from the clutter-clearing experts:

- Keep a schedule. This is a wonderfully organized way to maintain a clean house, especially for those who work best when they have a list of «to-dos» to follow.
- Follow the 30-second rule. Not to be confused with the dubious 'Five-Second Rule' (which entails eating food off the ground that's been there only five seconds), this powerful rule by Sarah Felton of Messies Anonymous goes something like this—if a job takes around 30 seconds or less to do, do it immediately. This applies to putting away your shoes, sorting mail, and other small jobs.
- Watch your 'hot spots.' Remember those piles that you just got rid of? Clutter tends to accumulate in the same places—the front door, the kitchen table—little by little each day. Flylady Marla Cilley recommends that you focus on the areas where you tend to leave clutter at the end of each day, so they don't turn into big piles again.
- Put YOUR things away. Once you have «a place for everything and everything in its place,» you're ready for this important companion rule. When you take something out, you should simply put it back.
- Take 15 minutes. Many cleaning experts, including Flylady, recommend that you put on some music and take 15 minutes, a few times a day, to clean. You can get a lot done in 15 minutes and it doesn't impact your schedule too much to do so.
- Stop receiving junk mail. One simple way to cut down on paper clutter is to get rid of the junk before it comes in!

**More simple tips**

- If you bring something in, get rid of something.
- Do a light cleaning at the end of every day.
- Do a more thorough cleaning once a week (or hire someone to do it for you if it fits your budget).
- Have people over more often and really enjoy your home. Live like you really appreciate your newly beautified haven and you'll automatically be more likely to maintain it.

(Source: [verywell.com](http://verywell.com))

## Get healthish

Group fitness classes and running on the treadmill are pretty safe options at the gym. When someone's telling you exactly what to do and what equipment to use, things stay relatively under control.

But moving onto the gym floor is uncharted territory. Before you slink back to the cardio area, hear us out. We asked professional trainers to give their best advice on venturing onto the floor. Equipped with these must-know rules and helpful hints, you'll be ready to take on the gym floor—and look like a pro while doing so.

**1. "Work in" as you work out**

"Working in" means letting someone else use a piece of equipment while you rest between sets. See someone using a machine you want? Just say, "Hey, would I be able to work in with you?"—and be gracious if someone asks you the same thing. You don't want to be a machine hog.

Just be sure you both are doing the same exercise. To be extra polite, readjust the weight back to what they were using before their turn.

**2. Safety first**

If you're using a machine with stacked weights, make sure you push the weight pin in all the way so it's secure and on barbells, don't forget to add weight collars. (No one wants weights crashing down on their feet.)

Another quick but important step: Adjust the seat or bench so it's appropriate for your height. It's an easy fix that can make a huge difference in the effectiveness—and safety—of certain moves.

**3. Keep it neat**

Don't leave free weights or other equipment lying on the floor. Others may not see them and could trip or injure themselves. One exception: If you're using a set of free weights, you can leave them nearby as you do a superset of another exercise. Just set them somewhere where people won't trip.

**4. Put the phone down**

We get it: Everyone is busy and hyperconnected, but unless you're a doctor or dealing with an emergency situation, you can afford to turn your phone to silent or airplane mode during a workout.

Plus, you don't want to be that person hogging a machine or bench as you scroll through Instagram for 10 minutes.

**5. Find some space**

Every gym is designed differently, but if you're doing dynamic moves like jumping lunges, kettlebell swings, jump rope, or one of these 19 awesome plyo exercises, find an out-of-the-way space—not the middle of the floor. One good spot: an empty classroom if it's an off-peak time.

**6. Don't be gross**

Do we have to remind you how germgy gyms are? Hope not, but just so you know, there are 362 times more bacteria on a free weight than on a toilet seat. So for your health and that of others, wipe down the equipment!

**A few final tips:**

- Don't let your ego get the best of you. Learn the movement with a challenging but not too punishing amount of weight, and as you get stronger, you can add more.
- Go in with a plan. Decide whether you're going to work your upper body, legs, or do a full-body workout, and know what you're going to do before you go.

(Source: [greatist.com](http://greatist.com))



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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** Russia threatens retaliation over Facebook 'censorship' of RT. Government-backed network was temporarily banned from posting images, videos or live streams for about 20 hours, possibly over a copyright issue.
- 2** FIH Mobile, a Foxconn subsidiary that licenses the Nokia brand for mobile devices, is working on an 18.4-inch display tablet. The tablet, or should we say 18.4-inch mini tv, has a 2560 x 1440 resolution screen and is powered by the Snapdragon 835 processor with 4GB of RAM and 64GB of storage (52GB left for users). It features two 12MP cameras on the front and back, both capable of recording 4K resolution video.
- 3** FaceTime is getting a new feature in iOS 11, namely group calling. This will allow iOS users to stream live to groups in addition to the usual one-to-one connection. Since there are messaging apps like Skype and Facebook Messenger that already offer it, Apple needs to update FaceTime's capabilities to keep pace.
- 4** Honor has become a respectful brand not only in China, but also in the United States. The company's latest flagship, the Honor 8 is a pretty decent device that's now being upgraded to Android 7.0 Nougat.
- 5** A new version of last year's Moto Z, one upgraded with the current Qualcomm Snapdragon 835 processor appeared in the GeekBench benchmark database. We're still looking at 4GB of RAM (which could be of the faster LPDDR4X RAM variety, though), but the smartphone runs Android 7.1.1.
- 6** Apple has filed a suit against Qualcomm accusing the latter of withholding \$1 billion that Apple says that it is owed by the chip maker. Apple claims that it is being stiffed because it has spoken truthfully to law enforcement agencies who are investigating Qualcomm.
- 7** The Korean media reports LG has turned to Google in an attempt to convince the search giant to allow it to put its AI on the next flagship smartphone, the G6. LG and Google have been long-time partners, as the South Korean company built one of the previous Nexus phones.
- 8** Apple CEO Tim Cook sold 30,000 shares of Apple last week netting the executive more than \$3.6 million. SEC filings show that Cook made the sales on January 17th through the 19th with 10,000 shares sold each day. The average price of the transactions came to \$120 a share. Last year, Cook received 1.26 million Restrictive Stock Units (RSU) consisting of 980,000 shares based on his longevity at Apple and 280,000 shares based on the company's performance.

**9** Lineage OS is now officially picking up where CyanogenMod left off. LineageOS builds for "Marshmallow and Nougat capable devices" (likely referring to models already capable of running CM13 and CM14.1) should start appearing on the official download page soon.

**10** Android Pay has recently been updated to version 1.13, and while this didn't add many new changes to the payment app's interface or otherwise, an APK teardown reveals more about the future capabilities of Android Pay. The mobile payment app will (at some time in the future) allow users to add their PayPal cards and the ability to support Visa Checkout.

**Microsoft to cut 700 employees in next layoff round**

Microsoft is expected to conduct another round of layoffs this week when the company reports its quarterly earnings on January 26. About 700 jobs are expected to be impacted, according to someone familiar with the matter.

That is not a huge number compared to Microsoft's workforce of about 113,000 people, but we understand nerves have been running high inside of Microsoft as employees hear rumors that hundreds of jobs will be cut.

This layoff is part of the previously announced plan to cut 2,850 roles announced in June in Microsoft's annual report. At that time, Microsoft said that it planned to complete those cuts by June 2017, which is the end of Microsoft's 2017 fiscal year.

Most of the 2,850 roles scheduled to be cut have already been eliminated, according to the person familiar with the matter. The upcoming cuts won't be specific to any single group, but will be spread across the company's worldwide offices and business units, including sales, marketing, human resources, engineering, finance and more.

The goals of these rotating smaller layoffs is not to reduce costs but to update skills in various units, this person tells us. And such layoffs don't have much of an impact on Microsoft's overall headcount. Microsoft is still hiring, with well over 1,600 job openings posted on LinkedIn.

We understand that Microsoft typically gives laid-off employees 60 days to find a new position internally and offers two weeks' pay for every 6 months of employment, according one employee.

Under Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella, Microsoft has experienced several rounds of layoffs including cutting approximately 7,400 positions in its last fiscal year, primarily from the phone business and its largest ever layoff in history of 18,000 jobs in 2014.

(Source: businessinsider)

**Amazon and Google fight crucial battle over voice recognition**

By Charles Arthur

Amazon and Google always thrive in the fourth quarter as people get out their wallets for Christmas. Both companies – or in Google's case, its parent group, Alphabet – are therefore expected to announce booming revenues in their fourth-quarter results over the next fortnight, with Alphabet going first on Thursday and Amazon the following week. But analysts are already looking beyond the simple question of how many cardboard boxes Amazon filled and how many searches Google answered. They're wondering which company will win the battle to control your home.

That battle is being fought by two carafe-sized cylinders from the respective companies. One is Amazon's Echo, with its voice-operated "personal assistant", Alexa; the other is Google Home, which responds to the phrase "OK Google". Both are internet-connected, home-based devices which can be command to do things: give the weather forecast; play music; read out news headlines; update shopping lists; and control "smart" devices in the home such as light bulbs or power points. In theory, if a device can be linked to it, the Echo can control or monitor it, and keep you informed. And simply by saying "Alexa, add sugar to the shopping list", users can keep up to date on house supplies and even purchase them directly.

Amazon is in the lead, having launched the Echo in November 2014, two years before Google Home came out. Though Amazon has not – and does not – release sales figures for any individual item, investment bank Morgan Stanley estimates that 11m Echos had been sold by the end of November 2016; other estimates suggest a further 7m have been sold since. About 700,000 were estimated to have been sold in the UK and Germany, the only countries outside the US where it is available.

The Morgan Stanley estimate would put an Echo in more than 8% of US households. This is a significant figure, especially compared with the best estimates for Google Home, which put its sales at less than a million since its launch in October 2016.

Why should Google care about Amazon? Because voice is seen as the next big field for computer interaction, and the home is a far better environment for



voice detection than the great outdoors. Research company Gartner reckons that by 2018, 30% of all interactions with devices will be voice-based, because people can speak up to four times faster than they can type, and the technology behind voice interaction is improving all the time.

The risk to Google is that at the moment, almost everyone starting a general search at home begins at Google's home page on a PC or phone. That leads to a results page topped by text adverts – which help generate about 90% of Google's revenue, and probably more of its profits. But if people begin searching or ordering goods via

an Echo, bypassing Google, that ad revenue will fall.

Amazon is copying one feature of Google's success in smartphones: it is offering methods to connect and control smart devices via the Echo for free, rather as Google's Android software was offered as a free platform for smartphones.

Similarly, at January's Consumer Electronics Show (CES), also in Las Vegas, commentators were struck by how many devices incorporated Alexa. And Amazon is even stealing into Google's territory: some phones sold in the US from China's Huawei, which uses Android, will incorporate Alexa rather than Google's



Assistant program.

Google's natural reaction is to have its own voice-driven home system, in Home. But that poses a difficulty, illustrated by the problems it claims to solve. At the device's launch, one presenter from the company explained how it could speak the answer to questions such as "how do you get wine stains out of a rug?" Most people would pose that question on a PC or mobile, and the results page would offer a series of paid-for ads. On Home, you just get the answer – without ads.

What analysts wonder is: how can Home bridge that revenue gap? So far, Google hasn't explained. Even if it can fend off the Echo, it may not be able to defend its core business.

By contrast, the Echo's benefit to Amazon is much clearer: it can make online shopping (at Amazon) a breeze, play music from Amazon's paid-for subscription service, and generally act as a passive block on your using rival shopping sites – rather as Google cemented its dominance by being the default search engine on multiple browsers in the mid-2000s.

Richard Windsor of Edison Investment Research suggests that time is running out for Google: "It has to act quickly, as Amazon is on the brink of becoming the industry standard for controlling smart home devices."

"At CES, everyone was integrating with Echo, with Google Home and Apple HomeKit barely present."

Phil Schiller, Apple's vice-president of marketing, seemed to suggest recently that Apple wouldn't follow Amazon and Google into offering a voice-only device: "Having my iPhone with me as the thing I speak to is better than something stuck in my kitchen or on a wall somewhere." He also emphasized the importance of a visual display: "We still like to take pictures and we need to look at them, and a disembodied voice is not going to show me what the picture is."

Yet, they were a hot Christmas present – and voice interaction is still in its early days, perhaps comparable to the smartphone market in 2005, when BlackBerry, Palm and Microsoft dominated. Or, it could be like the smartphone market now, effectively dominated by Google and Apple. But which? Alexa, can you see into the future?

(Source: Guardian)

**Apple is reinventing the iPhone's fingerprint reader**



Future iPhones may revolve around more than just an eye-catching curved display. KGI Securities analyst Ming-Chi Kuo, who frequently (though not always) has a knack for hardware scoops, believes that Apple is designing a whole new Touch ID fingerprint reader for future iPhones and iPads. In order for Apple to virtually eliminate bezels, it needs a reader that sits under the screen -- and that means a brand new optical sensor. Development is underway, the analyst says, but development is still early enough that the technology might not be ready in time for the 2017 iPhone.

You might not even need a fingerprint sensor in the future, though. Kuo claims that Apple is looking at using face recognition (not just iris recognition) as a part of the next iPhone's features, and may even scrap Touch ID in the long run. Face recognition isn't new (just ask anyone using Android since 4.0), but it would have to be advanced if people are going to ditch fingerprint reading entirely. It couldn't be fooled by a photo, for instance, and would have to be both very fast and adaptable to a wide range of conditions. You don't want to have to enter your PIN just because it's too dark.

Biometrics might not be the only area getting an overhaul thanks to the reported new screen. Kuo understands that the iPhone 7's existing approach to 3D Touch won't work with the next iPhone's curved OLED panel, prompting a switch to a "film sensor." The change would lead to greater sensitivity and more pressure levels, so you might not have to jab the screen quite so authoritatively as you do today.

(Source: 9to5Mac)

**Snowden's preferred email provider, Lavabit**



Lavabit, the encrypted email provider Edward Snowden favored, has risen from the ashes with more security features than before. If you'll recall, company chief Ladar Levison shut it down in 2013 instead of complying with the government's demand to hand over its SSL encryption key. Authorities targeted the provider in order to get to the whistleblower's communications, but a gag order prevented Lavabit from confirming that was the case until last year. In order to ensure its users' privacy, the resurrected Lavabit uses a new architecture that physically prevents the company from handing over its SSL key.

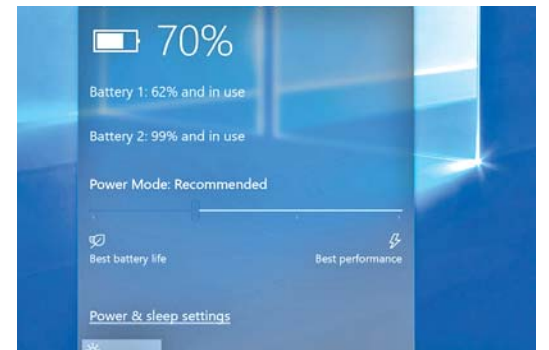
Lavabit now stores the key in a tamper-resistant device. The service automatically generates a long passphrase that the company won't be able to see, inserts the key into the device and then destroys the passphrase. A developer for the company told The Intercept that "Once it's in there, we cannot pull that SSL key back out."

At the moment, the service is only open to previous users who were suddenly locked out of their accounts due to its sudden death. They likely won't be able to retrieve their old emails anymore, but they can now continue using their Lavabit account. The company will eventually start accepting new users, though, and they'll be able to choose between three modes: Trustful, Cautious and Paranoid.

The least secure option encrypts emails on the company's server, while Cautious will offer end-to-end encryption. Those who prefer the latter will have to install the client software on their devices to be able to generate an encryption key.

(Source: The Intercept)

**Trade performance for battery life**



Microsoft has unveiled a new power-slider feature for its Windows 10 Creators Update to help squeeze more life out of the battery on Windows devices.

The power slider appears in the latest Fast Ring build 15014 for the Creators Update, which is scheduled for a wider release in the spring, possibly April.

The slider offers a quicker way for Windows users to optimize their power settings for a longer battery life, and builds on earlier battery improvements in the Creators Update. The current way to manage power preferences is via the Control Panel.

The power slider appears in a flyout panel from the Taskbar and is meant to allow Windows device users to tune their hardware to conserve power when there isn't ready access to a power source, or run it at full steam when plugged in.

"A person playing a game, for example, might be willing to have a few less FPS [frames per second] when on a long flight if it gets them more battery life, whereas the same person playing the same game, when near a power supply, may want top-end CPU performance to eke out every ounce of performance they can get," Microsoft explains.

While it could be a handy feature to have, it's not clear whether the slider will reach current Windows 10 devices when the Creators Update arrives.

Microsoft suggests it will only come with new devices that ship with the Creators Update. Apparently, it is testing the feature with Insiders because Windows device makers have requested new ways for their users to manager power consumption.

(Source: zdnet)



# New research helps to meet the challenges of nanotechnology

Research by scientists at Swansea University is helping to meet the challenge of incorporating nanoscale structures into future semiconductor devices that will create new technologies and impact on all aspects of everyday life.

Dr. Alex Lord and Professor Steve Wilks from the Center for Nanohealth led the collaborative research published in Nano Letters. The research team looked at ways to engineer electrical contact technology on minute scales with simple and effective modifications to nanowires that can be used to develop enhanced devices based on the nanomaterials. Well-defined electrical contacts are essential for any electrical circuit and electronic device because they control the flow of electricity that is fundamental to the operational capability.

Everyday materials that are being scaled down to the size of nanometers (one million times smaller than a millimeter on a standard ruler) by scientists on a global scale are seen as the future of electronic devices. The scientific and engineering advances are leading to new technologies such as energy producing clothing to power our personal gadgets and sensors to monitor our health and the surrounding environment.

## A web of communication

Over the coming years this will make a massive contribution to the explosion



**The scientific and engineering advances are leading to new technologies such as energy producing clothing to power our personal gadgets and sensors to monitor our health and the surrounding environment.**

that is the Internet of Things connecting everything from our homes to our cars into a web of communication. All of these new technologies require similar advances in electrical circuits and especially electrical contacts that allow the devices

to work correctly with electricity.

Professor Steve Wilks said: "Nanotechnology has delivered new materials and new technologies and the applications of nanotechnology will continue to expand over the coming decades with much of

its usefulness stemming from effects that occur at the atomic- or nano-scale.

## Chemical and biological sensors

With the advent of nanotechnology, new technologies have emerged such as chemical and biological sensors, quantum computing, energy harvesting, lasers, and environmental and photon-detectors, but there is a pressing need to develop new electrical contact preparation techniques to ensure these devices become an everyday reality."

"Traditional methods of engineering electrical contacts have been applied to nanomaterials but often neglect the nanoscale effects that nanoscientists have worked so hard to uncover. Currently, there isn't a design toolbox to make electrical contacts of chosen properties to nanomaterials and in some respects the research is lagging behind our potential application of the enhanced materials."

The Swansea research team used specialist experimental equipment and collaborated with Professor Quentin Ramasse of the SuperSTEM Laboratory, Science and Facilities Technology Council. The scientists were able to physically interact with the nanostructures and measure how the nanoscale modifications affected the electrical performance.

(Source: EurekAlert)

## Sitting down for hours a day speeds up aging: new research

Elderly people who spend most of their time sitting down age significantly quicker than more active contemporaries, according to new research.

A study of 1,500 pensioners found those who kept to a sedentary position for ten hours or more a day and who did less than 40 minutes moderate physical activity had the bodies of people eight years older.

They were discovered to have shorter telomeres, the tiny caps found on the ends of strands of DNA which protect chromosomes and which are associated with faster ageing.

Experts have said the research represents a "wake-up call" for Britain's growing elderly population and that pensioners should aim to stand up and walk around every 20 minutes if they can.

"People don't realize that if you sit down all day it can undermine all the exercise you do," said Professor James Goodwin, head of research at Age UK.

Current government advice recommends 150 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise a week for older people, however this latest research suggests the benefits from that amount of activity can be easily undone by a sedentary lifestyle.

## Recording movements

Published in the American Journal of Epidemiology, the study describes how participants aged between 64 and 95 wore devices on their right hip nonstop for seven days to record their movements; they subsequently completed a questionnaire.

"Discussions about the benefits of exercise should start when we are young, and physical activity should continue to be part of our daily lives as we get older, even at 80 years old."

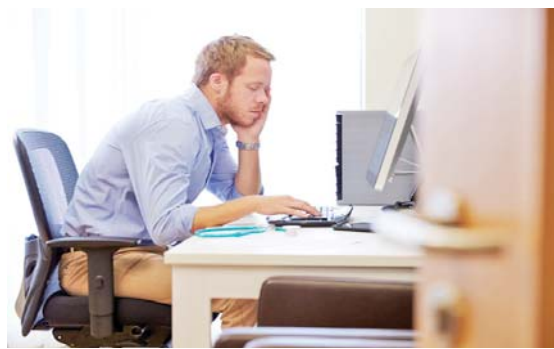
As cells age, their telomeres naturally shorten and fray, but health and lifestyle factors, such as obesity and smoking, are believed to accelerate the process.

"If you're sitting down for prolonged period of time, getting out of your seat every 20 minutes and walking about for 2 or 3 minutes is probably very advantageous," said Professor Goodwin.

"It could make a big difference to your long term health, to your risk of chronic illnesses and could help to slow down the rate of ageing in your body."

## Prolong sitting

Previous research has indicated that prolonged sitting could be especially dangerous for women by raising



their risk of developing cancer.

A study found that those who spent more than six hours a day sitting down were 10 percent more likely to develop the disease compared to those who sat for less than three hours.

Steven Ward, executive director of UK Active, said sedentary lifestyles were sending the ageing crisis "into overdrive."

"With health and social care budgets stretched to the limit, it's time to end our love affair with the chair and get people moving again," he said.

(Source: The Telegraph)

## Ever wondered what a Pluto landing would be like?

NASA's New Horizons made history when it flew through the Pluto system in 2015. Now, the space agency is offering a look into what it would have been like had the spacecraft landed on the dwarf planet.

To do this, mission scientists interpolated some of the black and white images captured by New Horizons based on what is their best idea of what the planet looks like.

Low-resolution color from the spacecraft's Ralph Multispectral Visual Imaging Camera was then laid over the frames to give the best available color simulation of the view you'd have if you were descending to Pluto from a high altitude.

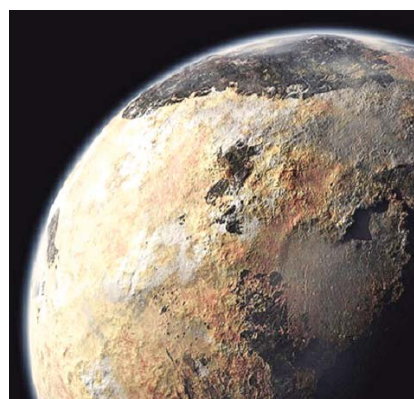
On the same day, NASA released a new, detailed global mosaic color map for Pluto based on three color filter images captured by the Ralph camera during New Horizons' close flyby to the planet. The mosaic features color patterns ex-

tending beyond the hemisphere toward New Horizons at the spacecraft's closest approach, as well as the Sputnik Planitia glacier, which shows the left half of Pluto's "heart" in the center.

## The Pluto system

It took New Horizons 9.5 years and over 3 billion miles to get to the Pluto system, getting as close as 7,800 miles of the planet on July 14, 2015. As the spacecraft was fitted with telescopic cameras powerful enough to spot features smaller in size than a football field, it was able to capture and send back hundreds of images of Pluto and its moons, many showing how fascinating and dynamic their surfaces are.

On Oct. 25, the last set of data from New Horizons was downloaded at the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory after passing through the NASA Deep Space Network station located in Can-



berra, Australia. With that, the spacecraft had sent a total of over 50 gigabits of data over the course of 15 months.

The "Pluto system data that New Horizons collected has amazed us over and over again with the beauty and complexity of Pluto and its system of moons," said Alan Stern, principal

investigator for New Horizons.

As part of an extended mission, there are plans to have New Horizons head farther into the Kuiper Belt to take a look at what's out there billions of miles beyond Neptune.

Aside from the Ralph camera that is a visible and infrared light imager, science payloads aboard the New Horizons spacecraft include: the Alice ultraviolet imaging spectrometer, REX (Radio Science Experiment) passive radiometer, LORRI (Long Range Reconnaissance Imager) telescopic camera, SWAP (Solar Wind Around Pluto) wind and plasma spectrometer, PEPSSI (Pluto Energetic Particle Spectrometer Science Investigation) energetic particle spectrometer, and VBSDC (Venetia Burney Student Dust Counter) for measuring space dust.

(Source: Tech Times)

## Why musicians may make the best drivers

Musicians may make the safest drivers, a new study suggests, after researchers found that people who play an instrument have faster reaction times.

The University of Montreal compared the reaction times of 16 musicians and 19 non-musicians asking them to click a mouse button when they sensed a vibration or noise.

Musicians reacted around 30 percent faster than people who could not play instruments.

"We found significantly faster reaction times with mu-

sicians," said lead author, doctoral student Simon Landry.

"These results suggest for the first time that long-term musical training reduces simple non-musical auditory, tactile and multisensory reaction times.

"Reaction times are related to cognitive function. Having faster reaction times could help reacting to something when you're driving, if your attention is focused on driving, or if your job requires you to react to something quickly."

## Learning an instrument

The finding could also be useful for elderly people, as

it suggests that learning an instrument in later life could improve mental ability and prevent the brain declining.

"As people get older, for example, we know their reaction times get slower. So if we know that playing a musical instrument increases reaction times, then maybe playing an instrument will be helpful for them," added Landry.

The "more we know about the impact of music on really basic sensory processes, the more we can apply musical training to individuals who might have slower reaction times."

(Source: The Telegraph)

## 48 Countries to Take Part in Iranian Agricultural Congress

Representatives from 48 countries are to participate in Iran's 8th Annual International Congress of Arman Sabz Adineh which is to be held on January 26 at Tehran's IRIB International Conferences Center.

The event seeks indigenization of modern technology in Iran on the way to improve the quality of domestic agriculture products.

The participating foreigners are reportedly from South Korea, Hungary, Canada, France, Finland, India, etc.

However, a number of 48 foreign countries in in-

ternational Congress of sustainable and healthy agriculture themed "Resistance Economy and Subsistence".

Mohammad-Reza Sharifi Founder of Organizing Company of the Congress announced the above statements and said: "More than 50 distinguished and outstanding guests in the field of agricultural sector have been invited from leading countries in world."

Studying and presenting strategies of private sector in subsistence and resistance economy, participating private sector in subsistence and resistance economy, highlight-

ing the key role of private sector in sustainability of production growth in agricultural sector, making effort to get lion's share in agricultural produce, presenting scientific updates and strategies in line with transferring technical knowhow, etc. have been cited as the main topics of this prestigious international congress, he maintained.

It should be noted that 4th Agricultural Raw Materials Exhibition will be held on Jan. 24-27 in Got-e Good Parkland exhibitions on the sidelines of sidelines of 8th Annual International Congress of Arman Sabz Adineh.

## One of largest Antarctica's icebergs closer to breaking off

Just 6.4 miles of ice are holding an iceberg the size of Delaware onto the floating Larsen C Ice Shelf in Antarctica, and scientists warn it could cleave off the ice-bound continent at any time.

Researchers who closely monitor the crack cutting across this particular Antarctic ice shelf reported on Thursday that it continued to make rapid progress, expanding another six miles in just the past two weeks.

This means that a collapse may be imminent, at which point, one of the top 10 largest icebergs ever observed will break away into the turbulent seas off the coast of the Antarctic Peninsula.

Scientists affiliated with a group that has been tracking the ice melt in this area, known as Project MIDAS, say the iceberg could measure 5,000 square kilometers, or 1,930 square miles.

Scientists are worried that the calving event — which refers to the breaking off of the iceberg from the ice shelf — could speed up the disintegration of the broader shelf and land-based ice that lies behind it.

"When it calves, the Larsen C Ice Shelf will lose more than 10 percent of its area to leave the ice front at its most retreated position ever recorded; this event will fundamentally change the landscape of the Antarctic Peninsula," researcher Adrian Luckman wrote in a blog post.

"We have previously shown that the new configuration will be less stable than it was prior to the rift, and that Larsen C may eventually follow the example of its neighbor Larsen B, which disintegrated in 2002 following a similar rift-induced calving event," Luckman wrote.

(Source: Mashable)



## Alzheimer's drug lets teeth repair themselves

Dentistry has come a long way since the bad old days when they'd whip out all your teeth at the slightest excuse. But while that may be true, many of us still have metal or plastic fillings to plug holes in damaged teeth.

Fortunately, researchers from the UK's King's College London are on the case — and they may have just found a way to banish artificial fillings for good. What they describe in a new research paper, published in the journal Science Reports, is a method for stimulating the renewal of living stem cells in teeth, using a drug developed to help with Alzheimer's.

The human body is able to heal small amounts of dental damage, by activating the tooth contact stem cells in the tooth's soft inner core, known as the pulp. In situations such as tiny cracks or fissures, these cells are stimulated to differentiate into specific tooth cells. Known as odontoblasts, these cells can then make new dentine and replace the area that is damaged.

However, this natural repair doesn't work for more significant damage — although it was enough to teach the King's College researchers a valuable lesson.

"We have studied the cellular and molecular mechanisms involved in this natural repair and, based on this, have developed a simple method to enhance the process by overstimulating the stem cells," lead researcher Paul Sharpe told Digital Trends. The "result is a more robust repair that can fill in bigger holes. The process produces a natural repair that maintains tooth structure."

The researchers hope that such a solution will remove the failure rate associated with artificial methods of plugging holes in teeth.

(Source: Digital Trends)

## Movement of tectonic plates will have scientists rewriting textbooks

Plate tectonics is the widely accepted theory that the Earth's crust is divided into several sections that float around on the mantle — the mostly solid layer between the core and the crust. But how they move around has been a subject of much debate among scientists since the theory was first accepted in the 1950s.

The sections, known as plates, move at a rate of about 2 to 5 centimeters per year, which is a similar speed to how fast your fingernails grow. When they grind past each other, it's called a transform plate boundary, which can cause earthquakes. When they move away from each other, it's known as a divergent boundary, where lava spews out, and volcanoes can form. Sometimes, when they meet each other head on, one plate starts moving upwards to form mountains, while the other is pushed downwards where it melts.

Scientists have wondered for many decades whether the plates are being passively moved around by the mantle, or are the active drivers of movement themselves, dragging the mantle along with them.

A new study has shown the additional force of heat drawn from Earth's core plays a part in plate dynamics. The team observed the East Pacific Rise, which is a divergent tectonic plate boundary which lies along the Pacific Ocean floor, and also made models of the mantle flow beneath the surface.

During their observations, they concluded that the movement of the East Pacific Rise could not be completely explained by subduction — when one plate moves under the other — and other forces had to be at play.

(Source: Business Insider)



## Firefighters save oil-soaked flamingo in southern Iran

**ENVIRONMENT** TEHRAN — A flamingo which had got stranded in oil recycling facilities of Bandar Abbas Refinery, southern province of Hormozgan, was rescued by firefighters, IRNA reported on Saturday.

Once the workers saw the animal and made sure that it was still alive they soon called firefighters who helped save the bird by taking appropriate measures to help the flamingo recover. Birds die from oil spills if their feathers are covered in oil. When they try to clean their feathers, they're poisoned. Animals may die because they get hypothermia, causing their body temperature to be really low. Oil can also enter an animal's lungs or liver, poisoning it from the inside.



Oil also blinds animals when it gets into their eyes, so they can no longer watch out for predators.

Every year by the beginning of the cold season, migratory birds wing their ways towards warm regions to find better food supplies and escape the cold weather.

Many flamingos are spotted in Shour, Shirin and Minab River International Wetland, Hormozgan province. Marshes and swamps are the most important habitats of these flamingos in Hormozgan.

## Look: World's first floating city is underway in French Polynesia

The French Polynesia has signed a memorandum of understanding with California's Seasteading Institute in San Francisco on Friday, which is aimed at building the world's first autonomous floating city.

According to the institute's page, the executive director Randolph Hencken supposes that the seasteading offers a solution to create new, resilient territory, as parts of the French Polynesia is currently facing threats of disappearance due to its low-lying nature. It is also seen as a tool for climate change adaptation.

Science Alert said that if ocean levels continue to rise at their current rate, French Polynesia could lose up to two-thirds of its land to the sea. While the developers have already laid out the impressive plan, further investigations are yet to be carried to out to determine its environmental and economic impact.

"What we're interested in is societal choice and having a location where we can try things that haven't been tried before. I don't think it will be that dramatically radical in the first renditions. We were looking for sheltered waters, we don't want to be out in the open ocean - it's technologically possible but economically outrageous to afford," Hencken told ABC News.

"If we can be behind a reef break, then we can design floating platforms that are sufficient for those waters at an affordable cost. We don't have to start from scratch as this is a pilot project. They also have very stable institutions so we're able to work with a government that wants us there, that we have respect for and they have respect for us," he continued.

The floating island will start small but will be self-sufficient as basic facility will be made available on the island itself. The MoU stipulates that the plans will be incorporated into draft legislation. If passed by the end of 2018, construction can start some time in 2019.

(Source: Nature World News)

## LEARN ENGLISH Foul!

A: Has the game started yet?  
B: Yeah, about 5 minutes ago.  
A: Who's winning?  
B: The Bulls, of course!  
A: What! That wasn't a **foul**! C'mon, **ref**!  
B: Don't worry, Shaq always **screws up free throws**.  
A: You were right! He didn't **make the shot**!  
B: That was a great shot! A **three pointer**, yeah!  
A: Did you see that? He **traveled** and the ref didn't **call** it!  
B: This ref needs glasses. Hey ref, open your eyes! I can't believe he didn't see that!  
A: Okay... end of the first quarter... Alright, I'm gonna make a **beer run**.

### Key vocabulary

**foul**: an act in sports that is against the rules  
**ref**: short for referee: a person who makes sure that players act according to the rules in a game or sport  
**screw up**: make a mistake  
**free throw**: a chance to shoot the ball due to a foul made by the opponent make the shot verb successfully throw a ball toward a goal  
**three pointer**: a shot that scores three points in a game  
**travel**: take more steps with the basketball than the rule allows  
**beer run**: the act of quickly going to get beer

### Supplementary vocabulary

**court**: place where basketball is played  
**assist**: an action where the ball is passed that helps score a goal  
**block**: put your body between an opposing player and the ball  
**jump shot**: jump in the air and shoot the ball while rebound verb grab and control the ball after the other team missed a shot  
**steal**: intercept a pass between two players of the opposite team

# Dolphins, the most appreciated marine mammals in Persian Gulf

➔ As much as dolphins are iconic animals, more importantly they are considered ecological indicators of the health of the marine environment, as they sit at the top of the marine food chain. So studying dolphin populations can provide an indication of the status of the marine ecosystem, and protecting dolphins can immediately result in protecting all the species below their trophic level.

These considerations prompted me to start the UAE dolphin project initiative, to provide first scientific information for at least a small area or the coastal waters in UAE, raise public awareness among the local communities and the [Persian] Gulf countries.

### Would you please tell me more about preliminary results?

The results are encouraging:  
1) Public engagement and awareness: we proved that the public can make a difference and provide invaluable data to help the research by simply reporting their sightings! Centralizing the information and making it available to the public is also crucial to raise awareness among all stakeholders and the public.

2) Research: Along the Dubai coastline, we confirmed the presence of three species of dolphins: the Indo-Pacific bottlenose, humpback dolphin and the finless porpoise. This is already a great result especially confirming the presence of the finless porpoise that is considered "vulnerable" by the IUCN Red List.

### What is your general assessment about Cetacean populations in Persian Gulf? Do you think habitat structure had any effect on their behaviors or even on genetic diversity?

A: It is very difficult to assess without data! From my experience I see the Persian Gulf as an extremely interesting marine ecosystem. The age of the Persian Gulf is comparable to the one of the Black Sea and for what regards dolphins, the Black Sea populations show extreme differentiation both at morphological and genetic level to the extent that they are considered subspecies. At the moment we don't have enough data from this region to make such assessment, but I wouldn't be surprised if the local dolphin population will be differentiated from the ones from the neighboring Indian Ocean. Also it would be extremely interesting to



© Ada Natoli

assess the population structure within the Persian Gulf by comparing samples and data from different areas.

### Would you like to participate with Iranian specialists to have a better viewpoint? How these participations can occur in your opinion?

A: I will be delighted to participate with the Iranian specialists to any initiative that will improve raising awareness about cetaceans and increasing the understanding of these species in the [Persian] Gulf. I believe that communication and collaboration is the winning design to efficiency and great results. Happy to discuss ideas!

### How much normal people can help in gathering basic information such as in transect surveys or even for photo-identification?

A: Nowadays with the support of such easily and cheap technology such as mobile phones, "citizen science" can really make a difference in gathering baseline information on species. One of the main targets of the UAE dolphin project initiative is to actively involve the public in helping the research. The "Report a Sighting" system has now received over 186 sighting from different areas of the UAE and also neighboring countries. The data is freely accessible to the public through the project sighting map. Especially where there is no baseline information these data are crucial. As we started to compile our photo-identification catalogue of the identifiable individuals, sending pictures of the dolphins' encounters, the public can also provide

great information to enable us to track the individual's movements. Really everybody can help! The public can also be involved directly in the survey by joining the research team as volunteer to conduct the survey.

### Most of people don't know dolphins can be dangerous. In most cases we see adults and children who shake their hands to attract dolphins, what is your suggestion for them and for their leaders?

A: The mass media always portrays dolphins as the friendly smiling animal. Wild dolphins can actually pose a risk to humans simply because are wild animals! I don't recommend swimming with wild dolphins. Think! A dolphin is on average 250kg, it is a carnivore and has lots of teeth! Would you still clap your hands and whistle to drag its attention and swim with it?

### How fisheries can help cetaceans? It means how can decrease the number of stranding dolphins or whales?

A: Generally fish presence and dolphins are pretty connected. If there is a healthy dolphin population, generally is an indication that also the fish population is healthy and in turns fisheries. By-catch is a problem in many countries. Stranding is another chapter. There can be many causes because a cetacean cast ashore. The establishment of a stranding network and a systematic collection of information on the stranded animals is crucial to verify the cause of death and if found linked to the fishing activity, alternatives can be proposed to minimize the risk.

### Why countries in the region must be aware and sensible about cetacean populations?

A: Every natural resource is part of the heritage of the local communities. Persian Gulf countries have a long marine tradition. I think it is mandatory to do our best to protect all marine life and allow the next generation to enjoy it as we are. There are dolphins in the Persian Gulf today; can you imagine a Persian Gulf without dolphins in 50 years' time? Why should it be?

### Please tell me about burgeon methods for evaluating toxicological hazards?

A: Because dolphins sit at the top of the marine food chain and have a long life span, they tend to accumulate contaminants. Furthermore as they feed principally on the same fish resources that we utilize, assessing the level of contaminants in dolphins provides a direct estimate of the level of contaminants we are likely to be expose.

### Did your team apply satellite tags to know more about travelling, feeding and socializing of dolphins? If your answer is yes please point out some important results. And if no please let me know if you have any plan for it in near future or not?

A: Satellite tagging is not something generally used on small dolphins. It is highly invasive and risky that can ultimately cause the death of the dolphin. Photo-identification on the other hand is not invasive and provides the same results especially if different research groups collaborate and agree to share their photo-identification catalogue. I strongly discourage tagging dolphins!

### Is there anything else you would like to add?

A: It would be great to see the Iranian public joining the "Report a sighting" campaign. The more sightings are reported the stronger can be the cause to carry on more detailed investigation to assess the status of the Iranian coastal dolphin populations. The sightings data are visible on the project website, so everyone can view them at any time. Report a sighting takes two minutes but can make a big difference! Dolphins do not respect international boundaries, so if we want to protect them, joining the forces across countries is essential to their survival.



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## IN FOCUS Tehran Times/Amir Ali Razzaghi



Hossein Nazari, 45, is a gardener who plants daffodils in the northern city of Jouybar, with 35 years of experience under his belt. Powerfully scented daffodils are harvested in late autumn or early winter depending on the coldness of the weather.





# Ex-CIA boss Brennan, others rip Trump speech in front of Memorial Wall

United States President Donald Trump traveled to CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) headquarters on Saturday to offer reassurance to the workforce after he spent weeks criticizing American intelligence, but his unscripted, self-referential remarks before a wall of stars memorializing fallen officers are drawing criticism, including a pointed denunciation from the agency's recently departed director.

"Former CIA Director Brennan is deeply saddened and angered at Donald Trump's despicable display of self-aggrandizement in front of CIA's Memorial Wall of Agency heroes," Nick Shapiro, a former aide to John Brennan at CIA, told NBC News' Andrea Mitchell.

Brennan, Shapiro said, believes Trump "should be ashamed of himself."

Trump was greeted with cheers by the CIA officers who volunteered to be there to greet him on Saturday.

But the wall of 117 stars in the CIA lobby is a revered place, and presidents who have spoken there tend to do so carefully and with a close attention to their subject — usually the sacrifices of the CIA officers and their families.

Trump expressed support for the CIA, but he also veered into political territory, denouncing the news media, boasting about the size of his inaugural crowds, and even discussing his own appraisal of his intellect.

"And then they say, 'Is Donald Trump an intellectual?'" Trump said. "Trust me, I'm like a smart person."



A former senior CIA officer told NBC News he was embarrassed, watching the remarks, which he called a "free-wheeling, narcissistic diatribe."

Another former senior official noted that that early on in his remarks Trump interrupted himself as he was commenting on the stars behind him and never returned to the topic.

"Not quite a 'this hallowed ground moment,'" the official said.

Former CIA Director Mike Hayden, a Republican who opposed Trump, said in an email, "I was heartened that the President gave a speech at CIA. It would have been even better if more of it had been about CIA."

When Barack Obama first visited CIA as president in 2009, he read a speech in which he honored CIA officers and told them he would need their help.

Trump, by contrast, tried to make a joke about how he would "back" the CIA.

"And I know maybe sometimes you haven't gotten the backing that you've wanted, and you're going to get so much backing. Maybe you're going to say, please don't give us so much backing," Trump said.

To a gathering of career intelligence professionals, he said, "probably almost everybody in this room voted for me, but I will not ask you to raise your hands if you did."

In reference to counter terrorism and the campaign against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group, he said, "We've been fighting these wars for longer than any wars we've ever fought. We have not used the real abilities that we have. We've been restrained."

Trump later insisted that the meeting had been "great", tweeting early Sunday that he had "paid great respect to [the] wall."

"WIN!" he added.

**■ Trump denies CIA feud over election 'hacking'**

Elsewhere, Trump has denied feuding with the CIA, in an attempt to mend fences with the intelligence community.

As part of his first presidential duties to visit the CIA, he challenged and, at times, criticized their conclusions that Russia influenced the November 8 election in his favor.

The meeting followed Trump's repeated and sharp public criticism of U.S. intelligence agencies before and after the election.

Trump denied claims that the inaugural turnout was lower than expected.

He took issue with television shots and photos of crowds that had gathered for his swearing-in ceremony, suggesting that they were misleading and showed fewer people present than actually attended.

(Source: agencies)

## Israel PM says will discuss key issues with U.S. president

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says he will hold a telephone conversation with United States President Donald Trump, their first talks since the billionaire businessman's inauguration, to discuss three major issues.

Speaking at the beginning of a cabinet meeting on Sunday, Netanyahu said he intended to discuss the Palestinian issue, the situation in Syria and the alleged Iranian threat with Trump later in the day.

Trump has vowed to strongly support Israel and promised, during his presidential campaign rallies, to move the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to East al-Quds (Jerusalem) and also to recognize al-Quds as Israel's capital.

The Israeli premier said in December that Trump would be a good friend to Tel Aviv, adding, "I know Donald Trump...And I think his attitude, his support for Israel is clear."

Israelis have welcomed Trump's election and expressed hope it would allow them to move forward with their goal of annexing most of the occupied West Bank.

In an initial step, Israeli regime officials on Sunday approved the construction of 566 new Israeli settler units in East al-Quds, despite international calls to end the unlawful practice.

The new approvals came despite a United Nations Security Council's Resolution 2334, passed on December 23, 2016, condemning all Israeli settlement construction on occupied Palestinian territories. The landmark resolution called Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East al-Quds a "flagrant violation of international law" and

demanding that Israel stop all construction.

Over half a million Israelis live in more than 230 illegal settlements built in the occupied Palestinian territories, including East al-Quds since 1967. The presence and continued expansion of Israeli settlements in occupied Palestine has created a major obstacle to efforts to establish peace in the Middle East.

Meanwhile, Netanyahu's remarks about discussing the issue of Syria with the new American president come at a time that Syria has repeatedly announced that Tel Aviv and its Western and regional allies are aiding and abetting Takfiri militant groups operating inside the country's legitimate government.

The Israeli regime has even set up field hospitals in the occupied Golan Heights to treat wounded Syrian militants.

Although Israeli officials refrain from announcing the exact number of terrorists who received treatment in Israeli hospitals, Israel's Channel 2 reported in March 2016 that the wounded militants were transferred quietly and that the number of them had reached 2,100 since 2011.

The Syrian army has repeatedly seized huge quantities of Israeli-made weapons and advanced military equipment from the foreign-backed militants inside Syria.

Israeli lawmaker, Akram Hasoon, posted a status on his Facebook page on September 11, 2016, claiming that Jabhat Fateh al-Sham (Front for the Conquest of the Levant) was bombing the Syrian village of Khadr through direct support of minister of military affairs, Avigdor Lieberman.

Hasoon added that the village of Khadr had been

target of persistent bombardments by Jabhat Fateh al-Sham militants.

**■ Bibi continues effort to scuttle JCPOA under Trump**

Elsewhere in his comments, Netanyahu strongly opposed the 2015 nuclear agreement between Iran and the P5+1 group of countries, including the United States.

The premier said stopping what he described as the "Iranian threat" and overturning the nuclear deal continues to be a key objective of Israel.

During his presidential campaign, Trump had promised to annul the deal which he referred to as a "disaster" and "the worst deal ever negotiated."

Iran and the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council — the United States, France, Britain, China and Russia — plus Germany reached the nuclear agreement, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), in July 2015 and started to implement it on January 16, 2016.

Under the JCPOA, Iran undertook to put limitations on its nuclear program in exchange for the removal of nuclear-related bans imposed against Tehran.

Israeli intelligence officials on Friday warned Netanyahu against pushing Trump to tear up the JCPOA.

"There is concern that revoking the pact would cause a chasm between Washington and the other signatories, most importantly Moscow and Beijing," the Israeli daily Haaretz quoted the officials as saying.

The United States is Israel's most important ally and provides it with more than three billion dollars per year in military aid.

(Source: Press TV)

## Plasco still in smoke



pointed the finger at ignoring building maintenance standard operating procedures. "All high rises in Iran, be it residen-

tial or commercial, should comply with standard safety procedures to prevent future accidents of such."

The minister added that there is little monitoring on privately owned building safety regulations and that calls for trouble.

Mehdi Chamran, the chair of Tehran City Council also expressed his view on the accident and said, "We had warned the building management to provide fire safety and protection system for the construction a few times."

Chamran, too, highlighted that fire breakouts should be prevented at all costs.

As of now, smoke is still rising from the tumble-down building and Iranians are mourning over the loss of their firemen and some citizens, an accident that many believe could have been avoided.

Many have speculated the reasons behind the fire blaze, but as Ahmad Masjed-Jamei, a member Tehran City Council put it, "it remains unclear."

As one of the first people arriving at the scene, Masjed-Jamei blamed the incoordination of crisis management at the site in the first hour of the accident for the late response.

"I immediately contacted the governor and some higher ups who showed up an hour or two later; I kept asking for authorities and the reply was they are on their way; they took too long."

Calling the "golden hours" - of search and rescue - really vital, the member of City Council believed there was "a breakdown in crisis management" during those hours.

Another official at the site was Iran's Energy Minister Hamid Chitchian who

pointed the finger at ignoring building maintenance standard operating procedures.

"All high rises in Iran, be it residen-

## Nearly 90 bodies exhumed at ISIL massacre site: Iraq

Iraqi forensic specialists and international activists have found a mass grave containing the remains of more than seven dozen victims of a June 2014 massacre by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) Takfiri terrorists at an air force camp in the country's north-central province of Salahuddin (Saladin Governorate).

A provincial police source, requesting not to be identified, said experts from the Iraqi Health Ministry and Human Rights Watch activists had recently found 89 bodies inside former Dictator Saddam Hussein's palace compound in Tikrit, located 140 kilometers northwest of the capital Baghdad.

The source added that information obtained from captured Takfiri ISIL terrorists helped locate the mass grave, noting that the corpses will be sent to the forensic department in order to be identified.

On June 12, 2014, ISIL terrorists killed around 1,700 Iraqi air force cadets after kidnapping them from Camp Speicher, a former United States base. There were reportedly around 4,000 unarmed cadets in the camp when it came under attack by ISIL terrorists.

Following the abductions, the attackers took the victims to the complex of presidential palaces and killed them. The terrorists also threw some of the bodies into a river.

The massacre was filmed by ISIL and broadcast on social media. An investigation committee later revealed that 57 members of Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath Party aided Takfiri ISIL terrorists in the massacre.

On August 21, 2016, Iraqi judiciary officials hanged 36 men convicted of involvement in the carnage.

Tikrit was recaptured from ISIL in March 2015. During clean-up operations in the northern part of the city, Iraqi forces found the location of the 2014 carnage.

**■ Multiple bomb attacks claim lives in, near Iraqi capital**

Meanwhile, at least two people have been killed and nearly a dozen others injured in a series of bomb attacks that ripped through areas in and around Baghdad.

Police said a civilian lost his life and five others sustained injuries when an improvised explosive device went off inside a parking lot in the capital's central neighborhood of Bab al-Moatham on Sunday noon.

A sound bomb also exploded near a security checkpoint in the Zayouna neighborhood of eastern Baghdad, leaving a civilian injured.

Elsewhere in the town of Taji, located 30 kilometers north of Baghdad, a bomb blast left one dead and four others injured.

No group or individual has claimed responsibility for the attacks, but they have the hallmark of those carried out by the Takfiri ISIL terrorist group.

The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) says a total of 386 Iraqis were killed and another 1,066 injured in acts of terrorism, violence and armed conflict last month.

According to the UN mission, the number of civilian fatalities stood at 385 in December 2016. Violence also left 1,060 people — excluding police personnel — injured.

A great portion of the fatalities was recorded in the northern province of Nineveh, where 208 civilians were killed. Terrorist attacks also left another 511 injured there.

(Source: Press TV)

## Gambia crisis ends as Yahya Jammeh leaves for exile

The Gambia's ex-leader Yahya Jammeh has flown out of the country he ruled for 22 years and into exile, bringing an end to a protracted political crisis following presidential elections last month.

The longtime ruler refused to step down after a December 1 vote in which opposition leader Adama Barrow was declared the winner, triggering weeks of tension as West African leaders threatened to use military force to oust him if he failed to step down.

Jammeh boarded a small, unmarked plane at an airport in the capital, Banjul, late on Saturday, alongside Guinea's President Alpha Conde after two days of negotiations over a departure deal.

He landed in Conakry, Guinea's capital, but set off again for Equatorial Guinea, where he will remain in exile, the president of the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS), Marcel Alain de Souza, told journalists.

"No legislative measures" would be taken that would infringe the "dignity, security, safety and rights" of Jammeh or his family, ECOWAS said in a joint declaration with the African Union and United Nations.

Jammeh could return to The Gambia when he pleased, the statement added, and property "lawfully" belonging to him would not be seized.

Human rights activists have repeatedly demanded that Jammeh be held accountable for alleged abuses, including torture and detention of opponents.

Scenes of jubilation broke out almost immediately on streets near Banjul, after the news filtered out that Jammeh had gone.

Barrow, who was sworn in as The Gambia's new president at the country's embassy in Senegal on Thursday, is expected to return home imminently.

Speaking to the Associated Press on Saturday, Barrow urged caution after an online petition called for Jammeh to be arrested, and not be granted asylum.

The new president, who had sought shelter in the neighboring country, said he favors launching a "truth and reconciliation commission" to investigate possible crimes by Jammeh.

ECOWAS had pledged to remove Jammeh by force if he did not step down. The group assembled a multinational military force, including tanks that rolled into The Gambia on Thursday.

The troops moved in after Barrow's inauguration and a unanimous vote by the United Nations Security Council backing the new president and calling Jammeh to cede power.

Jammeh announced his intention to leave the country on Friday. "I have decided in good conscience to relinquish the mantle of leadership of this great nation," he said.

At least 46,000 people had fled The Gambia for Senegal since the start of the crisis fearing unrest, according to the UN's refugee agency.

(Source: agencies)

## Violent extremism and the challenges it presents

Risk management is founded on implementing the appropriate security measures to ensure inmates are held in safe custody and on good, solid prison intelligence. It starts with a risk-based assessment on the prisoner's arrival and should continue with dedicated prison intelligence systems. Such work can inform interventions and rehabilitation and help prison management make strategic decisions on a prisoner's future.

Professional judgment needs to be applied when making these assessments. Post-release assessments can assist prisoners to disengage from violence and to eventually return to their communities.

Rehabilitation and disengagement are underpinned by the logic that those prisoners who become

engaged can also be turned away from radical beliefs and attitudes. To be effective, attention needs to be given to gender, countries and cultures, as well as the prison environment.

Our goal must be behavioral change allied to an acceptance that radical beliefs do not always threaten prisons or communities. Only a small number of radicals become violent extremists. Further research is needed on all aspects of disengagement interventions to appreciate the situation.

One of our strongest instruments is the adoption and full implementation of the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners — known as the Mandela Rules. The rules set out good practices on prisoner

treatment and prison management.

Violent extremism and radicalization in prisons and their relationship to terrorism are high on the international agenda. The world cannot have individuals entering prisons who may already feel angry and frustrated only to have them leave more embittered and determined to kill.

No simple cure exists: but while the violent extremists seek to groom recruits, we also have time to promote dignity and humanity and to set prisoners on the path to their communities and to never looking back. This journey begins with the creation of fair and just prison systems.

(Source: The National)



## Dismal Leicester match worst record for a reigning champion after 22 games

Leicester City's defeat at the hands of Southampton on Sunday saw them become the joint-worst reigning champions at this point in a top-flight season.

Goals from James Ward-Prowse, Jay Rodriguez and a Dusan Tadic penalty late on consigned the Foxes to their second 3-0 defeat on the bounce, leaving them in 15th place in the Premier League table.

And their meagre 21-point haul from 22 games has equalled the unwanted record set by Ipswich Town in 1962/63 (converted to three points for a win).

Leicester stunned the world when they won the Premier League against all odds last season but while few people expected them to repeat the feat this season, their title defence has still been a major disappointment. Having let 37 goals slip past them, the Foxes have already conceded more this season than they did in the whole of 2015-16 (36).

And it gets worse. Claudio Ranieri's side have now gone 13 away Premier League matches without a win, more than any other team. It is their longest winless away streak since October 2005 (18).

Chelsea's 10th placed finish in 2015-16 was previously the worst title defence of the Premier League era but Leicester are on course to claim that unwelcome mantle. And if they aren't careful, they could emulate Manchester City's 1937-38 achievement by being relegated as reigning champions!

(Source: Goal)

## Venus talks down possible Serena final showdown

Venus Williams was not prepared to even countenance the suggestion she could potentially meet younger sister Serena in the Australian Open final after she advanced to the quarter-finals with a 6-3 7-5 victory over Mona Barthel on Sunday.

The 13th-seeded Venus had some struggles against the German qualifier but clinched the crucial points to advance to a last eight clash with Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova.

Serena, who has won 22 grand slam titles to her sister's seven, is on the other side of the draw and faces Barbora Strycova in their fourth round clash on Monday and has looked the most comfortable of the players left in the tournament.

As such, a potential ninth showdown in a grand slam final, and second at Melbourne Park, between the American sisters could potentially be on the cards, though Venus sidestepped the question after her victory over Barthel.

"That could hopefully happen," the 36-year-old Venus said when asked of the possibility. "We both still have to work very hard to get there."

"Today I played a qualifier, and she hardly ever missed. So it doesn't matter who you come up against, they are coming and they want to win, too. They have nothing to lose."

"I'm going to be focused on winning one round at a time and focus on doing what it takes to be there."

Williams made a fast start against Barthel as she raced out to a 3-0 lead but the 181st-ranked German fought back with the American having trouble with her ball toss at the northern end of the court as she looked directly into the sun.

Barthel broke twice to give her the opportunity at 4-3 to get back on serve but Williams capitalized on the German also having trouble with the sun to break back then served out from the Yarra River end to clinch the first set in 42 minutes.

The second set went on serve until the 11th game when Williams broke for the first time in the set, then, despite serving from the northern end, clinched victory in 96 minutes.

"It was pretty rough. It's not easy serving in the sun," she said. "The cycle of the sun is different here."

"Normally you're not serving in the sun in quite the same way as other places, so it's an adjustment."

(Source: Reuters)

## Red-hot Higuain becomes first Juventus player to score five in a row for over 11 years

Gonzalo Higuain has become the first player to score in five successive Serie A matches for Juventus in over 11 years.

By finding the net in Sunday's clash against Lazio, the Argentine international emulated the achievement of France international forward David Trezeguet, who was the last player from the Turin giants to achieve such a feat.

Higuain has been in terrific scoring form after initially being criticised as overweight when he arrived at Juventus Stadium in the summer for a record fee from Napoli. The 29-year-old has netted 17 times in 26 matches.

He has been in particularly impressive since scoring twice against Torino in mid-December. He then scored against Roma before the winter break and has started 2017 without having lost any of that momentum, as he registered versus Bologna and Fiorentina.

Trezeguet's run, meanwhile, came in 2005, when he scored 11 goals in a sequence of nine consecutive games. The France great struck against Siena, Lazio, Cagliari (twice), Fiorentina, Treviso, Roma, Livorno, Milan and Sampdoria during an astonishing run of form.

Higuain, a France-born Argentina international, therefore has some way to go to beat Trezeguet, an Argentine-born France international.

(Source: Goal)

# 'It's just tennis' – Andy Murray's words after shock Australian Open loss

"It's just tennis," Andy Murray said before disappearing into the Melbourne night after losing to a player 50 places below him in the world rankings. All the indications had previously suggested he would finally win the Australian Open he craves after losing in five finals – but it was not to be.

Four of those defeats were to Novak Djokovic, who lost in the second round to the world No117 Denis Istomin, 67 places below Mischa Zverev, the German who inflicted Murray's pain on him over four sets in the fourth round. He had not just lost a match; he had blown a wonderful opportunity.

"I had great success for a number of months," Murray said, reflecting on his rise to No1 at the end of last season, when he displaced Djokovic and beat him in the ATP World Tour Finals in London.

"In the biggest events you want to do your best but that's not been the case here. It happens. I've had tough losses in my career. I've come back from them. This is a tough one. I'm sure I'll come back OK from it but right now I'm very down because I wanted to go further in this event. It wasn't to be."

But it was. The world No1 was supposed to play the world No2, Djokovic, in the final, and neither was scripted to go out before the quarter-finals to a pair of seasoned hustlers. The last time that happened was at Roland Garros 13 years ago.

Like Istomin, Zverev could hardly contain his delight. He described it as: "Definitely the best match of my life, not only because it was a best-of-five sets match, it was at a slam. It was just incredible."

It was a victory, too, for conviction over doubt. "I believed in myself," Zverev said. "I believed in my game. I believed that playing serve and volley against him and slicing a lot, trying to destroy his rhythm, was going to work, which it did in the end."

Murray, meanwhile, was as uncertain about his movement off the court as he



was on it, when Zverev second-guessed him in many key moments.

He was considering flying home on Monday, with his wife, Kim Sears, his daughter, Sophia, and his team but said he would decide later about playing in the Davis Cup tie against Canada in Ottawa the weekend after the final here. "Davis Cup would be next on the schedule but whether I stay here or go home in the meantime, I'm not sure," Murray said.

Tiredness might be an issue, although it would not be the best look if a player just knighted in part for his services to the British game chose not to lead the national team, having been unexpectedly gifted such a good amount of time to recover and prepare.

He added: "The off-season for me was fairly short just because I had to take a de-

cent break after the Tour Finals but it was a great way to finish last year. I was full of confidence coming into the beginning of this year. I prepared as best as I could."

As did all the players, from the elite to the lucky losers and qualifiers, most of whom went home early.

Where Murray descended into mutter mode in his match, Zverev, with nothing to lose, played with a smile on his face to win 7-5, 5-7, 6-2, 6-4. "You try to distract yourself by doing the right thing on the court," Zverev said. "I kept looking at my box. My mom [who also works as his coach] was always smiling. That helps. My dad's focused. Everybody else was just chilling [including his 19-year-old brother, Alex, who almost beat Rafael Nadal the night before]."

While Murray has borne his suffering

in public and in exalted company at the summit of the game, Zverev has endured disappointment in anonymity.

"When I came back from wrist surgery two years ago, it was my brother who said: 'You can make it back, you can be top 100 again, be a great player. I have to say thank you to him quite a lot. It wasn't easy. I had a cast on my left arm. I couldn't hold a racket. I dropped to, like, 1,100 at the beginning of 2015.'"

Now he is in a quarter-final of a slam and will play Roger Federer, who thrilled the arena later in the evening when he beat Kei Nishikori 6-7 (4-7), 6-4, 6-1, 4-6, 6-3.

"It was tough for Andy," Federer said courtside, "but he'll be back. I'm sure he'll win this title one day."

(Source: Guardian)

## Sergio Ramos: Real Madrid fans shouldn't 'kick us when we are down'



Real Madrid captain Sergio Ramos has played down boos at the Bernabeu during the 2-1 La Liga win against Malaga on Saturday but urged Los Blancos supporters to get behind the team.

Ramos scored twice to seal victory and end a tough week -- that had seen him booed by supporters of his former club Sevilla before scoring an own goal against them to contribute to Real's first defeat in 41 games -- on a high note.

"I've always said that we can never change the Bernabeu," Ramos said.

"I've spent many years here and like Marcelo said after the [Copa del Rey] game the other day, all of the great players have been whistled here at some point. It's a wake-up call to make the team respond."

"But it's in the difficult moments that we need them to be behind us, not kicking us when we are down."

"We know how our fans are and we like the way they are. The objective is that we all take this forward together."

The win against Malaga kept Real four points clear at the top of La Liga.

(Source: ESPN)

## Thierry Henry urges Mesut Ozil 'to stay and become an Arsenal legend'



Thierry Henry has told the Sun that Mesut Ozil should commit his future to Arsenal and become a club legend by winning major honours with the club.

Gunners legend Henry, the club's all-time record goal scorer, speculated that Ozil's reason for not committing his future is because of a desire to win silverware or concerns over Arsene Wenger's future.

"I'm desperate for him to stay," Henry wrote in his column. "But I understand his predicament. I was in the same situation in 2007 when I joined Barcelona -- with a heavy heart. I didn't know Arsene's plans, either, as he was coming to the end of a contract then, too."

"People will say it's all about money for Mesut and that Wenger's contract is a smokescreen. We don't know. We have to trust what he says. Respect it."

"Mesut has won the World Cup with Germany. But at club level, he has only one title, with Real Madrid in 2012. He will be desperate for more." But he can do that at the Emirates. That's why I'd urge him to stay and become an Arsenal legend.

"Win that first title. Be the future of Arsenal. Not just the assist man, but the guy who drives the team forward. He can do that with Alexis Sanchez."

(Source: Soccernet)



@wayneroooney Huge honour to become leading goalscorer for @manchesterunited. Thanks to Sir Bobby for his kind words after the game.



@\_r19 Perfect morning! #r19



@bestgoals #Chapecoense plane crash survivor returning to the pitch holding the Copa Sudamerica trophy





## Iran's Kimia Alizadeh wants to enjoy taekwondo

**SPORTS** Iranian taekwondo player Kimia Alizadeh says that she is going to enjoy the sport, instead of worrying about the winning medal. Alizadeh became the first Iranian woman to win an Olympic medal, taking bronze in a taekwondo event. The 18-year-old defeated Sweden's Nikita Glasnovic 5 - 1.

She had already won a bronze medal at the 22nd WTF World Taekwondo Championships 2015 in Chelyabinsk, Russia.

Alizadeh underwent surgery on her left ankle and is recovering at the moment.

She is preparing for the 23rd WTF World Taekwondo Championships which will be held in Muju, South Korea from June 22 to 30.

"I won a bronze medal in the previous edition and I am going to do my best this time. From now on, I just want to concentrate on my performance," Alizadeh said.

"Iranian people expect me to win gold medal but I believe that the results are in God's hands and I'll just try my best," she added.

"I will win what I deserve. I will train hard and never give up," Alizadeh stated.

## Esteghlal beat Sanat Naft, Tractor Sazi edge past Paykan



**SPORTS** Esteghlal football team have earned the biggest win of the season when they defeated Sanat Naft 3-0 in the 17th week of Iran Professional League on Sunday in Abadan.

Mojtaba Haghdoust opened the scoring for the Blues in the 28th minute. Behnam Barzay doubled their lead in the 56th minute while Majid Hosseini made it 3-0 in 62nd minute to seal an easy win for Esteghlal.

Elsewhere in Shahr-e Qods Stadium, Tractor Sazi edged past Paykan 1-0 in a tough clash to narrow the gap with the league leaders Persepolis.

Mohammad Ebrahimi scored the sole goal of the match for the visitors in the 74th minute to earn a valuable three points for Tabriz based club.

Earlier on Sunday, the clash of strugglers had no winner when Machine Sazi and Saba Qom played out a goalless draw. The five remaining games of the week will be held on Monday as follows:

Esteghlal Khuzestan – Sepahan  
Padideh – Naft Tehran  
Saipa – Siah Jamegan  
Zob Ahan – Foolad  
Persepolis – Gostaresh Foolad

## Karim Ansarifard can become a better player at Olympiacos, Queiroz said



**SPORTS** Iran national team head coach Carlos Queiroz believes that Olympiacos new striker Karim Ansarifard should take advantage of the chance given to him by the Greek giants.

"Karim is a physical striker, he can read the game well and he can either play as a lone striker or a false nine. Greek Super League is a tough physical competition in which Karim has been successful so far. I believe playing in the best team of the league would help him to become a better

player," Queiroz said. Olympiacos head coach Paulo Bento who is close friend of Carlos Queiroz has stated that he will use Karim Ansarifard in his team but the competition to play in the starting lineup is so close and the Iranian striker needs time in order to adapt to the new conditions.

The 26-year old striker joined Olympiacos from Panionios on a three-and-a-half year contract last week. Olympiacos is currently at the top of Greek Super League table with 42 points from 17 games.

## IRIBF to act against Bauermann's contract cancellation

The Islamic Republic of Iran Basketball Federation (IRIBF) has decided to take legal actions against German professional basketball coach Dirk Bauermann, who stunningly parted company with the federation late last year irrespective of the fact that he was under contract for four years.

The IRIBF has compiled a 15-page complaint against the 59-year-old coach, which will be submitted soon to the Basketball Arbitral Tribunal (BAT), previously known as the FIBA Arbitral Tribunal of FAT, after having been translated into both English and French. All necessary appendices have been attached to the complaint as well.

Late last year, Bauermann wrote in a letter addressed to the Iranian basketball federation that he regrettably had to go back to Germany and not return to Iran.

He described the reasons as strictly personal, stating that his three-year-old daughter misses him intolerably.



The German coach finalized an agreement with IRIBF officials in Tehran in November 2015 to lead Iran basketball team for four years.

Bauermann took charge of the German professional basketball club s.Oliver Würzburg after the

team severed ties with American Douglas Spradley on December 30 last year. Spradley had been in charge of the club for two and a half years.

The Islamic Republic of Iran Basketball Federation has named Mehran Hatami as the head coach of Iran men's national basketball team to steer the squad at the forthcoming 17th edition of West Asian Basketball Association (WABA) Championship in Jordan.

IRIBF Secretary Ali Tofigh said on January 15 that 52-year-old Hatami will be leading the Iranian squad during the tournament, which will kick off in the Jordanian capital city of Amman on January 29 and will wrap up on February 2.

Tofigh, however, did not disclose whether his federation would continue cooperation with Hatami after the championship or not.

(Source: PressTV)

## Pep Guardiola: 'I'm never going to give up' on Premier League title

Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola has not given up on winning the Premier League title this season, despite Saturday's 2-2 draw with Tottenham Hotspur leaving his side nine points behind Chelsea having played a game more.

Guardiola appeared to rule City out of the title race following the 4-0 defeat against Everton but denied that following a game in which his players gave up a two-goal lead to draw.

"I didn't say that," he said. "My answer was they [the media] said we have been ruled out of fighting for the trophy.

"But I'm never going to give up ... ever. It's going to be difficult, of course,

but I'm not worried about that now."

Guardiola also moved to play down expectations surrounding new arrival Gabriel Jesus and Leroy Sane, who scored City's opener against Spurs.

"He has his talent," Guardiola said of Gabriel Jesus. "But alone he cannot do that [solve City's scoring trouble] so we have to involve a lot.

"Over the season we have to score goals and we have to create the chances to score goals. We tried to create and when we created, we didn't score and when that happens, it's impossible to win the game.

"The crowd is always excited for the

new players."

And of Sane he added: "I'm so happy for the performance of Leroy. He arrived as a young player, 19 or 20 years old, and everybody expects [performances].

"It's not easy to come here and to play. He arrived injured, but for the last 10 days in the training sessions that guy looks different.

"I encourage him to keep going because he has special qualities for us and he made a good performance.

"To be able to look at him a little bit more, we will be more dangerous, I'm so happy for him."

(Source: ESPN)



## Wayne Rooney breaks Sir Bobby Charlton's Man United scoring record

Wayne Rooney broke Sir Bobby Charlton's all-time goal-scoring record for Manchester United on Saturday with his 250th goal in a 1-1 draw at Stoke City.

The striker produced a superb free kick four minutes into stoppage time to save United from defeat and extend their unbeaten run to 13 games.

Rooney, 31, had to wait two weeks to break the record after levelling it with his 249th goal in the FA Cup third-round game against Reading. His late strike at the bet365 Stadium on Saturday moved him ahead of England and United legend Charlton.



"Obviously it is a proud moment," Rooney said. "It is a bit of a strange feeling as obviously we wanted three points but didn't get it. But on the other end it is a proud moment for myself to get that record and a huge honour for me.

"I've been at the club a long time. Obviously those goals have built up over the years but to finally get that record it is a great feeling."

Of Rooney's 250 goals for United, it was only the sixth he scored directly from a free kick.

"We looked at set-pieces before the game and we knew it could be important today," Rooney said. "When we got it, I actually indicated to [Anders] Herrera that I was going to shoot, to make sure the players try and get across the keeper to try and put him off. As soon as I hit it, I knew it was in."

The goal also saw Rooney break Alan Shearer's record for the most scored away from home in Premier League history, moving him onto 88.

Charlton's goals came from 758 appearances between 1956 and 1973. Rooney's have come from 546 appearances after he joined the club from Everton in 2004.

"The record is the record," United manager Jose Mourinho told Sky Sports. "It is the record of the biggest club in England and one of the biggest in the world.

"Before him, the record belonged to a legend of English football. Now Wayne becomes a legend of Manchester United."

Rooney added that he still has a lot more to offer, telling Sky the record "means a hell of a lot."

"It's something I never expected when I joined the club but I'm delighted and very proud. It's been great, very successful, and there's a lot more to come."

Rooney also overtook Charlton to become England's all-time top scorer after netting his 50th goal for the Three Lions with an 84th-minute penalty in a 2-0 Euro 2016 qualifying win against Switzerland in September 2015.

His international tally now stands on 53 from 119 caps, and he is closing on Peter Shilton's record of 125 appearances for his country.

The 79-year-old Charlton said he was naturally a little disappointed to see the record set in 1973 broken but also "delighted for Wayne."

"He deserves his place in the history books," Charlton said. "He is a true great for club and country, and it is fitting that he is now the highest goalscorer for both United and England.

"It has been great to watch him every week since his arrival at Old Trafford in 2004; he set the tone with a wonderful hat-trick on his debut and he has thrilled us all in the years since, going on to enjoy a hugely successful career.

"I was 35 when I retired. Wayne is only 31 and still going strong, so I don't think he's done by a long stretch yet.

"He continues to show that he can contribute goals, assists and performances whenever called upon, he will raise the bar even further before he calls it a day. Now he's the man to beat, and I can't see anybody doing that for a long, long time."

A five-time Premier League champion, Rooney has also won the Champions League, FIFA Club World Cup, FA Cup and two League Cups. Much of that success came under former manager Sir Alex Ferguson, who also quick to praise United's record-breaker.

"I would like to say huge congratulations to Wayne on reaching this milestone," Ferguson said. "It is no mean feat to score so many goals and he breaks a record that has stood for over 40 years.

"Wayne thoroughly deserves his place in the history books of this great club and I am sure that he will go on to score many more goals.

"Well done Wayne, I am absolutely delighted for you, you have been a great servant to this club and long may it continue."

Rooney's 250-goal notes

- By body part: Right foot, 193; left foot, 27; head, 30
- By venue: 136 home, 106 away, 8 neutral
- By shot location: 213 inside the box (26 penalties), 37 outside the box
- By competition: Premier League 180, Champions League 34 (four in qualifying), FA Cup 22, League Cup 5, UEFA Cup/Europa League 5, Club World Cup 3, Community Shield 1

(Source: Soccernet)





### Poem of the day

The waves run high, night is clouded with fears,  
And eddying whirlpools clash and roar.

Hafez

### Prayer Times

Noon:12:16 Evening: 17:42 Dawn: 5:43 tomorrow Sunrise: 7:10 (tomorrow)

■ Managing Director: Ali Asgari  
■ Editor-in-Chief: Hassan Lasjerdi  
■ Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 editor@tehrantimes.com  
■ Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000  
■ Advertisements Dept.: Telefax: (+98 21) 43051450 ads@tehrantimes.com  
■ Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807  
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## Leader's message to Western youth published

**CULTURE TEHRAN** — The Islamic Revolution desk Publications has published the message of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, which was sent to the youth in Europe and North America on January 21, 2015.



The book named "Description of the Letter" holds two sections, the first of which contains the letter of the Leader, and the second contains descriptions of some of the major topics mentioned in the letter.

The publisher is an affiliate of the Institute for the Compilation and Publication of Ayatollah Khamenei's Works.

## Persian translation of "The Little Prince" published in Cyrillic script

**CULTURE TEHRAN** — Abolhassan Najafi's Persian translation of "The Little Prince" by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry has recently been published in both Persian and Cyrillic scripts in Tajikistan.



The late linguist and translator of French literature, Abolhassan Najafi (1930-2016), with his good command of the French language translated the book in 2000 and it was published by Niloofar Publications the same year.

The book was warmly received by readers and was republished a year later.

Najafi died of pneumonia at the age of 86 on January 22, 2016. He was a senior member of the Academy of

Persian Language and Literature with a career spanning over half a century.

He translated dozens of illustrious works including "The Devil and the Good Lord" by Jean-Paul Sartre, "Antimemoires" by André Malraux and "The Thibaults" by Roger Martin du Gard.

French aviator Antoine de Saint-Exupéry wrote "The Little Prince" while living in the United States.

The novella is about a downed pilot in the Sahara Desert, frantically trying to repair his wrecked plane. His efforts are interrupted one day by the apparition of a little prince, who asks him to draw a sheep.

Published in 1943, the book has been read by millions of children in more than a hundred languages. It is also read by adults for its allegorical meaning.

Several Persian translations of "The Little Prince", including those by Abolhassan Najafi, Mohammad Qazi, Ahmad Shamlu and Delara Qahraman, have previously been published in Iran.

Iran's Book House held a ceremony on Sunday to commemorate Najafi attended by a number of experts and scholars.

## Fajr festival announces jury

**ART TEHRAN** — The 35th Fajr Film Festival announced the jury for the official competition of Iranian Cinema section on Sunday.

The jury includes directors Mohammadreza Honarmand and Shahram Asadi.

Actress Roya Nonahali, art director and costume designer Iraj Raminfar and cinema critic Akbar Nabavi are also among the members of the jury.

Producers Mohammad Mehdi Dadgu and Mohammadreza Takhtkeshian are the other members of the jury.

Twenty-eight movies will compete in this section of the festival, which will be held in Tehran and several other Iranian cities from January 31 to February 10.

## 60 countries to host Islamic Revolution Anniversary celebrations

**ART TEHRAN** — The 38th anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution will be celebrated in 80 Iranian cultural attaché offices in 60 countries by different programs during February, director of Iran's Islamic Culture and Relations Organizations (ICRO) Abuzar Ebrahimi-Torkaman announced in a press release on Sunday.

The programs include film weeks, book fairs, lectures, meetings, cultural workshops and several photo, poster and art exhibitions.

# Moradi Kermani's "You're No Stranger Here" translated into Arabic

**CULTURE TEHRAN** — Children's writer Hushang Moradi Kermani's autobiography "You're No Stranger Here" has recently been translated into Arabic.

The book has been rendered into Arabic by Khariyyah Dammak Qasim, an assistant professor and head of the Persian Department at the University of Baghdad, the Persian service of ISNA reported on Sunday.

Majid Shamseddin, a Ph.D. student of Persian literature at Tehran's Kharazmi University, and Persian language scholar Amir-Hossein Mojeiri have also made contributions to the book.

The book, which is scheduled to be published by Khamush Publications in Tehran in the near future, will also contain the Persian text to help Arab students of the Persian language.

Dammak Qasim has previously translated Moradi Kermani's "Water Urn" into Arabic. In addition, his "The Stem End of a Cucumber" was rendered into Arabic by Ahmed Shaban from the Menoufia University in Egypt.

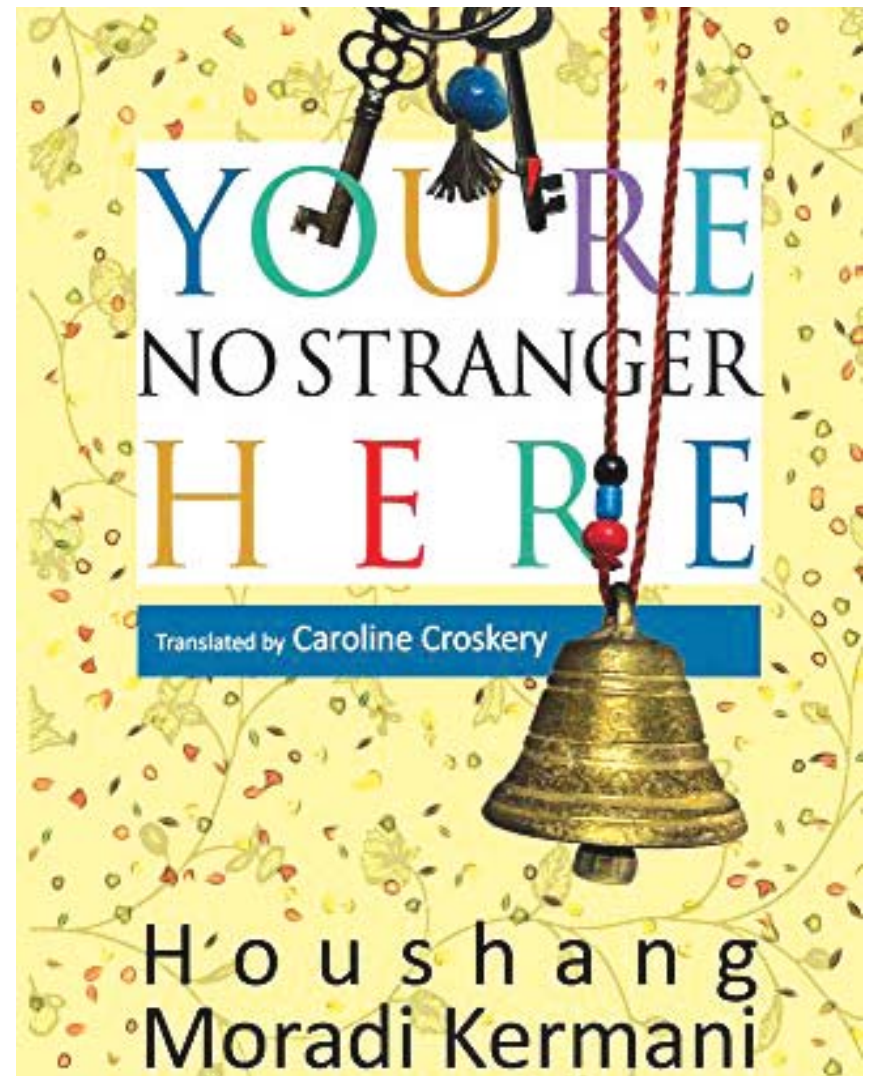
An English translation of "You're No Stranger Here" by

U.S. scholar Caroline Croskery was introduced at the 29th Tehran International Book Fair last May.

Moradi Kermani, 72, is mostly known for "The Stories of Majid", which was turned into a TV series by Kiumars Puraahmad.

He writes for children and teenagers although his works also appeal to adults.

Many of his works, including "The Water Urn" and "A Sweet Jam", have been translated into several languages across the world.



The front cover of the English version of Hushang Moradi Kermani's autobiography "You're No Stranger Here"

## Fajr Intl. Festival of Visual Arts opens in Tehran Museum

**ART TEHRAN** — The 9th edition of the Fajr International Festival of Visual Arts opened in the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art on Sunday.

The ceremony opened with honoring those active in promoting the festival through the past year including news agencies, publications, and cultural

offices.

Mehr News Agency, the news agency that had an active role in covering the news of the festival, was also among the honorees at the opening ceremony.

A collection of 102 works mostly featuring installations and art projects are on display in the competition section, the organizers have announced.

Belgian cartoonist Luc Descheemaeker, Brazilian cartoonist Silvano Mello, and American photographer and artist Eric Tomberlin are the foreign artists competing in the festival this year.

This edition of the festival has been dedicated to a review of artworks from Spain and Brazil. An exhibition of artworks from the two countries is set up

at the festival running until February 18.

The Niavaran Cultural Center is hosting the international section and exhibition of works by prominent Iranian visual artists.

A seminar entitled "Reading Art" has also been arranged on the margins, and the film screening section has been removed from the festival this year.

### PICTURE OF THE DAY Tehran Times/Mohammad Moheimani



Actor Reza Kianian (C) lights a candle among the people gathered in the courtyard of Tehran's City Theater Complex on January 21, 2017 to commemorate the victims of the Plasco Building disaster. The 17-storey commercial center located in downtown Tehran collapsed after a raging inferno last Thursday.

## Pink hats take over Sundance festival as Handler leads Women's March

**PARK CITY, UTAH (Reuters)** — More than 2,000 people took to snow-covered streets during the Sundance Film Festival on Saturday in solidarity with Women's March demonstrations around the United States, organized to show opposition to U.S. President Donald Trump's agenda.

A sea of bright pink knitted hats, a symbol of the movement, stood out on the streets of Park City, Utah, as talk show host Chelsea Handler led the Women's March there. Protesters chanted "Not My President", "Love Trumps Hate" and "Fight Like a Girl."

The demonstration took place during the 10-day Sundance festival for independent film, which takes over the small mountain resort town every year.

A day after the president's inauguration, the Women's March drew

hundreds of thousands of people to the streets of Washington, across the United States and the world to voice opposition to Trump's often angry, populist rhetoric and comments seen as demeaning to women and minorities.

Martina Costello, from Park City, said she was marching because she wanted her children to see "change is possible."

"This gives me chills, it almost brings tears to my eyes," she said.

Handler, who hosts her own Netflix talk show, led the rally after the march, saying the "silver lining" to Trump's election is the movement that has risen against him.

"The groundswell that we needed before that election is happening now. There's something happening and I feel it," she said.

## Juso the bear makes artistic debut at Finnish gallery

**HELSINKI (Reuters)** — Artists usually like to attend the opening of their exhibitions but the painter of the works that went on display at a gallery in Helsinki on Tuesday preferred to carry on hibernating.

The artist behind the exhibition entitled "Strong and soft touches" is a 423-kilogram (930 pound) brown bear named Juso who uses his body, especially his paws, as paintbrushes.

"We just leave paint for him, some plywood and paper ... If we ask him to do it, he doesn't do anything. He does all the work in his own time, when he's alone, sitting and moving his legs on the paper," said Pasi Jantti, one of his keepers.

Juso, who is 17 years old, favors blue and red, the keeper said, adding that the paints used posed no health

risk to the bear.

His keepers discovered Juso's artistic bent one day while painting some facilities at Kuusamo animal center in northern Finland where he has been living since being orphaned as a cub.

"Juso got some paint in his paws and started to make marks with them. We noticed that he liked it," Jantti said.

The center raised about 8,000 euros (\$8,500) by selling 15 paintings produced by Juso. The exhibition now opening at the Ruula gallery in Helsinki features 11 pieces of original work and some prints and are priced from 50 to 4,000 euros.

Some of the paintings still feature bits of Juso's fur. Funds raised from the exhibition will be used to make a documentary about bears.

## Ferguson film "Whose Streets?" aims to show humanity of community

**PARK CITY, UTAH (Reuters)** — The filmmakers of "Whose Streets?", chronicling the uprising in Ferguson, Missouri after the 2014 police killing of unarmed black teenager Michael Brown, said the documentary attempts to show the humanity behind a community in crisis.

"Whose Streets?" premiered at the Sundance Film Festival this week and follows the Ferguson community as they protested Brown's death, which led to weeks of tense unrest that drew worldwide interest.

The film, co-directed by Sabaah Foleyan and Missouri resident Damon Davis, combines social media and amateur footage with original footage depicting the actions of key people in the community.

"When mainstream media isn't committed to solving these problems but is more committed to ratings, when politicians are so partisan that they're confusing us, it becomes up to artists to show people the way," Foleyan said.