



Tehran to host 16th Intl. Gas Union Research Conference in 2020 **4**



Wetlands restoration law declared **12**



Iran win Asian Bodybuilding Championships **15**



Javad Bakhtiari hopes Iran's diplomats mimic Korean envoy's artistic lead **16**

## Qatar leans toward Iran, further irking UAE, S.Arabia



Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani (L), and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani emphasize stronger ties in phone call on May 27, 2017.

### Iran to hold tender for Azadegan project "within days"

Iran will hold a much-awaited tender over the development of a lucrative oil project in its southwestern province of Khuzestan.

Ali Kardor, the managing director of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), told the domestic media that a tender over the development of Azadegan oilfield would be held before Friday.

Kardor added that invitation letters would be sent out to 29 international companies to submit their proposals.

He emphasized that only companies had been invited that were present in Iran's list of eligible companies.

The official added that the companies included Shell, Total, CNPC, Lukoil, Pertamina, OMV, etc.

"Tender documents would be sent to any of those companies that voices interest in Azadegan," said Kardor.

Iran discovered Azadegan oil field in 1999 in what was the country's biggest oil find in decades. The country accordingly teamed up with Inpex to push the project toward development. However, the Japanese company later quit the project in what appeared to be the result of U.S. sanctions against Iran.

The NIOC later divided the project into South Azadegan and North Azadegan and both were awarded to China's CNPC.

The media reported in 2014 that Iran's Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh had sidelined CNPC from South Azadegan due to its protracted delays in developing the field.

(Source: Press TV)

### Saudi Arabia not ready to engage with Iran: former diplomat

**POLITICS** TEHRAN — Former Iranian nuclear negotiator Seyed Hossein Mousavian has said that unlike some regional countries such as Kuwait, Oman and Qatar, Saudi Arabia is not ready to engage with Iran. In an interview with Al Jazeera, Mousavian said the Saudis prefer to ally themselves with Israel rather than Iran, adding that Riyadh has expanded cooperation with Tel Aviv in order to challenge Iran.

He also said that Saudi Arabia and its allies are pouring terrorists — by the tens of thousands — into Syria in order to overthrow the legal government in Damascus.

60 percent of Syria is in the hands of terrorist groups such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda, he

said, adding that Iran is supporting the Assad government which is the legal government in Syria in order to fight the terrorists.

The former diplomat further said Iran is present in Syria upon request by the central government in order to help the Syrian nation take their land back from the foreign-backed terrorists.

"The reason too many Syrian people have been killed is not because of Assad, it's because the other countries recruited tens of thousands of terrorists from all over the world," he noted.

Referring to some Arab countries in the region, Mousavian said they are pouring terrorists into Syria to bring a regime collapse in Syria and to put terrorists in power in Damascus.

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### China ready to fill U.S. vacuum in global trade

By Fatemeh Mohammadipour

**TEHRAN** — Professor Simon Reich of Rutgers University is of the opinion that China is ready to move in to fill the U.S. gap in global trade as China is the greatest beneficiary the current global free trade system.

In an interview with the Tehran Times, Reich says, "China's leadership has already signaled its willingness to fill any void in terms of free-trade leadership vacated by the United States."

What follows is the text of the interview:

■ **The Trump administration withdrew from the Trans-Pacific Agreement and it has adopted a protectionist trade policy. How can it affect Asia?**

A: There is little doubt that the decision of the Trump administration to withdraw from the Trans-Pacific Agreement marks a watershed in American policy. A central component of what former President Obama described as the 'Washington Playbook' has included a commitment to global free trade for the last six decades — including in Asia. **→13**

### Non-oil GDP growth at 4.6% in autumn: CBI

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — The latest report released by the Central Bank of Iran shows the country's non-oil gross domestic product grew by 4.6 percent during the autumn last year.

According to the report, GDP growth, including the oil sector, hit 15.7 percent.

Government revenue amounted to 295.6 trillion rials (about \$7.946 billion) in the said time span.

Moreover, the country's foreign debts stood at \$7.84 billion, its current account balance was \$11.915 billion, and trade balance was \$16.036 billion.

In the last month of autumn (November 21- December 20, 2016) li-

quidity grew by 16.5 percent, the report added.

According to the latest report published by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in mid-May, Regional Economic Outlook, Iran is expected to see non-oil growth accelerate from ¾ percent in 2016 to almost 3½ percent in 2017.

Also, the World Bank, in its January report titled Global Economic Prospects, forecasted a 5.2 percent GDP growth for Iran in 2017.

The report put the country's GDP growth at 4.6 percent in 2016, while it predicted 4.8 percent and 4.5 percent growth for the country in 2018 and 2019, respectively.

### Syria forces make new advances against ISIL

Syria's military and allied fighters have made new advances against the ISIL (Daesh) Takfiri terrorist group and other militants in the country's strategic southern desert.

Various sources, including opposition media channels, confirmed that the government and allied troops had secured a large territory in the Syrian Desert. They said the region covered some key areas that used to be under the control of Daesh and other militant groups that enjoy support from the West.

The Syrian Central Military media said 5,000 kilometers (3,100 miles) in the desert area were secured in the multi-pronged operation, which began more than two weeks ago. The gains restore the government's control over mineral and oil resources, including the key phosphate mines in Khneifis, a major source of revenue for Daesh. Other sources said Syrian forces also recaptured al-Ilianiya, an area controlled by U.S.-backed militants near the border with Jordan. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which advocates Syria's opposition, said Syrian forces had secured a total of 6,000 kilometers (3,700 miles) in the desert since the offensive began earlier this month.

Syrian government forces secure a road for a military convoy in the desert area of Saba' Biyar in southeastern Syria near the border with Iraq on May 10, 2017, amid clashes in the region. (AFP photo)

Experts say gains made on Saturday would significantly boost the morale of the government forces in the battle against militants while they could hugely facilitate the advance toward the province of Dayr al-Zawr, where Daesh holds a grip. The advances also widen the government's control south of Palmyra in Homs province while the highway linking Palmyra to the capital Damascus would also be secured.

The advance could apparently irk the United States, which had deployed troops to southeastern Syria to support militants. Washington even launched an airstrike on a convoy and a base of Syrian fighters deployed to the area on May 18. U.S. officials said after the attack that they were deeply concerned about the safety of troops and allies who are allegedly fighting Daesh in southeastern Syria. (Source: SANA)

### G7 talks: Trump isolated over Paris climate change deal

Leaders of the G7 group of rich nations have failed to agree a statement on climate change.

Six world leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the Paris accord, the world's first comprehensive deal aimed at reducing greenhouse emissions.

However, the U.S has refused to recommit to the agreement, saying it will make a decision next week.

Trump, who once dismissed global warming as a "hoax", has previously threatened to pull out of the accord.

The Axios news site, quoting three sources, later reported that Trump had told mem-

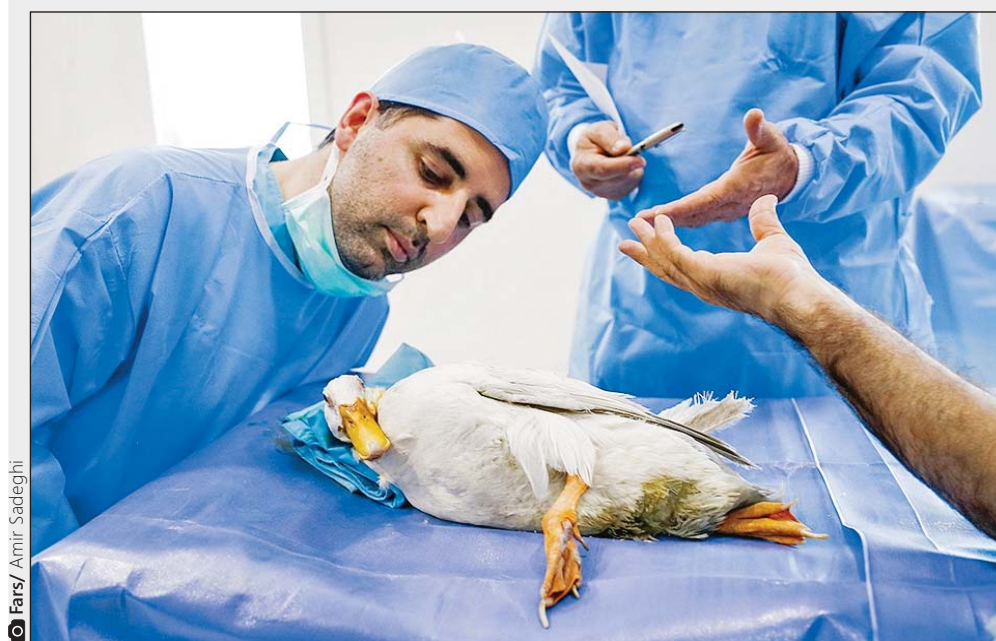
bers of his inner circle that the U.S. will withdraw from the Paris agreement.

This is Trump's first G7 summit - during his first foreign trip.

G7 leaders from the U.S., Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Japan have agreed a statement on fighting terrorism.

The final communique issued at the G7 summit in Italy said the U.S. "is in the process of reviewing its policies on climate change and on the Paris Agreement and thus is not in a position to join the consensus on these topics".

However, the other G7 leaders pledged to "reaffirm their strong commitment to swiftly implement the Paris Agreement".



Fars/ Amir Sadeghi

### Duck undergoes cataract surgery in Tabriz

Iranian ophthalmologist Behnam Ghafarzadeh examines a duck that has just undergone cataract extraction at the surgeon's office in the northwest city of Tabriz, May 25, 2017.

The 9-year-old duck had lost sight in one eye due to an injury that resulted in developing the disease. Iranian media say such operation on birds is unprecedented in the country.



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MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Iran to launch 1st sensor-operational satellite

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** —The director of the Iran desk Space Research Center has announced that Iran will send a new home-made sensing-operational satellite, named “Soha”, next year.

Elaborating on the satellite’s capabilities, Hassan Haddadpour said it can detect objects with the resolution of 15m and will be deployed in the 36,000-km orbit, Fars reported on Sunday.

ICT Minister Mahmoud Vaezi announced earlier this month that two new home-made satellites, namely Nahid 1 (Venus 1) and Payam-e Amir Kabir, were ready for launch.



Vetting bodies verify council election results in Tehran

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Two bodies tasked with overseeing elections have officially validated the results of the May 19 council election in Tehran.

Speaking to reporters on Sunday, Alireza Rahimi, director of the supreme council for overseeing Tehran province’s council election, said 190 election complaints had been received, but all of them were rejected after investigation, IRNA reported.

Most of the election complaints were from the Khedmat (service) list, which lost the election, he said.



Islamic Coalition Party thanks people for high turnout

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — The Islamic Coalition Party, who nominated Mostafa Mirsalim as its presidential candidate, has thanked the people for their huge turnout in election on May 19.

In an announcement published on Sunday, the party said the multiplicity of candidates is an indication that the Islamic establishment puts itself entirely at the mercy of people’s choice.

The party further said its presence among candidates was a start for a more vigorous political activity in the future.



National youth organization to be reinstited

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — The defunct national youth organization is going to be reinstited, according to the deputy sports and youth minister.

Speaking on Sunday, Mohammad Reza Rostami said, “The president has ordered the reinstition. The Official and Employment Organization has prepared the bill and now the cabinet is going to have a say on it.”

He hoped that the bill finds its way to the Majlis in near future.



VP congratulates Azerbaijan on Republic Day

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — The first vice president of the Islamic Republic of Iran has congratulated the neighboring country of Azerbaijan on Republic Day.

In a message to Azerbaijan’s Vice President and First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva on Sunday, Es’haq Jahangiri felicitated his counterpart as well as Azerbaijan’s government and people on the national occasion, the Iranian government’s website reported.

He hoped that the goodwill of the leaders of both countries would lead to more robust mutual ties.



Reformist Pezeshkian runs for Majlis speakership

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Reformist MP Masoud Pezeshkian has signed up for the candidacy of Majlis speakership, local news outlets reported on Sunday.

MP Alireza Rahimi said the Omid (Hope) faction unanimously chose Pezeshkian as their candidate for the post, ISNA reported.

The faction made the decision after long talks with other parliamentary groups failed to make them agree on a jointly-backed candidate, he added.

The Majlis is going to vote on a new speaker on Wednesday.

# Qatar leans toward Iran, further irking UAE, S.Arabia

Iranian reelected president and Qatari emir emphasize stronger ties

By Ali Kushki

**TEHRAN** — In a telephone call with Qatari Emir Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, Iranian reelected President Hassan Rouhani said Tehran and neighboring Arab states can mend strained ties through “strong will”, challenging U.S. President Trump’s call on the nations to “isolate Iran”.

“One of our foreign policy principles is to continue cooperation with neighboring countries in the Persian Gulf region” the state news agency IRNA quoted Rouhani as telling Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani late on Saturday. “We believe the two sides can remove existing barriers and boost fraternal bonds through strong will.”

Rouhani further told the Qatari emir: “The countries of the region need more cooperation and consultations to resolve the crises in the region and we are ready to cooperate in this regard.”

In a press conference held two days after his reelection, Rouhani said Iran welcomes better relations with its neighbors, emphasizing that stability could not be achieved in the Middle East without Tehran’s help.

Hours after the call, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei lambasted Saudi Arabia for getting closer to the U.S. and killing Yemenis, saying: “Those who commit such measures against Muslims are illegitimate and the illegitimate will certainly face decline and collapse”, according to his official website.

Iran and the Persian Gulf Arab states, particularly Saudi Arabia, align with opposing sides in the wars in Syria, and

**President Rouhani says one of Iran’s foreign policy principles is to continue cooperation with neighboring countries in the Persian Gulf region.**



Qatari Emir Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani

the unrest in Bahrain. Iran is also a vocal critic of the Saudi invasion of Yemen.

Relations came under further strain as Trump, in his speech on Sunday in Riyadh, spoke of a stronger alliance with mostly Sunni Muslim nations to fight terrorism and extremist ideology and to push back against Iran.

Iran says Saudi Arabia is the real financier of Islamist militants and spreads an intolerant creed that fuels terrorism and threatens minorities.

As archrivals, Tehran and Riyadh have had no political relations for more than a year after Riyadh summoned its diplomats from Tehran in the aftermath of attacks on its diplomatic missions in Iran by angry mobs.

The storming came after Riyadh’s execution of Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr, an outspoken opponent of the Saudi kingdom.

Already infuriating Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates for reportedly calling Iran a “big power”, Qatari Emir Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani called for closer ties with Tehran during the phone call.

## West should heed Iran’s security concerns: UK envoy



**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — The British Trade Envoy to Iran, Norman Lamont, has criticized U.S. President Donald Trump’s treatment of Iran, saying “no attention is paid to the insecurity of Iran while the West goes on pouring arms to the enemies of Iran, a country that has been invaded by its Arab neighbors.”

It came after U.S. President Donald Trump’s visit to Saudi Arabia and Israel, during which Trump singled out Iran as the world’s biggest sponsor of terrorism, saying, “For decades, Iran has fueled the fires of sectarian conflict and terror.”

In a television interview with Bloomberg, Lord Lamont said that Trump’s recent statement about the Islamic Republic during his visit to Saudi Arabia was a “mistake” and that Tehran deserves a better reaction from the West.

Calling for “a little bit more understanding of the Iranian position,” he said Trump should assure Tehran that “not only doesn’t the West seek regime change in Iran, but it calls for better ties.”

President Rouhani was quite outspoken during his election campaign not just about getting trade and investment into Iran but also about improving relations with the outside world, he said.

Noting that Rouhani specifically mentioned its Arab neighbor Saudi Arabia and said there is no need for this tremendous hostility between the two, Lamont said he felt it was sad that “Trump could not even acknowledge when he was in Saudi Arabia what President Rouhani had said.”

During his visit to Riyadh which was his first foreign trip since he took office, Trump signed a \$110 billion military deal with the Saudis, a deal said to be one of the biggest arms sales in history.

“I do not think the American people are ready to trade the lives they lost in Sept. 11 with billions of dollars gained through weapons sales,” said Rouhani in a news conference days after his landslide victory.

The Iranian president further said that Riyadh cannot solve terrorism just by giving their people’s money to a superpower.

Rouhani, who was re-elected as Iran’s president for another four years on May 19, denounced Saudi Arabia as an undemocratic state which “I doubt knows the definition of elections.”

“Mr. Trump arrived in the region at the time when he saw 45 million Iranians participating in the elections,” he said, expressing hope that one day Saudi Arabia chooses the same path.

## Russian ambassador: Iran not a threat to region



**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Russian Ambassador to Tehran Levan Dzagharyan has dismissed claims by the Saudi kingdom that Iran is a threat to regional countries, noting even Iran has been seeking to reach out to Arab countries including Saudi Arabia.

“So far, we have witnessed that Iranian Foreign Minister [Mohammad Javad Zarif] has announced readiness to have cooperation and constructive relations with the regional countries and Zarif has even announced that Iran is ready to have constructive dialogues with Saudi Arabia,” Dzagharyan said in an interview with Mehr news agency published on Sunday.

U.S. President Donald Trump visited Riyadh on May 20-21. During the visit the U.S. and Saudi Arabia signed 110 billion dollars arms deal, one of the greatest arms deal in history. While in Riyadh both Trump and King Salam claimed that Iran is supporting violent extremism.

“From Russia’s point of view, Iran poses no threat against Saudi Arabia and other regional countries, so these countries [in the region] do not need to be armed by the U.S.” the ambassador noted, adding purchasing arms is not necessary as it does not help regional stability.

Dzhagaryan said that Iran has never supported terrorism and is instead a victim of terrorism.

The diplomat said Iran has emerged as a great force against terrorism, not

The development comes just days after Qatar attended a Muslim summit in Riyadh, during which, Trump called for formation of a bloc against Iran.

Rouhani hit back hard by dismissing the summit as a “ceremonial (event) that had no political value and will bear no results”.

Before the speech, Trump held individual meetings with leaders of several nations, including Egypt and Qatar.

During his Riyadh visit, Trump also signed an agreement with members of the (Persian) Gulf Cooperation Council, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, on terrorism financing.

Reportedly, the Trump administration is coming under pressure to review its alliance with Qatar in view of its support for Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood.

Qatar has been at odds with the Arab states over the extent of its support for the Muslim Brotherhood.

Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain withdrew their ambassadors from Doha in 2014 for eight months after disagreements over Qatar’s support for the Muslim Brotherhood.

Kuwait’s foreign minister met Qatar’s ruler on Friday for talks that appeared aimed at trying to ease renewed tensions between Qatar and fellow Arab states over its policy toward Iran and regional Islamist groups.

Reuters quoted an Arab official as saying that Kuwait’s emir had offered during a conversation with Sheikh Tamim to mediate and host talks to ensure the feud does not escalate.

**“The countries of the region need more cooperation and consultations to resolve the crises in the region and we are ready to cooperate in this regard.”**

ing Iran is playing an important role in establishing stability in the region.

Elsewhere, he said that Russia is very happy that it is cooperating with Iran in the war against terrorists in Syria.

Iran and Russia have close stance on the Syrian crisis, he added.

Commenting on the process of the Astana talks on Syria, Dzagharyan said the talks will not be successful without involvement of Iran and Turkey.

Iran, Russia and Turkey have brokered talks in Astana, Kazakhstan, between the warring sides in Syria in effort to find a solution to the long-running conflict in the country.

The new round of the Astana talks will start on May 3.

Previous rounds of Astana talks were held in January, February and March.

**■ Iran’s missile tests do not violate JCPOA**

The Russian ambassador also said Iran has been showing strong commitment to its obligations in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action - the official name for the international nuclear deal - and that its missile tests do not violate the nuclear deal.

The UN Security Council Resolution 2231, which endorsed the nuclear deal between Iran and great powers including Russia, calls upon Iran “not to undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using such ballistic missile technology.”



# North Korea leader Kim guides test of new anti-aircraft weapon

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has supervised the test of a new anti-aircraft weapon system and ordered its mass production and deployment throughout the country, the state news agency reported on Sunday, after weeks of defiant ballistic missile tests.

The North's KCNA news agency did not report the exact nature of the weapon or the time of the test but said it was organized by the Academy of National Defense Science, a blacklisted agency that is believed to be developing missiles and nuclear weapons.

The North has been pushing to develop a wide range of weapon systems since early last year at an unprecedented pace including a long-range missile capable of striking the mainland United States and has in recent weeks tested its intermediate-range ballistic missile, making some technical advances.

The reclusive state rejects UN and unilateral sanctions by other states against its weapons program as an infringement of its right to self-defense and says the program is necessary to counter U.S. aggression.

It last conducted a ballistic missile test a week ago.

The United States denies any intention to attack the North.

"Kim Jong Un ... watched the test of a new type of anti-aircraft guided weapon system organized by the Academy of National Defense Science," KCNA said on Sunday.

"This weapon system, whose operation capability has been thoroughly verified, should be mass-produced to deploy all over the country ... so as to completely spoil the enemy's wild dream to command the air, boasting of



air supremacy and weapon almighty," it said.

KCNA said Kim was accompanied by his military aides and listed the three men believed to be the top officials in the country's rapidly accelerating missile program.

They are Ri Pyong Chol, a former top air force general; Kim Jong Sik, a veteran rocket scientist; and Jang Chang Ha, the head of the Academy of

National Defense Science, a weapons development and procurement center.

North Korea said on Monday it had successfully tested what it called an intermediate-range ballistic missile that met all technical requirements and could now be mass-produced, although outside officials and experts questioned the extent of its progress.

On Tuesday, the head of the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency said that

if left unchecked, North Korea is on an "inevitable" path to obtaining a nuclear-armed missile capable of striking the United States.

Appearing at a Senate hearing, Defense Intelligence Agency Director Vincent Stewart declined to offer a time estimate but Western experts believe the North still needed several years to develop such a weapon.

(Source: Reuters)

## Two men stabbed to death on Oregon train trying to stop anti-Muslim rant

A man fatally stabbed two passengers aboard a Portland, Oregon, commuter train after they tried to stop him from harassing two young women who appeared to be Muslim, police said.

Police identified the assailant, who was arrested soon after the Friday afternoon attack, as Jeremy Joseph Christian of Portland, a 35-year-old convicted felon.

A senior researcher with the Southern Poverty Law Center, in a blog post, said Christian's Facebook page showed he held "some racist and other extremist beliefs."

The attack unfolded hours before the start of Ramadan, Islam's holy month, when most of the world's 1.6 billion Muslims observe a daily religious fast.

"It's too early to say whether last night's violence was an act of domestic terrorism or a federal hate crime," Loren Cannon, special agent in charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Oregon told a news conference on Saturday, adding the bureau had joined the investigation.

Christian started shouting ethnic and religious slurs, apparently at the two young women, one of whom wore a Muslim head-covering, the Portland Police Department said in a statement.

Three men who intervened were stabbed. Ricky John Best, 53, of Happy Valley, Oregon died at the scene, while Taliesin Myrddin Namkai Meche, 23, of Southeast Portland died at a hospital, police said. A third victim, Micah Da-

vid-Cole Fletcher of 21, Southeast Portland, remained in a local hospital with serious but non-life-threatening injuries, police said.

Christian was booked on two counts of aggravated murder and charges of attempted murder, intimidation and being a felon in possession of a restricted weapon, and was ordered held without bail. His arraignment is scheduled for Tuesday.

The women, who had left the train before officers arrived, were later in contact with authorities, according to police, who have not released their identities.

Dyjuana Hudson, the mother of one of them, told The Oregonian newspaper her 16-year-old daughter, who is black, boarded the train with a Muslim friend, also a teenager, who was wearing a hijab.

The attacker approached the girls while screaming at them, Hudson told the newspaper, relaying an account her daughter had given her. "He was saying that Muslims should die," Hudson said.

On Friday, police said detectives wanted to speak to the two women. A detective later took a statement from her family, Hudson told the paper. She could not be reached for comment.

Police declined to release details of Christian's criminal history, but the newspaper reported he had been convicted of robbery, kidnapping and weapon charges, citing court records. It was not immediately clear if he had obtained an attorney.

(Source: AP)

## Egypt launches 2nd day of Libyan air strikes after attack on Christians

Egypt launched a fresh round of air strikes over Libya on Saturday, Egyptian military sources and an eyewitness said, targeting militant camps it said were responsible for a shooting spree that killed dozens of Egyptian Christians.

On Friday, Egyptian fighter jets struck eastern Libya just hours after a shooting that killed 29 and wounded 24 in the southern Egyptian province of Minya when masked militants boarded vehicles en route to a monastery and opened fire at close range.

ISIL terrorist group claimed responsibility for the attack, the latest directed at Egypt's increasingly embattled Christian minority following two church bombings last month that killed more than 45, also claimed by the group.

President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi said on Friday he had ordered air raids on militant camps in Libya, where he said the Minya gunmen had trained, though he did not name a specific group responsible.

Sisi, who has presented himself as a bulwark against militants in the region, said Egypt would not hesitate to carry out additional strikes inside and outside the country to quash future threats.

Two military sources told Reuters that three additional air raids on Saturday morning struck the area of Derna, a city where east Libyan forces led by Khalifa Haftar, a close ally of Egypt, have been trying to gain control from extremists and other opponents.

A source in Haftar's Libyan National

Army told Reuters that they had coordinated with Egyptian counterparts to strike ammunition stores belonging to the Derna Mujahideen Shura Council, an extremist umbrella group that opposes ISIL.

A resident in Derna told Reuters that warplanes were seen striking the Dahr Al-Hamar area in the southern part of Derna. Egypt's military spokesman declined to comment on the second round of strikes.

Egypt's foreign ministry said it had delivered a letter on Saturday to the United Nations Security Council informing it that the strikes were conducted as an act of legitimate self-defense, according to a ministry statement.

Derna has a history of Islamist militancy and is where ISIL set up its first presence in Libya in 2014. However, the militant group was later chased from the city by local fighters and rival Islamists.

The east Libyan air force said Friday the strikes were targeting al-Qaeda linked forces and did not mention ISIL.

Egypt's military said in a statement it had "conducted several intensive day and night-time strikes" that successfully destroyed many targets, including training camps responsible for the Minya attack.

A video uploaded to the military's Facebook page depicted fighter jets being armed with missiles and taking off as well as aerial footage of air strikes.

(Source: Daily Star)

## Qatar dispute revives row with Persian Gulf neighbors

A recent alleged hacking of Qatar's official state news agency has sparked a row with its Arab neighbors in the Persian Gulf, with analysts predicting that it could even fuel old tensions in the region.

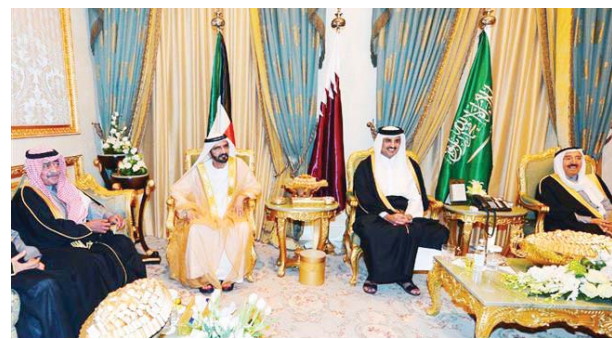
Earlier this week, Qatar's state-run news agency released comments attributed to Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani on sensitive issues.

The Qatari emir was quoted as describing Iran as an "Islamic power" and "big power in the stabilization of the region."

He was also cited as questioning U.S. President Donald Trump's hostility towards Tehran, speaking of "tensions" between Doha and Washington, praising Hamas resistance movement as "the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people," and threatening to withdraw ambassadors from a range of Middle Eastern countries.

The Qatari government communications office was quick to claim that hackers had broken into the QNA website and published the fake news.

However, the Qatari state television's nightly newscast had showed clips of the monarch at an official military ceremony with a scrolling ticker at the bottom of the screen showing the same remarks.



They included reference that Qatar had "strong relations" with Iran. "Iran represents a regional and Islamic power that cannot be ignored and it is unwise to face up against it," the ticker read at one point. "It is a big power in the stabilization of the region."

Afterwards, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) blocked access to Qatari media, including Al Jazeera and Egypt accused the international news channel of "inciting terrorism" and "fabricating news."

**Christopher Davidson of Durham University said the recent developments reflected a "serious fracture between the two different camps in the Persian Gulf," adding, "The divisions remain very deep about the vision for the region."**

Qatari Foreign Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani then said his country was being targeted in a "hostile media campaign."

Analysts said on Saturday that the developments appeared to have once again set Qatar against its rivals in the regions.

Doha has long has faced criticism from its Arab neighbors over its support for Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood.

Back in 2014, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the UAE withdrew their ambassadors from Qatar in protest at what they called Doha's "interference in their internal affairs."

Christopher Davidson of Durham University said the recent developments reflected a "serious fracture

between the two different camps in the Persian Gulf," adding, "The divisions remain very deep about the vision for the region."

Kristian Ulrichsen of Rice University also told AFP that a possible revival of a 2014 rift between Qatar and its neighbors "will depend on whether the issue continues to escalate or is quietly dropped."

"The apparent blocking of Al Jazeera's website and Qatar TV in Saudi Arabia and the UAE is an indication that deeper tensions may indeed be at play," he said.

"It may be the case that the Saudis and Emiratis feel emboldened by the success of their re-set of ties with the [U.S. President Donald] Trump presidency to become more assertive in regional affairs," he added.

(Source: Press TV)

## Germany to decide about troop withdrawal from Turkey by mid-June

Germany, whose relations with Turkey have been strained by a series of rows, will decide within two weeks whether to withdraw troops deployed at Turkey's Incirlik air force base, a German Foreign Ministry official said on Sunday.

Roughly 250 German troops are based at Incirlik to help in the fight against ISIL terrorist group.

Germany said last week it was considering moving its soldiers from Incirlik to Jordan or another country in the region because the Turkish government refuses to grant German lawmakers access to the site.

Ties between NATO allies Germany and Turkey have deteriorated sharply after a succession of diplomatic rows.

Most recently, Turkey has expressed anger that Germany is granting asylum to Turks accused of participating in a failed coup in July. The failed putsch prompted a purge of the Turkish military, judiciary and civil service.

"We're still holding talks with the Turkish side about Incirlik and we will work on a solution until mid-June," said the German Foreign Ministry official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Turkish officials have told Reuters a visit by German lawmakers to the German soldiers at Incirlik would not be appropriate at the moment.

(Source: Reuters)

## Iraqi army to reach Mosul's Old City 'in three days'

The Iraqi army says it hopes to capture the last ISIL (Daesh) terrorist group enclaves outside Mosul's Old City in the next 72 hours, as fighting continued on the second day of a new push to drive the armed group from its remaining pockets in its stronghold in Iraq.

Security forces and their allies on Saturday ramped up an operation that began seven months ago, launching an assault from three fronts to close in on ISIL positions in the neighborhoods of Shifa, Zinjili and Saha.

The head of the Iraqi operation said his forces are pushing ISIL fighters back, despite facing strong resistance.

"The fighting is fierce, but our forces managed to kill a number of ISIL fighters, including four suicide attackers," Major General Maan al-Saadi, said.

"The battle and the advances are continuing. I guess in 72 hours we will be able to take full control of these neighborhoods, and then we can say that we have besieged the whole Old City of Mosul."



The Iraqi military announced the beginning of the operation in a statement released on Saturday one day after the air force dropped leaflets urging residents in Mosul's Old City center to flee through safe corridors.

On Friday, Stephen O'Brien, United Nations under-secretary-general for humanitarian affairs, estimated that as many as 200,000 Iraqis may flee Mosul in the coming days.

Reports say almost 760,000 people have

already escaped the embattled Iraqi city over the past months.

Civilians trapped in Mosul suffer from a dire lack of food, water and fuel while they have limited access to hospitals.

Mosul fell to Daesh in 2014, when the terrorist outfit began its campaign of death and destruction in Iraq.

Since October 2016, the Iraqi army soldiers and allied volunteer fighters have been leading a major operation to recapture Mosul.

Iraqi forces took control of eastern Mosul in January and launched the battle in the west in February.

The operation has taken longer than planned as Takfiri elements are dug in among civilians and are fighting back with car bombs, booby traps, mortar fire and snipers.

The full liberation of Mosul would likely spell the end for the Iraqi half of Daesh's so-called caliphate.

(Source: agencies)



NEWS IN BRIEF



IGRC

International Gas Union

Research Conference Rio 2017


Tehran to host 16th Intl. Gas Union Research Conference in 2020

ENERGY

TEHRAN

— The International Gas Union (IGU) has selected Iran to host the 16th International Gas Research Conference in 2020 (IGRC 2020), Shana reported on Saturday quoting a gas official as saying.

According to Saeed Pakseresht, director of research and technology at National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC), the announcement was made at the closing ceremony of the 15th edition of the event which was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from May 24 to 26.



2017

AGRIANIMALS.KZ

EXHIBITIONS

TCCIMA to dispatch trade delegation to Kazakhstan late June

ECONOMY

TEHRAN

— Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) will dispatch a trade, marketing, and investment delegation to Kazakhstan from June 27 to July 1, the official website of TCCIMA announced.

The visit will be paid at the same time as the Kazakhstan International Exhibition of animal husbandry and poultry breeding «AGRIANIMALS.KZ-2017», which will be held from June 28 to 30, and seems a proper chance for Iranian producers to compete with their international rivals in exports of meat, eggs, fisheries, protein and dairy products, as well as the refrigerating machinery, slaughtering equipment, processing and disposal of wastes and etc.

Also, Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPO) had previously announced that it will dispatch a trade, marketing, and investment delegation to Kazakhstan from June 28 to 30 to visit the event.



Iran plans for stronger status of IRISL in global marine transport

ECONOMY

TEHRAN

— Given removal of sanctions against Iran, the government plans for more strengthening of the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL) in the world's marine transportation, IRNA reported on Sunday quoting Mohammad Baqer Nobakht, the government spokesman as well as head of the Management and Planning Organization, as saying.

IRISL has resumed its routes to various destinations across Europe in the post-sanction time, IRISL managing director Mohammad Saeedi said last April.

The sanctions barred IRISL fleet of about 170 vessels from sailing in international waters. They also prohibited international shipping companies from calling on Iranian ports.

International shipping lines have been stepping up port calls to Iran as the country's massive maritime trade sector emerged from sanctions.

EU workers look elsewhere for jobs as UK loses appeal

Fewer European workers want to move to jobs in the UK as Brexit appears to have made foreign staff think twice about coming to the country.

Meanwhile, more people in Britain are looking for work abroad, particularly in Ireland, according to data from jobs website Indeed.



Fewer overseas EU residents are searching for jobs in the UK  
CREDIT: ANDREW COWIE/EPA

The number of searches for UK jobs from other EU countries fell sharply in the wake of the Brexit vote and has remained low – so far this year it is down 18pc.

The UK is still the most popular destination in Europe among jobseekers, with 33.8pc of all searches, but that is down from 37.2pc last year.

Meanwhile the number of searches for Irish jobs from the UK are up 11pc.

“Overall, we are seeing a sharper and longer decline in interest in working in the UK than in previous ‘shock drops’ following last year’s referendum,” said economist Mariono Mamertino at Indeed. “As Brexit moves from rhetoric to reality, the strain on Britain’s strong but tight labour market will worsen.

“While European traffic to the UK has declined, Indeed is noting that countries like Ireland, followed by France and Germany, could be benefiting from additional interest levels from European jobseekers.”

Despite the strong supply of workers from elsewhere in the EU, UK unemployment has fallen to 40-year lows. In March the unemployment rate fell to 4.6pc, the lowest level since the mid-Seventies.

(Source: The Telegraph)

Ground laid for South Pars phase 11 implementation: POGC head

ENERGY

TEHRAN

— The ground is laid for the implementation of phase 11 of developing South Pars gas field (in the Persian Gulf), Mohammad Meshkinfam, the managing director of Pars Oil and Gas Company (POGC), which is in charge of developing the gas field, told Tasnim.

“All required studies have been conducted and we are just waiting for the Oil Ministry’s approach and also approval to sign the related deals with the contractors”, Meshkinfam added.

The POGC’s managing director further put the in-situ gas reserve of the phase 11 at about 21 trillion cubic feet and said 2 billion cubic feet (56 million cubic meters) of gas will be extracted from the field per day.

In early November last year, Iran signed a \$4.8 billion agreement on development of phase 11 with France and China.

The deal which was in the form of a heads of agreement (HOA) document based on Iran’s new oil contracts (known

as IPC) was signed between National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) and a consortium including France’s Total, China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) and Petropars, a subsidiary of NIOC.

Total, Petropars and CNPC would have 50.1, 19.9 and 30 percent of stakes in the project, respectively.

Total’s chief executive Patrick Pouyanne said last week that the company plans to conclude the Iran South Pars gas deal before summer.

Pouyanne said the signing of U.S. sanctions waivers, among other hurdles, cleared the path for the deal to be signed.

Total said earlier in February that a final decision on the deal hinged on the new U.S. administration renewing the waivers.

Focusing on enhancing rate of oil recovery by implementing modern technologies in this phase will make it the South Pars’s technology transfer center. POGC is constructing a modern platform designed to increase gas pressure in this phase.



Chinese market, German innovation a recipe for success

Combining German technology with Chinese efficiency, innovation is a key-word in Sino-German economic cooperation, say attendees at the Asia-Pacific Weeks (APW) event in Berlin.

The 12th APW, taking place from May 15 to 28, is a unique platform in Europe for interdisciplinary dialogue and cooperation between Asia and Europe.

The China Forum attracted more than 100 Chinese and German delegates from governments, enterprises, industry organizations and institutions to discuss innovation in the Sino-German economic and trade relationship.

Growing presence

Despite sluggish global growth, Sino-German cooperation remains strong and there are frequent high-ranking visits between the two sides, Zhang Junhui, minister of the Chinese embassy in Germany, said during the forum, adding that Chinese leaders are expected to visit Germany later this year.

Data show that the trade volume between the two countries reached 170 billion euros (about 190 billion U.S. dollars) last year and China surpassed the United States to become Germany’s largest trading partner, Zhang said.

According to Zhang, there are currently some 8,200 German companies operating in China and over 2,000 Chinese companies in Germany.

According to Germany Trade and Invest (GTAI), a Berlin-based foreign trade and investment promotion agency, China invested in 281 projects last year in Germany, holding its position as the largest foreign direct investor nation in Germany for the third consecutive year.

“China has been the country with the largest number of investment projects in Germany for three consecutive years, which shows the trust of Chinese companies in Germany as an investment destination,” said Benno Bunse, CEO of GTAI.

“Through investment in Germany,

more and more Chinese enterprises are able to explore the international market and to enhance their own brands and technology,” he added.

Best combination

China is one of the most important overseas markets for ALBA, said Zhang Pei, Berlin Representative ALBA China at ALBA Group, which focuses on waste disposal and resource regeneration.

She said during a discussion panel that German companies have good technology patents, but it would still be difficult for them to be successful when they go to China single-handedly.

The best way to success is to find a Chinese partner with an international perspective on the Chinese market, in order to adapt the German technology to actual practices in the Chinese market, she said.

Under the current situation, China urgently needs the world’s leading solutions to solve its own problems related

to urban waste. Meanwhile, German companies like ALBA also need broader markets after years of development in the German domestic market, according to Zhang.

“China’s broad market and German technology is the best combination,” she believed.

Zhang was echoed by Markus Gerlach, representative of German company CNP-Technology Water and Biosolids GmbH.

Gerlach told an audience that opportunities should be seized to deepen the cooperation between Sino-German enterprises in the field of water disposal.

The investment in water conservation infrastructure in China has bright prospects and the Chinese government is willing to invest in infrastructure and environmental protection to ensure the quality of economic development, Gerlach said.

(Source: China Daily)

G7 leaders divided on climate change, closer on trade issues

Under pressure from Group of Seven allies, U.S. President Donald Trump backed a pledge to fight protectionism on Saturday, but refused to endorse a global climate change accord, saying he needed more time to decide.

The summit of G7 wealthy nations pitted Trump against the leaders of Germany, France, Britain, Italy, Canada and Japan on several issues, with European diplomats frustrated at having to revisit questions they had hoped were long settled.

However, diplomats stressed there was broad agreement on an array of foreign policy problems, including the renewal of a threat to slap further economic sanctions on Russia if its interference in neighboring Ukraine demanded it.

“We are satisfied by how things went,” said Italian Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni, while acknowledging splits with Washington in some areas. “We do not disguise this division. It emerged very clearly in our conversations.”

Trump himself hailed what he called “a tremendously productive meeting”, saying he had strengthened U.S. ties with longstanding partners.

The president, who has previously called global warming a hoax, came under concerted pressure from the other leaders to honor the 2015 Paris Agreement on curbing carbon emissions.

Although he tweeted that he would make a decision next week, his apparent reluctance to embrace the first-ever legally binding global climate deal that was signed by 195 countries clearly annoyed German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

“The entire discussion about climate was very difficult, if not to say very dissatisfying,” she told reporters. “There are no indications whether the United States will stay in the Paris Agreement or not.”

Putting a positive spin on it, French President Emmanuel Macron said he was sure Trump, who he praised as “pragmatist”, would back the deal having listened to his G7 counterparts.

Brighter skies over Eurozone as growth and employment pick up

What a difference a few months make. As 2017 opened, Eurozone politicians still raw from the shock of the Brexit vote and Donald Trump’s presidential triumph were nervously awaiting elections in the Netherlands and France.

They feared that discontent would propel the populist wave into the heart of Europe and usher in far-right, anti-euro leaders. In the event, the predicted surge for Dutch populist Geert Wilders failed to materialize and in France, Front National candidate Marine Le Pen was decisively beaten by pro-EU centrist Emmanuel Macron.

Now, the economic picture for the cur-

rency union is looking brighter. Unemployment in the bloc is at its lowest for almost eight years and economic growth was 0.5 percent in the first quarter, well ahead of the UK’s 0.2 percent.

Business surveys suggest the new year momentum within the Eurozone carried on in the second quarter. Based on one report, the flash Eurozone PMI (purchasing managers’ index) survey from IHS Markit, growth was at a six-year high in May. The EU recently nudged up its forecast for Eurozone growth this year to 1.7 percent almost matching the 1.8 percent of 2016. It also expects unemployment to keep falling as

the economic recovery finally spreads to all corners of the region.

Experts say it is no coincidence that the approval ratings of populists are fading as the economy strengthens. “Support levels for anti-establishment or populist parties have declined quite sharply over the past few months,” says Andy Cates at Nomura.

He sees a number of causes of the recent strength, including a revival in global growth; improved domestic demand; signs that capital spending is making a comeback; and sharp declines in youth unemployment. In the longer term there will be further support from member nations’ public finances being

in better shape, giving governments more space to shore up the recovery, he adds.

Economists point out that the relationship between brighter economic news and diminishing popularity for anti-establishment parties works both ways. The decline of populism has in turn helped the economy. “It looks like confidence in the European economy is returning rather quickly,” says Bert Colijn of ING bank in Amsterdam. He says the brighter mood is down to the economic strength seen in official figures and surveys, and a change in the political atmosphere since the Dutch and French elections.

(Source: The Guardian)



“Only a few weeks ago, people thought that the United States would pull out and that no talks would be possible,” said Macron, who, like Trump, was making his first G7 appearance.

Merkel, by contrast, was attending her 12th such gathering, and clearly believed she had overcome climate change scepticism at a 2007 summit, when she convinced the then U.S. President George W. Bush to pursue substantial cuts in greenhouse gases.

Protectionism

Disappointment over the Paris Agreement was countered by relief when Trump agreed on Saturday to language in the final G7 communique that pledged “to fight all forms of protectionism” and committed to a rules-based international trade system.

During his election campaign, Trump threatened unilateral tariffs on Mexican and Chinese goods and said he would quit the North American Free Trade agreement unless it was renegotiated to his liking. Earlier this week he called Germany “very bad” on trade because of its U.S. surplus.

In a tweet after his plane took off, Trump said he had had “great meetings on everything, especially on trade”, highlighting the part of the communique which called “for the removal of all trade-distorting practices”.



# OPEC insiders reel after key minister is fired during their meeting

As OPEC ministers gathered in Vienna on May 25 to agree a nine-month extension of their oil-supply pact, the man credited with bringing about the landmark deal learned from a news broadcast that he had been fired.

The story broke as Algerian Energy Minister Noureddine Boutarfa attended a closed session with counterparts early Thursday afternoon. First came an unconfirmed report from an Algerian TV station, according to delegates who were present. More than an hour later, the nation's official APS news agency confirmed it.

It should have been a day of triumph for the man whose dogged diplomacy helped seal the historic alliance between producers of more than half the world's oil, but the decision appears to have been far removed from events unfolding in Vienna. A day earlier, Algeria's prime minister had been ousted, prompting a cabinet reshuffle that included the appointment of Sonelgaz Chief Executive Officer Mustapha Guitouni as energy minister.

In the job less than a year, Boutarfa was widely expected to keep his post following parliamentary elections earlier this month.

"For Boutarfa, I can't see any viable explanation," said Nacer Djabi, a political analyst and sociology professor at the University of Algiers. "All the indications were that he hasn't failed in his mission." The abrupt dismissal showed "flagrant disregard" for his accomplishments, he said.

The decision came amid growing concern about political stability in Algeria, where the collapse of oil prices has put a strain on the economy. The country's 80-year-old president, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, is suffering ill health and has no clear successor.

Boutarfa was caught unawares. As the news swirled around OPEC's Vienna headquarters, where repre-



Algerian Energy Minister Noureddine Boutarfa

sentatives of allies including Russia were arriving to finalize a broader deal, the minister and his delegation kept mum. Once the official confirmation came, Boutarfa is said to have taken some of his peers aside and spoken to them personally. They in turn congratulated him for his achievement, officials said.

Boutarfa declined to comment for this article.

Representing one of OPEC's smallest producers and coming from a country with little international clout, Boutarfa played a key role in a deal many had thought was impossible.

He rose to prominence in September when he hosted an extraordinary meeting in Algiers where OPEC reached a preliminary accord to curb production. Later, Russia and 10 other non-OPEC members joined the six-month pact that ultimately would take as much as 1.8 million barrels a day off the market.

Boutarfa enlisted support by shuttling between capitals, from Paris to Moscow to Baghdad, trips recorded on his ministry's Facebook page. Finally he corralled the ministers in a luxurious but isolated hotel on the

outskirts of Algiers over several days until they hammered out an agreement.

Boutarfa "had a big role in getting all the countries together and making the collaboration a success," Issam Almarzooq, Kuwait's oil minister, told Bloomberg News on Thursday.

The deal marked an abrupt U-turn from a Saudi-led policy to pump at full throttle. It meant clearing what at first seemed almost insurmountable hurdles -- the bitter rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran and the unwillingness of Iraq, Libya, and Nigeria, three producers champing at the bit to restore production they'd lost through internal conflict.

It was the first time OPEC agreed to curtail production in eight years, and would be their first collaboration with Russia -- the world's biggest energy producer -- in 15 years.

"We appreciate all the efforts he put in while he was a minister with us at OPEC and we wish him good luck," Suhail Mohammed Al Mazrouei, the energy minister for the United Arab Emirates, told Bloomberg after the meeting.

(Source: Bloomberg)

# World's largest floating solar plant begins operations in China

China has announced that the World's largest floating solar farm has finally been completed and connected to the local power grid. The plant, located on a coal mining subsidence area in Eastern China's Anhui province has a capacity of 40 megawatts.


Huainan, in Anhui Province is described as a coal-rich city and has been the source of much of the coal used to power the Chinese economy. Yet, the coal mines

are now flooded due to rainy weather and covered with water several meters deep after the surrounding land collapsed in a process known as subsidence following intensive coal mining operations over a period of years.

Built by Chinese photo voltaic manufacturer Sungrow Power Supply Co, the Huainan facility dwarfs the next-biggest floating solar farm -- a 20-megawatt stretch, also in Anhui province.

(Source: digitaljournal.com)

IN THE NAME OF GOD



**INVITATION TO INTERNATIONAL TENDER**  
**No. 370003**  
**KHOUZESTAN STEEL COMPANY INTENDS TO PURCHASE 2,000 MT MEDIUM CARBON FERRO MANGANESE**

INTERESTED BIDDERS MAY OBTAIN SET OF DOCUMENTS, CONTAINING THE RELEVANT TERMS AND CONDITIONS BY SUBMISSION OF A WRITTEN APPLICATION AND PAYMENT OF A NON-REFUNDABLE FEE OF:  
EUR 50 "FIFTY EURO" TO ONE OF BELOW ACCOUNT NO.:  
1) ACCOUNT No. **0100013543943** at "EXPORT DEVELOPMENT BANK OF IRAN, AHVAZ CENTRAL BRANCH"  
2) Account No.: **1902-750-4019644-1** AT "EGHTESAD NOVIN BANK- OF IRAN, AHVAZ SHARIATI BRANCH" OR **RIALS 2,000,000**, "(TWO MILLION RIALS)" TO THE ONE OF BELOW ACCOUNT NO.:  
1) ACCOUNT NO. **0102513186002** AT "MELLI BANK OF IRAN AHVAZ KSC BRANCH"  
2) Account No. **0100304453001** AT "SADERAT BANK OF IRAN AHVAZ KSC BRANCH"  
AND PRESENT THE PAYMENT RECEIPT TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRES:  
**RAW MATERIAL & ENERGY PURCHASING DEPARTMENT**  
**KHOUZESTAN STEEL COMPANY (KSC)**  
**KM 10, AHVAZ – BANDAR IMAM KHOMEINI ROAD**  
**P.O. BOX: 1378**  
**POST CODE: 61397 – 31398**  
**AHVAZ – IRAN**

Note 1: BIDDER SHALL SUBMIT WITH TENDER A BID BOND ISSUED BY AN IRANIAN BANK OR BY A EUROPEAN FIRST CLASS BANK, IN THE AMOUNT OF **90,000 EUR** OR **4,000,000,000 RIAL** FOR **2,000 MT MEDIUM CARBON FERRO MANGANESE** AND MAY REDUCED IN PROPORTION WITH THE QUANTITY OF BIDDERS OFFER.  
Note 2: ALL BIDS MUST BE INFORMED US WHICH PARTICIPATE IN OUR TENDER UP TO 03rd Jun. 2017. WHEN YOUR COMPANY IS CONFIRMED AND THE TENDER DOCUMENT IS SENT TO YOU, YOU MUST BE DELIVERED TO THE AFORESAID ADDRESS ON OR BEFORE THE CLOSING DATE **17th Jun. 2017**. THE OPENING DATE OF ENVELOPES WILL BE AT 10 AM ON THE **18th JUN. 2017** IN THE BUYER'S CONFERENCE ROOM LOCATED AT THE HEAD OFFICE OF KSC AHVAZ-IRAN AND THE BIDDERS OR THEIR AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES CAN ATTEND THE MEETING OF THE TENDER.  
NOTE 3: FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT WITH FOLLOWING DETAILS:

Tel No. : **+98 61 32908114** Fax No. : **+98 61 32908115**  
EMAIL : **F.NOORI@KSC.IR/H.MOHAMMADNEJAD@KSC.IR** OR VISIT:**http://WWW.KSC.IR**

**WITH THE FOLLOWING SPECIFICATIONS:**

Mn	78%	Min
SI	1.2%	Max
C	1.5%	Max
P	0.3%	Max
S	0.02%	Max
Fe	Rest	
Size of Pieces	20-60 mm <20 mm	Min 90% Max 10%
Packing	BULK OR 1MT BIG BAG IN THE 20' CONTAINER	
Delivery Date	July – August (1000MT)	(1000MT)

# IKCO Materializes Its Predefined Objectives Successfully

Iran Khodro Industrial Group took effective steps in recent years for the materialization of its predetermined objectives.

As a result of constructive measures taken by IKCO in the past years, the company brought about valuable results for economy of the country. With improving business environment and developing international cooperation and interaction, IKCO managed to achieve its goals and indicators as determined in car industry of the country in the best form possible.

When the 11th government dubbed "Hope and Prudence" assumed office in August 2013, senior officials at Iran Khodro Industrial Group made their utmost efforts vehemently and focused on manufacturing high-quality cars, the issue of which was taken into serious consideration in this industrial and production unit. After the passage of less than four years from the change of management approaches and methods, this prestigious car manufacturing company managed to act successfully in the path of international cooperation. Not only the company revived the production lines, but also it managed to return a great number of workers in auto parts manufacturing industry once again.

With due observance to the said issue, IKCO's first JV product hit the consumer market in cooperation with one of the world's leading carmakers. Currently, IKCO prides its cooperation and collaboration with one of the world's famous car manufacturers as joint venture (JV).

Moreover reviving stagnant production lines, the company took effective steps in parts manufacturing industry as well.

As the largest car manufacturing company in the country and the Middle East region, Iran Khodro Industrial Group has got the lion's share of car production among other car manufacturers. With the implementation of accurate, logical and on-time policies, Iran Khodro Industrial Group managed to revive car manufacturing industry in the country appropriately. Broadly speaking, IKCO enlivened car production industry on the right path of development and growth once again in the 11th government which had been halted for years.

Promoting market share of car production to more than 50% from 2014 to 2016, getting lion's share of car production at consumer market, implementing and improving projects with the nature of reducing and controlling cost, increasing income, selling stagnant and



noneconomic assets of the company, developing and continuing trend of growth, etc. are of salient achievements which were taken by IKCO in recent years.

**■ Car Production Process**

Car production in Iran Khodro Company (IKCO) experienced a considerable decline in 2012 as a result of international sanctions imposed on the country. However, few cars were manufactured at the company in the same year due to the cruel sanctions imposed against Iran in international arena. In addition, imposition of sanctions against Iran created critical problem in auto parts manufacturing industry of the country. Despite all difficulties and problems faced the company, IKCO managed to settle existing problems successfully and returned the same condition in pre-sanctions period.

Under the wise management of IKCO, car production industry was revived once again in the second half of year1392 (started Sept. 21, 2013). In the same direction, many of auto parts manufacturing plants, which had been shut down previously, restarted their activities with their skilled and expert workers who were out of work due to a series of problem happened in auto parts manufacturing industry. As a result, 365,000 high-quality cars were manufactured in the same year. At the unflinching efforts of industrious engineers and laborers of the company, incomplete and defective cars, which had been manufactured previously, were delivered in a sound and safe condition to its dear customers.

In general, IKCO made huge investment, which had been stagnant for a while, and re-

turned to the right path of production cycle. With the accurate planning made in the beginning of the year 1393 (started March 20, 2014), the company managed to manufacture high-quality cars in its equipped production lines. In the meantime, IKCO manufactured 601,000 passenger cars in 2014, products of which hit the consumer market with high quality. The production growth trend and implementation of projects for improving and promoting quality of products were taken into serious consideration in the company.

Given the above issue, IKCO managed to manufacture 625,000 various types of high-quality passenger cars and pick-up trucks in the past Iranian calendar year in 1395 (from March 20, 2016 to March 20, 2017) and maintained its car production share at the consumer market i.e. more than 50 percent (50%).

It is worth mentioning that IKCO has taken effective and constructive measures in recent years in the field of developing quality of products and managing car market. Moreover, the company is after diversifying basket of its products in line with manufacturing high-quality cars with fair and reasonable price. In general, IKCO has taken giant strides in recent years in the field of gaining satisfaction of its customers favorably coupled with meeting their demands in the best form possible.

Objectives of the said issue have been materialized with re-commissioning of research and development (R&D) center at the company and also accelerating its development projects. Development of projects (platform and driving force) is of the other measures carried out in company's research and development

center.

**■ International Cooperation**

Development of multi-brand cooperation model, exertion of strategic changes in share of foreign partners in products, increase of bargaining power on the way of cooperation with an emphasis in exports and balance of foreign change are of salient measures taken by Iran Khodro Company (IKCO) in cooperation with foreign companies.

In its new model of cooperation with the prestigious foreign car manufacturers, Iran Khodro Company has placed special emphasis on the investment of foreign party in the production lines, so that the company has considered 30-percent export in joint production of car as the most important point in conclusion of contracts. It is necessary to mention that investment of foreign party includes whole value chain, ranging from research and development (R&D) to after-sales services.

It is worth mentioning that IKCO is of the first industrial and production unit in the country that managed to garner benefit of Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the official title of nuclear deal. In this regard, Iran Khodro Company clinched a historic contract with leading French Peugeot Car Mfg. Company after the implementation of JCPOA and took giant stride in the field of manufacturing high-quality car both in domestic and foreign markets.

(It should be noted that a landmark nuclear deal was inked between Iran and P5+1 (the five permanent members of UN Security Council plus Germany) in mid-July 2015 and Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action was put into force in Jan. 2016.)

New round of cooperation between Iran Khodro Company and French Peugeot Car Manufacturing Company began with the establishment of a Joint Venture (JV) Company called IKAP. Under the contract, the two companies pledged to invest jointly within the framework of JV contract. (The joint venture between Iran Khodro and Peugeot -IKAP- has officially started working in a ceremony attended by Iran's Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade in Tehran, Mohammad Reza Nematzadeh.)

Given the above issue, Iran Khodro Company and French Peugeot Company invested in this giant project entitled IKAP as 50-50 percent, the investment of which includes whole value chain of car such as design, research and development (R&D), supplying parts, manufacturing car, selling and marketing, offering

after-sales services and exporting products as JV.

Under the contract, technical knowhow and modern-day technology will be transferred to IKCO in all areas. Conducting research activities jointly in the field of engineering activities, promoting and updating joint platforms and developing new products in this Joint Venture Contract (JV) are of the other cases predicted in this contract which was concluded between IKCO and French Peugeot Car Mfg. Company.

Indigenizing and domesticating jointly produced cars in cooperation with Peugeot Company is of the most important topics of cooperation between IKCO and Peugeot Company. According to the terms and conditions of contract, it has been stipulated that 40 percent of cars manufactured in the country will hit the consumer market before the termination of the first year of contract.

In this contract, IKCO has also obtained the right of using current and future platforms within the framework of IKAP to develop products with its brand and with the platform of Peugeot 208, 301 and 2008.

In the first phase of contract, Peugeot 2008, 301 and 208 passenger cars will hit the consumer market. At the first step, Peugeot 2008 was manufactured and will hit the consumer market in the very near future.

Likewise, some cars with Peugeot brand, which is not economical to be manufactured in the country, will be imported into the country within the framework of "Import Contract" between IKAP and Peugeot Company. These cars will be sold through taking advantage of capacity of IKCO's sales and after-sales services.

Also, changing model of cooperation, creating incentives and motivations for the production of commercial vehicles and investing jointly in the field of supplying passenger cars with the cooperation of prestigious German "Benz" Company as JV are of the other measures taken by IKCO in the area of foreign partnerships.

"Suzuki" Company is of the other leading brand in the world that IKCO has started cooperation with this company for producing car as joint venture (JV).

It is worth mentioning that Iran Khodro Company exported 237,000 high-quality cars to the target markets from 2006 to 2016.

Of total 237,000 cars exported to foreign markets, 104,000 of which belong to SAMAND passenger car. In the meantime, Iraq is IKCO's most important export market.



## Awakening from the Trump nightmare

By Bernard-Henri Lévy

The American people can escape from the ordeal of Donald Trump's presidency in one of three ways. But if and when they do is an irreducibly political question, not one that hinges on legal possibilities.

First, there's the Nixonian method, in which the president, worn down by the fight, simply resigns, scared and unwilling to submit to the proceedings that he sees mounting around him. But could that really be the exit taken by Trump? Does he share with his distant Republican predecessor a strong enough predisposition to melancholy? Can one picture a childish man, compulsive and narcissistic, surrendering without a fight the larger-than-life toy that is the top job in the most powerful country on the planet? I doubt it.

Second, there is Article 4 of the 25th Amendment to the Constitution, ratified in 1967, which spells out a process by which the vice president and cabinet can act to replace a president who has died or is prevented by reasons of health from governing. Such might have been the case, four years earlier, following the assassination of John F. Kennedy, had Kennedy not died from his wounds. The possibility briefly resurfaced when President Ronald Reagan began to show the first signs of Alzheimer's disease.

But the current situation does not resemble those cases. Trump may be unstable and unfit to govern, as his detractors claim. But is he any more so now than he was when the American people elected him? Probably not.

### ■ The remedy of impeachment

Finally, there remains the remedy of impeachment, which is being discussed more and more openly in Washington these days, accompanied (in a sign of the times) by a book, *The Case for Impeachment*, by Allan J. Lichtman. (A political historian, Lichtman is famous for having devised a model that has enabled him to predict the election of every American president from Ronald Reagan to Donald Trump.)

Impeachment, set out in Article 2 of the Constitution, is a procedure for the removal from office of a president, vice president, or other top executive official (or judge) suspected of "treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors." It is a complex process that unfolds in two phases: first, the House of Representatives must decide, by a simple majority, that the charges are serious enough to be tried; second, a full-fledged trial is conducted in the Senate, which must reach a two-thirds majority to convict the official and trigger immediate removal from office.

There are two main reasons to doubt that impeachment would rid the world of Trump. First, there is the balance of power in the Senate. At least 19 Republican senators would have to join the Democrats to convict Trump. At the moment, at most five can be counted on to do so. The only two presidential precedents (Andrew Johnson, impeached in 1868 for abuse of power, and Bill Clinton, impeached in 1998 for perjury and obstruction of justice) are hardly encouraging: both ended in acquittal by the Senate.

Second, there is the reluctance of Democratic Party bosses to see ultraconservative Vice President Mike Pence assume the place vacated by a fallen Trump. Wouldn't he enjoy the same state of grace enjoyed by recent vice presidents who entered the Oval Office under exceptional circumstances (Lyndon Johnson after Kennedy; Gerald Ford after Nixon)? And what if he remained in office, not only for the remainder of Trump's term, but for two four-year terms of his own?

All of this is logical enough. But times have changed since Johnson, Ford, and even Clinton.

### ■ Post-modern democracies

In post-modern democracies, there is one and only one boss: public opinion. And public opinion operates according to its own logic. How long will the American public tolerate the almost-daily doses of new evidence of conflicts of interest, starting with the licensing to Chinese investors, at the height of the presidential primary, of the Trump brand for use on spas, luxury hotels, and other real-estate projects?

What about Trump's financial ties with Russia, and those of his associates, including his former national security adviser, Michael Flynn, and his former campaign manager, Paul Manafort? What leverage can be wielded by the Russian oligarchs who, in 2004, when Trump was mired in one of his bankruptcies, stepped in for the American banks that had blacklisted him to recapitalize his companies and bought – sight unseen and at premium prices – luxury apartments in Trump World Tower? Won't all of this eventually take its toll?

And, finally, there is the gross obstruction of justice represented by the firing of FBI director James Comey, whose main offense seems to have been his refusal to exclude Trump from his investigation of the Russia interference in the 2016 campaign. What will voters make of the damning revelations that are sure to come to light, now that Comey's predecessor, Robert Mueller, has been appointed as special counsel to investigate the ties between Russia and Trump's election campaign?

The signs of public disgust are mounting. A petition drive to impeach Trump, organized by Massachusetts lawyer John Bonifaz, has gathered more than a million signatures. Polls indicate that a majority of the electorate would favor Trump's resignation if it were proved that his campaign colluded with Russia to sway the election. And growing numbers of voters are now saying as much to their representatives, who, sooner or later, will have to start listening if they want to avoid imperiling their own electoral chances.

(Source: project-syndicate.org)

# Why Turkey needs Europe more than Europe needs Turkey

By Simon A Waldman

Following the ghastly attack in Manchester on 22 May, it is unsurprising that terrorism topped the agenda at last week's NATO summit as the alliance pledged to join the anti-Islamic State (ISIL) coalition. In attendance was U.S. President Donald Trump, making sweet with the organization after previously disparaging it on the campaign trail.

However, another important development took place on the sidelines of the summit. Jean-Claude Juncker, the president of the European Commission, together with Donald Tusk, the president of the European Council, met Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, in an attempt to diffuse diplomatic tensions between Ankara and Brussels.

Apparently, the men discussed human rights, the 2016 migrant deal and agreed on the need to cooperate in future.

Never has the gap between Turkey and the EU been so wide. This was highlighted in March when Erdogan aimed some below-the-belt barbs at Germany and Holland along the lines that they behave like Nazis. This was because Berlin and the Hague prevented Turkish politicians from campaigning in those countries ahead of a controversial April referendum to grant Erdogan more powers.

The Turkish president narrowly won his vote, which was described by an EU observer as unfree and unfair. Turkey will now introduce constitutional changes, giving Erdogan additional authoritarian powers. Brussels has to deal with the inconvenient truth that Turkey is no longer a democracy by any stretch of the imagination - but is still banging on the EU's door for membership.

### ■ Turkey needs Europe - and badly

In all probability, man will land on Mars before Turkey joins the EU. Ankara needs to meet the EU's political criteria for accession. Ankara's case is not helped by free, unfair and, say some reports, fraudulent elections; the erosion of checks and balances especially with the judiciary increasingly lacking independence; a continued, perhaps indefinite, state of emergency; and purges of hundreds of thousands of state workers.

But this hasn't stopped Ankara from making demands. Erdogan recently stated that, unless new chapters are opened, Turkey has nothing to discuss.



Turkish president Erdogan (L) with EU council and commission presidents Tusk (C) and Juncker (R).

## Brussels has to deal with the inconvenient truth that Turkey is no longer a democracy by any stretch of the imagination - but is still banging on the EU's door for membership.

An alternative customs union is not something Ankara will accept.

Meanwhile, European countries are being taunted. Berlin is in a rage after access was denied to German politicians wishing to see their troops stationed at the Incirlik base close to Turkey's borders with Iraq and Syria. Deniz Yucel, a German journalist of Turkish origin, remains behind bars in Turkey despite numerous pleas for his release.

Turkey also insists that Europe grant visa-free travel for its citizens as part of the Syrian refugee agreement reached more than a year ago. Brussels is holding out – so Ankara is using the possibility of allowing an influx of Syrian refugees into Europe.

Europe should be more assertive and forthright in future talks with Turkish leaders. Turkey needs Europe badly. Its economy is faltering. Gone are the days of high levels of growth. Instead, unemployment continues to rise, especially among its youthful population.

The country is in a middle-

income trap, its credit rating outlook remains negative and the lira continues its downward trajectory. Europe is Turkey's most important market. Almost 55 percent of Turkey's exports find their way to Europe.

It is also Europe that accounts for the lion's share of foreign direct investment in Turkey. The country's tourism industry has been wrecked by political instability and terrorism. European visitors can be a source of the industry's recovery.

### ■ Europe loses appeal for refugees

Even if Ankara were to tear up the refugee deal, it is unlikely that hordes of migrants would flood Europe. Steps have been taken to tighten border security, especially along the routes across Greece and the eastern Mediterranean.

More importantly, many of Turkey's Syrian refugees do not wish to leave the country. They feel more comfortable in Muslim Turkey and want to be in close proximity to Syria, where many still hope to return to their homes.

Ankara's prevention of German

politicians from visiting their troops is an important misstep. Berlin is now seriously considering moving German forces to Jordan. If Germany manages to do this successfully, then other NATO and European nations, tired of Ankara using the base as a trump card, may follow suit.

This would diminish Turkey's standing in NATO, which has already been hit by Ankara's exclusion of Austria from partnership programs.

Turkey's military effectiveness has also been eroded by the purges which followed last July's failed coup. It is therefore doubtful that Turkey really offers Europe much in military terms. Ankara faces its own terrorism threat: it is in its interests to maintain intelligence sharing and cooperation with Europe.

Ankara needs Brussels more than Brussels needs Ankara. Perhaps a more forceful and forthright Europe will, in the long-term, earn the respect of not just Turkey, but some of its other critics from both within and outside of the union.

(Source: middleeasteye.net)

## More U.S. troops aren't enough to fix Afghanistan

### The key is China's influence on Pakistan

When he meets NATO leaders in Brussels last week, U.S. President Donald Trump was expected to discuss the idea of sending thousands more U.S. soldiers to Afghanistan. They may be needed to shore up beleaguered Afghan forces, but U.S. troops alone cannot end America's longest war.

Gen. John Nicholson, the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, argued in February that he needed reinforcements to roll back a resurgent Taliban. Trump advisers have reportedly recommended sending around 5,000 or more U.S. soldiers, on top of the roughly 8,500 stationed in Afghanistan currently. They'd be assigned as trainers and advisers to the Afghan army, and could call upon U.S. air power under more robust rules of engagement. The U.S. commitment would also be open-ended, with no deadline for withdrawing, in contrast to the surge of eight years ago.

There were roughly 100,000 U.S. troops on the ground after that surge -- yet today the Taliban control more territory than they have at any time since being driven from power in 2001. More than \$65 billion spent on training hasn't produced an Afghan army or police force capable of holding off the Taliban on its own. A power-sharing arrangement in Kabul is perpetually on the verge of collapse. Corruption remains woven into most official dealings. And Taliban leaders could be forgiven for thinking that, deadline or no, a chaotic Trump administration is unlikely to sustain any kind of focus on Afghanistan.

The key to ending the war in Afghanistan is, as it always has been, Pakistan. As long as Taliban fighters enjoy safe haven across the border, they can keep up their insurgency indefinitely. Billions in military aid and years of prodding by the U.S. have failed to convince Pakistani leaders to cut that lifeline. Some of the alternatives now being discussed -- including expanding U.S. drone strikes into Pakistan proper, cutting off military aid and encouraging India to get more involved in Afghanistan -- risk destabilizing a coup-prone nuclear power. Economic sanctions would be ineffective, given Pakistan's deep and growing relationship with China, its biggest trading partner.



## A real effort to constrict the insurgents' freedom of movement within Pakistan could at least drive the Taliban back to the negotiating table.

So the key to Pakistan's cooperation is China. As with North Korea, where Trump has similarly sought Chinese help, this should be in China's interests. A collapse in Kabul would fan the flames of Islamic extremism on China's borders and possibly threaten its multibillion-dollar infrastructure investments in Pakistan.

A real effort to constrict the insurgents' freedom of movement within Pakistan could at least drive the Taliban back to the negotiating table. For its part, the

Trump administration has to develop a diplomatic strategy to deal with them once they do, one that acknowledges the interests of regional players with whom the U.S. has been sparring recently. To help stabilize the Kabul government, shrink the opportunities for corruption and promote Afghan economic development, U.S. diplomats, not just the military, will need reinforcements as well.

(Source: Bloomberg)



# Dangerous Iranophobia: Trump edges towards his own 'axis of evil' moment

By Jonathan Steele

In the international commentary on Donald Trump's repetitive demonising of Iran during his visit to Saudi Arabia, much has rightly been made of the contrast between the Saudi kingdom's denial of democracy to its citizens and the vibrantly unpredictable presidential election in the very country which Trump was criticising.

What has been less noticed is the ominous similarity between Trump's onslaught on Iran and the policy of the last Republican in the White House, George W Bush.

We should remember how Bush Jr treated Iran's then reformist president, Mohammed Khatami, who was attempting to re-engage with the West and work out a compromise on the nuclear issue. Khatami's re-election in 2001 was welcomed by Britain and other European nations who sent their foreign ministers to Tehran to foster mutual engagement.

But in January 2002, Bush - to the surprise of the Europeans as well as the Iranians - labelled Iran as part of an "axis of evil". Hopes for a nuclear deal diminished, and even though Khatami and Rouhani, who was then one of Iran's top nuclear negotiators, continued to offer major concessions, the hardline White House mindset was unbudgeable throughout the rest of Khatami's second term.

## Europe's outreach at risk

The foreign country which most welcomed Bush's attempts to isolate Iran was, of course, Israel. It was no secret that Israel wanted to bomb Iran's nuclear facilities or, better still, get the Americans to do it for them. They were disappointed when Bush and his neocon advisers turned their wrath on Iraq instead and launched what the Israelis thought was the wrong war.

Now we have the disturbing parallel of another ignorant Republican president on the warpath against Iran, talking in Riyadh in the same simplistic terms as Bush: "This is a battle between good and evil." To complete the similarity with Bush, Trump calls for isolating Iran and says Iran's "funding of terrorists must cease immediately".

Then he flies off to Israel, the other pillar of the anti-Iranian axis, taking no account of the fact that the Iranian electorate has just chosen as its president the candidate who represents pragmatic moderation, foreign policy experience and engagement with the outside world.

Just as they did in 2001, European political and business leaders have been traveling to Tehran in recent months to revive business and trade links and help the country recover from the impact of sanctions. They have been arguing that Iran needs to be a full member of the group of nations involved in a political solution to the Syrian civil war. Now Trump puts all of that at risk.

## 'The lessons of experience'

In his Riyadh speech, Trump spoke loftily of being guided by "Principled Realism". (The transcript used capital letters for P and R. To those not reading the text, but actually listening, how did the president's voice convey the solemnity of this Trump doctrine?).

In an apparent effort to explain it, he went on: "We will discard those



**Saudis justify their costly military intervention in Yemen by exaggerated claims of Iranian involvement, ignoring the evidence that the Houthis defied Iran's advice not to seize Sanaa in 2015.**

strategies that have not worked. We will be guided by the lessons of experience." Have his advisers forgotten the Iraq war, the biggest catastrophe of the Bush presidency? Did they not notice that by trying to isolate Khatami's Iran, they promoted the ascendancy of a much more hostile successor president, Mahmoud Ahmedinejad?

One might argue that Trump the salesman is magnifying fear as the best way to persuade his customers to part with their money. The huge arms deal announced in Riyadh this weekend will certainly guarantee tens of thousands of American jobs for a decade or more. But there is no evidence that Trump's strategy is merely a business proposition, artificially contrived.

All the signs are that Trump believes what he is saying. It is part of the U.S. neocon world view which is shared by the Saudi royal family who have been misinterpreting Iranian foreign policy with redoubled vigour in recent years.

They justify their costly military intervention in Yemen by exaggerated claims of Iranian involvement, ignoring the evidence that the Houthis defied Iran's advice not to seize Sanaa in 2015.

By jointly working with the Saudi air force, Trump is complicit in the war

crimes and the man-made starvation which the Saudi blockade has imposed on Yemenis. Yet in his Riyadh speech he applauded Saudi Arabia's "strong action in Yemen".

With similar moral blindness, Trump portrays Iran as the main sponsor of regional extremism and terror. He ignores the fact that Iran has every reason to fear the ISIL group's openly avowed hostility to Shi'ism and thus to help the governments of Iraq and Syria to resist ISIL before it reaches Iran's borders.

Meanwhile, in what passes for his analysis of the origins of terrorism, Trump makes no mention of Saudi-sponsored campaigns to spread Wahhabism throughout the Middle East and the Persian Gulf countries' funding of Takfiri jihadis in Syria.

Then he travels on to Israel, the other great demoniser of Iran. Whereas Saudi Arabia fights Iran on a proxy battleground, Israel has the potential for making war on Iran itself. Instead of publicly congratulating Rouhani on being re-elected, the U.S. president dines with the foreign leader who would most like to see regime change in Tehran.

One must wonder whether the two men have been hatching new plans for

turning the screws on Iran, up to the use of armed force.

## Unpredictable election

Not that all is fine in Iran. The election system is controlled, and the judiciary has the right to veto candidates. Of the more than 1,600 Iranians who registered as candidates, less than ten were approved. But once the list is announced, there is a real contest.

This year's TV debates were astonishingly aggressive with accusations of corruption and incompetence freely bandied about as well as clear differences of economic policy. The rumors claiming that Rouhani's opponent had the support of the powerful Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, the judiciary and Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, but still did not win shows how unpredictable the contest was.

Rouhani has many faults. He was ultra-cautious on human rights during his first terms, not daring to publicly condemn, let alone take steps to end, the house arrest of two candidates in the 2009 presidential election, Mir Hossein Mousavi, a former prime minister and Mehdi Karubi, a former speaker of parliament.

Rouhani should move to have them freed now, as well as to end the imprisonment of other Iranians or dual nationals whose trials and sentences were flawed.

## U.S. should welcome Rouhani

In spite of their differences in democratic development, Saudi Arabia and Iran have much in common in terms of socio-economic issues: high youth unemployment, a widening income gap between rich and poor and corruption.

Rouhani has managed to move the economy from recession to growth, thanks in large part to a surge in oil exports after the lifting of sanctions. But he has done little to end unemployment and corruption.

As the Harvard specialist, Ali Fathollah-Nejad, pointed out recently, Rouhani has been following a neo-liberal austerity strategy rather than a Keynesian one of using government funds to stimulate investment. The president's policy relies on cutting government subsidies to the less well-off and restricting the rights of trade unions in the so far unfulfilled hope that private business will boom and create new jobs.

Popular frustration at the lack of results of this policy opened the way for his election opponents to attack him from the left as well as the populist right. It was mainly because of Rouhani's greater willingness to hint at social reform and engage more fully with the outside world that, in spite of poor economic performance, he managed to win a majority of votes.

His victory should have been welcomed by the United States. But that would have required Trump to accept that Obama's policy of engaging Iran and seeking a balance between Saudi Arabia and Iran was justified.

Instead, we have a massive U.S. tilt back to Iranophobia. The dangers are clear. Remember Bush in 2002 and the move towards war on Iraq. Now, after Trump's visits to the leading Iranophobe states in the region, we should beware of a drive towards yet another war.

(Source: Middle East Eye)



**Instead of publicly congratulating Rouhani on being re-elected, the U.S. president dines with the foreign leader who would most like to see regime change in Tehran.**

## U.S. dooms ISIL fighters leaving Raqqa to death

By Sophie Mangal

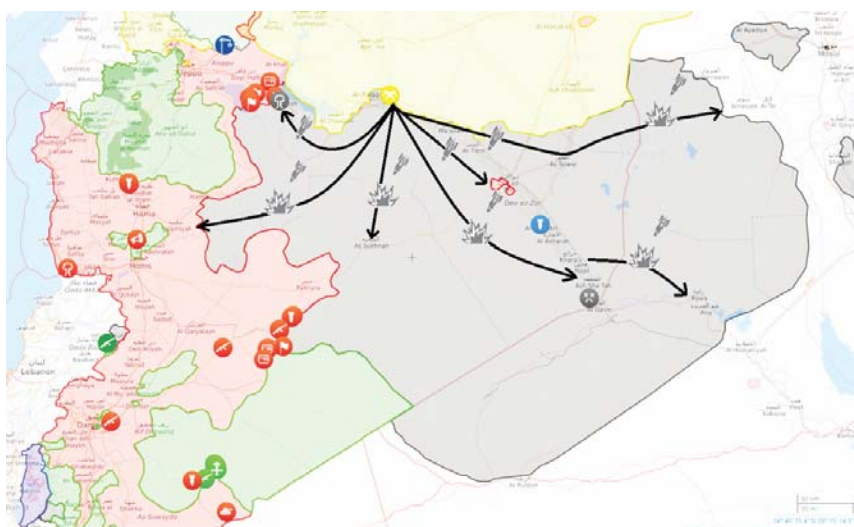
On May 26, the US-backed and formed of Kurdish and Arab units Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) announced that they are ready to guarantee safety for ISIS terrorists if they leave Raqqa within the next few days, ARA News reported.

Besides, according to a source in the SDF command, who preferred to remain anonymous, the Kurds in cooperation with U.S. forces are setting corridors to allow terrorists move towards Palmyra and other towns controlled by the Syrian government. Washington is attempting to lure terrorists and their families out of the city to get them eliminated with mass airstrikes either

by the international coalition or Syrian troops with the assistance of the Russian AF, the source added.

Such incidents have already occurred. Today, an Iranian news agency MEHR reported that the Russian Air Force eliminated 32 pickup trucks mounted with high-caliber guns and more than 120 ISIS terrorists fleeing from Raqqa to Palmyra. Notably, a news website The Baghdad Post wrote on Thursday that terrorists had left a number of Raqqa neighborhoods for unknown reasons. Militants seem to have been trying to use the corridors set by the U.S. to leave for Palmyra when they were hit by Russian jets.

Regarding this, our experts believe



Possible ways of ISIL running away

that Washington has taken a perfect position concerning ISIL in Raqqa. On one hand, by shaping 'safety corridors' for terrorists and their families, the Americans want to show the world

their 'humanitarian mission' in Syria, while on the other they push the militants out of the ISIS stronghold to doom them to death under the air bombs.

**Washington is attempting to lure terrorists and their families out of the city to get them eliminated with mass airstrikes.**

## The Manchester-Libya connection and the question that needs to be asked

By Neil Clark

The question we need to be asking is: who turned Libya — which as recently as July 2010 was being lauded in the British press as one of the top six cruise ship holiday destinations — into a "Daesh stronghold" — and a training ground for terrorists like Abedi?

It's not a question that the West's political elites and their media stenographers want us to be asking. And that's hardly surprising. Because it was they — and the military alliance they support, who transformed Libya from a modern progressive country which acted as a bulwark against Salafi-jihadism, into a haven for al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups.

Let's cast our minds back to March 2011. NATO's "liberation" of Libya during the so-called "Arab Spring" was cheered on by "liberal interventionists", regime-change obsessed neocons and most of the mainstream media. The "evil" Gaddafi was going to carry out a "Srebrenica style" massacre of civilians in Benghazi, the likes of David Cameron and William Hague told us. We simply had to intervene to stop the dictator "killing his own people."

Gaddafi's warnings that many of the so-called "rebels" were actually fanatical extremists linked to al-Qaeda were haughtily dismissed by the West's endless war lobby as the ravings of a madman. But — as I later wrote:

"It wasn't the 'mad' Gaddafi who was telling lies in 2011, but the regime changers in suits."

At home, those of us who warned that forcibly ousting the long-standing Libyan leader would greatly strengthen al-Qaeda — and give them and affiliated extremists a base on the Mediterranean — were shouted down as "apologists for dictators" by the Euston Manifesto brigade.



When I wrote a comment piece for the Daily Express newspaper on July 27, 2011, calling for UK to end its involvement in the Libyan war, my obsessed neocon stalker Oliver Kamm of the London Times newspaper attacked me the same day for saying that Gaddafi had given Libya stability and higher living standards.

But I — and others who opposed the NATO action — were right and the serial "regime changers" were wrong — once again.

Libya is now a failed state. The country which had the highest Human Development Index in Africa in 2009, has seen the return of slave markets.

Stability? In place of Gaddafi there's utter chaos. There is no unitary government authority — in fact, there's competing governments. The main beneficiaries of the NATO "intervention" have been Daesh and al-Qaeda, who established a presence in the country that they never had before.

"Libya today is a bewildering chaos of competing militias and jihadi groups broadly following ISIL, al-Qaeda and affiliates such as Ansar al-Sharia, and the Muslim Brotherhood in several guises and shadowy forms" writes Robert Fox in the Standard.

Yet just seven years ago, before NATO got going, it was a perfectly safe place for Western tourists to visit.

The instability in Libya has spilled over into neighboring Tunisia — with deadly consequences for western tourists. In June 2015, 38 people — including 30 Britons, were massacred on the beach at Port El Kantaoui. The gunman, Seifeddine Rezgui, was reported to have trained at a Daesh base in Libya. A base that — it must be pointed out — did not exist when Muammar Gaddafi was running the country.

While the consequences of NATO's Libya intervention have been so catastrophic, and so far-reaching, those responsible have never been held to account. Quite the opposite — those who helped turned the country into a jihadists playground and in doing so greatly increased the terror threat to Europeans — are positively thriving.

The politicians who ordered the bombing of Libya are raking it in on the conference circuit. Earlier this year it was revealed that David Cameron, British Prime Minister in 2011, was paid a mind-boggling £100,000 (US\$130,000) for one speech to Morgan Stanley Investment Management.

This is after a damning report of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Commons which declared:

"the proposition that Muammar Gaddafi would have ordered the massacre of civilians in Benghazi was not supported by the available evidence."

Like Iraq, Libya was a war sold to us on a lie.

Yet even after the destruction of Libya, the deceit goes on.

The same bunch of warmongers who voted for and cheered the military action to topple Gaddafi are hell-bent on toppling another secular Arab leader who's fighting the very same people who have claimed responsibility for and celebrated the horrific bomb attack in Manchester.

The serial regime changers want Bashar al-Assad's head on a plate, so they can then move on to Iran. Again, the main beneficiaries of this policy will be Daesh and al-Qaeda. It's worth noting that British Prime Minister Theresa May not only voted for the invasion of Iraq in 2003, but also for the bombing of Libya in 2011 — and for Syrian government forces to be bombed in 2013.

Had David Cameron got his way then, it's quite probable that Salman Abedi's co-ideologists would be in control of all of Syria today.

At the time of writing, there's also reports that Abedi himself may have been in Syria too. Once again, he'd be on the same side of the neocons — ie. working for "regime change."

The unpalatable truth is that very people who claim to be making us safe, have in fact greatly increased the terror risk to ordinary citizens on account of their criminally reckless regime change operations against governments that acted as a bulwark against the jihadists. And unless we have a proper grown up, no-holds barred debate on Western foreign policy double standards, and ask who it was who turned Libya from a top cruise ship destination which was getting praise in the Daily Telegraph, into a "Daesh stronghold," the nightmare will only continue. (Source: Sputnik)



# The real Donald Trump on show in Brussels

Donald Trump made a troubling debut at his first NATO summit on Thursday. The U.S. president's hardline utterances contrasted with his increasingly emollient tone of late towards the alliance. Since entering the Oval Office, it appeared Trump had moderated his previous view that the alliance was "obsolete". When Theresa May, the UK prime minister, visited Washington soon after his inauguration, she stated Trump was "100 per cent" behind NATO. His

behavior in Brussels, however, suggests that verdict was premature. Instead of seeing NATO as a group of nations bound by common causes and values, Trump has concluded it is largely a transactional relationship. His concern is money and past dues. He scolded the other members for "chronic underfunding" of the organization, which he said was "not fair to the people and taxpayers of the U.S.". On this, the president has a point. Some NATO members, such

as France and Germany, do not meet the commitment of spending 2 per cent of their gross domestic product on defense. Six years ago, Robert Gates, then U.S. defense secretary, said the same thing and it remains right. But NATO is not an organization of freeloaders and deadbeats, as Trump suggested. Wielding the stick is also unlikely to yield greater contributions from those nations already skeptical of the president's intentions. His most disturbing omission,

however, was regarding NATO's Article 5. This fundamental tenet declares that an attack on one member state is an attack on all and requires a mutual response. Trump was the first U.S. president since Harry Truman not to endorse publicly this principle. This was particularly galling given that he was attending a memorial for the September 11 terror attacks — the only time Article 5 has been triggered. It remains unclear why he equivocated. ➔13

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# When to get extra breastfeeding help and where to find it

By Donna Murray

The first few days and weeks of breastfeeding are the most important. When you get off to a good start, it's more likely that breastfeeding will be successful and continue for a longer period of time. It's always a good idea to have help in the beginning, especially for new moms, but there are some situations when having extra help is essential. If you experience any of the following circumstances, seek help right away.

Get the assistance and support you need right from the very first breastfeeding so that you can have the best possible breastfeeding experience.

■ **When to get extra breastfeeding help**

You had difficulty breastfeeding another child. If you've tried breastfeeding in the past and you weren't successful, it can be stressful to think about trying again. You may be worried that you'll run into the same issues and that's understandable. However, it's still possible to breastfeed successfully this time. Before your baby is born, talk to your doctor and see a lactation consultant if possible. Tell them about your past experiences. Your health care team can work with you to figure out what went wrong the last time, and find solutions to put you on the path to success as you try again. Plus, you'll feel better and more confident when you're prepared.

Your breasts didn't grow or change during your pregnancy. Some women may not have noticeable changes in the size of their breasts and still make a healthy supply of breast milk.

But, if your breasts do not grow at all or grow very little during your pregnancy, be sure to tell your doctor. Sometimes the lack of breast growth could mean a low milk supply. In this case, it's important to get extra help to monitor your milk production and your baby's weight.

You've had breast or chest surgery. It's definitely possible to make a full, healthy supply of breast milk with breast implants or after a minor breast surgery such as a lumpectomy.

However, depending on the type of surgery and where the surgical cut is located on your breast, your milk supply could be affected. Breast reductions and operations around the nipple and areola are more likely to have an impact on breastfeeding. So, tell your doctor and your baby's doctor if you've had breast or chest surgery, and get extra breastfeeding help in the beginning to make sure you're making enough breast milk for your baby.

Your baby's birth was a traumatic experience. A long, difficult birth with a lot of medications or an emergency c-section can cause physical and psychological stress. Medications, fatigue, stress, and pain can all interfere with getting breastfeeding off to a healthy start. A good support system and extra breastfeeding help can make all the difference.

Your newborn won't latch on. Problems with your baby's latch prevent your child from getting enough breast milk to grow and gain weight. It can even be dangerous if your newborn becomes malnourished and dehydrated. Latching problems can also lead to a low breast milk supply and some painful breast issues such as sore nipples, plugged milk ducts, and breast engorgement. If your child is not latching onto one or both sides, or if he latches on but doesn't breastfeed well enough to remove the breast milk from your breasts, you need to get help as soon as possible.

You have flat, inverted, or very large nipples. When babies latch on to the breast correctly, they take in more than just the nipple. They also grab some of the surrounding areola. For this reason, most babies can latch onto almost any type of nipple that their mother has. Many times, the baby's suck or a breast pump can draw out flat or inverted nipples. But, if the nipples are flat due to severe engorgement, or they are truly inverted so that the baby



can't latch on, then it's an issue. Very large nipples can also be difficult to latch on to for a preemie or a newborn with a small mouth. In these cases, extra breastfeeding help is needed to work around the nipple problems.

Your breast milk doesn't fill up your breasts by the fourth day. When you first start to breastfeed, you'll have a small amount of the first breast milk called colostrum. For many moms, milk production begins to increase quickly, and by the third day postpartum the breasts begin to fill up with transitional breast milk. For first time moms, it could take a day or two longer. A slight delay is usually not a problem, but if it continues, it could be dangerous for your baby. Newborns can become dehydrated, develop jaundice, and lose too much weight. If you don't notice an increase in your breast milk by the fourth day postpartum, call your doctor for help.

Your nipples are very sore. You can expect some mild nipple tenderness during the first week or so of breastfeeding. However, painfully sore or damaged nipples are a sign that something is not quite right. A common cause of very sore nipples is a poor latch, so get help right away to check how your baby is attaching to your breast. You should also see your doctor and learn how to heal and protect your nipples so you can breastfeed in comfort.

You're suffering from severe breast engorgement. Breast engorgement is normal in the first few weeks of breastfeeding when your breast milk supply increases and fills your breasts. However, some women experience severe breast engorgement, and it gets in the way of breastfeeding. If your breasts are so swollen, tight, and tender that your baby can't latch on, you should get some extra help. Seek the advice of a breastfeeding professional to help you relieve the engorgement and get breastfeeding back on track.

You have a health issue. If you're pregnant and you have diabetes, PCOS, or another medical condition that might interfere with building up your breast milk supply, you should seek extra breastfeeding help right from the start.

Your baby is born early or has a health concern. You should seek extra breastfeeding help if your child is born prematurely, has a physical problem such as a tongue-tie or a cleft lip, or is diagnosed with a neurological issue such as Down syndrome. It is still possible to breastfeed in these situations, but it often requires patience and extra help to

learn the best techniques for success.

You get a fever. While some women get a fever, aches, and chills when their milk comes in, these symptoms are also signs of an infection. If you're sick, or you have mastitis, you don't have to stop breastfeeding, but you should call your doctor for help right away. You'll want to catch and treat any infection as quickly as possible to feel better and prevent breastfeeding problems going forward.

■ **Where to find breastfeeding help**

If possible, get help before you even have to worry about problems. While you're pregnant, talk to your doctor, read about breastfeeding, and take a breastfeeding class.

Once your baby arrives, ask for help right away. Try to breastfeed as soon as you can after the birth of your child. If you have a natural birth, you can usually breastfeed in the delivery room within an hour of the delivery. But, if you have a c-section or your baby needs special care after the delivery, you may have to wait a little longer. When you can breastfeed, have your nurse, midwife, or doula help you get the baby to latch on correctly. Ask about breastfeeding positions and have someone show you the proper way to place your newborn in each hold. If you deliver in a hospital, request a visit from the lactation consultant and take advantage of the hospital staff while you're there so you can feel more comfortable when you go home.

Of course, breastfeeding problems can still pop up once you're at home with your baby. Thankfully, there is a variety of extra breastfeeding help available. You can:

- call your doctor for advice or a referral
- see a lactation consultant
- ask a friend or family member where they found helpful information
- keep a trusted breastfeeding book on hand for reference
- find an online breastfeeding community for those middle of the night worries
- join a local breastfeeding group for support and assistance

■ **Don't wait to seek help**

If you run into a breastfeeding issue, get help right away. The longer you wait, the more difficult a problem can become. But, by getting the help you need when you need it, you are more likely to find a solution and go on to have a successful breastfeeding experience. *(Source: verywell.com)*

## 4 ways to boost your energy naturally with breakfast

Healthful protein, slowly digested carbohydrates, fruit or vegetables serve up best morning mix

As you sleep, your body is hard at work digesting yesterday's dinner. By the time you wake up, your body and brain are demanding fresh fuel. "Breaking the fast" is a key way to power up in the morning. Do it right and the benefits can last all day.

If you miss the day's first meal, notes Dr. David S. Ludwig, a nutrition expert at Harvard-affiliated Children's Hospital Boston, you may start off with an energy deficit and have to tap into your energy reserves.

What's a good breakfast? One that delivers some healthful protein, some slowly digested carbohydrates, and some fruit or vegetables. A vegetable omelet with a slice of whole-grain toast qualifies, as does a bowl of high-fiber cereal topped with fresh fruit and reduced-fat or soy milk, along with a handful of almonds or walnuts.

■ **Try these 4 tips for creating your own energy-boosting breakfast:**

- **Choose whole grains.** High-fiber, whole-grain cereals and breads can help keep your blood sugar on an even keel and avoid a midmorning energy crash. With the hundreds of types of cereal on the market, bran cereal, bran flakes, and steel-cut oatmeal are typically the healthiest bets. To choose the healthiest breakfast cereal, read the label and look for:

- 5 grams or more of fiber per serving
- less than 300 milligrams of sodium per serving
- less than 5 grams of sugar per serving
- whole grain as the first item on the ingredient list

- **Include protein.** Yogurt is a good choice; Greek yogurt has more protein than regular yogurt. Eggs (up to one a day) are okay for healthy people. Although yolks are high in cholesterol, eggs have proteins, vitamins, and other nutrients and don't appear to increase the risk for developing heart disease. You might also include foods that have healthful fats such as those in nuts or salmon. Limit processed meats to the occasional treat as these foods are associated with a higher risk of colorectal cancer, heart disease, and type 2 diabetes.



- **Eat in, not out.** You can enjoy a healthful breakfast out if you stick to oatmeal. But much of the traditional fare will start your day with loads of refined carbohydrates and saturated fat. Like most processed food, the breakfast offerings from fast-food chains tend to be high-sodium, low-fiber disasters.

- **Blend up a breakfast smoothie.** Combine fruit, juice, yogurt, wheat germ, tofu, and other ingredients. Toss them in your blender with a bit of ice and you have a refreshing, high energy breakfast. *(Source: health.harvard.edu)*

## Should I drop calories or boost exercise?

By Anthony L. Komaroff

It is very, very hard to lose weight without both watching your calories and regularly exercising. But it's not that simple. For years, doctors (including me) told patients: "You've got to burn off more calories through exercise than the calories that you eat. If you do that, you'll maintain a healthy weight." We even implied that not being able to maintain a healthy weight, since it was so simple, reflected a weakness of character.

It's true that calories in, calories burned, and self-discipline are important. However, in my opinion, it's always been clear that some people really do have more trouble than others in achieving a healthy weight. You had only to observe your friends and family. The folks who always have seconds, yet remain thin. The folks who pick at their food, yet stay heavy. Now, we're learning why.

In the past 20 years, medical science has discovered a lot of the body chemistry that controls our appetite and metabolism. Some animals are born to be more hungry; the natural hormones that drive appetite overpower those that suppress appetite. The same probably is true of humans. Also, some of us are born to burn calories more readily. And in the past 10 years, we've discovered a new reality that may profoundly affect our ability to achieve a healthy weight: the microbiome.

We've known for over a century that many microorganisms (for example, bacteria and viruses) live on us and within us, like in our gut. All of their genes, collectively, are called our microbiome. And, boy, are there a lot of them: our microbiome has 250 to 800 times more genes than there are human genes. Why that matters is that these microbial genes make natural chemicals that can enter our bloodstream and affect our body chemistry.

As just one example of how the microbiome likely affects our weight, we have long assumed that the calories we swallow each day all get absorbed into our blood and distributed around our body, including into our fat cells. That isn't entirely true. Without getting too graphic about it, some of what we eat leaves our body as waste, taking some calories with it. There are people whose gut microbiome appears to cause them to absorb a lot more of the calories that they consume before the calories leave as waste.

Finally, don't forget that regular exercise produces health benefits even for those people who haven't achieved a healthy weight. Weight loss is only one reason for regular exercise. *(Source: greatist.com)*

## Busy brain not letting you sleep? 8 experts offer tips

By Jessica Brown

Some nights, it's like you can't get your brain to shut up long enough for you to fall asleep.

You're mentally reviewing the day you just completed while also previewing the day ahead; sometimes, your mind may even reach way back into the archives and pull up something embarrassing you did back in high school. So fun!

Racing thoughts can be a sign of a serious mental health condition like anxiety. But these nights also happen to everyone from time to time -- and once we're too old for bedtime stories, it's not always clear what to do.

There's no one solution that will work for everybody, of course, so instead, we've rounded up suggestions from eight sleep experts. At the very least, it's something to read next time you can't sleep.

■ **Distract yourself with meaningless mental lists.**

"The absolute prerequisite for sleep is a quiet mind. Think of something else, rather than what's worrying you -- something with a story to it. It can be anything of interest, but of no importance, so you can devote some brain energy to it without clashing into the real world and going straight back to your worries.

I fly a lot, so I imagine I have my own private jet and how would I arrange the furniture on it. If you're someone who likes going to music festivals, what would your lineup be?" -- Neil Stanley, sleep expert

■ **Try to stay awake instead.**

"Thinking about sleep and wishing for it to happen is a recipe for staying awake. This is where paradoxical thinking comes in. If you give yourself the paradoxical instruction to stay awake instead, you'll be more likely to fall asleep.

If you can be comfortable with the idea of remaining awake, then the performance anxiety and frustration that are associated with trying to sleep have nowhere to go and your arousal level drops." -- Colin Espie, professor of sleep

medicine at the University of Oxford

■ **Or just get out of bed.**

"If 20 minutes has gone by as the mind races and is unable to relax back to sleep, it's best to get out of bed. Without looking at your phone or any other screen devices, go to another dimly lit room where you keep a notebook. Write down the thoughts that are keeping you awake.

Finish with the words, 'It can wait until tomorrow.' Then, go back to bed, focus on the breath, and mindfully relax into those words, giving yourself permission to yield to sleep." -- Jenni June, sleep consultant

■ **Write down whatever's freaking you out.**

"Spend a maximum of 20 minutes just getting everything out of your head and onto paper every day. It's a therapeutic way to see that you probably don't have loads to worry about, rather just a few reoccurring things. You can then see which worries are hypothetical (i.e., what if I make a mistake at work and lose my job) or 'real' worries (e.g., I made a mistake and have lost my job).

For the real worries you can then make an action plan/ problem-solve and for the hypothetical ones, learn to let them go." -- Kathryn Pinkham, National Health Services insomnia specialist

■ **Get back in bed and do some deep breathing.**

"Deep breathing ... acts as a powerful distraction technique, particularly if paired with counting. You want to aim to breathe out for longer than you breathe in, and pause after breathing in and out; so you might choose to count for three when you breathe in, then pause and count to five when you breathe out, then pause.

Really focus on your breathing and counting, and if your mind wanders off, just take note of that and return your attention to the exercise. You may need to do this for ten minutes or so." -- Christabel Majendie, sleep therapist

■ **Try not to try so hard.**

"Try not to struggle or 'try harder' to overcome the

sleeplessness or get rid of unwanted thoughts, as this can worsen insomnia. One successful approach to overcome this negative cycle is to instead learn to observe and accept these struggles, using mindfulness strategies to help." -- Jenny Stephenson, director of HappySleepers.

■ **Or maybe plan how you'll get some sun in the a.m.**

"Getting more sun exposure in the midmorning can help readjust the brain's internal clock and make it easier to fall asleep later that night. In my book, I write about how sun exposure is now a key part of many professional athletes' travel schedules, and seen as a way of preventing jet lag. Non-athletes can do similar things.

Someone who can't seem to fall asleep at night may want to try getting as much exposure to natural light in the morning, essentially prepping themselves to fall asleep when they want to." -- David K. Randall, author of Dreamland: Adventures in the Strange Science of Sleep

■ **And if all else fails ...**

"The great era of tinkering with sleep aids was popular in early modern Europe. Here are a few of my favorites:

- Put some blood-sucking leeches behind your ears. When they bore holes in the skin, pull them out and place a grain of opium in each hole. (From 16th-century French physician André du Laurens.)
- Kill a sheep, and then press its steaming lungs on either side of the head. Keep the lungs in place as long as they remain warm. (From 16th-century French surgeon Ambroise Paré.)
- After the evening meal, eat lettuce, and rub an ointment made of the oil of violets or camphor on the temples. Dissolve a mixture of poppy seeds, lettuce seeds, balsam, saffron, and sugar and cook it in poppy juice. Then listen to pleasant music and lie down on a bed covered with the leaves of fresh, cool plants. (From 15th-century philosopher Marsilio Ficino.)"

*(Source: CNN)*



## 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** Google says it would cost too much to gather wage gap data.  
Mountain View's lawyers called the Labor Department's requests "unconstitutional."

**2** The mother of Travis Kalanick, CEO of Uber, has died in a boating accident. Bonnie Kalanick, 71, died after the boat she and her husband, Donald, 78, were riding hit a rock in Pine Flat Lake in Fresno county, California, authorities said.

**3** Google's AlphaGo retires from competition.  
Its creators plan on publishing one more paper and a teaching tool before saying goodbye.

**4** British Airways IT failure cancels many flights out of London.  
British Airways chief Alex Cruz has explained in a video apology that the failure was likely caused by a "power supply issue."

**5** Now you can design Google Photo Books on iOS or Android.  
Thankfully, the search giant has updated its Photos app on iOS and Android to support the new feature, letting you use your mobile device to easily order a book of your favorite images -- which can be created automatically using Google's AI.

**6** Huawei's premium mid-range line went into its second generation - meet the Huawei nova 2 and Huawei nova 2 plus.  
The dual camera is on the back, consisting of a 12MP sensor (1.25µm pixels) behind an f/1.8 lens and an 8MP sensor to help with optical zoom and portrait mode. On the front is a surprisingly serious 20MP selfie camera (the P10 has an 8MP cam!).

**7** Xiaomi has confirmed that it has managed to sell more than 3 million units of the Mi Max since launch. The device was launched back in May last year, and 1.5 million units were shipped in first two months.

**8** Facebook, Amazon and more than two dozen other U.S. technology companies pressed Congress to make changes to a broad internet surveillance law, saying they were necessary to improve privacy protections and increase government transparency.

**9** Hackers used malware to steal customer payment data from most of Chipotle Mexican Grill Inc's restaurants over a span of three weeks, the company said, adding to woes at the chain whose sales had just started recovering from a string of food safety lapses in 2015.

**10** A Canadian suspected of involvement in a massive 2014 breach of Yahoo email accounts linked to Russia is appealing a decision to hold him in custody pending an extradition hearing, the man's lawyer said.

## Early LG V30 design shown off in leaked images

Following the LG V10 of 2015, and the LG V20 of 2016, LG is expected to release a V30 smartphone sometime later this year. While both the V10 and V20 feature secondary ticker displays in addition to their main screens, the upcoming V30 might differ slightly in this regard.



According to two leaked images that reportedly show "old-ish mockups of Project Joan, a.k.a. the LG V30", LG seems to have envisioned the new handset as a slider phone.

More exactly, the device would sport two independent touchscreen displays, with the lower (and smaller) one sliding out to reveal a larger area for interacting with apps. Naturally, thanks to its larger footprint, this slide-out screen would provide a better user experience than the small, rigid ticker screens of the V20 and V10.

The secondary screen could even include a virtual keyboard, leaving more room for content to be shown on the main display.

These newly leaked images - embedded below - come from Evan Blass (aka @evleaks), one of the industry's most reliable sources.

He says that it's "not clear if the project is still headed in this direction," so the real V30 could certainly be different - it all depends on how practical LG ultimately saw this slider idea.

A previous report had it that the LG V30 would be officially announced this September, roughly one year after the V20. The handset should be compatible with Google Daydream, and might become LG's first flagship phone to use an OLED screen (or, well, maybe two OLED screens).

(source: Evan Blass)

# Samsung Galaxy Note 8, Google Pixel 2: The Future of Android

By Christopher Morris

Two of the interesting smartphone releases due for the coming months are the Galaxy Note 8 and Google Pixel 2. Google is hoping to establish itself as a significant player in the mobile niche, while Samsung must look to recover from the disastrous exploding Galaxy Note 7. While the appearance of the tenth anniversary iPhone 8 will also pose challenges for both developers.

the latest reports on the Galaxy Note 8 suggest that the phablet will feature a bigger screen than this year's Galaxy S8. Whispers from close to the Samsung supply chain in East Asia indicate that the consumer electronics giant is ready to fit the next generation mobile with a 6.4-inch infinity display.

After the Galaxy S8 included a wrap-around display, and with rumors that Apple will include such a screen in the iPhone 8, it is clear that the industry is heading generally in this direction. And it now also seems likely that the front panel of the Galaxy Note 8 will be dominated by significant screen real estate, while the handset may even be more compact than previous releases.

As confirmation of this notion, a video posted by Twitter user @mmdj\_china seems to reveal the glass-fronted panel from the upcoming Galaxy Note 8. This device is almost completely free of bezels, with extremely narrow bordering above and below the opening for the display.



Recent reports have also suggested that the Galaxy Note 8 will feature a dual-lens rear camera, with the fingerprint scanner in the device being moved and integrated into the display. This will be made possible by the screen-dominated design, while it is also anticipated that both Samsung and Apple will eliminate Home buttons from their devices before

the end of the calendar year.

Meanwhile, more details have emerged regarding the second-generation Google smartphone. The Google Pixel 2 can be considered more of a mid-range device, with the screen of the handset significantly smaller than the Galaxy Note range, or even the iPhone 7 Plus. Google evidently believes that the

premium smartphone niche is hugely crowded, and thus is aiming for an entirely different market.

Geekbench has posted solid details on the Google Pixel 2 cover, with the general consensus of opinion being that the mega-corporation is currently working on three handsets to comprise this range. It is thought that the device tested by Geekbench will be the largest in the series.

Specs from the testing process indicate that the Google Pixel 2 will utilize a CPU described as a "Qualcomm @ 1.90 GHz, 1 processor 8 cores". This points to the Snapdragon 835 that was used previously in the United States model of the Samsung Galaxy S8. 4GB of RAM will also power the device, while the handset in question was running the O generation of Android, which is due for release later this year, widely tipped to be branded as Android Oreo. The device tested by Geekbench also scored 1,804 in single-core testing and 6,248 in multi-core.

Google has yet to confirm the existence of the Pixel 2, but reports have indicated that the new smartphone has three internal codenames at the corporation; namely, Muskie, Walleye and Taimen. There is little concrete information on precisely how these models will defer, and only one version of the Google Pixel 2 turned up on Geekbench. But the general consensus is that there will be variance in size and memory in particular.

(Source: valuewalk)

## Nokia 9 with a whopping 8GB of RAM spotted on Geekbench



HMD has been keeping a rather low profile when it comes to the Nokia line and its future. Even so, we are already pretty certain that there is at least one flagship to look forward to - the Nokia 9 (previously Nokia 8) - a Snapdragon 835 taunting beast, with an alleged price of EUR 750.

That is pretty steep - up there with the pricier of 2017 flagships. Still, a recent GeekBench leak offered a glimpse at what is shaping up as a real powerhouse.

And now a new listing paints and even more impressive picture of an "Unknown Heart" Nokia model, with a whopping 8GB of RAM.

(Source: nokiapoweruser)

## Android TV to get a new UI with Android O



Google has announced some UI design changes to Android TV, which will be arriving with Android O.

The home screen now has a completely new look. With the help of new APIs, app developers will be able to let their apps make multiple channels, which will be visible as rows on your screen. The app can then populate these channels with programs that it sees fit. At the top will be a permanent section for your frequently used apps and below it will be Watch Next that will feature content based on your watching preferences.

Android O with Google Assistant will be coming to Android TV later this year, starting with the Nexus Player.

(Source: android-developers)

## Apple is prepping a dedicated AI processor



According to a source familiar with Apple's plans, the company is designing an artificial intelligence-focused chip that would concentrate on functions that would normally require human intelligence. This includes facial and speech recognition.

According to the source, Apple plans on offering third-party developers access to the chip, which will allow them to include AI features on their apps. Former Apple analyst Gene Munster points out the reasons why Apple is working on this chip. "Two of the areas that Apple is betting its future on require AI," said Munster. "At the core of augmented reality and self-driving cars is artificial intelligence."

(Source: Bloomberg)

## Researchers find a more effective way to test self-driving cars

It's tricky to test self-driving cars. Even if you have hundreds of thousands of miles under your belt, it's still difficult to account for every possible real-world peril. Researchers think they can fast-track that experience, however. They've developed a sped-up testing process that should accomplish a lot in just a small amount of time. Instead of a holistic approach

that gauges everything at once (and often goes for miles without a meaningful event), the new method breaks things down into individual components you can test frequently and repeatedly in simulations. If you want to gauge the car's reaction to someone cutting you off, for instance, you just focus on that -- you use stat analysis to determine how the car

would behave in "boring" moments.

The team's own experiments also limited their metrics to the likelihoods of crashes, injuries (including severity) and "conflict events."

Based on estimates, the improvements would be dramatic... to put it mildly. Researchers believe that 1,000 miles under their method could be equivalent to be-

tween 300,000 and 100 million miles of real-life driving. You could match Waymo's yearly driving experience (635,000 miles in 2016) in the space of a day.

Just don't get too excited. The researchers are aware that they need to account for many, many more situations before this testing method is ready for practical use.

(Source: umich)

## Keyone becomes most pre-ordered BlackBerry phone at Rogers



The Keyone has become the most pre-ordered BlackBerry phone at Canadian carrier Rogers. This was revealed by Steve Cistulli (President and General Manager over at TCL Communications) in a tweet.

Rogers began accepting pre-orders for the device late last week, and is offering it for CAD 679 (around \$500) outright. The handset will go on sale in the country starting May 31. Other Canadian carriers like Bell, Bell MTS, SaskTel, and Telus will also be carrying the phone.

(Source: crackberry)

## Moto G5S Plus leaked images show off the smartphone in all its glory



Two new Motorola smartphones are expected to go official in the coming weeks, the Moto G5 and Moto G5S Plus. Both belong to the mid-range category and are likely to be introduced in Latin America, at least initially.

The Moto G5S Plus is rumored to pack a 5.5-inch display with full HD (1080p) resolution and a Snapdragon 430 processor. A single primary camera with LED flash is shown on the back side of the phone, but the rumored fingerprint sensor is positioned under the Home button.

(Source: phonearena)

## Siri flaw allows anyone to disable cellular data on your iPhone



A Reddit subscriber found a way to use Siri to disable the Cellular Data settings on an iPhone without knowing the Passcode of the device.

If you ask Siri to disable Cellular Data on an iPhone running iOS 9 through the iOS 10.3.3 beta, she will tell you that this cannot be done without entering the Passcode of the particular device. Nothing wrong there, because that is exactly what you want to happen with your iPhone.

But instead, if you ask Siri about the Cellular Data setting and the status of it, a bug takes over and shows a toggle switch that will allow you to turn off Cellular Data.

(Source: Reddit)



# NASA discovers a new mode of ice loss in Greenland

A new NASA study finds that during Greenland's hottest summers on record, 2010 and 2012, the ice in Rink Glacier on the island's west coast didn't just melt faster than usual, it slid through the glacier's interior in a gigantic wave, like a warmed freezer pop sliding out of its plastic casing. The wave persisted for four months, with ice from upstream continuing to move down to replace the missing mass for at least four more months.

This long pulse of mass loss, called a solitary wave, is a new discovery that may increase the potential for sustained ice loss in Greenland as the climate continues to warm, with implications for the future rate of sea level rise.

The study by three scientists from NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, was the first to precisely track a glacier's loss of mass from melting ice using the horizontal motion of a GPS sensor. They used data from a single sensor in the Greenland GPS Network (GNET), sited on bedrock next to Rink Glacier.

## Paper on research

A paper on the research is published online in the journal *Geophysical Research Letters*.

Rink is one of Greenland's major outlets to the ocean, draining about 11 billion tons (gigatons) of ice per year in



the early 2000s — roughly the weight of 30,000 Empire State Buildings. In the intensely hot summer of 2012, however, it lost an additional 6.7 gigatons of mass in the form of a solitary wave. Previously

observed melting processes can't explain that much mass loss.

The wave moved through the flowing glacier during the months of June through September at a speed of about

2.5 miles (4 kilometers) a month for the first three months, increasing to 7.5 miles (12 kilometers) during September. The amount of mass in motion was 1.7 gigatons, plus or minus about half a gigaton, per month. Rink Glacier typically flows at a speed of a mile or two (a few kilometers) a year.

## Measuring thinning of glaciers

The wave could not have been detected by the usual methods of monitoring Greenland's ice loss, such as measuring the thinning of glaciers with airborne radar. "You could literally be standing there and you would not see any indication of the wave," said JPL scientist Eric Larour, a coauthor of the new paper. "You would not see cracks or other unique surface features."

The researchers saw the same wave pattern in the GPS data for 2010, the second hottest summer on record in Greenland. Although they did not quantify the exact size and speed of the 2010 wave, the patterns of motion in the GPS data indicate that it must have been smaller than the 2012 wave but similar in speed.

"We know for sure that the triggering mechanism was the surface melting of snow and ice, but we do not fully understand the complex array of processes that generate solitary waves," said JPL scientist Surendra Adhikari, who led the study.

(Source: *phys.org*)

**The amount of mass in motion was 1.7 gigatons, plus or minus about half a gigaton, per month. Rink Glacier typically flows at a speed of a mile or two (a few kilometers) a year.**

## Marine species distribution shifts will continue under ocean warming

Scientists using a high-resolution global climate model and historical observations of species distributions on the Northeast U.S. Shelf have found that commercially important species will continue to shift their distribution as ocean waters warm two to three times faster than the global average through the end of this century. Projected increases in surface to bottom waters of 6.6 to 9 degrees F (3.7 to 5.0 degrees Celsius) from current conditions are expected.

The findings, reported in *Progress in Oceanography*, suggest ocean temperature will continue to play a major role in where commercially and recreationally important species will find suitable habitat. Sea surface temperatures in the Gulf of Maine have warmed faster than 99 percent of the global ocean over the past decade. Northward shifts of many species are already happening, with major changes expected in the complex of species occurring in different regions on the shelf, and shifts from one management jurisdiction to another. These changes will directly affect fishing communities, as species now landed at those ports move out of range, and new species move in.

"Species that are currently found in the Mid-Atlantic Bight and on Georges Bank may have enough suitable habitat in the future because they can shift northward as temperatures increase," said lead author Kristin Kleisner, formerly of the Northeast Fisheries Science Center

(NEFSC)'s Ecosystems Dynamics and Assessment Branch and now a senior scientist at the Environmental Defense Fund. "Species concentrated in the Gulf of Maine, where species have shifted to deeper water rather than northward, may be more likely to experience a significant decline in suitable habitat and move out of the region altogether."

## Using bottom trawl

The researchers used bottom trawl survey data collected between 1968 and 2013 on the shelf to estimate niches for 58 demersal and pelagic species.

A high-resolution global climate model known as CM2.6, developed by the NOAA Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory (GFDL) in Princeton, New Jersey, was used to generate projections of future surface and bottom ocean temperatures across the region.

"Similar studies in the past used a coarse model with a roughly 100-kilometer or 62-mile ocean resolution, while the new model has a 10-kilometer or 6.2-mile ocean resolution, making the simulation of oceanic and atmospheric features much more accurate," said Vincent Saba of the NEFSC's Ecosystems Dynamics and Assessment Branch, who works at GFDL and is a co-author of the study.

Saba has compared the difference between the coarse model and the new high-resolution model as being similar to the difference between an old standard definition televi-



sion set and today's ultra high definition screens.

Researchers looked at species distributions in spring and fall in the Gulf of Maine on the northern part of the Northeast Shelf and those on the southern end, from Georges Bank to the Mid-Atlantic Bight. They also examined what the shifting distributions might mean for fishing communities by looking at the current and potential future distance between the main fishing port in each state and the center of the distribution of suitable thermal area for the top-landed species by weight in each state.

(Source: *EurekAlert*)

## Has Everest's iconic Hillary Step really collapsed?

The Hillary Step, a rocky outcrop at 8,770m, just beneath the summit of Everest (8,850m), has finally succumbed to gravity and partially collapsed. At least it has according to mountaineer Tim Mosedale, who climbed the mountain this year. His claim has been refuted by the chair of the Nepal Mountaineering Association, however, sparking a debate which looks set to rage for some time yet.

The definitive answer, after all, is located only a few meters short of the top of the world.

Named after Sir Edmund Hillary — the first to reach the summit of Everest, with Sherpa Tenzing Norgay, in May 1953 — this rocky structure certainly has a noble heritage in mountaineering circles. It is the last major obstacle encountered on the South Col route before reaching the summit.

## Geological circles

But it also famed in geological circles. It is, or was, formed of a resistant limestone band along the base of the Qomolangma Formation which dates back to

the Upper Cambrian or Lower Ordovician age. These rocks feature tiny remnants of crinoid ossicles (stems of sea lillies) that originally lived in a shallow tropical ocean 450m years ago and can now be found on the summit of Everest.

If the Hillary Step has indeed collapsed, the rockfall will have altered the standard route to the top. And this may result in increasing congestion as parties queue up to get to the summit during the brief period of stable, pre-monsoon climbing conditions in May. As Mosedale told Planet Mountain:

It's easier going up the snow slope and indeed for inexperienced climbers and mountaineers there's less "climbing" to be done, making it much easier for them. However, it's going to form a bottleneck. The Hillary Step often formed a bottleneck but some years ago they fixed an up and a down rope. In the current state it would be difficult to safely negotiate down where the step used to be on account of the huge unstable rocks that are perched on the route.



Ultimately, however, the demise of the Hillary Step would be but a small blip in the long-term process of Himalayan mountain building. The collision and ongoing convergence of the Indian plate into Asia results in convergence across the Himalaya of about 18-20mm per year and an average uplift rate of the mountains of about 3-4mm per year.

As the mountains are driven upwards

by these tectonic forces, climatic and geographic forces — such as rain and snowfall, and glacial and river incision — conspire to bring them back down through erosion.

The tectonic forces have been winning this battle for at least 25m years and the highest Himalayan peaks now reach nearly 9km above mean sea-level.

(Source: *The Conversation*)

## Bank Shahr Launches New Campaign during Holy Month of Ramadan

On the occasion of auspicious Holy Month of Ramadan, Bank Shahr unveiled its new campaign entitled "Do Not Carry Petty Cash in Your Pocket", the Public Relations Dept. of the bank reported.

Accordingly, this Campaign is launched with the aim of disseminating information services with regard to the characteristics of citizenship card and introducing places that these cards can be used there.

Of the other main objectives of this Campaign, it should be referred to: getting familiarity with, announcing readiness to the requirement created and offering this service in the cities that it has been launched there, etc.

It should be noted that "citizenship card" is has currently been implemented in public transportation system in metropolises like Tehran, Tabriz, Shiraz and

Hamedan.

Cinemas, parking meters, recreational and welfare centers, SHAHRVAND chain stores, etc. are of the places that the card is used there, the report added.

In this comprehensive Campaign, it is tried to describe characteristics of the "citizenship card" to users transparently, the Public Relations Dept. ended.

## SARMAYEH BANK Appreciated at 4th Festival of Stars of Public Relations

Public Relations Department Director of SARMAYEH Bank Ms. Nahid Moonesan was honored at the 4th Festival of Stars of Public Relations.

The closing ceremony of introduction

of winners at 4th Festival of Stars of Public Relations Departments of the country was held at Hall of Fame of National Library in the presence of Government Spokesperson Dr. Mohammad-Baqer

Nobakht, senior activists, directors and managers in the field of Public Relations.

In this prestigious festival, Director of Public Relations Dept. of SARMAYEH Bank Ms. Nahid Moonesan, Manager

of Public Relations Dept. of Oil Ministry Kasra Noori and Director of Public Relations Dept. of PARSIAN Insurance Company Afshin Noori were honored separately.

## Construction begins on world's largest telescope in Chilean desert

Construction began in Chile on Friday on the European Extremely Large Telescope, which when completed will be the world's largest optical telescope, some five times larger than the top observing instruments in use today.

The size of the ELT has the potential to transform our understanding of the universe, say its backers, with its main mirror that will measure some 39 meters (43 yards) across.

Located on a 3,000 meter-high mountain in the middle of the Atacama desert, it is due to begin operating in 2024.

Among other capabilities, it will add to and refine astronomers' burgeoning discoveries of planets orbiting other stars, with the ability to find more smaller planets, image larger ones, and possibly characterize their atmospheres, a key step in understanding if life is present.

"What is being raised here is more than a telescope. Here we see one of the greatest examples of the possibilities of science," said Chilean President Michelle Bachelet in a speech to mark the beginning of construction at the site.

The dry atmosphere of the Atacama provides as near perfect observing conditions as it is possible to find on Earth, with some 70 percent of the world's astronomical infrastructure slated to be located in the region by the 2020s.

The ELT is being funded by the European Southern Observatory, an organization consisting of European and southern hemisphere nations. Construction costs were not available but the ESO has said previously that the ELT would cost around 1 billion euros (\$1.12 billion) at 2012 prices.

(Source: *Reuters*)

## Sergey Brin is building the world's biggest aircraft

Google co-founder Sergey Brin's secret airship will be used for humanitarian missions, but it will also serve as a giant RV in the sky for his friends and family, according to The Guardian. Citing sources familiar with the project, the report says Brin wants to use the aircraft to "deliver supplies and food on humanitarian missions to remote locations," but also as a "luxurious intercontinental 'air yacht' for (his) friends and family."

The dirigible, which was first revealed by Bloomberg one month ago, is reportedly going to wind up being the biggest aircraft in the world at 200 meters long. (That's twice the length of the "flying bum," as long as we're measuring.) It will use helium instead of flammable hydrogen, and the project supposedly carries a price tag of \$100-\$150 million — funded completely by Brin.

The giant humanitarian sky yacht is being built at Moffett airfield, which is part of NASA's Ames Research Center in Northern California, where Google's Planetary Ventures division holds a 60-year lease valued at \$1 billion. Brin even has a former Ames head running the project, and as of last month the team reportedly had a full metal frame constructed.

Brin, who had employees jump out of a plane while wearing Google Glass in 2012, isn't the only Google exec who's fascinated with air travel. His co-founder Larry Page has a hand in two different "flying car" projects — one of which will supposedly be available at the end of this year.

(Source: *The Verge*)

## Sleep deprivation can cause brain to start 'eating' itself

A lack of sleep can cause parts of the brain's synapses to be 'eaten' by other brain cells, according to a new study by researchers at the Marche Polytechnic University in Italy.



Astrocytes are a cell in the brain that clean out worn-out cells and debris. Scientists studying the brains of mice found these cells were more active when the animals had been deprived of sleep, breaking down more of the brain's connections.

"We show for the first time that portions of synapses are literally eaten by astrocytes because of sleep loss," research leader Michele Bellesi told New Scientist.

However, that's not necessarily a bad thing, as most of the synapses affected were larger and more mature: "They are like old pieces of furniture, and so probably need more attention and cleaning," said Bellesi.

A more worrying finding was that 'microglial' brain cells, which seek out damaged cells and debris, were also more active in brain experiencing chronic sleep deprivation.

"We already know that sustained microglial activation has been observed in Alzheimer's and other forms of neurodegeneration," Bellesi said.

Previous research has found that chronic sleep deprivation increases so-called plaques in the brain thought to be a main cause of Alzheimer's and other dementias.

(Source: *The Telegraph*)



## Wetlands restoration law declared

**ENVIRONMENT** **TEHRAN** — President Hassan Rouhani **d e s k** has declared the wetlands restoration law, passed by the Majlis (the Iranian parliament) on April 19, the Department of Environment official website reported on Sunday.

Majlis had passed the general outlines of the wetlands restoration bill which was proposed by the Department of Environment earlier in May 2015.

The bill puts a great emphasis on restoration and protection of the wetlands that are of great ecological values by tasking the Department of Environment to do so.

Any illegal exploitation or acts resulting in the wetlands degradation are illicit and the Department of Environment is in charge of determining the harms and pollution sources.

## Trump tells ‘confidants’ U.S. will leave Paris climate deal

U.S. President Donald Trump has told “confidants,” including the head of the Environmental Protection Agency Scott Pruitt, that he plans to leave a landmark international agreement on climate change, Axios news outlet reported on Saturday, citing three sources with direct knowledge.

On Saturday, Trump said in a Twitter post he would make a decision on whether to support the Paris climate deal next week.

The White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

A source who has been in contact with people involved in the decision told Reuters a couple of meetings were planned with chief executives of energy companies and big corporations and others about the climate agreement ahead of Trump’s expected announcement later in the week. It was unclear whether those meetings would still take place.

“I will make my final decision on the Paris Accord next week!” he tweeted on the final day of a Group of Seven (G7) summit in Italy at which he refused to bow to pressure from allies to back the landmark 2015 agreement.

The summit of G7 wealthy nations pitted Trump against the leaders of Germany, France, Britain, Italy, Canada and Japan on several issues, with European diplomats frustrated at having to revisit questions they had hoped were long settled.

Trump, who has previously called global warming a hoax, came under concerted pressure from the other leaders to honor the 2015 Paris Agreement on curbing carbon emissions.

Although he tweeted that he would make a decision next week, his apparent reluctance to embrace the first legally binding global climate deal that was signed by 195 countries clearly annoyed German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

“The entire discussion about climate was very difficult, if not to say very dissatisfying,” she told reporters. “There are no indications whether the United States will stay in the Paris Agreement or not.”

(Source: Reuters)

## LEARN ENGLISH

### Interview Skills 6 - Describing Ones Strengths

Mr. Parsons: Okay Rebecca. Now you’ve given me a good idea of your work and academic background, but what about you as a person? How would you describe your key **strengths**?

Rebecca: Well Mr. Parsons, as I mentioned before I’m someone who needs new challenges. I’m really **focused** and **hard-working**. I think my academic results **prove** this.

Mr. Parsons: Yes, true, but how about other personal qualities?

Rebecca: Well I believe I’m a good **team-player**, but I can also work well independently. I’m very **enthusiastic** and, well I hope my colleagues would agree, I’m fun to work with.

Mr. Parsons: What would you say is your most **positive** quality?

Rebecca: Hmmmmm, that’s a **tough** question. But I would have to say my **passion**. I’m really **passionate** about journalism and passionate about my career.

■ **Key vocabulary**

**strengths:** a quality that makes someone effective or useful

**focus:** giving attention and effort to a specific task

**hardworking:** working with a lot of effort

**prove:** show the truth by some evidence

**team-player:** someone who is good at working closely with other people

**enthusiastic:** feeling or showing a lot of interest and excitement about something

**positive:** good

**tough:** difficult to do or deal with

**passion:** enthusiasm that one has when doing things

**passionate:** have a lot of interest in or passion for a particular issue

■ **Supplementary vocabulary**

**overconfident:** to have too much confidence to a fault

**hobby:** an activity done for pure enjoyment

**outgoing:** a person who is easy to get a long with

**coworkers:** the people who work with you

**goal oriented:** a person who actively pursues ways to better themselves

(Source: irlanguage.com)



### Have an idea? Be in touch!

**lifestyle.tehrantimes@gmail.com**

# Dragged to extinction by dogs and cats

By Farnaz Heidari

The thylacine -a marsupial- was once prevalent across Australia and Tasmania. Today it seems that domestic dogs and other introduced animals have outcompeted the species. It was also persecuted by farmers and is now extinct, although there are continued reports of sightings but all are inauthentic.

The last wild known Thylacine was captured in 1933 and lived alone in Hobart Zoo, Tasmania, where it died in 1936. Despite numerous, including contemporary, reports of its existence, and several organized searches, there has been no irrefutable evidence of its survival.

The thylacine has no close relatives. Once placental mammals such as dingoes and, later foxes and domestic dogs and cats reached Australia, the thylacine was forced to compete with these more efficient hunters and killers. It swiftly disappeared from its former wide range, although there were many reports of sightings on the mainland of Australia, even into the early 20th century.

■ **Fossils reveal**

About two years ago, an international team of scientists studied 2,000 fossils from North America. Fossils showed two species have a rocky past after the introduction of cats to Americas. This introduction ended in a disastrous influence for the continent’s species of wild dogs. Jack Miller wrote in his article of daily-mail: “In fact, it is thought that competition from cats caused up to 40 species of dog to become extinct in the region millions of years ago. The introduction of cats from Asia into the Americas 18.5 million years ago is thought to have drastically decreased the biodiversity of dogs, according to researchers.”

■ **Genetic dilution**

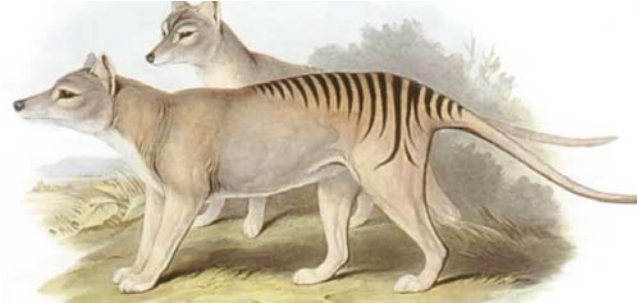
Like many predators, the wildcat has suffered extensive persecution. Today the major threat to its survival is genetic dilution of the species as it increasingly interbreeds with domestic cats. The wildcat is a solitary and secretive animal found mainly in forested areas across continental Europe and in Scotland. Its range also extends east to the Caspian Sea. The biggest threat by far to wildcats is “genetic pollution” through interbreeding with domestic cats. The wildcats of Europe are so similar to the African Wildcat (from



which the domestic form is thought to originate) that some zoologists think the two species are actually the same. They are certainly closely related, which is why they interbreed so easily. As a result, the natural wildcat population has begun to include crossbred animals (hybrids).

This genetic dilution undermines the purity of the species. Ironically, as the wildcat’s habitat has shrunk, the animal has been forced into new areas where it encounters domestic cats more often. This has led to more interbreeding and further genetic dilution. Thus the greater the wildcat’s breeding success, the more uncertain its future becomes. At the very least, hybridization will result in a confused picture, with some areas having true wildcats, and others having hybrids. In addition, interbreeding makes the species difficult to monitor.

The Berne Convention, the European Union Habitats Directive, and the national legislation of many countries recognize the wildcat’s rarity and have given the animal legal protection. Yet these laws are unable to prevent the main threat of interbreeding. Moreover, since hybrids are not legally protected, the legislation is weakened because anyone killing a wildcat can claim that they thought the animal was a hybrid. Such an assertion can-



not be easily disproved. If wildcats and domestic cats really are the same species then it seems impractical to give the animal legal protection, since there are millions of house cats all over the World!

■ **Limited knowledge**

As people and their domestic animals have spread and increased in number, conflict with wildlife has escalated, resulting in extermination of wildlife in many parts of their range. Today leopards, cheetahs, wolves, foxes and many others are still unwelcome residents across much of their range. Our wildlife heritage is rapidly vanishing, perhaps hastening into extinction by many reasons such as unknown disease that swept through domestic dogs and maybe cats. The main problems plaguing the wildlife throughout their range are all too familiar but introduction threats are still in doubt by public.

Dr. George Schaller known as one of the founding fathers of wildlife conservation, is the Vice President Emeritus at Panthera. Born in Germany in 1933, he has worked for nearly two decades studying and developing conservation initiatives for the snow leopard, Tibetan antelope, and wild yak, among other species.

His most recent conservation projects have been based in Laos, Myanmar, Mongolia, Iran and Tajikistan. Last year

he had visited cheetah habitat in Iran; in fact he has made five trips to Asiatic cheetah habitat since 2000. He addressed many threats that Asiatic Cheetah faces, many threats are indirect and less obvious- cars, dogs, and gazelle poachers on high-speed motorcycles for example head up a list of threats and all take a toll.

Cheetahs are vulnerable to the large, powerful, and often nearly feral mastiff-type dogs who accompany herdsmen into parks. Schaller said to wbur’s the Wild Life: “It is known that five cheetahs have been killed in the past three years by these dogs.” And he argues that the dogs are unnecessary to the shepherds—they don’t actually herd sheep and goats, and they are not needed to protect the flocks since the shepherds are always with them. “Dogs should be completely banned from national parks and wildlife refuges,” Schaller writes to wbur’s.

In fact the problem of dogs and cats is an extension of one of the oldest battles in nature- that of competition between animals for space. In this contest, one species competes more aggressively for space than any other. The problem of dogs and even cats is vast and widespread in our national parks and wildlife refuges, and it is just a reality that affects animals of all kinds.

## World’s first global ice archive in the works to preserve memory of disappearing glaciers

Every year Earth’s glaciers vanish a little bit more. It’s a harsh reality that the time is coming that some of the majestic ice pillars may disappear completely with no trace left of their existence.

An international team of scientists wants to make sure that at least some pieces of these glaciers are preserved for future generations to study. According to a report from IFLScience, the Ice Memory Project will be saving ice cores from the endangered glaciers in a sanctuary in Antarctica.

“In the coming decades, or even the coming centuries, these samples will be invaluable -- be it for entirely unprecedented scientific discoveries or for understanding local changes in the environment,” Nobel Peace Prize winner and climatologist Jean Jouzel said on their website. “This project has my full support.”

French and Italian glaciologists began the project in 2015 and after proving its feasibility during a trial run in Mont Blanc, French Alps in 2016, the team is ready for another field expedition to collect more samples. Joined with scientists from Brazil, Bolivia and Russia, the group will embark on a mission to drill and get three core samples from Bolivia’s second-highest mountain, Illimani, this week.

After the expedition, one of the three



core samples will be sent to Grenoble, France, for observation. The other two will be sent to a “snow cave” in Concordia, a research station in Antarctica. Antarctica is the best site for storage of scientific data and materials because of the freezing temperature that can preserve and protect it.

Preservation of non-polar glacier samples is important because of its ability to record changes in climate and atmospheric conditions, giving scientists a glimpse of former environments’ climates.

Just recently, scientists have said that the United States will lose all of its glaciers within decades. The increasing temperature has already destroyed a sizeable chunk of the famous Glacier National Park.

(Source: iflscience.com)

## Eating beans instead of beef could help reduce greenhouse gases

A new study led by the Loma Linda University revealed that Americans could help reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions by simply changing some of their eating habits.

The study, published in the journal Climatic Change, showed that United States can easily achieve 50 to 75 percent of its greenhouse gases reduction targets by 2020, if Americans give up on eating beef and start consuming beans.

“Given the scale of greenhouse gas reductions needed to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, are we prepared to eat beef analogs that look and taste like beef, but have a much lower climate impact?” said Helen Harwatt, PhD, a researcher at Loma Linda University and lead investigator of the study, in a press release. “It looks like we’ll need to do this. The scale of the reductions in greenhouse gas emissions needed doesn’t allow us the



luxury of ‘business as usual’ eating patterns.”

The researchers noted that beef cattle are considered to be one of the most greenhouse gas-intensive foods to produce. On the other hand, the production of beans and other legumes only result to one-fortieth the



amount of greenhouse gas produced in beef. Interestingly, the researchers claim that eating beans instead of beef could help the country achieve more than half of its greenhouse gas reduction goals, even without imposing any new standards in manufacturing and automobiles.

Aside from cutting down greenhouse gas emissions, substituting beef with legumes could free up 42 percent of U.S. cropland currently under cultivation. This is equivalent to more than 400 million square acres, or approximately 1.6 times the size of California.

Under the Obama administration, U.S. agreed to cut down its greenhouse gas emissions by 17 percent below 2005 levels by the year 2020. In order to achieve that goal, the greenhouse gas level need to remain below 5344 mmtCO2e by 2020. This is 7 percent less than the greenhouse gas emission of the country last 2013.

(Source: phys.org)



## Switzerland to decommission all 5 of its nuclear power plant

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(Source: Nature World News)



# European allies see the two sides of Trump

In Sicily, Donald Trump listened attentively during complex G7 debates over trade and climate change, smiled for the cameras, and for the most part refrained from provocative tweets.

In Brussels, he bashed NATO partners for not spending more on defense, shoved the prime minister of Montenegro and renewed his attacks on Germany's trade surplus with the United States.

America's allies witnessed the two sides of Trump on his first foreign trip as U.S. president, a nine-day tour that began with sword dancing in Saudi Arabia and vague pledges in Israel to deliver Middle East peace.

As Trump headed home, European officials were left with mixed feelings: relief that he had been patient enough to listen to their arguments and unsettled by a Jekyll-and-Hyde figure who is still finding his way on the big policy issues.

"It all fits with his strategic ambiguity approach to life," said Julianne Smith of the Centre for a New American Security. "It may do wonders when dealing with adversaries. But it doesn't work when dealing with allies," she said.

Other leaders of the Group of Seven nations had viewed with trepidation their summit, held at a cliff-top hotel overlooking the Mediterranean, after four preparatory meetings failed to clear up differences with the Trump administration on trade, how to deal with Russia and climate change.

But in the end, officials said, the result was better than they had feared.

The final communiqué acknowledged a split between the United States and its six partners over honoring the 2015 Paris accord on climate change. That followed a debate with Trump that German Chancellor Angela Merkel described as "very dissatisfying".

However on trade, Trump bowed to pressure from allies to retain a pledge to fight protectionism. And on Russia, he did not insist on removing - as some al-



lies had feared - the threat of additional sanctions for Moscow's intervention in Ukraine.

"I found him very willing to engage, very curious, with an ability and desire to ask questions and to learn from all his interlocutors," said Italian Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni, the G7 summit's host.

## ■ NATO "disaster"

Still, there was irritation at Trump's refusal to show his hand on the Paris agreement to curb carbon emissions. Near the end of the summit, he tweeted teasingly that he would make a decision on Paris next week, leaving delegations to scratch their heads about why he could not commit in Taormina.

The most critical words were reserved for Trump's appearance at NATO headquarters in Brussels, which was described as a "disaster" by more than one European official.

With the leaders of America's NATO partners standing like school children behind him, Trump upbraided them for not spending more on defense and repeated the charge that some members owed

"massive amounts of money" from past years - even though allied contributions are voluntary.

Most disturbingly for allies, Trump did not personally affirm his commitment to Article 5, NATO's mutual defense doctrine, after pre-trip signals from the White House that he would do just that. Trump also failed to mention Russia, which remains NATO's *raison d'être* in the eyes of most Europeans.

It was a speech that reminded some of Trump's doom-laden inauguration address in January, one that seemed written for the hardest of his hard-core domestic audience. "Proud of @realDonaldTrump for telling NATO deadbeats to pay up or shut up," former Republican governor Mike Huckabee tweeted in response.

Trump's appearance in Brussels was particularly galling to the Germans, who after months of painstaking relationship building with Trump - including Merkel's invitation to his daughter Ivanka for a G20 women's summit in Berlin - found themselves under attack from him on two fronts.

Before heading to NATO, Trump criticized Germany's trade surplus in a private meeting with senior European Union officials.

"If Trump really wants to go down a path of isolation, it will only speed up China's rise to the top," one senior German official grumbled.

## ■ Zero-sum

Beyond the rhetoric, Trump's body language also confounded his hosts. He muscled aside Montenegrin Prime Minister Dusko Markovic as NATO leaders walked into the alliance's new headquarters for a photo session.

And he engaged in two alpha-male handshakes with France's new 39-year-old President Emmanuel Macron, who seemed to get the better of Trump on both occasions.

The macho posturing in Europe contrasted to the images, a few days earlier, of Trump and his team swaying, swords in hand, with the absolute rulers of Saudi Arabia at a lavish welcome ceremony given by King Salman.

Summing up the tour on Saturday, Trump's advisers seemed most enthused about the Saudi leg, where he clinched a \$110 billion arms deal and forged what one aide described as a "personal bond" with the king.

"The president was able to make some of the most amazing deals that have really been made by any administration ever," enthused his economic adviser Gary Cohn.

Daniela Schwarzer, research director at the German Council of Foreign Relations in Berlin, said the trip had confirmed Trump's "zero-sum game" view of the world in which you are either a winner or a loser and relationships are transactional.

"His rhetoric and actions suggest he does not consider it a priority to build good and engaging relations with allies the U.S. so far considered its most important ones," she said.

(Source: Reuters)

## Britain says some of Manchester bomber's network potentially still at large

Members of Manchester suicide bomber Salman Abedi's network are still potentially at large, British interior minister Amber Rudd said on Sunday, after the terrorism threat level was lowered due to significant progress in the investigation.

Police have said they have arrested a large part of the network behind the bombing, which killed 22 people at a concert hall, and two more men were arrested on Saturday as police continued to close in on the group.

Asked during an interview on BBC television whether some of the group were still at large, Rudd said: "Potentially. It is an ongoing operation. There are 11 people in custody, the operation is still really at full tilt in a way."

Prime Minister Theresa May said developments in the investigation into the bombing meant intelligence experts had decided to lower the threat level from its highest rating "critical", meaning an attack could be imminent, to "severe".

Police have issued a photograph of Abedi, a 22-year-old Briton born to Libyan parents, taken on Monday night before he blew himself up and said they believed he had assembled his bomb in an apartment in the city center.

British officials have confirmed he had recently returned from Libya and the officers said police needed information about his movements from May 18 when he returned to Britain.

Abdedi was known to British security services before the bombing, the government has said, but Rudd declined to

comment on exactly what had been known about him.

Media have reported that people who knew Abedi had raised concerns about him and his views as long ago as five years before he carried about Monday's attack.

"The intelligence services are still collecting information about him but I wouldn't rush to conclusions, as you seem to be, that they have somehow missed something," Rudd said.

## ■ "Top list" of militants

When asked how many potential militants the government was worried about, Rudd said the security services were looking at 500 different potential plots, involving 3,000 people as a "top list", with a further 20,000 beneath that.

"That is all different layers, different tiers, it might be just a question mark about one of them or something serious with that top list," she said.

The government has previously complained that technology companies are not doing enough to tackle the use of their networks both to promote extremist ideology and for communication between militant suspects via encrypted messages.

Rudd said Britain was making good progress with internet firms on this but more could be done. Technology companies such as WhatsApp say they cannot break end-to-end encryption.

"I believe we can get them to be more successful in



working with us to find a way of getting some of that information," she said.

"The area that I am most concerned about is the internet companies who are continuing to publish the hate publications, the hate material that is contributing to radicalizing people in this country."

Security minister Ben Wallace also told the BBC that the government was looking at a range of options to put more pressure on internet firms to take down extremist material and change their algorithms to stop such posts from linking to similar material elsewhere online.

(Source: AFP)

## China ready to fill U.S. vacuum in global trade

➔ Occasional departures from that commitment - such as Ronald Reagan's use of protectionist measures against Japanese auto, steel and machine tools companies in the 1980s in the name of 'fair trade' - have always been characterized as temporary expedients. The intent was always characterized as a return to free trade. President Trump has used comparable language. But in his case, there has been no suggestion that his use of protectionist measures will be temporary. They represent a significant change in policy that will require a wholesale reappraisal by Asia's major exporters, pushing them to both establish bilateral agreements with the United States, closer ties with China, and new markets for their products.

■ **How do you assess the future of free trade in view of the Chinese president's remarks at the World Economic Forum in January?**

A: President Xi Jinping suggested at the World Economic Forum in January that China's leadership has already signaled its willingness to fill any void in terms of free-trade leadership vacated by the United States. China is undoubtedly the greatest beneficiaries of the current global free trade system. Their trade and investment position has grown extraordinarily over the course of the last two decades in every major regional market. Lower profitability at home, couple with a

consistently growing need for raw materials, has added further pressure for their firms to pursue profitable opportunities around the globe. China's announcement of the 'Silk Road Fund', The 'One Belt, One Road' initiative, and formation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank are three key elements in doing so. President Obama was determined to respond to that challenge in the belief that the United States should be willing to assume some domestic costs to maintain its leadership of the free trade system. Trump, in contrast, has signaled his willingness to abandon that position in favor of an 'America First' policy that generates benefits his core domestic supporters - in manufacturing, fossil fuels - and to project American technological innovation from what he sees as Chinese theft.

■ **Aren't Trump's moves a blow to global trade order?**

A: This is hard to judge at this point. To date, the Trump administration has spent a lot more time talking about what it will do rather than introducing substantial changes. From NATO or the proposed abandonment of the 'One China' policy abroad to health care reform at home, the new administration has had to either reverse its position or make compromises in the face of resistance. And it often does not speak with one voice: President Trump's favorable comments about Russia, for example, have

been contradicted by James Mattis, the Secretary of Defense.

Then again, the effective functioning of the global trading system depends as much on what political leaders say as what they do. Global markets pay attention when the economic ministers of the G20 countries met last week and the United States took the unprecedented step of rebuffing efforts to include in the meeting's joint statement language that stressed the importance of free trade and that it should be conducted in a "rules based" manner. The psychological effect could be significant as governments, corporations and markets plan their strategies on the basis of future expectations. They might understandably conclude that they can no longer rely on the assumption that free trade will go unchallenged - and that is destabilizing.

■ **In the absence of the U.S., will economic powers such as China will lead the global trade?**

A: Yes, as I mentioned, the Chinese will in part hope to fill this vacuum. The role that the European Union will play is unclear at present. It depends on the outcome of forthcoming elections in several countries in 2017 - notably Germany. If the recent Dutch elections are any guide, the leadership European countries - led by Angela Merkel - will sustain a commitment to free trade. But even in Europe

there has been a growing unhappiness about free trade with China. It is one of the less reported elements that has fueled right-wing nationalism and populism in many European countries. Economic insecurity is a major issue in public opinion polls - and the belief that China has taken jobs from Europe through unfair trade practices. So, regardless of the results of these elections, the European commitment to free trade faces serious strains in the next twelve months.

■ **What is possible alternative for NAFTA and Trans-Pacific Partnership?**

A: President Trump has signaled a clear commitment to bilateral trade agreements coupled with a renegotiation of regional agreements under NAFTA. But the greatest resistance to these measures are likely to come from within the Congressional leadership of the Republican Party. They have long expressed support for free trade and enhanced financial flows. The Congressional Republican leadership is likely to coalesce around President Trump as long as he advocates things they favor, such as tax cuts. But the reform of healthcare has already exposed some fissures between the President and Congressional Republicans. And that gap may grow as he moves to implement renegotiated trade agreements that undermine free trade and require Congressional approval.

## U.S. airstrikes kill 20 civilians in Syria's Raqqah

### Russia airstrikes kill 120 terrorists fleeing Raqqa

At least 20 civilians have been killed and 20 others injured in fresh airstrikes conducted by the U.S. against southern outskirts of the Syrian city of Raqqah, a London-based monitor says.



The so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) said Sunday the casualties came after warplanes attacked civilian buses leaving Raqqah, which is held by the ISIL (Daesh) terrorist group.

On Thursday, the U.S. carried out similar air raids on the city of Mayadin in Dayr al-Zawr Province, with the observatory saying at least 106 civilians, including 42 children, had been killed in the attacks.

The Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates wrote to the UN on Saturday, calling for the cessation of "illegal" attacks that "blatantly contradict the UN Security Council's resolutions, international law, and international humanitarian law."

In two letters addressed to UN chief Antonio Guterres and the world body's Security Council, the ministry denounced the U.S.-led campaign "against Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity under the pretext of combating terrorism."

The airstrikes, it said, "only contribute to spreading chaos and destruction" and benefit terror outfits such as Daesh and Jabhat Fateh al-Sham operating in the Arab country.

Syria wrote similar letters earlier, condemning the May 15 U.S. strikes that killed a total of 57 people in al-Ekirshi village of Raqqah Province and the city of Abu Kamal in Dayr al-Zawr Province.

The air raids do not target terrorists and their allies, but rather civilians, enabling militants to commit more crimes in Syria, the letters read.

The U.S. has been conducting airstrikes against what it calls Daesh positions inside Syria since September 2014 without any authorization from the Damascus government or a UN mandate.

According to latest figures released by SOHR, airstrikes by the US and its allies left a total of 225 civilians dead in Syria between April 23 and May 23 alone.

## ■ 120 terrorists killed in Russia airstrikes

Meanwhile, Russian airstrikes have killed as many as 120 Daesh terrorists who were trying to flee the Takfiri outfit's last stronghold of Raqqah in northern Syria for the ancient city of Palmyra in the central part of the Arab country, a Russian Defense Ministry source says.

On Saturday, Russia's Sputnik news agency cited a source with the country's Defense Ministry as saying that the development had taken place two days earlier.

"As a result of these strikes, 32 pick-up trucks were destroyed and some 120 terrorists were killed," the source said.

Daesh seized Raqqah in 2014, the same year when it started its campaign of terror in Syria. It then proceeded to capture large swathes of Syrian territory.

## The real Donald Trump on show in Brussels

### The US president's comments on NATO risk undermining the alliance

➔ There is the possibility that he does not fully comprehend that the central pillar of NATO's strength is the principle of mutual defense. Trump may think his non-commitment can be used as leverage at future summits. He may also be keen to steer clear of further foreign military interventions - one of his campaign messages. There are no circumstances, however, where Article 5 should be brought into question. Western leaders have little choice but to accept Trump's boorish behavior. They can only hope that his actions do not match the rhetoric.

His proposed "Arab NATO" alliance, for example, was suggested in the run-up to his visit to Saudi Arabia yet was never mentioned by name. Talk is cheap and bullying other NATO members may play well to his supporters at home. European nations must again consider the possibility of defending themselves in the event of the U.S. weakening support from NATO. This was judged to be a real prospect upon Trump's election and is so again. Germany in particular must step up and fill the leadership void that exists among NATO members. If the Brussels summit taught us anything about the U.S. president, it is that Trump cannot be relied on. Even when he signals moves towards more conventional foreign policy positions, the goodwill is all too quickly undone. His zero-sum world view has not fundamentally changed. If we have seen the real Donald Trump in Brussels last week it does not bode well for the future of the western alliance.

(Source: FT)

Instead of seeing NATO as a group of nations bound by common causes and values, Trump has concluded it is largely a transactional relationship.



## Tuchel “completely empty” after DFB-Pokal triumph

Borussia Dortmund manager Thomas Tuchel has admitted that he is running on empty following his side's DFB-Pokal triumph, but remains hopeful or stay in charge.

The 43-year-old is rumoured to have fallen out with BVB's board members earlier this campaign, leading to doubts over whether he will still be in charge at the Westfalenstadion come pre-season.



Dortmund earned a battling 2-1 win over Eintracht Frankfurt in Saturday's cup final at the Olympic Stadium in Berlin, building on what was a strong finish to their Bundesliga campaign to finish in a respectable third place.

Asked after the match if he wished to remain at Dortmund, Tuchel told Sky Sports News: "Yes! But I don't know. I am completely empty. After the semi-final I was full [of energy] but now I am completely empty. It was a hard work.

"After we scored, we stopped playing football and then we were lucky not to fall behind. But nobody talks about it anymore, because we have won. Now everything is perfect."

Tuchel, who replaced Jurgen Klopp as Dortmund boss in 2015, had never previously won a major honour at senior level.

(Source: Sports Mole)

## Top seed Kerber stunned by Makarova in first round

World number one Angelique Kerber's nightmare season hit a new low on Sunday when she was dumped out of the French Open 6-2 6-2 by 40th-ranked Ekaterina Makarova.

The German became the first top seeded woman to lose in the opening round of the French Open since the sport turned professional in 1968 -- and the disparity between the players in her Russian opponent's favour was as wide as the scoreline suggests.

Cutting a troubled figure on court a world away from the feisty player who last season battled her way to two grand slam titles, Kerber lacked the pace and power to trouble a fellow left-hander.

Kerber, 29, has struggled this year, withdrawing from the Madrid Open with a thigh injury and going down in straight sets to qualifier Anna Kontaveit in Rome.

But Sunday's setback, albeit on a surface she has no great affection for and having made an opening-round exit in Paris last year, threatens to leave her season in tatters.

"I need matches. I need matches where I can start playing and feeling my tennis. Winning matches," she said prior to Sunday's loss. Makarova - who had won four of her previous 11 encounters with Kerber - was making her first singles appearance on the Philippe Chatrier centre court as well as fighting against history.

But, arriving at Roland Garros high on confidence after having beaten Agnieszka Radwanska and Dominika Cibulkova on clay this year, she held her nerve to close out the match in a final game that featured five deuce points.

"I was also fighting with my emotions not to wait for a mistake (by Kerber)," she said.

(Source: Eurosport)

## Iniesta: 'It was not a good season for Barcelona'

Barcelona captain Andres Iniesta has admitted that this side's season his been one of disappointment afterclaiming just the Copa del Rey crown in Luis Enrique's final term at the helm.

Enrique's glittering three-year stint as manager at the Catalan giants ended in rather timid fashion, as his sidedfinished second to Real Madrid in La Liga after being knocked out of the Champions League at the hands of Juventus in the quarter-finals.

"When you do not achieve your goals of winning titles, winning the great things such as the league and Champions League, it is not a good season," said Iniesta, according to Sky Sports News.

"But what we had left to control, which was playing this Copa final and winning it, we have done it, and now we need to look into what we might have failed at this season, what do we need to improve, and we will try again next year.

"That is the demand of this team, of this club, and that is what we will try to do."

Iniesta has made 412 appearances for Barca since graduating to the senior side in 2002, scoring 34 goals in the process.

(Source: Sports Mole)

# Luis Enrique leaves with feeling of mission accomplished

Luis Enrique leaves Barcelona with no regrets and the feeling of mission accomplished.

The coach capped his three-year stint with the Catalan club by winning the Copa del Rey title with a 3-1 win over Alaves on Saturday.

Now it's time to enjoy some much-needed time off after three "intense" seasons, and let the club move on under fresh leadership.

"There is no sadness at all, just happiness," Luis Enrique said. "I'm the one who decided to stop, and I think that it was a wonderful decision for me, for the players and for the team as well. The intensity of this profession demands maximum dedication every single day and there is a natural wear out."

He said players always need new challenges and will benefit from a change in leadership, and the club will certainly keep winning despite his departure.

After missing out on the league this season, the Copa del Rey was Barcelona's second title of the campaign to go along with the Spanish Super Cup, but Luis Enrique has won nearly everything since replacing Gerard Martino in 2014. The former midfielder led Barcelona to the treble of the Spanish league, Copa del Rey and Champions League in 2015. He also managed the league-Copa double in 2016, and also won the European Super Cup and the Club World Cup in 2015.

He said he was "proud" to have helped Barcelona fans celebrate so many accomplishments during his time at the helm.

"If someone had told me when I arrived that I would have the opportunity to help my team win nine titles out of 13 that we played, I'd say that these would be good numbers," he said. "It would have been nice to have won La Liga and contended for the Champions League



title this season, but it just wasn't meant to be. I believe that the fans recognized the effort and the sacrifice of all the players throughout the season. I have enjoyed the opportunity to make them happy."

Luis Enrique said he was also lucky to have had the chance to coach a player like Lionel Messi.

"He is extraordinary, extraterrestrial," Luis Enrique said about the Argentina forward, who scored the team's first goal

on Saturday. "I've had the opportunity to enjoy Messi at his best, performing at the highest level. He is the very best, without a doubt."

Neymar and Paco Alcacer also scored at the Vicente Calderon Stadium to help Barcelona win its third straight Copa del Rey title, and 29th all-time.

Barcelona is expected to announce this week that its new coach will be Ernesto Valverde, who left Athletic Bilbao a few days ago.

Luis Enrique's future remains up in the air.

"I don't know what I'll be doing, really. I'm open to every possibility, including changing sports," the 47-year-old Luis Enrique said, with a smile on his face. "I do know that I'm very competitive and it's been like this since I was born. Right now I'm looking forward to the opportunity of enjoying my friends and my family."

(Source: Associated Press)

## Farah runs year's fastest 5,000m in Oregon



British double Olympic champion Mo Farah made his last U.S. track race a special one, running the year's fastest 5,000 meters at the Prefontaine Classic Diamond League meeting on Saturday.

Farah, who will be moving up to the marathon after August's IAAF world championships in London, sprinted down the straight to defeat a high-quality field in 13 minutes, 00.70 seconds.

"Everybody was in that race and I used my experience to come away with a win," said Farah. "It's massive, and what a way to end my career in the U.S."

"This track is where we started in 2011," said the crowd favorite who trains in nearby Portland.

"I remember it clear. I wasn't the fa-

vorite, I was probably ranked sixth or seventh in the race and then I come with the British record, the European record and made my breakthrough year and ended up winning in London 2012."

The 34-year-old, who plans to double in the 5,000 and 10,000 at the world championships, said the race also brought on a lot of pressure.

"There's a lot of people doubting me, 'Mo's getting old,'" he said. "There was lots of talk, a lot of youngsters coming through talking a lot. I let my running do my talking. That's what I'm good at."

Ethiopian Yomif Kejelcha finished second in 13:01.21 and Kenyan Geoffrey Kamworor claimed third in 13:01.35.

(Source: Reuters)

## Kvitova completes emotional winning comeback at French Open



Petra Kvitova made an emotional and convincing return to competition, showing no ill effects from the stabbing injury to her hand, with a 6-3 6-2 French Open first-round victory against American Julia Boserup on Sunday.

The Czech, who spent five months out of the game after needing emergency surgery last December when she was stabbed in her left, playing hand during a burglary, set up a second-round meeting with either Russian Evgeniya Rodina or American Bethanie Mattek-Sands.

The twice Wimbledon champion, a semi-finalist at Roland Garros in 2012, looked poised and focused, treating the sparse Court Philippe Chatrier crowd to a few exquisite drop shots and lightning-quick forehands.

Even though she probably enjoyed the mo-

ment, Kvitova wasted little time on court and was the first player to reach the second round.

An early double fault meant little as she opened a 2-0 lead by breaking in the second game.

The Czech 15th seed, who benefits from a protected ranking, took the opening set with a solid half volley.

She broke twice in the second, sealing victory when Boserup netted a forehand.

Kvitova dropped her racket and held her head in her hands, her eyes filling with tears while her support team, wearing T-shirts marked "Courage, Belief, Pojd (Come on! in Czech), celebrated wildly.

"Thank you guys I love you so much," she told the crowd, who applauded generously.

"I'm glad with the way I played."

(Source: Reuters)

## Wenger's Arsenal future will become clear by Thursday

Arsenal boss Arsene Wenger said his future would become "very clear" by Thursday, after guiding the Gunners to another FA Cup success.

The Frenchman became the first manager to win the FA Cup seven times as his side beat league champions Chelsea 2-1.

The 67-year-old's contract expires this summer, and there has been much speculation about whether he will stay.

"I have kept my medal so that means it is a special night," he said. "For the rest, we will see what happens."

Wenger said he knew what he wanted to do, but added: "Let us enjoy this win and not worry about the future."

He told the BBC: "We have a board meeting on Tuesday, and on Wednesday or Thursday it will be very clear."

It is understood Tuesday's gathering is not a formal board meeting, but Wenger's future will be discussed by the club's directors.

Alexis Sanchez gave Arsenal the lead against Chelsea, and Aaron Ramsey clinched the victory after Diego Costa's equaliser.



Arsenal won the FA Cup for a record 13th time as Wenger, who joined the club in 1996, became the most successful manager in the competition's history.

But they finished fifth in the Premier League, meaning they failed to qualify the Champions League for the first time in 20 years.

And the Gunners' season has been beset by protests from supporters, demanding the Frenchman ends his long association with the club.

With Laurent Koscielny suspended, and Gabriel and Shkodran Mustafi injured, Per Mertesacker made his first start of the season at Wembley.

A World Cup winner with 104 caps, the 32-year-old has had an injury-plagued season, playing just 37 minutes of first-team football before Saturday.

But the German defender kept Chelsea striker Costa quiet for much of the game.

Wenger said: "Per Mertesacker, for me, is a perfect example for any young professional football player.

"What he did was the consequence of an unbelievable attitude every day even when he was not selected.

"When he was not selected he worked even harder and that is why I will pay a special tribute to him."

Asked about his manager's achievements, Mertesacker said: "Not bad, is it?"

"That is everything I have to say because there has been a lot said about him and I think the team said everything they needed to."

Midfielder Ramsey had also scored the winning goal in the 2014 victory over Hull City.

Asked about Wenger, the Welshman said: "Of course I want him to stay. He deserves this."

(Source: BBC)



# Iranian teams ready to qualify for the ACL Round of Eight

Three Iranian football teams have chance to qualify for the AFC Champions League Round of Eight.

## ■ Al Ain v Esteghlal

Kaveh Rezaei's stoppage-time penalty gave Esteghlal a narrow 1-0 win over Al Ain in the first leg to mean the Iranian team travel to the United Arab Emirates with a slender one-goal advantage to defend.

But 2016 runners-up Al Ain showed their strong knockout stage pedigree last year and will be confident of working their way back into the tie, particularly with star striker Nasser Al Shamrani being brought back into the fold after missing the match in Tehran.

## Lekhwiya v Persepolis

A home win over Persepolis will see Lekhwiya progress to their third quarter-final in five years after the sides played out a scoreless draw in the first leg on Tuesday.

The competition's top scorer Mehdi Taremi may be left to rue his late penalty miss at Azadi Stadium as Persepolis squandered the chance to take a one-goal lead to Doha, where unbeaten Lekhwiya have played three, won three.

## ■ Al Hilal v Esteghlal Khuzestan

Al Hilal go into the second leg of their Round of 16 clash with Esteghlal Khuzestan a goal to the good after coming from behind to secure a 2-1 victory in the first leg in Muscat.

Al Hilal are looking to return to the quarter-finals after missing out in 2016, while Esteghlal Khuzestan need to score at least twice – something they've failed to do in seven games on the continent – to have any chance of making the last eight.

(Source: AFC)



## Petrochimi celebrate Iran's basketball Super League title

**S P O R T S** Petrochimi Bandar Emam basketball team rallied past Naft Abadan on the road to sweep the championship series.

The game was mostly controlled by Petrochimi. Naft Abadan managed to win second period 25-23. But it was not enough to take a lead and get a victory that evening. Petrochimi had a 30-17 advantage in offensive rebounds. Great defensive blocking was one of the keys in this match when Petrochimi made 7 blocks.



The best player for the winners was international center Hamed Haddadi (218-85) who had a double-double by scoring 28 points, 13 rebounds and 4 assists.

American swingman James White chipped in 18 points, 8 rebounds and 7 assists. At the other side the best for losing team was the former international swingman Saeed Davarpanah who recorded 26 points and 4 steals and American-Ivorian guard Doron Perkins added 12 points and 7 assists respectively.

## Iran win Asian Bodybuilding Championships



**S P O R T S** Iran won the title of the 51st Asian Bodybuilding Championships in Mongolia on Sunday.

In the competition held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, the Iranian team claimed 12 gold medals, four silvers and two bronze medals.

In the men's category, Iran finished in first place with 265 points, followed by Mongolia (175 points) and China (166 points).

In the women's category, China claimed the title, bagging 116 points.

Silver medal went to Japan with 80 points and South Korea won the bronze medal with 70 points.

## Ex-Persepolis player Naeini laid to rest



**S P O R T S** Ex-Persepolis player Majid Naeini was laid to rest in Tehran's Behesht-e Zahra Cemetery on Sunday.

He died of stroke at the age of 60 on Thursday in Tehran due to stroke.

His family chose to donate his organs.

Naeini was coach of Persepolis youth level teams.

He played for Shahin and Persepolis football teams.

A several Iranian sports officials attended the funeral.

The Tehran Times staff offer heartfelt condolences to his bereaved family.

## Paul Pogba marks the start of Ramadan as star travels to Mecca

Manchester United star Paul Pogba has flown to Saudi Arabia to mark the start of the Muslim holy month Ramadan just three days after lifting the Europa League trophy with victory over Ajax in Stockholm.

Pogba wore simple white garments and sported a new low-key hairstyle as he was spotted ahead of his pilgrimage to Mecca after Saturday marked the start of the ninth month in the Islamic calendar.

The 24-year-old is a practising Muslim but it is not known if he will spend the next month fasting with the world's most-expensive player named in Didier Deschamps' squad for France's games against Paraguay, Sweden and England in June.

Pogba posted a video on Instagram of him twirling his luggage outside his home in Manchester, telling his followers: 'On my way to go say thank you for this season. See you soon Manchester! En route to my prayers.'

In pictures posted on Twitter, Pogba is seen dressed



in all white ahead of 'umrah', the non-mandatory lesser pilgrimage to Mecca that - unlike Hajj - can be per-

formed at any time of the year.

The former Juventus midfielder who scored United's opening goal in the 2-0 victory over Ajax at the Friends Arena last Wednesday, was later spotted ahead of his period of introspection.

The more subdued appearance from the £100million midfielder is a far cry from the energetic celebrations on the pitch in Sweden barely 72 hours ago as he joined his family to toast the first European trophy of his career.

Pogba can look forward to a prolonged break following next month's international commitments, with United due to play six pre-season fixtures in the United States and Norway.

The Frenchman will return to Old Trafford in July where he will be joined again by Michael Carrick, who has signed a new one-year contract extension with the Red Devils.

(Source: Daily Mail)

## Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel wins F1's Monaco GP

Sebastian Vettel beat his Ferrari teammate Kimi Raikkonen to win the Monaco Grand Prix on Sunday and comfortably extend his lead at the top of the standings.

It was the four-time F1 champion's third win of the season and 45th of his career, as well as Ferrari's first at Monaco since Michael Schumacher in 2001. Red

Bull driver Daniel Ricciardo finished third ahead of Mercedes driver Valtteri Bottas.

Title rival Lewis Hamilton clawed his Mercedes through the field to finish a commendable seventh from 13th on the grid.

Raikkonen started from pole position for the first time in nine years, with Vettel joining him on the front row. Both made

a clean start, with Vettel holding off Bottas heading into the first corner.

After Raikkonen and Bottas had both come in for a tire change a few laps earlier, Vettel timed his change to perfection 39 laps into the 78-lap race. When he came back out, he was in front of Raikkonen.

(Source: Associated Press)



## Iran announce squad for World Para Athletics Championships

Members of the Iranian squad have been named for the World Para Athletics Championships London 2017.

Iran will participate in the prestigious event with 19 athletes.

## ■ Iran squad:

Ali Asghar Javanmardi (shot put F35), Mehran Nekuei Majd (shot put F35), Javad Hardani (shot put F38), Hamed Amiri (shot put, javelin F54), Sajjad Mohammadian (shot put F42), Siamak Saleh Farajzadeh (discus throw, shot put F34), Ali Mohammad-yari (discus throw F56), Mohsen Kaeidi (shot put and javelin F 34), Mohsen Majidi (discus throw F37), Amanollah Papi (javelin F57), Alireza Mokhtari (shot put F53), Hashemieh Mottaghi-an (javelin F56), Mohammad Khalvandi (javelin F57), Abdollah Heydari (javelin F57), Mehdi Alizadeh (shot put F33), Asadollah Azimi (shot put F53), Jalil Bagheri (shot put F55), Saman Pakbaz (shot put, discus throw F 12), Sajjad Nikparast (javelin F12)

The World Para Athletics Championships will take place at the London Stadium between 14-23 July.



## Sadeghi joins Beykoz Belediyespor handball team

Afshin Sadeghi joined Beykoz Belediyespor handball team on Sunday.

The Iranian international left back has joined the Turkish super league team on a one-year contract.

The details of the contract have not been revealed.

Sadeghi has joined Beykoz Belediyespor from Switzerland's TSV Fortitudo Gossau.

Another Iranian player Sajjad Nadri has previously joined Beykoz Belediyespor.

Nadri plays at right back.

Sadeghi and Nadri are members of Iran national handball team.

(Source: Tasnim)

## Sarmayeh Bank beaten by Altay at Asian Women's Club Volleyball

Sarmayeh Bank of Iran lost to Altay of Kazakhstan in Pool A of the 2017 Asian Women's Club Volleyball Championship on Saturday.

The Iranian team lost to its rival in straight sets (16-25, 18-25, 19-25).

Sarmayeh Bank lost to Supreme Chonburi of Thailand 3-1 and defeated Taiwan Power of Chinese Taipei in its second match.

Sarmayeh will face Tianjin Bohai Bank of China in quarter-final on Monday.

The competition is being held in Ust-Kamenogorsk, Kazakhstan from May 25 to 31.

The tournament will serve as the Asian qualifiers for the 2018 FIVB Volleyball Women's Club World Championship with the champion qualifying for the world championship.

(Source: Tasnim)



## FIFA U-20 World Cup: Senegal advance to last 16

Senegal and Ecuador finished goalless at the Jeonju World Cup Stadium in their final Group F match at the FIFA U-20 World Cup Korea Republic 2017.

The west Africans thought they had the winning goal in the 54th minute. But the video assistant referee cancelled Aliou Badji's effort as the forward was adjudged to have fouled Ecuador goalkeeper Jose Cevallos after he managed to keep out an Ibrahima Niane header on the line.

Ecuador's Joao Rojas attempted a powerful low shot in the 78th minute but Senegal goalkeeper Mouhamed M'baye was up to the challenge and made the save.

The shared point means Senegal finishes as Group F runners-up to USA, who drew 1-1 with Saudi Arabia in the group's other match, while Ecuador head home.

(Source: FIFA)





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## NEWS IN BRIEF



### “Cold Breath” crowned best at U.S. festival

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Iranian director Abbas d e s k Raziji’s “Cold Breath” won the best film award at the Second Ridgefield Independent Film Festival (RIFF), which was held in the state of Connecticut in the U.S. from May 19 to 21.

“What Children Do” by Dean Peterson from the U.S. received the Grand Jury Prize, while “The Ides of Childhood” co-directed by Sudeshna Sharma and Samar Salam from India was named the best documentary.

In addition, Iranian films “The Descendants” by Yaser Talebi and “Cradle” by Zaniar Lotfi went on screen during the festival.



### “The Fish and I” honored at Italy’s SorsiCorti festival

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — “The Fish and I”, an d e s k acclaimed short movie by Iranian director Babak Habibifar, won the New Visions Award of the 11th edition of the SorsiCorti Short Film Festival, which was held in Palermo, Italy from May 12 to 20.

The movie is about a blind man who tries to save the life of a fish.

## Polanski’s return to female psycho-drama divides Cannes critics

**CANNES, FRANCE (Reuters)** — Roman Polanski, whose 1960s films “Repulsion” and “Rosemary’s Baby” focused on women in mental torment, returns to the same theme in a film that screened at Cannes on Saturday to mixed reviews.

“Based on a True Story” stars Polanski’s wife Emmanuelle Seigner as Delphine, a successful author who makes friends with an overly-keen fan Elle, played by Eva Green, in a relationship that quickly takes on elements of “Single White Female”.



Director Roman Polanski poses during a photocall for “Based on a True Story” at the 70th Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, France on May 27, 2017. (Reuters/Stephane Mahe)

The French-Polish Polanski is still unable to make films in the United States since fleeing the country in 1978 due to fears that a plea bargain with prosecutors over his sexual assault of a 13-year-old girl would be overruled.

But he has continued to have a successful career and remains active at 83, securing a premiere for “Based on a True Story” in an out-of-competition slot at Cannes.

“I have never made a film where there are two principal female characters – it’s always a man and a woman, or two men,” Polanski told a news conference of his French-language movie.

“Here two women oppose each other. It’s fascinating. There are elements that I dealt with in my first films and I was interested to come back to that type of cinema.”

Polanski cast Eva Green – who is French but made her career in English-speaking movies, including in the 2006 James Bond film “Casino Royal” – as a character who switches from best friend to violent stalker and back and could ultimately be a figment of Delphine’s imagination.

“You are always asking, does she exist? Doesn’t she exist? And that is a real challenge for an actor – to try to put some flesh on that character,” Green said.

“Is she a ghost? That’s the question.”

The Hollywood Reporter’s Deborah Young praised “Based on a True Story” as “a masterfully made psychological thriller in the traditional mode”, but Nathalie Simon in Le Figaro called it “grotesque, predictable and funny – not a good sign for a thriller”.

# Javad Bakhtiari hopes Iran’s diplomats mimic Korean envoy’s artistic lead

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Calligrapher and d e s k painter Javad Bakhtiari hopes that Iranian ambassadors will emulate the successful experience of the South Korean envoy in organizing art shows at his official residence in Tehran.

Last Friday, South Korean Ambassador Kim Seung-ho organized an exhibition of Persian calligraphy works by Iranian artist Bakhtiari at his residence.

“This is a unique event that a center, which is mainly for diplomatic affairs, organizes with works by an artist from the host country,” Bakhtiari told the Persian service of MNA on Sunday.

“The exhibition, though it was held for one day, will have positive results in the cultural and even in political areas,” he noted.

He said that the exhibition was warmly received and achieved good sales.

According to Bakhtiari, most of the visitors were from companies that have economic relations with South Korea.

Bakhtiari is the second Iranian artist who was selected to showcase his works at Seung-ho’s residence.

Earlier in April, paintings by Masih Mirhosseini were put on display at the house.

Seung-ho has said that he aims to promote friendship between Iran and his country by organizing such exhibitions.



Iranian artist Javad Bakhtiari (R) and South Korean Ambassador Kim Seung-ho pose during the exhibition of his works at the diplomat’s residence in Tehran on May 26, 2017. (Mehr/Mahmud Rahimi)

## “A Man of Integrity” wins Cannes Un Certain Regard prize

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — d e s k Iranian filmmaker Mohammad Rasulo’s “A Man of Integrity” won the top prize in the Un Certain Regard category at the 70th Cannes Film Festival on Saturday.

The film is about a goldfish farmer who is battling corporate oppression in northern Iran.

Un Certain Regard recognizes younger talent and innovative filmmaking.

In this section, Jasmine Trinca won the best actress award for her role in “Lucky” by Sergio Castellitto from Italy, while Taylor Sheridan from the U.S.



A scene from “A Man of Integrity” received the best director award for his film “Wind River”.

“Barbara” by Mathieu Amalric from France was named the Best Poetic Narrative and “April’s Daughter” by Michel Franco from Mexico won the jury prize.

## Octogenarian Rafat Sarraf finds pain relief in painting

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Paintings full of d e s k passion for life by the 86-year-old, self-taught artist Rafat Sarraf have been put on exhibit in Tehran’s Golestan Gallery.

“At the age of 84, Rafat was sick in bed and began to paint to entertain herself. The paintings she has created are full of passion for life, full of beautiful colors and hope. This exhibit is a must see indeed,” gallery owner Lili Golestan has written for the exhibit.

The exhibit “Suddenly Age 84”, displaying 36 paintings by the artist, opened on Friday and was warmly received by visitors.

Her daughter Asefeh, who is a graphic designer, says that her mother was sick in bed at home two years ago, suffering from some sort of allergy that made her scratch herself all the time.

“I prepared sheets of paper and several pencils to drive her attention off her illness and keep her hands busy,” Asefeh said.

She added that there is a charity organization



Flowers offered by visitors are seen below two works by painter Rafat Sarraf on display at Tehran’s Golestan Gallery on May 26, 2017. (Mehr/Mohammad Khodabakhsh)

near their house, where physically and mentally disabled children are being kept and that she teaches painting to those children.

“I noticed these children keep calm while painting. Every day I told my mom about the events

## Southern rock music pioneer Gregg Allman dead at 69

**NEW YORK (Reuters)** — Gregg Allman, whose soulful vocals made the Allman Brothers Band one of rock’s top acts in the 1970s with songs such as “Whipping Post”, in a career also marred by tragedy and drug abuse, died on Saturday at the age of 69, his official website said.

“It is with deep sadness that we announce that Gregg Allman, a founding member of The Allman Brothers Band, passed away peacefully at his home in Savannah, Georgia,” it said.

Drummer Butch Trucks, another founding member of the band, died aged 60 on Jan. 24.

The Allman Brothers Band was started in Macon, Georgia, in the late 1960s by Gregg and older brother Duane, who became the band’s guiding force and one of rock’s most revered guitarists before he was killed in a motorcycle accident at age 24. In its heyday, the band was a staple on radio stations and released albums ranked among the best in rock history.

Gregg was the band’s lead singer, keyboardist and a key songwriter as it put out a string of hits. He wrote several of them – “It’s Not My Cross to Bear”, “Midnight Rider”, “Ain’t Wastin’ Time No More” and “Melissa” – while others were renditions of old blues songs, including “One Way Out” and “Statesboro Blues”.

The band was an early progenitor of



The Zac Brown Band performs “Georgia on My Mind” with Greg Allman (R) at the 45th Country Music Association Awards in Nashville, Tennessee, November 9, 2011. (Reuters/Tami Chappell)

what became known as Southern rock. In addition to blues, the band also was known for its crystal guitar harmonies between Duane and Dickey Betts, jazz influences and a free-wheeling approach that sometimes led to 20-minute songs. Rising above it all was Gregg’s voice.

“My southern-rock heart is breaking,” music star Melissa Etheridge said on her Twitter feed.

Country music great Charlie Daniels said on Twitter: “Gregg Allman had a feeling for the blues very few ever have, hard to believe that magnificent voice is stilled forever.”

Gregg and Duane spent their early childhood in their birthplace, Nashville, Tennessee, listening to a blues radio station. After their father was killed by a hitchhiker, their mother moved them to Daytona Beach, Florida.

## Sapienza University displays paintings by Iranian artists

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — d e s k Paintings by 19 Iranian female artists on the themes of Persian literature and musical instruments were exhibited at the Museum of Classical Art of the Sapienza University in Rome.

“Colors of Iranian Music” featured 30 paintings selected from the workshop held by Italian artist and musician Antonio Poce at the Music Museum of Iran in Tehran in February.

The exhibit was organized by Iran’s Cultural Office in Rome and took place last Thursday and Friday, the office has announced on its website.

The Harpax Gallery in Ferentino, a town 65 km southeast of Rome, also hosted the exhibit for one day on Saturday.

Sapienza University Deputy Rector for General Affairs Antonello Biagini, former Italian cultural attaché in Tehran Carlo Cereti, Iran’s Cultural Attaché in Rome Akbar Qoli and a number of Italian teachers and students attended the opening ceremony.

Jaleh Nozari, Hiva Moazed, Jila Ebadi, Shabnam Tabatabai, Jinus Shahidi and Mojdeh Rabiei are among the artists whose paintings were shown.

happening in the organization and showed her the children’s paintings, and she was more encouraged to paint.

“My mother used to ask me to draw the primary ideas for her to put the colors on. However, she gradually found her own forms and themes and asked me for help, for example where to put shadow or how to add light.” She explained.

Most of the paintings Rafat creates are inspired by the traditional house she used to live in when she was a child in Isfahan.

“The house was full of paintings dating back to the Safavid and Qajar eras,” Asefeh said.

Rafat has made her paintings over the past two years; some were even done while she was in hospital; however, she has no plans to sell them and believes if they are going to be sold, the money should be spent on making charity schools.

The exhibit will be running until May 31 at the gallery that can be found at 34 Kamasai St. in the Darrus neighborhood.

## Joaquin Phoenix bludgeons Cannes with Lynne Ramsay hit man thriller

**CANNES, FRANCE (Reuters)** — As a hired killer whose weapon of choice is a particular brand of hammer, Joaquin Phoenix delivered a short, sharp shock of a movie to close the Cannes Film Festival’s main competition on Saturday.

“You Were Never Really Here” is a taught, bloody thriller from Scottish director Lynne Ramsay whose reputation is such that she was allowed to enter the movie for the Palme d’Or without showing the selection committee a finished version.

Ramsay, whose last movie, the high school massacre drama “We Need to Talk About Kevin”, competed at Cannes in 2011, told reporters she was still editing “You Were Never Really Here”, prompting one journalist to beg her not to cut too much from the 85-minute version shown to the press.

“I didn’t want to bore you all at Cannes,” said Ramsay whose movies all come in under 90 minutes.

“There’s nothing worse than being at the end of this festival and watching a two-and-a-half-hour-long film that’s (got) self indulgent scenes in it,” she said, a description that could apply to many of the films screened this year.

Variety’s Guy Lodge, who said Ramsay may be the world’s “greatest



Director Lynne Ramsay and cast member Joaquin Phoenix attend a news conference for “You Were Never Really Here” during the 70th Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, France on May 27, 2017. (Reuters/Jean-Paul Pelissier)

working filmmaker”, called her new film “astonishing ... a stark, sinewy, slashed-to-the-bone hitman thriller far more concerned with the man than the hit”.

The film has drawn comparison’s with the Martin Scorsese classic “Taxi Driver” due to the moral ambiguity of Phoenix’s Joe who, like Robert De Niro’s Travis Bickle, is a psychologically damaged military veteran who tries to save a sexually abused girl.

““Taxi Driver” is probably one of the movies that really made me want to be an actor, a particular type of actor, so I am sure that its influence (was there), but there was no conscious decision to do that (copy De Niro’s performance),” Phoenix said, adding: “I thought we were making a comedy.”